

THOMAS MC NEIL  
and  
JANET REID

LIFE HISTORY OF THOMAS AND JANET McNEIL

Written in 1936 by  
their granddaughter  
Rebecca Ballard Cardon

This history was written because of the request of the children and grandchildren of this couple to have some written remembrance in their honor so that their memory may be everlasting.

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My maternal grandparents were Thomas McNeil and Janet Reid McNeil. They were both born in Tranent Haddingtonshire, Scotland. Thomas was born on Feb. 15, 1823, christened Mar. 15, 1823. He was the son of Thomas McNeil and Emily Selkirk, who were married Mar. 22, 1821. Thomas Senior was the son of George McNeil and Helen Grant. They were married Dec. 13, 1765 at Elphingstone Haddingtonshire, Scotland. Helen Grant was the daughter of Alexander Grant and Nicholas Halliday. Emily Selkirk's parents were Robert Selkirk and Euphonia Black.

Janet Reid was born Aug. 2, 1824 and was christened Aug. 14, 1824. She was the daughter of Peter Reid and Margaret Martin who were married Apr. 7, 1812. His parents were James Reid and Jean Allan. Her parents were Robert Martin and Elizabeth Howie. They were all born in Tranent.

Of their childhood, I know very little as they left no record of that, and all have now passed away who knew them in their early life. We know that Tranent was a small coal mining town, and that they both worked in the mines or pits, as they were called. Children went to work in the pits as early as eight and ten years and no doubt they did the same, for neither of them had any education, only to read and write very poorly, so I suppose that was how their childhood was spent.

Grandmother has told me how glad she was when the law was passed in 1843, prohibiting female labor in the mines. She said that some of the women felt badly and wept about it and wondered how they could get along, and some of them went back morning after morning and tried to go to work, but were refused by the authorities. Grandmother said that she was glad and as soon as they were told about it, she dropped her tools at once and didn't wait to finish filling her box, for she hated the work.

She was nineteen years old at that time and soon went to work as a house servant until she was married.

She was the fourth daughter in a family of nine girls and one son, and her father died when she was thirteen years old, so of course, the girls had to help keep the family.

Grandfather's father first married Margaret Mitchel, who died leaving a family of several children. The oldest daughter was named Jean and she must have been a very good woman, for she was the only mother grandfather ever knew as his own mother died when he was six years old and his father died two years later, so she was now father too. She was loving and kind to him and he loved her dearly.

I remember grandfather saying that sometimes he used to go to see other girls, but was always glad to go back to Jessie, as he called her, for she was always neat and clean and always had a sweet breath. They were married on Jun. 19, 1845 and became the parents of twelve children as follows:

Margaret Reid , born Apr. 14, 1846 in Tranent Haddington shire, Scotland  
Thomas Reid, Dec. 6, 1847. Tranent Haddingtonshire, Scot.  
Emily Reid, Jun. 19, 1849. Tranent...  
Peter Reid, Feb. 28, 1851, Tranent...  
John Reid, Feb. 24, 1853, Tranent...  
James Reid, Oct. 24, 1854, Tranent...  
Charles Thornton, May 1, 1856 in Liverpool Harbor  
Joseph Reid, Jan. 14, 1859, Genoa, Nebraska.  
Janet Jane, Mar. 14, 1861, Logan, Utah  
William Reid, May 3, 1863, Logan, Utah  
Hyrum Reid, Oct. 30, 1864, Logan, Utah  
George Reid, Oct. 2, 1866, Logan, Utah

Of these Peter died in Scotland at the age of one year. Twins were on her side of the house, both the Reids and Martins. Her mother's brother had twins, boy and girl. Her grandmother Reid had a boy and a girl, also her uncle James Reid had a boy and a girl, so there is no wonder twins are in our family. There are nine pairs to my knowledge in the family that stayed in the northern part of Utah.

The Mormon Elders came into Tranent soon after grandfather and grandmother were married and as usual the minister of their Church was anxious to hinder the Mormons as much as he could, so called on grandfather and two of his companions who were young men and fond of a good time, and asked them to go to the meeting and break it up. They agreed and the minister gave them enough beer to make them feel good and promised them more beer and a good time after the meeting. These three young men went to the meeting and expected to have a good time. On the way, they decided to go in and sit at the back until the meeting was well started. This they did and were so impressed with the spirit of the Elders and the earnestness of their prayers

and singing that they decided to hear what they had to say. They became so interested in the sermon of the Elders that they forgot to make any disturbance and remained until the close of the meeting. Instead of going to see the minister they went home, remarking that that was the best sermon they had ever heard.

The next day, they each took their Bibles to work with them and at dinner time they looked up the passages that the Elders had referred to and were pleased with the explanation that they gave, so decided to go to the meeting again. They did this and were more pleased each time and were finally converted.

Grandfather was one of the first to be baptised in Tranent. He was baptised Jul. 25, 1847 at Hunterfield, Edenburg branch, by David Moffat and confirmed the same day by William Copar. Grandmother was not so easily converted and took more time to investigate. She was very reserved and undemonstrative and hard to convince of a new thing, but when once convinced she was unchangeable. Her family all opposed her also, and I think this made her more cautious. She studied and prayed and was finally convinced that the new religion was the truth and she never changed her mind. She was baptised Mar. 26, 1848 by David Moffat and confirmed the same day by James Nibley.

Grandfather was ordained a Teacher, Oct. 1847, and an Elder on Jan. 7 1849. and I think he was chosen President of the Tranent branch at that time for he gave the report of the branch, as it's President, at the conference held in Edenborough on Mar. 18, 1849. This position he held until he emigrated. He was the first President of the Tranent branch after it was separated from the Edenborough branch. He presided there over five years and during all of that time they were both very prominent and active in church work there. The Elders made their home the headquarters and mother said that they were always welcome although sometimes she went to bed hungry because there was not enough food for all of the Elders were fed first.

The revelation on plural marriage was first made public in the Fall of 1852 and soon after this, the Elders were told to teach it to the saints in Europe. Rumors of it had reached grandmother before the Elders had announced it to the branch, and when Elder Campbell, who was presiding Elder at that time, came to grandmother's home at conference time, she asked him about it. He gave her an evasive answer, and then at the morning meeting told the saints about it. This hurt her and she was against the principle anyway, so decided to have nothing more to do with a people who would teach such a thing. When Elder Campbell came home to dinner, she refused to talk to him and after she had

prepared dinner for them, she refused to eat with them or to go back to the meeting in the afternoon.

After she had done up the dishes and was sitting alone thinking and feeling very sad, the door opened and a man, a stranger, came in and said to her, "Sister McNeil, why are you so sad and troubled?" She told him and he said, naming the principles of Gospel that she believed, "You believe these and think that they are true and correct principles?" She said "Yes, I do". He said, "Be of good cheer for the Lord is well pleased with your work so far. Accept this principle for it is true as the others are and comes from the Heavenly Father. Believe this as you have the others and He will bless you." He then departed as he came. She did not know who he was, but always thought that he was a messenger of some kind, teaching the truth for she accepted it as such and converted her husband to the same, and he entered into it after they came to Utah.

The spirit of gathering to Zion was strong upon both grandfather and grandmother and they were very anxious to emigrate, but as he was the President of the branch and doing a good work, the presiding Elder asked him to remain in Scotland for a while as they said they were doing more good there than they could in Zion. They accepted this council and remained until they were given the privilege to leave. During this time, they were saving what they could and had enough to bring them to Utah so that when the permission was given them to leave, it did not take them long to get ready. This permission came just before grandmother was about to become a mother for the seventh time. When grandfather got this word, he hurried home to tell grandmother and asked her if she did not think it best to wait until the baby was born and she was more able to travel. She said, "No, the time to go is now. Something may come up to hinder us if we wait. I will put my trust in God and He will see me through."

Think of the strength of character she had, of the faith and courage it took at such a time to undertake such long journey. She had five little ones and was leaving one small grave behind, which she said was one of the hardest things to leave.

Grandmother was the only one of her family who ever joined the Church and they felt very badly to think that she would do such a wicked thing, and when they decided to leave home and go to Utah, that was more than her mother could stand. My mother told me that she remembered the day they went to bid her grandmother goodbye. She was sick in bed and refused to let them in to see her as she said Jessie had broken her heart and she could not stand to say goodbye to her. Mother said that grandmother cried all the way home. She never saw any of her people again.

The branch had a big party for them when they left and gave grandfather a silver watch which he prized very highly and carried it all the rest of his life. They left their home on Apr. 27, 1856 and journeyed to Liverpool where they were to set sail. When they arrived there, grandmother was taken sick and was hurried on to the boat which was being disinfected and cleaned. Here the baby was born on May 1, with only one other woman on board to attend to grandmother. When the Captain and the doctor came on board the ship and found that a baby had been born, they were delighted and thought it would bring good luck to the trip. They asked the privilege of naming him. Brother James G. Willie, who was President of the Company, thought it best to let the Captain name him as there were 764 Mormon passengers on the boat, so he was named Charles Thornton, after the ship, which was named Thornton, and Captain Charles Collins.

The boat set sail on Sunday, May 4, 1856. Grandmother and the baby both did well and he was the pet of the whole company, as well as of the officers of the ship.

Mother has told me that some one told grandfather that if he gave the children some red pepper it would keep them from getting sea sick, so he went on board prepared and decided to try it, and as grandmother was in bed with the new baby, he had to give the dose. I don't know whether he was told how much to give or how to give it. At any rate, he was very inexperienced in the strength of red pepper. He lined the five little ones up and gave each one a teaspoonful of the fiery dry stuff. You can just imagine the results. Mother said that it got into their eyes, ears, noses, and a good portion into their little mouths. There was a screaming, clawing and dancing. When grandfather saw what he had done, he cried, "God forgive me, I have kilt me bairns." It took the combined efforts of nearly all the sisters on the boat to relieve those poor children. It didn't cure the sea sickness, however, for they all suffered greatly from it.

On board, they had to prepare their own food and were permitted to take their turn using a stove which was provided for the company. About all the food they had, though, was porridge.

The boat landed at Castle Garden, New York on Jun. 14, 1856. This company had planned to cross the plains with handcarts, but Brother Franklin D. Richards, who had been President of the European mission, counseled grandfather not to go that way, but to go to St. Louis to the branch of the church which had been organized there, and to remain until he had money enough to go to Utah by team, as it would be better for his family. This was a great test of their faith, because they were both anxious to come on to Utah.

but they had learned before that it was wise to take counsel.

They decided to wait, and afterwards were very thankful for it because that handcart company didn't get into Salt Lake until the 9th of November. They suffered greatly with cold and hunger and 66 died enroute. Grandfather was thankful that they didn't have all their little children in that company. While in St. Louis, their John, aged 3 years, died and was buried there.

Grandfather stayed in St. Louis that winter and earned some money and planned to go to Utah in the spring, but he had another disappointment and a test of his faith, for instead of being permitted to go to Utah, Brother Erastus Snow, who was presiding over the saints in the East, called a number of the brethren at St. Louis together, among whom grandfather was one, to go to Nebraska to make a settlement a hundred miles west of Florence in order to carry out the plan of Brigham Young, to have a settlement every hundred miles as a stopping place for the saints on their way across the plains.

(Church records in Church Historian's Office writes):  
"They were located on Beaver Creek, a half mile from Loupe Fork and named the settlement Genoa. Genoa was located on an eminence 3/4 of a mile north of the ford, and was laid out in blocks of 10 acres with lots 18 x 9 rods. About sixty of these saints arrived in April 1857. The pioneer settlers immediately commenced to plow and put in grain late in the spring, but were hindered by lack of teams. They also built a number of small log, frame, or sod houses, while others dug cellars or dug-outs. These pioneers also established a steam sawmill in a cottonwood grove. They also built a meeting house of cottonwood logs. By June 4, 1857, they had enclosed about 750 acres of land and had plowed and planted 200 acres."

Hudson says in the Mill. Star. Volume 19, page 607, "Genoa farms lie south and east of the city and contains about 750 acres bounded on the south by the Beaver River, southeast by the Loupe Fork, north and east by a sod fence. Our crops are of a most flattering character: corn, potatoes, buckwheat, and garden stuffs, looking finely and if our corn escapes the early frosts that are peculiar to this latitude, it is the opinion of some of our best judges that the yield of corn will be from sixty to seventy bushels per acre. We have a brick yard in full blast and expect soon to be able, from such auxiliaries as sawmills, brickyards, and milling hands to build a city not a whit behind any other in Nebraska."

They numbered 97 men, 25 women, 40 children, 42 yoke of oxen, 20 cows, 6 horses, 24 chickens, 20 hogs, 2 cats and

dogs plenty. At this point in the record the following was found. "In passing, it may be here stated that Sister Margaret McNeil, a girl twelve years old, arrived on the present site of Genoa ahead of the main company in 1857 and was the first female in camp." She was my mother.

The wheat crop of 1857 was partly destroyed by rust, but the settlement furnished the handcart missionaries with 400 pounds of flour.

Elder John Taylor says in a letter of July, 1857: "They have enclosed about 700 acres, 400 planted and although laboring under many disadvantages they have made better improvement than any other settlement within 50 miles of them. Their gardens are better and more forward than any we have seen in the western country. Among other vegetables we were treated to new green peas. We had a conference there and appointed Alburn Allen president, Nathan Davis and Henry Peck, counselors."

Bishop Andrew Cunningham said, "The company from St. Louis arrived on 19th of May, 1857. The brethren felt well and enjoyed the spirit of the Lord and I will say to their credit that I never got a better band of brethren than I found in that camp."

Andrew Jensen says that they fenced their land by digging deep gulches and throwing the dirt on the inside, and in 1925 he made a visit there and found that the remainders of them were still found in Genoa. One of them is known to this day as the Mormon ditch. Some of them were at least four feet deep.

In the spring of 1859, prospects were good but the indian agent took the lands away from them, claiming that it belonged to the Pawnee Indians. "The land was never given to the Indians, however, but was used by the agent. This broke up that settlement and the Mormons gave up the place."

Mother says that the crops were growing fine, but they had to load up their few belongings and turn their backs on the growing grain.

The following was copied from mother's autobiography: "We left St. Louis on the steam boat and came up the Mississippi river (to Florence). The measles broke out while we were on the boat and all of my mother's children took them and were very sick, with the exception of myself. When we landed we camped on the bank of the river until our teams and wagons came. When we were all ready to start on our journey westward, my father's team, consisting of unbroke, five year old oxen, ran away and our family was delayed. My father had never seen oxen before and the animals allotted to him had to be roped and tied to get the



yoke on them and fastened to the wagon. As soon as they were released from the ropes they became unmanageable and ran away. The company had gone on ahead and my mother was anxious to have me go with them so she strapped my little brother James on my back with a shawl. He was only four years old and was still quite sick with the measles.

"Mother had all she could do to care for the other children so I hurried on and caught up with the company. I traveled with them all day and that night a kind lady helped me take my brother off my back and I sat up and held him on my lap with a shawl wrapped around him, alone, all night. He was a little better in the morning. The people in the camp were very good to us and gave us a little fried bacon and some bread for breakfast. We traveled this way for about a week, my brother and I not seeing our mother during this time. Each morning one of the men would write a note and put it in the slit of a willow stuck into the ground to tell how we were. During the time we were at Genoa we had very little to eat as the people were all very poor. We raised corn, but the frost came early and it did not ripen well. We had to dry it in the oven and it was so nearly spoiled that we had to open the door while it was drying because it was all we had to eat. We had only one hand grinder for the whole company to use in grinding, which belonged to Brother Sleight. Of course, it kept us very busy grinding.

"During the settlement of Genoa, we suffered much from the hostile Indians. They were very troublesome and we were always in danger of being molested. While in Genoa, Joseph was born on January 14, 1859.

"After we had made the settlement of Genoa, my father was called to go and help another settlement, called Woodriver, about one hundred miles west of Genoa, which made it about two hundred miles from civilization. This was a very pretty place, surrounded with trees, most of them being elm trees. They stayed at Woodriver only about three months because the Indians were so very troublesome. The brethren told them to break off camp and join the next company that came along. They did this, regardless of splendidly growing crops.

"We had to cross the Platte River in which there were so many sand bars that it made the crossing very dangerous. The men were helping the women over, but my mother was so anxious to get over that she started out with a baby in her arms, thinking that she could go through herself. She had only gone a little way when she began sinking into the quicksand and was going down very fast, when some of the men saw her and ran to her assistance. It was a difficult task to get her out safely and she had a very narrow escape.

We traveled very slowly until we reached the Sweet Water. Here there was a terrible storm. The captain got on his horse and scouted around to see if he could find a place of safety. It was snowing and the wind was blowing a terrific gale and we would have perished out in the open. The Captain found shelter down at the bottom of a hollow. We camped here for several days, until the storm abated. I was very brave and wanted to go out and explore this new camping ground. I had not gone far when I saw a large ox grazing a little way from where we were. I ran and told my father, and he and some of the other men went and brought it into the camp and killed it for the company. The finding of this ox, I thought was wonderful, and very providential, as we were almost starving.:

In leaving this camp, the company had not gone far when they met Patriarch John Smith and Brother John P. Green who were going on missions and were traveling with mule teams. Grandfather went to them for council and told them of his circumstances. Brother Smith blessed him and gave him ten dollars, and Brother Green gave him five dollars. Brother Smith told grandfather to leave the company and go on as fast as possible for it was getting cold, and they were short of food. They were out of the worst part of the Indian country by this time, so there was not so much danger for them. Brother Smith also said to go through Weber Canyon into Ogden and stay there until he earned some food and then go on to Cache Valley and take up land there.

This was a new place just being settled and seemed to be a good place. Grandfather bought fifty pounds of flour at Fort Laramie, it cost him ten dollars. He also bought a little meat. Mother says, "We started out on our journey alone and had a very hard time of it. Our food gave out and we had nothing but milk and wild rose berries to eat. However, we had a good team and could travel fast. We arrived in Ogden on Oct. 4, 1859, after a journey of hardship and hunger, but with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for His protecting care."

They camped on the outskirts of town and grandfather went into Ogden to find work. Across the field from where they camped was a little house and out in the yard was a big pile of squash. The children were hungry and grandmother sent my mother over to this place to ask for a squash for some of the children were very weak for want of food and there was not a cent of money to pay for it. Margaret knocked at the door and a sweet old lady said: "Come in, come in. I knew you were coming and have been told to give you food." She gave mother a large loaf of fresh bread and said to tell her mother that she would come over soon. It was not long until she went over and took them a nice cooked dinner, something they had not had for a long time, and they

were very grateful to this kind woman. And to the Lord for inspiring her to find them.

When grandfather returned he told them that she had found a man whom he had known in Scotland. This man took them all to his home where they stayed until they started for Cache Valley. Grandmother took the smaller children and went and husked corn, mother herded cattle, and grandfather and the older boys worked on the threshing machine. In this way they were able to collect some food and as they were anxious to get settled they soon left for their new home.

This was on October 20. They had not gone far when they were overtaken by Henry Ballard, who had been to Salt Lake to conference and was returning home to Logan. Grandfather was pleased to meet someone who could tell him about the new place and perhaps help him get settled. A friendship was here begun which lasted as long as life lasted, for Henry Ballard became my father. Of this meeting my mother says, "This was my first meeting with my husband. At that time I was a bare-footed, sunburned little girl, driving my cow along the dusty country road, but it was made known to my mother and to my husband at that time, that I would someday be his wife." He also married Emily as his plural wife.

When they got to the Logan river, the water was so high that it lifted the box right off the wheels and they had a hard time to get across. They arrived in Logan, Oct. 21, 1859, after dark and the next morning they were assigned the last place in the fort, which was what is now the corner of Third West and Center Street, facing the south. Here they took the box off the wagon and were very happy to feel that they had at last found a resting place.

It was three and a half years now since they left their home and they had settled in three different places. Two of them in the wilds. Grandmother had given birth to two children and buried one at St. Louis. What a journey!

Grandfather went right to work, putting up hay for the cattle and then went to the Canyon and hauled logs to make a house. They had no lumber nor glass, so for the doors and windows he wove willows together and plastered them with clay. He used bulrushes and willows for the roof with dirt on top and dirt for the floor. Mother said that they were very comfortable.

Grandfather and the boys worked in the canyon all winter getting out logs which he exchanged for bran or bacon or anything he could get that is little ones could eat.

The next spring, they moved their belongings to a lot on Fifth West between Third and Fourth North. This was their permanent home and they remained there the rest of

their lives. They built a two room adobe house, later adding three more rooms to it. They did all the things that the other pioneers did to build up a new place, and grandmother worked hard to keep her family covered and fed. She spun, dyed and wove their clothes and raised chickens, pigs and sheep. They also had one of the best truck gardens in the city and many a dollar she made from the sale of vegetables as well as from butter and eggs.

Grandfather was known as a fluent talker and at one time in the early days of Logan, a man was asked to speak in meeting. He was rather a retiring man and did not like public speaking, so he said that Brother McNeil had a load of logs that he wanted and as Brother McNeil was a good talker, but poor, he would buy the logs if Brother McNeil would do the talking for him. It was arranged and the deal was made.

In 1878, Grandfather took Lucy Cook, a widow, as his plural wife. He was arrested for this during the time of the raid on those who had more than one wife, and was found guilty and sentenced to six months in the State prison and fined \$100.00. The war had a party for him before he left and the Relief Society sisters dedicated the following poem to him:

TO ELDER THOMAS McNEIL

Brother Thomas. We thy friends have come.  
To greet you here tonight;  
With love for all that you have done  
In giving us true light.

Your worthy head has hoary grown  
In working for the right;  
But still you feel to labor on  
And never give up the fight.

Though persecutions hand may rest  
Upon you for awhile;  
Faint not; but bravely pass the test  
And receive a Savior's smile.

May angels from the realms of bliss  
Bring solace to your heart;  
And make you feel the happiness  
That only Gods impart.

May you be blessed with health and strength  
Though in a dungeon thrown  
To emerge from prison walls at length  
And wear a righteous crown.

He entered the penitentiary on Jan. 3, 1887. This was in the old prison and it was so crowded and dirty that they were subjected to very uncomfortable things to say the least. He was shaved and as he had worn a beard for years, he took a heavy cold and was very sick. He recovered, but was never as well and strong again. He was released on July 7, 1887, and returned home again.

He was ordained a High Priest, Jan. 2, 1862 and was set apart as first counselor to Bishop Robert Davidson of the Third Ward of Logan, on May 31, 1877 and held that position until the time of his death. He was loved and honored by all the people of the ward.

On May 17, 1884, the Logan Temple was dedicated and ordinance work was begun at once. Grandfather was called as one of the first officiators and continued in this work as long as he lived. I remember seeing him pass our home every day and he often called to see us when he was on his way home. He enjoyed his work very much and was faithful to his duty, in all kinds of weather.

In February, 1891, there was a great deal of sickness and he was around among the sick, helping and administering to them and he took the flu-pneumonia. He only lived three days after he took the disease. He died on the 9th of Feb. 1891 and his funeral was held in the Logan Tabernacle and there was a large crowd gathered to pay their last respects to their friend and brother.

On his death my mother said, "This was a great sorrow to me for I loved my father very dearly and felt his loss keenly. His faith and power of healing, through the spirit of God, were very wonderful. I relied upon him in trials and sorrows and sickness and felt that I had truly lost a good friend and a loving father. His life had always been an inspiration to me and a guiding star."

For the next year or so grandmother lived alone in the old home and kept her garden and tended her chickens. Then her health began to fail and she spent the winters at mother's home and also at Aunt Janet's and in summers she went back home to the home she had lived in so long and helped to create. Grandmother's health broke and she had to give up her home and move to Janet's where she was confined to her bed for over two years. She died, Dec. 6, 1900.

During all this time, she was patient, kind and very appreciative of all that was done for her. She was very neat and clean in all her life and she kept herself that way as long as she could. After she was bedfast, mother and Aunt Janet kept her clean and sweet as she had loved to be always.

Her funeral was held on Dec. 9, 1900 in the Logan Tabernacle and there was a large crowd gathered. She had requested her son, James R. McNeil, and my brother Melvin J. Ballard to speak at her funeral, which they did. She was a faithful Latter-day saint and set a good example for her children to follow.

I heard Brother Hugh Adams say while gazing upon her dead face, "She was a good woman and knew the Gospel, and she lived true to the principles she believed and taught." In speaking to a lady, who was once a neighbor of grandmothers, about this little story she said, "Oh, don't forget to say that she never talked scandal about anyone. I often remember her coming to visit my mother and they would begin talking about neighbors. Your grandmother would always say, 'Well, let's not say anything bad about them, if we can't speak good of them lets not talk at all'. She never used vulgar language either". She acted as a viting teacher in Relief Society and later acted as a counselor in the Third Ward Relief Society.

Grandfather was the only one of his family to accept the Gospel, but he had several cousins and one dear friend who was like a brother to him, who accepted it. This friend was Robert Henderson. They were together as boys, working in the coal mines, and as young men joined the church about the same time. They came to Logan the same year. Here their friendship was closer than ever for now they were alone. They worked in the Temple together and were in the penitentiary, for living polygamy, at the same time.

No family party at Christmas or at other times was complete without the Hendersons being guests, and they loved each other dearly. When grandfather died, I remember seeing Brother Henderson caress his face and kissing him goodbye. He said, "In life we were not divided and in eath we will not be long separated." Which was true for Brother Henderson died in a few months.

Grandfather was a coal miner by trade but a blacksmith and machinist by inclination and after he got settled in Logan he built a shop or "smithie" as he called it, which had a real old fashioned forge and bellows. Here he did all the mending and repairing of machinery, also shoeing of horses for all the neighborhood. This was done mornings and evenings and between times of farming. I remember how we grandchildren delighted to visit that "smithie" and what a thrill we had when we found the forge going. Sometimes he would let us pump the bellows or draw the red hot iron from the fire. How we loved to see the sparks fly when he struck the hot iron, and we never ceased to wonder how he could bend and beat it into shape.

Sometimes when he was not at home, we delighted to rummage in his things and I suppose we would upset things in general. When he came back and found things disturbed, he would say to grandmother, "I see the rebels have been here today". He was always kind to us though and we were never afraid of him, but loved him dearly and were always happy to be with him. He was a fluent talker and a good musician as he was the drummer in the Latter-day Saints Band in Tranent and could also play the Bagpipe. He had a good singing voice and was a good story teller. How we loved to have him do both for us. Grandfather was blessed to a large degree with the gift of healing and through the exercise of that gift, we were often blessed and comforted and helped through difficult places. We children felt that we were safe as long as grandfather was with us, and whenever he made us a promise in his blessings, it was fulfilled to the very letter.

Sometimes he has said that he was almost frightened at the things he was led to say and would wonder about it, but he would say, "I didn't say it, the Lord did and it will be so", and it always was.

A few years ago, I met a Brother Thomas Smith who knew grandfather, while he was in Scotland and he said this of him, "Thomas McNeil was no scholar, but he knew the Gospel and could teach it and lived it too. He was an honest man and no one of his descendants have anything to be ashamed of in coming through him."

I hope I have not made grandfather and grandmother seem too perfect, for they were not and I suppose they had as many faults as the average human family, but those have faded from my memory and I have tried to picture them as I remember them, for these are the things that have left their impression upon me and made me proud and thankful for such noble ancestors.

My nephew, Henry Squires, spent about a month in Scotland, and he has helped me with the history of the different clans.

I have found some very interesting things and a few of them are these: The Clan McNeil originated in the 14th century on the Barra Isles and that in the year 1715 three cousins of that Clan joined the armies of Prince Charles and came over to the main land. After the war was over these cousins decided to remain in the old mining village of Elphingston in Hollingtonshire. They went into the mines there and worked and became the founders of our line.

Forty years after that, we find our first ancestor of record, George McNeil, marrying and living in Elphingston, so I am sure he was a descendant of one of these cousins.

In speaking about the Castle Kismal on the Isle of Barra, one historian says. "There is an air of Highland independence about it's site and life, as though the McNeils, whose ancient stronghold it was, had built into it their own proud spirit. It serves to underline for visitors the humor in the legend of the clans refusal of Noah's hospitality in the ark with the statement, "Na, I winna be thanking ye. Sure the McNeil has a boat c' his ain". The clan war cry is "Victory or Death". They are credited with being a race of bards, they were the hereditary harpers and pipers to the clan Macleans of Duart.

They are also known to be artists, writers, poets, and singers. The war cry of the clan Grant is "Stand fast, stand firm, stand sure." The Allans have "Gainsay who dare". The Reids say "Fierce when roused" and the Martins have "Sons of the hounds come here and get flesh".



LOGAN, CACHE COUNTY, UTAH, ON DECEMBER 8, 1884, A BLESSING GIVEN BY JOHN SMITH, PATRIARCH, UPON THE HEAD OF JANET REID MC NEIL, DAUGHTER OF PETER AND MARGARET REID, BORN IN TRANENT, WEDINGTONSHIRE, SCOTLAND, AUGUST 2, 1823.

Sister Janet, according to thy desire I place my hands upon thy head and in the name of Jesus Christ, pronounce and seal a blessing upon thee that thy heart may be comforted. Thou art of the House of Israel and have yielded obedience to the gospel with an honest heart.

Thou hast forsaken home, kindred and friends and also hast stemmed the current of opposition for the sake of salvation, and I say unto thee, continue firm, put thy trust in him who has preserved thy life in the past and delivered thee from among thy enemies and he will reward thee for the trials through which thou hast past, for thou knowest that he has heard thy petitions and has preserved thee from the evils of the world for thou hast seen his hand made bare in behalf of his people.

Thou has also seen changes for thy pathway has been a checkered one. Listen to the promptings of the monitor within thee and thy pathway shall be made clear and peace shall be thy circle.

Thou art numbered with the Mothers of Israel. It is thy privelege through prayer and faith to hold the adversary, thy health and peace may reign in thy dwelling for the Lord knoweth the secrets of thy heart and thou shalt see better days.

Thou art of Ephraim and entitled to the blessings, gifts and privileges of the new and everlasting covenant. And thou shalt receive thine inheritance among those who have fought the good fight, kept the faith and won the prize.

Learn and listen to the whisperings of the spirit and thy days and years shall be prolonged until you are satisfied, yea, even until thy mission is finished, therefore be comforted for all shall be well with both here and hereafter. It shall be thy lot also to counsel among thy sex, that the younger may receive benefits through thy experience.

This blessing I seal upon thee in the name of Jesus Christ and I seal thee up unto eternal life to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, a saviour among thy kindred, evenso, Amen.