

Mary Read

(Wife of Augustus Weber Belnap)

Heritage with Honor, pp 277-278

Mary Read was born on June 21, 1866, in the little settlement known as West Weber, Weber County, Utah. She was the seventh child born to Thomas Read and Jane Rowley.

Her school days were spent in Hooper, Utah. Her first shoes were made by the settlement cobbler and were shoes made to last - decorated with rows of stitching and copper rivets. They were made according to measurements taken by placing her stocking foot on a piece of paper and marking around it. She wore dresses of blue denim, trimmed with white pearl buttons. When Mary was sixteen, she went to work in other homes for 50 cents a week. From this she saved enough money to buy a pair of shoes and the old "clodhoppers," as she called them, were thrown away in the sagebrush.

Mary was married to Augustus Weber Belnap in the Logan Temple on April 21, 1886. They had eleven children of their own and one adopted daughter. They took this baby girl to raise the day after they buried a son, Thomas Gilbert, who died at the age of seven months. She filled the empty arms of a sorrowing mother and was the first daughter to Mary and Augustus. Their first nine children were all boys and the last two were girls.

In April of 1888 they moved to Wilford, Idaho, and then to Salem on October 13, 1888. Pioneering was hard, caring for her family meant much work and there was little to do with, but she was a loving mother and a generous neighbor. She was midwife for the little town of Salem and night or day, as she was needed, she fulfilled her calling. It was during these trying years that she endeared herself to her husband, Augustus, more than ever.

In 1916 Mary and one of her neighbors, Martha Ann Jensen, were called to go on a short term mission to Teton City, Idaho. Their means of travel was a horse and buggy, furnished by Mary, and it took them three months to cover the territory that had been assigned to them. Through this experience a lifelong friendship was established between these two wonderful women.

Mary worked in the Relief Society as President, teacher and counselor and in the Primary as President and teacher, and was well adapted to teaching boys. Her Church meant a great deal to her.

In her last years, Mary was not too well and she died at the age of 59 on June 15, 1925 at Salem, Idaho, and was buried in the Wilford Cemetery. In 1954 she had 48 grandchildren and 68 great grandchildren.

As a child, Mary had dark brown curly hair and blue eyes; and then as she became older, her hair became snow white and waved about her face and her eyes seemed to become more blue. In the prime of her life she was a large lady, 5 feet 9 inches tall, and weighed 225 pounds. She was beloved by her children and grandchildren. She was a lady of excellent morals and taught, by example as well as principal, and instilled into the minds of her children the precepts of honesty, honor and virtue, and the love of our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.