

HARRIET ELIZABETH SEYMOUR STILLMAN RUSSELL

(Mother of Frances Maria S. R. Neff, who was mother of Alfaretta Neff Seely, who is mother of Verna May Seely Carter)

In Hartford, Conn. on April 22, 1804 Samuel and Hannah Rockwell Seymour became the parents of a baby girl whom they named Harriet Elizabeth.

In 1804 the United States numbered 16 states. Two years previous the President Thomas Jefferson, had purchased Louisiana which was still an unknown territory, and the same year that Harriet was born, Lewis and Clark began their expedition into that vast uncharted land.

As a young woman Harriet married Jason Stillman. Three children were born to them, Minerva, Frances Maria and Charles. When Charles was five years old the father Jason, became sick. It was decided that he leave the cold northern climate and seek health in a warmer climate. When he found such a place his family would join him. It was a sad leave taking with his loved ones, and so he left only to die before he could return for his loved ones.

Harriet joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and with her three children cast her lot with the saints in Illinois. She later married Daniel Russell who was a widower with several children. When the saints left Nauvoo Harriet's oldest daughter Minerva, chose to remain in Illinois where she married Charles Parsons. Harriet with her son Charles reached Salt Lake valley in the fall of 1848. Her second daughter Frances Maria joined them two years later.

The family settled at the mouth of Mill Creek Canyon in Salt Lake County. Mr. Russell built a large one room log cabin. The south end was partitioned off for a granery. Later another room with a loft was added. In the east and west sides two small six pane windows gave light. They built a large barn and it was used often for dances, then the rafters would ring with singing and laughter. Music of the 'fiddle' and stomping of feet carried the pioneer dances to full swing. Harriet enjoyed to the utmost these dances and other social gatherings. She was a large, fleshy woman with a happy nature and a heart full of kindness. She never turned anyone away who was in need of sustenance be they Indian or white, sharing of that which they with others.

In July 1866 she went by mule team to American Fork to visit with friends. When she returned home she was stricken with a probable heart attack and died July 9, 1866. She was buried in the Salt Lake Cemetery in a coffin made by Peter Ranck, a pioneer carpenter. Valiant in work with a heart overflowing with love for people, she was a true pioneer.

( Taken from Neff record files)