

DUP AF Book 2

Biographical Sketch

of

Nancy Lance Stuart Dayton Cooper

by Alice Forbes Crosby Beck, granddaughter

Pioneer Year 1851

Captain Day Company

Born 16 Oct 1807 in Perth, Canada

Married Captain Stuart

Died 21 Apr 1926 in Salt Lake City, Utah

Buried in American Fork City Cemetery

Nancy Lance Stuart Dayton Cooper was born on the 16th of October, 1807, in Perth, Canada. She was the daughter of Jacob Lance, born in 1773, and Cynthia Draper, born in 1775. There were eight children in the family, they were: William, Louis, Nancy, Louisa, Sophia, Jacob, Simon, and Charles.

Nancy Lance, when very young, married Captain Stuart and to this union was born one child, Mary Stuart. A short time after their marriage, Captain Stuart was drowned at sea, so Nancy moved to Nauvoo with her family. It was there that she and her sister Sophia, also a widow, met Hyrum Dayton and were converted to the Gospel. Sophia married Hyrum Dayton, thereby becoming his second wife, and later Nancy married him, and bore him two children: one son, Albert Frien, and a daughter, Nancy Mindwell.

Hyrum Dayton and his wife, Nancy, left Nauvoo, Illinois for Winter Quarters with Captain Day's Co. about November of 1849, and in the fair spring of 1851 crossed the plains in Captain Day's Co., arriving in Salt Lake City, Utah, the 14th of Sept., 1851. Grandfather was very ill at the latter part of the journey with mountain fever and had to be brought by wagon, but Grandmother walked a great deal of the way, although she was pregnant at the time, and upon the arrival at the spot now known as Pioneer Park in Salt Lake City, the company made camp, and a few hours later, after walking all day, Nancy Dayton gave birth to a daughter, Nancy Mindwell, on the 14th of Sept., 1851. In 1852, Nancy Lance Stuart Dayton married Isaac Cooper.

My mother, Nancy Mindwell, was known as Nancy Cooper in childhood, she being only a baby when grandmother married Isaac Cooper, and she was raised as his child, though she was not adopted by him. She lived with her mother and Grandfather Cooper on a dairy farm near the point of the mountain on the Jordan River, and it was here that she spent her childhood. When she was six years old, she tried to follow her brother Albert when he went after the cows, and when she sat down to pick out the sand burrs from her bare feet and to rest, an Indian snatched her up and ran away with her. She was rescued after twenty-four hours.

When she was very small, Mother was sent with a basket of food to a new company of pioneers who had just arrived in the Valley. Her mother had told her to give each one of them just one piece of bread, and upon seeing her do this, President Brigham Young put his hands on her head and blessed her and promised her that she would never want for bread, that her last days would be her best, and that her daughters would be jewels in her crown. She remembered these things and felt they literally came true.

Grandfather Cooper owned a quarter section of land at the point of the mountain at the curve that is railed in, below that point on the river was his pastures, and many times mother had to swim her horse across the river to get the cows. When she was small she would milk eleven cows night and morning. Later the family moved to American Fork and ran a boarding house, and it was there my father first met mother.

One day Mr. Nevins and his partner Joseph Forbes came inquiring about accommodations and were directed to the Coopers. Upon asking the location of the Coopers, they were told it was finished Hindleys; when they didn't understand, it was explained that finished meant kitty-cornered, though they still didn't understand. They soon located the place, and Grandfather gave them consent to camp in the yard. Of course two handsome, cultured gentlemen, who sang and played their guitars, caused quite a sensation among the young folk, who came to peer at them as they prepared their evening meal. Among them were my mother, her cousins, and her half-sisters who stood around and watched the boys first boil their eggs and then use the water for their tea, which went sorely against mother's feelings.

Mother was a very busy hard working girl, as her mother and older sister were both invalids. Her mother, at the birth of her son Cyrus was stricken with paralysis, which left her totally helpless and bereft of her speech, though she lived for a good many years in that condition. Aunt Mary had heart trouble, and about all she could do about the house was to mend and sew, and do beautiful embroidery. Mother learned to spin and weave, and was adept at malting bread and butter and various other things. She and father fell in love and

although his friend and people prevailed upon him to come home, Joseph Forbes cast his lot with the Mormons and Mr. Nevens went on without him. He and mother were married on the 1st of January, 1865, and the following children came to bless this union: Sarah Amanda, Nancy Elizabeth, Joseph Arthur, Mary Alice, Emily Catherine, Isaac Roby, Olive Edith, Fredric Elbert, Ellen Drue, Edna Lulu, Charles Willard, Laura Lavern, and Florence Ruby.

Mother was glad she would never have polygamy to contend with, since she had practically been mother to both families, and felt she never could stand that. However, six months after their marriage, through Bishop Harrington's influence, father embraced the Gospel, and took Aunt Jane to wife. At this time mother's trials sorely tested her faith; her mother died, she lost her beautiful two and a half year old son Roby, and gave birth to my dear Sister Olive.

Mother was only fourteen years old when she was married, and her first daughter, Amanda, was born a month before she was sixteen. When father married Aunt Jane, mother willingly shared her household goods with her, and although her heart was heavy, she went bravely on, never complaining, and sharing whatever she had, and letting her children do any assistance to lighten Aunt Jane's burdens. Mother was of a cheerful and happy nature, and always saw the funny side of things, was witty and one never knew what heartaches her cheery smiles were hiding. She was always ready and willing to venture with father in anything he undertook. The first year of their married life they lived at the point of the mountain, but while they were on a visit home the Indians burned the house, then they moved to Heber, where father taught one term. They then moved to Ogden, where Nancy Elizabeth was born, but after a year in Ogden they moved back to American Fork. It was here that father taught school for so many years, and with the help of Bishop Harrington they established the free school system.

Mother was a great mimic, never with the spirit of criticism, but just that she loved to make people laugh, and she loved to tease just a little. Though she knew nothing of fortune telling, she often pretended that she did with her daughters, and would tell them just the opposite to what they wanted to hear, such as that their beau

might be taking another girl to the dance. She loved romance and her daughters and also granddaughters adored her and would always go to her with their innermost secrets and disappointments, and she would plan and counsel with them or revel in their happiness. My mother could never be old, for she could always be counted upon to don funny costumes and cut up capers with her granddaughters. Jennie Greenwood's father once told us that as a girl, our mother was very beautiful and a lovely dancer, and that none of her girls could compare with her. Nevertheless mother was always the leader in the work about home. Each one was assigned a task and mother always took the lead and the heaviest one. The hour was never too late, the weather too cold nor the road too long for her to lend aid to the sick or dying.

Just recently Sadie Bromly, Jenny Cunningham, Minnie Webb and others have commented on her cheerful disposition and how beloved she was. She was like a mother to them, and her life long friends we were taught to call Aunt Hannah Condor, and Melissa, Alice, and Mary Mott were all aunts to us. Many times Aunt Caroline would bring her nightdress tucked under her arm to stay all night with mother when father was away. Usually when they came to call, it was an all day affair and the children enjoyed it too.

When we moved to American Fork we lived on the Duncan corner for a number of years, then removed down on the highway by the Kouts and Woodhouse homes. Then father built the adobe house across the street from Richard Hansen's home, and also the home where Aaron Greenwood now lives, and where I was born, and mother's sister Mary and son Joseph A. died. Then mother buried her son Fredrick Elbert when he was six weeks of age. Then the Edmund Tucker law was passed and father moved Aunt Jane to Sanford, Colorado, leaving mother behind. She struggled along for about a year and a half, then father came back and sold our property and though we were heart broken at the thought of leaving our friends, we started for Colorado, where it was sparsely settled and there were few advantages. Upon our arrival at Sanford, Colorado, the Bishop met with the family and persuaded mother that since father was in the Dry Goods business, and was not known to be a polygamist,

against whom there was feeling, that it would not be wise for mother to stay there. Mother made the sacrifice and with a small colony of eight or nine families of plural wives went to a little town in Mexico, call Mariana.

When mother left for Mexico, my sister Emily was left to assist Aunt Jane and I remained to work in the store. While in Mexico, mother gave birth to my sister Lavern, with only an old Mexican midwife in attendance. Father took Emily and me down to take care of her, and having learned a bit of the Mexican language while in the store, and through teaching, we made the old Mexican woman understand with difficulty what mother wished her to do. Mother's life was despaired of, but the old midwife would only moan and rock back and forth muttering "Mucho Sangrie", and doing nothing for her. We prayed earnestly for God to spare our dear mother, and our prayers were answered. A year later, due to the terrible floods and storms in that vicinity, father moved us to East-Date, another little plural wife colony. There mother was stricken with Rheumatic fever, but through the careful nursing of sister Emily, she recovered.

During this time Aunt Jane moved back to American Fork, and father moved us to Sanford, Colorado, where we lived about a year, then father secured the school in Manassa, Colorado, and we moved over there; then back to American Fork where mother could call her much loved family about her. We resided in the old Bishop Harrington home for some time, and mother struggled with father to get a foothold in the old life. They kept boarders, mother did cooking, and father resumed his duties in the school. It was in this house that Edna, her thirteen-year-old daughter died. They then built the house where Elmer Pulley now resides. Mother often said that she had moved so much that the chickens would lie down and cross their legs to have them tied.

In 1926, Mother came to Salt Lake to my home on Murphy Lane, to a party on Friday in honor of Sister Olive. Her daughters were all there, and she was so happy and joined in their fun with her heart and soul. She danced all the changes of the plain quadrille alone. Saturday morning she and father ate breakfast together and made plans to visit all of the girls that day, but a little later she

became ill, and grew steadily worse. The doctor was called, and he told us that our dear mother's hours were numbered. She asked for all her family and they assembled Sunday with the exception of Charles.

She went into a state of coma, and on Tuesday morning, April 21st, 1926, she passed away at my home in Salt Lake City. She was taken to her home in American Fork. Dear in the hearts of her children is the memory of Aunt Caroline coming in with tears streaming down her cheeks, and in her hand a bunch of geraniums grown in her own little home. We all appreciated them more than the costliest bouquet money could buy.

Her funeral was held in the tabernacle and our darling mother, sleeps on the hill beside father, and her children who had gone before her.