

Written by Aunt Ellen = Ellen H. D. Bradley Nielson

Mary Ellen Johnson Denison (Mother) was hady caped (handicapped) because of deafness caused by her illness coming across the ocean.

Ephraim Monarch Denison (Father)

Father & mother had lots of trials & troubles to test their faith. They were very poor and had a hard time trying to live and get their land in shape and getting a home on it. Father used to (freighting to peohe?) to get food, & make a lively hood. He lost both his horses and cows. It seem death was sure to take them in one way or another. But the Lord blessed them & they survived and worked on scant meals they had. Father worked in the canyon and got logs to build one room. They lived in this one room for years, adding another room when a new member came to them and the need for more room was needed. I remember my brother wrapping their feet in burlap before they left for the mountains, and seeing them come home at night, with ice and snow on their feet. Mother was excellent with needle & thread. She was a seamstress, made tailored suit & clothing for other people. She also could crochet & tat spin & knit. She spun her own yarn & cloth, knit socks for the boys & stocking for girls & herself. She spun wool on shares (?) and knit and sold socks .50 a pair, she sold many in Salt Lake City. She wove many yards of cloth and dyed it red, green, blue and black. Some of us has quilts made from this cloth, it was called Linsey, it was real strong & durable.

Mother was always willing to help the poor & needy – she carried her spinning wheel & spun yarn for charity many times. It was the kind of wheel you had to walk back & forth. I remember her spinning day after day walking back and forth from early morn until late at nite.

She did fancy work of all kinds. She made a beautiful crocheted “tidy” they called them. It was about a yard square. A lady from (?) & her husband came from Castle Valley to visit. The woman admired that beautiful tidy and wanted to buy it, so mother sold it to her for a pounds of Lucern seed and a pair of baby shoes. I have the undershirt she made for me, when I was a baby. It has about five inches of Ilet (eyelet?) embroidery on the bottom. Myself and five of my babies and three of my brother & sister wore it – still good. It is among the Daughter of Pioneer relics it's 67 (crossed out) 86 years old now.

Father had a great deal of trouble trying to keep ditch for irrigation. It kept breaking out and lots of water was lost. It made it short of water for the farm and garden. Mother was afraid of Indians. She only had a quilt for a door so she would tie the dog by the door and if anyone come near he would really bark to try to get loose. She was so frightened and wondered whether he would tare the house down until they went away and he would quiet down.

Another experience father had was land jumping. He live on the place but hadn't built a house yet. This land was a little north of the old place that now stands west of Sterling close to the Gunnison reservoir.

A fellow came & told father someone else was going to jump his claim so he hurried and got the team of wagons and went to Manti for lumber to build. On the way back he met another fellow going into town. He asked him if he has seen another fellow going toward Sterling with lumber, and he said yes he saw him going in with a load of lumber, so father decided there was only one way to beat the other fellow so he took off over the hills where no wagon had ever been - a short cut. He marveled he ever made it, but he did, & drove on to the land, and looked and saw the other horses ears come over the hill, so father just made it about 5 minutes before the other fellow.

In the year 1879, in the month of June, they made a trip to the St. George temple. The late Fall before, there were two or three couples going to the temple. Father & mother planned to go with them, but it was quite cold & mother was afraid to take the children because they didn't have any warm clothes. So they waited until Spring & went. As the time drew near, everything seem to go wrong to prevent them from going. Father tried to borrow a wagon & team but everyone was busy in the field so he couldn't get one. His own horses were so poor & the wagon was too. They were afraid they couldn't make the trip. Still mother had faith in the Lord that He would help them if they put forth an effort. So they started out alone. They had a barrel of water on the back of the wagon in case of emergency. But as they journed along, the road was rough and the plug came out of the barrel and all the water ran out. It was (terrible?) hot so they stopped to rest the team & father went to get water for them & it was all gone. So there was nothing to do but go on to where there was water. The poor horses just crawled along it looked as if they would fall any minute. Mother said they were so exhausted all they could do was pray to God for help. She said the Lord was ever mindful of them who try to do their duty. He did bless

them so they got to St. George Temple. The next morning when they went in the temple their hearts almost sank again. Father hadn't paid any tithing and that was specified on his recommend. The president of the temple asked him if he would pay his back tithing. He said no because he didn't have anything to go on with. But he would pay from them on which he did until his dying day. So they went through the temple and returned home safely. They truly witnessed the hand of the Lord, on this trip. It was a miracle how the poor horses made the trip having to travel so far without water. On one trip to peoche one of father's horses died and he bought another, but before he had finished the trip another man claimed the horse so father was out both money & horse. They had so many trying experiences. We wonder how they were able to carry on so bravely, but there was no other way only to go on.

I must tell you how our dear mother was saved from the watery grave while crossing the ocean. She was 18 months old, she became very sick and seemed to get worse as day went by. Every morning the captain would dip her up to her neck in the ocean. One morning he said to her mother that they would have to throw her over board. I was the rivel of the ship (?). (It was the rival of the ship?) Grandmother clung to her and said, "If you throw her overboard, you will have to throw me over too." He said, "Well, we will give her one more day, if she isn't better we will have to throw her over." Grandmother prayed and watched over her all night, so did all the other saints. Toward morning she seemed to be better. It is thought that the high fever she had caused mother to become deaf. She went through life with this (handicap). She became the mother of nine children. She was indeed a wonderful mother. She passed away May 2, 1940 at Sterling, Utah. Burial in Manti Cemetery.

Notes:

1. Typed by Lori Glancy, Highland, Utah from a copy of the hand written manuscript. 3 August 2008
2. Author, Ellen Hannah Denison Bradley Nielson was daughter of Ephraim Monarch Denison. She was born 18 Aug 1884 and died 19 Jul 1977. She had several children from her first marriage to Jefferson Bradley who died on 8 Jan 1919. She married Niels Christen Nielson late in life on 19 Dec 1945.