

## **John Daniel Holladay, Sr.**

**1798 – 1861**

Compilation of the following materials:

“John Daniel Holladay, Sr.” by D. Carter Holladay

“John Daniel Holladay, Sr.” by Elora Tieman, great granddaughter, 1975

“John Daniel Holladay, Sr.” by Donna Mary Holladay Stosich, 1999

John Daniel Holladay, Sr. Genealogical & Historical Association Bulletin 10/1977

*Mississippi Saints* compiled by Kate B. Carter

*Church Chronology* by Andrew Jenson, Film: Utah Part 2, p. 940

Handwritten “History of John D. Holladay, Jr.” in possession of Joy Holladay

*Holladay-Cottonwood Places and Faces*, Stephen L. Carr

Compiled and typed by Victoria Wilson Chambers, great great granddaughter, 08/18/2006

John Daniel Holladay Sr. was born March 10, 1798, at Camden District, Kershaw County, South Carolina. He was the son of Daniel Holladay, born 1752 and Rebecca Keziah Terry, daughter of James Terry and Ann Robards.

John married Catherine Beasley Higgins on April 16, 1822. Catherine had been married previously to Benjamin Jones and had two children, Benjamin and Martha. Catherine sent these two children to live with their grandparents Jones in North Carolina where they would inherit a vast estate at the appropriate time.

John Daniel Holladay, Sr. by Donna Mary Holladay Stosich, 1999:

“The news of the declaration of war on Great Britain in 1812 caused the price of cotton to fall as low as 4.5 cents a pound. Also, the crop became less profitable on the worn and unfertilized lands of South Carolina. Many South Carolinians migrated to Alabama in hopes of better agricultural opportunities and fortunes. This migration had its effect on the Holladay family with John’s brother, Daniel William, leaving first in 1819. Likewise, in 1826 John and his family accompanied his father, Daniel Holladay, as they migrated to the state of Alabama and settled in Marion County. There John owned and operated a large plantation, had a number of slaves, and grew crops of corn, cotton and tobacco.”

In 1844 John’s life course was changed forever when he was introduced to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by Latter-day Saint missionaries. The following is the recorded experience written by Absolom Porter Dowdle, the Mormon missionary who was instrumental in teaching and baptizing John Daniel Holladay, Sr., and part of his family and slaves.

*“Baptism in June 1844 and Life on His Plantation”*

by Absolom Porter Dowdle

Working on a log cabin church, Absolom had hurt his hand and feeling that night that he was going to die of homesickness, he records this experience:

“...a man came in and he was real drunk. I got so interested in him that I forgot my own trouble. I asked him how he was and he gave me his name. He was John D. Holladay. He had a plantation and he told us a funny story. He said he had 99 slaves, and he said, ‘Do you know, preacher, if I go out to buy one to make a hundred, while I am gone to get my hundred, one will die or run away, so I only have my 99.’ He drove a fine team, both of his horses were gray with almost white mane and tails, the most beautiful team of horses that I had seen. He acted terrible but he was kind to us and when he left he came up to me and handed me ten dollars. When he handed it to me I thought my heart would stop beating. Do you know, that was the first ten dollars that I had ever seen in my life. We went out to help him. He was surprised and told the two Negroes to get in the back. He got a rope and tied them two slaves up and got up on the high seat to drive. He said, ‘Preacher, I can’t trust them to drive.’

“I will picture him. He was about 45 years old and he wore regular old cowboy boots. One leg of his jeans-pants was in the top of this boot and the other on the outside; a very large white hat, shirt opened at the neck, and an old duck shirt. He was an old good-natured Irishman. When he started for home he gave a war cry and gave his horses a lash with the lines. When he got to his plantation he would just throw the lines and give a war cry and everybody knew, ‘Massa Holladay got back.’

“He was always ready to find things to do, get a whip and start rounding up them poor old slaves. He had a poor old slave they called Violet. She would get down on her knees right out in the dirt and hold both of her hands up to God and shout, ‘Dear Lord, please don’t let Massa Holladay whip us poor old slaves.’ He would turn, look at her, listen, and take his old big hat off and walk away. He was a good man to the poor people and was very good to his slaves when he was sober. So, we would wait for him every night, and one night we saw him drive up to the front of our little log church. It was all we could get to preach in.

“There were a hundred people lived in this village, but quite a few lived on plantations, and they would drive in to hear us preach. Brother Holladay walked in and I noticed that he had not been drinking. We had prayed so hard that we might get to convert him. He got up and asked us if we could baptize him. That was a great thing for us. He asked us if we had things to eat. Of course, we did not have a thing to eat and not a bed to sleep in, only the old quilt. We did set a day for him to be baptized, and we did not have a very good place [to perform the baptism]. There was just a small creek, so he said for us to come down to his plantation on Sunday that he had a nice creek running through his place. Of course, we were glad to go down. So, on Sunday he sent his Negro slaves after us. When I looked out and saw them, that was as big a shock as when he gave me the ten dollars.

“To our surprise we met four of the most beautiful girls in the South. We were almost of a notion to break and run, but Brother Holladay understood all about us.

I do believe there was not a black slave that did not run and laugh at us. Of course, the family was raised very well and did not dare to laugh at us, but we must have been a picture. When it was all over and we had been acquainted with the people, Brother Holladay could see how bashful we were and he excused us and we were shown to our room. We had a large glass to view ourselves in and were a sight to behold. A knock came on our door, we answered and in came Brother Holladay with some new clothes for both of us to replace the overlarge ones we wore. We washed, dressed and then we were invited to eat dinner. I will never forget the sight my eyes beheld; a table with everything that an old Southern Plantation can offer, with colored slaves to seat us, and four beautiful Southern girls, their brother John Daniel and five younger brothers and sisters. There was their mother, a beautiful Southern-stylish woman. She was a very wonderful woman; her father was one of the settlers of South Carolina; her name was Catherine Higgins.

“At last we had decent meals and a room and decent clothes. We were very proud and happy. We were to have service at the plantation; there was the Holladay family and some others who had been invited to attend. There were a lot of Negroes who wanted to join our Church. Well, there was no law in God’s word that they had been rejected by God, so we had a pleasant time preaching and baptizing the ones we had converted. We set Saturday for baptizing, so we baptized all of Brother Holladay’s family except one girl; and about fifty slaves in one day. Sunday, we had church and confirmed them all. We stayed at the Holladay plantation the whole week as we were busy preaching. The next Saturday we had another day baptizing some more.

“I mentioned about one girl that did not get baptized; her name was Sarah Ann; she was engaged to a young man that lived on another plantation. She was expecting to marry Charles White at Christmas and this was November. The wedding was all arranged and Brother Holladay was trying to convert his daughter but he had no luck. She said that if Charley would get baptized she would consent to, but if he refused she would also. The day came for Sarah’s lover to come and I was surprised when I saw him drive up to the gate. He had a beautiful carriage and his two horses were jet black. I will never forget when I saw him order his slaves to open his carriage door. I walked away almost stunned, his clothes were all uniform and swell, and he was haughty and proud as if he owned the world. I thought that was the way I could have been, but I had taken another way. His carriage was taken care of and he was taken to his room. He did not meet Sarah until he entered in to supper. We were all introduced and everything went on very nice. We laughed and enjoyed everything until Brother Holladay told Sarah’s young man that we were missionaries to preach and baptize all that were converted. Well, there was a coolness in his actions then.

“Sarah invited him into the parlor, and she took his arm and they glided up a beautiful stair steps. The stairs were about ten feet wide, and all covered with beautiful carpet, with hanging lamps all a glitter, Sarah with all her beauty and her

evening dress of pink. We all gathered in the parlor to enjoy the evening. When all was over, Sarah said good night and left the room to go to bed. Brother Holladay took Charley into his private room and asked him if he would join the Church. 'If you do not you cannot have my daughter.' Charley explained that he could not do such a thing without his father's consent, so he was discouraged and there never was a more brokenhearted young man than Charley. Brother Holladay told Charley that he intended to leave the South with the other Saints, and he would not leave his daughter in the South. Well, Charley was in a position that he could not take a step like that, against his parents' wishes."

Absolom Porter Dowdle baptized Sarah Ann Holladay. They were married and went west with the Mississippi Company of Saints.

*Holladay-Cottonwood Places and Faces:*

"In 1842 when John Tyler was President of the United States, Joseph Smith, as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, foresaw that the Mormon people would be driven from their home in Nauvoo, Illinois, to the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. In 1845, a year after the martyrdom of Joseph Smith and under continued intense persecution, the remaining Church leaders issued the call to gather together and emigrate to the west. The great majority of the Church members lived in Illinois and surrounding states. Most of these collected in Nauvoo, then crossed the Mississippi River in February 1846. Then in the winter of 1846-47 after great hardship, these pioneers made camp along the Missouri River at Winter Quarters.

"A number of Mormons living in Monroe County Mississippi, and in Alabama, gathered under the direction of John Brown. They were advised not to travel all the way north to Nauvoo before heading west. Instead, they banded together under the name of the "Mississippi Company of Saints" and headed for Independence, Missouri. From this, the 'Queen City of the trails' they then struck westward along the Oregon Trail expecting to make contact with the main group of pioneers somewhere along the Platte River. They could not know that the main group would be severely weakened after the exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois and further decimated by the loss of 500 of their ablest-bodied men to the Mormon Battalion and would not progress beyond the Missouri River in 1846.

"The Mississippi Company was composed of 24 men, some with their families, and 19 wagons. William Crosby was chosen as captain of the group, with Robert Crow of Perry County, Illinois, and John D. Holladay, Sr. from Marion County, Alabama, as his counselors. The Company traveled the Oregon Trail, constantly seeking some sign or word about the main body of pioneers. In July 1846, just short of Fort Laramie (Wyoming) they finally heard of the plight of the Nauvoo pioneers and decided not to drive into the Rocky Mountains alone but to make their own winter quarters on the east side of the mountains. They chanced to meet one John Reshaw who informed them of suitable conditions 250 miles south down at the headwaters of the Arkansas River at the Spanish settlement of Pueblo

(Colorado). The Indians were peaceable, and the Mexicans had a good supply of corn and other supplies. The fall of 1846 saw the Company building cabins in Pueblo, repairing gear and laying in supplies for the season.”

*Mississippi Saints* compiled by Kate B. Carter. The text is quoted from the point the Mississippi Company join with others (in May 1846) who had left Nauvoo:

“...Brother Crow from Perry Country, Illinois, William Kartchner and some Oregon emigrants joined us here. We had in all 25 wagons; William Crosby was chosen captain of the Company; Robert Crow and John D. Holladay, Sr., his counselors...

“We had nineteen wagons left and twenty-four men. The Fox Indians stole one yoke of oxen belonging to George Therlkill. We traveled the Oregon Road from Independence and expected when we got to the Platte River to have fallen in with the company from Nauvoo or find their trail, but we found neither and could hear nothing from them. We supposed they had gone up the north side, so we continued our journey up the river though some of the company was very loath to go. On June 25, 1846, we got among the buffalo and laid in some meat. We were very much delighted with buffalo hunting. Our eyes never had beheld such a sight—the whole country was covered with them. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, a buffalo calf came running into the train of wagons. The dogs, teamsters and everyone else took after it, running through the train several times, and it finally got into the loose herd, and the dogs driven out, it became contented.

“At the crossing of South Platte, we encountered a severe storm in the night. This was June 29, 1846. Next day we crossed the River, and on July 1<sup>st</sup> we reached Ash Hollow. We camped near the brush in the hollow after dark, not knowing we were so near the North Fork of the Platte. On July 6, 1846, we came to Chimney Rock. We stopped one day at Horse Creek and repaired wagons. Here an alarm of Indians was made but none could be found. A few miles below Laramie, Wyoming, we met with John Reshaw. He had some robes to trade and was camped in Goshen Hole. Said that he had heard the Mormons were going up South Fork of the Platte. We held a council and concluded to go no farther west but find a place for the company to winter on the east side of the mountains. Mr. Reshaw said that the head of the Arkansas River was the best place, as there was some corn growing there and it was near the Spanish country where the company could get supplies. He was going to Pueblo in a few days with two ox teams, there being no road, and as he was acquainted with the route, we concluded to stop and go with him. We moved over to his camp, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1846, we started for Pueblo, Colorado. Mr. Reshaw proved faithful to us and rendered all the assistance he could on the plains and among the Indians. We camped one night without water and fearing lest the cattle would stray off. We corralled them.

“On July 19, 1846, twelve Indians came into camp. They were Cheyenne’s. We made them a feast and gave them some presents. Next day we came to their village. They received us kindly and made us a feast which consisted of stewed

buffalo meat. Two lodges of them traveled with us a few days. On the 24<sup>th</sup> we camped on Crow Creek and remained one day, after which we moved to the South Fork of the Platte. We searched in vain for the trail of the Mormons, not knowing anything of their location. We crossed the South Fork on July 27, 1846, a few miles below St. Vrain's Fort [Colorado]. Here we struck a wagon trail that led to Pueblo, made by the traders. We reached Pueblo on the August 7, 1846. We found six or eight mountaineers in the Fort with their families. They had Indians and Spanish women for wives. We were received very kindly and they seemed pleased to see us. We have now performed a journey of over 800 miles since leaving Independence, Missouri. We counseled the brethren to prepare for winter and build them some cabins in the form of a fort. The mountaineers said they would let them have their supplies, corn for their labor, etc. We organized the company into a branch and gave them such instructions and counsel as the spirit dictated."

*Holladay-Cottonwood Places and Faces:*

"As it had become apparent that the group was settled, organized into a branch and under good control, several of the men left Pueblo and headed back to Mississippi, by way of the Arkansas River, the Santa Fe Trail and Independence, to settle their affairs and to bring the rest of their families west [including John D. Holladay, Jr.]...

"As William Crosby had gone back to Mississippi, he was apparently succeeded as the Company leader by John Holladay, Sr., who supervised branch meetings and activities during the winter."

*Holladay-Cottonwood Faces & Places:*

"The following spring, the enlarged group of Mississippi Saints and Mormon Battalion people prepared to continue to move west. An advance party of 17 persons, with seven wagons proceeded north to Fort Laramie. In close proximity to the Fort, they waited some two weeks until June 1, 1847, when President Brigham Young and the first group of the main body of pioneers arrived at Ft. Laramie."

*Mississippi Saints* compiled by Kate B. Carter:

"...President Young, accompanied by Brothers Kimball, Woodruff and Clayton arrived on the east bank of the North Platte River. They saw some men approaching from the west on the opposite bank of the stream. In the meantime, Luke S. Johnson arrived at the camping place with his boat-wagon accompanied by others who had traveled ahead of the main company. The boat was launched and Luke S. Johnson, John Brown, Joseph Matthews, and Porter Rockwell crossed the river to greet the party waiting for them on the opposite bank. They soon learned that they were a part of the Mississippi Saints who had wintered at Pueblo and had traveled from that place to Fort Laramie, hoping to meet the pioneers. After visiting with the Mississippi Saints who were in the camp close to the Fort, President Young and some of the brethren went into Fort Laramie and

met James Bordeaux, the principal man in the Fort. They learned that a pair of moccasins sold for \$1; shirting and calico sold for \$1 per yard and flour sold for 25 cents per pound. Cows cost from \$15 to \$20; horses and ponies \$40 each on an average, and buffalo robes sold from \$3 to \$5 each. There was no sugar, coffee or spices in the store as the spring supplies had not as yet arrived at the Fort.

“William Kartchner said, ‘When our baby was a week old, a messenger was sent from Bent’s Fort, 80 miles below, for a blacksmith and the men brought a horse for me to ride. We started next day, leaving my young wife and baby to the kindness of Catherine Holladay.

“We arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley on July 29, 1847, five days after the [first] pioneers’ arrival. The land our ten drew was on a high bench six miles southeast of the City and our Captain, John Daniel Holladay, Sr., asked permission from his captain to locate three miles further south at a large spring. It was granted, and soon we moved out there, built a row of small houses and fenced a field.

“It was said after John Daniel Holladay freed his slaves and started to Utah, two of the freed slaves, a married couple, followed the Holladay family to Utah from Alabama and live near them the rest of their lives.

“One lovely morning, latter part of June 1848, our Captain, Brother Holladay, came to me holding a quarter of a skillet loaf of bread in his hand, eating at the same time of it, and said, ‘Brother William, what under heaven are we to do for bread?’ I told him to cheer up and pointing to a green piece of wheat said, ‘There is the bread.’”

From the handwritten history of John D. Holladay, Jr., in possession of Joy Holladay, daughter of Isaiah C. Holladay:

“After spending the winter of 1847-48 in the Great Salt Lake Fort, a number of families led by John Daniel Holladay Sr., left the Fort in the spring of 1848 to find a suitable place for locating farms, and finally made a camp on so called Spring Creek, a tributary of Big Cottonwood Creek, about half a mile southeast of the present Big Cottonwood Ward House, or three miles bellow the mouth of the Big Cottonwood Canyon. Some of the other families included in this group were Porter Dowdle, William and Benjamin Matthews, Washington Gibson, and Allen Smithson. The little village they created was the first of its kind founded in Utah outside of Salt Lake City. It was called Holladay’s Settlement or Holladay’s Burgh, in honor of John D. Holladay, Sr., (generally called Jack Holladay).”

*Holladay-Cottonwood Places and Faces* by Stephen L. Carr:

“A Church branch was established and for a few months was nicknamed the Mississippi Ward. John Holladay, Sr., was chosen as Presiding Elder. Although services were held under President Holladay in a small meetinghouse on the north

bank of Big Cottonwood Creek, folks would also ride into Salt Lake City for their Sunday services, then would return and give a report of the meetings.

“As soon as John Holladay, also known to a fairly great extent as Jack, was named as the branch president, the village took upon itself the name of Holladay’s Settlement or Holladay’s Burgh, even though the Church branch was actually named Big Cottonwood.

“It would be appropriate to include a picture of John Holladay at this point, but to the knowledge of the John Holladay family organization, there is not one in existence. The picture printed in 1945 captioned as “John D. Holladay, president elder, is actually of John Holladay, Jr., after he had grown well into maturity.”

*Mississippi Saints* compiled by Kate B. Carter:

“During the winter of 1850, a project was set about by some of the Church authorities to establish a colony in southern California and some families were chosen by Amasa Lyman and others by Charles C. Rich. The winter was spent in preparing to start on March 13, 1851, and when we arrived at Peteetneet, afterwards called Payson, we had organized into two companies known as Parley’s Company and Lyman and Rich Company. It seemed a great many more than were called were moving with us and President Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball called a meeting at this place and Heber preached and discouraged many from going. The teams of our Company were mostly oxen unshod who became footsore when on the desert, and many were left behind, sore-footed, and for want of water. Brother Parley’s Company had mostly horse and mule teams and gained a month on us in traveling to California. In order to raise some money, two wagons of Parley’s Company were sent back with light loads of groceries to Mojave to meet us, which worked well. They raised considerable money to pay their passage to Valparaiso, South America. The first of July we camped in Cajon Pass, and it was counseled to remain there until a place could be purchased. We remained in camp until September 1, 1851. During this time Brothers Lyman and Rich bought a ranch known as San Bernardino and gave notes for the sum of \$77,500.00 with fifty head of cattle included. We moved to the Ranch on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The sisters had hundreds of little chickens that were two months old to raise in camp.

“During our stay in camp, a stake was organized with David Seeley as president and Samuel Rolfe and Simeon Andrew, counselors. Bishop William Crosby with A.W. Collins and William Mathews, counselors. So that when we moved to the Ranch we were fully organized. In October we held a harvest feast in the meeting shed called tabernacle where the different kinds of produce were exhibited: corn stalks sixteen feet long, melons 38 pounds, and mammoth pumpkins. A public dinner and dance and general good time was held.

“During our seven-year stay, many pilgrims came from Australia, mostly on their way to Salt Lake City, Utah, the gathering place of the Saints. Also a mammoth



organ came from Australia, a donation to the Saints of Salt Lake City. It was in the care of Brother Ridges, who built it and freighted by Sidney Tanner. In 1855, the crops of San Bernardino were a failure and Brothers Lyman and Rich held a two-day meeting and concluded to send missionaries to all the counties and principal cities of California. Eighty-four Elders were called to go. I was called to go in company with John D. Holladay, Sr., to Santa Barbara on the Pacific coast. On Conference Day, April 6, 1862, 81 persons were baptized. These included some of the first Mexican converts to the Church.

“John Daniel Holladay” by Elora Tieman, September 16, 1975:

“With mixed feelings, the Mormon colonists abandoned their settlement at Rancho San Bernardino during the winter of 1857-58. They had labored hard for years to establish their farms, homes and mills at the foot of the towering Sierra Nevada’s. The prospect of again crossing the sands of the desert was not a pleasant one. The warm climate of San Bernardino was easy on Pioneers. Furthermore, in leaving hurriedly, they had to sell at low prices the land they had struggled to purchase with their sweat and toil. When a letter came to President W. G. Cox in the summer of 1857 from President Brigham Young for all saints to come back to Utah, there was a general rush to sell out. Some of the people in Utah sent their wagons and teams to help the Saints come back to Utah, for Johnston’s Army was at Ham’s Fork threatening destruction to the Mormons. True saints were not reluctant to leave. Apostates among them had combined with irresponsible elements among their non-Mormon neighbors to harass the colony. The situation promised to become a repetition of Missouri and Nauvoo history. Brigham Young felt that the colonists would be safer in the mountain settlements. When they first arrived at the Ranch, a threatened Indian attack prompted them to build a fort for protection on the site of the present city of San Bernardino.

“The Holladays took up the line of march back to Utah December 15, 1857, stopping one year at Beaver. In the fall of 1858 the entire family moved to Santaquin, Utah County. Here they owned a section of land on which there were springs, and they built their new family home. December 31, 1861, just 3 years later, John Daniel Holladay passed away and was laid to rest in the field not far from their home. Catherine was later laid beside him, and they were undisturbed until 1960 when the land was sold. Their graves were then transferred to General Cemetery in Santaquin by consent of descendants of John and Catherine.”

D. Carter Holladay, great grandson of John D. Holladay, Sr.:

“My father Joseph Augustus Holladay told me that when his grandfather, John D. Holladay, Sr., and his grandmother were buried the water [table] was so near the surface of the ground, they had to place rocks on the caskets to keep them from floating.”

*Deseret News*, March 5, 1862, Volume XI, Number 35, p. 8

“Died: At Spring Creek, Utah County, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1861, John Holladay, aged 64 years, 9 months and 21 days.”

Note: There remains some confusion as to death and burial year.