

ELIAS JONES

Born: 3 Oct 1809 Wales
 Age: 46
 Hunt Wagon Company



Elias Jones married Mary William in 1836 at the St. Mary Church in Swansea, Wales. Nine children were born to them in this small seaport in Glamorganshire. Elias was a baker by trade and owned a grocery store which Mary mostly took charge of. Elias also invested in a coal mine and became the superintendent. Having joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1849, Elias hired Latter-day Saints to work for him in preference to non-members, and the mine became known as “The Saint’s Pit.”

Mary also joined the Church after a Priesthood administration healed their daughter, Anne. In 1854, Elias decided to emigrate to Utah, but Mary worried that her health was too frail to stand the trip with their eight children and one on the way, so the trip was postponed. The new baby was born in June 1854 and Mary died the next month. In 1856 Elias renewed his plans to go to Zion and sailed on the *Samuel Curling* from Liverpool with his new bride, Hannah William Hopkins (38), (Mary’s sister, who had been left a widow with one child), Mary Hopkins (7) (Hannah’s daughter), his children: Mary (age 18), John (14), Llewellyn (12), Anne (9), Elias, Jr. (7), Ruth (5), Thomas (4) and Hannah (2), and his brother, John Jones (40). Three family servants also traveled with them, one known to be Nanson (or Ann) Rees, a 28-year-old widow.

Tragedy struck the Jones family before reaching Iowa City when their little baby, Hannah, died while on the train. The rest of the family survived to arrive safely in Utah. The Jones’ brothers were well-outfitted with eight oxen, two cows, two wagons and a horse and buggy. The family mostly rode in the buggy until the weather became too severe. They then were bundled in buffalo robes in the wagons. The cows which were brought to supply milk and butter learned to follow the buggy and come when called, until one day when they could not be found and the Jones’s had no more milk and butter.

Ruth Jones was in her Uncle John’s wagon when there was an oxen stampede one day and a Sister Walters was killed. Llewelyn Jones and his friend, William Parry Bowen, had been following the teams when the stampede started. They rushed ahead and notified the drivers who immediately stopped their oxen and prevented their teams from running away. Ruth was not so fortunate another time when she was hooked in the mouth by a cow. Elias had a medical kit along and he repaired the cut with “sticking plaster.” Elias’s daughter, Mary, witnessed the burial of Sister Walters whose body had been sewed up in a bed tick, and she was sincerely worried. She became sick and told her father if she died to bury her in one of the large tin boxes he’d brought and not in a bed tick. Her brother, Jack (John), would then tease her and say, “Now, Mary, do you want to go in the tin box?” Elias’s feet were frozen during his trek and most of the flesh dropped off his toes, but he was grateful his life had been spared. He reportedly helped to bury sixteen members of the Martin company near Devil’s Gate.

After reaching Salt Lake City, the Jones family settled in Spanish Fork where they first lived in a dugout. Elias eventually became well-to-do again and paid for the emigration of 6 or 8 other families to Utah from Wales. His generosity and good nature was eulogized at his death in a poem written by Hannah Cornaby, from which the following excerpts are taken:

A friend has gone / a brother whom we love / his goodness to the poor / will make his name beloved forever / And numbers whom his means have gathered here / Will bless his memory and his deeds revere.

(Pictured above: Mary Jones Flavel Bona, daughter of Elias and Mary William Jones, with her 2nd husband, William Bona, and her children, Annie Bona and William Flavel.)

Source: *Discover Your Heritage*, by Ray H. and Patricia Banks, 2006, pgs. 28-34, 38-39; Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; family histories from Mrs. Robb Smith, September 2007; “Llewellyn Jones,” Sons of Utah Pioneer history files.