

Daniel H. Wells
October 27, 1814 – March 24, 1891

Daniel Hanmer Wells was born in Trenton, New York, a member of the sixth generation of his family in America. His original immigrant ancestor was Thomas Welles, who arrived in Massachusetts in 1635. A few years after his father's death in 1826, Daniel H. Wells left New York with his mother Catherine Chapin Wells and his younger sister Catherine C. Wells and moved to Illinois.

Daniel Wells arrived in Hancock County, Illinois, in 1835. He lived in Commerce, Illinois which was later renamed Nauvoo and was a major landowner and justice of the peace for several years prior to the arrival of large numbers of Latter Day Saints in 1839.

Although not a member of the Latter Day Saints, Daniel was considered by opponents of the church to be a "Jack Mormon", a term originally applied to non-members who were friendly to or defended the Latter Day Saints. In Nauvoo, he served on the city council and as a judge.

Mobs invaded Nauvoo after the assassination of the church founder Joseph Smith; Daniel defended the city and fought as a Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion, and also provided shelter for evacuees. He was not baptized into the Latter Day Saints Church until August 9, 1846. He migrated to the Salt Lake Valley with the pioneers in 1848.

He was well respected for his integrity and loyal service, he was elected Attorney General of State of Deseret in 1849. Daniel was ordained an apostle of the LDS Church and set apart as Second Counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency of the church after Jedediah M. Grant died in 1856. Although serving as an apostle, Wells was sustained as a Counselor to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a position he held until his death.

On April 6, 1877, Daniel dedicated the St. George Temple and from 1888 to 1891 he was the first president of the Manti Utah Temple.

From 1848 to 1863 he was superintendent of public works for the LDS Church and presided over the continuing construction of the Salt Lake Temple completed 1893 and the Salt Lake Tabernacle completed 1867.

In 1866 he was elected the 3rd mayor of Salt Lake City as a member of the newly formed People's Party; he was re-elected in both 1872 and 1874. In 1871 he was arrested by U.S. marshals on charges related to polygamy.

Wells married Eliza Rebecca Robinson in 1837, she refused to accompany him to Utah in 1848 they later divorced. Between 1849 and 1852 he married six additional wives, in 1852 he married his seventh wife he had many children. His son Heber Manning Wells, was the first governor of the state of Utah, serving from 1896 to 1905.

Daniel H. Wells died in Salt Lake City at the age of 76 and was buried in the Salt Lake City Cemetery. His grave location is Plat – H, Block – 3, Lot 9NROD, Grave – 1, Tier – E.

