



DAVID W. CROWTHER 1846-1918

David W. Crowther was born 21 February 1846 at Clough Mill in Soyland, a small village located a few miles southwest of Halifax in Yorkshire, England. It is farming country with beautiful rolling hills, and formerly was a region with many cotton, woolen, and silk mills. According to David's birth certificate, his father, Eli Crowther, was a cotton twister. Eli and David's mother, Hannah Howe, had one other child, Martha, who was sixteen months older than David.

By the time David was two and a half years old, the family had moved to Manchester, Lancashire, England, where, on 13 September 1848, Eli was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subsequently, Hannah and Martha were also baptized. Conflicting records indicate that Eli either immigrated to the United States where he died a victim of foul play, or he died of tuberculosis sometime during the next decade. Hannah and David were registered to sail to New York in 1860, but did not leave. Instead, Hannah married James Jardine, a widower with five children. A month after their marriage, David was baptized a member of the LDS Church by his stepfather. The following year, James and Hannah had a daughter, who was named Hannah after her mother. David was then fifteen.

Few details are known about David's childhood, except that he was apprenticed to a machinist who made weaving looms and sewing machines in a factory in Manchester. In later years, David often talked about his apprenticeship.

Soon after he turned eighteen years old, David offered his services to LDS church officials who were making arrangements for converts to emigrate. The church hired him to work as a sailor on *The Monarch of the Sea*, which sailed from Liverpool on 28 April 1864, with 974 members on board. The *Monarch* belonged to the Washington Line. It was the largest ship used by the church, and during the April 1864 crossing and one earlier voyage, it carried the two largest companies of Saints to sail from England to the United States. One passenger recorded that the *Monarch* was large, roomy, new and clean, and an excellent vessel. With three decks, a round stern and billet head, it was an exceptionally fast clipper ship. Although the 1864 voyage was quite pleasant, the death toll was unusually high, forty one passengers died. Elder John Smith, Patriarch of the Church, was in charge of the emigrants. Parley P. Pratt, Jr., John D. Chase, and Johan Johansen were his counselors. They were at sea for thirty six days before arriving in New York on 3 June 1864.

The voyage was not as pleasant for the sailors. For David and Richard Brown, another LDS youth also employed as a sailor, the trip was dangerous and demanding. Richard, who later settled in Harrisville, wrote that for one week he was very sick. He received "such treatment as sailors usually did, which, particularly during the early days of the trip, was very cruel."

As part of his duties, David had to climb the masts and rigging, setting the sails to take best advantage of the wind. David often thought he would be blown into the sea as he clung to ropes high above the deck while being buffeted by stiff winds. He had grim evidence of what his fate would be should he fall because one night another sailor fell into the sea. Lost in the dark among the high, rolling waves, no attempt was made to rescue him. In later years, David's children had a favorite song that he sang to them as they gathered around his knees. The lyrics told of a sailor who died at sea, was wrapped in a sheet of canvas, and thrown overboard.

After arriving in New York City, David traveled in company with the LDS Saints across country until they were able to take a steamboat up the Missouri River. They made good progress until the boat struck a sand bank, delaying their passage. Once the boat was freed, they were able to continue on to Wyoming, Nebraska. At an organizational meeting in Nebraska, David and Richard were hired to drive a team of oxen across the plains. The company was not scheduled to leave for several weeks, which gave David time to learn how to handle a team. In the dry, hot weather of the plains, however, David suffered a severe sun stroke that made it impossible for him to journey to Salt Lake with the company. A family by the name of Wells cared for David and nursed him back to health. It was a kindness that David never forgot. He often expressed his gratitude for how well the family treated him during his illness.

As soon as he was fit enough to travel, David joined the Joseph S. Rawlins Company, which had 400 people and 63 wagons. They left Nebraska on 15 July 1864. Although it was not a handcart company, David had no wagon, so he pulled a handcart from Nebraska to Utah. The company endured many hardships, and had to be constantly on their guard against hostile Indians. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on 20 September 1864, where the *Deseret News* published a roster of their company and reported that all were well.

The company that David had originally planned to travel with did not fare as well. Richard Brown had hired on for twenty dollars a month with a man who had six teams. After a month the wagon train split up due to strife among the participants. The man who hired Richard turned back. Richard refused to go back with him, but the other company members continued to quarrel, and eventually each went their own way. Richard left on his own and walked 40 to 50 miles before he found refuge at an isolated ranch. He was invited to stay and work at the ranch, which he did until miraculously reunited with his family who were traveling with the Rawlins Company, along with David.

After a brief stay in Salt Lake City, David moved to Ogden where the Brown family had settled. He lived with George Lake and worked for a Mr. Shill for one year. As payment he received some grain, a cow, and a yoke of oxen. He donated the oxen to the LDS Church as tithing to help bring emigrants to the valley. He also helped guard the tiny settlement from Indians.

In 1869, the railroads were competing to lay as much track across Utah as possible to complete the Transcontinental Railroad. David worked on the segment of track at the mouth of Echo Canyon. When Leland Stanford drove the Golden Spike at Promontory Point, David was among the onlookers, and was standing on the same rail as Stanford in the famous picture memorializing the event. According to *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, David worked on the Utah Northern Railroad until 1882.

In the summer of 1869, five years after he arrived in Utah, David met Anna Louisa Josephine Hultgren, a recent emigrant from Sweden. They married on 16 November 1869, and bought a cabin (located on the west of Wall Avenue on 2nd Street) in the Fort Bingham area. While living on 2nd Street, a small pox epidemic broke out. The small pox inoculation did not exist, and many were dying. It is said that David took a scab from a small pox patient, injected it into a cow's teat, and when the serum worked on the cow, David vaccinated himself. It was the first such vaccination in the city of Ogden. With this protection, he proceeded to nurse the sick, and to wash and lay away the dead, including Richard Brown's wife who died in June 1877. To avoid exposing his family, David slept in his granary. Before going into the house with his family, he bathed and changed his clothes. Neither David nor his family contracted smallpox.

After purchasing two other cabins in Harrisville, David and Josephine bought their final home. It was a two room adobe house at 955 North Harrisville Road on 15 acres of land. There, the last of their five children was born. They raised six daughters and three sons to adulthood. Another son and daughter died at birth. Their surviving children were Annie (Dinsdale) (1871), Alice (Cowles) 1873, Clara (Smout) 1875, Walter (1879), Adella (Yearsley) 1882, Albert (1885), May (Wangsgard) 1887, Ethel (Williams) 1892, and William (1894).

In 1867, David's mother Hannah and his step-father James Jardine, emigrated to America along with their daughter, Hannah, and James's two young daughters, Annie and Eve. (David's sister, Martha, stayed in England. She married William Flitcroft and died of tuberculosis at the age of 30.) After visiting friends and family in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, and visiting David in Utah, James and Hannah settled in Cherry Creek, Idaho, where James's sons, William and James Jr., had built a cabin for them. William and James, Jr., had emigrated shortly after David. William later had a son, William M. Jardine, who became the Secretary of Agriculture under President Calvin Coolidge.

David and his young family often traveled by covered wagon to Malad, Idaho, to visit his mother and her new family. It was a three-day trip each direction, but David was very close to his mother, half sister, and step brothers. He continued to visit the family even after his mother died in 1884.

Following his work on the railroad, David worked as the Harrisville Road Supervisor for many years. He was responsible for maintaining the road between Harrisville and Ogden. However, most of his income came from farming. He raised a few steers, horses, chickens, pigs and other farm animals, and milked a few cows. He raised grain and hay as well as a large garden to help feed his family.

David had a slight build, but was strong and hard working. He had dark wavy hair that his daughters liked to comb. When May and Ethel were young they would quarrel over who got to climb on his lap and comb his beautiful hair. He was a loving father, but strict. His children obeyed him without argument. He was also a staunch Republican and often sat under the apple tree on the southeast side of the house, engaged in long friendly chats about politics with George Yearsley.

David and Josephine continued to live in their small comfortable home after their children married and moved away. As David grew older, his health did not permit him to continue to farm. He sometimes went into Ogden to sit in the shade of city park and visit with old friends.

In their last years, David and Josephine were cared for by their children. David suffered from diabetes, for which there was no insulin or other treatment available. He was bed fast for a long time. Most of the time, David stayed with his youngest son, William, who lived next door to him and who had fewer children than Albert, but William and Albert took turns caring for him. They also took turns working at the Cream O' Weber Dairy and dividing their wages in order to provide for their own families while caring for their father.

David suffered a great deal before he died on 8 September 1918, at the age of seventy two years. His family was relieved that he no longer had to suffer. After funeral services in the Harrisville Chapel, David was buried in the Ogden City Cemetery. He was survived by Josephine and his nine living children. Four and a half years later, Josephine died and was buried beside him.

SOURCE:

Painter, Eleanor Crowther. Family Documents.

Wheeler, LeAnn Painter. *David W. Crowther*. Compiled from documents in possession of Eleanor Crowther Painter. Unpublished manuscript. 2012.

Brown, Richard	Jardine, Annie
Chase, John D.	Jardine, Eve
Coolidge, President	Jardine, Hannah
Crowther, Adella (Yearsley)	Jardine, Hannah Howe Crowther
Crowther, Albert	Jardine, James
Crowther, Alice (Cowles)	Jardine, James Jr.
Crowther, Anna Louisa Josephine Hultgren	Jardine, William
Crowther, Annie (Dinsdale)	Jardine, William M.
Crowther, Clara (Smout)	Johansen, Johan
Crowther, Eli	Lake, George
Crowther, Ethel (Williams)	Pratt, Parley P. Jr.
Crowther, Hannah Howe	Promontory Point
Crowther, Martha	Rawlings, Joseph S. (Company)
Crowther, May (Wangsgard)	Shill, Mr.
Crowther, Walter	Smith, John
Crowther, William	Stanford, Leland
Flitcroft, Martha Crowther	The Monarch of the Sea
Flitcroft, William	Transcontinental Railroad
Golden Spike	Wells, family
Howe, Hannah	Yearsley, George
Hultgren, Anna Louisa Josephine	