

The Book of Jared
Pg. 84
Story about John Duke
Husband of Martha Vance Young
by Kenneth LeRoy Wagner

John Duke was a young boy in 1840 when his folds joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His father, a brick mason, had to work along the way. John and Robert, his brother, helped with the work. While they were in Nauvoo, their father was called on a mission to Delaware. During his absence the Prophet Joseph Smith was killed. John and Robert were down by the Mississippi River when to their amazement the stream appeared to be turning to blood. Shortly afterward a neighbor came along and informed them of the death of the Prophet.

His father and mother were sick and were forced to remain in Nauvoo when the Saints were driven out. The mob came and told them they had to leave. The family talked to the mob and told them of the danger it would be to move them, but the mobsters replied, "That is good enough for a Mormon."

However, the Lord was with the Duke family and a sister Jones and her son, William, helped them move to Benton fort where they pitched their tents and lived for about a year.

John was left at home several times to care for the family while his father and older brothers were away working. In the spring of 1850 the family started for Utah in the Bennett Company and arrived in Salt Lake City on 22 September 1850.

In September 1851 they moved to Provo, Utah, where John's father and brother owned a brick kiln. There he met and married Martha Vance Young. Soon after his marriage John was called by Brigham Young to meet the saints who were enroute to Utah. He was also one of the Pony Express Riders from Salt lake City to Missouri.

John and his brother built a brick kiln near the historical place just north of Heber City which was called "London" and he moved his family to Heber City to be near his work. At one time John and his brother Robert carried a plow from Provo to Herber City, walking all the way, a distance of 26 miles.

He was called "Uncle Johnny Duke" by the whole community. John Duke personally knew the Prophet Joseph Smith from whom he received a blessing and a prediction that he would be a healer in Zion. He sat on the Prophet's knee and Joseph Smith placed his hand on John's head when he was seven years old.