

## MARGARET GURNEY SMITH

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Margaret Gurney was born September 29, 1830, at Eaton Bray, the same little village described in Thomas X's history, near Dunstable, Bedfordshire, England. Her father, William Gurney, was a blacksmith by trade and also postmaster in Eaton Bray. Her mother was Hannah Sears. They were a hard-working couple, industrious and very religious. Hannah died at the age of fifty years, leaving her husband with a large family of four sons and six daughters.

Of this family Margaret was the only one to join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When she was a young girl she heard the Elders preach in the small village and knew at once she had found what her soul longed for. Many honest souls at that time were seeking the characteristics of the ancient church which Christ established while on earth, apostles, prophets, teachers, deacons, evangelists, all of which were not to be found anywhere at that time.

Her family were opposed to the Elders but only mildly. However, Margaret was compelled to steal away from home at midnight to be baptized. Her family was not unkind, but regretful, thinking she had been deceived.

She was keeping company with Thomas X. Smith at that time and led him to the Elders, saying she would not marry him unless he could accept her faith. Thomas wholeheartedly recognized the same truths for which she had sacrificed family approval, and the pair were married on the 5th of January, 1851. One year later, January 5th, 1852, Lucy,

their first child, was born. The following year, March, 1853, they left their home and loved ones and all earthly possessions, except a few necessities, and started for Utah.

The hazardous three-month voyage has been described in the history of Thomas X, after which they landed in New Orleans, took a boat to St. Louis from which vantage point, they left the last vestige of civilization. They were outfitted for a trip of fifteen hundred miles to Utah, across vast barren stretches known as the plains, by way of Omaha, Nebraska. As has been explained, Thomas had no idea how to drive an ox team, having worked in a factory all his previous life. No doubt he was given a crash course and sent on his way with nothing but courage and faith to sustain him.

When they reached the plains of Iowa near the present city of Keokuk, it was the Fourth of July, 1853. Margaret, in her last month of pregnancy, had been sick all the way. Again, the details of this experience are recounted in Thomas' history, but from Margaret's point of view no doubt she was extremely grateful for the wagon to stop its jolting long enough for son Orson to be born. Also for the questionable presence of the wolf dog under their wagon which might discourage other predators. The delay of one day, while the rest of the company went on, necessitated a long drive of over eighteen miles to overtake them. Margaret was learning toughness, without which no one survived this journey. From then until November when they

reached Salt Lake City, Margaret's weakened condition had little opportunity to improve. And when they finally arrived, there was no one to meet them and no place to go. Could Margaret have anticipated all this when she made her decision to leave home and kin? It is well that none of us is given a preview of what our lives will be or we'd all "shun the fight."

But God raised up friends who took care of them until Thomas could provide some way to care for them himself. Having no knowledge of livelihood outside their trade, which was braiding straw and making hats, they were poorly prepared for pioneer existence, real greenhorns. They did make a number of hats for people which gave them a little confidence, but the demands of log cutting and house building, plowing and planting had to be learned through the kindness and patience of the seasoned pioneers, many of whom had arrived in a similar condition from widely varying backgrounds. Their first home was little more than a lean-to made of four poles with stacked logs in between and large fireplace occupying one wall. This first home was in Salt Lake. Later Thomas learned how to make adobe bricks and their next home was more comfortable.

Orson describes his mother as a true helpmate to his father, encouraging him in his new and difficult life style. As his duties in the church increased she supported him fully and gladly. She had high ideals, a pure mind, and was a righteous woman true to the gospel she had embraced. She was patient and saw good in everyone. Her nature was quiet and retiring with few friends, but those few she loved more dearly than life. They were tried and true. Orson lists some of them: Fannie Earl, Laura Mickelson, Louise Bell, Ann Crookston, and Martha Barrett. These good women were among her dearest friends and

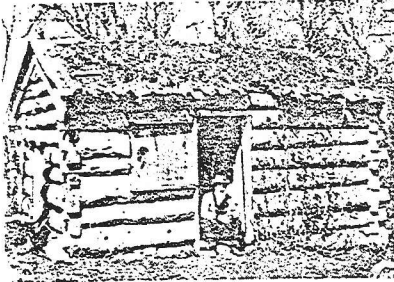
loved by all the family for their kindness to Margaret.

Margaret had eleven children, four sons and seven daughters. In the year 1854 the family moved to Farmington where three children were born, James, Thomas and Fred. Here their first adobe house was built with the necessary large fireplace. In an unguarded moment, the baby, James, fell into the fire which resulted in his death. Thomas made his little casket while Margaret and the children sat on the doorstep and watched. Then Thomas and Uncle George carried the little child to its resting place. There was no relief society to help them bear their sorrow. They went through many hardships while living in Farmington.

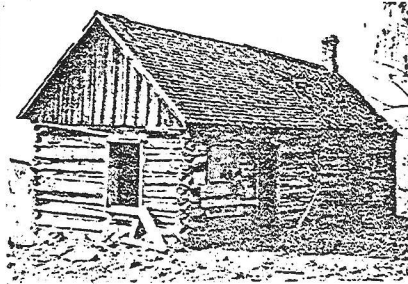
In 1875 the family made a forced move south to Cedar Valley, Camp Ford, Clear Creek when Johnson's army came to Salt Lake City. Our family did not stay for the winter but came back to Farmington in the fall after the emergency was settled. They remained there two or three years and moved to Logan in 1859.

Now they were back to square one. Their first home in Logan was built of logs with a dirt roof and floor, no plaster, no windows or door. Canvas was hung to keep out some of the cold. The winters were bitter cold with lots of snow. They suffered a great deal but were well and happy. As soon as possible Thomas set to work making adobes and built a four-room house on the corner of third north and first east. A brother Crookston made the foundation. Margaret raised nine children in that house.

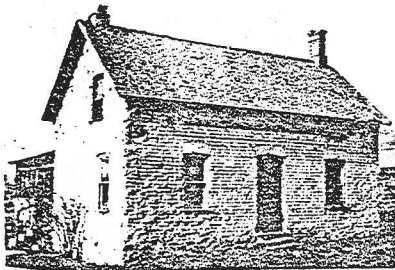
As Thomas was called away on church business so much Margaret had the raising of the family, and not very much to raise them on. Lucy, the oldest, was a great help at this time and no doubt Margaret thanked her luck that



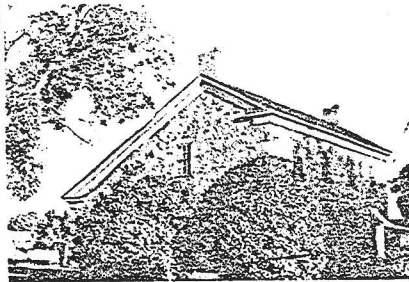
Log Cabin with dirt roof, 1860's  
Courtesy Amenzo Baker



Log House with shingle roof, 1870's  
Courtesy Fay H. Johnson



Adobe House, 1870's and 1880's  
Courtesy Fay H. Johnson



Rock House  
Photo by J. Fred Thunell

The evolution of living quarters from the crude cabin of rough, unfitted logs and sod roof to the house of smooth, fitted logs and shingle roof; to the adobe house with plastered exterior, to the house of rock set in cement.

But the greatest joy was when their father returned from Echo Canyon and was released from the army. Orson and Lucy, his older sister, walked hand in hand, barefooted and scantily clad but jubilant in spirit, to meet him. They were in such high hopes of his having something for them. They met him and he kissed them, but what a disappointment! He was worse clad than they were, ragged shirt, pants, shoes, a powder horn slung by one strap over his shoulder, a bullet pouch over the other, an old muzzle-loader rifle, no hat, and a long beard. He was a motley sight for a hungry child to behold. However, they were thrilled to have him home once more.

Now another important change occurred in their lives in the spring of 1859. Father Thomas went north to Cache County with others to check it out. There he built a log house and came back and took his family, now numbering six in all, father, mother, Lucy, Orson, James and Thomas E., to Logan to live. Their home stood on the west side of what was then the George Farrell block.

They arrived at their home in the fall of 1859. They found it unchinked or plastered. The wagon box was placed on the east end for a bedroom for the children. It was a severe winter. The snow was three feet on the level and there was much below zero weather. Of course, their parents stopped all the cracks and holes they could, but Orson said, looking back, he wondered how they survived and commented that God surely knew how to take care of his children and make the back for the burden.

While they were living here, James fell into the fireplace and was badly burned and died. Orson recalled his father and Uncle George making the little coffin and carrying it under their arms to the cemetery and burying it with no further ceremony. Some time later Thomas E. had a similar accident but

survived it. However, the shock affected his heart ever afterwards until he died at the age of sixteen. Those cold winters took their toll as the children instinctively wandered too close to the fire.

“Logan, the county seat of Cache County, is located in one of the most beautiful valleys in the world. Formed in early geologic periods by the recession of Lake Bonneville which covered the area to a depth of 500 feet, this lovely valley is completely surrounded by mountains. Like a great elongated bowl, with towering peaks to the east and west, it stretches north and south for a distance of fifty miles and is about nine miles wide. The range of mountains on the east forms a great watershed, and many canyons pour out their clear, cold streams into the rich agricultural area both for culinary and irrigation usage. The soil, being the deposit in the ancient lake bottom, is very fertile and provides some of the finest farming land in the west.” Logan Almanac.

Cache Valley was discovered in 1824 by Jim Bridger, an early trapper and explorer of the Rocky Mountain area who gained some prominence at the time of his forays into hither unknown country. It is because of Jim and some of his trapper friends, who hid their furs there until favorable conditions would allow them to be removed to trading posts, that the valley received the name “Cache Valley.” The “cache” of furs usually was made at a point near Hyrum, Utah.

The region was first settled by colonists sent out by Brigham Young in 1856. The first groups arrived under the leadership of Peter Maughan and established what was then known as Maughan’s Fort, now the city of Wellsville. Logan was settled in 1859 and named Logan after Logan River which received its name from an old Indian chief, Logan. Favorable conditions for settlement in

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this area made it apparent that this was destined to be the county seat and largest city in the valley.

These early Mormon settlers, sent out to conquer the wilderness and build homes and farms, showed much foresight, industry and fortitude in overcoming the hazards of the early days which is evident today. It was only 14 years after the first white people came to the valley that the Mormon temple was started. This magnificent edifice stands today as one of the most beautifully proportioned and perfectly situated of any building in the state. Built of native stone and lumber by pioneer hands, it is a marvel of early day construction.

Pioneer foresight also is responsible for locating the city at the very entrance to Logan Canyon where cool breezes and pure water are much more appreciated now than they were when survival was the main challenge. The town was originally laid out with broad streets and large blocks which conform now to modern ideas in city planning. Being essentially a city of homes, schools and churches, in the center of a rich agricultural area, its environment is unmatched anywhere. The undesirable problem of a transient population is absent, due to the city being off the main railroad. The high type of citizenry, beauty of surroundings, wonderful climate and easy accessibility to mountain playgrounds make Logan and Cache Valley ideal places to live and enjoy living.

From this home Orson and Lucy began going to school, which was located on the J.R. Edwards lot on center and 2nd west street in Logan. It was a log house 26 by 18 feet. Their teachers were John B. Thatcher first, then a Mr. Savage, then Aaron Dewitt and Richard Evans. While they were going to school one day, a large black bear had been chased from the brush in the west field and he ran across

several blocks. As he came across the block west of the school house, Orson and Lucy were walking right on the bear's course. They saw him in time to climb up on top of a five pole fence, and he came running right under the log they were sitting on. Men were shouting and hollering at him. As he reached the north side of the fence of the Dr. Cranney block on 2nd North Street, an Indian shot and killed him. That was a memorable scare of their lives.

After residing on the Farrell block for three years, Father Thomas moved to the corner of 2nd north and 1st east street. The lot was one and one-fourth acres in size. Here he built another log house 16 by 18 feet with a door in the west and a window in the south and fenced it with a four pole fence. This home was roofed with willows, straw, and dirt. The floor was also dirt. A log stable and sheds covered also with willows and dirt were built.

Now they had plenty of food. The land was rich and crops were abundant, when they could harvest them. The grasshopper and cricket pests were terrible. They hatched out every spring for a number of years, so thick that the ground looked like a living mass of earth. They ate everything that was green. To save the crops looked hopeless. Men, women and children were out every day trying to keep them from devouring the crops. They drove them into trenches and threw dirt on them. They tried to drown them and burn them. When they were in flight they kept them in the air, flapping sheets, caps, and anything to keep them in the air and from resting on the crops. Rollers, which ran by flutter wheels and water power, were placed across the canals. Thus they were ground up. Some were two inches long. Straw was placed around the farm when it was available, where they would

gather by the millions in the evening to keep off the cold ground. Then they could be burned. Thus they saved food and seed grain during the years of the grasshopper war. Finally, the insects died off and left the country. Both pests became extinct and they never wrought such great destruction again.

Cache Valley was a paradise for the Indians. Fish in abundance were in all the streams. Elk, moose, deer, bear, and some buffalo sometimes strayed into the valley. A few deaths by Indians were recorded, but by patient and friendly handling of them their wise leaders won them over in Cache Valley. They said they were living on Indian lands and that they were obligated to feed them, which they did. The Indians would go off happy but gradually became extinct or went to reservations.

Orson from early childhood had been associated and familiar with Indians, their habits and customs. His love for them grew out of his study of their history contained in the Book of Mormon, which relates where they came from, who they are, who are their progenitors, how they came here, what made them come, and why they have a dark skin. They called them Redmen for they are not so dark as the Negro. As a boy Orson played with their boys. As a man he associated with them by sleeping in their homes, by eating with them, by hiring them as laborers in the woods, and as herders of cattle and horses, as ditchers, teamsters; and in all such work he found them trustworthy, faithful and dependable as long as they understood what was wanted of them.

Orson tells of an instance that happened to him when he was a boy and before he knew the Indians well. He was caught in the mouth of Logan Canyon by a party of them while he was herding sheep all alone. They took all his dinner and told him to "git." He

got out as fast as he could with his little flock and was so frightened that he never stopped until he reached home.

A child was stolen soon after that, and Pat Conner, commander of a company of soldiers stationed at Fort Douglas, came in search of the Indians who had the child. Some of the Indians camped near Logan fled up Providence Dry Canyon with the soldiers after them. One who happened to be left behind tried to make his getaway by running north through Benson Block and on through the block north of that to the north side where two soldiers, one from the east, one from the west, cornered him with drawn pistols as though to shoot him down.

At this juncture, Father Thomas, who was nearby, stepped up and said, "Hold on, there, you can't shoot that Indian right here in the street in cold blood." They put up their guns, put the Indian on a horse, and rode away. After investigating they found that the cohorts of these Indians were not the ones who stole the child, and released them.

A few months after as Thomas was walking along the street, an Indian ran up to him and threw his arms around him and hugged him like a bear would. He proved to be the Indian Father Thomas had saved from being killed by the soldiers. He always thought Thomas had saved his life and no doubt he did. Father was always kind to them and they loved him.

Peter Maughan was a power for good among them and saved the people many times through his influence. Apostle Ezra T. Benson was friendly, I. J. Clark, Samuel Whitney and many others helped to pacify the Indians. Considering the few whites that were in the valley as compared to the hosts of roving bands, it is nothing short of miraculous

that they survived that early period of their history.

The following expresses Orson's sentiments concerning the Indians:

*I have never experienced any trouble with Indians individually. I have been among the Bannocks, Shoshones, Nesperces, Paiutes, Navajoes, Blackfeet, Sioux, Snakes, Siwash, Alutes, Laps, and Crows. All tribes are distinct from one another and have their tribal geographic boundaries. They warred with each other at times. They principally lived by the chase, fishing and hunting. The land was all theirs and they killed only what game they needed to live on and there was always plenty in the land. The white man took their land, killed their game and their fish. I feel great empathy for them now. No wonder they gave some trouble to the whites. The treatment they received made them worse than they naturally were, or are now.*

*The whites stole all from them and they stole some from the whites, until cowed completely before the superior race that poured in upon them from all nations. Their title to this entire nation is better than ours, for God gave it to them 600 years before Christ through their Father Lehi and his descendants. Some day they will come into their own.*

*Brigham Young said it was cheaper to feed them than to fight them. That policy made friends of them and saved many lives. Chief Washakie, a great chief, was always friendly and counseled his people to refrain from stealing and killing anyone and enforced his commands by punishing those who did.*

*Their teepees were made of straight poles 2 inches in diameter, 16 feet long fastened together at the top and spread out to the desired size at the bottom. Buffalo robes were stretched around for cover, with a fire in the center. A small opening at the top was for*

*smoke outlet and one at the bottom for the door. This provided a warm, comfortable house for winter and all kinds of weather. Wolves were tamed for dogs. That one that stayed under the wagon the night I was born was probably one of these.*

*They had ponies which were native to the land and were used for all purposes. These were all their domesticated animals until the whites taught them agriculture. Now they have everything the whites have. Their foods were wild meats from the buffalo, elk, moose, deer, rabbit, wolf, mountain sheep, small rodents, geese, ducks, and smaller birds, wild fruits, roots of various kinds, all of which they ate raw or cooked. Their weapons were bows and arrows of wood, knives and tomahawks or hatchets, until the whites introduced firearms.*

*They moved often from place to place as the seasons changed, for sanitary purposes. They were primitive in their lives and nomadic in their nature, children in a sense. Now they are wards of the government, being assembled on reservations and schooled in all the arts and sciences of the whites and taking their place in all the walks of citizenship. I have seen all this happen, and the future generations will see them a white and delightful people and again favored of the Lord as they once were.*

*I always enjoy citing the promises that have been pronounced upon them for they are of the house of Israel, descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, Joseph and Ephraim his sons. They must again rise up to fulfill their destiny and build the City of the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri, U.S.A.*

*The whites who live in that day may be privileged to help them. Such is the irony of fate. The tinselled king of today, the footman of tomorrow. Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud! The Washakie Indians in Malad*

are farming their own lands, encouraged and helped by the Mormon Church, and many are members of that church and work in the various quorums and organizations and are progressing nicely. The last trouble with the Indians was at Battle Creek on Bear River near Preston, Idaho, where 250 or more were killed and their camp destroyed.

An inscribed marker was placed there Monday, September 5, 1932. Over 5000 people attended the dedication. U.S. soldiers from Camp Douglas, Utah, under the command of E.P. Conner, with the help of some local citizens, had routed the natives and destroyed them. I always thought it was needless slaughter and more of a massacre than a battle. Men, women, and children succumbed in the withering fire of the guns of the whites in the dead of winter. It was in 1862 or 3 when I saw the soldiers as they went north through Logan, and when they returned I saw their dead soldiers, 14 of them. I was 11 years old when this happened.

Native clothing was made from skins of animals, tanned by a process of their own that kept the hides soft and pliable, sewed together with sinew from the muscles of animals. Their bow strings were of the same material, very strong and durable. Their shoes (moccasins) were made of the same thing, using the thickest of the skins for soles. Now they clothe as we do.

Our Western or Mountain Indians were the poorer in every way than the Eastern and Southern Indians, owing to the ruggedness of the country and the severity of the weather and scarcity of game. There were comparatively few buffalo in the mountains from which the Indian obtained his warm and valuable clothes, bedding and shelter. A buffalo robe makes a good warm bed; it will last a long time in constant use. There were millions upon millions of the animals in 1856, but now

what are left are found in the zoos and parks. Their bones were gathered up for fertilizer and sent east to be ground up to use upon farms. They were swept away before the ruthless sway of the white man; both Indian, moose, deer, elk, bear, fish and fowl perished. Until now they live and survive only by protective laws. The Indians' whoop is heard no more, his chant and song are of the past. The white man's bullet, bread and civilization have done their work.

The Indians' revival is slow but sure, increasing in numbers and education. He is coming back to fulfill his prophetic destiny. The time will come when he will become a white and delightful people, leader of his white brother. Retribution follows in the wake of wickedness. For the wickedness of his forefathers he has suffered untold misery. Righteousness follows in the wake of repentance.

So shall the truly repentant rise to heights of glory, praise, and honor commensurate with his efforts. His possibilities are unlimited. The tide has turned, the work of redemption has begun. His history revealed by the hand of God speaks to a slumbering world in no uncertain tone of the falling of a race through iniquity and sin. This will befall any people who will not repent and turn to the God of this land, who is Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world.

At eleven years of age Orson drove two yoke of oxen to the canyon for logs and fire wood. Father Thomas would go early and Orson would bring the team. He would have the load cut out by the time Orson got there and they would snake it to the road, load the wagon and return home. Thus each year they provided fuel and timber for use at home when not working on the farm. Shoes were a luxury and most of this work was done bare foot or in rag shoes. In time, a tannery was

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built and leather was made by Thomas Weir and Barney Stanford. Then they had shoes.

Andrew Frederickson came from Denmark about this time and brought tools for making wooden shoes out of cottonwood and box elder. Orson wore some of them, but they hurt his instep and he had a lot of trouble carrying them when he ran. Another kind of shoe was made with a leather top and wood bottom that was better for him but slow traveling.

Orson's schooling was obtained by attending three months in the year. some teachers that he had were Charles W. Penrose, John Chamber, Charles G. Davis, Ida Ione Cook, James Z. Stewart, all in Logan, and John Park of the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, where the Deseret News Building now stands. Orson reached that school but never graduated, unfortunately for him, he says.

At fifteen he was ordained an Elder and sent on a mission to southern Utah with John Reeder, Ephraim Humphries of Wellsville, and Nathan Ricks of Logan, with three thousand head of sheep for the Co-op. They drove them down and wintered in the desert west of Cedar City and brought them back to Logan in the spring. They were ten months on that trip. They lost but few but lambed many. The wool made wonderful growth.

The wolves were bad. They had to guard every night by taking turns of four hours each. They killed hundreds of wolves with poison bait placed on sharp sticks all around the herd at night, and they would gather all the bait that had not been eaten in the morning to save their dogs from getting it. one night they got nine wolves with twelve baits. It was a winter of hard work; Nathan and Orson were about the same age and became much attached to each other for life.

Orson tells this incident:

*An old Indian with two children about eight and ten years old camped near them on the sinks of Cedar Creek. "After dark I saw their fire and went to see who was there and came on them, all three, sitting around their fire with but few clothes and that of rabbit skins. At first they were frightened, but I could make out that they were of the Plead tribe and that the mother was dead. The old man tried to sell me the girl for my rifle but I told him to sell me the boy. 'No,' he said, he would grow up to be a great warrior to kill their enemies of another tribe. He seemed to be very bitter against some other tribe. So we made no trade. We had no difficulties with the Indians on that whole trip, which we thought very fortunate."*

Orson's next job was working in the canyon at the saw mill as off-bearer with Sydney Savage. He got his hand badly cut and Saren Sorenson came and was sawer for some time. In the winter Orson attended school. When he was eighteen he ran the mill somewhat by himself with Andrew Anderson, son of Hans Anderson, a partner of Father Thomas who owned the mill. Orson had two narrow escapes from instant death while at work there. He tells of one of them:

*The mill race was about one-fourth mile long and when freezing weather came we closed the gates at the dam and opened the wheel gates to let the water drain all out of the race. It was a Leffel wheel forty horse power. This night I shut the head gates at the dam, opened the wheel gates as usual. It froze quite hard and in the morning I went up and turned in the water and came down to the mill, got my file, and sat down on the saw frame with the saw between my legs to steady it, and commenced filing the saw to sharpen it. Something said to me, "Get up." I took no notice of it and again it said "Get up!" And as if some power lifted me I sprang to my feet as*

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