

**LOVINA ANN STEELE**  
**from History of Tooele County p416**

Lovina Ann Steele, born 29 September 1844, Illinois; daughter of Samuel Steele and Elvira Salome Thayer. Pioneers to Grantsville, Utah 1851 in the Joshua Grant company. Samuel Steele was an Alderman in Grantsville in 1852. Lovina married Benjamin Franklin Barrus 29 September 1861. She was a small woman, industrious and orderly. She had a place for everything and everything in its place. An air of love, peace and security permeated the home of Lovina and Benny Barrus. Children loved to visit them. They were always rewarded for an errand with a piece of homemade honey candy or a lump of sugar.

Children: 1-- Benjamin Franklin 2-- Emery Freeman (mar. Martha Tolman) 3-- Samuel Leonard 4-- Orrin Orlando (mar. Mary Elizabeth Clark) 5-- Lavina Angelia (mar. Ulysses S. Cline) 6-- Albert Almon (mar. Margaret Alice Millward) 7-- Mary Luella (mar. George Edward Millward) 8-- Aldo Benoni (mar. Mabel Louise Robinson) 9-- Elvira Chloina 10-- Sylvia Ellen 11-- Calvin Cleon

Lovina died 17 February 1925 Esther Warner (researcher)

**LOVINA'S CHILDHOOD**  
**By Luella Barrus Balls**

It is sad to think of two children left with strangers to take such a long, dangerous trip from Council Bluffs to Utah. The people who were bringing Lovina and her little brother weren't good to them. She would have to take him under her arm and jump out of the front of the wagon which didn't stop, then they would run to catch the wagon train. They went hungry and all her life Lovina could never stand to see food wasted.

When these children arrived in Salt Lake there was no one to meet them. The Collins took them to the Church Headquarters and said they were through with them. it wa announced in a meeting that they were homeless and a kind widow named Nancy Bailey offered to care for them. They were thin from malnutrition and dysentery. Their bodies were covered with lice, head and body, rather a bad sight. Grandma had a little red box with all her belongings in. This was her only link with the past. Nancy couldn't let them near her own children until they were cleaned up, but with good food, clean clothes and tender loving care they began to bloom.

Their father located them and came for them but they clung to Nancy. Their father later married Nancy and it is an interesting story of her getting to Utah to be kind to some children who needed her so desperately. She had joined the church, and her husband hadn't. He said if she went to Utah he would see to it that she would never see her children again. She was torn between her church and family when her husband was stricken with "Chills and Fever" and died very suddenly.

Lovina never saw her mother again. Uncle Orlando went to see her in California when he was on his way to his Samoan Mission. Grandma Dickey gave him a book on Thayer genealogy. I don't know if she stayed with the church.

**HISTORY OF LOVINA ANN STEELE**  
**by Her husband, Benjamin Franklin Barrus**

It is March 26, 1920 and I will record some incidents in the life of my wife Lovina Ann Steele, daughter of Samuel and Elvira Thayer Steele. She was born 29 Sep. 1844, in Hancock County, Illinois. Her afflictions began when she was about 3 years old. Her father went away to work expecting to be away all winter. He was in a prayer meeting one evening. When the meeting was out he said to his door companion, "I must start home in the morning." His partner was surprised, "We have just got located and ready to work", he said. Brother Steele said, "While the meeting was going on I heard a plain voice saying you are wanted at home. One of your family is ill and nigh unto death." Brother Steele was determined to go but his partner said, "It is winter, the snow is deep, the weather is very cold, no conveyance, no road broke." Brother Steele said he must go home. He started the 150 to 200 mile trip. He walked a day or two and came to a town, I forget the name. He found some of his neighbors just starting home with a horse team and sled so he got passage with them.

When he arrived near home he saw a neighbor. He feared to ask about his family but finally did. He was told that his daughter Lovina was almost burned to death. That she was still living but very low. They were surprised to see him back home. When he left he had intended to stay all winter. He explained about hearing a voice. He said, "It was plain as we now can hear a voice on the telephone." That was a wireless message. The nurse said, "What night was the message received"? The night was named. The nurse said, "That night, that hour, that minute, we were all in fast meeting praying to the Lord to send you home."

Wireless telephone is the Lord's method of sending messages. Samuel Steele found his child very sick. She and another child, were playing before a fireplace with some parched corn. A hot coal popped on her dress, and she was in a blaze before it was noticed. Lovina ran out doors and when the wind struck her the blaze spread very quickly. A lady across the way saw the burning child and came to the rescue. Lovina was severely burned. When Samuel Steele saw her he could see her ribs. There was proud flesh too. She recovered by faith, prayer, and work. She will carry the scars to her grave.

Though she is the mother of 11 children, 7 sons and 4 daughters, her life has been in the balance several times. At times her time had appeared to come, but by faith, prayers, and work she is still here and likely to live several years. She has surely been an ideal wife, a faithful mother, and a true Latter-day Saint. God bless her forever.

I am writing again on 29 March 1920. Lovina's parents separated when she was five years old. They had been living at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. They arrived at Council Bluffs, Iowa in 1851. Brother Steele left his team, wagon and goods in care of a Brother Hill expecting them to come to the valley the next season. Brother Hill apostatized and cheated Brother Steele out of his team and other property. They sent the children in care of a Brother Collins.

Samuel Steele arrived in the valley in 1851 and the children came in 1852. Lovina and I are the proud parents of 6 living children and their wives and husbands, 54 grandchildren but only 48 are living.

**LOVINA ANN STEELE BARRUS**  
**by Luella Cline Clark**

Lovina Ann Steele was born 29 SEP 1844. Her father was Samuel Steele. Her mother was Elvira S. Thayer. Des Moines, Iowa was her birth place. They were poor people and the father worked away from home. When she was small her brother Albert was sitting in front of the fireplace and his chair tipped, throwing him into the fire. At another time Lovina was standing in front of the fire and her clothing caught fire burning her badly. They carried these scars all their lives.

When Lovina was about six years of age her parents started across the plains with a team of oxen. While camped at Mt. Pisgah one winter Lovina's grandparents died of chills and fever and exposure. The next spring the company went to Winter Quarters. As they went along they planted gardens for those who came later.

Before reaching Winter Quarters Lovina's mother deserted them and went to California with gold rushers. When they reached Winter Quarters their father wanted to hurry on to catch the others who were ahead, so he put the children in the care of some people who promised to bring them on in the spring. He left a good team of black horses and other valuable things for the children. These people left the church and other people were supposed to care for the children, but no one took much interest in them. Lovina had the entire care of her little brother. She would jump off the wagon while it was going, and carrying her little brother, would run and get on the wagon again. The wagons only stopped for problems with the oxen and for night camps.

It took two years to get to Utah. They went to Grantsville where their father lived. He had married again. Then came the time when grasshoppers were bad and they lived on sego roots and greasewood greens, etc.

Lovina never had a chance to go to school but learned to read and write from Webster's Spelling Book. She worked in homes. William Allred was one of the homes she helped in for many years. Then while working in the home of Emery and Huldah Nickerson Barrus, she met Benjamin Franklin Barrus and was married to him when she was 18. When they were married they moved all of their belongings in a little red wooden trunk which had crossed the plains. Benjamin proved up on a quarter section of land, then deeded it to others who had lived on it and who needed it. They lived in Grantsville all their lives and raised a splendid family of honest children. They raised sugar cane and made molasses.

Once after or during a famine the Lord put a white frost on the grass and if they dipped the top of the grass in a pan of water early in the morning, then let it boil down it made sweetening for food.

Lovina and Benjamin had 12 children, 5 of them died small. Samuel was drowned in a well when he was 2 years old. This was a great sorrow as they thought it might have been prevented. One died from croup and one from black canker.

They had dances, quiltings, candy pulls, rag bees - cut cloth to make rugs, and wound it into balls to make rugs. They were happy helping one another. They used a shuttle and made lovely rugs on burlap, with pictures of horses and dogs, etc.

They were extremely honest, one time Grandfather traded for a horse and because it was better than what he had thought, he returned and gave the man an extra load of hay for it.

They had an orchard. They all planted the trees and built the houses around the trees so the Indians would not ambush them. They had flowing wells for water, sweet good water at the south edge of the Great Salt Lake. They were good gardeners and raised most of their food. Grandma didn't have a fridge, but a cool room with water running under partitions. She made butter and cheese to trade for what they needed. They traded at Z.C.M.I. a coop store in Grantsville. Grandpa also made brooms to trade.

In those days 10 cents looked so great to the children and they often sent 10 cents in a handkerchief at Christmas time to the children, and knitted mittens and sox for the men and grandchildren.

In later life Lovina had cancer and suffered many years before her death. The cancer was caused from the scars of burns when she was small. She lived with us the last years of her life in Salt Lake City, about 1921 to 1924. She died in Salt Lake and was buried in Grantsville.

Written by Luella Cline Clark. NOV 1988 Daughter of Angelia Barrus Cline

**LOVINA STEELE BARRUS**

**From A letter by Luella Cline Clark to Myrtis Hutchinson**

Lovina Ann Steele, Mrs. Benjamin Franklin Barrus, was born in Illinois. Her mother divorced her father Samuel Steele and went to California. I think it was at Winter Quarters where she left the children. The father Samuel Steele, arranged for them to come to Utah with some Saints but they left the Church and the children came with strangers. When they got to Utah, Brigham Young found families to care for them.

The boy, Albert Steele, was bound out, people would raise him and after he was grown he had to work and pay them back for raising him.

Lovina did house work and helped people to pay for her board and care, etc. Angelia Orissa Allred was kind to her and later she was a hired girl in the home of Emery Barrus and Huldah Nickerson, and met Benjamin Franklin Barrus, their son. They were married and had a large family, six of them lived to have families of their own. My mother, Angelia Barrus Cline, was of that family. There was Emery, Albert, Orlando, Aldo, 4 sons, and 2 daughters, Angelia and Luella. Calvin, Sammy, Chloena, and Sylvia Eleen died young. Their headstones are in the Grantsville Cemetery with their names on the Barrus\_plot.

When very young, Lovina caught fire and was badly burned. Her Father was away but hurried home after a voice spoke to him and told him she was near death's door. She laid on her face for weeks, but survived and raised a wonderful family. She was a wonderful Lady. She washed for her family with a washboard and tub, and carried the water in and heated it all her life. She was a wonderful cook. The best meals I ever had was at Grandma's. She made butter and cheese to trade for things they needed.

They would go to Logan Temple and work in winters for many years. People called them Aunt Lovina and Uncle Benny. He raised bees and sold honey. He also raised broom corn and made brooms and sold them. Children would bring back the handles and get 10 cents and he would make more brooms.

Their children called them Ma and Pa. He may have built the old home or Emery (His father) may have built it or helped with it. They say Emery built most of the first homes, also laid out cemetery lots. Benny was a patriarch and never spoke a cross word.

Lovina- Deceased when she was 77 years old