

My Grandmother, Mary Jane McCleave Meeks was born in Belfast, Ireland, 21 of August, 1840, the 4th child born to a family of 10; daughter of John and Nancy Jane (McFerren) McCleave; was baptised in the Irish sea, August 26, 1856 along with her sisters, Sarah, Catherine, and Margaret, after dark. She was confirmed a member of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, sailed for America and walked every inch of the way across the plains at the age of fifteen. She sailed on the Samuel Curling with her parents and 6 brothers and sisters; Margaret, 17; Isabel 15; John T., 11; Joseph Smith, 8; Eliza R., 6; and Alexander Gilmore, 2. Her two older sisters Sarah and Catherine McCleave preceded them to Zion, 5 years before the rest of the family arrived. They had sailed on the Falcon which arrived in New Orleans on May 18, 1855. From there they had gone by packet train up the Mississippi and continued by ox train to St Lake Valley. There the two sisters had married and were comfortably settled. Sarah married John Young, a brother to President Brigham Young and had a son John McCleave Young when the family arrived. Catherine was married to Phines Cook, Catherine McCleave Cook was later married to David Riley Russell. Why she was married the second time or what happened to her first husband I do not know.

The Samuel Curling carried 700 and 7 souls, very crowded and the voyage was rough. They set sail April 19th. Captain Don Jones was president of the ship. On May 5 a terrific storm come up which threatened to destroy them. The Captain said it was the worst he had encountered in his 20 years at sea. All the passengers prayed for God's mercy. Much luggage was thrown over board. Nancy Jane McCleave's two barrels of lovely down pillows and Irish linen were among the luggage cast into the sea.

WIFE OF DR. REDDY WEEKS

MARY JANE MCCLEAVE WEEKS

Mary

Grandmother first set foot on American soil May 26, 1856 continued her

Journey by rail to Iowa City. Captain Jones arranged with the railroad company to take the immigrants on a luggage train from Boston to Iowa City for \$11.00 for each adult and half price for children under 14 years. They were crowded in the cars like cattle and had several train changes to make. Much of their luggage was lost on this trip.

They left Iowa City June 11, 1856, in the second handcart company, Daniel D. McArthur captain. Grandmother said, "We hauled company provisions in the

carts. These were each on two wheels with a shaft to draw it with. No better outfits were available at that time, and rather than wait to procure wagons, horses or oxen, we chose to come this way before it got too late to reach the valley before winter, some would push and some would pull, which gave

occasion for the noted song."

"One day when we started up a large hill a little boy named Elliker became sick and could not climb when we camped that night the captain went back but could not find the lad, who had been left to rest and he was never heard of again."

Grandmother celebrated her 16 birthday on the plains by gathering bull

berries at every stop. In the evening everybody shared a bull berry dumpling. Grandmother had not feared the Indians or the weather. The greatest menace

to girls her age, she said, were the "white wolves". (Mostly white trash going west who preyed on the camps or companies, if not held at bay.)

One day the Company stopped to do washing. Grandmother was wringing

out clothes in the stream. A fine buggy drove up. A man jumped out and asked me to go for a ride. I said "no thank you" he asked me if I had any folks? I

said, "Yes". The other man who was in the buggy said, "take this handkerchief and tie over her mouth and throw her in." Just then father and sister appeared

and the men put whip to their horses and drove away. So you see even in those

days men wanted to take young girls for a ride.

Grandmother's father died two days before they reached the valley from a broken blood vessel he received from pulling the carts, and was buried on Bear River, near Evanston, Wyoming, by the side of the road.

Daniel McArthur's Company arrived in Salt Lake Valley September 26, 1856, and Grandmother, Mary Jane McLeve, was put out with a family named Grifford to work and earned enough money to buy a calico dress which cost a dollar a yard.

Mary Jane McLeve on November 12 was married to Dr. Priddy Meeks who had also crossed the plains. It was love at first sight even though he was 61

and Grandmother only 16. He had three girls all older than Grandmother and a wife his own age at the time. He was told by his first wife to bring home

another on his return trip from Salt Lake. Grandfather inquired at the proper places if there were any girls available. As a result, Mary Jane rode home

next morning in a covered wagon, the wife of my Grandfather. The prophet Joseph Smith had told Mr. Meeks he should go to Zion and marry a young girl and raise a large family; ten children blessed this union.

Taken from the Utah Historical Quarterly, Journal of Priddy Meeks, page 19 Grandfather had this to say:

"People may say what they please about being mismated in age, in marriage, but the Lord knows most about these matters and if there were ever a match consumated by providence of God this was one. She has born me 10 children and if anything they were above the average of smartness, all well-formed and intelligent. I have often said if I had picked the territory I could not have

suted myself as well as Mary Jane.

Their son, Heber Meeks, served many, years as stake president of Kdnab

Stake. He also helped open the Mission in Alaska. His son Heber served as

President of the Southern States Mission.

Grandmother was only 47 when grandfather died and raised her family

practically by her own support.

They first lived in Parowan. In 1862 they moved to Long Valley. Grandmother said one day Indians came to her home and demanded flour she gave them all

she had and her children had to eat corn meal until Dr. Meeks returned home

from Parowan.

After the Berry boys were killed it was two dangerous for them to remain

and they joined the settlers at Windsor, (Mt. Carmel). Robert Berry, his wife

Isabel and his brother Joe were killed by the Indians. According to history,

they first tied Robert to a wheel and he was forced to watch them torture

Isabel, who was an expectant mother. They shot arrows into her and laughed at

her as she tried to pull them out. Then they shot him full of arrows.

In 1877 Grandmother and Dr. Meeks moved from Mt. Carmel back to Long

Valley and joined the United Order in Orderville which had been organized two

years before. Grandfather put his stock in the common herd and paid \$3.00

a month. They lived in the fort in a lumber cabin in the Northwest corner.

They lived there until the order was broken up. They all had their work.

Grandmother did med-wifery after Dr. Meeks died and attended over 700 births.

One time when called upon to attend the sick Grandmothers horses became

frightened and ran. She was thrown out of the wagon loosening her teeth but

she made the call.

According to history and personal memories, the United Order was organized

at Mt. Carmel March 20, 1874, by John R. Young, at which time 109 members were

listed. One summer of the United Order was enough for most members. Bishop

Bryant Jolley, with his numerous family and relatives, formed the core of

dissenters. To avoid contention, those who wished to continue with the Order

sold their holdings and moved in a body two miles above Mt. Carmel where title

to land was vested in the group and where they set up the town of Orderville

under the leadership of Howard Spencer. The new town was surveyed February 20,

1875.

Grandmother had this to say about the United Order, "At the time we were in the order we all shared alike. I well remember the large dining hall in the

center with kitchen and bakery attached and at either side work shops. The

bread was mixed in a vat 7 feet long and 2½ feet wide, and 100 pounds of flour

was used at a baking with 5 bushels of potatoes to feed the order. There

were three dairies, one hundred cows each in two of them and fifty in the third.

There was a saw mill and wollen factory, with tannery, shoeshop and cabin shop.

We made our own hats and corded wool for cloths. The reason the order stopped

was not because of selfishness as some think, but because an order from Pres.

Woodruff, thought it advisable to discontinue. We were happy and contented and

I think it could still be made a success with the right kind of hard working

people."

In the year 1900 the United Order of Orderville was officially dissolved,

twenty five years after its incorporation. At one time it numbered nearly 600

and there were 28 specialized departments of work.

Polygamy troubles began in 1885 and fear that the Federal Government might

confiscate the goods of the order seemed to be the main factor that forced the

final dissolution of most of the property and farming lands. Livestock, ranches,

tannery and saw mills were all sold to members. The wollen mill alone was kept

and intermittently operated until the closing year.

Grandmother was a loving personality of vivid vitality at the age of

91 she still maintained her own home, a vine covered cottage, with always a

flower garden in front and she cared for chickens and would give the eggs to

the neighbors. She dried bushels of fruit every year of her life, much of it

grew on her own lot most of this she would give away also.

The last year or two of her life, her widowed daughter Mrs. Ellen Hoyet made her home with her and they cared for each other. Grandmother died at her home in Orderville, January 19, 1933. Before she died she could boast of 10 children, 62 grandchildren, 131 great grandchildren and 15 great-great-grandchildren and five generations.

Written by: Naomi A. Jensen

Box 313

Castle Dale, Utah 84513

Granddaughter of Mary Jane McCleave Meeks,
Daughter of Nancy Meeks and Jerome Asay.

Historian, Camp Dale D.U.P.

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July 21, 1969

NANCY JANE McCLEAVE WIFE OF DR. HADDY WEEKS.

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