

A Brief History of Ellen Clymena Sanders Cardon

(From her own writing, Lucille Cardon Matthews' History, and my own memories) Katie Cardon Webb

From Her own writings

The dawn of memory, so far as my consciousness of it is concerned, was when we were living at Thistle Valley. I think we did not live long there. When I think of my first home, Fairview is the place.

We left Fairview when I was five years old and went to St. George. It was at St. George I was confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by my father, John Franklin Sanders, after being baptized by Bishop Granger on the 14th of January, 1882. That was also the year we emigrated to the mountain cattle ranges of Arizona. My father had been called to settle Tonto Basin, now Giselia, Gila County, Arizona. We were joined by a number of relatives and friends, making a company of a dozen or more wagons. We took three months to make the 300-mile trip.

FROM LUCILLE'S HISTORY:

Until Mrs. Carrie Stanton (dearly loved by mother all the days of her life) came into Tonto from New York with her health seeking husband, mother's schooling had consisted of two or three months in that many years. Mrs. Stanton must have been quite a remarkable woman. She inspired mother with ambition to prepare for the teaching and coached her in that preparation.

It has always been a source of wonder and pride to me that with no more schooling than that, mother, with Mrs. Stanton to guide her in her studying, prepared herself to take an examination given at Arizona County seats for those desiring to teach in State schools.

Globe, the County seat, was a long trip by wagon or horseback from Tonto, one that could not be undertaken by a young girl at any time alone, and it was in the middle of Winter when people avoided travel if possible. She almost gave up hope of going. The day before the examination was to begin, in answer to her prayers, a neighbor told her it had become necessary for him and his wife to make the trip to Globe in spite of the weather, and she could go with them.

After two days of examinations, mother said, "I was awarded a teacher's certificate good for two years that was renewed for another two years." Mother went on to make quite a record with her teaching. She taught almost steady from 1891-1892 to 1928-1929 in different counties in Arizona, about thirty-one years, including ten years in Mexico.

At Tucson, John Metz, mother's classmate at Tempe, asked to be allowed to send for her credits in lieu of the certificates left in Mexico. In a letter Mr. Metz had received President Matthews of Tempe said it was routine to have his secretary send out these requests, but when she called his attention to mother's record, he told her that the president of the school should personally have the honor of sending out such a record. So he did.

She was active as a leader in church activities practically all her life. In Mexico she served on the M.I.A. Stake board in the Juarez Stake. She worked again on the Maricopa Stake board of the M.I.A. in 1928. From 1932 to 1939, she was in the Relief Society on the Maricopa Stake board as Visiting

Teacher's Leader. Sister Shupe remarked that she was excellent as a leader and was so much fun. And, of course, she taught many classes in various auxiliary organizations. I guess her most long-term activity was teaching school. She was quite active in the 4-H Club in Tucson and Glenbar, receiving a medal for this work of which she was very proud.

MY MEMORIES:

She spent many hours in compassionate service too. Jake Bingham was so grateful when mother came in to help when his family were all down with the flu. It was during the terrible 1918 epidemic when everyone was so frightened it was almost impossible to get help. He said she was so calm and gave them strength.

When I think of mother, certain pictures come to my mind. I can just see her walking briskly along, concentrating on some idea or project, twirling a bunch of keys on a long chain back and forth around her forefinger. In Mexico mother was slender, I felt rather proud of her looks. She put on weight when we came out to Arizona.

I also remember mother and her building. She would build a house and decide then that as a mean of paying for it, she would have to build another – and another – and still another. When she got things done, and we would ask how in the world she accomplished them, her answer was invariably, “Oh, I managed!” And we knew she had convinced someone to do something for her, or contribute something, usually for a school or 4-H Club project.

She worked with the young people much of the time and they liked to be with her. She created fun and pleasure for them. She allowed them to have slumber parties at her home, and there was always and eager crowd that came.

Etched deep in my memory are the songs mother used to sing. The ones I remember best are “I dreamed I Dwelt in Marble Halls,” “My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon,” and “Jingle Bells” with the real Christmas words. When I first heard the other version, I thought hers were the original words. She composed many poems and songs, often using them in school programs she conducted. Later she whistled the tune of many songs oftener than singing the words. This continued all through her life, at least when I was around her.

To me, mother was a brilliant woman who could adapt to any class of people, both the high and the lowly. I always had a great confidence in her abilities. I never remember mother being critical of other people or saying disparaging things about them, and as children she would never allow us to criticize others.

I am grateful to her for the many times she has been understanding of my problems and for the qualities that have been an example that I have tried to follow.