

JOSEPH SMITH CAZIER
Autobiography

I was born in North Ogden, Weber County, Utah on April 12, 1869, the year that the Southern Pacific-Continental line was finished across the continent. I was raised to manhood without much event. I never had much schooling. I went to school 2 or 3 months in the winter time, until I was probably 15 years old, when I discontinued school. I never really completed a school education , though I had accomplished reading and writing quite well. A school education was not compulsory in those days. In fact, the parents had to pay tuition for their children then. I did attend school at the age of 28 at the Weber State Academy at Ogden. I was active in dramatics from the age of 10, belonging to the North Ogden Dramatic Company after age 18. At one time in my school days I had trouble with the teachers, and I broke and ran for the door. I declared to my mother I would never go back, but mother took me back the next morning, and shoved me in the door. The school master, Lorenzo Waldron, said he would tend to me later, but never did take any action.

I did tell my father and mother I would rather stay out of school and work on the farm, and they let me do that after Christmas. My chief occupation was working on the farm. My father was a merchant, and from the time I was 13 years old, I would do the farming while my brothers freighted on the Montana Railroad.

My mother was born in Canada, later living in Farmington, Iowa, and migrated to Utah across the plains as a girl of 13 in 1850. Her family were Mormons, and they joined the Church, I think, in Canada. Her mother had a small baby which she had to tend, and my mother did the cooking for a large family at the time they were crossing the plains. Later, when they arrived in Utah, they settled in North Ogden.

One event I remember was Bill Montgomery telling of his going with his father, Robert Montgomery, to drive the Indians off his meadow land where there was a large encampment. Uncle Bill went with him and Grandfather ordered the Indians off his land, and they just laughed at him. Finally, he went to kicking fires out, and the Indians yelled at him "Stout Heap, Stout Man". Finally the old Chief said to them, "You say this your land. Whose land was this before white man come? Ail this land, these mountains, these waters, all belong to Injuns. Not so, you sayyou lie, you cheat, you kill Injun!!" Grandfather Montgomery hung his head and walked slowly away. The Indians those days were not dangerous, but there were a lot of Indian raids south of there, there was a little talk that they might attack some day, although one never did occur.

I think that my father's first wife died at the youngest son's(Benjamin) birth. Some 3 years after the death of his first wife, he married my mother, Isabelle Montgomery, and she raised his first family besides her own children: namely, William, Mary, Deserett, Joseph, Alexander, besides two, Alma and Grace, who died when they were babies.

In 1886, when I was 17 years old, I went with my uncle, Bill Bailey, into eastern Colorado. He was a sub-contractor, building railroads. I did his freighting from the main contractor's

headquarters, which was 20 miles from the camp. We were out on the plains with no habitation in the country.

One day, when I was driving through the headquarters to get a load of freight, I saw a man walking along the railroad right-of-way, and I asked him if he would like to ride. He stopped, and looked at me and in an instant said, "Yes, I will ride with you". It wasn't long before I could see that he was crazy. So, we went on into headquarters, and just before I was ready to start back, he came and asked me when I was ready to go back. He said he was out of patience with me. I told him, "Oh, before long", but I thought, "you crazy devil, you're not going with me". I didn't see anything of him until I got around a point a short distance from the headquarters. He had gone there, and was waiting for me. What I should have done was found some excuse, and taken him back, and had the men take care of him, but I didn't. I let him get in, and took a chance. On the way, he got mean, and somewhat abusive, and I sat there with the reins in my left hand, and ready to knock him out with my right. I did this for 20 miles. But he didn't get violent, and we arrived in camp all right. The Irishmen in camp got after him, and he took out and we never saw him anymore.

As I stated before, we were out on the plains with no habitation as far as we knew. There was good grass there, and we didn't have to feed hay. We turned the horses and mules out to graze with a night-herder. One night, there came a heavy fog, and the night-herder lost part of our animals. When he came in, he told my uncle that he had lost part of the animals, and Uncle Bill asked me if I would go out and hunt them. The fog was still very heavy, as I often could not see over 50 yards. There were very few landmarks in the country, even if I could have seen them. I had started out just after breakfast, and rode all day until towards evening. Somehow, I had kept my bearings. Along about 4:00 PM, the fog lifted, and I found the animals near a deserted old ranch. As I said, I had kept my bearings to some extent, and just before I arrived at camp, I saw a fire blazing upon a little butte near camp. My brother had gone up, and lit a fire to guide me, so I got in with the animals alright.

In the fall, we traveled with wagons and drove the animals overland back to Ogden, Utah. It was understood when we went that each one of us would stand our share of the expenses, but I furnished the outfit pretty well with meat, that is, with antelope meat, and sage hens, which were very plentiful in those days. I was later told by my uncle that I had furnished my share of the expenses that way, and that I didn't owe anything.

One night, I was night-herding the animals in uninhabited country. I had a small fire, and was lying dozing, near my fire, with a long lariat attached to my horse. I was in a box canyon with towering cliffs around. When the morning star came up, I was awakened by the howls of the coyotes. They did not startle me, but soon the big wolves began to howl. Then I got active, and replenished my fire, and pulled my saddle horse in close to the fire. Wolves were dangerous when they got in large packs.

Later, we came through on the creek called Big Sandy. There were the remains of the hub bands and wagons where Lot Smith had destroyed the wagons which had become detached from the regular army. Lot Smith had but few men with him, but he had them maneuver around, and

appear at different points so it looked like he had a large number of men with him. Then he rode down to the wagons, and ordered the men with him to set them on fire, which they did, burning up their freight with the wagons, but he did allow the teamsters with 4horse teams and wagons to get back and join the army again.

When I was 18 years old, I went to work on a railroad in Washington, which was then a territory. In the fall, my uncle left 6 of us boys to bring the horses and mules. We traveled on without event until we arrived at Vale, Oregon, on the Malheur River. As we had a desert of about 30 miles to cross, and it was afternoon when we arrived, we decided to lay over until morning. During the afternoon, a cowboy rode into our camp, and asked us a good many questions as to where we were going, etc. We turned our horses and mules out, and In the morning when we went to round them up, we were missing about 10 horses and mules out of our herd. Instead of hunting for sight of the horses, my best friend, Hiram Bailey, and I went tooking for tracks. We knew the track of each horse, so we soon found where they had been driven from the herd during the night, and also, we got track of a saddle horse. You soon learn to track when you are herding. We tracked them for about 10 miles up country back west, and we saw some horses and mules in the field about 1/2 mile away. Just then, we met the cowboy we had met the day before, and he said, "Hello, how are you doing?" We told him we thought those were our horses and he said, "No, they belonged to that rancher," and we said that we would go over and look at them anyway. We found that they were the horses and mules that we had lost. We never saw the cowboy again.

The next morning, we traveled on down to the Snake River, and ferried our wagons, and swam our horses across at Darks Ferry and Glens Ferry. This event and another took us so long on the road that we got out of grub. I tried to sell my saddle horse to buy food at Oakley, and even though horses were ordinarily selling for \$40 to \$60 at that time, I couldn't even sell him for \$15. They thought I had stolen the horse, because, no doubt, I looked pretty bad myself. I couldn't sell my horse, so we had to finally steal and butcher a calf in order to live. They were about ready to send out after us when we finally got home.

I belonged to the baseball team of the 1890's. That was before professional ball playing was admitted to Utah, and we were considered as good a team as there was in Utah at that time. We played ball in pastures and different places around, and were finally the prime movers in buying a park at North Ogden. We were the ones that made the bargain, and got the community to go in, and it still exists there. In the fail of 1898, I went on my misssion and never belonged to the team again. Later, when I was about 25 years old, I was elected Road Supervisor of the North Ogden District. I was also elected Justice of the Peace, and was called to be President of the YMMIA while there.

I was sent on a Mission in November of 1898 to Kentucky, where my father was born. Later, because of ill health, I was transferred to Ohio. There was one man who wanted me to baptize him, and when I asked my companion about it, he said that he was not ready for baptism yet, but I never was able to convert anyone else. Later, there was a young man named Hightower, who wrote after I was married, and mentioned the church as the only true church on earth. There were bashful boys who peeked through the door when we went, but never really attended our meetings.

The conditions under which we labored were hard, and the people were not very hospitable as a whole. Sometimes, we would go until nearly midnight to get a room, but never in Kentucky did we have to sleep out in the open. The only exception was in Warren County, Kentucky, and that was considered the worse county as far as tolerating the elders. We were told different times if we didn't leave, we would be mauled, but no mob ever developed, although we were used to being cussed, etc.

Once we were supposed to stay all night with a very kindly man, and we were told later he had company, and he couldn't keep us. It was raining at the time, so we went to a house where there was an old man milking his cows. We had umbrellas, so we waited while he milked the cows, and he said he would ask his wife about it. She kept us standing out there a while, but finally let us in. We hadn't had anything to eat, and she kept on complaining until she set us down to bread and milk. I told my companion that that was the best bread I had eaten in Kentucky, and after that she was kind as could be. The next morning, however, she was just as bitter as ever. She said Joe Smith was such a wicked man. To get back to the man who said he couldn't let us stay, he told his neighbors that night after we left, he thought that we were out in front of his

house sitting on a stump singing he would go back and look, and nobody was there, and it kept up all during the night, and he told his neighbors about it and said he never would turn down another Mormon Elder; and, whenever we went to the neighbors around there, we were never turned away. I returned home in the fall of 1900 somewhat broken in health from the effects of malaria. After returning home, I married Edna Moselle Wade in April of 1902 in the Salt Lake Temple.

In 1903, we moved to Fremont County, Idaho, where I worked a dry farm on the prairie. After struggling there for about 20 years, owing to light crops and low prices, we were compelled to give up our holdings. Florence, who was born in Pleasant View, Utah, was about 6 months old when we moved to Idaho. The next was Isabelle, born at Pleasant View on October 21, 1904. Ruth was born August 16, 1906, in Pleasant View. When Florence was born, I wanted to name her Ruth, but somebody told my wife I was trying to get her named after one of my old girl friends so I was happy when we chose this name for Ruth.

Dan was born in Farnham, Idaho, as were Helen, Mark, Bob, and Elaine. The baby that died was also born in Utah. Farnham was a newly settled country and people were very sociable. At first, we used to meet often together in the old log school house. This was later replaced by a cement block church house. Farnham was homesteaded by poor men, as I was without much money to build a home. As a result, many people built log houses and covered the roof with dirt instead of shingles. They used the top soil as a rule instead of getting clay which will shed water. As a result, the water would run through the dirt, and they would have to place dishpans, etc. on their bed and all around in their houses. After each rain, when we would get the people together, they would be lamenting about their roofs leaking muddy water all over their houses. I got to thinking the matter over one day, and finally composed the following lines:

LIVING ON A DRY FARM IN A LEAKY HOUSE

by Joseph Smith Cazier

Living on a dry farm in a leaky house
I can tell you ain't much fun;
You want it to rain, and still you don `t want it to
You're almost glad when it's done.

Your wife will cry and say
"Now if you don't shingle this house
before it comes another rain,
You can just take me to town,
and I'll leave here on the train;

I'll go back home ...that's what I'll do
And live with Pa and Ma."
And if you say a word to tantalize her,
She'll swing the dishrag on your jaw.

She'll say, "You promised when we moved into this old shack
You'd build another house as soon as you got able;
Put a shingle roof on it,
and use this place for a stable."

But we've lived here for 3 years now,
3 years this coming fall;
And I don't believe you meant to build another house
When you said you would, at all!!!"

A feller gets up and goes out of the house
A-feeling awfully blue
Because he realizes that his wife's
charges are partly true.

He goes and looks at his grain
It's still alooking awful dry;
And he feels just like he could throw up everything
And sit right down and cry.

Then he looks at the coming clouds
And he thinks, "Gosh, if it would only rain all night tonight,
I'd have a splendid crop." And then he thinks of his leaking house,
and his crying wife and his feelings take another drop.

"But I think we better stay here,
and tough it out another year or two
I can tell you, them that does is going to get `well-to-do'.
The railroad's comin up thru here next summer,
And we're going to build a big canal."
And then a feller can look at his wife, and grin, and say,
"Well, what do you think of me now, old gal?"

I belonged to a cattle association at the time and had a few head of cattle left after leaving the ranch. I was hired by my Association to oversee the cattle on the Association's Division of the range in the forest Reserve. This was in 1924 and 1925.

As the season progressed, it was my duty to keep track of the cattle on our division of the range and mark the calves. In July of that year, I worked them up to Wyoming, across the state line on the upper Bitz River. I had a hard time holding cattle in this location. There were lots of big bear tracks in the woods, and I concluded that the bears were intimidating the cattle, and driving them out.

One day, while alone, I went bear hunting. I was riding up the ridge between the middle and south forks when I discovered a bear sitting up, eating service berries. When I stopped and looked at it, and considered awhile what had that bear ever done to meand then I thought why I had come here to hunt him; and after watching him a while, I took aim and shot, and it fell, and I rode up cautiously. It hadn't moved over 6 feet. It was down in a kind of ravine, so I hitched a rope onto it, and dragged it up on top of the ridge, and was starting to skin it. I had just skinned one hind leg when I heard a panting noise behind me. I grabbed my gun, wheeled around, and saw a mother and two cubs about 70 yards away charging right at me. I took aim at the old bear and missed. At the time I shot, she stopped, and slapped the two cubs, and they ran up a tree. The old bear kept circling me and the timber was so thick, I could hear her going "whoof-whoof", but I couldn't see her, and I decided to either get on my horse, and get out of there or she might eventually charge me. In order to bring her out in the open, I shot one of her cubs, and that brought her right out about 100 yards in plain sight. I fired and killed her with one shot, and then, in mercy, shot the other cub.

With all the hard times we had, we had much pleasure. My family and I would go up to the mountains in the summer time, and we would have splendid times. We would have several fires, and in the night time, we would gather around the bonfires and sing and tell stories.

My sister-in-law, Myrtle, wrote and told the girls if they would come to California, she could get them good jobs. In 1929, two of the girls were so determined to go ...Isabelle and Ruththat I finally, very reluctantly, gave my consent. A neighbor said to me, "Joe, you'll never see them again", but that proved untrue. Within a couple of years, they both got married in California, and kept writing to us wanting us to move to California. I finally consented to move, and came on April 19, 1929, on a bus ahead of the family, and landed at Atascadero where Ruth and Earl were living. The girls had been writing that there was a good chance that we could come down and get in the chicken business, but by the time I got down there, the company that was building chicken

houses for settlers, went broke, and were not furnishing homes for people anymore.

About a month after I arrived, Dan, who was then about 16, brought the rest of the family, except for Florence who was also married, in an old Model-T car, and a two wheel trailer. They arrived at Atascadero, and later in that year, we moved to Escalon, and then we moved to Oakdale, Stanislaus County, where Dan and I worked at whatever we could get. The family was about a week on the road and looked just like Okies when they arrived but I was very glad to see them.

Finally the great depression came along, and I was compelled to work WPA to support the family (The government furnished work to support the families). During that depression, we finally bought a 28 acre tract of land very cheaply (\$35 per acre) which is located about a mile out of Riverbank, California on Claus Road. Later, the land all around me sold for as high as \$1000 per acre. Soon after we moved onto the ranch, while I was still working WPA, we started making adobe bricks, and the next year, began an adobe house. At first, we moved onto the ranch building what we intended to be a garage, and moved into it. We then built another adobe building into a fairly comfortable home, and we then proceeded to go into the dairy business. My wife, Edna, passed away in 1945.

The following was given to me by my grandfather, Joseph Smith Cazier, in November/1956:

Grandpa went to Idaho at the turn of the century and dry-farmed for a few years (20 or so), when the depression came upon us. The Federal Reserve Bank ordered member banks to stop loaning and collect all payments due. As a result, all the farmers had to try to sell all their grain and cattle. The markets became flooded, and many people lost their homes.

They lost their farm in 1924; then, as he belonged to the Cattle Association at the time, he was hired as a rider. As such, he "ran" between 600 to a 1000 head of cattle on the Forest Reserve in the summer months. His own cattle, only 25 to 30 head that were left to him, were with the large bunch. He was hired in 1925, and was the lone man to do this herding for the Cattle Association. He had two camps one cabin just inside the Reserve, and the other was located on the upper range, called Coyote Meadow. One of the camps was quite comfortable as it was a sheep wagon loaned to him by a friend.

It had a nice stove in it for heating and cooking. Grandpa enjoyed making a fire outside when he could, and he used to do it quite often. His family were all scattered now, and this particular night, he was sitting by the fire musing about the loss of their home:

THE DREAM OF MY YOUTH

I am reminded tonight of the dream of my youth
As I sit here by my campfire alone
No one is near
No voices I hear

But that of wild life, and my own.

Twas the dream of my youth when I settled for life
To own a home in this land of the free
For which our forefathers fought, faltering not
To gain freedom from over the sea.

So we came to Idaho many years ago
and located a farm on the prairie
Where early and late I tilled the soil
And my wife labored hard in the dairy.

We produced golden grain and dairy products
Which we sold at a price less than cost
But, year after year, we struggled on
Now, all that we owned, we have lost.

They have taken the farm for which I gave my birthright
The house where our children were born
Though humble indeed, it was our home
Now my dream is shattered and torn.

With no home in my country to call our own
I am a lone rider in the Forest Reserve
Our children are scattered
Our home circle is broken
That we tried with our might to preserve.

As I sit alone here by my campfire tonight
Far away from all of my kind
I pray God to hasten the day
When plans for mankind will be outlined.

In which humanity that toils may live in comfort and peace
Unafraid by night and by day
Protected from the sharks who exist in human form
Who are always demanding more pay.

The farmer is forced to mortgage his land and his chattels
To men who live in town.
He lives at their mercy each day
By and through the organizing of commerce and our economic system
He is told just how much he must pay.

While the Board of Trade in Chicago
Fixes a price on his grain
The jobber, a price on his meat
And the money he is force! to borrow to carry on the farm
Is controlled by the wolves on Wall Street.

I am just one of millions
Who have lost their farms
Since the year of 1920
Who, but for that dastardly act of the Federal Reserve Board
Might now be living in their own homes, with plenty.

They forced the farmers onto the marketall in a day
Deflated the price of their wheat and their meat
While Organized Interests throughout the land
Were not compelled to compete.

I love my country
I revere our flag
It is the emblem of democracy
But the powers that control
Have steered away from the goal
Sought by those who won our liberty.

Now I've told you the story the best that I can
In these lines, of How and Why I failed in that Dream of My Youth
Some will say it is not so
But, there are many who know
That every word I have said is the truth!!

END

Note: I wished everyone could hear Grandpa say these lines. They are his own, and he utters them with forcefulness, inflection, and emphasis. Standing erect, pacing back and forth in front of the gathered family, he held our interest completely. Though I am 69 years old now, I have never forgotten those moments and memories.
(Larry Galli, grandson).