

Rebecca Waite

From the original Sexton Records:

Name: Rebecca Wait

Age: 3y; 9m; 5d

Relationship: Daugt. Of John & Jane Wait

Deceased: Nov. 30, 1847

Disease: Canker

Birth Place: St. Louis, Mo.

Birth Date: Feb 25th, 1844

Grave No. 272

Birth Date: February 25, 1844

Birth Place: St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri

Death Date: November 30, 1847

Cause of Death: Canker

Burial Place: Winter Quarters Grave #272

Father's Name: John Waite

Mother's Maiden Name: Jane Caldwell

Which Winter Quarters Ward or Iowa Branch was the family:

Where was the family in the 1850 U. S. Census? In the 1856 Utah census she is Jane Kelsey of Tooele.

Which Pioneer wagon train took the family west? Evidently John Waite died in 1851/1852 in St. Louis, Missouri. Jane came west with the Eli B. Kelsey Company in 1852. Formerly the wife of Simeon Adams Dunn. Her name is "Jane Wait" on the company roster. She came with her son Joseph Moroni Dunn.

Any interesting facts or stories that might have been submitted.

It should be noted that variations occur among the records which document these early temple events. In particular, there seems to be some crossover of information between Mary Forsythe and Jane Caldwell. In the endowment record above, the day and month are consistent with Mary's birth date; however, the year is much closer to Jane's birth year (1808/1809) than Mary's (1878/1879). We will see similar confusion throughout the remaining temple records. In addition to baptisms for the dead and the endowment (which includes washing and anointing), sealing of spouses was also one of the temple ordinances performed in the Nauvoo temple as described here: "The endowment of the holy priesthood is closely associated with the principle of eternal

marriage. From the beginning of the Restoration, Latter-day Saints have been taught that “marriage is ordained of God unto man.” The marriage covenant has always been understood to be of great importance. Men in the Church are directed, “Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else.” Church members are not only charged to marry in righteousness, but to have children and to rear them according to the precepts of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Shortly after the introduction of the endowment, the Prophet revealed that a married couple could be sealed together by the power of the priesthood for time and all eternity. Many of the men and women who were endowed were also sealed by Joseph Smith to their spouses in the marriage covenant. Joseph taught that the marriage sealing, the endowment, and baptisms for the dead were to be performed in the house of the Lord and that these ordinances would be made available to all faithful Saints as soon as the temple was completed. In 1843 Joseph recorded a revelation on marriage that incorporated principles that had been revealed to him as early as 1831 in Kirtland. In it the Lord declared, “If a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood . . . [it] shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.” The law of celestial marriage, as outlined in this revelation, also included the principle of the plurality of wives. In 1831 as Joseph Smith labored on the inspired translation of the Holy Scriptures, he asked the Lord how he justified the practice of plural marriage among the Old Testament patriarchs. This question resulted in the revelation on celestial marriage, which included an answer to his question about the plural marriages of the patriarchs. First the Lord explained that for any covenant, including marriage, to be valid in eternity it must meet three requirements: (1) It must be “made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.” (2) It must be performed by the proper priesthood authority. (3) It must be by “revelation and commandment” through the Lord’s anointed prophet. Using Abraham as an example, the Lord said he “received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word.” Consequently, the Lord asked, “Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Verily I say unto you, nay; for I, the Lord, commanded it.” Moreover, Joseph Smith and the Church were to accept the principle of plural marriage as part of the restoration of all things. Accustomed to conventional marriage patterns, the Prophet was at first understandably reluctant to engage in this new practice. Due to a lack of historical documentation, we do not know what his early attempts were to comply with the commandment in Ohio. His first recorded plural marriage in Nauvoo was to Louisa Beaman; it was performed by Bishop Joseph B. Noble on 5 April 1841. During the next three years Joseph took additional plural wives in accordance with the Lord’s commands. As members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles returned from their missions to the British Isles in 1841, Joseph Smith taught them one by one the doctrine of plurality of wives, and each experienced some difficulty in understanding and accepting this doctrine. Brigham Young, for example, recounted his struggle: “I was not desirous of shrinking from any duty, nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I had desired the grave, and I could hardly get over it for a long time. And when I saw a funeral, I felt to envy the corpse its situation, and to regret that I was not in the coffin.” After their initial

hesitancy and frustration, Brigham Young and others of the Twelve received individual confirmations from the Holy Spirit and accepted the new doctrine of plural marriage. They knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God in all things. At first the practice was kept secret and was very limited. Rumors began to circulate about authorities of the Church having additional wives, which greatly distorted the truth and contributed to increased persecution from apostates and outsiders. Part of the difficulty, of course, was the natural aversion Americans held against “polygamy.” This new system appeared to threaten the strongly entrenched tradition of monogamy and the solidarity of the family structure. Later, in Utah, the Saints openly practiced “the principle,” but never without persecution. Thus, following the endowment session on January 24, 1846, Mary Forsythe was sealed to Eli Brazee Kelsey, as shown in the extracts below: Pg 365/ Kelsey, Eli Brazee born Oct 27, 1819 Scioto County, Ohio. Sealed to Mary Forsythe born May 3, 1790 Pittsburgh, Alleghany, Pennsylvania by A. M. Lyman, Nauvoo, Jan 24, 1846 at 9:30 pm. Witnesses S. W. Richrd and Z. Coltrin. Sealings for the living performed on this date (January 24, 1846): Eli Brazee Kelsey to Mary Forsyth. Mary Forsythe/ Birth date: 3 May 1790/ Birthplace: Pittsburgh, Alleghany, Pennsylvania/ Comments: in slg record. Eli Brazee Kelsey was a school teacher in Nauvoo. When Eli B. Kelsey and Mary Forsythe were sealed, Eli was considerably younger (age 26) than Mary (about age 57). Eli B. Kelsey was a self-made man. He began working in a dry goods store when he was thirteen years old. Still a youth, Eli obtained merchandise which he could sell and trade by traveling on a boat up and down the Ohio River. When he was eighteen years old, he settled down in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana where he married his first wife, Letitia Sheets in 1837. Eli continued in the merchandising business, and he and Letitia began having a family. In 1843, Eli received a visit from his mother, Mary Oldfield Kelsey Pearce and his step-father, John Pearce—Eli’s father having died in 1836. They had both joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In July of 1843, Eli and Letitia Kelsey were both baptized members of the LDS Church. In April 1844, Eli B. Kelsey and his family moved to Nauvoo to join the body of the saints. He was schoolteacher to the children of the prophet, Joseph Smith, when their father was martyred. It is interesting to note that Eli B. Kelsey married his wife Letitia in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana in 1837; and that John Anson Waite, son of John Waite and Jane Caldwell, states that he was born in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana in 1838. Could the families have known each other? Other than the sealing record, there are no records or evidence to show that Eli B. Kelsey and Mary Forsythe lived together, spent time together, or kept in contact with each other. Nauvoo plural marriages were not preceded by a romantic relationship or physical love-making, but rather were formed in a religious context. In addition, while plural marriages were religious ceremonies performed for spiritual reasons, they also helped organize people into family groups for the trek west. Mary Forsythe was nearly thirty years older than Eli B. Kelsey. As a widow, should she decide to go west, she would certainly need assistance. “No plural wife in Nauvoo took her husband’s name and was known by it. Polygamous couples did not openly cohabit, nor was there acknowledgement of the marriage beyond a small circle of people, and the polygamous couples certainly never acquired a reputation in the community as husband and wife. Nevertheless, polygamous husbands apparently fulfilled the role of provider when possible.” Prior to the Mormons leaving Nauvoo, Mary Forsythe returned to her family in the east rather than traveling with the body of the Saints to the west. The people of Nauvoo had committed to leave the city in

the spring of 1846 as soon as the grass was growing sufficiently for their animals as they traveled west. However, on January 29th, Brigham Young was informed that the governor's troops were prowling the city in hopes of arresting some of the leading brethren. Rumors began to circulate that it was now the government's intent to prevent the saints from going west lest they unite with foreign governments (such as Mexico) and become a hindrance to the United States. As a result, a decision was made to begin the exodus from Nauvoo sooner than originally expected.

([https://www.familysearch.org/photos/artifacts/2572425?p=17343972&returnLabel=Jane%20Caldwell%20\(KWJR-9QY\)&returnUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.familysearch.org%2Ftree%2Fperson%2Fmemories%2FKWJR-9QY](https://www.familysearch.org/photos/artifacts/2572425?p=17343972&returnLabel=Jane%20Caldwell%20(KWJR-9QY)&returnUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.familysearch.org%2Ftree%2Fperson%2Fmemories%2FKWJR-9QY))