

PAF Notes assembled by Alona Southwick Perkes

Places of birth as given by James Wanlass

1851 Edinburgh Midlothian - Census

1855 Musselburgh, Midlothian - Janet's birth

1858 Edinburgh, Midlothian - Church records

1861 Newton, Midlothian - Census

1871 Edinburgh Midlothian - Census

1874 Edinburgh - LDS Endowment

A brief outline of James, tell us that he was born 25 Sept. 1825. Family statements handed down state he was left on the steps of a foundling home as a baby or very young child, dressed in fancy clothes and with a blanket. A note accompanied him stated his name and requesting them to care for him as his parents could no longer do so, his parents couldn't be found (Edith Martha Bush Southwick). He understood that his parents were visiting Scotland with all their children when his mother was killed in some kind of accident and his father later remarried.

He was raised in an orphanage and when he got older, he ran away from the orphanage and a family by the name of Ramsey housed him and took care of him for a while.

James always felt he was English, rather than Scottish, by birth as he often told his granddaughter, Edith Elizabeth Wanlass.

James later became a keeper of records for the precinct where he lived, so he evidently was trusted in government affairs in the area. He was about 5 foot 9 inches tall, without a heavy of a Scottish brogue as his wife Margaret. A very quiet man, he educated himself by going to night school, and would recall stories of the mill at Nearth, Scotland where he attended church. He became a lay minister in one of the Nearth churches thereabout until he heard the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints doctrine preached, recognized the truth and was baptized and confirmed a member of the Tranent Branch of that church, Dec. 22nd 1850, by William Duncan (#026,585, #026,585, #415,456, #1,750,723)

James worked as an iron worker and had very bad asthma. He grew a beard to protect his throat from the cold air.

Margaret, his wife was 5 feet 6-7 inches tall and was heavier in her younger years than older. She spoke with a very broad Scots accent and one had to listen very hard in order to really understand what she was talking about. She would reach out to anyone who came to see her, a very calm lady.

They were quite poor, but humble and very hospitable, often sacrificing their necessities for the comfort and benefit of the Elders in that land even to the extent of selling some of their comforts that they might feed them. James later became president of the Bathgate conference in Scotland. He was ordained a Teacher in the LDS church Aug. 25, 1857 (026,585).

He would never have his picture taken and the only one in existence is the one as an old man with his eyes are closed, someone had to sneak up on him to take the picture unaware.

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Surname Book at SLC Family History Center # 941D4b, The New York Public Library, page 800 defines:

WANLESS, WANLISS: "Wanlace and Wanless are names peculiar to Northumberland" (Guppy), and in record there in 1523. Simon Wanles was a monk of Melrose, 1451 (Irvine, I, p. 141). Robert Wanless, witness in Linlithgow, 1538 (Laing, 419). Robert Wandles was admitted deacon of Coupar-Angus in 1683, and John Wanles was tenant in Pitrodie, 1711 (DPD., II, p. 86, 280). Wanlass 1691. Of uncertain origin, the usual definitions offered being, I think, improbable.

1874 Dec. 3, James Wanlass was received into the Salt Lake City 16th, Ward. (Film 026585, Record of Members 1877-1900 Salt Lake City 16th Ward, Book A, page 4, line 2)

The 1880 census has been extensively searched for Utah and surrounding states to Utah. Salt Lake City has also been searched, along with the new set of 1880 USA Census CD's with no listing of James or Margaret Wanlass or any various spellings, including searching for single children's names, in all of the USA. According to the obituary, James 'resided continually in SLC' after his immigration until his death, therefore it is assumed that they were missed being enumerated.

1884 Utah Gazetteer page 599 (979.225E4u)
Wanless James, Miner, 266 W Sixth South

1896 Polks, Salt Lake City Directory page 707 (979.225E4p)
Wanlass James, died Oct. 8, '95, age 70.
Wanless Alexander, lab, res 936 W 9th South