

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LYDIA EVA WILSON HEATON

SHE IS THE MOTHER OF VERNON DEVOE HEATON

Lydia Eva Wilson was born in 1895, the third child of eight in the family of James William and Lydia Anne Wilson. When Eva was eleven years old her father died from complications resulting from an accidental injury. This placed a great responsibility on the widow and the older children in caring for the family. Two years later her mother developed a lingering illness and almost the full responsibility for home and family life was placed on the children. Eva soon learned first hand of the hardships of life, but adapted quickly to the tasks of helping to provide and care for the family. During this time of adverse conditions all of the family stayed together working for the common cause and developed love and a family solidarity that endures even until today. This period of her life gave her schooling in some of the great principles of life that have helped her in later accomplishments.

When Eva was sixteen years old she willingly accepted the opportunity to attend the Murdock Academy. However, at the close of the first year of school she found it necessary to leave and accept a teaching position. This was to assist with the financial needs of the family. This job often required her to ride horse back for several miles to and from school, but no matter how cold or stormy the weather, she was never late nor absent.

At the age of nineteen Eva met Daniel Hoyt Heaton. The following year they were married and made their first home in Alton, Utah. Her early training had qualified her to be a real mother and home maker. Prior to their marriage she helped take care of her uncle's two motherless children when they were brought into her mother's home. At the end of the first year of married life they moved from the ranch that Dan had leased and began building the first general store in Alton. During this time as well as beginning her family, Eva worked long and hard along with her husband to make this a success.

During World War I she devoted a large share of her free time to work in the American Red Cross and the Hoover Food Administration. She was chairman of this program in Alton. After the war she received a medal and recognition from the President for her services.

During the terrible flu epidemic which followed the war Eva was an angel of mercy in giving comfort and care to the stricken families. She would go from home to home in the community giving comfort and aid to the sick and also helping care for the families with meals and house work. The epidemic left many children motherless and Eva always was willing to render assistance here when possible. It was during this period of time (1920) that Daniel and Eva responded to a call to help homeless children. They took two children from an orphanage in Salt Lake City and adopted them as their own.

Following the epidemic Eva had the desire to be able to render service to the people of her community through caring for the sick. Therefore, the family moved to Salt Lake City where in addition to running a home and caring for the family she took schooling in obstetrics and practical

nursing. After working early and then and studying hard she obtained her certificate. Then the family returned to Alton where she was able to render invaluable service. In these small towns many times it was impossible to obtain the service of a doctor, and hospitals during this period were an unheard of luxury. During this time Eva assisted many mothers in child birth, some without the help of a doctor. Eva brought ten or more babies into the world when doctors could not be present. In all these cases as well as the many others that she cared for after the doctor had delivered the baby she never lost a mother or a child. This is a record that most any doctor would envy for the time and place.

Later when the family moved to St. George, Utah she continued her service by taking mothers into her home that had come from the small towns of southern Utah and parts of Arizona and Nevada. These were mothers that could not afford to enter the St. George Hospital, but had come to town to have the services of a doctor. Eva would take them into her home and care for them until the child was delivered and for eleven days following. There are many mothers scattered over parts of three states that well remember the service given by this woman to them and their children. During all this period of service she attributes her success as a mid wife and practical nurse to divine guidance. This truly manifests her humble spirit.

The main reason for the family moving to St. George was to be near a good high school and college for the children. As the town grew and the services of doctors and hospitals became more readily available to all people she gradually gave up her practical nursing. However it was not long until her willingness to serve people and her community was called on again. This was a period when the government was bringing Indian children in from the reservation to attend school with the white children. At this time there was no such thing as a school lunch program to provide for these students. So Eva opened her home to these Indian children and prepared the noon meal for eighteen to twenty-five each day. In addition she gave them love and care to help them in the strange environment that they were in. Many of them were so timid that they did not quite know what to do, but they soon gained confidence when they found that they had a true friend. Many of them still tell of their appreciation for the one who gave them comfort and courage during the time they were getting acquainted with the white people and their schools.

In 1940 the Heaton family moved to Reno, Nevada. Here the county organization of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers called upon her to be President and later she became Captain of the Reno Camp. Under her leadership and direction this great organization increased in membership and activity. When World War II broke out Eva was chosen to act on the Advisory Committee of the Veteran's Hospital Volunteer Service. Here her education and practical experience as a nurse was put to full use. In Addition, many were the programs and entertainment that she arranged to help cheer and amuse the veterans in the hospital.

Also while in Reno during World War II Eva desired to support her three older sons that were in the Marine Corps and in addition give more service to her community. It was with this in mind that she became a charter member and President of the Marine League Auxiliary. This active organization did a great deal of work in civic affairs as well as rendering service to the families of Marine Corps

service personnel. In this capacity she was able to give freely of her experience and knowledge to younger wives, and families who found that their husbands would never return found unlimited comfort and help from this fine woman, the president of their organization.

The home that Eva made was always open to anyone in need. During this period in Reno she again proved that a child in need was her greatest concern. She took into her home two motherless children and cared for them for over two years until their father was discharged from the Air Force. Also during the war her home was always open to service men from the nearby bases. Many a weekend the house was filled with these boys trying to find a home while away from home.

Eva is now living in Salt Lake City where she is devoting a great deal of time to genealogical and research work. People come from far and near and often write to her for information contained in her many volumes of family history. She is currently leading the work of publishing a book on the descendants of George Deliverance Wilson, her grandfather, She has always been very proud of her family and she desires to leave a permanent record for all her relatives and descendants to have access to.

The greatest joy now for Mrs. Heaton is with her thirty-three grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Nothing makes her happier than to have her large house, which she keeps just for this purpose, filled with her children and their families. She is actively engaged in instilling in the grandchildren the same qualities of love, cooperation, and service that she has given her children.

While rearing a family of four boys and three girls of her own and one boy and one girl adopted, she has always been willing to assist those in need and render civic service as mentioned above. In addition, her church has occupied a central position in her life. Eva is a descendant of early Mormon pioneer stock and she has always been active in the "Mormon Church" -- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. She always took the whole family to church with her, and early in their lives gave them lessons in the love of God and the essential role of the church. She has given her family a wonderful goal by her own life of activity in many positions in the church. Her first assignment came when she was but sixteen years old, and from that time until the present she has never been without something to do in church. Following is a list of her church activities.

While at home in Cannonville, Utah:

Teacher in Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association (age 16)

While in Alton, Utah:

Teacher in Primary

Counselor in Primary Presidency

President of Ward Y.W.M.I.A

President of Ward Relief Society

While in St. George, Utah:

Teacher of Genealogy

Teacher in Y.W.M.I.A.

Stake Secretary of Y.W.M.I.A.

While in Reno, Nevada:

Teacher in Primary

Teacher in Sunday School

Drama Director Y.W.M.I.A.

Teacher in Relief Society

Stake Secretary Y.W.M.I.A.

Stake President Y.W.M.I.A.

While in Salt Lake City, Utah:

Teacher in Y.W.M.I.A.

Stake Secretary of Relief Society

Counselor in Stake Relief Society Presidency

At present Eva Heaton is serving as a counselor in a ward Relief Society Presidency and is engaged in genealogical research.

Perhaps the greatest service given to the church by Eva has been the sharing of her husband. Daniel has always been active and has been called to serve in many capacities such as counselor in the Stake Presidency, as a High Councilman, and Bishop, which often require a great deal of time away from home. But in this she has been most patient and understanding and has tried to adjust other things to the somewhat erratic schedule of a Bishop, which office he now holds.

As mentioned above, Daniel Heaton and Lydia Eva Heaton have raised nine children. Following is a brief statement concerning each one:

Daniel Garn: (Deceased age 28 -- would now be 43) He graduated from the Dixie Jr. College in St. George, Utah and then received a call to serve as a missionary for the L.D.S. Church in the British Isles. This was a two and one half year mission. A great deal of the time he spent as Presiding Elder. After his return he attended the University of Nevada for one year. At the beginning of World War II he volunteered in the Mormon Battalion that was formed in Salt Lake City and became part of the 2nd Marine Division. This division engaged in some of the worst battles in the Pacific. He was discharged as a second Lieutenant. Shortly after discharge he married Nellie Matekovic. He was killed four months later while working on the Veteran's Hospital in Reno. His only child, a daughter, was born eight months after his death.

Leda: Age 42 -- She graduated from the L.D.S. Business College. Her ability as an office organizer and manager was soon recognized and the firms for which she worked gave her work in the East as well as in Utah, Nevada, and California. It was in California that she met and married James Leo Bolander. He is now service manager of the Wright Motor Company in Elko, Nevada. They have two fine children, both boys. Both Leo and Leda are active in the L.D.S. Church. He is

Superintendent of the Sunday School, and she works in the Young Women's Mutual.

James Keith: Age 41 -- He graduated from the Dixie Jr. College and then received a call to serve as a missionary in the Western States for two years. He enlisted with his brother Garn in the Mormon Battalion and they were together all through the war. He was discharged as a Second Lieutenant. He married Carol Woodbury of Reno. They have three sons and one daughter. Keith is foreman in the welding department of Chicago Bridge and Iron Works, Inc. Both are active in church. He is senior President of his Seventies Quorum and a Sunday School teacher. Carol assists with the music in their ward and stake.

Marie: (Adopted) Age 51 -- She married Theron Crosby of Alton, Utah. They have eight children, one of which is now serving on a mission in Holland. They also have nine grandchildren. Both Theron and Marie are active in the church. He teaches in both Sunday School and Priesthood, and she is President of the Relief Society. He works for the Wild Life and Predatory Animal Control.

James Peter: (Adopted) Age 50 -- Married Phyllis Larson. They have two sons and three daughters. Both are active in the church. James is a scouter, and in addition, teaches Sunday School and Priesthood. Phyllis is the President of the Young Women's Mutual. James is employed by the State Road Commission.

Velma: Age 39 -- (Twin) She attended Dixie Jr. College and later graduated from the University of Nevada with a major in Education. While at the University she met and married Kenneth Neil Stewart, a rancher and an executive in the Wells and Stewart Construction Company. Both are active in the church. Neil is a counselor in the ward bishopric, and Velma is the President of the Relief Society. They live in Las Vegas, Nevada. Their family consists of two sons and one daughter.

Volma: Age 39 -- (Twin) He attended the Dixie Jr. College and was then called to serve a mission in Texas for two years. Following his release he enlisted in the Marine Corps and was stationed at San Diego, California. While there he met and married Ellen Crist. They have five boys and three girls and have lost one boy in infancy. Volma is President of the North Kearns Stake of the Church and Ellen gives of her talents in music and is a teacher in the Primary. Volma is an agency manager for Western Bankers Life Insurance Company.

Chyrrel: Age 34 -- She graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in Nursing. She later married Dr. William Krivit. He is now an Associate Professor on the staff of the medical school at the University of Minnesota. They have three sons. William is heading a research project at the university searching for a cure for leukemia. He is assisted in all his endeavors by his wife, Chyrrel.

Vernon DeVoe: Age 27 -- He was called to serve a two year mission for the church in Texas and Louisiana. Following his release he went into the Navy for two years. At present he is completing his schooling at the University of Utah. He is employed at night at the American Oil Refinery. He is active in church and is a teacher in Priesthood and Sunday School.

The three older sons were all outstanding athletes while in school. They all helped bring honors to Dixie Jr. College and all played on championship teams. They were three of the six members on the L.D.S. Church team that played in the Reno basketball league. They won this championship also. After the war Keith and Volma played on the American Legion basketball team in St. George. They were on the team that won the state championship and went back east to play in the national tournament.

While all of the girls were educated in various fields and were very successful while working, they all gave up their work when they were married. Each of them placed the rearing of a family before their professions.

The crowning achievement of this fine woman, Eva Heaton, has been her home. Although she has given freely of her time and talents to public and church activities her children were never neglected. They were God's gift to her and always her first responsibility. She has taught them to become noble men and women and to take their place in life in the highest manner possible. They were taught early to work, to share responsibility, be cooperative, respect the rights of each other, be dependable, and always be prepared. Holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and all such occasions were observed with special consideration. The family would always get together for as many as possible. The Sabbath Day was the most important day of the week and was always observed in the proper manner. This was the day when all members of the family were home and free from work. As a family unit they all attended Sunday School and then came home for family Sunday dinner. Then after an afternoon together they all returned to church for the Sunday evening service.

The oldest son, Garn, while serving in the service in the Pacific during World War II would often write home and say, "Today is Sunday and I know what all of you are doing today." Then he would tell of the many good times he remembered. He always said that the most difficult and loneliest days while in the service were the holidays or other special days. He knew from past experience that all the family at home would be together and enjoying each other's companionship and love.

In this active family not one of the children has ever felt neglected. There has been no complaining about the time that was spent in church and civic affairs. Much rather there was a spirit to follow and never let down the work that was started by their wonderful mother. Today they are all noble and law abiding citizens, upholding and supporting law and justice.

During their forty-five years of married life Eva has been a loving wife and companion for her husband. In his many and varied business endeavors she has always given him her full support. The home life and love manifest by these two could well be an example to all the world.

We cannot say that this brings to a close the works of Lydia Eva Wilson Heaton, for they continue even today, and they will continue to be manifest in the lives of her children and her associates. While individual works and achievements may slip into the past the principles upon which she has built are living and vital. They can never be forgotten nor destroyed.