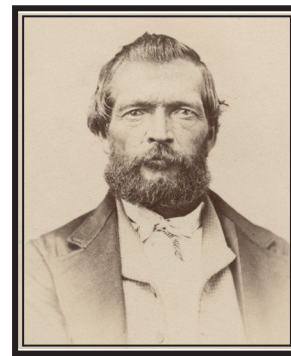


LEWIS ROBISON

Born: July 17, 1827, in Spafford, Onondago, New York
 Age: 29
 Rescuer



On August 3, 1855, Lewis Robison purchased about 20 square miles of land which included Fort Bridger, in Green River County, Utah Territory, from Jim Bridger and his partner, Louis Vasquez. The price was \$8,000. As the new owner of Fort Bridger and a counselor in the mission presidency of the Shoshone Mission,¹ Lewis Robison played an important role in the 1856 rescue. Immigrants and rescuers alike passed this site on the trail.

Redick Allred, a rescuer belonging to the advance party led by Captain George D. Grant, left a record that tells of a few rescuers reaching his supply station at South Pass in early November. Some tried to get him to break camp and return to Salt Lake. Allred wrote:

I declined this proposition, and he said he would return. I advised him to stay for the lives of the company depended upon us. He then said that he moved that as I was President of the Station they center their faith in me that I should get the word of the Lord to know what we must do. To this I objected as he had already said what he would do. They returned next day. I sent a letter by them to the [rescue] companies on the road, for them to come on as fast as the condition of their teams would allow, <he failing to present the letter> but all the companies turned back with them until they got to “Bridger” where Lewis Robinson prevailed on them to stop until he could send a messenger to President Young, the result of which was to turn them all back again with instructions to go until they met Capt. Geo. Grant.

As rescue wagons were coming and going from October to December,² Lewis Robison continued to obtain and follow the counsel of Brigham Young. The original counsel from Brigham Young had been to keep the members of the Hodgett and Hunt wagon companies at Ft. Bridger and Ft. Supply through the winter. Although Brigham Young would soon change this counsel, Lewis Robison was willing to do as asked before he knew of that change. The following letter written to President Young, shows Lewis’s humility and obedience.

Fort Bridger Nov. 27th 1856
 President Young
 Dear Brother

This evening I received your communication by favor of Brother Spery & Foss & was glad to hear from you as I always feel grateful to hear from you. But I must think from the Counsel that you gave the companies, that you have not been rightly informed with regard to this situation & the amount of supplies on hand in this country. I think your informants must have been taking a little opium. Before this reaches you, my communication by Brother Stringam will be there & you will know more of the situation of the back trains than you did when the Express started out & perhaps you may think best to change your present calculations & still take the Emigration in this Winter. I feel as I ever have to carry out your counsel in all things when I have it & when I have no counsel I grovel Blind & do the best I can. Brother John Harvey has just arrived today from the back trains & says that the trains will reach Green River tonight, that they intend to leave all the stock they can there, that their cattle are dying & giving out, from fifteen to 20 per day, & that they cannot reach here without more help & that they have had no Bread nor salt for several days. Three days ago I sent them 800 lbs which they will meet at Green River & today I have forwarded 1000 lbs more which will not be enough to do them here.

I have on hand 1000 lbs more that has been sent out for their supplies & that comprises the stock on hand. I cannot conceive what 4 or 5 hundred People can [spend?] to winter on in this country. You are aware that Fort Supply had to get their supplies from the valley & that they are very limited. They have no beef cattle, not even enough for their own consumption. As for vegetables, they might spare a few bushels perhaps & that is all they have to dispose of. As for this place, I only brought 3000 lbs of Flour from the valley the first of October & We have made a big hole in that. It takes no small quantity to supply a place like this. The few remaining Teams from Fort Supply left today

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to assist the companies on this far. It will be 6 or 8 days before our Brethren reach this place & then they will have to stop. And unless they have help from the valley they cannot Winter in this country.

We feel that we have done all that was in our Power thus far for our Brethren & still we feel to continue in well doing. May the Lord bless us all is the Prayer of your Brother in Christ. [signed] Lewis Robison
[Light editing for readability]

Sources: *Fast Rider on a Wild Wind: The Life and Times of Charlie F. Decker*, 181-83 (transaction documents on sale of Ft. Bridger); various Internet sites on Ft. Bridger; Jesse Haven Journal, in *Remember*, Riverton Wyoming Stake; Church History Library sources available: Journal of Redick Allred (film only); Diary of John Pulsipher; Lewis Robison letter (MS 1234 reel 48 box 23 fd 12).

¹The Shoshone Mission also included Fort Supply, which was about 12 miles south of Fort Bridger. The Church established Ft. Supply for its emigrants in 1853. It is located on the south side of Uinta Co. Rd. 274, about 3 miles southwest of Robertson, Wyoming. In 1856 and 1857 these areas were part of Utah Territory and under the governorship of Brigham Young. They were later surrendered in the settlement of the Utah War, and eventually became part of the State of Wyoming.

²The advance rescue teams from Salt Lake first reached Ft. Bridger on October 12. Supplies and wagons from Bridger were sent with them. Many of these helped bring in the Willie Handcart Company, which reached Bridger on November 2. Rescuer James B. Cole married Lucy Ward of the Willie company at Fort Bridger on that day.

³This same willingness to do whatever was necessary to help the immigrants in spite of the scanty supplies available was expressed by John Pulsipher, the clerk at Ft. Supply: “Nov. 11, Every man present was ready to start with all his teams & seem anxious to do all in their power to help them. It was proposed that we out of our scanty supply send them some feed to save their starving teams. ... Nov 27, Every man was wide awake to do something more to help them that are in trouble. ... About 400 persons are at Bridger without teams to go to the Valley & they are nearly out of provision & we have not the assistance for them. ... Dec. 7, As we were devising means for the support of this last co. of our emigration which we supposed would have to winter here, we all seemed willing to divide our scanty portion of bread with them & do as well for them as we do for ourselves—the news came that teams & flour were on the way to take them to the Valley.

⁴When returning missionary, Jesse Haven, of the Hodgett wagon company came through, he recorded: “Took dinner with Brother Lewis Robinson, the brother that owns the fort.”