

INJURED *and*

BY MARLI WALKER

He couldn't walk and was miles from help; there was only one thing he could do.

The spooked horse jerked to the right, smashing James's leg against a tree. Then he fell to the ground, and the horse dashed away, leaving him helpless.

As a youth I learned that prayer sustained me when I was faced with the adversity teenagers often encounter. My testimony of prayer was strengthened one day when I was reading in my family history.

I came across a story about my great-great-great grandfather James Little, who often looked back on an experience he had as a teenager as a powerful testimony of prayer. Here is his story:

The morning had started out with a beautiful sunrise as 17-year-old James Little and his father went about their morning chores. In 1869 there was always plenty of work to do on the farm. Horses, cows, and other animals needed to be fed, stalls cleaned, and the cows needed to be milked. But today, instead of going through the same old routine, James's father had asked James to go out on the desert where their cattle grazed and round up an old steer that was ready to butcher. James eagerly packed a coat, a canteen of water, and a light lunch his mother had prepared for him.

A newly broken young horse paced in the corral. After several attempts at trying to

catch him, James was finally able to slip a bridle around his head and saddle him. He wrapped his lasso around the saddle horn and set off to find the steer.

James traveled until mid-afternoon without stopping. He gazed across the barren, dusty landscape of southern Utah. Dry desert grasses and scrub-brush dotted the ground. James could see no sign of the old steer.

The horse was restless and tired, and James knew they both needed a rest and some food. About a mile away he could see a small grove of trees and decided that it would be a good place to stop.

The young horse loped over to the grove of trees, eager to be relieved of his burden. He pranced and shied as they neared a large tree. Suddenly a rabbit dashed out from behind the tree, spooking the horse. The frightened animal jerked to the right, smashing James's knee against the trunk of the tree. He fought to control the horse as it reared and jumped, again battering James's leg against the tree. James yelled in pain and surprise as the reins slipped from his grasp, and he fell to the hard ground. Freed of its rider, the horse took off at a dead run across the desert.

James lay in a daze. Then his leg started throbbing, bringing him back to consciousness. He realized his horse was long gone



ALONE



James didn't know what else he could do, so he offered a heartfelt prayer. No sooner had he finished when he heard a horse approaching.

and with it the food in his saddlebag, the canteen of water, and his coat. Darkness was falling, bringing a chill that comes with desert nights.

James looked around him, trying to decide what to do. To his left, he saw a limb of a tree hanging within his reach. Carefully he grasped the branch and then slowly put some weight on his damaged leg and tried to stand. But the pain was instantly agonizing, and he collapsed on the ground. James looked at his injured foot, and realized that it was swelling rapidly. Taking his knife out of its scabbard, he carefully cut the boot off his swollen foot. His leg was bruised and misshapen, and with gentle probing, he knew that it was also badly injured.

James then did the only thing he knew he could do. He took his hat off, closed his eyes, and offered up a heartfelt prayer to his Heavenly Father for help.

No sooner had he finished his prayer and

opened his eyes when he heard a horse approaching. A minute later, his horse was standing next to him. James stared in astonishment at the lasso that had somehow become unwrapped from the saddle-horn and was dangling within his reach.

Slowly and painfully, James grasped the lasso and began pulling himself up into the saddle. The newly broken young horse stood patiently until its rider was seated in the saddle and then set off for home.

Throughout his life, James never doubted that his Heavenly Father knew him and had heard his pleas for help one day in the desert. His story has touched me and strengthened my testimony. As I have gained experiences of my own during my teenage years and beyond, I have learned that my Heavenly Father is near and listens to me when I pray. **NE**

Do you have a story from your family history that ought to be shared? Send it to us at newera@ldschurch.org.

