

## JAMES NATHANIEL DUTSON

*Author: Carol Curtis Green, Granddaughter*

James Nathaniel Dutson, my grandfather, was born in Fillmore, Millard, Utah on Friday May 9, 1869, son of John William Dutson and Caroline Geneva Jenkins Dutson. This birth date entitled him to be called a “native pioneer”. If he had been born just two days later, he would not have been considered for this honor. He was blessed by his father, John William Dutson. The records containing his blessing were burned in Fillmore. However, his sister, Florence Nielson, remembered the incident very vividly. She said that when they called for the babies to be blessed, a Mr. Ashman (a good friend of the Dutson’s) came and took him up to bless him; but he blessed the Lord instead. So his father blessed him.

His father was born 28 September 1828 at Aylestone Hill, Herfordshire, England, a boy of twelve when he was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His mother, Ann Green Dutson, belonged to the United Brethren Church and was baptized by Wilford Woodruff. She was left a widow with a small daughter, Jane Ann, to take care of. John William was born eight months after the death of his father, so he never knew him.

The family emigrated to St. Louis, Nauvoo, and to Utah, settling in Fillmore, Millard, Utah. His father was very staunch in the LDS faith and kept a journal, which has been very helpful with our family genealogy. My grandfather James Nathaniel was one of twenty-two children. His father John William had three wives in polygamy.

His mother, Caroline Geneva Jenkins, was born 30 June 1835 in London, Essex, England. She was single when she and her family emigrated. After they were in Fillmore, she was hired to help John William and his wife, Elizabeth Cowley, with their small children. Elizabeth loved Caroline and suggested to her husband that he take her as his second wife, which he did. James Nathaniel, known as “Jim”, was two years old when his father was called to go to Oak Creek (later called Oak City) to settle in 1871. His father was very talented in music and was called to form and direct a youth choir and to teach music. He also had a beautiful tenor voice and played the violin. His mother also had a beautiful soprano voice and she and his father often sang duets.

Jim spent his boyhood days in Oak City. His father had built three homes on a block, one for each of his three wives. The children considered all three their homes. Caroline’s home was on the north end of the block. Jim didn’t have much schooling, going to about the fourth grade. However, he was an excellent speller, winning many spelling matches for which he once received an arithmetic book as a prize. His penmanship was also superior. He herded sheep some when younger.

When he was twenty-three years old, he married my grandmother, Susannah Lovell, who was eighteen. She was also from Oak Creek. Jim and his half-brother, Richard, made the trip to the Manti Temple together with their fiancées in a covered wagon. One night while camped and sitting around the fire, the boys played “Home Sweet Home” on their harmonicas, which made the girls so homesick they broke down and cried.

Jim and Susie had eleven children: Alonzo Edmund and Amelia Elzina (twins) born 30 July 1893. Alonzo was named after Alonzo A. Hinckley, a friend of the Dutsons and president of Deseret Stake, to which they belonged; Benjamin Jay born 11 February 1896; Eva May born 31 December 1897; Varley Nathaniel born 16 May 1900; Lorin Fay born 2 October 1902; Nora Geneva born 8 July 1904; Martha Eleanor (my mother) born 21 November 1906; Susie Arzella

born 26 September 1908; Ormus Lloyd, born 26 August 1910; and Caroline Meada born 25 July 1916.

Jim always had a ready smile and a twinkle in his gray eyes. He was 5'8" tall and weighed about 150 lbs. He had dark hair which eventually turned gray.

My grandfather was a quiet, gentle person with a wonderful personality that drew people to him. He was stalwart in the gospel and has always been a source of inspiration to me.

His mother and father passed on their talents to their children, especially to James Nathaniel, who sang, played the accordion and harmonica, and also entertained with his recitations, having his audiences laughing or crying at will. He was a popular square dance caller and chorded on the piano. In addition he was a dancer and delighted his children and grandchildren with an Irish jig.

Because Jim was outstanding in dramatics, he was very much in demand. His children were always proud of him when they attended the plays in which he took part. Jim was very talented and was part of a group called "the Cockle Burr Click Club". This was a group that put on three-act plays and took them from town-to-town in Millard County in 1911. Among grandpa's belongings my mother found some notations on how much money they made doing this, which was not very much. Susie helped him learn his parts and was his prompter. Jim was always called upon to give dialect readings. Here is one of his recitations:

I'm a broken-hearted Deutcher,  
Vots villed mit crief and shame,  
I dells you vot der drouble ish—  
I doesn't know my name.

You dinks it ferry funny, eh?  
Ven you der story hear,  
You vill not vonder den so mooch,  
It was so schtrange und queer.

Mein mudder had dwo liddle dwins,  
Dey vas me and mein brudder.  
Ve look so much alike  
No von knew vich from toder.

Von of der boys was Yawcup,  
Und Hans der udder name;  
But din't made no different,  
Ve both got called der same.

Vell von of us got tead—  
Yaw, Meinheer, dat is so;  
But vedder Hans or Yawcup,  
Mein modder she don't know.

Und so I am in drouble,  
I gan't get droo mein hed

Vedder I'm Hans vot's living  
Or yawcup vot is tead.

He and Susie also sang duets. He had a good singing voice and sang in the choir wherever he lived, as did Susie. He entertained his children by singing to them. My mother (Eleanor) said her father and mother would sing to them at nights after they were all in bed. In fact, three of the daughters, Eleanor, May and Nora made a tape of the three of them singing "Songs our father and mother sang to us." Everyone's favorite was "The Kicking Mule". He used to sing it to us grandkids and we loved it.

They lived in Oak City for awhile where their first three children were born, the twins Alonzo and Elzina and Ben. Then they moved to Leamington, Millard County, where Jim was one of the first settlers, going there in 1896. They had seven children born to them in Leamington; May, Varley, Lorin, Nora, Eleanor (my mother), Arzella and Ormus.

While in Leamington, Jim worked on the Union Pacific Railroad on the section crew. He worked long hours, going to work and returning while it was yet dark. For a long time he received wages of \$1.00 a day. They lived close to the Sevier River and the train ran in front of their house.

In about 1902 Jim quit the railroad and went to work for the Samuel McIntyre Ranch, earning \$1.50 a day. At the age of nine, Lon went to work with his father on the Ranch. His small pay went to help the family. McIntyres had thousands of acres of land plus thousands of head of Black Angus cattle. When Ben was 13, he also worked on the Ranch. They hired quite a few men.

Deer hunting was Jim's favorite sport. Once while deer hunting, he climbed onto a ledge and was looking around when a stray bullet grazed his forehead, shooting a hole through his hat. A red streak marked his forehead for a day or so, but he was very thankful that he wasn't seriously hurt.

Jim was set apart as assistant choir leader in the Leamington Ward by Bishop Rodney Ashby on May 6, 1900. He was set apart as an acting ward teacher on February 4, 1908 by August Nielson, first counselor to the Bishop.

In Leamington the Dutsons lived in a two-room log house on a five acre lot. The rooms were large and very comfortable. The floors were covered with rag-rug carpeting from wall-to-wall with straw underneath. They lived close to the Sevier River and the children spent many hours playing on its banks.

A home evening once each week was the custom in the home. These were greatly enjoyed by the family. There was lots of talent in the family. Some gave readings and some sang. A chapter from the Book of Mormon was then read and discussed. One gave a scripture reading and the meeting was finished with games and refreshments. The family was large, so it was just a nice party. Family prayer morning and night was a daily practice.

Jim owned part interest in a sorghum or molasses mill, so the family used lots of molasses, and they had frequent candy pulls. Sugar cane was raised from which the juice was extracted, boiled down in large vats over a fire, and cooked down to a thick syrup which made the molasses. This was a very interesting process to watch.

When the Leamington chapel was being constructed Jim worked on the building. He was assigned to the roof. One day as he and his son Ben were shingling, Ben fell from the roof and began to fall through the rafters toward the floor. He managed to catch onto a 2x4 on the eaves which broke his fall and saved him from serious injury.

Jim always had horses, one or two cows, a few head of sheep, and a hog or two for butchering, which supplied the family with much of the living necessities. One big, red cow with a white face and a red heart-shaped spot on the face was named "Heart". One day Elzina saw old Heart out by the clothesline eating something white. The lines were full of clothes so she ran out to see what Heart was eating. To her distress, she found out it was Nora's white embroidered Sunday dress. Elzina pulled and pulled and finally took it away from her, but the dress was in shreds.

Jim had a beautiful bay mare of which he thought a great deal. One day a fellow came who wanted to buy her, but Jim couldn't part with her. He turned down an offer of \$150.00. A few mornings later he went out to do his chores and found her dead. The whole family was saddened over this loss.

About 1911 the family moved to Parley, five miles east of Leamington where Jim became section foreman for the railroad. Elzina and May lived in Leamington during the school season to care for the children and keep them in school. Early one morning, May, Elzina, and Nora were alone in the house when a thunderstorm arose. A bolt of lightning came down the chimney in the bedroom and went out the corner, setting fire to the things in the corner which consisted of a trunk with quilts on it, also May and Elzina's new dresses folded with their new hats. Of course, they were ruined. The room was full of smoke and sparks. When May and Elzina came to see what had happened, they found Nora crying and she said, "Let's take the dishes and go over to Mrs. Nielson's". She was their nearest neighbor. Nora always was concerned over the pretty dishes of her mother, many which were wedding presents.

In Parley the Dutsons lived in a square, four-room cement block house with a porch across the front. A nearby house accommodated the other men who worked on the railroad. There were a number of Mexicans as well as a few white men. On payday there was quite a bit of excitement so Susie stayed in the house while Jim distributed wages. Susie's fear was needless—nothing out of the way ever happened.

One evening Jim and the crew were called out on a wreck east of Parley toward Nephi. The wrecker train stopped to get the men. It traveled very slowly with some of the men walking at the side. They had gone only a short distance when Jim had a very peculiar feeling. So he sent Ben back home. When Ben arrived, he found a tramp in the kitchen and Susie fixing him something to eat. Susie was very relieved and thankful to see her son. They had quite a bit of trouble with these fellows who often sneaked rides on the trains. Of course, after the trains pulled out the Dutsons found themselves with unexpected company. The tramps were always fed and treated kindly. However, Jim insisted Susie keep a gun with her all the time. If the occasion had arisen she probably never could have used it, being very tender-hearted. The wrecker brought the train through Parley the next day and it was quite a sight. Some of the cars were badly damaged. One of these cars carried building materials for Uncle Ben Lovell's new home in Leamington.

Rattlesnakes were everywhere. One day a big one was found underneath a couch on the porch where people had been sitting just a short while before.

One day Jim found a tarantula while returning from work. He brought it home and put it into a two-quart fruit jar; it covered the bottom. One day when a train stopped, Jim showed it to some of the men and one man wanted it. The last the folks saw of him he was walking along the top of the train with his fingers in the top of the bottle.

Water for the household was hauled in by train tank cars and emptied into a cistern. There was lots of excitement when the train came with the water. Susie gave the train men some

treat such as pie or cookies, which was always appreciated. Susie was a good cook and when a canal construction gang was camped in Parley, Susie was asked to cook for some of the men, which she did. They ate in the home and two of them became great favorites of the children, Dick Smith and Harold Coach.

The children loved to play on the sandhills behind their home, and also by the Sevier River.

When they lived in Parley the family used the section "handcar" to go back and forth to church in Leamington. This handcar was a platform on wheels, and it had a belt in the middle that worked on cogs. On each side of the platform was a handle. When one went down, the other came up, and this kept the car moving. Of course, Jim and the boys knew when the trains were due, and they'd drag the car off to one of the sidings until the train thundered by. Then they dragged the car back on the tracks and proceeded on to Leamington. In this way the family traveled winter or summer on the handcart to church or socials at the amusement hall, where the boys also went to play ball.

Jim, Lon and Ben spent their evenings making neckerchief rings out of animal bones which were polished and carved. When finished they were very attractive.

Jim quit the railroad and went back to work for the McIntyre Ranch.

In June, 1912, at the early age of 19 Lon left for his mission to the Southern States. The family missed him greatly, but was happy he could fulfill a mission. The family had a victrola phonograph and some beautiful records which the children liked to play. Among them was the record, "Oh, Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" The children played it, not realizing how it made their parents feel. Susie sat with tears running down her face. They were so proud and happy to receive Lon's letters. He enjoyed his mission immensely and was an excellent missionary.

While Lon was still on his mission, the Dutsons sold their home in Leamington to Dell Bradfield and bought a farm in Park Valley in April 1914. A friend of Jim's had visited him and brought some dry wheat from Park Valley to show him. Jim thought it looked promising so decided to move the family there. The family caught the train in Lynndyl. They shipped their belongings by train. Jim and the older boys stayed with the livestock in a freight car. Susie and the girls stayed overnight in a hotel in Brigham City. The girls caught the train from Brigham City to Kelton and then went by team and wagon to Park Valley. There were Russian settlers on the train going to colonize a section of Park Valley.

Unscrupulous land developers had painted a rosy picture of the area, which changed to gray once the settlers arrived and saw the difficulties which faced them. The land was far too dry for dry farming and there was not sufficient water for irrigation. Fighting with the land was back breaking and unrewarding.

Jim and the boys cleared sage brush from the land in the day and piled them in large piles; then at night they would set them on fire.

The family lived in a tent and sheep wagon until Jim and the boys could build a house. One night the older members of the family had gone to attend a wedding, when a strong wind came up, breaking the ridgepole of the tent. At one end of the tent stood the high cupboard full of dishes. It was swaying with the wind. Lorin and Nora lowered the cupboard face down onto the ground. The next day when the cupboard was raised, not one dish was broken.

It was not long until the Dutsons had their new house finished. It was made of lumber and had two large rooms. These were wonderful after living in a tent.

On the afternoon of July 25, 1916, Susie gave birth to Caroline Meada who lived only 18 days when she passed away with spinal bifida. Jim and Susie held the little coffin on their laps on the way to the Park Valley cemetery where she was buried. This was the first tragedy to strike the family.

While in Park Valley, Jim was set apart as second counselor to Bishop David Hirschi of the Park Valley Ward on August 6, 1916.

When Jim Dutson was called as second counselor in the bishopric in the Park Valley Ward, Susie was not at all well. Bishop Hirschi took Jim and Susie to Brigham City. From there they went to Ogden to the Dee Hospital, where Susie underwent three operations. One of these was a mastectomy. Donations were raised among ward members to help pay for the surgery. Jim worked for David Hirschi and at the Jones' Ranch. He and the boys contracted the harvesting of hay on the Jones' Ranch. The Dutsons had quite a hard time the first winter in Park Valley due to the fact that they weren't able to store much food and can fruit for the winter. Supplies were so exhausted that for three days their only food was potatoes. Jim told the children that they were celebrating his birthday, thus making a joke of it to ease the situation. Finally Lon arrived home from his mission—a great day! Some very good friends (Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Larrabee, an elderly couple,) became very fond of Lon and wanted him to stay with them. So he lived with them and helped them in every way he could. They claimed him as their boy and dearly loved him.

Lon became acquainted with Iona James and they were later married and went to Kimberly, Idaho to live.

Later Jim and Ben went to Idaho to look for employment. They got road work with the horses. When this work was finished, Jim and Lon went into the transfer dray service, but they didn't do too well, so each found other employment.

In June 1917, the family moved to Kimberly, Idaho. They first moved into a home across the street from Lon and Iona. They rented for sometime then bought a home. This was a beautiful white house with green trimmings. It had three bedrooms, living room, dining room, and kitchen with modern cabinets. It also had a front and back porch and an unfinished basement. Jim traded a beautiful gray team of horses as the down payment for this home.

Jim went to work on a farm for a Mr. Straughn. Then he returned to railroad work. While still working there, Jim had a very severe sick spell. At first it was thought he had typhoid fever, but later it was decided he had the summer flu. For sometime he was too ill to do any work. The children stayed out of the home as much as possible, because any little movement or noise was hard on him. Jim was always healthy and could work hard, so it was extremely hard on him to be confined. The children all helped with the finances.

In 1922 James N. Dutson was set apart as a member of the stake board of the Twin Falls Stake Genealogical Committee and was also a ward teacher. Because of his illness, he was released as a Sunday School teacher in the Second Intermediate class of boys twelve and thirteen years of age.

While he was recuperating, Jim and Susie decided to take a trip to Utah to visit their relatives. His health improved markedly in Millard County. So they decided to sell out in Kimberly and move to Utah, which they did. Lon, Iona and their three girls moved with them. They put the furniture in a hayrack wagon. A small hayrack black-topped buggy followed the big white-topped buggy containing the bedding and children. The children took turns driving a few head of cows and calves. They were typical pioneers.

On the morning of August 10, 1922, the family left Kimberly. The first night out they approached Milner Dam where two large canals were taken from the Snake River bridge. In the dusk it was difficult to see, and the children had taken the cows onto the bridge, with the wagons following close behind. It was discovered that a car was stalled at the other end of the bridge, and the men went ahead to give what assistance they could. Finally the car was moved back off the bridge. The bridge swayed constantly with the movements of the animals. It was indeed a queer sensation. But they finally got across and soon camped for the night between a large canal and the Snake River. Susie didn't sleep much that night. She was afraid one of the children would sleepwalk and drown in the river. Ormus had walked in his sleep a few times. But all was well. The next morning the Dutsons found to their horror that the bridge had been condemned. So there were prayers sent heavenward for the protection they had received. Travel in this manner was very slow. It took five long weeks to make the trip from Kimberly to Oak City.

When they finally arrived in Oak City they were heartily welcomed. Relatives feared that they had met with trouble. There were letters awaiting them. Also their recommends had been forwarded. There was a letter from Ben (who had stayed in Twin Falls) telling of the arrival of Dorothy Jean who was born September 15. He had married his wife Edna May Danner in 1920. They visited a few days in Oak City. Then Lon and Ione went to Leamington to live where Lon worked for the railroad. Jim and family went to Hinckley.

The first year in Hinckley Jim wasn't able to work much, but his health improved. As soon as he was able he went to work on a beet dump and did what additional work he could find. They rented a home for awhile, then bought a lot of about one and a quarter acres and moved a three-room house on it. Susie was not to enjoy it long. A year or so later she passed away, November 17, 1927.

Susie had not been well much of the time. When they came to Hinckley for Jim's health, the climate didn't agree with her and her toxic goiter grew worse. She had made up her mind to have it removed, but she passed away before it could be done.

Susie washed out a few clothes, hung them on the line, and then laid down to rest. Later in the early evening, Nora came over to visit and found that she had passed away in her sleep at the age of fifty-three. The doctor said he was not surprised because of the condition of her goiter which caused a strangulation.

Their oldest son Lon had died the preceding July as a result of an accident. He was on an outing with friends at the Sevier River. He dived from the Sevier River bridge and broke his neck, leaving his wife Iona and three small girls. He was thirty-four years old.

The first winter after Susie's death, Jim and his son-in-law Elmer Wright (Nora's husband) spent in the hills trapping and cutting posts. Then Jim again went to work for McIntyre's Ranch at Leamington. He lived with his brother-in-law, Ben Lovell. One night it was very dark as he was returning from work. He couldn't see very well and came too close to a skunk. So he had to change his clothes and bury them, since there was no other way of getting rid of the bad odor.

Later he returned to Hinckley and Elzina kept house for him. About this time Jim was becoming greatly interested in Temple work and went on Temple excursions at every opportunity. On July 17, 1935, Nora and Elzina went to the Manti Temple where Elzina received her endowments.

On May 12, 1936, Elzina passed away following a three-week illness of influenza and complications. She was forty-two years old and had never married. But once again Jim's home

was broken up. The winter of 1936 and 1937 he helped Elmer and Nora with their sheep. Later in 1937 he accepted a mission call to the Manti Temple. He rented a room in Manti with a Brother Gardner and only came to Hinckley on temple vacations. By now Ormus, the youngest of the family, was serving in the bishopric of the Deseret Ward. After serving as a counselor for three years he became bishop, a position which he held for some ten years. This made his father very proud of him. (Later Ormus became President of the Deseret Stake, which included all of the area in West Millard County.)

Early in 1944, Jim suffered a stroke. May was called and she took him to her home in Hinckley. This stroke left his right side partially paralyzed. He made his home with May until he was improved sufficiently to get around with a cane. Then he returned to the temple, but only for a short time when he had another stroke. This time Arzella was called at Richfield. He was very bad for awhile and called the children to his bedside. An invalid the rest of his life, he stayed with Arzella for several months. Then May took him to her home in Salt Lake where they had just moved. She took care of him for a long time. Then Ben took him for a short while. About two weeks before his death, he was taken to Nora's, where he had his third stroke and passed away in Tooele. He was so patient in spite of his suffering. He passed away on the morning of January 14, 1947. Nearly all of his children were at his bedside. He was buried in Oak City beside his wife Susie.

During his life he made many wonderful friends. President Louis Anderson of the Manti Temple said of him while he was still living: "No better man lives on the earth than Jim Dutson."

#### SOURCES:

- 1) History of James Nathaniel Dutson, by his daughter, Nora Dutson Wright.
- 2) Life Story of Eleanor Dutson Curtis, daughter
- 3) My Family Heritage, by granddaughters, Dora Dutson Flack & Virginia Dutson Addams
- 4) Personal Memories of Carol Curtis Green of her grandfather