

Life Of Lutie Marette Bassett Swensen Hansen

Original Author and Date unknown

Enclosed comments added 2006

Lutie Marette was born August 28, 1877 at Cedar Fort, Utah, now known as Cedar Valley. She was born in the home of her grandfather, Bishop Henry Freeman Cook, who was sent out from Salt Lake City by President Brigham Young to be Bishop of this settlement, serving in this position from 1863 to 1881.

Her father, William H. Bassett was sent there to manage a store for Z.C.M.I. It was there he met the twin daughters of Bishop Cook, Janette and Marette. He courted Marette and married her October 7, 1876. Lutie is the oldest of seven children. She had two sisters and four brothers.

In those days there were many Indian scares. A rock wall fort was built for protection of the Saints. It was about a half-acre square and wide enough for a steer to walk on top. The church was inside and provisions were stored and kept replenished for emergency use. She doesn't remember having to go there for protection herself but remembers her mother telling of being snatched up in the middle of night and carried into the fort after the town had been warned the Indians were on the warpath.

When she was about four years old her father and his brothers started a stage and freight line from Beaver Canyon (near Spencer, Idaho where I15 crosses the Idaho-Montana border) to Yellowstone Park and other places. Summers were spent in the Park and winters in Cedar Fort.

The Bassett brothers homesteaded land in Lago, Idaho (12 miles south of Grace). When she was seven her father moved his family to Lago, and they spent a few more summers in the Park and winters in Lago. In the spring, Lutie's father along with others would round up their horses, which were around sixty head, and take their families and travel to Yellowstone for the summer. Their home in Beaver Canyon was so near the railroad tracks that the house would shake and rumble when a train went by.

Indians were also present in the park, but they were not hostile. Lutie remembers one evening when her father was away and her mother was watching the children play. They looked up and saw an Indian with his face pressed against the windowpane. They looked at their mother but she showed no sign of fear so they went on about their play as if nothing had happened. They had been taught to do this and when their mother seemed unafraid they thought there was nothing to be afraid of. However, experience with the Indians in Cedar Fort had made them apprehensive and she remembers her mother always kept a pistol nearby and slept with it under her pillow when father was away.

When washday came along they would take their clothes and tubs and soap to the hot springs to wash. The children went swimming in the warm pools while the folks did the washing in the varied degrees of water from warm to boiling. While the clothes were drying the families sat in the shade of the trees and ate their lunch.

Horse back riding was a pleasant pastime. She remembers her father and mother galloping down the road lined with stately pines. What a striking couple they were, mounted on beautiful horses, mother in fancy riding habit riding sidesaddle.

When it came time for school days the family remained in Lago. Summers were spent attending the "Jim Elliott School" located on Whiskey Creek. With her two cousins, Don and Hattie Bassett, she walked three miles to school. Occasionally the three rode Don's old black horse, Billy. Don took delight in tormenting the girls by going up the steepest banks and down the steepest hills. One day Billy surprised Don by putting his head down and they all went tumbling off headfirst.

As she grew older and anyone needed help they called on Lutie. She spent two summers in Bear Lake helping her mother's sister, Aunt Hannah Quayle, cook for haymen. In those days they had a large crew of men for all three meals.

When she was sixteen she went to Salt Lake City and helped her Aunt Nett with her large family and attended school two winters. She passed the entrance exams to the University of Utah. All arrangements were made to enter when word came from her father that her mother was ill and she was needed at home. She came home by train to Franklin where the railroad stopped. She was met there by her father with a team and wagon.

The next year Lutie, Don, and Hattie attended the Agriculture College at Logan. Lutie studied teacher training and received her certificate.

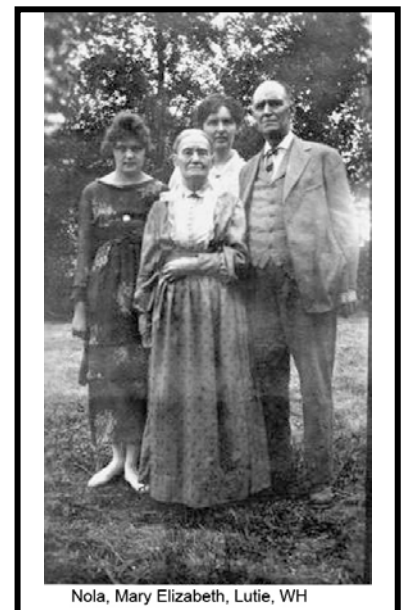
Again someone needed help so she packed her clothes and was off to Pocatello to help Aunt Molly with her newly born twin boys, Rex and Willis.

Now it is 1899 and Lutie is a schoolteacher. She taught in Lago four years, Grace one year, and Cleveland two years. When she was teaching in Cleveland her future husband, Hyrum Swenson, came for her every Friday night with a fancy high-spirited team and a little blacktopped buggy. As they forded the river going to and from Cleveland she recalls water running in the bottom of the buggy and they lifted their feet to keep them dry. The salary was thirty-five dollars a month. Twelve went for board and room. One year she received forty-five dollars per month and did her own janitor work. With some of her salary she made the down payment on her father's first white-topped buggy. She also bought a rocking chair for her mother, which is in her possession today. About this time she homesteaded a place, which is now the Ziegler place.

Her parents decided to wait until she was old enough to make up her own mind about joining the LDS Church. Therefore she was twenty years old when she was baptized in Trout Creek by Willard Hubbard and Jonathan Gibbs. Soon after this she started work in the MIA. She was president for twelve years. She also worked on the Stake board. They traveled as far as Ivan's with team and buggy to make their stake visits.

What a beautiful and happy bride Lutie made. She and Hiram Swensen were married at the home of the bride's parents, by the bride's father who was justice of the peace, on the 23rd day of April 1901. Her mother made her wedding dress. It was a heavy brocaded silk with basque waist, leg-o'-mutton sleeves and a high collar trimmed with ruching.

The first year they lived at Joe Swensen's where twins, a boy and a girl, were born. Later they lived on the corner where Olorenshaws lived. They then built



Nola, Mary Elizabeth, Lutie, WH

their own home over the hill on Whiskey Creek. It was a four-room home built by Barnes Rodeback, an Uncle of Lutie's. Three children were born here: Nola Jenkins, Lorette Hansen, and Raymond Swensen.

When their oldest daughter was old enough to go to school they would put her on the old white horse and send her up over the hill to school three miles away. What a relief it was to Lutie when she would finally see the horse's ears come up over the hill in the afternoon bringing her daughter home from school.

Around 1911 they bought the Lusher place and moved over on the east side of the hill. After a few years in the Lusher house they decided to move the home from Whiskey Creek over the hill. This was accomplished with hardwood rollers on a track pulled by one horse on a stump puller. On the steeper places of the hill they applied brakes by tying wagonloads of rocks to the house. When the house was on top of the hill everyone was invited to a very enjoyable party. They accomplished the task of moving the house without breaking a window or even cracking the plaster. Mitt Rodeback, son of the man who built the house, was the instigator of the moving plan.

When Lorette was ready for high school Lutie moved to Logan with her three children. (Four generations are shown in the picture: Nola, Mary Elizabeth, Lutie, WH) In the summer of 1924 she renewed her teacher's certificate and taught school in Lago for two years.

In 1929 her father died and Lutie and her husband took over the store and post office, which her father had run for a long time. Her husband was appointed postmaster and she assistant postmistress. Over the years her father had collected many many things, which were stored in the basement of the store. The following spring they held a gigantic sale. What a sale it was! People came from all over the country and were not disappointed. There were hundreds of yards of materials – laces, bolts of ribbon, shoes, socks, underwear, and barrels of dishes of all kinds.

March 17, 1932 was a day of sorrow for her family because her husband passed away. He died on Thursday and was buried on Sunday. Then it seemed as if fate had more hardship in store for her because her home burned down on Monday. All that was saved were the clothes they had on, a cedar chest, and her father's rocking chair. She moved into part of her parent's old home, which was now her sister Adelia's home. She lived there two years then built a new home where the old one had been. She and Raymond (her son) and his family lived here. She also built a small post office and store up near her home and moved everything there.

As time went on, happy days were again Lutie's. On November 20, 1942 she married Alfred Hansen. (Alfred's wife and Lutie's younger sister, Adelia, had died in February of that year.) She sold the store to Raymond and moved the post office back to Alfred's house. She and Alfred ran the post office. She retired in 1947. Alfred became postmaster until the Lago office was discontinued.



She had six children, three now living; thirteen grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren; five stepchildren; and thirteen step-grandchildren. (Lutie with Lorette and Nola are shown in the picture)

What a beautiful life, all the ideals of womanhood have been so beautifully exemplified.

Edited for spelling and paragraphing by Stanley D. Hansen March 2008