

HANNAH NILSON HOGAN

Hannah Nilson Hogan, my grandmother, was one of the many who emigrated to America from Sweden, bringing with them the culture of Scandinavia. The Gospel message appealed to the Scandinavians, and thousands of them were converted.

Grandmother was born June 10, 1834, in the province of Skone, Sweden, the daughter of Carl Nilson and Boel Fransson. Her father was a hard worker, a tiller of the soil, raising beets among other farm products. He also raised cattle. The whole family worked on the farm to produce a livelihood. Grandmother's education was very limited since most of her time was spent working on the farm. In her youth she had great energy and was full of fun. Her brother, a violinist, often took his two sisters, Hannah and Edla, to the dances where he played. The girls were thrilled with the music and the dancing. Perhaps it was at the dances that Hannah learned to step-dance. She was unusually graceful and extremely light on her feet. She entertained on many occasions, even when she was an old lady.

In 1862 when she was twenty-one years of age, she joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Her parents were infuriated that she should claim membership with such an unpopular group. They were so bitter that she was disowned. They forbade her to come into their home, and threw her belongings out of the house. But undaunted she decided to go to Utah, crossing the Atlantic in the ship "Humbolt" and the plains in an independent company, arriving in Salt Lake City, October 2, 1862.

Sometime after her arrival in the valley, she came to South Bountiful to work for Jane Hatch, but they had difficulties because they could not understand each other. Someone suggested that she go over to Brother Hogan's to visit since he and his family were Scandinavian. Eric Hogan, my grandfather, had built for his wife Ingeborg a new log cabin. Grandmother came into this home and soon became a plural wife. She was an attractive young woman, with blue, dancing eyes and masses of golden wavy hair. She was full of life and energy and used to hard work. She had learned to weave carpets in Sweden and was an expert. Grandfather hired a man named Anderson to construct a new loom for her. Another room was added on the east side of the cabin to house the loom. Here she sat day after day weaving, weaving cloth and countless yards of beautiful carpet that decorated pioneer homes far and near. While Grandmother wove, Aunt Ingeborg cared for the family.

To Grandmother were born five children; Hyrum, Josephine, Ephraim, Amelia Maria and Charles Francis. During an epidemic of diphtheria all the children were stricken, and three of them died, Josephine, Ephraim, and Maria. Grandfather had died two years earlier so now Aunt Ingeborg, Grandmother, and the two boys, Hyrum and Charles were left to care for the home and the farm.

During the time the children had been growing up, the whole family had worked hard and saved enough money to build a fine, new adobe house of which they were all very proud. This was a center for many community parties. Dancing was one of the favorite types of entertainment. Grandmother's own enthusiasm for, and participation in dancing gave others the spirit of gaiety, and great times were enjoyed by friends and neighbors. She was good company, always having a witty answer for every occasion.

Sometime after the boys were married, Grandmother decided to build a home of her own. Here she continued to weave carpet – hundreds of yards of the bright, colorful floor covering rolled from the loom. She was quick and alert, pushing the shuttle back and forth with force and speed.

Besides weaving, Grandmother helped with the farm work, milking the cows and feeding the cattle. Each Friday she and my father hitched up the horse to a two-seated wagon, loaded it with their butter and eggs and set off for Salt Lake to market their produce to regular customers.

Grandmother also helped to make soap and candles; in fact she had so much energy that she couldn't understand others getting tired.

She was active until the hour of her death. She passed away suddenly just as she had wanted to do. During the evening of October 4, 1916, she visited at the home of her son Hyrum. She returned to her home about 9:00 and died an hour later from a heart attack.

Grandmother had lived eighty-five years. Her life had been one of strength and forcefulness, courage, industry, and faith. Her faith never faltered. Making the long trek across the plains was not a hardship to her, but rather a joy. Though her family had disowned her, she was grateful that the Gospel message had come to her. She possessed the fortitude and powers that were so essential to frontier life.

She was a short, plump lady. Her heavy, golden, wavy hair showed some gray lines, but here energy, her keen ready wit, and her industry remained with her to the end. She was a worthy contribution to the pioneer life of the community.

--- Evon Hogan Freestone