

A Brief Sketch of the Life of
LUSANNAH E. GOODRIDGE HOVEY

Taken from the notes of her private journal
Prepared by M. R. Hovey, of Logan, Utah
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Lusannah E. Goodridge Hovey was born March 24, 1834 in Lunenburg, Worcester County, Massachusetts. Her parents were Benjamin Goodridge and Penelope Gardner Goodridge. There were eight children in the family. Lusannah was the sixth child. September 2, 1849, Lusannah with her parents, six sisters and one brother became members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Elder Leonard W. Hardy baptized them.

In 1850 under the leadership of Leonard W. Hardy, the Goodridge family with others started for the great West where they were to join Elder Wilford Woodruff's company enroute. Elder Woodruff was taking quite a large company of saints to Utah. After traveling by rail and canal boat for some distance, they met the Wilford Woodruff Company at Canesville, Iowa. Here they were fitted out with teams, wagons, and provisions. The teams consisted mostly of oxen. Some wagons had from two to five yoke of oxen and all heavily loaded with women, children and provisions, such as clothing and merchandise. The company was organized into groups of one hundred, fifty, and ten with a captain over each group. Leonard W. Hardy was appointed captain over one of the groups.

May 21, 1850, the company got under way for the long journey across the plains to Zion, or Utah. The journey was filled with a number of exciting and very trying and sad events. Not being accustomed to this mode of transportation and exposure, a number of deaths occurred. Four women died in one day. One man and his horse were killed by lightning during a thunder storm.

In traveling there were often twenty or thirty teams close behind each other, heavily loaded. On one occasion, a horse which was being ridden by a man became unruly, started to run and buck and threw the rider off. This frightened the teams and they stampeded. Teams and wagons were going in all directions. With most of the teams running away, it appeared that many of the women and children in the wagons were headed for destruction. Some of the wagons were tipped over. Brother Woodruff's carriage was tipped over and smashed to pieces and his horse's leg was broken. Two of his family were thrown out of the carriage and injured. Finally, the teams were gotten under control, and after a check up was made, no one was seriously injured. All felt very grateful considering the stampede and the danger they had passed through.

While traveling day after day, large herds of buffalo were encountered as well as Indians. Many hardships were experienced in camp life on the plains. The company finally arrived at Salt Lake City, October 14, 1850, nearly five months since they left Canesville, Iowa.

The Goodridge family settled in the nineteenth ward in Salt Lake City. Benjamin Goodridge, the father, purchased a house and lot. During the winter, three sisters of Lusannah were married. The eldest, Mary Jane, was married to William Flint, Sophia was married to Leonard W. Hardy, and Sarah was married to Joseph O. Hovey as a plural wife. Lusannah remained with her parents and other sisters and brother until the summer of 1851. She went to Centerville, North of Salt Lake City, to assist her sister, Mary Jane Flint. In September, 1851, her sister, Sarah, died leaving a baby boy eight days old. In the meantime, a daughter had been born to her other sister, Mary Jane. Lusannah took the little motherless babe of her dead sister, Sarah, and cared for it. It was named John G. Hovey. January 14, 1852, Lusannah married Joseph G. Hovey, the husband of Sarah.

Living conditions were strenuous and it was difficult to obtain sufficient food, clothing and other provisions. They were scarce. However, the little family struggled along and did the best they could. The winter of 1852 was long and severe. The family had no stoves. They cooked by the fireplace in bake kettles and boiling pots. Being a plural wife, Lusannah found it hard going, and she had to assume more responsibilities than ordinary. She had many trials and disappointments and was discouraged many times. It was only her faith in God and the strong testimony of the gospel that enabled her to bear the burden. Her father was sick and his family was in very poor circumstances. Lusannah worried over them considerably.

There was a drought during the summer of 1852, and the crops suffered. The food supply still remained scant and insufficient. The following winter was another cold one, and with it came many privations and much sickness. Her father still remained sick and unable to work. It was a severe trial for the family.

April 29, 1853, Lusannah gave birth to a daughter, her first child. She was named Penelope (Nellie). Lusannah's recovery was slow, and it was several months before she regained her health. Times were still hard and her family had few of the comforts of life. She tried faithfully to perform her religious and family duties. June 13, 1855, Lusannah gave birth to her second child. He was large and healthy. His name was James A. That summer was a hard one. They had a little bread and much less butter and meat. Their principal food consisted of dandelion and pig weeds boiled. However, the baby appeared to get long nicely, from the nourishment from his mother. Everybody was placed on rations. All were required to account for food and provisions in their possession. The grain that fall had to be pulled by hand as it was too short to harvest with a cradle or scythe. A number of times Lusannah went to the little farm to help pull the grain and harvest it. There were no machines or reapers in the country at that time.

She continued to keep her dead sister Sarah's child, and thought much of him. He was bright and affectionate.

During the winter of 1856, her husband, Joseph G. Hovey, was called on a mission to the southern part of the territory to visit the Saints and preach the gospel. This left Lusannah alone much of the time. It was also a very trying winter. In March, the little boy, John G. became ill with brain fever and died. The weather was so stormy and the roads so bad her husband and two

men placed the little coffin in a wagon and went to the cemetery, dug the grave, and buried the little body.

That spring and summer was another repetition of poor crops, scant food supplies, and necessities of life. Her husband continued on his mission in the southern part of the territory preaching the gospel and encouraging the Saints as directed. The food for the family consisted of a little bread and milk, greens, spinach, pig weeds, and later, beets and onions.

August 29, 1857, her third child, a daughter was born. She was named Olive Ann. There was much excitement in the Utah territory at this time. It was reported that the U.S. Army was coming to Utah to destroy the Mormons. Great preparations were made in Echo Canyon to hold the Army back until winter overtook them. Everybody was called on to assist. Most of the able bodied men were asked to go to the mountains to hinder the progress of the Army. Lusannah's husband's son, Joseph was one of the number who spent the winter in the mountains guarding the passes. In the spring of 1858, the call came for all the settlers to move south to give better protection to themselves in case the U.S. Army came through. Many responded. Lusannah, her husband, and three children loaded what provisions they could in a wagon, and with an ox team started south. A small chicken coup filled with chickens was attached to the rear of the wagon, and two cows were driven behind. As the wagon was filled to the bows; there was only enough room in the front seat for Lusannah with a child on each side of her and a baby in her arms. She had to drive the oxen as her husband followed behind and drove the cows. They went as far as Spanish Fork and camped with another family. Lusannah's husband then had to return to Salt Lake City to his other family, consisting of four.

The people who made the move to Spanish Fork lived in tents, dugouts, shacks, and other makeshifts for three months to see what the outcome would be. Finally, the word came to move back to Salt Lake City. The move back was done in about the same manner as the move out.

After returning home, the baby took severe convulsions and became partially paralyzed on one side of its body. For five weeks Lusannah did not undress to go to bed, but had to remain almost constantly by the side of the little one. By the great power of faith and good nursing, the life of the little baby was spared. It took some time for it to learn to walk and talk again.

Lusannah's health was broken and she was in distress most of the winter and spring.

July 24, 1859, her fourth child, a daughter was born. She was named Mary L. Because of other conditions and worry, Lusannah suffered much during the period of gestation and confinement, and to carry on for other duties. The following December her father, Benjamin Goodridge, died at the age of sixty five.

Learning of the possibilities in Cache Valley, and because so many families were going to help settle it, Lusannah's husband decided to move one of his families to Cache Valley. It was finally agreed that Lusannah and her children should go north with the other settlers and help build up the fertile Cache Valley. The church farm had been established in Cache Valley in 1855 by the Carr boys, Bakers and others under orders from President Brigham Young.

Wellsville, or Maughan's Fort had been established in 1856, but due to the Utah war or the coming of the U.S. Army to Utah, all had moved from Cache Valley south. In the spring of 1859, there was a rapid move back to Cache Valley by the former settlers and many new ones.

April 12, 1860, Lusannah and her family started with two teams, one of oxen and one of horses with two loaded wagons, for Cache Valley. The roads were in such bad conditions that they were able to reach only the Hot Springs north of Salt Lake City the first night and camped. The baby became sick and Lusannah sat up all night in the dark and cold weather with a baby wrapped close to her. Very little sleep was had. They were several days in reaching the little valley east of Brigham City where Mantua is now located.

In attempting to get through the mountains, it began to snow, and they were held up for a week. They could go no further. Her husband left the family and went to Cache Valley to get help from George W. Pitkin who had gone previously. Her husband brought back a yoke of oxen and with this additional help, the family was able to pull through the canyon and finally landed at the Church Farm (Elk Horn Ranch) in Cache Valley located a short distance south of the present Logan Sugar Factory.

When they arrived at the Church Farm, they met the Carr boys and the Weaver brothers who were caretakers. Lusannah and her family were permitted to occupy one of the cabins. It had been previously decided that the settlers at the Church Farm would move east and locate near a little saw mill on the Blacksmith Fork river to give it better protection. This advice was given by Apostle S.T. Benson and Peter Mangham, President of the Cache Valley Colony. The mill was named by Esalo Edwards. The settlers would also be nearer the canyon where they could get out timber for building their homes.

In her own words, Lusannah says, "My husband accrued a piece of land for farming. His son, Joseph, and he plowed the land and planted some wheat. They got out some logs for a cabin and some rails to fence the land. They made a shanty out of slabs and we lived in this shanty and the wagon box with a wagon cover during that summer. We moved from the Church Farm to the mill the latter part of May, 1860.

"Later that summer, Apostle Benson and President Peter Mangham, came to the settlement and set my husband a part as the first bishop. The town plot was made and surveyed into blocks with the streets designed. Eight acres to a block. The town was officially name Millville.

"We secured our lot and built a log house, 16 by 18 feet with a rough board floor and straw and dirt for a roof. Cloth for windows. There was about one dozen families and time the ward was organized. This was a new and wild country as most of the early settlements of the valley had been started only a year previous. The necessities of life were scarce and we had to work hard. There are many Indians remaining about and steeling what they lay their hands on. They stole a team of horses from us.

"We had the usual pests of crickets and grasshoppers to damage our crops. The first years of our settlement in Millville were very discouraging. Very often we had to contribute beef and flour to the Indians, following the advice of Brigham Young that it was better to feed the Indians than fight them. We had a few sheep. I took the wool, washed and carded it, and then spun it into yarn, then wove it and made clothing for our family. I did this for a number of years. One of our oxen died so we were handicapped for come time to harvest our crops and do other teamwork on the little farm. Somehow we managed to get through the first winter in Cache Valley for us, 1861.

"September 10, 1861, my fifth child, a daughter was born. We named her Martha C. The following winter was a very wet one. It rained most of the time and the water leaked through the roof of our cabin and we had a difficult time to keep our needs dry. The children are sick more or less all through the winter. My oldest daughter fell into the cellar and was badly injured. She was sick for several weeks and we feared she would die. One day Apostle Benson was passing and we called him to administer to the girl. He promised her she would live and become a mother in Israel. She soon recovered and she did become a real mother in Israel, and reared a large and wonderful family. A little later my baby had a very painful gathering on the back of its neck, and this caused us considerable worry and care.

"February, 1863, my sixth child, a daughter was born. We named her Esther. My husband had been in Salt Lake City all winter and my health was poor. I was not very strong for such an ordeal. About the 25th of February a heavy snowstorm came. This made it very bad for all of us as I still had the care and worry of the little girl with the gathering on her neck and sickly, and all of my children were young. It was a big load for me to carry and mostly alone. I had an elderly woman stopping with me in the daytime, and she did the best she could to help me.

In May of that year, my son James became ill with a fever sore on the shin bone of his left leg. His leg swelled very badly from the knee to the ankle. It was very painful and he had a high fever. It was five weeks before it abscessed in several places. A number of splinters of diseased bone came thru the flesh with the puss. I sat up with him many nights as he was in so much pain. There were no doctors, and my husband and I did all we could to nurse him and saved his leg and his life. We prayed earnestly to our Heavenly Father to spare his life. He finally began to recover and got so he could walk with crutches. He was ill in bed for four months.

In October of that year, James went to Salt Lake City to stay with his father and the other family. My husband was working on the Temple block as stone cutter.

"May 10, 1866, my seventh child was born. It was a son and we named him George S. During the summer, my husband went again to Salt Lake City. We rented his farm to a Swedish family. He did not expect to return again for some time. In the fall, he and James went to Salt Lake City again where James could have his leg doctored by his uncle, Dr. O.D. Hovey. My husband came to visit me the latter part of December and remained until the latter part of February in 1867. He settled up his affairs and said he would have to leave for Salt Lake City again and would not return for some time as he expected to be called again on another mission that spring. He had complained of a pain in his side and did not feel well. We sent brother Hunt who was going to Salt Lake City and said he could ride with him. My husband came to the house at once and asked that I pack his things so he would be off early the next morning with brother Hunt for Salt Lake City. When the next morning came, he said I would love to give each of you a special blessing, but do not have the time now. He asked God to bless us and departed.

That was the last time I saw my husband alive.

"I received two letters from him and each time he complained of being in poor health. When the Spring Conference was over, I looked in the papers of the conference reports of those called on missions. I failed to see the name of my husband and concluded that he had been mistaken about being called on another mission. May 5th, I received a letter stating he was very sick. May 7th, his son Joseph and I started for Salt Lake City with an ox team and wagon. We arrived there the morning of the 9th. My son James came out to meet us as we neared the house. I asked him how

his father was. He said, 'He is dead and was buried last Thursday, May 7th.' The shock was so sudden that I was nearly prostrated for some time. I had no premonition that he would be taken from me so soon. We had gone on a mission that neither of us had thought of. I went to my mother and remained with her for a week.

My eldest daughter, Penelope had been living for some time with my sister, Sophia Hardy. She and my son James accompanied me back home where I took up life's burden again to travel alone with seven children to clothe and feed and with another one to come soon. Only my Heavenly Father knows what my feelings are. I kept my children together and did the best I could. In my condition, I did not have the health and strength I otherwise would. Many times we did not have enough to eat but we did not complain.

September, 1868, my eighth child, a son, was born. I named him Grafton F. He was quite a sickly child until after he was two years old. Many times I thought I would not be able to raise him. I nursed him carefully and prayed earnestly to my Heavenly Father to save him. Food stuff still remained scarce. He had three years in succession of grasshopper pests which took nearly all the crops people could raise from the farms and the gardens.

"In later years, I was called out in the ward many times to help with the sick. I was a midwife and family doctor too as there were few doctors then. In addition to my own work and cares, I was called on many times to help others. This was cheerfully done. I look back now and wonder how I was able to endure and carry the load I did. But thanks to my Heavenly Father, 'He made the back to fit the burden.'"

Lusannah still carried on and reared her family to manhood and womanhood. In 1882, her son George was killed in a railway accident. In 1884, her daughter and mother died after a short illness. The rest of the family were married but the youngest son, Grafton. Lusannah was president of the Millville Relief Society Organization for 19 years. In her later life, she was a devoted temple worker. No one thought more of the temple ordinances and temple work than she. The last years of her life were spent in Salt Lake City where she lived with her daughters and did temple work.

Lusannah E. Goodridge Hovey died in Millville, July 14, 1910, and was buried in the Millville Cemetery. She was seventy-six years of age.

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The immersible caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death.
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed.
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lied down to pleasant dreams."

Bryant