

ROBERT CROSBIE (2 Dec 1807) and HELEN FRANCIS CROSBIE (15 May 1806)

Married 1827

It was said that Robert and Helen raised eighteen children. Of course they weren't all at home at the same time, but during the years there were many children and grandchildren living in their home. In my study of this family I find that this could have been possible.

Much of what we know about their lives has come to us from Grandma Crosbie (Mary Waldie Crosbie) wife of Josiah. For five years after their marriage they lived on the same street as his brothers, James, Robert, and George and Josiah's parents.

The 1871 Census gives the house numbers and lists the families. By this time Robert and Helen had three at home: Helen the daughter, Marion Robertson, a grand daughter, age 12, and a great grand daughter, age 2.

In the 1861 Census they had five of their own children, plus Robert and Gaven, grandchildren.

With thirteen children of their own and the grandchildren and great grandchildren who lived with them also, it is possible that they could have helped raise eighteen children. They must have had great love and patience.

Robert was a hand loom weaver in cotton. He did his work at home, 'as was common at that time. They must have had a fairly large home and he probably did very well to feed so many. The children did have to go out to work when quite young. The census records help to show this. The girls appear to have gone out as servants in homes around. The boys were farmers, weavers, general laborers and miners. All the Crosbie boys were miners.

An interesting, as well as important, story that Grandma told us was that Josiah was a triplet and the only one who lived. All three were born well, she said, but a boy died in a few months, and the girl, named Harriot, died in a few years. I don't know how much credence it has, but she mentioned a drowning for one of them. I haven't researched this very much, but I did look up the christening for Josiah. I found the following:

"Robert Crosbie, Weaver, and Helen Francis, spouse, had a son born the 11 of May 1839, and baptized in the parish church the 16 April 1843 named George. The aforessaid Robert Crosbie and Helen Francis had twin children born 4 June 1842 and baptized 16th April 1843 named Josiah and Harriot."

This is interesting because they waited several years before having George baptized and Josiah and Harriot were listed as twins. If they were born triplets, one baby had died in less than a year. This gives a corrected birth date for Josiah. Our old records from family knowledge was 18 July 1843.

In the 1841 Census we get the following information:

Dublin Rows, Kirkfieldbank, Lesmahagow, Lanark, Scotland.

Robert Crosbie,	30,	cotton weaver, born Lanarkshire
Helen	30,	wife, born England (Carlisle, Cumberland)
Elizabeth	12,	daughter, born Kirkfieldbank
John	10,	son, born Kirkfieldbank
Agnes	8,	daughter, born Kirkfieldbank
Robert	6,	son, born Kirkfieldbank
George	3,	son, born Kirkfieldbank
Harriet	7	months, daughter, born Kirkfieldbank

As the census was taken in June 1841, the 7 month old Harriet was born about November 1840. She apparently died between June 1841 and June 1842 when the triplets were born, because the girl was named Harriot. This Harriot died between the christening date April 1843 and December 1849 when the third Harriot was born. She lived a full life. This is evidence that there were two more children in the family, not usually counted. More research could be done.

The James Francis Crosbie family in Ogden, Utah and Salt Lake City and Lawrence Crosbie of Ogden, did the early work on the family. I just got their information from the Patron's file at the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City. I noticed James and Helen named a son, Josiah, possibly in memory of the nephew, Josiah, who died in 1881 in Alay, Wyoming. He died as a baby.

Possibly late 1843 or early 1844 the Robert Crosbie family moved to Hazelbank, a village down the river a short way. Robert and Helen lived at this place the rest of their lives.

There were three more children born to this couple after moving to Hazelbank: James, Harriot, and Helen. James later included his mother's maiden name as his second name, so in most references to him he had been called James Francis Crosbie.

It must have been soon after this that the Crosbie's met the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. No stories have come to us about their conversion. We only knew through Grandma Crosbie (Mary Waldie) that the Crosbie's were Mormons when she met Josiah.

The following event had a very far reaching effect on the Robert Crosbie family:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized at Kirkland, Ohio, 6 April 1830, by Joseph Smith. Seven years later, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, Orson Hyde, Elder Godson, and James Fielding, from Canada, arrived in Liverpool, England to open the British Mission. This marked the beginning of U. S. missionary work overseas.

Josiah made ready to leave first with his nephew, Robert (Curly Bob) and his family of wife and baby, in August 1874. Josiah had to earn money for the rest of the family to follow. Mary and their children and Gavin, a nephew, left in November 1874. Gavin Crosbie was 17 years old.

Nellie says, "Then I remember that last walk with you to Aughenheath Station, your little Betsy in your arms and the other two trotting along, 30 years ago this autumn. I was twelve then."

Mary and children left their home in Hazelbank, Scotland, and all went well until they got to New York City. Little Tom Crosbie got lost. Gavin had forgotten his responsibility for a moment but he was soon located and they proceeded with their journey.

When passing through Chicago on the train, Mary was much impressed with the sight of the burned-out buildings of Chicago. The great fire had occurred only 3 years before. The entire downtown, which had been built of lumber, was completely destroyed. It was still in ruins.