

John Welch
1823-1910

I, Iris W. Schow, daughter of Elmer Carlos Schow and Eleanor Welch Schow, write this account with the intention of adding to the things known of John Welch, Senior, by telling some of the things my Mother, Eleanor Welch Schow told me about her father.

John Welch was born to Nicholas Welch II and Elizabeth Briggs, 6 Jan. 1823 in Walton Village in Chesterfield Parish, Derbyshire, England. Seven children were born to his parents: Nathaniel, Sarah, John, Mary Ann, Ann, William, George. The two oldest children had died as small children (Sarah on 24 Feb. 1822) so John was the oldest child remaining in the family.

When John was 14 his parents apprenticed him to the firm of Geo. Worstenholm & Sons in Sheffield to serve until age 21, learning the cutlery trade. According to his daughter, Eleanor, the Welch family felt that they belonged to the gentleman class of England. John felt that his father had seen that the terms of his apprenticeship were very fine. John was to be suitably clothed always and to have a good suit for church. He was to be well schooled in arithmetic, reading and general knowledge. Times for him to visit his family were stipulated. He slept in the dormitory shared by other apprenticed boys. He always referred to that period as: "When I was an apprenticed lad."

Like his family, John was converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of latter-Day Saints by Alfred Cordon. He gave his own baptism date as 12 Sept. 1841 and was baptized and confirmed by Alfred Cordon: (Microfilm # 026365, Paradise Ward Membership Rocr4od, Part II, entry # 108 and microfilm # 025678, Brigham City Fourth Ward Membership Record, P.1 Ent. # 1; as well as several times on temple records. I believe Sept 12 is correct but I was told in the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake to use the better documented date of 5 Dec. 1841. His name and that date appear on Microfilm # 086991, Record of Membership of the British Mission, among the baptisms in Chesterfield, P.1, Ent. # 17. It is near the end of the roll. John Welch's parents baptisms are just above his on entries # 15 and 16. I suspect that the person recording the Chesterfield baptisms put the name of John Welch as entry # 17 where he should have put John's sister Ann Welch Crookston. I have not yet found a verification of Ann's baptism anywhere.

John's father, Nicholas Welch II, had a pottery making business on Brampton Moor. On Sundays he was a Methodist Sunday School Teacher until he joined the Latter Day Saint church. Then he met with financial losses because of his religion and his Methodist preaching ended. In the spring of 1842 John's parents, his sister Ann and brothers William and George sailed for America. John remained with the Worstenholms to complete his apprenticeship. He had learned the skills of cutlery making very thoroughly so the year plus the few months left of his apprenticeship were the period when his work would have been of the greatest worth to the Worstenholms.

In the summer or fall of 1842 John began having a nightly dream in which his father stood looking at him with a troubled expression and John felt that his family must be having some kind of difficulty. George Worstenholm had always said that if for any reason, any of his apprentices grew dissatisfied enough to run away, he would not resort to the law to force the young fellow to return. John decided to slip away and go to Nauvoo to assist his family. During the night while the other boys slept, he got his belongings together and left by a dormitory window. He sped away to join some Mormon missionaries who were sailing for American.

In telling of first seeing the Prophet Joseph he said that he did not see how anyone could fail to realize that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God.

On arrival in Nauvoo John learned that his father and two brothers had died, leaving his Mother and sister, Ann, living in privation. He learned that they had been under the necessity of selling keepsakes, accepting charity, and taking whatever work they could get doing fine sewing or housework.

In her old age, Ann Welch Crookston, John's sister, wrote her own history and in the late 1930s Eleanor W. Schow made a copy of it. I include here some quotations from Ann's history, describing the time following the death of her father Nicholas Welch and his two young sons:

"Mother and I were left all alone in that hovel on the Mississippi shore....neighbors did all they could to help us but so many were in the same state that it has always been to me, a dreadful thing to remember. Father had done some mason work on the Temple. Hyrum Smith had heard of our trouble and to save our lives, sent his team and wagon and some help and he moved us to a little house on his own farm on the upland." (They were now more comfortable but alone—a mile from the "business part of town".)

"To get things we needed, Mother would send me into town to sell or trade some of our possessions. While on my way to sell our silver teaspoons I met a gentleman whom I think must have known who I was. He stopped and asked how I was and how my Mother was. I told him and then I showed him the spoons and asked him if he wanted to buy them. He took from his pocket a dollar and pressed it into my hand. He patted my shoulder and said, "you go and get something with this, my girl, and take the spoons home to your mother."

After relating how lonely they had been, Ann discontinued her account and her daughter, Mary Crookston wrote: "I shall try now to write some things my mother has told me many times, if I can but remember them correctly." Mary, in writing, called Ann "Mother: at first; then began writing Ann's account in the first person. I, Iris, continue to quote; it being Mary's account of Ann for the rest of the quotation.

"A good friend, Bro. George Grant, told them, (Elizabeth and Ann) that he had some friends in Chicago who wanted a girl to help with the housework; so her (Ann's) Mother consented to let her go with him to a Mr. Hogan's family. Bro. Grant drove the distance

to Chicago. The Hogans were very nice. They treated her almost as one of their own. She lived with them a year or more. Mrs. Hogan was in delicate health and appreciated her help. She, my mother, went to see her own mother (Elizabeth) after she had been away several months and found to her sorrow, that her mother had re-married. The man's name was Robert Madison. He was a bachelor of comfortable means and could take care of her mother, and she had been advised by the authorities to marry him. But Mother (Ann) said, "I could not bear to have anyone take my father's place and I wanted to go back to Chicago. The Hogans had moved away but I was pretty well acquainted with other people so I got a place with a family by the name of Clayburn.

"They had a large place not far from Lake Michigan in the suburbs. He was in the meat market business and had seven meat markets in Chicago City. They were very good to me and though there was a lot of work, Mrs. Clayburn had a sister living with them who helped a lot. They had three young ladies and two boys. They had a private school in the house with teachers who lived with them; also a governess. They had singing classes often at night and read standard novels. They always came and called me to join them. If I was busy they would come and help me so I had time... I had an opportunity to learn quite a good deal. I had free access to their books. They knew that I was a Mormon but that made no difference to them. I learned a great many of the old songs. Those girls seemed as happy as larks. They never left home without some of the grown-ups to escort them. I stayed with them until my brother, John, had come from England and been in Nauvoo for quite a long time."

Note: I, Iris, have had no success in my attempts to document the exact time of John Welch's arrival in Nauvoo by pinning it down to a certain date on any record nor have I found his name on a passenger ships lists. I have not found any date, documented or otherwise, for Elizabeth Briggs Welch's marriage to Robert Madison or for his death.

Eleanor always told us that following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, John Welch realized that a call for the entire body of Latter-day- Saints to begin moving out of Nauvoo was likely. He wanted Ann to be with him and his mother, should the time for departure arise suddenly. So he went to Chicago by horse and buggy to bring Ann home.

Eleanor said that John Welch had a set of samples of the kinds of cutlery work he could do. They were kept in a soft cloth case with sewn pockets to protect each separate piece. He sometimes went down the river taking orders and making knives. He showed his adaptability by making the bowie knives which were such in demand for the plainsmen of that day. If he lacked work at his trade he would accept whatever honest labor he could get. He was apt at picking up skills which he lacked and he never grew too old to be willing to learn.

John served on the Nauvoo Legion and was among those who took a turn at standing guard over the Smiths' bodies while they lay in state in Nauvoo following the martyrdom on 27 June 1844.

Ann Welch Crookston's history as recorded by Mary Crookston Farmer throws some light upon the life of the family following the martyrdom. And told Mary about her return home: "In the meantime my mother was again a widow. Mr. Madison had taken a fever that was quite prevalent there and he died. He was a very good man and very good to my mother. Mother was thankful to have me back with her."

"The people were broken hearted over the murder of the Prophet and Patriarch and were looking toward the Rocky Mountains for a home. The martyrdom took place while I was in Chicago working. We attended many meetings for a year or so. The meetings were held in the Nauvoo Temple. I had no been able to attend many meetings for a long time and enjoyed this privilege greatly. I was strongly impressed by an inscription at the back of the pulpit on the wall. It read: The Lord hath beheld our sacrifice and hath come after us. My testimony was such increased and I wished to cast my lot with the people of God and continue in the work."

My Mother and I got some work to do. She could do very fine sewing by hand and I was able to get a little housework. There was no choice in the matter. We were glad to get anything we could to help obtain a good outfit for the journey west." Written by Mary Crookston Farmer.

The meeting held in the grove at Nauvoo on 8 Aug. 1844 was the gathering that impressed John Welch the most. In Cache County, Utah he had a deposition prepared and sworn before A. L. Farrell, County Clerk with the official seal affixed, to preserve his testimony for the benefit of posterity. After a statement about his birth and conversion to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints he explained: "I was well acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith and heard him speak, both in public and in private, many times. I was present at the meeting in the grove at Nauvoo, August 8, 1844, when Sidney Rigdon made the claim that it was his right to assume the leadership and presidency of the church. I saw Brigham Young, then the President of the Twelve Apostles, stand up to speak to the people and he spoke with the voice of Joseph Smith. I further testify that he, Brigham Young, had the appearance of the Prophet Joseph Smith while, he, Young, was talking; that I was convinced then and have never doubted in all the intervening years from that time up to the present, that Brigham Young was the right man and the man chosen of God, to lead the Church." "IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Logan City." The date was "5th day of July, A.D. 1902." John Welch's "Deposition" regarding this testimony is given in full on pages 10-11 in the John Welch Sr. Family Book of Remembrance published by Eva Dunn Snow. Several family members have duplicate copies of the original deposition showing the official seal.

On 18 May 1845 John Welch married Eliza Billington, whom he had met on shipboard during the voyage to America. They were endowed in the Nauvoo Temple 7 Feb. 1846. Microfilm # 183371 page 59. (This was the last day that ordinances were performed in the Nauvoo Temple.) John Welch's Mother was endowed in the Nauvoo Temple on 6 Feb 1846. (See LDS BOOK # 289.3: N.226n., Nauvoo Temple Register, p. 302, entry # 11: "Madison, Elizabeth Welch, b. 22 Dec 1799, "6 Feb 1846" endowed. The birthdate for Elizabeth Welch Madison given in the Nauvoo Book # 289.3;N226n

(22 Dec 1799) is the same as Eva Dunn Snow has for her in the John Welch Sr. Family Book of Remembrance on page 3 and also on p.6 and p.7 but on p. 14 in the same book Elizabeth's birthdate is given as "6 Jan. 1799". However the parish register of Chesterfield has Elizabeth Briggs christened 6 Feb. 1799. (See MF # 422 195 near end of film) If her birth was in Dec. it would have had to have been in 1798 as Maureen Umbreit has it. If in Jan., as Eva has on p. 14, it could have been in 1799. Maureen Umbreit found her christening and also Nicholas Welch's in the Chesterfield Parish Register and I have looked it up since and testify that her findings are correct.

The parish record states that her father was John Briggs. It is a joy to see the christening there on the parish record.

John and Eliza's first baby, Nicholas, was born in Nauvoo, 2 April 1846. Later on, John and Eliza, with John's Mother, his sister Ann, baby Nicholas and the two foster children whose care and rearing John and his Mother had undertaken, left Nauvoo to accompany other Latter-day Saints to Winter Quarters. The foster children, Hane and John Miles, were orphans whose parents were English converts who had died of fever in Nauvoo.

In Robert Crookston's sketch of his own life he tells of meeting the Welch family while enroute to Winter Quarters. "There was a ferry boat to take our wagons across (the river) at a place called Cutler's Park. There were several hundred wagons waiting to cross. My wagon was next to the outfit of a young man by the name of John Welch. He was an Englishman who had a young, good looking wife whom he called Eliza, his Mother and his sister Ann. His sister was, to my notion, a very attractive young lady; cheerful, refined in manner, a good companion with a sweet voice. Many a night she cheered the company with her singing."

"They were very fine neighbors....my father and mother soon grew fond of Ann, to say nothing of myself; and I determined to win her if I could." After reaching Winter Quarters the two families built cabins near each other. Robert Crookston relates that they "covered them with cottonwood bark which made a good thatch. We cut large trees, knocked the bark in 4 foot lengths, peeled it off in large flakes and placed them on the roof. We weighted them with other logs to keep them of warping in the sun. We camped out while building."

Robert Crookston's knowledge of Scotch methods of masonry and building coupled with John Welch's understanding of metal work enabled the two to work as partners, undertaking a variety of enterprises. They both seemed willing to undertake any honorable labor. Ann's marriage to Robert Crookston, 20 June 1847 left John Welch a household consisting of himself, Eliza, their one year old son, Nicholas, Elizabeth Briggs Welch and the two foster children, Jane and John Miles. Eleanor We. Schow said that before John Miles came to the Welches he had been left sitting in a high chair days on end—when he should have been crawling or walking. John Welch and family believed that this treatment had retarded John Miles's learning to walk and contributed to his being a hunchback throughout his life.

Robert wrote that he and Ann were married in his "neat, new little cabin" by Elder Joseph Fielding. He wrote of Ann: "I was sure that I had gotten the smartest girl in the camp of Israel. Her words were like proverbs. She was a splendid housekeeper, always keeping within our means."

About two months after the Crookstones' marriage, John Welch and Robert took work digging a well in Savannah, Andrew County, Missouri. To the joy of their employers, the pair struck water at 40 feet. After digging several other wells in the Savannah area, John and Robert returned to Winter Quarters. Serious changes had taken place in their age3nce. John and Eliza's little Nicholas had died of a severe illness on 14 Sept. 1847. Eleanor said that she had been told that the brethren who blessed little Nicholas during his illness had conferred the priesthood upon him at that time. This led John and Eliza to feel that the mission of their bright and promising child was not for this world. Robert's father also had died while the two brothers-in-law were in Savannah. The names of little Nicholas Welch and James Crookston are among those listed on the Winter Quarters Monument.

The families of John and Robert shard a rented house two miles east of Savannah, Missouri when they all moved to that area to continue digging wells, earning money to outfit themselves for the trek to Utah. After spending the winter in the house rented from William Manning they moved into separate houses on farmland they rented from a Mr. Rhodes in the spring of 1848. They pleased their landlord by making improvements in the rented properties in their spare time. In about 1850 they moved into the town of Savannah, paying their rent by digging a well for Mr. Monroe, their landlord. During this period the gold rush to California was in full swing. John Welch made bowie knives to sell to the would-be-miners passing through Missouri enrout to California. Elizabeth, Eliza and Ann made goggles and bowie knife scabbards to sell them.

In Savannah the two families succeed in providing themselves with good wagons, cows, oxen, clothing, and provisions exactly as Brigham Young had said that the Saints could do in Missouri if they would live their religion and apply themselves to their labors. In May, 1851 the Welches and Crookstons left Savannah in company with the families of Brother Gray and Brother Lever, bent on returning to Winter Quarters.

Eleanor used to tell of an incident that had amused John Welch. Sometime between his Nauvoo days and his departure for Utah, some men, apparently mobocrats, came into camp speaking and acting in a threatening manner. Orin Porter Rockwell was in camp, taking a thick stick in one hand and his bowie knife in the other, he made use of a man's right to whittle a stick. He kept whittling right under the unwelcome visitors' noses until they went away in peace.

Plagued by rains, mud and flooding streams, the Welches and Crookstons finally stopped in Glenwood, Iowa until the spring of 1852, before undertaking the journey across the plains. Meanwhile they rented land and raised corn to feed their animals. John Welch, in partnership with James Curry, a blacksmith, ironed wagons to earn money. They were advised to each provide two wagons and have 18 months provisions. In a

small company of 10 wagons they started for Utah in 1852. The men who each owned two wagons were: Capt. Betz, John Welch, Mr. Workman Scrogy, Robert Crookston, and a blacksmith.

Robert wrote of the journey: "Indians were bad at times... so everyone was advised to travel in large companies. We traveled between two large companies, sometimes being one day apart from them. But in Indian countries we traveled with other small companies. We saw a great many Indians near the Black Hills. We traded flour to them for buckskin and buffalo robes. We killed a large buffalo and divided the meat, each getting a wash tub full. We jerked the meat by hanging it in the smoke of the campfire at night to dry it... the buffalo we killed was at the North Platte River. The meat was very good.

John Welch and Eliza Billington's daughter, Eliza Ann, was born 16 July 1852 near Chimney Rock on the south bank of the North Platte River. In telling Eleanor Welch of the event, Auntie Welch (Eliza Billington) said, "They stopped there for three days and that wasn't no fun!" This lay-over was probably possible because of the small independent company of 10 wagons. The John Welch Sr. Book of Remembrance account says Eliza was born during the Sat. and Sun. lay-over to "worship the Lord." When Eleanor W. Schow told her mother-in-law, (Christina Hansen Schow) and her neighbor, Karen Marie Jensen (The first Mantua bishop's second wife) about this hardship of Auntie Welch's, the two old Danish pioneers looked at each other and laughed. "Your father's first wife must have really been somebody!" was their reply. "When we crossed the plains, they just went right on, bump! bump! bump!" At the time of this telling, Eleanor had not heard that the Welches were traveling with an independent group of but 10 wagons. Much of what Eleanor learned about the Welches was told to her by Auntie Welch, (Eliza Billington). Eleanor had the good fortune to be sent to wait on Auntie, whose leg was black and very painful, the summer Eleanor was ten. She put away the milk John Welch Junior's family brought to Eliza each morning. She did the tasks of bedmaking, dish washing, sweeping, and tidying up the kitchen each day. Then she went home to Edvenias a little before noon and carried the cooked dinner for her father and Auntie Welch back to them in a covered kettle. She then ran home to eat her own dinner and went back to wash Auntie's dinner dishes and remain to wait on her. She said Auntie's leg was in a sad condition at that time; the skin looking much like the color of a stove pipe. It was during those days that Eleanor learned much of what she knew about the history of the Welches and the experiences Eliza and John had in their life together after reaching Salt Lake in September, 1852 and settling in Centerville in 1854.

Auntie told Eleanor that one summer while they lived in Centerville the wheat crops on most of the farmers' land failed but John had a bountiful crop. The following spring he still had enough wheat stored to provide his family with flour. Auntie said that when John would take a grist of wheat to the mill to be ground into flour, the children along the road would see him go. They watched for his return and child after child would call to him on his way home and ask to be given a little flour "so mama could make them a wheat cake." John could not resist their pleas. "Run in the house and get a bowl" he would say and he would fill bowls with flour all along his route. Auntie Welch said that

often what flour he brought home was so little that she could not keep from fearing for their own welfare. But their supply held out until the new wheat crop was harvested.

When I, Iris Schow, was a child, some woman wrote an account of her experiences as a child in the early days of Utah. Her article was printed in a publication in Utah. In it she told of a man who passed in a wagon and saved them from hunger with his gifts of bowls of flour. Eleanor Welch Schow felt sure that the woman was telling about John Welch's generosity.

John Welch was a neighbor of Charles W. Penrose whom he called Charlie Penrose. They braided willow fences together.

In 1864 John Welch traded off the Centerville farm where Charlotte had been born in 1856, Jane in 1859, and Ann (Annie) in 1861. In exchange he received 100 acres in Three Mile Creek, the Perry area in Box Elder County. They remained in Three Mile Creek for ten years before moving to Brigham City and three more children were born to them during the ten year period: John Welch Jr. in 1864, William Wallace in 1867, and Flora Vellette in 1870. John Welch's mother, Elizabeth Briggs Welch, lived in a small house on the Welch property, and John's and Eliza's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, often spent the night with her. Elizabeth Briggs Welch died 7 Jan 1867 in Three Mile Creek. She was buried in the old Willard cemetery despite her statement that she could see that the area had been struck by a destructive flood years ago and she was sure another would happen some day. They had a little iron fence built around her grave to make sure of its location. When the Willard flood of 1923 covered the land with silt and rocks, her grave was located easily because of the iron fence.

Elizabeth Briggs Welch suffered from consumption. While still in England she had smoked a pipe because she had been told that the smoke would have a healing effect upon the lungs.

In 1874 John Welch moved his family to Brigham City on the advice of Apostle Lorenzo Snow, his good friend. He served as a member of the United Order Council of 60 influential citizens chosen to take charge of Brigham City Cooperative Institution during the Brigham City attempt to live the United Order. John was also one of the directors.

On 24 Oct. 1876 John Welch married Edvenia Maria Jeppson, daughter of Jeppa Hanson Jeppson and Gunniel Marie Hansen Jeppson. They were married in the Endowment House as recorded in the temple records. (End. House Sealings microfilm # 183401, page 412, entry 5752 on 24 Oct 1876, not 23 Oct.). When John Welch married Edvenia his age was 53 and hers was 21. Edvenia, born in Brigham City 2 Sept 1855 was younger than John's daughters Elizabeth, Maria, and Eliza. Charlotte was a year younger than Edvenia; John Jr. was 11 year younger. The daughters above mentioned were all married at this time, Charlotte's marriage have taken place earlier that very month.

Immediately after their marriage John Welch and Edvenia set out for the cotton farm that the Brigham City Co-operative Institution had started in southern Utah as a part of their effort to make the Co-op completely self sustaining. They reached Camp Lorenzo, as they called the cotton farm, on 10 Nov. 1876. John's assignment was to serve as the clerk for the cotton farm; but on 1 Dec. 1876 James May, the manager, set out for Brigham City with a load of cotton, leaving John in charge of the enterprise for the winter months. John Welch's diary of this period is on file in the historical library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which at present is still located in the east wing of the church office building in Salt Lake City. From it one gleans that he made very effort to build a solid relationship with his young wife, Edvenia, based on worthwhile interests. They spent most Sundays on the farm, though often the young men who worked there had gone to town. (St. George or Washington) They spent Sundays reading the Bible, writing home, taking a walk together, and reading The Discourses of Brigham Young.

The work on the farm that winter included picking cotton, making a dam on the Rio Virgin River to secure irrigation water and starting a vineyard. The dam broke several times, giving John much difficulty and concern.

At the time of the dedication of the lower rooms of the St. George Temple, John took Edvenia to St. George for several days. They stayed with friends there and he transacted some business for the farm. They attended the dedication of the temple on January 1, 1877 and heard Wilford Woodruff's dedicatory prayer.

In mid June they spent four days in St. George doing temple work. On 19 June 1877 Edvenia was proxy for the baptism of John's Aunts Sarah and Keziah Briggs. (MF # 170843, pg. 150) On 20 and 21 of June, 1877 John was proxy for further temple work for his father, his step-father Robert Madison, and his brother-in-law Hugh Billington. Edvenia did work for Elizabeth Briggs, Sarah Briggs, and Keziah Briggs. (MF 3 170595 St. George sealings, p. 216; and MF # 170542 Bk B, St. George Endowments for the dead, pages 78, 80, 86 and 88).

Although John spent a great deal of time keeping books for the cotton farm and attending to business dealings he also did a lot of the work of getting the vineyard into good shape and overseeing the work in the cotton fields and on the dam. By the first of July, 1877 John and Edvenia were packing to return to Brigham City. Edvenia was pregnant; the baby was expected in September. John's team and wagon was one of the outfits that had returned to Brigham City in December with Brother May's party so he paid for a ride north for himself and Edvenia with someone who took passengers.

Apostle Lorenzo Snow was released on 19 Aug 1877 from his duties as the equivalent of a stake president in Box Elder County. A formal stake organization was set up on that day and bishops were sustained for the four Brigham City wards and several of the nearby towns. President Brigham Young came up to effect those changes. John Welch was sustained as the Bishop of the fourth Ward, which included the areas that now make up the Fourth, Eighth, thirteenth and Seventeenth Wards and the rest of the northeast corner of the city. The meeting was held in the bowery on West forest Street

where the Community Center and the monument honoring Brigham Young at the site of his last public address are now located. (1986)

John and Eliza Billington Welch's daughter, Charlotte Boden, lived in the Third Ward. When her labor pains for her first baby began, John and Eliza hurried down to her and Heber's home, leaving Edvenia at home in the Fourth Ward. Edvenia's own labor began almost immediately. Hastily making a bundle of things she would need, she set out for her parents home at Fourth South on Main Street. Charlotte and Heber's son, Heber Wallace Boden, was born 26 Sept 1877. John and Edvenia Welch's daughter Olive Edvenia Welch was born before dawn on 27 Sept. 1877. When John and Eliza returned home they were surprised to learn that so much had happened in one night.

One of Auntie Welch and John Welch's favorite little stories was that when Heber Boden came to ask John Welch for Charlotte's hand in marriage and they had a private conversation, John glanced toward the door of the room and observed that it was ajar. Through the crack between the door and the frame he could see the full white skirt of Charlotte's dress billowing out. John and Eliza used to chuckle over this for it was their opinion that Charlotte stood there listening, fully intending to "give her father a piece of her mind" if his treatment of Heber did not conform to her wishes. John was always proud of the striking beauty and spirited temperament of the daughters of his first family.

John Welch began his service as bishop of the Brigham City Fourth Ward with Thomas H. Wilde and Lorenzo Wright as his counselors. Later his counselors were James Nielson and David Rees whose home stood on third East north of Forest Street where the Fourth and Thirteenth Wards meetinghouse later was built. Mary Nichols in "Through The Years", her history of the Eight Ward, relates that Bishop John Welch initiated work on the first meetinghouse of the Fourth Ward. His counselor James Nielson was delegated to take charge of the building process. The materials for the building were taken from nearby places; clay for making the sun baked adobe brick came from "the bottoms" directly south of Watery Lane in the northwest fields. Lime for mortar came from nearby hills. Wood came from the mountains east of Brigham City, and was made into lumber by the mills of the Co-op. The men of the fourth Ward erected the building through donated labor. It had a cloak room and a large room heated by a barrel stove and lighted at night by coal oil lamps. The Fourth Ward won out by six months in their competition with the Third Ward to be the first ward in town to complete a meetinghouse. (these facts from "Through the Years" by Mary Nichols.)

John Welch Jr. told Eleanor that while they were getting rock from the foothills northeast of town, "Father kept me in the rock pile the whole time."

John Welch Sr. had a good voice. While bishop he sometimes sang solos in ward meetings. Once when singing "The Mistletoe Bough" he pronounced it "boo" instead of "bough". John Jr. made his companions titter by whispering, "Oh, boo yourself, Brother Welch!"

Auntie Welch set shallow pans of milk on the shelves in the rocked up cellar so the cream could be skimmed off for butter churning. Children did not have many available treats in those days so John Jr. tried drinking a little creamy mild from a pan. His father discovered his misbehavior by noticing that a little scum of cream had stuck to the boy's hat brim when the front of the brim had dipped into the pan. Auntie was more upset when she discovered that a large harmless snake lived in the rocked up cellar wall and helped itself to liberal drinks of creamy mild from her nice clean pans.

The diphtheria epidemic of the spring and summer of 1879 left many families of Brigham City sorrowing over the loss of one or more children and John Welch, as bishop, grieved over the losses of his ward members as well as the loss of the youngest child of his first family and the eldest child of his second one. Lovely little Flora Velette died of diphtheria at age 9, 5 May 1879. She and her toddler half sister, Olive had been loving toward each other and it comforted John Welch's two wives when they saw little dying Olive hold out both arms eagerly and hear her cry out, "Florrie! Florrie!" at the time of her death, 6 June 1879. A little double tombstone marks the resting place of those two children. Nearby are the graves of Maria Welch Phillip's beloved little Melvin, d. 4 Apr 1879 and Charlotte Welch Boden's tiny Eliza Annora, d. 7 Nov. 1879.

In 1880 John Welch sold his farmland at Three Mile Creek and replaced it with several tracts of land in and near Brigham City. By the summer of 1884 he and Edvenia had four living children: Clarissa b. 3 Dec. 1878, Amy Elizabeth b. 5 Aug 1880, Rachel b. 15 May 1882, and Joseph Preston b. 18 June 1884. His and Eliza's sons, John Jr. and Will were almost 20 and past 17 respectively. John felt that he needed more farmland. The Robert Crookstons had been living in Logan since 1864 and Edvenia's brother Joseph was comfortably situated in Milville. These facts probably influenced John to have a look at the south end of Cache Valley. He sold his holdings in Box Elder County and in the summer of 1884 purchased a 20-acre dry farm, an 80-acre dry farm, a 10-acre block within city limits, and a series of three building lots on the northwest corner of the block just east of the Public Square, all in Paradise, Cache Count, Utah. At the very corner of the land opposite the square was a large house, already old though Paradise had been settled in 1867. It must have been built before the settlers of Paradise moved their settlement from Avon to its 1867 site. On the building lot just south of the big old house was a four room cottage. The third building lot was vacant.

John deeded the 10-acre block and the twenty acre-dry farm to Edvenia to support her young family, the eldest, Clarissa, being six at that time. He planned to build a three room house with space for two upstairs bedrooms to be finished someday, for Edvenia on the 10-acre block. He kept the 80-acre dry farm for the support of himself, Eliza, and the two boys. Eliza's daughters had all married by then. John deeded the big old house to Eliza. He thought that living across the street from the meetinghouse would be nice for her (and for him) in old age. He planned to give the two adjacent building lots to John Jr. and Will when they married.

On the day Edvenia turned 29 (2 Sept 1884) John moved her and her children into the big house to live until the new house could be built. John Jr., Will, and John Miles were

to stay with John and Edvenia in Paradise for the time being and help with the farm work. Eliza was to remain in Brigham City until Edvenia had her own home. Eliza Welch had been sustained as First Counselor to Pres. Mary Watkins. She was released in Dec. 1886 so her duties in the Fourth Ward continued after Edvenia was moved to Paradise.

The big house in Paradise had a parlor and large bedroom on the west, with two upstairs bedrooms above them. In back was a large kitchen with a number of little "slope" rooms north and east of it, including a long narrow bedroom against the sidewalk on the north, a pantry, and a workshop.

The fine large barn back of the house was the edifice that had sold that place to John Welch. It had the stables and one mysterious dark room in the basement, two stories, and an impressive little tower on the top of the building. Edvenia's family never learned of any useful purpose served by the dark room. The house had belonged to Alvin Montieth who was one of the original four arriving from Draper in 1860 and settling at Avon before moving that settlement to Paradise in 1867 because the Indians were hostile.

John Welch was 61 when he moved his second family to Paradise. Half of Edvenia's children were yet to be added to the family. Edvenia seems to have been contented with the situation of keeping house for John Jr., Will and John Miles in addition to her own family. She was still living in the old house opposite the Public Square when she gave birth to Parley Jeppson Welch on 2 May 1886. Some time during the following two years her new house was built on her 10-acre block facing south on the street that led up to the north gate of the cemetery on the gently sloping hillside east of town. The house had a parlor and a bedroom in front and a kitchen flanked by an east porch and a west porch in back. By the time Joe and Parley were old enough to sleep in the attic, John had a softwood floor put in the unfinished space allowed for two bedrooms to "be built someday".

By 30 May 1888 when Edvenia gave birth to Eleanor Jeppson Welch, she was living in the new house. Eleanor used to say that she may have been the first white child ever born on that block. While growing up she often wished that her father had left her mother's family in the old house so near the school and built the new house in Brigham City for Auntie. Failing that, she wished that at least he had put their house in the southwest corner of the 10-acre block, sparing a third of a block of their trek to school through the dust of the street. Instead, he had put their home near the canal where it cut diagonally across the southwest quarter of the block.

John Jr. and Will easily won popularity with the younger set in Paradise. On 2 Nov. 1887 John Jr. married Ann Rebecca Shaw, a daughter of Harry A. Shaw, a local store owner. The couple was presented with the four-room cottage on the building lot just south of Auntie's home so they could set up housekeeping in their own home immediately. He elected to remain in Paradise, farming, and doing other jobs such as hauling freight for the stores, as time and opportunity afforded. Like his father, he was enterprising.

William (Will) Welch married Elizabeth Dickson McArthur, 29 Dec. 1887 and received his wedding gift of the building lot just south of John Jrs. Within the year Elizabeth and Will sold their lot and went to live in Bennington, Bear Lake County, Idaho. In 1896 having increased their holdings substantially, they moved to Wilford, Fremont County, Idaho, where Will spent the remainder of his life.

During the period when Mormon polygamists were often arrested, tried, fined and sometimes imprisoned for unlawful cohabitation whenever their wives gave birth to children, John Welch Sr. usually paid the fines. When Eleanor was born in May, 1888 John was finally overtaken by the deputies and sentenced to four months in prison. He was in the penitentiary from 8 Feb 1889 until 20 May 1889. His chief complaint about his treatment there was that he had a bad time with neuralgia, and he thought it was caused by his being forced to have his beard shaved away. He wrote lovingly to Edvenia and the children, evidently expecting the letters to be shared with John Jr. He expected her to have cabbage and tomato plans ready for him to plant when he returned and to get a row of currants planted against the fence; and John to plant lucern when the ground was ready. He urges his young children to obey their mother and to love one another.

Owing to his having two homes and also to his advancing age by the time Eleanor was old enough to remember what happened (he was 65 when she was born), John Welch was with Edvenia's family less than half of the time. When he was away, Edvenia was the head of the house and was responsible for all that went on. When he came home, John was in charge. Edvenia had grown up in a similar situation; her father was a polygamist with a second family growing up on the other side of town.

John had been so versatile and competent during the Nauvoo, Winter Quarters, Centerville, and Three Mile Creek days that he evidently did not expect his ability to earn a living to diminish before he could get a second family reared. Younger than Eleanor were Winnifred Jeppson Welch b. 22 May 1890, Wilford Woodruff Welch b. 30 Mar. 1892 and Martha Rose (Mattie) Welch b. 4 June 1894. Eleanor remembered seeing and hearing the deputies come into the house in search of her father following the births of Wilford and Mattie. She was always proud of the courage shown by her mother and Amy during these frightening encounters. John was not at home either time.

John Welch planted all hardy vegetables on the land northeast of the canal or "Big Ditch" on the 10 acre block. He expected Rachel, Joe and Parley to keep the large garden weeded just as soon as they grew big enough to do it; and Eleanor, Winnie and Wilford joined that work force in due time, while Joe and Parley began hauling hay, doing other heavier tasks and, in Joe's case, working for other people part of the time. By the time Joe was twelve he was working part time for Brother Lofthouse and paying his mother's property taxes with the money he earned. Through Joe's early teens he did such things as being herd boy for the town and working for Bro. Lofthouse and others --attending school only while snow was on the ground. Parley worked along with him, manfully and capably, but did not feel the intense personal responsibility for the family that Joe felt.

The crops raised on the land provided Edvenia with plenty of potatoes, carrots, and the other vegetables which could be kept most of the winter when placed in pits lined with straw and covered with good Cache Valley soil. They dried plenty of navy beans, apples, corn and plums for their own use and sometimes sold dried beans or corn to people who did not harden. They had enough wheat to take to the mill in Logan to have round into flour. They paid for the grinding with part of the wheat. They produced their own pork, chicken, eggs and sometimes beef. The cows produced all the milk, butter, buttermilk and cream that they needed. Brother Jeppson, Edvenia's father gave them peaches and apricots for canning, unless there was a crop failure. They raised their own gooseberries and English currants. By working hard with all of those enterprises they were able to have a balanced diet.

But actual money was very hard for Edvenia to come by. Getting shoes, coats, cloth, school books and supplies such as pencils and paper, thread, sugar, baking powder, yeast or anything that cost money was very difficult for her, especially when they were rearing the younger children. A little spending money was out of the question. Edvenia aimed to give each child a birthday present of three eggs to spend at the store. The late spring birthdays were less profitable than those of early spring, for by then, eggs were plentiful and therefore cheap.

When Eleanor was about ten, she was sent daily for most of the summer to tidy up Auntie's (Eliza Billington Welch) house, wash the dishes and wait on Auntie Welch as requested. Much of the time she slept in the little bedroom against the sidewalk. When she asked to be let play "run sheep run" with the neighbor's children in the evening, her father said, "Doesn't thee know that those who love darkness better than light it's because their ways are evil?"

John Welch clung to his strict Methodist standards of Christian conduct. He allowed his teenagers to go to the ward dances although he protested, "Devil's are always shown as dancing when they are put in pictures." Auntie Welch said that when her beautiful daughter Eliza step danced for her friends one Sunday, she (Auntie) was immediately sent out to say, "Brother Welch does not approve of dancing and singing on the Sabbath Day."

Eleanor told me that once when she came into the store one of the men sitting around the stove and talking, noticed that one of John Welch's children had come in and he began poking fun at the way Brother Welch got around in his old age. Brother Bickmore turned on the fellow and told him a thing or two. The gist of his comments was, "I've seen Brother Welch when he was worth ten of you. The first I saw him, he was driving a wagon back east for immigrants. His hair was long, black, and curly and his eyes were sharp. He was a man who knew no fear."

When in old age, John Welch had an argument with "Toch" Goldberry over the placement of a fence. Although Goldberry was young, strong, and big and John Welch was a medium sized man, John said to him, "I've a mind to whip you until you know

nothing, but I wouldn't dirty me hands on you, Tocky, you impudent puppy!" And brushing off his hands, John Welch turned his back and departed.

John Welch had been in partnership with several men owning a herd of sheep. In his absence the sheep were sold off and he received no share of the profit. Repeatedly he contributed wagons and oxen to the emigration effort and as they were needed along the way for replacements of wagons and lost or dead oxen, his contributions were used up and he got nothing back. He felt this was fine since it forwarded the work and progress of the church. He also believed that the reign of righteousness would soon begin and property would no longer be needed. Being taught that property which could have been used to support their family better had been used to help the church, enabled Eleanor and the other children bear their childhood privations more easily.

I have been unable to find any record in the Paradise minutes to indicate that John Welch Sr. held any church positions there and I have also looked over priesthood and Sacrament meeting minutes rather thoroughly at the church historical library in Salt Lake. I think this must be at least partially a result of his custom of wintering in Brigham City during the Paradise years. I did learn from the minutes of the meetings, however, that John Welch was often called upon to offer the opening or closing prayers in Sacrament meetings and that he was quite frequently one of the speakers in these meetings. This was especially the case during the late eighteen nineties.

Realizing that his and Edvenia's children were going to have to take over the gardening on the ten-acre block and the farm work on the twenty-acre dry farm as soon as possible, John Welch did his best to teach each child to work skillfully and to assume responsibility willingly. He took those who were to do the weeding to the garden in the morning and gave each one an assignment of rows to weed. He came back toward evening to inspect the work in the presence of each worker and praised or rebuked as he felt necessary. Like other parents of that era, he checked up on some of the duties at the supper table. If the one assigned to provide kindling for next mornings fire had not done so he was sent from the table to complete his task.

John Welch had a cider press in the big barn at his first wife's home. While Eleanor and Winnie were in the middle grades they were often expected to go there and help their father with the apples when he made cider for the townspeople.

John Welch was ordained a Patriarch by Apostle George Teasdale, 8 May 1898. His family members were happy about his receiving that calling. Edvenia's children were glad to receive their patriarchal blessings from him. Rachel took pride in being asked to be his scribe for many of the blessings he gave. Many of his and Eliza's grandchildren received their patriarchal blessings from him. I have been told that the first patriarchal blessing he gave was to a great granddaughter, John Horsley's daughter Lucille.

Eleanor remembered her father as one whom she trusted and revered. She believed that he knew the principles of the gospel very well and that his firsthand knowledge of pioneering was a great asset to her and the others. It comforted her that he had

understood her grief when her motherless baby cousin, Leland died. She remembered her father as being one of those who placed their hands on her head when she was confirmed.

Eleanor believed that her father always ate very sensibly and maintained his health by being moderate in all things. She did not remember his being sick at all except in his final illness.

John Welch's old age was saddened by the death of his youngest daughter, Martha Rose, on 24 Feb. 1907 and his daughter Winifred, 8 June 1908.

Amy had married William Niel Schow, 5 Oct. 1904 in the Salt Lake Temple. Eleanor married Elmer C. Schow, 17 June 1908 in the Logan Temple. Rachel, Joseph, Parley and Wilford were still unmarried at the time of John Welch's death. Joseph had filled a mission to the southern states. I, Iris W. Schow, born 7 July 1909 was the only one of his and Edvenia's grandchildren that Grandfather lived to see.

Edvenia used her inheritance from her mother to remodel the front rooms and stairway and to have two bedrooms and a tiny hall finished upstairs, giving Rachel a private room and the three boys a finished room to share instead of the long unfinished attic. This made a nice difference to the lives of them all.

John Welch was appreciative of Edvenia's gentle care of him during his declining years. His beloved Eliza had died 16 Aug. 1907. Her burial was in the William Horsley lot in the Brigham City Cemetery.

John Welch died 8 Nov. 1910 in Edvenia's home in Paradise. Since he had been the first bishop of the Brigham City Fourth Ward, two funerals were held for him. His service was held in the Paradise Ward meetinghouse on 10 Nov 1910. On 11 Nov. 1910 the second funeral for Patriarch John Welch was held in the Brigham City Fourth Ward meetinghouse at 11:00 a.m. The burial took place that afternoon in the Brigham City Cemetery. His grave is on the William and Elizabeth Welch burial lot beside that of John's first wife, Eliza Billington.

When Eleanor had the opportunity to talk with her Mother, Edvenia, and her siblings Rachel, Joe, Parley and Wilford following her father's death she learned some details of his final hours. She was told that John Welch called out by name for each child of his two families. When he called out by name for Will, Edvenia, hoping to distract his attention, asked him if he wanted to see Will Schow. "My son, Will!" he said firmly.

After calling each one by name, Grandfather Welch said, "Prove faithful! Oh, prove faithful!" That was what he and his two wives had done and that was his dearest wish for each of us who can call him our ancestor.

Iris W. Schow

The following excerpts from the minutes of the Paradise Ward enables us to know of the thoughts about the Gospel and its principles which John Welch presented when he spoke in meetings.

Sacrament Meeting, March 18, 1894

Brother Welch “dwelt upon raising children and impressed upon the Saints the importance of being subject to the John Priesthood. He showed that no one could enjoy those blessings of the Gospel unless their works were in harmony with the Plan of Salvation.”

October 7, 1894

John Welch “spoke on joys of missionary labors if the missionary has trust in God. He impressed the importance of Sunday School attendance to young and old; advised constant attendance. Discussed the marriage relationship and lamentable state of affairs through our young people disregarding the counsel of the Priesthood in marrying those who were alien to the Gospel of Christ.”

February 17, 1895

Back from eight weeks in Brigham City, John Welch “gave a synopsis of what he had seen and heard in a theological point of view. He had had joy in attending a quarterly conference in Brigham City during his stay. He bore testimony to the great work of God that was established upon the earth in this, our day.”

December 15, 1895

“Elder John Welch Sr. spoke. His remarks were by way of counsel to the saints to do their duty and live faithful and true, that they may enjoy the spirit of God, for it was the best of all gifts.”

March 22, 1896

“Elder John Welch addressed the saints. He depended entirely upon the assistance of the Spirit of Truth. He expressed his joy at seeing such a reformation being made manifest among the Latter-day Saints. So many present indicated a part of that reformation. He dwelt upon the necessity of unity among the Saints and also upon the Sacrament. He referred to the darkness we were in before we heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and how plain the principles of the Gospel were to us. Brought about by the reception of the Holy Ghost. He spoke for some time upon the pre-existence of spirits. He bore testimony to the divinity of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He desired to see the Saints become more united and seek to forgive each other the sins they commit toward each other.”

May 17, 1896

When the Gibbs Monument was coming to Paradise. “Elder John Welch was then called upon to address the Saints. He arose and desired the help of the Saints in prayer for him. He said we should be obedient to our leaders. He testified to the truth of the work we were engaged in.”

July 12, 1896

“Elder John Welch Sr. was the next speaker. He referred to the early days of the Church of Christ; how he became acquainted with the Gospel, all its gifts & blessings.”

May 6, 1900

“Patriarch John Welch was the next speaker. He dwelt upon the prophecies made by the prophet Joseph Smith, especially in regard to the judgment that God will visit upon the earth before the coming of the Son of Man, and the necessity of the Latter-day Saints being united and faithful in the discharge of their duties so as to escape the visitation of the Lord’s anger.”

“The funeral services of Patriarch John Welch held in the meetinghouse, November 10, 1910.”

The actual minutes for his funeral were not recorded in the Paradise record of minutes of Sacrament meetings.

Minutes of the Funeral Services of John Welch Sr.
November 11, 1910

The funeral services over the remains of Patriarch John Welch, whose body had been brought from Paradise, Cache County to be interred in the Brigham City Cemetery, was held in the fourth Ward Meetinghouse Friday, November 11, 1910 at eleven o’clock A.M. Meeting was opened by the choir singing “When First the Glorious Light of Truth.”

Prayer was offered by C. Elias Jensen. Choir sang, “Resting Now from Care and Sorrow.”

Patriarch Welch was the first Bishop of the Fourth Ward in Box Elder Stake, set apart at the reorganization of the Stake in 1877, Aug. 19. Afterward he moved to Paradise where he has since resided.

Counselor Olsen of the Bishopric of Paradise was the first speaker, giving an account of the upright and honorable course of life of Brother Welch during his residence in that ward; and was followed by David M. Reese, James Nelson, and Elder Nicholas Crookston. (1)

A solo was sung by Victor Madsen, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives.”

Patriarch Cordon of Willard, W.L. Watkins of Brigham, Counselor L.A. Snow, and President Oleen N. Stohl also spoke of the life and labors of Patriarch Welch. Bishop Brigham Wright made the closing remarks.

The choir sang from the psalmody, page 394, and the benediction was pronounced by Elder R.L. Fishburn.

Signed: W.L. Watkins, Clerk

- (1) David Reese and James Nelson were the counselors of John Welch during his latter years as Bishop. Nicholas Crookston, known as Nick Crookston, was the son of John Welch's sister, Ann.

Call slip for the funeral record: 31-17132 C.R. 991
Brigham Fourth Ward Historical Roll 1 (H)