

## BIOGRAPHY OF LOUISA PARKINSON CLANSON

Louisa Benson Parkinson Clawson, the first child of William Chandler Parkinson and Louisa Benson was born in Richmond, Cache County, Utah on July 5, 1859. Her father, William Chandler Parkinson, was the son of Samuel Ross Parkinson and Arabella Ann Chandler and he was born in Kayville, Davis County, Utah on August 2, 1855. Her mother, Louisa Benson, was the first child of George Taft Benson and Louisa Ballif. She was born in Logan, Cache County, Utah on March 28, 1859. George Taft Benson was the son of Apostle Ezra Taft Benson and was born May 1, 1846 in Garden Grove, Iowa in a covered wagon while his parents were crossing the plains with Brigham Young and the first company of Mormon pioneers who reached the Salt Lake Valley in July of 1847.

Louisa was blessed and named by Serge Louis Ballif, her Great Grandfather, on August 4, 1859 in Logan, Utah. She was baptized on December 15, 1867 by Thomas Morgan in the Logan Temple and confirmed on the same day by H. D. Hammond.

She attended grade school in Whitney, Idaho, went to the Oneida Stake Academy at Preston, Idaho and attended Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah and the Latter Day Saint College in Salt Lake City, Utah.

While Louisa's father was a Bishop in Preston, Idaho one of his councillors was George Taft Benson. Often meetings were held at the Benson home. William Parkinson was already married but polygamy had become a recognized principal of the Latter Day Saint Church and all presiding officials were advised to live this principle. William was attracted to Louisa's mother who was the oldest daughter of the Bensons. One day when George Taft Benson and William Parkinson were meeting for tithing settlement George Benson announced that his tenth child was born and Bishop Parkinson said, "Well, Brother Benson it is time you turned one in for tithing. I'd like to marry the oldest one." Brother Benson gave his consent. A courtship began and they soon fell in love and were married in the Logan Temple February 11, 1867 by Apostle Marriner W. Merrill, who was then President of the Temple.

Persecution of polygamists had become intense and for three years after she was married it was necessary for Louisa's mother to live with her parents and her father's visits were infrequent and hazardous. It became necessary for her to go into hiding or "On the Underground" as it was called. She went to live in Apostle Marriner W. Merrill's home in Richmond, Utah. While "On the Underground" her mother took the assumed name of Barlow as she had to keep secret the name of her husband. During this time Louisa and her sister Marie were born. Louisa had been taught that her name was Louisa Barlow. When she was about two and a half years old her Uncle Samuel Parkinson, trying to test her to see if she would divulge her father's real name, said to her, "What is your name?" She answered, "Louisa Barlow". He said, "What is your father's name?" She said, "Mr. Barlow". Her Uncle said, "If you will tell me your father's real name I'll give you a dollar." He showed her a big round shiny dollar but Louisa continued to say that her father's name was Barlow. She had been true to her trust.

In October 1890 the Church issued a Manifesto or public declaration to the effect that polygamy should no longer be practiced, as it had served its purpose. They were now at liberty to live a normal life.

When Louisa was three years old her parents moved to Whitney, Idaho. There she enjoyed a very happy childhood. Her father built them a comfortable home across the street from her Grandfather and Grandmother Benson whom she loved dearly and spent much of her time with them. Many Sundays were spent at Grandmothers enjoying her homemade ice cream and cookies. Her mother's younger sisters were her best friends as they were growing up together.

Louisa was full of life and very venturesome, loving to ride horses, swim, run races, play ball etc.. She was never afraid of anything. She was extremely popular which was a source of worry to her parents at times. One night she attended a dance several miles from home and did not return when she was expected. Her

father hitched up their horse, "Old Bess" who was a great favorite with all the children and especially to Louisa, and went to get her. He found her at the dance and they started home together. It had rained during the day and a bridge they had to cross was washed out. As it was very dark they did not see this and "Old Bess" started to cross. They went down into a steep gully. It was the courage of Bess that saved their lives. She held the buggy upright until Louisa and her father could get out. They were able to unhitch Bess from the buggy and then walked several miles to their home.

While Louisa was attending the Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah she had parts in the Operas and Dramatic Plays. She studied vocal and always enjoyed singing and playing the piano. She has been blessed with good health and always led an active, vigorous life.

Louisa's parents were cultured and refined and she learned from them in her childhood the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They had a deep devotion for each other and solemnly believed that the family was the symbol of righteous living. There was music and laughter in their happy home. Friends gathered to sing and play the organ and corn was popped and honey candy made. Her mother was an excellent cook and housekeeper and was kind and gentle to her children, showing them great love and affection. She disciplined her children through love. She was a wise and understanding woman filled with kindness and charity. These fine characteristics carried over in the character of Louisa.

She had seven sisters and two brothers. This was a closely knit family and they always had great love and respect for each other and enjoyed being together. Her responsibilities were great as she was growing up as her father was often away from home and Louisa, being the eldest of such a large family, did many things to help her mother and younger sisters and brothers. Inasmuch as her mother was confined at home with her smaller children Louisa did much of the buying both for food and clothing for the family.

In about 1906 they moved to Logan, Utah. There Louisa met Curtis Young Clawson, her future husband, who was from Salt Lake City. Their courtship lasted for two years. They were married in the Logan Temple on June 28, 1911 and made their home in Salt Lake City. A wedding breakfast and formal reception were held at the home of Louisa's parents. She made her wedding dress and it was of pale pink satin.

Curtis Young Clawson was a son of Orson Spencer Clawson and Habbie Young and a grandson of Brigham Young. He served in World War I as a Major in the 145th Field Artillery with overseas duty in France and was later made a Colonel in the National Guard where he served for many years. Three children were born to this union, two girls and one boy.

When their son William was just four months old he became very seriously ill with pneumonia. The doctors said he could not recover but great faith and prayers were offered in his behalf. Grandmother Louisa Ballif Benson was noted for her ability as a nurse and had unusual talent in this line and unusually strong faith in her Heavenly Father. With her kind, efficient help, the blessings of the Elders of the Church, fasting and prayer, Louisa was able to bring him through this crisis and feels that it was definitely an answer to prayer that saved his life.

Many times while Louisa was rearing her family she felt that her prayers were answered in their behalf. Her daughter was talented in dramatics and music as she grew up and was told by movie scouts that she had ability to become a movie star in Hollywood. She longed to go to Hollywood to try out her talents, so her parents took her there and left her to stay with relatives. When they reached home they became worried about the promises that were made to their daughter and the attention she was receiving. They prayed humbly about this and after praying together to know what was the right thing to do Louisa had a very realistic dream in which she dreamed that all was not well with her daughter. Immediately after this dream she awakened suddenly and she and her husband discussed this together and felt a strong premonition that they should send for her immediately, which they did. They called her on the telephone the next morning and insisted she return home. Soon after this she fell in love with a fine young Mormon boy and they were married in the Salt Lake Temple. Louisa always felt that this turning point in her life was an answer to her faith and prayers.

During their married life Louisa and her husband had many nice trips. They went to New York, Chicago, St. Louis and other eastern cities and in 1933 when they were in Washington D. C. they attended the last social function which was given in the White House while Herbert Hoover was President of the United States. Their invitation was extended to them because of her husband's position as a Colonel in the Military Service. They danced in the Gold Room to the music of the United States Marine Band. There was a large reception line where they visited and shook hands with the President and Mrs. Hoover and many other Washington Government Personnel. It was one of the most thrilling evenings of her life.

Louisa's husband died on August 3, 1941 when she was just fifty one years of age. She helped herself in a financial way after that time by taking University students into her home. She sold her home at 1224 Second Avenue in Salt Lake City in 1946 and moved into an apartment at 1179 Sunnyside Avenue. For several years after this she did nursing. In 1938 she went with a tour to the Hawaiian Islands flying over the ocean by plane and returning on the ship Lurline. The following year she also went by tour through the eastern states including Palmyra, New York where she attended the world famous pageant given by our Church at the Hill Omerrah.

In 1912 Louisa was set apart as a teacher in the Primary in the 18th Ward which position she held for two years. She was made a councilor in the Young Womens Mutual Improvement Association Presidency from 1920 to 1926 in the 27th Ward. From 1926 to 1933 she served on the Ensign Stake Mutual Improvement Association Board as a councilor to the President. She also acted as President of this Mutual Board from 1933 to 1937. The Stake was divided at this time and she was President of the new Emigration Stake for two years until 1939.

During these years she was also chairman of the Brighton Home in Big Cottonwood Canyon which is a Mutual Improvement Association summer recreation home for girls. This position she held for three years.

During World War 2 she served on numerous committees, Red Cross Nutrition Council, Vice Chairman of Carison Unit 21, served on the first U.S.O. Council Board organized in Utah, served on the War Production Board in the Conservation and Salvage Division as contact representative, Military Services Chairman, District No. 4 from July 1942 to December 1943. From 1942 to 1946 she served on the Relief Society Stake Board in Emigration Stake.

From 1942 to 1946 Louisa served as Captain of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, University Camp. From 1938 to 1962 she served as Captain of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, Elizabeth Isaac Burgess Camp. She was Secretary of the Ezra Taft Benson family organization from 1950 to 1962.

Louisa's life was influenced always by the testimony she had of the truthfulness of the gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saint. She enjoyed thoroughly her work in the church and the influence of the wonderful people with whom she came in contact and worked with for many years. Her parents and grandparents were her ideals and she was very grateful for their righteous teachings. She was taught to pray at an early age and family prayer was a regular practice in her home before and after she was married. She never attended a meeting where she was to take part that she didn't ask her Heavenly Father for His help and guidance. Lucy Grant Cannon and Bertha Stevenson with whom she worked in the Mutual Improvement Association enriched her life greatly and she always felt it a real privilege to have had the opportunity of knowing and working with them.

It has always been her desire to live a righteous life. She has a great ambition to continue in positions in the Church but because of limited eye sight and a decline in her good health she is unable to do the things she would like. She is faithful in attending her meetings and is interested in genealogy and Temple work and hopes in the future to continue work along these lines.

As of this date, March 8, 1962, her posterity is as follows:

<u>CHILDREN</u>	<u>DATE OF BIRTH</u>
Hobbie Louisa Clawson Sorensen	April 5, 1912
Jeanette Clawson Judd	April 16, 1914
William Curtis Clawson	December 12, 1919

Fosterity of Louisa Parkinson Clawson continued:

<u>GRANDCHILDREN</u>	<u>DATE OF BIRTH</u>
Sally Louisa Sorensen Gardner	February 5, 1935
Steven Clawson Sorensen	January 11, 1937
Christine Sorensen	October 3, 1943
Curtis Clawson Judd	September 22, 1941
Juliette Judd	May 26, 1942
Daniel Clawson Judd	July 23, 1946
Josephine Judd	April 13, 1948

<u>GREAT GRANDCHILD</u>	
Lisa Louisa Gardner	January 3, 1962

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Marie	Wilbur
Charlotte	Carmen
Clara	Evelyn
George	Wanda
Adeline	