

LIFE OF JANE LOUISE MILLWARD

By Mary Robinson Rydalch

A granddaughter

Across the ocean in England lived a man, Andrew Vickers Millward, whose mother had been left a widow with eight children to care for. Andrew being the oldest child helped his mother to support the family from the time he was eight years old, by working in a factory.

In another part of the city, in a beautiful home, lived Louise Eastham, who had everything her heart desired. Beautiful clothes, jewels and money. Her father was the first man to be a railroad engineer in India. (That is the family tradition.) He would bring back from these trips lovely china, silverware and precious jewels, much of which he gave to Louise, later called Lucy.

Lucy and Andrew were drawn together by music. Both of them loved to sing. In due time they fell deeply in love and wanted to marry. Lucy's parents objected to poor Andrew and forbade her to marry him. But she did marry him, joined the LDS church and sold some of her beautiful dresses and jewelry to get enough money for them to come to America.

They were about seven weeks crossing the ocean and landed in America during the upheaval of the Civil War. They were told not to attempt coming west, but Andrew and Lucy were anxious to press forward.

They, in company with other saints left for Salt Lake City. The officers forbade them to cross the Mississippi River but the Saints felt that they would be protected. While they were crossing they had to lay flat on their backs to keep from getting shot. The shots rang out all around them.

A good friend Uncle Jim Ratcliffe, who married Lucy's sister Emma, and Andrew took a bath in the Mississippi river and Andrew almost drowned, but Uncle Jim saved him and he couldn't swim. They finally arrived in Grantsville sometime in February.

Later all the Easthams came to Grantsville and joined the church.

Uncle Jim told them they could live in his granary until they could find a house. They were glad for the offer because a few days later on 1 MAR 1865, Jane Louise Millward was born. Like most other young girls she started attending the district school at the age of 6, but due to the financial conditions of her parents she had to quit school and get work. She got a job washing for a family of Rydalchs that lived about 2 1/2 miles from town. She would walk that distance barefoot and be ready to wash at 5 O'clock, wash all day, and then walk home after dark. But it wasn't bad at all because Rydalchs had a washboard. Jane's mother had only a large rock to wash on. She did these washings for several years for 50 cents a wash.

She would go with her mother, father and brothers and sisters into the wheat fields and glean wheat for flour. If they got a small bucket full a day, they felt fully paid for their work. When Jane was still a young girl she helped her other and father make adobe bricks to build their

two room adobe house. Father Andrew insisted they build a fireplace in one end of the room. Many wonderful evenings were enjoyed around the fireplace. The family was very talented in music and drama.

We can imagine how their troubles and sorrow would vanish at night when they gathered together around the fireplace to sing, dance and dramatize. Every child that came to this family learned to sing and dance from the day of their birth. Twelve children, six boys and six girls were born to these good parents. Jane being the eldest.

Father Andrew was chorister for 50 years in Grantsville, Utah, organizing the first choir there. He composed several hymns, belonged to the Salt Lake choir, 50 seat reserve. He wrote a hymn and called it 'O God Our Father Let Thy Grace', later it was revised and became 'For the Strength of the Hills' also known as 'Grantsville.' He was famous throughout the west for choosing good organs and pianos. People would pay him to go with them to purchase a new organ or piano.

At the age of eight Jane began singing solo parts in her Father's choir. The same year she was chosen to play the part of 'Eve' in 'Ten Nights In a Barroom' at Grantsville. She and her brother Joseph Millward became famous in that show and were soon called to act in Salt Lake in the Great Salt Lake Theatre. In the Deseret News fifty years ago appeared this article: "Everyone is anticipating an enjoyable evening witnessing the outstanding performance of Jane Louise Millward, eight years old, and her brother Jody, six years old, of Grantsville, in the play 'Ten Nights in the Barroom'.

Grantsville Theatrical groups produced a play a month for many years and according to record Jane was in every one." Her young life was full. She worked hard, entertained extensively and was very happy doing things she loved.

Her first dance is interesting. Jane had a new dress to wear, but no shoes. Her grandmother had the nicest ones in Grantsville. Her grandmother said she could wear them if she would carry them to and from the dance. The shoes were three sizes too small for Jane, but she wore them and had a wonderful time. The dance crowds always shouted for Jane to sing and dramatize for them. She was the life of the parties.

At one of these dances she met and fell in love with a handsome young man, Heber John Robinson, born 7 Dec 1861 in American Fork, Utah, the son of John Robinson and Mary Ann Levens. Heber and Jane had to slip out to do their courting as Father Andrew wanted her to marry a polygamist who was high in the church. Jane wanted love and happiness of her own choice. Heber John smoked but quit at Jane's request and took her to the Salt Lake Temple to become his wife.

To show how sweet a character Jane was, I would like to illustrate; Before Jane was to be married she worked hard and saved her money to buy some nice wedding things but her mother was expecting a new baby and had no clothes, so Jane gave her mother the money for the new baby and went without her new wedding things.

Jane and her husband Heber purchased 2 acres of ground with a 2 room house on it. It was a lovely place to begin their lives together. Nine months later a baby girl was born to them, Mabel Louise. They were indeed happy. Heber longed for a sawmill in Tooele County. It was the first steam engine sawmill. They owned many oxen to haul the great logs. Their jolly banter to urge the oxen to work was heard throughout the valley. (Heber was one of twelve children and his parents had died and left these twelve children, they ate dandelions and berries and Heber was told if he'd pick up cigarette butts he wouldn't get hungry.)

Jane was always with her husband in his work. In the busy season she would take her family up to the sawmill, helping in every way. Her husband also cared for sheep in season. Jane with her family went with him to the sheep camps or what there was, to be with her husband. Jane's husband liked music too. He belonged to Father Andrew's famous band, the first in Grantsville. A special wagon was built and painted for the band. It was the duty of the band in those days to awaken the city for celebration days. After the early morning awakenings, breakfast would be served by Jane to the band. She was interested in music too and helped encourage it in every way. Jane and her husband were leaders in the community. About three years after they were married a boy was born to them, Heber Clarence, 2 JUN 1888.

About this time mother Lucy died leaving a small baby called Lionel. Jane took a small daughter, Grace, the baby that Jane had given her money for earlier, and raised her along with her own daughter Mabel. When Jane's father died at a ripe old age he requested his sons and daughters and grandchildren to furnish all the music at the funeral. It was a grand climax. All through their lives they kept the commandment: "Thou Shalt Rest on the Sabbath Day and Keep It Holy." No matter how far away, shearing or up at the saw mill, when Saturday night came, work ceased and they would travel home to Grantsville and make ready for Sunday -- a day to worship and to thank the Lord for His goodness unto them. They prospered. They built 2 more rooms on, bought lovely furniture, the latest styles of everything. Life was good.

Out of a clear blue sky came a call for Heber to go on a mission to New York. Yes, they could manage nicely by selling Heber's share in the sawmill. Dick bought it agreeing to pay so much a month, enough to keep Heber in the mission field and provide the necessities for Jane and her family at home. But the mill under new management didn't pay as much.

Jane was determined to keep her good husband in the mission field, so she opened a millinery shop; fitted and sold hats all day. This did not pay enough to meet their needs, so during the evenings she sold candy, ice cream and lunches. Her shop was under the dance hall. Her business increased. On special occasions she made special lunches etc. She was a very good cook. She would prepare her food at home and the children would haul it to the shop in a little wagon. Her business paid well now, but her health began to fail and she had to give up the millinery shop and ask the Mission President to move Heber to a cheaper mission. Heber was transferred to West Virginia where he completed his three year mission.

Just before Heber was released to come home he wrote to Jane and told her of a vision he had. In the vision he was to be called to a foreign mission, he may not even get to come home first to see her and the children.

Jane wrote him then of her health and how the saw mill had failed them and of her shop and the hard work she had done to keep him and that he had better come home and let her rest for a while, but to do as the Lord willed, and a way would be provided. Heber came home in March. A week after his return a load of hay tipped over on him and tore the ligaments of his leg. He was still weak and white from the strain of his mission and he began to cough. He was ill for six weeks and was just getting around on crutches when Jane was attacked with severe pains and was rushed to St. Mark's Hospital in Salt Lake. It was gall stones. 15 gall stones were removed and Jane was very sick for three months. She was not to die yet. She had a great life to live here.

She returned to Grantsville to find her husband had been working as much as he could (crippled), and had bought a cow, horse and buggy, and new things for the house, things to help Jane when he was called on that foreign mission. About the middle of the following winter his cough alarmed them and Jane insisted that he go to Salt Lake and see Dr. Stuckey. He did and was told he had consumption in its worst form and in March just a year after his return from his mission he died, leaving Jane, a young broken hearted widow with 2 children, Doctor bills, and funeral expenses to pay.

She was a courageous woman, she didn't sit down and mourn her lot. Instead she gathered new courage, enlarged her candy and ice cream shop to a cafe and in seven years the debts were all paid and she was once again established on her own.

During these seven years her daughter Mabel had married Aldo Barrus of Grantsville and they moved to Star Valley, Wyoming, a new and prosperous valley. Soon after her son Clarence visited Mabel, and liked the country and stayed there. Jane was glad for hard work now, but she was alone and lonely. About this time Charley Johnson, a neighbor and life-long friend (and the father of my mother Maud Clarice Johnson Robinson, James) lost his wife. He was left a widower with five young children, the Grantsville Mercantile Co., and the dance hall. He was lonely and began to eat over to Jane's. One day he asked Jane to marry him, and take care of him, his children and home. He told Jane he still loved his wife, but he'd be good to her and she wouldn't have to work so hard. So Charles and Jane married.

While married to Charles, Jane again applied herself to the task at hand, running Charles lovely home, raising his family, being a helpmate and giving of herself to this man the best she had in every way. She had two major operations, her gall bladder removed and an eye operation, both successful.

Charles began to drink more and more; lost customers, and his business began to fail. Jane sold her home, that Heber and she had built, to get money for Charles to enlarge and remodel his store. Everything was rosy again for a while and then Charles began to fail in both health and business and finally he died.

He had failed to tell his two brothers, who also owned shares in the store, about Jane's share. The brothers finally gave Jane \$700. She left and went to visit her children in Star Valley, Wyoming. She liked it there and decided to stay. Two brothers and two sisters of Jane's also lived in Star Valley.

The Lord guided Jane to this little valley at the right time. Everyone was having babies, including her daughter and her son's wife Clarice (Charles Johnson's daughter). The valley was snow bound most of the winter months. She went from house to house caring for the sick and the babies. (I was one of the babies).

Jane's spirits were made anew, her health improved and she learned to love the people and the valley so she took her \$700, and opened a cafe in Afton, Wyoming. It didn't do well, too small a town.

Jane's brother Roger at St. Anthony, Idaho asked her to come to his home and attend his wife with one of her babies. While there she was Relief Society president and met and married Eli Belcher Clark a widower with one unmarried son and a farm at Newdale. Family troubles developed after ten years of trying to make a go of it, they separated.

She visited around with friends and relatives, where ever anyone was sick and needed help. She went to visit a friend in Declo, Idaho, Belle Anderson formerly of Grantsville. Belle had a big party inviting fifty friends. Jane helped and they cooked a lovely dinner and as always they called for Jane to entertain. They said it was her most outstanding performance.

Jane and Belle retired late, talked of old times and of the grand evening. Jane stopped talking suddenly. Belle called her name but Jane had gone on a foreign mission. And so ended a unique and energetic life, full of hard work, and the joy of serving in every way. She died 8 Aug 1929. She was buried beside her beloved husband Heber John Robinson at Grantsville, Utah.