

Life sketch of Margaret Ann Manning Belnap

(First Wife of Oliver Belnap)

Contributed By Brenda Ames Belnap to Family Search

Margaret Ann Manning was born on June 11, 1859 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah. Her parents were Henry William Manning and Margaret Galbraith, English emigrants. Margaret Ann was the second daughter and the third child in a family of ten children.

During the years when Margaret Ann was small, the Saints in the valley were threatened by Johnston's Army and her father sent the family to Spanish Fork to stay with the rest of the Saints until the trouble was settled. When the scare was over, they returned to their home. Following this, her family moved to Wilson Lane, a short distance from Ogden and it seemed that hardships and misfortune followed them. The Weber River had overflowed its banks three years in succession, ruining their farm and it became necessary for them to find a new home. In the spring of 1869, they moved to Hooper. At this time Margaret's mother was very ill and was bedridden for six months, and Margaret Ann (affectionately called Maggie) had to assume the responsibilities of the housekeeper and homemaker. She was an excellent dressmaker in her very tender years, and at the age of thirteen, she hired out to Mrs. Ole Oleson as a seamstress. Her family prospered here in their new home.

It was at this time that they became acquainted with the Belnap family and Maggie met Oliver Belnap while they were both still very young. Their friendship through the years developed into love for one another and they were married on January 6, 1881, in the Salt Lake Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah. They had six children, four boys and two girls.

On October 28, 1879 the first Primary was organized in the Hooper Ward. Mrs. Jessie Wilson was sustained as President, with Margaret Ann Manning as First Counselor and Martha Hardy as Second Counselor. Elizabeth A. Hooper was Secretary. Margaret labored in the Primary from the beginning and on July 6, 1881, she was sustained as Counselor to Martha Hardy.

In the fall of 1882 Margaret became President of the Hooper Ward Primary. She served in this capacity until she was released on April 11, 1886. The original Primary Minute Book, Page 25, contains this remark, "Maggie Manning spoke well, encouraged the children in observing good order in meeting and listening to what was said."

On October 31, 1887, her husband, Oliver, was set apart to fill a mission to the Southern States. During this mission, Maggie lived in a log house on her father's farm, bravely caring for her home and family. Her dressmaking skill came in useful during these years. Oliver was honorably released from his mission on November 18, 1889, and returned home to have a happy reunion with the family he left behind, and a son, Lester, who was born during his absence.

They continued to live in Hooper for a while and then moved to Ogden on October 10, 1889, her husband, Oliver, having been appointed Deputy Sheriff to serve under his brother, Gilbert Rosel, who was Sheriff of Weber County.

Following the birth of their fifth child, Margaret's health began to fail, and after her sixth child was born she became steadily worse. She died after a lingering illness on April 18, 1894. Margaret Ann was small in stature, never weighing more than a hundred pounds. Her hair was golden brown and her eyes a deep blue. She was gentle and demur in manner, with a loveable disposition, good humor and a ready wit that endeared her to all who knew her. She enjoyed the social life of her community and her Church, she was deeply religious and took part wherever she could. She was an affectionate and devoted wife.