



Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration, 1856-1860

LeRoy R. Hafen, Ann W. Hafen

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It is unparalleled in history, the procession of Latter-Day Saints pushing handcarts from Iowa City and Florence (Omaha) to their promised Zion by the Great Salt Lake. Many of the three thousand hardy souls who trudged across thirteen hundred miles of prairie, desert, and mountain from 1856 to 1860 were European converts to the Mormon faith. Without funds for wagons and oxen, they carried their possessions in two-wheeled carts powered and aided by their own muscle and blood. Some of the weary travelers would finally be welcomed by their brethren in Salt Lake City; others would go to wayside graves or get caught in early winter storms in the Rockies and hope to be rescued by the parties sent out by Brigham Young. The migration is described in *Handcarts to Zion*, which draws on diaries and reports of the participants, rosters of the ten companies, and a collection of the songs sung on the trail and at "The Gathering." LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen dedicated the book to his mother, Mary Ann Hafen, who wrote about the long journey in *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860: A Woman's Life on the Mormon Frontier*, also a Bison Book.

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