

Josiah Mousseau

Uncle Fred's memories of Grandfather Mousseau's life from a book grandfather has written and from stories that he heard from Grandmother Smith. The book was published around 1884. How much is truth and how much is fiction he did not know. Grandfather could neither read nor write. Someone wrote it for him and he could have added things to it.

Grandfather Mousseau was born in Three Rivers, Quebec in 1808. This date is from his marriage certificate. Aunt Vera had 1818 and he did not know where she got it.

Grandfather said he can well remember visiting the barracks of the soldiers of the War of 1812. If he can remember this he could not have been born in 1818. He died in 1911. This would make him 103 when he died.

Grandfather was the son of Josiah Mousseau and Victoria Bufort. They were Catholic and were married and lived in the town of Three Rivers. Victoria's family were quite well off, according to Grandmother Smith. She was a very ~~superstitious~~ young lady and when they married her father gave them quite a bit to start with. Josiah was the first born. When his sister was born the mother died. The father remarried before Josiah was 12 years old and he didn't get along with his stepmother so Josiah's father gave Josiah to a group of Jesuit priests and wanted to make a priest out of him.

He was 12 and didn't want anything to do with that so he ran away and came to the United States. He met up with a man he called Big Nels. They teamed up and stayed together for years and years until Josiah was married. They went west and hired out as Scouts to do scouting for fur traders and different scouting parties. He was on the Yellow Stone River in 1825 (12 years before the trek westward). In 1835 they were camped on the Yellow Stone River. They were supposed to send a message to the soldiers at Ft. Benton on the Missouri River. He was assigned to take the message to Ft. Benton. He was riding a horse and had ridden all day and decided to camp for the night. He found a grove of trees, built a fire to cook his supper and tethered his horse so the horse could eat. He had finished his supper and heard his horse whinny and when he heard that he knew there were other horses nearby and it was very likely they were Indians. He had to hide quickly. He had built his fire at the bottom of a large tree. The top of the tree was off and when he climbed the tree he found it was hollow and he lowered himself into it. He had not been in the tree very long when the Indians rode up. They knew there had been someone there because of the signs of the camp at the foot of the tree. They looked for him and decided to wait for him. They built a fire at the foot of the tree and the hollow trunk acted as a chimney and he was nearly suffocated. He stayed in the tree for two days. Finally when he could not hear any noise he edged his way up and out of the tree. His horse and his camping equipment were gone. He walked the rest of the way to Ft. Benton to deliver his message.

Another occasion he was out with a group of fur traders trapping animals. They set their traps at night and checked them in the morning. This morning he and five others were assigned to go and check traps. As they were checking one of the traps they were surrounded by Indians. They were taken captive and were taken on a long march. He said they marched over into Canada to their main camp on Milk River, south of Cardston. The Milk River flows from the US into Canada and then back to the US again. They arrived at the camp in the evening and the next morning they held a council among the chiefs to decide the fate of the prisoners. They were killed by one of the chiefs and the decree was that they should all be killed.

chief's daughter took a fancy to grandfather. He was a tall handsome man with black hair and beard. Very curly. This Indian maid asked her father for this one prisoner and he consented and she took his arm and took him to her little wickiup. He never heard any more about his companions. He was held prisoner in the girl's teepee and she would not let him out of her sight day or night.

At night she used to wind his hair into her fingers and close her fist so if he moved at all she would awaken. She did this every night for at least a year. He tried to persuade her to let him go hunting with the Indian braves but she refused because she knew he would try to escape and she didn't want that to happen. She guarded him well that year. One day she got two horses and she gave him the slowest horse and she took the fastest so he could not run away from her. They picked berries and a long time and while they were resting they talked about his captivity and all the time he was getting the lay of the land so he could remember it in case he got a chance to escape. He pored out his heart to her and told her that he longed to return to his people. Whether it had an effect on her he didn't know but that night in camp she did not wind his hair in her hands and he was able to escape. He got loose and went outside to where the horses were and the chief's horse was the one he took because it was the fastest. He walked the horse for a long time so the vibration would not awaken the camp. He finally rode the horse as fast as it could go for as long as the horse could take it. He wanted to put as many miles between himself and the Indians. He made good his escape. He finally got back to camp and found Big Nels.

Another time he was out with the trappers and the Indians stole their horses and left them on foot and may have started the prairie fire and they were without anything except their guns. They were lost and wandered for days without food or water. There were 12 of them and they got so hungry and thirsty that they finally decided among the 12 of them that they would shoot one of the men and eat him for their survival. The country had burned so there were not even roots they could eat for food. They drew straws and Big Nels got the unlucky straw and when it was decided that he'd be the one he made one request. "I'll walk away from you but be sure that you shoot straight and kill me dead, don't wound me." He started walking away and he walked and walked, each step thinking that a bullet would stop him. After he got quite a ways away he turned around and none of them had their guns up at all. He said, "What's the matter?" They told him to come on back because they all loved him and just could not kill him. He was the dearest friend that Grandfather had. They decided to hang in there until they found help. It was about this time that one lone Indian showed up and he saw their plight and he told them where they could find water and where they could get game. He helped them start in the right direction.

They continued their trapping along the way and they finally came into San Francisco. They sold their furs and each of them had quite a little stake on them. They decided they would like to get a boat and get to Mexico. They made arrangements with a captain and when they had been on board a few days they heard that the crew was going to kill them and take their money. When they discovered this plan they happened to see another boat and they signalled and they came and rescued them. They landed in southern Mexico. They walked from the west coast to the east coast of MEXICO. They walked up the east coast of Mexico and with the help of a burro they bought to carry their belongings.

By the coast they met the Emmet Company. The Emmet Co. had left the church and started west the year before the exodus. They were lost. There were some in the group that wanted to join with a church group again because they were disillusioned with Emmet. Grandfather Hinman was in this company. He was the father of Edna Hinman who was a sister to ~~NAME~~ Henry L. Hinman and also Morgan Hinman, Helen Hinman and Evalina Hinman. ~~THEY~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ They hired Grandfather Mousseau to take them to Council Bluffs. They were reunited with that group but in the meantime Edna and Josiah fell in love and were married much to the distress of her parents. She got her way and so her father supplied a team and wagon for them. When they got to Winter Quarters Josiah was told by his friends that the Mormons had decided to kill him because he married Edna. (This could be fiction because of the prejudice of the writer) One night he harnessed his team and took his belongings and wife and headed south and went down into the southern part of Nebraska. (Grandmother Smith was born in Fall City, Neb.)

Josiah got <sup>word</sup> ~~word~~ that his father had moved into Wisconsin so they went to Wisconsin and stayed for a number of years and back to Nebraska. Josiah and Edna were married in 1845. Grandmother was next to the youngest of the family. Later they moved down into what they called Indian Territory and is now Oklahoma and Arkansas. Grandmother said they lived at one time near Ft. Smith, Arkansas, on the Poteau River.

One occasion she remembers very vividly. It had been raining for a long time. The Poteau looked extremely muddy. A man was walking from town to his farm in the country. He was thirsty and he had to have a drink. He went down to get a drink and the water was a mass of mud. Just then a man appeared from nowhere and said, "Just a minute before you drink." The stranger put his hand over the water and said some words and when he finished speaking the water was crystal clear and they both drank. They got up to go and they walked side by side. The man telling the story said he was mud from head to foot but the stranger, who was walking right along beside him, his shoes were not a bit soiled. When they got to the Mousseau's home, the stranger told the farmer "I must go in here. I have a message for them." Grandmother said they were just ready to eat dinner so her father invited him to eat dinner which he did. When he finished eating he turned to Josiah and said, "You curse your wife, don't you?" Josiah admitted he did. The stranger told him that he was not to do that anymore. Grandmother ~~remembers~~ remembers the man eating and that he was so clean after having come down the muddy road and when he took his leave they heard that he had stopped at several other places. Grandmother feels that it must have been one of the Three Nephites. The farmer told them that he had not seen where he came from.

While they were living in the south, Edna longed to go to Utah. She had corresponded with her family there and expressed her longing. ~~SHE~~ Josiah finally told her that if she wanted to go she could. Henry and Morgan (her brothers) sent her the money to go to Utah. Shortly after they received the money a child died and Josiah promised Edna that if they could use the money to bury the child ~~she~~ he would replace it with the money he made from cotton in the fall. One day when Edna was at the store the storekeeper was inspired to ask her what was troubling her. She pored out her story to him. The storekeeper loaned her the money and Josiah promised to repay him. They got to Kansas City. She had taken three of her children with her, Evalina, Walter and Finley. When she tried to buy the tickets she was short so couldn't buy the tickets. ~~NAME~~

Walter and Finley were walking up and down the platform and a man in the station opened the window and put his head out and asked the boys, "What's the matter. Is there something troubling you?" The boys told him the story about going to Utah and running out of money. He called Edna in and gave her money ~~from E~~ for tickets from Kansas City to Ogden. Then when she got to Ogden she had no money for tickets to Farmington where Henry and Morgan lived. She approached the station agent and told him her brothers would return the money if he would give her the tickets. The station agent refused but at about that time the conductor came in and asked what the trouble was and was told about the lack of money and the brothers would pay for it but the agent could not do anything. The conductor found it was Morgan and Henry Hinman and the conductor paid for the tickets because he knew her brothers well. She got the tickets and went on to Farmington. Grandmother was 15 at the time.

Before Edna married Josiah, Willard Richards tried to get Edna to marry him as a ~~SI~~ polygamous wife. This is one reason she married so young was to get out of marrying Bro. Richards. Bro. Richards told Morgan and Henry Hinman that if Edna ever came back to the church he wanted her sealed to him. It was 1881 when she returned to the church. When she heard what Bro. Richards said she went to the endowment house and was sealed to Bro. Richards. All of her children were sealed to Willard Richards and Edna Sarah Hinman(died) on June 9, 1893.

Some of the children were later sealed in the Cardston Temple to Edna and Willard March 25, 1953. Grandmother was sealed to Bro. Richards June 1893. Edna never ~~was~~ returned to Josiah or her other children in Arkansas. ~~xxxxxxxixixixxxxxxxx~~ Josiah lived until 1911.

In 1911 or 1912 Amanda Roberts and her husband, Uncle Albert and a sister Mary (grandmother Smith's sisters) ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and Walter and a brother Joe all met at Yellowstone Park and Grandmother went down on the train with Morgan. (Grandfather Smith died in 1910) Finley was not at the reunion of the Mousseau brothers and sisters for reasons unknown. Finley was in Montana but not active in the church.

The Roberts came to Canada in 1913 and visited with Grandmother's family in ~~KNE~~ Champion for about a month. They brought their son, Wilmer, who was about 3-years-old ~~than Fred~~.

In the spring of 1959 Uncle Fred and Aunt Zina stopped at the little town of Declo, Idaho, and visited with Walter Mousseau, ~~xxxxxx~~ the son of Walter Mousseau. Had a nice visit. Met two boys named H Hjort. Both bachelors, were grandsons of Uncle Walter.

Eva used to write to Grandfather Mousseau. He could not write but had someone do it for him. Eva received a copy of his book. Darwin may have it now. It was badly worn.  
Josiah was uneducated so he quite naturally believe some of the tales about the Mormons and naturally was disturbed about his marriage breaking up. Edna died Feb. 25, 1896 in Idaho. Buried in Parker, Ida. Mary is buried there also. She died at 10 months.  
Evalina and Richard DeMonte Smith married in 1885 and lived out of Willford and later moved to Sand Creek and Eigen (?) Bench. When her mother died it was several weeks before Grandmother even heard of his death so was unable to even attend the funeral. This made her very sad.