

Sketch of  
the Lives of  
Daniel and  
Rachel Smith  
Robison

by Lucy Robison  
Turner

Daniel Robison was born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, 21 March 1831. He was the son of Alexander Robison and Nancy Ellen Wagaman.

Rachel Smith Robison was born the 19 November 1836 in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of Daniel Smith and Catherine Geesman.

My mother was married to father at the age of sixteen years. On hearing the gospel from Angus M. Cannon, a Mormon missionary from Utah, my father was converted and was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in the year 1854. My mother did not accept the gospel when father did but he told her it would be made known to her in due time just which was the true *church*. It was understood between them that there would be no dispute on religion as my mother belonged to the Lutheran Church and was a faithful teacher in the Sunday School of the same. They each went to their own meetings and lived in perfect peace.

After the death of Mother's father and mother, both dying very suddenly and leaving two small girls, Sabina and Charlotte, my mother and her sister Margaret took these two girls to raise until the time came when Mother's mother appeared to her and talked and conversed with her just as we do here on earth; while telling

my mother that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was true, and it was the only true church on earth, she wept.

My mother at once was converted and accepted the gospel and was baptized a member of the *church*. This angered her brothers, and they took the little sisters away from mother and Aunt Margaret. They longed to see them and on several occasions went to their school grounds and would wait until they were dismissed for recess. Sabina and Charlotte would run to them'. Another sorrow came into mother's and father's lives, they lost Annie, their baby girl.

My parents owned a cozy little home and were very comfortably situated. I have often heard my father and mother speak of their beautiful cherry orchard and garden, but on the 7 May 1860 they left all this to come to Zion in the west where they could be free to live their religion they had sacrificed so much for. On reaching Niagra Falls, just across the border in Canada, their little daughter Agnes, eight years, died. They were unable to stop the train as they were traveling by contract, so their loved one was carried away by a negro and buried, they knew not where'.

They traveled by rail and water 2,000 miles. When they landed at Florence, Nebraska they camped there two weeks while the arrangements were being made for the hand cast company. Here they lost their little boy, Johnie, three years old. The outfit consisted of 240 people, 40 carts, 10 tents, 6 wagons, 36 oxen. The teams and wagons were put in the lead, the carts in the rear. They were two wheeled carts, with bows over the top which were

covered with the canvas. The tongue of the carts had a crosspiece fastened in the end, about two and one half feet long so that two persons could stand on either side of the tongue leaning their bodies against the crosspiece. They called it pushing, instead of pulling. There were about four to seven persons to one cart. Thus we see our Pioneers trudging along day after day, in the hot sun and sand. My father, Daniel Robison, was appointed captain of the company. It left Florence, Nebraska June 7, and arrived in the valley August 27.

It was one of the last *hand* cart companies  
and one of the  
most successful  
in its journey.  
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My father tried very hard to avoid any trouble that might arise and was very well respected by all. Mother went with one of the wagons, but walked a great deal of the way. She made noodles and dried them before leaving home, which she shared with the sick. Also made yeast cakes and had light bread all the way. Provisions were weighed out to each family once a week and one time was rationed out at 1/2 pound of flour a day. At times water was very scarce and at low, loggy places. Shovels and spades were used and after digging two or three feet, would strike water, which was about the color of rain water. This was caused by alkali.

At night when a camp ground was reached the carts were placed in a circle, leaving an open space of about ten feet. This was used for a corral for the oxen. The oxen were then unyoked and driven perhaps 1/2 mile away where they were watched by two men until midnight when they were relieved by two others. When morning came they were brought in, each man yoked up his own oxen and as soon as breakfast was over they were ordered to line up for another hot day. The carts were loaded with bedding, cooking utensils and sometimes children, as their feet became very tired at times. Mothers leading their little children by the hands and bare footed themselves was very hard for them to endure. When camped for the night they always sang hymns and tried to be happy.

Their journey was very peaceful. Several bands of Indians passed, but they

were not molested by them. At one time their food failed to reach them and MY father swam the Platt River and arranged for provisions to be sent to the camp. On arriving at Sweet Water the bottom of the river seemed to be covered with fish. Everyone had all the fish they could eat, which was a great feast after eating salty bacon all the way. When they reached Green River, all were taken across on ferry boat, except the oxen, and they had to swim. They were very low on provisions and became very weak and hungry, when two wagons drove up loaded with provisions. They camped two days at the mouth of Echo canyon on the Weber River, at a small town called Henefer. The town was named Henefer in honor of the only family in the valley at the time. Mr. Henefer donated five bushels of potatoes, providing they would dig them. The fishing was very good so that everyone had all the potatoes and fish they could eat. They reached Salt Lake the end of their journey on the 27 August 1860.

Wagons, carts, tents, and the oxen, everything that was used on their journey, belonged to the church and were taken from them. My parents located in Farmington and lived there three years. My father helped to lay the rock for the old meeting house in Farmington, which is still standing. They moved from Farmington in the fall of 1863 to North Morgan. The first cabins were logs with small poles and wild wheat grass for the roof. Chimneys were built of rock, one small window without a glass. No lumber for a door, a quilt or carpet was hung in place of a door. Also a dirt floor. Fine willows were tied together for a broom, beds were built out of poles. For chairs, blocks of wood were split, holes bored in the bottom and round sticks were put in for legs. They used tallow candles for lights and sometimes they placed tallow in a tin plate and a piece of twisted cloth with one end to light.'

My mother spun yarn for cloth and dyed it, making enough for two suits of clothes. One for father and their son George. She also made her own yarn with her spinning wheel and knit all the children's stockings. In the fall they would make a barrel of soft soap, take it to Salt Lake and trade it for dried fruit to

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be used during the winter. They passed through all the hardships of the early Pioneer days, losing four children while living in North Morgan, Daniel, Birdie, Samuel, and Arta. Making seven in all that passed away.

The Union Pacific Railway was built in 1868 and 1869. Money was more plentiful. Machinery was used on the farms instead of cradels and scythes.

My father was Counselor to the Bishop in North Morgan for a number of years. Also Superintendent of the Sunday School for some time. He lived an honest life and died at his residence in North Morgan, after a lingering illness, March 25, 1907, a faithful Latter Day Saint.

My mother was President of the Primary for sixteen years and Counselor to the Primary Stake President for 24 years. She was the mother of twelve children, and passed many hardships. She passed away very suddenly on the 4 September 1905. at; the age of 69 years. She is survived by five children, George, Brigham, David, Margaret, and Lucy.