

Personal History of Grace Montague



Figure 1: James Albert and Susan Lovina Jones Montague. Grace is center back row.

Grace Montague, daughter of James Albert Montague and Susan Lovina Jones, was born 26 November 1898. In Paragonah, Iron Co. Utah. She was blessed 5 March 1898 by J.P. Barton. She lived in Woodville all her life, since coming to Idaho from Paragonah in March 1904. She was baptised on Aug. 1907, in Woodville, Idaho, by Elmer Ames Huntsman, who later became her father-in-law, and was confirmed 1st Sept.1907 by John M. Rider. She was the fourth child and first girl in a family of ten children. When she was 5 years old the family came by train to Idaho where James Albert's two cousins were living. We stayed

with them. They arrived in March when it was cold and muddy, and the family of five children moved into an old grainier in Taysom, Idaho west of the Snake River. Only six weeks after they arrived, Graces's Mother, Susan Lovina , gave birth to her sixth child, Glen. They lived in a one-room home on the banks of the Snake River. Susan was very discouraged. She had typhoid fever. Tom Bennett helped their family when they first came.

Education was very important to Grace, she attended the Taysom school for 2 or 3 years. After her family moved to the Woodville Townsite she attended a one room

school that was located by the Woodville canal. She attended High School at Shelley where she wanted to study bookkeeping and typing, but she had three cases of pneumonia during those four years and it prevented her from finishing high school. Two of her teachers were Ed Cutler and Ottis South. The family had smallpox, James Albert was very bloated and very sick. Diantha Everett came over and brought food and helped. They thought a lot of her. James A. Built a house on the Woodville townsite, just north of the of the river bridge that he helped build. In 1918 they built a new school house near the Woodville Townsite. It had 4 rooms. Grace graduated from Grade School



Figure 2: On the Woodville Bridge. Front seat: Vern and Grace Huntsman. Back seat: Edna and Victor Kotter

there. One day they all left home , she was across the road playing and when they came up on the river bank, they saw smoke coming out of the top of the house. It burned down and the only thing they saved was a rocking

chair and the clothes they had on. Elmer Ames Huntsman and James Albert made the cement blocks to build a new house. There were lots of sand hills and cedar trees there that they used to play in. They took their Easter lunches and ate and played in the sand hills.They used to have a lot of fun. They would gather tumble weeds, light the tumble weeks and have a big bonfire and play Run Sheep Run and etc. She remembers when they built the church, which was the Community Hall. A big round stove in each corner to heat the building, if you got too far from the stoves you got cold. They used to have dances. You had to be 14 to go to the dances. They had that building for a long time and went to church in it. They had wires stretched with curtains to separate it into about 6 classrooms. That's where we held our classes in Sunday School. It was kind of noisy sometimes. They built the new church house and used the community hall for recreations. That's where they had the Wedding Dances and etc. They also roller skated there.

On 25th May, 1922, Grace Montague and Vernard Huntsman were , married at Woodville, Idaho. They were later sealed in the Logan, Utah, Temple on 2 June, 1926. After their marriage they moved into the rock house on the Woodville townsite that was built by both of their fathers. Their first child, Mildred was born in this house. James and Susan Montague decided to go to California for the winter and take the kids, and Vern and Grace lived in their home. Cooked for the teachers , one was Mildred Felt who later married Leo, Grace's brother. They lived there that winter and in the spring they bought a 2-roomed house. Vern wanted to be a merchant so he took one room of the

house for a store and lived in the other room and a lean-to at the back. They lived there until they decided to build for a new store.



Figure 3: from left: Pearl Edwards, Grace Huntsman, Berniece Balmforth, Edna Kotter. By Woodville Bridge.

It was one large room for the store and 2 smaller rooms to live in. Boyd and Bessie were born in the small 2 room house.,in 1925. They were very comfortable in their new home. An experience they had with boyd and Bessie. She had put them on the bottle and alternated with the bottle and breast. They had small bottles that prepared mustard came in and they were of the shape that they could handle pretty good. They

had a bed that was long enough to set the 2 babies in-one on each end.. One day the salesman came there. Vern rolled them into the store and let him see the twins. The salesman said, "Well, I've seen those bottles in use for many things but never saw them used for nursing bottles."

Grace said they used to go fishing in the snake river when they first moved there. The water was clean and they could drink it. They got nice trout and spent a lot of time on the river, but nobody ever got hurt. A crawfish like a crab had long deals on their legs, and boy could they get a hold of you and pinch hard. They would be under rocks and we would go down and raise the rocks and dig them out, and use them as bait to catch the trout. When they first moved to Woodville they forded the river west and south of Woodville. Susan Montague said that the water came up onto the buggy until they had to raise their feet up to keep from getting wet, finally, she said "no more, it was too dangerous". That's when the new bridge was built. It was a long way to go by horse and buggy, to go down by the bridge south of Shelley. To go to Idaho Falls they would start out and go up through Riverdale and New Sweden with no roads or anything. Later there were dirt roads and Grace said when it rained, oh the mud. It was hard to keep the kids clean because there was no pavement or any place for them to play - kinda rough going.

I guess the first position I had was Secretary in the mutual. Then I was a teacher of the Kindergarten class in Primary. Edna Kotter and I. She had the Primary class, the older group and I had the youngest. I had that position for a long time. We were called to

the Sunday School Board. Roderick Millar was Superintendent with Hiram McBride and Hiram Dial. Then I was Secretary of the Sunday School.

After I was married I had the youngest group of Bee Hive girls. We made a quilt. It was birds-embroidered, Oh, was it pretty. I wanted it so bad. We sold it and I couldn't afford to buy it. I sure did want that quilt.

When Boyd and Bessie were babies, I was asked to be the Secretary of the Relief Society. They were very good to me to take care of the twins while I took the minutes. I worked 7 years with Irene Call, Edna Hurst and Mrs Fugal. I was asked to help in the M.I.A. to help the young people get their histories started. Later I was President of the M.I.A. for a while. That was when I was pregnant with Karma. Karma was born in Woodville on Nov 9, 1936. That was my second year. Because I had trouble they released me. Susann was born the 4th of March, 1940. Linda Grace was born 28th of Nov, 1942.

Lorraine was born after we moved into the new store on June 4, 1928. We had two rooms and I know one of our friends was to my place when I started having pains, and I didn't want her there when my baby was born. She went out one door and the Doctor came in the other. I wasn't sick very long. When they told I had a baby she said, "I know she didn't. I was over there just before that and she wasn't even sick." She said that Nora was combing my hair. Nora was there. She was usually with me. Ivan Ross was born Feb 28, 1930. I was with her when one or two of hers were born. I was with Oreta when one of her babies was born and with Bertha when one of hers was born. I had had experiences before that. I had worked with

women after the babies were born, I took care of them. But I hadn't taken care of them the first time, when one of our neighbors had a baby and it came so quick it came at home. They had the Doctor come and he handed the baby to me and said, "Here, take care of it." I said "I don't know how to take care of it.: It was the first time I took care of a new baby. But, I had a lot of experience and took care of new babies and their mothers. I had a pretty good reputation to do housework and cook and all. I was a good cook. I got along pretty good. I made \$10.00 a week one time and I thought that was a lot when I got up in that category.

I was sick in High School. I wanted to take book-keeping and learn to type, but I had pneumonia my Junior and Senior years. I had it 3 times in the 4 years that I was in High School. The fifth year I started again and I quit...I didn't to back and I didn't graduate. While I was going to school in Shelley, I sang in a chorus. It was a group of 12. I was always self conscious and I didn't take advantage of the opportunities I had to sing and play the piano. I played the piano a little. I still do- I sit down when I'm alone and practice. I thought I was a pretty good singer until I went out to Karma's, and one day I was singing and hit a wrong note and 4 year old Natalie said, "Grandma, you didn't sing that right.", so I decided that I was not going to sing anymore. I'm proud of my children and grandchildren. When Boyd was in High School he was President of his Junior and Senior class. Boyd and Bessie played the trumpets. When they were real small about 7 years old] there was a program in the tabernacle in Shelley, and they had them play a trumpet duet. They held those trumpets up, they were about as tall as they

were. Mildred played the clarinet, she played in the first chair. Bessie played in trumpet trios, a brass sextet and in the High School orchestra. Boyd played the baritone and trumpet, Lorraine played the piano and organ, Ivan played the drums, Karma played the saxophone, Susann played the piano and organ, Linda played the piano and organ.

Dad [James Albert] wanted me to sing with him but I've always been timid and I couldn't sing or play good enough. My family were all very musical.. My Dad played the accordion and mouth organ (harmonica).

After we were married and started the store, we would buy a new car and they would pay us what it would cost them to ship it and we got a free trip out of it. We would go out on the train and drive the new car back home. On year there was a group of us. Nora and Wes Huntsman, Jane and George Risenmay and 2 children and Edna and Victor Kotter. We went on the bus that the company had. We went back to Detroit in Nov. One night it rained and we had a hard time to find a place to stay in Indiana. Because of a football game everything was taken. We went back alone one time to New York World's Fair. They were going to open it the first of the year. We were going to see all we could see. All of a sudden we realized we were the only ones left - everybody else had gone. We went back to the gate that we came in and it was locked. We couldn't see any place we could get through. We had to cross the railroad tracks and up some stairs, to get on the train. We were two scared people. We found a little place that we could squeeze through to get out. We caught the train to New York. It was dangerous because if anything had happened to us no one would have known us or anything. Another time we

went to Salt Lake to conference and Jane Risenmay said, " What about going to the Fair?" so the six of us, Nora and Wes, Jane and George and Vern and Grace , went to Chicago. We tried to find a place to stay and there was a fellow that was listening to us and asked if we belonged to the L.D.S.. Church? George was Bishop, Wes was on the High Council and Vern was Stake Pres. Of the YMMIA/ This fellow came up to us and said my wife is away, but if you want to take our house you can use it and he let us go in there and use his silver-ware, and furniture and everything. We were there for one week and it didn't cost much either, and we thought how wonderful that our reputation would give us that opportunity. We really saw the town. He said," I don't think any one has seen the town more than you. When the kids were small we got someone to stay with them and the store. Anona, Delila , etc. We celebrated quite a bit.

One time we went alone and went to Detroit and got our car. We crossed the International bridge from there over into Canada. We stayed all night in Canada and drove to Niagara Falls, then came across the bridge there. It was a beautiful sight.