

Posterity of Lavina Young (1820 – 1883)
Compiled by Lorraine (Richardson) Manderscheid
Web site with listings of John Doyle Lee's wives and descendants
http://www.wadhome.org/lee/edition_1
See Chapter 15: www.ajlambert.com

Listing 549 descendants for 7 generations.

Lavina Young¹ was born 25 September 1820 in Putnam, Jackson, Tennessee, the daughter of David Young and Elizabeth Vance, Lavina died 4 July 1883 in Nutrioso, Apache, Arizona, and was buried July 1883 in Nutrioso, Apache, Arizona.

Both families, the Youngs and the Vances, were some of the earliest settlers of middle Tennessee, having arrived there at about the time the territory achieved statehood. David and Elizabeth probably lived on the same land for forty years. During that time they had eight children. The first was born about 1807 and the last in 1825. Lavina was the second youngest in the family.

David and Elizabeth and their three youngest children, Mary, who became known as Polly, Lavina and David Isom, became members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1842. Other Young and Vance families living the area were baptized at the same time.

In 1845, the year they joined the Church, David, Elizabeth and those three children moved to the center stake of the Mormon kingdom of God on earth, the City of Joseph, as Nauvoo was sometimes called. Little is known about the family after their move and while they lived in Nauvoo, but it was certain that they kept in close communication with their missionary patron, John Doyle lee, who had baptized them.

When the Saints were driven from Nauvoo, the Youngs were among them. Traveling across the territory of Iowa in the middle of the winter of 1845-1846, they experienced the ordeals of ice, snow, rain, and mud with everyone else. Following the trail marked by President Young, they passed through such places as Sugar Creek, Farmington, Keosaqua, and Garden Grove. While bogged down at the Pleasant Grove encampment, they would have heard President Young summarize the situation of the Saints and give them a glimpse of what he saw in the future.

“...Some have started with us that have turned away...and perhaps more will yet go. Yet I hope better things for you. We have set out to find a land and a resting place where we can serve the Lord in peace. We will leave some here because they cannot go further at present, but can stay here for a season and recruit and by and by pick up (and) come on while we go a little further, lengthen out the

cords and gather all the saints together in the place where we will build up the House of the Lord in the mountains...Inasmuch as we are united, we will prosper and I know that if the people will be united and hearken to council, that the Lord will give them every desire of their hearts..."

It took three months to travel the distance from the Mississippi to what became known as Winter Quarters on the Missouri River. By November, the family had been at the Missouri for several weeks and in serious trouble. The entire family was sick and they had no shelter or provisions. David, the father, was elderly, seventy-four years old, and unable to do much even when fit and well. Elizabeth was sixty-three years of age. The children would have borne the burden of the physical requirements of the trip across Iowa, particularly twenty-one year old David Isom. They had made it thus far but they found themselves facing what appeared to be insurmountable obstacles having to do with their very survival.

A few months later the elderly couple witnessed the marriage of their daughters, Polly and Lavina, and another Tennessee convert, Nancy Gibbons Armstrong. Those three ladies were married to John Doyle Lee in a single ceremony on February 27, 1847. The marriage was performed by President Brigham Young at Lee's winter Quarters home. Lee made note of the event in his journal:

"Nancy Gibbons Armstrong, Nancy Vance Young and Lavina Young were sealed to John Doyle Lee for time and all eternity in presence of Brigham Young and David Young. "Following that unusual ceremony, the party all sat down to a "sumptuous supper." Afterwards, President Young and his wife entertained the group by singing several songs which Lee described as "...both sentimental and sacred."

A month later President Young left Winter Quarters with a pioneer company to blaze the trail to their new home in west. John Doyle Lee and his family moved from Winter Quarters north about fifteen miles to establish a farm on which they were to grow corn for the general migration of the Saints, anticipated the following year. Lavina, the fourteenth wife of John Doyle Lee, went with the family to the new farm, which was given then name Brigham's Farm or Summer Quarters.

As the land was being tilled in preparation for planting, Lavina's parents, young brother and others in the settlement contracted a strange disease with which no one seemed familiar. The illness proved to be a very virulent, debilitating ailment. There was little anyone could do beyond treating them with homemade elixirs and herbal potions and administering priesthood blessings. Sometimes the sickness progressed so quickly that it was over before the victim could receive any attention. David Isom was the first in the settlement to pass away. He was buried on a nearby hill in a new graveyard given the name of Fairfield Cemetery. Others followed, including both parents of the Young family, David and Elizabeth, all of whom shared a place in Fairfield Cemetery as their last

resting spot. The disease finally ran its course and survivors were left to fulfill their farming mission at Summer Quarters.

One could imagine the feelings of both Lavina and her sister; the new family which they had joined suddenly became their only family, the center of their lives. They had to rely wholly on their husband, John Doyle Lee, and his extensive group of adopted sons, daughters, and plural wives for companionship and support when confronted with the awesome challenge of crossing the great plains to the Rocky Mountains.

After a year at Summer Quarters the Saints were ready to move on to the Salt Lake Valley which Brother Brigham and his company designated as the new gathering place for the Saints. They left the Missouri River encampment on May 26, 1848. Lee described in his detailed journal entries the journey along the Platte River, through the high plains country of Nebraska and Wyoming and across the Great Divide, down into the Salt Lake Valley. He rarely mentioned any individual members of the family in his journals.

The strenuous, unvarying routine of the trail, though, must have soon become a test, particularly for the women, not only of their physical endurance, but also of mind and will. The continual dust created by the lumbering draft animals and the churning of wagon wheels was suffocating at times, and a constant source of discomfort and complaint.

The Platte River road was smooth, flat and easy at times, but too often it turned into sand hills and sand valleys, while the heat was unbearably oppressive. One of the most formidable challenges came in small packages, namely the mosquitoes. Most of the diaries of those using the Platte River Trail, or the Oregon-California Trail, as it came to be known, mentioned the profusion of gnats and mosquitoes. It seemed a never ending contest with the irksome little creatures to avoid their voracious appetites.

One of the most frequent sources of complaint, perhaps for Lavina and other female pioneers, was the necessity of cooking food over open fires. Fuel had to be gathered daily, and as soon as camp was set up at the end of the day and a fire started, the women began preparing the evening meal. The requirement of working so near the open fire caused long skirts to become scorched and riddled with holes. When the bake oven, or dutch oven as we know it today, was used, as it was for almost every cooked meal, the lid had to be removed often to check the food. The fronts of dresses were scorched and toes of shoes burned along with a blistered face.

Another chore to be done, though not as frequently as cooking, was washing clothes. It was no simple task in that era, under the best of circumstances. It took on gargantuan proportions when traveling across the plains. Not only was water scarce, what was found was usually so laced with mineral salts that it was

almost ineffectual as a cleaning agent. The lye soap carried with them was not much help either.

Lavina experienced those arduous homemaking chores and vexing duties, all of which had to be performed regardless of time or place. Because of the nature and extent of the one-thousand-mile, three-month-long hike across the plains everyone's clothing became dirtier faster and everyone, with increased need for energy, hungered more intensely. So it was with every household chore. What was a simple task in the environs of a home, became a veritable monster of a job while on the trail.

The family reached the embryonic city of Salt Lake the last week in September, and immediately set about preparing shelters. The winter of 1848-1849 was difficult for them but that was nothing new. They had experienced far worse than that and were prepared to carry on. Through sharing, encouraged by Brigham Young, everyone in the settlement was able to endure the harsh winter months.

Lavina, with some of the others, moved to a place John had constructed, with the help of his wives, at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon, and began building up their assets of cattle, sheep and the land itself.

The year 1852 was a pivotal one for the John Doyle Lee family. He was called to fulfill a mission to southern Utah. Departure with two of his wives, Lavina and Polly, began a twenty-seven year sojourn in the land to the south.

Lavina's first child was born while the town of Parowan was being organized. Named after his father and his mother's father, he was given the name of John David. Her second child was born a year later in the same community. Their third, Sabina, was born in Cedar City. Each of those children, on arriving at adulthood, married siblings of the John Wesley Clark family.

Eventually Lavina and her sister and their children moved to Washington, Utah, where John had purchased land in 1858 with the intent of experimenting with the cultivation of cotton. They lived there for the next twelve years, raising their families in one of the finest homes that John Doyle Lee had ever built. It was a large rock house which he called his "mansion."

At the urging of Brigham Young in 1871, John sold his properties at New Harmony and elsewhere and moved to an area north of Kanahb, known as Upper Kanab. Lee referred to the place in his diaries as Skutumpah, an Indian name. Shortly after the move, and before the families of Lavina and Polly had arrived at the new place, John learned that he had been excommunicated from the Church, but for what reason, he could not immediately discern. Some of his wives left him at that time. Those remaining included the Young sisters. They arrived a few months later at the Skutumpah location.

Lee stayed there, operating a sawmill for no more than a year, at which time he moved south into the Territory of Arizona. President Young had given him the responsibility for setting up a ferry at the Colorado River crossing.

Lavina and Polly remained at the Skutumpah location. Many of the Clark family members moved into the area until, at one time, it was given the name Clarksville. Following Lee's death they moved briefly to St. George, then into Arizona several miles from Springerville, almost on the eastern border, at a place they called Lees Valley. Able to endure only one freezing cold winter there, they moved the following spring about twenty miles to the southwest to the little settlement of Nutrioso.

It was there that Lavina remained for the balance of her life. With her children and grandchildren, her sister, Polly, and the family nearby, she seemed to have lived a very satisfactory life. Her daughter Ellen's husband, John Wesley Clark, Jr., became the first postmaster of Nutrioso.

Lavina lived for only a few more years. She took ill one day and was unable to recover. She passed away at the age of sixty-three. Her grave is in the Nutrioso town cemetery a few miles north, off Highway 666, going toward Springerville.

In the year 1888 many of the Lees and Clarks moved back to Utah. By the time they had built up considerable herds of cattle which they drove back with them. Polly did not leave, however, and seemed to have continued a happy life in the little mountain settlement. Her death came in 1893 at the age of seventy-five. The remains of the two sisters, Polly and Lavina, who had been together all their lives, were not separated at death. They were buried next to one another in the little Nutrioso Cemetery, a few miles east of the town.

She married John Doyle Lee 27 February 1847 in Winter Quarters, Douglas, Nebraska.

They had 3 children:

...Ellen S. Lee – b. 11 November 1852, Parowan, Iron, UT –
d. 12 July 1924, Cedar City, Iron, Utah, and was buried in Emery, Emery,
Utah – md 24 July 1871, St. George, Washington, Utah John Wesley Clark –
b. 3 December 1848, Anderson, Grimes, Texas – d. 9 November 1920, Emery,
Emery, Utah, and was buried November 1920, Emery, Emery, Utah
the son of John Wesley Clark Sr. and Evelyn Brown

They had eleven children.

...Melivina Lee – b. 18 June 1855, Cedar City, Iron, Utah -
d. 8 February 1920, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, and was buried 12
February 1920 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah –

md 27 March 1872 Hyrum Brown Clark – b. 11 August 1853, Chimney Rock, Morrill, Nebraska – d. 7 March 1918, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah

Little is known about Melvina Lee, wife of Hyrum Brown Clark, and her life's work, yet no one can read her story without making a mental picture of her part of the struggle as they colonized and moved about from place to place. Her part in his everyday affairs was the role she played as wife and mother, sharing his hardships and being gratified with him in his posterity. Her noble life was portrayed in his achievements. She was one with him in giving most of their children a college education, sharing their property with her family, assisting her own as well as his families financially and spiritually, and sending a son to England on a mission. No man stands alone; it take a good woman, such as Melvina, to travel the whole way by his side. They had eleven children.

...John David Lee – b. 19 March 1851, Parowan, Iron, UT
d. 22 May 1922, Thatcher, Graham, AZ
md 1 May 1879, St. George, Washington, UT (1) Evaline Dorinda Clark –
b. 15 February 1858, Washington ,UT – d. 2 January 1887, Luna, Catron, New Mexico, and was buried 4 January 1887 in Luna, Catron, New Mexico.
the daughter of John Wesley Clark and Evelyn Brown

When John was born, his mother was living in a covered wagon box for they had not yet established a home. They remained in Parowan for about a year and then moved to Washington where his father had been called. There they made their permanent home. By the time he was eight years old, he was working with his mother in the cotton fields. He labored there in the early morning and late evening. During the hot part of the day he attended school where he was very studious and loved his books. Realizing the effort he was putting forth to learn, his teacher favored him all she could. He loved her dearly all the days of his life because of her assistance to him when he was a boy.

One of the chief pleasures of the schools was the "spelling bee." David was a good speller and was frequently the captain of his team. In one of the matches he found himself pitted against his teacher's son Neil. They were tied for a time, then he gave the word "seize." She pronounced it for Neil and he missed it. David began to spell, then hesitated for a moment. His teacher rubbed her eye ever so slightly. David took the hint and spelled the word correctly and captured the prize, a big red apple. He longed to take the apple home to his mother, but his conscience would not permit him to do it, because he realized he had been helped. Just before, he reached his own door he buried the apple. Whenever he told this story to his children he always ended up saying that he could not give a gift that was not honestly earned. He also made it clear that he himself could not have eaten the apple either.

One of his neighbors, Thomas Clark, seeing David's industry, gave him the opportunity to work with him in his cotton field. He was so pleased with the boy's

efforts that he shared the crop equally with him at the end of the season. That same neighbor allowed David to work for him with his cattle and paid him with heifer calves, thus pointing the way for David to build a herd of cattle of his own.

In his youth David's life was saddened by the knowledge that he father was carrying a heavy burden. In his desire to help his father whom he knew was innocent of nay intentional wrong, he over-taxed himself and became dangerously ill. For many weeks his mother nursed him with the most tender care. His recovery was slow and when he was able to go about again his friends were shocked when they saw him for his hair was almost white.

There was a close companionship between father and son. As often as possible David visited his father and offered him all the comfort he could. The two found strength in the companionship. The son knew that his father had never designedly harmed anyone. He knew that he along with most all the other men in the vicinity felt they were at war and that they must protect their homes and their settlements or they would be destroyed as they had been in Missouri. He was proud of his father and the noble sacrifice he was willing to make. All the days of his life David tried to comply with his father's last request that he do everything within his power to keep all his brothers and sisters and all members of the Lee family within the Church.

Following his marriage and several moves, David eventually settled with his family in Luna, New Mexico. There he had large herds of cattle as well as horses. Many in the community benefited from his animals as he provided work and food for them. Along with others, David bought a saw mill and moved it into town so the townspeople could have work and be at home. Throughout his life he was a valiant community leader wherever he lived.

Realizing that his children were getting older and did not have schooling, he moved his family to Thatcher, Arizona at a great financial loss to himself. He felt their education in the Latter-day Saint Academy was much more important than what he had lost financially. They all excelled there. Every child he had was precious to him and he made each one feel secure in his love, even as his father had done with him. They had four children.