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John Hopwood Bleazard

WIFE #3

SARAH SEARCY MILLER

and Martha Ann Miller Their Marriages and Children

by Jennifer DeAnn Johnson Banks
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8/09 --- Devon uploaded pictures of Sarah Searcy and her daughter Martha Ann. You may want to look for them. The pictures were with the story that Jennifer Banks provided for our site. Thanks Jennifer.

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Preface

This is a history of Sarah Searcy and Martha Ann Miller, their marriages and children. Sarah Searcy and her daughter, Martha Ann Miller, were early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They were both involved in multiple marriages, some of which were polygamous and some of which ended in divorce.

The story begins with Sarah's birth in the early 1800s in North Carolina. It follows the Searcy family as they emigrate westward settling briefly in Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa. Sarah and her first husband join the LDS church and move to Nauvoo, Illinois where her husband dies and her daughter Martha enters adolescence. The narrative then tracks both women as they enter marriages and create families while immigrating westward to help establish settlements in what would become the states of Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho. The story ends with the death of Martha in 1911 in Wyoming.

I have long been fascinated by the lives of these women. They do not seem to fit the stereotype of meek and submissive women that is often presented during Sunday church history lessons. The facts represented on family group and pedigree sheets would seem to indicate a fair amount of independent thinking.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to dig deeper and look for the motives and circumstances behind the decisions that created the facts I see documented in my Book of Remembrance. I now have a greater knowledge of what was happening in the lives of these two women and their families, but I do not yet know what motivated many of their decisions and how they felt about the events in their lives. I hope to someday find personal writings for at least some of the family members discussed in this history. I believe that there is more of their story left to tell and hope that as more records become available that story will continue to emerge.

I must give special thanks to my daughter, Chelsea, who read through the Journal History of the Church during her spare time at BYU, my father, J. Raymond Johnson, for his help creating the maps, and especially my cousin, Lynne Slater Turner, who spent countless hours in the Special Collections room at the Family History Library.

The Story Begins

The story begins in the beautiful green misty mountains of western North Carolina in the spring of 1815. It was here that Sarah Searcy was born to Robert Searcy and Mary Spivey on 12 March 1815 in Rutherford County, North Carolina. Not much is certain about Sarah's parents. Evidence suggests her father came from Virginia and her mother was born in North Carolina. The earliest detailed knowledge occurs with their marriage bond on 13 October 1802 in Rutherford County with John Dalton as bondsman.[1]

Children of Robert and Mary Spivey Searcy

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1804	Cynthia	North Carolina
1806	Hannah	North Carolina
1808	Mille	North Carolina
1813	William	North Carolina
1815	Sarah	North Carolina
1820	Rhoena	Tennessee

1824	Elijah	Tennessee
1826	Eliza	Tennessee
1827	Elvina	Tennessee
1829	Nancy	Tennessee
1830	Mary Emily	Indiana
1831	Baby girl	Illinois
1832	Robert	Illinois

While Sarah was an infant, the family moved to Warren County in Tennessee. Sarah lived in Warren County until she was fourteen.[2] While the family lived in Warren County, two of Sarah's older sisters married and made their own homes in Tennessee. In the fall of 1829 the Searcy family started for Indiana, but because of illness they did not arrive until the spring of 1830. They lived in Morgan County, Indiana just long enough to bring in one crop. In the fall of 1830 they moved on to Sangamon County, Illinois. [3]

Places of Residence for the Searcy Family 1802-1830

When Sarah and her family came to Illinois, it had been a state for almost twelve years. Sangamon County encompassed an area that included all of present day Menard County plus parts of Logan, Mason, Macon, and Christian Counties.[4] The county was almost completely rural with a population in 1830 of only 12,960.[5] Early visitors describe Sangamon County as gently rolling prairie with many stands of timber and numerous streams and rivers full of clear water. The area was particularly attractive to settlers because of the presence of timber. Besides providing building material and fuel, these early farmers incorrectly assumed that trees indicated a more fertile soil than did prairie.[6]

Weather had a strong and immediate impact on the everyday lives of families like the Searcys. They arrived in central Illinois just in time to experience one of the most talked about weather events of that time period, The Big Snow of 1830-31. Years later when the "Old Settlers of Sangamon County" was organized, the requirement for membership was "all men who were in Sangamon County & were 21 years of age, previous to the deep snow of 1830-31."

The snow began to fall on December 22 and continued falling in a gradual yet consistent way for two months. The minimum depth reported by the old settlers is four feet on level ground and in the timber. Wind driven drifts were much higher, sometimes covering homes and stables. It was difficult for the settlers to keep their stock alive. Cattle and horses died along with many deer and wild turkey.

The deep snow led to high water in the spring. John Dawson, who lived through this winter, later recalled that the creeks became great rivers and that in places steamboats could have sailed the waters gathered on the low prairies. The deep snow of winter and the high water in spring meant that communication and travel for the Searcy family was often impossible making them dependant upon their own resources for survival.[7]

Early Married Life

Sangamon County brought the Searcys into contact with the Aaron Miller family. The Millers had emigrated to this central Illinois area from Kentucky a few years earlier. In less than a year the first of three romances blossomed between the two families. On September 4 1831 James J. Miller and Sarah Searsee were married in Sangamon County by John Antle, an itinerant Separate Baptist preacher.[8] James was five years older than Sarah and had been born in Kentucky in January of 1810. The couple set up housekeeping in Montgomery County, Illinois.[9] Contemporary newspapers provide a glimpse into what life was like in that part of Illinois at that time. Advertisements show that seed corn sold for \$1.00 per bushel, while fruit trees went for 4-6 1/4 cents each. In March of 1832 tracts of land along the Illinois River in lots from 1 to 40 acres were selling for \$1.50 - \$5.00 per lot. Horses were very expensive and cost between \$30.00 and \$40.00 each.[10]

In the spring of 1836, Sarah and James joined with James's brother, John Miller, and Sarah's brother, William Searcy, to settle new land across the Mississippi River in the area that is now Pleasant Plain, Jefferson County, Iowa. William had just married Sarah Miller, a sister of James, making this excursion a real family affair. William Searcy later recounted how the group followed the new township lines by the marks on the trees and the stakes in the prairie. This group was the first to take teams into that area.[11]

The three couples settled on the north side of the river near the camp of Chief Wapello. The unpleasant odor of the river led the Indians to name it Chicauqua. White settlers called it the Skunk River.[12] In general, the Indians treated them well and William Searcy remembered that they seemed to be fascinated by the process of plowing new fields. Knowledge must have been shared in both directions because William recalls that his family lived in a wigwam during the time they were there.[13]

The families worked hard that summer breaking the tough prairie sod for their farms. They were also hired to turn land for other prospective settlers in return for a promise of supplies. However, when fall came their provisions were exhausted and the promised payments were not made. All three families returned to Sangamon County. They planned to return to Iowa the following spring, but were delayed and did not go back until 1839. By that time a colony of Quakers had taken over their claims.[14]

The disappointment in Jefferson County was followed with news that new Indian lands would be opening up for white settlers just west of Washington County, Iowa. An area known as the "old strip" consisting of one and one-half million acres had been purchased from the Sauk and Fox Indian tribes.[15] This strip of land became part of the new county of Keokuk created a few years later. The county was named after Chief Keokuk.

This part of Iowa was inhabited by Sauk and Fox Indians. Two of the most prominent chiefs at that time were Chief Wapello and Chief Keokuk. The tribes considered southern Keokuk County a resort area and the maple groves around Rock Creek in what was to become Jackson Township were frequented by the Indians in the spring to make syrup.[16]

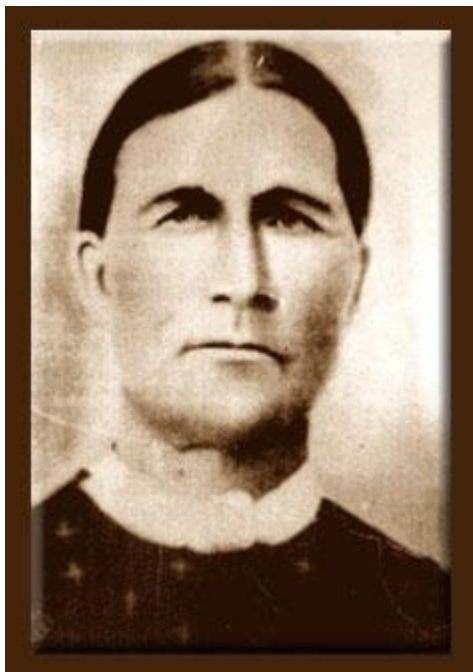
Southwest Iowa Territory in 1840

The first settlers arrived in Richland Township in 1839 and included James and Sarah Searcy Miller, William and Sarah Miller Searcy, John Miller, and James' parents Aaron and Sarah Miller. Robert and Mary Spivey Searcy were soon to follow.[17]

Aaron Miller was a hospitable man and his cabin under the burr oak trees was often a social gathering place. On one occasion a man named Peter Perry told a story teasing Elijah Searcy, Sarah's younger brother, about a young woman. Elijah had some type of impaired mental function and was at times the object of jokes. This time, Elijah became so angry that he grabbed a club and landed a fatal blow to Peter's head. Frightened by what had happened, he ran and hid. As news of the murder spread, angry citizens began to look for Elijah, but were not able to find him. When Elijah returned some time later, news of his mental condition had softened public opinion against him. He was arrested and placed in the Washington County jail, and then allowed to escape.[18] It is probable that Elijah went to Tennessee and stayed with one of his married sisters since that is where he died in 1850.[19]

Children of Sarah Searcy and James J Miller

YEAR	NAME	PLACE
1832	Mary Jane	Illinois
1834	Martha Ann	Illinois
1837/1838	Samuel Robert	Illinois
1838	Elijah	Illinois
1840	Jacob	Iowa



Sarah Searcy

A New Religion

The Miller and Searcy families had affiliations with the Separate Baptist Church. James and Sarah had been married by a Separate Baptist minister,[20] and when the Rock Creek Separate Baptist Church was formed in Keokuk County, Iowa in 1844 almost all the Miller and Searcy family members living in the area were founding members.[21] The Separate Baptist movement had broken off of the Baptist Church during the First Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s. While this tradition began in New England, it was in the south that it really began to take hold. After the Revolutionary War this faith followed the surge of migration west. Separate Baptists have a strong evangelical tradition, and believe the Bible to be the only written source of authority. They sanction lay ministers of both genders. Members of this denomination feel that their church is a modern day revival of the primitive Christian Church of the New Testament.[22]

Sometime during 1840 Mormon missionaries from Nauvoo came to Keokuk County and preached at the home of Aaron Miller. Among the new converts were: Mrs. Aaron Miller and William Miller, along with James and Sarah Searcy Miller. Mrs. Aaron Miller and William Miller were mother and brother to James Miller. Sarah's family was very much opposed to her baptism. Her mother, Mary Spivey Searcy, cried out to the people to "watch their horses or the Mormons would steal them." Sarah's brother, William Searcy, prevented her first attempt at baptism by appearing with friends and making threats of violence. They were successfully baptized in secret the next morning and the new converts escaped quickly to Nauvoo, Illinois. James's mother and brother returned to Keokuk County within a short time, but Sarah and James Miller stayed and made their home in Nauvoo.[23]

Nauvoo, Illinois.

James and Sarah lived on lot 43. The temple was built on lot 20.

Sarah and James were not long in Nauvoo before James died on 12 March 1841 leaving her a widow with five children to raise.[24] Ella H. Heap Slater, a great-granddaughter of Sarah and James stated that James died from starvation and exposure while working on the Nauvoo Temple without shoes or clothes.[25] That may be an exaggeration, but it is possible that hard physical labor on the temple foundation during the winter months could have been a contributing factor to his death.

The city of Nauvoo was divided into four civil wards. In the spring of 1841 the number of ecclesiastical wards increased to four. Civil and ecclesiastical boundaries were identical until December 1842.[26] The Aaronic Priesthood took a census during the spring of 1842 of those living in Nauvoo. The census list of the Nauvoo Second Ward includes Sarah and all her children except Elijah. James Miller is noted as deceased at age 31.[27] Sarah Miller owned horses, at least one wagon, a clock and a watch. By far, the horses were Sarah's most valuable asset accounting for \$100.00 of her declared financial worth of \$225.00.[28]

The principle of plural marriage began to be practiced by Joseph Smith and a few other select members of the church in 1841. Difficulties anticipated from the incorporation of this new marriage system caused it to be practiced in great secrecy at first. However rumors of polygamy began to circulate among church members. [29] Some members of the community took advantage of the uncertainties created by this and began to privately teach that sexual relations were approved as long as they were kept secret. Sarah Miller was among those approached. After hearing a sermon from Joseph Smith that contradicted this teaching she came before the Nauvoo high council and gave an affidavit detailing how Chauncey Higbee had led her to enter into an illicit relationship.[30]

Misunderstanding about the existence of, and the guidelines for entering into, plural marriage continued in Nauvoo. During 1842-1844 the Nauvoo High Council heard several cases involving persons who entered into new marriages while still legally married to someone else. One of these cases involved a marriage between Sarah Miller and John Thorp, who were summoned to appear before the High Council in January of 1843. Thorp did not appear for fear of arrest on bigamy charges so Sarah stood alone before the council. She told the council that she had married John Thorp last December after he, Dr. Foster, and others had used much persuasion to convince her that it was right for her to marry Thorp even though he was already married.[31]

John Hopwood Blazzard

Sarah was approached by John Hopwood Blazzard while she was outside chopping wood. He asked her if she wouldn't like to get married and have someone to do her work for her. John told her that he was also alone and didn't have anyone to do for him. That was their first conversation. They were married soon after.[32]

On 23 November, 1843 Sarah Searcy Miller married John Hopwood Blazzard in Nauvoo. They were married by Willard Richards.[33] John had been married twice before. His first marriage was to Sarah Newell who was from Yorkshire, England. Sarah Newell Blazzard may have died shortly

after arriving in Nauvoo. John's second wife was Elizabeth Miller Poole. They were married on an island in the Mississippi River opposite of Nauvoo. Both of them were excommunicated for a time because Elizabeth was still legally married to her first husband, Daniel Poole, who had stayed behind in England. John and Elizabeth were both reinstated into full fellowship after it was determined that Daniel Poole was adulterous. Elizabeth Miller Poole Blazzard died in Nauvoo in October of 1843.[34]

John still had at least three living children from his first marriage when he married Sarah Searcy. They joined with Sarah and her children to create a new family. John's daughter, Sarah Ann, had married before the households combined, but John's two sons remained with them for a time. The older son, Robert, became a soldier and later married and raised a family in Missouri.[35] The younger son, Elijah, crossed the plains with them and died in his teens in Utah.[36] While Sarah and John were living in Nauvoo they were part of the Nauvoo 5th ward with Edward Hunter as Bishop. John and Sarah donated fish to the poor and paid tithing with wood during 1845. [37]

Increasing pressure from anti-Mormon mobs forced the evacuation of Nauvoo in 1846. Sarah and John Blazzard were among the evacuees that year. They remained in the city long enough to make use of the Nauvoo temple where they obtained endowments for themselves and sealed John to his first two wives.[38] After those temple ordinances were completed they joined the slow trek across southern Iowa. The path followed by the Nauvoo evacuees across southern Iowa passed less than fifty miles from Sarah's family in Keokuk County, Iowa. It can be inferred from the contents of a letter written much later to Sarah by her younger sister, Mary Emily, that Sarah had visited her family at least once after her marriage to Blazzard and before her 1850 emigration to Utah.[39] It would seem likely that the visit occurred at this time as the family traveled to the temporary gathering place for the church on the banks of the Missouri River.

The hundreds of Mormons who had fled Nauvoo were clustered around the Council Bluffs area along both sides of the Missouri River. The city of Winter Quarters sprang up almost overnight on Indian land located on the west side of the river. A wide variety of dwellings existed there. Most lived in cabins, and a few enjoyed houses, but some were forced to make do with dugouts, wagons or tents.[40] John H. Blazzard was established in Winter Quarters by December with a family of nine two wagons, one yoke of oxen and one cow.[41]

The presence of white settlers on the west side of the Missouri was a violation of agreements between the United States government and the Indian tribes. However, Brigham Young negotiated a temporary exception to this agreement on the basis of friendship and mutual aid with the Omaha and Oto Indian Tribes, and as a prerequisite for recruiting able-bodied men to fight in the Mexican War with the U.S. Government.[42]

Even though church members did not currently have access to a temple, some temple ordinances were performed in Winter Quarters. Accordingly, under the cold darkening sky of a late winter evening, Sarah was sealed to John Hopwood Blazzard by Brigham Young. At the same time John took Sarah's oldest daughter, Mary Jane Miller, as a plural wife. These sealings occurred at 6:00 PM on 16 March 1848 with Wilford Woodruff and Willard Richards as witnesses.[43]

In the spring of 1848, all citizens of Winter Quarters were moving out. Those not migrating that

summer ferried their belongings across the river to join the temporary settlements on the Iowa side.[44] John Blazzard, a wagon maker, was asked by Brigham Young to give his outfit to others and remain for a while at the Missouri River settlements so that he could help others prepare to cross the plains.[45] By January the Blazzard family was settling in on the east side of the Missouri where John signed a petition on 20 January 1848 requesting a post office near the log Tabernacle in the Pottawattamie Lands of Iowa.[46] Church members continued to gather at the Missouri River in preparation for the trek west. Resources were stretched thin and many families had difficulty obtaining enough food. It was common for men to get temporary work from the settlers in northern Missouri.[47] John H. Blazzard and his wives spent much of the time after leaving Winter Quarters in Holt County Missouri. Mary Jane and Sarah each had a child while they were living there.[48] In the spring of 1850 the Blazzard family joined the Wilford Woodruff Company for the trek west.[49]

Going West

In one brief moment calm turned to chaos. The air was filled with dust and thunderous noise as the screams of frightened children mingled with the bellows of terrified livestock punctuated by the cracking of wooden wagons as thirty to forty ox teams, each with two to five yoke of oxen per team, collided and overturned. Women ran into the paths of the frantic runaway teams to save their children. Men scrambled to find a safe haven for their families and tried to preserve their property. The usual order of the pioneer company was in disarray after one runaway horse started a stampede that eventually involved all the family wagons of the first division. When the dust settled some yokes and wagon tongues required repair and one horse had to be shot, but no company members were killed.[50]

The stampede was among the most noteworthy experiences of the Wilford Woodruff Company as they crossed the plains in 1850. In addition there was a great deal of sickness among the departing companies that year. Between 7 June and 16 July the Wilford Woodruff Company suffered twelve deaths. Most deaths were attributed to cholera, but one person was killed by lightning. Brother Blazzard was among those noted as taken sick on 27 June.

On Sunday, 14 October 1850 the Wilford Woodruff Company entered the Salt Lake Valley. For the past four months Sarah and her family had walked through oppressive heat and humidity, waded through mud in rain drenched clothing, and for most of the last four days in the mountains, they had trudged through much snow. They had strained bugs from their water and eaten food tainted by the buffalo chips it used as cooking fuel. They were the last company of pioneers to reach Salt Lake Valley that year. Their long journey ended at the Old Fort, a group of log and adobe huts joined together to encircle a ten acre plot of land. A fellow traveler described the city as very dry and dusty with only a few little log and adobe houses fenced with rail and willow fences.[51]

The Blazzard family made their home in the Seventh Ward.[52] This ward was bounded by Main Street, Sixth South, Third West, and Third South. Like many of the other Salt Lake wards at that time, the members of the Seventh Ward built a fence around the entire nine block area located within the ward boundaries. In 1850 the members decided to fence each individual block off separately and formed a committee to inspect the fence. Livestock was generally allowed to roam

free; gardens were fenced.[53]

The Principle

The principle of plural marriage included a number of different types of marriages, each with its own set of obligations and expectations. Some unions were for this life only; other unions were believed to remain in force after death.[54] Sarah Searcy and John Blazzard began to practice plural marriage in 1848 when John married Sarah's daughter, Mary Jane Miller. Sarah and Mary Jane obtained divorces from John Hopwood Blazzard less than four months after their arrival in January 1851.[55] It is not clear if this divorce was intended to dissolve all marital ties, or simply change the type of marriage it was. Sarah and Mary Jane continued to live with John Blazzard throughout 1851.[56] [57] During this year another woman was added to the family when John Blazzard was married, but not sealed, to Margaret Birch in October.[58]

By the end of 1852 the number of women in the Blazzard household returned to one with the divorce of Margaret Birch in July [59] and Mary Jane Miller's marriage to Isaac Hill in October.[60] Sarah Searcy continued to live with John Blazzard as a wife. They had a son in August 1852 and a daughter in 1854. In 1855 the Blazzards became a plural family once again with the addition of Matilda Murch and her young son, Richard. Matilda's husband, Robert, had died the previous summer while crossing the plains. On 17 January 1855 John H. Blazzard was sealed to Matilda and at the same time was re-sealed to Sarah Searcy. The ceremony took place in the Blazzard home because Matilda was too sick to leave the house.[61] [62]

Children of Sarah Searcy and John Hopwood Blazzard

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1845	Dorcas	Nauvoo, Illinois
1847	John	Nebraska
1849	Mariam	Iowa
1852	James	Salt Lake City, Utah
1854	Ellen	Salt Lake City, Utah
1857	Thomas	Salt Lake City, Utah

On 10 January 1856 John Blazzard arrived in Las Vegas to join the mission that had been established there the previous spring. John brought a thermometer with him so that the fort could begin to keep more accurate weather records. He participated in gospel instruction and participated in ordaining some of the local Native Americans to the Aaronic Priesthood. After the discovery of lead in the nearby area, John was among those selected to try and establish a mine. His stay was cut short however when he was sent back to Salt Lake to "put some affairs in order concerning his reputed former course, the reports of which were considerably against him." John left Las Vegas on 30 August 1856.[63]

John H. Blazzard did not immediately move back in with his wives upon his return from Las Vegas. When the 1856 territorial census was taken, after John returned from his mission, he was

living in the Sixth Ward alone and apart from his families. Sarah and her children remained in the Seventh ward.[64] Sarah and Matilda reached some type of agreement with John and moved back in with him, but the compromise only lasted eight or nine months.[65] Both Matilda Murch and Sarah Searcy divorced John Blazzard in March 1857.[66] [67] Thomas, the youngest child of Sarah and John H. Blazzard was born five months after the second divorce.[68] John then moved to the Fourteenth Ward, while Sarah remained in the Seventh Ward.[69] [70]

Most of the marital trouble was over women. John wanted to take more wives and Sarah objected. She simply could not live the principle of plural marriage. Before Sarah divorced John the second time, John tried to persuade her to stay. Most of their conversation was about other women that John wanted to take, including Lydia Davis.[71] Coincidentally Lydia Davis gave birth to Mary Ann Blazzard on the same day that Sarah obtained her divorce, 30 March 1857[72] John Hopwood Blazzard was sealed to Lydia Davis in 1863 shortly before the birth of their fourth child. Mary Matilda Holden was sealed to John H Blazzard at the same time as Lydia, but she and John were later divorced.[73] John's last wife, Mary Ison, was sealed to him in 1867.[74]

John Hopwood Blazzard died in Salt Lake on 13 January 1871 from typhoid. He had been attended by Dr. Bernhisel during this final illness. At the time of his death he was living in the Fourteenth Ward.[75] His obituary stated that he had always been a friend of the Prophet Joseph and that while he "underwent many trials and exhibited some peculiar traits of character" after his arrival in Salt Lake City, he had remained true to the faith and loyal to the Church.[76]

In his will John Hopwood Blazzard left his two Salt Lake properties to his two remaining plural wives, Lydia Davis and Mary Ison. They were to have lifetime use of the property after which the assets were to be divided among his remaining children, or their heirs, provided that they were members in good standing of the LDS Church.[77]

In the latter part of 1889, Mariam Blazzard Steers moved to Salt Lake City and became aware that her father had left a sizable estate estimated to be worth \$100,000.[78] Both Mary Ison and Lydia Davis had died by this time leaving the estate entirely in the possession of his children by Lydia Davis. Mariam and her siblings took the four children of Lydia Davis to court seeking shares of the property. The case went to court during November and December of 1890, almost twenty years after the death of John Hopwood Blazzard. It was interesting to note that in its opinion on the case, the Third District Court recognized Sarah Searcy Blazzard as the only lawful wife of John Hopwood Blazzard. John Searcy Blazzard was awarded one-fourth of the value of both properties, the complaints of the other siblings were dismissed and they were not awarded any share of the estate.[79]

The case was appealed and tried again in 1893. This time half-siblings Sarah Ann Blazzard Stewart, daughter of Mary Jane Miller, and Thomas Murch Blazzard, son of Matilda Murch, joined the children of Sarah Searcy in the suit. Mary Jane Miller also asked to be declared John Hopwood Blazzard's widow and awarded a share of the estate. Mary Jane Miller's petition was denied.[80] The Fourteenth Ward property consisting of parcels of land located in lot 6, block 69, plat A, was awarded to the children of Lydia Davis along with the sum of \$8,500.00 and one half of their total taxable court costs. This property is located on the southwest corner of 100 South and Main Street. The living children of Sarah Searcy and John Hopwood Blazzard along with

Sarah Ann Blazzard Stewart and Thomas Murch Blazzard were awarded the land located in the Seventh Ward, lot 6, block 69, plat A.[81] Today this land is located on the southeast corner of 500 South and West Temple in Salt Lake City.

While still living in the Salt Lake Seventh Ward, Sarah was married to Niels C. Jorgenson by Bishop Willis on 22 March 1858.[82] This marriage took place just one day after the citizens of Salt Lake City agreed to abandon their homes and move south in advance of Johnston's Army. Sarah and her family would have joined in this migration. In June, after the army passed through Salt Lake Valley and camped in Cedar Valley, the citizens began to return to the city starting with the First Presidency on July 1, 1858.[83] Sarah's marriage to Jorgenson ended by divorce in January 1859.[84] Sometime after April 1859 Sarah moved from Salt Lake to Manti where it appears she entered into another short marriage. When the census was taken in June of 1860, Sarah, along with all of her unmarried children, is residing in the household of John Demel.[85]

George Pectol

On 12 March of 1861 Sarah Searcy married for the final time. Her husband was George Pectol. He had been born on 17 Dec 1805 in Sullivan County, Tennessee. On 8 Nov 1828 he married Sarah Reasor in Floyd County, Indiana.[86] After moving to Missouri the Pectols became acquainted with the LDS Church. After joining the Church they emigrated to Utah in 1850 in the Aaron Johnson Company. The Pectols settled in Manti with their eight children. Sarah Reasor's sister, Eunice Reasor Brown, wife of James Polly Brown, was already living in Manti so the sisters were able to spend a lot of time together. Church records from the Manti ward indicate that these family ties were also observed by their husbands. When George Pectol was rebaptized it was his brother-in-law James P. Brown who officiated. Three years later George Pectol returned the favor by officiating in that ordinance in behalf of James.[87] James P. Brown also participated in the blessing of George's children William and James.[88]

George Pectol's first wife, Sarah Reasor, died in January of 1861 leaving her husband with minor children still in the home. George married Sarah Searcy, in part, so that these children would have the assistance of a mother in the home. Shortly after their marriage George and Sarah Searcy Pectol moved to Washington City, near St George, in Washington County, Utah. They were part of a larger group of settlers from Sanpete County who had been asked to help colonize the southern part of the state. Drought, flash floods and disease made settlement in this part of Utah particularly challenging. Malaria was especially prevalent in Washington City. Robert Gardner, who passed through Washington City in 1861, recorded that nearly all the inhabitants appeared to be sick and that "there clothes and their faces were all of the same color being a kind of blue." The difficulties of desert agriculture combined with the ever-present malice of malaria had reduced the population to a mere twenty families by June 1861.[89]

Soon after settling in Washington, George and Sarah found that their marriage was not working out so they separated and maintained separate homes, but did not divorce.[90] George established residence in block 22 lot 3 and 8.[91] Sarah lived in block 33, lot 5.[92]

A section of Washington City, showing blocks occupied by George Pectol (22) and Sarah Pectol (33)

Eight years later in July of 1869, George became ill from drinking the water of Grapevine Spring. Sarah, his estranged wife, came and assisted him in this last illness until he died from consumption in November 1869.[93][94] Like most women of the time, Sarah had developed some nursing skills during her life that she used to help family and friends. While it would not be possible to say what type of medicines Sarah used to treat George during his illness, common medicines in use at that time included watermelon seeds and milkweed root as diuretics, cayenne pepper as a healing medicine, sulfur molasses and sassafras tea to purify blood, and slippery elm for colds and cough.[95] George Pectol is buried in the Washington City Cemetery, Washington, Utah.[96]

After George's death Sarah continued living in Washington City.[97] Sarah died of old age on 13 March 1889 in the home of her daughter, Mariam, where she had been living off and on during the final years of her life. She was two days shy of her seventy-fourth birthday.[98] [99] She is buried in an unmarked grave in an old part of the Washington City Cemetery.[100] Israel Nielson, who knew her well, said that she was a fine woman and a wonderful executive who was capable of giving strong directions.[101]

Martha Ann Miller



Martha Ann was the second child of James J. and Sarah Searcy Miller. She had been born in Montgomery, Illinois and had accompanied her parents in their settlement of Keokuk County, Iowa and their move to Nauvoo, Illinois. While in Nauvoo, Martha was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1843 by Elder Richardsen.[102] It is reasonable to assume that Martha was with her mother and step-father, John Hopwood Blazzard, as they left Nauvoo and lived for a time in Winter Quarters. Martha crossed the plains sometime during the years 1847-1850. A granddaughter stated that Martha had been a member of the

Woodruff Company in 1850, but her name is not listed on any company lists for that, or any other year.[103]

By the spring of 1851 Martha Ann was married and living with her new husband, James Henry Marsh, in Salt Lake City. It is not known if Martha and James were married in Winter Quarters, along the trail, or in Salt Lake, but the census entry does indicate that they had been married within the last year.[104]

James Henry Marsh

James Henry Marsh was another English convert. He was born in December 1815 in Manchester England, making him only six months younger than Martha Ann's mother, Sarah. James and Martha shared housing with several other couples in Salt Lake.[105]

Martha's marriage to James Henry Marsh did not last long. It is not known exactly when the marriage ended, but on 28 October 1851 Martha Ann Miller married Isaac Hill. Six months after her marriage to Isaac, Martha gave birth to her first child, Sarah Ann Marsh, in April 1852.[106]

No further mention of James Henry Marsh can be found after the 1850 census. Ella H. Heap Slater stated that he died in 1914 in Silver City, Utah.[107]

Children of Martha Ann Miller and James Henry Marsh

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1852	Sarah Ann	Salt Lake City, Utah

Isaac Hill

Isaac Hill was born 28 September 1806 in Brighton, Beaver County, Pennsylvania As a young man he was apprenticed to a blacksmith and later worked in a steam boat yard.[108] He and his first wife, Mary Bell, were living in Beardstown Illinois when they joined the LDS Church in 1833. After joining the Church they moved to Kirtland, Ohio.[109] While he lived in Kirtland he worked on the temple and was a member of the School of the Prophets.[110] Isaac Hill was briefly excommunicated for lying and an attempt to seduce a female. He was rebaptized 8 Nov 1835.[111] In September of 1835 his wife, Mary, died in Kirtland. Isaac married Eliza Kite six months later and they immediately left Ohio for Missouri where they lived near Haun's Mill. After the Haun's Mill massacre the family moved to Illinois eventually living in Nauvoo.[112] Isaac's wife, Eliza, died while crossing the plains in 1850.[113] Isaac Hill was a friend of Martha Ann's father, James Miller, and it is from Isaac's diary that we know the death date for James.[114] Isaac had been twice a widower when he married Martha Ann Miller in Salt Lake.[115]

Isaac was Bishop of the Salt Lake City Second ward. This ward was bordered by Third and Sixth East and Sixth and Ninth South.[116] In November of 1854 the Deseret News reported that Isaac Hill had raised potatoes, carrots, parsnips, beets, onion, cabbages, squash, peas, and beans. In addition he had raised some beets that weighed sixteen to eighteen pounds each.[117]

The Hills experienced marital difficulties of their own. Isaac Hill's diary entry for 7 October 1856 states that Martha's mother, Sarah, was trying to persuade Martha to leave Isaac and that Martha had gone to Brigham Young for that purpose but had been refused.[118] On 21 April 1857 Isaac took both his wives, Martha Ann Miller and her sister, Mary Jane Miller, to the Endowment House where they were once again sealed to him prior to his departure on a mission to Canada.[119] Martha was pregnant with Cynthia Ann when Isaac left on his mission. Cynthia was six months old before her father saw her.[120]

CHILDREN OF MARTHA ANN MILLER AND ISAAC HILL

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1854	Caroline	Salt Lake City, Utah
1855	John	Salt Lake City, Utah
1856	Danny	Salt Lake City, Utah
1857	Cynthia Ann	Salt Lake City, Utah

When Isaac Hill returned home from his mission on 21 June 1858 the marital tension between Isaac and Martha resumed.[121] On 6 August 1858, Martha took her children and went to her mother's. On 17 Sep 1858 she and Isaac were divorced. According to Isaac's diary, Martha had been unfaithful to him while he was on his mission and that after she left him Martha "began to lie and misrepresent things to cover up her wickedness." [122] However, their daughter Caroline stated that the marriage broke up because of family disagreements resulting from his polygamous marriage.[123] Two months after this divorce, Martha Ann Miller married James Polley Brown.[124]

Martha's sister, Mary Jane Miller, remained married to Isaac Hill and they had ten children together. Isaac eventually took two more wives. He married Amelia Arkartha Rasmussen in 1862 and Margaret Faulkner in 1863. It does not appear that either of these women lived with Isaac for more than a year or two, although he did have one child with Amelia, Charles, born in September 1863.[125]

James Polly Brown

Martha Ann Miller became the third wife of James Polly Brown when she married him 13 November 1858 in the Endowment House.[126] James had been born in 1803 in Kentucky.[127] When the Mormon Battalion left Fort Leavenworth Kansas, James P. Brown was one of the members. His wife Eunice and three of their children were among the families that accompanied the battalion. After crossing the Kansas River, the battalion followed the Arkansas River to a little beyond Fort Mann.

On 16 September, 1846, at the last crossing of the Arkansas River the commanding officer insisted that most of the families be detached and sent under guard to Pueblo, Colorado where they could camp for the winter and then join up with the pioneers who would be heading west to the Salt Lake Valley the following summer.[128] James P. Brown and his family were part of the

family detachment.[129]

The following summer most of the LDS members who had wintered in Pueblo left to meet up with the pioneer companies making their way across the plains. On 29 July, 1847 the Brown family, along with fellow battalion members and the Mississippi Saints, entered the Salt Lake Valley.[130] The family settled in Manti, Sanpete, Utah. James was actively involved with the small ward in Manti and often officiated in baptismal and other ordinances. He held the office of High Priest.[131] In May 1855 James took a second wife, Petra Christine Pederson. She was from Denmark.[132] James also had an adopted Piute Indian son named Alma Shock Brown. He had been born in the Utah area around 1842.[133] Alma died and was buried in Manti In 1886.[134] In July 1858, Eunice Reasor, James Polly Brown' s first wife, died and was buried in Manti.[135]

Martha and her children moved to Manti after the marriage where they shared a house with James' second wife, Petra, and her children.[136] This family was among those called to help settle the Upper Virgin area in Southern Utah. As Martha and her family traveled southward they entered a landscape completely foreign to them. Tree covered mountains were replaced with jagged brightly colored cliffs reaching toward the sky and the air was like the blast of dry heat produced by a very hot oven.

Children of Martha Ann Miller and James Polly Brown

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1860	Margaret Ann	Manti, Sanpete, Utah
1862	Elizabeth	Kane, Utah
1864	Jacob	Kane, Utah

After arriving, the family settled in the Rockville area and began the arduous task of creating homes and growing food in an arid environment. While they lived in southern Utah two more children were born to Martha and James, Elizabeth and Jacob. In January 1865 Martha took her children and left James Brown.[137] They were divorced in March.[138] A couple of weeks after the divorce, James P. Brown wrote from his home in Duncan's Retreat to Brigham Young requesting permission to take another wife. Permission was granted "if you will only obtain a good one who will stay with you." [139] James Polly Brown died on 6 Nov 1871. He is buried in the Rockville Cemetery. [140]

Virgin River Valley in 1870

Going to Zion

In 1863 John Social Rolph was sent to Arizona to settle with his wives Diantha, Elizabeth and Emily, and their children. While traveling they encountered a fierce snowstorm. They took shelter from the snow in Zion Canyon. John sent word to Brigham Young to inform him of the delay. Brigham Young sent word back that they should stay put and settle the area they were in.[141]

The settlement in Zion Canyon was in the general area of the present National Park lodge. The settlers planted fruit trees and raised cane for sugar. They also tried to grow wheat and vegetables.[142] However, it was very difficult to raise enough crops to sustain life. In 1867 John Social Rolph returned to Salt Lake where he informed Brigham Young of their extreme difficulties and asked to be sent somewhere else. President Young replied that what was needed were more people to help settle the land. He suggested that John marry Martha Ann Miller as she had adult children that could be useful in building up the area. Accordingly, John Social Rolph became Martha's fourth husband on 19 October 1867 when they were married in the Endowment House. That same day Martha's oldest child, Sarah Ann Marsh, was married in Salt Lake City to William Henry Harrison Heap. At the time Heap was not a member of the LDS Church, but at the request of Brigham Young the young couple accompanied the Rolphs back to Zion Canyon and aided in building up the small community.[143]

Children of Martha Ann Miller and John Social Rolph

BORN	NAME	PLACE
1869	Social	Kane, Utah
1870	Dorcas	Kane, Utah

By 1870 Martha was living in Rockville with her husband, John Social Rolph, and her children Cynthia Hill and Margaret Brown along with two new offspring, Social and Dorcas Rolph. Her sister wives Diantha and Emily were living in separate neighboring households. Martha's previous husband, James Brown and his wife Petra were living only a few doors down.[144] Life continued to be hard. William Heap later said that when he brought his cow to Salt Lake City from Dixie she walked around with her head up in the air for a week because she didn't know that grass grew on the ground.[145]

In addition to the challenges of desert agriculture, the settlers also faced challenges dealing with the native Indian population. Justin Lomis Rolph, son of John Social and Diantha, spent the early years of his life in Zion Canyon. He later recalled that his father was always good to the Indians and that while most settlers would give the Indians food to eat, his father would actually have them come into the house and join the family dinner table. On one occasion the Rolph family was picking berries when a war party of Indians tied them up, kicked over the berries and commenced to torment them. An Indian Chief came and made the Indians untie the Rolphs, pick more berries, and let them go saying, "John Rolph is a good man". Justin remembered another specific incident involving the Indians. Once when the Indians were visiting, Martha took one of their blankets and hid it under the house. The chief came to John Rolph and told him that one of his squaws had taken the blanket and that there would be trouble unless it was returned. John Rolph found the blanket and made Martha apologize to the chief.[146]

The Final Frontier

By 1878 hope of establishing a viable community in Zion Canyon was gone and the settlement was abandoned. The pioneers turned north as they began to look for land more favorably suited

to agriculture. Eventually they decided on the Salt River Valley which spans the Idaho/Wyoming border. The name of this area was later changed to Star Valley. The group entered the valley in the spring of 1879. Among the first settlers were John Social Rolph and his family along with Martha's adult children John Hill, Cynthia Hill Hunt, Sarah Ann Marsh Heap, and Margaret Brown Heap as well as their spouses.[147] All of Martha's living children except Caroline Hill Behunin were with her in Star Valley.[148]

The colonizers decided to settle in an uninhabited portion of the lower Star Valley that straddled the Idaho/Wyoming state line. They named their new community Freedom because they could easily escape the federal agents hunting polygamists by simply crossing the state line.[149]

The practice of plural marriage had become a lightning rod for those who opposed the church. An anti-bigamy law was passed by Congress in 1862 and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln. However, due to the lack of appointed officers to enforce the law, it did not have much immediate affect. By 1874 the issue was heating up and test cases began to be prosecuted in the courts. A man convicted of having plural wives could be sentenced to a fine of \$500.00 and one year in jail. The first man convicted of practicing plural marriage began his prison sentence in June of 1879. With that conviction, polygamist hunting began in earnest. The following decade saw legal pressure against polygamy increase with the passage of the Edmunds Bill in 1882 and the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887 [150] It was against this backdrop that the first settlers in this part of Star Valley chose the name of Freedom for their new community. Many of the men were polygamists and the ability to cross the state line when it was necessary to avoid arrest meant that they had an advantage in maintaining their "Freedom" from prison.

The first winter of 1879/80 was very severe with snow measuring as high as eight feet in depth. The settlers lost most of their livestock. Some of their supplies were cached in Beaver Canyon and would be accessed by Albert Rolph and John Hill on snowshoes. For six weeks the families subsisted solely on beaver meat and wild onions.[151] The settlers persevered and commenced to establish homes and farms. As they began to grow crops they found a ready market selling to the miners at Caribou, Idaho.[152]

By the summer of 1880 Martha's marriage to John Social Rolph was either struggling or over. That summer Martha moved in with her daughter, Sarah Ann Marsh Heap and reverted to her maiden name of Miller. Her children, Social and Dorcas Rolph continue to live next door with their father and his other wives and children.[153] John Social Rolph later moved to Bear Lake, Idaho where he died in April 1891.[154]

In July 1891, at the age of fifty-six, Martha Ann Rolph made a Homestead Land Entry for some property in Freedom. The two room log house located on the property had been built in August of 1889, but Martha did not establish residency there until May of 1891. Over the next seven years Martha raised crops and tried to improve the land except for the years 1895 and 1896 when she went to Canada to visit her son. Most years she had 10 acres under cultivation. By January of 1899 Martha had a house with a corral, stable and 160 rods of fence, although the fence and stables were out of repair.[155]

During her final years, Martha lived in the household of her grandson William H Heap with his wife

and children.[156] Martha died on 28 December, 1911, from gangrene in Thayne Wyoming.[157] She is buried in the Thayne Cemetery near her son, Social Rolph, and daughter, Cynthia Hill Miller.[158] She is remembered as being someone who loved parties and would often host the community of Freedom for pie and dancing.[159]

The Children of Sarah Searcy

Sarah had twelve known children. Her second child, Martha Ann Miller, has been discussed extensively already. Brief biographical sketches of the remaining children follow:

Mary Jane Miller was born in January 1832 in Illinois.[160] She was the first child of Sarah Searcy and James Miller. She was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Nauvoo on 10 October 1842.[161] Mary Jane became a plural wife to her stepfather, John Hopwood Blazzard. Mary Jane later stated that she had been married to Blazzard twice. The first ceremony was conducted by John Smith, uncle of Joseph Smith, and then Brigham Young sealed them 16 March 1848 when Young returned from the mountains.[162] [163]

Mary Jane's first child, Sarah Jane Blazzard was born the following July in Missouri.[164] Mary Jane Blazzard, along with her mother, husband, and some of her siblings traveled to Utah in the Wilford Woodruff Company in 1850.[165] The 1850 census entry indicates that sometime prior to the spring of 1851 another daughter was born to Mary Jane and John Blazzard. However, Mary Jane stated in court testimony forty years later that her second child was a son and that he was not born until September 30, 1851.[166] Either way, it does not appear that this child lived for many years. The marriages of Mary Jane, and her mother, Sarah, with John Hopwood Blazzard were troubled. In spite of counseling with Brigham Young the marriage ended in divorce. Soon after the divorce, Mary Jane joined the family of her sister, Martha, by marrying Martha's husband Isaac Hill.

Mary Jane lived the rest of her life as Isaac's wife and had ten children with him. They accepted a call to help colonize the Bear Lake area of Idaho in 1864. Following Isaac Hill's death in 1879 Mary Jane and her three youngest children accepted a call to help settle Castle Valley in Emery County, Utah. After twelve years in that area Mary Jane returned to Fish Haven, Idaho where she died on February 5, 1896.[167]

Samuel Robert Miller was born in 1838 in Iowa. He is listed as a child under eight with his family on the census list of the Nauvoo First Ward.[168] It is not yet known if he crossed the plains in the Wilford Woodruff Company with his family, but in the spring of 1851 he is living in Salt Lake City with his mother and siblings.[169] He married Petrine Christine Larson 13 April 1861 in Salt Lake City. They had eleven children. Samuel died 20 April, 1887, and is buried in the Freedom Cemetery.[170]

Elijah Miller was born in Illinois in about 1838. It has long been assumed that Elijah died as a young child because his name is not included on the census list of the Nauvoo Second Ward with the rest of his family. Likewise, he is not listed with his mother on the company roster for the Wilford Woodruff Company. It is not yet known if the Elijah listed with the Blazzard family in the 1850 census entry is Sarah and James Miller's son or the son of John Hopwood Blazzard from

his first marriage. [171] Nothing further is known about Elijah.

Jacob Miller was born in Iowa. He spent his early childhood in Nauvoo [172] and crossed the plains to Utah when he was about ten years old. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in 1857 while living in the Salt Lake Seventh ward.[173] He lived with his mother until he reached adulthood. [174] After 1860 no further records have been found concerning Jacob. One history states that Jacob left one day to help drive some cattle and was never heard from again.[175]

Elizabeth Miller was born and died in Nauvoo. There is some question as to who her father was. Elizabeth is included when Martha Ann Miller seals herself and her deceased siblings to their parents, James and Sarah Searcy Miller.[176] She may be the Elizabeth Miller that died in Nauvoo on 12 September 1844 at the age of eleven months from diarrhea.[177]

Dorcas Searcy Blazzard was the first child of Sarah Searcy and John Hopwood Blazzard. She was born in Nauvoo, Illinois on 25 September 1845 and crossed the plains in the Wilford Woodruff Company.[178] Dorcas died on 22 April, 1859 at the age of thirteen. Her cause of death is listed as "Change in Life". Dorcas is buried in the Salt Lake City Cemetery. [179]

John Searcy Blazzard was born in Indian Territory in what is now Nebraska on 24 October, 1847.[180] When John was twelve or thirteen months old he pulled himself up on a stool by a table. His father came in and asked the toddler to get off of the stool. When little John did not comply, his father kicked the stool throwing the child into the air high enough to hit his head on the ceiling. The child then landed on his head, breaking his neck. For a while they thought he would die. When the child came out of it "he didn't know anything, just seemed for three or four months he didn't know a thing - looked up like he was catching at something, and he never got any mind afterward." John was never able to live independently and care for himself.[181] He lived with his mother until her death in 1889. After that he lived under the care of his brother, Thomas Blazzard. John died 15 February 1922 from the effects of a broken leg caused by the attack of a vicious sheep.[182] John is buried in the Washington City Cemetery.[183]

Mariam Searcy Blazzard was born in Holt County, Missouri on 23 December, 1849.[184] She crossed the plains as a young infant. In 1867 she married James Pectol, son of her mother's last husband, George Pectol.[185] After James Pectol died Mariam married Elijah Minerly Steers 10 July 1878 in St. George, Utah.[186] Mariam was the court appointed guardian for her brother, John Blazzard, when she and her siblings contested their father's will in 1890.[187] Mariam died in Moreland, Bingham, Idaho on 20 February 1920.[188]

James Searcy Blazzard was born in Salt Lake City on 7 August 1852. He moved with his mother to Washington City in southern Utah after her marriage to George Pectol. James secretly married Mary Catherine Jolley against the wishes of her family. Mary's brothers were so angered with James that, two to three years later, they ambushed him while he was driving freight. The Jolley boys scalped James, cut off his ears, and left him for dead. James' mother, Sarah, reattached his scalp and ears and along with Mary's grandmother Jolley nursed him back to health. During James' recovery his and Mary Catherine's daughter, a toddler named Mary Ann, disappeared. Neighbors all helped to look for the girl, but she could not be found. Some time later an Indian friendly to the Blazzard's left what appeared to be a small Indian girl on their doorstep; but as they

washed her they discovered that it was the little girl they had lost. Her skin had been dyed with berries and her hair dyed with walnut bark. Soon after recovering Mary Ann, James and Mary Catherine moved to Thatcher, Arizona where they raised six children.[189] James died 24 April 1905 in Thatcher, Graham, Arizona.[190]

Ellen Searcy Blazzard was born in Salt Lake City 13 October, 1854.[191] She moved to Manti with her mother and is assumed to have also accompanied her mother to Washington City. Ellen died in 1874.[192]

Thomas Searcy Blazzard was the youngest child of Sarah Searcy Miller and John Hopwood Blazzard. He was born 14 August 1857 just prior to the final separation of his parents. He moved to Washington City in southern Utah with his mother, and appears to have lived with her until her death. Thomas married Eliza Melzina Averett January 27 1882.[193] They had three children of their own and also helped to raise his nephews James and Roy Pectol. Thomas also cared for his older brother, John, who was not capable of living independently. Thomas died 3 July 1924.[194]

Children of Martha Ann Miller

Martha was the mother of ten children. These children were spread between all four of her marriages.

Sarah Ann Marsh was born 18 April 1852 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Her mother had married Isaac Hill prior to her birth and Sarah's earliest years were spent living in the Salt Lake Second ward where her step-father was the Bishop. After her mother's divorce from Isaac Hill and subsequent marriage to James Polly Brown, Sarah stayed with her mother living first in Manti, Utah and then helped to colonize the Rockville area in southern Utah. After her mother divorced James Polly Brown, Sarah returned with her to the Salt Lake area. While Sarah was attending a dance at Black Rock on the shore of the Great Salt Lake, she met William Heap. Sarah married William Henry Harrison Heap in Salt Lake City, Utah on 19 October, 1867. She and her husband accompanied her mother and other family members back to southern Utah and later moved with them to Star Valley Wyoming via Bear Lake, Idaho. Sarah and William Heap were the parents of eleven children. Sarah died 7 February 1919 in Thayne, Wyoming.[195]

A story is told that when Martha lay dying she called her oldest child, Sarah Ann Marsh, to her bedside and told Sarah that James Henry Marsh was not really her father; but that in fact her real father had been John Hopwood Blazzard. Sarah later told this incident to Georgeanna Blazzard Jennings, a daughter of Thomas Searcy Blazzard.[196]

Caroline Hill was born to Martha Ann and Isaac Hill 16 January 1854 in Salt Lake City, Utah. She accompanied her mother to Zion's Canyon and there met and married Mosiah Behunin. She and her husband spent most of their lives serving Indian Missions, serving for seventeen years at Koosharem. After their missions they decided to move north and settle closer to their families. However, they stopped in Emery County, Utah and never went any further.[197]

John Hill was born 29 November, 1855 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He married Hanna Mortenson 12 October 1875 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He died as a relatively young man on 12 October

1881.[198]

Danny Hill was born about 1856 in Salt Lake City.[199] It seems probable that he died before 1860 as he does not appear on census records.

Cynthia Ann Hill was born in Salt Lake City on 2 December 1857 while her father was on a mission in Canada.[200] Cynthia and her mother served as midwives in Star Valley.[201] Her first husband was Abel Moroni Hunt. They were married about 1872 and were the parents of nine children. None of these children reached adulthood.[202] After the death of Moroni Hunt in 1891, Cynthia married her first cousin, Jacob A Miller, on 7 July 1893. Jacob was the son of Samuel Robert Miller. Cynthia and Jacob had two children, both of whom died as young adults. Cynthia died 8 January 1940 in Freedom and was buried in Thayne Wyoming.[203]

Margaret Ann Brown was the oldest child of Martha Ann and James Polley Brown. She was born in Manti, Sanpete, Utah in January of 1860.[204] A year later Margaret accompanied her parents when they were called to settle the Upper Virgin region of southern Utah. After her parents' divorce, Margaret lived with her mother and accompanied her to Zion's Canyon after she married John Social Rolph.[205] Also living in the area were Margaret's half-sister, Sarah Ann Marsh and her husband William Henry Harrison Heap. When William and Sarah traveled to Salt Lake to be sealed in the temple, Margaret joined them and became a plural wife to William Henry Harrison Heap. Within a few months of the birth of their fourth child, Margaret divorced William Heap and in 1800 married James Francis. She had two children by this marriage In 1889 Margaret married for a third time to George William Heap. This husband was a brother to her first husband. Five children were born to this union. Margaret died in September, 1944.[206]

Elizabeth Brown was born after her parents moved to southern Utah on 14 February 1862. She died 14 April 1865.[207]

Jacob Brown was born in Kane County, Utah on 25 November 1864.[208] He probably died sometime prior to 1870.

Social Rolph was the first child of Martha Ann Miller and John Social Rolph. He was born in Zion's Canyon in July of 1868 or 1869. He must have been the son that Martha Ann visited in Canada in the 1890s, since all of her other sons were deceased by that time. He married Sarah Limberg on 22 September 1886 in Logan, Cache, Utah. Social Rolph died 16 June 1922 in Montpelier, Idaho and is buried in Thayne, Wyoming.[209]

Dorcas Rolph was born May 1870 in Rockville. She accompanied her parents when they settled Star Valley Wyoming. Dorcas married Frank Cross in 1886.[210] She died 14 February 1942.[211]

Concluding Thoughts

As I have researched the lives of Sarah Searcy and Martha Ann Miller, two dominant themes have continually come to the forefront of the story. These are polygamy and pioneering.

Polygamy is one of the most intriguing aspects of life for the modern reader. It is a system that

seems very foreign to our cultural way of thinking. After polygamy was introduced privately by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, rumors and misinformation created a climate that enabled some to take advantage. Sarah seems to have been taken in. In spite of that, when polygamy began to be practiced openly, Sarah entered into the church sanctioned form of plural marriage when her daughter, Mary Jane, joined her in marriage to John Hopwood Blazzard.

It is obvious that polygamy was difficult for Sarah. The events from the decade following the 1848 ceremony certainly point to a tumultuous personal life. I think that the two sealings and divorces between Sarah and John Blazzard indicate she felt strongly about both Blazzard and the principle of plural marriage but for whatever reason; she was unable to live with either of them.

Martha Ann Miller also chose to enter into plural marriage at least three times. It is apparent that it was also difficult for her. All of her marriages ended in some type of divorce, and like her mother, she was alone at the end of her life. Despite these difficulties, she maintained close relationships with her children. Most of them continued to move with her even after they had married and started families of their own.

The number and frequency of divorce seems surprising; particularly for women who belong to a religious faith that teaches of an eternal nature of marriage and that the highest degree of exaltation is available only to those who have been sealed. However, divorce in territorial Utah was not uncommon and relatively easy to obtain, especially for plural wives. Ironically, it is the very doctrine of eternal marriage that led to a higher divorce rate. It was considered of paramount importance that women were sealed to a righteous man with whom they could have an harmonious relationship. Should either righteousness or amicability be absent in the relationship, a divorce would be advised so that the woman would be free to make a marriage that did have both of those factors. The presence of children increased the advisability of divorce because it was considered more important for the children to be raised in a peaceful home than for them to be raised by both of their biological parents.[212]

Despite their many marriages, both Martha and Sarah spent the last years of their lives alone. It is sad that Martha did not find lasting happiness within marriage. Sarah seems to have returned to the husband of her youth. During her life she often reverted to the Miller surname when she was between marriages. After the death of her last husband, Sarah traveled to the Endowment House in Salt Lake. With the help of her oldest son Samuel, she was sealed to her first husband, James J. Miller.[213] Later, when the St. George temple was completed in 1877, Sarah acted as proxy for many of her deceased female relatives.

Martha also continued to practice her religion and valued temple ordinances. She was the last surviving child of James and Sarah Miller. In 1904, Martha attended the Logan temple and had herself and her siblings sealed to their parents.[214]

In addition to the occurrence of polygamy, Sarah and Martha shared the experience of pioneering. Both of these women spent their entire lives living on the fringe of civilization. These women never moved into an established city, although Nauvoo and Salt Lake both became cities while they lived there. In Richland, Iowa and Freedom, Wyoming they were listed among the very first settlers. They lived very demanding lives, physically and emotionally.

As I learn about the lives of Sarah and Martha and compare their situation to mine, I am reminded of the scripture in Joshua 24:13: *"And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat."* Much of what I enjoy today is due to the choices made by those who went before me. The pioneering efforts of these women and others like them established the foundation of the civilization I grew up in. Generally speaking, they did not reap many of the benefits of their hard work and sacrifice. I am the one who dwells in their houses and eats of their fruit.

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Notes from Joan

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