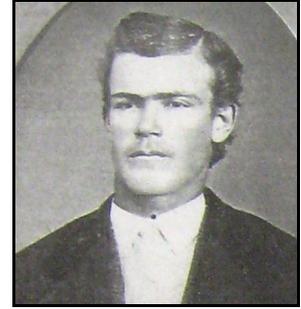


Moroni Helaman Martineau

Moroni Helaman was born in the covenant on September 12, 1854 in Parowan, Utah, the third child of James Henry and Susan Ellen Johnson Martineau. His father recorded the following in his journal about the event: *“A son was born to me, this evening at 8 o’clock and 24 minutes P.M. We dedicated him to the Lord and named him Moroni Helaman. I prophesied he should be like Moroni and Helaman of old, in building up the Kingdom of God.”*



His father, a convert, was a surveyor and colonizer, sent to survey new Mormon settlements in southern Utah, Arizona, and old Mexico, so as a child, the family moved a great deal. Moroni had 12 brothers and sisters and 8 half-brothers and sisters from James Henry’s other wife, Julia Susan Sherman.

His younger days seemed plagued with illness and misfortune. About a month after his birth, both Moroni and his mother became very ill. Moroni had vomiting and diarrhea so bad his bowels began to come out and had to be carefully put back in. In November, Moroni was blessed by Patriarch E. H. Groves, which seemed to help. July 7, 1859, all of Moroni’s siblings took sick with inflammation of bowels and lungs, except for Moroni. When he was five, he received a blessing by Isaac Morley, in which he was told he was of the house Joseph.

September 1864, 10 year old Moroni accompanied his father as he surveyed new settlements in Cache Valley and surrounding areas. In December 1874, 20 year old Moroni and his brother Charles helped their father cut ties for the Utah Western railroad. In March 1875, his brother Theodore, who was three, fell head first into a 15-foot well. As soon as he was missed, Moroni went looking for him. He ran to the well, looked in and saw him lying motionless under the water. He got down to him as soon as possible, and got him out of the water. He seemed to have suffered no ill effects. As soon as he recovered, he said, *“Ma, I fell into the well and got my new shoes all wet.”*

Early in 1876, Moroni was called, along with his sister Elvira and her husband, Benjamin Samuel Johnson, to serve a mission to ‘extend the borders of Zion’ in Arizona. He accompanied them as far as Salt Lake City. In September 1876, Moroni and his brother Nephi, were sent by their father to deliver \$1,100 worth of stock to Dixie in southern Utah. In January 1877, Moroni and his brother Nephi, were again sent by their father to deliver stock, this time to Joel Hills Johnson, his father’s father-in-law, in Johnson Canyon, Kane County, Utah. It took them six weeks, during which they lost one cow and some calves. Moroni purchased some land from Joel Hills in Hillsdale, Iron county, and lived there for about three years with his brothers, Nephi and Henry. The boys had a contract to carry mail from Hillside to Marysville. January 30, 1879, while in Hillsdale, Moroni received a blessing by Patriarch Joseph L. Heywood. In September, Moroni traveled back to Logan to visit family and friends.

On December 25, 1878, Moroni was endowed in the temple, and he married Sarah Sophia Johnson of Virgin, Utah, on December 17, 1879. The couple were sealed by J.D.T. McAllister in the St. George Temple. He was 25 and she was 16. Sarah was the daughter of her mother-in-law’s brother, Sixtus Ellis Johnson and Melissa Editha Merill.

In 1879 or 1880, the couple accompanied Moroni's brother, George and others to Arizona, where they became some of the first settlers of St Johns. Here Sarah gave birth to their first child on October 17, 1880, whom they named James Edward, after Moroni's father.

Moroni moved his small family to Erastus (formerly Concho), Apache County, Arizona, where their second child, Howard Moroni was born April 28, 1882. The family soon moved a short distance to Omer, where Howard died on August 3, 1883. Three more children joined their family in Omer; Frank Adelbert was born August 27 that year. Sixtus Johnson was born in February 22, 1885, and Editha on September 20, 1886. On May 13, 1885, the family again suffers the loss of a child, when two-year old Frank passes on.

Moroni was ordained a Seventy on November 30, 1885 by Joseph W. Smith. Moroni's father had moved to Pima, Graham County, Arizona in September of 1884. On January 10, 1887, James Henry became Mayor of Pima, Graham county, Arizona. In January 1887, Moroni and his family became members of the Pima Ward. Their sixth child, Leo, was born in Pima on October 26, 1888. That year, James Henry applied for colonization papers for himself, Moroni and his brother Joel, in preparation to travel to Mexico.

In October 1888, his father moved his wife and family to Mexico, along with his oldest son, Henry Augustus and his family. They settled in Col. Juarez, where James surveyed the Colonies of Dublan, Chuichupa, and others. In 1889, Moroni and his family joined them. They lived for a short while in the mountain colony of Pacheco, where Susan was born in 1890, before returning to Colonia Juarez.

Feb. 6, 1892, James, Theodore, Anne, Moroni and his oldest son, James Edward (Eddie), Sixtus Johnson and others started for a new land purchase in Sonora, on the Bavispe or Yaqui River, which eventually became known as Colonia Oaxaca, arriving on 15 of March. They had to build a road across the mountains and many miles of heavy dugway. Moroni moved his family to the new colony, where Verne was born March 3, 1893. While in Oaxaca, he was appointed constable in the municipal organization and was the Sunday School teacher. When the dam they had constructed to irrigate the land was flooded out shortly after completion, they all returned to Colonia Juarez, where Anne was born in November 1894.

That year, Benjamin Julius Johnson, Sarah's first cousin, had purchased the whole of the Chuichupa valley in the Sierra Madre mountains of Mexico from the Garcia brothers of Mexico City. In April, some of Sarah's relatives, including Benjamin Julius Johnson, Benjamin L. Johnson, Sixtus Johnson, David E. Johnson with his wife (Rosetta Thurston), their baby Amy and her sister Elinor moved to the settlement, originally called Mariano, then Chuichupa, or Chupe. In October, Moroni, along with Benjamin Johnson, and a few others, moved their families to Chupe. By now, Moroni's family consisted of his wife, Sarah, James Edward (Eddie), Howard Moroni, Frank Adelbert, Sixtus, Editha, Leo, Susan, Verne and Anne. The children ranged in ages from 14 to 2 years of age. In Chupe, they built a simple log home with mud or dirt for the floor and the roof. Their eldest son, Eddie, along with Charles Henry Martineau (Moroni's nephew) 17 and David Ellis Johnson, about 25 yrs old, brought the first 150 head of Mormon owned cattle and horses into the valley. On the following 27 and 28 of January 1895, a great snow storm two feet deep came, driving cattle to the north. They were scattered among the wild cattle and many of them were never found again.

Sixtus Ellis Johnson was appointed as Presiding Elder of Chupe by Apostle George Teasdale, who was serving as the President of the Mexican Mission. Benjamin Julius Johnson was sustained as President of the newly organized Chuichupa Branch of the Pacheco Ward when Sixtus found the climate too cold and moved to Oaxaca. On June 9th, Moroni was called to serve as first assistant to the new Sunday School Superintendent, David E. Johnson.

Moroni's brother, Henry Augustus Martineau and his wife, Melissa Edith Johnson, moved their family to Chupe in March 1896. The family included Charles Henry, Susan Editha, Bertha Mandana, Jesse Brady, Louise, Ida, Howard Edward and Adelaide. The children ranged from 19 to 1 year old.

In 1896, Moroni's life came to a tragic and abrupt end. He died April 22 at the age of 42. Details regarding his death can be found the following letter from his wife, Sarah Sophia Johnson Martineau to his father, James Henry Martineau.

Mariano-21 May 1896

"My dear Father and Mother and sisters, I will try and write a few lines. It is a month tomorrow since my dear Moroni died. Oh dear! It is terrible to think about; I never get it off my mind when I am around home. He commenced Thursday (16th April) night with a head ache that lasted Friday. Saturday he had a pain in his left arm. I got that stopped and he seemed to be getting better. He sat up in bed part of the time and walked around. He went down to Henry's on Monday night. (20th) I did not want him to go—he said he felt well enough. I put my big coat around him. In the night he woke me up breathing so hard and such a rattling in his throat. Anything we done for him did him no good. He never wanted any body to do any thing but me. I tried my best to get him to let me go and get somebody to come. He said "You are doing all you can, I don't want anybody else." At last he gave his consent for me to send for Dama [Diadema Carlton]. She came and asked him how he felt. He said "I am better." Inside of a half hour he was dead. He was sitting up in bed, his head fell over to one side, and he died without a struggle. He said he was in no pain after I got it stopped under his arm. He has tried to do better since he came here than he ever did before. He paid a full tithing and took such interest in the Sunday School and anything to teach the young, and he felt so anxious about the children; he wanted them to be better than other children. He has worked so hard since we have been here; when he was sick he would talk about his work so much. But the Lord's will be done, and not ours, but it is a great trial for me.

xxx I hope you are all well.

From your loving daughter,

Sarah Martineau"

James Henry Martineau, Moroni's father, recorded the following in his diary, regarding his son's death.

"May 8, 1896 - We also received a letter from Melissa, dated April 27 which conveys the terribly sudden tidings of the death of our dear son Moroni which occurred April 22, 1896 in Mariana the new settlement in the tops of the Sierra Madre Mts., Sonora [actually Chihuahua], Mexico. He was taken ill Thursday night April 16th with a chill and a stiff neck, but did not complain of being sick or of any pain until he died. On Monday, 20th he began to labor in his breathing, but no one thought him seriously ill, nor did he himself, refusing to take any strong medicine, and desiring only the nursing of his beloved wife Sarah Sophia. They had three elders to administer to him, Henry [his

grown son] being absent, - leaving home on a prospecting trip with some brethren on the 21st. He had no thought that Moroni was seriously ill, or he would not have gone away. During the night Moroni's breast and ears turned dark - visibly in the morning. He told his son Eddie [James Edward] how to plow a piece of ground nearby, and Eddie went to do it, but had only plowed two furrows before his father was dead."¹

Clifton Whetten, Moroni's grandson, had this to say about Moroni's death:

"Above Chupe there was a spring where the water was a permanent spring, it wasn't an artesian but just a permanent spring, but all the horses and cattle would go up there for feed and water. One of his work horses got in the mud and he spent all night working and trying to get that horse out of that mud and he caught pneumonia and that's what he died from. He's not even buried in the cemetery in Chupe. He's buried way out on the east side of town."

It was said of him at his death: *"His was a character of true integrity and unselfish devotion to the work of the Lord, in which he always was an energetic worker, whether as a Sunday School teacher, a member of the Y.M.M. association, or in pioneer labors, in all of which he always did his full share. He strictly obeyed the law of Tithing and the Word of Wisdom; and to crown all, was valiant in Mormonism, an unwavering support to the Priesthood wherever he lived, and never was found in opposition thereto, nor to any of the laws, regulations, revelations or doctrines of the Church, neither in word or deed. He leaves an unsullied record and died as he lived, in full faith and fellowship with the Saints. He left a wife and seven children (besides two who died), who, with many friends, were left to mourn his loss. But of him it may truly be said; he has fought the good fight, and has gone to his reward."*

On October 4, three months after Moroni's death, Sarah gave birth to a 10 pound boy, whom she named Helaman in memory of his father. In 1902, their sixteen-year old daughter, Editha, died on April 18, 1902 and was buried beside her father in the small cemetery. Sarah never re-married, but raised her remaining children in Chupe. In 1912 she was among the women and children who fled the Mexican Revolution by train. Sadie and most of her children homesteaded in Miramonte, Cochise County. July 5, 1920, she returned to Chupe. Most of her children, many of them married, returned as well. She lived there among family and friends, until June 26, 1944, when she passed away at the age of 81. She was laid to rest in the larger cemetery north of town.

Written by Jess & Laurie Martineau
using timeline & notes for Moroni
compiled by Marcella Martineau Roe 6-2015