



Edson Barney (1806-1905)
&
Lillis Ballou (1805-1892)



their children:

Danielson Buren 1831

Olney Ammon 1833

Alice Malena 1835 ▶

Eliza Arabell 1837 ▶

Sarah Alcea abt 1837

Alcea Celinda 1840

Edson Alroy 1843

Joseph Seth 1845



Alice Malena Barney
(1835-1916)
married ([their page](#))



Eliza Arabella Barney
(1837-1906)
married ([their page](#))



Alexander Wilkins Sr.
(1835-1902)



Alexander Wilkins Sr.
(1835-1902)

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Edson Barney



Lillis Ballou

Edson's Story

I was born on June 30, 1806 in Jefferson County, Ellisburg Township, State of New York. I was the son of Royal Barney and Rachel Barney. My parents were first cousins; their fathers were brothers. My father was the son of John and Ruth Shephardson Barney. My mother was the daughter of Thankful Marsh and James Barney.

From boyhood I lived with my father and worked at farming. In February of 1825, just before I turned 19, my family moved from New York to Ohio. We lived in Amherst Township of Lorain County. I farmed and cleared land during the summer and taught school in the winter.

When I was 25 years old, I married a 26 year old widow named Lillis Ballou Comstock, daughter of Seth and Sophia Anderson Ballou. We were married on January 1, 1831. At that time I was working at a sawmill and cutting stone. That same year, on May 10th, 1831, I embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints and was baptized by Simeon D. Carter. Also baptized was my wife, mother, sister Philanea, brother Orimel and brother Royal and his wife Sarah. In the fall of 1832, I was ordained a teacher and magnified my calling as such for about a year. I was then ordained a priest and was present at the 1832 conference held in the town of Amherst where I lived. On December 27th 1832, I saw the prophet receive the revelation which is the 88th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. In the fall of 1833 I was sick with bilious fever which continued most of the time until May 1834 when we moved to Kirtland.

On May 10th 1834, my brother Royal and I and about 200 others, went with Joseph Smith to travel to Missouri. This journey was called Zions Camp. After Zion's Camp reached Missouri, and after extensive negotiations with Gov. Daniel Dunklin failed to produce results, the Prophet disbanded Zion's Camp. Zion would be redeemed at some future time. According to order I tarried in this region a short time and then received orders to return home. I arrived home in August to my wife and two sons who were two year old Buren and one year old Olney. Olney was very sick when I arrived. He died a few hours later.

On February 28th, 1835 a meeting was called and selection was made from those who went to Missouri in Zion's Camp to create the first Quorum of Seventy. The men were ordained under the hands of the First Presidency. I was one of them. I was ordained by the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer. I received my prophetic promises which I have fulfilled. My brother Royal was also ordained. On June 10, 1835, in company with John D. Packer, I was called on a mission and traveled on foot through Pennsylvania to New York State.

I returned home to Kirtland in the fall and did carpenter work on the temple. I built a large carpenter shop for the Church and studied the Hebrew language through the winter and spring. I received an endowment in the temple equal to the one received at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. I also saw the breakup of Kirtland.

We decided to move to Nauvoo, so with my wife and four small children we traveled as far as St. Joseph County, Michigan and stayed there for two years. Our fifth child was born there. I suffered much from chills and fever at this time.

Eventually we began getting ready to move on to Nauvoo. As we were finishing loading up, the Sheriff arrested me and put me in jail for safe keeping. I was charged with being an accomplice in kidnapping a girl and taking her to the Mormons for common stock. I was in jail for 24 hours and while there a priest and some

infidels came to visit me. I preached Mormonism to them and bore my testimony. This caused tears to run from their eyes. They said that if I was not released they would bring a writ of habeus corpus. I was soon released and taken to a tavern where I was informed that the girl had been found. She had run away to work. I was discharged and we went on our way to Nauvoo. Soon after we arrived in Nauvoo I joined the Nauvoo Legion, received a Captains Commission and exercised the same.

At April conference in 1844, Lorin Babbit and I were called on a mission to Ohio. We traveled on foot from Nauvoo to Chicago preaching the gospel along the way. We took the steamboat across Lake Michigan to Cold Water and then to Hillsdale. We preached and bore testimony of Mormonism along the way.

We took the cars to Monroe on Lake Erie, then the steamboat to Black River, Ohio, and thence to my father's place in Amherst where I once lived. While there I preached several times and held a debate with a Presbyterian from Oberlin. The majority decided in my favor.

I attended a conference at Kirtland and there received an appointment to "Trail" in Lorain and Huron Counties and lecture on politics and Joseph Smith's views on government. I went to my field of labor and did so successfully.

I received information of the death of Joseph and Hyrum, received a discharge of President Brookes and traveled home to Nauvoo and my family. When I arrived home I found a different aspect of things from when I left. The Prophet and Patriarch were dead!

At the organization of Seventies Quorums I was appointed Senior President of the Second Quorum. I worked hard to help finish the temple.

My wife and I were called in to receive our endowments and first and second anointings. We were endowed on December 17th 1845 and sealed on January 28, 1846. I worked in the endowment house for about 10 or 12 days. By the end of February 1846, 5,600 people had received their endowments and 2000 were sealed to their spouses. Then there were drums for war and extermination. With the rest I prepared to leave.

Lillis and I were now ready to leave. We had 5 children, the oldest was 14 and the youngest a baby. Our son Olney Ammon had died earlier in Ohio and our 2 year old Edson Alroy had died in Nauvoo. We left Nauvoo, crossed the river and went to Farmington, Iowa. We lived in Farmington for about a year. While there I received many threats. One time a shower of rocks hit the house and broke all the windows. As soon as we could, we left for Winter Quarters.

I was finally able to make my outfit to go to Salt Lake Valley - Apostle Orson Pratt put me in as a captain over 10 men in the Stevens Company of fifty men. I took my two wives and 6 children and began the journey west (probably the spring of 1851). Nothing occurred on the way except a small Indian fight close to our wagons. Two Indians were killed. We arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in August and I soon found work. I built a woolen factory about 15 miles west of Salt Lake and alongside the Jordan River. I also worked on a sawmill in Provo and worked on a bridge across the Provo River being built by the U.S. Government.

In the spring of 1856 I was appointed to go on a mission to Las Vegas, New Mexico. My 13 year old son went with me. We opened up a farm and planted seed but the crops were destroyed by the alkaline soil. We then received orders to travel about thirty miles and open up a lead mine. I helped prepare a furnace smelter but ran out of bullion. By order of the President I returned home in October. After this mission I farmed in Provo, served as Justice of the Peace, was a member of the City Council, and was chosen as Captain of the Silver Greys.

On March 10, 1858 I left on another mission. Several other men and I were sent out into southwest Utah to explore the white mountain region. I took my son Alroy with me. I was chosen president or captain of the company; George W. Bean and Brother Frieze from Salt Lake were my Counselors. We traveled to Chicken Creek, crossed the Sevier River, then on to Antelope Springs, Meadow Creek, and Snake Creek at the foot of the White Mountains. On the way we were hit by a twenty four hour snowstorm that killed one cow and six horses. We then went back to Meadow Creek. We set up a farm on Snake Creek, went to the Sink of Beaver, and then traveled the eighty miles home. I reported to Brigham Young and received an honorable discharge from the mission.

I worked in a woolen mill in Ogden for awhile and then in 1862 was "called" to go to Southern Utah. I was

56 years old, Lillis was 57, and Louisa was 40.

I lived the rest of my life in the St. George area. The winters were spent in St. George and the summers in Pine Valley. I did downstream ditch work for \$200.00. When I was 70 years old, I built a fence around the tabernacle, donated \$40.00 to the temple and paid \$20.00 tithing. I helped build the temple and the next year I built a fence around the temple block and paid \$20 tithing. I attended the dedication of the St. George temple when I was 71 years old and then went into the temple and did considerable work for my friends that were dead.

On September 20th, 1883 when I was 77 years old, I received a letter from my brother Royal, his daughter Harriet B. Young, (wife of Brigham Young) and her son Howe Young. It contained a free pass and money to pay fare to travel to Provo and Salt Lake City. This caused me to rejoice with unspeakable joy to think I had a friend. Because of this I was able to go to Provo and see Lillis where she had been visiting for a year and a half. I got to see all my children and grandchildren. I also saw many old friends and neighbors. I had a good time in Provo.

I then went to Salt Lake City. I saw my brother who was very sick, and many old friends. I attended conference and a Seventy's meeting. My friends donated a suit of apparel to me. They gave Lillis and I a free pass back to the Milford terminus and money to pay our land fare. We arrived back home in St. George about the 15th of October. We found our house swept and garnished by two young lady friends and our neighbors were there to greet us.

I stayed in Potatoo Valley (Escalante) for a short time. One time I got fruit trees and grape vine cuttings and went with my son Buren to Bluff City in San Juan County and spent the winter of 1883.

In the spring of 1890, when Lillis and I were 84 years old, we received the means to go up north. My brother Royal, his wife Sarah, Harriet B. Young, and the Alice Wilkins family furnished the means to pay our fare. So we have friends indeed in time of need. We went to Provo where my wife stayed while I went on to Salt Lake City to attend Conference. I went back to St. George and she stayed in Provo until fall, then came home by way of Escalante.

They all sent us the means in 1893 to go to the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple. We were 87 years old and were not well so we thought it would not be safe to start. We have both been unwell and sometimes sick since going the rounds. We are both here yet, trying to do our work which is May 1893."

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Lillis Ballou Comstock

Written by her 3rd great-granddaughter Debbie Wilkins Armstrong

Lillis Ballou was born April 20, 1805 at Litchfield, Herkimer, New York. She was the daughter of Seth Ballou and Sophia Batton Anderson. Her parents were honorable people who were both devoted members of the Methodist Episcopal Church for many years. Their home wherever located was a free tavern and hospital for itinerant ministers, and their substance ungrudgingly consecrated to the church and suffering humanity. The sick, poor, and needy, in everywhere that they dwelt, shared largely in their goods, their time, and their ministering attentions. Thus with unblemished rectitude of moral character, and unstinted charity towards their afflicted fellow creatures, they passed into the celestial mansions, leaving little earthly treasure to their heirs, but a "good name", which "is rather to be chosen than great riches."

About 1819 the family removed to Independence, Cuyahoga, Ohio. It was here that Lillis married her first husband, Fitch Comstock, on May 1, 1823. He was a respectable farmer, and they made their home in Independence, Ohio. They had two daughters, Minerva Ann born, and Harriet Comstock. Sadly, Harriet died when she was not yet a year old. About two weeks after Harriet died, Lillis' husband Fitch also died leaving her a widow at the young age of twenty-two. This must have been an incredibly difficult time for Lillis. She was left alone to care for her young daughter Minerva Ann.

Four years later on January 1, 1831 she married Edson Barney in Amherst, Lorain, Ohio. That same year on May 10, they were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The church being only one year, one month, and one week old at the time. They were very active in the Church. Lillis was one of the charter members of the first Relief Society, and she supported her husband while he was called away on several missions for the Church.

While living in Amherst Lillis gave birth to Danielson Buren and Olney Ammon. When her husband was away on a mission Olney became deathly ill. Edson arrived home just hours before he passed away. They settled in Ruthland near Kirtland where Alice Malena and Eliza Arabella were born. They witnessed the building and dedication of the Kirtland Temple. They were driven from Kirtland and spent the next two years in St. Joseph Michigan. Here another daughter, Alcea Celinda was born.

They then joined the Saints at Nauvoo where they remained for seven years and became personally acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. While in Nauvoo Lillis gave birth to two more sons Edson Alroy and Joseph Seth. Her husband was away on a mission when the Prophet was killed. He returned to find the sound of drums warning the Saints of extermination. Along with others they prepared to leave. They crossed the river and found work in Farmington, Van Buren, Iowa. Here they stayed for over a year and received many threats and had a shower of rocks break the windows of their home. In the spring of 1847 they moved to a place called Little Pigeon, near Kaneshville, now known as Bluff City. Here Edson married a second wife Louisa Butterfield Walker. Edson worked to supply his family with the necessary things to cross the plains. They remained there until 1851 when they emigrated to Utah traveling with the John G. Smith Company. They were on the plains four months.

After arriving in the Salt Lake Valley they went to Jordan, and after two months residence there moved to Provo arriving on Christmas Eve 1851. They lived there until the fall of 1861 passing through the trials of the Walker War. They were called on a mission to help settle St. George. While they were there Lillis raised cotton, carded spun and made her own apparel. They also helped to build the St. George Temple and witnessed its dedication. They returned to Provo and Lillis stayed with her two married daughters for a while. Then they returned to St. George. They were then called to settle and farm on the right bank of the Santa Clara, about 22 1/2 miles from St. George on the road to Pine Valley. Here they built a small house. She had to do all the things that pioneer women did to keep their family.

When Lillis was ninety-one years old her family planned a surprise birthday for her. She enjoyed the surprise very much and when told that she was probably good for ten more years she braced up and said that she didn't know but that she was. Lillis lived with her married daughters in Provo for two years before her death. When she died she was believed to be the oldest living member of the church at the time. She was

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sick for about six weeks before she died but did not suffer severely during her last illness, but she took scarcely any nourishment. She was satisfied in her own mind that the time for her departure had come, and anxiously awaited the change. She died December 23, 1897 at the home of Mrs. Wilkins, her daughter, in Provo Utah. She was 92 years old.

Sources:

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 4. "An Elaborate History and Genealogy of the Ballou's in America" pgs. 264-265 and 666-667 found on Ancestry.com
 5. "Deseret News" 1898-01-01 Local and Other News
 6. "The Daily Enquirer" 1896-04-21 Veteran Surprised
 7. "Deseret News" 1898-01-08 Obituary Notes
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