

## Rachel Roylance 1848 by Rachel Spencer

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

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

Mary and her family crossed the plains with an ox team and wagon. One evening Rachel's mother, Mary, was frying some meat in a frying pan over the campfire. 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 hand in the burning frying pan. The pain was so great that Rachel 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 strawberries.

I think it would be exciting to be a pioneer child like Rachel was, but it would be 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 they could build a one-room log cabin. At one point of Rachel's life, she lived on one slice of bread each day and had very few cloths.

When Rachel was 17, she married John Woodsfield 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!