



Title: **Hyrum Don Carlos's image in statue of Angel Moroni**
Provenance:

Category: **Document**
Person: **Hyrum Don Carlos Clark**
Date:

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When she was called with her husband to the New York Rochester mission, Sister Dorothy Nielson was told by her grown children, "Now you can tell your Angel Moroni story, Mom." She and her husband, Jack, of the Hunter 2nd Ward, Salt Lake Hunter Stake, were assigned as couple missionaries to serve at the Church historic sites in the Palmyra area.

The statue of the Angel Moroni atop the Hill Cumorah, created by the prominent Norwegian sculptor Torleif Knaphus, has special meaning to Sister Nielson and her family.

During the Depression, her father, Elwin Clark, rented a home in Salt Lake City from Knaphus. Her father was a bricklayer and needed work. He did odd jobs for the sculptor.

Knaphus had been commissioned by the Church to create a statue of the Angel Moroni and was looking for a strong muscled, tall man for the model. Noting the bricklayer's bulging muscles, Knaphus asked if he would pose for the statue. Sister Nielson's father consented and posed for man hours.

When the torso was completed, Knaphus realized that Elwin Clark's face appeared much too young to represent the Angel Moroni and went prayerfully looking for a suitable model for the head.

"While walking down the streets of Salt Lake, he happened to see and began following after the older gentleman with a full beard and a strong, high cheek-boned face," Sister Nielson related. "He was impressed with him as a perfect model for the statue and began following him for a few

blocks."

It was with a great deal of difficulty that the sculptor was able to convince the man that he (Knaphus) was an artist and wanted him to pose. After the sculptor explained that he had been commissioned by the Church to do a statue of the Angel Moroni for Hill Cumorah, the man consented to pose.

A great surprise was in store for both men when they arrived at the studio. Knaphus discovered that the old gentleman he had chosen to model for the head was the father of the man he had used for the torso. Hyrum D. Clark was unaware that his son, Elwin, had been posing for the statue.

"In other words," Sister Nielson said, "both my father and grandfather were the models for the Angel Moroni. And, so you see, coming to Palmyra as a missionary has great significance for me."

Sister Nielson said that story has been told over and over again in her family.

"It's become part of our family heritage," she said. "It's a little known story because brother Knaphus did not keep track of the names of his models. But with my father and grandfather had written of it in their journals."

Written by Kit Poole, LDS Church News contributor and found on ezratclark.org website, under photo gallery section.