

Napoleon Bonaparte Roundy

Napoleon "Pole" Bonaparte Roundy was born 5 February 1851¹ in Centerville, Davis, Utah Territory. He was the fourth of nine children of Lorenzo Wesley Roundy and Susannah Wallace.² In 1860 the family was living in Centerville, Davis, Utah Territory.³ Then Lorenzo was called to go to southern Utah with other pioneers. As they traveled south, they camped at Toquerville, where they were exposed to scarlet fever. They arrived at Kanab and built one log cabin. The Indians were hostile and they were in constant danger. President Brigham Young sent word for them to move to Long Valley in the spring. There they planted crops and started building homes.⁴

Not long after, President Young sent message to Bishop Roundy that they were to come to Kanara and he was to preside there.⁵ They were forced to live within the walls of a fort to protect themselves from hostile Indians. Tensions were high with local Indian tribes, so Pole learned at a young age to handle guns as he guarded the family's livestock. At just 12 years old, the resourceful young Pole earned enough money to buy his first gun "shocking" wheat for neighbors by moonlight after he had finished his day's work for his father. He became an expert marksman.⁶



Lorenzo Wesley Roundy



Susannah Wallace

(Images from <http://aeb.buchananspot.com/families/Roundy/NapoleonBRoundyHIST.html>)

Military records from Utah list Napoleon B Roundy as a private in W. Coplan's Company of the Utah Territorial Militia from 25 February to 13 March 1869.⁷ He completed an affidavit on his service in the Black Hawk Indian War.⁸ He served in Captain Lorenzo N Roundy's Company in the Utah Cavalry

¹ Tombstone.

² Utah, Death and Military Death Certificates, 1904-1961.

³ United States Census, 1860.

⁴ Memories of Lorenzo Wesley Roundy by 'Aunt Bet' Smith of Kanarrville, Utah.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ [Napoleon Bonapart Roundy Families Information and Photos.](http://aeb.buchananspot.com/families/Roundy/NapoleonBRoundyHIST.html)

⁷ Utah Military Records, 1861-1970.

⁸ Utah Index to Indian War Service Affidavits, 1909-19.

from 1865-1867.⁹ On the 1870 census he is living with his family in Kanara, Kane, Utah Territory.¹⁰ Napoleon played the drum and his brothers played the fife in Bishop Schow's town band.¹¹

Napoleon worked for his father on the farm until he married in 1872. He married Elizabeth Margaret Williams in St George, Washington, Utah. Their first home was a new three-room brick house. When it was completed, Napoleon said to his young wife, "Well, Elizabeth, we will move home today. If you will carry the drum, I'll carry the gun." It was true -- they had little more than that. His mother gave them the necessary furnishings for their little home.¹² Napoleon and Elizabeth eventually had twelve children. About 1880, President Brigham Young asked some worthy men to take another wife. Elizabeth and Napoleon talked it over, and he told her she should make the selection of a second wife. With her consent, he married Louisa Jane Higgins.¹³ They had four children together.



Napoleon Bonaparte Roundy

Elizabeth Margaret Williams

(Images from <http://aeb.buchananspot.com/families/Roundy/NapoleonBRoundyHIST.html>)

People from all over southern Utah came to be entertained by the rooster and dog fights, horse races and rifle matches of the Silver Reef Rifle Club. In March of 1880, Napoleon challenged Enos A. Wall to a shooting match. Wall was known as "Colonel" even though it was not his true military title.¹⁴ Local gamblers believed that the well-dressed Colonel, with his years of military experience and a fancy new Henry rifle, would win the \$100 pot. Napoleon was rough-cut, ill dressed, with an odd-looking long rifle. Napoleon was the winner, much to Colonel Wall's chagrin. A rematch for double the pot was won by Napoleon with an even wider margin of points. There were several more rematches over

⁹ US Civil War Pension Index, 1861-1934; Utah, Military Records, 1861-1970.

¹⁰ United States Census, 1870.

¹¹ [Chronological Biography of Don Carlos \(called Carl\) Shirts, by Gary Young; Napoleon Bonapart Roundy Families Information and Photos.](#)

¹² [Napoleon Bonapart Roundy Families Information and Photos.](#)

¹³ Elizabeth Margaret Williams, by Gerald Haycock and Wallace Napoleon Roundy.

¹⁴ Mining and Metallurgy, 1920, Issue 165, p. 16.

the years, but Wall was never able to beat Napoleon. Once Wall hired someone to interrupt Napoleon as he was about to pull the trigger, but it didn't deter him.¹⁵

On the 1880 census, Napoleon and Elizabeth, their three children, and his second wife, Louisa, were living in Kanara, Kane, Utah Territory.

About 1881, Napoleon was called on a mission by his church to help establish a friendly relationship and to preach the gospel to the Indians of Arizona. He sold his property in Kanara and moved his family to Snowflake, Arizona, where they lived for five years. Food was in short supply and flour was a luxury, so corn bread (corndodgers) was a common substitute. Napoleon purchased a farm that the family cared for and he went about his work with the Indian People.¹⁶

Napoleon's oldest brother, Wallace Wesley Roundy, went to Snowflake with him. Wallace became interested in going on to Mexico, seeking peace and quiet from the US Marshals who were constantly harassing the Saints and putting them into prison for practicing polygamy. The Mexicans kept postponing the time of giving them any land to settle on. They waited, camping on a river bank for weeks. Wallace became very ill, and the stake president visited and advised him to return home immediately. On their way back, they had a frightening experience. They had stopped for the night, and Elizabeth and Louisa had fixed supper over the campfire. They were ready to eat when a group of Indians rode down from the hills, all painted and screaming. Napoleon knew enough of the Indian language to understand they were fighting mad. A camp of Negroes had come near them and they claimed they were taking their squaws. Napoleon said they had not come to hurt them, that they were just passing through on their way home. He talked as pleasant as he could to pacify them. He gathered up all the supper and gave it to them. He kept petting their ponies and told them they were wine-o, wine-o, meaning good. The Indians seemed to calm down; they ate and finally they mounted their horses and turned for the hills and disappeared. As soon as the Indians were out of sight, the men harnessed their horses while the wives packed their dishes and children back into the wagons. With all haste, the tired little caravan started on the trail back home again. No supper, tired horses, scared to death, miles and miles from nowhere on a forsaken road. All night long they coaxed and forced their horses; at daybreak they stopped. They felt they had enough distance between to be safe and the horses were exhausted. Napoleon said if the Indians came after them, he would shoot until the last shell before they could take his family.¹⁷

In 1886, Napoleon heard about a new settlement in Potato Valley (the valley east of the Escalante Mountains, named for the wild potatoes growing there). He loaded his wagon with apples and went to see what it was like. Liking it so well, he went back, traded his farm and property (except for their piano) for a herd of sheep and moved his large family there. The settlement was later named Escalante in honor of the 1776 explorer. Napoleon built a large red brick house which was just big enough for his family of fourteen children.¹⁸ It was the largest house in town, with a bell in a unique bell tower, that could be heard throughout town. Elizabeth and Louisa shared the duties of caring for their home, Elizabeth did the cooking and Louisa would sew clothes for all the children. They got

¹⁵ Memories of Silver Reef, in Utah Historical Quarterly, Vol 3, No 4, October 1930, p. 107; [Turn the Hearts, Kanarrville Marksman: Napoleon Bonaparte Roundy; Pole Roundy, The Marksman of Boulder, Utah.](#)

¹⁶ Johanna Roundy Barker History, compiled by Gerald Haycock.

¹⁷ Elizabeth Margaret Williams, by Gerald Haycock and Wallace Napoleon Roundy.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

along very well.¹⁹ Louisa died in 1888 after giving birth, and was buried in the Escalante City Cemetery.²⁰ Her four children were raised by Napoleon's first wife, Elizabeth.²¹



Napoleon, second wife Louisa, and children about 1883
([Image from Napoleon Bonapart Roundy Families Information and Photos](#))

Napoleon patented land on the northeast corner of Escalante. He was a very progressive man, as well as the most public-spirited to settle this area. He started to breed purebred Sires sheep until he had the best flock in the valley. He told his daughters they could have all the quilts and rag rugs they wanted, but would they have to make them. He also told his daughters that if they waited until age 20 before getting married, he would give them a twenty-dollar gold piece.²²

Napoleon built a dam west of Barney Lake and southeast of Antimony on the south edge of the Aquarius Plateau. The resulting Roundy Reservoir improved his irrigation supply and provided water for his sheep.²³ In the early part of 1897, he started to build a new house. He had two of the best orchards in the community; he freighted this cider to Little Creek at the head of East Fork of the Sevier River to help pay for the lumber to be used in the house. Mr. Higbee traded lumber for the fresh cider, then kept it until around Christmas, when it would be mighty strong.²⁴

On the 1900 census, Napoleon, both wives and thirteen children were living in Escalante, Garfield, Utah. He owned his home and farm free and clear.²⁵ The next year, he was made president of the

¹⁹ Elizabeth Margaret Williams, by Gerald Haycock and Wallace Napoleon Roundy.

²⁰ Utah Cemetery Inventory.

²¹ Elizabeth Margaret Williams, by Gerald Haycock and Wallace Napoleon Roundy.

²² [Autobiography of Napoleon Roundy](#).

²³ Utah Place Names: A Comprehensive Guide to the Origins of Geographic Names, by John W Van Cott, 1990, p. 332.

²⁴ [Autobiography of Wallace Napoleon Roundy](#).

²⁵ United States Census, 1900.

newly incorporated Escalante Co-operative Mercantile & Manufacturing Company.²⁶ In 1902, he took on the building of a dance hall and home dramatic hall.²⁷ The first dance held there was the wedding of Napoleon's daughter Rebecca.

Napoleon's son Hyrum tells the story: "My father decided to build a dance hall and show house which contained some beautiful hand painted scenery. Father hired a carpenter by the name of James Woodhead to figure out the bill of lumber necessary to build the hall. As he could not get lumber on the east side of the mountain, he applied for it at the Beeby mill on the west side. We boys helped him chop the timber, log it to the mill; then after it had been sawed, hauled it over the mountain to Escalante—a distance of 35 miles. Everything went fine until winter set in. We would go to school until the week end, start out on Friday and did well to get back by Sunday night so as to get into school Monday morning. We kept the road open by taking the teams and driving them up and down the road to tramp the snow solid enough to hold the wagons. Then we could pull the load over. Some places we would have to shovel the dugways clear of snow so that the wagons would not slide off and land us hundreds of feet below... I remember cutting some quaking aspen trees, and next Spring the stumps of those trees showed us how deep the snow had been the winter before... Father had a chain harness on the team without a holdback on it and we would load a thousand feet of lumber to the team... The hall was built with a dome-shaped ceiling lined with narrow tongue and groove-finishing lumber, which, when painted, was a beautiful sight. The sound carried from the stage in the back end of the building to the entrance as clearly as it did in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. My father employed a painter by the name of Anderson to do the inside... All the sons were able to assist with the music at the dances. He took care of the upkeep of the building until his health failed him. He finally rented it out to his son-in-law, who installed a moving picture machine; but after several years the Church bought it and when the Escalante Ward was divided into the North and South Wards, it was used for all the activities of the North Ward until their church was completed in 1931. Later a gymnasium was built and the Roundy or old Star Hall, as it was called then, was torn down."²⁸

In 1908, Napoleon joined with the Utah Woolgrowers and sent his wool clips for storage in Boston and Philadelphia under the united movement plan for better prices.²⁹ The next year, his wife Elizabeth died³⁰ of stomach cancer, probably due to a kick from a cow three years earlier. She was buried in the Salt Lake Cemetery, next to her father, because shipping the body to Escalante was prohibitively expensive.³¹

In the 1910 census, Napoleon is living with his four younger children in Escalante.³² On the 1920 census, he is living with his daughter, her husband, and her two children.³³ In 1923 he sold his farm to his sons.³⁴ Escalante stories celebrate the colorful disarray and sharp wit of Pole Roundy, a sheep man with extensive holdings, two wives, and the biggest house in town.³⁵ He died 6 October 1928 in Escalante, Garfield, Utah, of sugar diabetes. He was buried in the Escalante City Cemetery.³⁶

²⁶ *Salt Lake Herald*, 26 July 1901, p. 5.

²⁷ [Autobiography of Wallace Napoleon Roundy](#).

²⁸ *Treasures of Pioneer History*, by Kate Carter, 1952, Vol 2.

²⁹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 29 May 1908, p. 5.

³⁰ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1956.

³¹ Elizabeth Margaret Williams, by Gerald Haycock and Wallace Napoleon Roundy.

³² United States Census, 1910.

³³ United States Census, 1920.

³⁴ [Autobiography of Wallace Napoleon Roundy](#).

³⁵ *The Proper Edge of the Sky: The High Plateau Country of Utah*, by Edward A. Geary, p. 167.

³⁶ Utah, Death and Military Death Certificates, 1904-1961.

His legend lives on at Pole's Place Motel & Gift Shop in Boulder, on Scenic Byway 12, located across from Anasazi State Park. The establishment was opened in 1987 by Pole's namesake grandson.³⁷

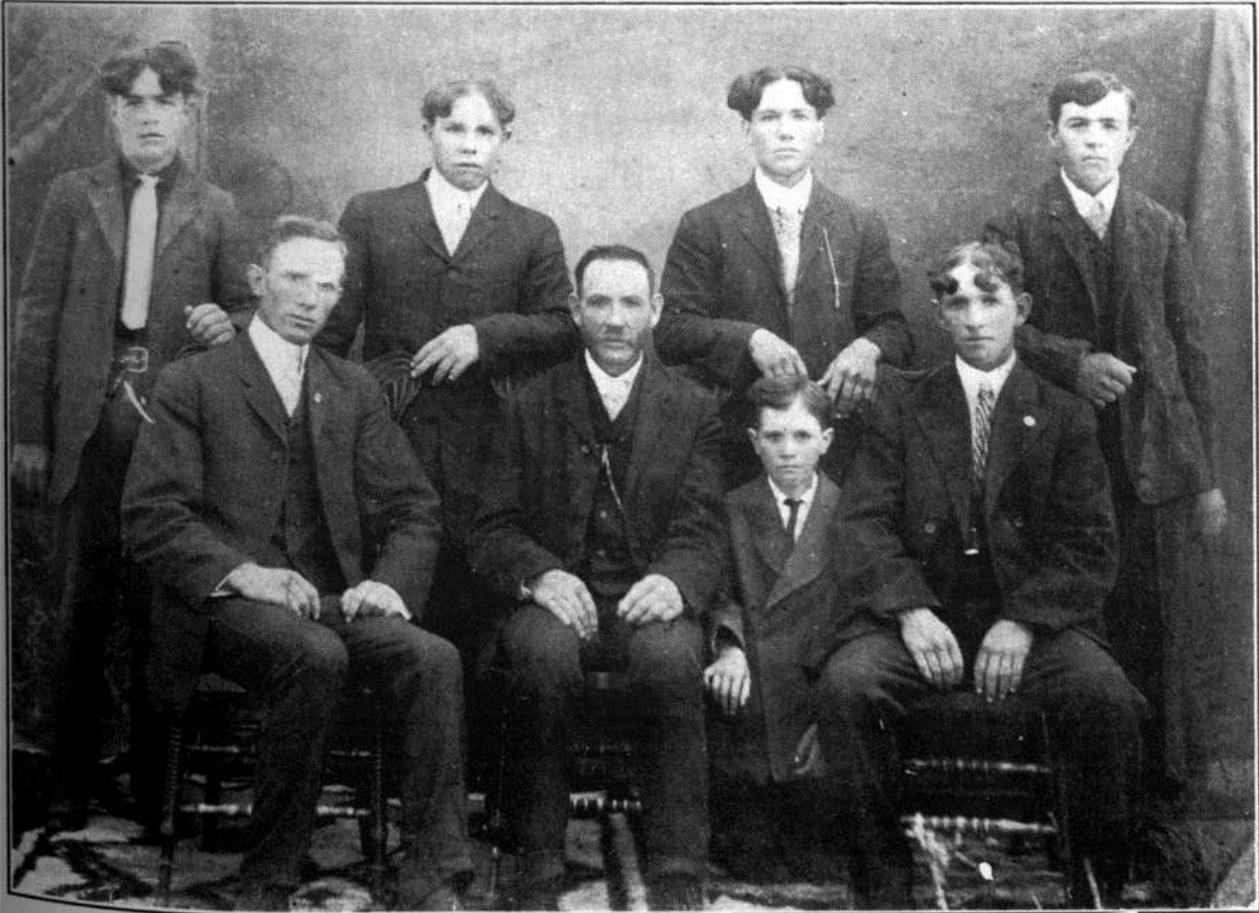


(Image from [Pole Roundy, The Marksman of Boulder, Utah](#))

³⁷ [Pole Roundy, The Marksman of Boulder, Utah.](#)



Napoleon Roundy Home in Escalante, Utah (Image from <http://aeb.buchananspot.com/families/Roundy/NapoleonBRoundyHIST.html>)



HOME OF NAPOLEON B. ROUNDY, ESCALANTE, UTAH
Napoleon B. Roundy (*Seated in Center*), and His Sons: (*Standing, Left to Right*) Walter Marion, Hyrum Shadrach, Wallace Napoleon, Albert Ervin; (*Seated, at Left*) Ammon Lorenzo; (*Kneeling*) Aof; (*Seated, at Right*) Rees Jones

(Image from <http://aeb.buchananspot.com/families/Roundy/NapoleonBRoundyHIST.html>)



(Image from Ancestry.com)