
Biography of Georgina Norr Miller

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I was born at Melby, Frederickborg, Denmark on September 14, 1853. My father's name was Anders Petersen Norr and my mother's name was Frederickke Petersen. They were both Danish and belonged to the Lutheran Church, and were good, honest people. My father died when I was nine years old and my mother had been a good and faithful wife to him. After his death, of course, times became harder for us and I had to help support myself. I would knit stockings and do cross-stitch work for others and in the summertime I had to herd cows for the farmers. We were very poor and I remember we used to think it a great treat to get white bread at the holiday season, when the farmer's wives sent it to Mother. My mother, though poor, was a woman of integrity and she desired to bring up her children in the best possible way. She taught us to fear God and be honest and it has been my desire to be like her.

Shortly after my father's death, my mother joined the Mormon Church and then there began to be much unpleasantness toward her in the neighborhood, for she defended her religion on all occasions, and lived it too, and at that time the sentiment was much against the Mormons. I used to watch the ships out at sea and go wading in the water near the shore, and in the summer we had the most beautiful field of flowers one could imagine. When I was ten years old I was baptized into the Church.

In 1867 some good brother came to my mother and offered to take one of her children with him to Zion, and I was chosen because I was the eldest. I remember how glad I was to get away from my schoolmates, for they had pointed the finger of scorn at me every chance they could get on account of my religion. It was a great trial for me to part with my dear mother, and anyone can imagine what it meant for the widowed mother to give up her child; but I went, and God preserved me through many difficulties on the journey, for in those days traveling was quite different from now. When we reached England, some of the baggage had been lost and among it was mine. So I had only the clothes I wore. That was hard, after the struggle my mother had to procure the necessary clothes so I might be comfortable and look decent when I reached Zion.

We were nearly two months on the water, and when I had to wash my clothes, I was obliged to borrow some other child's clothing. One time when I was washing, I came nearly losing my life. Our way of washing was quite a task; we would get a tub, some water and soft soap and scrub them as clean as we could, after which we would place the clothes at the end of a long stick, which we held over the railing and rinsed the clothes in the ocean. It was while I was rinsing my clothes that I lost my balance and would undoubtedly have fallen in, had not a man, who was standing near, caught me by the feet and thus saved me.

Traveling across the plains was hard enough, but toward the end of the journey food became very scarce and I went to bed many times, hungry. Then in the fall, when it became cold and stormy, my shoes were worn out and my feet became wet so that I had to dry my stockings at night near the fire. One morning when I came to get them, I found them in the ashes burned up. So there I was with worn out shoes and no stockings. I asked someone in the company for a pair, but they could not spare any, so I got some rags and tied them around my feet the best I could. Often the good captain of the company would take me on his horse to ride with him, but of course, I had to walk most of the way and many times my feet were so sore I could hardly move them.

Finally, the journey ended and we stopped at the Tithing Office. Those of the Saints who had friends were taken to their homes, but no one came for me. A brother who had come for an old sister took me to his home and they were very kind to me until I could get something better. We finally came to Brigham City (the man who had brought me from Denmark had forsaken me) and for a time I lived with the family of Brother Adolph Madson and they were very good to me.

When I had been in Utah two years, my mother came over, and that was indeed a happy reunion. What hardships I had endured on the way I kept from Mother for I knew how she would grieve if she knew what her little girl had had to put up with on the way. My mother was very anxious to do her duty and help God's work along, and when she was asked to donate to the Temple, she would go out in the sage brush, where the sheep had passed, and gather the wool which had been caught in the brush, take it home, wash, card and spin it, knit it into stockings and sell them for fifty cents a pair. Thus she was able in her poverty, to keep up with the other sisters, which was her great desire.

After a couple of years, I moved to Logan to work for a family and there became acquainted with my husband, Hans Miller. He was a good Mormon boy and always did his best for me. He was a miner by profession and the children and I often went with him while he was engaged with his work, which took him to a number of places. I was only seventeen years of age when I married and we were living in Salt Lake City when our first child was born. After two years we moved to Brigham City and here my next three children were born, and all died. We had been a little careless in not having been through the Temple, but in 1886 I had a dream that caused us to move to Sanpete so as to be nearer the Temple at St. George, which was the only Temple open at that time. That was shortly before my now living eldest son was born and I was given a blessing and a promise that was fulfilled many years after. I was promised that I should become the mother of a boy, who at sometime would be a living miracle; which happened twenty-eight years later, when he was scalded almost to death, and no one thought he would live.

We had joined the United Order and it broke up two years later and we lost all we had of worldly goods. After that we moved into Idaho where we endured many hardships; we thought we were rich if we had 25¢ worth of sugar in the house. I used to take in sewing and helped a little that way. But though they were hard times, they were happy ones too. The women had to help in the fields in those days. They would take their babies in their arms and go out and glean wheat, then wait for a windy day and pound the wheat out and clean it by letting the wind blow out the chaff. Then at night we would do our housework and washing. After we had got settled in this place and things began to look a little brighter, we were told that we could not get a title to our land and so we moved our house seven miles from where we had been living.

I was feeling pretty well discouraged at this time, and was expecting to become a mother again, so things looked pretty blue, but I had a dream at this time, which was very encouraging to me. I was shown a home, which would be given me in perhaps seven, fourteen or perhaps twenty-one years. Well, just twenty-one years after, I moved into that home.

In 1887 something happened that made a deep and lasting impression on me, which I will relate. We were living on a little farm at Mayfield and it was the Fourth of July and nearly everyone was going up in the mountains to have a good time. Little did we know what a sad homecoming it would be. I remember when the party returned how the women came screaming and tearing their hair, for, eleven young people had been drowned while boating on a small lake. A storm had come up and in their excitement the boat had tipped. One woman lost her only child, a bright little girl of twelve who used to play the organ. One young man and his wife died, leaving a nursing baby. This little babe was often brought to me to nurse, as I had a babe about the same age. That was a sad, sad funeral. Sister Eliza R. Snow and Sister Zina D. Young came with some of the Apostles to comfort the people. Someone spoke in tongues and another interpreted it. They said there were angels present to mourn with them. That was the saddest funeral I ever attended.

Another remarkable incident occurred about four months before my second son was born. I was run over by a wagon loaded with salt — seven hundred pounds of salt — and was taken home as dead; but I was administered to and became well.

In about 1898 my husband began to go prospecting, and many trips did I and the children make with him and we were happy in our poverty and pulled the load together. My greatest trial was when my husband was brought home fatally injured, which happened on the 24th of August 1907. I had been downhearted for several days, feeling as if some cloud hung over me. We were living in Ogden at the time in a home we had bought. Some of the sisters who knew of my nervous condition came and stayed with me, and while we were kneeling down praying, one of the sisters looked up and saw a woman with long black hair standing near, and at the same time she saw my husband's accident. This same woman, with the long black hair, was with me in my dreams and seems to have been my guide or something to me through my life. After nine days my husband died, faithful to the last.

Through all my trials God has been with me, has guided and led me, and I have had many testimonies of the truth of the Gospel. I know that we are here to go through certain trials until our sojourn is finished and then our Father calls us home. I trust that my life has been spent in the right way and that my children will appreciate what their parents have endured; then it will be well with them and they will walk the narrow way. I have had ten children, three are dead and seven are living: Minnie Miller Jensen; George W. Miller; Emma Miller Albertson; Arthur O. Miller; Mabel Miller Davis; Ila Miller and Leona Miller.

I was at one time first counselor to the Primary president at Snowville for about six years. Was also a teacher in Sunday School at Mayfield, Utah, which work I greatly enjoyed because I love children. My greatest ambition in my youth was to become married to some good man and have a home and children, and that has all been realized, and I rejoice in the goodness of God.