

Leannah ROBISON ROCK

Written by Geneal Rock Robison (daughter of Harry Rock)

This information was gotten from Laverne Hinkley Johnson (Her mother was Harry Rocks oldest sister. She was Elizabeth Rock Hinkley, was married to Alonzo Hinkley)

My grandpa, Henry Rock was working near Chicago with his brother in law. They were masons by trade. He wrote to his wife, Leannah, and told her he was going to Utah. He asked her to meet him at a place on the Mississippi River. She was living near her folks in Franklin Country, Pennsylvania, and she didn't want to go and leave her folks, but she knew if she didn't go, he would go without her. They had one child (Aunt Lizzie, my father's oldest sister, and Laverne H. Johnson's mother) She took their clothes and the food they had and left with her brother Dave and wife. They drove an ox team hitched to a covered wagon. They met her husband, Henry, at the Mississippi River. As far as we know they came with the ox team to Utah, after they met Henry. The little girl walked along with her folks most of the time. Grandma said, "She left her little foot prints in the sands of time." Leannah said her sister in law had worn her shoes out, and she had to walk bare foot. So Leannah prayed that someday they would be able to get something for her feet. She hadn't gone very far, when there under a sage brush laid a five dollar gold piece. She picked it up, but didn't know how it could help to get shoes. They traveled quite a distance when they came to a place where Indians were selling moccasins and other things to the people, so they traded the gold piece for moccasins.

Leannah said one day along the way she became very thirsty. Henry went on ahead about a mile and he found water where other people and their animals had stopped to drink It wasn't very clear, but he took some back to the folks. Leannah wouldn't drink it; she emptied it out on the ground. She said all at once she felt a bull whip across her back. Henry had hit her with the whip. He said to her, "Don't ever do that again there are people here that would be glad to drink that water." Laverne Johnson said she didn't listen much when the grandparents would tell about their lives, so incidents in the life of Leannah Robison Rock are rather sketchy. This is all we could get from the folks in Rexburg. Some facts are: Leannah was born Aug 9, 1839. In Tomstown, PA to Alexander Robison and Nancy Ellen Wagamon. Nothing is said of her childhood. She married Henry Rock Dec 17, 1858 at the age of 19 in Tomstown. Their first child a daughter was born there. It was while this little girl was still at a tender age that the family migrated to Utah. They settled in a community now called Farmington. Their second child, Amanda was born there. Bountiful was the next place of abode and Henry, the first son was born there. The family made another move, this time to Morgan, Utah. The Rock family lived there for quite some time. Eight more children were born to the family, 7 sons, and 1 more daughter, making a family of 11 children. It goes without saying it kept Leannah and her husband very busy supporting such a large family. About this time they heard fascinating stories of the wonderful land to be had up in Idaho. It was said, that it was all virgin soil and there was a whole valley to choose a place from and settle down. The family with other families, decided to make the long trip to Idaho. Leannah, Henry and their brood left Morgan June 15, 1884 and spent 8 days making the trip from Morgan to Hibbard which was then called Salem. The roads were hardly roads the way was rough and rocky and the children walked most all the way, barefooted, because they had one pair of shoes and those were saved for Sundays. At the end of each days travel their feet were marked with scratches and cuts.

The first settlement they reached was Pocatello and it was just a shanty town, no marked streets. The main thorough fare was dirt with lots of dust billowing around. The next , town was Eagle Rock (what is now Idaho Falls) It had a few buildings along the railroad track, one old wooden bridge spanning the tricky Snake River, and anyone crossing it, had to pay a toll (It was called the Taylor Bridge) The party then headed north to Market lake (now Roberts). It was evening when they reached the area and when they were about to settle in for the night, swarms of mosquitoes made It so miserable they decided to travel on. At times the pests were so thick they couldn't see the color of the horses.

Their next stop was to be the Carter Ranch close to the Snake River (a location west of what is now Rexburg, Idaho) while traveling through Lava bed roads to the ranch 4 head of horses had to be used on

each wagon, the mud was so deep in places. When they reached Hibbard (Salem then) they found only a few log houses with dirt roofs, and it was a wild country. The sage brush was as high as a horses head; deer and other big game were in abundance also wild geese and ducks. A home was built and Leannah and her family settled in, helping to make this community a pleasant place to live for those that followed later.

I remember going to visit my grandparents with my folks, every week. Grandma always had fresh baked bread. She didn't have butter all the time, she would sprinkle water on the bread and then sugar on top. It really tasted good to these youngsters.

Henry and Leannah had a nice brick house. He was a mason by trade and all the boys followed the trade. He died March 6, 1908; she died Oct 21, 1909.

Geneal Robison