

A WOMAN'S SACRIFICE

A story of my great Grandmother's Life

Lying in a secluded spot in the central part of Wales was a beautiful little city of Llanelly. Everything about this charming village seemed to be in peace and harmony. Even to the prevailing atmosphere shed an influence of love and contentment. Rolling hills and towering sumits rose to the west, while to the East, the valley descended gradually into a grassy slope, being at last checked by the mossy banks of the shining river Severn. It was one afternoon in June, where the distant ringing of cow bells pealed through the evening air, as the cattle strolled drolly homeward from the grassy pastures---as the sun, like a flood of glory sank beneath the western hills, Nancy Williams and her five children, four girls and one baby boy were tracing slowly down the little path that led to the garden gate. They were gazing anxiously down the narrow lane, expecting the father to come home from the coal mine where he worked.

Presently William, her husband, accompanied by a Mormon missionary, appeared in the distance. When they gained the turn in the road, he bid his new acquaintance a fond good nite and departed. He then hurried to meet his dear little family at the gate. After taking little Billie in his arms and showering his little face with kisses and kissing his four little girls, he put his arm around his wife's waist. He told her to be seated, for he had a number of things to tell her. With a countenance beaming brighter than it ever had before he began his story. He first told her of the many times he had wondered what the object was of his coming to this world of woe and strife. Was it to work from dawn til dust in the dark coal mines, and then wrapped about with the black vail of death, to be forever in the cold and silent tomb, and last of all to moulder to dust and decay; then to be in this condition for ever and ever more. Oh, what an awful thought. To think of this being the end after struggling and fighting so long against the forces of this world. He next told how he met and conversed with the missionary. Of how the Lord revealed the true and everlasting gospel to the Prophet Joseph Smith, all for what? For the sole purpose of installing into their noble heads the truthfulness of its works. "My mind is brightened," he said. "My hopes renewed. I feel like life is worth living after all. I'm going to put my trust in God, and about this time next year, we will be on our way to our mountainous home in Zion, a place where we can prepare ourselves for the world beyond the vail. Wealth and honors of this life are nothing to me; My ambitions have reached a higher ~~scale~~ scale."

"Why William," exclaimed Nancy. "Surely those are not your intentions. How could we ever leave all that is near and dear to us and go to that wild western continent? ~~What~~ would our children do to part with their playmates and to leave my grey haired mother? How could I bid her farewell for the last time on this earth? I simply can't go, it would be like tearing my heart from my bosom." Choking with sobs, she leaned on his shoulder and wept bitterly. "Don't worry about it, mother." Seeming to be quite dismayed, William rising to his feet, started up the path with Nancy at his side, arm in arm, they were soon wending their way to the house. Little Billie dashing from the path now and then to pluck the yellow dandelions. While the girls were wondering what it was all about.

"Come along Dear," he said. "You're apt to change your opinion yet and give aid to my plans." Days had rolled by bringing with them the joys ~~and~~ sorrows of this life, though the greatest sorrow of all was yet to come; one that would cause Nancy's heart to burn with anguish; one that was never dreamt of, for the bright visions of the future would naturally cause her to think that no such a thing ~~could~~ happen. Time never lingers in its constant journey onward. Almost before she was aware of it, the past lay far behind her. She stood upon the ~~verge~~ of the ~~future~~ future----that future which if she only could have seen, would have caused her to shrink from it with dread and horror.

One summer morning, about two months after the pleasant stroll through the clover fields, Nancy stood at the little cottage door watching her husband as he went plodding off to his daily labor. As he wandered down the narrow path, the sun seemed to darken, and the world to grow chill. A feeling of regret and longing seem to prevade over her soul. William turned several times, gently waving his hand, acting as though there was some over ruling power that kept urging him to stay. Each step brought him farther away until at last distance and shadow brought him into their embrace and he was lost from sight. Little did he think that this would ~~have~~ be the last time that he would tread this little path. If he did he would have gazed longingly at each familiar object; and murmur in soft sweet tones, a fond farewell.

That afternoon where Nancy was at the window gazing down the shady dell, four men were seen approaching, carrying the body of what seemed to be a lifeless man. On coming nearer, she found out to her ill luck that the unfortunate was William, her

her husband. Words could not express the terrified feeling that over came her. When she saw ~~the~~ his lifeless form she screamed, "Oh, he's dead." "have mercy, Oh, what shall I do?" She ran to the door; overwhelmed with exhaustion she fell back into a swoon. The children kneeling by her crying bitterly for mother, but Mother's ears were deaf. Her mind was wondering off to some other sphere. She was in this peculiar state for hours. On recovering she found William lying in bed, still and motionless. His cheeks were flushed as though there was yet a spark of life remaining. Raising to her feet, her form shaking with suppressed sobs, she advanced timidly toward the couch, and with trembling hands touched his cold white forehead. To her surprise, his lips quivered, and his eyes opened. It was the first time that he seemed to be aware of what was going on around him. He raised his dim eyes to her's and tears filled them. A low moan broke forth from his parched lips. He took her hand and clasped it tightly, looking at her with an expression that she never forgot. "I'm going to leave you, dear" he whispered. "I awoke from this deep slumber so as to give you my last request. It will be hard for you Nancy, but for my sake, do carry out the plans that I have begun. Let God be your guiding star." As the end drew nigh he called for the children. With wan, fevered face tenderly lifted to them, he looked staringly at them, while the tears rolled down his burning cheeks. "Oh, how I hate to leave you all" he cried, "I wish I could take you all across the dark river of death with me. It almost seems that I cannot die and leave you here." He felt the icy hand of death at his heart, and something whispered for him to make ready. Oh, the anguish of going just then when so sorely needed by his family. He gazed out at the window, watching the red clouds of evening that arched low to the horizon on the serene and shining pathway of the stars. His dying eyes read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul can know. In the silence of the receding world, he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore, and fell already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning. Gradually his pulse beat fainter and fainter until at last he dozed off into the final slumber, the one where there is no awakening. Nancy called but he made no reply. She shook him but his life had fled. His limbs were still and motionless. She felt as though she could bear it no longer. She threw her self on the bed and was soon enwrapped in a deep, profound slumber. No one ~~of~~

enwrapped in a deep, profound slumber, ~~no one~~ could arouse her. She ladd for days, as though her spirit was with that of her husband in Paradise. When she awoke, all was over. The funeral had taken place and William Williams was laid away in the lonely church yard, Nancy was dispondent; she felt as though she could not live without him. This world seemed dark and dreary to her but through the aid of Mormon Missionaries she was renewed with courage, and decided to start for Zion in the early spring. William's dying words came to her like a flash and excited her to action. She and the children would ^{often} stroll to the cemetary and linger there for hours until the darkening shades of evening would begin to fall. Then she would start homeward, crying ^{aw} though her dear heart would break. But the day would come when they should visit this lonely spot for the last. ^{time} Like fleeing on the wings of wind, the time soom came, and they were compelled to leave their happy home perhaps forever---leaving her loved ones along with her aged mother who died a short time after. It was one beautiful morning in May in the year 1856 when Mrs. Nancy Williams and her four daughters, Ann, Margaret, Sarah, and Mary and little William Jr., a delicate child, left for Zion, standing at the harbor in Liverpool, soon to start on their desperate voyage across the dark blue ocean. They had many others to share it with them, for a band of converts were going for the same purpose, many of Nancy's friends and relatives coaxed and tried to persuade her not to go; but it was of no avail. She would answer them saying "It is the Lord's will, not mine." When climbing on board ship, sobs and sighs were heard in the crowd that had gathered there. As the ship, Horizon, glided smoothly away, the people gazed at it until it sank into oblivion. Then choked with sobs turned homeward, feeling as though something had gone from their midst that could never be replaced.

Day after day the ship was rocked and tossed on the angry billows of the sea. Nancy would at times gaze longingly out upon the deep blue waters and give a lonely sigh, which would plainly indicate that she was thinking of William, whose body was left under the cold clouds in a solitary spot in Wales, while his spirit was in a place where she was longing to be. At last their watery voyage was ended. They stopped at a beautiful little spot in Boston. Three days from this, they were on their way west; a weary journey of one thousand miles lay before them, wild animals and Indians abounded in the country through which they were to go. In June 23 they left Iowa with the Edward Bunker Co. After traveling for some time, they were checked

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at the upper crossing of the Platt River by a great snow storm. While here, they lived in small dugouts that were left by the mountainer, who had not long before traveled that same country. Nancy was always sad and lonely, no matter how dismal the out look seemed, she was always the same. Her little son William was a great comfort, he was the image of his father; had laughing brown eyes, wavy flaxen hair, rosy dimpled cheeks---forming a combination of loveliness. In fact it seemed that he was too heavenly to be a human being.

One day Billie ceased to play with the others. He seemed to be worried and unnatural. He wanted to sit on his mothers knee, asking such curious questions about Heaven. Nancy consoled herself by thinking the reason he talked like that was because he was different from all others. But the fatel day came at last; he died in his mother's arms. Nancy gazed wild and staringly at the wan face of her only boy, not a sob shook the frail ~~wasted~~/wasted figure. It was as if this most terrible misfortune had dried up the well springs of grief, and robbed her of that blessed gift--tears. A grave was dug out in the open planes, wrapped his little body in a cotton sheet and put him in this shallow grave. She had to go on with the hand cart Co., too weak to walk. The girls pulled the handcart with their poor grief stricken mother too weak to raise her hand. Mary was 10 years Old and Sarah 13, Margaret was 12 and Ann was 14. This was almost the breaking point. The saints were all so kind and good. They encouraged her to keep faith in God. All that had just passed seemed to her like a confused dream from which she must awake. Soon Nancy was again traveling with the rest, but her sad thoughts were rambling back to that little mound on the planes. It would take volumns to tell of what these people went through, of how they traveled wearily on day after day with nothing to eat except the flesh of oxen that had given out on the way. On the second of December, the little band entered the valley of Utah. Soon after landing, dugouts could be seen springing up in various places. They settled in Logan. All got different places to work. Mary went to Spanish Fork to live with a relative. Ann stayed in Logan and married Griffith Charles. Margaret married a man by the name of Rees. She was his second wife and Sarah married Lewis W. Jones of Malad, Idaho and Mary the youngest of the girls married D. T. Davis the cook on the ship. She fell in love with him on the way over the sea. He was so good and kind to them all. She could think of no one else but him. He was 25 years older than her.

Nancy Williams was one of the most faithful members in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; most of her precious moments were spent in the Temple. She married a man by the name of Joseph Aldridge. They lived in Logan. She went to visit Sarah in Samaria. In Samaria she took sick and died and Margaret died just a month after. They were both buried at Samaria, Idaho.

Her beautiful dark hair turned to gray and the marks of time which dealt so unkindly with her had planted deep furrows in her face, but yet ~~she had~~ if she had lost her beauty, her kind loving disposition remained the same all through her life.