

Robert Darius Adams

Robert Dairus "R D" Adams was born 13 January 1881 in Escalante, Iron, Utah Territory.¹ He was the oldest of twelve children of Robert Nelson Adams and Margaret Ann Shirts. Robert's father was the first white child born in Beaver, Utah,² and his mother was the second white child born in Virgin City, Utah.³ His father, a blacksmith, moved the little family to Loa and then Teasdale in Wayne County, Utah. By 1889, they had moved to Springville, Utah, Utah, and on to Heber City, Wasatch, Utah, by 1891.

The family returned to Teasdale by 1893 and were farming there in 1900.⁴ R D married Jessie Ellen Billingsley in 1901 in the Manti Temple, Manti, Sanpete, Utah.⁵ They had ten children; three of whom died at birth. By 1904, R D had moved his family to Marysvale, Piute, Utah, and then to Cedar City, Iron, Utah, by 1906. By 1907, he was advertising his photography business in the Cedar City newspaper.⁶

R D used a travel car to move his business from town to town. At that time, photography was more than just clicking a button. He custom made many of the components of his camera. He loaded his own negatives in the dark with a bottle of light sensitive emulsion, exposing it for the proper amount of time without built-in light meters or automatic settings. Then the development and printing process began.

By 1910, the family had moved to Beaver, where R D and his father were operating a private photography gallery.⁷ That year, R D moved his family to Richfield, Sevier, Utah. By 1918, they were back in Cedar City, and in 1920, he was working as a photographer out of his own home.⁸ He received a letter from a man in California requesting more of his photos of the Utah national parks for a motion picture serial about Utah.⁹ His photographs of Bryce Canyon, Zion, and Cedar Breaks became some of the first postcards sent from these national parks.

By 1930, R D was working as a photographer in his own studio, living with his wife and four children in Hurricane, Washington, Utah.¹⁰ His wife Jessie died in 1940 in Cedar City and was buried in the Hurricane Cemetery.¹¹ The next year, he married Mary Elizabeth Robinson in St George. At this time of life, he was described as five-foot seven inches tall, with gray eyes and gray hair.¹²

R D died 11 June 1956 in St George of acute renal failure from diabetes. He was buried in Hurricane Cemetery.¹³ His wife Mary died in 1980 in St George and was also buried in the Hurricane Cemetery. R D was one of the early photographers of Southern Utah and Nevada. For five decades, he took pictures of individuals, families, street scenes, parades, celebrations, and school children. His son

¹ US WWI Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918; US WWII Draft Registration Cards, 1942.

² *Richfield Reaper*, 2 March 1922.

³ *Richfield Reaper*, 11 March 1926.

⁴ United States Census, 1900.

⁵ Utah Marriages, 1887-1935.

⁶ *Iron County Record*, 3 May 1907, p. 2.

⁷ United States Census, 1910.

⁸ United States Census, 1920; *Richfield Reaper*, 29 December 1921, p. 8.

⁹ *Iron County Record*, 2 January 1920, p. 1.

¹⁰ United States Census, 1930, 1940.

¹¹ Utah Death Certificates, XXXXXX

¹² US WWII Draft Registration Cards, 1942.

¹³ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1956.

Rex, grandson Cory, and great grandson Jon were all photographers.¹⁴ A second great granddaughter, Shallee, is also a photographer.¹⁵

A collection of his photographs may be found at
<http://contentdm.li.suu.edu/cdm/search/collection/adams>



Jessie and R D Adams, on their wedding day in 1901 (image from *Familysearch.org*)

¹⁴ John Adams, at reflectedpixel.on-rev.com/about/index.html

¹⁵ Shallee McArthur, at hometownmemoriesphotography.wordpress.com



R D Adams' photo car (wife Jessie and two children are at right by the phonograph), at Hickman Hotel in Loa, Wayne, Utah, 1905 (image from *Familysearch.org*)

R. D. ADAMS, Photographer.

New Stock of Picture Frame Moulding, Glass, Picture Mats, Etc. Just in.

I am now Prepared to Make Picture Frames of any Size or Design Desired at Lowest Rates.

Outside Orders Filled. Mail Orders Promptly Attended to.

To Secure the Best Possible Results it is Better to Bring Your Pictures to my Place of Business in Cedar City. Courteous Treatment to all.

(*Iron County Record*, 3 May 1907, p. 2)



Mary and R D Adams (image from *Familysearch.org*)



R D's "selfie" taken in front of a mirror in 1948 (image from *Familysearch.org*)¹⁶

¹⁶ Shallee McArthur, at hometownmemoriesphotography.wordpress.com



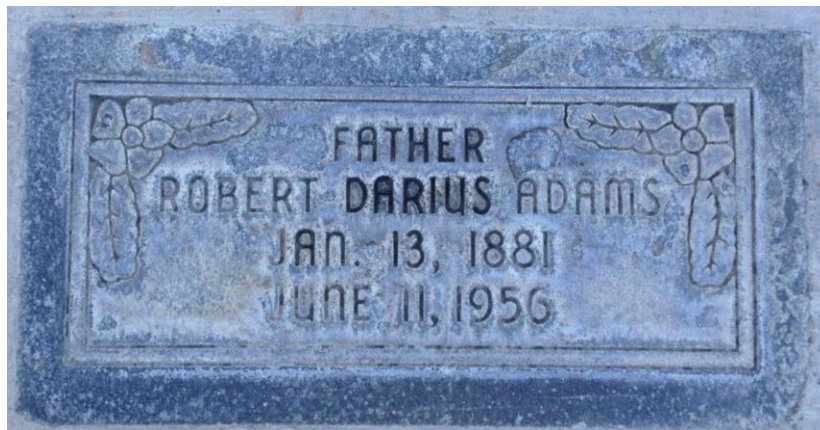
Family of R D [front right] and Jessie Adams (image from *Familysearch.org*)



Robert Darius Adams (image from *Familysearch.org*)



Men standing beside the Hurricane Cannery, 1938; R D Adams is on far left
(image from Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University)



(Image from *BillionGraves.com*)