

Biography of Severine Maria Madsen



by

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Edited by Diane Stokoe.

**Biography of
Severine Maria Madsen**
by Jenny Terry Farley - A grand daughter

Severine Maria Madsen was born August 21, 1836. Her father, Mads Sorensen, was born in Hjorring County, Lindrums City, Denmark on March 13, 1796. Her mother, Johanna Jensen, was born in Gronloft, Denmark in 1801. There is little information about Severine's youth. We know she learned tailoring and was an excellent seamstress. In the old country women were required to butcher the animals. We know that Severine worked for a time as a butcher. Her co-worker was a girl with a very dark complexion. Grandma believed that this was a result of the girl wiping her face with a wet cloth several time each day as she passed the wash basin. Both girls were instructed to kill a veal. As Grandma did not wish to kill the animal. So decided she would simply assist her dark complected co-worker. Evidently the other girl had the same idea. She held the calf by the head and said, "Cut right here!" As Severine did not know how to avoid it, she went on with the gruesome task.

On July 26, 1857, one month before Severine's 21st birthday, she was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints by Jens Christian Andrewson Weibye. Grandma was confirmed the same day by P. Lfjelstead and immediately began to save money to emigrate to Zion. Three years later Jens Madsen, Grandma's brother whom she called "Jimmie" emigrated and settled near the Jordan Narrows, not far from the Point of the Mountain. Five years later Jimmie introduced a co-worker a fellow countrymen to Severine. This man would become her husband.

Ten days before Severine's baptism, Scandinavian Mission President Hector C. Haight posted this report to Orson Pratt: ". . . *In Denmark we are at present enjoying much freedom compared with the past, both in preaching and spreading the written word. When I first came here, which was a year and a half ago, it was a frequent occurrence for elders to be whipped, mobbed and driven from their fields of labor. I soon found that much of this was occasioned by the course pursued by the Elders themselves in harsh preaching, reproving and reproaching both priest and people for their religion. I forthwith counseled them through our Star and in public meetings that they should go forth in the spirit of meekness and kindness, proclaiming the simple truth of the gospel... Through the cautiousness with which our Elders have labored of late, much of the prejudice against us had abated, and our enemies have expressed through the papers that "Mormonism" is on the wane, and that they had no more to fear as it would die out, when at the same time we were baptizing over two to one to what we were before. . . Everything is moving on satisfactorily in Denmark under the present circumstances, and in the last half-year 700 souls (evidently including Severine) have been baptized.*"

On November 23, 1859, Elder John Van Cott arrived in Copenhagen on his second

mission to the region. He had come to preside over the mission. He was released in 1862 and placed in charge of 1556 Scandinavian saints who were preparing for the trip to Zion. This is the largest number of Scandinavians ever to emigrate together, either before or since that time. President Van Cott made all the travel arrangements for this very large company. Four ships were chartered including the Albion, the Humbolt, the Franklin and the Electric. Elder Van Cott gave Grandma and another Danish girl steamship tickets he obtained through the Perpetual Immigration Fund so they could join the company. Grandma was then twenty-six years of age and unmarried. Severine noted in her journal that she left Denmark on April 5, 1862. Neither of her parents had joined the church although sometime after her father's death on July 3, 1871, her mother accepted the gospel and followed her children to Zion.

The Humbolt, with Captain H.B. Boysen, sailed from Hamburg with 323 emigrating saints on Wednesday, April 9th. This ship landed in New York on May 20th. Grandma Severine probably sailed on the Franklin, the second ship to embark, with Robert Murray serving as company captain. She noted "*We have been very little troubled with sea sickness.*"

The Franklin sailed from Hamburg with 413 saints, nearly all from Aalborg and Vendsyssel Conferences. Jens C.A. Weibye, the elder who had baptized Grandma, gives this account of the voyage after they crossed the Atlantic: "*We went on board the Franklin in the evening of Tuesday (April 8th) and I was appointed to locate the emigrants in their bunks below deck. These bunks, 160 in number, were so wide that three persons easily could have room in one of them sleeping side by side. After getting our baggage in order, we received our rations of provisions. These consisted of beef, pork, peas, beans, potatoes, pearl barley, rice, prunes, syrup, vinegar, pepper, coffee, tea, sugar, butter, rye bread, sea biscuits, water flour, salt herring, salt, and oil for the lamps. We lighted eleven lanterns every night, six of which belonged to the ship and five to the emigrants. We hired an extra cook in Hamburg for 90 rigsdaler, and besides him, two of our brethren served as assistant cooks. We thus had our dinners nicely cooked in about the following routine: Sunday we had sweet soup, Monday pea soup, Tuesday and Wednesday rice, Thursday pea soup, Friday barley mush and Saturday herring and potatoes.*"

Some of this large company had come down with the measles and the disease soon spread to all parts of the ship so no less than forty persons, mostly children, were infected at once. Many of the emigrants were also suffering with diarrhea. . . We lost our appetite for sea biscuits, but learned to soak them in water or tea from 8 to 12 hours, which softened them so that they were more palatable. The sick were served twice a day with porridge made from barley, rice or sago, almost every day pancakes could be had by the hundreds for the sick who could not eat the hard tack or sea biscuits. Wheat bread was also baked for some of the old people. We held a council meeting every night, and the sanitary conditions of the ship's apartments were attended to with great care. Three times a week the decks were washed and twice a week the ship was thoroughly fumigated by burning tar. A spirit of peace prevailed and very few difficulties were encountered. The captain and crew were good-natured and obliging and so were the cooks, who even served the sick when they were not on duty.

“We held meetings of worship on the upper or lower decks, and every morning at 5:00 o’clock the signal for rising was given by the clarinet or accordion. At 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. a similar signal was sounded calling the Saints to assemble in their several districts for prayer. Most every day we amused ourselves a short time by dancing on the deck to music played by some of our brethren or members of the ship’s crew. We could thus have an enjoyable time, had it not been for the sorrow occasioned by the many sick and dying among us, on account of the measles. Up to this date (May 27th) three adults and forty-three children have died, nearly all from the measles. During the last few days the chicken pox has also broken out among us and four cases have already developed. We have had hard winds most of the time, otherwise we could have been in New York before now, for the Franklin is a first class ship.

Andrew Jensen reports, “On Thursday, May 29th, in the forenoon the Franklin arrived at New York Harbor. The emigrants were placed on a transport steamer to be landed at Castle Garden, but on arriving at the wharf they were not permitted to go ashore because of some cases of measles yet existing among them. After 18 of the sick had been taken into the hospital, the rest were returned to the Franklin and there remained on board two more nights and a day. Finally, on May 31st, they landed at Castle Garden where they were met by Elders Charles C. Rich, John Van Cott, and the other brethren.”

After leaving the ship, the journey continued by train via Syracuse, Rochester, and Niagara, where no doubt they were allowed to view the falls, as was related in other histories. They crossed the Detroit River to Detroit, from there they went to Chicago and on to Quincy, Illinois, and thence by steamboat across the Mississippi River to Hannibal, Missouri, and again by train to St. Joseph, Missouri, where they arrived June 6th. The following day they went by steamboat up the Missouri River to Florence, Nebraska. There the company obtained wagons and oxen to carry their supplies. Whoever drove the oxen did not ride in the wagon, but walked along, directing them with “gee” and “haw” and sometimes the crack of a whip. One interesting note was that the Scandinavian, not being used to the oxen and not being able to direct them in English, had considerable difficulty. The oxen could not understand Danish. But apparently relations between drivers and animals improved. Evidently the two Danish girls traveled with someone who had a wagon and oxen, because Grandma states that sometimes she drove the oxen. They walked all the way across the plains, except when the streams and rivers were too deep for them to wade. Sometimes the two girls would walk at the head of the train and then wait for the others to catch up. Anthon H. Lund, later an apostle, was in this company and acted as interpreter.

After five months and 18 days, Grandma Severine finally arrived at her destination. It was September 23, 1862. She was met her brother Jimmie and his friend Andrew Rasmussen. These young Danish converts had become acquainted as they worked for Bishop Archibald Gardner, of West Jordan.

Andrew Rasmussen recorded this: “I have always esteemed my privilege very much in getting back to Bishop Gardner’s. I again hired out to him for the coming season for \$30.00 per

month. I was expecting my Danish girl to come in the fall. We were to be married. But she did not come. Brother James (Jens) Madsen had already married. He had a sister by the name of Severine Marie, who was on the road that season. He had word that she was coming, so I decided I would see what could be done in that case. She arrived in due time and was single and not engaged, so I made my proposal and was accepted, and we got married on the 12th day of October 1862."

The marriage took place less than three weeks after Severine's arrival. Bishop Gardner performed the ceremony. He gave the newly weds ten acres of land in West Jordan. Andrew built a dugout which became their "home" for the first two winters of their married life. It was in this dugout that my mother, Mary Johannah, was born on December 26, 1863. It took my grandfather all day to drive his ox team and wagon to Draper to get the midwife. They got back in time to welcome the new baby.

The first few years of their life together were very difficult. They were short of provisions and as Grandpa recorded, *"Almost too short to be comfortable."* A tanner offered Andrew a dollar if he would make a willow basket in which to carry his tan bark. Grandpa laid the matter before Grandma. She told him that if he would gather the willows, she would see what could be done. He brought the willows and she wove the basket. The tanner was well pleased. *"It proved to be a great blessing to us. It was certainly the providence of the Lord. For a long time she sat and made willow baskets and I procured the willows and then went around among the people and disposed of them. We got a good supply of the necessities of life, even so much that we were able to help others who were in need,"* Andrew recorded.

In the spring of 1864 flour was so scarce and expensive that the young couple decided to move to Sanpete County where they could raise their own wheat. Bishop Gardner advised them to take out their endowments before they left Salt Lake. So Andrew walked from West Jordan to Salt Lake to make arrangements with President Heber C. Kimball. On May 5, 1864 they were sealed as husband and wife in the Endowment House.

Andrew, Severine and Mary Johanna moved to Sanpete County and settled in Fairview, or "North Bend," as it was called at the time. However the Indians became troublesome and as there was no fort in Fairview, they moved to Mt. Pleasant. Andrew wrote: *"In the summer of 1865 and 1866 we had trouble with the Indians, and came very near leaving because of the trials they brought. I humbled myself before the Lord, and his spirit rested upon me so much so, that I felt it was not his will that we should run away from this trouble, but stay where we were, and the Lord would bless and prosper us. I told this to my wife, and she reconciled herself to my words, and so we stayed."* Their second child and first son was born at Mt. Pleasant. The family returned to Fairview after the Indian problems abated.

Andrew's farm was located in the southeast section of Fairview. They worked hard to clear the land of sage and rabbit brush. Finally grain was planted and how happy the young family was when it began to sprout. The grain was harvested with a scythe, or cradle. Then it

was gathered into bundles and bound together with a few strands of straw. Six or eight bundles were then stood on end together so they could dry. This is called “shocking the grain.” Later the grain was separated from the chaff. The chaff was fanned out by the breeze. After the grain was harvested, children took sacks and went over the entire field gleaning every head of grain that had been left behind, all around the edges and corners of the field.

In the spring of 1868 the grasshoppers were very bad . Every effort was made to get rid of them but they had various appetites. They ate almost every bit of the maturing grain. One Sunday morning Grandpa went out to see if there was anything left. The field was full of these pests. Andrew’s grain was nearly gone. He was so discouraged that he fell to his knees and pleaded with the Lord to save one little patch so his family would have enough food for the coming winter. The Lord must have heard his prayer. That fall, 50 bushels of wheat was harvested from that one small area.

Three more sons were born to Andrew and Severine over the next five years: Anasa on September 26, 1868; Nephi, on January 24, 1871 and Jacob on June 6, 1873. Grandpa Andrew Rasmussen told this story to Amasa regarding an incident which may have contributed to the growing friction between the couple. A man by the name of Tulle Sern called at his home to borrow a spade. Grandpa had not returned from the field and so Grandma asked Tulle to sit down and wait for him as she expected him to return at any moment. When Andrew came in, the circumstances somehow angered him. After Tulle Sern left Andrew gave Severine “a good lecturing” as he was very much disturbed. Andrew told Amasa later that even the man’s name was “bad.”

Andrew wrote: *“The principle of plural and celestial marriage was often spoken to the people and we were encouraged to enter into these covenants and ordinances. . . I was desirous of partaking of these blessings and privileges in connection with the Latter-day Saints. And so I spoke to my wife, that we were in our best years, and it would be our duty to give heed and put into practice [the principle] as soon as circumstances would allow. She said it was all right, that I would have to do as I saw proper.”* Consequently Andrew married two Danish emigrants, Sidsel Maria Nielson, a young girl, and Maren Gouldager, the mother of two daughters and a son, in the fall of 1875. Eight years later Andrew took a fourth wife, Annie Catherin Mortensen, whom he described as “a young Utah girl.” His youngest son Jacob wrote, *“Taking a plural wife seems to have split up Dad’s first marriage. Mother got a divorce.”*

Indeed, less than a year after the plural wives came into the family, Severine left Andrew. She obtained a civil divorce on August 14, 1876. Mary Johanna, my mother, was nearly thirteen at the time. Brother Andrew was ten. These children were asked to choose which parent they wanted to live with. This was a difficult choice as they loved both parents. Mary Johanna chose to stay with her mother. Andrew decided to remain in Fairview with his Dad.” The three younger sons went along with their sister and mom to live in “Little Valley.”

Severine left Fairview with four of her five children in the spring of 1879. The journey

was, of necessity, made by wagon and a team. They encountered high waters and some difficulties in crossing streams in Spanish Fork but eventually arrived safely in Box Elder County. Today, the area they settled in is called "Mantua." Severine was pleased to join her own mother and brother who were living in a little house by the creek. Her mother had arrived in Utah in September, 1871. Johanna never learned to speak English so did not attend any church meetings. She was baptized by "Jimmie" on December 6, 1871, two months after her arrival.

Times were hard for Severine as there was no man to provide for her and the children. She could earn 40 to 50 cents a day weaving blankets, shawls, carpets and linsey at home but that was not enough to sustain her family. Jacob wrote, *"A neighbor came for Amasa and Nephi to help with the harvest. At threshing time they were paid in grain. Mother went to get the grain due for the boys work and the good neighbor said, "Sister Madsen, your boys have done men's work and shall have men's pay." He measured out 40 Bushels of wheat for her. You can imagine what joy came to my Mother on that occasion for now she had enough bread for the family for a whole year. And sister Mary was not to be sniffed at for she went to Owen's Dairy and earned enough to clothe most of us for the winter."* Jenny remembered that her mother also milked cows, made butter and cheese and helped with the housework there.

Amasa related this story which he heard from sister Jensen, the first wife of Mantua's Bishop, P.C. Jensen. She called Amasa aside and told him there was something she thought he ought to know. She said that while Severine was staying in Mantua she decided to travel to Salt Lake City with a merchant from Brigham City. So Sister Jensen drove her to Brigham to meet the merchant. While they were waiting for the wagons to be loaded the two women walked to the south edge of the town and sat down to visit. During their long conversation Severine opened up and shared her true feelings. She told Sister Jensen about all the problems and irritations that had come up between herself and Andrew over the years. After she disclosed this, Sister Jensen replied: "It is nothing to break up the family over. All married people have such troubles. If you really love Andrew you should forget these little things." Severine replied: "That's just it – I don't like him."

I remember when I was just a little girl going up to Grandma's with Mother to spend Christmas. The snow was so deep I could not see out. It was like walking through a tunnel. When we hung up our stocking for Santa Claus, we could not hang up "Old Grandma's" (she was my great-grandmother,) because she was sleeping in them. So Mother tied a string around the bottom of her homespun drawers and hung them up for her. This seemed very funny to me. I woke up in the night with the croup. I was so hoarse I could not call out to Mother, so I awakened her by shaking her. She gave me a spoonful of coal oil. It tasted terrible, but it loosened my croup.

No one knows just when Grandma Severine purchased her loom, but she has had it as long as I can remember. Uncle Amasa says he cannot remember when she did not own a loom. Severine also had a spinning wheel and cards. She would get the wool, wash and clean it thoroughly, card and spin it into yarn, and then weave it on the loom into cloth which was made

into clothing. Severine also used the yarn for knitting long stocking and mittens for the children. She made gloves for her self, for some of the other adults and for her older grandchildren. She wove rugs and carpets made from strips of rags sewn together and rolled into balls during “rag bees” with neighbors and relatives.

In 1887 Uncle Andrew left Fairview for Green River with Lute Ludvigsen to help drive a band of horses. At Green River he decided to go on into Colorado with the men who had purchased the horses, though his original intent was to return with Ludvigsen. The family did not hear anything from him for many years and had no idea where he was. When they finally got his letter they discovered he had found work in Colorado and had married Sadie Barnes in Mesa, Colorado. By then, the couple had four children, two girls and two boys. Andrew’s employment had taken him from one sawmill to another. His wife and children accompanied him until the children grew old enough to attend school. Then the family settled in Ridgeway, Colorado where Andrew worked for the railroad. I remember a sketch that he drew of the house he built for his family—four sides with a rounded roof which he made by curving the boards up over the top.

Grandma Severine noted in her records that she went with her mother and brother Charley to the Logan Temple on November 8, 1888 where she and Charley were sealed to their mother (Johanna Jensen) and to Bishop P.C. Jensen. Evidently her father, Mads, never joined the church and died in the “Old Country.” At this time the Presidents of the Church encouraged the sealing of several women to one man. Grandpa Andrew married five women and had five others, probably all dead, sealed to him. Later the practice of adding wives in this manner was discontinued. My grandmother Johanna, 86 at that time, probably liked Bishop Jensen very much and felt she was doing the right thing as her Patriarchal Blessing read, “You shall come forth in the morning of the first resurrection and with your husband, rule a kingdom.” Perhaps Johanna did not feel it likely that this promise could be fulfilled if she were sealed to Mads, her deceased husband. Four years later, at the age of ninety, she died peacefully in Mantua on February 8, 1892 following three weeks of illness. She was buried in the cemetery there the next day.

Jacob writes that all the children harbored a desire to go back to Fairview because Father and brother Andrew were there, however he never offered any inducement. My sister Mary went first and found her a good husband whom she married May 17, 1884 in the Logan Temple. Brother Amasa went next, he also met a beautiful girl by the name of Sarah Elizabeth Steward there. They were married in the Manti Temple on 26 September 1888. Brother-in-law Adolphus was called on a mission to Virginia so I went to live with sister Mary while he was away. Before I got home, Mother and brother Nephi had come on the train from Mantua, so we were all back in Fairview once again.

When Brother Adolphus returned he brought two families with him, the Hamiltons and the Lawhorns. Nephi was next in line. Some time later he and Sarah Ann Lawhorn were married in the Manti Temple. Well fate and Fairview seems to have provided for us. On the 20th day of June 1894, Jacob and Sarah Rebecca Hawell were married in the Manti Temple.”

When Jacob arrived in Fairview he was given a job at the Union Roller Mills just south of the community. This position was probably secured for him by Grandpa Andrew who was a director and stockholder in the company. Grandma kept house in the old mill house for both of them until Jacob married Sarah, whom he had met shortly after he arrived in Fairview. Then Grandma moved back to her little house in Mantua. There she raised a nice garden and had a few chickens, her spinning wheel and her loom. She attended church regularly and was called to be a Relief Society teacher. She was always ready to help in cases of sickness or death. Many times she sewed all night to have clothing, especially men's suits, ready for a burial the next day. Grandma used to go out as a midwife, but when one of her patients died she would not go out any more.



Nephi and Annie Rasmussen and family at home in Lyman, Wyoming

Paul Larsen, a distant relative, came to visit her in Fairview and told of a tract of land in Wyoming that could be homesteaded. Nephi and Jacob were very interested. So they loaded their families and few possessions into wagons and moved to what is now Lyman, Wyoming.

After nineteen years of separation and probably many misunderstandings between the two of them, Severine and Andrew went together to President Wilfred Woodruff and obtained a Temple divorce on October 3, 1895. Andrew felt very bad and even cried about it. The reason for the divorce was noted as "incompatibility." Grandmother was a very stubborn person and this may have contributed to their problems. Then Severine, following her mother's example, was sealed to John Van Cott on March 25, 1896, just five months after her church divorce had been granted.

Jacob wrote: "Sister Mary lost her first husband, Dolphus and she moved to Provo, where some time later, she married a widower, Otis Lysander Terry, a half brother to Adolphus, her first husband." Jenny recalls that "It was about this time that Uncle Nephi came and moved Grandma out to Lyman.

Grandma said this country was more nearly like her native Denmark than anywhere else she had lived. Two of her sons lived nearby so she could visit and see their families as often as she liked.

Grandma had her loom so she kept busy and she enjoyed working in the Relief Society. She served as one of the officers and as a visiting teacher as well. Severine was selected as Chairman of the Building Committee of the Lyman Ward Relief Society on September 4, 1904. She held this office until July 10, 1908. On February 1, 1906 Grandma was set apart as Treasurer of the Relief Society by Bishop Samuel R. Brough.



Relief Society officers in Wyoming included Jane Phillips center of back row, Severine second from left in second row. Also Rebecca Eyre Bradshaw, seated, Devine Madsen, Sisters Noble and Wall and Henriette Durrant pictured but not identified

Grandma never did learn to write in English but she was very industrious in keeping up her records up and dictating her correspondence. Others wrote for her. Part of the time my mother acted as scribe. Some times I wrote for her. Her good friend Jan Phillips wrote for her when she lived in Lyman.

In November 1909 Severine moved back to Utah to live with my mother on Provo Bench in the Timpanogos Ward. Mother let her have the downstairs northwest room as her own. Severine set up her loom in one corner, and had her bed and other furniture there so she could live independently and still be where mother could look after her. She got a sore on her forehead

that developed into cancer. She went to see a Mrs. Steward, whose father had developed cure which he had handed down to her. Grandma did not sleep for several nights, as the pain was so severe, but Mrs. Steward's remedy eventually worked. The cancer was cured and Severine was never troubled with it again. We were all thankful that she had come back to Utah where she could get the help she needed.

In 1905 Uncle Jacob left Lyman and returned to Utah, to settle on Provo Bench. In the summer of 1910 Andrew brought his family to visit. This was a big event in Grandma's life as another child, Forest Milton, had been born to Uncle Andrew and Aunt Sadie in her absence. They arrived on the train using Andrew's railroad pass. What a wonderful reunion for Grandma and her sons. On another occasion, Uncle Andrew's daughters Rena and Sadie came to pick strawberries for my mother. At the same time Ulala and Severia, Uncle Nephi's daughters, visited us from Wyoming. Grandma really enjoyed spending time with her granddaughters.

In 1912 Serevine received a record of her mother's progenitors from Joseph M. Smith, her brother-in-law, who lived in Draper, Utah. Of these people Jacob wrote: *"Father Andrew had no relatives in this land but Mother had several: Her brother James was here when she first arrived. Later Carl, another brother, her mother and two of her sisters came to Utah after their conversion to the gospel. Johanne Marie Madsdatter, her older sister, was born in Denmark on July 28, 1830. She died in 1911 in Draper. It was Mrs. Joseph M. Smith, another sister, who had the family records. James Madsen, Grandma's brother, lived in Riverton (South Jordan) with his wife and five children. Severine's paternal grandmother, Johhhah Madsen, also lived in Draper. Grandma worked hard to complete the work and the book was returned to the Smith family in 1917 when that work was done."*

Before Severine moved back to Lyman, she lived alone in the little two room house located on the west side of State Street, south of the Wentz property in Orem. During my early years in grade school, We would stop in on our way home for a visit with Grandma. It was fun watching her weaving at her loom and we enjoyed eating her horehound candy. I loved to see her shoot the spindles across the loom and work it expertly with her feet and hands in harmony. I still remember many little Danish song that Grandma taught us.

While Severine was living on Provo Bench, Charley Watson took a picture of her at her loom. Later he painted it for the Provo schools as part of a vocational training project. This was in 1915. After a number of years the painting came to me and I now have it in my home. All of the family and her friends who have seen this painting say it is an excellent likeness. It brings Grandma back to us as we all remember her, working at her loom. This painting inspired a prize winning poem, which was written by Grace Carter, a student. *(Editors note: This painting is now in the possession of Weston and Lavon Farley, of Orem. Weston is the youngest son of Jenny Terry Farley.)*



The Painting of Grandma Severine

There is many an artist, whose skillful hand
Could paint bright scenes of our glorious land,
But keener is he whose eye has seen
And whose art has revealed, such a weaving queen.

She has fought and toiled on the wild stage of life
But her tender and earnest smiles shows not the strife;
The same sun that shone on her hair, now white
Still shines on her, making her task seem light.

Each rag is a symbol of one glad year,
Woven with joy to give comfort and cheer,
Selected each color with glowing pride
That her rug takes from depicting life's tide.

So, may we weave, through our little day
On the loom of time while life drifts away,
Till at last when we hear the great Amen
May our weaving shed joy on the heart of man.

When the Timpanogos Church was being cleaned, Grandma noticed that the old “states” carpet on the stand was badly worn. She took it out, cut it into strips and wove it into rugs which were used in the church for a long time. They were beautifully woven—so tight and good that the warp did not even show. Grandma wove many rugs and anyone who had one counted themselves fortunate indeed. They were good firm rugs that lasted for many years.

Severine always carried a sharp pocket knife. One winter she made a set of Jack Straws for the children to play with. She whittled the straws with her knife and colored them with diamond dyes. My own children still remember the excellence of the carving and the curved hooks with which they lifted the little sticks from the piles. If one of the children's toys were

broken, they would say “Grandma will fix it,” and she always did. One time the lock in our door was broken and we had tried without success to have it repaired. Grandma said, “Let me see it.” She made a spring from a corset steel and repaired the lock. It’s still working satisfactorily after all these years. If a clock stopped, Severine would get some chicken feathers and coal oil and take it apart, oil and clean it, and put it back together again and it would tick along as good as new.

Grandma had a small sack of peppermint or horehound candy, with which she would treat the children. Even though it was brown and bitter, we would eat it because it was “candy” and because Grandma had given it us. I remember that Grandma used to wear a white cotton handkerchief, neatly folded, over the top of her head and ears and tied under her chin. On Sunday she would wear a white silk handkerchief tied in the same fashion to church.

It always fascinated me to watch her dress. Severine used long strips of knit material (made by cutting a stocking or sleeve of worn-out underwear around and around) to hold up her long knit stockings. She would first use it to keep her long sleeved underwear from slipping back in lumps when she pulled the sleeves of her dress over it. She would fold the sleeve of her heavy unbleached muslin underwear smoothly, then start wrapping the strip of knit material up near the elbow around and around until it was held down to her wrist. Holding the end of it between thumb and finger, she would slip her arm into the sleeve of her dress and unwind the strip by pulling it out of the end of the sleeve to be used for the other sleeve. Finally she would wrap the strip around the top of her stocking just below the knee, where the end was tucked under the edge to hold up her stocking neatly all day.

Grandma used to walk from my mother’s place down to my own, a distance of about two miles, to visit us. Usually I would take her home with the horse and buggy, but often she would say, “No, I’ll walk back. I don’t want you to bother you. I can do it all right. I don’t hurry, just walk a steady gait and get there all right.” She always carried a little coal oil lantern when she expected to be out after dark. Severine was extremely independent and felt well able to take care of herself.

Uncle Otis and mother sold their home on Provo Bench and moved back to Provo. A year or two after that Grandma decided to move back to Lyman, Wyoming. Uncle Nephi came and moved her and her things in May of 1919. He provided her with a comfortable house where she again took up weaving and renewing acquaintance with her old friends who loved and respected her. They were very happy to have her back in Lyman.

During the evening of October 25, 1920, Severine visited her neighbors, Jane Phillips and the Vosses, returning home about 9:00 o’clock, seemingly in her usual good health. She fixed her fire in the stove and sat down on a common kitchen chair by the table to mend her home-knit glove. There she passed away, apparently without a struggle, with the glove on one hand and a thimble and needle in the other. Slightly stooped over, she was found the next morning about 11:00 o’clock. She had died at the age of 84 year, 2 months and four days.

At the time of her death all of her five children were still living including her daughter Mary Jane and her four sons. Severine also had thirty-one living grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. Mother and Uncle Andrew went to Lyman to attend her funeral. It was held in the Lyman Ward under the direction of Bishop Melvin Rollins. She was interred in the Lyman Cemetery. “The flowers were very beautiful and reflected the esteem in which the departed lady was held,” the newspaper account read.

She died as she had lived—honest, faithful and true to her convictions.

Her trials here she bravely bore,
With fortitude and calm;
She passed to sleep on troubled earth,
To wake in Heaven’s dawn.