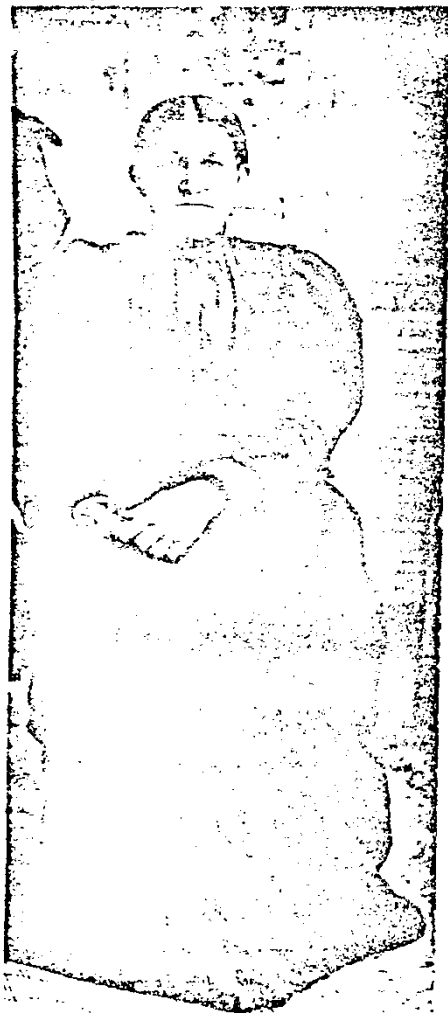


Ruth Jones



b 15 November 1850  
d 1 October 1927

## Ruth Jones Bowen

by Lois B. Christensen (granddaughter)

Ruth Jones Bowen, my Grandmother was born, 15 November 1850, in Fabians Bay, a small suburb of St. Thomas which is located on the east bank of the Tawe River and is part of Swansea. She was blessed in the L.D.S. Church, 9 April 1851 by David Edwards.

Fabians Bay as the name implies, is a small place near the docks and shipyards, where the people lived who worked in the steel industries which used the important Swansea Bay as a port.

Her father, Elias Jones, moved into this area from Cadoxton which is over the Neath River from Neath, seven miles north of Swansea. He had a food and drink business there. Some say he was a baker, some a grocer but the census records of 1851 list him as a victualler, commonly known as a pub owner. "He was part owner and lessor of some coal mines (according to Aunt Ruth Bona Patten) which were called the Saint's Pits because Elias preferred to have the Latter-Day-Saints work in them.

Grandmother was the seventh of nine children. Her oldest brother, John was born and is buried in Cadoxton, beside his grandfather, John Jones. Her oldest sister was Mary of whom you will hear more later. Then her other brothers and sisters were born: another John, Llewellyn, Annie, Elias, Thomas and Hannah. All born in Fabians Bay except the eldest John.

Her mother, Mary Williams Jones, a daughter of Llewellyn Williams, a school master, and Mary Thomas, married Elias Jones, 3 June 1836 in St. Mary's Church, Swansea. This beautiful church is still there. Elias and Mary lived in Cadoxton about two years near their parents. They moved to Fabians Bay in 1838. When Grandmother was born in 1850 she had two

grandmothers, Mary Williams and Ann Jones living near her. They were old though and she probably didn't remember much about them. Mary was 72 and Ann was 75 in 1850.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1854 Grandma's mother gave birth to Hannah, her ninth child, and on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July she died leaving eight living children. Her sister Hannah for whom her last girl was named, lost her husband, Morgan Hopkins, about the same time as her sister died, Hannah had one child, Mary.

The death of his wife postponed the plans Elias had made for coming to Utah. His oldest daughter, Mary took over the management of the children and the home with the help and encouragement of her two grandmothers. She was loved by her little sister Ruth and all the other children loved and respected her. Mary's daughter, Ruth Patten, says, "Grandfather decided to remain in Wales until the children were older." Two years later he married his wife's sister, Hannah Williams Hopkins whose daughter, Mary (Aunt Polly Beck) was about the same age as his daughter Ruth. They grew up together and were just like sisters.

In the spring of 1856 they started for America. They set sail from Liverpool 19 April on the ship called Saunders Curling. They were on the water six weeks and when they landed at Boston, they took a train to Iowa City, Iowa. This was as far as the railroad extended west at that time. While on the train, Wednesday, 28 May 1856, the baby, Hannah, died. She was buried in Woodland Cemetery, Cleveland, Ohio Section 20 grave 45 E. top lot 166.

That fall the family joined Captain John A. Hunt's company to come to Utah. Grandfather was well equipped for the journey. He had two horse teams, two wagons and a buggy.:

From Aunt Jane Hodgen's history of Elais Jones we have this incident which happened: "During a stampede on the plains mother was hooked in the mouth by a cows horn. She carried a

scar the rest of her life. Her father had a first aid kit along and pulled the wound together with plaster.”

They reached Salt Lake City on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1856, where they were sent to be housed in a schoolhouse. This family fared better than many others in the company because Grandfather (Elias Jones), had looked well to their comfort. He brought a number of buffalo robes to keep them warm. .

From Salt Lake City they moved to Cottonwood in the spring of 1857. This same spring Elias and Hannah were endowed and sealed to their first spouses in the Endowment House the date was March 20<sup>th</sup>. It is said also that Hannah would walk into Salt Lake City with her eggs to make purchases.

In Cottonwood they bought a small house and a piece of land. (Elias had bought a piece of land in Wales but his claim was never honored-which created a bitterness which affected his feeling about the church). They lived in Cottonwood until fall, then they moved to Spanish Fork which was to be their permanent home. Like many others they lived in a dugout, on Main Street about 6<sup>th</sup> north, the first year. Then Grandfather, Elias, bouth a city block and built a home. He gradually acquired a great deal of land and became fairly well to do. He paid for transportation of six or eight families to Utah from Wales.”

We are indebted to Aunt Jane Bowen Hodgens for the very wonderful history of what Grandmother did as a vocation with her sisters, Mary and Annie, and what an outstanding knitter and worker she was:

My Mother, Ruth Jones Bowen, well deserves credit for her share of pioneering in Utah, She was born 15 November 1850 in Swansea, Glamorganshire, South Wales, being the third daughter of Elias Jones and Mary Williams. She came to Utah when she was six years of age and

shared the joys and hardships of other children of pioneer days, but being naturally of an optimistic disposition, she found more sunshine than shadow in her girlhood.

Although she was left motherless when but four years old, Aunt Mary, a dear good sister, just twelve years older, was always a mother to her, her father's heart as large enough to supply a mother's as well as father's affection.

As a child Mother was robust and hearty and enjoyed boyish sports. Her brother, Elias, two years older and Tom, two years younger, were her girlhood companions. It was her greatest delight to accompany her father and her brother s in the fields.

Her father kept a flock of sheep and early in life Mother learned to card, spin, weave and knit. She learned to knit when only eight years old and made her own stockings, later she helped to do the knitting for the whole family.

Most girls have a hobby. Mother's was fancy knitting. She made knitted lace by the yard to trim window curtains, bed-valances, pillow slips, etc., and when her children were young she made fancy lace stockings for them. She became an expert at spinning, making as much as five skeins of yarn a day. She, and her sisters Mary and Annie spun three hundred pounds of wool one fall. This they did for other people for 35 cents per pound. Mother washed the wool, picked and spun it, dyed and wove it into cloth for her wedding dress.

She was married at eighteen years of age, became the mother of nine children, five girls and four boys, all living and now at the age of seventy five ha a living posterity numbering 82: 9 children; 57 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Hers is a mother's nature. She is especially interested in boys. Besides raising four of her own she has cared for a number of motherless boys.

Mother joined the Spanish Fork Choir in her early girlhood, and is today one of the seven surviving members of this choir who sang at the dedication of the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City. When she was about sixteen she became a member of the Relief Society and later served as councilor to Margret Chisholm in the Leland Ward. She has not excelled in active church work because all her efforts have been bent toward the welfare of her family and serving wherever she saw the greatest need for service or bestowing her love and sympathy where it was most necessary.

Mother departed this life 1 October 1927.

Frank Hanks said of her at her funeral, "If there ever was an angel on earth it was Ruth Bowen." (Last two statements added by L.B.C. and L.L.M.)

When Johnston's army made its headquarters at Cedar Fort, Grandma's sister Mary went there to live with a friend, Mary Morgan. While there she met and married Thomas Flavel. This was sometime in 1858. In 1860 Thomas Flavel received orders to go to Nevada. So, because Great-Grandfather, Elias Jones had lost his second wife, Hannah, Mary and Ruth moved back to Spanish fork to help her father again as housekeeper. She expected her husband to send for her. She never saw her husband again.

Grandma Bowen was baptized the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1863 by John A. Lewis. She was endowed and married in the Endowment House 9 February 1869. Her older brother John and Mena Dahle were endowed and married on the same day. Grandma and Grandpa Bowen came to Utah at the same time. They grew up in the same ward and lived in the same neighborhood. So they must have had the same kinds of experiences which other young people have together.

Grandmother Bowen had a large family: Mary Eleanor, Aunt Mel, Larson; Ruth Warthen; Jane Hodgens Tuttle; William Jones, Jonce; David Foster, Uncle Foss; Annie

Elizabeth, Aunt Bess Warren, Elias Llewellyn; Margret Alice, Aunt Maude; Huff Peterson; and John parry. I have heard my father say so many times that she knew how to handle children.

How to keep them happy while they did their various chores. She must have been heartsick when beautiful little girl, Margret Alice was run over by a load of hay when she was young. Her body didn't develop well on the left side after that. All of Grandmother's children married however and they all had big beautiful families except Jane who helped with some of her sister's children.

On the 15 April 1957 my sister, Donna, and I went to visit Aunt Bess Warren, in Springville. I had written to ask her to tell me some things she remembered about her mother; her childhood, courtship, and such. Aunt Bess said that Grandma never talked about herself.

She said she could never remember her father when he wasn't dressed well-dress shirt, cuff links, tie, etc. He was a property owner, farmer and stockraiser. They lived on their farm but Grandmother and the children ran the farm-at least they did the manual work. He brought the first purebred Herford cattle into the Spanish Fork area and the first purebred percheon horses. He used to go all over the area to show and sell his beautiful stock. Aunt Jane rode them to show them off.

Grandmother kept the homefires burning and the children busy providing the daily food for the family. She was a wonderful "Boss." She could get a lot out of the children because she was jolly and the children loved working with her. I remember that Grandmother always had something pleasant to say. She never complained and was always glad to see us.

On the farm there were cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, geese, and peacocks. Grandmother milked the cows and taught her children to help with this job. The children had to help with the other chores around the place too. They would pluck the soft feathers from the ducks and geese-

Aunt Bess said she could still hear the old things squawking. These feathers were used to make beds and pillows.

I admired my Grandmother Bowen because everytime I saw her she was so neat and clean, in clothes she had probably sewed for herself. Her hair was always brushed up into a small bun on the very top of her head and her cute scolding locks hung on her neck. She had a dear Welch sense of humor, which was so exciting to me and made her fun to be with. She laughed a lot like my dad did and made people warm and comfortable in her presence. She was very kind to children. She had a lot of us growing up all over town and elsewhere.

I remember how twisted some of Grandmother's fingers were. She called it rheumatism and suffered in her later years with this affliction.