

# RACHEL ROYLANCE

By Rachel Spencer

My name is Rachel Spencer. I'm a fourth grade student at Washington Elementary. I chose to write about my great-great-great grandmother, Rachel Roylance. I thought she would be interesting to write about first of all we have the same first name and second she went through some scary and neat experiences.

Rachel was born nearly 162 years ago on May 16, 1848, in Des Moines, Iowa. Her parents were William J. Roylance and Mary Yarwood, both from Cheshire, England.

Rachel and her family crossed the plains in a wagon with an ox team. One evening Rachel's mother, Mary, was frying some meat in a frying pan over the camp fire. Suddenly, a man ran into camp shouting that the cattle were straying. Mary dropped everything to help with the cattle. Little four-year-old Rachel tried to turn the meat as she had seen her mother do. But she slipped and fell with her right hand in the burning frying pan. The pain was so great that she closed her stinging hand into a fist and wouldn't open it. Her hand was bandaged this way. When the bandage was removed, her right index finger never opened again.

Rachel rode most of the way across the plains in the wagon. At night when they stopped to camp, Rachel and the other children helped gather firewood and pick wild strawberry.

"I think it would be exciting to be a pioneer child like Rachel was, but a little scary too!"

The Roylance family arrived in Salt Lake City on September 24, 1853. Later they settled in North Ogden where Rachel lived the rest of her life.

Rachel's family was very poor. They lived in their wagon until they could build a one-room log cabin. At one point in Rachel's life, she lived on one slice of bread each day and had very few clothes. When Rachel was 17, she married John Woodfield who was from England. Together they had twelve children—nine girls and three boys.

One evening while John was away, Rachel was out milking the cow. Her baby was bundled in a shawl near the fence. Rachel, sensing danger, quickly turned to see an Indian reaching for her

baby. She jumped up screaming, and the frightened Indian ran away leaving the baby unharmed.

Another interesting experience was when Rachel taught her husband, John, how to read. They studied by candlelight after the work was done. John learned to read very well, but he never learned to write-not even his name.

John and Rachel eventually built a large two-story brick home with a basement for their growing family. This home in North Ogden still stands today.

Rachel was a hard worker. She was a good cook and organizer. She also became a midwife and helped the doctor deliver over 100 babies including many of her own grandchildren.

I think Rachel Roylance was a really great person, and I learned a lot about her. She was kind to many and had a strong heart even when times were tough. And I'm glad to say she's my ancestor!

Rachel Spencer