

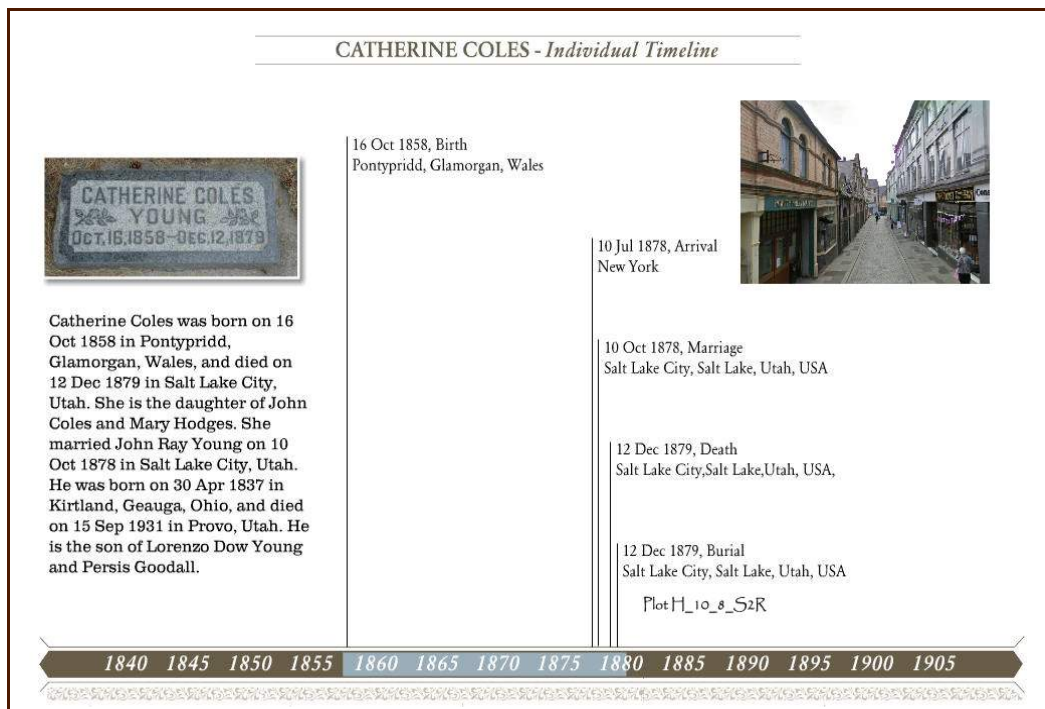
The Story of Catherine Coles (1858-1879)



Mary Ellen Young
(1879-1969)

John R. Young outlived each of his four plural wives. In his Memoirs, published in 1920, he devoted a separate chapter to Albina Terry, Lydia Knight and Tamar Black, respectively, but not one for Catherine Coles. For "Kate" he wrote:

There is one other wife, who has claim as valid and sacred as the ones that I have so warmly eulogized. The reason that a chapter is not given to her memory is a sad one. On the 10th of October, 1878, I married in the Salt Lake Temple (Endowment House), Catherine Coles, to me a sweet, chaste girl. On the 27th day of November, 1879, she gave her life, in giving birth to a sweet baby girl. By her request the babe was named Mary Ellen, and with my consent she was adopted by Aunt Ellen Young, who cuddled her to her breast and held her there until the child grew to womanhood and found a pleasant nest of her own. In that child's veins flows the blood of a Young. She came honestly and virtuously by that heritage. The woman does not exist, either dead or alive, who can say that I ever invited her to commit sin. My wives were given to me in sacred places, by those who had authority to seal on earth, and it was sealed in heaven, and if I can be pure to the end, those ties will be eternal (Memoirs of John R. Young, page 215).



Congruity and Truth

It is a strange and enigmatic argument that uses the logic that since Catherine died so young and so early in her marriage that no more than a paragraph can be devoted to her memory! What about her conversion story; her sacrifice of leaving home and family; her lonely emigration to a foreign land; the family she left behind; and the specific cause of her death and her last wishes? And what about who she was and the last year and a half of her precious life? It is sad we don't know about these things!

Geographical and Family Settings

Today, we have the advantage of presenting a new perspective on the story of this pretty 20 year old lass from South Wales who came to be the number four plural wife of Mormon pioneer and polygamist John R. Young who was more than twice her age? May the telling of this story today, 135 years after it began, immortalize her memory for the beauty she inspired and produced in her short life.

As a great-grandson of John R. Young, committed to writing and illustrating objective family history, I can piece together a fairly comprehensive picture of the lives of John R.'s first three wives, but for a long time facts relating to fourth wife, Catherine Coles, and her progeny escaped my grasp. Then, as if by some heavenly design, the life

of Catherine's only child, Mary Ellen Young, came literally to my doorstep and all the pieces relating to the four wives came together in one interesting example of unexplainable serendipity. ¹ For this to happen, I believe, there was a reason that begs for further response. Thus, I search on.

The courtship of John R. and Catherine is certainly an unusual circumstance by any measure, historic or contemporary. The answers to how and why it came about fit perfectly into the paradigm of the old saying, *The Lord moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.*

In 1872 John R. Young was living at Washington, Utah in a large rock home he had built after working for several months in his Uncle Brigham's cotton factory at "good wages." He described his life as "pleasant." His family was beginning to be comfortable with a vineyard bearing fruit. ² Genealogical records show that he was, at the time, the husband of three wives. Four young sons from first wife Albina and a ten year old daughter from second wife, Lydia constituted his family. Since coming to Utah's Dixie he had experienced his share of trials and sacrifices including the loss of three infant sons and his father-in-law, William R. Terry, whom he considered his "best counselor and truest friend." ³

The peaceful prelude that John R. enjoyed at Washington, just east of St. George, did not last long. Like the rest of his fast-paced life, he was soon persuaded by several of his Young family cousins and by his brother, Joseph Watson Young, who served as President of the LDS St. George Stake, to sell out his holdings and move to the undeveloped lands of Kane County, some sixty miles to the east. Obtaining eighteen hundred dollars for his large rock home, John R. reinvested in four lots of property at the new community of Kanab and a sawmill and ranch in Long Valley, near the town of Glendale.

Over the next four years at Kanab, John R. became embroiled in controversy while trying to serve a special calling from his Uncle and Prophet Brigham Young related to the establishment of a communal experiment called "The United Order." ⁴

Simultaneously, at Glendale, during the years 1872 to 1877, his three wives produced an additional six children to add to his growing family. Moreover, early in 1877, wives Lydia and Tamar found themselves "heavy with child," and by the end of

¹ See End Note 1 for further information on this apparent "chance event."

² Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer 1847. Original published in Salt Lake City, Utah, The Deseret News, 1920, page 148.

³ See End Notes 2 and 3.

⁴ See End Note 4.

that year, their maternity would bring to thirteen the total number of children in his plural family.

Amazingly, at this very time in early 1877, with a mindset bordering on chagrin and discouragement, John R. accepted a call to serve his third mission for the church -- this time to England. Feeling sadness at leaving his family in tough circumstances, including two pregnant wives, he recorded in his journal:

On the 20th of April I started for England, in company with Elder Samuel Claridge. We left home in a snow storm. The brethren of Orderville, having given me a pair of carriage horses, I sold them to my Brother William G. and thereby purchased a good outfit. Our company of missionaries traveled in care of Apostle Joseph F. Smith, going by rail to New York, then by cabin passage, first-class steamer, to Liverpool. The journey both by land and sea was pleasant and interesting.⁵

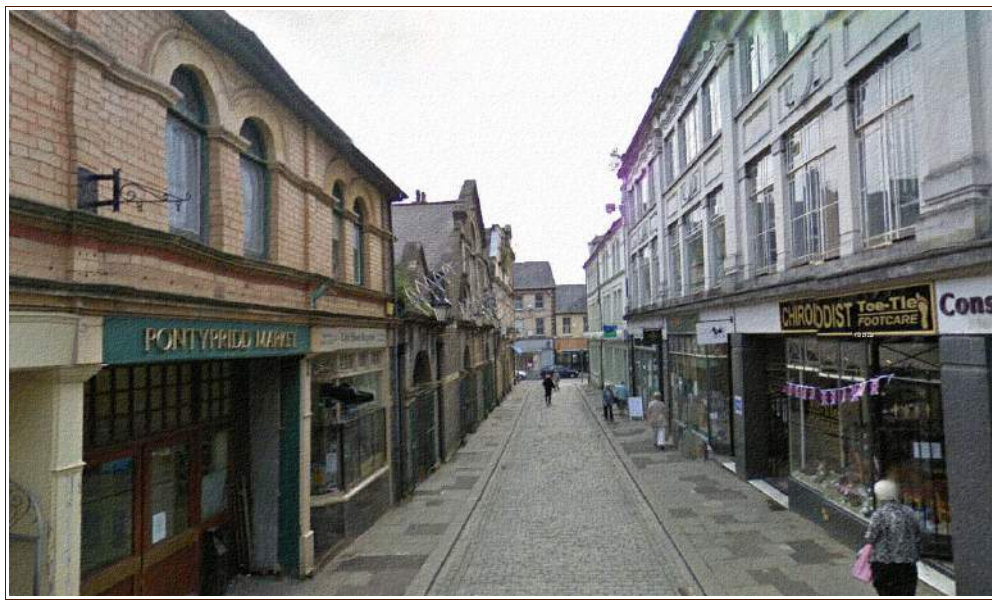
Pontypridd

In 1877, in the coal mining town of Pontypridd, Glamorgan, South Wales, lived the family of John Coles. Coles called himself a miner but he held a management position in one of the prominent local coal mines. Upon reaching England, Elder John R. Young was appointed to labor in Wales. By July 3, 1877 he became personally familiar with the coal mining culture of the area by spending a day deep inside the Dyfern Coal Mine where he succeeded, with management approval, in conducting an hour long gospel meeting where he preached for forty minutes. He found the Welsh people "warm-hearted and excitable." It was not long before he crossed paths with the Coles family, indeed if he had not already done so.



An engraving of Pontypridd circa 1850, public domain.

⁵ Third wife, Tamar, gave birth to Samuel Claridge Young on 24 April, 1877; Second wife, Lydia, gave birth to Newel Knight Young four months later, on 21 August, 1877.



Church Street in Pontypridd, Glamorgan, South Wales.

Once a rural farming area, a population explosion occurred in the town of Pontypridd with the exploitation of rich coal seams that started to be extracted in the mid 1800's. This steam coal produced more power and less clinker than any other steam coal known at the time and was the only coal used by the Royal Navy and many other steam driven marine/industrial enterprises. Pontypridd grew because of the coal industry and became dependent on it reaching its highest levels in the period 1870 to 1895. http://www.pontypriddtown.co.uk/about_pontypridd/index.htm

Elder John R. Young labored in Wales from June through September, 1877. He later wrote:

I labored four months in Wales, and formed many pleasant acquaintances; but it would be unjust to name a few, when all were so kind to me. I walked eight hundred miles, preached seventy times, and wrote forty-five letters. I was satisfied with my work; I had been humble, faithful, and diligent; the result I left with my Heavenly Father.

Here is yet another strange use of logic to avoid giving any specifics about Catherine Coles. Why would it be "unjust to name a few acquaintances" in South Wales when his Memoirs are replete with examples of individuals that touched his life? Especially in this case when we are so curious to learn about "Kate." Her confirmation record in new FamilySearch gives 1 August 1877 as the date of her entry on the records of the church. Are we to doubt that Elder Young would not have been aware of her baptism when we know he was involved in intimately teaching the message of the gospel


and restoration at Pontypridd? Perhaps he played a role in teaching her the gospel. But, we will never know because John R. used his pen so ambiguously. On 1 October 1877 Elder Young was transferred to the Bristol Conference, some fifty miles distance from South Wales.

The Coles Family


Coal Miner John Coles, age 32, appears with his family in the 1861 Glamorgan, Llantwit Fardre, District 15, Wales Census Record. Besides himself, his family includes wife, Mary, 32, son William, 10, daughter Jane Ann, 6, and daughter Eliza, 2.⁶

JOHN COLES - Family Group Sheet

John Coles
 Birth: 31 Jan 1829 in Kilmersdon, Somerset, England
 Death: 10 Dec 1912 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, USA
 Other Spouses: Lucy Davis
 Parents: Joseph Coles & Jane Bray



Mary Hodges
 Birth: 10 Jun 1829 in Kilmersdon, Somerset, England
 Death: 23 Dec 1866 in Pontypridd, Glamorgan, , Wales
 Other Spouses:
 Parents: William Hodges & Sarah Mathews



Marriage: 1850 in Rodstock, , , England

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
William Coles	M	22 Feb 1852 in Abersychan, Monmouthshire, Wales	Elizabeth Jones		3 Sep 1921 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales
Jane Ann Coles	F	23 Nov 1854 in Dowlais, Glamorganshire, Wales	Thomas Evans	3 Jun 1876 in Dowlais, Wales	29 Oct 1902 in Fruitland, San Juan, New Mexico, USA
Catherine Coles	F	16 Oct 1858 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales	John Ray Young	10 Oct 1878 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, USA	12 Dec 1879 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, USA
Joseph John Coles	M	20 Aug 1861 in Treforst, Glamrgn, South Wales	Edith E Coles	28 Jul 1883 in Pontry, Creuse, Limousin, France	20 Jan 1941 in Salt Lake City, S-Lk, Utah, USA

Mary Hodges, mother of Catherine (Eliza) Coles, died at Pontypridd on 23 December, 1866. Sometime in the the following year, the widower, John married Lucy Davis. Their marriage produced eight children over the next 18 years.


In the 1871 Wales Census, John appears with second wife, Lucy. The children living with them are son William, 20, a miner, daughter Eliza, 12, son Joseph John, 7, son Thomas, 3, and son Edwin. William, Eliza and Joseph John are children of John and Mary Hodges; Thomas and Edwin are children of John and Lucy Davis Coles. Of the four known children of John and Mary Hodges, only Jane Ann Coles is missing from this census record. It is important to note that Jane Ann appears in the 1871 Census in Llanwonno Glamorgan Wales as a Nurse. Jane Ann became a Mormon convert and in

⁶ Eliza is Catherine Coles: Birth: Oct. 16, 1858, Glamorgan, Wales, Death: Dec. 12, 1879, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah, USA. Born at Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, South Wales, Daughter of John Coles & Mary Hodges, Married John Ray Young, 10 Oct 1878, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, Daughter - Mary Ellen Young, 27 Nov 1879, Burial: Salt Lake City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah, USA, Plot: H_10_8__S2R.


1892 emigrated to Utah with her husband, Thomas Evans. Her family eventually moved to the Fruitland area of the San Juan River Valley of New Mexico where they continued contact with John R. Young for many years. Jane Ann and her husband are buried in the Fruitland, New Mexico cemetery (see **End Note 5 for their story**). There is so much we would like to know, but don't, about other members of the Coles family. Of the four children of Mary Hodges, only oldest son William did not emigrate to Utah. Youngest son, Joseph John Coles, worked as an Electrical Engineer in building construction after coming to Utah. He died in Salt Lake City 20 January 1941.

JOHN COLES - Family Group Sheet

John Coles
 Birth: 31 Jan 1829 in Kilmersdon, Somerset, England
 Death: 10 Dec 1912 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, USA
 Other Spouses: Mary Hodges
 Parents: Joseph Coles & Jane Bray



Lucy Davis
 Birth: 1836 in Wells, Somerset, England
 Death: 31 October, 1915 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, USA
 Other Spouses:
 Parents:



Marriage: 1867

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Thomas Coles	M	1868			
Edwin Coles	M	1871			
Emily Coles	F	17 April 1873 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales, UK	James Alvin Morrison		26 March 1955 in Ogden, Weber, Utah, USA
Keturah Mae Coles	F	21 May 1876 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales, UK	John Fredrick Garrett	8 Jul 1896 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah	20 Jan 1967 in Baker City, Baker, Oregon, USA
Cassie Coles	F	1880 in Pontypridd, Glamorgan, Wales			
Charlotte Coles	F	1882 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales, UK			
Tom Augusta Coles	M	1884 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales, UK			
Nancy Coles	F	1886 in Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales, UK			

John and Lucy Coles and some of their eight children eventually emigrated to Utah. They appear in the 1891 Wales Census with two of their children and four grandchildren. A note in the new FamilySearch website stated: *John was regarded as an eminent engineering authority in the coal mining industry. He was the superintendent operator of the Daren Dee coal mine located near the town of Pontypridd, South Wales.* Also, *John Coles and his wife, Aunt Lucy were closely associated with Lorenzo D. Young, brother of Brigham Young.* In the notes of Mary Ellen Young, daughter of Catherine Coles and John R. Young, is a statement that she remembered going on walks with her grandmother Lucy Coles. Apparently, after John and Lucy Coles retired they emigrated to Utah where they and some of his children established and maintained a familial relationship with granddaughter, Mary Ellen Young and her adopted parents, Lorenzo D. and Eleanor Jones Young. John and Lucy are both buried in the Salt Lake City cemetery.



Mary Ellen Young, front left, and her mother's two half sisters, Emily Coles Morrison, top, and Keturah Mae Coles Garrett, front right.

1878

John R, Young married Catherine Coles in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on 10 October 1878.⁷ He left precious little information to support the idea that this was anything more than a union of convenience. But that idea falls way short of what we want to believe. So, we sift a bit in his Memoirs for any evidence to support the concept of an eternal marriage based on meaningful feelings and principle.

⁷ See End Note 6.

In late December, 1877 Elder Young returned to Wales to visit and renew acquaintances with folks he had met there during the previous summer and fall. His discussions and activities centered on the idea of helping the "poor saints" migrate to Zion. On 18 January 1878, he wrote President John Taylor recommending church help in the matter. The response he received was negative. On 17 February 1878 he received a letter from his father advising him that he was not in a position to help the poor migrate, but including words of encouragement: *Well, Johnny, hold on, and never give up until the battle is won. We shall all be glad to meet you when you come home.*

On 25 March 1878, John R. received a "weeks absence" from his mission to spend time with the Welsh Saints. The subject of Mormon plural marriage was on his mind. On 30 March 1878 he wrote a letter to "an enquirer of the church," and recorded this defense:

I know the idea generally prevails, that a man can love but one wife at a time; but a careful reading of the word of God forces the conviction that the idea is wrong ; and my own experience confirms this view. I find in the scriptures of divine truth, that we are commanded to love the Lord with all our heart, and to love our neighbor as ourselves; what a terrible tax to place upon a man who can only love one wife! I am thankful to say that I have learned to govern love by principle; and I can truly say, that the bright and intelligent sons and daughters born to me by different wives, are alike beloved, and dear to me.

After serving for several weeks in the London Conference, Elder Young received a letter from the uncle of Catherine Coles, Brother David R. Gill, that his family and several of the Welsh Saints would emigrate to Utah the 29th of June. John R. wrote and got permission from his mission leadership to make a short visit to Wales. He recorded in his journal:

June 25, 1878: *In the afternoon I went to Ponty Pridd. Yesterday and today, had attentive listeners in the cars; for I always tell the people where I am from, and then, if they permit, I teach the Gospel to them. On Wednesday, **June 26th**, I went with Sister Coles, to tell her parents that she is going to Utah. They were surprised, and at first, angry; but after I had talked to them, they said it was all right. On Tuesday, **June 27th** I visited Mr. Coles, gave him a "Voice of Warning," and bore testimony to his family.*

June 28, 1878: Up at 4:00 A.M. John R. found Catherine's Uncle David Gill sick and blessed him well; then he assisted the group of traveling Saints to the train station where he joined with them on their 125 mile trip to Liverpool, but only as far as Pontypool, fifteen miles north of Pontypridd.

What John R. Young did next revealed his passion for the Welsh Saints and Catherine Coles and his longing to gather them all "*with the speed of a dove, To the Zion of -God the land that I love.*" While waiting on the Pontypool platform for a downward train, in a melancholy mood he wrote 72 lines of poetry he titled "Parting With The Saints."⁸ In the poem, after mentioning by name some of his closest Welsh friends, including D. R. Gill, he wrote:

*I've said my say, and now I go,
The seeds of truth again to sow ;
Scattering it with liberal hands
As I have done in other lands.
These smiling faces I'll see no more
Until we meet on Zion's shore.
Will they forget? and you, dear Kate⁹
Wilt ever linger "at the garden gate ?"
And think of him, who at Ponty Pridd,
Proved friend to thee, and brother indeed?
Oft will he long for thy voice again
But, goodbye friends, here's the downward train.*

July 10, 1878

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Place of Birth
3	A. J. Jones	44	Male	Farmer	Wales
4	John	44	Male	Boys	Wales
5	Maest	11	Male	Child	Wales
6	Alf	4	Male	Child	Wales
7	St. Gile	4	Male	Farmer	Wales
8	Sarah	36	Female	Boys	Wales
9	John	21	Male	Labourer	Wales
10	Mrs D. R. Gill	11	Male	Child	Wales
11	John	9	Male	Child	Wales
12	John	7	Male	Child	Wales
13	John	4	Male	Child	Wales
14	John	2	Male	Child	Wales
15	Alfred	9	Male	Farmer	Wales
16	Cath Coles	20	Female	Widow	Wales
17	J. Morgan	7	Male	Child	Wales
18	Jane Jones	56	Female	Widow	Wales
19	John	11	Male	Child	Wales
20	May Edward	32	Female	Widow	Wales

Catherine (Cath) Coles arrived with Gill family and other Saints on the ship "Nevada" in Port of New York.

⁸ Memoirs of John R. Young, page 219.

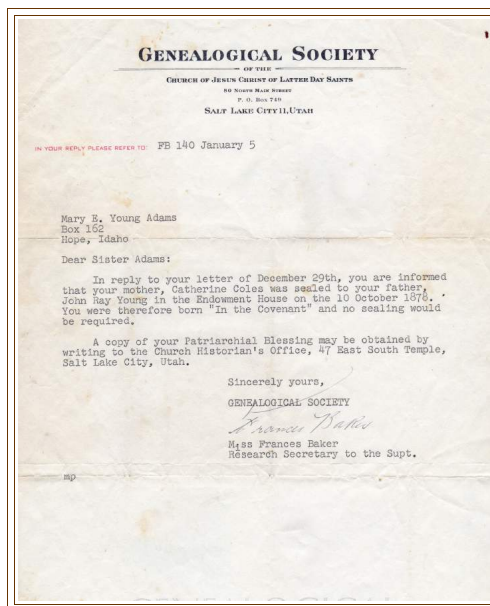
⁹ Kate is Catherine Coles.

It is reassuring to learn that Catherine Coles emigrated to Utah with the Gill family, among whom were several cousins and her Uncle David and Aunt Sarah Hodges Gill, sister of her late mother, Mary Hodges Coles.

In July 1878 the mission headquarters in Liverpool received a letter from President John Taylor authorizing the release of Elder John R. Young. It suggested that he return to the states on a ship leaving 12 Oct. 1878. Anxious to return home, John R. took passage on the ship Wyoming and arrived in New York harbor 25 September 1878. With him were two special passengers, seven year old Emma Burris and the widow Mary Jaynes. The stories of these two individuals are as touching and faith reassuring as anything John R. experienced on his seventeen month mission to England.¹⁰

Not a single sentence survived our family's history of what transpired between John R. Young and Catherine Coles during the next two weeks. We can assume a speedy journey by train from New York across the country to Utah. From John R.'s previous journal entries we were told that at Echo, in northern Utah, the widow Jaynes was delivered to live with friends of old. And upon arrival in Salt Lake *at father's Emma Burris' uncles, Joseph and Thomas Morgan, came to see her. They begged me to let her stay with them. I consented on condition that they would bring the family to Zion. They promised to do so, and they kept their covenant.*

Barely two weeks after arriving in New York harbor, John R. traveled to Utah, secured a pledge of marriage from Catherine Coles, and was sealed to her for time and eternity in the Endowment House. The date was 10 October 1878. In his Memoirs he made it a point to tell us of the "hearty welcome" he received from his family and friends; and that his wife Albina and her son Silas had come from Orderville to meet him with a team and carry him back home where he was again greeted with a "serenade and welcome" from his family and friends; but not a word about Catherine Coles. Strange!

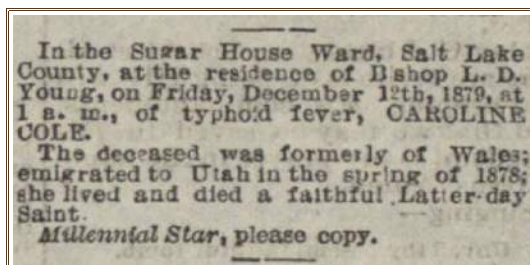


¹⁰ See Memoirs of John R. Young, pages 169, 199-200, 236-238.

What Catherine Coles did or where she lived in the forthcoming year is unknown. There is not a stick of evidence in the record that she ever went to Orderville or met the other plural wives of John R. Young.¹¹ It is safe to assume that she obtained residence with John R.'s parents or family in Salt Lake City. The only thing we really know is that the marriage was consummated because on 27 November 1879, on a busy Thanksgiving day at the home of Lorenzo Dow Young, where two marriage ceremonies took place with 250 guests attending, Catherine Coles gave birth to a baby girl they named Mary Ellen Young.¹²

12 December 1879

Catherine Coles died two weeks after the birth of her child, Mary Ellen Young, at the home of Lorenzo Dow Young in Salt Lake City, Utah. The cause of death has been assumed to be complications from childbirth, but a published news items of her death indicates otherwise.



In the Sugar House Ward, Salt Lake County, at the residence of Bishop L. D. Young, on Friday, December 12th, 1879, at 1 a. m., of typhoid fever, CAROLINE COLE.
The deceased was formerly of Wales; emigrated to Utah in the spring of 1878; she lived and died a faithful Latter-day Saint.
Millennial Star, please copy.



¹¹ Important revision added, August 14, 2015. See End Note 7.

¹² This note was found on the back of one of the old family group sheets for this family: "Edward Jones Young and Esther Dunster, and Charles Carter and Josephine Young (half sister to Edward Jones Young) were married the same day in the Salt Lake Temple. A big reception was held for them at Grandmother Young's home that night. A big Thanksgiving dinner and about 250 guests. The same day Mary Ellen (Mamie) young was born in Grandmother's house. She is the daughter of John Ray Young and Catherine Coles, a Welsh girl who was Uncle John R's fourth wife. Catherine died 2 weeks later and Grandmother raised Mamie as her own.

End Notes

End Note 1

March 30, 2009

The screenshot shows an email thread with the subject "RE: Mary Ellen Young Odekirk Adams". At the top right is a link for "My Public Profil...". Below the subject is a "Back To Inbox" button. The first message is from "glodixon" (Today 2:09 PM) asking about a relationship with Gloria Odekirk Dixon. The second message is from "RobertReynold..." (Today 4:43 PM) providing a detailed response about his family connection to John R. Young and his wife Lydia Knight Young. The third message is from "glodixon" (Today 4:58 PM) providing more information about her grandmother and her contact details.

Subject: **RE: Mary Ellen Young Odekirk Adams** [My Public Profil...](#)

[Back To Inbox](#)

glodixon
Today 2:09 PM
She is my grandmother. I see that you are attached to her. I was wondering your relationship? Gloria Odekirk Dixon at glodixon@msn.com
Message in Inbox

RobertReynold...
Today 4:43 PM
Dear Gloria,
Thank you for your inquiry. I am a great-grandson of John R. Young and his second wife, Lydia Knight Young through their son Newel K. Young. Please respond as I would love to know who your father is. I have spent much time studying the history of John R. Young but you are tgehe first descendant I have had contact from through his fourth wife, Catherine Coles. I would love to learn more about the Odekirk family.
Sincerely
Robert Newel Reynolds
Message in Sent

glodixon
Today 4:58 PM
My Grandmother was the only child of Catherine and John Ray. She lived with Lorenzo Dow when just a baby. I don't have lots of information on John Ray. I would love to hear what you have. I'm not going to be available thru ancestry.com after Wednesday but I would like to stay in touch with you. My email address is: glodixon@msn.com. Could you please write back to that address. I don't want to lose you. I would love to share my information about the Odekirk line. Gloria Dixon

After the above contact with descendant Gloria Dixon via ancestry.com we visited personally and exchanged much information. Gloria had carefully saved and organized her Grandmother's family history items she inherited, including many photos and written documents.

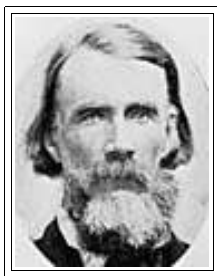
End Note 2

As a boy I pondered with awe and amazement the stories my mother told me of her grandfather, John R. Young. His life seemed so full of excitement compared to my own. As I studied and learned about him I realized he had lived a lifetime by his 26th birthday. As a boy he had witnessed the exodus from Nauvoo, experienced Winter Quarters, performed a man's labors crossing the plains to Utah; had sown and harvested wheat grown from the desert floor, hauled dirt from the foundation of the Salt Lake temple, witnessed the miracle of the gulls, served nobly on a four year mission to the Sandwich Islands, performed as a minister preaching, baptizing and converting others to his faith in Hawaii and California, witnessed the coming and going of

Johnston's Army, driven ox-teams and livestock over 2400 miles from Santa Clara to Omaha and back, bought and sold one farm and started another, married two wives and started families with both, witnessed the destruction of spring floods at Santa Clara and the death of his first son, and traveled a second time to Omaha this time to assist in "gathering the poor." Within a year he was called to return a second time to the Sandwich Islands to perform additional missionary labors. And the remaining 68 years just got more productive and exciting!

From page two of "John R. Young -- History Maker," by Robert N. Reynolds.

End Note 3



William R. Terry

On the 30th of May, 1868, William R. Terry, my wife Albina's father, died at St. George. He had ever been a help to me. When I was on missions he farmed my land, and cared for my family as if they were his own. In his death, I lost one of my best counselors and my truest friend.

Memoirs of John R. Young, page 147.

End Note 4

United Order

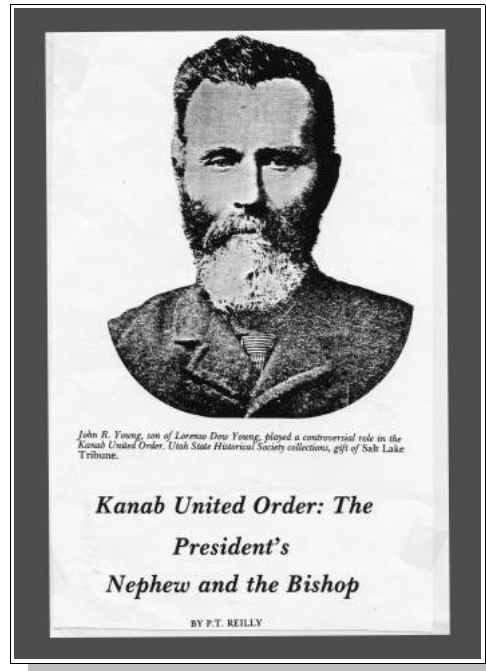
In the winter of 1873 and 1874 President Young visited Dixie, and taught the people the principles of the United Order (Memoirs, page 153).

I received a written appointment, signed by Brigham Young and George A. Smith, authorizing and instructing me to visit our southeastern frontier settlements and organize them into working companies in the United Order; the object being to enable them to become self-sustaining by encouraging home production.

With Bishop Levi Stewart I visited and organized the Pahreah branch. I also organized working companies at Glendale and Mt. Carmel in Long Valley. I was sustained as president of the working companies in Kanab, while Levi Stewart was sustained as bishop of the ward. This was wrong in principle, and led to division, retarding the growth of the ward.

In 1876 Bishop Stewart and I were released from our positions, and L. John Nuttall of Provo was sent to preside. I was disheartened at the way things had gone, and believing that my days of usefulness at Kanab was ended, I returned to Long Valley, and

associated myself with Orderville United Order (Memoirs, p 154).



Kanab United Order

Many United Order communities were set up amongst Mormon towns beginning in 1874. One in particular was the United Order of Kanab, which was a communal experiment initiated by Brigham Young. Kanab was established in 1870. That year John R. Young and the local bishop, Levi Stewart, began colonization of this area and twelve families followed to begin this endeavor. However, there was confusion as to who was the leader of this society. Church authorities appointed the bishop and only they could revoke his status. But many wanted to elect John R. Young as president because he was related to the prophet Brigham Young. This conflict of power lasted until January 5, 1875 when Levi Stewart became the president. Eventually Stewart resigned from his position and John Nuttall of Provo took his place.

Eventually other families followed that were either unhappy in their own lives or were from other failing colonies. By 1874 there were eighty-one families and about seventeen percent of the men that lived in this community practiced polygamy. The households were simple in structure and were usually two to three bedrooms. There were about three children per mother in every household and polygamous wives lived in the same home as well. Large families in all Mormon communities were regarded as a spiritual practice and the child-woman ration in Kanab reflected that. The main source of

income for the community was by raising livestock. Most of their wealth was in livestock, vehicles, and shares of stock in corporate enterprises. The land and the improvements made up the rest of their wealth. This particular United Order was very wealthy but within the society there were major gaps. Everyone owned property but some pieces of land were better than others. Eventually Brigham Young ordered the community to diminish the financial gap that set them apart from the other communities.

Many suffered hardships while living on the frontier and tended to move frequently, around the same area to escape the harsh conditions and find greater opportunities. It also made it easy to migrate since most of the wealth people had was movable. The number of families moving three or more times was below fifty. Only twenty-three families moved four times or more and thirteen moved five times or more. By the year 1880, the United Order at Kanab had greatly decreased. Only thirty-two families were left out of the original eighty-one families that came within the first year of it being established. Many eventually migrated to Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Mexico. Also the young men tended to leave home before they were married and started families of their own.

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End Note 5

Biography of Thomas Evans
by
grandson Richard P. Evans



Thomas Evans wrote in his journal about the date of his birth as follows: “I, Thomas Evans was born at Tredegar, Monmouthshire on July 10th, 1849. I don’t remember much about it.” His parents, William Evans and Caroline Lee were married the 15th of October 1845 in Nebo Baptist Chapel at Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire. Witnesses to the ceremony were Caroline’s brother and sister, John Lee and Mary Ann Heynes. William and Caroline had three children born at Tredegar, Hannah, born 14 July 1846, Thomas, born 10 July 1849, and Sarah, born 7 October, 1854. Hannah married Edwin Powles on 3 June 1876 and their children were Edwin, Jack, Tom, the Dodd Lady, and Emma. Sarah

married Robert Manship in October 1882 and their children were William and Caroline. Sarah Evans Manship died 2 May 1935. Thomas lived a long and eventful life until his death at age 93 in Shiprock, New Mexico, half a world away from his boyhood home in south Wales.

After just two years of formal schooling, Thomas became a miner like his father William. Thomas stood only 5'4" tall in the prime of his life but was strong and muscular, developing his strength while digging, lifting and hauling coal. From youth to manhood Thomas wore a full beard which he kept trimmed short. In his later years, one of his grandsons asked why he didn't shave, Thomas replied that his father had a quick temper, and once in a sudden rage, picked up a piece of coal and threw it at Thomas, striking him in the face. The coal left a permanent blue mark after the wound healed, of which Thomas was ashamed and grew the beard to cover what was often called "the mark of a miner." Thomas explained that another small blue streak on his cheek beside his nose was made when a small piece of coal fell from the roof of the mine shaft and hit him. When a layer of fine coal dust penetrates the pores of the skin, a blue/black mark remains.

Thomas worked in the Ty Trist mine in Tredegar, a major operation at the time which produced coal and steam power to run the pulleys and elevators on which men and supplies were lowered into the mine and coal lifted to the surface. Miners entered the lifts and descended into the mine at the beginning of twelve-hour shifts, working six days a week, often in dangerous conditions. Mine shafts were deep and dark, filled with workers, rats, and coal cars which Thomas called "wagins." There were the ever-present pockets of methane gas which a pick might free from the rock and explode from the open candle flames miners used to light the mine shafts. Every miner knew well the danger of falling rocks and cave-ins. Workers often developed a serious lung disease from years of breathing in coal dust which they called "black lung", that eventually filled their lungs and suffocated them. Thomas's grandchildren were both fascinated and horrified when Thomas told them about the rats living in the mines, stating that "some of them were as big as a small cat." He related that the rats were vicious, and if a miner poked a stick at a rat, the rodent often climbed the stick and tried to attack the miner. Rats were good climbers and for this reason, miners had the habit of tying a cord around their trousers just below the knee to keep the rats from crawling up their pant legs. They also wore heavy leather boots with hobnailed soles to protect their feet from the water, rocks, and muck in the mines.

Thomas and his family moved to Spout Row in Tredegar when he was five years old. Living conditions were adequate for the salary paid to miners. Thomas' mother, Caroline Lee Evans cared for her husband and three children, cooking over an open grate with coal and coke for cooking and heating due to the expense of firewood. Clothes were washed by hand and placed on wooden racks which were pulled out of the way by

ropes and pulleys to the kitchen ceiling for drying. Beginning late in the afternoon, Caroline and her daughters hauled water into the kitchen to heat for the daily bath. When the men arrived from the mines, the bathing began in a small wooden tub on the floor near the grate. William bathed first, then Thomas sat in the same tub and scrubbed as much of the black as he could from his hands and face before he was allowed to don clean clothes and sit at the supper table. After supper the filthy clothes were washed in the same wooden bath tub. Layers of stained and blackened clothing were dropped into the tub: coat, vest, shirt, neck scarf, trousers, socks, and underwear. The drying rack was lowered from the ceiling, the clean clothes laid upon it, and it was returned to its lofty position so the clothing could be worn to work the next day. Ironing and pressing of clothes was reserved for Sunday best.

William Evans, Thomas' father, was badly injured in a mining accident when a large rock fall from the ceiling pinned him to the floor. Thomas recounted in his journal that he was 14 years old and working with his father when the accident occurred. He was very frightened, but had the sense to find a long iron bar and pry the rock up so his injured father could pull himself free. Thomas ran for help and William was carried home where he died of his injuries nine days later, on the 21st of April 1863 at New Pits near Bedwellty Pits, down the Sirhowy Valley from Tredegar. Thomas became the young but capable breadwinner for his mother and sisters although he had received only two years of schooling. Coal mining was the only work he knew, having started working alongside his father at the age of seven.

In a brief history of his life written for his grandson, Richard Evans, Thomas wrote:

“In the year 1873 I left home and went to Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, on a visit and I stayed there for good. On the first Sunday evening I went with the folks of the house where I was staying to the Methodist Church and it was the first time I seen the young lady that became your grandmother. Something told me she was to be my wife. At Christmas Eve the young lady came to the house where I was living, and when she went home I escorted her home, then we made the date for Sunday night to go to Church, and we kept it for six months. Then something came up that we did not meet again for a year” during which time Jane Ann was hired out as a “domestic.”

The young lady who married Thomas Evans was Jane Ann Coles, daughter of John and Mary Hodges Coles. Thomas and Jane Ann agreed to be partners for life, and were married on June 3, 1876. The original certificate reads as follows:

“Thomas Evans, age 27, bachelor, collier, residence Pontypridd, son of William Evans, collier; and Jane Ann Coles, age 22, spinster; residence Pontypridd,

daughter of John Coles, Manager; were married in the Parish Church, after Banns, by Rice Jones, Vicar, on June 3, 1876, in the presence of David James and Anne James. The above is a true copy of the marriage register of the Parish Church of Eglwysilan, entry No. 355.” They continued to go to the Methodist Church together and became members of the congregation.



On March 14, 1877, their first child, William Evans was born in Pontypridd. The couple continued to attend Church, taking baby William along with them. At one Sunday revival meeting, the loud singing and praying frightened the baby who began to cry. Thomas records, “an old lady got down on her knees and began to pray quite loud and then got louder and it scared our baby so his mother got up to take him out but the door was locked. She came back to me and said that when she went out she would never come in there again, and she kept her word.” The next day in the mine Thomas told his co-worker Robert Bishop about the experience. Robert Bishop, a Latter-day Saint, invited the couple to attend a meeting with him which they did. They walked the mile to the meeting house on Sundays and Thursday nights for many months. Jane Ann was convinced that the gospel was true and was baptized in 1880. Thomas was reluctant, although he investigated the gospel for many years. He wrote: “I had a bad case of stuttering and it was hard for me to speak. I knew that if I joined the Church I

would be advanced in the Priesthood and be expected to speak in the meetings. I was very sensitive about my stuttering and did not want to be ridiculed for it. This impediment kept me from joining the Church although I had attended for three years.” “Then one of the Elders talked to me and told me I must not question the Lord’s work any longer, and so I decided to be baptized. When I was baptized and confirmed, this impediment [stuttering] left me at once and never came back. This is a strong testimony to me. I was confirmed the same night I was baptized, Friday night, October 14, 1881.” Thomas continues, “On Sunday, October 23, 1881, I was ordained a Deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood. Two months later I was made a Teacher. Two months from then I was ordained a Priest. Fourteen months from that time I was ordained an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood. In 1883 I was appointed Branch Clerk and I was Clerk for a year. In 1884 I was set apart as First Counselor to the Branch President, and in 1886 I was set apart as Branch President.”

“While I was President of the branch, one of the Counselors suggested ...we go to a little village ...to see if we could hold Sunday meetings....While there it began to get cloudy and it looked like it was raining behind us...We started out and after a short time it began to rain. We had a steady climb along the road to the top of a slope, then it was downward for some distance...When I reached home I pulled off my coat and vest. I had no umbrella nor overcoat, and it had rained all the five miles I had walked, but there was only a wet spot on each shoulder of my coat. That is a testimony to me that the Lord takes care of His servants who are engaged in His work.”

In 1888 Thomas and his family moved to the Merthyr Conference House at 98 Twynnyrobyn Street in Merthyr Tydfil. Their duties consisted of keeping house for the missionaries laboring in the Merthyr District. The Elders lived at the house, ate there, had their laundry done, and met by appointment with the Branch President on the first Sunday of each month. Jane Ann took care of the cooking and washing for the Elders in addition to caring for her family. Thomas recorded, “We had lively, and sometimes risky times in our meetings in Merthyr. The main trouble came from anti-Mormon disturbers who would try to break up our meetings.” But other records show that the Welsh people in the area were interested in the gospel, there were many baptisms and the Church began to grow.

During that time, sorrow came to the Evans family. A son was born to Thomas and Jane Ann on the 18th of September, 1889. The baby, named Joseph, became ill at the age of nine months and all the faith, prayers and administrations were of no avail. The baby died on 29 July 1890 and was buried in the Cefn Coed Cemetery in what was considered “unconsecrated ground.” The family were not members of the officially recognized state church, and the child had not been baptized shortly after birth in the established rites of that religion, so could not be buried in consecrated ground.

Four years later, Thomas and Jane Ann decided to leave their native land. Under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and leaders Brigham Young, Jr., and John R. Young, the family made the decision to join with other saints in Zion. They were tired of the persecution and ridicule heaped upon them by former friends and neighbors who hooted and jeered at them after they became members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They began to plan and save for their journey. Their children, William, John, Thomas Henry, Sylvia, Mary Ellen, and Edwin Charles accompanied them. From Thomas's journal:

"August 27th we left Liverpool for New York [on the ship Wyoming]. We arrived there on Thursday Night, Sept. 6th at 8 o'clock. We thought to land on Wednesday Morning, but were disappointed for when the Doctor Came on Board he informed us that we could not Land. There was some German Ships in the Harbour That had Cholera on board..."

After twelve days in the harbor, they were taken to Fire Island for five days. After many days of waiting and following a long train ride, they finally arrived in Salt Lake City on Thursday September 27, 1892. The family stayed with relative, David R. Gill for two or three days in the Salt Lake 15th Ward. Thomas made arrangements for a house in the 5th Ward at a brick yard on 8th South and 3rd West where they lived for the short time they stayed in Salt Lake.

On November 7, 1892, Thomas Evans was re baptized by N. V. Jones and reconfirmed by John R. Morgan. Re-baptizing was a common practice in the early days of the Church. Jane A. Evans was re-baptized by N. V. Jones and reconfirmed by F. W. Schoenfeld. Children William, John, Thomas Henry, and Sylvia were all re-baptized the same day by N. V. Jones in the 15th Ward baptismal font.

Work was scarce with so many others having emigrated to Salt Lake City. Thomas worked at whatever odd job he could find, but it was a struggle. After a year of hardship in the city, the family left Salt Lake for Fruitland, New Mexico on the 24th of August 1893, arriving on September 4, 1893. Thomas wrote,

"John R. Young gave us a place to live in when we arrived until we could get our own place, it was uphill to get one. We didn't have a red cent only our clothes and bedding. I started to work in the Stevens coal mine on the 6th of September. I had to wheel the coal out to the wagons in wheelbarrows. There were no rails, no coal cars, no animals to pull the cars. The coal sold for \$1.50 a ton. I got 75 cents and all expenses was paid by the owner of the mine."

So, after leaving Wales and the hardships of the coal mines, Thomas and his family were once again miners, but they had a fairly happy life for several years. Thomas's

sons, Will, John and Thomas joined their father in the mines once again, but not all of the boys continued in the mining business, finding it to be difficult and dreary work. Another son, Wilford David Evans was born, May 15th, 1895 at Fruitland, New Mexico. Thomas was appointed 1st Assistant in the Sunday School to William G. Black, Superintendent.

Five years later on May 11, 1899, the family minus oldest son Will who was working in another area, traveled to Salt Lake to be endowed and sealed. Accompanying them were the rest of the children, John, Thomas Henry, Sylvia, Mary Ellen, Edwin Charles, and Wilford David. Thomas wrote:

“My wife [Jane Ann] was sick. We went in a wagon and arrived at Salt Lake on June the 7th. We stayed 2 months. Got back to Fruitland Sept. 6th. Sister Evans did not improve much in health.”

Thomas and Jane Ann were sealed 27 June 1899 in the Salt Lake Temple.

Jane Ann had begun to show increasing symptoms of circulatory problems and heart failure. The trip to Salt Lake by wagon did little to improve her general condition, although it was her husband’s hope that the trip, the work in the temple, and the extended visit with her father and stepmother in Salt Lake would somehow cause her condition to improve. As the months dragged on, she could not lie down. Her legs and ankles began to swell with fluid, and her anxious, grieving husband began to see the light of his life flicker away from him. Thomas recorded,

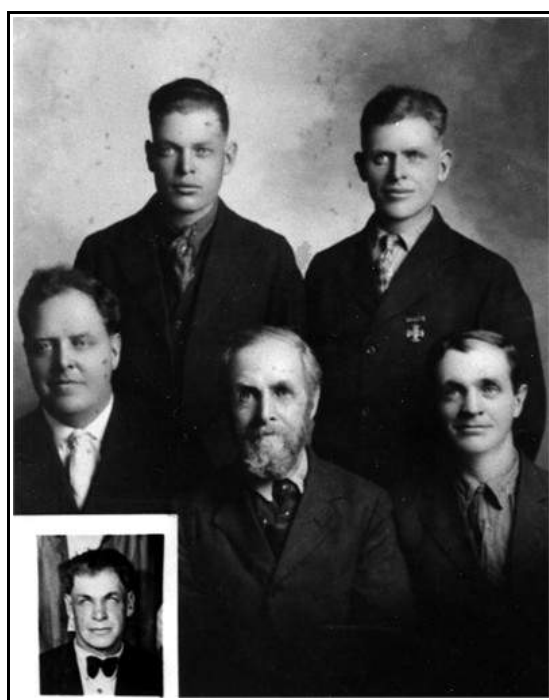
“One month before she died 2 sisters of the Relief Society came and stayed all the time; she was sick until she died October 29, 1902 at 3:25 p.m., aged 47 years, 11 months, 6 days.”

She was buried in the Kirtland-Fruitland cemetery in the northwest corner on the first day of November, 1902.

Thomas’ grandson, Richard P. Evans recorded,

“of all the hardships visited upon Thomas Evans, this was the worst. Time heals all but the deepest mourning. For many years after the passing of his wife, Thomas slipped into a reverie, elbows resting on knees, large, work-worn hands clasped together to go back in memory to the happy days that Jane Ann was beside him, her gentle voice and ready smile easing the struggle of life. I do not imply that he did not enjoy life in those latter years; his ready wit and genuine laugh came to hand easily. But he missed his beloved Jane Ann more than he could ever find words to express.”

By 1911, all but the two youngest children of Thomas and Jane Ann had married. Thomas had left the coal mines in Fruitland and was working at a smelter in Durango, Colorado. On August 5, 1911 at Kline, Colorado, he was married to Emmagin Hurd Carner Creath and they lived in a modest frame home in Durango. She was called “the old lady”, a term not used in disrespect but merely to differentiate between her and the irreplaceable Jane Ann. She passed away on 29 October 1924 at Redmesa, Colorado. She was born in New York City, baptized into the Church on March 11, 1911 by Max Black. She received her vicarious endowments in the Salt Lake Temple the 28th of June 1938. Her first husband was Jerome Carner. Before her death she said she did not wish to be sealed to Thomas Evans, but to second husband, David Creath.



Thomas Evans and sons. Clockwise from top left, Wilford, Edwin, William, Thomas, John, insert is Thomas Henry.

Thomas Evans was now too old at the age of 73 to find further employment. His foreman at the Durango smelter had said, “Tommie, I think the world of you, and hate to tell you this, but you’re too old; we can’t use you any more.” He then lived with children at Kline and Redmesa, Colorado and Monticello, Utah, but seemed to prefer living at Shiprock, New Mexico with his oldest son Will and wife Sarah. At Shiprock Will built a little one-room cabin for Thomas, and there he had his little but very loud radio, a cast iron stove where he boiled eggs and toasted bread. He had a short-handled

ball-pin hammer with which he broke up coal into small chunks for the stove and in the winter he heated a fairly large boulder in the stove which he wrapped in an old Navajo saddle blanket to warm up his bed. Thomas had a garden (which he pronounced "Gairden") where he raised fine vegetables which he sold to people in the community to keep himself in a little pocket money. He continued to walk for long distances, although he loved to take trips to wherever the family car was going. Often he would walk a distance of 20 miles to visit friends and relatives. He spoke both Welsh and English fluently, and often sought out friends with whom he could converse in Welsh. His hearing was poor by now, and his eyesight troubled him as he aged. One eye grew bad although it never lost its clear blue color. He described the difficulty as, "like looking into a bright light". He wrote to his children and grandchildren in his ninety-first year, "without the aid of eye glasses," he boasted. He was an avid reader, and in his later years used a magnifying glass to aid his eyesight.

Thomas Evans was a man of strong testimony. Even in the closing years of his life he bore a powerful testimony. His prayers were fervent and eloquent as he stood at the rostrum in church, right hand raised to the square, eyes closed, voice rolling forth in supplication to the Lord.

His grandson, Ralph Evans wrote the following about Thomas:

"There was a quality about Grandpa Evans that gave me much satisfaction: he never feared what anyone might say about the Church. He knew it was founded upon truth. He did not need any sermons on some far-away kingdom caught up in the air; or fanciful stories to prove to him that he had joined the right Church. I am sure that all of the scientific lecture in this world could not have been as impressive as his humble testimonies that he gave to us when we would take the time to listen to him."

And,

"what an example of kindness and consideration he had for all people. I never saw in him a time of doubt as to the truth of the Gospel which he embraced, not only for himself, but also for future posterity. And I am grateful for this blessing which he and others gave to me and to mine - membership in the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth!"

Thomas was musically talented, taking charge of congregational singing both in Wales and in America. He capably played the concertina, a small octagon-shaped accordion. He was an oft-invited speaker at the Indian School in Shiprock where he spoke to students and played his concertina, swinging the instrument up and down and in a circle as he played a stirring Welsh folk song.



He had a quick wit and fine sense of humor. At one time a Reverend Holcomb of the Emmanuel Mission near Sweetwater, Arizona asked Thomas, “Grandpa, do you fear the Lord?” Thomas pondered the question a moment. “No,” he replied quietly, “I don’t fear the Lord. It’s that other booger I’m afraid of.”

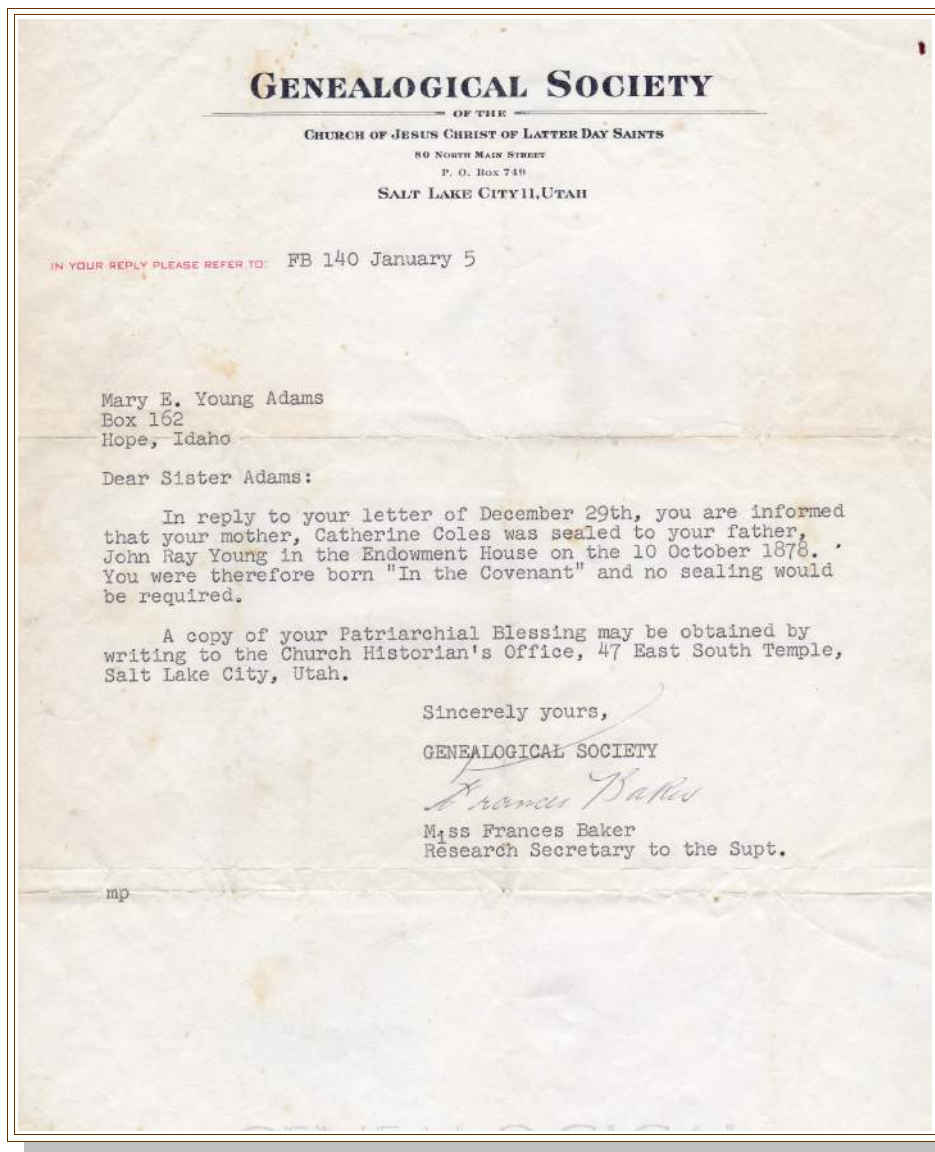
Thomas remained physically active to the end of his long life. He spent most of his last mortal day in Farmington, New Mexico with his son Will. He became ill there but it seemed to pass off and they returned home. Early that evening he again complained of illness, and about eleven o’clock at night on the seventh day of January, 1942, he passed away in the presence of his son. His grandson Ralph and Ralph’s uncle, William J. Walker of Kirtland, New Mexico, washed the body next morning and dressed him in his temple robes. A modest casket was obtained from a mortuary in Farmington in which Thomas’ mortal remains were placed. He was taken to Kirtland to the home of his

daughter, Sylvia Evans Black where he lay in state until the time of his funeral on the morning of the 9th of January at the Ward Chapel in Kirtland. He was buried beside his beloved Jane Ann in the Kirtland Cemetery.



Information was excerpted from a manuscript entitled A Biography of Thomas Evans by his grandson, Richard P. Evans, 1973.

End Note 6



End Note 7

Since this "Story of Catherine Coles" was prepared in March 2012, the Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints digitized the Journal and Biography of Franklin Wheeler Young. The 503 pages of these two documents have been available via microfilm for some time at the above library but the study and research of the same was difficult and time consuming. Now, both are available online

in PDF, via FamilySearch Books, subject to making an agreement, plus copyright stipulations.

Franklin was a brother-in-law of Catherine Coles and a younger brother of John Ray Young. John R. and Catherine were sealed as husband and wife in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on 10 October 1878. During the following month members of Lorenzo Dow Young's family responded to his request to assemble at St. George, Utah to perform temple ordinances especially intended for the family's eternal unity and salvation. En-route to St. George, Franklin recorded visiting his brother, John R. and family at Orderville on November 27 and 28, 1878. On Friday, November 29th his Journal stated: ***Accompanied by John R. his wife "Kate," and daughter Lydia and my bro. Lorenzo we moved on to Kanab...*** There, on November 30 Franklin recorded taking his mother, Persis into his little wagon with her trunk and bed and then moving on to "Windsor Castle" or Pipe Springs, where the group camped for the night. It is important to note that Persis had been estranged from her husband, Lorenzo Dow Young since herself being sealed to Dr. Levi Richards in the Nauvoo temple on 27 January 1846.

After arriving at St. George the family members attended the temple on December 3 and 4, 1878. There, on December 3rd they had "a good family talk." For the descendants of Lorenzo Dow and Persis Goodall Young Richards, this talk included a discussion, including direct conversation with both parents, as to why they separated when at Nauvoo. Franklin recorded on page 277 of his Journal the "family talk" and many (but not all) of the pertinent related facts that have remained silent through the years. While these facts are key to our understanding they are not repeated here!

Franklin recorded: ***Wednesday Dec. 4th We went again to the Temple, and received washings, anointings & blessings, and were sealed to our Father, choosing aunt Ellen to stand for our Mother.***

Thursday Dec. 5th We, having finished up our work in the temple bid farewell to our friends in St. George, as also John R. and his folks, and, with Father went to Toquerville.....

Each of the 285 pages in Franklin's Journal contains interesting information. The reader is encouraged to download Franklin's Journal from the Church History Library for their personal study and enlightenment.

Compiled and written by Robert Newel Reynolds
Littleton, Colorado
March 2012
End Note 7 added August 14, 2015