

History of Ephraim Robison Brother of David Robison

Written in 1930. Ephraim was 86 years old.

Ephraim Robison was born in Quincy Township, Franklin County, and Pennsylvania. He was the tenth child and fourth son of Alexander and Nancy Ellen Wagamon Robison. He was born February 29, 1844.

“I have been told, relates Ephraim, that Brigham Young remarked all those who pulled handcarts across the plains would get a through ticket to heaven.” Leaving my Pennsylvania home May 7, 1860. Myself and other members of my family made the trip to Missouri by rail and water a distance of 2,000 miles. In Florence Nebraska we joined the John C. Rich Handcart Company. We were under the Captaincy of my brother Daniel. The company consisted of 240 people, 40 carts, 10 tents, 6 wagons, and 36 oxen. In the company was a man called a gambler we had no law so all disputes were settled by him. The party that could talk the loudest and longest usually won the decision of the “gambler.”

I was assigned to a cart with my sister, her husband, and their seven children. Our food and water rationed out to last us a week, our building supplies and cooking utensils and some of the smaller children had to be carried on the cart. Water was scarce and when we ran out, shallow wells were dug to provide water for the people and animals. Many times after digging the well, we were unable to drink the water because of alkali. The women wore long aprons and as the company journeyed on they gathered buffalo chips for their fires at night. Wood was very scarce. If we could find a stick as large as a whip handle we were lucky. The chips burned slow and gave off a yellow smoke that turned the bread so yellow, till it could hardly be eaten; but we enjoyed it as though it was Christmas cake. At night the wagons were circled, making a corral for the animals The cattle were grazed on the nearby plains Members of the company took turns in shifts herding them. They were brought in in the morning for another days travel.

A man named Fasket was in charge of the supplies; Once when I was ill I ask him for a handful of dried fruit. He treated me like a dog, and I thought if I ever got him alone he wouldn't be able to reach Zion.

The company made Green River crossing by ferryboat. Only the carts were ferried the animal had to swim. At Sweetwater near the continental divide in Wyoming the streams were teaming with fish. We caught them and lived well while we were camped there. As we neared Salt Lake provisions ran short and some of the company fell from exhaustion and hunger. Relief wagons were sent out from Salt Lake and we were able to move on. We reached Salt Lake august 27, 1860. I was ragged, dirty and barefoot; and felt about as happy as though I had ran a nail in my foot. We expected to see brass bands waiting for us. No one was there except people whose belongings we had carried across the plains. No one came to visit us, until we could get established in permanent shelters. It was as though they didn't care that we had come across a continent to make our home with them.

My brother-in-law and I moved to Farmington and rented a small adobe house. One roost, one small window a small fireplace on one side. This kept us warm and cooked our meals. We fixed p the shack as best we could. Built a bunk

on one side of the room from small poles woven with willows. Straw made our mattress. Our covers were quilts, nearly worn through from the wear on the plains.

It was a cold winter and many nights we would sit up and stir the fire. Sitting on stumps and boxes and putting the bedding and a few rags around the children to help keep them warm Most of the time we lived on boiled potatoes. We had no chairs and an old hand made table Where ever we worked we got store credit or grain. Not one cent of money did we have.

I moved my family and parents to North Morgan in 1864. My older brother David was the first settler there. I helped build the second log cabin there. Most of the people lived in shanties built of small poles, willows, and wheat grass straw. Small holes were cut for windows and a larger one served as a door. An old quilt or piece of worn carpet covered the hole. A bunch of small willows were tied together for a broom. Chairs were made of split blocks of wood with holes bored in the bottom, in which sticks were placed for legs. Bunks were made of Poles. In a rainstorm which was a rare thing we were as well off outside as we were inside The rain through the roof and beat through the walls. There were few staves, and a tallow candle furnished light. Coal oil lamps weren't even known to the settlers. Clothing was so scarce, mothers often stripped their clothing, put them into bed and washed and mended the while the children slept. The first grain in Morgan was threshed out with oxen on a clay floor. When there was sufficient wind the chaff would be blown from the straw The fruit of the day was wild berries. The women made wild currant pie; so sour it would turn our faces crooked. There was no sugar available. One pie would last a family a week. A little amusement in the winter consisted of parties at private homes. Ore room was cleared so we could dance the quadrille. Candles served as lights and fiddlers played the music. We enjoyed the get togethers very much and looked forward to the next one. People generally had good health, but when we got sick old-fashioned remedies and the Lord will helped us recover.

I moved to Crayden in 1877 and I lived there until 1915 when I moved to Ogden. -

Game was plentiful in Morgan County and I often went out before breakfast and shot a deer with my old rifle. I think I killed more deer than any other man did. I trapped animals and sold their pelts.

Ephriam Robison died November 24, 1932 at age 88 years_

Apparently the brass band, Ephriam expected to greet them, was from former companies arrival.

Sept. 26,1856 Salt Lake City - the first two companies of handcart pioneers entered Salt Lake City after completing their journey from Iowa City, Iowa in 7 days_ -

The two companies were under the direction of Capt. Edmund Eilsworth and Daniel D. McArthur and consisted of 497people with 10 handcarts. Five wagons and 23 oxen. Four mules and 25 tents.

They were greeted here by the First-Presidency. A brass band. A company of lancers and 2 large group of citizens