

EIGHT



SOLOMON WARDELL & ELLEN MCKELL MATHESON

History of Solomon Wardell and His Wife Ellen Mckell Matheson

Written by their granddaughter Afton Whitney Hannig

The only dates I have for this history are those taken from genealogical and church records. Whatever else I write is from memory of stories mother told me years ago before her death. I do not remember the proper sequence of these stories, but because they show the faith and courage and kindness of my grandparents, I will write them as I remember them.

My grandfather, Solomon Wardle (Wardell) was born 20 July 1841 in Hallgreen, Warwickshire, England. He was the eldest of four children born to John and Sarah (Tracy) Wardle or Wardell. His parents were converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1847 and left England for America soon after that time. They lived in Illinois and Iowa for several years, and then came to Salt Lake City, Utah in the S. Louis Company, arriving 19 August 1853. They lived in Salt Lake City one month, and then moved to Parowan, Iron, Utah where they made their home and Solomon grew

to manhood. He learned to be a shoemaker and a beekeeper, and practiced both trades throughout his life.

However, in his early manhood, he took time from his trades to answer the call of the Church leaders to go back along the pioneer trail to help other saints on their trek to the Salt Lake Valley. It was on one of these trips that he met his future wife, Ellen Matheson.

Ellen McKell Matheson was born 7 November 1848 in Newtyle, Farfor, Scotland. She was one of eighteen children born to Daniel and Catherine (Treasurer) Matheson. However, due to measles and other epidemics and tragedies, only Ellen and five of her brothers grew to adulthood. (Note: Other sources state that they had thirteen children.) Her family accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints the year Ellen was born and in due time she was baptized. The story of what is known of her childhood and the journey to America is in the history of Daniel and Catherine Matheson, her parents.

Ellen was a girl of fifteen, just blooming into womanhood in 1862 when she, with her family crossed the plains. On the journey, Ellen got the mountain fever (Typhoid?), and in the critical stage of the illness she was thrown into the Platte River as the lurching wagons were crossing the river. She never fully recovered from this accident and illness and was an invalid most of her life. However, in spite of this and other hardships, she lived a useful and a happy life, and was the mother of eight children.



**Solomon
Wardell**

It was also on the trip across the plains that Ellen met the tall, blue-eyed young man who would later become her husband. He was Solomon Wardle and had been sent by the Church Authorities to meet the company of Saints and assist them on their journey to the Salt Lake Valley. A few years later when Ellen was about eighteen, they were married, making Parowan their home when they were not answering the call of Church leaders to help settle other parts of the west.

I believe it was in the first summer or autumn of their marriage that the following incident occurred. Sol and Ellen were living in a cabin up on the mountain while Sol cut wood or timbres. Sometimes it was necessary for him to be gone overnight or perhaps several days. Food was very scarce and they had no leavening of any kind. But Ellen would cook a slab of unleavened whole wheat bread, cut it in squares and put it in Sol's coat pockets, and that would be his supply of food for the time he would be gone.

On one of these occasions when Ellen was left alone at the cabin she was making soap, having a large kettle of grease and lye bubbling over the fire. While she was stirring and skimming it, a large Indian came to the cabin. He looked in the kettle and thinking it contained molasses, demanded some. Ellen tried to tell him it

was soap, but he shouted "White squaw lie, this sorghum," and grabbing the dipper from her, he took a great mouthful of it. He let out a whoop, and spitting and coughing, he ran into the forest. Ellen was terrified and wondered when he or his people would be back to take revenge on her. In two weeks he was back but not to take revenge. There were still sores around his mouth but in his hand he carried a string of nice trout. Giving them to Ellen he said humbly, "White squaw not lie."

Before the birth of their first child, Ellen and Sol were helping settle Panguitch. It was at the time of the Black Hawk Indian War and while they were there, the Indians went on the warpath and the settlers were called back to Parowan. It was cold and the snow was several feet deep on the mountain. Sol's only conveyance was an old horse, so he put Ellen and their few belongings on the horse and he walked leading the lunging animal through the drifts of snow. As a result of this difficult trip, their baby was born before its time, 12 April 1867, and died the same day.

Sol and Ellen made their home in Parowan for the next ten or twelve years where my mother, Julia, and four other children were born. Mother was born 23 June 1868; John Daniel, 5 January 1870; Elizabeth, 7 August 1872; Mary Ellen, 21 January 1875; and Lydia Jane, 19 May 1877.

My mother, Julia, being the eldest of the children was the cook and housekeeper from the time she was six years old since Ellen was an invalid most of the time.

In the spring and autumn when the sheep herds moved between the winter and summer ranges, Julia and the younger children would go out on the hills and gather wool from the bushes where the sheep had passed. Then Ellen and Julia would cord and spin the wool and make clothing for the family.

Solomon was always at his cobbler's bench making shoes for the family and for the people of the town, or he would be caring for his bees or working his garden or farm. Food was scarce and sometimes the children went out on the foothills to gather sego roots for the family meals.

I do not know when or where the following incident occurred, but it was when the children were small and I believe it was at their home in Parowan. It shows the great tender heart of Solomon. He often played with the children and on this summer day he was in the yard playing with them when a bluebird lit on the fence some distance away. Sol picked up a stone and in fun said, "Watch me hit that bird." The children laughed because their father was a notoriously bad shot. But inadvertently the stone hit the bird and killed it. The bird was tenderly buried and it was a sad affair with Solomon and the children all crying. The kind-hearted father never forgave himself.

The following incident shows how the Lord was watching over this good family. Again I do not know if it happened in Parowan or one of the settlements where they had been called. However, it was when Julia was a girl. She idolized her father and when she could get away from the household chores, she would go to the field with him while he cared for the crops. The field was some distance from their home, and on this occasion, a storm had come up and they were walking home together. Sol always carried his tools on his left shoulder and Julia was walking close to him on his left. Suddenly he moved the ax and other tools from his left to his right shoulder. A moment later a lightning bolt knocked the tools violently to the ground. Had they been on the other shoulder, no doubt Julia would have been killed or seriously injured. So great was the faith of this good man and his family, they always believed a guardian angel or the Lord had inspired Solomon to move the tools to the other shoulder.

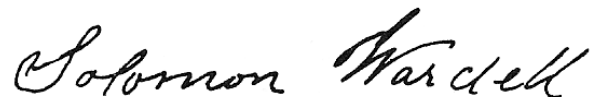
Sometime between 1877 and 1885, Solomon and Ellen received a call to help

settle Snowflake, Arizona. I asked my mother why they did not refuse the call since Ellen was so ill. She said that such a thing never entered their minds, so great was their faith in President Brigham Young as a Prophet of the Lord.

So with many other Saints, they arranged their affairs, and the long journey began which would take them over rugged mountains, across the Colorado River at Lee's Ferry, and over deserts and hills.

Their trip took many weeks longer than expected and the whole company ran out of food. Their plight was desperate so, as was usual with these faithful pioneers, they put their trust in the Lord. The company was called together and they prayed for food to take them to their journey's end. The next morning they hitched up their teams and wagons and continued their journey through a vast meadow in the Arizona Mountains where the green grass grew tall.

All that day a large fat heifer kept joining the company's animals. The men and boys would drive it away but it would return. All day they tried in vain to keep the heifer away from the wagon train. When evening came a council was called and since there was no mark or brand on the animal to show that it belonged to anyone, it was decided this was the answer to their prayers. The heifer was butchered and the Saints rejoiced in having food again.



Solomon Wardell's Signature

As they approached the town of St. Joseph where the United Order was practiced, they saw a strange sight come over the brow of the hill toward them. It proved to be dozens and dozens of loaves of bread and goodies piled high on a huge wheelbarrow. All that could be seen of the town baker, who was pushing the

wheelbarrow, was his high white baker's hat, so high was the bread stacked. Again, the hungry Saints had cause to rejoice. A scout had ridden into the town to tell the plight of the pioneer company. When they arrived in St. Joe they were given a royal welcome and invited into the big town dining room for hearty meals.

After arriving in Snowflake, Solomon and Ellen and their children lived in a dugout, as did many of the other Saints. Each morning the children went out in the fields and gleaned the heads of wheat after the harvesters had passed. Then they would thresh the wheat and grind it in a small hand operated coffee mill and cook it for their breakfast. What was left was used for the other meals along with sego roots and game. The milk was portioned out to them with a tablespoon.

During this sojourn in Snowflake, another child, Solomon Alexander, was born to Sol and Ellen. Because of her illness, Ellen could not nurse the baby. There was one family in the town who had white flour. I believe their name was Smith. Each morning Sister Smith would send one white biscuit over to the Wardle home. It was that day's food for the little baby. Mixed with a little warm milk, it was the only thing in the settlement that would agree with him. That one biscuit would set in the middle of the table like a jewel, with the children circling around the table looking longingly at it. But not one of them would touch a crumb of it because that was all that was keeping their baby brother alive.

I suppose there are in every family descended from pioneers, stories and sayings which come out of the regular hazards of pioneer life. Often these events were tragedies or near tragedies, but in the telling they have brought smiles and laughter. In our own family, whenever we children had ravenous appetites, and it seemed to Mama like she was pouring food into bottomless pits, she would say we had a "take-in" like Mrs. Oakley. This always brought gales of laughter from

us, and if there were friends or strangers among us, it meant a retelling of the story of Mrs. Oakley. If there are descendents of that good woman, I hope they will forgive the telling of the story and realize that we are laughing "with" her and not "at" her. No doubt she and her husband got many a good laugh out of the incident for it was a good trick as long as it lasted, and that was quite a while.

Sol and Ellen were among the victims and the event took place in those difficult days in the pioneering of Snowflake. Food was scarce and what they had was difficult to obtain. In those trying times, there was a couple, Mr. and Mrs. Oakley, who lived in a house surrounded by a high board or slab fence. Mrs. Oakley was supposed to be a very sick woman. Whatever her illness, she seemed to require the very best food and a lot of it. The Saints rallied to the aid of this couple, each family taking its turn and the very best was taken to Mrs. Oakley. If Sol went hunting and brought in game, the choice cuts did not go to the ailing Ellen nor to the hungry Wardle family, but were prepared with care and taken to Mrs. Oakley. Other struggling families took their turns.

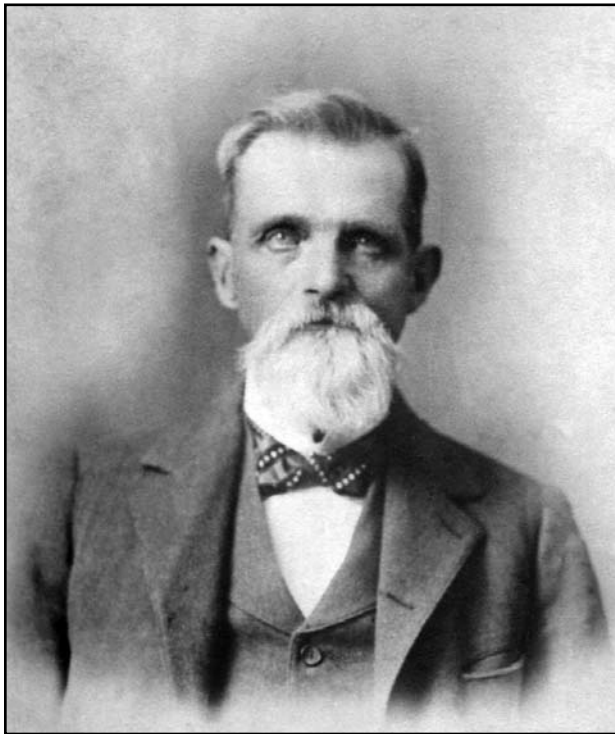
This went on for a long time until one day two good sisters bearing the daily gifts arrived at the Oakley home much earlier than usual, and going unnoticed through the accidentally unlocked gate in the slab fence, they knocked on the door. There was no answer and fearing the poor woman had passed away, they went into the house. She was not there. Making their way to the back yard, they were dumb-founded to find Mrs. Oakley in her nightgown, helping her husband lift the wagon box up on the wheels. Needless to say, there were no more goodies taken to Mrs. Oakley.

I do not know if the following event occurred in the Snowflake mission or another, but this story came down to us from Sol and Ellen.

It seems there was an Indian uprising and the Saints had to flee into the forest for protection. In those days the most prized possession was a feather bed, and the most essential article was a gun.

In the settlement was a Danish couple, and as the Saints hurried for the protection of the forest, Hannah grabbed the feather bed, and her husband took the gun. They scurried from tree to tree, those with guns trying to get a shot at the Indians. Finally, all out of breath, the Danish man said, "Give me the feather bed, Hannah, and you take the gun. I'm so tremble I can't shoot."

So in our own pioneering days when something frightening happened, Mama would calm us down and start the smiles again by saying, "Give me the feather bed, Hannah, and you take the gun. I'm so tremble I can't shoot."



Solomon Wardell Portrait

The Wardells did not remain in Snowflake to make their permanent home. When their mission was completed, they returned to Utah. Evidently they went to Junction over on the Sevier River, for

according to my records, the next child, Sarah Alice, was born there 3 June 1885. I do not know if this was another mission, or if they went of their own accord. I have heard my mother speak of their sojourn there, and I believe it was while they lived there that Sol took the family on an excursion to Fish Lake. I remember what an impression that trip made on my mother and the other children.

After a time, the family returned to their home in Parowan. In February 1887, my mother, Julia, married Alfred Luke Syphus and went to Panaca, Nevada and then to St. Thomas, Nevada, where they were living when Julia received word of the death of her wonderful mother, Ellen, who passed away 9 October 1887. She was laid to rest in the Parowan cemetery near the beautiful Parowan Canyon and hills that the family loved so much, and only a short distance from the home that Solomon had surrounded with beautiful trees, flowers and gardens. Only ten years later, her daughter Lydia was laid beside her.

Solomon was heartbroken after Ellen's death, and although he tried to hold the family together, it was soon broken up. Some of the older ones going off to work, and troubles besetting others.

In 1890, Solomon married Sarah Pamela Holyoak Robb, and two children were born to them, Mattie Lorena (12 February 1892) and Joseph Holyoak (6 September 1893). Later the family moved to Wyoming and we must rely on that branch of the family for further history.

Because of poor transportation in those days, mother was out of touch with her family except for occasional letters. Her sister, Mary, married Christian Ronnow and lived in Panaca, Nevada until her death, 15 July 1952.

Elizabeth (Aunt Lizzie) married John L. Edwards and also lived in Panaca. In researching the old Panaca Ward records, I found that Sol and the children had lived

in Panaca for a time after Ellen's death. I suppose it was at this time that the girls met and married the Panaca boys.

John never married and he was a wanderer. Solomon Alexander (young Sol) moved to Wyoming with his father. He married Sarah Alice Robb.

Ellen's youngest daughter, Sarah Alice, married William McLeod and later Mr. Thompson. She was living in Ely, Nevada at the time of Aunt Mary's death.

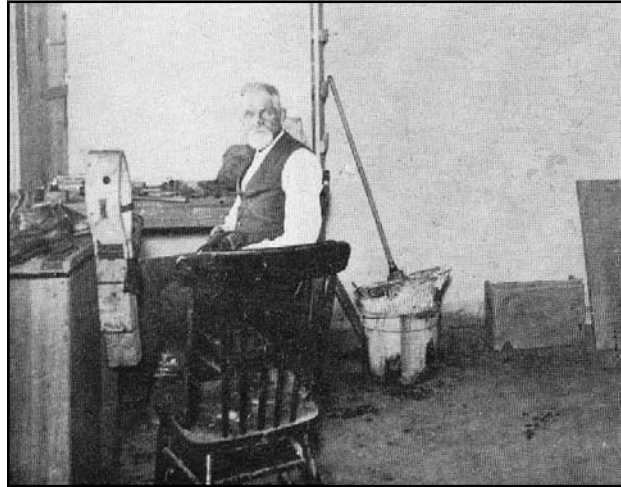
In 1894, my mother, Julia's, first husband passed away leaving her with three small children. In 1897, she married my father, George Luke Whitney, and in due time we four children came along. I being, the youngest.

In 1914, as usual, we were spending the summer on our ranch in the Bunkerville Mountains, twenty miles from St. Thomas, Nevada. In that year, we were delighted when our grandfather, Solomon Wardle came to spend the summer with us.

Still being proficient in bee culture, he soon had a row of beehives at the edge of the orchard. What an exciting time it was for us children when we helped him find and capture a swarm of bees. And we watched with wonder his skill in repairing our shoes.

On the 12th of July, Grandpa Wardle ate his breakfast and went over in the field to cut stakes for the string beans. Unaccustomed to idleness, he insisted on helping around the ranch. After he had eaten his noon meal, Mama could see that he did not feel well, but when she talked to him he said he was all right, only had a little hurt in his chest. She persuaded him to go up in a quiet room on the upper terrace and rest before staking the beans. An hour or two later we heard one of our renters scream, and as we all came running, we saw Grandpa lying on the doorstep.

A few moments later, Solomon had joined his Ellen in the "great beyond" as he lay in his beloved Julia's arms. He had awakened from his nap and as he came out of the door, he had a fatal heart attack. We were all brokenhearted, for we loved him dearly.



*Solomon Wardell in his Shoe Shop
in Cowley Wyoming*

I remember the hurried preparations and the trip into town with Papa and Mama sitting in the wagon seat with we younger children folded into a bed under the seat and the older children sitting beside Grandpa's body in the rear of the wagon. My teenage brother, Fenton, had been sent to town on a galloping horse to take the news so preparations could be made for the funeral and burial. The weather was extremely hot and with none of our modern facilities, it was impossible to take the body to Parowan or wait for his distant loved ones to come.

The journey to town, the funeral, and the burial had to be done quickly and in the cool of the night and early morning. I remember the funeral on the lawn of our St. Thomas home and the burial up on the hill. But most of all I remember the stories my mother told of her beloved parents, Ellen and Solomon Wardle, and of their fine and happy lives in spite of poverty and illness and hardships. As she told the stories, I could feel her great love and respect and

admiration for them in her voice and in the expression of her eyes.

Long after our grandfather passed away, the row of white beehives stood at the edge of the orchard and the old cobblers tools had constant use, but not with the old deft touch. And the things he had planted, grew and grew.

When I visited Parowan several years ago doing research on the Wardle (Wardell) and Matheson lines, a relative told me that Solomon was noted for his green thumb; and that the several homes he had made for his family had been garden spots with trees, vines and flowers as well as the essential vegetable garden. I like to think my love for growing things has come to me from him through my sweet mother. She, like her father, Solomon, always had beautiful flowers growing around her. ■

Jane Tells of Ellen

By Julia Whitney 1940

A story about Ellen McKell Matheson written by a great-granddaughter, Julia Whitney Rawlins.

“I’m on the list of unrewardables of the family.”

This was Mr. Steamer Chest boasting of his usefulness to Jane. She wasn’t a common Jane with mouse-colored hair and plain features. She was a “flaxen-haired, one-time-pretty-faced” wax doll. Although she bore the marks of hard usage, she still carried herself with the dignity and charm of a large wax doll.

Anyone observing would have noted the look of disgust, followed quickly by tolerance, that passed over Jane’s face. She had been in the family longer and had been a more intimate member of the family than had the trunk, but she said nothing. She was thinking of that crisp October day in 1858, when she was sitting in the shop

window, all new and pleasing to the eye. She had been lonely then, but not since.

Steamer Chest became impatient. Why didn’t that Jane say something? His conscience annoyed him, for he was remembering certain things which made him wish he could recall the words just spoken.

He was about to speak when Jane began, “I was thrilled that morning in 1858 when a nice-looking sailor man came in and gave me a critical glance. But the thrill was even greater when Daniel Matheson took me home to his dark-eyed, dark-haired sister.

“Ellen—for that was her name—was eight years old. Daniel Matheson was her father and Catherine Treasurer Matheson, her mother. Ellen’s full name is Ellen McKell Matheson and she was the eighteenth child. At Ellen’s eighth birthday, the Matheson’s were still living at the place of her birth, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Long before this birthday was over, I knew my affection for Ellen would never end. I loved her sweet voice and I could listen to her sing hour on hour and never grow weary.

Ellen’s father came home the night after I arrived. He was a jolly, but deeply thoughtful man. He was educated as a Presbyterian minister, and he traveled about, preaching in one of his several languages that suited the audience.

Since Ellen’s mother worked at a factory, we, with the other children of working mothers, spent our time in a day nursery.

A few months passed. One night a Mr. Albert Carrington came to the house and announced himself as a Mormon missionary. The folks (they were my folks by now because I loved them so) my folks invited him in and he talked with us. We liked to listen to him. He had a nice voice and a sincerity of tone that charmed us. He

and father had many a discussion of the different phases of the gospel, and since we liked his message, we set a date for our baptism to the church.

Ellen took me with them that day and I witnessed a solemn performance. We all felt it was a great step forward. From this time on, the family worked to one end -- "Zion as our Home."

Then in 1861, we were ready to sail. It was the fall that Ellen was eleven. I shall never forget that long, tedious journey with nothing but water and more water on all sides. It was one time that I was thrilled with my position in the family for seasickness just afflicts mankind.

During those months, Ellen and I had plenty of each other's company. Most times it was pleasant company but sometimes we got on each other's nerves. Ellen would often sing for me, so you can imagine that my journey wasn't always tedious. Ellen was growing prettier, her dark hair growing longer.

We landed at New Orleans and came up the Mississippi. This new land was a mystery to us, but it represented a land of success. It was still winter when we arrived at Winter Quarters, and a good family took us in until that time when we could start for Zion.

All went well with us for a time, but as in most families here, sickness entered the home. Ellen was the victim of typhoid fever. I, for one, was discouraged in the greatest sense of the word. It was nearly time to start across the plains, too.

Then a joyous day arrive. Men and wagons from Utah were ready to start and we were too, except for the fact that Ellen was still ill. But it had seemed such a long wait, and Ellen was in favor of leaving with this company, so we went. It was still cold when we started and the ice on many of the rivers had not broken up. This was the case of the Platte River, so the company was

crossing over the ice. But fate was against us. Our wagon broke through, and we were all plunged into the icy water. I never did feel the same after, and it may be said that many anxious hours were spent over Ellen's bedside. It was during this period of affliction that we became well acquainted with Solomon Wardell. He had come to Utah four years before and was now helping the immigrants across the plains. He had been seventeen when he had left England with his parents. He had not quite finished his apprenticeship in England, but he was a fairly good shoemaker.

He came to our wagon often to see how Ellen was and to cheer us up. But when he continued to come after she was well, I began to suspect that I was losing my place in her heart to him. I soon became reconciled to this new condition for he was a fine man.

His parents and he were settled at Parowan. We settled there too. I sometimes suspected a motive, but such is love. Our Parowan home was a one-roomed, log cabin and there was not a great deal of room for me. There was so much to be done that there was no time for me either. In those days, the only time I felt I was needed was when Ellen would have an attack of rheumatic fever caused by her cold dip in the Platte River. At these times she talked with me as in "days of yore."

Ellen and Solomon were ready to be married when she was sixteen. They were married on June 27, 1867. I remember her homespun dress with its tight waist emphasizing the smallness of hers, and the big full skirt.

Although I was sitting upon a shelf of the new cabin built by Solomon's father at the time of the wedding, I have heard the story of that wedding many times. The part enacted at the cabin I saw of course.

A portion of the town's boys -- and not the most gentlemanly portion -- came to the cabin with finely cut horsehair, which they

lavishly spread between the blankets of the bed. After accomplishing this delicious task, they went off to lie in wait for the unsuspecting and helpless pair. Solomon was locked in the shoe shop and Ellen guarded in the cabin. After protesting till she was tired, Mrs. Wardell told me all about it. My, I envied her – I almost wished I had been human, for I was real pretty and surely someone would have had me.

Shortly after the marriage of Ellen and Solomon, Panquitch was being settled, and since Panquitch needed a shoemaker, we were called. The next great marker in our lives. (I felt closer to Ellen now for she enjoyed talking to me while Solomon was at work.) The next marker was that terrible Indian Massacre. We were obliged to pack all our belongings on an old, worn-out mare, our only means of conveyance. We started out in snow up to the horse's chest. We did have the advantage of the frozen snow most of the way.

So we came back to Parowan and our little log cabin was home once again. This was my period of great rejoicing for our home was blessed with children, first Julia Ann, then John, Elizabeth and Mary. I loved children and though each one had his part to play in the breakdown of my appearance, they loved me.

I have always marveled that people didn't seem to appreciate the different way that food was obtained here in Parowan. Back in Scotland, every food seemed tame. Here in Parowan we often went out (sometimes to the detriment of my wax body) and gathered salt from the salt flats by Parowan. A little higher up we gathered saleratus to leaven our bread, wild berries represented the fruit, and wild game the meat. Sugar beets were made into sugar for the household. Later sugar cane was raised and molasses became the chief sweetening.

Speaking of molasses reminds me of an Indian story. You see that leech over there by the stove. Ashes are put in it, water poured over them, and the liquid drained

off and used for lye in soap. One day I was sitting in the shade watching Ellen prepare to make soap. She had put the lye on to heat before adding the fat, when an Indian appeared. Now Ellen wasn't on "Love your Neighbor" terms with Indians, but there was no escape. He came forward, indicated the lye water which had the dark cast of molasses, and said, "White squaw givum Indian peaugament (sweets)." Ellen wishing to live, tried to explain to him that it would burn, "no good for the tummy" and so on. The Indian said, "White squaw lie."

By this time, I was searching for my sleeve so that I might laugh up it. But I did not wait for my sleeve when he scooped up a wooden dipper of this water and drank it, and then rapidly left the country making queer noises.

Ellen didn't rest easy after that. She was sure her life would be ended by this Indian if he lived or by his tribesmen if he died. Six weeks passed and he came back. He carried with him a string of twelve or thirteen speckled trout, and his mouth, I noticed, was not what it used to be. He presented the fish to Ellen with, "White squaw no lie. Heap good squaw." He promised her all the wild game she could use, and he kept his promise. Besides this he gave Ellen the name "White Mother."

Once again Solomon's trade led him to a new settlement. He was called to Snowflake, Arizona. We started out with plenty of provisions for the trip, but since we had not planned on a two months' trip, our food ran out. You can imagine our state of mind. There we were in the winter on the road alone, and no food. We solved the problem by calling on the horses and taking their bran from them. As luck would have it, we arrived during the coldest winter in history. Food in this country was scarce this year. Maxcall, a wild plant, furnished food for four days at one time. Grain was among the exceedingly great number of "have nots" at this time.

We lived here three years. Ellen's health was too poor to permit a longer stay, and the food didn't help her condition. Therefore, we came back to Parowan.

In all these years, I was very happy, for there were children, and I felt life was worth living because I was needed. Lydia, Solomon and Sarah Alice had joined our ranks. Of all the children, I loved Mary the most. You ask why? She was always into trouble and she needed me to comfort her. She has caused me much misery, not only physically, but mentally as well.

I'll never forget the time when she was two and a small irrigation ditch just about claimed her as a victim. Later when she nearly choked to death on a button she had swallowed, I thought I would go wild. Chest, dear, I know that as much as she loves me and I love her, that she will be the cause of my death.

I have had a grand life, have I not? But I'm tired. I think I shall go to sleep. It is

great of you to listen so patiently." With these words Jane fell asleep, and the chest sat reflecting on what he had just heard.

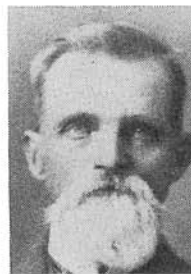
Epilogue

Some time later, when Julia Ann was going through the contents of the trunk, she found a letter by it. In this letter she found this paragraph: "Jane was right when she said that Mary would be the death of her. The day after our conversation, Mary took her out in the fields under that horrid July sun. When Mary came back without Jane, I knew that her hour had come. A few days later Mary came in with the remains of Jane. It was a sad day for all." ■

Solomon Wardell and Ellen McKell Matheson

We have learned a few additional interesting facts about Solomon and Ellen (Nellie) from The Matheson Clan compiled by Veldron and Leslie Matheson

Solomon Wardell & Ellen McKell Matheson's Children



Solomon Wardell



Ellen McKell Matheson



Julia Ann Wardell



Elizabeth Thorton Wardell



Mary Ellen Wardell



Solomon Wardell



Sarah Alice Wardell

We know that Solomon went back to Florence, Nebraska to help Saints cross the plains on several occasions. He was approximately age 21. On one of these trips he met Ellen McKell Matheson who he married 3 years later.

From Alexander Matheson's journal (who later became Solomon's brother-in-law), we learn that the next year he crossed back across the plains to assist another group of emigrants.

Alexander states, "About the middle of March, 1863, Apostle Erastus Snow of St. George, received a call from President Brigham Young to send a train of 40 wagons back to Florence, Nebraska, to bring a number of emigrants to Utah. Apostle Snow received the letter late at night. Early the next morning, he called on me to go as a teamster, which I cheerfully did. I was the first man he called on."

"There were four mounted horsemen who guarded the cattle at night. Erastus McIntyre, Solomon Wardell, Bill Lytle, and William Alexander. There were four yoke of oxen to each wagon."

"We left St. George on April 1, 1863. We arrived at the Mississippi River where we waited six weeks for the emigrants to come 200 miles up the river. We started the return trip about July 24th, and we out-traveled every other ox train on the plains that year. We were called, 'Hell Saving Dixie.'"

"As an example of our energy, every man would have his eight head of oxen picked out of over 300 head and ready to start in twenty minutes from the time they were driven into the corral. This of itself was no small matter. Everything was well ordered and good counsel was always given and generally accepted. Prayers were never neglected, no matter how busy we were."

In those days, there were enough discomforts in crossing the plains that very few people wanted to return. Obituary

notices often said, 'She walked all the way across the plains.' Quite so, as there were twelve persons to each wagon. Due to hauling their bedding and luggage, the chances to ride were negligible."

In Alexander Matheson's journal, he talked about when the pioneers left Parowan to settle Panguitch. They went to Panguitch in April 1864. Some of the original settlers included Daniel and Alex Matheson. I suspect that Daniel's wife Catherine was with them. I also would think that Ellen "Nellie" was with them. The pioneers were in Panguitch from 1864 until May 8, 1866 when they were evacuated because of the Black Hawk wars.

Solomon and Ellen "Nellie" were married in Parowan on June 29, 1865. Solomon and Ellen "Nellie" were married at the home of John Wardell (Solomon's father) by Thomas Devonport in Parowan on June 29, 1865. Witnesses were William Gurr and John Wardell.

In Panguitch, "Some very enjoyable dances were held with music provided by John and Julia Lowder, with Sid Littlefield and Solomon Wardell as fiddlers; John S. Hyatt was caller and master of ceremonies. There were no evening dresses, but everyone dressed in their best as befitted the occasions. The hall was lighted with a few precious candles. Occasionally there would be a minstrel show and other forms of entertainment. There were a good number of fine singers in Panguitch; Lydia (Alexander's wife) with her sweet singing voice was one of them. A choir led by Thomas Gunn added much to the enjoyment. The only amusements were the simple ones that the settlers could originate themselves."

The tremendous difficulties that they faced during these years is depicted by the story of Solomon's violin. A granddaughter stated, "My grandfather did play the violin. He played for dances. My mother tells me that during a trying period he traded his violin for a barrel or sack of flour."

Solomon was a shoemaker and proprietor of his shoe shop. His Church ordinances and ordinations include:

*Elder (Parowan Early Records) no date
Seventy (membership received in Panaca Ward states
Seventy, 1888)*

*Endowment, April 17, 1871, Endowment House
Church Service: Worked for kindred dead in the St.
George Temple.*

“So great was Ellen and Solomon’s faith in the church that they heeded each Church call.”■

Family Group Record for Solomon Wardell

1

Husband		Solomon Wardell		
<small>LDS Ordinance Data</small>				
Born	20 Jul 1841	Hall Green, Warwickshire, England	B 8 Aug 1974	OAKLA
Christened	1 Aug 1841	Shirley, Warwickshire, England	E 16 Oct 1974	OAKLA
Died	12 Jul 1914	Whitney Ranch, St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada		
Buried	13 Jul 1914	St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada		
Father	John Wardell (1815-1891)		SP 1 Nov 1974	OAKLA
Mother	Sarah Care Tracey (1815-)			
Marriage	29 Jun 1865	Parowan, Iron, Utah	SS	
Wife		Ellen Mckell Matheson		
Born	7 Dec 1848	Dundee, Angus, Scotland	B 25 Oct 1967	SLAKE
Christened			E 17 Apr 1871	EHOUS
Died	9 Oct 1887	Parowan, Iron, Utah		
Buried		Parowan, Iron, Utah		
Father	Daniel (Or Donald) Matheson (1801-1884)		SP 12 Mar 1968	SLAKE
Mother	Catherine Treasurer (1804-1896)			
Children				
1	M	Solomon Wardell		
Born	12 Apr 1866	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B	
Christened			E	
Died	12 Apr 1866	Parowan, Iron, Utah	SP 26 Oct 1882	SGEOR
Buried				
Spouse			SS	
2	F	Julia Ann Wardell		
Born	23 Jun 1868	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B Jun 1876	
Christened			E 26 Oct 1882	SGEOR
Died	26 Jul 1950	Hurricane, Washington, Utah	SP 26 Oct 1882	SGEOR
Buried	Jul 1950	Overton, Clark, Nevada		
Spouse	Alfred Luke Syphus Sr. (1861-1894)		SS 17 Feb 1887	SGEOR
Marr. Date	17 Feb 1887 - St. George, Washington, Utah			
Spouse	George Luke Whitney (1874-1952)	10 Jan 1897 - St. George, Washington, Utah	SS DNS	
3	M	John David Wardell		
AKA	Jack			
Born	5 Jan 1870	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B 22 Sep 1878	
Christened			E 7 May 1966	SGEOR
Died	29 Jan 1939	Lone Pine, Inyo, California	SP 26 Oct 1882	SGEOR
Buried		Mt. Whitney Cem., Lone Pine, Inyo, California		
Spouse			SS	
4	F	Elizabeth Thornton Wardell		
Born	7 Aug 1872	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B 22 May 1984	OGDEN
Christened			E 5 Jul 1984	OGDEN
Died	15 Feb 1948	Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah	SP 15 Sep 1984	OGDEN
Buried		Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Spouse			SS	

Family Group Record for Solomon Wardell

2

Children (cont.)				
5	F	Mary Ellen Wardell		
Born	21 Jan 1875	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B	2 Jun 1965
Christened			E	1 Jul 1965 SGEOR
Died	15 Jul 1952	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	SP	BIC
Buried		Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Spouse			SS	
6	F	Lydia Jane Wardell		
Born	19 May 1877	Parowan, Iron, Utah	B	21 Mar 1887
Christened			E	1 May 1900 SGEOR
Died	11 Nov 1897		SP	BIC
Buried				
Spouse			SS	
7	M	Solomon Alexander Wardell		
Born	21 May 1880	Snowflake, Navajo, Arizona	B	12 Sep 1889
Christened			E	9 Jul 1920 LOGAN
Died	6 Jan 1945	Billings, Yellowstone, Montana	SP	BIC
Buried				
Spouse			SS	
8	F	Sarah Alice Wardell		
Born	3 Jun 1885	Junction, Piute, Utah	B	3 Feb 1981 IFALL
Christened			E	18 Feb 1981 IFALL
Died	31 May 1962	Yerrington, White Pine, Nevada	SP	BIC
Buried		Ely, White Pine, Nevada		
Spouse			SS	

