

## History of George Wesley Morton and Julia Ann Falknor

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Morton Family Background: Jessie May Morton was the daughter of George Wesley Morton (formerly known as Otho Stewart Martinie) and Julia Ann Falknor. She was born September 13, 1878, at Mankato, Blue Earth County, Minnesota. A brief history of her parents follows: Otho Stewart Martinie was born November 26, 1853, at Mill Creek, Henry County, Kentucky, to David Martinie, a merchant, and Mary Jane Triplett. The Martinie's are German, as their ancestor was a Hessian soldier. They were hired by the English to help fight in the American Revolution and many of them remained in the United States. Ernest Martinie was one who remained here. The Triplett's were from England, but were originally from France. Otho Martinie moved with his father's family to Morroco, Kent County, Indiana, and to Champaign County, Illinois, where he was a druggist at Fithian. It is believed that he had trained at the Hahnemann Medical College in Cincinnati. He disappeared from Fithian about 1874 (being unable to get along with his stepmother) and changed his name to George Wesley Morton. Julia Ann Falknor was born April 24, 1856, at Jintown, Elk Hart, Indiana, to Jesse Falknor and Rebecca Sailor. Her family later moved to Mankato, Minnesota. George Wesley Morton and Julia Ann Falknor were married November 15, 1876, at Mankato, Minnesota. George was a pharmacist and they lived on a farm near Julia's parents. Missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints visited the humble home of George and Julia Morton. They also visited the home of Julia's parents, Jesse and Rebecca Falknor. Julia and Rebecca were interested in their teachings from the first but Jesse was very antagonistic. He forbade Rebecca to have anything to do with the church and he told Julia he would disown her if she joined this church. Julia knew it was right and George continued to study with her. Julia was baptized April 20, 1886. At this time George and Julia had three children: Jessie May, Lyman Wesley, and Ethelbert Pearl. Jesse carried out his threat and disowned Julia's family. This was hard for them to take. Three more children were born: Alma Clayton, Ruby and Hazel. The missionaries encouraged this family to prepare to go to live with the Saints. Little Hazel, their baby, died March 9, 1895. The next month, April, 1895, the family left all, including the new grave of little Hazel, and travelled by wagon to La Jara Colorado. There were George and Julia and their five children. Julia's Aunt Esther Johnson and her husband, Will Johnson located in La Jara, Colorado, and the Morton's went to join them. In anticipation of their journey, Julia wrote the following letter to her father. The letter was written one and one-half years before the family actually departed, but it was returned to Julia unopened as her father wanted no contact with her. The Morton's lived southwest of La Jara for two years and then moved to Richfield, Colorado. Two more children were added to this family: Candace Esther was born February 15, 1896. She died September 2, 1896. Julia Estelle was born March 21, 1898. George had worked in the drug business but he was selling nursery products for L. L. May Nursery Co. of St. Paul, Minnesota. He was in Holdridge, Nebraska when he wrote a letter to his family saying that he would be in Canyon City, Colorado, the next day

and would take the train for home the following day. He said he was bringing a doll for Estelle. He never did come home. We have never known why (This was in 1902) Julia Morton began washing clothes and ironing for the people in La Jara. She also did janitor work at the church. She was proud and independent. My father, Joseph Hyrum Shawcroft, bought the Hans Miller home for her and her children but she wouldn't accept it all (By this time Julia's oldest daughter, Jessie May, had married Hyrum Shawcroft) When her father, Jesse Falknor, heard that she and her two youngest children were alone (Those children were Alma and Estelle), he repented of his ill feelings toward Julia and humbly asked her to return to Mankato with Alma and Estelle and make her home with her parents again. Jesse and Rebecca Falknor had prospered and were considered rich people. Julia would have had an easy life there but she would not go. In the summer of 1904, Alma had a big black dog. Alma made a harness for the dog and he would pull a little wagon any place to please Alma. Although I was only five years of age at this time, I remember this incident. Alma and his dog came to our hay yard where my sisters and our brother, some of our cousins and several of our friends and I were playing in the hay yard. We were taking turns riding in the wagon. We heard a train whistle as it came to La Jara. Alma stopped short, looked up and ran for his home with his dog and wagon. He had saved some money which he kept in a sugar bowl. He got his money, went to La Jara and got in an empty car on the freight train. He planned to go to his two brothers, Wesley and Bert, in Idaho. Two other fellows joined him along the way. They took his money and threw him out of the train a short distance from his destination in Idaho. He was hurt but was found alive and his brothers were notified and they talked to him. He told what had happened but he died very soon afterward on July 3, 1904. He was buried in Idaho. Julia was married briefly to Hyrum Stevens. They lived in southern Utah and were in the process of building a home. Hyrum was not religious and Julia was. This caused some conflict and Julia returned to La Jara with Estelle. At the time Alma left, his mother, Julia, was planning to take the two children, Alma and Stell, to Minnesota for a visit. She and Stell made the trip. While they were there, a telegram to Julia sent in care of Hy Shawcroft to LaJara came informing her of Alma's accident. Hy sent a telegram to her in Minnesota. She planned to go to Idaho, but before she got away the second telegram arrived telling her of Alma's death. Some years later, she traveled to Idaho with Stell to visit her two sons who were homesteading here (Wes and Bert) She became very ill. Mama and Papa (Hy and Jessie Shawcroft) realized that she should be with Mama so she could help. Mama had a new baby, Arthus, and her family so it was decided that Grandma should come to our home instead of Mama going to Idaho. Bert brought Grandma. She arrived June 28th during the noon hour but Estelle, her 12 year-old daughter was not with her. I was so sad. I just didn't think they should be separated. Grandma was very ill and suffered so much. The second day she was there she had a nap after lunch. She dreamed that Estelle was there. She was so happy and for a minute she thought she would see Estelle. Papa was there and saw how disappointed she was when she realized that this was a dream. He sent for Estelle that very afternoon. She came in three days. Grandma died July 14, 1910. She was buried in the Sanford Cemetery, Sanford, Colorado. Grandma told Estelle to stay with us and to obey Jessie and Hy. Estelle was born March 21, 1898 and I was born

August 20, 1899. She was just one year and five months older than I and she always seemed just like my sister, although she was my aunt because she was Mam's sister. She married James Reid, December 22, 1920. They lived in Centerville, Utah. Estelle celebrated her eightieth birthday. At the time of this writing (March, 1979), Jim is eighty-four years old. Estelle passed away at Bountiful, Utah, February 22, 1979. They have a wonderful posterity. I am proud of every one of them. Julia Morton's life was not an easy one. She lost four of her children before they reached adulthood (Hazel, March 9, 1895; Candace, September 2, 1896; Ruby, August 7, 1897; and Alma, July 3, 1904). Her husband had disappeared and her father had disowned her for her religious convictions (although he later reconciled with her). Julia and George's oldest daughter, Jessie May, married Joseph Hyrum Shawcroft in the Salt Lake Temple October 5, 1898. They lived in the La Jara and Richfield, Colorado, areas and were the parents of ten children: Vera May, born August 20, 1899, (md. William Christensen Brothers, June 7, 1922); Vernice Lucille, born October 3, 1900, (md. Josiah Alexander Harris, December 2, 1943); Ethel Vidella, born May 15, 1902, (md. James Thrasher, July 24, 1925. She was later married to Isaac Truman, Billy Lang and Lawrence Murray); Joseph Lyman, born September 4, 1904, (md. Florence Engler in 1925); Mary Alma, born January 26, 1906, (md. Cecil Elmer Ellsworth Schofield, July 18, 1924); Nellie, born August 20, 1907, (md. Lloyd Wilbur Hatfield, December 13, 1925); Ardu, born May 9, 1910, (md. Carl Watts, March 15, 1929. She was later married to Perry Lyman Bowdish); Delma, born March 15, 1912, (md. November 4, 1928, to Leo Wesley Brown. Her second husband was John Floyd Fincher, July 6, 1935); Annie Rhee, born December 24, 1913, (md. Harold Ray Newman, June 3, 1939). Sadie, born October 26, 1915, (md. Carl Ernest Linderholm, October 7, 1934. Her second husband was John Clark Burt). Jessie died March 29, 1919, leaving a young family. Lyman Wesley Jerome Morton was the eldest son of George and Julia. He was born July 16, 1880 in Mankato, Minnesota. He was 16 when his family moved to Colorado. He worked at sawmills until he was 22. He then went to Rupert, Idaho, to take up a homestead. He moved to Twin Falls, Idaho, and married Ruth Herendeen on November 26, 1913. They had one son, George William, born July 9, 1914. They were later divorced. Wesley moved to California and married MittieLeona Fogle, September 1923, in Chico, California. They had four sons: Jerry Dow, born July 19, 1924 (md. Mickey Welch, August 11, 1955); Thomas ÓDell, born October 26, 1925 (md. not known); Buck Emmett, born October 13, 1927 (md. Margaret Elizabeth Inkanish, January 25, 1957); and Bert, born Nov. 30, 1929, (md. Charlene Upchurch). I remember when Uncle Wes came to visit shortly after Mama (Jessie) died. He had not heard about Mamás death because Papa did not know where to reach him at the time. He did arrive in time, though, to thwart a plan of Mary's to ride the train to Denver with a friend. It was nice to have him visit. Wes died in Modesto, California, June 14, 1949. He was never baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Ethelbert Pearl (Uncle Bert) Morton was born July 4, 1883, in Mankato, Minnesota. He moved to Colorado with his family and then followed his brother Wes to Idaho when he was about twenty. He married Minnie May White, September 11, 1917. They later moved to Bountiful, Utah. Their twins, Philip Bert and Phyllis Emily were born April 16, 1923, in Salt Lake City, Utah. I remember when my husband, Bill, died, I was secretary in the Ward Relief Society.

Dixie Christensen was president and Sadie Mortensen and Sister Reynolds were counselors. Soon after this, I was asked to be 1st Counselor to Della Gylling in the Stake M.I.A. Della resigned and I was sustained as Stake M.I.A. President. When I went to Salt Lake to attend General M.I.A. Conference, I took Cathryn and Billy with me many times. We would stay with Uncle Bert and Aunt Minnie and they always tended Cathryn and Billy while I attended my meetings. We learned to know, love and appreciate them then. These permanent bonds of love and friendship have endured through the years. Uncle Bert died June 14, 1949, of a heart attack. Julia Estelle Morton was born March 21, 1898, in Richfield, Conejos County, Colorado. She married James Reid December 22, 1920. They lived in the Morgan (near La Jara) area and then moved to Centerville, Utah, in 1942. All of their nine children were born in Colorado. They were: James Wayne, born July 28, 1922, (md. Shirley Stewart Peterson and she died seven months later--md., September 1, 1949, md. (2) Merle Christensen, November 29, 1951) ; Willadene Ann, born January 11, 1924, (md. Charles Francis Fabry, April 7, 1943); Morris Everett, born February 5, 1926, (md. Donetta Christensen, October 29, 1954); Bruce Wallace, born February 19, 1927, (md. Margene Bergetta Larsen, December 3, 1948); Ardell LaVerne, born October 28, 1929, (md. Howard VanderMeyden, October 13, 1949); Dennis, born April 21, 1931, died April 22, 1931); Mary Lucille, born August 7, 1932, (md. Rawney Galde Ellis, October 18, 1950); Wanda June, born October 12, 1934, (md. Kipp Parker, June 4, 1952) ; Lola Mae, born May 29, 1936, (md. Duane W. Lambert, December 7, 1955) Stell was always like a sister to me and I have made many visits to she and Jim. I was with her for the month preceding her death. She passed away February 22, 1979, and left a wonderful posterity. Written By: Vera Shawcroft Brothers (Vera had written this article in her story of the Joseph Hyrum Shawcroft and Jessie May Morton Shawcroft story. I included this part of the article as it gives her view of the Morton family as they lived in Mankato, Blue Earth County, Minnesota.