

Abel Weaver Garr - Handcart Company Rescuer

FEATURING

Abel Weaver Garr

Abel Weaver Garr (1833 - 1899) Gathered from various sources

Early Life

Abel Weaver Garr was born on September 14, 1833, in Hampshire County, Virginia (now West Virginia). He was the son of James Garr and Mary Weaver. Growing up in a rural farming community, Abel developed the work ethic and determination that would define his later acts of heroism.

Conversion and Migration

Abel joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as a young man and made the decision to gather with the Saints in Utah. He was part of the great westward migration that characterized so many Latter-day Saint families of this era.

The Handcart Rescue

In the autumn of 1856, Abel Weaver Garr distinguished himself as one of the heroic rescuers of the ill-fated Willie and Martin Handcart Companies. When news reached Salt Lake City that hundreds of pioneers were stranded in early winter storms in Wyoming, Brigham Young called for volunteers to ride out and bring the suffering Saints to safety. Abel answered the call without hesitation.

He rode through fierce October and November snows, helping carry exhausted and frostbitten men, women, and children across icy streams and through deep drifts. Many survivors later recalled the rescuers as angels sent from heaven. Abel made multiple trips into the mountains to ensure all who could be saved were brought out.

Later Life

After the rescue, Abel settled in Utah and raised a family. He continued to serve in his community and church for the remainder of his life, known for his quiet courage and generosity. He passed away in 1899, leaving behind a legacy of selfless service.

Source: LDS Church History Records - Contributed by Darrell Hansen on March 12, 2024.

