

HISTORY OF JOHN DEVONALD MORRIS

by Julia Victoria Jacobs BECK

Editor's note:

Documenting This American Family (DocFam) Editor's note: The history of John Devonald Morris was written in 1952 by Julia Victoria Jacobs Beck. Light reformatting has occurred in this DocFam version; however, text is copied verbatim from the original transcription. No corrections are made to spelling, punctuation or syntax, to preserve the original author's unique personality and voice.

John Devonald MORRIS was the second child born to John Newland MORRIS and Phoebe Devonald in Brigham City, Utah he was born on 9 April 1856.

I knew Uncle John as an older man, but one Memorial Day, in Rockland, I was visiting with a cousin, Thomas Melvin Morris who was Uncle John's son and he said, "did you know, Julia, that dad and his father (John Devonald Morris) planted the first 1/2 bushel of wheat in this valley?" I was so happy to know that.

When our dear Uncle John was living with us, I asked mother, "where is his wife?", and she told me the following. "In 1901 a little girl was born to them, and ten days later, Uncle John's wife (Elizabeth Morgan) passed away." I thought, that is more sad than my grandmother's passing, because she left a tiny little baby, and my mother was three years old when her mother had died. I learned this when very young. It has been more than forty years since my mother told me this, and I still feel a sadness inside when I think of Uncle John.

He had married Elizabeth Morgan on 18 January 1883 (this is on the same day my mother's parents were married.) He was twenty-seven years old and his wife was nineteen. Seven children were born, four boys and three girls. How happy those years must have been. When he found himself alone, he also found relatives who wanted to help. They took the children, and raised them, but these stories are to others to tell.

I want to tell of the sweet little old man who was my Uncle John. His hair was white as snow, and he had very blue eyes. They twinkled when he talked. He was very bent, and walked with a cane. He worked or rested all the time. Mother said "a weed wouldn't dare show itself in the garden." He would work then go over to the apple tree that stood near the gate, slide down the trunk, lay his cane aside, and sitting against the base of the trunk, nod. Soon he would be in the garden again.

He was quite a philosopher. One hot summer day my mother, Phoebe Alvaretta Johnson Jacobs, who was the 4-H leader for me, and my friends was hostess for the Power County Home Demonstration Agent. This lady had come over to demonstrate "home canning." Mother knew that the puffed sleeves in my 4-H dress had to come out, a second time. I had basted those gathers by hand twice, and she knew I would not take this news graciously. So she said "Julia Victoria, why don't you go get you 4-H dress, and show it to (I don't remember her name);" So I did, and very soon "the sky was falling". Pride in my dress was wiped away as she said, "it is very pretty but these sleeves are called "puffed" because they should be a gathered. I'm afraid when you basted them your stitches were just a little to long because the fabric lays in tiny pleats. Can you see right here, and here, etc.?"

I was crushed! I put the dress away, and was out in the orchard crying when Uncle John came over, and asked what had happened. I sobbed out the whole story. He patted me, then said, "you know Julia, they will ask 'who did it' not 'how long did it take';" All of these many years I have quoted that great lesson he taught me so long ago. And I will be eternally grateful to Uncle John for it brought the quality of his life into my life.

He passed away on 24 March 1944