

MARIAH (MARIA) POWELL WARREN BLAIN BLANCHARD

John Ammon Powell and Hannah Matilda Snyder were the parents of Maria. They came to Utah with the pioneers. John Ammon was born Nov. 27, 1844, at Pisday Illinois. Hannah Matilda was born Feb. 26, 1847 at, Winter Quarters Nebraska. They met and married Jan. 13, 1863 at Kamas Utah. Here they lived in a cabin John Ammon had built three years prior. Hannah was 16 years old and John 19, when they moved to Lambs Canyon. Two of the children were born here, John Ammon Jr. Oct. 4, 1863, and Maria was born May 18, 1866. While living here they endured many Indian wars, until the Black Hawk War drove them from their home to Salem, Utah.

After moving to Salem, Utah, Almeda was born Sept. 29, 1869; James March 14, 1871; Leah Aug. 23, 1874; and Robert Augustus June 4, 1877. While they lived at Salem, John met and married a widow; Sarah Jane Shields Plumb, who he took in plural marriage in the Endowment House for time only on Jan. 6, 1873.

Maria was only 3 at this time, so everything she remembered about her family was of being a polygamist. She never saw much of her father because he was split between two families, and always out working for them. This made her mother the most important person in her life. She knew she would always be there to help her.

On the 7th of December 1877, Hannah Matilda died at the age of 30, and was buried in the Salem Cemetery. She had not been well since the birth of her last child and left John Ammon with 6 little children between the ages of 12 years, and 6 months old.

The children had lost the only person upon whom they knew they could count. They now had to grow up fast, and take more responsibility. John Ammon, took the children to Sarah Jane to raise, along with her own children. Life there was not the happiest for there were a lot of children and a lot of work to be done to raise them. This made them grow up being hard workers and doing the best they could, with what they had.

From there John Ammon, took the family to Carbon County, to the town of Price. At this time Maria was 16. New homes were built for them, and Maria took over most of the care for her brothers and sisters. Then her father married again to Rosaltha Jane Allred on the 19th of March 1885.

When Maria was 19 she married William Zenos Warren, he was 27. They married in Price, Utah on the 19th of March 1885.

William had a ranch in Garden Creek, where he and his uncle, Levi Simmons, were partners in a cattle herd. William was born the 4th of Dec. 1858 in Springville, Utah to William James Warren and Sarah Jane Simmons. His parents had run a small trading post for many years, and had dealt with many of the famous out-laws of that day who had stopped to buy supplies. When Maria and William went to Garden Creek to live, their stay ended up being very short. A man by the name of Argyle, (whom Argyle Canyon was named after) came to William

to trade ranches. He told William of how he had made a deal to furnish fresh horses to the Wild Bunch after they robbed the Castle Dale payroll. He got scared and never showed up with the horses. Afterwards being afraid they would come back and kill him he had to get out. The Wild Bunch rode through the canyon many times, and used it as a hideout. William needed more ground for his stock, so the decision was made to move. The land was free and the government had homestead rights on the land. They could also run their stock over long distances for grazing. The friends William had made when his father was running the trading post would pay-off. He would have no problems getting along with the out-laws. The kids later told of how sometimes the wild bunch would ride through and stop for a few days to rest up and hideout. They said they were nice to them and never hurt one of them.

The west gave many people a chance to have land, and the opportunity to make good; if they were willing to take on the untamed elements, and unknown dangers. The land was still filled with savage men and ravenous beasts. If people were willing to meet these terms they could survive. For those willing to work hard it became a promised land. Maria took upon herself these hardships because she never knew another way of life. She became an important part in this wilderness. She became, a homemaker, wife, mother, farmhand, cook, doctor, breadwinner, and so many more things.

She homesteaded, cleared and leveled land, built irrigation ditches, built several homes, raised horses, cows, chickens and pigs as well as put in crops, harvested, had her own orchards, and gardens.

Now Maria's mother was a gentle woman and used faith and medicine to heal the sick. Her grandmother had been well known for her healing ways too, and this knowledge was passed down to Maria. She became a well known healer, not a Doctor; but in those days not many doctors were to be found. Not many people had money to get a doctor anyway. They relied upon the other people round them who could help. Maria knew a lot about the art of healing and taking care of the sick. Whenever anyone needed help they would call for her. Her children say she was like a midwife in those days. She took care of anyone who needed her. She would get her horse and no matter how far she would go and care for them.

She had many ways of healing the sick. It is said that upon going to a drug store for a few things she needed, the druggist marveled at her knowledge of the drugs and asked her how she used them. She never told anyone how to use her mixtures. But often she could be seen gathering and storing wild herbs, which she drank for different reasons. She was very successful at using her knowledge of herbs.

Their life in the Canyon was a very hot and dusty one. Not much water and a lot of desert ground. There was not much brush or grass because of no water, just a lot of shale rock.

Later after William made the move to Ninemile a few of his brothers came to join them. They filled the whole mouth of the canyon. There got to be a few wild cattle around then and a few more families moved in to hunt the strays and to make a living.

In those days a few people were sent in bunches by the church to colonize, so more and more families ended up in the canyon.

They plowed the ground, hard as it was, and put in oats, because oats was the only thing they could get to grow in that dry country. It was hard work to lay out a farm, and build up ground with very little water. All the water they had was winter run off from snow, as it run

down out of the mountains. Many a time they had to melt snow to have drinking water. The only needs they had were food and shelter, and the home was free, it just had to be built and the land farmed. They had chickens, so they had eggs, and cows provided them with milk, cream and butter. They raised their own animals for meat, and had hogs. But most of the time they couldn't afford to eat their own animals, so they hunted for wild game. They planted a good crop of potatoes, and corn. Just enough to get them through the hard long winters.

They only went to Price for goods they needed. It was a long trip by horse or wagon and took a full day. The roads were not very good, in many places it was only a trail cut in the ground. The trips were dusty and bumpy, so when they went it had to count. The wagons were made full of sugar, flour, salt, coffee, and a few other things. In those days they bought coffee in big bags of hole beans, and had to brake them up with a hammer to make coffee. To get money for the goods they took stock to trade or sale. For people of these times, they were considered very well off.

William and Maria had eight children; Matilda Jane, born 11 Dec. 1885, and died 11 Dec. 1885; Hattie May born 14 March 1887, and died 31 Mar. 1888; Alma Zenos (Doc) 3 Feb. 1889; Lorean born 9 Sept. 1891, died 25 Oct. 1929; Joseph Glen born 1 Dec. 1892, died June 22, 1979; Joral born 8 Feb. 1896, died 5 Mar. 1980; Lee Roy born 26 Apr. 1901; William Harold born 6 June 1903.

Maria had a large family bible that she recorded all of the important family dates in. She saw to it that each of the children were blessed, and baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. This was done in the Price Ward.

When Lorean was a small baby, Maria became ill and died. She told this story, "When I went to see my small children (Matilda, and Hattie) that were dead. I was told that my work was not done here on this earth and if I wanted to return to do it, my life would be full of hardship and heartbreak for the rest of my days." Maria made the decision to come back, not wanting to leave her small children the way she was left when she was young. When she returned, William and Maria went through the Salt Lake Temple and were sealed for time and all eternity and she had her children all sealed to her.

The kids had to ride their horses 5 miles before daylight to school. They had a school house built in Argyle later and the teachers lived with the different families for short times. "We were real good kids we run off every teacher that came out their, and we got a real rough name. We did everything from tipping over the out house with the teacher in it, to making the teacher ride us down on our horses to come to school. We had a hard time keeping teachers." Roy said. He later said, "I had a hard time ever getting out of the first grade and learned to read off of an old calf of corn."

The time came when Utah became a state (Jan. 4, 1896) and it became against the law to have more than one wife. John Powell was caught and thrown in jail. He sent word to Maria and William to come and get him out, because they were going to kill him. Maria and William were the only ones with enough money to help him. The law treated the man charged with polygamist marriages bad. Maria and William went to Price and posted 300 dollars bail to get him out. Her father then had to leave one of his wives and try to take care of them the best he could without being part of the family.

Maria's life in the Canyon was a hard one just making a farm and good ground to grow

crops etc. They also had to build a log cabin and dig a water well in front of the house. They had to chop wood and heat water to wash and then wash on a scrub board. They made their own bread, milked cows for butter and cream, and took care of the farm animals, gathered eggs and fed the animals. These were a few of the everyday chores. Hours were long and hard from sun up until sun down just to feed the family. Many times William would need help with the stock moving them for grazing, branding, and feeding.

Then William began getting sick. He had bad teeth, and because of health reasons he had to have them pulled out. They made a trip to Price where they had William drink all the whiskey he could hold. When he felt no more pain they held him down, and pulled all of his teeth. It proved to be too much for Bill. He was never the same person. It gave him what they called leakage of the heart, or heart trouble. Within two years from that day he got worse and had a heart attack from the poison draining into his body. At that time they tried to get him to a doctor. They took the covered wagon and put a bed and stove in it to keep him warm, and headed for Price. By the time they reached Coal Creek Bill had gotten worse and died. Maria went ahead and laid him out. They took his body into Price for burial. He died 21 Jan. 1905 at the age of 47. They had been married 20 years.

With William's death Maria's lifestyle became even harder. She was very firm in her ways. Maria and the kids were left with a lot of stock so this would take care of them for awhile. (Each one of the kids had a horse and a few extras ones, as well as cows.) Maria and the children would do all of the farming, and ranching now. Alma was 16 years old and helped do a lot of his father's work. Lorean, who was 14 years old got all of the household chores. It was said that if not for Lorean they would have starved to death.

She was a good sister, took care of the boys like no one else could, and they loved her for that. The boys say, "Maria was always gone," the kids called her an "old Polygamist," because of her father. "She was like all women now days always gone or off doing something, or going some place. She was a busy woman and had a hard struggle to make a go of it with us little kids." (A quote from one of the kids.)

Maria would load up the wagon in the summer for a "few day" trip to Price to get fruit, and bring back home. While they were there they would get a few hogs and chickens, as well as food supplies. One time on the way back they had to cross a steep creek, and the pigs they had boxed up, and tied down, broke loose and the pigs got away. Roy and Harold say their mother left them with a sack of biscuits, and told them to find the pigs and she and she would be back in three days. They were only 8 and 6 and worried about what they would do if they did find the pigs. They followed the tracks three days and never did find any pigs.

The kids tell about one of the wild bunch that road through their every summer. He had a herd of cattle about 300-400 head and he would stop for two or three days and rest up, because they had a large corral to hold the cattle. He always told the kids he bought them from the Indian, but they could have been stolen, but either way it was a federal offense to have Indian cattle. "He made this trip every year and would kill a beef for us kids and hang it for us. This time he went into Price with his cattle where a posse was waiting for him and picked him up on a government offense. He sent all of his pack horses and equipment back to mother, and she kept them a long time. He never returned for his things and we never heard what happened to him.

made a new one out of it."

In the winter Maria would move into town to be near the school, so the kids could get a good education. They would live in any vacant house they could find. Sometimes they would stay with Lorean in Price, after she married Elmer Adley in 1910. The boys were so wild and hated to go to town so soon they would move back to Argyle.

By 1910 Lorean was married and gone and Alma came and went as he pleased, so only 4 children were left home. There was a Blain who married one of the Warren boys. Maria met Hillary Blain and married him on November 18th, 1909. They went to Argyle for awhile.

They had one child born August 18, 1910 and named him Ruland. They all got along good together. The kids really liked Hillary and thought he was a real good man and he done right by them. He took care of Maria the best he could.

In 1912 Maria came to Bluebell on the advice of her brother James Powell, and filed a claim on 160 acres of ground. They had thrown open the reservation for homesteaders, but it was a hard struggle trying to make the place into a farm. They didn't have any water at all. There was sage brush land to be cleared and a new farm to be built up. "She took us little kids over there, keeping the ranch in Argyle for grazing land for the stock. We would take the cattle back and forth from one place to the other."

Now Hillary was helping her farm down in Argyle and get that place ready for crops. About the first of April he got sick. They thought it was typhoid fever and took him to the Roosevelt Hospital. Instead he had tick fever and on April 22, 1915 he died. They buried him in Bluebell, Utah.

While in Bluebell, Maria became the ditch rider and had to check on the water and make sure the right people were using it. There were many fights that took place over the use of water and who should have it.

The wild horses were so thick, that when they planted a patch of oats that was about five acres the horses would come and eat the oats after they got quite high. The boys would go out and sleep in the field with a gun and wake up in the night and shoot off the gun to scare off the horses.

"The year the flu epidemic hit people died by the dozens. We never did get sick. Mom went around doctoring everyone and helping. She took care of us kids and used an asafetida bag. She bought it by big bricks and cut it into one inch squares, then hung it around our necks. It made us sleep a lot, and it stunk so bad it made the sickness leave or not want to be around. She took care of a lot of people that winter. She made an ointment that would draw out poison. This proved to be worth its weight in gold when she was bitten by a rattle snake. There were lots of snakes in the county and you had to watch your step. She had been out watering when she stepped on a snake and it bit her threw a hole in her shoe. She doctored herself and saved her own life. Us kids didn't know what to do for her. When she was better she walked down to Rob Powell's home to get help. Her leg had swelled up twice its size and was black. She hand bandaged it up and took care of it the best she could." The kids were afraid they would lose her.

Maria was drug many times in her life for different reasons. She also in turn did her share of roping and dragging. (insert story about getting drug because of water) There was no law to help take care of problems in those days and people had to do their own rule making. She was a very stubborn person, and a bit hard in the eyes of other people. But she believed right

was right and no way was wrong okay. "You paid for your errors and done better."

If people treated her fair they got the same respect, but if they were hard with her she could be a real bear. Many people were scared to death of her. She always carried a big walking stick and used it to help her get around better. Whenever she traveled she would take the stick with her. She walked great distances even after she got old. To see her going to Salt Lake, Duchesne, Price, or Vernal was nothing out of the ordinary. She loved her freedom above all else and hated to not be able to be her own boss.

She had lots of Indians come to her home for food. One time there was one old buck that kept coming back everyday wanting something to eat and drink. He came one time and she fixed him a good drink. She went in under the bed and got her box of native wild herbs and mixed him up a drink. He never came back again. She was afraid of the Indians but never let them know it. She stood her ground with them. One Indian would come by everyday for the prairie dogs the kids would kill by running water down the prairie dog holes. When they came out they would hit them over the head with a shovel. The Indian would tie 30-40 prairie dogs, at a time, on his horse. He said they were good eating.

In 1917 Alma filed on the ground in Ninemile in his name. Maria gave him 50 head of cattle to start out, and he took over the Ninemile farm.

There was one time when Glen got sick. Maria was afraid he would die. She doctored him and gave him all she could think of but he didn't get better. The only thing she could think of was to pray so she did. When she went to the out house she read a piece of paper that said, "one teaspoon of olive oil once a day." She knew her prayer had been answered. She gave the olive oil and Glen got better.

Maria remarried again to ED. Blanchard the 10th of Jan. 1918, at Altonah. He was 51 she was 50, but they never did get along very good and soon separated.

Nov. 14, 1925 Maria registered her home as a homestead. She was 59 and listed Ruland as her sole child. Later she bought more ground to make her farm bigger. She would take Ruland to live with Lorean when school was going, and so she was alone most of the time now.

Maria was living in Vernal when she got word that Lorean had been hurt and was not expected to live. She had a broken neck. All the family was sent for. Maria was there taking care of Lorean until she died on Oct. 25th 1928. The family took Lorean back to Price and buried her next to her father.

The 14th of Dec. 1928 Maria's father, John Ammon Powell died. He had been a big part of her life. He wrote that he wanted his children to be lifters and builders not leaners and let their deeds speak for them. "I guess that tells it all about Maria. She was a builder and never tried to put on airs. She done what she had too. At one time on Aug. 19, 1927 she had a broken arm, but never let that stop her from working and carrying on."

Maria now was getting old and most people couldn't understand her ways, like the old west she was losing her place in the new world. At the age of 89, on the 4th of July 1953, in Orem, Utah in an old folks home Maria died. Her last wishes were to be buried, in her temple clothes, in Bluebell, by James H. Blain.

History has ignored the roll played by so many hard working women. Maria took on the life of the early frontier and settlement period. She suffered all the dangers and hardships imposed by the wilderness conditions. She lived through long days of toil, loneliness, and

sorrow s, until at last driven to the edge of sanity, she resigned herself to a hard life. She had declared herself as confident as anyone else and eager to meet the challenge of the wilderness. She held her head high and her eyes searched for the future that lay ahead. She shared with her family that faith for their future. She was a builder not a leaner, and she knew her value. Even though the times changed and the wilderness became tame, Maria could not change. Even as time found her growing old she wanted to go and do for herself as she had always done.

- Facts for this story were taken from:

Alma Warren

Robert Warren

Harold Warren

Dorothy Adley

Zella Adley Pizzuto

- Court Records of Duchesne County, Carbon County, & records office Duchesne County.
 - Certificates of Marriage Duchesne County and Carbon County
 - Dates on births, Price & Bluebell Ward Records
 - Letter of Robert Augustus to Maria Powell
 - Stories of Life Histories of John Ammon Powell Family
 - Newspaper clippings of Roosevelt, & Duchesne Papers
 - Cemetery Records of Duchesne, Bluebell, Price, & Salem Ut.
 - Facts written and compiled by Diana Spalding, from an original story written for a family history.
 - History from the Simmons Family Book
- (Editing and retyping was completed by Terri Denney, daughter of Glen Warren, 1975.)