

Excerpt from the "Biography of Samuel Miles Jr.,
son of **Samuel Miles and Prudence Marks**"

{our line comes through Samuel Jr.'s brother, William Marks Miles}

I was born April 6th 1826 in Attica, Genesee County, State of New York, USA. My father was born in the town of Branford, New Haven County, Connecticut, September 3rd 1779, being of the fourth (Fifth) generation from Richard the immigrant, (Deacon Richard Miles) who came from England in the company which landed in Boston, July 25th 1637, and was one of the first settlers in Milford, Connecticut, 1639, and three years later moved to New Haven.

My father settled in the state of Vermont where in Rutland County August 25th 1807, he married Sarah Simonds. They had children – Ira Simonds, born December 25, 1808; Eliza Osborn, June 11th 1811; Alphonso Edwin, born April 5, 1813; James Rowe, February 5th 1815; Joel Simonds, October 25, 1816. She was born October 5th 1790. She died September 23rd 1824.

My mother {Prudence Marks} was married to my father May 19th 1825. She had by her first husband {Josiah Prescott} from who she was divorced one son, Gustavus Adolphus Prescott.

She was born, May 1st 1795. Died February 9th 1852 at Salt Lake City, Utah. My father died December 22, 1847 at St. Louis. My mother was born at Pawlet, Rutland County, Vermont. Her father was Cornwell and her mother Sarah Goodrich Marks.

She had by my father, Samuel {me} born as {stated} above, William Marks born May 22nd 1828, Attica, Genesee County New York, died July 7, 1897 {Moreland, Bingham, Idaho} Sarah Simonds born December 27, 1831, Freedom, Cattaraugus County, New York; died January 15th 1904, Heber, Utah. Orson Pratt, born March 23rd 1834, Freedom, Cattaraugus County, New York; died September 7th 1895, Salt Lake City, Utah.

When I was between two and three years of age I was taken by my mother on a visit to her parents in Vermont. Our passage on the Erie Canal and visit with my grandfather, grandmother are among my earliest though somewhat indistinct recollections.

In the year 1830 when I was 4 years of age we moved into the town of Freedom, Cattaraugus County, New York, where my father bought land and opened up a farm in the heavy timber land of that section.

Our farm joined that of Dr. Warren A. Cowdery, He and my father being brothers-in-law. He {Cowdery} having Patience Simonds, a sister to my father's first wife Sarah, and

*Samuel Miles, Salt Lake City, Utah
Grandfather's signature
Grandmother's signature*

being a brother to Oliver Cowdery we early became acquainted with the rise of the Church known as Mormons.

It was not until the winter of 1833-34 that the Elders visited our town. When my father learned of a meeting to be held in an adjoining town, Farmersville, by an Elder Matthews he took me with him to the meeting which was held in the house of Ira S Hatch. After the close of the meeting a few proceeded to a nearby stream where they ice was cut, it being midwinter where baptisms were attended to. I was then 7 years of age and became thus early impressed with the principles of the gospel which my father was anxious to hear and ready to receive. In a few weeks our town was visited by Elders John Murdock and Orson Pratt and others. A large branch was raised up. My father and Mother were early baptized. Warren A. Cowdery was appointed President of the Branch {see Doctrine & Covenants 103}. With such members as Hyman Hyde and family, Thomas Graves, Ira S. Hatch, the Cheenys, the McPherson family, the Calkin brothers Luman and Israel, Benjamin F. Wheeler, who married my sister Eliza, with his wife, Isaac Decker and family, they being baptized after moving to Ohio, also my brother Joel

I was blessed under the hands of John Murdock, My mother's brother, William Marks {later the Nauvoo stake president}, visited us at this time and attended our meetings and became converted to the truth of the Gospel and was shortly afterward baptized. He lived in the town of Nunda, Alleghany County, New York. He being a wealthy man in those days sold his possessions and moved to Kirtland, Ohio and materially assisted the Prophet Joseph and the Church in their financial straits.

My early remembrances consist in attending our meeting and prayer meetings where the gifts of tongues was made manifest and notably the interpretation of tongues by Eunice Sawyer, a young woman who had received the gospel, the only one of her family. She made strong impressions on my mind, being one of my first school teachers. She married Heman Tilton Hyde, of our branch, who was one of those who volunteered and went up to redeem Zion and reinstate the saints in Jackson County, Missouri, from whence they had been expelled.

Having sold our property in Freedom we started in the fall of 1835 to gather with the saints in Missouri. We traveled by team, passed through Kirtland, Ohio, then the headquarters of the saints, and when the temple was nearing completion reached New Portage, 50 miles west, where we remained for the winter, there being a large branch of the church there. Father worked at his trade as tailor, and we children attended school. We were pleasantly situated on the Ohio Canal, a short distance from Akron, where my brother-in-law B.F. Wheeler settled. Here my brother Ira was living. He took our team and worked it through the winter.

{This particular history ends here}

The following additional information was also taken from Samuel Miles Jr. autobiography by Jean P. Andersen, g-g-granddaughter.

Samuel Sr attended the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in March 1836. He and Prudence received their Patriarchal Blessings under the hands of Joseph Smith Sr who visited their branch.

Elder Murdock led a group on the Missouri late in the spring. Samuel, Prudence and family were in this group. Their journey was very pleasant. They arrived in due time in Ray County, Missouri where a large company was formed on the Crooked River near Richmond awaiting arrangements being made for the Saints who had been expelled from Jackson County. They had found temporary homes in Clay County and vicinity to occupy the new county of Caldwell. This was the planned gathering place for the Saints. All of the immigrant Saints from the East joined those expelled from Jackson County, and bought the land from the Government. They also bought out most of the first settlers, and founded Far West as the principal town and county seat.

They remained a short time near Richmond, all the family except Prudence and the oldest son Samuel being stricken down with the chills and fever. When they recovered they were able to continue their journey into the area being occupied by the Saints. Samuel entered 80 acres of land at the land office, being mostly prairie land with several acres of good timber, and pleasantly situated 2 ½ miles south of Far West. Samuel erected a comfortable log house so that they were prepared for the winter.

Samuel's sons Ira and Joel came in 1837 to make their home with the family and assisted their father in opening up the farm.

Ira joined the church here. The Prophet Joseph visited the Saints here and organized them, David Whitmer being in charge as President in Far West. The following year, 1838, the Prophet returned to Far West shortly followed by most of the Saints from Kirtland, Ohio. Davis County adjoining Caldwell to the north now commenced to be occupied by the Saints (Adam-on-Di-Aman being the principle town which the Prophet Joseph Smith said was the place where Adam built the altar upon which he offered sacrifice when driven out from the Garden of Eden. This area was situated in Jackson County, Missouri.

A place for the erection of a Temple had been selected at Far West and excavation for the foundation was made. The 4th of July was appointed as the time for the Saints to meet and hold services on the site of the foundation. Samuel's family attended the exercise. While on the way Samuel the oldest son stepped on a scythe taken along to cut prairie grass for the team. He being bare-foot it was partly severed in two. Samuel took him to the house of David Whitmer, where his foot was attended to. A crutch was improvised so that Samuel Jr. went out and heard the Martial band and attended the services at the Temple foundation. The family heard the notable oration delivered by Sidney Rigdon and the words of the Prophet.

Samuel rented his farm and moved to a place where he rented a house one mile from Far West. He commenced to build a house in the city where he intended working at his trade as a tailor. The conflict at the election in Davis County between the Saints and old settlers aroused a mobocratic spirit in the hearts of the old settlers which resulted in serious conflicts. Ira and Joel took part with others sent from Far West to assist the brethren.

The invading army camped in the vicinity of Samuel's home. They held the family as prisoners. Brother Tanner, who had been struck in the head by a gun, inflicting a severe wound, was treated and the wound bound up by Prudence.

They moved to Nauvoo in the fall of 1839. Samuel bought a lot on the hill or upper part of the city, a short distance south of the Temple site. They built a log home and were prepared for the winter. Ira had married Mary K. Bent before they moved from Missouri and they with Joel made their homes in Nauvoo. By working at his trade, Samuel was able to build a comfortable home the following year.

The children all went to school, though the facilities for education were limited at first. The saints were all struggling to make homes and raise their food. There was much sickness. The fever and ague were very prevalent in this section. After they moved into the new home, the oldest son Samuel taught a primary school in the log cabin.

While in Nauvoo, Samuel Sr. went on a mission to the eastern states, visiting many of his relatives and friends. The Temple was now nearing completion and was pushed ahead with much energy by the Saints.

By this time Prudence's brother William Marks (who had been the first Stake President in Nauvoo) had left the church and moved to Shabonna Grove, DeKalb, Illinois. He had obtained a farm in exchange for his Nauvoo property. Young Samuel Jr. went to visit his uncle in Shabonna.

The Temple was completed in 1845 and the Saints were receiving their endowments. Samuel and Prudence had this privilege. The enemies would give them no peace until

the Saints agreed to leave the state. Preparations had been going on throughout the winter by making wagons, and the family commenced their journey to the mountains early in the season in the first company crossing the river on the ice. The twelve Apostles took the lead with President Brigham Young at the head

Samuel had sold their home in June for a light team of mules, and all started for the headquarters of the emigrating camps in Iowa.

They arrived in Council Bluffs in July as the Mormon Battalion was being raised to fill a requisition of the Government for 500 men to march to California and take part in the Mexican war then being waged. Their oldest son Samuel Jr. enlisted July of 1846. Samuel was discharged from the Mormon Battalion in Los Angeles July 16, 1847. He writes in his journal "Together with other discharged soldiers, I started for Salt Lake City, but we received instructions from President Brigham Young to remain in California for a while longer. I finally arrived in Great Salt Lake valley, Sept. 6, 1848, and located in Salt Lake City. I married Hannah M. Colborn, Sept. 6, 1849, and the same year I sent east for my mother to come to the Valley, my father had died during my absence." {Samuel Jr. records that his father Samuel Sr. died in St. Louis, Missouri December 22, 1847.}

Prudence did come to the Salt Lake Valley with her family in the Ezra T. Benson Company. They arrived in the valley the latter part of October 1849. After the family arrived William purchased a city lot and built a home where he moved his mother and the rest of the family. Prudence died on February 9, 1852 after an illness of one week, of lung fever. She was a true wife and a devoted Latter-day Saint and a kind, faithful and loving mother.

**Note added by Catherine S. Peacock, wife of William Marks Miles g-g-g-grandson Lee J. Peacock.*

William Marks Miles is listed in the Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel index twice. First he came to the Valley in 1847 with the Jedediah M. Grant and Joseph B. Noble Company. Because of his age (19) he was probably used as a young, strong, hired hand. When Samuel Jr. arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1848 it might have been decided between the two brothers that it would be better for William to go and help with bringing the rest of the family westward. After all Samuel had done his time marching all over the country with the Mormon Battalion, it was time for him to stay put for a while. (Samuel married his wife in September of 1849, his mother and siblings arrived in the valley a month later in October 1849.) William Marks Miles is listed a 2nd time coming west with his family in 1849; this time he was 21.

Excerpts from "**Pawlet for One Hundred Years**" [printed in 1867] Concerning Prudence Marks & parents, Cornwell Marks & Sarah Goodrich.

Marks, Cornwell, from Glastenbury, Connecticut, about 1785; married Sarah Goodrich, and settled on the road near James M. Shaw's; was a kind hearted and exemplary man, and died in 1857, aged 88. His wife was a skillful nurse, and devoted much of her time to attendance on the sick; she died in 1857, aged 87. They raised a family of five children, William, Elisha, Ira, Prudence, and Electa. William married Rosanna, daughter of Ephraim Robinson, and settled at Nunda, New York; becoming attached to the Mormons, he followed them in their wanderings to Nauvoo, Illinois. He was acting mayor of the city, when the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, was arrested by the civil authorities of Illinois, and issued a writ of habeas corpus, through which he was released from custody. The infuriated mob took after Smith, followed him to Carthage, and killed him. Prudence married John C. Prescott, between whom a separation took place, leaving with her one son, Gustavus A. She then married Samuel Miles, and became attached to the Mormons and followed them to Utah, where she recently died. [pp. 213-214]

Mormonism

Soon after the rise of Mormonism in western New York, its missionaries found their way to this town [Pawlet, VT] and held stated meetings for several weeks. Among them came Brigham Young, then young and unnoted, who visited this town and held his meetings at the old Red school house, not ten rods from where we now write. Joseph Smith, Senior also visited the town, preached and baptized Mrs. Cornwell Marks. A few adherents were obtained, mostly from families educated in the Congregational church, who followed the fortunes of the party to Kirtland, Ohio, thence to Nauvoo, Illinois, and thence, some of them, to Great Salt Lake City.