Lula Greene Richards: Utah's First Woman Editor

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Sherilyn Cox Bennion

I am only a girl in the cold, proud world,
Working from day to day;
But this is my plan, wherever I can,
To brighten the lonely way.
I look around me and where they stand,
The weary, the sad and weak,
I smile and offer a friendly hand,
And these are the words I speak:
It is better to work than to idle be,
As it's better to live than to die;
To sustain one's self, and thus be free,
And it's better to laugh than to cry.[1]

So ran a stanza in one of the poems Louisa Lula Greene Richards chose to have published in a volume of her works issued in 1904. It is a representative sample of both her poetry and her philosophy—a philosophy which found expression in the newspaper she edited (she was the first woman editor in Utah), in the column she wrote for the Sunday School magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for about twenty years, and in the multitude of tributes, hymns and commemorative poems she began writing as a young teenager. She expressed similar ideas in instructions sent the fledgling LDS Relief Society, Primary, and Young Ladies Retrenchment organizations and, no doubt, during visits she paid to members of these groups as an organizer and promoter of all three.

Dedicated, ambitious and prolific, Lula had a vast number of interests, many of which developed into causes and crusades and all of which she must have written about at one time or another during her ninety-five years. While her poetry ran to lofty sentiment and her essays often concentrated on advice for moral living, she was eminently practical, as free with advice on curing bad breath or cleansing the hair as she was with urgings to pursue education or support woman's suffrage. She had a sense of humor, as well. It emerged in her selection of items for the miscellany columns of the *Woman's Exponent,* which she edited, as well as in her own writing for that paper. In later years it found frequent release in the poems, stories, and comments she prepared "For Our Little Folks" in the Sunday School magazine, *The Juvenile Instructor.*

Lula was born 8 April 1849, in Kanesville, Iowa, the eighth of the thirteen children of Evan M. and Susan Kent Greene, both of whose mothers were sisters of President Brigham Young. Her parents had joined the Church in New York in the 1830s and moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where Evan taught an English class and served as a clerk to Joseph Smith, the prophet. The Greenes moved to Kanesville in 1846, to Salt Lake City in 1852, and then to Provo. There Evan was chosen mayor and representative to the territorial legislature. In 1859 the family moved to Grantsville, where Evan was elected to the legislature for two more terms, and in 1864 to Smithfield, Utah, where he served as city recorder.[2]

The earliest of Lula's preserved poetry was a "poetical dialogue" between "Princess Aurora" and the "Mountain Queen" composed at the age of fourteen for herself and her sister to dramatize. She recorded it from memory eleven years later in a letter to her niece, apologizing for its lack of refinement:

> You must recollect that I was but a child, fourteen years of age when I composed the poem, and taught your Aunt Lissie her part by repeating it to her. I had read little or no history then; and was not familiar with the proper style of getting up dialogues, having never witnessed more than two evening's entertainments, of a theatrical nature, in my life. The effort, therefore, is a very crude one, entirely imaginary with no particular aim at effect in any direction . . . Childish and absurd as it really seemed, it always met with great applause wherever we could be induced to give it in public assemblies. Of course this was pleasing to my girlish ambition; but what was still more gratifying to me, it used to have the effect to make the tears run down your Grandpa's cheeks when we would play it in the family circle.[3]

Scene of the dialogue is an elegant boudoir, where Lissie, as Princess Aurora, sits and dreams of the faraway mountains she sees through her window. Lula is the Mountain Queen, a native of those mountains taken captive by Aurora's father. She comes before the princess to protest her abject state and to plead for release:

> True, I'm not taught in grand, old arts and science;
> My dress is coarse, my manners unrefined:—
> Yet, I can look on thee in proud defiance
> Is dress, and manners all that make the mind?
> If so, why, then I yield in calm submission;
> They say I am your servant—nay, your slave!
> Yet think not that I fear in this condition
> To tell thee that thy father is a knave!

After a few more verses, Aurora is convinced and seeks successfully the Mountain Queen's release. Lula invites Aurora to visit her in the mountains, and the dialogue concludes with the two addressing the audience from the front of the stage.[4]

Lula's first journalistic venture was editing the "Smithfield Sunday School Gazette," one of many handwritten papers distributed by Sunday School students throughout Utah. The "Gazette" was a four-page paper with two columns written on each page, given each Sunday to those who would "come to Sabbath School, keep order and pay attention."[5] Lula's editorship lasted for six issues, from 24 October to 28 November 1869.

For the first number Lula wrote a front-page editorial reminding Mormon children how blessed they were in opportunities for learn, a recurring theme in her writings. Other features were a "Juvenile Department" with one short paragraph on good manners and another on "The Eagle," a letter about the Book of Mormon, a poem called "Baby Learning to Read," and a "Teachers Department" containing a letter to Smithfield children from one of their teachers telling them how to behave in Sunday School. Lula added a note encouraging the children to write for the "Gazette" but asking them not to copy material from other sources.[6]

In a later number, among advice, tributes, poetry, and congratulations to Sunday School classes whose members had passed "a creditable examination," Lula placed an editorial on rising early, but added the following qualification to her agreement that being up with the sun was generally desirable:

> Lest our indulgent father and mother should happen to come across this article and make use of our own words to justify themselves in condemning some of our willful ways, we beg to exempt young ladies from this general rule on certain occasions. Such, for instance, as necessity requiring the editing of a Sunday School News Paper Saturday evening after bed time.[7]

In the same number, her last, she told her readers good-bye and asked to be released, "on account of other duties." She had attended a private school in Salt Lake City in 1868–1869 and now wanted to pursue her studies at the University of Deseret.

By the fall of 1871 Lula was back in Smithfield. However, she traveled to Salt Lake City in October to attend general conference and to seek a position teaching elementary school. She was ready to begin work, according to one biographical sketch, when she received a letter calling her home because of illness in the family. Lacking the money she needed to get there, she sat up all night writing poetry which she took the next day to the office of *The Salt Lake Daily Herald,* asking the editor, Edward L. Sloan, to buy it for the $7.50 she needed.[8]

He did, and "Tired Out" became her first published work. It was a melancholy addition to the *Herald's* front page, appearing at the top center of the sheet in the spot which Edward Sloan reserved for the poetry he periodically offered his readers, alternating between nationally-recognized poets like Joaquin Miller or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and local writers.

Possibly Lula really was tired out by the time she wrote it, or perhaps the news of illness at Smithfield had dampened her usual high spirits. At any rate, the poem was a letter to the writer's mother asking if the author might come home to die. It ended with these two stanzas:

My companions read it over,
And with tears and quiv'ring breath
They said I need not send it,
Then they told me of your death;
They had not dared to tell me,
For they feared my sudden grief,—
Yet the news was not distressing,
But to me a sweet relief:
To feel you would not miss me,
Was indeed a blest relief.

There are those around me, mother,
Who have ever kindly smiled;
Who have proved in joy or sorrow
Ever faithful to your child;
There are others who have slighted,
Who have wronged me and oppress'd;
But my heart can know no malice,
And my spirit is at rest,—
And I'm coming, angel mother,
Coming home with thee to rest.[9]

It was signed "Lula."

A few days later, back in Smithfield, Lula received a letter from Sloan asking if she would be interested in editing a paper for Mormon women. She later recorded that he first had contemplated giving her work on the *Herald* but, since other staff members did not agree with that plan, he conceived the idea of the women's paper. Lula was reluctant, pleading inexperience, but Sloan persisted, so she wrote Eliza R. Snow, the most influential woman in the Church, to find out what Eliza thought about the suggestion and to ask her to get Brigham Young's reaction. If President Young approved, Lula add, she would like him to "appoint the duties of that calling" as a mission. Eliza wrote back that both she and the President "heartily sanctioned the undertaking" and that President Young would gladly appoint Lula the mission and bless her in it. This he agreed to after inquiring about her capabilities for such an undertaking and being assured that what she lacked in education she could learn and that she was "stanch."[10]

During the first months of 1872, planning for the new publication went forward. Eliza and Lula corresponded about possible printers, methods of financing the paper, subscription prices, the necessity of keeping careful records, and the types of content that would be appropriate.[11] The paper was to be published twice a month. Lula moved to Salt Lake to begin

her editorship, staying with her uncle, Lorenzo D. Young, and using his parlor as an office until the fall of 1872, when Edward Sloan had a small office constructed near the *Herald* building. Lula lived there with her aunt, Persis Richards, using the back room as living quarters and the front as public office.[12]

Publication date for the first number was set for early in April, to coincide with general conference, but delays in shipments of type and paper postponed its issuance until 1 June.[13] That 1 June was also Brigham Young's birthday was a happy coincidence.

The first issues of the *Woman's Exponent* were printed in the *Herald* plant, but before they appeared, Sloan probably had a hand in preparation of a prospectus explaining the aims of the publication and soliciting subscriptions for it. This was sent to all Relief Society presidents and used as an advertisement in the *Herald.* Lula had set herself a considerable task, for the paper was to discuss "every subject interesting and valuable to women. It will contain a brief and graphic summary of current news, local and general; household hints, educational matters, articles on health and dress, correspondence, editorials on leading topics of interest suitable to its columns, and miscellaneous reading," as well as reports of the Relief Societies of Utah. It would "endeavor to defend the right, inculcate sound principles and disseminate useful knowledge."[14]

Lula's first number of the *Exponent* came close to meeting the promise of the prospectus. In its eight pages, it contained a column of "News and Views," the first installment of a history of the Relief Society by Eliza R. Snow, a report on Relief Society activities in Ogden, brief essays on the values of labor and cheerful dispositions and the dangers of relying on first impressions, "Household Hints," poems which were unsigned but probably written by Lula and called "Remember Thy Mother" and "Rearing of Children," news notes in a column headed "Splinters," exchanges reprinted from other publications, editorials supporting statehood for Utah and explaining the goals of the *Exponent,* articles on woman's place and suffrage, short fillers both witty and whimsical, and advertisements.

Listed as editor was "L. L. Greene." Lula changed this to "Louise L. Greene" with the 15 July number, explaining, "There appears to be a misunderstanding on the part of numbers of our readers, in regard to the Editor of the *Exponent.* 'Mr. L. L. Green, Dear Editor,' and 'Editor WOMAN'S EXPONENT, Dear Sir,' are honorable appellations, but we are not entitled to either 'Mr.' or 'Sir,' being simply a woman, which our name as it now appears over the editorial department will indicate."[15]

The use of pen names on some contributions and no names on others makes it difficult to state with certainty just how much of the content of the *Exponent* Lula actually wrote, but it is probably safe to assume that most of

the unsigned material—at least in the early issues—came from her pen. It can also be established, through the *Exponent* and other sources, that the pen names "Geranium," "Mary Grace," and "Mignona" were hers.[16] Thus, a miniature anthology of her work for the *Exponent* can be compiled:

On "Sleep":

> If no other reward could be anticipated, for a good, substantial day's work, and the careful keeping of a clear conscience, a night of calm, refreshing sleep is a compensation not to be ignored by the most ambitious and energetic. . . . Is it not very probable that one great cause of the immature deaths in the present age, may be attributed to a lack of indulgence in this exhilarating restorative at the proper time?[17]

On "Temperance":

> Temperance enters into the smallest minutiae of life, and beautiful indeed are the lives of the strictly temperate. They may not have genius or brilliant talent. But if by circumstances placed side by side with, or in antagonism with Genius or Talent, for any considerable length of time, Temperance will be sure to win and wear the laurel wreath of fame. . . . If we will be temperate in all things our lives will be beautiful and our deaths but triumphs.[18]

On "Mixed Parties":

> We refer to what has been called "mixed parties," where the price of admission is placed at a certain figure, and where every person is welcome who will pay the money at the door. To such places every character, no matter how vile, can claim admission; and, there, simple and guileless young girls may be thrown into the society of men practiced in all the wiles and arts by which maidens are lured to destruction. . . . We earnestly recommend parents to make the strictest inquiries where the slightest doubt rests upon their minds, that they may be satisfied beforehand their children are not exposed to blighting evil, nor thrown in the way of insidious and dangerous temptation.[19]

On "Utah and the Mormons":

> We recommend to these very pious people throughout the country, who are so strongly exercised over the condition of Utah, to open their eyes and look around them, and see what a vast field there is, within sight of their very doors, for the philanthropist, the reformer and the man or woman of real charity to labor in. And we can assure those at a distance, that the men in Utah who make the loudest outcry against the immorality of the "Mormon," are themselves the most immoral men in the country, and openly boast that they only use this cry as a means of stirring up prejudice to enable them to accomplish designs which it were flattery to characterize as base.[20]

On "Science and Religion":

> Truth is science, and science in its legitimate form embraces all truth; and as "true science and true religion walk hand in hand," nothing that is unscientific can belong to true religion, nor can anything that is irreligious be classed with true science.[21]

On "Education of Women":

> If there be some women in whom the love of learning extinguishes all other love, then the heaven-appointed sphere of that woman is not the nursery. It may be the library, the laboratory, the observatory . . . Does such a woman prove that perfect liberty of education unspheres woman? On the contrary it has enabled that woman to perceive exactly what God meant her to do. . .God lead us to find the true woman in the free American home.[22]

On "Daily Bathing":

> If mothers wish their children to be healthy, active and intellectual, this duty must not be neglected, either for themselves or their little ones . . . From the effects of this treatment, very delicate women have become comparatively robust and healthy.[23]

On "The Girls":

> It has become a common rule with mothers to foster in the minds of their little daughters the belief that to dress richly and be pert and talkative are the chief means of winning attraction, which must be the principal aim of their existence. . . . Well-to-do fathers take pride themselves in noting the pleasure with which their bright, vivacious, witching little darlings will array themselves in the latest styles, and pet and humor instead of correcting their childish vanities. . . . If we want our daughters to become amiable, refined, sensible and beautiful women, we must give them the principles upon which to erect such characters. Teach them to be industrious and orderly in all their habits, and to value the worth of genuine intelligence, and they will find little time and less desire to run wild after fashion.[24]

On "The 'Enslaved' Women of Utah":

> With the knowledge thus obtained through years of experience, we denounce the incorrect and vindictive statements still made concerning men, women and matters in Utah; and regret that any woman should be engaged in such work. [Women in Utah] are to-day in the free and unrestricted exercise of more political and social rights than are the women of any other part of these United States.[25]

Along with her own writings, her choice of items for the columns of "News and Views," "Splinters," or "Home Affairs" and her comments on them showed Lula's ideas and opinions. She suggested after stating half the servant girls in Philadelphia were said to be drunkards that giving them "a chance to become honest wives and keepers of their own houses, instead of having to keep irregular hours waiting on fashionable mistresses" might solve the problem. She criticized Tennessee Claflin, a fellow journalist more noted for her flamboyant life-style than for her writing ability, calling her "a sad spectacle of a talented woman setting modesty, purity of feeling, and womanly grace at defiance, that she may secure the applause of the reckless and the indorsement of those who set proper restrictions at defiance."[26] She

approved, in a "Household Hints" item, Miss Harriet Beecher's remark "that there is nothing which so distinctly marks the difference between weak and strong minds as whether they control circumstances or circumstances control them."[27]

A few excerpts from a column and a half of "Splinters" show their varied nature:

> One of the women in the house of the Good Shepherd, St. Louis, is a carpenter and shoemaker. . . . Clark, the balloonist, who fell from a balloon at Memphis, died from the effects, less than a week afterward. Prince Bismarck is going to the Isle of Wight. . . . The Emperor William, of Germany, is said to be gradually sinking into the grave. . . . The Bairds, who stand at the head of the iron masters in Scotland, make as clear profit annually $2,500,000. . . . Nilsson sketches landscapes nicely. . . . Over ten million pairs of shoes were manufactured in Lynn, Massachusetts, last year.[28]

A year after Lula began her editorship, she was married. Her husband was Levi Willard Richards, born in 1845 at Nauvoo, Illinois. His father and mother, Dr. Levi Richards and Sarah Griffith, were on a mission in England when the Mormons moved to Utah, so their son was sent west at the age of three with his Aunt Rhoda and Uncle Willard Richards. He was eight when his parents returned. Levi was later to be secretary of the Deseret Sunday School Union Board, clerk of both the Fourteenth and Twentieth wards, a counselor in the high priests quorum and a patriarch of Ensign Stake, and a temple worker for twenty-five years.[29]

Andrew Jenson, in his *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia,* wrote that "in all his walks in life, in the privacy of his own home, as well as before the public, Levi W. Richards was always justly upheld as a model of the charity, patience, benevolence and brotherly kindness and love which should characterize all Latter-day Saints."[30]

Lula bore two daughters while she was *Exponent* editor, and both of them died before she gave up the editorship in August 1877.[31] By that time, however, she was sharing editorial responsibilities with Emmeline B. Wells; both women were listed as editors beginning in December 1875. Emmeline stayed in that position until the *Exponent* was discontinued in 1914.

Even in the latter part of her editorship, Lula did not neglect the *Exponent.* Her letters to her family were filled with news about the paper, along with appeals for contributions. This one to her sister Lissie also repeats Lula's feelings about woman's place:

> I wish you would look about you a little more and try to jot down *something* every time that you think might be of public interest. Any little idea, no matter how commonplace, coming from outer settlements, gives life to my paper, and you know it is my business to keep it alive, and nourish and brighten it up all the while. It is doing much good at home, and some abroad; and if we can continue to make it grow its mission will be a great one yet. It is one of

> the small things which the Lord will make use of to confound the mighty. Besides this, my sister, for your own good, I want you to make an effort to do some other good thing than to raise boys for missionaries in Zion. I know that is a great thing to do, but you have ability to add to it.[32]

A little later, Lula tried to add to the good that the *Exponent* was doing by suggesting to her brother and sisters that they help a young woman friend, apparently romantically involved with an unacceptable man, by having her read two articles in the latest number.[33]

It was in June 1877 that Lula wrote Brigham Young requesting a release from the editorship, naming family responsibilities as the reason:

> Four years ago, you sealed upon me a higher and holier mission—to be a wife and to become a mother!
>
> My object in addressing you now, is to acquaint you with the fact, that I find I have not sufficient strength to perform both missions at the same time, with satisfaction or credit to myself.
>
> I could not, conscientiously, remove my name from the "Expo" without first consulting you, and asking your approval and blessing in so doing. Sister Emmeline B. Wells, having already reared her family, is a woman well adapted to the work of carrying on our little paper. And although I regret my own inability, which renders it necessary for me to ask to be released from further responsibilities in connection with the paper, I feel well to leave it in her hands.
>
> In years to come, I hope to be prepared to enter again upon such labors, with renewed energies and increased capabilities. For the present, I still ask, if, in removing my name from the "Exponent" I may still feel that I have your favor and blessing?[34]

The President's reply, addressed to "My dear Niece" and signed "Your affectionate uncle," read:

> Your note of the 16th. instant has been received. I am willing you should retire from the editorial chair of the "Exponent," as you desire, and in so doing you have my best wishes and blessings, which you will ever continue to have in fulfilling the duties of life.
>
> Wishing yourself, your husband and the little stranger much happiness and continued peace, . . .[35]

Lula also explained to *Exponent* readers why she was "withdrawing from public service for the present," once more adding a few comments on her conception of the proper role of a Mormon woman:

> During the years of my life which may be properly devoted to the rearing of a family, I will give my special attention to that most important branch of "Home Industry." Not that my interest in the public weal is diminishing, or that I think the best season of a woman's life should be completely absorbed in her domestic duties. But every reflecting mother, and every true philanthropist, can see the happy medium between being selfishly home bound, and foolishly public spirited.[36]

Although Lula no longer sat in the editorial chair, she continued to be a frequent contributor to the *Exponent,*" in cases of necessity carrying much of its responsibilities," as she wrote in the margin of Susa Young Gates's history of the paper.[37] She also wrote for other Mormon publications and composed poetry and song lyrics for special occasions.

Her next major journalistic responsibility was a department begun in 1883 in *The Juvenile Instructor.* Lula was asked by George Q. Cannon, editor of the publication which was designed for Sunday School workers and members, to take charge of the column.[38] The section's first title was "Chapter for the Little Ones," and its usual content was a story or essay. As it evolved into "Our Little Folks" its content became more varied, including stories and essays by con, along with those by its compiler; poetry; charades and puzzles; a series of articles on Mormon stake presidents; and a section of letters from readers.

Sometimes Lula's contributions to "Our Little Folks" were signed, sometimes not. This "Sentiment for Thanksgiving Day" was one that she initialed:

> Thanksgiving and praise to our Father and God,
> Who withholds in His strength from the river and sod;
> But crowns with rich blessing man's labor and care:
> So kindly, so amply our wants are supplied,
> It is best, always best, if our stores we divide,
> And spread freely 'round us, that all may have share.[39]

"Pussy's Letter," which follows, was not signed, but its appearance in Lula's department, whether or not she wrote it, shows that she was wise enough to include material just for fun.

> Pussy thought she'd write a letter
> To her friend, the Irish setter.
>
> Little Ruth made all things ready,
> Held the little soft paw steady.
>
> It was very nicely written
> For a simple Maltese kitten.
>
> But—Ruth, do you mind my telling?
> Pussy isn't good at spelling![40]

The essays did not always teach a moral, either. One was about "A Queer Conference Visitor" who "was the most cheeky little fellow" the author had ever seen. "Without waiting to be invited he came right into the priesthood meeting in the Tabernacle, Monday evening, and instead of going off into a corner and sitting down, he went right up to the stand and presented himself to the presiding authorities."[41] Lula then described the intruder, asking the children to guess who he was. At the end of the description, she revealed that the creature was a bat who lived, she surmised, on top of the Tabernacle organ.

Of course, much of the content of "Our Little Folks" did contain advice and instruction. A filler at the end of a column might be something like this "Motto: If I can't do all the good I want to, I want to do all the good I can."[42] Or commentary accompanying an illustration showing four puppies watching longingly from a basket as a kitten laps a saucer of milk would conclude, "Pussy seems to me not to be quite so happy eating alone, as she would be if the puppies had their supper too, instead of watching her so eagerly and whining over her because they have nothing to eat. How would we feel if we were in pussy's place? Why would we feel that way?"[43]

Sometimes Lula offered advice to parents. One essay in which she did was titled "The Hurry of the Times, and Need of Relaxation," a topic, like many of those she wrote about, which is as appropriate today as it was in 1904. She noted that the husband needed relief from the worry of business and that both parents should relax more—and mingle more with their children in the process.[44]

Lula often had poems published in other parts of the magazine, as well as her own department. In 1905 the magazine offered $50 in prizes for the best poems honoring Joseph Smith on the 100th anniversary of his birth. Lula won first prize, and prominent Mormon composer Evan Stephens took top honors in the next phase of the contest, which was to produce a musical setting for the two winning poems. Lula's lyric was titled "Joseph the Blest." The first stanza follows:

> Father of life and light,
> In heav'n above,
> This world Thou makes bright,
> Warmed by Thy love.
> While all the meek rejoice,
> Let every heart and voice
> Send forth Thy praise,
> Who didst on earth bestow,
> One hundred years ago,
> Joseph, the Prophet dear,
> Joseph, the mighty seer
> Of latter days![45]

Lula's works continued to be published, even after "Our Little Folks" was discontinued in a 1907 attempt to modernize *The Juvenile Instructor* and put it on a firmer financial footing. Her response to the change, as she expressed it in a letter to Joseph F. Smith, at that time LDS Church President, as well as *Instructor* editor, was not exactly a protest; but it did make clear her disappointment and a very human need for approval:

> As the changes to be made in the Juvenile Instructor leave out "Our Little Folks" department, of which I have been editor, I feel that in kindness to the children, some notice and explanation should be given them. They write to the "Letter-Box" from all parts of our country, as well as from

> foreign lands, and it seems to me it would be unfair and disappointing to them to shut off this medium of communication, which they evidently have enjoyed so much, without saying something to them about it. . . .
>
> In retiring from the position I have held for a number of years on the Juvenile Instructor, which position came to me unsolicited and unexpected, through the kindness and courtesy of President George Q. Cannon, it would be very gratifying to me to know if in the past my work has been satisfactory to you, or if, for any reason, at any time it has proven otherwise.[46]

President Smith made a gracious attempt to mollify Lula in a handwritten reply, saying that he had not only always enjoyed the contents of the column and her management of it but had always esteemed highly her greater gifts as poetess and writer. He said he regarded her "as one of the best and most gifted, in your line, of our dear Sisters, whose names will live in the memories and heart of our people." He added that he couldn't help but regret the need of making the changes in *The Instructor* which had been decided upon by the Brethren but that the magazine couldn't be continued with the constant financial loss it had been incurring.[47]

While she was still with *The Instructor,* Lula published a volume of her collected prose and poetry.[48] Called *Branches That Run over the Wall,* it took that title from its opening section, a long Book of Mormon epic.

Prefatory material included two complimentary letters about this work, one of which noted Lula's ingenuity in making up wives' names by transposing letters in the names of their husbands, and an explanation of abbreviations used to show which lines were historical, which supposition, and which contained comments on the text. Also prefatory was the following poem, "At the Door," which expressed not only how Lula felt about her Book of Mormon poem but also how she must have felt about writing for publication in general:

> Upon the threshold, ere I touch the bell,
> I pause, and listen—and my heart beats quick.
> Who are within? How shall I be received?
> Now I remember that for friendly hearts
> The world is full of friends.
> I need not fear; why should I hesitate?
> Ah! mingling with our friends, harsh critics throng,
> Who give opinions ere they're introduced,
> And judgment pass before a case is heard.
> But, friendship's holdings must be stronger still,
> Than cynics' scorn, or painful ridicule
> Of careless, prating tongues, however sharp;
> And love and truth and light, though simply clad,
> And artless to excess, will rise—must rise
> Superior to their opposites, and live.
> This feeling quickens faith and quiets fear.
> I ring courageously, then calmly wait.[49]

The book was divided into three sections, with a painting by artist Lee Greene Richards, Lula's son, to illustrate each. The Book of Mormon epic, written in a variety of meters and styles, came to a climax with a wedding feast for the five sons of major character Lehi and their wives and then concluded with a few verses summarizing subsequent Book of Mormon history and an admonition to readers to learn for themselves of the book's truthfulness. The rest of Lula's book contained shorter poems, sketches, essays and epigrams, many of them reprinted from the *Woman's Exponent* or *The Juvenile Instructor.* The final section was a collection of poems, recitations and dialogues for children. Two songs, complete with words and music, also were included.

As was usual in Lula's writings, most of the selections had morals. For example:

> The high, ambitious one will often stumble
> Where safely walks the lowly and the humble;
> Oft falls the proudly dignified and grand,
> Where modest, unassuming worth will stand.[50]

However, a few works were obviously written—and included in the anthology—just for fun. "Something New" fits into this category:

> Oh! girls, I have seen and have heard something new;
> And, womanlike, truly, I'll tell it to you.
> It is not a fancy worked cushion or mat,
> The style of a dress or the shape of a hat.
>
> You may guess and may puzzle all day and all night,
> But I have no idea you'd ever guess right.
> And therefore I'll tell you, since curious you've grown,
> For a fact that's so wonderful ought to be known—
>
> At least among women, for comfort and cheer
> It contains for our spirits; so listen, and hear.
> Last evening, I met at a kind neighbor's house,
> A man who will own he's afraid of a mouse![51]

By the time her anthology was published Lula was fifty-four, and, of course, many changes had occurred in her personal life. Her seventh child, a third daughter who did not survive, had been born in 1888, and her four sons, born between 1878 and 1885, were grown. Each child had been given the middle name Greene. Lee was a well-known artist, and Willard was a participant in the colonization and development of southern Alberta in Canada. Evan became a dentist, Heber a professor of English at the University of Utah.

Another member had been added to the household, as well. She was Persis Louisa Young, Lula's niece, who came to the Richards as a household helper and stayed to become Levi's plural wife. He married her on his and

Lula's eleventh wedding anniversary. This arrangement apparently was satisfactory to all concerned. Persis had only one child, who died in infancy, and spent the rest of her life helping with family and household tasks while Lula pursued more public interests. The two women continued to share the same house after Levi died in 1914.[52]

Lula was active as an officer in the Mormon auxiliary organization of the Twentieth Ward, where she lived for most of her life. From its dedication in 1893 until 1934, she was a worker in the Salt Lake Temple, as were both her husband and Persis. She continued to write for Church publications almost until her death, which occurred in 1944, when she was ninety-five years old. Persis died the same year.[53]

An earlier tribute may reveal more about Lula than those written at her death, although perhaps most obituary praises in both poetry and prose—like those Lula wrote—tell more about their writers than about their subjects. Susa Young Gates described Lula as a rather intimidating character, full of paradoxes:

> Extremely modest, if not diffident, she was naturally noble, broad-minded, yet with a rigid moral standard which amounted almost to what is sometimes called by worldly people, fanatacism. Unmindful of such criticisms Lula Greene possessed courage, initiative and considerable fire of poesy and self-expression, modified greatly by a placid, obedient spirit which often hid the steely strength of her will and determination to press forward always in the path of duty.[54]

Lula certainly was something of the paragon Susa depicted. But she was also a real person, a talented woman who had strong convictions about right and wrong, about justice and duty, about the responsibility of a woman to rear righteous children without withdrawing from involvement in civic affairs, but also about the beauty and joy of life on earth. All of these found a place both in her writing and in her life.

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1. Louisa Lula Greene Richards, *Branches That Run over the Wall* (Salt Lake City. Utah: Magazine Print Company, 1904). p. 79.

2. Biographical information is from family group sheet for Evan M. Greene, in the Genealogical Department Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; and Leonard J Arrington, "Louisa Lula Greene Richards: Woman Journalist of the Early West," *The Improvement Era* 72 (May, 1969): 28–31. Lula's two grandmothers were Nancy Young Kent and Rhoda Young Greene, according to Susa Young Gates, "The Woman's Exponent," p. 1, undated typescript in Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter referred to as Church Archives).

3. Richards to Rhoda Bullock, 13 March 1874, Church Archives.
4. Richards, "Princess Aurora and the Mountain Queen" in ibid.
5. "Smithfield Sunday School Gazette," no. 2 (31 October 1869), Church Archives.
6. Ibid., no. 1 (24 October 1869).
7. Ibid., no. 6 (28 November 1869).
8. Thomas C. Romney, "Louisa Lula Greene Richards," *The Instructor* 85 (September 1950): 262.
9. *The Salt Lake Daily Herald* 2 (2 November 1871): 1.
10. Richards to Zina S. Whitney, 20 January 1893, Church Archives.
11. Eliza R. Snow to Richards, 23 April and 16 November 1871, and 20 February 1872, Church Archives.
12. Gates, "Woman's Exponent," pp. 2–3.
13. Richards to Zina S. Whitney, 20 January 1893.
14. *The Salt Lake Daily Herald* 2 (9 April 1872): 3.
15. *Woman's Exponent* 4 (15 July 1872):5.
16. From list of pen names compiled by Davis Bitton, professor of history, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.
17. *Woman's Exponent* 1 (1 July 1872): 5.
18. Ibid. (15 December 1872), p. 5.
19. Ibid. (1 January 1873), p. 4.
20. Ibid., (15 January 1873), p.4.
21. Ibid. (31 January 1873). p.1.
22. Ibid. (1 April 1873), p. 3
23. Ibid. (1 May 1873). p. 5.
24. Ibid., 2 (15 June 1873): 7.
25. Ibid., 1 (1 July 1872): 4.
26. Ibid., p. 1.
27. Ibid., p. 3.
28. Ibid., p. 4.
29. Andrew Jenson. *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1901), 3:703–705.
30. Ibid., p. 705.
31. Family group sheet for Levi W. Richards, LDS Genealogical Department Library.
32. Richards to her sister Lissie, 21 March 1874, copy in Church Archives.
33. Richards to her sisters and brother, Lissie, Lina, and Edmund. 24 November 1874, copy in Church Archives.
34. Richards to Brigham Young, 16 June 1877. Church Archives.
35. Brigham Young to Richards, 28 June 1877, Church Archives.
36. W*oman's Exponent* 6 (1 August 1877): 4.
37. Gates, "Woman's Exponent," p. 14.
38. Richards to Joseph F. Smith, 25 November 1907, Church Archives.
39. *The Juvenile Instructor* 36 (1 December 1901): 733.
40. Ibid., 37 (1 February 1902): 96.
41. Ibid., 39 (1 May 1904): 280.
42. Ibid., 37 (1 January 1902): 32.
43. Ibid., 42 (1 May 1907): 286.
44. Ibid., 39 (15 March 1904): 187.
45. Ibid., 40 (1 November 1905): 646–47.
46. Richards to Joseph F. Smith, 25 November 1907, Church Archives.

47. Joseph F. Smith to Richards, 30 November 1907, Church Archives.

48. Lula Greene Richards, *Branches That Run Over the Wa//* (Salt Lake City: The Magazine Printing Co., 1904).

49. Ibid., p. v.

50. Ibid., p. 166.

51. Ibid., p. 141.

52. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia,* p. 703; and Helen R. Gardner, comp., *Levi Richards (1799 1876): Some of His Ancestors and Descendants* (Logan, Utah: Unique Printing, 1973), pp. 140–42.

53. Gardner, *Levi Richards,* p. 142.

54. Gates, "Woman's Exponent," p. 1.