

The History of James Radford Millard and His Wife Catherine Richards

Chapter 11: James Millard Ordained a Patriarch

Many of the pioneers in Utah had not been originally married in the temple. As a result, some of their children had not been born in the covenant. After the completion of the St. George and Logan Temples in 1877 and 1884, the ordinance of sealing a child to his or her parents was encouraged by Church leaders.¹ In early May of 1895, in the newly completed Salt Lake Temple, John James, who by this time was the father of four, was sealed to his father and deceased mother. Mary Catherine knelt at the altar as the proxy for her sister Alice.

That summer, James gained two more grandchildren. Cecelia gave birth to her sixth child, a son she and Walter named Thomas Odell, to honor Walter's deceased father. William and Maud had their second daughter whom they named Alice, the third grandchild of James' who was named after their beloved family member.

The next year Keturah gave birth to her fifth child, a daughter she named Lera Louise. The next year Keturah had her another daughter, her sixth child, whom she named Minnie.²



The four youngest children of Cecelia and Walter Grover in 1897: L-R, Jim, Mary, Odell and Alice.



Alice Millard, one of many to bear this name. Minnie Millard developed a deep love for family history work.

In the mid-1890s, Simon Bamberger, a Jewish entrepreneur who later served as governor of Utah, bought a large tract of property three miles from Farmington which included the ice lagoon. With the creation of the state of Utah in 1896, and Wilford Woodruff having signed the Manifesto abolishing polygamy, Mr. Bamberger expected tensions in the state to lessen.

He invested a sizeable sum in his new project, bringing in buildings which had been built for a resort during the previous decade along the shores of the Great Salt Lake. Unfortunately for the

resort, but to the benefit of Mr. Bamberger, the lake had receded and left the buildings high and dry.

Mr. Bamberger intended to create an attraction which would draw people from Ogden and Salt Lake City, encouraging them to travel on his railroad line between these two cities. He built rides, bowling lanes and other amusements, including a dance pavilion. Boats were available for rent on the lagoon. Later a carousel was added. He named the amusement park Lagoon.

The park was not just a diversion for Farmington and other nearby residents, but it also provided employment. One of James Millard's neighbors, a new immigrant named Charles Boylin, was employed by Mr. Bamberger as a florist.

James Radford Millard Ordained a Patriarch

In 1898, a week before James' seventy-first birthday, President George Q. Cannon traveled to Farmington where he ordained James Millard a patriarch. An extremely responsible calling, to be certain, given to a humble, faithful man.

By this time James' daughter Mary was serving as the president of the Farmington Ward Primary, and his son-in-law Walter was the bishop of the Garland Ward.

In September of that year, President Woodruff died. Ten days later Lorenzo Snow was sustained as the new president of the LDS Church, again retaining President Cannon and President Smith as his counselors.

In addition to pronouncing patriarchal blessings for the members of the Davis Stake, on August 8th, 1899 James gave two of Cecelia's children their patriarchal blessings.



On September 13th, 1898, Lorenzo Snow was sustained as the fifth president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith were again retained as counselors.

George, fifteen, was declared to be descended from "the Patriarch Jacob." George was told, "You have been blessed to live upon the earth where the gospel is again restored. This is a blessing above that of your progenitors, that is of your forefathers, for they were not so blessed. . . ." George was admonished to seek out his ancestors and then promised that he would "be blessed with inspiration, that is, you shall be blessed with dreams and with visions and they shall appear unto you and make their relationship known. . . ." While James, as a patriarch, spoke under inspiration, his passion for family history work was surely revealed in this blessing.

Then Mary³, age eleven, was given her blessing, where she was told she was of the lineage of

Joseph. Mary's blessing said, "... you are blessed above millions to be born under the covenant of the Holy Priesthood, which your father and mother made before you were born." Both George and Mary's blessings were recorded by Cecelia.

Sacred meetings were often held in the Millard home where those present spoke in tongues and then were interpreted. Celia wrote that these meetings were thrilling experiences, "and many prophecies were given there which have been fulfilled."

In the fall of 1900 John James and Keturah took their family to Farmington. Over a two-day period, four family members received patriarchal blessings under the hands of James Millard. John, who had received a blessing twenty-seven years earlier, was given a second blessing. This time his lineage was declared as being from Joseph, the father of Ephraim. Nineteen-year-old Alice, seventeen-year-old James and fourteen-year-old John also received their blessings. Alice and James were told they were from Ephraim, but John was not given a lineage.



James Radford Millard was ordained a patriarch by Apostle George Q. Cannon in 1898.

Six months later the family again traveled to Farmington. At this time, Keturah received a patriarchal blessing at the hands of her father-in-law. She was not given a lineage. Interestingly, Keturah had received a patriarchal blessing the previous month at the hands of the patriarch in Oakley, Dorr P. Curtis, one of the wagon train leaders when John's mother and grandfather crossed the plains. He also did not declare a lineage, which might have been the reason Keturah sought a second blessing.

Eleven-year-old Annie received her blessing by her grandfather James, being told she was of the lineage of Abraham. Four-year-old Lera also received her blessing, without a lineage being stated.

In 1899, Cecelia gave birth to her seventh child, a son she named Leland. Walter and Cecelia sold their property and bought twenty-seven acres across the valley, closer to the Garland meeting house so Walter wouldn't have to travel so far as bishop. Walter built a large frame home for their growing family, which



Near the turn of the century, Walter and Cecelia Grover opened a mercantile store in the center of Garland, a new settlement in northern Utah.

was also comfortable enough to accommodate Church leaders who visited often. Walter left farming and opened a mercantile store.



Beth Innes Cannon, Walter's granddaughter and my mother, later told me that as a bishop, Walter found it difficult to operate a store, as ward members felt he should always extend credit.



Grover children helped in the family store as they got older. Daughter Alice is on the right; George is on the left.

The next year, in 1900 when Keturah was



Mary Millard, fourth daughter of Joseph William and Keturah, was born the day before the 4th of July in 1900.

almost forty years old, she and John had their sixth and last child, a baby girl named after her mother. Two months later, Maud gave birth to little Mary. Sadly, baby Keturah died that fall, just a few weeks before Cecelia gave birth to her eighth child, a son she named Preston, who would from his humble beginnings grow up to be a world-famous correspondent during WWII.

In April of 1901, George Q. Cannon died at the age of seventy-four. That fall, President Snow died. The next week Joseph F. Smith was sustained as the president of the LDS Church where he would serve until his death in 1918.

Even as Patriarch, James Millard continued his correspondence with family and friends in England in his quest to search out his ancestors. In 1902 James learned John Millard of 1666 was his ancestor, and he traveled to the Salt Lake Temple where he performed the temple ordinances for this man.

James remained active even in his old age. He often walked to a creek not far from his home, and no matter the weather he would take a dip, even if it was icy. His friends and family tried to dissuade him from this practice, but he believed it was essential to his good health. He also had no trouble walking his cows three miles to their pasture and then walking home.



On October 17th, 1901, Joseph F. Smith, left, was sustained as president of the LDS Church. Anthon H. Lund, center, and John R. Winder were called as counselors.

In 1903, Maud gave birth to twins, a girl named Martha and their first son whom they named after William. Little William lived less than two weeks, the fourth but last infant grandchild of James' to pass away in infancy.



This family portrait of Walter and Cecelia's family was taken about 1903. Cecelia would have a ninth child, Edna, in 1907. L-R, back, Mary Elizabeth, Leslie, Alice, Jim. Center: Odell, Walter, Cecelia, George. Front: Preston, Leland. The original photo hung in my Grandmother Mary's house for decades. When Mary went to a nursing home in her old age, this photo was one of the few things she took with her. Realizing her memory was fading, she carefully wrote her family member's names on their faces so she would remember them, as her parents were long deceased, as were four of her siblings. My aunt Hazel was with Grandma Mary during her final moments. Mary had been quite lucid in her last few days, and at the end, she sat up in bed and looked into the corner of the room. Her last words were, "Oh, you are all here, you are all here!"

William and Maud were both faithful in the LDS Church. Maud served in her Relief Society presidency and William served as the Sunday School superintendent and later in a bishopric. William and Maud always tried share what they had with those in need. When general authorities came from Salt Lake City, William would drive the wagon five miles to the train station in Arimo. In snowy weather, William would take a sleigh. Returning with the visiting authorities, they would all be greeted with a hot meal cooked by Maud. In 1905, Maud was expecting her seventh child. While the midwife was experienced, there were problems with the delivery. William and the visiting authority, Apostle George Albert Smith, administered to her, and Maud and her baby

Dora's lives were spared. Shortly after that, Joseph was ordained a High Priest and sustained as a counselor in the bishopric.

They took care of their large farm and numerous animals. Maud planted currants, gooseberries and plums which the children picked and which she then sold for extra income. On occasion the family would ride in the wagon fifteen miles to Lava Hot Springs where they enjoyed swimming in the hot mineral springs.

In 1906, Mary Millard was called to serve as a counselor to Aurelia Rogers, who was now the Davis Stake Primary president. Walter and Cecelia moved to their third home in Garland, a brick house which was the sixth home Walter had constructed by himself.

Endnotes to Chapter 11:

1. This is something I have observed after many years of researching temple records.

2. Minnie, like her grandfather, had a deep love for family history work. Later in her life, with her nephew's wife Mary Ellen Wood Smoot, the thirteenth General Relief Society President, they researched Millard names in Biddisham records and ensured that many temple ordinances were completed. I am fortunate to have several histories and photos from the Smoot family, including those of the William Joseph Millard family.

3. While our family knew Mary Elizabeth Grover's patriarchal blessing existed, no copy could be found. Many years after Mary's death, her daughter Marilyn Innes Pratt found Mary's hand-copied blessing in her private papers. Marilyn shared her copy with me before her death in 2010. Wayne Airmet, a grandson of Mary's brother George, shared his grandfather's patriarchal blessing with me. Wayne's mother, Norma Grover Airmet, told me before her death in 2014, that there has always been a question of how George's middle name was spelled, but in this blessing, transcribed by his mother, it is spelled Frederic. While the LDS historical department which handles Patriarchal blessings initially did not have these two documents, they asked me to send them my copies, which I have done. I learned in this research that a patriarch can bless his own descendants, even if they lived out of his stake, and that on occasion copies of these particular type of blessings were not sent to Salt Lake City. The Patriarchal Blessing Index shows a patriarchal blessing given to their brother Walter Leslie in 1903 by John W. Hess, the faithful Farmington bishop who later served as the stake president and was ordained a patriarch in 1900. This index also shows their cousins' blessings given by their grandfather. I can only see blessings of my direct line, so I was grateful that my second cousin Wayne shared George's blessing with me.