

JOSEPH LOUIS BOULDEN AND MATILDA CAROLINE CURTIS BOULDEN
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When Gwen and I were just small children, Mother would take us down to Grandpa and Grandma Boulden's home. They had a log house with a long front porch built the full length of the house. The house faced the west and Grandpa Boulden would sit and rock us. He would put one of us on each knee and peel oranges for us to eat. He loved all of his grandchildren.

Grandfather and Grandmother Boulden had a family of eight boys and four girls. Their names were, my father, Vern, and Will. Two of the boys died when they were babies. Their names were Curtis and Joseph. The girls were Belle Boulden Jones, Merle Boulden Jeffs, Oreole Boulden Jewkes and Gladys Boulden. I used to love to listen to the stories that my father would tell of his family. Here are just a few of the things I learned about my fathers family.

Grandfather Boulden was born in Pequa (Piqua), Ohio in Miami County and grew up on the banks of the beautiful Miami River. When he was 28 years old he left Ohio alone. He had a lot of trouble with his step father. Years later his step father came to Utah from Ohio to see him. My father was a young child at the time and he said he would always remember his dad going to the door when he came to the house. He took one look at the man and said, "God damn you. I

traveled over 2000 miles to get away from you and I won't see you now!" and closed the door. He stayed in the valley and seemed to be a nice man. We children called him "Uncle Joe" and he was very good to us. But my father wouldn't have anything to do with him and didn't care for any of his family who came to Utah later. Grandfather Boulden went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad as a blacksmith when he left Ohio. He was a good man with horses and kept all of the mule teams shod for the Railroad as they worked their way to the end of the line in Utah, when the Golden Spike was driven May 10, 1869 at Promontory about 50 miles northwest of Ogden.

At this time Erastus Curtis and his family had pitched a tent in Ogden and were visiting his sisters. His daughter Matilda at this time although only 15 years old, met Joseph Boulden who was now 33 years old. They fell madly in love with each other and very shortly were married in Ogden. This was the beginning of a beautiful love affair that lasted all of their lives. They were completely devoted to each other. They lived for a time at Moroni. The church sent settlers over the mountains to Orangeville to settle it. In 1878 Joseph and Matilda decided to seek their livelihood in this new settlement.

While en route from Moroni by oxen team, their 5 months old baby son "Curtis" took very sick. The Mother with her sick baby in her arms, was seated by the campfire with a quilt wrapped around both of them as it was very cold. The baby had been doctored for earache, colic and everything else that could be thought of but to no avail. The baby died just above Joe's Valley, when they were but a days travel from their destination. As there was no lumber available, Grandfather took some boards from the cupboard in the wagon and made a crude coffin from them. Grandmother lined it with a black skip that she had. They carried the small body in this to Orangeville.

A man was sent ahead to the valley on horseback to take the news of the baby's death and to make burial arrangements. Another man took Grandfather and Grandmother in a horse drawn wagon with their baby's body to the settlement. Leaving their wagon and other possessions for others to transport to Orangeville. Upon their arrival in Orangeville, they found that a friend George Bruno, had made a nice casket for them. It was lined on the inside with a white pillow slip. As it was the custom to paint or cover a casket in black, the slip was removed from the other box and used for this. On the lid over the black cloth the initials "E.C.B." were put on with bright headed tacks. The parents felt quite comforted to lay their precious baby away in such a nice casket, prepared by the loving hands of their friends. The baby was the first buried on its Grandfather Curtis farm. Later, when the Castle Dale Cemetery was laid out, the body was moved and was one of the first ones to be buried there.

My Great-Grandmother Mary Caroline Barton Curtis and her daughter, my Grandmother, Matilda Curtis boulden were the 2nd, and 3rd women in Cottonwood Creek above the town of Orangeville. Two years later in 1880 another family joined them. When the town of Orangeville was first settled it was known as Upper Castle Dale. It was not until later that it was changed to Orangeville.

It is told by many what a beautiful woman my Grandmother was. The story is told that Grandmother would leave her young children at home alone while she waded the creek with a basket of eggs to hurry to John K. Reid's store for salt and soda. At one time a gallant young stranger placed her on his horse, and waded the high, fast stream carrying her basket of eggs, leading the horse across. She never saw the man again, but she never forgot his kindness to her.

Once when she and a small baby were alone in her cabin and no neighbors closer than a mile, a band of Indians shouting "Ki-Yi" came and rode around and around the house demanding

that she give them food. This she did. They did her no harm, but she was afraid to stay alone that night for fear that they would come back and burn the place. She quietly slipped from the house and took her baby up the creek to what is now known as “Boulden’s Wash.” She went to a small cave that she knew of in the side of the bank. Placing a blanket in the cave, she and the baby crawled in and remained there for three days. It was a terrible experience for her. The next morning after she returned home a dispatch came warning people to beware of sixteen Indians who were on the war path. Her house had been unmolested. The Indians never returned. That was how this wash received it’s name. It is still today know as “Boulden Wash.”

Grandfather Boulden homesteaded land on the east side of Cottonwood Creek. He was the first Blacksmith in Emery county. He was well known for his great skill and as a fine craftsman who took great pride in his work. People from as far away as Price and Myton came to him to have their work done. He made most of the early plows and other farm implements in the valley as well as Oxen Yokes and shoes for Oxen, Horses and Mules. A short time later an Uncle of his “Lewis Boulden” came to Utah. He had been a well known Through-bred Horse Breeder in Ohio. He started his business here and was quite successful. He was well known through out the state for some great horses.

Grandfather remained a blacksmith throughout his life. He spent seven years as Head Blacksmith at Winter Quarters, [Utah].¹ Grandmother would usually spend the summers with him, but would return to Orangeville during the winter months to put the children in school. While at Winter Quarters their little girl Gladys became ill and despite their doctoring and prayers she worsened and died. They buried her at Winter Quarters.

They were very courageous people. The night my Father’s sister “Belle” was born in a little log cabin on the dark night of August 1880, there was a terrible storm raging outside. It was raining hard and the dirt roof leaked. In order to keep the bed dry a quilt was held over the bed while the baby was born. The creed in front of the cabin overflowed with flood waters.

They later moved to Castle Dale where Grandfather opened a Blacksmith Shop on the North West corner of Main Street. It was just across the street from my home where Dale Jeffs now has his homes. To please Grandmother he bought a farm and raised cattle and horses. He never did like it so he turned it over to his son Will. Will was not too good a businessman and had some bad luck and lost most of it.

Grandmother was a very talented person. She appeared in many Stage plays and Theatricals. With her husband she took an active part in the county entertainments. These are just some of the events that have stood out in my memories of my Grandparents.

¹ Winter Quarters, Utah. The Pleasant Valley Coal Company began coal mining in 1875. On May 1, 1900, an explosion killed over 200 miners. Joseph was probably blacksmith for the mine horses and mules, for equipment repair, and for the Utah and Pleasant Valley Railroad. Though a ghost town now, it is reported in Wikipedia that the remains of the blacksmith shop are still visible.