

Mary Ann Owens Crosby¹

by John Silas Crosby

Mary Ann Owens was born in Panguitch November 9, 1884. Her parents were William Thomas Owens and Margaret Jones.

As a small girl she spent a large part of her life, especially in the summer, on the farm of Jesse W. Crosby Jr. about three miles north of Panguitch, now owned by members of the William H. Tebbs family.

In the winter the family would move to town. ~~or the children including Mary would live with Aunt Emma~~

Early in the spring or late in the fall, while there was necessary work to do on the farm Margaret's children including Mary would stay with Aunt Emma and go to school.

Her very early schooling was obtained in the lower school house. Some of those early teachers were: Lidy Winters and George Hanks. ~~Latter~~ Later she moved up into the Garfield Exchange Building. In the Myers and Henrie Building or where ever a room large enough [2] to hold a class of thirty or forty students could be obtained. Her last two years of elementary schooling were in the elementary building now in use on the public square. Her teachers there were George H. Barney and Heber Neilson. She graduated from that school.

After her graduation from Elementary school, she spent one year in High School at Beaver, in the then Beaver Branch of the Brigham Young University.

On her mother's death ~~on~~ the 18th of August 1895 she spent a few years living with her grandmother Mary Jones in Paragonah. That is how she got so familiar with the people and happenings in Paragonah.

¹ Reproduced from the original. The original is in the possession of Arthur Crosby, Panguitch, Utah.

As a more mature girl and a young woman she was hired to help in the homes of some of the people in Panguitch. Among them were Mamie Sevy, Aunt Maggie Clark, and Georgie Stiner, Dr. J. J. Stiner's wife. She worked for her a lot. I believe [3] she felt that she got the best consideration here of any place she worked. She even went with ~~sises~~ Mrs. Stiner to Kimberely where she got an inoculation for Small Pox that immunized her for life.

After coming back from school at Beaver she got a position as clerk in the Garfield Exchange. A position she held until she married John S. Crosby November 4, 1908 in the Manti Temple. As a clerk she was considered very efficient. She was pleasant and people liked to do business with her. When she left the store, by order of the board of directors she was given a substantial financial consideration.

Mary was always very much at home with people who were ill. She helped with my mother, when she was so ill at my Aunt Emily Steele's home while I was on my first mission. She nursed her sister Gwen with Typhoid Fever, which delayed our marriage one month. We were intending to get married in October, at the October Conference, in the Salt Lake Temple, [4] but Gwens' illness delayed that a month.

When I came home from my Mission to the Eastern States in November of 1907, I had defended poligamy so much that I was very definitely converted to monogamy. I wanted a wife and needed one. I had never really kept company with any girl. There was one that I thought was particularly cute. But she hadn't given me enough encouragement that I felt at all safe. The fact of the matter is, I wasn't at all safe, because when I returned from my mission she was soon married.

I think I am wondering now ~~who~~ how I came to go down to Owen's to ask for Marys company to Mutual. I believe though, it was because I wanted to.

When I knocked on the door, Non Cameron was there, and thinking some of the children were fooling, said, "Come in if your nose is clean." I felt of my nose and walked in.

It was a rather awkward situation. The house was full of boys and girls. I can [5] remember distinctly that Joe Owens and Norm Sargent were in the room where Mary was. And in not long it was apparent that they didn't intend to leave. So after nearly twisting my gloves into I asked Mary to go to Mutual with me.

She consented. When I brought her home she told me if I felt like coming back to do so. I felt like going back.

A few weeks ago I made up my mind that I wanted to go to Beaver and see some of my old school friends. Including class mates. And the girl that I have told you I thought was cute. She is still cute and capable as well. ~~In~~The fact is I think she is just splendid.

I made inquiry about her family. She has four children. Tree girls and a boy. But when I look at that group of eight boys, and consider their abilities, I have no trouble in making up my mind that I made no mistake when I married Mary Owens. [6]

One time While we were living down on the Three Mile Creek Farm, Arthur and Dee McAllister were living on the farm that Ambrose Myers is running now. Dee wanted to know from Doctor Bigelow if she could be confined there with the assistance of Mary Crosby. Dr. Bigelow said yes. The next time her baby came here in town she asked for "Mother". That started things. For the next number of years her services were requested in almost every home in town. For a year or two she ran a maternity home in our house. It was very popular. In fact too popular for the best kind of a home. This much is true. No mother or baby ever died there. If I

remember correctly, the doctors considered that they all went away in excellent condition. But I know this that she definitely welcomed the Hospital.

When we were first married we lived on the farm. Then we moved into town and I taught school for five years. I have now taught thirty one years in all. We lived in an old log house a block east and across the street south from the Court House. It wasn't very good but about as good as we could afford at the time. Gwen lived with us there at [7] least one winter and went to school

In this home Silas was born May 12, 1910. It was a beautiful Spring morning when he came. He was very welcome to our home. When Gwen stayed with us he was just big enough to be, we thought, exceptionally cute. When we would ask him to say Gwen, he would open his mouth as wide as he could and never make a sound. While here we build the two by six home that Silas now owns on the lot where we now live.

We got along there fairly well for a year or two but the boys finally got too abundant. We decided we just had to have a better home. Mother and I went and looked some of the interesting homes over. We finally decided what we wanted and could possibly afford. The result ~~was~~ is the home in which I now live and in which we were living when she died. February 3, 1954.

Mother and I were asked by Bishop N. O. Henrie to take a short term mission to the [8] world. We accepted and went into the Mission home in Salt Lake City December 1st, 1952. When our ten days of training ~~so~~as were up we started in the new Buick Car we had bought for the purpose for Louisville, Kentucky.² After a little further training there, we were assigned to labor in Nashville,

² Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer, 1086. Situated on the south bank of the Ohio River, Louisville was the largest city in Kentucky in 1952, with a population of 369,100. This was the headquarters of the East Central States Mission at that time. John and Mary reported here to meet their mission president and receive their area assignment.

Tennessee.³ Here we were expected to labor largely with the members of the Church. But a Brother and Sister Jones had done a rather good job with them and a branch of the Church there was in rather good condition. Arrangements were under way to have the acting teachers look after the members. So Mother and I were transferred to Jackson,⁴ about eighty miles from Memphis. Nashville.

There were few members here. A Sunday School had been running but was discontinued and we didn't revive it. We contacted a lot of people, not as many as we might have done, but I guess about all Mothers health would permit. We did make make some very [9] good friends, but so far as we knew, no converts. In Jackson, Mother organized the Relief Society. In Bemis⁵ she organized a Primary that lasted until the Rhodes family moved to their farm in the country. Here she and I organized a Sunday School that was going the last we knew.

As I look through Mary's Bible now, I notice that she has marked in red most of the passages that are particularly pertinent to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its establishment in this dispensation. So her accomplishments in the six months ~~was~~ were considerable.

Mary Owens Crosby is the mother of eight boys and one girl. The eight boys are now all mature men. The girl died when three days old. A thing I can't think was quite necessary. Maybe I don't know.

³ Ibid., 1287. Nashville is located on the Cumberland River in central Tennessee, 195 miles north-east of Memphis. A commercial and industrial center, Nashville was the second largest city in Tennessee in 1952, with a population of 174,300.

⁴ Ibid., 863. Jackson, Tennessee is located in the western half of the state on the South Fork of the Forked Deer River, seventy-five miles north-east of Memphis. Settled in 1819, Jackson became a city in 1845. Later selected as a rail junction, Jackson became an industrial and shipping center for timber and agricultural products. The population in 1952 was 30,200.

⁵ Ibid., 194. Bemis, Tennessee is located in Madison County, three miles south of Jackson. This village had a population of just over 3,200 in 1952. It was a company town, built around a cotton mill.

Mary Crosby was just about as good a house keeper, cook, and home maker a woman gets. She was a well near perfect mother. [10] She didn't have to learn how to care for a baby. She already knew. I believe it next to impossible for a woman to be a more natural nurse.

Mother gave me a compliment or two along the way. A time or two she said, "I like you". ~~One~~ One in the a month of her death.

She gave me one compliment when I least deserved it. I went up town and stayed and stayed. I stayed until I was ashamed to go home. Then I stayed on because I was ashamed.

It was so prolonged that the boys mentioned it to her. Not once but several times. Finally she replied. "When he does come home he won't be drunk.

Mary's funeral was very well attended. I expected the auditorium in the chapel would be reasonably well filled. But I hardly expected that the Relief Society Room would be filled as well. I could then see that she had fully as many friends as I thought she had. [11] The funeral service was all I hoped it to be. I am not sure that I ever attended a better one.

It definitely looks like she has done a good job in life. It is now up to me to do as well.