

Isabella Watson

Isabella Watson was christened 3 February 1812 in Cardross, Dunbartonshire, Scotland.¹ She was the third of eight children of Adam Watson and Ann Gordon. Growing up, she was trained as a dressmaker and milliner. She learned to shear the sheep, wash the wool, card it and spun it and to make cloth. She dyed yarn and knit a petticoat, shawl, hood and all of her own stockings. She made gloves, men's clothing, and shoes. She could farm and was a good cook.²

In 1835, she married Robert McIntyre in Gorbals, Lanarkshire, Scotland.³ They had one daughter.⁴ Isabella heard the Mormon missionaries and was baptized in 1841; she was living with her parents in Greenock East, Renfrew, Scotland.⁵ She was the only one in her family to embrace the gospel. When she was baptized she did not know her own birth year and the missionaries gave her a birth year of 1818 and that is what she used thereafter. Robert was a joiner journeyman and they lived in Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland.⁶

In 1843, the little family came to America. Her husband was abusive and they often fought. She told her family that she took her daughter and left him in New York and continued on to Nauvoo on her own.⁷ She arrived in Nauvoo when the foundation of the temple was only three to four feet above the ground.⁸

In 1844 she married James Kippen in Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois.⁹ Four years later they crossed the plains with the Willard Richards Company and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley 19 October 1848.¹⁰ On the 1850 census, they were living in Davis County, Utah Territory.¹¹ She probably separated from James about that time because he remarried in 1853 (and had ten children).

On the 1856 census, Isabella had taken back her maiden name and was living with her daughter's family in Springville, Utah Territory.¹² She also lived with them in Spanish Fork in 1857¹³, and in Bountiful in 1860.¹⁴ In 1869, they were living in Richmond, Cache, Utah Territory, when her daughter died.¹⁵ That year Isabella married George Watson in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory, but was back in Richmond for the 1870 census, living next door to her daughter's family.¹⁶ She helped care for her four grandsons and she and George followed them to the Dixie Mission and helped in building the St George Temple.¹⁷

¹ Scotland Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950.

² *Familysearch.org*

³ Scotland Marriages, 1561-1910

⁴ Scotland Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950.

⁵ Scotland Census, 1841.

⁶ Scotland Census, 1841.

⁷ *Familysearch.org*

⁸ Journal History of the LDS Church, 19 April 1897, p. 12.

⁹ Civil Marriages of Nauvoo, Illinois, by Lyndon Cook.

¹⁰ Utah Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database, 1847-1868.

¹¹ United States Census, 1850.

¹² Utah Statehood Census Index, 1856, p. 1031.

¹³ FHL film #027309, p. 1.

¹⁴ United States Census, 1860.

¹⁵ *Familysearch.org*

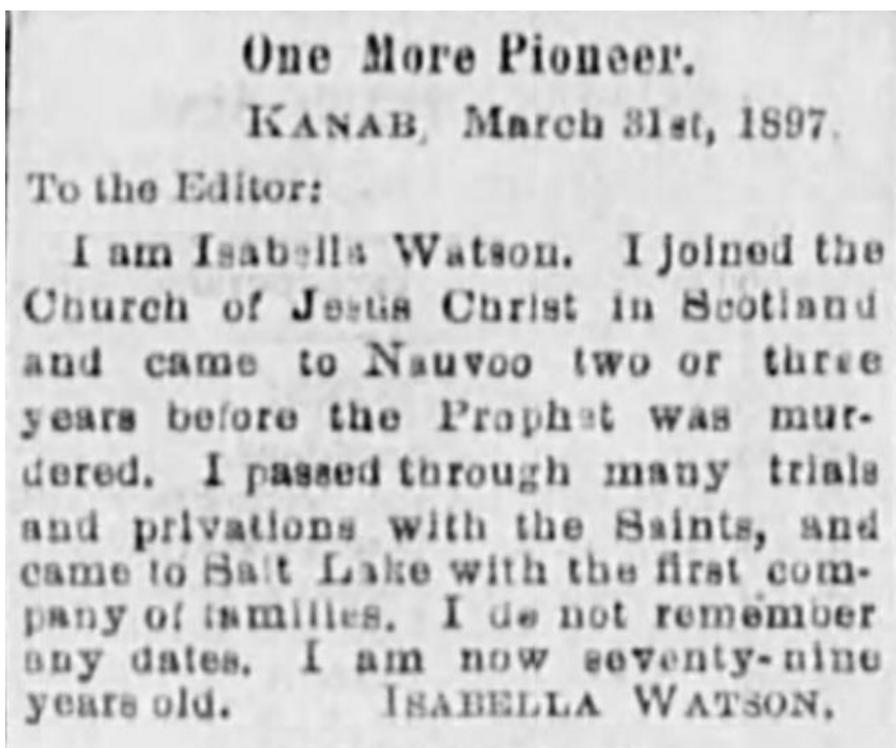
¹⁶ United States Census, 1870.

¹⁷ *Familysearch.org*

On the 1880 census, George was listed as a wood hauler and Isabella's grandson was living with them in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory. She was the oldest women in the town; George was the third oldest man.¹⁸ A granddaughter remembered the Watson house: "Among my memories of Silver Reef was our house, a lumber room about fifty feet long. Frank Fish and family lived in the back half. One time, a man who was boarding with us walked over to the looking glass then stepped backward, forgetting the trap-door which was open, and fell into the cellar. This man was Henry Lyman, son of Amassa Lyman."¹⁹

Isabella and George lived in Virgin City and were kept busy in the St. George Temple doing ordinance work for their ancestors. George died in 1881 in Silver Reef, and Isabella moved to Kanab, Kane, Utah, where in 1900, she was listed as an indigent widow with one deceased child.²⁰ In 1903, Mrs Frank J Cannon (whose husband was the first US senator from Utah, and son of the apostle George Q Cannon) entertained friends of her mother with a "grandma's party". Carriages were sent to the homes of the guests of honor from Ogden, bringing them to the Salt Lake Depot and then to the Cannon home. The day was spent in "feasting, singing, social chat, and making merry in many other ways". Isabella was one of the grandmas attending.²¹

Isabella died in Kanab during the winter of 1909-1910 and is buried in the Kanab City Cemetery.²² She was a very intelligent woman, a poet, an excellent reciter and entertainer, a good story teller and a good dancer. She taught others to dance the highland fling and when she was old she danced it with her in the ward hall.²³



One More Pioneer.
KANAB, March 31st, 1897.
To the Editor:
I am Isabella Watson. I joined the Church of Jesus Christ in Scotland and came to Nauvoo two or three years before the Prophet was murdered. I passed through many trials and privations with the Saints, and came to Salt Lake with the first company of families. I do not remember any dates. I am now seventy-nine years old.
ISABELLA WATSON,

(Image from *Deseret Evening News*, 7 April 1897, p. 2)

¹⁸ United States Census, 1880.

¹⁹ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 145.

²⁰ United States Census, 1900.

²¹ *Deseret Evening News*, 26 June 1903, p. 7.

²² Kanab City Cemetery records.

²³ *Familysearch.org*



Isabella Watson McIntyre Kippen Watson
(image from *Familysearch.org*)