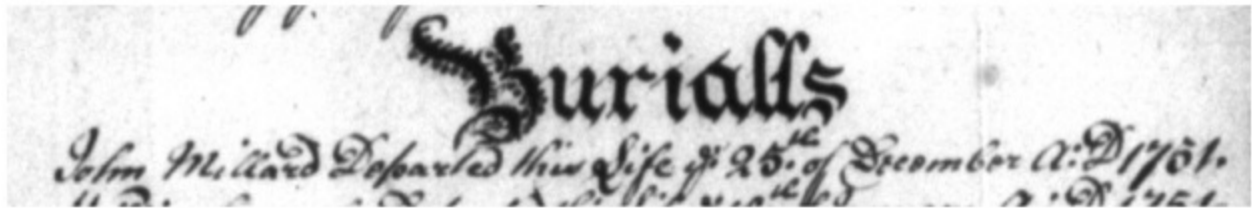


The History of James Radford Millard and His Wife Catherine Richards

Chapter 2: Catherine Richards and her family and James Millard Join the LDS Church

The 15th century brought the discovery of the New World which had an enormous impact on the old. By the 1500s, Protestantism had gained a foothold in England and Europe while British adventurers traveled throughout the globe.

In the 17th century, thousands of persecuted Puritans left the British Isles for the New World. In 1662, John Millard was born, either in Germany or England, and settled in Somerset County. By 1700 he had married a woman named Hannah, and while only two sons are known, William and John, he either had a very large family or he had many siblings with numerous descendants. By the end of that century, the entire county of Somerset was populated with Millards.¹



The earliest record of a Millard ancestor is this burial entry in the Biddisham Parish. John Millard was James Millard's third great-grandfather. James performed John's temple ordinances in 1902 in the Salt Lake Temple.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is Restored

Over a century later, in 1830, the prophet Joseph Smith organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York. Within a decade LDS missionaries were preaching the restored gospel in the British Isles.

In 1840 a Welshman named Dan Jones, with his wife Jane, emigrated to the United States. Dan made his living ferrying passengers along the Mississippi River in his steamboat *The Maid of Iowa*. Dan had heard about the Mormons and was anxious to meet the prophet Joseph Smith. In 1843 he ferried three hundred British converts from St. Louis to the dock at Nauvoo. He looked over the crowd gathered to meet the emigrants hoping to catch a glimpse of the Mormon prophet, who Dan imagined would be wearing an animal skin and have a long beard and white hair. Joseph Smith approached Dan and shook his hand, but Dan was so intent on finding an Old Testament prophet that he didn't realize who was in front of him.

When Joseph Smith learned the steamboat pilot was looking for him, he took Dan on a tour of Nauvoo and introduced him to his family. They formed a strong friendship and Dan was soon baptized in the Mississippi River.



The angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith in 1823. The young prophet had already been visited by God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The next year Brother Jones was with Joseph Smith in Carthage jail the night before the prophet's martyrdom. The others with them were sleeping when Joseph asked in a whisper if Dan was afraid to die. Dan replied, "Has that time come, think you? Engaged in such a cause I do not think that death would have many terrors."

"You will yet see Wales and fulfill the mission appointed you ere you die," said the Prophet. By the end of the summer Elder Jones was preaching the gospel in his native Wales.

The following year, in 1845, Elder Jones was the president of the Merthyr Tydfil Conference which included several branches. Twenty years earlier, this town had been a quiet farming village, but as the industrialization era spread throughout the world, high quality coal from Wales literally fueled the steam engines on every sea and continent. The Merthyr Tydfil area boomed with an influx of men anxious to better provide for their families. Missionaries from the LDS Church found many converts in Merthyr Tydfil and the surrounding areas, including the Richards family.

William Richards and His Family are Baptized

Shortly after arriving, Dan attended a mission conference in Manchester, where he met Elder William Henshaw who had been serving for two years in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales. Elder Henshaw was baptizing an average of fifteen people a month even though he did not speak the Welsh language. Already a member by this time was nine-year-old Morgan Richards. Two years later, in August of 1845, Morgan's forty-eight-year-old father William was baptized.

William Richards was a master stone mason whose sons worked with him in the stone cutting business. He, three sons and two daughters lived in a lovely stone house in Monknash, forty miles south of Merthyr Tydfil along the coast and across the channel from Somerset County. William had laid beautifully colored tiles for their kitchen floor. Flowers and manicured lawns surrounded paths William had laid with red sandstone. The home was next to a church, and William's wife Alice was buried in the graveyard. She had died in 1835, leaving a baby, Edward.²

Catherine, a young teenager at the time of her mother's death, had cared for this baby until he died, in addition to watching over her younger siblings. By 1845 she was twenty-three. Her brother William Howell was twenty-one. Cecelia was seventeen, a year older than Thomas. Morgan, the youngest surviving child, was eleven.

Besides the baby Edward, two other children had died as infants. Many years later Catherine told her own children how much she enjoyed walking through the burial grounds next to her home in the evenings when her chores were completed. When asked if she wasn't afraid to be alone among the tombs, her reply was, "There is not a thing in a burial ground to frighten anyone. It is only the living people we need to fear."

In 1847 William Howell Richards joined the LDS Church and soon was called as a missionary to preach the gospel in England. Not until December 1848, six years after young Morgan had joined the Church, did twenty-seven-year-old Catherine Richards join the church, likely at the same time as her brother Thomas. She later said that the restored gospel made all the difference in the world

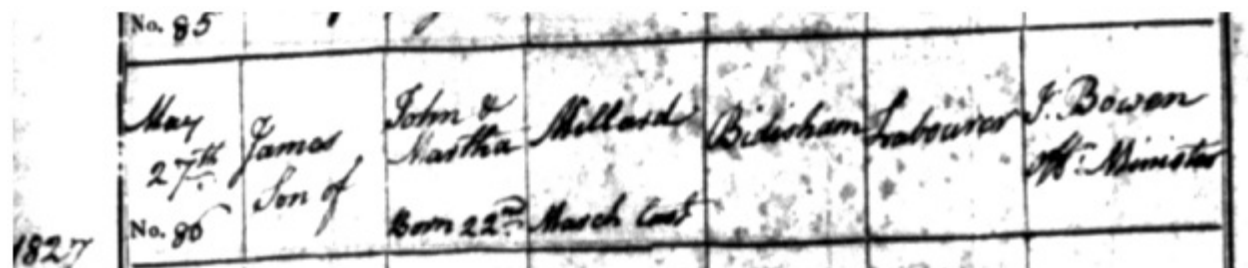
to them. By this time President Dan Jones was publishing a successful Welsh periodical titled *Prophet of the Jubilee*, and hundreds of Welsh converts were leaving the British Isles at the northern port of Liverpool and sailing to America. When President Jones returned to the United States in early 1849, there were still four thousand converts in Wales, the William Richards family being among them.

By 1851 the family was still living in their home except for Cecelia, who was possibly married and living elsewhere.³ The 1851 census shows that Catherine cared for the house while her brothers, William, Thomas, and Morgan were all apprenticed to their father as masons. They lived next door to William's brother Edward, also a master mason.⁴ Edward and his wife Barbara did not join the LDS Church, nor did any of their children except for their son William, who at age eleven was baptized the same year as his cousins Thomas and Catherine.

James Radford Millard Joins the LDS Church and Emigrates

In the meantime, James Radford Millard, a young shoe cobbler, left his home in Somerset County after the 1851 death of his father. James had been born in Biddisham in 1827, the youngest of seven children.⁵ Biddisham was tiny village in Somerset County which in 1821 had eighteen homes, twenty-nine families and a population of one hundred and thirty-six.⁶ Millard names appear on almost every page of the parish records, with James' grandfather, John Millard, making many entries as the church warden.

Biddisham is near other small towns, such as Winscombe, where his mother Martha Radford had been born in 1781. Even though she was forty-six, Martha was delighted to have this healthy, happy child so late in life.⁷ James was christened in the small parish church where his father and grandfather had been baptized. He grew up knowing everyone in the village, including numerous Millard relatives who populated Biddisham and the surrounding towns.



Christening of James Millard from a page of the Biddisham parish record. In addition to the christening date, the priest recorded James' birth date, "22nd March last." John Millard's occupation was shown as a labourer on this record and also on the christening records I could find for four of James siblings, three of whom were born in Winscombe where his mother Martha was born.

About the time his parents neared their sixties, his father contracted to place twelve-year-old James three miles away in the home of James Parsons, a cobbler in the larger village of Compton Bishop. Young James was apprenticed to his master and lived with his family, being loved and cared for by them.⁸ By 1851, twenty-four-year-old James had set aside his cobbler trade and was working as a farm servant to a prosperous land owner in East Brent, just a few miles from Biddisham and Compton Bishop.

James became engaged to a young woman and desired to earn enough money for their marriage. After his father's recent death, the inheritance had passed to James' oldest brother Joseph. Knowing of opportunities for laborers in Wales, James traveled forty miles north, across Bristol Bay, where he began working in Merthyr Tydfil.

James found a close friend in Ebenezer Williams, who had joined the LDS Church two years earlier when the family with whom he was employed embraced the restored gospel. After serving a mission, Ebenezer returned to work for this family where he befriended James. This association brought James in contact with Samuel Savior⁹, a native of Compton Bishop who had lived near James when he was apprenticed to Mr. Parsons.¹⁰ Samuel had moved his young family to Wales where he had joined the LDS Church in 1848. By 1852 was a presiding elder.¹¹ In January of 1852, President Savior baptized James, likely an emotional event since Samuel would have watched James grow up and certainly knew him well. With the zeal of a new convert, James returned to Biddisham to share the gospel message, but he and his message were rejected by his family and fiancé. He moved back to Merthyr Tydfil and worked for a year to earn enough money to emigrate to Utah, never seeing his family again.¹²



James Millard, born in Biddisham, was descended from grandparents born within a ten-mile radius. His father John Millard and grandfather James Millard were also born in Biddisham. James' paternal grandmother Martha Lovell was from Lympsham, a small hamlet with only 100 homes. His mother Martha Radford was born in Winscombe, as was her father James. Winscombe had a population of 300. James Millard's maternal grandmother Sarah Dunscombe was born in Congresbury, a larger town with 211 homes in 1800.

Endnotes for Chapter 2:

1. The births of James Radford Millard and his ancestor John Millard were over 165 years apart. After emigrating to Utah, James wrote to relatives in England asking for genealogy information. James had two sets of information for John; one gives his birth in Germany in 1662 and dying 1750. The other shows him born in England in 1666 and dying in 1750. I found John's burial record in Biddisham on December 25th, 1751. Genealogy information associated with temple work performed by James has proven invaluable to Millard research. In most cases, James identified family members by their relationship to him. For example, James labeled John Millard as his 3rd great-grandfather. He identified some relatives as step-great-uncles, helping to clarify parish records which indicated a great-grandmother had died, leaving a husband who remarried and had a second family. Known ancestors cannot account for the large numbers of Millards I came across in research. The Millard name seems to be ubiquitous in parish records throughout Somerset. A fellow researcher found the same situation in neighboring Wiltshire. I have thought about my Cannon name, which was brought to the United States by my second-great-grandfather George Cannon in 1842. George was born 156 years before I was. His three surviving sons each entered polygamous marriages and there are now thousands of Cannon descendants everywhere in the West and in fact throughout the United States. Millard is a German name, and John Millard could indeed be the immigrant ancestor of the Somerset Millards. However, I cannot eliminate the possibility Millard families had lived in Somersetshire and Wiltshire for hundreds of years.

2. Family records do not give a date for the death of Edward. However, temple work was not performed for Edward during the lifetimes of any surviving family members or their children, indicating they knew he had died as a child. Cecelia Millard Grover wrote that Catherine cared for this baby, but she did not mention him again in the biography of her mother.

3. Some family records give Cecelia's husband's name as Thomas Bynon. I could find a perfect match for this couple on the 1851 census in Merthyr Tydfil, but I also found this same couple in the same location on the 1861 census, eliminating this as a possible match for Cecelia Richards. Cecelia Millard Grover wrote that her mother's sister Cecelia was onboard the *Golconda* with her grandfather and uncles in 1854, (which is confirmed by the ship's manifest), that she married a British officer, moved to New York and was dead by 1860. Two different Cecelias are likely to have been confused by researchers unfamiliar with Cecelia's record of her aunt.

4. The 1851 census shows that the children of these two brothers were born in various small towns in Glamorganshire, indicating these fathers moved their families as job opportunities arose.

5. James' daughter Cecelia wrote that there were 14 children in his family. Today only seven are known, and I have come to believe that there were only seven. The seven known children fit perfectly together and align with the parents' ages. James saw to the temple work for his six older siblings, leaving me to believe there were no other children in this family. James was enumerated in the 1851 census on March 31^s on a farm in East Brent four miles from his family home where James worked as a servant. At that time, both of his parents were still alive. His father died in October of that year, and I have assumed James left England after his father's death.

6. I am often amazed at the information I can find. This detail came from *Somerset Delineated*. Possibly James' birth raised the population to 137. For many years the parish records only had two or three entries.

7. I am extremely fortunate to be able to use the biographies of James R. Millard and his wife Catherine Richards written by their daughter, my great-grandmother Cecelia Millard Grover, who described personal details.

8. Traditions of the times indicate James was likely apprenticed at age 12. The 1841 census shows 14-year-old James living with the Parsons family. I have assumed he was happy there because in 1902, James did the temple work for James Parsons. In fact, he did the temple work for many of the people who lived near the cobbler's shop based on the 1841 census.

9. While I could find early Church records for many LDS branches in Merthyr Tydfil, I could not find any branches in Somerset County, England. However, nineteen of the families emigrating to Utah with James on the *Jersey* were from Bristol, only 20 miles from Biddisham. I could find no indication that James knew of the LDS Church before he went to Wales, although it is possible. None of his family members ever joined the LDS Church. His daughter and biographer Cecelia did not mention that James knew of the LDS Church before he left for Wales.

10. The 1841 census shows the Savior family living three homes from the Parson home where James lived.

11. High Priest Quorum records from the Utah Davis Stake state that James was baptized and confirmed by Sam Savier in Glamorganshire, Wales. I obtained further information about Samuel from a DUP history, which briefly mentioned that Samuel was a bishop in Cardiff. Samuel was in Compton Bishop on the 1841 census, as was James Millard, and Samuel was in St. Andrews Major, near Cardiff, working as a laborer on the 1851 census. Samuel emigrated to Utah in 1859, settling in Pleasant Grove.

12. Cecelia Millard Grover wrote of his broken engagement. Many years later this woman penned a few words at the bottom of a letter sent by a friend, but Cecelia didn't include any details.