

Sharing our Links to the Past
by Wally and Frances Gray

Lois Angeline Smith (Mrs. John Bushman) (1844-1921)
By Roberta Flake Clayton

Plus Poems to her husband

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Lois was the daughter of Dr. John Smith and **Maria Foscue**. She was born near Little Rock, Arkansas, on the 25th of January 1844.

The parents of Lois were people of considerable means and intellectual attainments and were devoutly religious. They had moved from Alabama to Texas in 1844 where they were living when they became affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and at once began making preparations to join the Saints in their exodus west. Accordingly in 1850, in company with Lorenzo Van Cleve, the husband of a sister of Mr. Smith, and their five children; **John Percival Lee and wife Eliza, sister of Mrs. Smith**, and their small family, they started for Winter Quarters, Mo. stopping at St. Louis to complete their equipment for the westward journey to establish a home.

Upon arrival at Winter Quarters, Dr. Smith was appointed captain of a company of pioneers.

While encamped at the Platte River, cholera broke out and fifty-three persons died the first day. Dr. Smith contracted the dreaded disease and died the next day, June 16, 1850, at Florence, Nebraska.

Dr. Smith's dying request of his wife was that she continue on with the company. Their little family now consisted of four children, the eldest aged 10, and the youngest only 4. Lois was 6 at this time. The mother was in a delicate condition, and it required no little degree of faith and courage, to say nothing of business ability, for unlike many of the pioneers, this family was going to the West completely equipped to make a home. They had an unusually large outfit, sheep, cattle, teams and wagons, with their drivers.

The first evening after Dr. Smith died, the head teamster became offended because Mrs. Smith indignantly refused his offer of marriage, so helping himself to the best horse and outfit, he left that night for parts unknown. This necessitated hiring a new man and adjusting affairs, but Mrs. Smith was equal to the task. The company arrived in Salt Lake City September 1850 and this family located at the nearby town of Tooele.

After almost two years of widowhood, Lois' mother married again, this time to Preston Thomas, and with him moved into Cedar Fort, thence to Lehi, Utah County, in 1858.

The opportunities for education were very limited in these early days but the Smith family had brought many choice books with them, consisting of histories, biographies, scriptural, scientific

and classical works. At an early age Lois exhibited marked intellectual tastes. Her thirst for knowledge grew with the years. She was very fond of poetry, and had a remarkable memory. Lois was a member of the first Sunday School and Relief Society organized in Lehi, and at the age of 18 was chosen to lead the young ladies of the town in their celebrations. She loved to sing and dance and was very popular with the young and old. In those days some of the requisites in every girl's education were: To keep a home immaculately clean and sweet, to cook, knit, darn, sew and patch, spin, weave, embroider and make lace, either knitted or crocheted or both. In these she excelled.

Whatever the task, Lois approached it with cheerfulness. As she spun, she sang to the accompaniment of the hum of the wheel, tripping back and forth in rhythmic dance. She declared that, not only did it make the work lighter and the thread smoother, but the number of ten-knot skeins per day, more by one, than was spun by the girls who signed or visited as they spun. This was demonstrated by the spinning "bees" of that day.

As early as 1862 the opportunities for recreational and social development along aesthetic lines were encouraged and provided. The balls were carefully planned and supervised, and dancing masters were employed. Amateur theatricals, concerts, home socials and parties in abundance were conducted.

The courtship of John Bushman and Lois Smith began on May Day of the leap year, 1864. The young ladies were required to invite their partners for the ball, and Lois selected John Bushman. John had long admired her for her maidenly reserve and her many charms, and when he found himself the lucky escort, well he made the most of his chance and became "her steady beau". He often recalled for his children the pleasures of those days, when in the summer time they took long walks together, and then of the sleigh rides in the winter when they would go to neighboring towns to dances, and his spirited horse would try to pass all others on the road. The wedding took place on February 11, 1865, and the honey-moon lasted as long as they lived.

The newly married couple lived in the home of his parents for the first ten months. Lois won the love and confidence of the family, and there was perfect harmony and good will in the home. Besides helping with the cooking and housework, she carded, spun and wove enough jeans for a suit of clothes for her husband, and tailored them herself. She also wove linsey and made a dress for herself this first year. In December they moved into their own newly completed adobe house. They had but little furniture. At first the meals were cooked over the fireplace, but in a few weeks a cook stove was obtained.

The only thing to mar their happiness during the first year or two of their married life was the frequent raids of the Indians and John would be called out to help guard the settlements. On June 12, Blackhawk was creating much trouble and the men were constantly on guard.

May 28th, 1866 their first child was born. He was a very delicate child, and the latter part of July became very ill. John was away on guard duty much of the time and the whole of the care of the sick depended on Lois. Two of the townsmen were brought home dead from Indian bullets, the anxiety she felt for her husband and child was so great that her health was impaired. After the baby's death December 3, 1866 she was in very poor health for a long time.

Finally a treaty of peace was entered into between Blackhawk and President Brigham Young and

the men were permitted to return home. John began to acquire more land, and was getting quite comfortable fixed.

On January 23, 1876 John Bushman, with two hundred other men, were called by Brigham Young to settle on the Little Colorado River, in the northeastern part of Arizona, on an arid waste of shifting sands. This was a mission to establish permanent settlement in this section of the country. All of the men were expected to pool their property, with the object of having all things in common, of working together in a United Order.

Because of the poor health of Lois it was considered best that she remain in Lehi, Utah while her husband who had married a beautiful girl, Mary Ann Peterson and brought her with him to make a home. He frequently visited his family, and at the end of two years and a half final preparations were made for the remainder of the family to go to Arizona. The covered wagon beds extended at the rear of one of the wagons. It contained shelves of food supplies and dishes pots, and pans. The door, when let down, served as a table. The extension on the wagonbox was used to carry barrels of water over the desert for both men and animals. On Tuesday, October 22, 1878 the trip began. This equipment consisted of three wagons well packed and drawn by five span of horses; a small herd of cows, and a riding pony for the eldest son to use in driving the cattle, rather young was this cowboy, only ten years old.

There were six other families, thirteen wagons in the train. The caravan moved smoothly along until it reached Salina Creek. Here the light wagon Lois was driving, and in which her aged mother and the younger children were riding, tipped over, bruising the grandmother and breaking the arm of little four year old Wickliff. This was near the town of Salina. Fortunately a doctor was summoned and attended the injured. Mrs. Bushman's mother did not accompany them farther on the journey going to her sister in Beaver, Utah. This was a sad parting, indeed for Lois, but her faith and love for her husband sustained her.

The trip was a wonderful one, in spite of hardships. Every day revealed new surroundings with beautiful and sometimes strange scenery. At camping time, fires were made, and the evening meal prepared. When all was arranged for the night the camp would be called together around one campfire, prayer would be offered then the evening spent in singing familiar hymns and songs, and the voices of John and Lois rang out in sweet harmony. Thus the time passed, hardships came and were bravely met, and on December 1, 1878 the little town of St. Joseph was reached. Here was the home John took his family to, a sort of Apartment house, known as the Fort. The new comers were heartily welcomed, especially by Mary who had been anxiously awaiting them and little Lois who had come with the father and Mary on the first trip, and it was not long until they had entered into the life and become a part of this big family, with common interest, that of redeeming this desert into a place where the necessities of life could be obtained and a little beauty and comfort mixed in. When the work of the day was completed, and the bugler called all together as on the road, prayer, song and friendly greeting, then each family went to its abode, there to rest until a new day with its duties should call them.

Of a cherry, genial temperament, and an understanding disposition, Lois fitted well into this community life. Indeed, her past training especially prepared her for these new conditions. She had been schooled in patience, born of love and perfect faith and trust in the Giver of all blessings. Because of her extensive reading and her gift of song and story telling, her part of the Fort was the gathering place of the children. Bible stories were exhausted and historical ones

began. Then the neighboring mothers requested to join the group. The interest grew and the circle enlarged. Her oral narrative of history became as interesting as fiction. The story lost none of its fine shading, and dates became significant. Her pauses with her knitting added impressiveness. She was truly an artist at entertaining, and quick to discover the talents of others. Soon theatricals, concerts and other cultural forms of amusement were undertaken and all responded with the ingenuity that was needed to plan the costumes and scenery.

The northern part of the territory of Arizona was noted for its winds and sandstorms in the springtime. It seemed that the wind blew most of the time. But when these periodical storms came they lasted for three days. During this time no work would be done outside. Doors were shut and windows closed, and when it was over the sand drifts had to be shoveled away. John was not idle during these days, but employed his time making brooms for the family and neighbors. These winds were especially trying on the eyes. There were many on the banks of the sandy bed of the Little Colorado whose eyes were injured permanently. Lois' eyes were seriously affected and she was never able to read again. This was her greatest trial, for awhile, but always there was someone who delighted in reading for her, because of the rich background she possessed, and the graciousness she showed to all who were so kind to her. Uncomplainingly she passed through the trying experiences of pioneer life, making the best of everything as it came and encouraging others to do the same. Although she almost completely lost her sight, her voice still retained its sweetness, and ten days before she passed away she sang in public.

Lois was the mother of 11 children, and then raised three others whose mother had died. Always her home was the gathering place for young and old. The friends of her children were always welcome.

In 1844 (1884?) the United Order was discontinued and people began building individual homes. The beautiful red brick one of the Busman's was dedicated on the happy couples silver wedding anniversary. Friends from far and near came in to help celebrate the festive occasion.

After the children were grown and married John and Lois traveled quite extensively, going to the World's Fair in St. Louis, and to a Fair in Seattle.

Their Golden Wedding Anniversary, February 11, 1915 was an elaborate affair, and was celebrated by their numerous descendants and a host of friends.

Shortly after this they decided to return to their old home in Lehi, Utah. They were now together constantly. How gracefully and perfectly they had advanced together. How smoothly and gently their barque (barge?) glided on the calm unruffled stream. They were living over the first happy years of their married life--plus the luxuries and comforts their thrift and industry had secured for them. They mutually enjoyed the hours of reading, writing, and the serenity and peace that follows a well ordered life.

Here on September 19, 1921 ended the beautiful earth life of this wonderful pioneer, Lois Angeline Smith Bushman, beloved by all who knew her.

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How I Love You

Lois Angeline Smith Bushman was left in Lehi, Utah, with her small children while her husband John Bushman with 200 other men, called by Pres. Young to settle the Little Colorado river country, in the Northern Territory of Arizona, were trying to locate a favorable location. In his letters to her he wondered how she felt about leaving her comfortable home and surroundings, and we find these two poems in her letter to him written March 18, 1877, Lehi, Ut.

"I suppose if I put my sentiments in rhyme you won't care," in her own handwriting on the same piece of paper.

You ask me how I love you
And pray that I would tell,
Know then, the love I own dear
Is deep as deepest well.

Is high as highest mountain
As wide as endless space,
And fresh as clearest fountain
As pure as purest grace.

You know I love you darling,
Why do you ever ask
You know 'tis all my pleasure,
My heart's delightful task.

It comes as free as sunlight
That shines in summer bowers;
And falls as free as dewdrops
That gem the blessed flowers.

Now ask me if I love you
If I can tell you more
I'll tell it dear with action,
And not my phrases poor.

I'll tell you late and early
Of love that fills my heart,
That binds our love together,
No more, no more to part.

Love Song

Lead me darling, I will follow,
Whatso'er the path you take,
Be it thru the darkened hollow,
Or among the tangled brake.

Where the spider hangs her curtain
And the wild bird builds her nest
I will follow, sure and certain
If my hand in yours is pressed.

Lead me darling, I will follow
Thru the desert bare and brown
Up the heights swift as a swallow
There to pluck leaves for my crown.

I will go thru dark recesses
Where the laurel branches twine
Feasting on thy sweet caresses
If you'll clasp my hand in thine.

Clasp my hand then, close, my dearest
Lead me in life's choicest way
So the sun of truth may lighten
All our glad oncoming days.

In my heart, Lo, I have throned you
There to reign, my king of men
And with truest love have crowned you
Purer than earth's choicest gem. [p.521]

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