

## **Prominent Utah Man and Pioneers pages 334-335-336**

John Daniel Thompson McAllister, president of the St George Stake of Zion from 1877 to 1888, is the son of Wm. J.F. McAllister and Eliza Thompson and was born Feb 19, 1827, in Lewis, Sussex county, Delaware. The following is a short sketch of his early life, written by himself; "I removed to Philadelphia, the city of my first recollection, Oct 12 1844. I was baptized in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints by Elder Albert Lutz, president of the Philadelphia branch July 5, 1847. I married Ellen Handley July 28, 1848 and my first born was named Moroni, Sept 28 1848. With my wife, I started for the body of the church, traveling by railroad, canal and steamboat to St Louis Mo. where I labored at blacksmithing. July 12, 1849, I took passage on a steamboat for Council Bluffs, where we arrived Aug 1, in the spring of 1850, I built a house, and while working at carpentering for Jos E. Johnson, he engaged me to clerk for him in the store we built. Jan 9 1851, my wife Ellen gave to me another boy; we named him John. June 20, 1851, we left Kanesville with a wagon and 5 yoke of cattle. At the 6-mile grove, beyond Winter Quarters, I was appointed clerk of Alfred Cordon's company of 50 wagons. We started for the valley of the Great Salt Lake, July 1, 1851 and arrived there in safety Oct 11 1851. I met with the saints in an adobe's bowery, on the south side of the Temple block near the spot where the south gate is at the present time. Previous to this, while in Philadelphia, I had been ordained a Priest, Sept 27, 1846 and commissioned to preach the gospel; in Kanesville I was ordained an Elder, and in the valley, I was ordained a Seventy Nov 8 1851 and became a member of the 8th quorum. As soon as I arrived in the Valley, I found employment on the public works carpenter shop; I worked on the old Tabernacle, where the Assembly Hall now stands. I also joined Captain Ballo's brass band and became lieutenant, playing the cornet. Feb 14, 1853, a large number of people assembled on the temple Block to witness the breaking and consecrating of the Temple

grounds.

There was about 3" of snow on the ground, but the morning was clear and lovely, the snow soon melted, and in some places the ground was quite bare. The Nauvoo and Ballo bands cheered us with their sweet music. At about 10 o'clock a.m. Pres. Young arrived and with Pres Kimball and Pres Richards and the assembled multitude I witnessed the survey of the site of the Temple, by Elders Truman O. Angell, Church architect, and Surveyor Jesse W. Fox. This work was completed about 11 o'clock, when the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles' and other moved to the corner of the south and east lines. Pres Brigham Young addressed us 30 minutes and related briefly the changes through which the church had passed, the difficulties the Saints had encountered in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, and how they had been led by an overruling providence to this consecrated spot. 7 years ago, he said, he had left Nauvoo, not knowing which way to go, only as he learned by dreams, visions and revelations, that there was a good place in the mtns for the Saints. The united bands of music were invited to the center; the standard bearer placed the ensign on the center stake of the Temple plat, where all could see it, the musicians formed in a circle and gave a cheering strain to "Auld Lang Syne" Pres Kimball offered the dedicatory prayer, after which the presidency moved to the southeast corner of the Temple site, where, with the Twelve, Mayor Jedediah M. Grant, Marshal Jesse C. Little and others, they succeeded in picking around a piece of earth, about 1 foot square, and while doing this a silver dollar fell on the square of earth without any one knowing where it came from. Pres Kimball prophesied that it was a good token, and that means would not be wanted to build the Temple. After the earth was loosened about 6" deep, Pres Young said, that it was his privilege to remove it and he took the lump upon his spade and lifted it up high, while he said "Get out of my way, for I am going to throw this" He held it about a minute before he could get room to lay it down off the Temple site. He then addressed the

multitude and declared the ground broken for the Temple, blessed the people in the name of the Lord, and dismissed the assembly. We all said Amen. The general conference was held, as usual, in April, 1851 and it was celebrated by the laying of the 4 corner stones of the Temple. At that conference (on the 8th) I was appointed a mission to England. The beautiful block of stone contributed by the state of Deseret to the Washington monument was entrusted to the care of Elder Philemon C. Merrill and myself, to deliver to the committee at Washington to whom, and to Pres Franklin Pierce and Hon. John M. Berhisel, we carried letters of introduction from Governor Young. The block mentioned was 3 ft long and 2 feet wide, and 6 1/2" thick. In the center stood the bee-hive, the emblem of industry, over it was the motto "Holiness to the Lord". Above this was the all-seeing eye with rays; beneath the line was the word "Deseret" over that (springing from the ground which was covered with different kinds of foliage) was a semicircular arch, enriched with the convololus. On each side were spandrels; in one was the symbol of union, with foliage; in the other was the cornucopia. Near the edge was a fillet, 1 1/2" wide and 3/4" deep. After being set apart for our missions, we bid our families and friends goodbye June 21 1851 and started on our journey. We arrived in Washington Sept 23rd presented our letters of introduction and the stone to the committee, who received us in a very kind and affectionate manner. After doing our business, we went to Baltimore and took passage for Philadelphia, whence we started on the steamer "Glasgow" for Liverpool, where we landed Oct 25, 1851. On this mission I was gone 3 1/2 years. I was welcomed home by the Presidency and many acquaintances."

After his return from this mission, Oct 4 1856. Elder McAllister labored at carpentering and mill work to support his family and attended to his several duties as an Elder in the Church. He was chosen President of the 16th quorum of the Seventy and elected major of the 2nd battalion of the Nauvoo Legion, in the Salt Lake Military District. As a member of the

Deseret Dramatic Assn. he took an active part in Utah's early drama. From 1860 to 1862 he filled another mission to United States and Europe. On his return he brought a company of emigrants across the plains. After that, he served as city marshal of Salt Lake, Territorial marshal and chief of the Salt Lake fire department. He also labored for several years in the Endowment House, and was acting as superintendent of Pres Young's woolen mills when he was called to accompany the president on a mission to St. George. At a meeting of the general conference held in the St George Temple April 5, 1877, he was chosen President of the St George Stake of Zion, being ordained a High Priest and set apart to that position by Pres Brigham Young. For his counselors he chose Thos. J. Jones and Henry Eyring. He was also appointed an assistant to Pres Wilford Woodruff, who had been called to preside over the Temple and its affairs. He was blessed and set apart by Pres Woodruff to officiate in all the ordinances of the Temple, April 13, 1877. While residing in St George he was elected president of the Rio Virgen Manuf. Co., president of the St George Dramatic Assn, a brigadier-general of the Washington county brigade. He presided over St George Stake about 11 years. In 1893 he was called to assist in the Salt Lake Temple and later in the Manti Temple, of which he has been President for a number of years.