

Memories of the Denison Manti Home

Located at 602 East 4th South, Manti, Utah

As told to Deanna Bean by Fred Heber Denison (1983)

Retyped by Trena Horne Dodge November 2003 from The Denison Family Memories Volume I

In the possession of Ellen Bernice Phillips Horne

All 12 children of Hyrum Denison and Barbara Stutznegger Denison, were born in the front room of this humble home, in the corner set apart for their big bed. The one bedroom in the house had three beds for the girls, one for Emily and Ellen, one for Cleo and Bertha, and one for Geneva when she was just over 2 years of age. At the time, the “big boys slept across the street in the “Bee house”, an adobe house that contained a stove and extractor for straining the honey. Melvin and Lorenzo found companionship and privacy there and in the summer they slept out in the hay loft of the big barn where it was cooler. Little Hans and Heber slept together in a roll-away bed that was stored during the day under their parents’ bed.

The kitchen was the family gathering place and the coal stove was lit year around. Many hours as a boy Heber spent turning the handle to the washing machine and every morning it was his job to turn the handle for the bread mixer.

In the spring of 1912 they dug a basement to add on an addition to their home. Uncle Fred Stutznegger came to help and was “assisted” by his namesake, young Fred Heber. Uncle Victor, Aunt Emily’s husband did most of the carpenter work so it was truly a family project.

The new addition had a large bedroom and parlor on the main floor with the basement underneath where 10 sacks of potatoes were stored under the basement steps. The second floor had a large bedroom with two double beds for the boys. This was Heber’s first recollection of having the older boys sleep in the house with the rest of the family. There were two other bedrooms, one for Ellen and Cleo, and one for Bertha and Geneva. As the years passed, newcomers Iris, Alice and merle also shared these rooms. At night the girls would take their lamps upstairs to bed. A tragedy was narrowly averted, when a lamp was knocked over while they were turning their beds down. Before the fire could spread or the lamp explode, mother Denison grabbed the spread and threw it out the window.

When electricity came to their area they were all excited to take turns to “Work the switch” and see it light up at the top of the stairs. When they turned it for the first time they had a party for the big event and even Brother Brox (affectionately called “old man Brox”) who ran the power plant up the canyon came. It was a real thrill to see the light glowing in each room from the bulb that hung on its long cord from the ceiling in the center of each room.

That summer Grandpa Denison was selling Temple Brand Garments for the Salt Lake Knitting Mills and did a good deal of traveling. He let his boys raise spuds and paid them 10 cents a sack for them. One year Heber earned \$2.00 for his efforts. Later his father sold nursery stock and they would borrow a team of horses to deliver the trees and bushes to homes around Manti, Sterling, and Mayfield. He was home most of the winters to supervise the four or five cows and the 1,000 chickens the boys took care of. Milking the cows was one of Heber’s daily chores until he went to work full-time after finishing college.

The holidays were something they all looked forward to, and they had some fun family traditions:

The Easter Egg Roll down Red and Blue Hill above Manti which was finished off with a big picnic lunch. Those Easter Eggs were both beautiful and creative, decorated by taking clover leaves or tiny flowers and tying them onto the eggs with a string. The design in yellow was lift when they boiled them in onion-peeling water.

The Fourth of July was also a highlight because each child received 15 cents to spend. Heber always got an ice cream cone, a box of sparklers and then spent his last nickel for a box of Mother Goose Pop Corn to eat during the parade. As a young man in Jr. High he began marching in the parades with the band playing the trumpet. They would be up and in uniform at day-break ready to perform. They always went first to the Mayor's house to serenade him and after treats and a drink they would go to the councilman's homes to play for each of them. Then the band would dismiss long enough for them to get home for a quick breakfast and rush back to march in the parade.

For Christmas the older boys would always go to Funks Canyon to cut the family tree. When Heber was older, he joined them and later he went alone after the older boys had left home. He remembered the cold as he walked through the snow that was often knee deep. He always went to 20 or even 30 trees before choosing the "prettiest one there". Since wagons couldn't get up into that area he would drag it home on the snow. When Cleo taught school in Manti he cut one for her classroom as well as the family tree. As a little boy he remembers the worry every Christmas Eve as they decorated the tree for fear they would take too long and Santa wouldn't come. Santa never failed them however, and their stockings were always full of candy, fruit and nuts, and sometimes a new piece of clothing. A special memory of Heber's is of a little metal truck a favorite toy. Everything they bought came from the Sears and Roebuck Company mail order house, and there was always lots of excitement when packages came, especially at this time of the year.

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**Note: (added 23 October 2007)**

1. **Hyrum DENISON** (Birth: 6 Jan 1865 Manti, Sanpete County, Ut; Death: 1 Jun 1932 Manti, Sanpete County, Ut) is youngest son of **Hans DINESEN** (Born: 20 Jul 1824 Place: Gjentofte, Copenhagen, Denmark; Buried: Died: 13 Jan 1904 Place: Manti, Sanpete, Ut) and **Johanne Jacobsen CHRISTOFFERSEN** (Born: 4 Dec 1825 Place: Sandbjaerg, Birkerod, Frdrck, Denmark, Died: 28 Jul 1880 Place: Manti, Sanpete, Ut).
2. **Fred Heber DENISON** (Born: 27 Mar 1906 Place: Manti, Sanpete, Ut, Died: 5 Dec 1975 Place: Pocatello, Bannock, Idaho) is youngest son of above Hyrum DENISON.
3. **Deanna BEAN** is daughter of Fred Heber Denison.

