Maria Louisa was born 17 Nov 1829 in Montesuma, Pike Co., Illinois. Maria was 8 years old when she, her mother and father were baptized in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Because of their conversions they were driven from their homeland, their property was taken from them in Ripley, Ill.

In February 1838 the family of mother, father, 7 children and a wagon driver traveled in one wagon to Nauvoo. The Prophet Joseph Smith advised them to build a pottery and make crockery for the Saints, which they did.

Maria said, “Indeed they were dark and trying times. I saw Joseph and Hyrum after their martyrdom in their coffins with their wounds. We were forced to leave out home and go into strange lands among strangers and seek a home and subsistence upon the extreme borders of civilization with nothing to recommend us to the charities of the frontiersmen or the savage Indian except the good Spirit or influence we carried with us.” They settled in Council Bluffs after being driven from Nauvoo, after the temple had been built.

Maria met and married Elliot Alfred Newell in 1851. They left for the Salt Lake Valley on 6 June 1852 in a wagon with a team of oxen. Elliot had the use of one hand only, due to felons, so Maria had to yoke and unyoke the cattle and drive them a great part of the way. They arrived 7 Oct. 1852.

Maria endured many hardships which continued after their arrival in Utah. She cared for her family, while Elliot was away defending the Saints against Johnson’s Army and again when he was called to southern Utah to protect the Saints from hostile Indians and later when called to settle in Provo, and when Elliot served a mission in his native state of New York. Maria and Elliot were always faithful & humble servants of the Lord. They participated actively in Church and community activities in Provo. Maria was selected to be the main speaker at the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the organization of the Relief Society 17 March 1892.

The following is taken from her speech at that time. “After 50 years we are only now recovering from long years of toil, hardships and trials that have taken from us many of our strongest pillars, our brightest stars and most noble minds. Many times it appeared as though we were adrift upon an ocean of trouble without a landmark to steer to, but in our darkest hours we sought refuge in our Heavenly Father’s care. He had heard the cries of His Saints, through His aid we were enabled to surmount the greatest obstacles that at times almost overpowered us. Our hearts should swell with gratitude this day that we are permitted to assemble under so favorable circumstances to commemorate so great an event as occurred 50 years ago today.” (Her speech in its entirety is in the DUP Historical Dept.

Marie Louisa Roberts Newell was a great pioneer woman, who experienced first hand the early history of the Saints in Nauvoo and continued to participate to a great extend in the History of Utah. She passed away 15 Sep. 1904 in Provo, Utah at almost 75 years old. Elliot Albred Newell had died 14 Jan. 1893, 10 years prior, also in Provo. We honor them for their great faith and fortitude.

CHILDREN:

Luella Isola born 2 April 1852
Elliot Alfred, Jr. Born 7 July 1853
Arthur Pembrose born 12 Oct. 1854
Myron Clark born 26 Sep 1856
Cealy born 26 April 1859
Charles Ephraim chr. 6 Feb 1860
Ida Olive chr. 23 Oct 1862
Frank Ernest born 21 June 1864
Maria Louisa born 29 Feb 1867
Lucy Edith born 25 April 1871
George born 8 Nov 1872 died an infant.

Typed into the computer Oct. 2002 Kathleen Jardine Woolf Idaho Falls, Idaho
Information came from Newell reunion histories and LDS Church records