

AUGUSTA JOYCE CROCHERON

In the original design of the Representative Women of Deseret, I did not include myself, but by the request of those whose wishes I have always endeavored to fulfill, now do so, although there are several to whom I would prefer giving place.

I was born in Boston, Massachusetts, October 9, 1844. My father was John Joyce, from St. John, New Brunswick--his parents were both from England. I have heard my mother say that my uncle, Oliver Joyce, planted the English flag on the Chinese wall at the time of the war (about 1840) between those countries. I do not know whether he was an officer, color bearer, or ordinary private.

My mother, Caroline A. Joyce, was the eldest daughter of John Perkins, a sea captain, and his wife, Caroline Harriman. The Perkins and Harriman families were among the early Puritan emigrants, the property they first built upon still being in possession of their decendants. I have heard my mother speak of the oak stairs and floors being so worn with age that they bent beneath the tread even when she was a child. My mother's mother was the daughter of Elder John Harriman, well known in New Hampshire as the occasional traveling companion of Lorenzo Dow, but more particularly as the founder of a sect called the "New Light Christian Baptists." He was the son of John Harriman and the daughter of a Penobscot chief who was friendly to the white people, and permitted his only daughter to recieve Christian baptism, and she was afterwards married to him pubicly in church. This union afforded peace and security to the settlers and gave them the alliance if needed, of a powerful tribe. The son of this marriage recieved an education and married. A few weeks after, and at the age of twenty-one, he "recieved a visit from a personage who gave him a new doctrine to preach to the children of man." He awoke his wife, Ruth, told her the vision, and she believed him. In the morning he began to arrange his worldly affairs so as not to interfere with his call and began to preach, accompanied by his young wife, who rose when he had done speaking and bore testimony to what he had said. He traveled a certain circuit, holding two and three

days' meetings whenever he stopped, building up quite a large church in his locality. He preached seventy-one years and died at the age of ninety-two. He never cut his hair from the time of his call to the ministry, and sometimes wore it braided in a queue, sometimes flowing in waves upon his shoulders, as in his portrait. His wife, Ruth, lived beyond her one hundredth birthday. His son, John, became a minister, but his daughter (my grandmother) was more worldly minded. Once when he entered the room she was standing before a mirror surveying her appearance being attired for some special occasion. He quietly stepped up to her and with a pair of scissors cut off the long black ringlets that fell like a mantle upon her bare shoulders, saying, "These come between you and your God." This did not, however, quench the worldly spirit within her, for she, at the age of sixteen, eloped with and was married to John Perkins, a young sea captain, a God-fearing man but not a church member then or ever afterwards in this life. She was very industrious, however, and had at that age spun all her bed and table linen, etc. She became quite a politician and used to write articles of the character, and the young men of the town used to gather round her hearth and ask her opinion on political matters. She also composed for them campaign songs, both words and music. My mother has told me the only dancing she ever saw in her childhood was when her mother, inspired by the patriotic songs she would be singing, would dance to and fro at her spinning, instead of stepping--improvising step and figure. She had eight sons that she said she was "raising for her country." Sure enough, two of them went to the war (twenty years ago) and laid down their lives; Warren and Andres Jackson, (so named because he was born on the day of President Jackson's second inauguration.) Grandma was an Andrew Jackson Democrat; he was her very beau ideal of a man. Charles served two terms and returned safe. Lawrence, my patriot grandmother's youngest boy, enlisted at seventeen and was sent back; "Too young," they told him, but he waited one year and went again and this time they took him, and he too was spared to return home.

Thaddeus sailed to Labrador through many years, and John to the West Indies. Her eldest daughter was my mother. When my mother heard and

received the Gospel in Boston, she hastened home to bear the good tidings and obtain their permission for her baptism. She found them bitterly opposed to this, her father reticent, her mother reproachful. Just at this time Elder John Harriman arrived to hold a three days' meeting. Preparations had been made for his coming, and on his arrival my grandmother received him in her best parlor and after the usual salutations were over, unfolded to him the story of my mother's conversion, that she had gone insane and wanted to join the Mormons. He asked, "Where is Caroline?" adding, reflectively, "If the Lord has any more light for the children of men, I for one am willing to receive it." His grandchild, overhearing this, was filled with joy. Her mother came out and told her to put on her bonnet and shawl. Not knowing what was wanted of her to perform, she obeyed, and by the time she was ready, found her brother, John, waiting with a horse and sleigh, and seating herself therein was rapidly whirled away to some relatives several miles distant to remain there until sent for. Said she, "I never saw my grandfather again." This was a specimen of my grandma's executive ability; no circumlocution about her.

I will give her own account of her receiving the Gospel, from a portion of her manuscripts:

"In the year 1842, I was living in the city of Boston, State of Massachusetts. One day I heard that a strange sect were preaching in Boylston Hall; they professed to believe in the same Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and the ancient Apostles. I went to hear them. As we entered the hall, they were singing a new song-- the words were:

'The Spirit of God like a fire is burning,  
The Latter Day Glory begins to come forth,  
The visions and blessings of lod are returning,  
The angels are coming to visit the earth.'

"After the song, a young man\* arose and taking for his text these words--'And in the last days it shall come to pass that the Lord's House shall be established in the tops of the mountains and

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\* Elder Erastus Snow. He afterward married her to her husband, and and blessed her children's children.

all nations shall flow unto it'---said the time for the fulfillment of this prophecy was near at hand, an angel had appeared unto a man named Joseph Smith, having the keys of the Everlasting Gospel to be preached to this generation, that those who obeyed it would gather out from the wicked, and prepare themselves for the coming of the Son of Man. He spoke of the great work already commanded in these the last days, and while I listened, his words were like unto a song heard in my far off childhood, once forgotten but now returning afresh to my memory, and I cried for very joy. I went home to tell my father the good news, but my words returned to my own heart, for both my parents thought me insane, and talked to each other sadly of my condition and what to do with me. My heart was filled with sorrow and disappointment. I asked for the privilege of being baptized but was answered with these words by my father, 'You must leave home if you join those Mormons.' I went away and was baptized for the remission of my sins, but still with regret and an uncertainty as to the right to disobey my parents. Soon after, my father left the city, and my mother came and took me with her, to care for me, as she was fearful I would be 'ruined by those deceivers.' One night I had been to a meeting where the Spirit of God seemed to fill the house, and returned home thankful to my Heavenly Father that I ever heard the Gospel. I laid down to rest beside my mother who commenced upbraiding me, and instantly I was filled with remorse that I was the cause of her unhappiness. I did not know what to say, but still and low, said these words, 'If you will leave father and mother, you shall have Eternal Life.' I asked, 'Mother, did you hear that?' She answered, 'You are bewitched!' I knew then she had not heard the voice, but my mind was at rest and I went to sleep. I have heard the same voice since, not in dreams, but in daylight, when in trouble and uncertain which way to go; and I know God lives and guides this people called 'Mormons.' I know also the gifts and blessings are in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and that same faith once delivered to the Saints is also ours if we live for it.

"In the month of February, 1845, I left home, my native land, and all the friends of my youthful days and sailed in the ship, 'Brooklyn,' for California. Before starting, I visited my parents, then living in New Hampshire. I told them of my determination to follow God's people, who had already been notified to leave the United States, that our destination was the Pacific Coast, and we should take materials to plant a colony.

"When the hour came for parting, my father could not speak. My mother asked, 'When shall we see you again, my child?' I answered, 'When there is a railroad across the continent.' God grant that

prophecy may be fulfilled and her life be spared to see it. I knew it would be there, even the 'highway cast up that the eagle's eye had never seen, nor the lion's foot had ever trod.'

"I turned my back on all once dear, for the memory of that voice was in my ears--'If you will leave father and mother, you shall have eternal life'--and selling my household treasures, wrapped my child in my cloak (for the weather was bitter cold) and started on my long journey around the Horn.

"Of all the unpleasant memories, not one half so bitter as that dreary six months' voyage in an emigrant ship. We were so closely crowded that the heat of the Tropics was terrible, but 'mid all our trials the object of our journey was never forgotten. The living faith was there and was often manifested. I remember well one dreadful storm during which we had to be hatched below, as the waves broke over the ship and filled our staterooms.

"While the elements were raging above, and we below were being tossed about like feathers, the good old captain came down among us wearing a solemn countenance. We tried to gather around him; he said to us, 'My friends, there is a time in a man's life when it is fitting to prepare to die, and that time has come to us; I have done all I can do, but, unless God interposes, we must go down.' A good sister answered, 'Captain, we were sent to California and we shall go there.' He went up stairs, saying, 'These people have a faith I have not.' And so it proved. We outrode the storm; we endured another off Cape Horn; we stopped and buried one of our dear sisters, a mother of seven children, (Mrs. Goodwin), at Juan Fernandez, and at last reached our new home, the last day of July, 1846, to find a country barren and dreary, so unlike the California of today, but we trusted in God and he heard our prayers; and when I soaked the mouldy ship bread purchased from the whaleships lying in the harbor, (returned from a four years' cruise) and fried it in the tallow taken from the rawhides lying on the beach, God made it sweet to me and to my child, for on this food I weaned her. I used to think of Hagar and her babe, and of the God who watched over them, and again I remembered the voice and words it spoke unto me--and took courage.

"From that day to this, I can bear my testimony to all the world that I have known, and still know, this is the work of God and will exalt us if we seek to know His will, and knowing it, do it."

My mother's testimony, written at my request, was the last work performed by her hand. After finishing, and accompanied a caller to the gate, the chill night air penetrated her frame, and morning found her sick with pneumonia.



From that bed she was borne seven days later, from the earthly gaze of children and friends forever. They called it death, but to her it was the reward promised and recorded by her own hand--"Eternal Life."

My mother had kept a daily journal on the ship, "Brooklyn," also the first five or six years in San Francisco, calling it "The Early Annals of California." This I considered invaluable from the reliability and the fullness of its historic matter and data, and after her demise, I searched for it but it was gone. Thsi I thought strange indeed, for she had assured me of its preservation about eighteen months before her last illness. I have heard her relate many incidents of those times. Once when nearly famished, (hostilities not yet being concluded between Mexico and the United States), two men ventured outside the town to lasso one of the cattle browsing so near them, but were themselves caught by cruel Mexicans in ambush and killed and quartered, their bodies left lying on the sand in view of the wretched inhabitants. At another time a Mexican was intercepted and searched. In one boot was found an order from General Castro to attack by night and kill everyting above four years old that could speak English. The messenger was buried in the sand. After a while the native women became curious, and some of them ventured past the guard after dark, and being touched with compassion, returned in the same cautious manner, with bottles of leche (milk) slung around their waists under their flounced dress skirts, and tortillas (flour and water cakes) concealed beneath their revosas (mantles) for the women and children. Soon after the landing, the brethren strayed around, glad to be on land and looking to see what they could find. "Any fruit?" asked one of a returning comrade. "Yes," said he. "grape, lots of 'em." There was a rush off in that direction and a fruitless search. Being sharply questioned, he pulled a handful of grape shot out of his pocket, which he had picked up from the scene of a recent engagement. The same day a gentleman passenger, traveling for pleasure, brought a bouquet of wild flowers to me, saying, "Little lady, I herewith present you the first bouquet ever offered by a white man to a white woman in Yerba Buena." Yerba Buena was the original name of San Francisco and means "good herb"-- from a kind of pennyroyal

growing wild there at that time. My mother kept the flowers many years and told me the story over their odorless ashes. My father and mother with many of the Saints, (sixteen families) moved from the ship into the "old adobe", partitioned off with quilts. Soon after he rented a house, but the largest room was required of him as a hospital for the wounded soldiers; the next largest, for the printing office. The press was an old Spanish press, and there being no "W" in the alphabet, they used to turn the "M" upside down. My mother sued to help decipher the dispatches, many of them being written on the battlefield with a burnt stick or coal.

Her first Christmas dinner in San Francisco consisted of a quart of beans and a pound of salt pork, which the hospital steward brought to her; he told her he would be flogged if it became known. In after days he became her steward. One day Dr. Poet had told my father where he could purchase half a barrel of flour. After baking some flour and water cakes between two tin plates in the ashed, my mother brought her dear friend, Mrs. Robbins, (now in this city), to share the repast. Said Mrs. Robbins, "Mrs. Joyce, isn't this like Bostin?" This was just after living for six months on mouldy shipbread. I have heard her say that often she was so hungry she would willingly have walked ten miles to obtain a slice of bread. Soon after this my mother helped to take care of the "Donner Party," who were found partly frozen and so famished that they were eating their dead companions. The girl she tended, told her that they grew to like it, and she had helped eat her brother. The true stories they told are too dreadful to repeat, particularly as some of them are still living. The Mormon Battallion came; peace was declared, the gold mines were discovered, and the circumstances of Saints were changed from isolation and famine to wealth and grandeur. My father became very wealthy, by prosperity caused his apostacy. My grandfather and uncle, John Perkins, both sea captains, came to see my mother. I well remember sitting on grandpa's knee and learning my alphabet from the large family Bible spread before him, he being my teacher. I often recall also the long evenings when Uncle John held me on his knee and sang the strange, pathetic, old-fashioned sea songs of which he knew so

many and sang them so sweetly; I used to nestle closer to him, half frightened, and at last fall asleep. I remember one was, "'Twas down in the lowlands a poor boy did wander," and I have never heard it since.

In Boston my mother was called "The Mormon Nightingale." Strangers indifferent to the Gospel would say, "Let us go to Boylston Hall and hear the singing." A gentleman of fortune offered to take her to Italy and educate her in singing, at the same time that Adelaide Phillips (his protegee) went, but her destiny was upon another stage, to sing the hymns of the newly-restored Gospel; and many have thought that she sang them as one inspired. Her rendering of Wm. Clayton's hymn, "The Resurrection Day," will be remembered by all who ever heard it. She purchased the first melodeon brought to San Francisco, (by a Mr. Washington Holbrook), thereby causing a sensation among the wives of the ministers of five denominations, who each wanted it for their church. She went, during the ravages of the cholera, in San Francisco, and gathered together sixty orphan children, providing for them until a building spot, material, and means were collected by subscription; and was one of the Board of Managers of the Protestant Orphan Asylum thus originated and founded. I remember going with her and hearing the children sing, "The Watcher," a song of poverty and death. At the expiration of one year some of the ladies objected to having a Mormon officer among them, "not considering Mormonism a religion at all," although quite willing to accept the continuance of her contributions. She, however, found a larger and more congenial field of labor; brethren going on their missions, their families left behind in Utah, received her prompt remembrance. Also seeds, trees, etc., she sent to Utah spring and fall, through more than twenty years. My only sister was born in San Francisco, August, 1847, and died in St. George, Mrs. Helen F. Judd, one of the truest Saints I ever knew. In San Francisco Parley P. Pratt was a guest at my mother's house. She had loaned the Book of Mormon to a Gentleman belonging to the Custom House, Colonel Alden A. M. Jackson. He had been in the Mexican War, at the battle of Buena Vista, and was with General Scott and Zachary Taylor through that campaign. He had two horses killed under him and recieved



injuries that lasted throughout his life. When he returned the book, he said he had read it day and night until finished and wished to know where he could find a minister of the Mormon Church. She invited him to come that evening and meet the Apostle, author and poet, Parley P. Pratt. The gentleman became so interested in their theme that my mother left the room without disturbing them and, giving a servant instructions to attend to Mr. Pratt's room, etc., retired. Descending the stairs next morning, she heard Brother Pratt, conversing, the lamp still burning. "Good morning, gentlemen," said she; Brother Pratt looked up--"Is it morning?" Colonel Jackson walked to the window--"Yes," said he, "another day has dawned, and another day has dawned for me--a beautiful one." Brother Pratt looked out upon the garden and said significantly, "It only needs water to complete the picture." Colonel Jackson replied, "I understand you; I am ready." Turning to my mother, Brother Pratt asked, "Sister Joyce, have you renewed your covenants? A number are going to the North Beach tomorrow. Will you go?" and she answered thoughtfully, "Ten years ago last night I was baptized in the Atlantic at midnight; tomorrow I will be baptized in the Pacific."

My own parents had been separated since my father's apostacy. A few months after her baptism, she moved to San Bernardino and there began building a beautiful home. Colonel Jackson, on his way to Utah was delayed, waiting for a train to cross the deserts, and my mother being his only acquaintance, he often sought her society, and at last determined to win her if possible, and some three years after their first acquaintance, they were married. Never was a kinder father than he. Years added to years drew us all nearer to each other.

In 1856, at the time of the Utah War, an armed mob twenty-two men visited the four remaining Mormon families in San Bernardino, and calling father out from breakfast, ordered him to leave town with his family by nine o'clock. He replied he would not do it, prefacing and concluding the reply in language more forcible than elegant. They planted an old cannon on the public square, fired it off, rode around and threatened a great deal. Father's law office fronted the square; he went as usual to it, and in the

afternoon they made a bonfire outside and coming in to him, told him they intended to burn him alive. He continued writing, only telling them if they disturbed his papers, he would send daylight through them. They left. When we were all ready to start for Utah, enemies obtained a writ from the court prohibiting my sister and I from leaving the state before we were of age. We were among enemies and powerless. My mother said, "If we can't go, our property shall," and with father's consent divided goods, provisions, arms and ammunition with the poor who could go. In 1864, my mother, sister, and I came to Utah on a visit, returned here in 1867. In 1868 I was appointed Secretary of the Relief Society in St. George. In 1869 our parents brought us "to the city" to receive our endowments, for which our joy and gratitude was beyond expression. I remained here; they returned to St. George where my sister married. In 1870 I became the second wife of George W. Crocheron. I believed I should better please my Heavenly Father by so doing than by marrying otherwise. Any woman, no matter how selfish, can be a first and only wife, but it takes a great deal more christian philosophy and fortitude and self-discipline to be a wife in this order of marriage; and I believe those who choose the latter when both are equally possible, and do right therein, casting out all selfishness, judging self and not another, have attained a height, a mental power, a spiritual plan above those who have not. To do this is to overcome that which has its roots in selfishness, and it can be done if each will do what is right. In November, 1870, I was appointed Secretary of the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association of the Ninth Ward, which position I filled 'til home duties compelled my resignation. At times during thirteen years I have reported, in the sister's meetings, chiefly those of the Fourteenth Ward. In 1876 our father died, and in five weeks after our mother followed him. Their graves are side by side in the valley of St. George, as beautiful as we could make them.

In 1878 I was appointed, then later, set apart and blessed to labor as Secretary of the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association for the Salt Stake of Zion, which position I strive to honorably fill. In 1880, by the advice and aid of my friends I published a volume of poems, "Wild Flowers of Deseret," which was kindly recieved, the entire edition being sold within

two years. The design of the picture "Representative Women of Deseret," appeared to me one night as I rose from family prayers. I had not thought of it before. This book of biographical sketches to accompany it was an afterthought. Many suppose that Mormon women are not encouraged in their abilities, are perhaps repressed. This has not been so in my case, or in my observations of others. Both encouragement and help have been given me by friends, by those in authority, and my husband has also encouraged and assisted me in every way in his power.

I am the mother of three boys and two girls, born in the New and Everlasting Covenant, and consecrated to my Creator before I ever held them in my arms or pressed a mother's kiss upon their little faces. Myself and all that are mine to give are dedicated to the service of God, praying that He will help us to be worthy of His acceptance.