

# The Pioneer Dulcimer

Sally T. Taylor

She brought the dulcimer  
Wrapped softly, though their skin  
Was roughened with crude wool  
And homespun, leather boots  
Shredded and worn to holes;  
Their raw, chapped hands and legs  
Were wrapped in flapping rags,  
And blankets were their coats.

She brought the dulcimer  
Packed carefully when the trunks  
From emptied rooms across  
The seas were left behind—  
No room—and dishes, pots  
And treasured chairs sat lonely  
By dead camps as wagons  
Staggered west along  
A powdery, gravestrewn trail.

She brought the dulcimer  
Played gently after dusk  
When tears of blinding loss,  
Dissolving hope, and sharp  
Regret turned faces East.  
But all these sifting pains  
Were changed to restful peace,  
And all who heard knew why  
She brought the dulcimer.