

Morley Black Life History
Contributed By

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Morley , as I am called was born October 24, 1875 in Orderville, Kane County, Utah. My parents were William M. Black and Mariah Hansen. When I was a young baby I took very ill with the Scarlet Fever, and my Father fearing that I was going to leave them, laid his hands on my head and prayed and promised the Father in Heaven if He would spare my life he would do all in his power to teach and train me to live the Gospel-- and I was made well.

We lived in Orderville until I was eight years old. At about this time the Order, as it was called, broke up and we moved to Huntington, Emery County. We bought a nice field of 40 acres, as I remember. I spent most of my summer months herding cows. One of our main sports while herding cows was what we called duck stone. We would place a small flint rock on a larger rock, then we would get back about 15 feet and pitch at it and so on—very interesting.

I remember one 4th of July, just as I left the house my mother called back and said, "Please don't ride any races today." I don't remember making her a promise, but when I got to the celebration, I was asked to ride a race. I had become one of the main jockeys of the town and as I loved to ride I couldn't refuse. The horse I was riding proved to be very hard headed, and when about halfway through the race, he left the track and ran under a big limb of one of the shade trees and knocked me off into a ditch of water on my back. They took me home unconscious and I lay that way for about 24 hours, so it doesn't pay to disobey mothers' advice.

When I was just a little over 10 years old, my brother Joe took me on a trip to Mancos, Colorado with him hauling two wagon loads of Lucerne seed. Joe drove one wagon and I the other. While traveling along to Mancos, we camped at the Carlisle Ranch. The men who lived there gave us a nice piece of beef and a big butcher knife to cut it with. Just a bunch of toughies lived there. Then we were on our way to Delores Colorado. Going on to Mancos we sold our alfalfa seed to Bower Mercantile that being the only store there. The store was made of logs. We stayed there for several days to let our horses rest where there was lots of good feed. Mr. Bower asked my brother who it was the drove the extra team and Joe said, "My kid brother." He then pointed at me "Oh, you don't mean to say that little fellow drove a team over those roads." We then made our return trip to Huntington. I will not say much about that as it was about the same kind of a trip going as coming. I was really

thrilled to get home. It seemed I had been gone several months. Since I hadn't had any milk for two or three weeks, I ate too much bread and milk and it made me very sick for several hours. Life went on about the same--- herding cows in the summer and doing what was on hand to do. Not much school at that time. Father had to be on the watch to keep out of the hands of the U.S. Marshalls as they were on the lookout for every man that had more than one wife. It made it so miserable he asked the men of authority what to do. They advised him to move to Old Mexico where lots of other men had moved in order to live in peace. We moved there in wagons in the year 1890, taking what belongings we could in that way. We lived in several different places, finally settling in Cave Valley. We lived here in Cave Valley for several years—in this happy little town of about 150 people in all. There was peace and happiness in the top of the mountains. While we were at Cave Valley I married Nellie Porter, daughter of Warner and Mary Porter. From Cave valley we moved to Colonia Pacheco, making our home there.

My work was chiefly working at the saw mill, freighting and most anything I could get to do. We lived in 2 or 3 rooms of a large frame house for a while as I was working with Nellie's father making shingles. I later found it best to make us a two room house by her father's home and we lived there quite some time.

A short time after this my brother and I moved our families to Cave Valley to a ranch that was owned by Moses Thatcher. We lived here for a few years, raising mostly corn, potatoes, and all kinds of garden produce. I remember one time I left early in the morning to hunt a bunch of our horses, I ran onto some wild turkeys, and not having a gun with me I made my horse chase them. They were flying at the time I saw them. They can't fly very far, so I picked out a big gobbler and when they lit I soon chased him down. I cleaned him up and took it home. It weighed 22 pounds. There was lots of turkey. I had seen as many as 60 in a flock. I often think of that country—everywhere grass and flowers up to the horse's knees. There were flowers of every kind—wild cherries and wild grapes in places hanging down ledges and climbing up trees. It was beautiful to see.

The town's people early in the fall would gather together and go in wagons down the river and stay all day for a good outing and pick wild grapes to make jelly. The people at that time all seemed to work for each other's interest, and of course their pleasures were most happy and gay. One time when all, or nearly all of the towns folk went down the river for one of these pleasure trips, along in the afternoon I saw two girls stooping over washing their hands at the river's edge. At this place the water was always quite deep. It was a

temptation to me (as I guess I was always quite a tease) to throw a limb just in front of the two girls and make a wave of water come splashing over the top. Well, down came the limb. As I was making my getaway, Rachel Lunt, who later became my wife, took up some prickly pears and threw them at me, one catching me right in the middle of the back. I felt I got the worst end of the deal that time.

I had been put in as boss of a large bunch of Mexicans as I could understand the Spanish language real well. I worked at this job for about a year and then I was put in as chief of the night watchmen, at which job I worked for two years. Things went on fairly smooth for a while until the Revolution got to going pretty fierce. Trouble kept coming first one group would move in then another. First it was the Federals, the Viestes, then Salazar and his bunch and then the Red Flaggers.

Times kept getting worse until the leaders of the Church thought it best for all Mormons to leave for awhile to go across the line into the U.S., so that is what we did. We just brought one trunk of clothes and a little bedding, thinking we would soon be back to our homes. Most of the people never did return and lost all they had worked for most of their lives. Some returned and are still there at this time. I and my two wives and children went back for a while, but if we could have looked into the future we would have looked for a home elsewhere as there were many dangers to face.

When we returned, I can say that it was due to our Heavenly Father's care that my life was spared several times. One morning June 9, 1913 at 3:30 a.m. some quick steps were heard coming up the five steps of the porch. It was Orson Hawkins. He said all out of breath, Morley, get up quick and bring your family down to my house," as our house was up quite a bit higher and would have been in the firing line. He had a few dairy cows the other side of the big milk pond. He always went to milk at 3:30 in the morning, and at this time as he neared the pond several guns clicked and he was asked, "Who are you and where are you going. You had better get back to your home. We are nearly ready to open fire on the Federal Government Soldiers and the Red Flaggers. About 200 of them are all stationed along the bank of this large pond."

Burt Whetton and Dave Brown had just come in from the mountain with some work horses and riding horses on their way back to Blue Water, New Mexico. Burt stayed at our place that night, and as Orson left I stepped to the middle door saying, "Burt, did you hear that"? He said yes and as putting on his clothes as fast as he could. Rachel was dressed in a minute. She said to me,

“Oh, hurry, it is getting almost light enough to shoot now”. I said “Now try and hold yourself and don’t get too frightened and just at that very minute the sound of a large gun fired, then another one and then they went just as fast as I ever heard popcorn pop in a pan. We had no time to go down to Orson’s place, so all that we could do was to get in behind the house in the canal that ran from the north to the south. We each took one of the children—Reta 8, Kim 4, and Glen 2 —out of their beds, grabbed a couple of coats that were hanging up. We put the coats around the children and then got down in the canal. Just then several shots came and threw the dirt all around us. My night watchman came then, a man we called Bill Blaky.

We thought it best to move on down the canal as we were in the firing line so much. Well, we were still in the firing line so when the shots quit we ventured to move on again. By this time we moved up under a steel bridge that crossed to the hospital. For a while the bullets just made the iron rails ring over our heads. It seemed life they would keep on till they would get some of us.

After this time of shooting we again moved going around south of the hospital. Just then the sun came up and a bugle sounded a different tone to what we had been used to hearing. Then we knew that the Red Flaggers had won the fight.

I thought it best to ask Burt to stay with Rachel and the children and get back to the house. So I took off my belt of cartridges and my gun and wrapped my red handkerchief around them, moved a rock, put them in the hole and put the rock back and kicked the dirt around the edges. I guess they are still there. I never did get to go back and find out.

Soon after I had left them up in the wash, Burt and Rachel saw more than 200 around the little hill. When these men saw the folks, two of them took their guns out of their scabbards, worked the leavers and jogged down towards them. When the man reached them the children were crying because they were afraid. They asked about the fight. Burt being able to speak good Spanish told them he didn’t know anything only that it was different bugle that had blown. They asked what the matter with the children was. They said, “Poor little things tell them not to cry, we won’t hurt them.” Then they turned their horses and left, happy to think they had won the battle that time.

On the 17th of the same month of June, Rachel gave birth to a baby boy who was named William. I moved my family to Dublan and Reta attended school that winter. During this time it seemed real good to have our good Mormon friends and a Church to go to. I just couldn’t believe things were as bad as they were. We had been used to living in peace and happiness all my life in

such a beautiful country. One day I saw several Mexicans on horseback come through the front gate, crossing over the flower garden and on to the bran. They took the only team I had and rode away. That left me without a way to put the hay in the stack or barn.

While we were eating breakfast one morning after this, we heard a train whistle. This was quite a shock as the bridges had been burned for several months and no trains had been coming to town. The U.S. had sent a crew of men to fix the bridges so the train could come and get what Americans were there and bring them out to El Paso, Texas. I hurried up in town to see what the excitement was and when I returned home I found Rachel getting things ready to leave. We had one trunk of clothes and some bedding for the six of us. We stayed by Fort Bliss with Aunt Sarah Lunt's family for a while then Uncle Sam gave us tickets to go by train to places we wanted to go, we gathered our belongings again, mounted the train and left for Utah. Rachel stopped off at Lund and her brother Oscar was there to meet her and take them to Cedar City. I went on the Salt Lake then on the next morning to Thompson Springs. I came on the Monticello with Ben Perkins on the mail buggy and then on to Blanding the same way. This is where my wife Nellie and our children, my father and mother, brother, Dave and sisters Myrtle and Hattie, Nellie's parents and some of her brothers and sisters were. This was a happy meeting for we had been separated for nearly a year. Nellie and her little flock were living in the Hyrum Stevens house at that time. This was in the first part of the summer and I hadn't been here long when I took Perry with me in a one seat buggy and a team of horses and went to El Paso. I heard that things were better now so I thought I would get some of our things in Mexico. I left Perry with Aunt Sarah Lunt and got on the train and went into Durban, but when I got there I found things just as bad as ever so I got on the train and came back to El Paso. How it ever happened I will never know but here I found my good old faithful team of horses. A stallion named Pen and a big mare named Nell in El Paso so I brought them to Blanding. I traded some of our Mexico property to Brother Whetton for a bunch of horses and a log wagon they had brought from Mexico I rejoiced to have my dear old team with me once more. That fall I went to Thompson by team to meet Rachel and our children. We packed all in the wagon and headed for Blanding. We drove to Moab and stayed at George Mconkie's that night. The next morning we started on. There was snow on the ground the farther we came the deeper the snow was. When we reached dry Valley, the horses were pushing snow with their breasts. It was hard travel and the horses could hardly make it. We camped at Hatch Wash that night. In the morning it was still snowing. It was very cold and it worried me quite a bit. I would ask the children once in a while if they felt warm. I lit the lantern and kept it burning to help keep the air warm.

We stayed in Monticello that night with Ed and Chloe Black and left the next morning for Blanding. We reached here okay. That evening the roads were bad, but my team was a good strong one.

Rachel thought Blanding was quite a city, but when morning came she found it just a small town with narrow trails here and there that the school children had made going back and forth to school. But it was a pretty town with hay fields everywhere in the summer, gardens beautiful and everything grew and not bothered with bugs. There was a deep snow in the winter and plenty of rain the summer. About one week later, February 8th, I moved Rachel and family to the sawmill where Dave and I took a contract hauling logs to the mill. Just as we got to the little lumber house where we were to live it began to snow. Snow did you say –it kept snowing and snowing. Jim Carroll and Dave cut the trees, going up to their waists in snow and would have to clear the snow away before they could cut. I would then come along with a pair of bob sleighs and two spans of horses to take the logs out of such deep snow to the mill. I often think, “How in the world did we ever do it”. That was working by the sweat of the brow.

On April 6th we loaded up the bob sleighs and headed for Blanding. In town I got a tent, boarded it up and moved Rachel on the north corner of the same lot as Nellie. The two women raised a good garden that summer on a new lot just plowed that spring. This same summer June 21, 1915 my father died though he was getting old, he had this made us all very sad. He had served a wonderful life and we hated to see him leave us. I remember a white span of horses that we used to carry him to the cemetery a few weeks later Tamar Young, my half sister died.

I had taken up a dry land farm out of east of Devil Canyon with two families, 11 children. We had to start from the bottom, leaving all we had back in Mexico. My first wife Nellie Porter bore me a lovely family of eight boys and four girls. William Morley, Ivy Mariah, Perry Warner, Leone, Reva, Jose, Orin Porter, LeGrand, Gus Porter, Fonda, Delmar Larson, and Raline. My second wife Rachel bore me eight boys and five girls: Henry, Reta, Alberto, Kimball, Glendon, William, Kline, Carma, Kelly, Darlene, Myrtle Ann, Rachel, and Rex.

We had quite a struggle for a long time, but we were happy. Our best years are when we are working hardest and going right ahead when we can hardly see our way out. Success is never as interesting as struggle--not even to the successful.

I cleared several acres at the farm which proved to be wonderful land for crops. I raised Sudan Grass that grew much taller than me. Wheat grew 40

acres to an acre, oats, potatoes, everything we planted grew wonderful. I was made to rejoice over such good country. It kept me busy, no time to lose to keep my families eating, but not too well in clothes for a few years. Life was hard, but the children were small and clothing didn't worry them.

I took Nellie one week and Rachel the next in turns to cook for me and my bunch of little boys. They were lots help to take the horses down in the bottom of Devil Canyon to water. I was then using eight head of horses. I often think of how it would take three little boys to harness the horses. It would really look funny, one boy would be on top of the horse's back and would pull the harness up as two would lift and push up. Then when the collar was fixed on okay, the one on top would crawl back to fix the cupper strap. It made me think of a bunch of little brownies.

I time or so some of the little boys were so ragged they just couldn't come into town until their mother could come in and gather something together and do a bunch of patching and fixing. When harvest time was finished, then we could buy some clothes.

Times were quite hard for awhile. But we were happy and all enjoyed good health and that was the most important thing. Our diet was very simple and I can't help thinking that that helped to keep us in pretty good health. It kept me digging and planning to keep the wolf from the door, but I made it. I managed to get one cow for each family. I would hire out myself and two or three teams of horses and four little boys for slip drivers.

The following was written by the compiler of this history:

"We feel we all begin very fine things that we never finish and this is as far as the history was written by Morley Larsen Black and we hope it will be of interest to his descendants. Many of the older members of the families will recall these and other events to complete this history, to others it will be detail they are not personally acquainted with and it should be of real interest to them. It is our hope that each of you sill finish the work and preserve it for those who shall follow you".