

Violet's Grandparent's

History of Isaac Nathaniel Workman and Esther Jane Buchanan Workman

(Written by their daughter Adelia (Ada) Workman Barnhurst Burrows)

Isaac Nathaniel Workman was born February 26, 1862 in Farmington, Davis County, Utah. He was the son of Jacob Lindsey and Rebecca Willard Turner Workman. The same year he was born, his family was called by Brigham Young to go to the Dixie Mission and assist in the experiment of raising cotton in Utah. The people endured many hardships, and often went hungry before they could get the land to yield enough crops for food. Cotton was grown for a time but it didn't produce the amount of cotton they needed and so the Church abandoned the project. The mills were then used for making wool cloth instead.

When Nathaniel was three or four years old, he remembers his mother made him a bright red dress. He said little boys often wore dresses until they were quite old. He remembers he used to help pick tomatoes and would carry them in this dress. As he grew older, he would follow the sheep herds and would gather the wool that clung to the bushes as the sheep passed against them. He got enough wool this way to make his first pair of trousers. His mother spun the wool and wove the cloth to make the pants.

President Brigham Young came to Dixie to visit the people in the little town of Virgin City when Nathaniel was seven. Nathaniel wanted to see the prophet very much but his clothes were very shabby. Along with several other little ragged boys, he climbed upon the old Fort wall where they could see him as he passed. After the President had shaken hands with all the people, he said, I hear there are some little boys who would like to see me also. He then went over to the wall and shook hands with all the little boys making them very happy and proud,

Nathaniel and his older brother, Cornelius, would go up on the mountains and gather dry wood. The wood had to be dragged back down the old Grafton Mountains which was very steep. The boys took this wood down the river to the Silver Reef Mine and sold it to the people living there. In this way, they made a little money to help out in those trying times.

The main crop which was raised at first was sugar cane from which molasses was made. Some of the families had beehives and so honey was available also. These were all the sweets the people had. Later a grist mill was built so flour could be ground. The people caught wild quail in the mountains. After a time, they began to have a variety of food.

Nathaniel's father, Jacob died in the summer of 1878. Nathaniel was 16 years old and was the oldest son living at home because his brothers had gone to other places to work. He was left with the responsibility of looking after his mother and the smaller children. He and his mother sold the cattle and the little farm they had in Virgin City and moved to Woodruff, Arizona. The boys that were old enough, worked on the dam which was being built there by the people to store water for the crops. Nathaniel prepared the family's land for planting. The crops were just

beginning to grow well when floods washed the dam out. The people lost all of their planting and had a bad time.

The family moved to Pinedale where they homesteaded some land. Here Nathaniel, his mother, and other boys, built themselves a house. The family also owned a small saw mill.

In 1885, at the age of 23, Nathaniel met a young lady named Esther Jane Buchanan. Esther was visiting at her sister's home and attended some dances while she was there. Nathaniel met Esther at one of these dances and the two become very good friends. After a courtship of about six months, they were married January 27, 1885 by Bishop Mann in Snow Flake Arizona. Esther was born in Eagle Valley August 11, 1868. The young couple lived for three months with Nathaniel's mother and he worked at Fort Apache. Later that summer, he promised to take his wife to see her father, who was living in Johnson, a little town in Kane County, Utah. They had several bad experiences on the trip. Just a short distance from her father's home, as they were camped out at night, it rained. As they neared the little settlement, they had to cross a river or gully but there was a flood caused by the rain. Esther was so anxious to get home to see her father and all of her family (her mother had passed away while she was in Arizona), that she persuaded her husband to try and cross the water anyway. The water was much deeper than they had expected and the swift current carried them downstream. Nathaniel managed to get Esther on one of their horses and he rode the other. He unhitched the horses from the wagon, and the couple was able to arrive on the other side safely. Their wagon, however, along with all of their belongings was washed away. They recovered what was left of the wagon after the flood went down, but all the rest of their things were washed away. All they had left was what they had on.

In September, Nathaniel got word that his mother, Rebecca, was very ill. Nathaniel joined with his older brother, Cornelius, who was living in Hatch, Utah, to bring her and the younger children back to Utah. Upon arriving in Arizona, the brothers found their mother too ill to be moved and she soon died. Nathaniel said she died in his arms and they buried her in a little town in Arizona. Nathaniel and his mother had been very close, as he had been her main support since his father had died. He had been with her all the time until he had married. Nathaniel was like a father to all the younger children and they all loved and respected him.

That winter Nathaniel moved back to his old home town, Virgin City, Utah. His fathers (Jacobs) second wife, known as Aunt Fannie to the other wives children, still lived in Virgin City with some of her children.

In February, 1 1886 Nathaniel and Esther's first child was born. It was a daughter whom they named Esther Rebecca. When the baby was ten months old, they went to the St. George Temple and had their marriage solemnized and the baby sealed to them.

In 1888, they moved to Hatch, Utah, where their second child, a son, was born October 3, 1888. They named him Lindsey Nathaniel Workman. A year or so later, Nathaniel took his family and moved to Ashley Valley, later called Vernal, in Uintah County, Utah. Here they bought a two room house with ten acres of land. They planted an orchard on this land. The fruit grew well and soon they had a lovely orchard. Fruit is still being gathered from some of those same trees at this time.

Nathaniel made lime for many buildings and some of the better homes in that community. He also supplied the people of White Rocks, a government owned Indian reservation, with some of this lime. The people used it to make the plaster for the walls of their homes. While living here, two more children were added to the family; a girl born August 8, 1889 named Adelia, another daughter was born November 1, 1891 named Josephine. When the baby, Josephine, was seven weeks old, Esther wanted to be with her aged father who was in poor health. Nathaniel said, it was too far to go just for a visit so he sold his property in Vernal, Utah, and took his family and started for Johnson, Kane County, Utah, in the early part of December, 1891. They spent Christmas in Hatch, Utah, with relatives and then journeyed on south to Kane County.

They made their home in Kane County for the next four years. During this time, they operated a hotel and bought a herd of cattle and were very active in all community affairs.

After a time, they decided they would like to go back to Dixie where Nathaniel had lived as a boy. Another little girl had been born to them in Johnson, Kane County, on March 3, 1894, and they named her Barbara May. In May of that year the family moved back to Dixie where Nathaniel bought a farm on the Virgin River. They lived there in the summer but moved to a little settlement of Harrisburg or Leeds for the winter so the children could attend school. Many happy years were spent in this place with the children roaming over the hills and swimming in the Virgin River, which was always warm and not too deep except during the heavy rains or floods.

Nathaniel played the accordion and was a very fine singer. He played and sang for many dances and social functions. Two more children were born here. German Buchanan Workman, their second son, was born on October 7, 1896, and another girl named Leona was born November 30, 1898. About this time Esther became very sick with malaria, with chills and fever as it was sometimes called. Most of the children became ill with the fever also. Nathaniel decided to go someplace which might be healthier for his family. He sold the property and moved to Camp Verda, Arizona. He rented a farm here and raised chicken and sold eggs. Adelia and Josephine took the produce to the Fort each day and sold the produce to the people living there.

The family later moved to Mesa, Arizona, where the family could renew their connections with the Church, but the only work Nathaniel could get was hauling ore to New Mexico. This meant he had to be away from his family most of the time and he loved to be with his family. The family missed him very much and after two years of this, they moved back to Dixie. Nathaniel became ill with the chills and fever. By this time, he was ready to leave the south for good. Another little boy was born to them there, Hillery B., was born January 19, 1902 in Leeds, Washington County, Utah. From here they went back to Hatch, Utah, where he farmed, his brother Abram's farm, on the Mammoth River. The grain froze that year, 1903, so he didn't get much for his years work. On October 1, 1904, another little girl was born. They named her Edith. Nathaniel then worked at the saw mill for awhile and built them a small home here. Soon after this, the government opened up the Uintah Indian Reservation for white settlers so he left Hatch the first of May 1905 and went to Uintah, rented a

farm and put in a crop, and then sent for his wife and children to come. While in Hatch, the oldest daughter Esther Rebecca (Bessie as she was called), was married in the Manti Temple on September 20, 1904 to Benjamin Wilkerson. Esther (the mother) and her oldest son, Lindsey drove a wagon and horses all the way to Vernal, Utah which was quite a distance for that mode of travel. The second daughter, Adelia, remained in Hatch, Utah, she married that spring June 25, 1905 to Samuel Barnhurst.

In 1906, the government let the people draw for the land in Uintah. When Nathaniel received his land, it was 160 acres of rocks, cedars, and sagebrush. It was really in the rough and took a lot of hard work to clear it before it could be planted. He had one team of horses, a wagon, an ax, a shovel, and a hand plow. This was all of the equipment he had to work with but that didn't stop him. The first thing he did was cut the cedar trees for the post and other timber and built himself a house. The roof was cover with dirt to keep out the storms. This was the first house built in that part of the country. They also had a large tent to help out with room for his large family. Esther, his wife, kept the floor sprinkled with water several times a day so the dirt would harden and could be cleaned better.

The family all worked long and hard and cleared enough land to plant a garden. They set out some fruit trees and that July, their daughter Adelia and her husband, Samuel Barnhurst came to live there and found their folks enjoying lovely fresh vegetables from their garden which they had planted on their own land. After this, the father and son-in-law went to the mountains, which were covered with fine trees and cut enough logs to build a one room house for Adelia and her husband. They also built a 3 room house for the family about two and a half mile from the farm in a little settlement called Claberville, later named Packard.

During that year, there were several hundred people who came to that country to get homes. That summer, the father and the mother went about four miles to a Brother Davis home where they organized a Sunday School. The father was chosen as the adult teacher. The next winter, a Mutual was organized and Nathaniel also taught one of the classes there. In the fall of that year, the people built a two roomed log house which was used for school and on Sundays for church as well as for dances, etc. The families all went to Hayden for Sacrament Meetings. Years later, a new town, Neola, grew up which was west of the town of Packard. Here a ward was organized. One year the family lived on the farm and the children had to ride horses to school. The family built another house in Neola and they moved there in the winter so the children could be close to school. Esther was made second counselor in Relief Society and worked in other organizations. She also helped care for the sick. She and her family joined in all of the activities that pertain to the building of a new community and helped build churches and schools.

People from all over the county came to the Basin as it was called (Uintah Basin) to get the free land and make homes. The Workman's home became a central place for strangers because these kind people shared with all their home and food. No one was ever turned away without food and lodging. Esther invited the Indians in and gave them food and many times had to prepare more for her own family.

While living in Uintah County, Esther took her second son, German to Loa, Utah where Patriarch Blackburn gave him a blessing. The boy's leg

was run over by the wagon when they moved from Arizona and had never healed. Brother Blackburn gave him this blessings and his leg was healed after being bad for five years.

In 1922, the family moved to Delta, Utah. While moving there, Nathaniel got something in his eye and he suffered very much for several weeks. Their daughter, Adelia (Ada), who had moved back to Hatch, Utah, came out to Delta to visit her family and while there, her family and Uncle Abram, a brother to Nathaniel, got together and had a big birthday party for the two wives who birthdays came on the same day on August 11. The son, German and family took Nathaniel, Esther and Ada back to Hatch, where the weather was cooler. There Nathaniel got better, but he lost the sight in one eye. The doctor wanted to operate and maybe could restore the sight of his eye, but the family had very little means and Nathaniel would not burden his family with another big doctor bill to pay. Their daughter, Edith had married while they lived in Delta. She married Abram Elder, a second cousin and a grandson of Abram Workman.

After Nathaniel got better, he and his wife and two sons went to Nevada and worked for a season but Nathaniel never was too well after this and wanted to go back and spend his last days on his farm at his home in Neola, Uintah County, Utah in 1923. He always enjoyed having his family come to visit them at the old home where they would all get together and Nathaniel would play his accordion and sing. They would have a fine time, visiting and dancing. They would have the children dance with his grand children, while their grandfather played the accordion. These happy times were never forgotten by the members of his family and friends. Isaac Nathaniel departed from this life June 23, 1925 and was buried in the Cedar View Cemetery on June 25. This was the wedding day for daughter Adelia (Ada) and Sam Barnhurst, and that day also another grandson was born to his daughter Leona.

After Nathaniel's death, Esther and her youngest son moved to Kiz, Carbon County, a little town not too far from Price, Carbon County, Utah. There, a drought came and they lost most of their live stock. Then they made a move to a farm a mile from Wellington, Carbon county, Utah. Here the son Eugene, farmed some and worked part time in the coal mine. While living here, Esther milked cows and raised chickens and helped to build them a little basement house. About this time her youngest son married a girl name Reva Jenkins. After this, her children insisted she give up all of the hard work and come and live with them, but she wanted a home for herself so she bought a small home in the little town of Bluebell, Duchesne county, Utah, where she lived and was very happy for several years, taking care of her own little place and having her children and grandchildren visit with her.

One day Esther fell and suffered a back injury from which she suffered greatly. She stayed with her daughter, Leona Wilkerson, who lived in Holladay, Salt Lake County, Utah. On January 22, 1951, she died and was buried beside her husband in Cedar View Cemetery, Duchesne County, Utah.

This noble man and wife raised ten children, six girls and four boys who came to bless their union. Their lives were not easy ones, but the trials and hardships which they endured in trying to make a living for their large family were shared with love and respect by both the parents and the

children. They never had many of the luxuries of this world but had something money cannot buy, a loving home where parents and children cheerfully shared in all the pleasures and sorrows that came their way.

The memory of their childhood was very vivid in the lives of their family members. They always remembered the family gatherings they had at the home with Nathaniel singing and playing for them, and their mothers wonderful dinners. These things will always have a place in the hearts of their many descendants and time will never erase the love they cherished for their loving parents.



Esther Jane Buchanan & Isaac Nathaniel
Workman



Front row, left to right-Edith Workman, Esther Jane Buchanan Workman, Eugene Workman, Isaac Nathaniel Workman, Hillary Workman, Back row, left to right-Josephine Workman Elmer, Adelia Workman Barnhurst, Lindsay Nathaniel Workman, Esther Rebecca Workman Wilkerson, German Buchanan Workman, Leona Workman Wilkerson, Barbara Workman Wilkerson



Children to Isaac Nathaniel & Esther Jane Buchanan Workman Wilkerson

Left to Right: Edith Workman Elder, Leona Workman Wilkerson, Barbara Workman Wilkerson, Josephine Workman Elmer, Adelia (Ada) Workman Barnhurst Burrows, Bessie Workman Wilkerson, Hillary Workman, Eugene Workman, German Workman