

# The Mystery of Rose Daniels

You may wonder if there were any Native Americans who lived to be a hundred. Rose Daniels was a centenarian. In her long life in the southwest, she went from Navajo to Ute, to pioneer wife, and finally homesteader. We do not know the exact year that Rose was born. It was between 1839 – 1841. So much of her early life is a mystery. There are hundreds of pieces to fit together.

Rose Jenson was born in the canyons of northern Arizona about the time the last Rendezvous was held. A Rendezvous was a meeting of different Euro-Americans and Native Americans who traded, brought their beaver pelts to sell, and had mountain man and warrior contests. Her tribe at first was the Navajo. When she was five years old, she and some other girls were herding sheep. While the churra sheep fed on sagebrush, White River Utes captured Rose. Her descendants disagree as to the kidnappers. Some descendants say it was the White River Utes who kidnapped her, and the others say it was the Arapaho. Nevertheless, little Rose was terrified. The lonely girl's heart ached for her family, especially her mother. Years later, she told of her great sadness, since she wanted to feel like a daughter who belonged to her parents. She never did. The young girl later would not even remember her Navajo name. Rose

Timpanogos tribe of Utes. Rose learned much from the Timpanogos Utes. She learned how to do beautiful beadwork on gloves, gauntlets, moccasins, jewelry, and more.



Rose and her favorite horse. Courtesy Uintah County Library.

Rose did not know the particulars of what happened next, only that she had to go with a White Mormon, Latter-Day Saints (LDS) family in Provo. She was either sold or traded for money or material gain. In Provo, Rose worked for several of the LDS families. One was headed by Aaron Daniels, who had two wives. The polygamous Aaron Daniels was a frontiersman and looked for an opportunity to earn money. He got a contract to build and operate a stagecoach line between Utah and Wyoming. So, Daniels moved his family to Heber and Rose went along with them.

Rose did not forget her Native American heritage, despite what happened. Hannah, Caroline Daniels, and Aaron took Rose in as their daughter and her boys treated her like an adopted sister. We do not know all that went on in the household with two wives, but Rose reported that it was strained. Due to his heavy drinking, Hannah left and went to Wyoming. Rose was sent to the other wife Caroline in Provo. Caroline was the model pioneer housewife. She taught Rose the basics of homemaking and making and sewing

and worked for various families doing domestic service. The longest time she had been with any family was when she lived with the Daniels family. It is not surprising that she kept in contact with them.

According to Kerry Ross Boren, Aaron Daniels was sixty-two years old and Rose nearly 40 years old when they married in 1885. A different story is conveyed in the book, "An Enduring Legacy." It states that Aaron took Rose with him as he mined for gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota for about a year. Then, they went to the Tintic Mining District in the Utah Territory. He worked for several of the mines there. They had four children, with the youngest an infant when the father, Aaron died. To support her children, Rose farmed on their land in the Uintah Basin. Everyone in the Uintah Basin knew the sociable and spirited Rose.

Aaron died in 1896. Rose would live another forty-seven years.

Rose died on the Fourth of July. She was 102 – 103 years old when she died! She had an exceptionally long and varied life. This has been the story of one woman centenarian whose story had been overlooked for so long. We have solved much of the mystery surrounding her life.

Find out more about women of the West by going to our website, [JohnHutchingsMuseum.org](http://JohnHutchingsMuseum.org).

## Bibliography

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