

**WILLIAM RALPHS AND HIS BROTHERS**

**JOSEPH, RICHARD AND THOMAS**

**JOSEPH RALPHS:**

**STOUTHEARTED PIONEER**

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# WILLIAM RALPHS AND HIS BROTHERS JOSEPH, RICHARD AND THOMAS

by Carol M. Christensen

(a great granddaughter of William's son, Joseph and Ann Cable)

The family of **Benjamin Ralphs** and **Mary Edwards** lived in the town of **Wollerton**, **Hodnet**, **Shropshire**, **England**. **Shropshire** is the center of three counties in **England** that border on **Wales**. **Hodnet** is in the north, northeastern portion of **Shropshire**. This area, the "Potteries" consists of numerous scattered villages over about ten square miles and is noted for pottery manufacturing which is the "most important and extensive in the kingdom. Colored china of all sorts and of exquisite taste and beauty" was manufactured in **Shropshire** as well as earthenware that imitated **Wedgewood China!** (**Lewis' Topographical Dictionary**)

In early 1840 **Wilford Woodruff**, an apostle and missionary for **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints**, arrived in the area of the **Potteries** and surrounding counties. In his words, "the sick were healed, devils were cast out, and the lame made to walk." Specifically, he mentioned one lady who had not walked for eleven years. She was carried into the water and baptized. Then, during the confirmation, her lameness was rebuked in the name of the Lord, and she was commanded to arise and walk. The next day she walked through the center of town, and never again used a staff or crutch."

Even with evidence of these mighty miracles, life was not easy for those choosing baptism. The Millennial Star states, "More or less are baptized every week although the ice has to yield its natural claims and step aside to accommodate them." Imagine having to break the ice in order to be baptized! There were also many instances of persecution. On one occasion when the saints were holding a meeting a mob threw gravel on the roof and against the windows while hooting at them. As the meeting dispersed "the mob supplied the Saints on their way home with plenty of mud and contumely" (insulting rudeness). In the same article, **Levi Richards** states, "More or less of the Saints are turned out of employ and out of their houses for obeying the Gospel." This was a time of "a flood of opposition unparalleled in the history of men."

"Lies, Slanders, Misrepresentations in all their varied forms, have been heralded forth from the press and the pulpit, and have come in upon

the world like a flood of water out of the mouth of the dragon, to stop the progress of truth, but all in vain." (**Millennial Star**)

Amidst persecution, many of the people from the **Potteries** recognized the truth and were baptized. **Elder Cordon** wrote from the **Potteries** "that the gift of healing the sick has been in several instances been made manifest in a powerful manner and the kingdom of God is rolling forth in majesty and power." On **February 27, 1841** the **Potteries** reported that 26 members had been baptized in the two preceding weeks. (This coincides with the time **William** and **Thomas** were baptized.)

Among these early converts to the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** were four sons of **Benjamin Ralphs** and **Mary Edwards**: **Joseph** (christened Jan. 8, 1810), **Richard** (christened Sep 8, 1812, baptized early 1842), **William Benjamin** (born May 16, 1816; baptized Feb. 1, 1841) and **Thomas** (born July 22, 1819; baptized Feb. 12, 1841). Three months after his baptism, **William** married **Elizabeth Brooks** May 10, 1841. **Thomas** also had a sweetheart, **Sarah Johnson** who worked in a pottery with him. (He molded the clay and she decorated it). Although **Thomas** urged her to marry, **Sarah** was desirous of first going to **America** and joining the **Saints**. Meanwhile, **Thomas** was called and served a mission in **England** prior to their departure.

There must have been a spirit of adventure, and the hope of a better life with a new religion and dreams of a great new country; yet how heart wrenching to leave family and friends and all that was familiar in an area where few had the luxury of an education to be able to correspond with those remaining in **England**. Leaving behind their parents, their oldest brother, **John** (christened 3 Jan 1808) and their only sister and youngest member of the family, **Mary** (born Dec 3, 1821), as well as the grave of an infant brother, **George** (christened 10 Mar 1815 and buried 18 Mar 1815. Burial records show he was 3 weeks old at time of death)—they crossed the frigid and turbulent **Atlantic** and landed at **New Orleans**, where they took a river

boat up the Mississippi to Nauvoo in the spring of 1842.

Ironically, as baptisms increased, a drastic change occurred in the Potteries. About a year after their departure, this article appeared in a Nottingham newspaper:

“A few years ago, commercial prosperity was to be seen everywhere. One hundred thousand inhabitants occupied this district; merchants, shopkeepers, potters and other labourers. A few years ago no district was more flourishing and prosperous; but alas! How changed the scene! Her halls of commerce are tenantless—her shops many of them closed, and those who are open without the signs of business about them....(Nottingham Mercury, 1843)

This article from “The Wasp,” a Nauvoo Newspaper” illustrates the tide of emigration to Nauvoo about the time the Ralphs arrived there.

“The emigration to our city is daily increasing. Some three or four weeks ago, it will be remembered, some hundred and fifty or two hundred emigrants arrived on the AERIAL from England accompanied by Elder Lyman Wight and eighty or ninety more from Mississippi. This was the first company of English emigrants that landed here this spring. Since that time, there has been daily accessions made of our population, both from England and the Eastern States. Last Wednesday, nearly one hundred fifty English arrived on the LOIZA—the AMARANTH, on the same day, we understand brought sixty more. We witness the tide of emigration with feelings of satisfaction. It speaks well for the prosperity of our city.”

The AERIAL, the LOIZA and the AMARANTH were Mississippi River Boats. It is likely that the Ralphs were passengers on one of these three River Boats.

The four brothers arrived in Nauvoo together with other relatives. **Elizabeth Brooks Ralphs** likely accompanied her husband, William Benjamin. **Eliza** and **Elisha Ralphs** likely emigrated at this time but their exact relationship is uncertain. However, they later accompanied Richard across the plains, then to California. Also, **Sarah Johnson** emigrated at this time and married Thomas Ralphs in Missouri May 10, 1842 (the first anniversary of the marriage of William and Elizabeth). Why had they waited so long to marry! Being extremely seasick on the long ocean voyage, Sarah would have appreciated a husband to strengthen and comfort her there. Now, their future looked bright among the saints in Zion!

Nauvoo, the Beautiful! What a glorious place to live! A Methodist minister visiting Nauvoo wrote, “I was surprised to see one of the most

romantic places that I had visited in the west. Instead of being in Nauvoo of Illinois, among Mormons I was almost willing to believe I was in Italy at the city of Leghorn, which the location of Nauvoo resembles very much.” Furthermore, the town was alive with more business and employment than he had seen. No signs of immorality, drunkards, or ruffians could be found in Nauvoo. In short, “I heard not an oath in the place, I saw not a gloomy countenance; all were cheerful, polite and industrious.”

While in Nauvoo, these families were intimately associated with Joseph Smith and other early Church leaders. Thomas and Sarah even lived across the street from the Prophet, Joseph. Records show that William and Elizabeth as well as Thomas and Sarah Johnson all received Patriarchal Blessings from John Smith on Sep. 15, 1845. Thomas and Richard Ralphs were members of the 31st Quorum of Seventy that was organized October 26, 1845.

Richard, Joseph and Thomas were potters, and were part of a company making fine earthenware china in Nauvoo. The following advertisement appeared in the Nauvoo Neighbor (a weekly newspaper) for a period of six months beginning June 4, 1845:

“The Potters Association”

“The undersigned would inform the citizens of the City of Joseph and the public generally that we are now manufacturing of the best material and have on hand a large assortment of Earthenware, a few yards east of the Temple on Knight Street, such as Pitchers, Bowl, Plates, Dishes, Cups and Saucers, Chambers, Peppers and Salts, Nappes, Mugs, etc., which will be sold wholesale and retail for Cash or Country Produce, cheaper than can be purchased on the Mississippi, of the same quality. We boast of the best material and best workman the United States can afford, being English Potters and having worked in the most extensive manufactories in England.

Elijah K. Fuller, Pres.	Joseph Ralphs
Richard Taylor Steele	Thomas Ralphs
William Box	Alfred Cordon
Richard Ralphs	John Bourne, Clerk

Tragedy struck the Ralphs families as their older brother, **Joseph** was struck by lightning and killed while walking on a Nauvoo street. “The Nauvoo Neighbor” August 20, 1845 reports:

“Killed by lightning” A severe thunderstorm

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visited Nauvoo in the morning. “A man by the name of Ralph (Joseph) was killed by lightning this morning on Parley Street. The shaft struck him on the head and passed off at his feet, as he was walking the street. Others were knocked down”. What a blow to the remaining brothers who had all sacrificed much for the gospel’s sake! Joseph was just 35 years old when laid to rest in the Old Mormon Cemetery in Nauvoo.

June 27, 1844 brought the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and his brother, Hyrum. The following day their bodies were met in Nauvoo by a sorrow-smitten throng of several thousand people. The procession moved slowly into the city, amid lamentations of the people, to the Nauvoo Mansion. Among others, Dr. Willard Richards addressed the ten thousand people gathered and admonished them “to keep peace;” he had pledged his honor and his life for their good conduct. The people then “with one united voice resolved to trust to the law for a remedy of such a high-handed assassination, and when that failed, to call upon God to avenge them of their wrongs.”

Sarah recounted to her descendants that she viewed the mortal remains of the Prophet, Joseph. (Can we really imagine the depths of their sorrow at the loss of not only a personal friend and neighbor, but a Prophet of the Lord who had seen God in this dispensation!)

Yet, the saints continued to be guided. Sarah told of being present at the meeting when the mantle of Joseph Smith fell upon Brigham Young. “If Joseph had arisen from the dead and again spoken in their hearing, the effect could not have been more startling than it was to many present at that meeting; it was the voice of Joseph himself; and not only was it the voice of Joseph which was heard, but it seemed in the eyes of the people as if it were the very person of Joseph which stood before them. A more wonderful and miraculous event than was wrought that day in the presence of that congregation we never heard of. The Lord gave his people a testimony that left no room for doubt as to who was the man chosen to lead them.” (George Q. Cannon)

Numerous volunteers labored relentlessly constructing the Nauvoo Temple. (It is possible that these brothers were among the many who assisted in the erection of this temple.) Thomas and William each received their endowments on February 7, 1846, the last day the Nauvoo temple was open for endowments. Sarah would have been

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there also but she had given birth to her second child just two days prior and was unable to attend. William told his children stories of how he was with others in the Nauvoo Temple when mobs came and drove them out.

While living in Nauvoo, the Ralphs endured all the trials, sufferings and persecutions common to the early Church members. One Saint described circumstances this way: “Abuses, persecutions, murders and robberies were practiced upon us by a horde of land pirates, with impunity, in a Christian republic and land of liberty (while the institutions of justice have either been too weak to afford us protection or redress, or else they have been a little remiss) have brought us to the solemn conclusion that our exit from the United States is the only alternative by which we can enjoy our share of the elements which our Heavenly Father created free for all.”

Amidst the persecutions, the Saints organized themselves for the trek West. They were poor and it took time for the Ralphs to accumulate enough resources.

It was a true test of faith to leave their homes, an established pottery business, the temple, and what seemed to be all of their dreams to follow a new prophet into a desert of the unknown. Perhaps they received comfort from Brigham Young’s statement about their leaving. “Our homes, gardens, orchards, farms, streets, bridges, mills, public improvements, we leave as a monument of our patriotism, industry, economy, uprightness of purpose, and integrity of heart; and as a living testimony of the falsehood and the wickedness of those who charge us with disloyalty to the Constitution of our country, idleness, and dishonesty.”

Having been driven from Nauvoo, these faithful brothers became divided by a barrier of physical distance. The William Ralphs’ lived in Burlington, DeMoines Co., Iowa for a couple of years while his brother, Richard and family moved to Joplin, Jasper Co., Missouri. Thomas and Sarah resided in Bonaparte, Van Buren Co., Iowa by April 19, 1848 where their son Ephraim was born. Later, they arrived in Kanessville and became members of the Fifth Company of Pioneers. Eventually, all three families made the long trek to “Zion.”

**Richard and Mary Ralphs** had two children in Joplin, Jasper Co., Missouri. A daughter, Martha was born in 1848 and a son, George A. was born September 23, 1850. They crossed the plains in the

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Second James J. Jepson Company of Pioneers “which crossed Iowa with teams to avoid the dangers of the Missouri River.” They arrived in Salt Lake City about September 10, 1852. Another son, John C. was born in 1853 likely in Provo, Utah.

In 1851, one hundred and fifty families were sent from Salt Lake to found a colony or a Stake of Zion in San Bernardino, California. The object of locating a colony at this point was to keep open a line of communication with some seaport. A great ranch was purchased and a Stake organized. It was while this colony was flourishing that Richard, Mary and family relocated in San Bernardino. Here they had five more children born to them: Walter B. in 1853; Mary in 1857; Oscar Newell in August, 1859; William in 1862; and Priscilla in 1865.



**William Benjamin Ralphs**

However, Brigham Young recalled the members to Utah in the autumn of 1857 to take part in the threatened war with the United States. Think for a moment of the dedication this would have taken: leaving the lush, prosperous valley of California where wheat sold for \$5 per bushel to return to the arid desert of Utah to risk possible death in the prospects of a war with the United States! Is it any wonder that only the most valiant obeyed, selling their lands for whatever they could get and returning to Utah? Is it any wonder that Richard and Mary chose to stay in California? During this time, Richard continued to return to Salt Lake at least every six months to attend a meeting of the Sevens.

Richard's occupation is listed as a Brick Mason

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on the 1860 and 1870 census. He died September 15, 1874. His family started the Ralphs Grocery Chain. As far as is known, none of his posterity have remained in the church—What a tremendous price for disobeying the prophet once even though a multitude of other saints chose to stay in California, too!

**William Benjamin and Elizabeth Brooks**  
Ralphs had three children in Nauvoo: **Mary Ellen** in 1842; **Samuel** and **Sarah** each were born then died in Nauvoo. After being driven from Nauvoo, another son, **William** was born in Burlington, DeMoines Co., Iowa in 1847. He lived only nine days. Finally, **Joseph** was born July 10, 1849—and he LIVED! Imagine the joy of having a son that lives after three who died so tiny!



**Elizabeth Brooks**

The following year, 1850 this family of four—the parents, eight year old Mary and one year old Joseph successfully crossed the plains. As they made camp, these protective parents tied Joseph to the wheel of the wagon so that he would not wander away or get lost. With the tragic loss of so many babies, they could not risk losing Joseph! And yet as tiny as he was, Joseph hated being restricted so, and remembered this all of his life!

Shortly after their arrival, they lived in the Eighth Ward in Salt Lake. During the grasshopper plague, many people almost starved. Each morning, William, Mary and Joseph would take a spade to dig Indian Roots and Sego Lilies for food. With no shoes, even in the winter they trudged barefoot

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leaving the snow red from their bleeding feet! It is no wonder that William became a shoemaker!

Demand for shoes was far greater than the ability to supply them, and tanning the leather was a very lengthy process. First, lumber had to be cut and hauled from the mountains so the bark could be scraped for use in the tanning vats. Because of the tremendous need for footwear, half-tanned leather was removed from the vats to make shoes and boots. Of course this didn't produce top quality footwear—wet weather made them loose and flabby and dry weather caused them to shrink and get hard. Many boots and shoes were even made of the green hides, leaving the hair on the inside. Any type of footwear was almost a luxury item.

William was ordained a Seventy in April, 1852. While remaining in this great city, four more children were born here: **Thomas** who died at ten months; **Nephi** died at birth; **Emily** and **Parley Pratt** both LIVED! (It isn't certain what particular incident occurred that caused these parents to name their son for Parley P. Pratt, but it is known that Parley Pratt was the Mission President in England at the time the Ralphs brothers joined the church.)

William enlisted and served in the Echo Canyon trouble. Bro. William Hitchcock, a neighbor described it this way: "The U.S. government was not satisfied with the troubles the Mormons had to suffer in the East, so they sent Johnson's Army out west to exterminate them here too. During the winter, they arrived at and camped in Echo Canyon, just east of Salt Lake. It was a hard winter and they were short on supplies and nearly starved. It is said they had to kill some of their animals to stay alive themselves.

"During this time a small band of Mormons, appearing as soldiers marched continuously on a knoll overlooking the army camp. They made it appear as though there were great numbers of them, so much so that Johnson's Army was glad to retreat."

This family lived in South Cottonwood for a time, then by 1860 had moved to American Fork where the last of Elizabeth's children, **John Heber** was born. (Census records show them living in Alpine in 1860, Pleasant Grove in 1870-80, and American Fork in 1900. Because of the location of property in the county between American Fork and Pleasant Grove, it seems logical that the property could have remained the same, but they were censused in different districts. It is also possible

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that they moved numerous times.) Legal papers show that at the time of his death, William owned a mere 8 acres of ground at 4230 West on 6800 North (west side of the road) in American Fork. The current owner (over 100 years later in 1994) describes the land as "lakebottom soil with bottomless topsoil that will grow anything. Artisan water underneath brings a water table that requires little other watering of the crops and yet has never become swampy or too wet." (Sounds a bit like "Camelot!") The land is level with majestic mountains rising in the background. What a spectacular sight! He also owned a few acres of grassland a short distance away.

As times began to prosper, William travelled to California to visit his oldest daughter, Mary. While there, his beloved wife, Elizabeth suddenly took sick and died January 22, 1863. With the previous loss of five of his ten children had he not been tried sufficiently? How would he now manage to raise his family and make a living? Because of transportation difficulties, he was unable even to return home for the funeral, and when he finally arrived, his large family of children had been farmed out to various family and friends. What a lonely and discouraging time for William! Although family traditions suggest the children were raised by others, the 1870 census shows Joseph, Emily, Parley and John all living with their father, at least at that time.

Later, he found a helper in **Mary Ann Hansen Johnson**. Census records show she was a neighbor to William, a widow, and had arrived from Denmark in 1868, probably with her husband. It is likely that William helped raise her five young children and treated them as his own. Mary Ann's children were **Christian Johnson** (born abt 1857), **Anna Johnson** (b. abt. 1860), **Jacob Johnson** (b. abt. 1864), **Carolina Johnson** (b. abt 1855 or 1859) and **Mary Ann Johnson** (b. Oct. 17, 1870) Her youngest daughter, Mary was listed on the ward records as "Mary Ann Ralphs" but in his will as a stepdaughter, "Mary Ann Johnson." A son, **William Benjamin** was born to William and Mary Ann May 17, 1872.

Three of his sons migrated to Castle Valley in the early 1880's. Joe, the oldest, homesteaded 160 acres in the meadows between Ferron and Molen and divided this in thirds for himself and younger brothers, Parley and John. In January, 1884, Will Ward records in the numerous areas they lived

A multitude of other sources many of which proved

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Iiam arrived in Ferron for the wedding of his son, Parley then spent the winter with Joe and Mandy. (John and Edrie had married a couple weeks earlier but neglected to notify anyone.) Parley's wife, Hannah recounts how at their wedding "William was a great entertainer and sang songs and did the clog dance. We sang and danced all night!" Wouldn't it be fun to have listened to him sing those songs and watch him dance!

Late in July, 1893 a telegram brought devastating news about his precious daughter, Mary—his only child for the first seven years of her life, and who had brought him so much joy and comfort. He had been in California with Mary when word arrived of his wife's sudden death, and Mary had cared for Parley when he had been ill. Now, Mary had been murdered! Her husband, Will Hunter—murdered. Their only daughter—murdered—all by the daughter's estranged husband, Jack Craig. Miraculously, Mary's two young granddaughters had been saved!

Mary and Will's daughter had serious marital problems so had moved back home with her two daughters. It happened that Joe's wife, Mandy had gone to California to visit her sister. While there, Mandy and her sister, Tena went to see Mary and family. In the morning of a gorgeous, sunny, summer day their joy was interrupted by **Jack Craig**, the estranged husband of Mary's daughter. Threats of violence erupted in a hideous scene before this unwelcome intruder could be expelled.

Later in the day as they all sat on the front veranda, Jack Craig returned. Thinking only of the safety of the two precious little girls, Mandy grabbed them, tore through the house, out the back door at lightning speed and hid in the cornpatch. Gunshots rang out! Then another person ran into the cornfield. This time

Tena had escaped after witnessing three murders. Anxiously, they waited to hear the murderer leave, then Mandy and Tena had the sorrowful duty of comforting the little ones then contacting authorities and family. Tena stayed in the Governor's Mansion for Witness Protection till Jack Craig could be located, tried, and convicted. He later committed suicide in prison. The girls were raised by other family members. Sorrowfully, William and his older sons, Joe, Parley, and John rode the train to California for the triple funeral, and to comfort Mary's surviving sons, **Joseph, George and Richard Hunter.**

William succumbed to peaceful slumber

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April 20, 1900 and is buried in the American Fork cemetery beside his daughter-in-law, **Melinda Shelley Ralphs** who had married his son, Benjamin September 18, 1891 and died March 14, 1898. The Pioneer Cemetery where Elizabeth is buried was no longer in use.

Mary Ann continued to live on the home-  
stead of 8 acres until her death September 16, 1915.

In his final will, William left equal amounts to his own children as well as to the children of his wife, Mary Ann. This seems to indicate the great love he had for all children, and his complete acceptance of Mary Ann's children as his own. A stepson, Jake Johnson while sheriff of Pioche, Nevada wrote, "William Ralphs, while living did not owe anyone a cent." He also instilled this principle of integrity in his children. Through all of the sorrows and heartaches that plagued his life, the vision of him singing and clogging all night at his son, Parley's wedding comes to mind! Could this be how he coped with the tragedies in his life? Despite personal devastations, he brought love and joy into the lives of others.

**Thomas and Sarah** arrived in Salt Lake City with one and one-half year old, Ephraim about October 28, 1849. "They had endured many hardships; they had hungered, thirsted, toiled, as they trudged their way. They had felt the extreme heat of July's and August's piercing sun and the cold Autumn nights of September and October as they pursued the mountainous part of their journey. They had experienced all kinds of storms; rain, hail, sleet, snow, thunder, lightning and dust—dust so thick in the air they could scarcely see. They had hauled water in containers along with them to use in time of need. They had picked wild strawberries to eat. They had killed antelope and other game for food. Mention was made that prairie dogs were "very good eating" as "their diet was grass." They had encountered various road difficulties; sometimes the roads were muddy, sometimes they were sandy, and sometimes they were mountainous. They had to ferry rivers and ford streams. They had spent a day now and again by enforced stops to repair wagons, reset tires, do their laundry, baking, etc. They had worshipped; always mindful of their Maker and their obligations to Him, they ever hallowed the Sabbath Day. (It was usual to cease their journey on the Sabbath and worship in meeting.)"

This family settled in Great Salt Lake where records show Thomas "wrought on the water ditch, the Big Canyon Ditch, the Ward Ditches and the

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water canal.” The family was multiplying—a daughter, Sarah and sons Thomas Heber and James Albert were born here. Also, Sarah received her endowments and was sealed to her husband in Salt Lake City December 9, 1851. Thomas assisted in the erection of the Salt Lake Temple by hauling rock from a granite quarry some twenty miles to the southeast.

The family moved to Brigham City in 1855 “through the solicitation of Lorenzo Snow” (then an apostle). They continued to pioneer and suffered many privations and hardships. Ephraim recalls “going with his mother two miles west of Brigham to pull water segoes, which grew profusely that season (1856) in the water. The segoes were stewed and with a little bran or flour, made into a porridge to subsist on.”

A daughter, Mary Frances was born February 15, 1857 about a year prior to the family returning to Salt Lake because of the threatened invasion of Johnson’s Army. Later they returned to Brigham City.

Tragedy struck this faithful family with the death of Thomas on June 11, 1859. He was less than forty years of age and left a large family and a wife who delivered another daughter, Lavinnia just two months after his death. This baby lived only about 18 months.

Resolutely, Sarah set forth to provide for and rear her family. She organized a school and taught in a room in her own home. Later, she taught school nearly five miles from home, and she commuted on foot. Her sons all worked hard to help maintain the family.

Later, Sarah was trained as a midwife and “set apart to be a midwife and nurse in Zion.”

Notwithstanding the many trials and privations endured, Sarah lived to be 75 years old; she passed away April 14, 1896.

The untold portion of their story raises curiosity: What were the circumstances of their conversion? Did they ever hear from their family in England, or had they been disowned? Oh, to see some of their pottery! Or to have a written testimony as they talked with the Prophet Joseph... (Perhaps this is a greater lesson for US to keep journals, write a personal history and share testimony of important events with our families!) At least with the Ralphs

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brothers we can go to the records of Church History and perhaps the realization that our ancestors were there during these times will help personalize the history and draw us closer to our noble ancestors.

Rather than a written history, they have left us a far greater testimony through their actions: They have given a legacy of sacrifice of family and friends—of leaving all they knew and loved for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their legacy includes dedication to a better future for their posterity. Each accepted the changes in occupations and continued to strive for the betterment of others. These families endured much pain and persecution, and yet remained true to their commitment that provided new opportunities for their posterity.

Thanks goes to these great Pioneer families and the wonderful heritage they have left us!

#### NOTE:

This is a compilation of other histories: “Richard Ralphs, my Grandfather’s Brother”, “Ralphs History”, and “Thomas Ralphs and Sarah Johnson; Pioneers of 1849” all written by Myrtle Christensen, a granddaughter of Thomas.

“Ralphs History” written by Ina Corbett, a granddaughter of William’s son, Joseph and Ann Cable. Also, Ina had notes of an interview with Brother and Sister William Hitchcock, a former neighbor of William’s sons in Ferron, Utah.

**Parley Pratt Ralphs Family History** compiled by Michael and Marian Ralphs, descendants of William through his son, Parley. This includes an autobiography of Hannah Ralphs.

#### Original Research:

Census Records of Utah, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1900. (1890 records unavailable.

William Ralphs’ will and the dispersment of the will and other probate information for both William and Mary Ann Ralphs

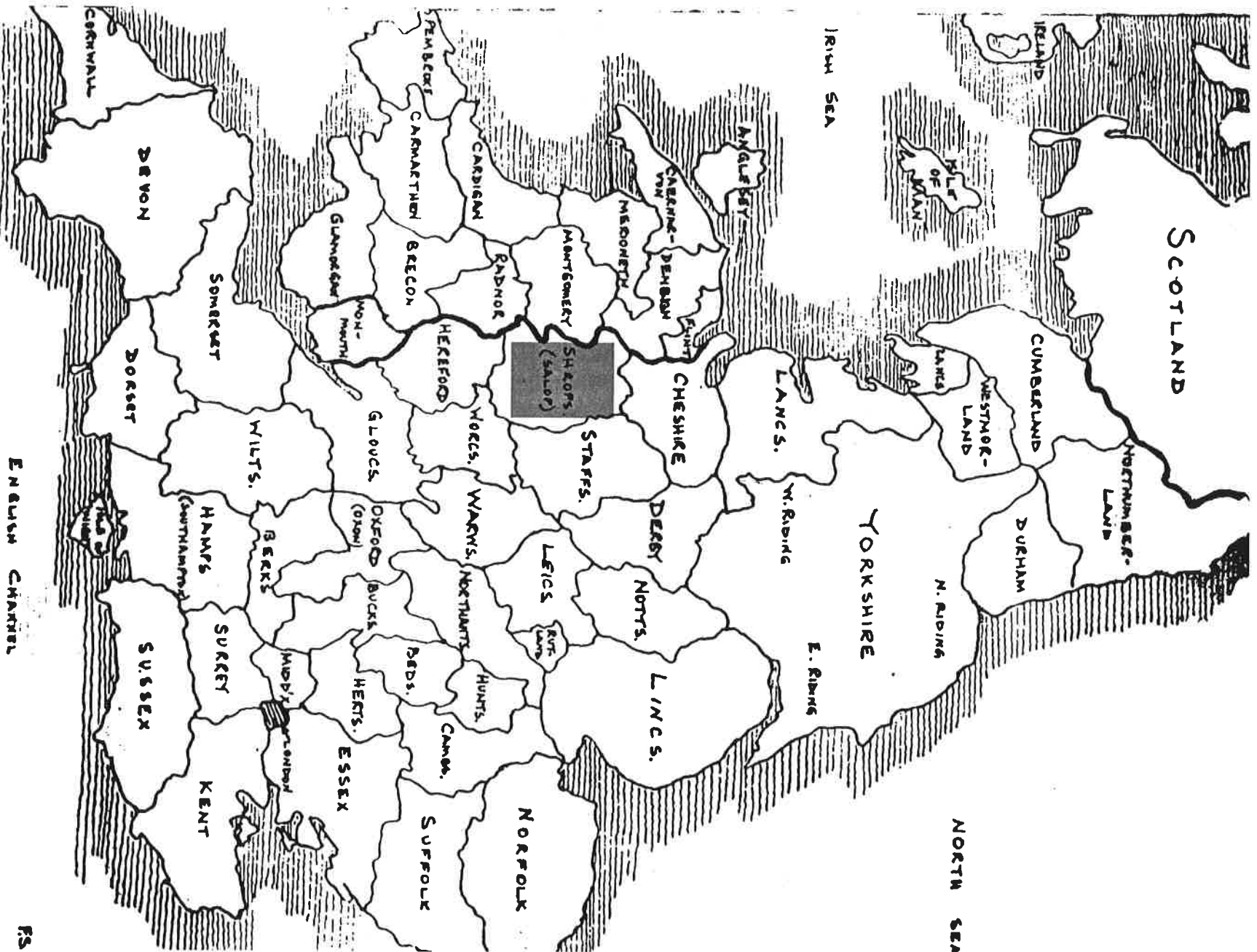
“The Millennial Star”, 1841-1843.

“The Nauvoo Neighbor” and “The Wasp” both newspapers in Nauvoo

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers had some information



# ENGLAND MAP





# **JOSEPH RALPHS:**

## **STOUTHEARTED PIONEER**

**July 10, 1849-February 7, 1931**



By Carol Meldrum Christensen, a Great Granddaughter  
42 South 500 East  
Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

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## JOSEPH RALPHS: STOUTHEARTED PIONEER

July 10, 1849-February 7, 1931

by Carol Meldrum Christensen, a great granddaughter

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**Joseph Ralphs** was born July 10, 1849 in Burlington, Iowa to **William Ralphs and Mary Elizabeth Brooks** who had lost their last three children as tiny babies! Imagine the joy they must have felt to have a child that lived! Undoubtedly, he was named for his uncle, Joseph Ralphs who immigrated from England with his brothers in 1842 and settled in Nauvoo, Illinois where lightning struck and killed him during a rainstorm in August, 1845. William and Elizabeth's first child, **Mary** was born in Nauvoo. Driven by mobs, they were forced to leave Nauvoo and find temporary residence in Des Moines, Iowa.

At just one year of age, Joseph with his parents and eight year old Mary plodded across the rugged plains to enter the Great Salt Lake Valley. Joseph must have been an active child, because his protective parents tied him to the wagon when they were making camp so he wouldn't wander away and become lost on the prairie! This had such an impact on this tiny child that he remembered it all his life.

Their first home was in the Eighth Ward in Salt Lake City where they lived during the grass-hopper plague when so many people almost starved. Joseph, a small lad, and his sister and father took a spade each morning to go dig Indian Roots and Sego Lilies for food. Width no shoes, even in the winter they trudged barefoot leaving the snow red from bleeding feet. Little else is known of his childhood.

The family moved to South Cottonwood for a short time, then to Northern Utah County where they lived in Alpine, Pleasant Grove, and American Fork at various times.

Joseph married **Ann Cable** in about 1876 and they had one daughter, **Mary Ann**, born September 18, 1877. Sadly, a divorce followed on

Nov. 26, 1878. It is unlikely that Joseph knew about his son, **John Henry** who was born May 30, 1879 and only lived till December, 1879.

Y e a r s  
later, Joe's sister-in-law, Hannah Ralphs visited Ann and asked about



the troubles between she and Joe. Ann replied, "There was no trouble between us; I just refused to go to such a wild, uncivilized place!" Ann had developed a terror of Indians as a child living in Mantt. Each morning the Indians did war dances, carried scalps, whooped, hollered and let the whites know what could happen to them! She would have realized that those same Indians stole the cattle and led them into the area of Castle Valley where Joseph now desired to settle. Joe would not have shared Ann's horrendous fear because he received a medal for fighting in those Indian Wars!

Ironically, the dissolving of this family unit helped each partner to strengthen and support their paternal families. Ann felt a responsibility to stay close to her aging parents so she could care for them. Similarly, since his mother's death, Joe's brothers had been farmed out to other family members. Their father had remarried **Mary Ann Johnson** who had five children of her own plus a new son, **Benjamin**, to rear. Therefore, Joe, being the eldest desired to help his brothers by homesteading land in Emery County with Parley and John.

Castle Valley settlements were the last out-

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posts of civilization in a frontier that stretched between the Mormon corridor of settlement in the Great Basin, east to the mining camps of the Colorado Rockies, a distance of approximately 300 miles. The area of Ferron was so desolate and isolated that for many years not even the Indians would inhabit it. Previous attempts to settle this place had ended in death or settlers running for their lives. When Brigham Young first requested 75 families to volunteer to settle the land, not one person volunteered. Later, he wrote a letter to emphasize the need for settlers. However, within a week of the letter, "the Great Colonizer" had passed away which led to speculation that he had gone too far to expect people to settle in Castle Valley and this was the Lord's way of removing a fallen Prophet from office!

"Every person is much bigger than he himself realizes" was the recurring lesson of the early pioneers of Castle Valley. "When they arrived, they had practically nothing but their physical strength, their religious dedication, and their drive and perseverance. All their earthly possessions they carried with them in a wagon box. Behind them rose a mountain wall whose door was shut for the winter once the snows came. In front of them was a maze of broken country, of straight-walled red canyons, and a desert full of the unknown."

Joe, Parley and John Ralphs courageously entered the Castle Valley in 1878 anticipating a fresh beginning with new homes. Joe homesteaded 160 acres of land and divided it equally with each receiving 53 1/3 acres. His brothers were too young to homestead alone, but he could get the land and sign some over to them. This was the only way his brothers could get their land.

The first year they built a cabin on Joe's land where they all lived. A pole fence to surround all 160 acres was also on the docket. They had to go to the mountains, cut the trees, remove each branch, load the poles on the wagon, then take them home to build the fence. Imagine the number of poles required to fence 160 acres! Progress was extremely labor intensive.

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The first year, crops were poor because the soil needed nutrients and water. That winter, Joe, his brothers and three others built the **Molen Ditch** (a canal) to bring irrigation water to the area. They also helped construct the first roads. Tools were crude, but determination undaunted as they toiled for a better future.

During the spring of the second year, the farmers were gloating when they discovered seedlings growing abundantly now that water was more plentiful and the irrigation water had brought with it better soil. However, grasshoppers appeared and began devouring the precious crops. One settler made an emergency trip to Manti for a load of chickens to eat the grasshoppers and save the crops. Two weeks later when he returned with his wagonload of feathered friends, the crops had been eaten and replanting was necessary. Still these valiant pioneers persisted.

In the early years, they relied on the land to provide them with food and necessities. Prickly pear cacti grew so abundantly that neither dog nor horse could be forced to walk through the area that is now Ferron. However, the settlers ate the cactus to sustain life. It is doubtful that anyone got fat dequilling their dinner before dining!

Socially, the Hansen sisters, Eda and Hannah lived in Ferron with their parents, and of course knew the Ralphs brothers. Eda went with John and Hannah dated Parley. Fortunately, they had a friend from Manti, Amanda (Mandy) Jensen who came frequently to see them—and Joe. Romance blossomed. **Joe married Mariah Amanda Jensen**, daughter of Chris and Albertina Jensen **September 17, 1883.** Hannah and Parley announced plans to be married January 18, 1884 and move into the gorgeous two story rock home that Mr. Hansen, with the help of both Parley and John built for his first daughter to marry. Not to be outdone and without announcing any plans, John married Eda Hansen January 1, 1884, thus receiving the large rock home!

Although 15 years younger than her hus-

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band, Amanda was a great companion and a true help mate for Joe. Mandy was tall (over 6 ft), slender and accustomed to difficult farm work. She willingly worked beside Joe on the farm. At breakfast time the tantalizing aroma of cooking ham or home made sausage along with "light biscuits" was enough to whet anyone's appetite! Because Joe fancied light biscuits, every night of her marriage she mixed up a batch, covered them and placed the bowl in the rocking chair where she had been sitting (the warmest place in the house). Arising early, (Joe liked to get up at 4 a.m.) she punched down the dough, formed the rolls so they would rise again before breakfast. Now that's true dedication to your husband!

At age 16, Mandy had milked her cow near a crabapple tree during a heavy rainstorm. Suddenly, lightning struck, leaving Mandy extremely hard of hearing. However, nobody thought of Mandy as handicapped because of her unusual wit and charm.

After a few years in the log cabin, Joe built a red brick house in town on the road to their farm; here they lived for many years. The farm was prosperous, growing oats, barley and corn as well as raising milk cows and chickens. He valued his good team of horses that help on the farm.

Although no children were born to this couples, they helped others with their families and took advantage of the freedom to visit others.

In July, 1893 Mandy travelled to California to see her sister, **Tena**. During the visit, Tena took Mandy to visit Joe's older sister, **Mary** and her husband, **Will Hunter**. Will and Mary had a daughter who had recently left her husband and had come back home with her two young girls to live for a time. July 25, 1893 was a gorgeous, sunny summer day as this group gathered, feeling the exhilaration of the reunion of loved ones. Interrupting this joyous sight, the estranged husband, Jack Craig intruded. Threats of violence erupted in a hideous scene before this unwelcome caller could be expelled.

Later in the day as they attempted to forget the earlier scene Will and Mary, their daughter and granddaughters, Mandy and Tena all gathered on the front veranda overlooking the front yard to continue socializing. Suddenly, Jack Craig returned.

Grabbing the two little girls, Mandy flew threw the house and out the back door at lightning speed to hide in the cornfield. Her only thoughts were for the safety of the precious little ones.

Gunshots rang out! Suddenly another figure tore out the back door and into the cornpatch. Tensions mounted. Who else lurked in the cornfield? Sounds of someone leaving gave hopes that the murderer had retreated. Tena! Dear Tena had also escaped the bullets. She had witnessed the shooting of **Mary, Will, and their daughter** before escaping to the cornpatch.

Mandy, Tena and the terrified youngsters returned to the devastating scene of horror where three bloody, bullet ridden and lifeless bodies lay strewn on the once beautiful veranda. Mandy and Tena comforted the little girls, then contacted police and family.

Tena, the only living witness resided in the Governor's Mansion for Witness Protection till Jack Craig could be located and tried. He later committed suicide in prison. The little girls were raised by another family member.

Castle Valley had its own excitement. Nearly twenty years after settlements began, Butch Cassidy and his partner Eliza Lay held up a train and robbed \$8700 from the Castle Gate payroll which was never recovered. Butch Cassidy and his men frequented the Ferron Saloon owned by Mandy's brother, Chris and had become good friends. Years later as the Ralphs family vacationed in California, horses hooves thundered from a cloud of dust in the distance. Butch Cassidy and his gang entered the cafe where the Ralphs family huddled. Recognizing Chris, each came to slap him on the back, with the greeting of old friends!

Joe and Mandy learned that one person's greatest sorrow can be another person's greatest joy! In 1896, Mandy's sister, Cora Jo Nelson, had serious marital problems prior to the birth of her son Ray on July 20, 1896. After about six weeks of attempting to raise him alone, she conceded defeat and sorrowfully gave her son to Mandy and Joe to raise as their own. (Later her husband also wrote a letter officially giving the boy to them). Imagine the joy of this loving couple to finally have a child after 13 years of marriage! Those who knew Joe and Mandy attest that the predominant characteristic of each of them was "LOVE" for all people, but especially for children. They loved **Hans Ray Nelson Ralphs** and raised him as their own child, still maintaining contact with Cora Jo who lived till Ray was about 12 years old. Ray was formally adopted June 11, 1917.

Raising a child brought new challenges to Joe and Mandy. Joe was so kind hearted that he couldn't discipline anyone: therefore, Amanda accepted the responsibility. As Ray grew older and helped his dad on the farm, he chose not to arise as early as his parents thought he should. Mandy was not one to natter or repeatedly request something be done; instead she took action. A glass of cold water in his face got Ray out of bed in a hurry! Later, he chose to leave his room a mess with clothes strewn all over. Once again, Mandy found it necessary to take action. This time, as Ray returned from school, he found his trousers in the apple tree, shirts on the fence and in the yard, and yes, his underwear on the front gate for all to view! It only took once for Ray to learn to keep his clothes off the floor. When he was a parent, Ray laughingly told his children how he learned to be neat and tidy! The effects of this lesson were long lasting!

Joe was always honest and would not go into debt for anything. When he needed a new wagon badly but did not have the cash, he rounded up enough of his cattle to pay for the wagon and sold them even though Mandy didn't approve of the sale.

Joe's father, William died in April, 1900 and his younger brother Parley, age 44 passed away in October, 1903 leaving his widow Hannah with 8 children to raise. Prior to his death, Parley and Hannah had each battled serious stomach troubles and had discussed the consequences if one of them should die. Parley said it would be better if he went first, because he would have no idea how to raise the children. As a family, they "knelt around the bed and prayed that Hannah's life would be spared to raise her family. Hannah promised the Lord that she would pay an honest tithing and bring her children up in the church." Parley's life was taken and Hannah lived to keep her promise to the Lord.

"Uncle Joe and Aunt Mandy" assisted Hannah with her family as often as possible. Shortly after Parley's death, Hannah's youngest three children broke out with small pox while the older ones were in school. Not wanting them to catch this dread disease from the younger ones, Hannah stopped each one at the door, and told them to go to Aunt Mandy's. Because of a quarantine, they could take only the clothes on their backs. Without forewarning, Joe and Mandy brought all five children into their home, cared for them, and loved them as their own for about two weeks. Afterwards, they frequently brought them gifts.

A few years later, Hannah was still pumping her stomach each morning which caused her youngest son Walter to feel nauseous at home. Therefore, he stopped at Aunt Mandy's for breakfast each morning on his way to the pasture with the cows. It was usually homemade bread and butter topped with scrumptious black current preserves!

Walter recalled Uncle Joe teaching him techniques of farming such as a particular way to rake the hay with a fork when in an inconvenient area. Even though some of Parley's boy were teenagers and could do most of the farming when their father died, Joe was available for consultation any time he was needed.

One day as five of Hannah's boys were returning from the farm in the wagon, the high

water had washed out the bank, and as they attempted to cross, the high water pulled the horses and wagon down into the water. Four of the five boys jumped into the water to swim, but the current was too strong so they yelled for help. Uncle Joe heard their cries and helped retrieve the boys and the horses. This was a really close call for them all.

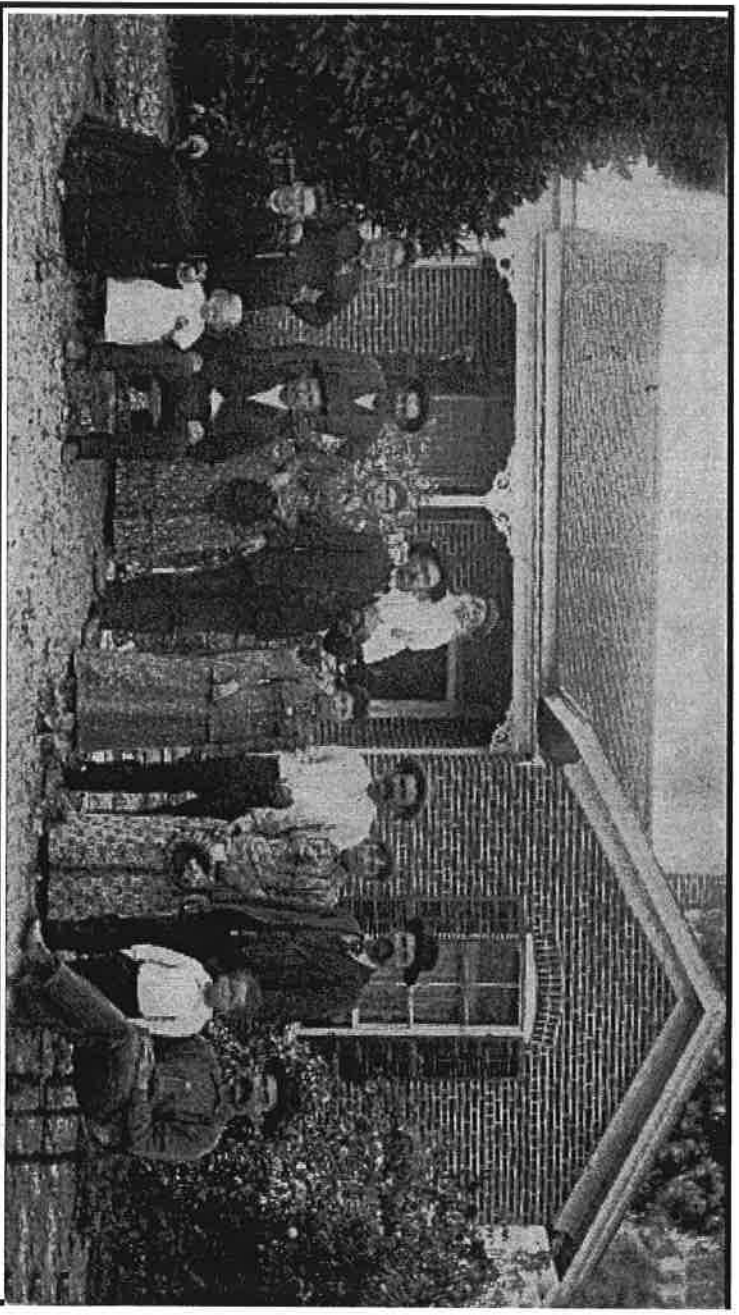
In the meantime, Joe's oldest daughter Mary Ann had come with her family from Canada to nurse her mother Ann Cable during the last few weeks of life. After her mother's death in January, 1910 Mary desired to know more about the father she had never known. Uncertain of what they would find, Mary and her husband David Meldrum Jr. left their five daughters with Grandma Meldrum while they drove to Ferron. Knowing the loving nature of both Joe and Amanda, think what a wonderful reception they must have received! Other family members living in Ferron welcomed them with open arms! A loving bond developed between Joseph, Amanda and Mary Ann, sufficient for

them to remain in touch through letters the rest of Joe's life! Even with the barrier of physical distance between them, letters indicate there were occasional visits by Mary's family to Ferron!

Because Joseph could neither read nor write (census records of 1900) Amanda wrote loving letters containing family news, concern for Mary and her family and often the hope that they could visit soon. The following excerpt tells about moving to her parents' home:

August 17, 1921

"My father died three years ago. Mother traded places with us with the understanding she was to have one of the rooms in her old home as long as she lived. We had lived with her just 10 months when she died. She was 80 yrs. Jan. 23, and died Feb. 25. Mother let Ray have our old home and he is to give Bert (my brother) five hundred dollars which will be their share of the estate...."



The William and Mary Hunter Home in Verduga, Woodland, California. Aunt Mary is standing behind Amanda and Joe seated on the left front. Mary's son George Hunter and his wife are standing next to Joe. The rest are unidentified members of the Hunter family. This picture was obviously taken on a visit prior to the murders.



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Their new home was a four room red brick house with a lovely front porch that overlooked the town and a screened back porch that served as a summer kitchen. In the back yard near the summer kitchen stood a large brick milk cellar with either a spring or well inside to cool the milk. This was in close proximity to where the cows were kept and milked. Along with the house, their property extended the width of the yard and the length of the entire block. Years of irrigating caused their farm to become swampy due to the shale underneath the soil. Now it was good as a meadow for raising cattle and hay. That farm was sold because there was plenty of grass for feed for both the cows and chickens by this new home. Many fruit trees surrounding the house provided shade and produced fruit.

In the same letter about the home, Amanda told of a serious accident that crippled Joe requiring him to use a cane the rest of his life:

“Your father has wanted me to write and tell you about him getting hurt ever since it happened which was last February. He and Aunt Hanner’s boy, Elwin were topping trees. Elwin had got the cut made and a rope on the part that was to come down and he and Joe commenced to pull when down came the tree before Joe could get out of its way. When they got him out from under the tree he was unconscious and they fetched him home on a stretcher and for weeks he was very bad. His back got injured so he isn’t able yet to be up all day. Two of his ribs were broken and one of his feet was broken. It was put in a cast of plaster of paris. It seems to be alright now but I don’t think his back will ever be alright as I believe the spine is injured.

One thing strange took place after he got hurt; he turned against tobacco. He couldn’t stand even the smell of it so after he got around again he never took it. I am so glad he quit it for now we can go to the temple as soon as he gets strong enough to make the trip. He has been ordained an Elder and can have a recommend as soon as he wants it.”

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Joe had enjoyed smoking a pipe. He bought Union Leader tobacco that came in a bright red pouch for ten cents. While smoking he mused, “Oh for the money I’ve spent on tobacco to burn under my nose!” After the accident he asked Ray to fill and light his pipe for him. After a couple of puffs, he put it down and never again allowed even the smell of tobacco in the house.

As this habit was conquered, Joe and Amanda arrived at the Salt Lake Temple for their endowments and sealing October 5, 1921. Joe had been baptized shortly after arriving in Ferron but Amanda had always been more actively involved in church functions. Both were thrilled to go to the temple. Mandy’s letter tells more:

“I will try to answer your most welcome letter of Sept. 21. We were busy about that time preparing to go to the temple so thought we would wait and write when we got back. Well we went the first part of October and got our own work done and your father sealed to his parents, and I was sealed to mine. Your father also did Will Hunter’s work and we had him and Aunt Mary sealed to each other, and I did their daughter’s work as far as it could be done, as she couldn’t be sealed to her husband and of course wouldn’t if she could as he killed her and her parents so we took out her endowments and had her sealed to her parents.”

**Ray** married **Celia Edrie Nelson** March 6, 1918 and much to Joe and Mandy’s delight, they had three children. **Winston Nelson Ralphs** born April 7, 1919 in Ferron became the first grandson! **Carol Ralphs** born June 13, 1921 also added more joy to this family. Later, another daughter **Ila Rae Ralphs** born Nov. 18, 1929 completed this happy family unit.

Ray, a car salesman in Price, Utah was unable to see his parents as frequently as when he resided in Ferron. Joe and Mandy missed him terribly and chose to adopt a little six year old girl, **Nan (Nancy Elizabeth Allen)**. At the time Nan came to live with them, Joe was 75 years old and

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Amanda was 60 and they had two charming grandchildren. In the same letter Mandy tells about Nan, she also mentions that Joe's eyesight was failing. That shows true love and devotion to even want another child in their home considering their age and circumstances!

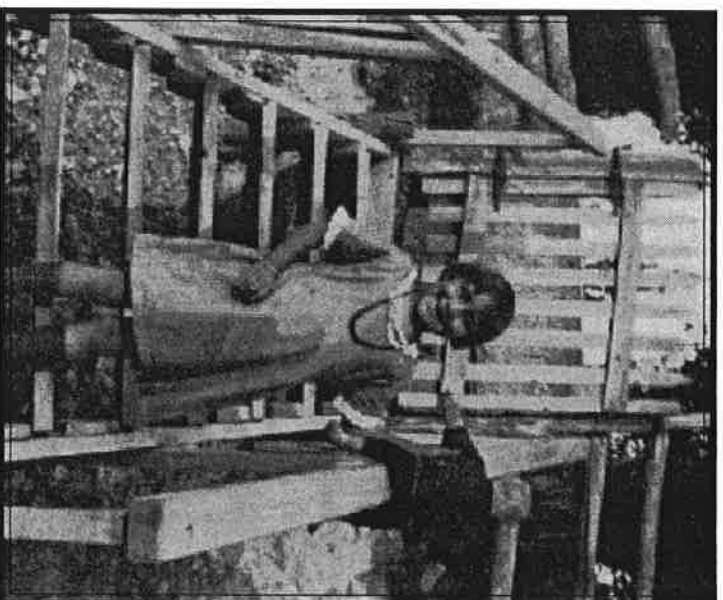
Carol Ralphs Songer remembers riding with her parents, grandparents, and brother in her dad's big Buick to Payson to get Nan. Nan's mother brought her to the car with one suitcase and a doll, told her she belonged to these folks now, and to "be a good girl." Nan knew that her paternal grandfather, a doctor, had offered her mother money to raise the family, but her mother declined the offer and chose to give her children to strangers instead. Nan felt rejected for quite some time, but appreciated the love she received from Joe and Amanda. Another letter from Amanda dated January 5, 1925 tells about getting Nan:

"I guess you see from the card we sent you that we have a little girl six years old. We had been trying for two years to get a girl. I put an add in the S.L. Tribune and got all kinds of answers both for boys and girls, although my add read a girl under seven. Well, Aunt Emily found the one we have as none came in answer to the add that suited us, but one a little girl 4 years but they wouldn't let her go unless we would take her brother 8 yrs. So we couldn't do that.

This little girl's father died and her mother was left destitute with 5 small children to support the oldest 9 years old. She decided to get good homes for them so Aunt Emily got Nan for us; and after we got her (the 4th of June last) the mother wrote and asked me to find a home for her 8 yr. old boy. I did so and he lives here in Ferron, too. The mother has signed an agreement to let us adopt Nan so I believe everything is alright. She is lots of company for us and is a dear little girl. I will send you some kodak pictures of her I took in the summer. She has started school this winter

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and is doing fine.



Nan with doll on front steps

It was pretty lonesome for us after Ray and his family moved away and your father being hurt kept us both at home pretty close. He would get so blue and discouraged and that made me the same. He always made so much of Ray and kiddies when they came so we thought to have a child in the house would be good for both. It's a little extra work and more expense but the comfort of it makes up for that."

Amanda arranged with the Zwahlen family in Ferron to take Nan's older brother Alburn. Comfort came to both to have each other in their new town. Nan was not only a comfort but also a help to Joe and Amanda. At eleven years of age, Nan assisted with the care of her father in the sickness prior to his death. Amanda's letter to Mary describes the cancer in Joe's face.

Ferron, Utah Feb.

15, 1931

Just a few lines this evening. Please excuse pencil writing for I am too shaky to write with a pen. I want to thank you for your dear, kind letter, Mary. It sure touched a tender spot and made me

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feel that you appreciated my efforts in doing my best. Our Heavenly Father knows I did all that lay in my power and I am thankful I did, too. I never trusted any one to care for him one night until the last one when the folks forced me to take some rest as I had been sick for over two weeks with flu. He would feel so sorry for me when I could hardly get up and down and would want me to get someone to sit up, but I just felt like they might neglect him.

He was bedfast three months. The doctor said what caused death was the pus that didn't drain out as it should after he opened the lump. It mixed with the blood and practically caused blood poison. Then he got this cold or flu that has been going around. He coughed almost every breath and had a raging fever for over a week. The doctor thinks he got cancer from a bruise on his face. It was just below the left eye.

Last summer he and I made a floor to put in the pig pen as the rains made such wet puddles in it. After we put the floor in we had a large trough to put up on it. Daddy got the pinch bar to pull the trough where we wanted it and I was to nail it in place. As he was pulling with all his might he slipped and fell against the pen. He grabbed for his face and seemed in pain with it, although I thought at the time that he hurt his breast worst. Well he never was free from pain in that side of his face again.

The first doctor we got said it was only neuralgia, and didn't take a hold like he cared to do anything so we got another after Christmas. This doctor was so nice and kind to Daddy, that he thought so much of him. He said Daddy had sinus trouble and doctored for that.

When the lump got so large that he couldn't see over it and that eye was the only one he had been able to see with for four years, it broke and we poulticed it night and day to get it down so he could see but it didn't get smaller. The Doctor decided he would open it and put in a drain to draw out the pus faster. When he lanced it he found a hollow cavity

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in the cheek, everything gone, clean into the nostril on that side, and that it was cancer.

We never let him know and he kept worrying because the lump shut off his sight. He wanted the doctor to cut it off.

There was a large attendance at the funeral. The casket was made here. He asked Ray to have that done as John's and Parley's were made here. We got the best we could for his clothes. The linen for the robe was beautiful. His nephews carried the casket from the house over to the church and the small girls of the family carried the flowers in head. The family walked just behind. Besides the regular singing at the service the music teacher from school sang a beautiful song entitled, The End of a Perfect Day.

There were people here from Emery and Orangeville and Kennilworth. There were some lovely and expensive flowers from the hot house at Price. Ray got a bouquet that cost five Dollars. Aunt Edie and her family got one a little larger than Ray's. Aunt Hanner and her family got a lovely big wreath on a wire stand. The Crawford family got a large bouquet and the Myers family gave a beautiful bouquet of white lilies and roses. My folks sent a box of red carnations and ferns from California. I wish you could have come but it's so far away I was afraid you couldn't. The folks have all read your letter and think you are great. Everyone was so good to us all during his illness and after.

Tena wants Nan and I to come to California for a while but I can't afford it for one thing and I believe it will be best to stay with my home, until I get a little used to being here without him. But oh, it's lonesome and tomorrow Nan must go back to school, and then I will be lonelier than ever.

When the bills are paid we will have \$1300 to live on. It's drawing 8%. That and this home and a cow and 40 chickens is the extent of our means. But I and daddy talked it over at different times and

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he thought I better try and sell a part of the lot, so I will try to do so if I get a chance, but there don't seem to be sale for anything now.

Nan sent a card to Lucille when she sent out the others. Am wondering if she got it.

Love to you dear from all the folks and accept it from Nan and I to you all. Write soon. Amanda

Joseph Ralphs was an unusual combination of valiant, stouthearted pioneer, civic minded settler who donated time and effort to build roads and ditches, excellent, hard-working farmer who arose at 4 a.m. to accomplish his work, conscientious brother who helped his siblings get land, kind and loving husband, and dad and grandpa too kind-hearted to reprimand. His name is mentioned in The History of Sanpete and Emery Counties as one of the earliest settlers of Ferron. Joe had the courage and stamina to heed the request of the "Great Colonizer" and Prophet when few others were willing to go to that Last Frontier. Few men are willing to allow their wives to be "center stage" while he remains the hard-worker behind the scenes helping everything run smoothly. Joe, however, was proud of Mandy's success.

His grandchildren remember how he loved to sit in the sun and whittle. Grandpa often held them on his knee, talked with them and reached over to tickle them on the knee when least expected! Sometimes he would catch a ride to Price so he could be with them more. His love of children is evident in his willingness to adopt another child in his senior years. All who knew him spoke of his great love for all people, especially children.

His nephew Walter describes him in these simple but powerful words: "Joe was a very good man; everybody liked Uncle Joe. He was a hard worker, honest and kind. He didn't have any enemies. I never saw him mad. He was neat and clean around the place; everything had to be "just so." He took good care of his tools and always put them away neatly after using them. He always had a big garden

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**which he shared with others. Uncle Joe was happy."**

After his death, Mandy and Nan lived in Ferron until after Nan graduated from high school. About that time, the Ford Dealership in Price went under and Ray lost all he had invested including his home. With minimal work opportunities in Ferron and Price, the decision was made to move all to Salt Lake.

Mandy was getting older, and Nan desired work opportunities. Feeling responsible for both Ray, convinced them to move with him in the summer of 1938. Mandy sold her home and she and Nan moved into an apartment Ray built for them in his new home on eighth East in Sugar House. Ray built cupboards and put in a sink and stove so Mandy could have her own kitchen. She and Nan had basically three rooms of their own when they wanted to be alone. Frequently friends came from hundreds of miles to visit Mandy. Also, about three or four times a week she would "make her rounds" in Sugar House, stopping at every store to visit with clerks or customers. Everyone was drawn to Mandy's outgoing, happy personality.

One evening in Sugar House Nan and Mandy walked to a movie theater. The interior was dark, and Mandy's eyes hadn't adjusted to the dark as she followed Nan to their seats. When she sat down, Mandy missed the chair and landed in the aisle.

"Oh, Lordy, Nan I've sat on a hat" resounded through the theater! Teenaged Nan was mortified to see her mother sprawled out on the floor. Mandy's long arms and legs had become awkward and she couldn't get up. Laughter permeated the building as gallant men came to her rescue. However, Mandy was strong and a bit heavy. The men toppled like tinkertoys in the aisle as they attempted to lift her up. Reinforcements volunteered until Mandy could finally be tugged from the floor. However, the squashed hat now resembling a Swedish Pancake, rolled easily to the very front of the theater where embarrassed Nan retrieved it.

The show in the aisle that night was far superior to the one on the screen! When they arrived home, both were laughing so hard, they

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couldn't tell Ray what had happened!

Mandy would try anything at the amusement park at Saltaire. Even in her seventies, Mandy would climb the numerous stairs to the top of a slide, sit on a gunnysack and slip down the bumpy path with the youngsters, laughing and enjoying every minute. At the same park, she also got stuck in a barrel she'd crawled into with her granddaughter! The adventures continually brought joy and laughter to all.

As Nan grew older, she started nurse's aide training at the County Hospital where her "birth brother" Alburn was suffering with tuberculosis. Nan cared for him until his death. Later, she began managing "Hughes's Feminine Apparel" store first in American Fork then she and her husband **Bill (William Richard) Quinn** transferred to Grand Junction, Colorado so she could continue managing a store.

Amanda peacefully slipped from this world into the next on May 13, 1945, at Ray's home in Salt Lake. She left a myriad of happy memories as mementoes of her love. Her grandchildren recall:

"Grandma Ralphs loved music and storytelling. She played an organ and the accordion. I remember sitting around the table in Ferron playing little games by the light of a kerosene lamp and Grandma Mandy nearby telling stories to the delight of all. She made dolls from hollyhock flowers and a purse from a lilac leaf, played word and finger game and made a Raggedy Ann doll for me. She accompanied us on family camping trips."

"I used to follow along, "helping" her in her large garden and played between the rows of tall corn. We would gather eggs in the henhouse. Grandma Ralphs would let me take an egg or two to trade for candy at the store. We fed a calf and milked a cow. Of course I always thought I was a good "helper" because Grandma said I was."

"Grandma nursed us when we were sick. When I came down with rheumatic fever I stayed in her big bed for about six weeks. "Dr. Nixon took my tonsils out at Grandma Ralphs too. I asked for

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fried chicken and ice cream so Grandma killed and cleaned the chicken before frying it but I got fried chicken and ice cream when I awoke and I ate with relish. (My girls had such sore throats after that operation, they could barely swallow.)"



Nan and Amanda  
Nan's first car

"She was a wonderful cook making sausage and ham from her own pigs, preserving vegetables from her garden drying apricots, and apples to make wonderful pies of which I have yet to find the equal. I loved her Danish dumplings, Danish pudding and learning the Danish names for her recipes. **With Grandma there was always an abundance of good food, good talk, good stories and good times.**"

A granddaughter, Ila Rae Walsh pays this tribute to her grandparents: "Amanda Jensen Ralphs may have appeared to be a simple, dignified, almost solemn person but she was really quite complex with many different facets and talents. She had strong moral ethics and stood up for what she believed in. Grandma pieced quiltops and stitched quilts for Nan and her grandchildren. Although she had little formal education, she was a wise person with quick wit. **Grandma was ready for adventure and fun at a moments notice.**"

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**“The success of their children is a tribute to Joe and Amanda.** In his work, Dad received recognition as the best salesman in the Internountain West. His philosophy was to make friends with the customers first so he could recommend the best for their needs. He learned from his parents to make even the mundane things happy. A trip from Price to Ferron was made delightful by leading the family in singing silly or popular songs, telling stories etc. We enjoyed our parents and loved to be with them. I think that speaks volumes for the kind of people they were and for the people who raised them.”

“Nan was loved by her employer and staff alike. She was offered a management position in the head office of “Hughes’s” but chose not to relocate. Nan never had children, but she was good with all children including nieces and nephews. She and Bill worked with several charitable organizations to assist needy causes.”

As farmers, Joe and Amanda understood the importance of a “matched team” of horses. A matched team is equal in strength and working ability, they pull straight and toward a common goal, leaning and striding together. As cooperation and teamwork increase, maximum performance is increased. The color and physical features of the horses are unimportant in comparison with how they work together.

**Joe and Mandy travelled down the road of life much like a matched pair, stride for stride, pulling together straight to their goal. Although somewhat different in personality, these two complimented each other and maximized accomplishment. They worked tirelessly, leaning together for added strength. Their common goal was the establishment of a town and a family. With their eyes focused on the future, these two labored ceaselessly for the betterment of both their town and their family.**

These stouthearted pioneers leave a legacy of hard work and self-reliance, persistence and perseverance, resourcefulness and resoluteness, devotion and dedication, love and laughter, joy through service, and oh so very much more!

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**SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**

**PEOPLE:**

Joe’s only living nephew, **Walter Ralphs** (age 92) and his wife **LaVon** both residing in Ferron, UT.

Ray’s children:

**Buelah Walsh Ralphs**, widow of Winston. She lives in Murray, UT.

**Carol Ralphs Songer** now living in Ukiah, CA.

**Ila Rae Ralphs Walsh** now living in Kearns, UT.

Letters from the file of **Ina Corbett** (now deceased). This included copies of letters from Amanda to Mary Ann Ralphs Meldrum.

Notes written by **Ralph Meldrum** after a visit with Ray N. Ralphs Dec. 1957. Ralph was visiting Salt Lake from Canada, looked in the phone book and contacted Ray Ralphs.

**BOOKS:**

History of Sanpete and Emery Counties

Emery County: Reflections on its Past and Future by Allan Kent Powell

Emery County, 1880-1990 by Emery County Historical Society

Parley Pratt Ralphs Family History compiled by Michael and Marian Ralphs, 1991.

U.S. Census Records

**PICTURES:**

From the album of the Ray Ralphs family. Buelah Ralphs and Rae Walsh loaned these pictures for the book.

From the album of Mary Ann Ralphs Meldrum came the pictures of the younger Joseph Ralphs, and Ann Cable. Negatives in possession of Marie Fisk, Cardston, Alberta and Carol Christensen, Pleasant Grove, Utah.

Pictures of Mary Ann and David Meldrum and children from Lois Lybbert, Layton, Utah.



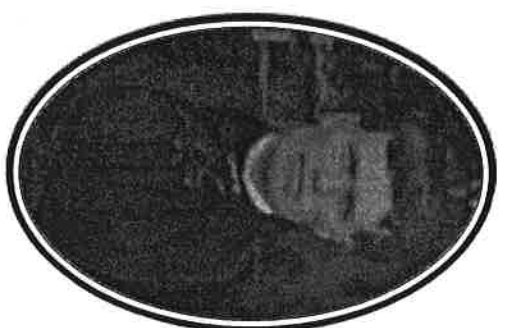
Ann Cable

Mother of Mary Ann

Divorced Nov. 26, 1878



Joseph Ralphs



Amanda Jensen

Eternal Companion

Adopted Ray & Nan

## Ralphs' Family



David and Mary Ann Meldrum



Edrie and Ray N. Ralphs

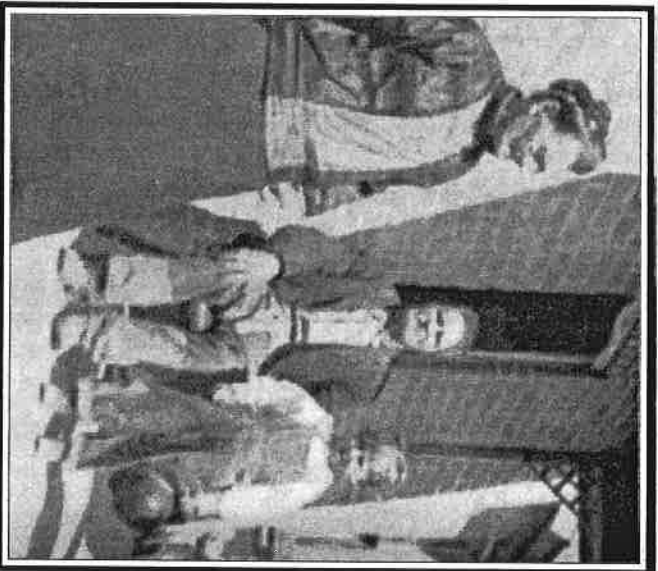


Bill and Nan Quin

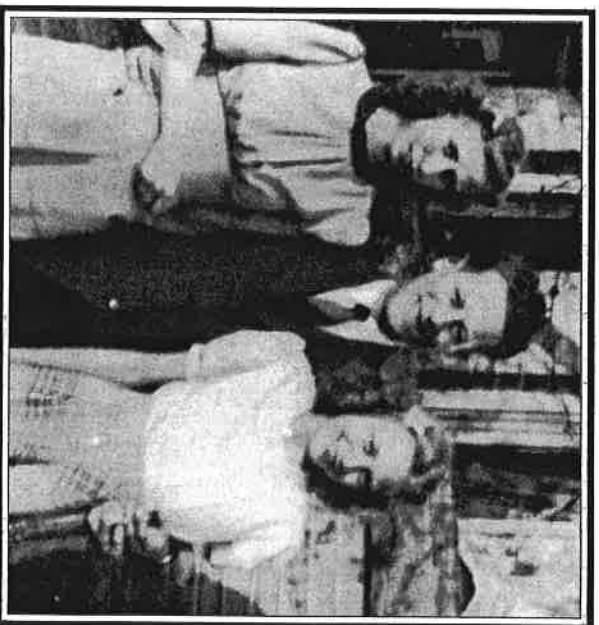
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## Grandchildren

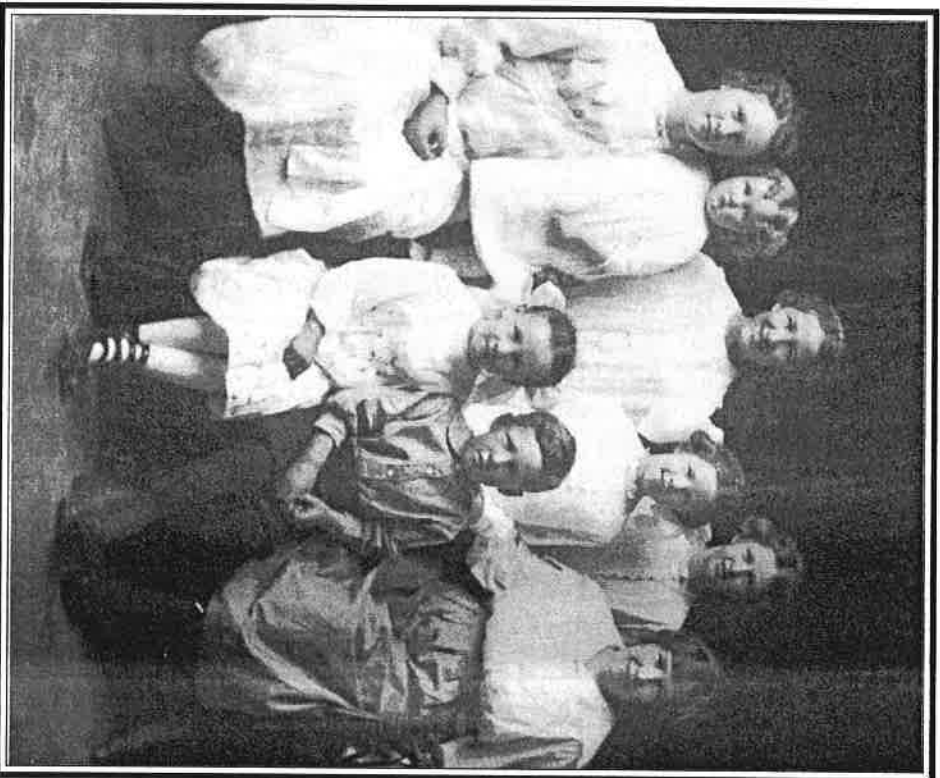
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Amanda, Joe and  
Grandson Winston

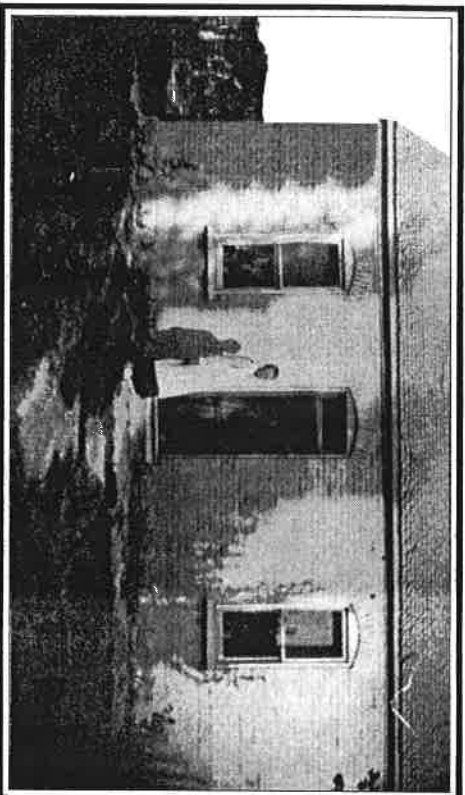


Carol, Winston and Rae  
Children of Ray Ralphs

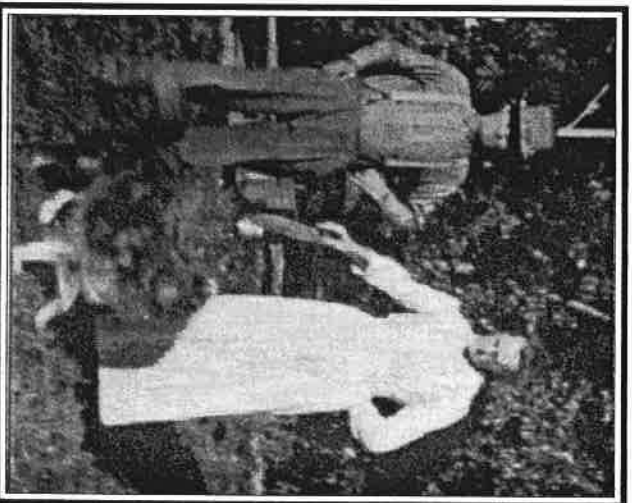


Ened, Ina, Ruth, Lucille,  
Delvoir, and Velma  
Sitting: Vida and Ralph  
Children of Mary Ann Meldrum

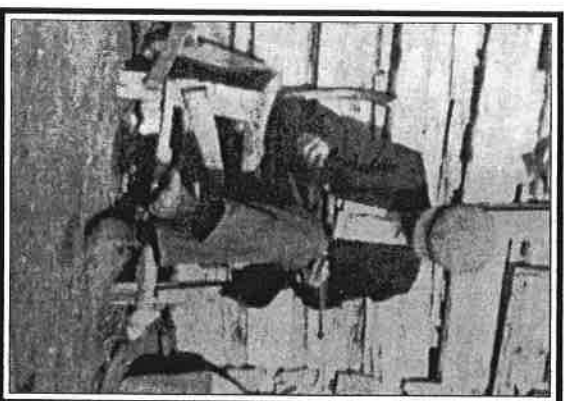




**Ralphs' family home in Ferron**



**Joe and Amanda with dog**



**Joe Ralphs with whittling stick**



**Mandy, Joe, Edrie, Aunt Tena, and Ray  
Front: Nan, Carol, and Winston**

SEX	M	F	CHILDREN	WHEN BORN	WHERE BORN	DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	WHEN DIED	WIFE
M	F	CHILDREN	WHEN BORN	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	DAY MONTH YEAR	DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE
1	M	John RALPHS	03 Jan 1808	of Wollerton	Shrops	Eng		23 Dec 1930
2	M	Joseph RALPHS	8 Jan 1810	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng	20 Aug 1845	13 Jan 1931
3	M	Richard RALPHS	8 Sept 1812	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng	15 Sep 1874	19 Jan 1931
4	M	George RALPHS	10 Mar 1815	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng	28 Mar 1815	19 Jan 1931
5	M	William Benjamin RALPHS	6 May 1816	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng	10 May 1841 20 Apr 1900	1 Feb 1841
6	M	Thomas RALPHS	22 Jul 1819	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng	10 May 1842 11 Jun 1859	12 Feb 1841
7	F	Mary RALPHS	8 Dec 1821	Hodnet	Shrops	Eng		26 Aug 1976
8								
9								
10								
11								

SOURCES OF INFORMATION Shrops 12 v. 15; Shrops par reg Vol 11; Hodnet (L.D.) Eng. p. 349, 298, 305, 310; Shrops L 1 vol 11 p 227, 298, 305, 310, 349. IGI 1988 verslap child #1, microfiche; #2, 3 1b1b film # 908234 # 4, 5, 7 1b film # 502931  
 Note: Burial records for child #4 state he was 3 weeks old at time of death.

OTHER MARRIAGES

NECESSARY EXPLANATIONS

**HUSBAND** Benjamin RALPHS  
 Born 5 Feb 1778  
 Place of Hodnet, Shropshire, England

**WIFE** Mary EDWARDS  
 Born 18 Sept 1785  
 Place of Hodnet, Shropshire, England

**HUSBAND'S FATHER** (unmarried)  
 Burial Place  
 Died Place  
 Chr. Place  
 Mar. Place 30 Jan 1806  
 Hodnet, Shropshire, England

**WIFE'S FATHER** Samuel BROOKS  
 Burial Place  
 Died Place  
 Chr. Place  
 Born Place 18 Sept 1785  
 of Hodnet, Shropshire, England

**HUSBAND'S MOTHER** Anne Ralphs

**WIFE'S MOTHER** Mary

**RELATION OF ABOVE TO HUSBAND** WIFE  
**RELATION OF ABOVE TO WIFE** HUSBAND

**NAME & ADDRESS OF PERSON SUBMITTING SHEET**  
 Wife: Mary EDWARDS  
 Husb: Benjamin RALPHS 1778

**STATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE**  
 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND

**SEALING TO PARENTS**  
 CHILDREN TO PARENTS

**DATE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL SOCIETY**

**FOUR GENERATION SHEET FOR FILING ONLY**  
 YES  NO

**LDS ORDINANCE DATA**  
 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND

**WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS**

**CHILDREN**  
 M F Given Name (Living or dead) in order of birth. DAY MONTH YEAR TOWN COUNTY STATE OR COUNTRY DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE WHEN DIED WIFE

**SEALING TO PARENTS**  
 CHILDREN TO PARENTS

**DATE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL SOCIETY**

**FOUR GENERATION SHEET FOR FILING ONLY**  
 YES  NO

**LDS ORDINANCE DATA**  
 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND

**WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS**

**CHILDREN**  
 M F Given Name (Living or dead) in order of birth. DAY MONTH YEAR TOWN COUNTY STATE OR COUNTRY DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE WHEN DIED WIFE

**SEALING TO PARENTS**  
 CHILDREN TO PARENTS

**DATE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL SOCIETY**

**FOUR GENERATION SHEET FOR FILING ONLY**  
 YES  NO

**LDS ORDINANCE DATA**  
 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND

**WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS**

**CHILDREN**  
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**DATE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL SOCIETY**

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 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND

**WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS**

**CHILDREN**  
 M F Given Name (Living or dead) in order of birth. DAY MONTH YEAR TOWN COUNTY STATE OR COUNTRY DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE WHEN DIED WIFE

**SEALING TO PARENTS**  
 CHILDREN TO PARENTS

**DATE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL SOCIETY**

**FOUR GENERATION SHEET FOR FILING ONLY**  
 YES  NO

**LDS ORDINANCE DATA**  
 BAPTIZED (Date) ENDOWED (Date) WIFE TO HUSBAND









## THE RALPHS FAMILY

Three sons of Benjamin Ralphs and Mary Edwards

immigrated from Shropshire England to America. Richard settled in California. His descendants, who own the large grocery stores there, have never joined the church. We find records which show that the two young men, William Benjamin Ralphs, aged 29 years, and Thomas Ralphs, aged 26 years were in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1845. Where they joined the Church we do not know but the Early Church Records state that Thomas and William were both baptized in February, 1841. Also, there is record of both of these men and Sarah Johnson, the wife of Thomas having received Patriarchal Blessings from John Smith on the 15 Sept, 1845. Thomas was ordained a Seventy 8 Oct, 1845. William Benjamin Ralphs told his children stories of how he was with others in the Nauvoo Temple when mobs came and drove them out.

WILLIAM BENJAMIN RALPHS, born May 6, 1816 and Elizabeth Brooks, born 30 March, 1819 daughter of Samuel and Mary Brooks, were married 10 May 1841 three months after his baptism. Exactly one year later, 10 May, 1842 Thomas was married to Sarah Johnson, daughter of Joseph and Margaret Johnson. Both of these families went to Utah with the Pioneers. There is a record of Sarah Ralphs re-baptism in Salt Lake City 28 Sept, 1851, also of William Benjamin being ordained a Seventy in April, 1852 which would have been after he had reached the Valley.

The family record sheet shows that the first three children of William Benjamin Ralphs and Elizabeth Brooks were born in Nauvoo, Mary Ellen in 1842 followed by Samuel and Sarah who both died in Nauvoo. After having been driven from Nauvoo, they apparently lived in Burlington, DeMoines Co. Iowa, for another son, William, was born there in 1847 living only nine days. Then JOSEPH was born 10 July 1849 in the same place. The next year the family of four, the father and the mother with eight year old Mary Ellen and one year old Joseph crossed the

*possibly mother by her brother?*

plaints to Salt Lake City. Here the next four children were born. Thomas, who died at ten months of age, Nephi who died at birth, Emily and Parley Pratt.

In 1860 they had moved to American Fork, Utah Co. for it was there that the last of Elizabeth's children, John Heber was born. He was only three years old when the mother was also called home leaving her husband with five children to rear. He found a helper in Mary Ann Johnson, who became his second wife. This couple had a son, William Benjamin Ralphs. He was living in Idaho when Joseph Ralphs died according to the Newspaper report from Ferron.

Joseph could recall as a small boy how the people nearly starved during the plague of the crickets in 1848 and how he and his sister would go out every morning with a spade to dig Indian roots for food.

He married Ann Cable who had unsuccessfully tried to live in polygamy with Stephen L. Brimuel. Two children were born to Joseph and Ann: MARY ANN RALPHS born 18 Sept. 1877 and John Henry, born 20 May, 1879. The little son just lived six months. Nor were the parents happy together. Joseph moved to Ferron, Utah where his brothers Parley and John had settled. It was said that Ann would not leave her folks to go to that country. Mary said they could not agree so they were divorced 26 Nov. 1878.

In Ferron Joseph helped to construct the first irrigation ditches. There he met and married Martha Amanda Jensen. In October 1921 they went to the temple in Manti to be sealed. They had no children of their own but adopted a boy, Ray and later a girl, Nan.

Amanda always kept in close touch with Mary through letters. Mary made several trips to Ferron. She and her husband visited there after Ann Cable died in 1910. Again in 1929 she took her two daughters, Velma, just returning from a Mission,



and Lucille, leaving her holidays from her training at the L.D.S. Hospital, with her to visit her father in Ferron. The letter which Amanda wrote to Mary after the death of Joseph Ralph is 7 February 1931, aged 81 years, is interesting:

Ferron, Utah  
Feb. 15, 1931

Dear Mary and family,

Just a few lines this evening. Please excuse pencil writing for I am too shaky to write with a pen. I want to thank you for your dear, kind letter, Mary. It sure touched a tender spot and made me feel that you appreciated my efforts in doing my best. Our Heavenly Father knows I did all that lay in my power and I am thankful I did, too. I never trusted any one to care for him one night until the last one when the folks forced me to take some rest as I had been sick for over two weeks with flu. He would feel so sorry for me when I could hardly get up and down and would want me to get someone to sit up, but I just felt like they might neglect him.

He was bedfast three months. The doctor said what caused death was the puss that didn't drain out as it should after he opened the hump. It mixed with the blood and practically caused blood poison. Then he got this cold or flu that has been going around. He coughed almost every breath and had a raging fever for over a week. The doctor thinks he got cancer from a britisc on his face. It was just below the left eye.

Last summer he and I made a floor to put in the pig pen as the rains made such wet puddles in it. After we put the floor in we had a large trough to put up on it. Daddy got the pinch bar to pull the trough where we wanted it and I was to nail it in place. As he was pulling with all his might he slipped and fell against the pen. He grabbed for his face and screamed in pain with it, although I thought at the time that he hurt his breast worst.

Well he never was free from pain in that side of his face again. The first doctor we got said it was only neuralgia, and didn't take a hold like he cared to do anything so we got another after Christmas. This doctor was so nice and kind to Daddy, that he thought so much of him. He said Daddy had sinus trouble and doctored for that.

When the hump got so large that he couldn't see over it, and that eye was the only one he had been able to see with for four years, it broke and we noticed it right and day to get it down so he could see but it didn't get smaller. The Doctor decided he would open it and put in a drain to draw out the puss faster.

When he noticed it he found a hollow cavity in the cheek, everything gone, clean into the nostril on that side, and that it was cancer.

We never let him know and he kept worrying because the hump shut off his sight. He wanted the doctor to cut it off.

There was a large attendance at the funeral. The casket was made here. He asked Ray to have that done as John's and Parley's were made here. We got the best we could for his clothes. The linen for the robe was beautiful. His nephews carried the casket from the house over to the church and the small girls of the family carried the flowers in hand. The family walked just behind. Besides the regular singing at the service the music teacher from school sang a beautiful song entitled, "The Land of a Perfect Day."

There were people here from Lenox and Orangeville and Kenilworth. There were some lovely and expensive flowers from the hot house at Price. Ray got a bouquet that cost five dollars. Aunt Fannie and her family got one a little larger than Ray's. Aunt Harner and her family got a lovely big wreath on a wire stand. The Crawford family got a large bouquet and the Myers family gave a beautiful bouquet of white lilies and roses. My folks sent

a box of red carnations and ferns from California. I wish you could have come but its so far away I was afraid you couldn't.

The folks have all read your letter and think you are great. Everyone was so good to us, all during his illness and after. Tena wants Nan and I to come to California for awhile but I can't afford it for one thing and I believe it will be best to stay with my home, until I get a little used to being here without him. But oh, it's homesome and tomorrow Nan must go back to school, and then I will be lonlier than ever. When the bills are paid we will have \$1:300 to live on. It's drawing 8%. That and this home and a cow and 40 chickens is the extent of our means. But I and daddy talked it over at different times and he thought I better try and sell a part of the lot, so I will try to do so if I get a chance, but there don't seem to be sale for anything now.

Nan sent a card to Lareille when she sent out the others. Am wondering if she got it.

Love to you dear from all the folks and accept it from Nan and I to you all. Write soon.

Amanda

#### EARLY CHURCH RECORDS FILE

SARAH RAIPLES b. 3 Feb. 1821, Ireland; Father, Joseph Johnson; Mother, Margaret; Pat. Blessing, 15 Sept 1845, Nanwoo III. by John Smith Vol. 4 p. 393 # 1157.

SARAH RAIPLES b. 3 Feb. 1821, Ireland; Bapt R. 26 Sept, 1851, Salt Lake City. Utah by David G. Demmel, Record No. Rc. Bapt. 1808 p. 64 Confirmed 28 Sept 1851.

RAIPLES THOMAS b. 22 July 1819, Worton Strop, Eng. Pat. Blessing, 15 Sept. 1845, Nanwoo, III. by John Smith. Vol. 9, P.302 #1156. Bapt. 12 Feb, 1851 by C. Thornton for Charles

Hendhong) Ordained 8 Oct. 1845 by H. Harrison Record No. 10  
Seventies p. 207 (31 quorum) p. 313 (58 quorum)

Ralphs William b. 6 May 1816 Hodnot Park, Shrop. 19th Parents  
Benjamin Ralphs and Mary. Pat. Blessing, 15 Sept. 1845, at  
Newton, Ill. by John Smith. Vol. 9 p. 392 # 1154 Bappt. 1 Feb.  
1841 by E.N. Ordained April 1852 Record P# 10 Seventies p. 185  
(26 quorum)

THE RALPHS OF EMERY COUNTY, UTAH  
by Michael H. and Marian Ralphs  
(Edited by Diana and Elaine Ralphs)

History of the Parley Pratt Ralphs Family, told by Walter Ralphs 1989.

Three sons and a daughter of Benjamin Ralphs emigrated from England. One brother, John, went on to California. His family started the Ralphs Grocery Chain. Another brother settled in Idaho. William Benjamin Ralphs settled in Salt Lake. He moved later to South Cottonwood and finally to American Fork. Three of William's sons migrated to Castle Valley in the early 1880's. Joe, the oldest, homesteaded 160 acres in the meadows between Ferron and Molen. He divided this in thirds among his younger brothers Parley and John.

Joe's first wife, Ann Cable, would not move to Castle Valley. Joe divorced her and left her in American Fork. They had one daughter. When she was grown, she moved to Canada married, and stayed there. Her mother went with her and lived with her. Hanna related an experience she had on her trip to the Alberta Temple. In their visit to the temple, they witnessed a marriage sealing. Later, she found out that it had been this daughter of Joe's, and she was fit to be tied to realize she had witnessed it and had not realized who it was. The girl, in a visit through Ferron, related the experience and she and Hanna pieced it together.

Joe married Amanda Jensen, daughter of Christian Jensen. They had no children. However, they took in Amanda's sister's son Ray. Later in life, they took in another child, Ann, from a broken home in Salina. Ann helped them out in their later years. The first house Joe lived in after marrying was a small brick house across the street from Jess Conover. Later, they moved into the house that Clive Worthen lived in. Joe died in that house in 1930.

Parley and John married sisters, Hanna and Eda Hansen, daughters of Peter Hansen. John was the father of Laverd Ralphs. Laverd married Eldona and they had four daughters. Carol, one of their daughters, won the national Dairy Queen contest in 1964. Walter was 2 years older than Laverd and they played together. They used to wrestle and Uncle John chided Walter for being too rough. John was a tall thin man and a hard worker. He farmed at the Meadows, and he also died fairly young.

Parley was a hard worker and a prudent man. He bought 80 acres south of the creek where Cliff Snow lives. He built up a large herd of cattle (60 head) and had enough horses to work the land. He farmed this and his third (53 1/3 acres) of the meadows. Every day he would take his 5 little boys with him to the fields. He was good at finding jobs for each to do (that trait has persisted in the 3 generations since him). Each morning in family prayer, they would ask for safety and protection. Because of this, his wife Hanna never worried about them crossing the creek. She was very faithful and implicitly expected the Lord to answer their prayers.

Both Parley and Hanna contracted stomach ulcers. They would lay on the floor on a quilt in pain and misery. Parley told Hanna that if one should die, it should be him. Hanna was stronger and had raised the children. He didn't know what he would do with them without their mother. Hanna was a proud woman and very strong willed. They agreed that she should be spared, and she vowed

that she would raise them in righteousness. Her prayer was answered. Parley died on Oct 2, 1903 at the age of 45. Walter was just 2 years old and William was 18. Hanna was left a widow at 32. With 8 kids, she saw to it that all went to school and to church. She taught them all how to work and the value of a dollar.

Parley left a life insurance policy of \$2000. This was a large amount of money and there was no bank to keep it safe. Hanna was very concerned that she was a widow with a young family and all that money in the house. She lived in fear that something would happen to her and the money. She put it to work by lending it out to people in Ferron. Many of the prosperous men in Ferron got their start from Hanna's money (Dr. Easily, Cliff Snow,       ). They would borrow it and pay it back with interest. Walter remembers the men coming into the Kitchen, counting the money out on the table and paying the interest.

Will was 18 and Leon was 16 when their father died. They did all the work on the farm, and all the other boys helped as they got big enough. At times, Hanna leased out the farm and cattle to other men in Ferron. This was unfortunate, because many of the cattle were "lost" or died of hunger during the drought. As the boys became of age, they ran the cattle and took the increase to get their start. Hanna used her money and her means to help each boy get started.

#### William

Will worked at the brick factory which was just north off the Molen Bench as a teenager. Most boys in town worked down there at one time or another to make extra money. The soil there was just right to make bricks. A horse walked in circles mixing clay and sand. The mud was poured into 3 brick molds and the boys ran from the mixer to the drying oven. They were always on the run and it was hard work. Will sheared sheep in his late teens. He and Johnny, Uncle Johns son went to Wyoming shearing. Johnny contracted tick fever and died. He was Will's age and his best friend.

Will had many friends but Bertha was his choice. After they married, they lived with Hanna for a while, then moved out on the farm across the creek in a little log house. Land on the Reservation was opened for homesteading and Will homesteaded 160 acres at Altona in the Uinta Basin. Hanna paid \$340 for the land, gave him a team of horses, a wagon and provisions. The land was covered with cedar trees and rocks. They would plow one day and haul rocks two days. Shortly after going out to the Reservation, Will had stomach problems and had an operation to put a plate in his stomach. Hanna paid for the operation. She would go out to visit Will once or twice a year in her little buggy. She took provisions, especially fruit; for they didn't have any there. In later years, when she had an automobile, she would always comment on the places she used to stop and spend the night, or where things happened on her buggy trips. Will and Bertha had 8 children. After the children married and left home, Will sold the farm and moved to Lehi where two of the girls lived.

#### Leon

Leon was the second boy and was 16 when his father died. He worked on the farm until he was called on a mission. Hanna helped to support Leon on his mission. Although they went without purse or script, still Hanna helped out. When he returned, Leon ran the cows for a few years and took the increase for

his start. Leon had many friends and finally married Surelda Crawford. They first lived in the house where Preston Thompson lived on Canyon road. They moved a log house up to their present lot and lived in it for a while. Leon and Mirl went out to Rochester and bought into the Emery County Land and Water Company. The Company bought up the land and then sold land shares to individuals. All the families helped to build and maintain the canal. The families had to pay monthly dividends to the Company, which they were hard pressed to do at the time. Aunt Lavon's father was secretary for the Company, and he found it hard to take checks from the families when they had to scrape to come up with the money.

Leon built a little log house on his property near the lane going up to our homestead. He had a large bunch of cattle. He later was appointed the first Post Master of Rochester. Aunt Surelda managed a small store called the Blue Bird Cottage. Later, they sold their land and moved back into Ferron. He invested his money in the Ferron Merc. Store and he worked in the store for a while with Lew Peterson. Leon was Post Master of Ferron for many years. Leon served his first mission in Texas. Later in life, He and Surelda served together in Kansas.

Leon had problems with broken bones in his later years. He broke his heel and went to the Price Hospital to have a cast put on. When he came home, his housekeeper had waxed the kitchen floor. The crutches slipped out from under him and he fell. Mirl was behind him but he couldn't catch him, and he broke his leg. While in the hospital, he suffered a stroke. This was the last straw, and he entered himself into the Resthome to be taken care of and to be with Surelda. She had been there for some time, but no one could determine what was wrong with her.

#### Clifton

Clifton was the third boy and the first born in the new house. When he got older he helped Hanna with the house work and cared for the smaller children. When Cliff was ordained an Elder, he baptized several children; Walter was one of them. They were baptized in the creek just above the bridge. After Cliff graduated from school, he went to California to the other Ralphs family to hit it big and get a job in their store. They put him to work sacking candy in the basement. He soon got tired of it and came back home. Cliff took up some land a Desert Lake near Cedar Mountain. He planted it into potatoes and cultivated it during the summer. In the fall, he went up state to school. Elwin and Walter ended up going over and harvesting the potatoes in the fall. Hanna financed Cliff's education. He obtained a teaching degree and came back and taught school in Emery. He met and married Ethel Carey, a Presbyterian school teacher at the Academy.

Cliff and Ethel moved to Ethel's home in Topeka Kansas and farmed there. Their first set of twins were born in Kansas (William and Robert). They moved to Star Idaho (near Caldwell) where their second set of twins were born (Beatrice and Barbara). Ethel had a nervous breakdown with 4 small babies, so Hanna and Walter went up to help them out. Walter helped Cliff farm and run a dairy. Later, Walter got a job with a neighbor and lived and worked with them in Star. Later Cliff and Ethel had two more boys.

#### Elwin

Elwin lived with Hanna and Walter in their home in Ferron for several years. He had a lot of friends and they called him Ray. He and some of his

friends played a trick on Jeannie Lemon. She had a nice horse and saddle that she rode to town. When she went in the store, they put limburger cheese on the bridle rains and saddle. They stood back to watch when she came out. She untied the horse, sniffed at the her gloves and saddle, curled up her nose and didn't know what to do. The boys were laughing and finally came out and wiped the cheese off the saddle. They all had a good laugh and sent her on her way. El and Walter farmed together. Hanna bought 20 acres of land out under the dugway and gave 10 acres each to El and Walter. El volunteered for the Navy in World War 1. He could have been exempt, with a widowed mother and a younger brother to look after. But he and 3 of his friends volunteered. He served on a transport which took soldiers over and brought dead soldiers back. Part of his wages was held and the government matched it and sent it home to Hanna. When he was discharged, he looked so nice in his sailors uniform. None of the other boys went into the service. When El returned, he farmed for 2 years, then went to work in the coal mines. El was not very religious, He went on big parties at times. When he came home for Christmas, he would bring candy, clothing and gifts. He was very free-hearted with Walter and his mother. He bought a car and would take his mother around to visit. He would let Walter take it at nights. El was 37 when he met and married Etta Seeley. He and Walter were like a couple of old bachelors, both in their 30's when they finally married. El and Etta lived in the mining camps for 2 years, then moved back to Ferron. They lived in the old Jimmy Stevens home where Eck Wild lives. El bought a farm in Clawson and got a real good deal. A team of horses, wagons and equipment were all thrown in, and they moved out to Clawson. Seeley was born in Ferron before they moved out and was their only child. El became Bishop of the Clawson Ward. When Seeley grew up, he joined the Air Force and was stationed in California, where he met and married Vivian. Later, El and Etta sold the farm and moved to Orangevale California to be with their family. Etta died after a number of years. After a few years, he married Pearl, who was a close friend to both Etta and him. He invested his money from the farm wisely by buying home mortgages and lived very well for the rest of his life. He died at the age of 98.

#### Mirl

Mirl was a dandy. He had fancy clothes, the fanciest horse and saddle. He was the one that his brothers, sisters and Mother had to put up with. He had a little bay mare that he guarded jealously. He seldom let Walter ride her and got mad at his sisters for dolling her up and riding her when he was away. Mirl was good looking and very popular with the girls. He had a lot of pride and everything had to be the best. Mirl's chores were to herd the cows. He would take a lunch and spend the whole day grazing the cows on flats. He didn't like work.

Mirl was nice looking and popular with the young people. He met Blanch Cook and they went steady for a time. After her mother died, she spent a lot of time with Hanna and the girls. After they married, they lived with her father for a while, then they moved into the house where Hazel Christensen lived. Their first 3 daughters and son (Barbara, Emily, Louise and Max) were born there. Anna Lee, Kathleen and James were born in Rochester. Hanna helped Mirl get land at Rochester with the Company. He built a log cabin with a dirt roof on the homestead. This was passed down to Max, who still farms the land.



~~tender hearted and cried a lot over this. Since Irena spent a lot of time alone, Hanna would walk up and visit her often and try to comfort her.~~

Arthur hired several men to help on the farm and Irena always had a lot of company to cook for. When she wasn't cooking or working in the house, she was working outside. She always had a big garden. They also had fruit orchards and Irena and the girls worked in the orchards. When Ralph went of a mission and to the service, Irena and the girls helped on the farm. Irena was plowing with the new tractor which she didn't know how to operate very well. When she came to the end of the row, she couldn't stop or turn it, and ran through the fence and tore out several posts. One time while burning leaves and grass, the fire caught on to an evergreen tree, raced up the tree and ignited the roof. She called the fire department. By the time they got there, the whole roof was a blaze. Men came and moved the furniture out and they lived in a trailer until the roof was repaired.

Irena was very active in the Church. She was President of the Primary for 10 years. She was in the Relief Society Presidency, and a visiting teacher all her life. She was very free-hearted. Whenever anyone came to visit, they would have to stay for a meal, or have some refreshments. Neva was also like that.

Irena had bleeding ulcers, but Arthur wouldn't allow her to be operated on. His mother had died on the operating table. He would try all manner of quack medicines and doctors, but wouldn't allow the proper treatment. Both Arthur and Irena were good at business. Irena kept all the records and did the taxes. Arthur was never in debt. He was awarded Cattleman of the Year, and best farmer. He had lots of cattle, land and money. Together, they had a large posterity.

Walter

Walter was the youngest son. He never knew his father. His two older sisters caused him a lot of trouble while he was growing up by teasing and tattling on him. His main chores was to take the cows to the pasture on foot. When grass got short, he took them to the hills and stayed all day. He didn't want to go to school, but his Mother and sisters pressured him into it, but he didn't like it. He went through the 9th grade in Ferron and then to the Presbyterian school for 2 years. He didn't go on to the Academy like his older brothers and sisters. As he got bigger, every one of his older brothers had jobs for him to do.

Walter had many friends while he was growing up and would go out at night chasing around. For entertainment, they went to dances in the old Meeting house where a local orchestra played. There were also picture shows in the old Greenlaugh building. After the show, Walter and some friends would put their nickels and dimes together and would go in the store and buy a keg of ginger snaps and sit on the door step and eat them and plan what mischief they could get into.

When he was 17, he tried to join the Navy, but his mother found out and talked with the Bishop. He was shortly called on a mission. He served in the Mexican Mission. His first 6 months was in New Mexico. He then went to San Antonio TX, then to Laredo, and finally to Montarae Mexico. When he returned, his friends were all gone and he became a loner. He was active in his church duties for a while and served in the Sunday School Presidency. Walter and his mother didn't have much to live on. He farmed during the summer and worked in the mining camps south west of Helper in the winters for 3-4 years. He worked

Neva

While Hanna was sickly, Neva took much of the responsibility in the home. Both Neva and Irena learned to play the piano. The home became a gathering place for the young folks of the town. They would congregate and play the piano and party on the lawn. When her children reached the age for High School, Hanna moved her family to Castle Dale for the winters so El, Miri and the girls could attend the academy. They lived in the north east part of town in a small building behind the house owned by Jim Peterson for the first winter. The second winter, they lived in apartment houses called the Incubator, which still stands to the north and west of the Church. While living in Castle Dale, Neva met Earnest Jensen. He was just leaving on a 3 year mission. He came to say goodbye to Neva, but she was in the outhouse. She wouldn't come out because she was so embarrassed, so he left without saying goodbye. While Earnest was gone, Neva went to college up state. She was smart but didn't finish. During the winter, she went to the Reservation and helped Will. When Ernest came home, they were married. Earnest operated a small leather shop on main street in Castle Dale, where he made and repaired harnesses and other leather goods. They moved to Ferron when Ralph was born, and Earnest continued his leather work in a small shop on the corner where Dean Behling trailer court stands. Later they moved back to Castle Dale and bought the house on North Main St. Don, Helen and Elaine were born there. Earnest accumulated a lot of land, water and cattle. He died in the late 40's when a horse reared over backwards and broke his back. He laid in the hospital for 10 days before he died. This was such a shock to Neva that Hanna went over and stayed with her to comfort her. Neva worked in the school lunch program for 17 years. Later, she served a mission in California. When she returned, she lived alone, and many of the single women from the Extension Service and other singles came to board with her. Between these and her missionary companions and converts, she had many special friends continually coming to visit her. She loved all the people in Castle Dale. Christmas time was very special. All her friends brought gifts to her and she in turn would send them away with a gift. Many of the gifts were turned around and sent out with another person. She liked social activities and would capitalize on any occasion to throw a party. She had a gala birthday party for her 80, 85 and 90th birthday. She lived her religion. She was always a visiting teacher and never was too old to serve the church.

Irena

Irena was nicknamed Rena for short. She was sickly when she was little, but the Doctor couldn't find what was wrong. When she died at the age of 8y, the Doctor diagnosed that she had had hepatitis as a youth. The Doctor at the time recommended that she be taken to a higher altitude. Hanna loaded the kids in a wagon and went to the Mountain for the summers. They took milk cows and made butter and cheese on Dairy creek. This seemed to help Irena and she got over the illness.

Irena was a pretty girl. She went to work for Mrs. Lemon, where she got to know and fell in love with Arthur. Arthur's father bought them a nice brick home where they lived until they died. Since Arthur was several years older and set in his ways, Irena had to give in a lot to him. Arthur worked on his Fathers farm and took his meals at his Mothers house. Irena felt that he was clinging to his Mother and not to her. She was tender hearted and cried a lot over this. Since Irena spent a lot of time alone, Hanna would walk up and

in the Rains, Little Standard and Little Columbia mines. He had two close calls while working in the mines. One winter was very cold and froze all the outside water. He had gone into the mine to get some water and had been standing on the track. He just stepped off as a trip came by. He could have been crushed by it. Another time he had just moved away as a big rock fell where he was standing. He did crush his left ring finger coupling coal cars.

Walter came back and farmed with his mother. One summer, he made a cart for his Mother to ride in. They hooked up the old mare and went to the field to hoe potatoes. When they went through a ditch, the shaft broke and goosed the horse and she started to run. Walter's foot was caught in the line and Walter drug him down and back through the field. Hanna offered a prayer that Hanna wouldn't get hurt, and the line broke. He was shook up but unhurt. Hanna caught a ride home on a wagon coming from Emery, and Walter rode the horse home.

Walter raised and raced horses. A favorite event was the 4th of July celebrations, which lasted 2-3 days. The races started in front of Peterson's store and ran up the street to where Ray Wareham now lives. Sometimes they started from where Perry Snow lived. They held dances every night during the celebration. For Easter, Will and his friends rode horses to the hills, to the Round Knoll and Long Knoll.

He married Lavon Nelson in 1936. They lived in the same house as Hanna. It was partitioned in two, but they shared the same bathroom. Lavon probably knew Hanna better than any of the children by living so close to her for 25 years. Walter bought EI's 20 acres under the dugway, another 20 acres from Bartons, and 120 acres from the County in the early 1920's. He also farmed the original 53 acres of Parley's on the meadow. He was one of the better farmers in the county, receiving the Best Farmer and Best Pasture awards. He sold the farm to Preston Thompson in 1950.

Walter was always kind hearted. During the drought there wasn't much hay. He had some native hay growing on the meadows and harvested some periodically to bring home to his horses. On the way home, he gave most of it away to his neighbors. Walter served two terms on the Ferron Town Board in the 1950's. He took several trips to Salt Lake and Las Vegas with the Municipal League. He also ran for Mayor against Max, but Max won. Walter served as Brand Inspector for 10 years. He was always willing and available to help anyone.

I remember one experience as a small boy where Dad, French Beach and Walter went up on Wrigley Hill to cut aspen logs for a corral. They took me along and we stayed in an old army tent. They cut the trees and it was my job to peel the bark off with sharpened leaf springs. We loaded the poles on a rickety old wagon attached to a tractor and started off the dugway. I was afraid it would run off the edge. Walter helped at odd jobs whenever we needed a hand.

History of Parley Pratt Ralphs

Parley Pratt Ralphs was born July 25, 1858 in South Collomwood, Utah to William Ralph and Elizabeth Brooks Ralphs. His pioneer parents left England to embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and to live with the Mormons in the West. They faced many problems that are familiar to early Church members. They knew the Prophet Joseph Smith, and enjoyed their association with him.

In 1865 his father had gone to California to visit his oldest daughter, Mary Ellen who was married and living there and while he was gone the mother of this large family was taken ill and passed away. Because of transportation difficulties of those days he was unable to get home in time for the funeral, and when he did finally arrive the children were staying with relatives and friends.

Parley had gone to Payson to live with his sister Emily and he stayed there with her family until the early 70's when his oldest brother Joseph took him and his brother John to Ferron and the three of them took up homesteading. The boys lived together south of Ferron until they were married. Joseph married Amanda Jensen in August of 1883, John and Parley married the Hansen sisters, Eda and Johannah in January of 1884.

Peter Hansen, the father of the Hansen girls who had moved from Manti, Utah to Ferron and was a mason by trade had promised to build each of his girls a home so John and Parley worked along with him and got stone out of the canyon west of Ferron and built a large stone home. John and Eda were married first so they got the big home. The house was the first big home built in the town and for many years the upstairs was the meeting place for all wedding dances and special occasions. In fact, it was always a place where the young people of the community were at home.

Parley and Johannah lived with John and Eda for nearly a year and then moved to a small log house down in their field--however in 1890 they moved into a big log home across the street from John and Eda and had all the room they needed for their three little boys. Both homes are in down town Ferron and to this date are both beautiful, modern and an asset to the community. Johannah still lives in part of her home sharing it with her son Walter and his wife. The Stone house was sold and Karl Nelson lives there now.

Parley was a hard working man and provided well for his six sons and two daughters. His main livelihood was farming and cattle raising. He taught his boys to work and to love the good earth and provided their means of living. He was especially interested in horses and always had the best team in town to work with. He had plenty of horses so that his boys could learn to ride and to love them as he did. Of course along with riding, the horses came its share of broken arms--shoulders and etc.

He always took his boys to the field with him and no matter how young he tried to find jobs for them to do. One time when Mirl was only five, he and the other four boys were returning home with their father after a days work. It was during the time of high water and although the river was high they had still been going back and forth to their farm. As they got near the bank where the horses were to pull them out of the river, they noticed the bank had washed out and left such a high embankment that the horses were not able to find a place they could get out of the river. In the excitement that all the boys jumped out of the wagon which the water had started running through. The older boys were able finally to get ashore but Mirl was rescued by his father. When he got safely on the ~~high~~ bank, his little black cap which he was very much attached too, and which he wore all the time was still sitting on his head. Neighboring farmers who had heard the excitement came to assist in getting the horses unharnessed and freed from the wagon so they could get out of the water. It was a close call--as the water was so swift and high but the family looked at the cheerful side and had merry laughs that in all that swift water, and them all being wet from head to foot that Mirl came out of it all without loosing his cap.

Parley was a good citizen and helped in many ways to improve the community. He was always willing to leave his work to go dig ditches or build roads or do work that was so important to the early settlers. He invested money in the coops so that things could be made available to the people in the Community.

This man was kind and gentle to his children and yet very strict in the things he felt they must learn. He wanted them to be mannerly and unoffensive in any way. He left most of their religious training to his wife because having been raised away from home he hadn't taken advantage of Church training as he should have done. Everyone who visited their home made a comment on how well behaved their children were and should you visit any of the children today I believe you will still find their early training has prevailed throughout all the years.

For the last few years of his life he was troubled with stomach ulcers--which was the cause of his death. He went to California for a while, taking Leon with him, to see if the climate might help his condition but it didn't seem to justify moving there. He was taken away from his family while they were still young but he had trained the older ones to work and they were able to provide for the family who had been left behind. He died October 2, 1903.

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