

## LYDIA KNIGHT YOUNG (1844-1905)

Viewpoints of Robert Newel Reynolds  
great-grandson



### Preface

Anyone who writes poetry like Grandpa John R. Young is a philosopher in my book. I am not a poet but I do like to theorize and seek truth wherever it is hiding or can be found. Also, I like to spend time in thoughtful meditation of the way things were, should have been or could have been. These traits qualify me to pen some things about the lives and behaviors of my ancestors while thinking I alone will be the sole benefactor. If by chance someone else—a relative perhaps—takes the time to read and think deeply about this message, it is my hope that there will be an empathetic wave, on a spiritual frequency, that will connect the two of us and together we will share the moment with mutual feelings of satisfaction and revelry that will compensate and make it all worthwhile!

The approach here is not without risk. Study of family history has led me to read enough product to realize that the majority of it is done in a style that offends no one, but delivers mostly "just the facts." I value that product and use a lot of it in family pieces, always giving credit where credit is due, but once in a

while, like in the case of Lydia and John R., curiosity leaps its bounds. After studying this case in depth it is almost as if protocol and etiquette have robbed us of our right to know. Is this because of their plural lifestyle and their theological choices or is it because there was no paper to write on? Even the manuscripts that do exist have been so carefully worded with comma placements, sometimes, as to turn simple sentences into subtleties with two possible interpretations! I would almost prefer poetry here but what I really want is straight talk. So, if this venture into the philosophical raises uncomfortable questions, please forgive me, or turn to another piece where just the facts exist.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, the above collage of my great-grandparents is worth about ten times more than the verbiage of the previous two paragraphs. In reality, however, there is no comparison. On a good quality computer monitor the image represents two lives that cannot be given justice even in two books, let alone a thousand words. What follows here in a few paragraphs is just a token of the thoughts that are possible by a caring descendant.

## Chapter One

My mother, Vernessa Young, was born in Colonia Pacheco on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, 1905, just a little over six months after her grandmother Lydia Knight Young passed away in Colonia Dublan, Mexico. Though she never knew her grandmother, Mom grew to womanhood with a deep love and respect for the strong, spiritual image Lydia left with her children and those who knew her. When a small boy and the last of five children at home, I became the recipient of Mom's personal accounts and her powerful regard for the lessons she learned during her early life in the Mormon colonies of Chihuahua and Sonora. The fact that grandma Lydia had gone to Mexico, was abandoned by her husband and died there, and then soon afterwards all her family fled the ravages of the Mexican Revolution leaving her in an unmarked grave, seemed always to stir within me questions of why and what and where? To this day I yet long for answers to questions that now can only be heard by unknowing ears.

The name Lydia has had a profound impact among the Knight-Young progeny. Nearly every family line has its throng of girls named Lydia. And yet for those of us who descend from her there truly is only one "Lydia Knight" and that is our grandmother who died in Dublan. That is not to say that our admiration for Lydia Goldthwaite exists at a lesser degree—no indeed—rather it says loudly that Lydia Knight paid her way and earned her singular place in our family annals. We love and pray for her sacred remembrance.

In a large sense Lydia Knight's mother Lydia Goldthwaite Bailey Knight has a higher degree of recognition among descendant generations because of the fine work written about her by Susa Young Gates. Interestingly, even the title of Lydia Goldthwaite's life story i.e., "Lydia Knight's History" has overshadowed the remembrance of her daughter by the same name. It is only after looking closely at the written remnants of our family's history that one becomes fully aware of the greatness of Lydia's character and her undying love for her children. Fortunately for all of her descendants there are personal accounts and tributes written by her son Newel and at least two of her granddaughters—and there is that single photo of her with an expression on her face and a penetrating look in her eyes that reaches out and communicates spirit to spirit—and we know who she is.

Lydia Knight Young's life story qualifies as a remarkable pioneer saga. Beginning with the trials and tribulations of Nauvoo, followed shortly by the loss of her father, her early life knew little comfort. If a vale of tears and a valley of sorrows coupled with hard work, blood and sweat are the building blocks of immortality, Lydia surely earned her Castle on high.

Wholly, a daughter of the "Restoration" her parents were the first to be joined as husband and wife by the Prophet Joseph Smith. This fact has been referenced by nearly all of Lydia's biographers. It is repeated here to illustrate the connotations of loyalty as well as the strength of conviction to the teachings of the Restoration that have characterized a goodly number of the descendants, through six subsequent generations, who have followed in their footsteps.

Lydia was born in Nauvoo just three weeks to the day before the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage. Though her mother's ill health at the time precluded any opportunity to bid goodbye to her dear friends and spiritual leaders her father Newel Knight assisted in the secret burial of Joseph and Hyrum's bodies—an act accomplished by a small group of trusted friends of the Prophet. By age two Lydia with other members of her family were expelled from the "City Beautiful" at the hands of a mob.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> When Joseph and Hyrum were killed, there was concern that the bodies would be desecrated. Coffins, filled with sand, were publicly buried, but the bodies were secretly interred in an unfinished area of the cellar inside the foundation walls of the Nauvoo House. Several months later, the bodies were again moved and buried nearly 8 feet below ground level in the well house next to the Homestead. This was done with great secrecy in the middle of the night. In 1928, the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum were relocated one more time. The Smith Family Cemetery now serves as the final resting place for Joseph, Hyrum, Emma, Lucy Mack, Joseph Sr., and thirteen other family members. Also buried here are Lewis C. Bidamon and a few other close friends.

<http://www.ldspro.com/ldsgetaway/docs/ft/030711nauvoo.asp>.

Lydia's father Newel established his own place in history. His loyalty and friendship with the Prophet Joseph Smith has been properly accounted for by the written word of several publications, including sacred scripture.<sup>2</sup> High among the treasures he left for progeny were his well written journals. We honor him for the strength of his pen but mostly for his sinew and character in defending truth and right. Newel's role in the exodus from Nauvoo and his untimely death in Ponca Indian country have been sadly underplayed in church history accounts. For our focus here let us picture for a moment the toddler Lydia, at her pregnant mother's side, witnessing the anguish attending her father's death and the fashioning of his crude coffin out of wagon slats. She was old enough at two and one-half years to feel both the tragedy of her father's death and the loss of his warm hugs and voice. Something she would not subconsciously forget. Alone on the western prairie her mother's fears would be hard to hide yet through it all was heard Lydia Goldthwaite's constantly whispered motto, "*The Lord's will be done.*"

The many epic events of Lydia Knight's sixty-one years cover a broad range of human experience. During her first sixteen years she obtained from her mother's example many of the qualities of a "true believer." She not only had a great teacher but she inherited her mother's physical and mental constitution as well as her father's loyalty to principle. Her strong will and determination were probably both inherent and learned and served her well in the ensuing years as she successfully experienced most of the vicissitudes of frontier life— marrying very young, poverty, scraping a living from the earth, childbirth and infant death, estrangement from her husband and serious illness. Throughout her life she was frequently recognized by her friends and community for her generous giving of herself to help others.

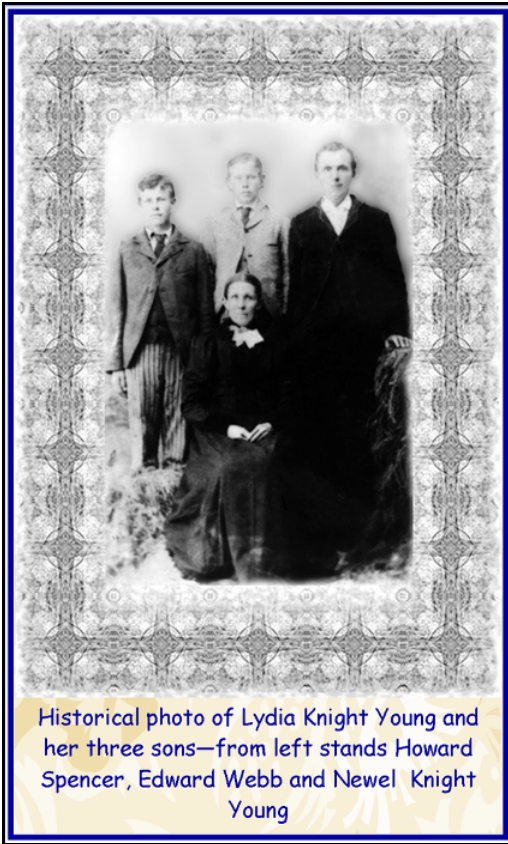
Complementing her positive persona were her many artistic talents, her fierce independence, her children and their accomplishments, her energy and enthusiasm for life, and most of all—her undying faith.

In viewing her story I have often wondered about the many descendants who have been inspired to emulate that which is good and profound in her life because of her example. I cannot adequately put in words the cumulative emotion I feel when thinking about her, working on her image with digital technology and looking into her eyes. It is strange mixture of pride, astonishment, awe and humility which moistens my eyes and swells my bosom.

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<sup>2</sup> Doctrine and Covenants, Sections 52:32; 54:1-10; 56:7; 124:32.

Because facts and images of Lydia's life are so scarce I have tremendous gratitude for those who have left us memories including her granddaughters Wilma



Historical photo of Lydia Knight Young and her three sons—from left stands Howard Spencer, Edward Webb and Newel Knight Young

Stolworthy Hawkins and Pearl Stolworthy McGee. My cousin Bobbie Jean Foster Railsback kindly provided me the first copy of the old photo of Lydia and her three sons from which I produced the collage at left. The image used in the workup at the beginning of this piece was obtained from The Memoirs of John R. Young. The Daughters of Utah Pioneers has been a valuable source for biographical information on all my early day Utah ancestors and from them I was able to obtain the life sketches by Lydia's granddaughters. The Historian's Office Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has copies of some of grandpa Newel K. Young's writings including teaching material which was based in part on the memories and experiences he had with his mother.<sup>3</sup> This library also has all of the copies of The Juvenile Instructor published during the early nineteen hundreds in which the writings of Newel K. Young appear. No article is better than the

one that captured grandpa's elegy to his mother which I have singly treated in an adjoining piece to this one entitled "My Mother."

In family history work no writing has greater value than that created by personal witnesses because they are usually the most accurate. However, in order to capture the whole story frequently requires the examination of more than just one slide under the scope. The collision of spirits as witnessed in the marriage of John R. and Lydia is a case in point. Of all the substance in John R's "Memoirs" none is more poignant and instructive than his chapter on Lydia.<sup>4</sup>

For we who love and honor Lydia Knight Young the witness and recording of her life by her children, husband and grandchildren are especially significant. Over time much has been lost and any hope of restoration rests on the generosity of

<sup>3</sup> My cousin Evelyn Jimerson made me aware of some of grandpa Newel K. Young's publicized teachings and sent me part of them.

<sup>4</sup> Please read Chapter Two in this article for my expanded treatment of this thought.

family members who have become recipients of information either through inheritance or downright perseverance. Some items are far more available than others. Until starting this history in my late sixties I was only aware of John R's "Memoirs." The written remembrances of granddaughters Wilma Hawkins and Pearl McGee, mentioned earlier, and Lydia's true friend Elizabeth Farr and the tributes by her son Newel Knight Young all represent treasures just recently discovered. Each offer different perspectives and are special in their own way. "Sister Elizabeth Farr's" observations, as quoted by Wilma Hawkins,<sup>5</sup> represent what probably was a typical viewpoint by neighbors and fellow colonists in Mexico. The Stolworthy sisters have made us a gift of salient chronology couched in words of honor and praise, as well as powerful insight into the emotional fabric of our grandparents. Newel has given us deep and insightful data, firsthand, from which we can measure the real impact of a mother's life on a grateful and expressive son.

My love for this grandparent compels me to search and mentally ponder each and every statement by those who were touched by her fine spirit. And Lydia had that special charisma which left each person she befriended alone and somewhat empty when she moved on. My paternal great-grandmother Mary Ann Park Brockbank knew her as a teenager in Provo and when Mary learned my mother was Lydia's descendant she said, "oh yes, we loved her so and then that John R. Young fellow came and took her away from us."<sup>6</sup>

For Lydia's son Newel she was his port in the storm, a place to restore his soul, a respite from a troubled and warring world, a giver of hope, and the effigy of Godhood. Twice he was inspired to write short essays about "Mother"—once in 1915 and again in 1935. He constantly longed to go home to his Mother to his humble "hallowed place." Said grandpa of a favorite analogy:

*"An' him went home to his muvver"... is an "exquisite baby version of the Prodigal Son, 'I will arise and go to my Father.'"*

And in further reference to her he said:

*"When the agitating and unusual adventures of the world cause your hair to stand on end it may be time to go home to your mother... I have been home to my mother very many times, and by very many different paths. Sometimes by way of books, when I have stumbled*

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<sup>5</sup> Hawkins, Wilma Stolworthy, Biography of Lydia Knight Young (Pioneer of 1850), courtesy of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

<sup>6</sup> My mother, Vernessa Young Reynolds loved to repeat this firsthand account she experienced with grandma Brockbank and she would always end the story with that wonderful chuckle in her voice.

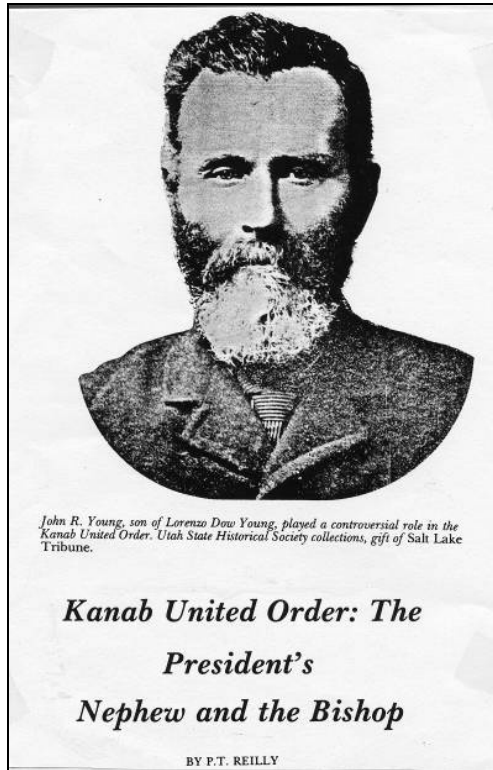
*upon a revelation of thought which presses open spiritual doors; sometimes by way of familiar music...Every spring there is a going-home to my mother for me, when as May swings into her perfumed place among the months she finds me returned to a well-loved little corner of the world. There I am faced by the wide sweep of mountains which I have known always. I wander up and down long, familiar paths, dig in old flower-borders, and greet old friends. The trivial and ephemeral accumulations of the city winter melt away..."*

Thus did Newel K. Young partially describe his mother Lydia. That he loved her deeply; that he was influenced by her spirit; that he held a special place for mothers and motherhood in his heart is plain from his many letters. His biggest concern in later life was that he had not done enough for the women in his life.

## Chapter Two

References to the life of Lydia Knight Young can be found in articles treating Orderville and in some writings about the early Mormon colonies in Mexico. John R. Young dedicated seven short pages to Lydia, his second wife, in his memoirs. His statements, while respectful enough, were clearly designed to validate his differences with Lydia on the subject of their plural marriage—perhaps a polite attempt to explain why he left her in Mexico.

Throughout their married life John R. had only limited ability to support her and her children, and their short time on earth together was spent mostly apart as he answered to the priority of his church callings and his earthly seer and prophet in Salt Lake—"Uncle Brigham." Of course he had to constantly look after the needs of his other plural wives, and for a time he did a real good job of traversing the wild parts of the countryside to evade the "Feds" and avoid prosecution because of his polygamy.



It might be easy for a descendant to take sides between John R. and Lydia, but having the benefit of a generation or two's distance I have been unable to do this. I respect and honor them both in a very peculiar way, and find myself very forgiving of any faults whatsoever. In most respects, judging by the way history has treated them; they both were superior individuals in the school of life. Of course, the frontier times they lived in, as well as the Priesthood ordered culture of their faith created a special set of circumstances that must be considered and added to the equation in order to understand and appreciate their respective positions.

The idea that Lydia chose to end their marriage over differences in interpretation of the Wilford Woodruff Manifesto seems more of an excuse to me than the real reason. There are some good arguments for my viewpoint.

First, they went to Mexico *after* the 1890 Manifesto was issued to avoid persecution and prosecution. That fact is made clear from John R's references to evasion behaviors and avoiding prosecution on the long and arduous trip into Mexico in 1891. If there were differences in their beliefs they would have to have been developed after they arrived in Mexico or why would Lydia have moved her family there in the first place? It has never made good sense to me to think that Lydia would move her family all the way to Mexico so that she could then institute a



position of not living with her husband because it violated her moral conscience. With respect to this issue we know from his own writings that John R. had traveled to Salt Lake and discussed the matter with his father so he would have been in possession of the most up-to-date information on the Manifesto when they left for Mexico. John R. was only in Mexico a year and a few months when he decided to return to the Fruitland, New Mexico area with his third wife Tamar and her children.

Second, Lydia clearly demonstrated her liking for the security and structure of a church supported community during the Orderville days. She had been baptized into the Order, was dedicated to its survival and she seemed perfectly willing to let John R. drive off with his other wives and leave her behind.<sup>7</sup> And who could blame her? At other times she lived a very minimal pecuniary existence and her concern for the welfare of her children kept her from returning. Mexico, in a way, was kind of like Orderville. If her husband's account was correct she had a deed to her little property; and, the industrious Mormon colonists had demonstrated amazing communal improvements in a very short period of time. Moreover, there was strong group support in her small church community. Lydia was a skilled artisan with her weaving and hat making. While it wouldn't make her rich it did provide food for the table, and in the Mormon colonies there was a market for her work. This is to say that Lydia's issues probably included matters of economic security, family welfare and self sufficiency—maybe even more so than matters of theology. We know from testimonials that her love for her children was without bounds.<sup>8</sup>

Third, we do not have firsthand written information from Lydia as to why she parted ways with John R. and it is fair to question the accuracy of his account since it was written several years after her death and is entirely "one-sided." Because I love and honor my great-grandfather John R. Young, I excuse him for trying to put

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<sup>7</sup> Please see further discussion on this in footnote number 8.

<sup>8</sup> Sterling M. McMurrin Remembers Newel K. Young, September 10, 1994, is a composition constructed by my cousin Evelyn Young Jimerson from memories recorded on tape. In this composition Dr. McMurrin, a dear friend of Newel K. Young relates a conversation with grandpa about his Orderville days when as a small boy he remembered his father with his other wives pulling away in a wagon leaving his mother and her children "to shift for themselves." There is no doubt that grandpa Newel as a very young boy had this memory of his parent's parting at Orderville etched in his mind. It is less likely, however, that the context of this parting was accurately captured in the way this story portrays. In the accounts by granddaughters Pearl Stolworthy McGee and Wilma Stolworthy Hawkins we are given what is probably the correct context i.e., Lydia felt "duty-bound" to stay behind even if it meant separation from her husband. The account as reported here gives no credit to John R's correct intent or Lydia's practice of principle! Her decision to stay was final; he had to choose. And choose he did as he moved both Albina and Tamar north to Wayne County and established a homestead in Rabbit Valley.

a good face on the situation in his "Memoirs" by blaming the "evolving theology" of his beloved faith for his breakup with Lydia.

However, we do know from the writings of grandpa Newel K. Young that there were serious emotional issues created by the parting of John R. and Lydia. And it is recorded these issues coincided at the time of daughter Vilate's marriage to Eugene Deloss Buchanan on October 30, 1891. In one of his writings grandpa informs us:

*"During the evening of her marriage mother was taken seriously sick with pneumonia and was carried home to our tent, just north of town. These were the pioneer days of the early settlement of Colonia Dublan, Chihuahua, Mexico. The second morning of mother's sickness, under conditions that were heart-rending to her, father was called away, leaving us with only a little flour, molasses, and two quarts of milk a day. Even mother's dauntless heart sickened, and crushed and bleeding, it all but died that day." <sup>9</sup>*

Later in a lesson he titled "Toward The Making Of A Man" grandpa made the following analogous remark about this instance:

*"At this time mother's spirit was broken and her heart crushed and bleeding, by betrayals and conditions that cannot be given here." He continued: "During the evening's entertainment mother was suddenly stricken with pneumonia. Those attending to her say that she seemed marked by death from the very first hour of her sickness. Though mother was a hopeful person, with unusual courage to suffer, she was too sorely smitten with grief to find the heart and spirit to make much of a fight to live. Yet, though hope had all but died, love kept her faith and will alive; and she prayed for life that she might mother her boys." <sup>10</sup>*

When John R. was "called away" from Lydia on that "second morning" he most likely went straight to Pacheco to care for his third wife Tamar. Just a few months later he would take Tamar and her family and leave Mexico for good to establish a new home on the San Juan at Fruitland, New Mexico.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Facing About, The writings of Newel K. Young, The Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 50, p. 331, May 1915.

<sup>10</sup> Toward the Making of a Man, Some of Life's Discoveries by Newel K. Young, L.D.S. Department of Education, Salt Lake City, Utah 1927, Lesson 10, page 46.

<sup>11</sup> John R. did not give us the reason for settling Lydia at Dublan and establishing Tamar at Pacheco, but we can surmise from our study of the Pacheco Ward Records on microfilm that several members

Although the central focus has been on Lydia and her illness it is very important to understand the broader picture. Events of the preceding two years were unusually demanding—even dreadful for all members of John R's family that ended up in Mexico. It began with Tamar's accident after leaving Wildcat on Boulder Mountain and the subsequent death of three week old Daniel Washburn Young at Huntington on 12 January 1890 even as she was recuperating from her mishap. This was soon followed by the death of her eldest daughter Harriet Amy Young Buchanan on 11 April, 1890, who left behind an eleven day old son John Ray. From the writings of Luana Porter Bunnell, a great-granddaughter of Tamar, through her daughter May, we learn that Tamar "took the baby, brought her own milk supply back, and nursed and cared for the baby until he was a year or two old. Then his father married again and came and took the baby from her".<sup>12</sup>

Fourth, before John R. and Lydia parted ways there were some serious discussions between them. There is no specific record of the final hours or what the issues were. John R's own "Memoirs" have not helped here because of the "positive spin" he placed on the relationships i.e., "I cannot remember that there were ever disputations or unkind jealous feelings among my wives; they ever sustained and loved one another." And, "It is better to suffer wrong, than to do wrong."<sup>13</sup>

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of Tamar Black's family including a brother and her father established their homes in Pacheco. Lydia may have preferred Dublin because many of her Orderville friends were settled there and nearby. Of the true relationship between wife Lydia and wife Tamar we know little beyond what is written here.

<sup>12</sup> The father was Eugene Deloss Buchanan, who as noted in item three of this chapter, married John R. and Lydia's fifteen year old daughter Vilate on October 30, 1891. The boy John Ray would have been 19 months old.

<sup>13</sup> Since these are my musings I must say this positive stuff is great except that it glossed over many tough realities that survived to beg for answers through subsequent generations. Here, for example, on the last day of October 1891 John R's second wife Lydia lay with broken spirit and a crushed heart on a deathbed with pneumonia while somewhere between Dublin and Pacheco John R's third wife Tamar was likewise suffering from a broken heart when her bonded suckling grandchild was taken from her by the husband of her late daughter. Luana Bunnell would later write the words of her grandmother (Tamar's daughter May) who told her "Ma said anything had never hurt her as much as that had done.....Ma was brokenhearted." Eugene Deloss Buchanan lost his wife Harriet Amy and his second wife Vilate in a period of just under three years time. Finding himself a young 26 year old double time widower with two sons—one an infant the other a three year old, he appealed to his mother, Mary Ann Brown Buchanan, herself a plural wife to come to his aid in helping him raise the boys. Mary Ann, mother of eight, responded to the best of her ability—perhaps not as good as we could hope—but to the best of her ability. For an informative read on this specific subject see page 95, Archibald Waller Overton Buchanan and Family by Golden R. Buchanan, published by J. Grant Stevenson, Provo, Utah 1978.

John R's statement that "I now realize that I did wrong in leaving Lydia without help...in caring for her young family" does not give much support to his argument that Lydia believed the Manifesto required a severance of marriage covenants," and this was the reason for their parting. It would have been difficult to have it both ways, and what do we do with grandpa Newel's use of the word "betrayals?" When John R. published his "Memoirs" Lydia had been dead for fifteen years and so she could not take exception to anything he said.

Fifth, granddaughter Wilma Stolworthy Hawkins, in her history of her mother, alludes to the fact that there were some hard feelings her mother had to overcome in her attitude toward her Father over the way he treated Lydia. She doesn't provide any particulars that help in the matter of the Manifesto Interpretation issue, but it is possible to infer that these hard feelings may have gone back to the Orderville days and could have resulted—not from Lydia being *left* but that John R. didn't stay and instead picked up and removed himself and his other families from there—leaving her without support. There exists a strong coincidental set of circumstances between not leaving Orderville and not leaving Dublan. John R. attempted to make history by blaming both decisions by Lydia on her strong religious convictions. In my view this is really admirable in that it created a martyr of her in a way but it ignored the fact, as we know it, that Lydia's greatest living force was her concern and love for her children. Grandpa Newel said that is what kept her alive.

Sixth, from grandson Howard D. Roberts' "Memories" we learn that the tragic accident which cost John R. his arm also resulted in the death of his grandchild "Mamie" and that it occurred near Deming, New Mexico when he was taking his daughter May to the railroad in Deming, so she could return to Farmington, New Mexico where her husband, Howard was working. The Roberts family genealogical information in "Ancestral File" places her death on March 25, 1892. Roberts said "John R. lingered between life and death with an amputated arm for about three weeks, when he began to gain strength."<sup>14</sup> The bullet that cost John R. his arm went through his shoulder, grazed a child's leg, then through the baby's head, and lodged in daughter May's breast. The members of John R. and Tamar's family that were

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<sup>14</sup> Memories of Howard D. Roberts, page 4. 1978, publisher unknown. I have since found additional references supporting the Deming, New Mexico site of John R's accident in the files of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers and in the following reference: March 25, 1892 (Friday), "Elder John R. Young was severely wounded and his grandchild killed by a gun accident, near Deming, New Mexico, Andrew Jensen, Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1914].

said to be traveling with them in their two wagon train at the time were daughter Mary Whipple Roberts "May" age 18, and her baby Mary "Mamie," sons William Lorenzo age 17, Samuel Claridge age 15, Thomas Robertson age 13, and Martin Ray age 6.

In June 2007, I had the good fortune of learning about and then making contact with Luana Bunnell, granddaughter of Mary Whipple Young Roberts. Luana provided me with a copy of a chapter of her family history entitled "Mary (May) Whipple Young." In this work Luana recorded conversations with her grandmother May in March, 1959 just before May's passing on April 13, 1959. The story of the accident was given in greater detail than heretofore recorded. Most of the facts as recorded in Howard D. Robert's' *Memories* were confirmed with one notable exception being that the infant "Mamie" was buried in an unmarked grave in the desert rather than in the cemetery at Deming, New Mexico.<sup>15</sup>

The historical ramifications of the facts in this incident are many, but no records are known that document the period between John R's accident and when he returned to live at Farmington, New Mexico. As to his reason for leaving Mexico we are left only with his statement: "I felt with only one hand I could not successfully compete with Mexican labor."<sup>16</sup> The exact date of his return is unknown but is thought to be late 1892 or early 1893.

Seventh, Lydia could have picked up and come back to the States anytime she wanted. Her daughter Vilate did and in fact died in Lyman, Utah just two years after their move to Mexico. Lydia is believed to have attended her funeral after her death on March 16, 1893 and then traveled to Salt Lake where she attended the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple on April 6, 1893. In 1899 her brother Jesse bought her a new home which she enjoyed with great pleasure until her death on May 8, 1905.

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<sup>15</sup> Mary (May) Whipple Young, *A Family History* by Luana Bunnell, pages 63-75, date not given.

<sup>16</sup> *Memoirs of John R. Young*, page 254.

The information John R. provided in Chapters 29 and 30, of when he lost his arm, could have but did not clarify his arguments for leaving Lydia in Mexico. Here we have grandpa "crippled for life" deciding he is unable to sustain his families and thus must leave Mexico; and then recording, "After I had lost my arm, in coming back from Mexico, while I was still feeble, when crossing the New Mexico desert...." relying on his good wife Tamar to fend off a robbing pack of Indians. If only we had the time details!

## Vilate Young Buchanan

2004



*Gravesite of Vilate Young Buchanan*

The gravesite of Vilate Young Buchanan overlooking the homestead of her father John R. Young. Vilate died from complications of childbirth. Her son, Archie Deloss Buchanan followed her at age seven. The gravesite was originally part of the homestead of Franklin Wheeler Young, brother to John R. This view from Rabbit Valley depicts the west flank of Boulder Mountain in the rear.

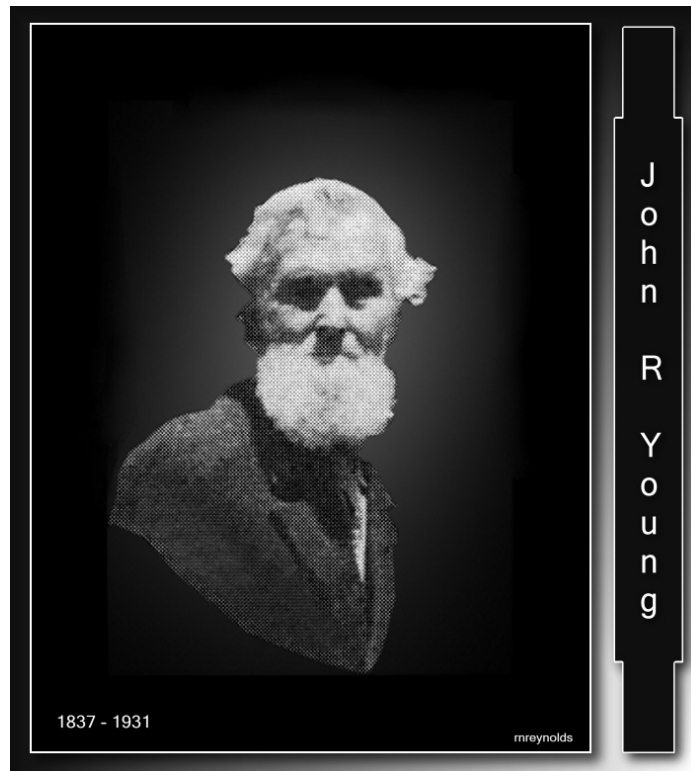
Finally—there is the thing about Grandpa Newel K. Young taking a second wife. The most frequent question I have heard is: How could grandpa have taken a second wife when his mother Lydia felt so strongly about the Manifesto? The answer for me is probably she didn't feel so strongly about it. What she felt strongly about was not having a husband to help support her children. Her very closest friends in Dublan were Call family plural wives who continued to live with their husband after the Manifesto. Two of them nursed her back to life when she fell ill in the fall of 1891.

Like many wonderfully righteous and loyal to the death plural wives, can't you just see Lydia remaining quiet, without complaint, immersed in her loneliness and pain, yet daily pierced with temptations of bitterness for having become the victim of a cruel and conflicting world that deserted her need for companionship and spousal love? Or was it like John R. said: she died a martyr without guile or jealous

feelings—having found instead companionship and love of the Savior and an abiding faith of things eternal—because “The Lord’s will be done—He doeth all things well.”



Grandpa John R. Young also said of his wife Lydia Knight Young, “By nature she was proud spirited, and ambitious to appear well.” I must say that grandpa was a little of that himself. It can be seen in his wonderful personal “Memoirs” and even in his driving behavior that lasted him even until his last days on earth as he made his rounds to remember himself to all his loved ones. Not to mention that after he had left Lydia in Mexico and suffered his tragic accident, life for him as a one-armed man became even harder than it already was. It most certainly would have limited his ability to earn the kind of living he needed for three families. Finally, at last he admitted that the responsibility for three families taxed him beyond his ability to provide. He loved his wives and children and he loved Lydia all the days of his life and we thank him for his admissions of shortcoming and for his parting wish to be reunited with her “when the day of recompense comes.” As his descendant I join with him in that wish and it fills my mind with hope. I pray that Lydia will have him!



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