

Biography of Daniel Heiner

Information taken from his Autobiography
And an Autobiography of Bryant Heiner Croft
Pioneer Biographies by the DUP

Compiled by Dana Palmer

Daniel Heiner was born on November 27, 1850, son of Johann Martin and Adelgunda Dietzel Heiner, in Chambersburg, Waynesboro, Franklin Co., Pennsylvania. His parents were originally from Waldorf and Wasungen, Sax Meiningen, Thuringia, Germany. Four of his brothers and sisters were born in Germany before the family immigrated to the United States.

At ten years of age, a desire came to him to pray, and from that day to the present, each day he found time to pray to Father in Heaven which was a great support to him in life. On April 11, 1859, he was baptized. The next day, on the 12th, his family of twelve left Chambersburg and started for Utah. They traveled to Pittsburgh by wagon and then by boat down the Ohio River to St. Louis and up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs, Iowa.

From Council Bluffs, they traveled with only one yoke of oxen, one yoke of cows, and one wagon that carried all their worldly belongings. They arrived in Salt Lake City on September 16, 1859. During the first two winters in Utah, he subsisted partly on bran bread. His family moved to Morgan in December of 1863, but spent most of the time on the ranch and at other occupations. He never had much opportunity for attending school.

Daniel was away working on the Union Pacific Railroad the winter of 1869 and 1870, 1871, 1872, the trustees persuaded him to teach school the second year. He had one hundred and eleven students from ABC to fifth reader. He had the good will of parents and children.

During the time from 1864 to 1872, they got more land under cultivation. All worked very hard. They would walk out two miles to Pine Canyon every morning after horses and again at night after cows, and work on the farm during the day. There were no meat shops in those days. In 1865 in November, there came a deep snow. Martin asked Daniel if he could go out and try to get deer. Daniel said, "Yes, I will try." He started out toward Pine Canyon. He overtook Ephraim Robison and Ben Smith about half way. They were men, and he was a small boy. Ben Smith turned around and said, "You ... little snot, what are you tagging us up for?" Daniel told them they could go up either canyon and he would go up the other one. Daniel walked all day in the snow, crossed a high mountain when night was coming on. He had not seen a deer track, but just as night was on me, he came on seven deer, and was fortunate enough to kill two fine fat bucks. He was six miles from home. When Daniel got to the mouth of big hollow with the dressed deer, he went into a man's stable and took out a mule and rode home. Those deer were a blessing to our family. Robison and Smith got nothing.

This deer hunt proved an index to Daniel's hunting life. He gained the reputation of being the most successful deer hunter in the state. He hunted for market three seasons. He went with horse, saddle, gun and a piece of rope about eight feet long and came back with seven deer. He only had two elk hunts. The first time Daniel did not see an elk, but

the next time he killed nine. He also had several thrilling bear hunts. At one time he was standing on a trail on the side of a steep mountain. A bear was coming up the trail. Daniel only had two cartridges. He shot both, only breaking one foot. The bear came on up the trail. Daniel laid the gun down and picked up two cobble rocks about the size of baseballs. He planted his feet solidly and when the bear was about eight feet away Daniel threw full force, hit the bear above one eye, fractured his skull, and the bear rolled down the hill, quivered and died. In those days Daniel could throw like a shot.

At another time in late November, three grizzly bears kept Daniel and two other fellows up a tree until two o'clock in the morning. They nearly froze to death.

For years Salt Lake and Chicago sportsmen came to the Heiner ranch for two weeks' hunting. They had some great times.

There were two Taggart boys from Morgan that would often go with them on their hunts. One had a fiddle, the other a banjo. In the evening after they had eaten a good supper and were rested, those two boys would start up a real-old time jig. Well, you would think bedlam was turned loose; some would jump on the table. Talk about real hoedown. There is when they would have the fun.

Hunters came to the ranch for twenty years; some from Morgan, some from Salt Lake, others from Chicago. During all that time they did not have one accident owing to some rules. Every time new hunters came Daniel would tell them they must abide by certain rules. One was that they must positively not shoot at any object unless they knew what it was. Another was they must not come in the tent or house with any cartridges in their magazines. In the morning they must step outside to fill their guns. Another rule was that when two or more men were standing together, if any one wanted to shoot at any object, they must step three steps away from the others. These rules were protection for all. They only allowed one man to do the swearing for the camp. When new hunters came it was up to Daniel to see they got a deer. "I surely had some times. Some could shoot pretty good, others did well if they could hit the side of a mountain."

Some of those Salt Lake City hunters brought with them some rubber bed ticks. On going to bed they would blow them up and make their beds upon the rocks, saying they could sleep well upon rocks. In the night, someone went to their bed and with his picket knife plugged a hole into the rubber, letting them down upon the rocks.

Other hunters from Chicago brought with them large cloth sacks with draw strings in the top. They would get into these sacks, then tie the top. This was done (as they said) to protect them from snakes and lizards, but during the night they got into an argument, then into a fight. When this was over not a piece of their sleeping sacks were left.

Some of the boys brought a Kodak and would, unaware to the other fellow, take snap shots. At the weeks end these pictures would be developed, and the worst pessimist was made to laugh. In all this fun-making he who laughed first was laughed at last. The first was last, the last first.

The Chicago people paid Daniel's fare to Chicago and back and showed him a wonderfully good time for three weeks.

Soon the time came for Daniel to think of marriage. His brother, John, who was married in March, the same year he was called to the Muddy Mission, while on the way was stricken with pneumonia and died in St. George. His young wife came back to Morgan. She became attached to Daniel and was very affectionate. But he did not want

to marry her unless he had a wife of his own for eternity. There were several girls who would have said yes, but he had to find one that was willing to join him in a three-horse team. He succeeded in finding one of the most noble girls that ever walked on the earth in Martha Ann Stevens, who was the daughter of Roswell Stevens and Mary Peterson. Her father came to Utah with the Mormon Battalion. She was born on December 14, 1855 in Peterson, Morgan County, Utah, as the first white child born in Morgan County.

When the time came to ask her father, he had moved way up Chalk Creek. Daniel hooked up a team early and drove forty miles. He came to the house about dark. He expected to ask for the girl that night but her father kept talking about Joseph Smith and telling stories until late. Daniel could not get a chance to break in. Just before bedtime he told of a deer hunt. He said there was a round mountain near Nauvoo and he took his gun and went up the mountain. When half way up he came to deer trail. The track led on a level, not up or down. He followed it around the mountain and came to the same place where he started from. The second time he followed it to the starting point. The third time the track led the same way. He concluded not to go farther, so he went to a tree and struck the barrel of his gun around the tree and bent the barrel, of his gun around the tree, took aim and along the trail and fired. He said the bullet went around the mountain three times before it caught the deer.

“I wondered whether he expected me to make three trips before I got my dear. I had to go to bed somewhat disappointed”.

The next morning Daniel knew he must get back to the ranch. Her father took two milk buckets and started for the cow corral. “I followed him, and when he took hold of the pole to open the bars, I held the pole, and told him I must have a minute of his time. I will not tell you what I said to him, but he seemed to know what I wanted”.

He looked at me for a minute and said, “My boy, I can trust my girl with a boy that can dress a mutton as neat and neat quick as I saw you dress one up Echo Canyon a year ago.” After breakfast, Daniel started down the canyon with the girl, and with a light heart.

Sarah Jane Coulam Heiner, his brother, John’s wife, also was a very fine woman. She was born on January 19, 1846 in Louth, Lincolnshire, England to John Coulam and Sarah Cordon.

“I took those two girls with a team and wagon to Salt Lake, to the endowment house. We all three knelt together by the Holy Altar. Two dollars was all the money I had. I paid for our marriage, it being one dollar for each wife.” He married both women on March 31, 1873.

They came back to Morgan with a determination to make a success of life. Martha had no bedstead and for three months they slept on a straw tick on the floor. But, believe me, they were as happy as they could be. The pioneers all slept on straw beds. Sarah had a nice log house he built for her soon after she came back from St. George.

Polygamy brought its troubles, and no doubt its heartaches, but Daniel with his two wives lived in that relationship as well as it could be lived. Martha Ann had thirteen children and Sarah Jane had six plus her child, Sarah by her first husband, John Heiner. These twenty children maintained a wholesome, loving and lasting family relationship all the days of their lives.

The first summer Daniel moved Martha to the ranch. The next winter they fixed up his brother George's work shop to live in. The following three winters they lived upstairs in an unplastered room in George's house. The women changed off each summer in going to the ranch.

Each wife frequently took care of the other wife's children, particularly during the summer months when the Heiner ranch in Echo Canyon, operated by Daniel, required care and attention of all that could lend a hand. One wife would stay at the ranch and keep house for the older children of both families while the other remained in Morgan looking after the younger ones.

They all worked very hard milking cows, making and shipping butter, building fences and ditches, also putting up hay and riding after the cattle that they summered for other people. Many days Daniel rode for sixteen hours. In those days money was very scarce. "The first silver dollar I saw looked as large as a wagon wheel."

They did everything to get money to buy children's clothes, as they came along pretty fast when they were married. In ten years, they had twelve children. Daniel would set traps for beaver, mink and foxes, after working hours, and make what he could in the way. The wife at the ranch would make butter, the one at Morgan would make clothes for all the family, as they did not buy clothes ready made.

For twenty-five years part of the family lived at the ranch. They raised their children on fine butter and milk, fish and wild meat. If any of the children were sick or got hurt, they depended on the Lord for help. They tried to live the Gospel at the ranch as well as at any other place. They kept the Sabbath, attended prayers, kept the Word of Wisdom, paid our tithing and lived as near right as they could. They never turned a hungry man from their door. Their latch string was always out. They never locked the door. Daniel often said to the folks, "if any one packed us off, when daylight came, and they took a good look at us, they would bring us back." They never set hot drinks on the table for the family, as Daniel always took the stand that when the Lord said hot drink were not good, He meant all hot drinks, including hot water. "I attribute the good health of our large family to our mode of living. We always set a good table and my folks never had to wonder where the next meal was coming from." During all their struggles and hard work, they were happier than people are nowadays.

Daniel had some narrow escapes from death. One day, while at the ranch, he started up the canyon with team and wagon to get a load of wood. When up about two miles he saw a large herd of cattle coming out of the canyon onto some hay meadows. Wanting to stop them before they got on the hay, he moved up onto the tongue of the wagon, back of the doubletrees, and started the horses on a pretty fast run. Soon the coupling pin came out and the reach flew over and struck the horses, causing them to run faster than ever, forcing Daniel under the ax, between the hounds of the tongue and the holster nearly on the ground. He held to the lines and called to the horses and soon got them stopped. "But I was edged in so tight, and full of pain, I could not extricate myself and it seemed that I must perish. Then is when I asked God for help." Soon the horses made a quick move ahead and he was loosed. After rubbing his legs to ease the pain, he started back to get the other part of the wagon, which had run into a hollow. He turned the team and wrapped the lines around the front wheel and tried to couple the wagon. The horses backed, pulled up on the lines, raring up, and caught him between suabar and

hind hounds as tight as a vise, almost breaking his thighs. Once more he asked for help. When he was loosed he tied one horse to the wagon, unharnessed the other and rode after the cattle. They were all over the meadow. In running back and forth, the horse fell in a badger hole. The horse struck on his head and Daniel struck his head farther on. He lay there in the hot sun unconscious from eleven o'clock to about four in the afternoon. When he woke up the horse was on the side hill eating.

"I decided that if the Lord would help me home, I would call it enough for one day." When he got home Martha said, "Whatever has been wrong today?" She said she had never spent such an awful day before and that the canyon looked as black as ink all day.

Horses have fallen and rolled over him many times. Henry Eddington rode with Daniel often. One day his horse fell on me. He rode up to me and said, "Well, Dan, I did not think you would ever get up again." He said, "That is the second time I thought you were dead."

At one time in [Daniel] Hanmer's life, he accidentally had a pitchfork run in his lungs. Daniel was away, and was about twenty minutes reaching him. When he did come in the house, Hanmer was sitting in a chair holding the bottom of it with both hands, struggling for his breath. His face was blue, water dripping from his hair. There was an Ogden doctor in town. He and our local doctor were sent for as soon as possible. When they came they made an examination, then said they would be frank with us, and tell us that no power on earth could save this boy's life five hours. His oldest sister stood by. She said, "he can live," and went up stairs to pray for him. Daniel's two brothers were present. Daniel said to them, in the presence of the doctors, "You stay with us and we will show the doctor that he can live."

The doctor had said that there was a bowl of blood at the bottom of his lungs. When the doctor left Daniel sent over for his father and four of the family put their hands on Hanmer and asked God to save his life. Before they took our hands off of him, he released his hold on the chair (as up to that time he was fighting to get his breath; he could only hiccup) and began to breath natural. They put him to bed. He soon went to sleep and slept all the night and got up the next morning and went to school. He never had any bad effects from the wound. The Ogden doctor was so sure that the boy would die, that he had it announced in the morning paper that D. Heiner had lost a boy by having a pitchfork run in his lungs.

All the children, except Mary Elizabeth, were born in Morgan. Both women had children in 1874. Sarah Jane had the first child, born on February 1, 1874 and called her Adalgunda after Daniel's mother. Martha soon had her first baby, a boy, Daniel Nephi on July 14, 1874. She also bore the next child on December 22, 1875 and called him Roswell Martin. Sarah Jane bore a son on February 7, 1876, and called him John. Moroni Heiner was born next to Martha on February 18, 1877. Soon followed by Sarah's son, Daniel Hanmer on February 24, 1878. George Anthony was born next on December 7, 1879 to Martha. Fannie Heiner (my great-grandmother) was born next on August 6, 1880 to Sarah. Charles came in the year 1881 on the 13th of April to Martha. Henry soon followed on September 11, 1882 to Sarah Jane. Martha also bore Heber J on November 18, 1882 and Martha Sophia on April 26, 1884. Sarah Jane's last child was George Sylvester born on March 2, 1886. Estella was born to Martha on May 12, 1887; and

Mary Elizabeth soon followed on August 13, 1889 in Echo Canyon, Summit County, Utah; the only child not born in Morgan.

Although there were two mothers, they always had a happy home. “Strife and trouble had no place at our home. I believe we made a success of living the Celestial law of marriage, as well as any one in the church. I am thankful for the experience we had in living in that order of marriage. My dear wives. God bless them forever for the noble way they took their part.”

“I hope the children will ever honor their mothers for living that Celestial law of marriage, and that none will ever be heard ridiculing that law, for it is a divine law and it is a dangerous thing for any one to speak evil about it. It makes men and women bigger and better.” None of the brothers or sisters ever did display less feeling or show of love toward any of the others because of the half-brother or half-sister relationship.

In the days before statehood, when the Federal Government was taking a more affirmative stand against polygamy, the United States Marshals would periodically come into Morgan County looking for those living in polygamy. When word of their presence spread, Daniel would take his rifle and ride off into the hills on his horse. Because of his reputation as a marksman with a rifle, the Marshals were not inclined to pursue him further. He had the reputation of being the best deer hunter in the state.

“In the 1880’s, when the crusade was on, I was arrested for having two wives. I was taken to Ogden for trial. I gave bonds to appear in court at the next term, which was six months ahead. At that time I appeared in court for trial. The judge called the case when the government witnesses were to be present, but the clerk had failed to notify them, so the judge said ‘this case will be postponed for six months.’”

“At the end of that time, the witnesses had been summoned and it looked as though I must surely go to prison. The folks put some under clothes and other things in a suitcase and I partly bid farewell to my family for six months (and yet I felt as though something might intervene so I would not go to jail). I took the early train for Ogden and when the court was called the witnesses were all there. The judge ordered the clerk to call my case from the docket. He went down the page and my case was not on the docket. The judge seemed to be vexed, and the attorney told the court that all was ready for trial, why not go on. But the judge said the case is off for six months longer.”

“I returned to Morgan two hours after dark. When the train pulled up the depot, I looked out of the window and saw my four little black-eyed boys on the platform. I heard them say, ‘There’s pa.’ I took them a few steps away from the crowd and asked them why they had come out so late at night. They said, ‘Pa, we fasted and prayed all day and we knew you would come back.’ They said they had prayed each time I went to court and they knew the Lord had heard their prayers and he would not allow them to lock me up in prison. The case was so real that I could not help shedding tears.”

“And sure enough before the six months were ended the Manifesto was issued, and I did not go to jail at all. This may seem a simple little story, but we do know that it was the prayer and faith of those little children with the Lord’s blessing that caused the judge to postpone the trial each time.”

Because he no longer practiced polygamy he could no longer be arrested or jailed. The Lord’s Manifesto saved Daniel from imprisonment since he was obedient to the Lord’s prophets. Each wife had her own home, and Daniel chose to live with Martha his

eternal mate, since Sarah was sealed to John. He still loved Sarah Jane very much and apparently continued to provide for her.

Martha continued to have children: Brenton Wells Heiner arrived on July 24, 1891; Rebecca was born on September 21, 1893, but died that same day; Spencer was born on November 21, 1894; followed by a daughter, Disc, who came on December 1, 1896; and the youngest child, Cash Heiner, arrived on February 7, 1899.

The Heiner family also had their own baseball team and about the only one who played on the team who was not a Heiner was Charles Milton Croft. Both Milt and Alfred, both who played ball (and also their sister, Annie) later married into the Heiner family.

Daniel has always taken a great interest in the affairs and progress of the State of Utah. Politically he was a thorough natural Republican. "I believe I have done as much as any ten men in establishing the Republican Party in Morgan County. I never cared for political office, although I was mayor of Morgan City for two years, and I believe I did more to put Morgan on the map than any other mayor. That may sound strong, but ask the people."

He was also elected Republican Representative to the First State Legislature in 1896, which honor he was proud of. "The Lord blessed me, so that I was able to gain the respect and esteem of all the State officers from governor on down. They presented me with an autographed album, with all their signatures. The Salt Lake Tribune was not friendly to our people at that time. They said of me that I was a worthy representative, an indispensable committee worker, and that my vote was always on the right side of the bill."

There are many interesting incidents happened of which I will mention only one. There was a representative from Salt Lake who was very bitter toward our people. He wanted to enact the Edmonds-Tucker law. He framed a bill and made a canvas of the members and succeeded in getting 22 of the 43 to vote for the bill. He got permission to call a night session on the sly. Daniel happened to hear of it, so he attended.

There were only 23 members present when the bill came up for vote. Daniel was the only one to vote against it. "The next morning a man came to me and said I was wanted in a certain room." When Daniel entered he was met by John Henry Smith. He put his arms around me and said, "You voted against the bill, last night. God bless you, Brother Heiner, we have crawled in the dust long enough. We cannot afford to have such bills passed." John Henry Smith then asked Daniel to go to the Senate room and use his influence to kill the bill, which he did. "But I want to say for the Senate, the bill had no ghost of a chance with that body of men."

In 1898, the Governor appointed Daniel Heiner as road commissioner in Morgan County, to build roads and bridges, with money that was appropriated by the State. He built a new road below Mountain Green nearly all the way to Devil's Gate. Also he built the bridges at Morgan and Devil's Gate. He moved the road at several places up the canyon and built the new road through the narrows.

He was manager for the Echo Land and Live Stock Company for fifteen years. He bought and sold thousands of cattle, and spent thousands of dollars of money of Whitney and Chambers, of Evanston, Wyoming, buying cattle for them. "I have handled a lot of money in my time and I am proud to say I never was accused of using one dollar

unlawfully, or of writing a check that was not honored. I trust this will be a lesson to all my descendants—that it pays to be strictly honest.”

He tried to deal honestly with all men and women. While at the ranch there were many opportunities to do wrong. When you were branding sheep and cattle he often told the men to be very careful to know what they were branding. “I often told them that I would rather lose ten head of cattle than to have them brand one calf that did not belong to us.” When any cattle came to the Heiner ranch he would try to find the owner.

One time a young cow belonging to Judge Asper came to the ranch and soon after had a calf. Daniel sent word to him a number of times, and he promised to get her but failed. The cow stayed over two years and raised three calves. When he came to get her Daniel turned four head of cattle over to him instead of one. He said to me, “Brother Heiner, very few men in this world would have done what you have done.”

Religiously, he gave service to the church as Sunday School Teacher, Sunday School Superintendent and Assistant Stake Superintendent for a number of years. He was president of the M.I.A. for ten years in their ward, served as High Councilor for several years. The 16th of September 1900, I was set apart as President of Morgan Stake by Apostle George Teasdale and served for twenty five years.

“I am proud and thankful for the confidence and good will shown me by all of the people, also by the general authorities. The Lord was good to me and blessed me with inspiration when in need.”

He also served as President of Black Hawk Coal Company and President of Morgan Commercial Club.

In 1903, Daniel Heiner served as President of the Morgan First National Bank, with his brother, Charles working as the cashier. He was president of the First National Bank of Morgan for sixteen years. “I have had many severe trials. Had it not been for the faith I had in God and in prayer, I may have given up. Prayer has been my strong hold. There are not many high mountains or deep canyons within ten miles of our old ranch that I have not knelt down on in humble prayer.” During the war time, many small banks failed. Their bank stood the test during the sixteen years. They doubled their surplus, enlarged the bank building, costing nearly \$5,000, and paid all their dividends but two, which was better than most of the banks did.

During the world ward, although Daniel was a full German, he was appointed by the U.S. Government as chairman of the Council of Defense, chairman of the three liberty bond drives, and food administrator for Morgan County.

Sarah Jane, one of his wives, died on April 30, 1918 in Morgan, Morgan County, Utah and was buried on May 2nd in the city cemetery. In December 1923, he was ordained a Patriarch in the Church. Three short years later, his wife Martha Ann died on April 21, 1926.

On June 20, 1928, Daniel married Minnie Barbara Wheeler in Salt Lake City. Barbara was born on January 7 1877 in Newport, South Wales, England, daughter of Thomas and Lydia Pulley Wheeler. She was a maiden lady and nurse who had nursed Daniel through a severe case of pneumonia several years before. She was a comfort to him in his declining years and through his last sickness. (She died after Daniel on August 7, 1967 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, and was buried three days afterwards.)

On August 8, 1931, being 80 years old, Daniel passed away at his home in Morgan, Morgan County, Utah. He died with a strong testimony of the Gospel which he bore to most of his living children who were around his death bed. Daniel was buried three days later on the 11th. He is remembered for his wise and good counsel and was loved and respected by all who knew him. He ascribed a great deal of his success in life to a good parentage; both his parents were good people who raised their children in the fear of the Lord.