

(Maternal grandparents of Lenora Starkey Gerrard)

The year 1842 was an important one for me, because that year two babies were born who in due time became my grandparents. To Richard Fowkes and Mary Barrass was born a baby boy, in the town of Ibstock, Leicestershire, England, on February 18. He was given the name of Reuben --Reuben Fowkes.

A short distance away, in the town of Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England, to William Bacon and Caroline North, a baby daughter had arrived ten days earlier, on February 8, 1842. She was named Mary, --Mary Bacon. These two children grew to maturity, met, fell in love, and were married in the year 1863 on Easter Sunday, which came that year on April 5. They belonged to the Church of England.

Reuben's vocation was that of a civil engineer. His wife Mary was an expert tailoress. She spun the cloth, and made men's suits. She was a good cook, was gifted in music, and also had a lovely singing voice.

These two people were converted to Mormonism by Latter Day Saint Missionaries. Two little daughters were born to them in England, Edith Elizabeth, and Esther Ellen. When the children were two, and eight months, respectively, this little family embarked for America on June 30, 1868, sailing from Liverpool on the steamship Minnesota. There were 534 emigrating saints who sailed on that voyage. They were under the direction of John Parry. They arrived in New York July 12, 1868. From there they traveled by rail to Laramie, Wyoming, which was then the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad. Here they joined Captain Chester Loveland's company and proceeded to Salt Lake City by wagon train. A Mr. Cluff was in charge of their division. They left Laramie July 22, 1868, arriving in Salt Lake City August 20, 1868.

The journey across the plains was long and hard. They followed the Platte River which was dangerous to cross because of the quick-sands. The Big Sandy Mountains were also difficult to cross. The sand was so deep that the oxen could go only a few steps at a time. Everyone who was able had to walk,--men, women and children. Wood was scarce and it was hard to gather enough to even make fires to cook with.

Due to extreme heat, there was much sickness. Mary had sunstroke and became very ill. The journey was extremely difficult for her. She grew very thin. Her wedding ring slipped from her finger and was lost in the deep sand. It was her most valued possession, and she regretted that it was never recovered. Mary was placed in one of the wagons to ride, because of her weakened condition. The two young daughters also required much care, but with the help of her good husband Reuben, they reached the Salt Lake Valley. They lived in the Seventh Ward on First West between Third and Fourth South. Reuben worked on the great tabernacle and other buildings.

After a short stay in Salt Lake, the Fowkes family moved to Coalville, Utah. They built the first rock house in Coalville. It was made of flat rocks, and the children helped by carrying small rocks in their aprons to fill in the chinks. In this house another daughter, Eveline Mae was born on May 14, 1869. This quaint little rock home inspired George Beard, the well-known Utah artist to paint it. He titled the picture, "The Fowkes Homestead."

Reuben, as I have stated, was a civil engineer in England, and upon coming to this country brought his surveying equipment with him. He did some work on the great tabernacle and other buildings in Salt Lake, as I have said. He also prospected and surveyed lands, and found coal for the Union Pacific Co. Company at Grass Creek, Utah, and at Cumberland, Diamondville, and Kemmerer, Wyoming. He worked on the Union Pacific tunnel in Weber canyon. Reuben was later mine superintendent at Almy, Wyoming, for many years. Mary was a dress-maker in the community. She also made and sold candles, which were much in demand at that time.

Reuben Fowkes assisted in the social life of the community by directing a Home Dramatics Club in Coalville. In her childhood years, little Eveline Mae (she was always called just "Mae",) had parts in many plays. She especially enjoyed playing the part of Little Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

In 1874 the Fowkes family left Coalville. After Mr. Fowkes worked for a number of years as Superintendent of the Almy mines, he then took up a homestead on lower Bear River, in Uinta County, Wyoming. In the book, "History of Uinta County", by Elizabeth Arnold Stone, we read:

"It is interesting to note that the Fowkes name, aside from being perpetuated among us in the line of their descendants, who are among our foremost citizens, has been given a lasting place in the geological history of the country in the "Fowkes Formation" that comes to the surface on the Fowkes ranch about six miles below Almy." This formation is commonly known as "The Fowkes Beds" in geological strata.

(I add, parenthetically: The little daughter Eveline Mae, who was born in the little rock house in Coalville, Utah, grew to womanhood and was married to William John Starkey in the Logan Temple on October 18, 1888. William was also a convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in England, and came to this country for the Gospel's sake. They became the parents of eight children, -five girls and three boys, I being the fourth girl.)

This history would not be complete without making mention of the Indians who roamed this western land at that time. Chief Washakie was a very good friend of the Fowkes family. He was a welcome visitor in their home. He was of the Shoshone tribe, which is the tribe most closely associated with western Wyoming. No Indian name stands out so prominently as "Chief Washakie", and it is said that of all the Indians, he worked most consistently for the good of his people. He was born in 1804, became chief at the age of 19, and was the leader of his tribe for nearly eighty years. They were the years of the greatest Indian troubles through which the country ever passed, when the white men, often through necessity, often from selfish motives, were steadily encroaching on the hunting grounds of this once independent people. Chief Washakie possessed a natural dignity that commanded respect. But he did not like the Arapahoes, and when greeting their chiefs, instead of shaking hands as with an equal, he would coldly extend two fingers, keeping the other fingers clenched, which was the Indian way of showing distrust. It might be said here that the Shoshones and the Arapahoes seldom intermarry. Each looks on the other with true tribal pride and prejudice. (Info. from "History of Uinta County", by Elizabeth Arnold Stone, an acquaintance of mine.)

The following is a true story. I have often heard my mother, Mae, the little girl in this history, tell it:

When my grandparents, Rueben and Mary Fowkes were living at their ranch home on Bear River, one day they left to go to the town of Evanston, some twelve or thirteen miles distant, to do some shopping. Two of their daughters, Edith and Mae, were to stay at home until their parents returned.

Late in the afternoon the girls decided to go down into the field and drive the cows home, ready to be milked by their father, when he returned. They were sure he would be returning soon.

While they were in the willows by the river, they glanced toward the winding road, and were delighted when they saw a cloud of dust. They were happy because their parents were coming home at last!

But their delight turned to dismay, because as they watched, they soon discovered that it wasn't their father and mother, but INDIANS! Mae and Edith ran into the willows to hide, and would probably have remained unnoticed by the Indians, had not the little dog that was with them kept running in and out of the bushes, and when he saw the horses, gave several sharp barks. The girls called the dog, and tried to quiet him and keep him hidden, but it was too late. The Indians had seen him. Knowing that someone must be there with the dog, they rode their horses down to the field. Edith and Mae ran toward home after they had been seen. The Indians followed them, keeping their horses' hoofs right on the little girl's heels. The girls ran as fast as they could, and were crying all the way home. When they reached home, the girls hurried in and tried to lock the door, but the Indians were too quick for them. They jumped off their horses, pushed open the door, and went inside. They had been drinking "fire water", and kept demanding that they be given "biskee" (biscuits), dishes, meat and soap. The dusky faces and out-stretched hands, and the demand for "cold biskee" and other things, could not be disregarded

with safety. The girls were wishing desperately that their parents would come.

One of the Indians kept watch at the door. Presently he said something in an excited voice to the others, and pointed down the road. They all rushed outside, got on their horses, and rode rapidly away. The Indian who had kept watch had told the others that someone was coming around the curve of the hill. Sure enough, it was Reuben and Mary. Never had the girls been so glad to see their parents. They had arrived just in time!

Reuben and Mary said that the Indians had passed them with a whoop and a yell, whipping their horses and driving them like mad. This was several miles back down the road. They were afraid that these wild men were up to some mischief, and they drove as fast as they could, knowing the little girls would be frightened, and probably in great danger.

Mr. Fowkes told Chief Washakie about the incident, and how the Indians had behaved. The Chief liked the Fowkes family. He had often eaten meals in their home. Chief Washakie severely rebuked the Indians, and told them they must never bother these good people again. After that they had no more trouble with the Indians.

Concluding this history, I want to state that Reuben and Mary Fowkes had thirteen children in all, three of whom died in infancy. The other ten all married and reared honorable and respected families, who were good citizens of the country. They were Edith Elizabeth Fowkes Wanlass, Esther Ellen Fowkes Thomas, Eveline Mae Fowkes Starkey, Caroline Annie Fowkes Harris, Mary Lenora Fowkes Harris, Reuben William Fowkes, Charles Martimer Fowkes, Katherine Emma Fowkes Sellers, Richard Barras Fowkes, Ernest Fowkes, Ethel Violet Fowkes and Luch Fowkes (twins), Joseph Valentine Fowkes.

Reuben passed away in Almy, Wyoming, on February 24, 1892, of what is now believed to have been appendicitis, and Mary died in Evanston on March 9, 1915, of pneumonia. Their final resting place is in the Almy, Wyoming, cemetery.

Describing my dear grandparents: Grandfather Reuben Fowkes was about five feet, ten inches tall, had blue-grey eyes, and brown hair. He was of medium stature. Grandmother Mary Bacon Fowkes was small in stature, dark brown eyes and black hair. She was one of five sisters: Mary, Elizabeth, Ann, Lucy, and Catherine Bacon.

(Grandfather Reuben Fowkes followed the advice of church authorities and married a second wife. She was Catherine Bacon, a sister to Mary. To Reuben and Catherine two children were born: Lillian and Samuel H. Pike Fowkes.) They all got along well together.)

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THE STATE OF WYOMING
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
CHEYENNE

October 19, 1935

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Starkey,
Evanston, Wyoming.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Starkey:

To have had so many of your friends and relatives celebrate with you on the occasion of your golden wedding anniversary must have been one of the happiest times of your life.

It is clear you have weathered the storms of life together in a manner which, to say the least, should prove an example in this changing and hurrying world of ours. May you celebrate many more anniversaries together!

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely
LESLIE A MILLER
Governor

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The Uinta County Herald had a lovely article about them, in which it said, "They are a grand old couple. They command and enjoy the respect of all who know them." They lived to celebrate fifty-eight years of married life before dad passed away at the age of 85 and mother eight years later at age eighty-six.

Some of the Church and civic positions that William J. Starkey held are as follows:

- First Assistant in the Sunday School, Spring Valley, 1904
- President of Young Men's Mutual Improvement Ass'n. Spring Valley.
- Secong Assistant in the Sunday School, Cumberland.
- Superintendent of Sunday School, Red Canyon, Almy.
- A Bishop's Counselor for over thirty years:
 - In Spring Valley; in Cumberland; in Evanston.
- A Genealogy Stake Board Member..

Some of the Civic Positions he held:
A Patriarch to the Woodruff Stake at the time of his death in 1947.

- Elected to Board of Education ("School Trustees" at Cumberland. He was treasurer and Clerk of Board.)
- Elected to office of County Commissioner of Uinta County, 1922 - 1926.

May Fowkes Starkey was very active in church work also, attending church meetings regularly. She was a counselor to Mrs. Zina Taggart in the Woodruff Stake Relief Society, and was a block teacher in that organization for many years. She was sought after to give readings on many programs, and many, many people marveled at her talents, her ability, and her memory. She was also a good alto singer. Not long before she died, I remember sitting in a Sacrament meeting beside her, and and marveling at her beautiful alto voice. Her tones were so sweet and true. And at that age! She was also a member of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

Eight children in all were born to William John and Eveline Mae Starkey: Laura, Lillian, Gladys, Lenora, William Francis, Charles Ernest, Iva Lucille, and Leslie Emerson. Bill never married. All the rest have been married in the Temple, with the exception of Leslie. His wife, Joan Carpenter, appeared to be interested in the church, but after marriage she affiliated herself with the Presbyterian Church. I am thankful that we all have a testimony of the gospel; that we are "true to the faith that our parents have cherished, and true to the truth for which martyrs have perished." We hope to pass our heritage on to our children.

We had exceptionally kind, wise, and wonderful parents. We owe them a debt of gratitude. I want to say this about our father, the head of the family, and a true Patriarch:

The world would be better if there were more men like him. He was kind and good and generous, loyal, likable, and had a wonderful sense of humor. He was most certainly entitled to bear the Priesthood of God. He practiced what he preached. Everybody liked him. He loved his family with a deep and

abiding love. I remember when I was a child, how he would get up and make a fire to get the house warm for the family. In those days there was no such thing as automatic heat. I wished fervently that in some way things could be made easier for him. When we would get up to get dressed, he would hold our shoes and stockings over the coal stove to warm them for us before we put them on. He would bring us special treats home on Saturday night, and sing, "Saturday night is my delight, and so is Sunday Morning, but Sunday noon comes too soon, and so does Monday morning." Just a silly little ditty, but he always sang good naturedly, and created a mood of jollity and good humor in the home. He demonstrated his love for us in numerous ways.

I like this little poem. It reminds me of Dad.

"HEART'S ECHO,"

Footsteps have sometimes a way of speaking.
I remember my Father's, when he came seeking
A child, who nightly played a game,
While listening to hear him call her name.
Always I tried to guess, as I lay,
From my Father's tread, the trend of the day.
If his step was cautious and somewhat slow,
Things had happened just so-and-so;
If his walk was light, with a hint of hurry,
I knew that his day had brought little worry;
If his foot was heavy, the sound would tell
That somehow things had not gone well.
But heavy or light, - or in between,
When he reached my door his face was serene;
Even by flicker of candle light
His smile had a radiance that filled the night
With something only a child can feel,
Lighter than thistle, stronger than steel.
And now, as I watch white stars grow clear,
I know it's a faraway echo I hear--
And not what I thought, too joyous to bear--
The sound of light steps on the Golden Stair.

Dad passed away on July 17, 1947, at 85. I remember the night before he died he called me and sang "Happy Birthday", as my birthday was July 16. He was quite active up to the last, but did have some arthritis a few months before he died, that gave him quite a lot of pain and trouble.

Mother lived until June 8, 1955. She was in good physical and mental health. She passed away in my home at age 86. Their final resting place is in the Evanston, Wyoming cemetery.

Description of Dad:

Height: about 5'11".
Hair, brown in younger years, grey later. Had a very good head of hair all his life.
Eyes: blue-grey
Stature: he had a very good physique,--straight and tall, and always carried himself well.
Disposition: jovial and happy.

Description of Mother:

Height: about 5'3 or 4".
Hair: dark brown, later in life, light grey
Eyes: brown.
Mother was petite and dainty.
Some people have said she reminded them of a Dresden doll. This really describes her more than a profusion of words could. She took pride in her appearance, and always liked to look nice.