

ELIZA ANN TAGGART GOODRICH

By Lela G. Johnson

Eliza Ann Taggart was born on January 28, 1844 in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois. She was the daughter of Harriet Atkins Bruce and George Washington Taggart, two stalwarts who had "counted the cost, laid their hearts on the altar, and made the sacrifice." Few of us realize today what that meant--what it involved to be a "Mormon" in those days. Nearly everything that made life pleasant and lovely, except the gospel, was taken away. They became strangers to their kindred, in many cases, almost overnight.

Harriet and George had come to Nauvoo for the church, were married in May of 1843 when the saints were working hard on the temple and the mobs were crying for the blood of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Their first and only child, Eliza, was born January 28, just a few months before the Prophet and his brother were murdered in June. Harriet died the next February 19, 1845.

Eliza's father was a member of the Nauvoo Legion and was frequently called to bear arms for the protection of the city. He was also working on the temple, which the saints had been commanded to build and complete before they left for the west. Everyone was working feverishly to get homes built, and food was so scarce that men working on the temple were often hungry. In order to do his duty, George W. Taggart would often make a bed in his wheelbarrow and take Eliza to work with him, caring for her the best he could while he worked.

Before many months the turmoil increased to the point where the prophet decided to go west and wait there for his people until they had finished their work in Nauvoo and could follow him. But as history records, he returned again to face the mob and death. With his death went more of the security of the saints, and everyone felt the increase in suffering and danger.

At the time of the prophet's death the temple was but one story high; yet on the 24th of May 1845, eleven months after the martyrdom, they had finished the temple at a cost of one and one-half million dollars, and about six o'clock in the morning the capstone was laid amid the general rejoicing and shouts of "Hosanna" from the assembled thousands of saints. The reason the capstone was laid so early in the morning was that the twelve were kept in an enforced semi-seclusion to avoid the officers who sought to serve writs upon them for trumped-up charges against the law.

On July 6, 1845, nearly two months after the completion of the temple, Eliza's father married Fanny Parks who became a loving mother to Eliza. Fanny wrote in her own history that "through all the hardships and trials to come I had her (Eliza) with me, and she was a great comfort to me."

In February 1846 some of the saints started to leave Nauvoo because of persecution. At the same time some of the men were called to act as guards for the artillery in the first company that left Nauvoo. Eliza's father was one of these and she and her mother were left in the care of John Mills. They hoped to sell some property to get means to take them to Winter Quarters, but were unsuccessful. Brother Mills then moved them across the river to a town called Nashville because it was unsafe in Nauvoo. Thus it was that they were not in Nauvoo at the time of the battle.

Fanny wrote to George to tell him of their situation and he started back to help. However, he was counseled to stop at Pisgah, 200 miles west of Nauvoo, and plant crops which might benefit his family. While at this work the call came from President Polk for five hundred men to volunteer for service in the United States Army. Surprise and dismay greeted this message, but President Young said he trusted Captain Allen who had brought the message and he would like the brethren to enlist and serve their country. He promised them if they would do this and would live their religion, not a man would fall in battle. George was again one to go.

Fanny wrote in her journal that the condition seemed very hard to her, but Brother Mills was kind and promised that if he was able to take his family west, he would also take her. Arriving at Council Bluffs they had no home, but friends were kind and the way was opened, and they were blessed with enough of the necessities to live. They slept in a wagon until the weather became too cold, then they slept on a bed of hay on a floor, the hay having to be taken up each morning, and the rains soaked through the roof, so everything was wet.

They were blessed with health so that they were able to give aid to those who were not so fortunate, and thus they found other homes. She would furnish her share of the food, which consisted mostly of corn boiled in lye water to take the husks off, then washed clean and boiled until tender. They had no fruit, meat or vegetables, and never butter. One family by the name of Lambert left to go to Missouri to work, and Fanny and Eliza were asked to take their home, so they lived there until George returned from the Battallion on December 17, 1847. Eliza had forgotten her father by this time.

They now moved across the river to Harris Grove in Pottawattamie County, Iowa where they lived until they left for Salt Lake City. Eliza's father brought home from the Battallion a span of mules and a horse. These he traded for young stock, some cows and a yoke of oxen. He worked on a farm and built wagons for the saints, all the time preparing to come to Salt Lake City as soon as possible. In July 1852 they started for the Valley, arriving in Salt Lake City on October 17, 1853. Eliza was eight years old now. They had traveled 1037 miles from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake City.

The journey was anything but pleasant. Some new roads, many mud holes, mountains to climb, bad water or none at all. The cholera was in their midst and many died, but as they came nearer to the mountains the cholera left and they were blessed with fairly good health. When they had trouble with the wagons or something else went wrong, they would stop for repairs, at which time the women would bake and wash. They were not able to iron. They did much of their baking, as well as setting tires etc. with buffalo chip fires.

Upon arriving in Salt Lake City, George immediately started building a grist mill for President Young. He also built the Chase Mill in Liberty Park. Their home was in the Twelfth Ward. They had no stove, bed, table nor chairs, and the roof leaked, but they were grateful to have it, and they lived there a year. George built them a bed and table, and in the fall of 1853 he bought a stove from Heber C. Kimball. The next spring they planted a garden by the house, only to have it washed away by a cloudburst which cut gulches down both sides of the house, which they could not cross until they were bridged. The water also ran inside the house and they kept dry by climbing on

the bed.

They now moved to a lot one block north of the temple, on a hill just a little below the old arsenal. The arsenal stood where the State Capitol now stands. It was blown up when some young boys played around it with matches. They were never found. Windows rattled and houses shook all over the city. Here George built a house and planted an orchard of peach trees. Eliza was ten years old at this time, and she had one sister and two brothers.

Two years later the Echo Canyon War occurred and Eliza and her family were moved to Provo to escape harm. The Taggart family stayed there five weeks. Upon their return the children were overjoyed to find their toys still safe and unmolested, as they had heard President Young say that men on guard were to burn everything to the ground if the enemy molested anything.

Eliza's father worked one summer on the Salt Lake temple, then he assisted in building four flour mills, in Bountiful, Farmington, and Brigham City.

The next we know of Eliza comes from the history of her mother-in-law, Penelope Randall Gardner Goodrich. "On November 10, 1862," she wrote, "George started with me to go to the station. (The "station" was at the top of Parley's Canyon, and was later known as "Skyline." It was run at that time by her daughter, Sophia and her husband Leonard W. Hardy.) We called at Bro. Taggart's. Took Eliza along with us. When we got there we found them well and jolly. Found a new married couple there, and as the disease is catching, George was attacked, so he came home with a wife by his side. They were married by Elder James Laird." Eliza was now 18 years of age.

Again on the 20th her mother-in-law wrote: "George has taken his wife home to live with me. I hope I shall like her. It will not be so lonely."

And again on the 20th of October 1863 the diary says, "Eliza and I have cut and dried 60 bushels of peaches."

On October 30, 1863 Eliza's first child was born. She named him George Leonard. They were still living with Penelope. All of the families were happy together and visited back and forth, quite often staying with each other overnight.

The diary says again, "Dec. 5, 1864: George and wife have gone to the theatre tonight, will stay with Eliza's mother. George got Eliza a new dress, paid 16 dollars for it. Got me a pair of shoes and paid 5 dollars."

On the 26th of December 1865 Eliza Caroline, second child, was born in Salt Lake City.

In May 1866 Eliza's half sister, Harriet, became her husband's second wife.

On January 4, 1868 in Salt Lake City her third child, Mary Augusta, was born.

Now the call came from Brigham Young to go to what was called the "Muddy Mission."

The purpose of this call was for the saints to settle the southern part of Utah about 100 miles south of St. George for the purpose of raising cotton to help the saints to be self-sustaining. The two Goodrich families left on this mission on the 4th of November 1868. They endured many hardships on this three-week journey. They had a small tent of linen for their protection nights. It was difficult to stake the tent securely because of the deep sand, and often the tent blew over on them as they slept. Traveling down the Virgin River they could only go about 10 miles a day because of the sand. They were molested considerably by Navajo Indians and had to stand guard each night to keep their horses from being stolen. They were often short of wood or water.

They arrived at their destination, St. Joseph, the early part of December and found that as fast as they planted seeds the wind would blow them away. The ground was sand. The wind blew the canals they built full of sand. Melons and bran bread were often their only food.

Finally, they found some land along a creek where they could raise crops. They planted wheat in December and harvested it in May. Then they planted corn and harvested it in November. Food was still scarce and they at one time bought a bushel of potatoes for \$5.00. They made nearly everything they wore, even shoes and hats. Building material was adobe, which they made, and wood, which they cut with a whip saw.

During this time President Young wanted some of the families to go to Long Valley and settle there. The Goodrich families went. Here Eliza's fourth child, Lewis Henry, was born on June 27, 1870. This place was later known as Overton, Clark County, Nevada. Once again food was hard to get. George and Isaiah Bowers went into the timber and with a whip saw, sawed lumber for a man at Pipe Springs. By this means they secured some flour and beans which were very much appreciated. Flour was \$25.00 per hundred here at this time. Grasshoppers devoured all their first crops. Their land was surveyed and found to be in Nevada. This state demanded that taxes be paid, and when they could not raise money to pay, the state took many of their horses and cattle for taxes. President Young advised breaking up the settlements rather than suffer these extremities. Some families returned to their homes they had left in Utah. Others did what they could.

The Goodrich families left the "Muddy" on July 12 and arrived at Salt Lake City July 24, 1871. Here they remained a few days and then pushed on to Morgan where the Taggarts were living, Eliza's and Harriet's parents. George engaged in farming and milling here for the next 14 or 16 years. He was sheriff here for two terms.

It was here also that he found Rhoda Slade who became his third wife on October 9, 1879. They were married by Joseph F. Smith. At this place six more children were born to Eliza, and she was sustained a member of the Primary stake board.

Pioneer work was not over for these families, for after hearing encouraging stories about the Ashley Valley, they decided to make a home there. In October 1885 they started for the valley. Harriet and Rhoda remained for a time in Morgan, while Eliza went to Ashley Valley. They settled in Mill Ward, now known as Maeser Ward, where George began operating the first grist mill in the valley. It was owned by Lycurgus Johnson and run by water power. They lived in a log house a little east of the mill. This location is about one-fourth mile northwest of the old Jim Hacking

corner, now the Owen Hacking home. They operated this mill for about three years. While here their last child, Byron, was born on November 23, 1887. A short while after this they purchased land and built a home just north of the Naples Ward chapel. This house had two large rooms downstairs and two upstairs (one not finished), and was built of logs. Harriet came now from Morgan and the two families lived there. Rhoda came and occupied the Maeser home.

Trouble again set foot in their door. A diphtheria epidemic came to the valley in 1889 and many people died. Among them were five of Harriet's children and one of Eliza's. This was a terrible thing. Dr. Hullinger was the only doctor in the valley except for one at Ft. Duchesne, but neither knew much about the disease nor effective methods for combating the malady. Fear of the disease was extreme. They were quarantined for two months, and during this time one man was arrested for traveling the street on which they lived.

Soon George was called on a mission to Tennessee and the wives were left alone to make their way. He was away from 1892 to 1894. His son Albert was left to help care for the families during his absence, but soon the church authorities called Albert to take the Sunday School normal course at Provo, and the families were left without a boy large enough to harness a team.

When George returned from his mission, he spent the winter in Salt Lake City with his sister, thinking it safer there on account of the polygamy raid. While there he was able to do a little work to aid in the support of his families. He also did temple work there until 1896.

At Naples Eliza was a member of the Relief Society Presidency. The families, like most families around them, were poor in worldly goods, but rich in spirituality, and they sought to improve their social life, religious training, and educational advantages.

The families then took up an 80-acre tract of land under the timber act, and planted about four acres of cottonwood trees. Many of these trees are still standing. Harriet's family moved first to this farm. A few years later Eliza and family followed, and then Rhoda and her family. With the help of the boys a living was made for the three families. Besides the farm work the father had other jobs such as water master on the Central Canal, and being a rock mason he built several rock houses, some of which are still standing. He was also the first man hired to help Professor Douglas at the beginning of the development of the Dinosaur Quarry. The families worked together putting up hay and other crops, herding cows, and smoking meat in the same "smoke house." Each family had its own garden and cows.

Eliza was a lover of beautiful things. She loved flowers and had her windows lined with them. She sang much of the time as she went about her work, and those who remember her say that she would never become angry at anyone or anything. One of her specialties in the baking line was soda crackers.

Eliza's health broke after the birth of her eleventh child and she was unable to attend meetings and other public things, but was obliged to remain home most of the time. She loved to read, and kept up pretty well on events of the day. She especially enjoyed reading articles by the church leaders, a great number of which she clipped from the Deseret News and kept for others to

read. She had a strong desire to contribute to the missionary cause and all things pertaining to the church, and did so according to her ability. Her most consuming interest seemed to be Genealogy. The family was strict in tithe payments and other offerings, and always had the blessing on the food and family prayer. Eliza was neat in her personal appearance and was unassuming in nature and disposition, kind, tolerant, and unselfish.

Eliza lived to be 69 years of age, passing away April 6, 1913, two years after her husband. She is buried in the Vernal Cemetery, Uintah County, Utah.

We of the families who are living today owe a debt of gratitude to the three mothers who felt that polygamy was a deep religious principle which was to be obeyed, and they likely sacrificed many of their own personal desires to live this principle. They lived together in love and understanding, and taught their children in such a way that they also have been able to live congenially and happily together. I hope the same can be said of all of us who are descended from these strong Latter-day Saint pioneers.

Letter from Eliza Ann Taggart Goodrich, written in Ashley on March 26, 1886 to her sister, Harriet Maria Taggart Goodrich in Morgan.

Dear Sister Harriet,

I was glad to get a few lines from you, and very glad you are all in good health and getting along so well...

I like this place very well, but it is like all other places, not entirely perfect. There's room for a great deal to be done. There's a poor market for anything we can sell, eggs now and then have been twenty cents this winter. How we will get any store pay I do not know, but hope some way will open. The people are just as good as they can be so far.

I don't think there is any weaving done here yet. Brother G. G. Clark is making a loom thing. People will have to shift for themselves all they can. Some that have plenty of wool take it to the Provo factory. Please write again.

E. A. T. G.
(Eliza Ann Taggart Goodrich)

P.S. We got the tomato seed all right and am much obliged to you. I will be still more obliged if you will send us some cauliflower seed, if you have any. I can't find any around here. Tell Fan (Fanny) when she gets home to write and tell us all the news, what kind of time she had etc.

E. A. G.
(Eliza Ann Goodrich)