

# Hannah Elida Baldwin Crosby:

## Biographical Sketch<sup>1</sup>

by Mary Karma Crosby Stalker

Hannah Elida Baldwin Crosby was born March 4, 1820 in New Brunswick, Maine. She was the daughter of George Baldwin and Elizabeth Hansen Baldwin. Her father died when she was small and her mother married Nathan Leavitt. They lived near Clinton, Kennebec County, Maine. there was a large family and it became necessary for Hannah and her half-sister, Elizabeth to work. They worked in a cotton mill at Lowell Mass. Here they heard of the L.D.S. church and the missionaries taught and converted them. They were baptized. Later, Elizabeth left the Church, but not Hannah. She was the only one of her family in the Church and when she went West and married Jesse Wentworth Crosby in Nauvoo, Ill. November 3, 1845;<sup>2</sup> her family felt that she had thrown her life away.

Before Hannah left Nauvoo to come on West, she went back to Maine to see about some property left to her by her father. And while there her first child George H. Crosby was born. After the birth she was not well for some time and her husband Jesse came to Maine to get her. They traveled by railroad, steamer, and stage coach as far as Omaha. Their party left Omaha June 5, 1847. while crossing the plains her husband suggested that she leave the dishes to wash when they got to their next camp, but Hannah could not do such a thing. She was very neat and clean and a wonderful manager. They had a cow and they carried the milk in a small covered barrel on the back of the wagon and each night when they camped,

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<sup>1</sup> Typescript in the author's possession. The original is filed with the D.U.P. Camp Timp View.

<sup>2</sup> Jesse and Hannah were married 23 November 1845.

there would be chunks of butter on top of the milk. the moving wagon had churned the milk into butter. Many times she divided the milk with her neighbors. Hannah was thrifty and did not believe in a feast and then fast. But, during the scourge of the crickets it was mostly fast. She told how the rain looked, so beautiful all in front of her (log) house. Then came those big black crickets, in hoards. They came and were leaving the ground clean as they went and it looked as if the people would starve. When all of a sudden the sun was darkened and the seagulls came, in hoards and set about eating the crickets and saved the people and their grain crops.

During these trying times, when they were living on pigweeds greens and Sego Lilly roots, and whatever else they could find. A man came to the Crosby home, on his way to California, and asked if they could give him some food and lodging for a day. Hannah told him she had no flour and he gave her some flour, which to them was a treat. And when the man left to go on his way, he sorted out bushels of crackers and gave Hannah the crumbs. She soaked them all night and then sliced and fried them for breakfast.

On April 19, 1850 her husband, Jesse Wentworth Crosby left for a mission to England. Hannah was left with three boys, George H., Jesse W., and Samuel Obed Crosby. During this time Colonel Steptoe came to Salt Lake with a company of soldiers. They camped near the Crosby home and Hannah did much to support herself and family, by selling butter and eggs to the camp.

The Crosby home at this time was in the 17th ward, on the corner of North Temple and 2nd West St. They had a one story adobe house and had brick ready to build a new house, when they were called to Dixie. They were told to get rid of their possessions in Salt Lake, so that they would not be tempted to come back. And the Crosbys were one of the strong families, who did stay and face the hardships of that hot dry climate. They fought the Virgin River and its flash floods, which made it so difficult to keep a dam in the river and force the water into their

canals. After thirty years they goat a dam that would stay. It took stallworth men like Erastus Snow, Robert Garner, Jesse W. Crosby, D. H. Cannon, and many other men to make things go when everything seemed so impossible. Some families left, because they couldn't take it.

While the Crosby family lived in Salt Lake, a lifelong friendship was formed with the Jesse Fox family. The Foxes lived in the Crosby home when they first came into the valley.

Because of lack of sugar, molasses was for sweetening. Hannah assisted by washing and preparing such vegetables as bets, carrots, turnips; from which molasses was made in those days. After moving to Dixie, Jesse Wentworth Crosby had three mills and raised sugar cane and made the molasses from the sugar cane, which was much better.

Hannah said that the U. S. Army came to Salt Lake, and proved to be a real blessing. As it gave the people a market for everything they could raise and at a good price. She traded dried squash for a brass bucket, which she used all the rest of her life.

Hannah's little girl, Mary died while they were still living in Salt Lake. Also Jesse Wentworth's second wife, Ann Sheldon,<sup>3</sup> whom the all loved. They were buried and their bodies were robbed of their clothing and they had to dig the bodies up and redress them. The robber was caught and convicted.

When they moved to Dixie in 1861, Hannah's husband and her older boys went first and had a rock house all ready for Hannah to move into. They must have lived in a tent for a while, as she tells of things happening in a tent.

Even in a rock house things were bad. The weather was hot and the water was bad; along with so many flies and insects. The Indians were troublesome. A

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<sup>3</sup> Anne Shelton.

number of men were killed by the Indians. among them were Frank Wooley. They were all frightened of the Indians. About this time Hannah lost another child, a little girl named Annie.

In 1873 Hannah took a trip back East to see her family. She didn't let them know that she was coming. She traveled by train as far as she could and then by stage to within a mile of her mother's home. She stopped to see a girlhood friend, then went on. She didn't tell them who she was, but said she was going to a nearby town. But, she did ask for lodging. Her mother came over and raised her bonnet and asked, "Aren't you one of my girls?" Hannah said, "Yes mother I am Hannah." Her mother dropped into a chair and cried. the family all rushed in to see her. She visited, but this was the last time she saw her mother.

It was 1855, when cotton raising was first tried out in Southern Utah. And a Southern woman gave Augustus P. Hardy some cotton seeds and he planted it in Santa Clara Valley. Enough cotton was raised to make 30 yards of cloth the first year. It was after Fort Sumter was fired upon, in April 1861, that cotton raising in the south dropped and the cotton prices soared rapidly.

President Young saw the possibilities of cotton raising in Dixie and launched a carefully planned colonizing. And that was felt for good, not only in Southern Utah, but for hundreds of miles in adjacent states. It was in October Conference 1861, that a call came for 309 families to go to St. George. They had no previous notice. Some were even at the meeting. They were calling them from all the northern settlements. Salt Lake furnished 57%, and they were people of all different occupations. It took men and women of courage, faith and initiative and stability in a marked degree to settle this—the most difficult of all the missions of the Church.

When Ann C. Woodbury and a few other women raised silk worms in St. George; Hannah did it also and she spun and had cloth made from the silk yarn for a Temple dress, which is in the hands of Hannah C. Hall of Hurricane, Utah.

While the Temple was being built, Hannah did her part by furnishing room and board for men working on the Temple.

Hannah used to ride to the Temple in the Temple wagon, which was a long covered carriage with seats on either side and drawn by two horses. The driver would go from house to house, where Temple workers lived and take them to and from the Temple. Hannah was usually greeted on her return by some of her grandchildren, from whom she usually had a rose and a piece of peppermint candy. She worked as an ordinance worker for 30 years. She was at the meeting in Nauvoo, when Brigham Young stood up and looked and sounded like the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Jesse Wentworth Crosby married into polygamy. She<sup>4</sup> was a convert from Germany. And he moved with her into Eastern Nevada, where he tried pioneering again. But, he was too old and he died while visiting his son Samuel in Panguitch, June 11, 1893. He was buried there. His father<sup>5</sup> did not join the Church when he and his mother did. But, in later life he came to Utah and joined the Church at the age of 82. He died and was buried in St. George, in 1877. Hannah was very good to him.

Hannah Elida Baldwin Crosby was a resourceful, industrious, stately, dignified person full of faith and love for the Gospel. She used to knit stockings and mittens for her children. She worked up pieces of cloth into quilt blocks and

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<sup>4</sup> Minnie Karl.

<sup>5</sup> Joshua Crosby (1789-1877) came to Utah and joined the Church sometime prior to October 1866.

worked old clothing into rugs. She made all her children a silk quilt from small silk pieces lined with muslin.

Hannah died May 2, 1907, in St. George, Utah and was buried there.

# Hannah Elida Baldwin Crosby: Correspondence

## 1. To Hannah Adelia Crosby,<sup>6</sup> Sunday, 29 July 1906

St George. July, 29. 1906

Mrs Adelia Crosby

My Dear Girl

I want to send John<sup>7</sup> five dollars and thot I would send you this check and you can send it to him as I have not his adress pleas tell him Geo. A and [I] sent it. I hope he will gow to Lowell Mass before he comes home and visit my sisters. I sopose Lawrance Snow<sup>8</sup> is thear to day he was to gow to Vermont to the Conference and then gow to Lowell to visit our frends. [2] Joseph F. Smith<sup>9</sup> has gone East for a rest and I think he has gone to Vermont to the Conference if so they will have a grand time hope John can be thear, and visit with Lawrance. I hope he can gow down

<sup>6</sup> Hannah Adelia Bunker Crosby was the widow of Samuel Obed Crosby. At the time that this letter was written, Hannah Adelia was operating a hotel in Panguitch, Utah. Within the family she was commonly referred to as Adelia or Aunt Dee.

<sup>7</sup> John Silas Crosby (1880-1964) was on a mission to West Virginia from 1905 to 1907. John was the third son of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence Snow was a son of Erastus Beaman Snow and Elida Crosby—the oldest daughter of Jesse Wentworth Crosby and Hannah Elida Baldwin. Lawrence was on a mission in the east at the same time as his first cousin, John. They did meet briefly before Elder Snow returned home.

<sup>9</sup> In the summer of 1906, President Joseph F. Smith and Presiding Bishop Charles W. Penrose toured the European missions of the LDS Church. At the beginning of that tripk, President Smith dedicated the monument honoring the birthplace of the Prophet Joseph Smith on 23 December 1905 at Sharon, Vermont.

with him now. I have an neace thear, that I wish was with you. She was rased in abordin house cept [kept] hir mothers boocks and seteld with the borders every month she is alone in this world and feelds sad. hir mother, my sister Sarah is dead and hir Father you knew Bro Longee<sup>10</sup> dide [died] here hir sisters and brother are all dead. She cold<sup>11</sup> [3] tend the store<sup>12</sup> for you and help in meny ways to liten your load. I had a letter from Sister Ellen Flander they are all well and waten for Lawrance to come.<sup>13</sup> Joshua<sup>14</sup> has bought a two seated buggie a dandy so dont come round us with your old (bugges). It has ben offel [awful] hot but I am alive yet. Elida<sup>15</sup> has gon round the Stake with Sister Broocks. She is first counsler to Sister Broocks in the Stak. They will be home to morrow or next day. We are all well and hope you are the same. Hannah had a letter from Besse Trost she is liven with hir sister [4] Minnie Willis in Snowflake didnt say a word about eny of the family I hear sister Buncker<sup>16</sup> is home but dont hear from my cheas [?] did she bring one love to sirte Davis and all the dear ones have is Lauis and family what in

<sup>10</sup> Brother Longee was most likely a D. Longee who was a member of the Lowell, Massachusetts branch of the Church. The actual relationship to Hannah is unclear. See: Samuel Wallace Crosby, *Jesse Wentworth Crosby: Mormon Preacher—Pioneer—Man of God* (n.p., 1977), 42.

<sup>11</sup> could

<sup>12</sup> Before his death in 1903, Samuel Obed Crosby had operated a furniture store in Panguitch. By 1906 Hannah was operating a hotel from her home. This letter would seem to indicate that she was also still selling some merchandise. She sold the hotel and moved to three-mile-creek before John returned from his mission.

<sup>13</sup> Hannah made only one trip east to see her family. this occurred in 1873. However, it is apparent from this letter that she maintained contact with her family. She clearly expected both Lawrence and John to visit her family in Lowell, Massachusetts before returning from their missions.

<sup>14</sup> Joshua Alma Crosby (1863-1909) was the youngest child of Jesse Wentworth Crosby and Hannah Elida Baldwin.

<sup>15</sup> Elida Crosby (1854-1919) was the oldest daughter of Jesse Wentworth Crosby and Hannah Elida Baldwin. She was the wife of Erastus Beaman Snow and the mother of Lawrence Snow.

<sup>16</sup> This is probably a reference to Emily Abbott Bunker (1827-1913), widowed first wife of Edward Bunker and the mother of Hannah Adelia.

the Co.op dowing will they pay evry dividen this year remember me to Haycock  
Rieges Snow and all those young ladys of my age

lovenly yours Hannah E Crosby

I wish I cold be out thear about one week and cool off tell Naomi<sup>17</sup> to write and  
Eddy<sup>18</sup> to Stephen<sup>19</sup> and Bula<sup>20</sup> to where is Rawell<sup>21</sup> all [?] in lord to you

[Attached as a separate sheet]

Send this to John  
where my sisters live<sup>22</sup>

Mary E Reed<sup>23</sup> Lowell  
9 Elm Street Massachusetts

Dorcas Ellen Flanders 234  
Lincoln Street Lowell Mass

Jane Turner Belwich Mass

<sup>17</sup> Eunice Naomi Crosby (1890-1982) was the ninth child of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker. Called Naomi by the members of the family, she would have been sixteen, and the oldest child still living at home.

<sup>18</sup> Edward Wentworth Crosby (1885-1960) was the sixth child of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker. Called Ed or Eddie by the members of the family, he seems to have been assisting Hannah with the family business, but he was gone at least part of the summer of 1906 helping a survey party to the west of Panguitch. See letter of Hannah Adelia Crosby to John S. Crosby, 16 June 1906.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Abbott Crosby (1892-1951) was the tenth child of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker.

<sup>20</sup> Beulah Crosby (1898-1981) was the eleventh child of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker.

<sup>21</sup> William Rowell Crosby (1888-1919) was the seventh child of Samuel Obed Crosby and Hannah Adelia Bunker. Called Rowell by the members of the family, he was running a sheep camp up above Panguitch Lake in the summer of 1906. See letter of Hannah Adelia Crosby to John S. Crosby, 4 August 1906.

<sup>22</sup> According to this attachment, the women listed below were Hannah's sisters. However, it is likely that at many of them may have been nieces. With the possible exception of Mary E. Reed, these women are unidentified.

<sup>23</sup> It is possible that Mary E. Reed was Hannah's older sister. However, Samuel Wallace Crosby believed that Hannah's older sister had died as an infant. Samuel Wallace Crosby, *Jesse Wentworth Crosby*, 43.

Rachal Reed Granitville Mass

Leeold Reed 9 Elm Street  
Lowell Massachusetts

## **2. To Hannah Adelia Crosby, Sunday, 11 November 1906**

St George Nov 11 1906

Dear Adelia

I thot I wold wright you a line or two I here from you through Sister Morton they write her that you are better we all prayed for you the Conferance and all your Bro Williams and Doghter was here last night left this morning for home they have a baby girl two weeks old jest [?] a cold from George<sup>24</sup> is saying they have a pair of twines Girls born Oct 21 all doing well last Friday and Mary Ann Gardner<sup>25</sup> has gone and left me she died Oct 24 Sister Morton works in the [?] with me she is dowing fine I am quite feeble but gow to the Temple yet I dont want to bother you but wold like to know about the Co-op if thear is a dividen I want some ask bill [2] Gibbs about it with me when you ar able I wold so like to here from you and know what you ar agoin to dow and whean you will live Joshua is home and will bee till after we have more family we git letter from Bertie every week Joshua is [?] with the sheep will gow next months to Provo school the sheep ar fat and fine so Joshua says Elida and family ar well girt letter from Lawrance every week he is dowing fine in maken quite a Preacher Minnie Bowe Crosby<sup>26</sup> died at the Mudy the 16 of

<sup>24</sup> George Henry Crosby (1846-1916) was the eldest child of Jesse Wentworth Crosby and Hannah Elida Baldwin.

<sup>25</sup> Mary Ann Carr was the third wife of Robert Gardner.

<sup>26</sup> Minnie Bauer Karl (1844-1906) was the third wife of Jesse Wentworth Crosby.

Oct abses in the side the Children all gow to school but Henrey and Arther [?] was down and spent two or three weeks in sep we had such a good visit well [?] is over and St George went [?] how I thot of Smuel love to all the dear ones god bless you all

your loven mother

H E Crosby

Give my love to Emme god bless hir too Wright to me

## Hannah Elida Baldwin Crosby: Patriarchal Blessing<sup>27</sup>

G[reat] S[alt] L[ake] C[ity] Oct 8<sup>th</sup> 1849

A blessing by John Smith, Patriarch, upon the head of Hannah E. Crosby, Daughter of George and Elisabeth Baldwin, born New Brunswick, March 6<sup>th</sup> 1820.

Sister Hannah, beloved of the Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I place my hands upon thy head and seal upon thee a Patriarchal or father's blessing. Thou art a daughter of Abraham through the lineage of Joseph, and a lawfull heir to all the blessings of the priesthood which was sealed upon the head of his children to its uttermost boundary of the everlasting hills. And Hannah as thou hast obeyed the gospel and left thy native land and thy father's house choosing rather to suffer opposition with the Lord's people than to enjoy the fullness and families of the gentiles, which thing is pleasing unto the Lord, and thy name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Thou shalt have the ministring of Angels that shalt comfort thy heart when thy companion is absent. They shall bring tidings from him to thee when he is in a far country, and thou shalt be able to communicate with them as with thy friends. Thou shalt have faith to heal the sick in thy house and preserve thy children in life until they are old. They shall grow up about thy table like olive plants and thy table shalt be well supplied with the best

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<sup>27</sup> Photocopy of original. Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Original spelling has been retained, but the blessing has been punctuated for clarity.

fruits of the earth. Thy store house shalt be well filled with every good thing. And thy companion shalt have flocks and heards, and thou shalt have servants and handmaidens that will delight to do thy will. Thy children shalt increase. Thy daughters shall He expand in knowledge to any of the [?] that may dwell on the earth, for thou shalt have sons and daughters.<sup>28</sup> The weakest of thy sons shalt be [?]. Thou shalt be clothed with all the power of the priesthood in common with thy companion, for no good thing shall be withheld from thee, and thou shalt live, if you desire it, until a perfect heart, to see peace gathered and Zion redeemed and not a dog to move his tongue against the Saints. Thou shalt come forth in the first resurrection with thy companion and all thy father's house to inherit a kingdom that shalt never pass away. Even so. Amen.

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<sup>28</sup> At the time the blessing was given, Hannah had recently given birth to her third son, Samuel Obed Crosby. She did not yet have any daughters.