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Title: **John Wickersham Woolley, Amazing Man of Many Accomplishments**

Provenance:

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Person: **John Wickersham Woolley**

Date:

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John Wickersham Woolley was born on December 30, 1831 in Newlin Township, Pennsylvania to Edwin Dilworth Woolley and Mary Wickersham. When he was just a baby, his parents joined the LDS Church. As a youth, his family lived in Nauvoo, Illinois where he was personally acquainted with Joseph Smith and remembered well as a young child sitting on the prophet's lap.

When the Mormon saints were forced to leave Nauvoo and move west, John's family traveled across Iowa to Winter Quarters. Then in the spring of 1848 his family proceeded on to the Great Salt Lake Valley, with John, age 16, doing the work of a man, driving a team of oxen from Omaha to Utah.

John W. Woolley made an incredible contribution to the westward movement of Mormon pioneers by making four different trips back to Missouri and helping hundreds of immigrants travel safely to the Salt Lake Valley. He even discovered better routes to Utah which shortened the trip by eleven days. A guidebook called "Woolley Cutoffs" which he wrote was of great help to the westward travels of many immigrant groups.

On March 20, 1851, John married Julia Seamless Ensign in Salt Lake City. She and her parents were also driven out of Nauvoo and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September 1847. John and Julia were parents of six children. John married a second wife in October 1886, Ann Everingtpon who was a 60 year old widow. After his first wife Julia dies in 1892, he married his third wife, Annie Fisher, age 40, in March of 1910.

John and Julia lived in both Centerville and Salt Lake City during their marriage together where he was always actively involved in church work. He was ordained an elder by Brigham Young and later served in many callings, including Bishop, High Councilman, Patriarch, and Ordinance Worker in the Salt Lake Temple. John also held many positions in the community, including Constable Sheriff, Justice of the Peace, and County Commissioner. He was very involved in the military, participating in the Black Hawk War and meeting Johnston's Army at Echo Canyon in 1857.

In the early history of the Church in Utah, John Woolley will be remembered for helping to hide many church leaders who were being hunted by sheriffs and federal marshals for practicing plural marriage. President John Taylor, his counselors, and several of the Quorum of the Twelve stayed at the Woolley's Centerville home for a considerable time.

John Wickersham Woolley lived for 97 years which was truly an amazing feat for the time in which he lived. He died peacefully in his Centerville, Utah home on December 13, 1928, having outlived all but one of his children as well as two of his three wives.