

William Fletcher Ewell (William L. Ewell)

William was born November 30, 1815 in Palmyra, Fluvanna, Virginia. He was the son of Pleasant and Barbara Ann Fauber Ewell. He was raised on a plantation and may have attended medical school.



William married Mary Lee Bland on November 30, 1834 in Carroll County, Missouri. She was born November 1, 1817 in Cumberland County, Kentucky to John and Sarah Caldwell Lee Bland. The family owned a plantation and were rather well to do.

From Mary Lee's history as told to her granddaughter the following story of the meeting of William was told. One day, after saddling her horse, she was riding through the woods. The cinch was not tight enough, it turned, and threw her to the ground which injured her back and ankle. While she was on the ground, a young man came along and bound her ankle. He introduced himself as William Fletcher Ewell, a medical student on vacation for the summer. William said he was a Mormon and told Mary Lee's family about it. At first the new religion was listened to and agreed with. One day, her father went to town and found that the teachings of Joseph Smith and the Mormons were very unpopular. If he would have followed the teachings, he would have been very unpopular in the community.

Mr. Bland tried to convince William to give up his religion but when he refused, he commanded him to leave and forbade Mary Lee to see him. She loved him and believed the Gospel. With the support of Mrs. Bland, she arranged to leave and to marry William. She left with her slave, Chloe. Her father disinherited her, but she never questioned her choice even with all the trials she experienced.

While living in Ray County, Missouri the couple had two children, Francis Marion and John Pleasant. They moved to Livingston County, Missouri where two more children were born, Sarah Elizabeth and Barbara Ann, although Barbara Ann may have been born in Nauvoo, depending on when the family was driven out of Missouri. Eventually, the family moved to the Winter Quarters area and another child was born on October 5, 1846. His name was William Thomas Ewell. He was born after William had volunteered to join and Mormon Battalion and had begun the long march to California.

William contracted tuberculosis and was ill as he returned to his family in Iowa sometime in 1847. His father, Pleasant, and his wife were probably living in Big Pigeon by the time he returned. The Tithing Records recorded his name on November and December of 1848. From then on, the receipt of Tithing was in the name of Mary Ewell. The last recorded date was July 1852. His health grew worse and he died on December 22, 1848 and is probably buried in Big Pigeon. Mary Lee was left a widow and had another child, Mary Jane, on February 5, 1849.

On the 1850 U. S. Census, the family was listed, Polly (Mary Lee), age 33; Francis, age 15; John, age 12; Sarah, age 9; Barbara, age 6; William, age 4; and Mary, age 1. This was enumerated as dwelling #689.



Peter & Mary Lee's
house in Santaquin.

Mary Lee and her six children came west with the Uriah Curtis Company in 1852. They left Kanesville on June 28, 1852 and reached the Salt Lake Valley on September 29. There were about 260 in the Company and 50 wagons.

Mary Lee married Peter Jones in 1853 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah. Peter was the son of James and Mary Jones. He was born October 25, 1819 in Alfrick, Worcestershire, England. The couple had two children born in Ogden—Hannah and Zachery Henry. They moved to Santaquin, Utah County, Utah Territory and had another daughter—Emma Keziah. Peter died on October 15, 1890 and Mary Lee on May 24, 1898. Both are buried in the Santaquin Cemetery.