

OUR SOUTHAM SAGA



A History of Willis J. and
Carol Manwaring Southam

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Carol Manwaring Southam



Of Vernal, Utah

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Cover photo is of Willis and Carol at the time of their engagement.

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“Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents.”

Jacob 4:3



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All the thanks I want is for Dad to be happy and at peace with this effort. His spirit has been nudging me since October 2008 to get this thing done.

To Mom and Dad for living the lives we read about and making the sacrifices on our behalf.

Dad always said, "Each generation should be better than the last, or that generation has failed."

I see the thread of that woven throughout our lives in the five generations I know past, present, and future. Thank you for the part you played and I pray the future generations will keep the torch burning even brighter.

Diane Southam Smith







CHAPTER ONE

Beginnings



Willis at two years old.

As I start my life story on this tenth day of January, 1992, I am 67 years young. I started writing this about thirty years back. I have added to it as I have went along and I would write them down as I remembered those experiences. As Nephi and many of the other prophets would say, “Only one hundredth of a part do I write.” However, I brought to the surface the things I felt would paint the best picture of my life.

With this story I want to leave with those that read it, [the fact] that I can never remember when I didn’t have a testimony of the gospel of my Savior. I hope that when they lay me in the ground I can still say the same thing and that I have endured to the end.

As you read this story you will see it isn’t from an experienced story teller. It’s just me, and I’m telling it just as it was, but you will also see it was a very happy life. This life all started on the 29th day of November, 1924 on a cold Saturday morning. I was born to George Henry Southam Jr. and Florence Matilda Willis Southam. She gave birth to a homely red headed boy with yellow jaundice. They say that I was as yellow as a canary. I had two other sieges of yellow jaundice after that. The last one was when I was in the third grade. I remember being so sick that I thought I





was going to die. I know I hadn't eaten anything for three days. My stomach looked like a greyhound dog. The medicines we had back then was the home remedy kind, like cod-liver oil, peppermint tea, Mentholatum, and Epson salts. Well, after three days of those Epson salts treatments I never had anything in my stomach so I knew then I was going to die or get well. The good Lord didn't want me then, especially in the shape I was in. So He gave me an appetite and in about three days I was going good.

I was born in Vernal, Utah at about Third West and Second North in Grandmother Willis' home. They told me later that my mother's cousin was also giving birth to a baby, but he didn't make it. It was a couple of weeks after my birth before they knew I would live. My Grandmother Willis was there as the mid-wife; she was a mid-wife to many women.

At that time we were living in Davis Ward and so when I was strong enough to travel my Mother bundled me up good and I took my first ride with the team and wagon to my new home. There was to be many more wagon trips in my life after that one. I might mention here that this same wagon that brought me home as a baby was used by my father to freight the first dinosaur bones from the Dinosaur Quarry near Jensen, Utah to the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

From the center of Vernal it was about five miles to my new home in Davis. We traveled the route of the "old Jensen Highway" which today is south on Vernal Avenue to 1500 South; then turn east on 1500 East and travel south to 3500 South. Keep in mind this highway was an old dirt road with bridges made from wooden planks. As we turned off the "old Jensen Highway" at 3500 South we would go east for half a mile to Bowthorpes corner, then turn north a quarter mile through a little dip we called "the holler" where we arrived at my new home. This was the main way of getting home from town because highway 40 had not been built yet.

The following year on February 1, 1925 my father and mother took me to church where Edward Watkins Jr. gave me a name (Willis J. Southam) and a blessing. My name, Willis, was taken from my Grandfather Willis'

DUPLICATE COPY
CERTIFICATE OF BLESSING

This certifies that WILLIS J. SOUTHAM born 29 November 1924
at (City/Town) Vernal (County) Uintah (State/Territory) Utah USA
(maiden name) Son of (father's full name) George Henry Southam
(mother's full maiden name) Florence Matilda Willis and
by Edward Watkins, Jr. whose priesthood office is Elder
in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Happened at Ward #011223
Vernal Utah Uintah Stake

WITNESSES
I, Alfred Simpson
Elder

No. 194
Certificate of Baptism and Confirmation

This Certifies that Willis J. Southam
Son of George Henry Southam and Florence Matilda Willis
Born 29 Nov. 1924 at Vernal, Uintah, Utah
was baptized 25 Feb. 1925 by Philip A. Watkins
and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 5 Mar. 1925
by Elder Alfred Simpson
Signed Alfred Simpson

Willis' blessing and baptismal certificates.



last name and the “J” comes from his first name, Jesse.

I don’t remember how my brother and sisters accepted me, but apparently they accepted me like the rest of my siblings because I’m still surviving. Marion, my oldest brother, was first. Then came Bernice, followed by Ila, then Velma. I was the fifth in the family. Three years after me came Viola and another five years later came Junius, making me a total of two brothers and four sisters.

My new home was a three room log house that was located about one hundred feet north from the house where my great grandmother Catherine Cameron Southam lived. We lived in that old dirt roofed house until I was about four years old. When my great grandmother Southam got cancer and died our family moved into her home which was a better house. It had wood shingles on it for a roof. When it used to rain on our old dirt roofed house my Mother would always have to put pans and buckets on the floor to catch the rain water. Being as young as I was at that time I could never figure out why the rain water was so muddy in the pans and buckets inside the house, but when you caught it outside of the house it was so clear.

I remember the old log home had a lean-to on the front entrance way, which not every log home in the valley had. During the summer it was a nice place to cool off because of the cool breeze. And in the winter it would keep the snow and ice off the step. With all this we thought we had all the conveniences of “up town”. There was a dirt cellar out in front where I used to play all the time which provided a very good place as a baby sitter because I spent many hours out there playing in the dirt with my toy cars and sliding down the cellar roof. I also spent a lot of time riding my old steel wheeled tricycle.

One time Uncle Frances “Frant” and Uncle Sim Willis came down to see their sister, my mother. They had a red, green and black plaid coat my Grandmother Willis had made for me. She had sent it down with them to give to me. They kept trying to get me to walk over to them so that they could give me the coat. I remember I was so bashful that I wouldn’t go to them, but I sure wanted that coat. It was so pretty. I really wanted those checkered colors. I remember I really liked my uncles and I liked to see them when they came down, but I wouldn’t go to them. So they finally had



to give the coat to mother to give to me. I was hanging on to my mother for dear life.

As I said once before, it was about this time that I was four years old that we moved in to Great Grandmother Southam's home where I spent the rest of my boyhood days enjoying my father and mother's warm and humble home, learning the rights and wrongs in life and gaining a testimony of the gospel under the love and example that was in the home. By watching the way my dad would trade or deal with anyone, I learned the true and honest way of dealing. He taught me if there was any question about the deal you were going to make you was to turn the deal around as if it was you who would be receiving it and if you were willing to accept it, you had a fair bargain going.

Even though I was still young I really liked to go with my dad. I remember this one day he took me down to the creek to change the water with him in the old Model T Ford. He had the creek place that my grandfather homesteaded when he first came into this valley. My dad was running it for him that year. So when we got there that morning he parked the Model T under the old cottonwood tree that all the hay crew would eat dinner under and use for shade at noon or fix broken machinery under. And this is where he left me to play by the car while he went to irrigate. All of a sudden a big gust of wind came up and the tree limbs started to bend with the wind, and the canvas top on the old model T started to flapping up and down and because I was only four or five years old I thought the whole tree was going to fall on me. So I crawled to the top of the car and started hollering to my dad to come and save me, but he paid me no heed because he knew it was just a little quiet wind going by. Before he got back I thought it had been all of one day.

I have always been a lover of horses even at this small age of four or five. I loved to ride our old family horse, "Old Toots". One spring day I wanted to ride her down to the creek because my father was going to be gone to the creek all day. He knew that as little as I was he couldn't take me with him. He was going to take Old Toots with him to give her better feed at the creek. So he turned her loose knowing she would go on her own.

Thinking that it was my only chance to go with my dad, I started to chase Old Toots through the lane to Bowthorpes corner which was a



quarter mile away. Old Toots would stop and eat until I could almost have her, then she would take off again. She kept doing that until we reached the corner. That's where I gave it up and came home. I cried all the way back because of my defeat. That was a miserable day for me.

It was about this time of my life that the family got to go to town in the Old Model T. Now keep in mind, this road was all dirt with a few sand spots in it and because I was among the younger ones I got to sit between Mom and Dad just where I could reach the throttle which was a lever on the steering column. I wanted my dad to go faster so I would reach up and pull the lever down and away we would go. My dad would cuff me a little with his elbow and push me back in the seat and tell me not to do that any more. I didn't realize at that time how rough the road was and if we would of went as fast as I wanted we all would have went flying out of the car.

The last remaining story about the old Model T Ford is a sad one at that. My father took the old car to Vernal to do some business. This was about 1928 or 1929. Before he got home from this trip, he had had about four flat tires because of old tires and hot weather. Of course, back in those days you carried your own tire patching kit so that you could fix them yourself, but by the time he got home that day, he was through with cars and backed it up behind the chicken coop and there it stayed for a year or so. He then went back to the old team and wagon.

One day Lloyd Collier, my dad's sister's boy, came down and wanted to trade my dad out of the Model T. At that time he was taking wood working, as we called it at the time, in high school and said he would make my mother an ironing board in his wood working class in exchange for the car. My dad really liked that idea. It wasn't long until Lloyd had the ironing board done and down to my mother. The sad part of the story is that he hadn't had the car very long until he was coming down the highway from Glines and as he came around the sharp corner that we call "the Readers corner," there was a big bull in the road and he hit it and it killed Lloyd.

As I look back at those days I remember a lot of happy times in my life and, like all kids growing up, I also had a few disappointments that came by my way. Like one day my cousin, Sheldon Lewis, from town, was down and it was haying time. To the best of my memory I thought my father said if we helped hay all that day we could go swimming that night. Well, when



night came we wasn't allowed to go swimming., possibly for a wise cause that I could not see at that time, but I remember I was quite upset and knew I was going to break down and cry right there, so I had to get out of the house. I went out back on the lawn by the tree and cried harder than I ever remember before or since. Soon after that Sheldon, my cousin, came out to comfort me and told me that it would be all right and that we'd go swimming some other time, but that still didn't take the hurt away from an eleven year old boy.

Another time was when I was about thirteen years old and helping my dad on the farm on the creek. He put in an acre of squash and they turned out really good. We sold them all for a good price at that time, for about \$50.00. My dad gave me \$15.00 for helping him that year. My Grandpa Southam wanted to sell one of his spring calves for \$12.00. My father said if I wanted to take some of the squash money and buy that calf that I could double my money, so I did. Well, that fall my calf and also one of my father's and Grandpa Southam's all got black leg and died. Black leg is a deadly disease—I remember I had to help burn and bury them so the disease wouldn't spread. Alma, my brother-in-law, and Uncle Niles Southam also helped that day. All that time I was thinking, "There went all my summers work—all but \$3.00." I didn't have the money nor the calf, but all those kinds of experiences helped me to grow up and helped me face other things in life. I don't think I've had it so bad at that.



CHAPTER TWO

Boyhood Responsibilities and Memories

The first and biggest task that I can remember was finding the sheep after I got home from school at night and bringing them back to the corral. There were times that I had to go a mile or more to find them. It was after dark most of the time when I got them home. Of course, I had to do that after I walked a mile and a quarter from the old Davis ward school. I was in the third grade then. Most of those nights was good ones because I liked doing those kinds of things and especially with sheep. I had many faith promoting stories that came from this responsibility.

That coming spring I guess my dad thought I had grown up because he broke me in on running the plow after I got home from school. Of course, that was in the early thirties and that was when we were having the drought and depression, so not having a lot of snow that year made it possible to start plowing in February with an old sulky plow. You usually plowed with three horses, but with hard times on us and only a team we plowed with only two horses which made it a lot slower because we had to stop and rest them a lot more. Three acres is all there was in that particu-



lar field and it seemed like it took all spring. My first time plowing, and with only two horses, I guess it seemed longer than usual.



Willis' father, George Southam

All of this paid off for later on in my life because I found myself out running a haying team real early in life and that was something I long looked forward to. I was way below average in school with the kids my age, but when it came to handling teams and knowing horses and sheep, etc. I felt I was way above average for my age. My Dad always kept horses that I was proud of, both teams and riding horses. When kids from Davis ward would go swimming on Sunday we would ride our horses and most of the time there would be a horse race

to see who had the fastest horse. I never had the fastest horse all the time, but I never came in last at anytime.

During the summer months, and especially during haying and thrashing time, we went swimming in Ashley creek. Of course, at that time as long as there wasn't any girls that was with us, it was always without a swim suit. In the late thirties it seem like the water was good all the time and we had a real good swimming hold called the birch hole. It seemed everybody around came to go swimming there.

When it was hay time on the old farm on the creek, it seemed like a celebration to me. I got to run a hay wagon with Marlo Bowthorpe, my opposite, on the other hay wagon. He was a kid that I grew up with and my dad would always hire him because he was a good worker. In fact, I tried for several years to beat his skill, but I never did. I was about twelve or thirteen by this time. To make up a haying crew, me and Marlo would run the hay wagons and my uncle, Wallace Southam, and Noah Roadabeck would always work out in the hay field pitching hay on the wagon. My dad would stay in the stack yard to fasten the hay slings on the wagons for us hay haulers. Owen Haws would always stack. The dinners at that time were always so good. To hear the fun stories and jokes at that time made it a special time of the year. My dad always would pay the haying hands in hay which was the way they chose it. My dad was always fair with them. Each time he would tell them, "For those that don't have a team and



wagon, you take mine and choose the field and take what you feel is right.” There was never no hourly wage in the hay time.

Then there would come time to thrash the grain in the fall—another big time on the farm. There was always ten to twelve men at thrashing time. You could always get a good joke out of someone or on someone or have a good story before you was through.

I remember one summer my dad took two horses that had gotten to old to ride from Joe Hacking and he wanted them to be broke to work in a harness. So my dad took on the job. I was about eighteen years old, so I got in on most of it. All summer we got along fine until during haying time. I got on the one with the harness on and took the other horse down to the creek to water at noon like we had done all my life, but that day was different for that old sorrel because he let all the horses drink and as we turned to come out of the creek he went crazy and I couldn’t hold him in or talk to the old boy. I had to turn all the other horses loose and concentrate on the old sorrel. He took me up through the flats on Ashley Creek, a bucking and running, until we come to an old slew and he dove of into it clear up to his belly. I thought, “Well, I’ve got him now. I can get him talked out of this crazy idea by the time he gets out of this old slew,” but he turned and went out of that place the way he came into it and started the whole fit over again right back where we had come from, doing the same thing. So, as we went through the creek again, he slowed up a bit and I decided that he wasn’t listening to me any and there was a long strip coming up just ahead of us, so I decided to part company right there while I could still hay that afternoon. As I gathered myself up, I seen my dad coming on our little black saddle horse because they had been watching the whole event.

I got on behind him and we rode about a mile down the creek before we found the old sorrel. We took him back and worked him the rest of the day, but we never trusted him from there on.

Because we lived up on the highway, so that we kids could catch the bus to school, we would haul the grain we had thrashed up to our granary with a wagon. One day, when I was about fourteen years old, we went for



George Southam harvesting.



a load and we had to load this grain with buckets out of the old house at the creek. We could see a storm coming and we wanted to get up the hill before it got too slick. We got it loaded and were half way up the hill when the storm hit. There was a flat place on the hill at that time to rest the horses, so that made a nice place to stop and get out of the rain by getting under the wagon. Well, after the storm went over we started on our way, but we didn't go very far because the hill was too slick and the new colt we were breaking didn't help matters out. So I had to walk back to the creek and go to the pasture for another horse and put a harness on it and get a chain and single tree so we could put these horses on the wagon. I learned by that what one extra horse can do in that predicament.

I was only twelve years old when we had a chance to lease the creek place. I remember I walked all over the place that Saturday around the last of March. I remember it was a nice warm day; the birds was singing and it seemed so quiet down there. It was a lot different than living on the highway.

I started to like that place right then. That was the year of 1936 and that was the spring I was leaving the fifth grade. That also was the first year that they moved the Davis ward school over to Naples. Of course, there was a few good fights over there while we was all getting acquainted. I came out with a black eye one night which I got while waiting for the bus. I learned right there that I would have to practice running faster or learn the art of talking harder or longer.

I finished the fifth grade that year by riding a horse from the creek to school and back. I didn't mind that—that was better than walking like I had done for the past four years. Of course, it was plowing time when we moved to the creek that spring, but our horses was so weak coming through a hard winter that my father hired Vaughn Simper with his big tractor to plow the fields. We did have three horses by then. One was just a colt and small at that because of the past two winters with not much hay to feed him. So we had to drill a new hole in the three horse eveners to give him the advantage on the pull. When we started him out that spring I can't think he would have weighed over one thousand pounds. That little fellow grew for two years after that and became one of the nicest horses my dad ever owned, but when my brother-in-law, Alma Wilkins, took out





a government loan, he wanted that horse really bad so my Dad sold him to Alma and he kept him for many years.

As a rule, my dad always had nice horses—good to drive, good to handle, safe with anyone. I guess my father was anxious that spring to get his grain in the ground so it would be in ahead of all the spring rains. So when I got home from school I didn't get to do much with the ground. I got in on a little of the leveling and drilling of the grain. We had a real good crop of oats that year. I had never seen so much grain in all my time up to then. That was the first year that I could remember that we had all the hay and grain our animals needed. When we moved there on that place that spring we also leased about seven cows to milk. That is where I really learned how to milk cows. We had to go get them from the pasture every morning and night. Of course, being kids as we were, we made it a fun time most of the time. Only when the cows would cross the creek right after a big storm and the creek would swell the banks so we couldn't get across and the horses was over there to. A lot of the times while we were down after the cows it would start storming or raining on us kids to where I thought them old cows would never hurry to the barn. There we would be, soaked to the skin and still milking, with our teeth a chattering. But, looking back at those times makes me glad I did it because as years went on there was many more days that was worse.

One day when I was riding a cow one kicked me in the stomach when I was hanging on to the tail.

When it come time to cut the grain that fall, I had some of my cousins down to help shock the grain. I remember my dad would get so mad because we was taking so long to shock that grain it took us a week to shock ten acres. We would make grain houses with the grain shocks and crawl back in them out of the sun. Years later I realized why, as the old story goes, one boy is one boy and two boys is a half a boy and three boys is no boys at all when it comes to responsibilities or work.

Those of you who are reading this will see that I quote my father an awful lot. I see no harm in this for as a boy I tried to be like my father in every way I could. I seen no man that I wanted to be more like than he. My father taught me responsibility, honesty, and other important things of life. However, as I got older I realized that my father wasn't perfect. He





was like the rest of us. I remember one Sunday in the spring of the year when I was about nine years old we were running out of hay for the animals. So my father had me go with him to the creek where our hay was. We couldn't raise enough hay on the highway place where we lived to feed all our animals because of the drought. So we had to haul the hay from the creek place.

Let me interrupt this story to tell about the creek place. It was my great-grandfather's place which he homesteaded back in the late 1880s and was called, at that time, "The Southam Place." My father had the place leased and, as a very small boy, I remember going down there with my father and most of my Southam uncles to put up the hay. Of course, after a long, hot day in the hay field, a lot of the times we all would go swimming in the creek. One evening while we all was swimming, Uncle Niles, who didn't know how to swim, had drifted into a deep hole and started to holler for help. Uncle Ralph made for him. It seemed to me at that time that he was on the other side of the swimming hole, but the water was sure splashing. It was only but a second until he had Niles on the bank, upside down, draining the water out of him and asking him if he was alright. Poor kid, he never had time to get any water in his lungs, but he was getting the treatment for it nevertheless.

Now, getting back to my story. I started telling you about that Sunday we went after hay. Well, we got the hay alright, and then my dad said, "You drive the team with hay and I'll ride Old Darky (the saddle horse we had) and drive our calves home behind the hay." So that's the way I learned to drive calves—always have some feed in front of them. It works most of the time. Everything was doing fine until we got within two hundred feet of where we turned into our place. I was sure getting sleepy, riding on that load of soft hay and in the warm afternoon spring sun. After driving three miles, and with the team knowing they were going home, there wasn't much to it. I guess I had them on remote control because all at once I was on top of a guard rail with my load of hay and no way off or out until my father came to my rescue.

Of course, back at that time there wasn't much traffic, but even if there was only one vehicle, it would have embarrassed me for my dad's sake because everyone knew he wouldn't drive like that. At that time we





knew almost everybody that traveled the road and so the only outfit that came along stopped and wanted to know how I had got one side of the hay rack on top of the guard rail. Well, by the time we had got the calves in the corral and were back to the scene of the accident where I felt very uncomfortable, so there was only one true and rightful answer and that was that I fell asleep.

After much work and effort, and the usual amount of cursing, we got it off. My father sent me to the house to get something to help get the wagon free and when I got back I was still receiving some cussing. So I thought, as a nine year old, I had had enough. I searched for the best English I knew at that time to not raise any more heat than had to be after all of that and said, "Well, if we hadn't of went on Sunday this wouldn't of happened." Everything all quieted down at the time, but later my mother caught me all alone and asked if I told Dad it was her that said that it was all caused because it was done on Sunday. I knew then why everything went quiet that day—because my father thought it had come from my mother while I was up to the house getting something to get the wagon off the rail. Well, my mother got all three of us together later that night and got that all straightened out. Of course, my mother was on my side because it was on Sunday.

My mother was the one that kept all of us children going to church because my father never went to church too often. I guess it was that he was scared someone was going to call on him to do something. I may say that to be shy that way runs in the Southams. So Mother seen to it that we was in church. She never got much support from my father as he could also find the excuse that he needed to work on his harness or take care of his horses or team.

Everybody in the Ashley Valley knew my dad had one of the better teams in the valley. To me he was an expert horseman, especially with teams. It was during the worst years of the drought that everything got so dry. You did well if you could even keep your garden coming along. Ashley Creek dried up which left nothing but alkali pot holes for our animals to drink from. Because of that my father lost three of his best horses and then another one got its leg broke and we had to shoot it. Within that three year period of time it almost wiped him out of horses. After our





Bishop had heard about all of this he came to my father and told him that those horses wasn't the most important thing in life and if he would start going to church more the Lord would bless him and that He would bless him with the things in life that was most important to him and his family, both spiritual and temporal. I watched this come about, although it was slow coming about. Over the years he got out of debt and got things around him that he enjoyed. It wasn't until I went on my mission that he got real active. Later, they had him in the bishopric and he stayed active the rest of his days.

My mother was always a great strength to us all when it came to religion. My mother took good care of all us kids and done the best she knew how in all the things that comes about in raising a family. She would make the best meal out of nothing during the depression. We wondered where the next meal was coming from, but somehow there always was something on the table the next time to eat. It wasn't much, but I guess we had about what anyone else was getting. I know I wore a lot of patched clothes. Maybe that's why I feel so comfortable in them now. But I never thought I'd see the day that patched clothes would come in fashion like they are today—to where you could buy them already patched. I never could see any sense in it. Anyway, the good Lord blessed us that we didn't have to go naked.

I remember that my mother would have the most to do with having a good garden every year. I learned how to plant a garden from my mother and how to farm from my father, more or less. However, as the years went on and my father was able to be home more, they worked together in the garden. I never remember of my father hollering or cussing mother for anything. They had their debates and little differences, but they always got along good.

One thing that made a hardship on my father was that my mother never would learn to drive the car and, with the many times that I have had to have my wife come and get me or take me somewhere, or even drive part of the time or drive the tractor for me, I look back and see how inconvenient it must have been for my father. The one and only day he thought he would try and teach her how to drive, she almost killed the both of them. It scared my father to the point that he thought if he was to





keep a wife he had better do the driving. From there on he would take her to all of her meetings, etc. I guess it worked out alright because they were together more that way.

I remember when I was but a small lad about six or seven years old I used to like to tease my younger sister, Viola, who was three years younger than I was. I'd get her down an old dark cellar we had at that time. Then I'd run out and holler, "A bear's came." I did this until one day my mother caught me doing that trick and went and found a long willow. I never knew this until she was right on me and the fun stopped immediately. I started to run to salvage what could be left and, in doing so, I found out that I could outrun her. A hundred thoughts was going through my mind saying, "But where could I run to and not be caught?" When she realized the same thing I had, that I could out run her, she started to holler, "You stop right now or when I do catch you I will make up for it all and whip you a lot worse." So, being an obedient child like I was, I stopped and took my punishment. I didn't think she was ever going to stop whipping me. I couldn't bawl because of my stubbornness, but I sure felt bad. Of course, that was the object of it and I got the point.

Thinking about that I often wonder how my folks raised me because of my stubbornness, but, even at that, I don't feel like I was a bad kid to get along with because all of my cousins used to play with me. We always would get along good and have a lot of fun together. Like one time the whole family was having a celebration for my brother, Junius', birthday on the creek (the place that I own) and a lot of my cousins come that day to have fun too. We went swimming, riding calves, and four of us tried riding our saddle horse bareback. We done fine until we started on a trot and the back person started falling off and the rest of use went with him. So we all fell off together onto the ground. To this day all of my cousins have a good rapport with each other and a lot of good memories.

Coming back to my mother: I remember she used to catch the old buggy horse—Old Snipe we used to call her—and harness her and hook her to the buggy and take me and Viola and away we would go Relief Society teaching. I was small enough that I could just barely see over the dashboard of the buggy and watch the bottoms of the horses hoofs as they came up. It seemed like it was always fun to go in the buggy whenever it





went somewhere.

When my mother used to trust Bernice, Ila, or my cousin, Ada, and I know they were only young teenagers, to take the dinner down to the hay-ing crew on the creek (the old Southam place) with the horse and buggy, I'd try to go with them and cry if I couldn't. Of course, I was always good and that's why they would always take me. Ada (I would always call her Aunt Ada) would feel sorry for me and say to Aunt Flose, "He can go can't he?" That would okay the trip. You know, when I got a little older and wasn't so cute, I had to start earning everything I got. I never could feel it was fair that life would change so fast.

When I was in the fourth grade I had the chores of going and finding the sheep after I got home each night. This story I am going to tell you about took place in the spring of the year when all of the ice was breaking up in all ditches, leaving only ledges of ice on the banks, which made it very difficult for the ewes heavy with lamb or the weaker ones to cross. The sheep had their specified trail to follow on to get home each night and it was right over what we called "the big ditch." It was about five feet across and there were straight up and down banks of ice on both sides of the ditch. This one night this yearling ewe lamb jumped alright, but never made it all the way. So there she was, in the middle of the ditch with her hind part soaked like a sponge and her front feet on top of the icy bank, jumping up and down trying to get on top to get out. As a ten year old boy that was going to be quite the job to lift her out. So my thoughts first was to drop to my knees, bow my head, close my eyes, and tell the good Lord I was in trouble and needed His help fast. When I opened my eyes and looked up to see what I had to do for my part to get her out, the lamb was already out and running to catch the other sheep. I couldn't believe what my eyes was seeing. I still on my knees with amazement. I just witnessed my first miracle. My folks taught me how to pray, but I don't remember that they said anything about thanking Him for something like that, because I don't remember ever doing so at the time. I hope the good Lord forgave me for not doing so.

When I reached the age of twelve I got ordained to the Aaronic priesthood office of a deacon. Then I could pass the sacrament. There was only three of us there most of the time—Marlo Bowthorpe, Lyle Simper, and





myself. As we was the only ones there most of the time, it was our job to pass. Because the red corduroy pants and shirts was in fashion at that time, we all had a set. I liked to pass the sacrament, though. When it come to gathering the fast offering, it seemed to be Lyle and I's job. He had a little pony that he hooked on a little sleigh he had built, so that's how we gathered fast offering each month. What we got most of the time was potatoes, flour, beans, and, once in a while, we would get meat. Very seldom any money. Lyle Simper and I got hooked up with each other in the first grade of school and was good friends from that day on.

It was well in to spring and I was just a kid of about seven years old. Marion was eight years older than I and he wanted to take me with him to the store to buy something for Mother and also get me some marbles, so we caught Old Rex, our saddle horse. It had just rained and so the roads and cow trails along the side of the road was real muddy and slick. On the way over to the store we chose the cow trail to go on. Well, as these thing happen at times, it did to us. Old Rex came to a slick place and down he went, but as luck had it, Marion pulled his leg up and, because I was on behind him, he brought my leg up with his. We was riding bare back that day, so Marion grabbed a handful of mane on the horse and, as the horse got up, we rode him back up also. I was scared, but still, it was a lot of fun having that type of an experience. I couldn't wait to get home to tell the rest of the family what had happened. Of course, with mud all over the side of Old Rex and mud all over us. Mother already knew about what had happened.

I was always going with Marion wherever or whenever I could—on the back of the saddle most of the time. I guess, like all brothers growing up, it seemed like he was mean to me at times. One time he took me with him when he was to change saddle horses on the creek. He got me down there, three miles from home, and was going to teach me how to saddle a horse. Well, I remember I couldn't hardly lift the saddle, not saying anything about taking it off from one horse and putting it on another one. So he got mad and saddled up, got on, and rode away for home and left me there bawling. But after a time he come back and got me. The conversation the rest of the way home wasn't too much to remember. It wasn't but a few years later that my father had me riding the horse alone going that





three miles to get the cows at night to milk them. Then we would have them in the corral overnight, milk them again, and then I would drive them back that three miles to the creek where they could pasture for the day. That was so impractical that it only lasted a few weeks.

One time in the spring, my father was irrigating and had a big stream of water going. There was me, seven, Velma, eight, and Viola, four. We had to follow our dad out to the field. When we reached the culvert that went out where the land and the water went through, that looked like a good place to stop and play. My dad went on over in the field and left us kids there playing. It wasn't long until Viola fell in the ditch just above the culvert. Velma was always a fast thinker and hurried over to the opening of the culvert and caught Viola just as she was going in the culvert. We drug her out, but she was bawling to the top of her lungs, so my dad come back in a hurry to find out what was the matter and sent us with her to the house. I have often wondered what would of happened if Velma hadn't been there at that time. She was always quick to think what to do in those occasions.

When I was about thirteen years old, my Uncle Frant come by the house one afternoon on his way to the mountain and wanted me to go with him and told me he was going down to Jensen to get my cousin Phillip Murry to go with us. That sounded okay to me and it was okay with my folks. So I got a coat. Sheldon Lewis was already with him and Val, his brother, was already up on the mountain working for Ray Searle, our uncle. That would put all four of us cousins together again to have a fun time, but as it turned out, both Frant and Ray knew that I could drive a team of horses, so when morning come Ray and Frant had to go look at something at another place on the mountain. They took Phillip and Sheldon with them and me and Val had to stay and build reservoirs which Ray had contracted to build for the BLM. They built the reservoirs with four horse teams and Fresno scrapers. So my fun went down the drain for that trip. We come home late that afternoon and as Uncle Frant dropped me off at home he gave me a dollar bill. At that time a dollar was a day's pay for a man, so that made me feel better.

I always loved to be on the mountain at any cost. My father had a chance to buy some old ewes from Joe Hacking to feed and lamb them





out for the winter and sell them in the spring. This was the first time my dad had done anything like that in my lifetime. I was fifteen years old and I was all for it. We had to go to Diamond Mountain to receive them. Marlo Bowthorpe wasn't only my friend, but a good hand to help on this occasion. He wasn't doing anything at the time so we asked him along. He was glad to go. So, this warm afternoon in the late fall, my dad and us threw a bed roll and two days of groceries in an old 1934 Chevy Coupe that Marion left for my father. Well, by sundown, we had arrived at the mouth of Jackson Draw where Joe Hacking's range started. There was a gate we had to open. This fence was to hold his sheep back into the draw. A mile farther up the draw from the gate was where Joe's sheep corrals were located. That was the first time I had ever seen a corral that big.

Just up the hill from there was his cabin and sheepwagon that we was going to stay in. Well, after so much man talk they started supper. When the sourdough biscuits, fried potatoes, onions, and mountain fried mut-ton started cooking, I was like a hungry dog waiting to be fed. Because I was taught basic good manners I just had to be good and sit back on the sheepwagon bed with Marlo and wait for our turn to eat because we was the youngest. I don't remember talking any. Marlo and I just listened to the older folks talk—some difference nowadays. Well, by the time that food was done I thought I was hungry enough to eat all of what was cooked. I do remember I didn't have any problems eating what they gave me. We finally got to sleep in that little cabin. I bunked up with Rulon Hacking and the next thing I knew everyone was getting up to start the day. It was still dark outside, and a little chilly, but it was exciting to get up to a sheep herder's breakfast and help corral all that many sheep.







CHAPTER THREE

School Days and Teachers

At this time of my life I was living free and happy—until this one morning, in the fall of the year, this word they called “school” came to my ears for the first time. They were saying, “You start school this year.” I remember that I thought about that for quite awhile, thinking and wondering if there was any other way to get grown up besides going to school. The first day of school I found myself having to get ready by washing my face and hands and combing my hair. You would of thought it was Sunday morning around there by the way you had to clean up. Of course we always had our weekly baths on Sundays so that we would be fresh for the week. But this was all new for me to clean up every day.

Mark Twain’s description of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn explains very much my feelings toward this new experience. Their love and adventures was based around the Mississippi river, while mine was based around a more western theme of cows, horses, and sheep. But when I got to school, I found my teacher was Linnie Simper. Linnie was my teacher in first and second grade. I thought she was the best teacher in the school. I always did well in school as long as we were drawing, or painting, or other things like that, but when it came to reading, writing, or arithmetic





I just couldn't get my interest to pick up because I left my desire at home. Because I was so bashful, I never gave my teacher any trouble. Maybe that is why she treated me so good.

In the spring we would have a table in the back of the classroom with a box built on it with dirt in it. We would plant different things like grain, corn, and garden seed so we could watch them grow. We all had our turns of watering the plants.

My first years of schooling was in the Davis School where it only had four rooms and a hallway where we could hang our coats up. The building was heated with gas stoves, one in each room. The gas come from a well in the Ashley Oil Field. That was the only oil and gas field there was around the valley. The first grade would go in the morning until noon then go home and the second grade would be there by one o'clock and stay until school was out. The rest of the grades, third through eighth, would go all day using the remaining three classrooms; third and fourth grades in one, fifth and sixth in a other, and the seventh and eighth grades in the last room.

There wasn't any buses at that time, so everyone walked or rode horses to school. When you made it to high school you would have to find your own way to the school which was in town. At that time it was the ninth through twelfth grades. I guess that's why there wasn't to many finishing high school back then. It was in 1933, when I was in the fourth grade, that the first school bus, affectionately called the "Chicken Coop", started busing students to high school only. It was owned by my uncle, Victor Wilkins, and drove by my uncle, Clair Southam. The reason it was called the Chicken Coop was because it looked like a chicken coop on wheels. It was approximately twenty feet long—much shorter than the buses of today. It was made of wood and did have glass windows with no heater, making it very cold to ride in in the winter. Since no other vehicle at that time had heaters either, no one knew the difference.

We had to take our own lunches for the first three years of my school. Then, I remember, about half way through the fourth grade they started bringing vegetable soup and crackers. It only cost three cents a bowl. I still remember how good it used to smell and taste after eating baking powder biscuits and sometimes a bottle of milk, because that was what most of





us were bringing to eat for our lunch before the soup and cracker days. I must remind the reader here that there wasn't any supermarkets ever heard of then, to be able to buy the fancy lunches that you have today.

My sister, Velma, which was only one year older than me died after an appendicitis operation, the day before Christmas, while she was in the third grade. She was in the second grade when I started my first year of school. I would have to go in the morning with the older kids, but she would come at noon. We had to walk one and a quarter miles to school, so most of the time I would go with my brother, Marion, and a lot of the time he would take a short cut through the fields. Most of the time there would be animals in the field, but I wasn't scared of them because Marion was in the eighth grade and he would of taken care of me. But that winter, while we were going through those fields to school one morning, we noticed this one two-year old colt was laying down, but the next time through he was dead from starving and cold weather. Back at that time it wasn't unusual to see things like that, because not only did we have a depression on but a real bad drought also.

I remember while I was going to school in Davis we would have a hoop. Everyone that liked that sport would have one and all it was was a hoop off of an old iron wagon wheel that held the hub of the wheel together. It was about a foot in diameter and one inch wide. The board was one inch by two inches or one inch by four inches. Then another board, similar in size—just shorter, would tee off at the end of the longer board to push the hoop. Us kids would push those things for miles (think Pollyanna, the movie). At that time it seemed that everything went by seasons—ball playing, marbles, hoops, etc.

Stella Richards taught me in the third and fourth grade. I remember we were studying about pioneers and their covered wagons and we was to build something around that subject, so I built a covered wagon and took it to school. There were only about three that was built. She put them all in the window for show and they were there for a long time before she let us bring them home. She was a good teacher, and I did fair those two years. The next year when I was in fifth grade we went to Naples school. They, the school board, moved all of Davis to Naples. I remember the people at Davis sure put up a fuss. In fact, they went on strike for two weeks. Us





kids didn't have to go to school for that length of time and I enjoyed that. But after we started I didn't mind it because they started busing all of us to school and our bus came right by our house.

Ruth Goodrich was my fifth grade teacher. I got along with her real well. The only thing that bothered me about her is that she would have us take turns reading in front of the class. That would turn me purple with fear. Mrs. Goodrich was an art teacher by heart. So we had an art show, or display, once, and I got an "A" for my drawing. It wouldn't be worth while to tell you what I got out of my other studies. While I was still in her class in the fall and when the melons were ripe, she took our whole class to her parents place, A. G. Goodrich's, for a melon bust. That was the first time I had all the melons I could eat.

Jacob N. Lybbert was my sixth grade teacher. He never thought to much of me. I couldn't blame him any, though, because he wanted every one to be a hard and fast study-er, and I wasn't, mostly because the things outside the class room window were more interesting. Unfortunately, they don't give diplomas for doing that kind of thing.

I was about the only one in the class that had a watch, and so everyone around me close wanted to know the time. This would get me in trouble most of the time with Mr. Lybbert, but he never did take away the watch. My dad had this watch to start with and it stopped on him because of to much electricity in his body. He always had a hard time keeping a watch running. This time it was good because he gave this one to me. It was a fascinating watch. On the front of it was the big bad wolf and the three little pigs, and the big bad wolf's eye was the second hand. Everyone wanted to watch it.

It was about this same year when we went to school at Naples that all the Davis boys had rubber band guns. During our recess and noon time we would have a fun time with our guns playing "Sheriff and Outlaws." It was all going well until one of us Davis boys slipped and shot one of the Naples boys. We were all brought into the principles office, also Mr. Lybbert, for a court hearing. The verdict was not any more guns. It was rather boring until we decided to bring marbles and play games with our marbles. Lloyd Smuin was so good with the marbles games that he was winning all of our marbles.





Regardless of his opinion of me, it didn't lessen him any of being a good principal and teacher because he did some very outstanding things to help the school in several areas like building practical swings and teeter-totters. He always had a excellent athletic program including running track, chin-ups, softball, broad jumping, and high jumping. When it came to chinning we could beat any school in the valley because of one of our chinners, Jean Stacey. She could do over one hundred chin-ups. A few short years later a girl by the name of Carol Manwaring also kept the championship in Naples for several years.

I left grade school and entered junior high when the school board made all the changes of putting more of the schools together like putting the seventh and eighth grades in the junior high and busing everybody that wasn't living close to the school from then on. So when I went to school in town I missed the old 8:30 a.m. school bell, then the 8:50 a.m. bell, then the 9:00 a.m. bell. When we got to junior high it was a lot easier as there were more kids. Some of my cousins went there with me and two of my uncles also. As slow as I was in school, I found myself struggling to keep up. I did alright in art and woodwork, but in the rest of the subjects I had no idea what they were doing and was too bashful to ask.

I remember the last year I went to school, my first year of high school. I took English as my last class of the day. I took this English class from Miss Lindsay. She would give us spelling words all week and on Friday we had a test on them all. All of us that would make a low percent would have to stay in and pass them off to the teacher before going home. I had a bus to catch and chores to do after I got home, so I knew I couldn't stay in after school and that was it!

The door that went out of the classroom was on the side of the room right in the middle. I was always set for a quick get away. When the bell would ring everyone would make for the door and I would fall into the crowd and slip out before she could get me. That worked for a while, but one night she caught me. Well, knowing the bus was leaving in a few minutes I was at that time no different than a wild animal in a trap. She took me up to her desk to get the list of words that I had misspelled. If she only knew that would of been about four years worth of catching up on misspelled words and I didn't have that much time to spare. Anyway, when





she got the list of words and looked at me she could see that I was white with fear. I wondered how I was going to get out of that pinch. As she turned to go to the back of the room where we were going to take that monstrous test, I followed until I got parallel with the door. Then it was only seconds until I was on the bus. I never looked back until I was on the bus. I was the last one on as it started pulling out. Then I looked back to see Miss Lindsay standing mid-way across the lawn. I knew I was in trouble for the next day. I've never told my folks about this, or really anyone else until now.

Well, Monday morning came and I knew I had to face it. That afternoon as I entered the class Miss Lindsay told me that I couldn't come back to class until I got a release from the schools principal, Harold Lundale. So I made a call on him and told him what my teacher said. He said she told him that I had never made it to class that day and he wanted to know where I was. I played low-key when I could see it wasn't going to be any worse than that. So I simply told him that I was there, but she must not have heard me when I answered roll call. I really feel Mr. Lundale felt sorry for me and gave me a release slip to get back into class. That worked that time, but what about the next Friday. Well, I came up with the idea that I would get my Uncle Niles to come and ask for me just before the bell rang. He took gym that class and thought that would work out great, and it did.

There was one time I borrowed Uncle Niles bicycle to ride it during gym class. A bicycle was a very rare thing back at that time and to be able to ride one was something else. So when my Uncle Niles said I could ride it, Lyle Simper and I went riding the whole class period, Lyle on his and me on Niles' bike. When we got back for the next class, why, Coach Wright was there waiting for us and took us into his office and gave us one of the worse paddlings I have ever had in my life. My folks never did know that I got a paddling and I wasn't going to tell them for fear that I would get another. I was willing to settle with just the one. I never knew we were doing anything wrong, but because he was twice our size I wasn't going to argue with him.

As time went on I found myself skipping through school just getting by however I could. I came to the conclusion that if I hadn't got started by





now there wasn't any use wasting any more of my life like this. I look back at this time and kick myself for missing such a good opportunity in my life—I had good teachers all through my school years. I didn't think so at the time, but looking back I see now they were good teachers—it was just me. As the old saying goes, "If I only knew then what I know now!"

But now let me tell you "the rest of the story," as Paul Harvey would say. I left school at this time to help my dad feed out a little bunch of sheep that winter. I really liked doing that. I don't think I ever enjoyed a nicer winter. But, still feeling the absence of school, and knowing I would possibly never go back, I started to wonder what my life was going to be like. I found myself longing to go back, but for what? I couldn't answer that at that time, but as life went on I knew why. So I made a secret pledge with myself that I was going to be as everyone else in this life. However, I had a lot of catching up to do by now.

This opportunity came as I went into the army about three years later. That morning, as I left home for the Army, I thought, "How do I write back home? I don't even know how to spell my home address." So my mother addressed my first envelope. When I got to Fort Douglas, Utah, they tested for all of our IQs. They seen I needed help so they put me in a school there in Fort Douglas that they had for guys like me. I went to work. I was among the top of the class. It only lasted for about 3 months. An old buddy I had while in training taught me how to improve my writing. It still isn't very good, but you should have seen it then. Later, when I was in Spokane, Washington convalescing just before I was discharged, I enrolled in some school classes that they offered to us guys.

The officer that was over all these classes took me into his office and said, "I see you haven't graduated from high school yet. How would you like to take a 32 hour test that we offer you guys to graduate from high school?" At first I told him that was a big bite for me, that I never would make it. He then asked me, "What have you got to loose? Try it." So I said, "Okay." He told me first he would write to my high school principal to get his approval and if we could get that we could go ahead with it. Within a weeks time I was taking tests every day for about four hours a day. I just passed them by a small margin, but what made me feel good was when I got to Vernal, Mr. Lundale, the principal, called me in to interview me.





The first thing he asked me was about what happened to me after I left the school five years before and what the change of heart was. So I told him what I had realized after I left the school when I was fifteen. So now I have a high school diploma.





CHAPTER FOUR

U.S. Highway 40

Now I will take you back to the year of about 1930, when I was six years old. We got a new highway through the country from coast to coast. It was mostly done with teams, scrapers and Fresno scrapers pulled with a four horse team. It would get a lot of men working. There would be huge tents put up for boarding the workers and to eat in. There was little tents where the working men would stay and sleep. It wasn't nothing to see fifty to a hundred horses and mules within a five mile area. Lots of hay and grain was sold at that time. The Vernal area prospered while the U.S. 40 was being built. The average man would get about \$1.50 a day, but \$6.00 a day for a four horse or mule team. A good horse or mule would cost any where from \$100 to \$160.

It was fun for me to go down by the road and watch all the excitement going on. Every day, about 15 minutes before noon, the mules would start braying and continued until they stopped for lunch. Then, at 5:00 p.m. they would start braying all over again. One day I was down there watching when one of the horses dropped dead from heart failure. It was the inside horse at that. I remember it took quite awhile to undo him from the rest of the horses and take his harness off because of some of the buckles





that was underneath him. Then they had to drag him off, then go to their wagon where most of the guys would always have a spare horse tied.

After the highway was finished, they left long and high banks where they pulled the dirt away to put in the fill dirt or low places to bring up the grade. So this one spring day I overheard my Dad and his brother, Ralph, talking about tying an old calf hide to the tail of this one horse that kept coming around our corral to eat up all the hay from our milk cows. Of course, I wanted to get in on all the fun, so after dinner I followed them to the corral where I could watch all the fun and rodeo. You see, we didn't have TV as yet, and sometimes it was time spent like this that provided excitement.

So after they had caught the horse and tied the old calf hide to its tale, they opened the big gate wide and turned him loose. As the horse came out of the corral he made a quick right and headed for the highway. When he got to the road he turned up and started for town. He traveled that way for about a quarter mile then turned off the road into a big open field. All this time the horse was doing no less than 35 m.p.h. with the hide flying about five feet off the ground. The horse then turned and started back to our place where I could get a better look at everything. By this time he was coming down hill all the way giving that old hide a ride that it paid for. The ground under this pony was hard and solid so he wasn't watching the path too well because when he came to that eight foot bank that those guys had made building the highway, why, that horse just kept on going right on out into space. I thought he had taken up flying until I heard an awful groan. But when he got up he took down the road, hide and all. We never saw him or the hide again from that day on.

Another thing I felt bad about was that I could never keep a dog. They were getting run over every year just by living on the highway. But there also were some advantages by living there. To start with, when we kids wanted rocks for our flipper crotches there were plenty of them on the side of the road. Plus, the school bus would come within a city block to take us to school. Also, we had a mail route through the area which was given the name of "star route" and which still holds the same name today. Speaking of the mail, at first we didn't have boxes. We had duffel bags that were clipped to a holder alongside of the road. The mailman would





unclip your bag and leave the incoming bag and so went the rotation. Stan Slaugh was the first mail carrier that I remember. He would make a trip from Craig, Colorado to Vernal every day, come rain or shine, delivering mail.

Another advantage of living by the highway was that we had a good graveled road to go to town on instead of mud holes when wet. Then a few years later they put oil, or hard surface, on it. By having the highway, it made it three quarters of a mile shorter to ride the horse or walk over to the store to buy something like coal oil for the old lamp, or sugar, or maybe a little candy, or whatever the folks wanted. Carl Goodrich owned and ran a little store on the corner of 1500 East 2500 South. We all called it the "Naples Store." All of Davis and Naples and some of the Jensen people would trade there.

He had an old gas pump there that he sold you gas with that had a long handle to the side of this tall gas pump that you would push and pull until you would have the big glass bowl full. It would hold ten gallons. There was lines and numbers up to ten labeled on it. As you would gradually fill your car you would read the gallons that you would want by the numbers on the glass bowl. Carl kept in stock a little hardware, groceries, gas, oil, meat, wheat, flour, and a few toys at Christmas time.

Carl had a new Diamond T two ton truck that he hauled all his supplies in with. This one fall, about 1938, it was kind of slow around here so he had Alma, my brother in law, and Uncle Ralph Southam take a team out by the head of Dead Man's Bench to pull in some cedar wood. My Uncle Grant was driving for Carl at the time. So he would drive out each morning to pick up a load of wood that would have been pulled in each day. Carl was going to try selling that wood that winter. He paid Alma and Ralph in groceries. He kept that going for about a week.

This all was during Thanksgiving time and my holiday break from school. I loved camping out, so during the holiday I took my 22 caliber rifle and went out with Uncle Grant for two days. I thought I was really living. That first night out there I took my gun out to go hunting rabbits. My uncles, Ralph and Alma, told me I never would get one. I told them, "If I see one I'll bring him back with me," because I wasn't a bad shot for my age. Well, I only seen one rabbit but I brought him back with me. They





were surprised, but we had rabbit for supper.

We was staying in a tent and it was cold, but I didn't care. The men told me I had to build the fire the next morning. I already knew how, so before I went to bed I got me some cedar bark and fine wood ready for the next morning. There was only one bed in that tent, but we all got in it. Before you knew it, Uncle Ralph was telling me it was time to build the fire. It was still dark, so I jumped out of bed on that old cold sandy floor. I thought I had just landed on a block of ice, but I struck a match and lit the old coal oil lantern, threw the wood in the stove, put a match to it, and jumped back in bed until it got half warm in the tent. When I got back in bed I about shocked the other two out of bed because my feet were like a couple of ice blocks.

We had eggs, potatoes, and meat for breakfast. I never thought I was going to stop eating. Then, that afternoon when Uncle Grant got loaded with wood, I rode home with him. But on the way home we had to go down in a little gully and back out. The road we were on was just a wagon road, so as we were coming back out of that little wash in that Diamond T truck with the load on it, the front end came off the ground and up in the air. I remember that all I could see was the blue sky above, looking straight up. I thought my days had suddenly come to an end. I looked over at Uncle Grant to see how he was taking it, and he was sitting there with a big smile on his face. As he came off the gas a little, the old truck came back to the earth again. I have never forgotten that Thanksgiving day. I have eaten a lot of turkey in my day, but never had a Thanksgiving like that one.





CHAPTER FIVE

Depression Days— The Good Old Thirties

The Depression Days took in most of the 1930s. And they were bad times for most people. It affected every one, but more so the south and the east of the United States. The thing that made it the worst was that we had a real bad drought at the same time which cost the lives of a lot of the livestock. Mostly the horses because they couldn't take the alkali water. My dad lost a good team from it. He lost a big stallion with pneumonia and another with a broken leg all in just a few years. It wiped him out of horses except one. It was rough on us from then on. Back at that time a good team was what helped make your living. And the jobs he got around Vernal were mostly with his team. He worked on the highway, for the county, the state, and at the last for the WPA (Works Progress Administration.)

One summer he took his team to the mountains to help on the "Buck Pasture" ditch for the WPA. I got to go with him one time and got to see my first wild deer. While I was up there, George Jenkins had his boy, Lynn, with him at the same time. We were both about the same age, so we hit it





off right away. Our dads never had to worry about us after that—we were on our own exploring the mountain. We would come back for dinner at night. We got to stay for a week before coming home. To leave that old mountain was as bad as taking a dose of salts.

The next year I got to go up for another week. This time I went up with Leon P. Christensen, the county surveyor and engineer for the Oaks Park Reservoir. Then, we called it the Buck Pasture Dam. Leon had a new Ford, one of the new V-8s. I want you to know we went up the mountain then! Albern Atwood was my age and he was going with us, so we sat in the back seat, but we was in the front a lot of the time. I had never took such a ride. When we finally got there, we had a ball. Albern liked to fish and I wanted to hunt woodchucks, so that took up most of the day. I had enough shoe oil from those woodchucks to last for two years.

I remember the men came in to cook their dinner one day. One of the men had plugged up the chimney of one of the cabins as a prank. So when this other guy built a fire in his stove the smoke run the guy out of the cabin. So the next day he wanted to play a joke on the other guys so he put black pepper on their stove and when they came in for lunch and built their fire with the pepper on it, it ran them out because it was making them cough and burning their eyes. It was all in good fun and a good joke on each other.

But it was these things that made life worth living for, because down in the valley it was hot and dry with hardly any water to grow a garden. We would walk up the ditch a half a mile to take our water turn and there would be about one second foot of water to take and half of a mile to run it in a stone dry ditch. We hardly got the garden watered if we was lucky. There wasn't any weeds growing on the banks that year. It was rough that winter because of not having any hay for the animals. Most every one was experiencing the same thing. When spring came the animals were poor and lousy. A lot of them would never make it to green fields alive.

Even grain was hard to find, but the next thing was the money to buy it with. Grain was \$1.00-\$1.25 a hundred pounds. I remember there was one or two men around the valley that was making whiskey out of grain, which we called "boot-leg whiskey". Some of the boys around here would sneak into their dad's grain bin and take a hundred pounds of grain, unbe-





knownst to their dad, and trade it for some of that boot leg whiskey. That was going on right here in Davis Ward.

I also remember Old Bill Thompson and his two older brothers would get their little Model A Ford and head for the badlands in the spring. At the time there were 80,000 head of sheep that were wintering out south of Vernal. By spring there was a lot of sheep that had died, and the Thompson boys would pull the wool off from the dead sheep. We called that “pulled wool.” I have heard some of the guys say that the Thompson boys could smell a dead sheep a mile away. In the spring time they would have that little Model A loaded down when they got to Vernal, where they sold it to old Russ Montgomery for a song. That old Russ was so shrewd in his hide and fur business that I often thought there was two meanings to that pulled wool.

In some ways, life was good in those days. When a guy did get a hundred dollars in his pocket he could live for a year on it. It didn’t cost much to live then. Most people never had any light bill, water bill, nor phone bill. Rent was about four or five dollars a month and no fuel bill either. Your stamps was three cents. Now they are thirty-two cents. Coal was \$4.50 a ton. Now coal is \$28.00 a ton. Ice cream was five cents a cone, a bottle of pop five cents, and five sticks of gum was five cents. A loaf of bread was ten cents, and now a loaf is almost \$2.00. Gas was nineteen cents a gallon, now it’s \$1.30. Back in the forties you have your own car, work on for a dollar an hour. Now, fifty years later you pay over forty dollars an hour and wonder if it is going to run when you get it out of the garage. The cost of parts for your car, truck, or machinery would give you a heart attack.

Back then, if you had your own home and was willing to chop wood to keep warm, and dip water from the ditch or melt snow or ice for your water, and if you had a dozen chickens, one milk cow, two pigs, and one beef in the field getting fat, you could live quite nice.

The log house that I grew up in had four rooms in it. One of those rooms was a clothes closet, another was the kitchen pantry. One bedroom had two beds in it. The other one was an all purpose room—it was the kitchen, dining room, front room, living room, and, at night, it was a bedroom. Sometimes it was used as a hospital, or a study room where we got our homework done, or where all of us loved to get around the





table at night and listen to mother read to us stories of long ago, such as pioneer stories, with the light of the old coal oil lamp. You see, there was no electricity.

We had no TV. We were lucky to have a Victrola to put a record on. We would wind it up and turn it on. But make sure you were there to turn it off when it got through or else sharpen the needle and get a new record for the next time. We had no refrigerator, just a cupboard. In the winter time fresh vegetables was a thing of the past. We would have a little stand in the corner of the kitchen that had a bucket of water for drinking and washing your hands with. The stand was used for the wash stand also.

We would take our baths in front of the old coal and wood cook stove in the winter time and in the pantry in the summer time. For the privacy of those who were bathing, the rest of us would all go into the bedroom. The toilet was just outside and to your right and down the path a piece. We were fortunate enough to have a “two hole-er”. It had cracks in it to see who was approaching. In the summer time it was alright, but in the winter the waste got frozen. So when it got high enough to touch your bottom then you took a shovel and knocked it down. Our toilet paper was the old catalogs. Also, in winter you was hoping someone was there before you to warm the seat.

When it came to eating there was very little said, because there was very little choices. Sometimes we would have hot dumplings that was boiled in hot water and opened in half with cream and sugar on them or thickened milk with vanilla flavored pudding. If we was lucky to have hot mush that was a treat. In the summer and most of the winter we would have all the potatoes, carrots, or garden stuff we wanted. For meat we had chickens, mutton, a little beef, and pork. We also had some fruits.

We lived happy with that because we didn’t know of anything better. Most people was living the same way.

In the fall my dad would get some mud mixed up to put in the cracks of the walls of our old log house to keep the winter cold out. You would save on wood that way, and it was not so cold building fires in the morning. We all had to take turns in doing so.

Well, we never had to worry about AIDS back then, but we sure had a battle with those little bed bugs. You never could get rid of them. Every





one had them, it seemed. I know this because you would work so hard to get rid of them and some one would come and visit you and we would have them all over again. In the fall of the year, when those little bugs got going good in number, our string beans would be in and we sure gave them a battle for their lives. Mother would put those string bean leaves all over our beds and in the night those little hummers would sneak out of those cracks to feed up on our blood. Being conservative as I am, I never had any to give away. As they crept across those bean leaves they would get stuck and couldn't go any where. The next morning we would find a half dozen on each leaf. I never believed those cracks in the wall was so big to hold so many little bugs. In the last end of the 1930s, my uncle, Louis Murray, took up plastering for a living. So my folks had him come and plaster our house. Well, that done away with those little critters for good. I wish I could do something like that to some of our environmentalists we have today.

When I was real young it was the kids' job to fill up the two fifty gallon wooden barrels which we keep sitting on the ditch banks filled with water. Those barrels sat on the ditch bank that watered our farm and garden. We would have to walk up the ditch each week to take our water turn. By the time the water had traveled a half of a mile to reach the house there wasn't much water left to irrigate with. Us kids would take buckets and dip the water out of the ditch until the barrels were all filled.

That had to do us for the whole week for drinking, washing clothes, washing bodies, scrubbing, and cooking. Keep in mind that because of no refrigerators, and the barrel sitting in the sun most of the day, that we were drinking warm water most of the time. Not to mention the dirt that was there because of the dipping, and the squiggles that had grown by the end of the week. Today you can only image how stale that water would taste by the end of the week. Now you realize how we would cherish the opportunity to go to Carl Goodrich's old Naples store with a nickel in our pocket and reach in to the cold ice box and pull out a bottle of strawberry soda pop. Some kids would like to tip it up and drink it all at once, but I wanted to make it last a long time so I would sip on it so long that it would be warm by the time I finished. Needless to say, water was a real problem during the drought of the 1930s.





It was about this time the next summer that my dad sold one of our milk cows named “Old Pink” and took the money to build a cistern to store water in right by the house. We put the pipe in the house with a hand pump on it. We thought that we had just moved up town. Us kids almost fought over who would get to pump the water.

Back in the late twenties we used to milk two or three cows and save the cream up so we could sell it to help buy groceries with. The Calders Creamery would send Robert Aycock around the valley to gather all the cream in the Vernal area with an old open panel wagon. It had curtains that could be pulled down if needed. He would carry butter and cheese to sell if you needed or wanted some. He would just deduct it off your cream check. I remember that he had a lot of ten gallon cans in the back to pour the cream into.

Well, my folks would send the older kids over to the Bowthorpe corner with the cream we would have collected. This one time I wanted to go with Marion so Mom let me go. Every thing went well until we was to start home. Marion said to me, “Willis, you go home. I’m going with the cream man, Robert, to help him for the day.” Of course, Robert was as big a joker as my brother was. So, as the cream truck started pulling away, Marion jumped on right then and there. I thought the world had just come to the end. After he had gave me a big scare, he jumped off and we walked back home pulling the little wagon we had to take the cream over with. After I got older it was hard to tease me or pull a prank on me because Marion had taught me all of them.

I remember it was in the 1930s when we had use of a car and it was in the winter time we had some kind of party uptown at Grandmother’s place. So we started the car and put a quilt over the radiator. Then we started to pour water in the radiator because anti-freeze wasn’t invented yet. We had to take a big pan with us so we could drain the water when we got there so as not to freeze the engine block. When we got ready to come home we had to start the whole process over again, one on the crank and one on the starter. After all that I can see why Father preferred the team and wagon over the 1934 Chevy. It was nice in the summer time, however.





CHAPTER SIX

Growing Up



Willis (L) and brother Junius (R)

I was only about eight or nine when Joe Hacking and his son, Rulon, drove in the yard where me and my father was. I was listening to them chatting away when they told Father they was going out to check their winter range and told my father, “Why don’t you let that boy go with us? We’ll be back tonight.” You see, Joseph was my grandfather’s brother-in-law by his first wife, so the family has been real close since. So in I jumped. I had to sit in the middle all the way out and back. At that time I knew that I wasn’t to give them any trouble, so I remember I sit real quiet. I could hardly see over the dash board of that old model A Ford pick-up as we went bouncing along the on the dirt road. Joe would turn to Rulon and say, “You could slow down a little for them bumps.” So I took it that he was just learning to drive at that time. This was in the early fall, so it was still hot weather time.

The conversation on that trip was mostly about sheep dry pound and not much feed then, which at that time, I didn’t understand any of that talk, but I was taking in the scenery as this was the first time I’d been that far away from home. I guess my little mind was trying to memorize the road and the country because years later when I went back over that road





I recognized all the turn-offs on the road clear to White River where we stopped for a cold bottle of pop. When Joe and Rulon got their first bottle drank they had another one brought to them, so me, not knowing the proper etiquette at that age, I thought we had landed in heaven where pop was free and I was trying real hard to get up enough courage to order me another one. When Joe could see what I was about to do he poured from his a little pop in to mine and I let that be good enough.

We drove back to Dead Man's Bench to an old cabin of theirs where they kept salt and grain for the horse in the winter for the sheep time while they had the sheep in that area and found a shady side of the house and had dinner. They shared dinner with me. We had sandwiches and fresh onions out of their garden and some warm milk that had been almost churned to butter by then. But I remember it was all good. I never got seconds then, but it was a long memorable trip out there for my first time away from home that far.

Grandmother Willis, Uncle Frant W., Uncle Lewis, and Aunt Ila Murray was going to Grand Junction that fall to get our yearly peaches to put up. Well, they wanted me to go along so Phillip, my cousin which was two years younger than I, would have some one to play with on the trip, but I think it was more for me. I know this, that we always had a good time when we got together and the trip to Grand Junction likewise. They took two old pick-up's. I know they made them in the early 20s, but they run like a top besides both of my uncles was good machinists, so I never worried. We young ones had to ride in the back, but Aunt Ila was good enough she rode back there with us. It was hot and dusty but we didn't mind. It was all new country and we was getting to go on a trip. But, when we was going up Douglas Creek over Douglas Mountain we had been traveling about four hours by now and started to get thirsty. We never had any water but my Aunt Ila put out oranges to go around us all. I thought at that time we had hit an oasis in the desert.

We arrived at Aunt Erma and Uncle Sim Willis's place just outside of Grand Junction at sundown. The next day they all went buying peaches and fruit. Phil and I decided to look for some peaches on our own. Just to see so many, we thought they would never miss a few. They looked so red and ripe. We just took a couple and we hadn't any more then had them in





our hands until the owner showed up from somewhere and said, “Those you got isn’t ripe ones. Let me get you boys some ripe ones.” We thanked him and headed for the pick-up. Well, late that afternoon we was loaded and headed for home, but instead of going over Douglas Pass we went around Rifle and Meeker way because Uncle Frant wanted to see an old girl friend of his. We made it to Rifle for the night. For just a kid like me that was quit an adventure and I really liked the country. Well after another long drive we made it home that night.

It was about this same time, when I was six years old, that I got the chance to go with my father over to the Walter Collier coal mine to get our winter supply of coal. We went with a team and wagon. We had to go past my place on the creek to get over to the mine. My uncle, Wallace Southam, was running it at the time. This was the first time I had ever seen it. Little did I know at that time I would own it a few years later. At that time the road went straight down the hill and the further down you went the steeper the hill got, so as you would start over the top you couldn’t see the bottom. I was sitting on the spring seat (as we used to call it) and as I looked down the hill I started pushing myself back in the seat so I wouldn’t fall out. I thought I was going to drop off the earth.

We had got our load of coal and started home on a different road so that the dug way wouldn’t be so steep to pull out of Ashley Creek. When it came dinner time, I remember the smell of the home grown melons (cantaloupe), tomato, and the egg sandwiches Mother had sent. It was another sunny fall day. I had started to enjoy the day knowing that we wasn’t going back up that steep hill that we had come over that morning. When we got to this other dug way, well, it was wider and not as steep. Well, we got half way up the hill when Father decided to teach or discipline one of the horses. The next thing I knew we was backing down the hill, and I could see us, coal and all, going over the bank, and about one hundred feet to the bottom. The way I looked at things then, life was always exciting for me.

I loved being with my father and having him tell his stories of his earlier days. I shall share a couple of them here. My grandfather run a few sheep for a good many years. His winter range was on the south side of White River and from this range there was a canyon that lead down to





White River. They named that canyon Southam Canyon after my grandfather. This is where he would winter at and lamb out before going to the mountains for the summer. At this time Watson was a flourishing little town. The narrow gage train track made it a shipping center for the country. It handled freight for Vernal, Gilsonite from the mines around there, and wool from the spring, and all these places was in the same area. There used to be a big shearing corral at Watson where every sheep man around there would bring their herd in to be sheared. So there is where my grandfather would shear his sheep. After they got lambbed out they would move to the mountain north of Vernal (what we call Brush Creek Mountain) for the summer.

Now this is where the story of my father came in the picture. As he was the oldest boy of the family, he was assigned to the herd. He said he was only sixteen when he was at the herd. This one night the sheep bells woke him up. There was something in his sheep, he knew, so he piled out of bed, lighted up the old kerosene lantern, and grabbed the gun. He said, "There I was, a lantern in one hand, rifle in the other, standing in my underwear, sheep going by me on the run, and I couldn't see anything so I just fired the rifle off in the air, and it was only minutes that the herd quieted down." But the next morning there was about twelve head of sheep laying dead on the bed ground from a bear kill.

There was a lot of times that my uncle, Wallace, would go up and be with my dad for company. He was two years younger than my dad. There was six boys in that family and everyone was very close and a lot of love between each other. Now this one time Clair and Ralph thought that they were big enough to go stay with their older brothers that were out with the sheep. So Grandpa took them with a tent and a few extra groceries and headed for the mountain to leave the younger boys with their older brothers, Geo and Wallace. Everything went fine until one night Ralph got thirsty and wanted a drink of water. They both hadn't hardly got back to their tent when an old cow let out a big bawl way down the canyon. The kids thought it was a coyote and quickly came up with the excuse that they was getting cold and wanted to come sleep in the sheep wagon. Well, after Geo and Wallace had their fun with the kids, they told them to come on in the wagon. They said they had hardly said, "Come on in,"





when the both of the kids had their quilts and up the wagon tongue they come. There wasn't much room in the wagon, but they thought it was better than the tent.

By the time Ralph reached about sixteen, he had gotten over most of the scares of life. One of the times he was staying with our family, why we had this neighbor boy by the name of Leo Bowthorpe, and he would come over to play with Marion and forget what time it was until it would get way after dark. Then Leo would want Marion to walk half way home with him. This was becoming a habit, so Uncle Ralph, being a big tease, he came up with this plan that the next time he stayed until dark, why, my dad wouldn't let Marion go with him and Uncle Ralph would leave early saying he was going home. But, instead of going home he would get an old black coat we had around there and put it on and get behind a big bush that was out in the lane where Leo had to go home. Ralph was to growl and scratch the ground like a bear where Leo come by. It wasn't long until all of this took place and the plan worked perfectly as it was designed. Ralph said he would wait until Leo was a little passed him so that he wouldn't come back that he would go for his home. Well, it was in the dark of the night, so all they could do was hear him running. Half way to his home was what we called going through the holler (or hollow) and in that swell was a reservoir full of water that backed up over the road, so instead of taking the time to go around it he went straight through it. Uncle said it sounded like a horse going through the pond. Well, it was only the next day that Marion saw Leo and he was telling him of the past night's excitement that he out run that bear that was over at our place. I was too young to remember when it happened, but whenever my uncles got together, that story and a lot more would be like legends to listen to.

When I would get home from school at nights in the spring my dad would be plowing or hauling manure. That was always down my alley, so I would bee line it down there as fast as I could get me a slice of bread, dip it in the cream pan, then put sugar on it. I would be down with my Dad wanting to drive the team. That's where I first started to learn about horses and farming.

I remember I got to go to a picture show a couple of times before I reached fifteen, once with my brother Marion. He took me to a Tom Mix





show (western) and another time, when our neighbors wanted to borrow our hooty wagon (which is similar to a buckboard wagon) because they never had one. They ask if they could borrow it. My dad told them, “Yes.” So they brought their team of horses over that evening, and the family walked over. It was only a quarter mile to their place. They asked if I wanted to go with them. My folks said, “Yes” and I was on the way to my second show. Fifteen cents was all it cost in those days. It was in the fall time so it was warm going, but coming home it was different. But they had some quilts to put over us while we set in the back in the wagon bed.

On the way to change the water on the creek place one day I seen my Uncle Ralph saddling up a bronc that he was getting ready to ride. This bronc belonged to my brother, Marion, and it had got spoiled while at the sheep camp. Well, I wanted in on the ground floor so I reigned my horse in to see and watch the rodeo. Well, he mounted and the show was on its way. That horse started for the pasture and got about fifteen hundred yards away doing all it could. Ralph was riding it all the way—he went way over eight seconds. He was still on when they hit the gate of the pasture. The gate went down and so did the horse. My uncle put the horse’s head around so it couldn’t get up and there is where he really worked it over, but when he got through training the horse a few good lessons he gave the horse some slack and jumped in the saddle as the horse got up, and then rode back to the house where me and Aunt Nellie had been watching. As the story went on, that animal wound up in the rodeo in the bucking string and done well there.

Whenever we had to go to town it was with the team and wagon and, of course, on the old Jensen Highway. That made it so we would enter Ver-
nal from the south and in the summer time the team would need a drink before we tied them up for the day. About three quarters of a mile out of town was what they call the Old Ashton gulch that went across the road. There was a nice traveled road into that watering hole, down in the bar-pit, through the gulch, and out on the road again.

It served two purposes. One, to water your thirsty animals, and two, to soak up your wooden wagon wheels. Most good teamsters would drive out in the middle of the stream, stop the team, walk up the tongue of the wagon, take the bits out of the horses mouth, and let them drink. As a





small boy, when I saw my dad do that it scared me. I thought we were all in trouble. I didn't think we would be able to control them, but everything went along just right, the horses was under a good command.

My grandmother Willis lived in town and would always grow a good garden. She would have my father plow it for her. We didn't have rotary tillers then. I got to go with him the spring one of our horses had a colt. My grandma wanted a picture of me on it, so my dad held the colt and me on it while Grandma took the picture. I thought that was the cat's meow. That was the first picture I remember being taken of me.

Years later, when I was in the third grade, I stayed with my Grandma Willis for a few days. I found an old bicycle in the shed out behind her house. It never had any tires on it, and I didn't know how to ride it, but before I went home I sure did. The next bicycle I road had tires on it and when I first started off on it I thought I was having a runaway because it was so easy. We never had a bicycle in our home until I was sixteen years old. With my first job I bought one, but until that time I would always borrow Uncle Niles'.

Back at that time all of the neighbor kids would gather to somebody's home and play all these fun games, like hide-n-go-seek, old bears out to-night, pump-pump pull away, kick the can, and, when the season was in, rolling car tires. It was so much fun that I would even roll mine when I went to get the cows at night to milk them. A lot of the times I'd take my flipper crotches to help the cows along.

I was finishing up my sixth grade that spring when my father had a chance to lease the place on the creek that I own today. He also leased about seven milk cows. Well, we was hired out the rest of the summer. The creek went right down the middle of our pasture and the cows would always be eating on our side of the creek until it would rain. Then they would always be on the other side when the creek bank would start swelling with the rain water.

I decided I was going to go after them this one night, so I got me a stick to help balance me in the swift water. I took into the water and I was about a quarter of the way across. The water was above my neck and I knew the water was going to get much deeper. The water was then about to take my feet out from under me, so I came back and tried calling them



over. Well, after a long time they come over on their own.

It was nice to live on the creek that summer. There was a lot of things to do for young boys. Hunting, fishing, trapping, horse back riding over the foot hills, as we would call them. Then we had a choice swimming hole. We called it “the birch hole” which stuck until 1945 when high water changed the creek channel.

Once, when I was in the fifth grade, me and a friend, Durrel Chivers, was waiting for the bus we decided to see who was better at milking cows. So we headed to the nearest field with cows. We found one and began to milk the cow, milking it into Durrel’s bucket. We weren’t getting very much when the owner of the cows came. He didn’t say much except to tell us if we were going to milk the cow we should pick one that wasn’t a dry. Our pride was a little bruised after that, so we were a little more careful when we showed off after that.

I remember it was a nice warm spring afternoon, the Good Friday before Easter, when I was in fifth grade. When I got out of school, instead of waiting for the bus, I decided to walk home. It was only one and a half miles. As I turned off the road I took a short cut through the corral. Well, when I got close to the old shed, I seen our saddle mare by the shed with a freshly born mule colt to the side of her. I never knew any thing like that was going to happen to our place. And, more over than that, I never knew a horse could have a mule colt. But as I was looking around there I saw this other little mule colt that never made it. He had died at birth, but he was a pinto mule. Everybody around knew me when they saw me coming. They would tell my folks we would know who it was coming up the road when they would see the kid, the mule, the dog, and the horse. That little colt was quite the attraction that summer, but when late fall came my dad had a chance to sell the little fellow for the price of a grown horse. That brought a few tears among the family.

Then during the early 1930s I remember there was some horse traders that would come through Vernal almost every year. This one year they had what you call a “janette”—that would be the reverse of a mule. That is, a mule is from a jackass bred with a mare horse. A janette is from a stud horse bred to a female donkey. These horse traders mostly was gypsies, as we liked to call them, who camped at the silver leaf trees, as we called





them. Back at that time, instead of addresses, we had these names for different places like “by the silver leaf trees,” “the shady lane,” “Richens’ corner,” etc.

Then there was Jakey the Jew that would always come around every year or two. He would always have second hand clothing. One time, I remember, I needed some shoes, so I got some from Old Jakey the Jew. After my folks had gotten them I thought they were alright until about two months later I was coming home from school when I went right through the toe. There I was with my toe sticking out and my shoe still on. Poor Old Jake, he was as poor as the rest of us. He would always come in an old sheep wagon pulled by a team of horses.

It was about this time in my life, when I was eleven years old, that I had a chance to take my father’s place for one day working on the gravel pit for the WPA. My father was sick this one day and he told me that I had to take his place at work with our team of horses. Most places at that time was all horses so I got to miss school that day, which I didn’t mind a bit. I never worried about whether I could do the job right or not because I figured even at that age I was a fair hand with a team because the first thing it takes is to love horses and I did. I had been driving teams from the fourth grade on. I would walk home from school in the spring during my fourth grade year and as soon as I was home my dad would have me on the old plow. I would plow until dark. So I knew I could do the job all right, but I didn’t know what Alvin Kay, the boss, would think about the whole thing. I knew him as well as a young boy can know a man, so down there to that gravel pit I went and told Alvin Kay what my dad said and why he couldn’t be there that day. Alvin looked at me for a long time sizing me up, wondering if I could do the job, being an eleven year old boy. They always put my dad’s team on the Ripper (which is a plow with a point in front of it to loosen the ground) because he always had the best and biggest horses. There was one thing I had going for me that morning, and that was that all the other men was there and telling Alvin that he could put another team on the ripper and let me and my team run one of the scrappers. They also told him that if I went home they would be one team short and that would work their teams that much harder. Alvin said it would be alright if I stayed. He stayed there until I made a couple of rounds to see if I knew





what I was doing then he left and I never seen him the rest of the day.

Talking about my horse experiences, I remember I hired out on the farm for Tom Mckeachie the summer of 1941. I was only sixteen at the time. Those horses he had at that time were balky, they would run away, and one of them was known to bite, strike or kick. They told me that Tom's bother-in-law, little Hy Richardson, could vouch for that because one horse had bit him, lifting him off the ground. Because of this, Glen and Colton Mckeachie were the only ones allowed to drive them. So I was told that I wasn't to touch that team to start with. But two weeks later I was driving them.

Later that fall, for the second crop of hay and thrashing time, Tom built three slips to haul all that hay and grain in from the fields. This is how he worked them: one slip was in the yard being unloaded while the other one was in the field being loaded. The tractor would bring the empty slips out to us in the field and take the loaded one back. Tom had just bought the tractor which was almost the only one in the area, as there was a very few tractors in the valley at the time. My job was to help load the slips in the field and I also fell heir to driving that runaway team because nobody else wanted the job. So I worked with that team for one year. They never balked or run away once with me.

The next summer, when I was seventeen years old, Tom bought two three year old colts and turned them over to me to break. That was a real team. Both of them were a dark gray and weighted about 1600 pounds a piece. By that fall Tom was so proud of that team that he was betting the guys that came to thresh his grain that this team would out pull that big tractor of his, and that even made me scared. But I had worked them hard and trained them well, so I was anxious to see that done. At that time something like that was almost like seeing a pulling match at the fair down town. So we got the tractor on the slip and started up the wind-row loading it with stocks of grain. Because it was threshing time, and the grain was shocked and put in windrows, by the time we had the slip loaded to where the tractor couldn't pull it any more we were only about a hundred feet from the threshing machine. Tom bet the guys there that he could take that team and pull that loaded slip of grain on into the threshing machine. Tom hooked that young team up to that slip, grabbed the





reins, and when he spoke to them their heads were almost to the ground. I never seen horses pull so hard as they did, and being colts at that! They strained everything from the bit to the double-tree, but when he said, "Woe," the load of grain was alongside the thrashing machine. One year later I heard that Tom had taken that team out to his sheep camp to move camp with them that winter. By spring they told me that those horses wouldn't pull your hat off.

I remember that I almost burned our house down one day. All the older kids had gone to school. My dad was to work and my mother was down doing the morning chores. Mom had left Viola and myself in the house alone. It was winter time and we had a good fire going in the old cook stove. I was curious about the fire, so I proceeded to get a stick out of the wood box and stick it in the fire. I would get it to burning good, then bring it out of the stove and wave it around the house. Next thing I know I had got it too close to the dish towel that was hanging on the wall behind the stove and I had a fire clear to the ceiling. It scared me enough that I didn't think about getting a flogging. I just ran to the door and hollered to Mom, "The house is on fire!" When she got there she grabbed the tea kettle of water on the stove and put the fire out. She was so glad to have two kids and a house left that I just got a scolding from her. After it was all over I felt as bad as if I had been paddled. I never tried that again. I decided you just can't trust a fire.

When all of us kids started to school, it was in the old Davis Ward School, and that was where we held church on Sundays also. We never had a chapel back then, but by having it in the school building we would have all those class rooms to separate to for classes. It made it good that way. I remember I was to give a two and a half minute talk on Daniel and the lions den in church this one Sunday. My mother had gotten it ready for me. Well, I didn't think it would be to bad. So I was sitting by my sister, Bernice, so when it was time for me to give it I got up to give it and started fine. But there was something different about being up there alone. My voice was the only one saying anything and it scared me so bad that the only way I was going to continue on living was to sit down. I remember it took the rest of that meeting to recover. I never volunteered after that.

I remember one day, just as the church was letting out, every one was



gathered on the outside just visiting like all good Mormons would do. Some older kids on horses come by on the road past the church house on a high lope. I think they was just showing off, but they had my full attention. When they got right in front of the school house, Bill Allen's horse fell down on the hard road. Because every one knew those kids they knew it was going to kill him and all the women sucked in their breath. I have to agree it was very exciting, but as the horse went down, Bill was quick and put his feet up. When he hit the ground he just rolled and got up with the horse. By then everyone just took a big breath. That made my day.

I don't remember any cars there in those days. It was team and wagon or walk. We held church there in the school building until we got our chapel built when I was about eleven years old. I remember I got to pass the sacrament the spring we dedicated it. President Smoot, from Salt Lake City, dedicated our new chapel. Then they tore down the old school building. That lot was left vacant for about twenty-five years before they build the new and bigger chapel they have now.

When our old chapel was being built, about four of us boys went across the road after school and was playing in the half finished chapel. Well, as it would happen, Earl Allred fell through the two by six floor rafters about eight feet to the bottom and broke his arm. Well, that stopped the play. He had to walk all the way home like that and it was about a mile and a half to his home. I felt bad about it all. I learned that we didn't play in those kinds of places!

I remember when I was about fourteen years old we had just let church out and every one was starting home. Our bishop always was the first on the road walking home. The bishops didn't have the meetings then like we have today. Rulon Bowthorpe had just gotten a car. He was about seventeen years old and wanted every one to notice him and the car he had gotten. He wanted to show off just a little, so he wanted to get real close to the bishop and scare him. But he misjudged, as a new driver would, and caught the bishop with his right fender turning the bishop for a complete flip in the air. He came back down into the barpit without even a scratch. The good Lord was with us Davis warders again.

Bishop Simper's son was my best friend and stayed that way until he died at about sixty years old. He and I was the most active deacons in the





ward, so we fell heir to the job of gathering fast offerings every month. Lyle Simper, my friend, had a little pony that he worked and rode, so we would hook her up to a wooden homemade sled to gather in the fast offering like beans, bacon, flour, potatoes, or whatever they had, and put it in the basement of our chapel. This is the way we would spend our Sunday together because when Monday would come we both was on the old farm working or going to school.

My early teenage years was spent happily growing up on the farm, care free, no problems, just helping my father run the old farm, watering and putting up hay, cutting grain, stacking it in bunches, thrashing it, and putting the grain in the granaries. We had a real grain crop the first year we leased the place on the creek. When thrashing time came there was so many men helping us that we had to eat in two different bunches. This old bachelor, Dan Bedows, that was living across the creek from us, came over to help us. He got right in on the first bunch to eat and when the second bunch finished up he was still eating with us. I guess he was putting away a two year supply.

This is where I learned the good smells of the new mowed hay, of thrashing time, the corn just before harvest time, the different kinds of flowers and plants and trees. I even still remember the horses breath. It was a combination of turnips and onions.

One year we had a lot of prairie dogs on our place. The only way we had of riding them from the farm was to drown them out of their holes at watering time. You had to be quick with the shovel when they came out of the water or they would be down another hole. Sometimes you'd get six or eight out of one hole. You don't see very many of them anymore, but I miss the singing in the spring of the year when they would be calling to each other.

This one year we had the best old neighbor by the name of Orly Murray that lived on the Stangel place, as we called it. He had about thirty acres and he put corn in all of it. We took the water out of the creek which meant we had to put a new dam in each year after high water was over. In the late summer the water would get so low it was hard to get enough water to water with. I watched Orley shovel just two inches more out of the bottom of the ditch for about four hundred feet down stream so it would





draw two inches more water from the creek. He raised a real crop of corn that year. I learned a lot about farming that year from watching him.

The drought had stopped and better times was in sight. About this time of my life I would look forward to the weekend so I could go to the old birch hole or the Eaton swimming hole. We always rode our horses and we would want to know who had the fastest running horse. Well, to make it short, I was in the top ten, as we would say.

Back in the late 20s and early 30s we used our long winter nights spending time listening to our mother read stories to us and doing home work for those that was studious. I liked to carve or work with wood or make other things. But most of the time it was just an enjoyable evening sitting around the old coal and wood stove. I remember my father bringing his harnesses in the house to work on them and fix them up. My mother was very tolerant on this kind of thing, but at that time I thought it was alright because I was right in the middle of it all.

Spring and fall is my favorite times of the year. The cool night and warm sunny day along with that inspiring harvest moon. The autumn leaves that you can walk through crossing the lawn. The soft rain that sometime comes.





CHAPTER SEVEN

The Exciting Forties

I had worked for Thomas McKeachnie for two summers and a winter and this was the fall of 1942 and World War II was in full swing by now. You could get a job anywhere. I was only seventeen years old then, I had just bought the place on the creek, and I was only making \$60.00 a month. But the Miller and Viele Loan Co. only wanted \$2,500.00 for the place. \$200.00 down and \$196.00 a year from there on. I said to myself, “Why not? I’m young and got the rest of my life to pay for it.”

Marion got a job at the Gilsonite Mines that summer. They were hiring, so Marion got me on too. I was then making \$4.46 a day—just double what I was before and only eight hours a day. I thought that was alright. I worked there until in the spring. I wanted to start farming my own place. I had started to save up some money to buy machinery with and I was making \$6.65 an hour and a lot of overtime. I never realized at the time but I would have been better off if I would of stayed at the mine because Uncle Sam got me to work for him a couple of years.

I had to leave in July for the army. I had just put my first crop of hay up and the corn was just about to my knees. The grain was almost ready to head out. Being a young boy then, as I was, it was difficult to walk away





and say to your dad, “Well here it is. It’s yours until I get back, if I do.” The army had a ten thousand dollar insurance on us all, so if I never made it back, Dad would be able to pay the place off and have money to good. But it never turned out that way. As you can see the good Lord had other plans for me.

I want to go back and say a few things about working at the Barber Asphalt Co., or the Gilsonite mine. We would drive out there, which was about fifty miles from Vernal, and stay there for the week and come home on the weekends. There was getting to be a lot of cars then. They were coming out with heaters and radios and at that time we thought that we had everything going for us. Marion had a nice little 1936 model V8 Ford that he wanted to sell for \$200.00, so I told him I would buy it when we got home that weekend. Well, his brother-in-law, Dee Caldwell, which was my age, borrowed it before we got home. He run it up a tree and totaled it out, so I didn’t get the car. As young as I was, I may have done the same thing and it might have killed me. So I never grieved about that.

After I had worked out there for a couple of months they gave me a chance to go under ground to “pull shoot,” as they called it. It was about five hundred feet under ground and you would have to walk down and back. I was working night shift this one night, and as I was climbing the man ways coming out for dinner, the guys that was working back on the slope would have their shots ready to blast off at dinner and as we went off shift. I guess they thought I had already come out because when they got to the top they prepared their shots and blasted away. Everyone is supposed to be out of the hole when blasting. I remember I had about two hundred feet to go before I was on top. There was about four inches of Gilsonite dust on every landing, and the man ways always went down the side of the shaft. So there I was, with the open shaft on one side and the open and empty mine on the other side of me. That empty space went down about three hundred feet. A mine light wouldn’t show to the bottom. So when the blast went off, there I was hanging on to that ladder, climbing for dear life. At first, all I could see was a big flash of light and then a ninety mile wind storm hitting me that almost blew me off the ladder and almost at the same time I was covered with the Gilsonite dust. Well, three years later that same hole blew up. That was in the fall of 1945. The fire burned





there for several months before they got it out. Other than a few times like that, why, I quite enjoyed that job. My brother Marion, and my two uncles, Ralph and Niles, and a few of the kids I grew up with was working out there at this same time.

In the winter time when we wouldn't car pool to go back to Bonanza (that's what they called the place) why, we would ride the company's truck back to work for the week. They never charged us anything because the truck was always in Vernal over the weekend picking up groceries for the boarding house. It was a 1941 International dual wheel truck with a stock rack on it with a big canvas tarp over the stock rack. They would put their boxes of groceries to the front and then us guys would crawl in behind. There would be about ten of us in there and we'd sit close for each other's body heat. After about fifty miles of that there wouldn't be much body heat left. I was glad it only come once a week.

I remember the Warburtons from Lapoint was the cooks at the boarding house. The meals had started to get smaller and smaller until one morning we went to breakfast and the last ones there only got can milk and toast. That's when the union went to the mine superintendent, Mr. Berry. Well, the outcome of it was that the Warburtons wasn't there the next morning and Orville McCarrell had took over, and we started to eating like kings. I met a lot of good men out there and made some long time friendships, even to this day.

The last of July, 1941, I was sixteen years old. I was living at home with my folks, enjoying a quiet and care free life and helping my father on the farm. My father enjoyed the free help from me, but always knew that if I was going to get started in life he would have to give me a little push out of the feathered nest, as we call it. My brother Marion was working for John McKeachnie on his farm. Tom McKeachnie had a bigger farm that joined John's place. Tom needed another hand on his farm so Marion told him about me. Tom and Marion came down and asked if I wanted the job. I hadn't worked for anybody before, so I didn't know what to say. Marion told me it was just the farm work that I had been doing all my life, only a little more of it. I told Tom I would be there the next morning. In the mean time my father told me that I was to do things on my own after I had done all that they had told me to do and not to goof-off. With that in mind





I was ready to go to work, hoping things would work out.

The next morning my father drove me to work. I stayed with the McKeachnie's during the week and went home for Sunday and back on Monday. I knocked on the door, told them who I was, and asked what they wanted me to do. The women told me that the men folks were out by the corrals so I headed that way. I had to go up a lane to get there. It was only about a hundred and fifty feet long but it seemed like it was a mile. I first saw Glenn, a boy that I had went to school with. He was my same age. He asked if I was going to work for them. I replied, "If you will let me." I asked, "What do you want me to do?" He pointed up to the field and said, "There is some grain to be shocked. I will be up after awhile, okay?" I took off for the field. I had that field all shocked and no Glenn yet. I thought, "Now what do I do?" This is what was going on inside my sixteen year old mind. I remembered my father told me to look for things to do on my own. So I thought they must have more grain than this or they wouldn't have hired me for just this.

I started to look for grain binder tracks and they led me to the next field of grain that wasn't shocked so I had another acre shocked before Glenn got there. He was really surprised to see so much grain shocked in half a day. I never told him but I was surprised too, because that was more grain than I had ever shocked in half a day. The word went all over Glines Ward of what I had done. After that, I slowly started getting the hang of things. After we got the grain all shocked we started in on the hay. Then back to threshing, then to chopping corn silage, then the third crop of hay, and we also built barns. That winter Tom had me feed out some four hundred lambs he had bought.

During August of that year, while we were threshing grain, Tom hired a boy from town to help out. He slept with Glenn and I during the threshing time. Come to find out he had the seven year itch (scabies.) As it was, everyone there caught the itch. If I remember it right, it took more than a month to get rid of it. When I went home for the weekend, I even took it to my folks. By the time all of us got rid of the itch I broke out with boils. I never got cured of those things until about Christmas time. Life went on just the same. On December 7, 1941 war broke out and help started to get hard to find. The next summer I was a year older and by then more





experienced so I could fill in more of the gaps left by not enough help. By now I was on my own, and it was about five years after that before I ever spent a Christmas at home with my folks.

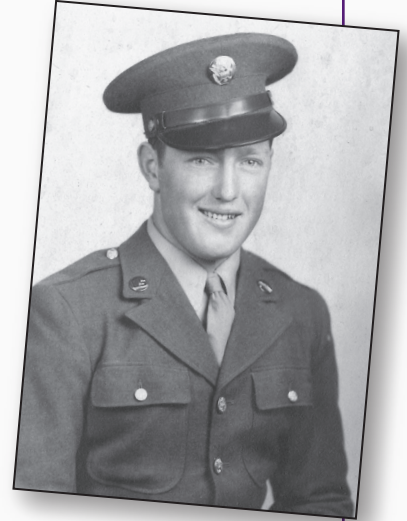
I have got to say something about my aunts and uncles. They always treated me good. I had a real good relationship with my uncles. I always enjoyed working and being around them. Likewise with all my brothers and sisters, including all of my cousins.





CHAPTER EIGHT

My Army Life from July 1943 to 1945



I was eighteen and the army was needing all of us that age and older. The war was on and in full swing by this time, 1943. I got my call for July 23. The army sent us all on a bus to Salt Lake City, then to Fort Douglas. There is where I was for about three months. From there I went to camp Arlington in California—that's just a mile or so from Riverside, California. I was there for about forty days, taking a little more training and close order drill. We got pretty good at that while we were there. The camp was made up of about fifty-fifty whites and blacks and they really know how to drill. So the head officers of the camp wanted a demonstration displayed on the parade field with the best platoon of the camp. Well, we practiced our drills for a week getting ready for the competition. There was a lot of platoons, but they only wanted the best and no mistakes made. So the way they selected their men was to eliminate those that made their first mistake. Well, I thought "Hey, I want to see how good my IQ is," so I went for it and lucked out. But we never got first, but second. The blacks took first.





I had a weekend pass to Los Angeles and there was about six of us that went together. By the next day, Kenneth Southam and myself had paired off. We tried to take in all of Los Angeles and then boarded a trolley to the beach of the Pacific ocean. We got back in camp by twelve o'clock Sunday night. I met this Southam kid in Salt Lake City. He was from there, we never knew each other until we met in Fort Douglas. They sent him to the Pacific and me to the Atlantic. After we met we hit it right off. We had a lot in common, of course, because we both were Southams. Unfortunately, he got killed while in the Pacific.

The next place I found myself in was Fort McArthur which was down by a shipping dock area at San Pedro, California. It was foggy all the time there. We never had anything to do there, just waiting on orders. After about three weeks we was on our way on a Greyhound bus to Camp Roberts, California. Here we was going to finally take our basic training and that was what they meant. That was the place that separated the boys from the men. But I made it through alive and got a seven day furlow before reporting to Fort Mead, Maryland.

It was at the last end of our basic training that we went on our bivouac, twenty-five miles out from Camp Roberts. Well, I had never walked over ten miles in one day in my life—I had always had a horse to ride. And I had always said, "If you caught a Southam walking, he was in trouble." Well, that changed a little today. After we got out there in those California hills, it started raining and never stopped for three days. We couldn't even take any maneuvering. We just stayed around our little pup tents, eating nothing but vitamin chocolate bars. After three or four days of eating candy bars I couldn't look at a candy bar for years. By this time all the gullies was running full of water. Word came that the mess truck had got with in a mile or so to the camp and that was as far as they could make it and that they needed a detail to go and bring the food in by foot. So I was one that got to go. I know that there was ten of those gullies we had to ford, and all of them come as high as our waist. Well, when we got back with that food we wasn't only hungry, but wet through and through, and no place to go to get dry. But the funny thing was that we all lived through the whole thing.

After a week the sun come out and we went on with our maneuvering





and then started that twenty-five miles back to Camp Roberts. Before we got there, there were guys falling out of rank. A lot of them would go until they would just pass out. If there had been another mile I may of done the same thing. But when we reached the end of the parade field of Camp Roberts, which was a mile long, they had the army band playing for us. Why, we all just straightened up and took off like we had just started out. Funny what a little music will do in a case like that. A lot of the guys went on a weekend pass, but myself and a lot of others stayed at camp with swollen feet.

Well, moving on with the story, I found myself in Camp Patrick Henry in Virginia where we was waiting our overseas orders. Now I was the only one out of Camp Roberts that was sent to Camp Patrick Henry. I have no explanation of why, but looking back over these moves and timing, I can see the hand of the Lord in all of my two years while in the army. He had a greater mission ahead for me and I hope I haven't disappointed Him. After about three weeks I got my orders and was assigned to the 91st Division. How all this took place was that the 91st division and the "American born" Japanese outfit was in Camp Patrick Henry waiting for this big ship convoy to be made up and ready to go over seas. As they all was leaving that afternoon for the ship, the 91st division was short two men. One went to the hospital and the other we don't know. So they needed two more replacements, and fast!

It just so happened that that afternoon me an this other guy was in the barracks alone with nothing to do. So we decided to go to the show that afternoon that was playing there in the camp. There we was, enjoying a good show, when over the intercom come our names to report immediately back to the barracks. You see, they knew where we was at because when you are waiting on orders, where ever you go, you must leave your name and where you are going at the front desk—always. So we hurried back to report. They gave us three minutes to pack and be ready to move out. They hurried us through the fastest examination of about ten minutes I have ever had. They hurried us over to the train tracks where there was a train waiting for us. In fact, it had started moving out slowly. My new sergeant was in the door way of the train waiting to help me catch the train. I caught it on the way. Catching the train like I did, I thought I was





a railroad bum.

As soon as I lay my eyes on that new sergeant I knew we was going to hit it off real well and we did. He welcomed me to my new outfit and told me I was headed overseas with them. We got on our ship at Newport News and from there we drifted out into the Atlantic, moving into formation with the rest of the convoy that was going with us. There was 112 ships in the one convoy. We was told that this convoy of ships was the biggest that had ever been put together for any cause.

We was twenty-seven days going over to all of our different assigned places, some to England, some to Italy. Our outfit went to Oran, Africa to take some amphibious training for the Southern France invasion. I remember as we entered the Rock of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea. It was just coming light and the sea was smooth and, as the sun started coming up, the sea was just like a sea of glass. I never had seen anything like that before or since.

It was something like about noon when we docked at Oran. It was new for me and exciting to see all those different looking people running around the ship dock. We referred to them as Arabs. There were army trucks there to pick us all up and take us over some of that Africa "desert like" land to our new camp site in the desert. This was April now, and as warm as our summer is. There we was, out there without a tree around, only rabbit brush. I was wishing I was back on our old Liberty ship. We did get to feel a breeze now and again.

After we had all buddied up and set our tents up, they come around with two army blankets, one a piece, I thought they were crazy, but before morning came, I was wishing they had dropped off three. That's how the temperature changes over there. You never see them Arabs working in the day time. Always at night, when it was cool. I never knew that until one night we, the army, was taking a night maneuver. There all them Arabs was, out in their fields working there grape vineyards. I never did learn how they made their living.

All of us guys had to take our turn for guard duty when it come





around to us. We stood four hours on and four hours off. As I was going off, this one afternoon, from guard duty. I learned our outfit was going on a twenty-five mile march that night. So I asked my sergeant if I was to go. He told me I didn't have to where I was just coming off guard duty, but if I wanted to I could. Knowing it would be boring at camp, I volunteered to go. It wasn't as bad as the first one was because it was at night. It paid off though. He promoted me to PFC (Private First Class) and assigned me to his company headquarters as a Company Runner, or a message boy. The other guys wondered why I got the promotion and not them. I was the youngest to join their outfit, so I just told them it was all new to me and that they would have to go ask the sergeant.

We took our amphibious training while we was in Africa, but it turned out to be all in vain because they stopped our training and sent us all to Italy for combat. Before we left I have got to tell you two things I shall never forget. One is funny, and the other was disgusting. The first was this Arab went by our camp in the morning with his cart being pulled with a little horse not weighing over seven hundred pounds, and a mule a little bit bigger, hooked up just in front of the horse. The cart was bigger then either one of the animals. That afternoon he, the Arab, came back with that cart loaded with old boards he had gotten somewhere and he was loaded. As he went down into this little wash that went by our camp, I think I was the only one watching this free show. The cart pushed ahead going into the wash and as the animals came to the end of their slack and started pulling the cart out, the force was so great that it lifted the little horse right off the ground. There the little fellow was, up in the air kicking desperately to get down on the ground. The mule was smart—he knew if he got any help out of that horse he was going to be the one to pull that horse back to the ground. As quick as the horse had landed on the ground it took the two animals to pull that cart out of the wash and then they went on their way. I showed that to a few guys that was around me at that time, and we had a big laugh over it.

The next one was that the army gave us that wanted a pass to go into



Willis (R) with unknown army buddy.





Oran, which was about seven or eight miles from camp. The things that these guys did while they were there isn't for this book. By the time we caught the truck back to camp there was a few that had to be helped into the back of the army truck. It had a canvas over the top which we didn't need at the time as we was needing all the air we could get. After the old steal bed truck floor got about one inch deep of the best wine that Oran made, it was sloshing back and forth from one side to the other as we moved along the crooked road home. This one guy was having a hard time staying on the seat. Anyway, we made a quick turn and the old kid went belly buster right down in all that swill. Well, we guys had to get him back on the seat again. Oh, what a mess. I was sure glad he wasn't my buddy to sleep in the same little tent with me. The next morning they was all saying what a time we had. I could of agreed with them more if I hadn't been there and seen all of it. I was more particular from there on when I took a pass.

By now it was around June and they shipped the 91st over to Italy. We docked at Naples and about one mile north of Naples City there was what they called the Kings Bowl. It was an area about a half mile around and sunken in the ground about two hundred feet. This is the place we stopped off for about another month. There was very little done. We had exercise every morning until eleven o'clock or so. On weekends we could get a pass to Naples, for those that wanted one. I was the only Mormon in the outfit, so I was real particular about the type of guy I went to town with. I learned my lesson on the last pass I went on.

One weekend this old buddy I knew from Fort Mead, Maryland and I went on a pass in Baltimore. We got along well. He wasn't a Mormon, but we had the same viewpoints. He wanted me to go with him to Naples, Italy. I got a pass and we were on our way. It was a beautiful day in June and Italy was a beautiful place. I really liked that country.

They done everything the old way (or hard way), because the country had never had advanced in any modern equipment. They were still using forked sticks for pitchforks, thrashing grain on a big cement pad about thirty feet in diameter by hand. They still drove those huge white oxen teams. Some of those teams were as tall and as big as our draft horses were. Most people there lived in a two-story home. They lived upstairs





and the pig barn and chicken coop, along with the cow and oxen barn, would all be on the ground level. That made the flies unbearable. Other than these things everything was normal.

They had real good water to drink, but they never drank any. They lived on wine there. They not only farmed the valleys, but the hills also. I suppose I could say over the thousands of years they had done a lot of work on those hills making terraces to farm on. They grow a lot of grape vineyards and fruit trees. The soil was deep there. They could raise everything there. Most places it was semi-tropical and that is why they did so well.

We saw a car just once in a while. At that time, 1944, you never saw any wooden buildings. Everything there was rock and cement. Even the bridges were rock and cement. Italy was a very fascinating country that was three thousand years old. A lot of history had taken place there.

Well back to my story about our pass. We took in all of Naples that we thought was of any interest. Of course, we got to keep in mind it had been only weeks since the front lines had went through that area, so there wasn't any established business going as yet. The bombs and shells had pretty well destroyed the city of Naples. So as we drifted out to the outskirts of the city, we come up on these kids, about five of them, ranging from eight to fourteen years old. We started to talk with them just to pass the time away and to learn more about the Italian language. It wasn't long before they asked us into their house. Of course, they had a stairway that we sat down on and talked and kidded with them. The first thing I know, is that this fourteen year old girl was wanting me to go upstairs with her to make love. I had to ask the second time to make sure that I was hearing it right. Sure enough that is what she was meaning. I was so embarrassed I wanted to crawl in a hole. That was the first time that I had ever been approached like that. But I had to tell her that I wasn't one of those kind. There were a few more of those kind of experiences that came my way before I got out of that man's army. I was grateful for the gospel in that respect because I knew I wanted a wife that was untouched, and the best way to do so was to be that way myself. As I have found out, it pays to live the gospel and to keep the Lord on your side.

Another weekend, that army furnished a truck for all of us that want-





Willis (C) with unknown army buddies.

ed to go see the old ruins of Pompeii. There wasn't an awful lot to see at that time, nothing like they have today. It was a pleasant trip, though. About this time we were moving to the front lines so, we got on some smaller boats at Naples and we landed in Leg horn, Italy, just above Rome. Then we went inland from there until we reached Highway 65, which at that time was the main highway from north to south, top to bottom of Italy. We basically stayed near that highway until we "pulled up," or stopped for the winter at the edge of the PO Valley. That was a beautiful

little valley.

As we was landing in Leg Horn, there was an Italian boy that was in our outfit who had come to the States years before, but his family lived in Leg Horn, and his brother was there waiting to see him when we landed at Leg Horn.

We was moving north from there on. It was just days before we were in combat. They took us in trucks as far as it was safe. Then we walked all night to get on the front line. It was quiet all night, and a beautiful morning when we arrived there on July 12, 1944. The road that we was traveling on was going up the side of this little valley. It was flat in the bottom where they grew grapes and made wine. The hills on each side of the valley went up about one hundred and fifty feet in elevation. In front of us one half of a mile the valley closed off like a box canyon. There was a little rock house half a mile ahead of us that was being used as a look out point that the "Gerries" were using to watch us.

It was a quiet and beautiful morning, I remember, not a sound anywhere. The headquarters that I was assigned to took up quarters half way up the hill to the west of the valley. It also served as a first-aid quarter. We four company runners sat down on the bank that was outside of the headquarters. The sun was already getting warm when there was the funniest sound that came screeching down, dead center in the grapevines where all our company was. Hell had just broke loose. Then the "Gerries" started on us with the artillery battery that was located just down the hill





from us. We all started to dig in and make fox holes. I dug until I had blisters all across my hands, but when blood started coming, I had only reached two feet deep. I decided to find a good bank, or something like it, to get behind from there on, because we were moving all the time. We stayed there in that one spot until the next day about noon.

Before night came we seen what war was all about. The first aid men were bringing in the wounded. So, in every hour of the day, ambulances were coming as fast as they could make a trip to the hospital they had set up miles behind the lines. Some men were wounded bad. These artillery shells were going over head almost all the time, either from ours or from theirs. The headquarters moved up the next night to the foot of the hill that had the little rock house on it.

Our company had moved on ahead. We had a sniper shooting on us that night. They wasn't hitting any of us because of it being night time.

They had a detail of men bring the dead there by the road where the jeep could put them up the next day. They were about thirty feet from our headquarters, so I don't know if they were keeping us company or we were keeping them company. But as time went on, I found out that was standard policy around headquarters. We got used to that. I remember the medics brought in a nice looking soldier one morning that was dying and laid him on a rock where all of us company runners was eating our morning K-rations. He was unconscious by then, and there wasn't anything that we could do for him. Looking back to that time now, I regret many times wondering if I couldn't of been of more use to my fellowmen—speaking of that time and many more.

As we moved on over the hill the next day we passed two dead Germans by a machine gun that we had knocked out two days before. With all this excitement we were going into the fourth night with about two hours sleep. They wanted me to stand the first guard for the night. I didn't think twelve o'clock at night would ever come.

That next day I had to take a message to my company. I always had my





prayer before I left. Sometimes it was while I was walking, sometimes in a ravine or wherever I could find a good spot. I went alone and, most of the time, at night. I would serve as a guide for the supply jeep. But back to this one day. My sergeant told me to go this one direction and as I started out that way something told me to follow the phone line that was going a different direction. I changed directions and followed that prompting. The trouble with this job, was you only had one chance to find your outfit, otherwise you would be a German prisoner with all the American information. Well, I only went about half a mile until I ran right into the boys of my company. They sure were shocked to see me because they hadn't had time to notify anyone of their change of position and they told me if I would of kept going the way I was ordered I would have run right into enemy forces.

Two days later we moved into this little town about sunup. Our front line company had moved up this road about three quarters of a mile. I had to take a message to them so out there I went like I usually did. This was another quiet morning—until I started back. They opened up on us. I knew then that the “Gerries” had been watching me, knowing what I had, and waiting to see where my outfit was. They were all taking cover in a ditch about one foot deep that was running along the side of the road. When they opened up those four cannons, we were all in the ditch. You could hear the shrapnel cutting the grass just above our backs. I knew that it was going to take the Germans a minute to reload so I took off running for headquarters. When the first shell would come in I would hit the ditch again. I knew by that time that I was drawing the fire to me, so I just gave them a race to the little village we were in. They were always one setting behind me with the sites of their cannons. I remember as I was making that speed record that morning, I was coming up to a culvert in the ditch. I knew it was time for some more shells to start landing around me. I took the chance and started going by it not slowing down any. Just as I started by, the first shell broke just behind me. It only took two more strides and I dove for the ditch. When I got through sliding, I said to myself, “If I could get back under the culvert, I would be that much better off.” As I looked back where I was laying, I was twenty feet from the culvert, so I just stayed where I was and took off from there. But me and the Germans played tag





all the way to the village. There was a little house with a side door in it with some GIs inside, so I just darted in it. When I could get my breath, I said jokingly, "Why, them Germans are trying killing me." But I didn't get any response from any of them. But that was to be expected after being through what we had for a week or more.

You get to where you don't care much what happens. Life went on about the same way, living from minute to minute. When you could sleep, you would appreciate that time. Because in that way, during those moments, you could black out that horrible world for a while. But then, if it may rain in the night, it would be like sleeping in a tub of cold water before morning. It wasn't nothing to go a month without a chance to take a bath or clean up. You never wanted to build a fire to get warm, even as cold and wet and miserable as it was. Sometimes there was six inches of mud to wade around in. You got used to living outside like the animals.

One time in the late fall they let our outfit come back off the front line for a week to rest and stock up on replacements again. Because, sometimes after taking an objective we would only have about thirty men left out of a hundred and twenty five. Promotions on the battle field, to go up in rank, was plentiful if you wanted them and sometimes when you didn't want them.

It seemed so good to know we was going to be treated to a warm breakfast this morning. They served hotcakes, sausages, butter and syrup. It was raining cats and dogs by the time we finished eating, so we could almost drink the last of our breakfast because of so much rain. While we was in this area, we were able to have hot meals every day. This one night, as I had just washed my mess gear and headed down the hill to my pup tent, I went by the radio jeep that went with our outfit. I knew the GI well. Instead of having the radio on communications, he had it on a radio station. The song that was playing was "I'll Dance With the Dolly With the Hole in Her Stocking." This song was popular then. There I found myself, standing in the pouring rain, listening to some music after six or seven months without any music. I realized that music is part of man here on earth.

As we went back on the front line, we pushed ahead until we reached the PO Valley, just south of the Swiss Mountains. That was a beautiful





valley with the PO River running down through it, and with the snow capped peaks of the Swiss Mountains on the north side of the river. In fact, I enjoyed all of it. It was so primitive, but so fascinating, with the way they had to thrash their grain, the big white ox teams they worked, their living methods, their farming systems, and so on.

The 5th army stopped for the winter when we reached the PO Valley. It was around the middle of November when we came back off the front lines. We were here in this spot until December. Sometime while we were camped here, I had my twentieth birthday. I also got Nephritis and had to go to the hospital. It was the second of December, 1944, when I went into the hospital after they found out that I wasn't just trying to pull their leg.

My first hospital stop was in a big army tent about thirty by seventy-five feet square with a oil stove in the middle. By the next morning I had a fever of 104°F. I remember I was talking out of my head so the army doctors seen that I had better be sent back to Florence, Italy to a general hospital. They put me in this one building that never had a stove in it and it was so cold I just as well of been in a fox hole. They put me on the second floor and made us walk a city block to get something to eat. By the next day I was having a hard time to make one flight of stairs. I was to the point I couldn't hardly breath.

That next morning, at the doctor's check up, he looked me over and said, "You look pretty healthy and fat for being up on combat and being on C-rations." Then he told me to take down my pants to my ankles and he pushed his finger into the shin of my leg. His finger went in almost half an inch and the imprint took a long time before it came back out. I knew I was in trouble, but I had confidence in the doctor that he knew what he was doing and would get my health problem taken care of. He never said anything. He just reached and grabbed the telephone and called for an ambulance and let them know he wanted it right now!

The next thing I knew, I was in the Venereal Disease ward, although I didn't know which ward it was until the next morning when I had to report to the doctor in that ward. He looked me over like all the rest of the doctors, then asked, "Have you had any sexual intercourse in your life?" "No," I said. And he wanted to know why I hadn't. So I told him. The first thing is, that it wasn't right. The second thing, I wanted to marry a





virtuous women and it is only fair for me to be virtuous myself. He also grabbed the telephone and ask for a ambulance and told me where he was going to send me. By now they knew what I had in the next ward. The doctors and nurses was very good to me and knew what they were doing. It was warm and I even had sheets on my bed. All they did to me was to take all my salt away. Food wasn't the same after that. Three weeks later I knew I was going to live.

It only took about two weeks before I was on the improve. But to them I wasn't good enough to go back on the front line and they told me that they were sending me back to the States. I really didn't want to debate the issue so I just said, "I guess you know what is best."

I was on my way home the last end of December. They put me on a hospital ship and took me first to Naples, Italy. We docked there New Year's Eve and at twelve o'clock that night every ship in the dock shot off a few rounds from their cannons. Us guys on board didn't know ahead of time what was going to happen. There was almost a runaway with panic. The intercom came on and wished a Happy New Year. What a relief.

Well, I left Naples, Italy the last of January, 1945. I was still a "litter patient." Not that I wanted to be, but it was army rules. So I abided by the rules and it made for a good showing when they carried us all down the gang plank when we docked at Charleston, South Carolina. Words have never been invented to express the joy of being back on American soil and leaving behind the nightmare that was going on across the sea.

They treated me good all the while I was in the hospital. My folks, aunts, grandparents and friends wrote to me all the while I was gone. I really appreciated that. I also received the Vernal Express, but there was almost two weeks during that disease that my eyes could see nothing but a blur. It was hard for me to make out everything.

Four days after landing in the States, I found myself in Baxter General Hospital in Spokane, Washington. I really liked that place. We were free to go or come anywhere on the base in the afternoon because we was in a convalescent hospital. We always had tests until noon. There was education classes offered all afternoon for those that wanted them. I signed up for about three classes. That would take care of my afternoon.

The army released me the twelfth of July that year, but, while I was still





in convalescence, I had two thirty day leaves to go home. While in Spokane I got acquainted with three other LDS boys, so we called ourselves the “Four Convalescent-teers”. We always went to church on Sundays in Spokane, and to D&C meetings on Tuesday evenings. When we had stake conference, President Benson, who was an apostle and the general authority over that area at that time, always made sure he would come around where us GIs were and shake our hands and talk with us for a while before starting time. I had a lot of good experiences while in Spokane.

That spring, I thought, was quite unusual. It was so beautiful, warm, and peaceful. We had quiet rains, and sunshine, both in Spokane and Vernal. I believe that it was such a beautiful spring and summer that year because the Lord was very pleased that the world had peace once again.

The doctor ordered that I rest that summer, so I mostly lounged around, helping my father run his and my places farming. I think back on that year and wish I could live that year over and over again. I also started going with a number of girls, looking for my eternal companion. I was a slow looker because I never found her until five years later. It was worth every year I waited though.

The following three stories were remembered by Willis’ daughters and verified by his wife, Carol, therefore we would like to include them in the history.

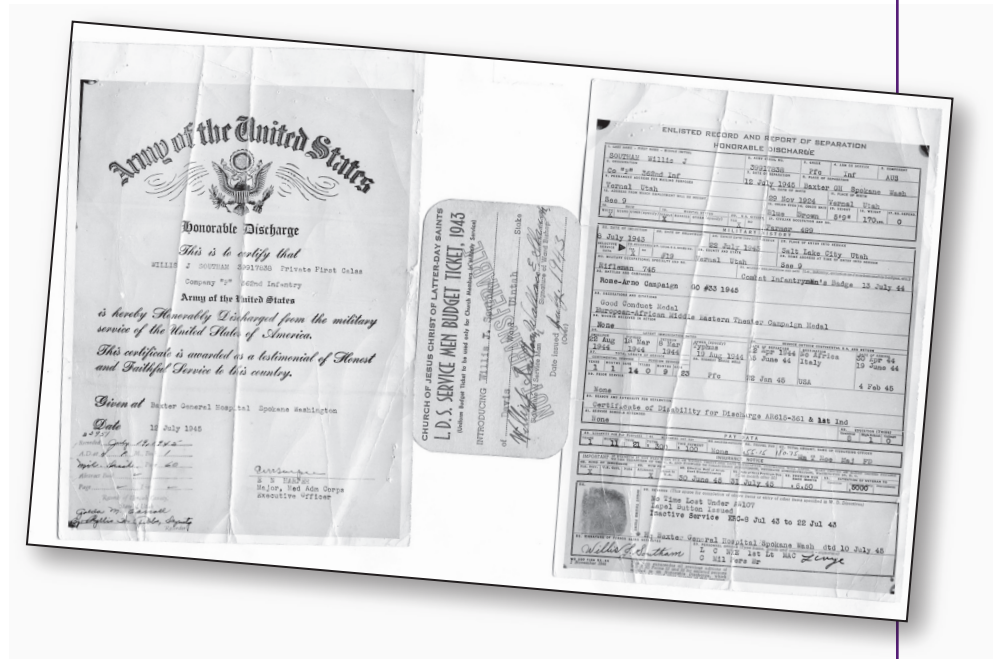
Many times they would move a convoy at night with lights out. Dad got the duty of walking ahead of the lead jeep, being eyes and ears for them, informing them to turn right or left of hills and curves, until they reached their destination.

Food for the native people was hard to get. Dad remembered seeing little children with buckets lined up at the mess hall for leftovers after the soldiers had eaten. Also, every soldier got cigarettes and chocolate in their K-rations and Dad would trade his cigarettes for chocolate and then give his chocolate to the little children that he came in contact with.

As a runner with snipers after him, he had occasion one time to plead with the Lord that if the Lord would preserve his life he promised to go on a mission, marry in the temple, and do everything he knew how to raise



his family in righteousness. We are deeply humbled and grateful to know that Dad kept his end of the bargain and the Lord blessed not only Dad, but each of us as well.



Army discharge papers.





CHAPTER NINE

The Years Between Army and Marriage

The oil boom in Rangely, Colorado was going on in full swing. The money was good, so I took a swing at it. The guys was good to work with, so that is where I stayed the next three years. The only thing I regret is I never saved any money those three years. Just fun was all I saved.

I was home and out of the Army when the war ended in Germany. So the people of Vernal blocked off Vernal Avenue and we had a big dance right there on the street. I wore out one pair of shoes that night dancing on the pavement. I think everyone had a good time. If I remember right, they had the dance in the old Imperial Hall when Japan surrendered. There was many a good dance held in that old Imperial Hall, just Second South, off from Main street. They tore down that building in the 1960s. All it is now is a car parking lot.

That next fall, in 1946, my father and I bought a new tractor for the farm so we could retire the team of horses. Between my social life, working in the oil field seven days a week, serving as counselor in the Mutual, and doing my ward teaching (as it was called at that time) with Elijah





Form ACA 348
(Rev. 4-1-43)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
CIVIL AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON

AIRMAN CERTIFICATE NO. **666780**

This certifies that **WILLIS J. (I.O.) SOUTHAM** has been found to be properly qualified to exercise the privileges of a PILOT

Address **STAR ROUTE, TETON, UTAH**

SEX MALE	DATE OF BIRTH 11-29-24	WEIGHT 165	HEIGHT 5'8"	HAIR RED	EYES BLUE
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THIS CERTIFICATE is of such duration as is provided in currently effective Civil Air Regulations.

Date of Issuance **May 6, 1947**
By direction of the Administrator
Howard C. Harris
Civil Aviation Director

This certificate is not valid unless accompanied by a Medical Certificate evidencing compliance with the pertinent physical requirements, an appropriate rating, unless when required during the stated validity, and other evidence as required under the currently effective Civil Air Regulations. Any violation of this certificate is punishable by a fine of not exceeding \$1,000.

(Over) Signature of Holder *Willis J. Southam*

Willis and his aviation license.

Jackson, I enjoyed helping my father farm.

Well that wasn't keeping me busy enough, so I took up flying on the GI bill. I enjoyed doing that. I even got to go back east to the factory at Wayne, Michigan to get a new plane for Jack Turner who was also our instructor. That put just one in each plane coming home. I flew until I lacked only a few hours from having my commercial license which is when I went on my mission to Hawaii. Of course, from there I never went back to flying anymore after that.

I was called to the Central Pacific Mission, known as the C.P.M., to work with the Japanese people in Hawaii. There was also a Hawaiian mission there, working with all the other nationalities that there was in the islands. Let me explain how this all got started. A little different than today, in 1993.

It was in the early spring of 1947 after M.I.A. Every other week the M.I.A. officers (I was one of the counselors) would let the kids dance a while. The Men's President of M.I.A. was hardly there, so I had to stay and run the dance. The bishop showed up that night for some unknown reason, and found me in the chapel part of the church house. He started talking to me about who in the ward would be eligible to go on a mission. I thought back before the war time when I could remember those polished guys that would come home after their missions. I looked up to them, thinking they were the elite of the church. So I said to the Bishop, "I don't know who we got here in Davis ward that could fill those shoes." It had been eight years since Von Simper had got home from his mission, but he was the bishop's son. The bishop said to me, "I've been thinking about you." "Me?" I asked. "For me to be a missionary—that's a joke."

I had always thought how nice it would be to be a polished returned missionary of the Lord, and what it would do for me. But I told Bishop Wallace Slaugh it was impossible because I felt I wouldn't make a good one because of the lack of my education and me being far from polished.





He told me to think about it and let him know right away. Well, I tried to avoid him the best I could, but he caught me again after M.I.A. and he quoted me 1 Nephi 3:7. It was there I knew that if the Lord was calling me He would also help me fill that mission. So, as far as I was concerned, the argument was over, because the Lord always provides a way. I know He had quite a job to make something out of nothing; I hadn't read a dozen scriptures in my life.

I knew the Church was true because of the good teachings at home and the stories my Sunday School teachers had told me of Joseph Smith and others. There never was a doubt about it. So my reply to the bishop was, "I will go." We filled out the papers and he sent them off. He told me I would be getting my call from the Church headquarters soon. I let it go for a week or two before I told my folks. I told Mother first. Then, one morning as I was driving up in the yard after a night shift, I seen Mother out talking to Father while he was working on our leveler. When I walked over to where they were Father said to me, "Mother tells me your going on a mission." I said, "Yes, I am going and Bishop has sent the papers off already." So his reply back to me was, "Well, who's going to support you there? Who's going to help run the farm?" I just said, "The Lord will provide!" And He did. I knew that my dad would be glad to help keep me there once he had time to think about it. The Lord opened the way that even my father was surprised.

Marion was hauling grain to Salt Lake City, so he took me out. We drove all night so that we would be at the Mission Home, there by the Eagle Gate, on the fourth day of January, 1948. Two weeks there and then I was on the train headed for California where we caught the Madsen Liner out of Long Beach, California. Five days later I was docking in Honolulu, Hawaii. They had put me in charge of all the missionaries going to Hawaii. I got there with every one of them. However, some was good and some you had to watch. It even took four or five months for me to learn how to become a missionary. I remember my interview, for my new assignment, with my mission president when I first arrived there. I could tell by the



Willis (2nd L) and companions on ship to Hawaii.





way he was talking to me he knew he had a farm boy from way back in the hills. So I thought I would relieve him of all those nervous thoughts. So I said to him, “President, my folks are supporting me while I am here and they don’t have much money, so I am not down here to play around. I want you to give me the hardest job you got down here.” I didn’t realize what I was saying, but I meant every word of it. When I got through talking I looked up at his face and tears was running down his face. I didn’t know at the time why, but before I finished my mission I knew why. In my last interview with him, he told me that when I arrived in the mission home that I was the roughest looking missionary he had ever received. But he and I got along real fine.

Those two years gave me a chance to meet a lot of good people in the Church and out of the Church. I never baptized anyone while I was there. Our entire mission only baptized twelve people the entire time I was there, but it was only a short time after that that the whole world opened up and started joining the Church, so I guess we was laying the ground work for those who came later. I know that we would tract out areas and for days we wouldn’t even have as much as a gospel conversation, but we would just keep going. The Japanese people were very polite. They would never shut the door in your face, but they wouldn’t talk to you either. We brought a few back into activity and made branch presidents out of them.

Willis explains that the homes of these Buddhists were arranged in a big square with the playgrounds and outside toilets in the middle.

After thirteen months they made me a district president—today we call them zone leaders—and assigned me and three other elders to open up a little place they call Waipahu. We was to live in this little place they called Camp Ten, one mile back in the cane fields. There was about twenty homes there—all Japanese that work for the cane plantation. We first got their confidence and their trust, then a children’s Sunday School in an old vacant house. One day we asked the kids if they wanted to see a show about our temples. “Sure, sure,” they said, so we told them the day. We came home early from tracting this night from Waipahu to show the slides. We were all ready, but nobody came, so we looked out our door and, there in the middle of our courtyard, was the Buddhist priest putting up a big show screen to catch every one coming to our place and show them a cartoon movie. So the elders ask me, “What are we go-





ing to do now?" I said, "We are going out there to watch the show with the kids, and they will not know but what it was us that put it on." And that worked out just right, so we still won, thanks to the Lord.

Then, after we got a little more known to them, we asked the kids if they would like to take a lunch and go over to the beach for a day. Our mission had an old army bus that President Weenig bought just for those kind of occasions. He would always send one of his missionary counselors with it for the driver. Well, let me tell you how that all worked out. The kids said they would be ready. The bus was chartered, the morning came, and the bus arrived, but who was driving? It was the president himself! I started to worry how many kids would show up, or if any, but here they all came and with their mothers to the side of them. Well, we elders were beaming all over. We had a good time. We played ball, the kids swam, and the older ones visited. While I was in Camp Ten we also organized a ball team, and played in the Church league in Honolulu. We done real well. I have left all the details, I hope, in my diary.

I enjoyed those two years. Like everyone else that went on a mission, I had good times and bad times, but I got more out of it than anyone else. I was released around the last of January, 1950. The mission president and his wife gave us a big supper to send us off in good style. All of us elders, and two sisters who come home with us, were given leis and kisses, as was the Hawaiian custom. I have slides of all this.

They fed us good on the luxury liner, and within five days we were in San Francisco where Elder Colman's folks picked us all up and took us to the museum, then to Sacramento where they lived. They took us over the Golden Gate Bridge on our way to their place. We stayed at their place that night, then caught the train there the next day.

Marion, Mother and Junius came to Salt Lake to pick me up. Before



Willis with Japanese children in Hawaii.





Willis Southam Returns From Hawaiian Mission

Willis Southam, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Southam returned to Vernal February 9, after filling a two year LDS mission in the Hawaiian Islands.

Elder Southam has had many interesting experiences while in the Islands and served in Hilo, Hawaii, Mountain View, Waipahu, Oahu and, at Honolulu, Hawaii, Mission headquarters.

Last Christmas Elder Southam was instrumental in the presentation of a Japanese pageant, which was by the Japanese LDS members and investigators for the benefit of the Japanese people of the island.

Mr. Southam returned home on the S.S. Louri Lei and reports that it was a wonderful journey. He was met in Salt Lake City by his mother and several members of the family.

they arrived I spent one day in Salt Lake with an old missionary companion I had in Hawaii. He took me down to BYU that night. It was good to see good old Vernal again. Three months after I got home, I was real busy talking and showing slides at schools and churches.

Vernal Express clipping announcing Willis' arrival home.





CHAPTER TEN

Marriage and Family



Willis and Carol at time of engagement.

Five years had went by since I had left the army, and now that my mission was behind me, I knew it was time for me to find that eternal companion and get my life on its way. I was twenty-five years old by this time, and if I was to find a top class girl I had better start now while I still had the mission polish.

It was the ninth of May, 1950, when Carol Manwaring and I decided to start on the long journey of eternity and go through the Salt Lake temple. Those that went through with us was Marion, Eula and their family. They were going through for the first time. Also, Ashel and Elva Manwaring, and Leon Johnson and his wife. Leon was a good missionary companion of mine while in Hawaii. It was a beautiful time of the year to get married.

I only took one day off from the farm for my honeymoon, which I regret, because you never can go back and catch a honeymoon up. You could tour the world over, but it still wouldn't be your honeymoon.

My father and I was in a partnership deal in farming and, just getting home from a mission, I never had any money coming in. We also had bought a lot of farm equipment to run the farm with. So, all the farm





could do is make the payments on the equipment. In about July I had a chance to go “oil well’in,” so I went working in the oil field and kept trying to keep up with my part of the farm. I was burning the candle on both ends of the day. But that’s the way I worked from there on until I retired. I had a good wife and a good family to help me.

I continued on with the oil field for two years, then went to work for the Vernal Sand and Gravel Co., working on roads. My uncle, Grant Southam, wanted me to work for him driving truck to haul livestock, hay, feed, or whatever. We was still in debt with the bank for farm machinery and some old ewes we had bought for about \$6,000. The farm was only making payments, taxes and appreciation expenses.

I had to find something that would get us out of debt. I liked all those jobs that I’ve spoken about, but \$10.00 a day wasn’t getting my bills paid. They were hiring out at the Gilsonite mine, so I started my second time out there. I doubled my pay there. I had hopes of getting out of debt, so I told my father, “You can have all the livestock and I’ll help with what I can on the farm. I’ll come up with my half of the bank note from my wages.” The bank note was down to \$4,000 by now, and the following fall we paid off the bank. I enjoyed very much working with my father, but the farm was too small for the two of us, so he kept his farm, and I kept mine. We run our machinery together. I kept working and running the Creek place myself from there on.

I’ve got to go back to when we were first married. We started out living by my folk’s house in a eight foot by 23 foot trailer house that I had bought by selling a cow. After the first year we moved it down on my place on the creek. My wife always kept that little trailer so homey it was always nice to come home to. The following March 24, 1951, the Lord blessed us with a little girl in our home. Mother called her Diane and that’s the name I blessed her with. We was going to the Davis Ward at the time. That summer we was living down on the creek, so we started going to the Naples Ward.

That August, on the way home from work, we had a bad car wreck. I got a skull fracture and I was off work for two months. The insurance paid us all for the time we was off. Mine was \$500. My wife and I put the money into our old house on the creek. My father-in-law, Ashel, done the work





on it. It was really nice when we got through with it.

Diane caught the whooping cough that fall while we was working on the house. There was about a week that we didn't know whether the Lord was going to let us keep her or not. We never had a telephone or electric lights, not even a paved or gravel road. Plus, the road went straight up the hill. We had an awful lot of rain that fell to where it was almost impossible to get out of there in a car. So we just lived on faith and a lot of prayers.

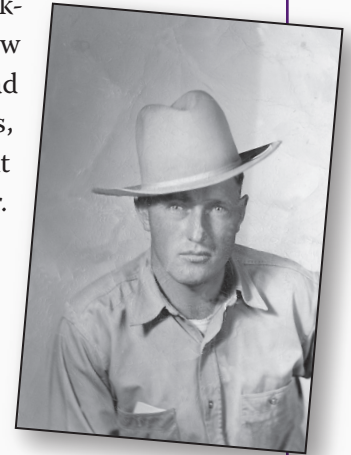
That winter I had to catch my guy that I worked with up on the highway at my dad's place. So for about a week I would get up in time to milk my cow, do my chores, eat my breakfast, take my lunch, and ride my saddle horse to meet the guys. I'd leave the horse at my fathers place until that night when I got home. I would ride the little black and white pinto home. I would ride her bare back, as we called it, because it was warmer that way. Carol, my wife, would have to stay home then because the car wouldn't make it.

We had it really comfortable and warm in the house when we moved in that December. It was a good thing because we had a hard winter and forty below for a long time that winter. Carol had the house warm and cozy just like she did the trailer so we really enjoyed it on our own place. In the summer time we would walk up in the field together in the moonlight to change the irrigation water. Things were so peaceful at the time. We lived there until Diane got old enough to start kindergarten.

During those happy years on the creek, and on March 16, the Lord blessed our home with another baby girl. We called her Shanna Lee. Those two girls would play together so well. I would take them up in the field with me to change the water, and let them go swimming in the ditch, then take them back to their mother wet and muddy. We were all happy but Mother.

Two years later, we had our first baby boy come to our home. I had a lot of big plans for him on the farm, but a little over a month the Lord needed him home more than we did.

It was about then that Lester and Florence Nelsen were wanting to sell their place and move to Moses Lake, Washington. They wanted us to buy their place for \$5,000, so we did, and that was the place we call the base-



Willis in his thirties.





ment home. By doing this, why Diane could catch the bus to school and I could be closer to my rides for work. That was the year I started back to the mines again. I mortgaged my place on the creek to Harold Reeder for \$5000 and paid off Lester and Florence Nelson.

I had worked at the mines for one year and I got one week vacation with pay. Junius, my younger brother, also had a vacation coming from his job. So we pooled our money together and took his car, because his was the best one out of the two of ours. Besides, his was a Hudson, and they had the widest seats of any car made at that time. So we grabbed our bed rolls and grub boxes and took off for Seattle and Moses Lake, Washington, then back through Yellowstone Park. It was our first time seeing all of that.

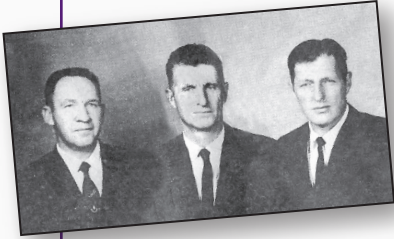
We would cook out on an open fire, sleep out on the ground, and put the kids in the car to sleep. You don't do those things today. On that trip, there was a lot of times we had to push the car to get it started because of an old battery. We never minded that, we had a real fun vacation.

Connie Ray had come to our home by this time and was able to go on this vacation with us. She was too young to remember much of it.

The Duvalls also sold out their home to my brother Junius and his wife Barbara so that they could go to Moses Lake, Washington. We got to see a lot of those people from down here in Vernal while we were going through Moses Lake.

But, as life went on, Junius wanted to sell the Duvall place to me. So, thinking that would put me right on the highway to catch the Bonanza bus, and because I had a steady job at the mines (I worked there for fifteen years), I sold the basement home and moved down on the Duvall home. It had six acres to go with it. Jimmy Duvall had been in the chicken business. Those old coops were full of chicken manure, so I got busy and hauled it all out on the six acres. I also done a lot of fencing and other work to it. We also went into the chicken business ourselves. That only lasted about two years because there was better ways of making a living. All this time I was caring for the creek place. It was a long ways away to be farming, but somehow we kept it going.

While at the Duvall place we had Denna Kay come to bless our home.



Davis Ward Bishopric, Don E. Gardinar, Max S. Johnson, Willis J. Southam





Then Rodney W., our second boy. I always passed out candy bars instead of cigars. This afternoon as I caught the bus to work I was passing candy bars around to all the men when they started asking, "Well, what was it, a boy or a girl?" I told them, "It was a man child." Most all the men on the bus knew what I meant but Jack Chivers, and he asked me again what I had got. I told him the second time, "It was a man child." By that time all the men were laughing their sides off. Well, that was the talk and the laugh on the job for a long time.

We had city water in the basement home, but an outside toilet. In the Duvall home we had to have our water hauled and put in a cistern. We had all the conveniences of uptown—hot and cold running water, an inside toilet, and a phone, so we enjoyed that place also.

We had been there about three years when we had a chance to bid on five acres in Naples about one and a quarter miles from our place on the creek. At the Duvall place we had been getting a lot of bums off the highway stopping by all the time for food, water, gas and a place sleep. I was on night shift more than half the time, so we decided to make a bid on it. The place was the John Nelsen estate that had been willed to his two boys. They both lived outside the state; one was in California. I had asked them about this place years earlier. So we started out at about \$800. May Nelsen, their sister, was their administrator. She would say every time we would go back, "You are going to have to go higher if you want it." Well, I could see what was happening, so in a around about way we found out who was bidding against us. I told her we couldn't go any higher, but I would like to be informed when they take it to court to sell it. I just may show up if I don't have anything else to do. I talked to Harold Reeder about what I wanted to do and how much I was willing to go for it. He said to go ahead, so I put the deal up to the family that night. They all agreed, so we fasted and prayed about it.

I went to court and there on the front row was May Nelsen and Mrs. Reynolds. I shook their hands and went back on the back row where I could watch everything. The court started and went on for about thirty minutes with other stuff. Mrs. Reynolds got up and went out. Just then they brought the five acres up for hearing. It opened at \$1500. I stood up and bid \$1600 and took my place. The judge asked me three times if I was





serious. The only thing I could tell him was that if he had the papers ready, I had the money. All the judge was doing was stalling. As he was moving on with more stuff Mrs. Reynolds came back in. One of my friends, and lawyer, Roy Delmone, got up and came back to me. He told me I had better get out of the court room or they could bring the five acres back up. So I started out of the room when Mrs. Reynolds started after me howling, “Willis, Willis,” but I went right on out and never stopped until I got outside the court room. I told her she could have the place, if she was going to bid more than me. She told me she was going to bid \$1800 if necessary. I had \$2100, so it made everything alright.

Our whole family started preparing from right there on. I got a VA loan and drew up some house plans. Two years later, which was 1963, we moved in our new home on the seventh of December. Just two months later and I wouldn’t have been eligible for a VA loan.

We had by now sold our other two homes and that gave us a big boost. We had only been here for five years when, in 1968, Don Walker came to me and ask me if I wanted to be one of his partners in buying out Lorin and Claude Hatch’s sheep outfit. I told him I would because a few years earlier, when Don worked out at the mine with me, we both talked of how we could get started in the sheep business and I gave him my plan how to start off as a shoe string outfit. I guess he thought it would work because when the chance came up he went for it. We needed one more partner, so he got his brother, Ralph. We borrowed \$35,000 from the bank and secured the land, then borrowed \$20,000 to buy the sheep. Of coarse, that was all split between the three of us. Ralph choose to run them. Well, that was the first mistake as it was from there that Don and I was to keep working on our jobs—me at the Gilsonite mines, and Don as our county assessor.

This was about December time now and we had our sheep bought and on the winter range. We done alright that winter as far as the feed on the range went, but it was \$600 a month to Ralph and the \$250 to the herder with high operating expenses. I knew things was going to get rough in the future and it did! A lot of people told me I was crazy for going into partnership with these guys, but the thing they didn’t know was how stubborn and determined I could be and how little I can live on.





We didn't see alike and all this came to a head a year and a half latter. I pulled out, making it a two to one vote on all BLM and Forest land and permits. It took ten years to get everything divided up that had to be. I had the patience of Job when they didn't. That was the only way I could even up the two to one vote. But after it was all over I still came out alright. It was one of the biggest challenges I had ever taken on in my life. It was definitely a shoe string outfit for about five years, but I had a good family that stayed right with me all the way and both sides of the family was very good to help when I needed them for any reason. Then I had a lot of good friends to help. Even the loan company was good to me when making my payments. I was always one year behind for a few years, even to the point that one year the main man from the Loan Company FHA came out and asked me to sell the place and pay them off. They said that I would never pay out. It just wasn't in the cards with my debt and income. They never knew that I had a little bunch of sheep I was building up on the ranch at the creek. So I told them, "No way. I'd lose everything before I'd sell out."

The next year the Naples church was going under construction and all the ward members was assessed one thousand dollars. That year I had a 190% lamb crop and paid my assessment to the Church and told the Loan Company what I had done. I told them they could put me in jail if they wanted. They said no. But the next year I caught up on all my payments and two years later I paid off the whole loan. I built up a little cow herd and kept my sheep on the ranch and kept it that way until I sold the place on the mountain for \$200,000. Even if this was my greatest challenge of my life, I turned it about so that my whole family and I could enjoy it. I learned a lot, I grewed a lot, and it was a good experience for us all spiritually, and temporally.

I sold the place and the cows because my back finally went out on me and I had to have a back operation. I never knew at that time whether I would ever get back on my feet to do any hard work or not. I was flat on the bed for about two months, but as the good Lord wanted it, I was on my feet and going hard in about four months. I just started to concentrate on my place on the creek and improving it and watching it grow into a better place. I was back to working shift work so that I was only part-time on the place. But I did buy some newer equipment to run it with that





saved a lot of time for me. It wasn't new, but a lot better than what I did have. Besides, it gave me something to tinker on.

Now, let me take you back to 1970 in the early spring. I was working out at the mines, as I had said before, with fifteen years seniority, with the decision to come home and take the chances on what sheep I had left. Would they make my living and pay my bills? That was the question. So I asked my dad and my father-in-law, Ashel Manwaring. They both said, "If you want a sheep outfit, you had better come and save what you have left." So that's what I did. With lambing only one month away and me with no lambing sheds or corrals to put them in, no wonder that people told me I was crazy. Well, the good Lord came to my rescue and gave me some good weather for that month that I needed it bad. I got busy and threw up some sheds and corral to lamb in. We had about five hundred head to lamb out. It took us all to do that job that spring, but we had a fair lamb crop.

I had to buy hay and corn that spring to hold me over until I went to the mountain. I remember high water had just started in the creek when we had to start for the mountain. It took a little while to get the sheep started across the creek. After we crossed, and on top of the first bench, with the daily expense of hay and corn behind me, I knew I was on green feed from there on. There was a great relief that came over me. However, I knew that everything ahead of me from here on was all new to me. Because of a very limited amount of money I had at the time, I knew I couldn't make any mistakes that summer and came out on top.

My father wanted to help me to the mountain. He was an old hand at that, so I let him be my camp mover and cook. That worked out just right. Because I had been doing most of the lambing myself with my family, and Junius and Marion, my brothers, and my dad, we was pretty busy, so I hadn't had a chance to shoe my horses. So when we stopped for dinner I took time to shoe the front of one horse and that's the way I worked it going up the mountain, but I got them all shoed before we reached to the top of the mountain. Things went fairly smooth that summer. We lost a few, but not as many as my used-to-be partners. I sold ninety pound lambs and that was better than most herds that came out of the summer range that year. Everything gained weight that summer but me, and I lost about 15 pounds. I would have lost more than that if I hadn't of had my boy,





Rod, with me. He was only nine years old. He asked me, “Dad, when are we going in to eat?” That would be way late in the afternoon and I knew I needed something too, so we would go and cook up a sheep herder’s dinner, which he and I thought was all right. But, why wouldn’t it, after riding all day without anything to eat? There wasn’t any 7-11, nor top stops, nor super markets—just a tent, camp stove, and a couple of grub boxes of food and a bed on the ground that consisted of our living quarters.

When school let out, and Rod was able to stay with me, we was still on Diamond mountain. We had to make our first move with our camp to get our first sheep on new grass. It started to rain the morning we was to move. So the thing that had to be done first was to head the sheep in the direction we wanted them, then hurry back to camp where my boy, Rod, was just getting up. Rod was nine years old at that time. Then we had breakfast, done dishes, packed the sheep wagon to travel, tied the horses on behind, and started out. We hadn’t went very far until we had to put chains on the old truck. By the time we got to Speck’s cabin, I was muddy and the truck was muddy inside and out. Well, I hurried and set up camp, fed the horses, got some dry wood in and the wagon warm, then I had to get back to my sheep. It was so cold and rainy I thought Rod would be better off at camp and told him I would be back in a couple of hours. I had an old rain coat I put on to keep me dry, and rode off to find my sheep.

Well I went around all my sheep and felt that everything was all right. About that time it lightning and thundered, and a small cloud burst hit me. My horse refused to continue in the rain. I was going by a big cedar tree, so I just backed her under that big tree. The little mare I was riding backed under that tree almost automatically. It seemed like at least thirty minutes before we could go on. I guessed it was about five o’clock, so I headed for camp knowing the sheep was all grazing that way. There was quite a big hill between me and camp, so I was going around it to save going over the top, saving on horse flesh, as we called it. But something kept telling me, you have got to check that hill, so go over. Don’t worry about the horse. So I did. As I was riding over the top, through the scattered cedar, there stood a wet little boy looking for his dad. I know it was at least a mile from camp. It was all new country both for him and myself. I had only been in that country a couple of times myself to this point. Well, I



was so glad to see him that I couldn't get mad at him for leaving camp. I just reached down and pulled him wet and all and put him on the back of me and told him to grab those saddle strings and hang on. I didn't know whether that horse rode double or not, but at this point in life I knew she was going to. But everything went well, to the point that Rod wanted to go with me the next day also. I knew we was in this thing together. We would learn this thing together—we would learn this sheep business together.

My old sheep skin coat that Rod had on the day before had dried out. I told him to get that old coat and ride with me. It was still raining, but by now it wasn't coming down slow and soft. The wind was blowing until it was coming down in a horizontal way. It was cold, and the horse didn't want to face the rain. The next time around my sheep, Rod said he would stay at the camp, or sheep wagon. Well, that rain lasted for three days and nights without stopping. I thought I was back in California taking bivouac training. After the third day, the sun come out and warmed the old mountain up. Rod was ready to go with me again. On the way around the sheep he said to me, "Dad, that sheep wagon sure is small to have to stay in for two days." As most of you would know, being on the mountain, that wasn't the last time we experienced those cold rains.

Carol and my father came up that afternoon to bring our supplies that we needed. Most of the time she would come alone. If some of the girls was free she would bring one of them up. This sheep operation was run different than most sheep outfits. The big ones would have sheepherders, camp movers, etc. But I done my own camp moving and getting my own wood and water most of the time.

One of my horses I was using that belonged to my father got kicked by one of the other horses and got infection it, so I had to send her back to be treated. I had a young mare at home that wasn't broke to ride yet. So my father brought her up for me to break. He helped me get her started that day. Then, the next morning, Father snubbed her off to start the day. I was on my own from there on. Within a month the kids was riding her all over the mountain. The kids named her Starlight and we kept her in the family until she was twenty-nine years old. By then she was getting so old that she couldn't hardly get around, so we sold her for dog food so that she wouldn't have to suffer another winter. We took the money and gave it to





help build the Provo Temple.

While we was yet camped at Speck's cabin, Rodney wanted to borrow my pocket knife for something. Well, on his way down to the reservoir to give it back to me, he lost it in the weeds. I was doing something down by the water, so when I learned what had happened, I started looking for my knife. Walking back to camp and trying to stay on the same tracks as Rod came down on, I reached camp without any luck at all. A pocket knife is very essential to have when running a business like we was, and it was along ways to town for another one, besides the money involved. So I had a silent prayer and told the Lord my predicament, and then started back toward the waterhole. I went only about a hundred feet from camp and there in the weeds my eyes saw my pocket knife. I don't remember thanking the good Lord for that for years later, until one day I was thinking back over all those things that had happened to me. So I thanked Him for that and everything all at once so that I wouldn't have to bother Him so much. Sure hope He understands a character like me.

When it come to move the sheep to the forest range, my wife come up with Wayne Pack and Denna and Connie to help us. They, with their mother, drove the big truck as that was all I owned at that time. Wayne and Rod helped drive the sheep. We had to make five miles a day because they was twenty other herds on the trail at the same time, and each herd had to enter the trail a certain day or wait until everybody else had gone if you had missed your given day for the trail. So everything was going well until we come to the canyons we had to go down in and come back out. Those sheep had never been there before and neither had I. You would of thought I was driving a pig the way they acted on the trail. After a week we finally reached the little foot bridge that we was to cross the sheep on and that went fairly well compared to what I thought it was going to be like.

Mother and the girls had to go around the Red Cloud loop road to get in what they called Bear Holler, and that was still three miles from where our sheep was. So the next thing to do was to come up with some pack saddles to keep the camp nearer and closer to the sheep. Well, there again the good Lord came to my rescue. Allen Bennion, an old sheep man, had some old pack outfits he used on his burros years ago and said I could have them for twenty dollars. It was only a few days until my father





dropped all that stuff off at the sheep wagon. Well, I had never packed a horse or a burro before in my life. I had only seen it done once on the trail up here. Now I had three horses, and which one of the three would be best to pack and not string the only camp I owned all over Dry Fork canyon? My old pinto was calm and gentle. Then I chose the little black mare, Star Light. Even if she had been broke for a couple of months, she was the most tame.

It was early in the afternoon when I started the process of trying my luck out making sure I got the right thing to make camp with. It was a nice day but the flies was awful and kept my horses stomping around until I could hardly get the pack on them. Well, after about one hour later, we was going down the trail to South Fork—myself, Rod, and our coats on old Bill, the big sorrel, and leading Starlight and old Pint behind her. Things was going smooth until the pans, forks, and knives started to rattle in the grub boxes. Rod and I found ourselves going down the trail sideways trying to keep old Bill calmed down so there wouldn't be a run away.

As new as I was in the business, it was a learning experience almost every day, but it was all fun. Carol would bring Teresa up to stay with me and Rod for a few days. One time Denna came up to stay over night and brought her little dog, Sugar, which was a Pomeranian and Sugar had four little puppies. Well, by this time of the year we was back in Frenchy Park which was about two miles back to our tent. We was still packing, so we put the little pups in the pandeleroes that hang over the pack horse. I would have liked a movie of all this, but we will have to settle for only the memories.

Shane Southam, Rod's cousin, came up for a few days. His time up there was over a weekend, so he got in on my Sunday School class we had every Sunday. Marcia, Denna's cousin, came one time—all of these happenings made it fun for everyone.

I got to see seven bears that summer. They killed quite a few sheep for me so I had a trapper come up and set a trap for them. We got one before we left the summer range. I got to see a lot of deer and elk. In the high mountains that summer, one old bull elk had a set of horns on him that I have never seen since.

When it came time to move the sheep back on the fall range on Dia-





mond mountain, Rod and I tackled it alone. We hadn't went too far until we was approaching the other fork in the sheep trail that was coming from the north from Trout Creek areas. Well, we was in tall pines so we could only see straight down the clearing, so when we was about to merge with the other trail, there was another herd of sheep going to the fall range just like us. We merged those two herds together as good as you could with two cars on a freeway. There was Spanish boys with that other herd and they almost panicked when all this happened. They wanted to know what to do. I just told them we would keep the herds together until we reached the counting corral; then we would cut them out. So they were happy to hear that.

We got back to Diamond mountain about the fifteenth of September and sold the lambs about the last of October. It was a picnic to herd the sheep then—they never wanted to go anywhere, only to eat and drink. I guess I put back on a few pounds in the last month I was there. I finished the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants while I was waiting to come off the mountain. It also gave me a chance to think my next few years through. The Walkers made me a really good deal to take my sheep for the winter. I couldn't turn it down, so that gave me a chance to go back to work. I looked me up an oil field job that paid good money and hired on. I stayed in the oil field for fifteen years and tried to run my outfit the best I could on the side.

I eventually had to sell the sheep, except a little farm flock, and go into cows. I got about seventy-five head. Then I had to build five miles of fence. Rod was fifteen by now, so I hired him and Kevin Martin to help me. Then Junius wanted to run a few cows with me, so he helped and also his boy, Shane, came with him. So that made a pretty good crew. Then I had some water tanks made that would hold six thousand gallons. That way, I would only have to haul water about every five days. I had a truck and a thousand gallon tank on it. We hauled our water out of Jones' Hole fish hatchery. Sometimes I would get off work at five o'clock p.m. and start hauling water, and by the time I got home it was three o'clock in the morning.



Willis down at the "crick."





But there was some fun times also. We enjoyed the cattle drive to and from the mountain. One time in the spring we was taking the cows to the mountain. It's quite a way from Ashley Creek to Brush Creek, and it was hot that day, so by the time we got to Brush Creek, those old cows didn't wait to get to the crossing. They dove off in the first opening they come to and the creek was bank to bank in high water. For about thirty minutes I thought we had lost about ten head. After a few prayers, they found an opening on the other side of the creek and crawled out. That never happened any more—we seen to that. The young calves would get hot and lay down and the cows would go on without them. So we always had to pick them up and haul them to the next stop.

One day, Mom and I was hauling water out of the fish hatchery and I know it was a hundred and five degrees. You leave the fish hatchery and climb about six miles with a eight percent grade, so it's a slow climb all the way. This one time down there, after a load, Mom didn't get the water turned off in time, so she got wet from the top to the bottom and all the way through. That water will fill a thousand gallon tank in three minutes, so you really have to watch it or you sure can get wet, and she did that time. So on the way out of the place she took off all her clothes and hung them out the window and put some on the mirror braces. Well, by the time we reached the tanks the clothes was dry. I ask if she would let me help her back on with them. It was all an X-rated view, free to be continued!

I was working in Alaska at this time, and I would fly up for thirty days and then home for fifteen days. I worked that way for most of that year, until we finished the well. I stayed home most of that winter feeding my cows out. I made one well in Red Wash before calving time. I enjoyed that year. I could do and catch up around the house and the farm as I wanted to. I wasn't worried about bill collectors. Things was going good for me until I landed the cows on the mountain and my back went out on me and I couldn't even get out of bed. After three weeks I got an appointment with a Dr. Morton in Salt Lake City. Mom put a mattress in the back of the pickup and backed it up close to the door and I crawled out and in the truck. A week later I was home recovering. By now I had sold all the cows and had a good chance to sell the place on the mountain, so I did. The main reason for this was I didn't know whether I would ever get back to





hard work or not, but as luck happened, I was back to heavy work in the oil field within two and a half months. But I had already agreed to sell the place, so I followed on through with it and adjusted my life accordingly.

In 1980, Kevin Manwaring wanted to break in working in the oil field, so I got him on with our crew. Kevin was a good cook, and I was a good dish washer, so that made it just right. We ate like kings. We got to talking one day about inspecting pipe and how much we could make from it. So I asked him why he wasn't doing that because he used to do that work. In fact, the company Kevin worked for sent him to school to learn pipe inspection. Well, what Kevin told me was that he didn't have any money nor any leads to start out with. It so happened that I had that kind of money in the bank at that time. I also had the leads we needed, so I asked him, "What's stopping us?" We started right then planning how we was going to put it together. What the name of the company was going to be. What our logo sign was going to look like. It was only about four months until we was on our way. We done real well the first year, close to a \$100,000. Well, like all other partnerships, when money like that gets involved it don't last long, and so, where family was involved, I sold my part to Kevin and let him go on with it. That business is still doing well at this time, in 1997.

It wasn't long until I had a chance to make pallets on my own for the Little Bananza mine. I tried that for a few years on the side from farming and working out at the little Bonanza full time. I returned from there in 1987. A year later Bishop Haslem called me and my wife on a mission to New Zealand. We got back from there in the spring of March, 1990. I took over my sheep again from my brother Junius, as he was caring for them while I was gone. Our experience on a mission in New Zealand will be found in our journals.

The bishop called us to work with the young adults the first day we arrived home to the church, as well as acting as our stake coordinator at the dry pack cannery, one week out of the month. Two years later I found myself as a high councilmen—three years of that and they asked me to be the new bishop of the new Ashley Creek ward they was putting together. That was the biggest calling I had ever had, but the good Lord gave me some good people to staff the ward with. I hardly new anyone in the





THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE

We, the First Presidency of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, do hereby certify
that on the Fifteenth day of October A.D. 1995
WILLIS J. SOUTHAM was
Ordained and Set Apart
by Phillip Wayne Manning as
Bishop of the Ashley Creek Ward
of the Vernal Utah Unitah State
of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In testimony whereof,
we hereunto subscribe our names this Eighteenth day
of November A.D. 1995

W. J. Southam
James E. Davis

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

new ward . All I had was a roster sheet the stake gave me of the people from five different wards. I didn't know or hadn't seen my second counselor until President Manwaring called Dave Birch in to be my counselor. But it all turned out to be a great experience. I have learned a lot, and have grown a lot from it all.

Front row: Willis (L) as Ashley Creek Ward Bishop and his counselors Ivan Saddler (M) and David Birch (R).





CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Refiner's Fire Talk

Not only is this part of my life story, but it is a talk I gave in a ward conference on January 11, 1998 entitled “The Refiner’s Fire.”

One of the tools that the Lord has to get the attention of His people is called “the refiner’s fire.” For example, when the Lord came to Jonah in the Old Testament and asked him to go save the people in the city of Ninevah, Jonah first thought that is absolutely impossible. So he grabbed a ship to run away from his responsibility the Lord needed him to do. But, as we all know, after three days the whale threw him up on the beach. I don’t know what it would be like to be in the belly of a whale, but whatever it was like, Jonah had repented and was willing to go and accomplish the task the Lord sent him to do. To start with, I am sure that took place after a good clean scrubbing.

Another example is Paul of old in the New Testament who was at one time working for the Roman empire to eliminate all the saints. When the Lord took his eyesight away, then asked him (in my expression), “Would you like your eyesight back?” He told him what he had to do to receive his eyesight back. Within a few months, through the refiners fire, he was working to save the souls of men rather than trying to eliminate them, and





served faithfully the rest of his life.

Then we know of Alma the Younger in the Book of Mormon. The Lord used the same tool of refiner's fire, only it took three days for his repentance. Alma expressed it as "the gaul of bitterness." He was willing to change his ways and give the rest of his life in saving souls.

After fifty years I will confess my pride in this part of my life story. This began in the spring of 1945 with me leaving combat in Italy. I came home and started working in the Rangle Colorado oil boom, which was both dangerous and exciting work, and being around the hard core men of the world. With all this I still maintained my testimony of the gospel. I had not been home very long when the bishop asked me to be a counselor in the M.I.A. Very seldom was the bishop there because of his time schedule.

So one Mutual night we were having a dance and I had to go into the chapel for some reason, and there the bishop was, and I asked him,

"What brings you here, Bishop?" He got right to the point. He asked me if I had thoughts of going on a mission. I told him missions are only for the polished guys. As a kid, I looked up to them as General Authorities, so I came back with the reply, "No way can I become a missionary." Bishop Wallace Slaugh was a very good bishop, and an understanding person. He quoted a scripture out of 1st Nephi where the Lord told Nephi that He asks His servants to do nothing except

He prepare a way for them. So right there and

then I seen that I wasn't arguing with the bishop. I knew I was not about to argue with the Lord. So I slowly took my eyes off the floor and looked the Bishop in his eyes and said, "I will go."

In a couple of months I got my call and it read, "You are to serve in the Hawaiian mission specifically with the Japanese people." Immediately I felt a cold, hard feeling coming over me of a negative attitude because I hadn't been home too long from fighting that enemy. But, I thought to myself, "The Lord will open up the way."

I finished my mission training and was put in charge of six other el-



SS Matsonia Ship





ders that was going to Hawaii. It was a five day trip on the Matsonia ship. I knew I would have a lot of time to study, so I carried the Book of Mormon where ever I went on the ship because there was a lot of studying to be done and because I had never studied the scriptures. In keeping track of my elders on the top deck of the ship we played a lot of shuffle board. In my spare time I tried to read the Book of Mormon. I know I read the first page twenty times, and all I was doing was just reading words. All I got out of it was "I, Nephi, was born of goodly parents...." That wasn't enough to convert an investigator, and I was getting worried. On the fifth morning, instead of the slow sway of the ship going up and down, it was calm, so I hurriedly got dressed and went up on the top deck and found the Hawaiian island was in view. It wasn't long until we was docking at the Aloha Tower dock. I remember looking down at the people. They were all crowded around waiting for friends and relatives to come off the ship. There were all kinds and colors of people, and I thought, "Can all these people be converted?" I shrugged my shoulders, grabbed my belongings, and headed down the gang plank. I moved through the crowd and found our mission president waiting for us.

He interviewed all his new missionaries, and it came my turn. After talking awhile with me, I could see he was having a hard time wondering where to place me—a character such as myself. So I just blurted out and said, "President Weenig, I am not down here to play around. I came down here to do missionary work, so give me the hardest job you got down here. My parents aren't flushed with money, so I am not down here to goof off." The next morning I found myself in Hilo, Hawaii, assigned to the most strict missionary in the mission field. At the end of one month, if I was to measure my success from one to one hundred, it would be a zero.

At that time I got a transfer with another elder to open up a new area, an Elder that was the complete opposite, from my point, of my first companion. He would do all the law would allow and then some. We was sent to this new area without purse or script. The first day was about twenty



Playing shuffle board on the ship.





miles from nowhere and about twenty hours. We started tracting, but nobody wanted to listen to us. It started to get night and it was raining. We were wet and hungry and dog tired after a full days walking. My stomach felt like a greyhound looks. No one wanted to take us in for the night. It was about this time I thought, “How do you experience faith?” Another prayer was in order.

We hadn’t went very far down this dirt road when we saw a trail that led to a shack. The light was on, and a Japanese/Hawaiian woman invited us in. We told her who we were and why we were there and chatted with her about the gospel for over an hour. She told us that she was living a common law marriage. About then she got up to fix us something to eat. After we ate and got the dishes done, she showed us to their bed and they slept on the floor in another room. They wouldn’t have no other way. The next thing I knew, it was light and I could smell breakfast cooking. The man of the house had gone to work and she set us up to breakfast. The house was very clean and the meals were better than any banquets I had ever eaten. We taught her some more of the gospel then took off. The sun was shining, and it was nice and warm as we were walking on the little trail back out to the road. There was a warm feeling that came over me that I had never experienced before. I stopped and looked around and looked that humble abode over again and was meditating on what had happened in those last few hours. That couple had taken in a couple servants of the Lord in out of the rain and fed us and gave us their bed while they slept on the floor, humble enough to listen to our message.

While I stood there, the spirit spoke to me and said, “My gospel will be taught to every kindred, tongue and people, and that doesn’t leave out anyone.” I repented there and went away anew. My success from then on, if I had a way of measuring it, went from “A” instead of a zero. As I studied the scriptures, it was like reading them through the Urim and Thummim. By accepting the refiner’s fire, it becomes sweet in the end.





CHAPTER TWELVE

The Finishing of My Life Story

My brothers and sisters were very helpful to one another. We were a very close family. I am sure that our folks could say they were proud of us all. Even if none of us became a movie star, a governor of the state, a king or queen, or maybe even the mayor of Vernal city. I feel there is many more things that could be done that is just as important. We were just common people, but I feel the good Lord loves us or he wouldn't have made so many of us.

I've got to say this about my wife: it would be real hard to find a better wife and mother, the world over, that would fit me and my demands and let me reach all of my potential that I have reached this far. My dreams and goals were pretty well accomplished with the help of my wife and children. I know I used a lot of baling wire, but we kept the place going and running. We got everything paid for, then took a break and started to



Willis on another kind of horse.





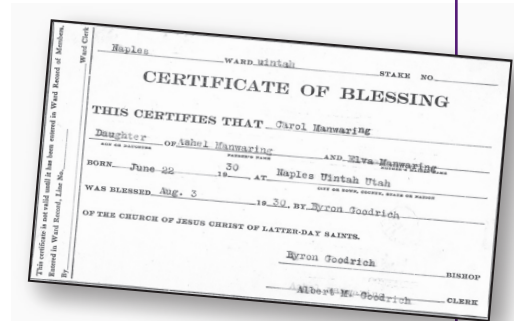
On the back of this postcard of Hawaii, Willis had written, "I carried this with me while in the army. But not knowing why, but later I went there on a mission."

enjoy life. That didn't last long until they had the both of us working in the Church doing different callings. That was good though, because we grew in the gospel and went on a mission together and worked in our callings, like hometeaching, young adults, etc., for almost fifteen years.





CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Carol's Certificate of Blessing.

Growing Up Years

I, Carol Manwaring Southam, was the second child born to Elva Merrell and Ashel Manwaring on June 22, 1930. I understand that my mother thought that I was to make my appearance a few weeks earlier. The doctor had come and everything was prepared, but I was still up in heaven learning my last article of faith, so I couldn't come to earth until I had completed my assignments.

I was born in a log house just east of where Mother (Elva) Manwaring's house is now. The home consisted of one bedroom, a front room, and a small kitchen. In the bedroom was a trap door in the floor that went down into the root cellar where Mom stored all the bottled food and potatoes, carrots, and onions. So when the cold winds blew, she just went into the bedroom, moved a throw rug, opened the trap door, and went down some stairs to get whatever she needed.

We had some big tall cottonwood trees just a hop, step, and a jump from the kitchen door. Dad climbed up to one of the tallest limbs and put some heavy rope around the limb and made us a rubber tire swing. We had more fun on that swing because you went so high—it seemed almost like we could touch the clouds. My sister, LaWanna, and I spent a lot of





time playing on that swing.

There was a irrigation ditch that was about forty-five feet from our front door. I can still hear the water gurgling past the house. When it was our water turn, it would sing you to sleep at night. The strawberry and raspberry patch was just out the back door. I could go and eat all I wanted just for the picking. We had a nice apple orchard with the varieties of Wealthys, Wolfrivers, and Yellow Transparents. Also in this orchard, we had plums, prunes and even some Preserving Peaches. So during the late summer and early fall we had plenty of fruit to eat and mother always canned plenty for the winter months. In the fall we would pick some of our best apples and wrap them in newspaper so that we would have nice apples clear into January and February.

We grew big gardens and, of course, we were expected to weed them. That was one of the things that I did not like—weeding those long rows of garden with the sun beating down on you and the mosquitoes biting you. My mom would say “Don’t look at how much more you have to weed, but look behind you and see how much you have accomplished.” I guess that would be a thought to apply to our lives. Don’t be discouraged of what we haven’t accomplished in life, but be grateful for what we have accomplished.

We had chickens, turkeys, ducks, pigs, sheep, cows, and horses. I guess it was old MacDonald’s farm. Of coarse, we were expected at an early age to help with all the chores that these animals created. Feed the chickens, gather the eggs. When mom let them out of the chicken house, which would be in the early summer months, they would lay their eggs in a haystack, a straw stack, or in a corner among some old boards. We even found a nest down at the bottom of the apple orchard among the potowatomi plum bushes, so we had Easter egg hunting every night.

When I was five or six years old, Dad built the house Grandmother Manwaring lives in now. He tore the log house down and used the logs to build the new home. I remember that experience was quite fun for me, but I don’t think it was all that fun for Mom and Dad. Mom had to cook on the tiny camp stove and our clothes were hung on nails and in boxes and Mom had her dishes in boxes, so it was quite unhandy. But I didn’t feel the pressure.





One of my favorite sounds came from childhood when I was a child growing up at home. My folks were building their home and we needed to sleep up in the loft. The way you got to the loft was we went outside and climbed some stairs up to the loft. There was beds in there for the children, and in the summertime, we'd leave the door open so it was cooler. We had some big, tall cottonwood trees outside of our house and when you'd be in your beds at night and we'd have a little small breeze coming through, you could hear the leaves blowing and singing to one another until it just lulled you to sleep. That's one special sound I know of. It may not sound too great to you people, but to me that was a comforting sound because the nice, little, gentle breeze just rustled the limbs in the trees enough to sing us all to sleep.

We herded turkeys and they were hard to herd. We tried to keep them in the bottom of our fields, but they would fly up over the fences into our neighbor's gardens and flower gardens and get into trouble, so we had to be ever watchful of those rascals. One of the reasons we had so many turkeys was Dad and Mom would raise small turkeys to fatten and grow to sell for Thanksgiving in November to the grocery stores and town people for the holiday table. Then Dad would take the money and pay our fall taxes.

This was another responsibility I disliked very much. We were expected to help kill them in the fall, gut them, take them into the house, pin feather them, and clean them up for the market. Mom would have to put them all on the kitchen counter and table to cool over night. Remember, our homes were cold at night, so they cooled off quite well. Anyway, next morning we couldn't find a place to eat our breakfast, but Dad wrapped and hauled them into town that day with horses and wagon.

We had an old cranky man for one of our neighbors, and a couple of times the turkeys got away from us and was in his garden. The second time they had got in, my sister, LaWanna, and I was getting them out. He followed us back to the house and told Mother if they came to his place again he would start shooting them and we knew he would. Mother knew it was wrong and told him it wouldn't happen again, but for him to be so angry upset Mom a great deal. I will always remember the lesson of how my mother baked him some bread and a couple of pies (Mom was a good





cook) and sent LaWanna and I down with the baked goods.

This fellow was a bachelor and was cantankerous. I will add this while I am talking about him. When he got older and was very sick and dying, he called for Dad to come to his bedside and said to Dad, “Ashel, I wanted the place you have so bad, and when Abe Richens let you buy instead of me, it made me so mad that I would think of ways to kill you and make it look like a accident. You have always been so good to me, so, before I die, I have to apologize and ask for your forgiveness.” Which Dad, of course, did.

I am going back to the summer we lived in the tent while Dad built our new home. By fall Dad had the house completed enough so we could move in before it got too cold. We didn’t have electricity yet, so we had coal oil lamps and wood and coal stoves. We hauled our water and Mom washed our clothes on a wash board by hand. Our toilet was an outhouse. It was hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Well it was so nice to move into freshly plastered walls—now we wouldn’t have bed bug problems.

My mother was a good, nutritious cook, and what she couldn’t cook or bake on the ol’ coal and wood stove was unbelievable. Being that I am talking of cooking, I’ll mention a few different ways we prepared some food that my grandchildren will raise their eyebrows at. My mom would clean the back of the coal stove and wipe a little grease on it, then put some very thinly sliced potatoes on the top of the stove. When they were browned on the one side, she would turn them over and brown the other side. Then you had some lovely potatoes chips before we even heard of potato chips.

Also, if you prepare the stove the same way, you can make some different tasting scones that I quite liked. The good ol’ fashioned stew or soup that Mom would simmer on the back of the stove; your ham hock and white bean soup; the new baked bread and pies and cake and cookies that came out of the ol’ fashioned coal stove oven just couldn’t be beat.

Every Saturday night Mom would get out the round number three tub and put it in front of the oven door and put some warm water in it that she had got out of the water reservoir that was on the back of the stove. Then we all took a turn in taking a bath in the same water, starting





with the youngest. Doesn't that sound yucky? Well, we had to conserve on water. In the winter it was such a nice warm place to have a bath. When all was done, Mom would take the water and mop the floor with the bath water. We had to be conservative on water because we hauled our water in wooden barrels. Talking of wooden barrels reminds me of the song Dad and Mom use to sing to us:

*Oh little play mate,
Come out and play with me,
And bring your dollies three,
Climb up my apple tree,
Holler down my rain barrel,
Slide down my cellar door,
And will be jolly friends forever more.*

We use to put a wooden barrel on the corner of the house under the rain drain. The barrel would fill up with rain water when it rained and we would use that for bathing and other things. When the rain barrel was half empty, you would holler down in it, and it would make a echo, so we children would see who could make the loudest noise or echo.

When I was just a child, my mother and father would go around hanging the signs up to these different billboards that you see on the highway. They would get paid so much for hanging the signs up and my dad had the contract from Roosevelt to Rangely, Colorado. The companies would send him the paper pictures to go and hang up. He had to hang them up with paste. So my mother would go with him, most generally to help him, and us children were small so we would go with them. This one time I remember we were over to Roosevelt and they were putting the signs up. We were playing underneath the sign and of course it got noon time and we were very hungry. So my mother went to the store and got some store bought bread and some of what we called chippered salmon—really it was a smoked salmon—and one or two other things to go with it. She come back and she made us some sandwiches of chippered salmon and we had store bought bread. I still remember to this day the delicious taste with the smoked salmon and the store bought bread.

We also herded cows out on the road along the side and along the





ditch banks. The summer feed would get short in the pasture and then it was cow herding time. When the cows grazed all the grass in one area, then we would move them on up further. This one day we were way up passed Richens' corner and the house Richens' lived in. Abe Richens was a sheep rancher with a lot of acreage and a bunch of sheep. He even had land on the mountain. He and his wife were getting a little older, so he was selling some of his holdings. That is how Grandpa Manwaring was able to get the acreage he did.

Anyway, they had built a nice brick house on the corner, north about a half of mile from where we lived. I thought it was almost like a mansion. They even had a indoor bathroom and a telephone and I thought how rich these people must be. This is crazy, but even to this day I dream about how nice this house was. The beautiful flowers she didn't have around her yard—to me at that time it was a dream place. Anyway, back to herding cows. There came in the sky some dark clouds and we knew it was going to rain and rain hard because of the clouds being so dark and low. So we started the cows back, but then there was a bam—bam—just two or three lighting strikes and we had a cloud burst and hail storm. The hail was just a pelting us; it stung. The cows put their tails in the air and took off running for home. We ran after them, but couldn't run as fast, so by the time we got to the Richens' corner, the hail was pelting us so hard and we where soaked to the skin. LaWanna said we better go into the Richens' and wait till this was over. I was to bashful and didn't want to go in, so LaWanna said, "We will just stay on their porch." So I went in with her. Well, of course, we didn't stay on the porch. Mrs. Richens came out and ask us to come in and get dry. Man, was I bashful. I always have had a hang up that rich people are better than little ol' me. I haven't got over it completely to this day. Mrs. Richens wrung out our clothes in her bathtub in the bathroom that I marveled at and had us wait while she dried our clothes by a electric heater I had never heard or seen before. Their furnishings were so lovely, and her floors just shined.

This was quite the experience for this little farm girl. Well, the storm didn't last too long—just a nice quick cloud burst—so when our clothes got dry we went home to parents that wondered why the cows came home without two little girls behind them. We, of course, had a story to tell





them of being in this magical house with bathroom, telephone, electric heater, and such fine furniture.

They had a son by the name Jack, and he was a bachelor, so when the parents died, Jack inherited the house and land around. I am sorry to say everything went to pot. It was so sad how it went downhill after his parents died. The house and place looked so empty and forlorn.

We milked cows, and here was another chore I disliked, but we were expected to do it. We were obedient and so we did it. Some cows were easier to milk than others, and in the summer they would switch their tails to get rid of the pesky flies. Of course, while we were milking, we would get flipped in the face with their tails. Some cows kicked, so you was always on the alert when you milked so that the cow didn't kick the bucket and tip over the milk.

I have a story to tell you about me milking cows. I was a teenager and, of course, liked the boys. One of the boys I really liked was named Max. He was a nice looking chap. Well, one evening in a sloppy spring night I was milking away and my mind was in another world when I heard this voice say, "Are you working too hard?" I peaked around the cow and there stood Max. I about died. I swallowed and tried to gain my composure. Here I was, in the old dirty corral, milking a cow—a job that wasn't very lady like—and he had come to take me to the show.

We didn't have a telephone, so the boys would just come and ask the night they wanted to go out. If the boy thought ahead of time he would ask you at school or church, but they had to wait and see if they could get the family car or have the money to go to a show. When they came unannounced they would have to wait while you got ready, and if they caught you milking cows or the likes, then they had to wait while you even took a bath, like I did that night. How embarrassing. Well, thank goodness for brothers and sisters. They entertained while we got spruced up.

After we would get the milking done, Mom and Dad took the milk into the house and ran it through the separator. We would help feed the calves and pigs some chopped grain and the separated milk. We also made sure the chickens were fed and eggs gathered in. Then we would take the cows down to the lower pasture. To make it more interesting we would grab ahold of their tails and, of course, they didn't like this, so they would take





off a running. We would hang on as long as we could.

Dad would wake us up before the sun was up so we could get the cows from the lower pasture to bring them in for their morning milking. Man, my eyes could hardly open, but that was our chore. We would sometime stretch a little too long in bed and fall back to sleep just to hear Dad calling us again. But, what I remember about those mornings was Mother would slice a thick slice of her good home made bread and put some of our thick cream on it and spread it like butter and sprinkle sugar on and we ate this as we went after the cows. Our Mom knew this made the job a little more pleasant.

One time we were milking and doing our chores at dusk which meant we were taking the cows down to the lower pasture after dark. Both LaWanna and I was timid of the dark and we complained about it to Dad. Mom said, “Nothing is going to hurt you. We will go on with the rest of the chores while you get them to the pasture.” So off we went, shaking in our boots. A little ways on the lane, just out of the lower pasture, was a bunch of trees we passed through, and as we were coming back, just as we entered the trees, we heard this growling sound. LaWanna and I stopped and didn’t know if we dared continue, but we couldn’t stay out there all night, so we took a few more steps and heard it again. We stopped and LaWanna was trying to be the brave big sister and I was holding on to her for dear life. Then we heard a giggle and it was Mom! She had felt sorry for us, so she had come down to walk us back home, but because she was a tease she couldn’t resist the temptation.

In those days, when Dad put up his hay for the winter, he stacked it right next to the barn and shed. It was loose hay—not baled. When Dad had fed the hay down a little passed the top of the shed, we would love to run and jump off the shed and fall down into the soft fluffy hay. What fun! Dad didn’t have a tractor at this time. He had some big work horses called Dick and Doll. At dinner time it was our job to lead them up to the head of the ditch to the water hole. I was a little girl with these big horses that scared the liver out of me to handle. They were so thirsty, the closer to the water hole they got, they started to run and you had to know what you were doing or they would run right over you. I was always glad to get this noon day chore over with. There was no “ifs,” “ands,” or “buts.” We did





it to be obedient.

One fall day these big horses got out into the grain field and Dad had LaWanna and me stand in this certain place so the horses wouldn't come through this broken down gate and get into the hay stack. Well, we stood shivering in our boots and hoping they wouldn't come our way. Well, of course they did, and was coming "ninety per." Needless to say, when they were almost to us, we couldn't be brave any longer, so we scattered for the nearest safe place and the horses got into the haystack. Because they were all worked up, they did a lot of damage before Dad could get to them and get them out of the hay stack. We got punished for letting them get by us. Dad was so upset that they had not only done the damage in the hay stack, but also in the grain field, that he didn't control himself.

Dad always planted quite a few acres of field corn and grain, and had quite a few acres of alfalfa and pasture land. We had around a hundred and sixty acres. He would silage the field corn and this was good winter feed for the horses and cows and sheep. We would cultivate these long rows of corn with a cultivating horse and we rode the horse and had to steer or guide him right down the middle of the rows of corn. That was our job—to not let the horse step on any corn plants. So we had to be ever watchful so they wouldn't. You hardly had time to swat the mosquitoes and flies for fear the horse would step in the wrong place. And remember, back when I was young, we girls didn't wear pants, so our legs was in the open for any mosquitoes or flies.

We had a pond down in the pasture that filled up with water each time we had a water turn. This is what the stock would drink out of until the next water turn. My brothers loved to go and catch frogs and polly wogs in the pond. In the winter the pond would freeze over and we would have a nice place for ice skating, but we didn't have ice skates unless we borrowed some, so most all the time we went skating on our shoes. This was still fun for us, though.

In the spring of the year, when the cold March winds blew, I can still see my mother going down the lane and through fields and pasture looking for turkey nests in bushes, and clumps of grass. Sometimes she would find a nest closer to the corrals, but the turkeys usually would make their nests in the far away places. She would keep watch of them so when the





little ones hatched we could bring the mom and little turkeys up and put them in the hen house so the fox and coyotes wouldn't get them. Of course, in the spring we would have new lambs, calves, little chickens, little pigs, and sometime a new colt. We most generally had bum lambs we would feed, and once in a while, a new born calf had to be shown how to get its dinner.

In the fall we shocked grain, stomped hay—all sorts of fun farm chores. I think Willis mentioned in his life story about Jakey the Jew. He came to our place also, and I thought he was from another world with all his products he didn't have in his covered wagon. Of course, he would barter and trade with things you may have on your farm that he wanted. I remember one time Mother gave him some loaves of bread for a pair of shoes.

We had some gypsies that would come by most every summer. They were wanting a hand out. They were so fascinating with there colorful clothes and jingles and bangles and cute little babies. We even had Indians migrating from summer reservation to winter. I had heard stories of them taking little children, so I stayed close by my mom when she was talking with them. It was fascinating to watch them go by while we watched from our porch. Sometimes they would stop and ask for something to eat or drink. I can still see them carrying their belongings on that sling thing—I think you call it a travois—behind their horses.

I don't know what reminded me of this. Maybe because these things I have just mentioned happened while we were still living in the three room log house. Mom's youngest sister, Aunt Winnona, lived with us for a while. One Halloween, Aunt Winnona had gone to a M.I.A. Halloween party, and they had carved Jack O'Lanterns out of pumpkins and put a candle inside. She brought hers home with her. We were all in the kitchen when all of a sudden this lite-up face was showing through the window! Wow, did I run fast to hide behind my Mother! I for sure believed in ghost and goblins there after.

I remember I had the measles when we lived in the log house. I was so sick with them that one night, and so thirsty for a drink of water, that I dreamed that a big black bull came up out of the cellar door and was handing me a glass of water. I keep reaching for it, but couldn't quite get it. You know how those kind of dreams are like. It wakes you up and you





are still wanting a drink, so I called to Mother and she brought me a cool glass of water. I can still remember how good that water tasted.

We had a nice coal and wood stove in the kitchen with a nice oven in it and so, whenever I hear the story of Hansel and Gretel, I can visualize the old woman pushing them into our old fashioned oven. Why I don't know, unless I heard the story in Mom's kitchen by the stove for the first time. The peace and warmth that I remember in that old log home and later years is what I have strived for in my own home after I got married.

Some time after we moved into our new home, because it only had one bedroom, Dad and Mom fixed a place up in the attic for us children to sleep. We had to go out of the house and go up some stairs that was along the side of the house to get to the attic. In the winter I sure hated to go out in the cold to go up the stairs to get to our beds and in the summer the attic was hot. Thank goodness for cool nights! The attic door was left open so the cool breeze could come in and I do remember how the big silver leaf trees would sway in the breeze and sing me to sleep as the wind would sigh through their branches.

I remember when we received electricity. Boy oh boy, what magic! Just pull a string and, bingo, you had lights. No more washing lamp chimneys and filling the lamps with coal oil. When you wanted to go from one room to another you didn't have to carry a lamp with you. All you did was go to a room and pull a string. Now days you just switch a switch. Boy, we were getting real modern. I didn't realize at that time how much more modern we would become. We were able to get a refrigerator after we received the electricity and, oh, how good the water and especially the good cold milk tasted. Before the refrigerator, we kept our milk and other perishables in an ice box, or hung the milk in a small bucket down the cistern which would just barley keep it cool. The day the refrigerator was delivered, LaWanna and I was up the street about a quarter of a mile when we saw the delivery truck pull into our house. We were so excited we left the cows and ran home to see what it looked like. Boy, we were getting just like the city folk.

Going out to the ice house and getting a big piece of ice for the ice box was another chore that we took turns doing. The ice out in the ice house had sawdust packed all around to keep it from melting. The ice house was





a building with thick logs, so it was quite insulated. When Dad would go up to what they called Calders Pond in the cold part of the winter when the water in the pond had frozen solid, they would take ice saws and cut blocks of ice from the pond and pay Calders so much for how many pounds they had. They would bring it home in their wagons and get some sawdust and pack the ice and sawdust in just so, so the ice wouldn't melt. Of course, you keep the door closed at all times. It was amazing how we had ice all summer. Anyway, because the ice had sawdust all around it, when you went to get some for the ice box, then you had to dust the sawdust off from the ice and then take an ice pick and chop off the right size to fit in the ice box. We would put it in our little red wagon and haul it into the house. Then Mom would help us put it into the ice box.

Have I told you about another chore that was ours and we took turns doing? Getting the coal and wood in for the night. Now, you must remember that this was all year around, not just in the winter, because it was even quite awhile after we received the electricity before Dad and Mom could afford an electric stove. If I remember right, we got the refrigerator before we were able to get the electric stove. Well, back to hauling the coal and wood in each night. We filled two coal buckets full of coal and a big wood box full of wood. Well, it was my turn this week, and I had forgotten, and here it was time for bed, and Dad checked to see if the wood and coal was in and then said, "Who's turn is it?" I knew in a minute that it was me and me alone to go get the fuel. It was dark outside and do you all remember how afraid of the dark I am? Well, I shyly asked if LaWanna could go with me. "No," Dad said, and I knew he was teaching me a lesson. Well, I hope you feel sorry for me now because I just knew I would be eaten up by a wild beast of some sort. Needless to say, I never forgot again.

Each fall we would kill a pig and, sometimes if we didn't need the money from the sale of a calf, we would have some beef also for the winter. Mom always raised some little chickens, or fryers as we called them, because we didn't have deep freezers to store our meat in. When the fryers were just the right size, then all who was able would catch and kill and prepare them so Mom could fry them and bottle the meat for future use. I have never tasted better chicken. Yum, yum, so good! You could open up a bottle and have potatoes and gravy. You could warm it up and eat





with your meals, put it in bread for sandwiches, and quite a few other uses, and it was all prepared so tasty. They would save some of the pork for fresh meat by putting it in some good, tight, woven white sacks, and hang the sacks out on the north side of the house. We used to have real cold winters, so this served as our deep freeze. Then the ham and bacon they cured with a certain home cured recipe—oh so good. If we were able to kill a beef then we would hang it on the north side of the house in bags. However, a lot of the time we had to sell our beef calves for money to help with expenses.

Mom always had a few quilts, either piecing them or quilting them, so we always had warm quilts on our beds. Dad was a brick layer by trade, and put his eight hours or longer at the job, then come home and did his farm work. So my mother had a lot of farm chores to do along with us children to help keep both ends going. Dad always planted quite a few acres of field corn to make silage for the cows to feed in winter and of course he planted grain and always alfalfa—all of this to keep the animals and his family from starving and help pay the taxes.

My home, as I grew up, was always open to anyone that needed food or rest. Mom and Dad even took care of some nephews a few summers while they were out of school and had summer work in Vernal. They would have beds, or cots as we called them, down under the apple trees, and we would coax or beg to take some quilts and go down and sleep on the ground next to their cots and sleep under the stars. Well, that didn't last to long because of the hard ground and the mosquitoes would bite. But I can still hear the sounds of the night and the cool breeze as it blew by my face.

Our home was always inviting and warm with the smell of good home cooking. In the winter, when the cold winds blew, we had family home evening almost every night. Mom read us stories from Bible, Book of Mormon, and other type of stories. We would pop popcorn, make home made candy, and sometimes we would take the black walnuts that we had gathered in the fall and get a flat rock and a little hammer and crack black walnuts to eat or put in a jar for Mom to put in a cake and the home made candy.

I want to tell you about the popcorn. We grew our own popcorn and





when we harvested it in the fall we put it in gunny (burlap) sacks and hung them in the granary. Then, whenever we wanted to pop some corn, we would go get some and rub the two ears of corn together to shell the kernels off the cob. Then we would pop our corn over the coal and wood stove in a screened old fashioned popper. We would either have butter on it or Mom would make a delicious caramel to pour over it. Good ol' days.

We had our kitchen stove, then a heater in the front room, but no heat in the bedrooms, so in the winter we would close the bedroom doors to conserve heat in the kitchen and front room. The bedrooms would be cold when we went to bed, so Mom would heat some rocks on the back of the stove and when we went to bed, she would wrap the rocks in a flannel cloth and we would take them to bed. The rocks would warm our bed up so cozy and warm and we could snuggle in the warmth of the bed while the cold winds blew.

A scene of mine is to be in the kitchen with Mom finishing up supper and Dad by the kitchen table reading the scriptures and the children doing their thing—like, boys playing with home made trucks (made out of empty spools of thread), and LaWanna and I cutting paper dolls out of the old catalog. When it was time, we would set the table and then help wash up the dishes. Mom and Dad wanted us to learn how to play the piano, so they started us with lessons, but our piano teacher lived two and a half to three miles from us and we had to either walk or ride this old bike we pumped each other on. I guess this was too much of a hassle, we thought, so we gave up on it too soon. How disgusting that we couldn't stick it out.

Mom did all our sewing. She would even take some of the flour sacks and make bloomers and panties for us. I will always remember a dress Mom made for me out of a old suit of Dad's. It was tan, and Mom embroidered some colorful flowers on the dress. I thought it was so pretty. When I was about thirteen, Mom made me a drop waste taffeta dress. I remember how pleased I was—I felt so elegant in it. I was right in style. The first prom I went to, I wanted a real pretty dress, and Mom worked many long hours to make me a very nice prom dress. I felt like the queen of the ball.

LaWanna and I played house when we were small. In the summer time





we would build our playhouses down in some willows under an apple tree. We would gather old buckets, boards, bottles—any thing to make a play house. We would gather rocks and that would be the outline of our house and also the room dividers. What a time we didn't have. One time, when we had our house in the willows, I found a weather beaten high topped shoe with the buttons down the side. It was so tiny we called it our fairy shoe. So, from that time on, we just knew fairies lived in those willows.

In the fall we loved to rake the leaves and then one of us would lie down and the rest would pile the leaves on you so there wasn't a hair on your head showing. Then the next would do the same thing to another person, until there was only one person to go in and tell Mom and Dad to come out and find the rest of their children. What a fun game!

Dad worked out to the Gilsonite mine and would go out and stay all week. There was a boarding house out in Bonanza, the place where the mine was located. Then he would come home on weekends. Mom would take care of chores, etc., while he was gone. One week while he was gone, LaWanna and I was coming back from taking the cows down to the lower pasture. Down the lane from the corral, Dad had cut down some old cottonwood trees and the stumps of the trees were quite high. I loved to jump from one tree stump to the next to see how good I was to make the distance from one stump to the next. Well, there is always the one time you miss, and I did and broke my arm. Here was my Mom, with no transportation to take me to town about five miles away. So she tied my arm in a diaper next to my tummy in a sling and we walked to our neighbors to see if he would take us to the doctors. He had a old truck. It was rare in those days for people to have any type of a automobile. Well, he took us to the doctor and it was broke and I had to have a plaster cast put on my arm. What I remember most about this trip was our neighbor charged my mom a dime for him to take us to the doctor. I still shake my head over this—even at six years old I knew this was not very kind, but that is one of the reasons we are down here on earth—to overcome our faults and failings.

While we are on that subject, I will have to tell you of one of my faults that I have worked to overcome. When we were growing up, we didn't get ladies nylons until we were sixteen or seventeen years old because they





were hard to get and then the expense of them. We needed to be more mature so we would take good care of them and not ruin them in one wearing. LaWanna got a pair for her birthday. I thought she acted too smart and acted like she was the Queen of Sheba, which made me jealous. So, as we were walking home from church, I thought she was parading up the road ahead of me so smug, so I saw some dried up burdock or cocklebur. I picked some and threw them at her legs and of all times, I didn't miss. The cocklebur clung right to her nylons and, of course, they were ruined. Well, I was immediately sorry for what I had done. I couldn't even replace them; I had no money at all. I could say I was sorry, sorry, but that still didn't wipe away the nasty deed. This put such a bad taste in my mind that I have tried real hard to improve this in my character.

We walked to church, primary, M.I.A. and other functions until we were older teenagers. We would save up our chicken eggs that Mom didn't use in the cooking and baking and Mom would send us to the store with the eggs. The store was about one and half miles away and we would use the eggs to trade for sugar, salt, or yeast. One time I was sent to the store with some eggs to trade for some sugar. Mom was canning and ran out of sugar. It was a hot summer day and I got to the store with the eggs, but on the way back home with the heavy bag of sugar, my arms got tired, and I dropped the bag and it busted and sugar was spilled and some was mixed with dirt. I tried to salvage what I could and took it home. I can't remember if Mom even tried to use any of it. I felt so bad. It hurts me yet to this day.

When Dad would have his water turns for irrigation, he would also water the lawn. He would put a dam at the top of the lawn and flood it, so that would be the time that we children would swim and slide on the lawn. It was better than any banana slide. We would start running at one end of the lawn and slide to the other end on wet grass and water. Man, that was a bushel of fun.

I will have to tell you about our hairdos. Mom would have three different ways she would curl our hair. Number one—she would put our hair up in rags. She had torn strips of material and after our hair was shampooed, she would take small sections of our hair and wrap the hair around the strips of material and roll it up and tie the material. Then we would go to





bed and the next morning, when we took it out, we had little curls all over our head. We looked like Shirley Temple. Then Mom had some curling irons, kind of like your electric curling irons today, but, of course, ours was not electric. Mom would usually heat the iron over the coal oil lamps or the top of the coal stove. I remember one Christmas program that I was in when Mom curled my hair with the hot curling iron, and with my new Christmas dress, I felt like a princess. Then Mom knew how to wave hair really pretty. It was the fade then to have your hair waved, and so Mom had the young girls of the ward coming to have their hair waved. Of course, Mom would wave our hair also.

I will tell you about a faith promoting experience I had when I was about ten years old. Dad had broke something on his cultivator. It wasn't too big of a piece, but it needed to be welded and the blacksmith lived down on Highway 40. Dad put the part in a gunny sack and asked LaWanna and I to cut through the fields to the blacksmith shop and have it welded. He gave us a fifty cent piece. This was a lot of money back in those days and could have been Dad's last fifty cent piece until he made some more. He tied the money in one of his hankies and told us not to lose it. We took off through the fields with LaWanna carrying the part and I was carrying the money, but I started to swinging the hankie around and around my head. Well, pretty soon I didn't feel the money. I looked and, sure enough, the money was gone. I went cold—where could we find it in all this grass and weeds. It could of flew quite a ways with me swinging it around my head. We started looking for it, but you are right, it was like looking for a needle in a hay stack. We had to have the money to pay the blacksmith, so, after looking for some time, we knew the only person we could turn to was our Heavenly Father. We knelt down and told Him our plight and when we said amen and stood up, we both had the impression to go on the other side of this one bush and there it was, shining in the sun. That was a great testimony builder for a little girl—something I have never forgotten. To find the money in all that grass, and with me swinging it like I was it could of landed so far away. The Lord directed us.

One time we had been playing down on this same mile block with some girls by the last name of Nickle. Their first names were Marva and Erma. We didn't go and play with our friends hardly at all because we were





kept too busy on the farm. Plus, they lived too far away. Well, it was time for us to come home. By the way, it was at their home I first tasted home made root beer—what a treat! Anyway, we cut up through the fields, but one of the farmers had put his cows in this one field with the bull there also. We moseyed up through this field and, all at once, LaWanna yelled, “Run! The bull is coming.” We took off and, man, did we run! We jumped over the fence by the hair of our chinny chin chin. I left part of my dress on the barb wire with the bull just a pawing at the ground and snorting. Wow, were we scared. We were so glad the fence was a good solid one.

One summer, Dad started to build a fruit cellar out north of our house. He wanted it there so we didn’t have to go out in the winter time and brush the snow off the door of our root cellar to get the bottled fruit and veggies. So Dad dug this big square hole, all by himself, with a pick and shovel. Then he poured a cement floor and sides, built some shelves, and then built another bedroom on top of the cellar. Of course, all of this was connected to our house, so when finished, we could just open our bedroom door and go down and get the bottled food we needed. It was so nice and cool down there. We loved to go down and cool off in the hot summer months. In fact, LaWanna and I slept down there for awhile. But then, after a while, Dad build another bedroom on top of his bedroom so the boys had a bedroom and LaWanna and I had a bedroom for ourselves. It made it nice so we weren’t so crowded.

I went to school in the old Naples school that has long ago been torn down. The first two years, we walked to school, which was about two miles. We, most of the time, walked through the fields to make it shorter. In one field, we had to cross a canal, so Dad build a little bridge across it just so his children could cross and not get wet. Of course, during the spring run-off, the canal would be flowing over its banks. The school had a big bell on top and you could hear it ring for miles away. They would ring it at eight-thirty, then at nine, and, if you was still aways from school, you knew you better hustle fast to get to school on time or you would be counted tardy—and I was to embarrassed to go in late.

In the winter months, with the snow and cold, it was real miserable, even with our warm clothing on. We had long brown or black cotton stockings plus, under our clothes, we had long legged underwear—the





kind with the dropped seat. It had some buttons just below your waist that you unbuttoned when you needed to go to the bathroom. It was quite a chore to reach around and unbutton your dropped seat and then button it back up. Then when you had waited to long and was standing there dancing around...oh boy, oh boy! We had warm hats, gloves, and long coats with boots you wore over your shoes. Sometimes the wind would blow the snow and make snow drifts over the fences and then we didn't have to crawl over or under fences. We would walk over them on the hard snow. Sometimes, if the snow in places wasn't to solid, then the weight of your body would break through the snow and you would fall up to your crotch. Then you would be cold and tired by the time you arrived at school.

During recess we played all sorts of games from jump rope to red-rover, red-rover, and pump-pump-pull-away. The boys would play marbles and the girls would play jacks. We had swings and monkey bars. We also had the outdoor toilets. We carried our lunch to school until I was in the third grade when they started to serve hot lunch. At that time it was a bowl of soup with a roll and cost a dime.

I loved school my first three years. Then, in the fourth grade, I had a teacher that scolded me a few times, which I probably deserved. It embarrassed me to the point that I shied in the corner and got behind, and from that time I stayed behind in school and it was hard and I didn't like school. Nevertheless, I made some good friends and I had some happy memories. By the time I was about in the fourth grade the school board had fixed it so the school bus could go into the outlying areas and pick us up, so that made it real great. However, the bus didn't have any heater in it, so in the winter you got real cold going all out through Davis area picking up the children. But it still beat walking.

Talking of winter and winter clothing, I can remember when the warm days of spring came we felt like we were shedding an outer layer of skin—we felt so light and free. With the girls it was a race to see who's mother let them wear anklets and get rid of the long winter stockings. We'd get just a little bit jealous because so and so's mother already were letting her wear these anklets and we still had to wear our heavy, long, brown stockings. My mom always made us wear them up until the snow was all melted and it was hot, hot. She wanted to make sure that we stayed warm and didn't





get cold. Oh, man, it'd be right around May time. And, my word, when you put the anklets on you felt like you was free. The air breezed through your legs, and, fweewy, you were free of those heavy stockings. We wore those stockings until we was round about twelve years old.





CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Years From Twelve to Twenty

I look back on my school days and I could of made them much more productive if I had applied myself more. But, that is the way life is. You will always have some, “If only’s.” Thank goodness we can just keep on a trying. When we finished sixth grade in Naples we went up town to junior high, but the junior high was mixed right in with the high school kids. It took some time to get use to this. You felt like a little fish in a big kid’s pond. In high school we wanted to be in different activities, but we couldn’t because we lived to far from town for us to go to the different practices and, for some time, our folks didn’t have a car to be able to take us. So, we just got involved in our ward activities and our own family things. Once in a while the school board would let a bus come to the outlying area and pick us up for a basketball game and maybe a school play at night. We thought that was the cat’s meow.

When I was in the eleventh grade I started working at the Uintah Packing plant after school. I did some book work and wrapping meat for individual lockers and deep freezers. After I graduated I went on working





there until I married. I didn't like that type of work all that much, but I met some fine people and have some fond memories. Of course, this gave me some spending money and I could buy some store bought clothes. Not that I was ashamed of the clothes Mom made for me, because she was a good seamstress, but it was just neat to be able to buy something out of the store.

Well I went through school with ups and downs, heart breaks and crying some tears, but thank goodness for my Mom and Dad helping me through these times and keeping me focused on the straight path. I graduated from Uintah High School in May of 1948 and, as I said, went right on working at the packing plant until I married two years later on May 9, 1950. I had a few boyfriends, and they were all good boys—the kind you were not afraid to go and be with. They were gentlemen. Some of them were more fun to be with than others, but I am sure glad I didn't get married until Dad came along because he had the right ingredients in his personality to help me grow in my own character. Now this doesn't mean we have had a perfect marriage, but we have helped one another grow.

Willis dated a girl that ran around with my sister, LaWanna. LaWanna dated a friend of Willis', so they would be at our house having parties or just drop by to goof around. I would watch them and wish I could date Willis, but, to him, I was just this silly kid sister of LaWanna's.

There was a game we played back then that was called the Winking Game. You'd have the girls sit down on the chairs to begin with, but you'd always have one empty chair with somebody behind the chair. They would be the one that would start by winking at you if they wanted you to come and sit on their chair. So they always let me play with them because I made the odd man out. Which made it good so they'd have an empty chair to start with. I would wink at Willis to get him to come on my chair and he wasn't very happy. He wanted to stay with his girlfriend, Ezma. But there was a few times I was able to. The one standing behind the chair had to hit them on the shoulder and then, if you got them on the shoulder before they got off the chair, they couldn't leave. They had to stay with you. But, if you didn't get them hit on the shoulder then they could go over to the other person that was winking at them. So I got Willis on my chair a couple of times, but I wasn't quick enough the one time to hit his shoulder and

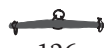




so Ezma got him again. When I got him back the second time, I got a little sofa pillow and every time she would wink at him, I would hit him on the head with the sofa pillow because that would make it so I could hurry and get him quicker than by reaching out my hand. So Dad always remembers that and says that I was such a silly little girl. Ever since I was sixteen years old I have liked Willis. He didn't give me the time of day.

Well, Dad went on his mission and when he returned the tables had turned on him because I had grown up and he looked at me with a different pair of eyes. I should of given him a merry chase, shouldn't have I? We only dated three months when he ask me to marry him. When he proposed to me, he did ask me, and this is the way he asked me. He said, "How would you like to sit across the table the rest of your life with an old fellow like me?" And I says, "Yes, I'd love it." And that's how we got engaged. We didn't have a long courtship. In fact, that has been one of my bugger boos—he went with this one girl longer and done more fun things than he ever did with me. Oh well, I got him in the end.



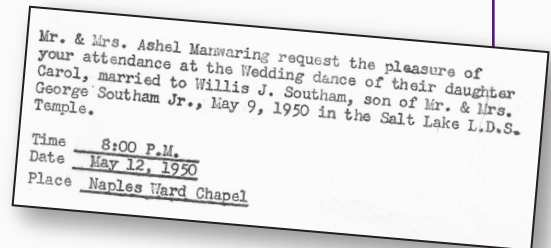




CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Marriage and Family

My wedding day was not as memorable as I had dreamed of, but it turned out to be lovely. Willis went out a day before because he needed to go and do some business. I came out the next day with my parents and stayed at Grandmother Merrell's place. Her home was near the Salt Lake Temple. I still remember the address—50th W. Temple Street. We stayed at her place that night and then got up and Willis come and picked us up and we went to the temple. His mother and father could not come and be with us at the temple because their daughter, Viola, was having a new baby and she had some serious complications. So there was my mother, father, my Grandmother Merrell, her daughter, Winona, a missionary companion, and Uncle Marion and Aunt Ula, that accompanied us to the temple. When we came out of the temple I remember Aunt Winona was walking behind us and she said, “Mrs. Southam, Mrs. Southam,” and I just went on walking. Pretty soon she said, “Carol Southam.” So I turned around and she says, “That is your new name now.” Because I had been a Manwaring for so long, I didn't recognize my new married name. Then, when we came clear out of



Carol and Willis' wedding announcement.





This is Carol's wedding dress (modeled by her granddaughter, Makita Smith Jones.)

the temple, I'm walking down the sidewalk and there started to be some rice thrown at us. So we turned around to look, and Willis' missionary companion and his wife was throwing rice on us.

Grandmother Merrell was not going to be in her apartment that night because she was going to travel on down to Provo with her daughter, Winona. So she asked us if we would like to use her apartment that night. We did and the next morning, when Willis and I woke up, I didn't want to get up, so he got up out of bed and brought me breakfast in bed. Can you imagine? It was some hash browns, eggs, and some orange juice. Very nice. Then, we went up to Ogden to see his old mission president and I was introduced to him. It was Willis' mission president that he loved, so they had a good conversation and a good connection there for a couple of hours. Then we came back down to Salt Lake where a missionary couple had invited us to dinner that night. She had a very lovely meal and we had a very nice conversation. She even told me that Willis was one of the best missionaries that she had been around, so let's give Grandpa a big star there.

We came home that night and we needed to travel up through Bonita, which is over by Altamont. That's where his sister, Bernice, lived, and Bernice couldn't come to our wedding reception. We called it a wedding dance, the upcoming Friday, because she had some problems. So we went around by Bonita as we came home and picked up a present she had for us. By the time we got home to our little small trailer that we had already bought and fixed up, it was somewhere between two and two-thirty in the morning. We went to bed and the next morning at five o'clock there was a knock on our door. It was his father telling Willis to get up and come help him with the chores. I thought, "Well, what a great honeymoon. To Salt Lake and get married and sleep overnight, and come back and Willis has to go right back to work."

Meeting my in-laws for the first time, that was quite a story. I, naturally, living in the same valley as them, and being such a small area, I had seen them before, and knew of them. But to actually meet them, this is the story. I had been going with a boy from Provo named Jim Chapman, and I was writing letters back and forth with him, and he came up a few times





to see me. In the meantime, Willis had come home from his mission and had dated me a few times. Willis wanted to pick me up and take me to a sacrament meeting that he was to speak at Sunday night.

Jim Chapman had come into the town and hadn't told me anything about coming. When my own sacrament meeting started, my brother came in and said, "Carol, Jim Chapman is out there and he wants you to come out." I thought to myself, "Well, if he doesn't want to come into the church and get me, then he'll just have to wait." So I went clear on through the sacrament meeting and when it ended I went out and he was still waiting for me. So we got in the car and we went up to my home and I changed from my best clothes into my casual clothes and he wanted to take me for a ride. So I got in his car and he says, "Where shall we go?" And I said to him, "There's a big ice jam on the Green River Bridge, let's go down and take a look at that."

Willis happened to live on the highway that goes to Jensen, and as we went by Willis' house, I told him, "I have a date with that fellow tonight that lives in that house." He wanted me to break the date, and I told him I didn't do those kinds of things. Anyway, we went down and looked at the ice jam and came back and as we passed Willis' place, why, he told me again, "Why, I came all the way up from Provo to see you. You need to break the date." And I say's, "No, I can't break the date." So he got really angry at me and he turned off the highway and went down an old road that leads out towards Green River, and in those days it was not paved. It was in the springtime when everything was melting—mud bogs and everything—so he took off down there really mad and upset and we got stuck. We was stuck almost all night, and Willis came to pick me up and I wasn't there, and my mom didn't even know where I was. That's another story in itself about how she got all upset, but I'm telling you about how I met Willis' folks for the first time. Willis came to pick me up at my folks' place and I wasn't up there 'cause I was stuck with Jim out in the tooleywads.

So when we finally got back home it was the next morning because it was quite an ordeal for us to get out of this big mud bog clear out in the tooleywads. So I told Jim goodbye because he needed to get back to Provo and then I told my mother, "During the time I was with Jim, I decided I wanted Willis." Willis did not have a telephone at the time, and so





Vernal Express article regarding Willis and Carol's wedding.

my mother said, "Okay, jump in the car and I'll take you down to their place." So I went down to Willis' place and went and knocked on the door and that's the first time I had officially met his mother face to face. I asked if Willis was there and she said, "Well, he's over to the corral loading up some hay, but he will be coming by the house in a little while." So I had to think up all kinds of conversation and this is the first time she and I had met face to face. Anyway, he came by and I went out to where he was on the wagon. I said "Hi," and he was kind of cold to me. I said, "I'd like to take you on a buggy ride." He wasn't very receptive, but he did agree. While at the wagon, I met his father for the first time.

We went on the buggy ride. He was really quite cold to me, but I got to where I shed a few tears telling him that I was very sorry for the whole episode and he says, "Well, okay, what we'll do is we won't see or go with anyone for a couple of weeks and then I'll come back and we'll decide about it." But, while we was out on that little buggy ride, he did specifically say to me, "Are you still a virgin?" Being stuck in the mud all night with this fellow raised some question marks in his head. I told him emphatically that I hadn't even been touched, that Jim hadn't even kissed me because he was so mad about trying to get this car out of the mud. It wasn't even two weeks—I think it was only about a week—when he saw my sister, LaWanna, that worked at the bank in town. He'd been up town doing some business and he seen her and he says, "LaWanna, could I come to your house at a certain time and show some Hawaiian slides?" LaWanna said, "Yes." And then that's what started us dating from then on.

When he come to show the slides, I met him at the door and invited him in, but he was still a little coolish. He was still trying to test everything out; make sure that he wasn't going to be dumped. But we shown slides that night and my mother had some cookies and punch, and we visited afterwards. My mother, dad, and LaWanna, and my brothers visited, then he put up his slides and he wanted in turn to take me for a buggy ride. So we went just riding around and got a better relationship going.

We were married in the Salt Lake temple May the ninth, 1950. We





were married on a Tuesday, and the Sunday before, we had been to Church and he was leaving the next day to go out to Provo to sign up on a program called “On Farm Training.” When he took me to the door he said, “I’ll see you out to your grandmother Merrell’s place in Salt Lake City Monday night.” So my folks took me out Monday and around seven or eight that night he showed up at Grandmother Merrell’s and we went for a little ride up to the state capital hill and parked the car where he showed me the wedding band he had picked out. I didn’t have a diamond. My wedding band did have some diamonds on it. Well I loved him anyway,—is it the person or the ring you are marrying?

Our first home was a small trailer parked by his folk’s house where we lived for one and half years. Dad farmed with his dad the first summer, and when winter came, we needed some money. So Dad found work out on the other side of Rangley Colorado with the Staley coal mine. We lived in camp there at the coal mine. Of course, there were a few other families that lived there too. Uncle Junius and Aunt Barbara came out also. They would walk up to the mine from camp. We were expecting our first child in March of 1951, so we came back to our little trailer the last of February so I could be close to my doctor. While I lived in camp, I would make night gowns for the baby. I embroidered pretty things on the night gowns and cut and sewed the flannel diapers, about five dozen of them. Oh, how I wished that there were disposable diapers back then. They would of cut out a lot of work. Sometimes I would have three long lines of diapers out on the clothes line. I didn’t have an automatic washer, nor a clothes dryer, so they got hung out winter and summer and in the winter the clothes would freeze on the line so you would bring them in and finish drying them in the house. But, oh the sweet out door smell they would have. When we moved to our new house I had Dad put some clothes lines up down stairs.

Well, back to the birth of our first baby. Diane was born March 24, 1951, and we were so happy to be parents. I had always wanted children. When I was growing up you would find me where the babies were. Diane was a cross baby and I wonder now if my milk satisfied her. She grew to be a pretty little girl. She wasn’t a pretty new baby—her nose was smashed against her face and she was wrinkled and red—but we loved her dearly





and as she grew and developed her personality we loved her more. She liked to go with her dad. While I was in the hospital having Shanna Lee she stuck right with her dad. In those days you stayed in the hospital for at least four days.

We were still in our little trailer and Dad farmed with Grandpa Southam. Then, in the fall when the crops were harvested, he went to work in another coal mine west of Maeser. They called it Coal Mine Basin or the Wardell coal mine. When Dad was a young boy he bought the Ashley creek place. It had an old house on it that could and needed to be fixed up. So we got Grandpa Manwaring, Uncle Dee Manwaring, Uncle Lavell Manwaring, and, with Dad's help, they sawed and hammered and plastered until they had it so we could paint and put new flooring down. I put up some home made curtains for the windows. We had a cozy little house on the creek. I have some fond memories living there. Moonlight walks with Willis carrying Diane and myself. It was so quiet and peaceful. My house stayed clean and I had fun cooking up creations. We had no electricity, but Dad was wiring it so the electrical company could come down to inspect it and hook us up. Dad even dug a hole and poured cement for a cistern so we could have town water in the house.

Once, when we lived down on the crick, Willis was to work and I had made this nice, lovely chocolate cake. It was a double layer chocolate cake. I put it on a nice plate and iced it with chocolate icing. That was going to be our dessert for the night. Then I had to go somewhere, I don't remember where, but I took the two girls and got them in the car. I just left the cake out on the table and I got the girls and went wherever I needed to go and come back later and I couldn't find my chocolate cake. It was gone and I thought, "Well, am I losing my mind? Did I really bake a chocolate cake?" I even looked around to see if I put it somewhere else, but I could not find it. That was really a mystery to me, but Willis came home that night and I told him about it and he said, "Well, maybe some of those young boys had come down here to fish in the crick. Maybe they took the chocolate cake." And I said, "Well, why would they take the whole cake?" He says, "Well, you never can tell." Anyway, I think it was into the fall time that Dad was up through the Willows—we had a willow patch down by our house—he was up to the Willows getting a calf and he found my plate





up in the willows. He brought it back to me and said, “Is this the plate that your cake was on?” And I says, “Well, it certainly was.” So we thought that was exactly what happened. These boys, they come down fishing and they stopped in the house and took the cake. So, a number of years later, I had a fellow by the name of Christian Wilson that came to me and says, “I’ve got to apologize to you. Me, and my buddies came into your house to get a drink and nobody was there and so we walked in and seen that cake and couldn’t resist it. So we took it up into the Willows and devoured it all.”

By now I was pregnant with our second baby, Shanna Lee, and she was to be born the first of March. The winter before Shanna Lee was to be born was a cold hard winter with lots of snow and we had bad roads. Dad was concerned as it got near my due date when he was gone to work. He didn’t like to leave me down on the creek alone, so I would go up to either Grandmother Southam’s or my Mom’s while he was to work. Sometimes I just wanted to be in my own little house, so I would stay at home. I gave Dad quite a scare this one day. He had left the car with me and when I wasn’t at the highway to pick him up, he had his driller (boss) drive him to the top of the hill. When he got half way down the hill and found the car half off the dugway, he panicked, thinking maybe I had gone into labor and tried to get up the hill. He didn’t know what he would find. He said he has never jacked a car up so fast in all his life to get it back on the road. I had left the keys in it, so he backed the car all the way back to the house. The roads were too muddy to turn the car around. He ran into the house and found me safe and sound. He gave a big sigh of relief.

Shanna Lee didn’t come on her due date. She went over two weeks and it just happened Dad was on his days off when she was born. Shanna Lee was born March 16, 1953. Dad said I needed to tell you what I was doing the day she was born. I didn’t want to write all this extra—maybe it won’t even interest the reader. Dad and Grandpa Southam were feeding out a bunch of cows down on some ground they called the Stringham place. They fed them by wagon and a team of horses. It was Dad’s turn to feed them, so he took me and Diane with him. I had been having a few contractions, but not too close together. I didn’t want to wait in the car, so I got out and told Dad I would drive the team of horses while he threw the hay off to the cows. Diane was in her seventh heaven to be on top of that





big load of hay with the horses pulling us and Dad throwing the hay off the wagon. As I drove the team, and Diane having the time of her life, the contractions keep coming harder and Shanna Lee was born that night.

Shanna Lee had just a little more hair than Diane did, but it was so white you could hardly see it. As her hair came in a little thicker it was a real pretty white with some natural curl and easy to manage. Shanna was quite a good baby and didn't make too much fuss and we were so grateful for her. She was a great playmate for Diane. Dad picked me up from the hospital and we went out to Mom and Dad's for a little while. Then, that evening, we went home to our humble abode on the creek. It was dark and I was expecting when we went into the house to wait while Dad lit the Coleman lantern, but as we entered—presto!—lights! Dad had just turned the switch and, to my surprise, we had lights. How wonderful that was. The rascal, Dad, had hooked the electricity while I was in the hospital and wanted to save it for a big surprise and it sure was. I was so happy to have the electricity. We could turn the radio on and I could have company while I was being a mom and homemaker while Dad was to work. There used to be radio programs like our TV soap operas are today, but the husbands and wives were more faithful to each other and had a better storyline, so I would listen to them as I worked.

We really loved our two little girls and the joy they brought into our lives. We didn't realize how much more happiness we would receive as our family grew. We had fixed the inside of the house up so inviting. I only wished we had taken more pains with the outside of the house and the yards. We hauled our city water for a while, until Dad got the cistern built, then we would call on Birchell Goodrich who hauled water around to the people who had cisterns and where city water hadn't reached them yet. This was most of the ones in the outlying areas from Vernal city. Anyway, Birchell would bring us a tank of water for two dollars a load. If we were sparing with it, it would last us a month. I would heat our wash water in a big number three tub on the coal and wood stove. Then I would roll my double Dexter washing machine out into the kitchen and start my laundry. It would take me all day, but I'll have to brag and say I had some white clothes hanging on the line. I love the smell of the clothes as they came in the house to be folded from the outside clothes lines.





Well, the happy days passed and I found I was pregnant and the baby was to be born the last of March, just two years after Shanna Lee's birth. Ronald didn't come until April 15, 1955, a couple of weeks passed due, but that was about par for me. We were so tickled for a boy, but the sad thing was he was with us just six weeks and he passed away. Dad was driving truck for Uncle Grant Southam. Dad had got up early to pick up the truck and drive out to Provo to pick up a load of brick for our new high school they were building. I kissed him goodbye and went back to sleep. A little while later the baby woke me up crying. It was about five-thirty a.m., so I got up to nurse him and changed his diaper. When I was through nursing him he threw it all back up. It came just like a waterfall and I knew something was really wrong because my babies did not even spit up that much. I gave him a bath and put dry clothes on. When I changed his diaper it had a little blood in it, so I was concerned. And all the while he just keep crying.

I put the sleeping girls into the car and went up to Grandmother Southam's place. She fixed some peppermint tea and we tried to get him to drink from a bottle. He drank very little and Grandmother could tell I better get him to the doctor. I took him into Doctor Spendlove. He checked him over from head to toe and he thought he had a bad tummy ache and gave me some medicine. I went out to Grandmother Manwaring's, where my girls was, and we mixed the medicine in a bottle of water. But, when we tried to give it to him he started to have convolutions. I went and found Grandfather Southam and Uncle Marion (Grandfather Manwaring was in Tridell working on a church building) to give him a blessing. After the blessing, Uncle Marion said to me, "You better take him back into the doctor." I did, and the doctor put him right in the hospital. He was in there one hour before he died. He passed away at ten-thirty a.m. which, between the time he woke me up 'till he passed away, was about four and half hours.

The doctor was afraid he had spinal meningitis, so they sent the baby out to Salt Lake City for an autopsy to make sure, because so many people had been around him and we all would be affected. We got the word back late that night that it was the main artery that goes down your spinal column. It had not fully developed and had taken that long from his birth to





explode.

In the meantime Uncle Grant had got ahold of Dad and they got him right home. I am going to tell you of the experience Dad had just before they found him and told him of Ronald's death. He had just arrived in Provo at the brickyard and had just got out of the truck to start loading when he noticed that a light, brighter then the sun, shone around him, even to the point that he stopped and looked around to see what was happening. Dad didn't know at this time Ronald had passed away, and so this bright light puzzled him until he was home and we put the time of this experience with when Ronald passed away and found it was the same time. Dad has always thought that Ronald was there telling him goodbye.

The Lord was with us; we were at peace. My arms were empty, but I didn't want him to suffer any more even if it was just a few more hours that we could hold him. It was hard for me to wash up his new little clothes and put them away.

Uncle Lester and Aunt Florence (Merrell) Nielson was going to move to Moses Lake, Washington, and was selling their basement house and nine acres. Aunt Florence kept asking us if we wanted to buy their property. We didn't answer her right away, but the more we talked about it we decided it might be a good thing because Diane started school in the fall, and the old creek hill was not dependable to get up in the winter time and on bad rainy days. We also needed to get Diane to the bus stop which was up on the corner by Ben Richard's place. We decided to buy it and then we would be right on the bus route and wouldn't have to mess with the hill. Plus, we would have city water and telephone, and we could see people moving around. The basement house was build with logs, and the damp logs drew all kinds of bugs. Yuck! Yuck! There were some nice raspberry bushes, apple and apricot trees, so the next summer I put up lots of nice fruit.

We moved to the basement home in the fall of 1955. In January of 1956, I found out I was pregnant and would have a new baby around the twentieth of September. Connie Rae came a few days late, October 1st 1956. Connie was another added joy to our household. She didn't have much hair, but what she did have had a touch of red. She was a cute baby and we enjoyed her so much. We had three little girls, one with brown



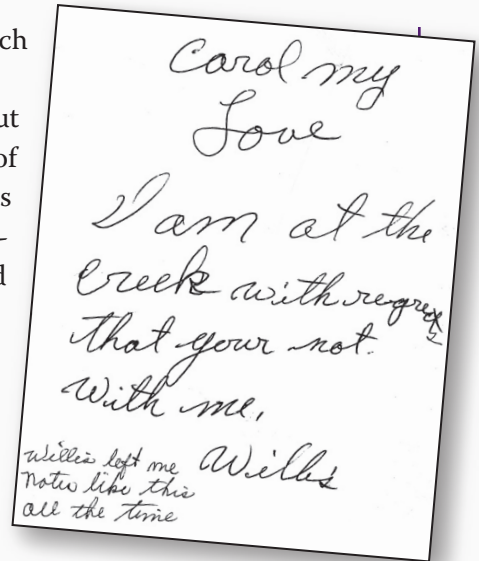


hair, one with snow white, and our little one with a touch of red.

We had some nice times in the basement home, but the roof had started to leak real bad and I was tired of the bugs. We had a chance to sell it to Carl Stevens, his wife, and family, so we sold and bought Uncle Jim Duvall's place on Highway 40 as you go to Jensen. They had a nice house on six acres with three big chicken coops. We bought five hundred little chickens and raised them for laying hens. Then the eggs started to come and we washed and candled them, put them in cartons, and went out peddling for customers. When Dad was to work I needed to take care of the chickens, gather eggs, and milk the cow. I would take either Diane or Shanna Lee with me to hold the baby while I did the chores.

During this time I became pregnant with Denna Kay. She was due the last of November and we was hoping she would be born on Dad's birthday, but here again she didn't come until December 2, 1958. Denna Kay was a pretty newborn baby, with a little more hair then the others. You heard me say just a little more, but it was dark so it showed up more. Four little girls, so choice. Denna Kay was really a cross baby, even more cross than Diane. So at this time there were chickens to feed and eggs to gather and the cow to milk and I didn't dare leave Denna Kay in the house with the girls because she would cry her lungs out and they wouldn't know what to do. So I would take one of the girls out and they would set on bucket and hold the baby while I took care of the chores. It seemed the chickens and cow would entertain the baby. Anyway, that is how I got my work done.

One time, when Denna Kay was about four or five months old, she happened to be sleeping quite soundly when it was chore time, so I told Diane to keep a eye on her and, if she woke up, to come and tell me. I was milking the cow and I heard a little baby cry. When I turned around, there was Diane, struggling to keep Denna Kay in her arms and barely holding on to her and she said, "Mom, she woke up." I don't see how she got her out of the crib, out the front door, down the cement steps, then clear out to the barn. Oh my, oh my, I don't remember if I scolded her, but I hope



One of many love notes from Willis to Carol.





I didn't because she was just trying to help. Diane was about seven years old.

Diane and Shanna loved to make play houses and they would make them in the sage brush, in the granary, the garage, even in the old root cellar. They had a lot of fun and occupied many a hour playing outside. Connie Rae would even toddle along with them. They would get disgusted because she would mess their playhouse up. There playhouse names were Jetty and Toddie; quite unique, I would say.

At the Duvall house, an irrigation ditch ran right by the house, so when it was our water turn, Dad would dam up some of the water and make a little pond in the ditch for the girls to swim. Did they ever love to play in that little "pond" of water! The girls loved to play airplane, train, and bus. We had some stairs at the Duvall place, so the girls would pretend that the stairs were either an airplane or a train, and the stairs were the seats. They would dress up in some play clothes and go sit on the stairs and off they would go into the wild blue yonder. Of course, they had to pay for their tickets. Sometimes they would ask me to fix a jam sandwich for them to take on their trip. They would take my pots and pans out of the kitchen cupboards and pretend they were in a train. They would close the doors and were off to I don't know where—never never land. They made tickets out of paper. Oh, what great, entertaining imagination. Of course, Connie followed them wherever her older sisters went and, when Denna Kay got old enough, they all four had a train seat.

I will have to stop and tell you of an embarrassing happening. Diane had lost one of her front teeth. She wanted the tooth fairy to come that night and didn't want to loose her tooth until she went to bed. I told her to put it on the kitchen cupboard by the telephone. I thought she had. Well, when I fixed Dad's lunch that night (he was on night shift), I was slicing the bread for his sandwich and the rest of his lunch was fixed right where she had put her tooth on the kitchen counter. After Dad went to work we looked for the tooth but couldn't find it. I told her I would talk to the tooth fairy and the tooth fairy came during the night. The next morning, when Dad came home from work, he showed me what he had found in his sandwich—Diane's tooth! No wonder we couldn't find it the night before. I had blamed her for not putting it where I told her and, of course, she hadn't.





The hitchhikers would come to our door from the highway for a hand-out and a place to stay. I wanted to help, but most of the time when they came I was alone—a person didn't dare trust—so most of the time I would just hand out some sandwiches and a glass of milk and lock the door. They would go to the shade of the trees and eat their sandwiches and rest. Isn't that sad we can't trust so we can be more open and friendly.

About the time that I lived down to the Duvall place on the highway, we had a store up here in Naples which we don't have now. You could go and you could buy a few items that you might need. I was putting up three or four bushels of peaches and I'd also baked bread that day. Willis was on shift work. I can't remember what shift he was on, but, anyway, he was on shift work. I ran out of flat lid tops and I was in the middle of doing my peaches, so I put the children in the car and I just closed the door because I was just going to go right up here to Naples and buy me some lids so I could finish my peaches out that evening. I just got through baking some bread and it was out cooling. So we got the lids, and we came back home and the girls and the children started to get out of the car. I seen my kitchen door moving back and forth and something told me I'd better not go into the house. So I said, "Girls, don't get out of the car yet." I was real frightened, but I knew I had to be master of the situation, so I started to cautiously walk around to the front of the car so I could go into the house and see what was carrying on. Then, out of the house came a hitchhiker. I quickly moved around to the other side of the car so I could be ready to jump in and take off and he says, "Ma'am, I hope you don't mind, but I ate half a loaf of your bread and some of your peaches. I was real hungry." And I says, "That's just fine, I'm glad you was able to eat it, but please get on your way. We don't want you here anymore. Please get on your way." So I stood on the other side of my car 'till he got way down to the highway. I got the children and ran in the house and locked the doors and I watched in my front room windows to make sure he got way down the highway. A little while later two policeman came to my door and said, "Ma'am, did that man that just come in, did he bother you any?" And I says, "No. He just ate a half a loaf of bread and some peaches is all." And they says, "That's good. We just wanted to find out because he just escaped from the mental institution in Provo and they were trying to find him." So that was





a scary place. I never was sure what kind of men they were.

One time Dad was on afternoon shift where he got home around one in the morning. Around six that night a hitchhiker came and wanted a meal and a place to stay for the night. With me being alone, I didn't dare let him come in the house and sleep, so I gave him some sandwiches and a quilt and told him to go down to the haystack and sleep. When Dad came home at one o'clock a.m., I told him about our visitor, so Dad went down to the haystack to check up on him and to tell him not to smoke or he might burn the haystack down. Quite the days! Needless to say, I was happy when we were able to move where we are now.

Before we moved from the Duvall place, our other two children were born to us. Rodney came to us April 8, 1961. He too was suppose to have been born earlier—the due date was March 22. We all were so happy to get us another boy. Needless to say, Dad was really happy. When he went to work he passed out candy bars to the men and one of the men said, “Willie, what did you get?” and Dad said, “It was a Manchild.” He was so tickled. The girls often kidded Dad how, while I was still in the hospital, he took them up town and they could buy anything they wanted (within reason, of course.) I can only remember two of the girl's wishes. One wanted bananas and the other a can of olives.

Rodney also had a reddish tint to his hair, what little he had. Rodney was a skinny, wrinkled little baby, but he grew into a chubby little darling baby. He loved being with his dad and Dad did take him every chance he had. Even, that Rod got sunburned quite bad when he was about three years old. Rod had gone to sleep while Dad was taking care of some irrigation water on the creek, so Dad laid Rod under a shade tree. Before Dad got back to him, the sun had come on the other side of the tree.

I look back on some of his photos and it makes me lonesome. It makes me wish I could go back to those days and be more present and take more time to enjoy him. But it isn't only Rod, but the rest of our children, especially the younger ones. I blame it on to trying to get a house built and the ordinary things that come as your family grows. Anyway, I did miss up on some choice moments as all of them grew. As the days have come and gone I must accept what I have taught our children, and improve, and improve, and still improve.





When the girls played dress up, and Rodney was old enough, they like to dress him up in a dress and high heels. At first, Rod allowed, but after a while he rebelled.

I found out I was pregnant with Teresa Ann in October, 1962. We were happy for a new little one. We were going to start our new home the next spring. We were a little later starting the house in the spring because we were still waiting for our loan to come through. We started to pour the cement about the twentieth of July, 1963. The basement needed to have water sprinkled on it three or four times a day because of the heat. Dad was on afternoon shift and so, when he went to work, it was our responsibility to go over and spray the basement down. On the twenty-first I had been having quite hard labor pains, so Dad stayed home with me on the twenty-second and we even went into the hospital that night. My water broke and the doctor said it wouldn't be long, but the labor just stopped. The doctor gave me a couple of shots to start the labor, but nothing would happen, so he sent me home about nine o'clock the morning of the twenty-third. When it came time for Dad to go to work at one o'clock, he asked me if he should stay home or go to work. I was not in any pain, and we needed the money, so I told him to go because I may still be here when he got home around twelve o'clock that night. He went to work, and about four o'clock in the afternoon the children and I came over to sprinkle the basement. I started to have contractions, so I went right up to my folks place and left the children. Mom Manwaring went into the hospital with me and Teresa Ann was born about eight or nine o'clock. When Dad got home around one o'clock and found us not home he called up my folks and they told him he had a little baby girl. So even at that time in the morning he came up to see how we were doing. He was concerned.

Dad had the twenty-fourth of July off, so he took the family and celebrated the twenty-fourth with them. I can't remember what they did. Teresa Ann was another joy added to our household. She didn't have much hair but, what was there, was so light you could hardly see any hair. Not any of our babies were what you call real darling newborns like some I have seen, but to me they were pretty. I didn't spend the time enjoying Teresa liked I would of liked because I was helping pound nails and other small tasks on our new home. Diane and Shanna were just entering into





their teenage years, Diane just starting Young Women and Shanna right behind her. I was spread a little thin. Besides, when we moved into our home in December of that same year, Teresa was five months old. We moved with the house not even being finished. We just camped in the basement. In fact, we had hardly moved when they gave me a calling in the Primary in our new ward. I am not complaining; just looking back and wishing I had taken more time with our children. But, even through all of our bungalows, our children turned into lovely, outstanding children, each with unique personalities and, thank goodness, they all have testimonies of the gospel and they love the Lord.

Time went on and we had our fun times, disagreeable times, and some sad times. Rod had Terry Richards and Vance Merrell as neighbor friends. They played along the gulch as cowboy and indians and pirates and such. They built them a little wooden box where they kept their treasures. They rode their bikes up and down the road, and when they got older, you ought to have seen them on their motorbikes—scare a mother to death! The girls had their Barbie dolls they spent hours playing with, and had Barbie doll houses in every one of the rooms where they would go and visit with each other in their different rooms. Diane and Shanna grew out of playing outside in the summer, but Connie, Denna, and Teresa loved to have their own playhouses. They would make mud pies and cakes and then decorate them with wild flowers and weeds. You should of seen some of their creations. They had their bum lambs, helped haul hay, weeded the garden, and other chores.

Rod turned nineteen when Denna was twenty-one, so they turned their mission papers in and it just so happened they were in the MTC together which was a choice experience for them. Rod went to Albuquerque, New Mexico and Denna to Boston, Massachusetts. They served honorable missions.





CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Empty Nester Years

After the children left home, Dad and I went on a mission to New Zealand. It was a great experience. We met some great people and have some fond memories. It wasn't easy, but it was worth it. We came home in March of 1989 and, not long after, Dad was put in as a high councilor, served there for about two years, and was put in as the bishop of a newly organized ward called the Ashley Creek Ward. Dad really enjoyed this calling. He loved working with the people.

Before going on our mission, Grandmother Southam's health was failing, and each member of Willis' family was taking their turns staying with her a week at a time. She had a bad heart and her mind was going, so she needed someone with her most all the time. It was a joy to take care of her—she was one special lady. To the grandchildren who didn't get to meet her, some day you will find out what a special lady she was.

Mother Manwaring was living at home and doing pretty good, but she also had a bad heart. We took turns seeing that she was taken care of and tucked into bed at night. The summer of 1995, she had a stroke, and was in the hospital for awhile. She improved and was able to stay at her home with us looking in on her. In January of 1996 she fell and cracked her ribs,



but when we took her to the doctor they didn't even wrap them. The doctor said they will heal better without anything on them. We decided, as a family, she needed to come to one of our homes and live, so she came to our place. We had her until December of 1996 and LaWanna wanted her to come down to her place in California. So, Willis and I took her down to LaWanna's and she stayed there until April of 1997. She went and stayed with Elva Linn until June of 1997. She came home with us then. In September of that same year, she had another stroke. We took her to the hospital and she was there for three weeks. She came back to our place and she was getting weaker and it was hard to get her to the bathroom and her bowels were not working good at all. We decided she would be better up in the care center. Verdon worked there, so he would be right there to look in on her. She was there about three months when she passed away January 25, 1998, which was a blessing. I visited her every day at the care center and would go away with a heavier heart than when she died. She was finally out of her pain and her body that hurt. She was at peace and I was so happy to have her out of her suffering. We have missed her presence, but, oh how we are glad she can run and walk and have no more pain. She was a wonderful mother, friend, and lady. People loved her.

Well, I stopped writing here about three years ago. I read through my writings and feel there are things I can't remember real clear and maybe they may be to long and boring anyway, so I will write some of my deep thoughts. Oh, how thankful I am for the parents I had, and for their undying love and training they gave to me and my siblings, I couldn't of gone to a better home for my type of personality. I always felt loved and wanted. And then, as time went on, and I found and married Willis J., I was even more blessed because he was such a good husband.

As I have said, we have had some beautiful spirits come into our home. Dad has passed away, February 10, 2002—a year ago now. I am so lonely at times. How often I have thought I would just like to close my eyes and go find him, but I can't because of the veil between us. So, I will just keep on living the best I can, remembering the good times we had together. Willis wasn't perfect, but he was a remarkable man. I love him dearly. When my dear husband found out he had prostate cancer, we tried everything from modern technology to even herbal remedies, but the Lord needed



him. He went through a lot the last few months. I look back and wonder if I could have made it more comfortable for him. He fought the fight very well right to the last moment. He still had a sense of humor, almost to the last. A great man that we all will miss.







CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Odds and Ends



Carol in July 2009—79 years old.

Well, time marches on and memories pass through my mind. Like the time I was cleaning out the china cupboard and had most all of my nice wedding dishes on the dining room table and one of the girls came and set on the edge of the table and it over balanced and tipped and spilled my dishes and broke a lot of them. The time I had just barely came home from the hospital from having Denna Kay and Grandmother Southam called up and said that Brother Ching, a Japanese member Dad knew in Hawaii, was here to visit with Willis, and wanted to know where he lived. So Dad said to send him down. Brother Ching was going to BYU furthering his education. He came down to our house and it just wasn't him, but he had a lady friend and they had not had dinner and needed a place to stay. So, as tired as I was, we feed them a nice dinner and bedded them down. I can still feel how exhausted I was—totally so!

As a child, I was always excited about Christmas because I didn't have any responsibility of buying gifts for the children, etc. A lot of times, we as children, would make homemade gifts and that was always fun because we could use our imagination and, of course, you know how some of those homemade gifts from children are. We never went to the mountains to get





a Christmas tree. Most generally it was mostly to just go up town where they were selling trees. The way we decorated the trees was with paper chains, those red and green paper chains that you would cut and paste together, and then mother might have had a few glass Christmas bulbs. Right at first we never had electric lights on our Christmas tree, just the chain decorations and a few of those little glass bulbs. Mostly what made our Christmas tree pretty were what we called icicles—I think a lot of you might remember what they were. You had to string these icicles on the tree and make the tree look all glittery.

We didn't get very many gifts. I remember one year that I got a pair of shoes and they didn't fit and I was very disappointed 'cause we didn't get shoes in those days very often. I was very disappointed and I thought, "Oh dear, didn't Santa Claus know my shoe size?" Anyway, my mother says, "Well, maybe we'll have to send them back to Santa Claus." I was disappointed about that because I knew they would take some time and I didn't even question, "What would Santa Claus do; how long will it take?" I didn't even question any of that; I just believed it. I was probably around about six that Christmas. When we came from the front room where we was seeing and opening our gifts, I went into the kitchen, and there on the kitchen table was another pair of shoes. I asked Mother, "Who's shoes are those?" She quickly said, "Oh, I guess Santa Claus forgot to take them back with him. Maybe we'd better see if they'll fit you." So we tried them on and they fit me, and she says, "Oh, that's from Santa Claus. He left them there in case these other didn't fit you, Oh, that solves the problem, Carol." Can you imagine how? The shoes were black patent leather which I was really excited about because in those days we had the heavy duty shoes that would last you all year long and I got some black patent leather shoes that was just so shiny and pretty just for best.

Another time, and I was probably around twelve or thirteen years old, I wanted to have a pearl necklace. I remember that year I got some books—I liked Nancy Drew mystery stories at that time—and I got some Nancy Drew mystery stories, and a few other things, but I did not find my pearl necklace that I had asked for. So I asked my mother, "Mom, did I get a pearl necklace?" And she says, "Well, let's see. Go and look around the Christmas tree and let's see where in the world it'd be." And so she played





the game with me. She'd say, "No, you're too cold." And then I'd go a different direction, and she'd say, "Oh, you're getting warmer, you're getting warmer." And pretty soon she says, "You're hot, you're hot!" And there I found it, hanging from a Christmas tree branch.

The stockings: we used to wear brown stockings—those old fashioned brown stockings that we had to hook on to some garters. I don't know if they was called "Buster Browns" or not, but they came clear up to your thigh and you had to hook them onto a garter. They were very thick. That was our stockings for Christmas and we most always got an orange down in the toe. I remember that I would really save—I'd just take one section of orange at a time so that I could last the orange all day long. Of course, we got a little bit of candy and some peanuts in the stocking.

I'm going to tell you about after we got married. I did get stressed out with Christmases 'cause it seemed like we never had enough money and I always wanted to make sure the children had as good of Christmases as we could get. But, man, a lot of times it was just real skimpy. So I always got quite stressed out. One thing I remember about that time; Willis loved to take this old cow bell and go around—you guys slept down in the basement most of the time—and he would go around and ring this cow bell. Then he'd come in and say, "Girls, girls, Santa Claus is trying to come, but he can't come because you haven't gone to bed yet." So you'd hurry and you'd tuck yourselves down underneath the covers. I remembered your dad loved to do that. I loved the smell of the carrot pudding, and I loved the smell of the pine trees. I think the pine trees back then came with a more prominent aroma of the pine than they do now. It must be because they were just freshly cut and the heating that we had back then that would bring out that smell. But I always remember that smell. It was always such a comforting, sweet, spicy smell of Christmas time. My mother raised turkeys and so they'd always save one turkey out of their flock to cook for Christmas and did I love the smell of that baked turkey!

My mother, Aunt Rea, and I, would make chocolates at Christmas. We'd make the centers to the chocolates in our own homes. There'd be anything from fondant to nugget—the different centers to the chocolates. Then we would get together and I remember doing it in Mother Manwaring's home one or two times, and then in Aunt Rea's home. They would





buy big blocks of chocolate and cut them in chunks and melt them and then, on a marble slab that they had, we would put the melted chocolate and we learned how to dip the chocolate around those centers. Of course, it wasn't very professional, but they were good chocolates. If it was a maple flavored one we would put an "M" on the top; if it was a cherry one we'd put a "C" on it. Like I said, it wasn't very professional, but we were getting quite good at it, and then what I would do, I would bring mine home and we had an attic in our house. Now mind you, when you think of attics you think of spiders and bugs and all of that. Well, this was a half finished attic, and I'd put the chocolates in boxes and I took them up in the attic to store so the children wouldn't steal them from me, and I'd store them there until Christmas time. But there were times that my children had gone up to the attic and taken a taste or two.

Our folks didn't have the money for gifts. But this one time my mother had her brothers come and visit, and her brothers were just really cut-ups—they really loved life. They sat down to have my favorite meal and

they started to sing to me, "Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you," and then when they sang it the second time they said, "Look under your plate, look under your plate, look under your plate and see what is there." And so I looked under my plate and I had a whole fifty cent piece. I thought that was the best birthday present I had ever received.

I had two special friends in high school. One's name was Helen Richens' and the other was Ruth Hodgekinson. Helen Richens grew up and went to school and married somebody. She lives in Arizona now. Ruth Hodgekinson Winn and I still keep in contact with one another. There was one night we went over to Helen Richens' place for us all to have a sleep over and even after we'd eaten a nice dinner and we

Caramel

4 c sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
1/2 pound butter
2 c light corn syrup
2 lrg cans canned milk

Melt butter, add sugar and corn syrup. Stir to a boil. Add canned milk a little at a time so the candy doesn't stop boiling (about 15 minutes per can). Cook to 240 degrees and pour into a buttered cookie sheet.

English Toffee

2 c sugar
1 pound butter
5 T water
1 c chopped almonds
Grated chocolate
Chopped walnuts

Melt butter, add sugar, water, and almonds. Cook on high heat to a good bubble boil and then turn stove to medium heat. Cook to 305 to 310 degrees. Pour into buttered cookie sheet. Sprinkle top with grated chocolate and chopped walnuts while still warm. Break into pieces when cool.





went downstairs to Helen's room to go to bed, Helen say's "Oh, let's go into my mom's pantry and let's get a bottle of peaches out." So she did and she went upstairs and got some spoons and we sat there and ate that whole bottle of put up peaches.

I was in the Relief Society with this lady who lived about a couple of blocks up the road from me. We had a Relief Society Stake meeting to go to that night. I was just putting on my nylons when she called and asked if I could pick her up. I said, "Oh, yes, I'll be right there. I'm just putting on my nylons and I'll be there in about ten minutes." Now remember, ten minutes, because that's how forgetful I am. So I got in my car and went up and I had to pass right by her place, and as I went by her place—she has a big picture window right next to the road—she was standing in the picture window watching for me. I seen her there and I just waved to her and went right on. I got almost to town when I says "Ohhh, I was supposed to pick that lady up." So I turned around, came back and picked her up, and she was just giggling because she knew what kind of a memory I had.

Fondant

1 c cream
3 Tbs. light corn syrup
1/2 c milk
4 c sugar
2/3 c butter

Add desired flavoring: orange, vanilla, maple walnut, etc. Warm the cream, milk, and corn syrup in a sauce pan. Add the sugar and cook for 10 minutes. Put in candy thermometer and cook to 235 degrees. Pour out on a marble slab and add 2/3 c butter. Stir to form fondant as it cools.

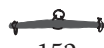
Nougat

1 c sugar
2 egg whites
1 c light corn syrup
1/4 t. vanilla
1/4 c water
1 c walnuts
1/4 t. salt

Add sugar, corn syrup, and water together. Cook to 250 degrees. Stir only until sugar dissolves. Add salt to egg whites beating constantly. Slowly pour syrup over egg whites beating constantly. Add vanilla and beat until thick. Add nuts and pour into foil lined cookie sheet.

To the best of our knowledge, these recipes were used by Rea and Elva Manwaring and Carol Southam.







CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Church Callings

I have worked in Relief Society, Primary, MIA (they call it Young Women now). I've led the singing; I've been in the choir; I taught Relief Society one year; so I've been in most of the callings. I was in the Stake Scouting one time, which I did not like. I've been in the Stake Relief Society, Stake Primary in the Scouting Department. I was a Primary President one time. I was a counselor a couple of times, and I've been a primary teacher. I was even a Trail Builder.

Here is a story that happened while working with the Trail Builders. When you're a boy, when they get so far along you got to take them on a five mile hike. So I had been told by the Stake Scouting Leader that, if you took the boys up to the entrance of the Staniker Dam and walked back into where the picnic tables were, that would be five miles. And, they said, what would be nice would be for you to take a little picnic lunch along and then walk back in there and have your own picnic lunch and come back and then you have this five mile walk requirement done. So I picked up the boys in this old farm truck and we went up there to Staniker. We walked in with our lunches.

When we got to the picnic tables, we had our nice little lunches there





on the picnic tables but, as boys are boys, they wanted to go in and swim. I told them no, that we will not swim. They kept bugging me and bugging me until I say's, "Okay, well, I'll let you go in this little shallow part with your feet." They didn't even have their swimming trunks, but they was just going to take off their pants and go in their shorts, and I say's, "No, not at all." So they say's, "Just let us dangle our feet in the water," so I gave in to them and pretty soon one boy was going out a little farther. Naturally, because I wasn't very assertive, they kept testing me and testing me, until finally some of the boys were clear in to their necks and finally, one boy thought, "Okay, I'd like to do it too," which would be the last of the bunch of them. So he went in and he didn't even know how to swim and he went down over his head. I thought, 'Oh my, I'm taller than him, so maybe I can reach out and grab his hand. He was hollering, "Help! Help!" So I thought, "I'm taller than him and I can walk out to my waist and grab ahold of his hand and bring him in—I do not know how to swim. So I took a couple of steps and down I went because there was a great big hole in the water there that put you down underneath your head. So then there I was, trying to get back to shore because I didn't know how to swim, and there he was and one of the boys in the group had gotten out of the water and for some miraculous reason there was a long quaking aspen limb that the wind had broken off and was just laying there. Now, mind you, there wasn't any quaking aspens around there in that area, but there's a long quaking aspen limb that was laying right there, so he took that limb and pushed it out there for us to grab onto and come in to the shore. I was very devastated to think that here it could have been in the paper the next week—a boy scout leader and a boy got drowned in Staniker because they didn't mind their manners. But anyway, that was very sobering to the boys after we all got out. All the boys was very, very sober. I will have to tell you, that the boy that got the quaking aspen branch limb, he got a badge for bravery.

My first calling in the Church after I was married was a primary teacher. And then, later, I remember before we left Davis ward, they had me be a chorister for sacrament meeting. Later, they had me go in to be a secretary to the Relief Society and later they released me and put me back in as a chorister in Relief Society that helps the singing mothers. They used to have a chorus in each ward and they called them singing mothers





and then they would all come together and sing at conference.

Of all my callings—the one I liked the best—was the chorister and a Primary teacher. I was even a Cub Scout mother at one time, and I did not like that—a den mother and I did not like that. I did not like to be the boy scout leader, the main scouting leader. I enjoyed my calling in the auxiliary presidencies. There was a time or two that I didn't care for the people I worked with but, knowing me, I went on and trudged on and learned to like them. I enjoyed being a Primary teacher because I had these children that didn't talk back to me and they were at the right age that was more impressionable. I never liked being in the lime light, and I had to work at being open and friendly when I was in different presidency situations. Not that I don't love people, but I just wanted to be in the background. I really enjoyed working with Dad with the Single Adults. Dad was there to be the buffer and I could be the background person that helped with whatever in the background. And I still got to be with Dad. One of my most memorable, most favorite times, was being with Dad in New Zealand because I could just tag along with him. He could be the buffer in meeting and greeting and talking to people.







CHAPTER NINETEEN

Favorite Things



Carol watching her grandchildren water-ski while trying to stay out of the sun.

My favorite smell is homemade baked bread and a pot of soup on the stove. My favorite color, as most all of you know, is lavender and purple. My favorite flower is a rose. I have many favorite foods, but my most favorite is a roast beef dinner with brown gravy and whipped potatoes. I love to read, but I also love to embroidery. I'm learning how to knit and I'm enjoying it. Even though I had a house full of girls, I did not like to sew. Besides our General Authorities—I love to read some of their books and articles, and, of course, our prophet—but besides those type of reading, I love to read Mary Higgins Clark, and I love romances—good, clean romances. You're gonna laugh when I say this, but I love *Message in a Bottle*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and *Sound of Music*. I have many scriptures that really touch my heart, but ever since a small child, I have loved the scripture in 1 Nephi 3:7 where Nephi says he will go and do what the Lord wants him to do. I like country music—country western. I like the good western, not the yang, yang, yang. I like the good country western, but in my church hymns, I love something about the starry night, “I Love the Starry, Starry Night,” and “I Wandered Through the Still of Night.”

I never knew when I first had a testimony. I remember as a little child,





sitting in church, and then I especially remember sitting in conference, when we got to that Stake Center—it's a temple now—and I would be just glued to some of the speakers. I knew that every word that they were speaking was truth. So it was way back when I was just a little girl. I could even be as little as six years old that I remember of my first testimony and I knew that was my testimony. I must have always known.





CHAPTER TWENTY

Mission in New Zealand

This chapter, compiled by both Carol Southam and granddaughter Charmaine Smith Puzey, contains highlights of Willis and Carol's mission to New Zealand. The actual journal is available if anyone would like to read the full account. Willis and Carol were called on a proselyting leadership mission to Christchurch, New Zealand, serving from September 21, 1988 to March 7, 1990. This mission seemed to be tailor-made for them. Willis went from his sheep farm in Vernal to sheep farms in New Zealand. They helped shear sheep and haul hay while teaching the gospel. Carol fed a lot of ward members, less-actives, and missionaries, as well as making bread several times a week—giving most of it away.

Willis and I was so excited when we received our mission call. A friend of ours that worked in the post office called up early one morning and asked if we wanted to come up to the post office to receive our mission call or wait until it came out on the postal route, which would of been in late afternoon. Dad said, "You bet we'll be right up!" You should of seen the smile on Dad's face when we read "New Zealand, Christchurch mission," because Dad had put on his paper as one of his occupations that





he was a sheep herder and Dad knew of the many sheep New Zealand had. Also, he didn't want to be in the middle of the city, but out in the country with sheep and people.

Our mission was quite hard, but so rewarding. Dad said the mission president sent us on the front lines because he knew we could handle all the problems that exists in small unorganized branches. We did enjoy working with the people and their different culture and some of the Maori members were so delightful. The country was beautiful and there was so many sheep and beautiful paddocks with cattle so Dad was right at home.

There were many beautiful flowers and shrubs. The weather was not what I thought it would be. A lot of the time it would be quite cold—a damp cold—so you needed a jacket with you just in case the sun went behind a cloud. All and all it was a great experience.

As perfect as this mission was, they had new experiences as well. After just days of being in New Zealand (October 17, 1988), Willis and Carol were having tea (supper) at a member's house. After supper, they went home with Elder Barker and Elder George. Willis and Carol got into the back seat while the elders were up front. Carol writes, "As we were backing out of the driveway, I noticed Elder Barker just a cocking his head all around, and it didn't even look like he had his hands on the steering wheel." She mentioned to him that he must be a good driver and know the area well because he hardly looked where he was going. They backed out of a sixty foot driveway and drove two to three blocks around a lot of corners. "I kept watching Elder Barker because he wasn't looking or paying much attention to the road and I kept thinking, 'Are we going to get home safe?' All of a sudden, I remembered that we were in New Zealand and Elder Barker was the passenger!"

In Westport we held our meetings in a plunket room, which is a nurse station, in the small town. One Sunday we noticed a Maori lady walk in and sit on the back bench. We went on with the service until we separated for classes, then we went and visited with her. She told us that she was walking by and, hearing such beautiful music, had to come in and see. Of course, the Maori people can make such pretty harmony. She stayed the rest of meetings and said she would like to have the missionary lessons,





so every Tuesday she would come to our flat and the Elders would come and teach her. She was a golden contact. She was baptized and was a great new member—just because she walked by a plunket room, heard beautiful hymns being sung, and was touched by the spirit. She was looking for a better life.

Willis used his farming knowledge to gather in the Lord's sheep. In Balclutha, we worked with a Jeff Bungard who was a German. He was not a member, but his wife was. They lived out in the country with beautiful rolling hills and had hundreds of sheep. On February 15, 1989, Willis was helping Jeff Bungard haul hay. They just kept hauling till twelve o'clock at night because Jeff kept saying, "Will,"—that is what he always called him—"so you think we can get one more load?" Willis thought if it was that important he would help. When they were finally done, Jeff offered to pay for their petrol. Willis said, "Jeff, I don't want you to buy petrol for us. Do you know what I really would like? You give me a little time to talk with you about what I am really out here for—a message to you people that is a better way of life." Jeff thought that was a good deal, so they started teaching him the gospel. Dad and I went out and helped dock the sheep, and even harvested some grass and hay.

He thought a lot of Dad and he found out I liked New Zealand chocolate so he kept giving me chocolate. Even when we came home, he sent us a whole lot of chocolate that cost more for postage than the chocolate for every Christmas. When we got transferred up to Westport, he cried when we left, so the upcoming Christmas they came up to Westport to visit us. Well, he never would commit to be baptized. We were home for about four years when we got a long distance call from his wife telling us he had been killed while helping a motorist fix a flat tire. Another car came and ran over him. I have often thought that Dad has finished his missionary service with him over on the other side because he really liked being with Dad.

After six months in Christchurch, on March 9, 1989, Willis and Carol got transferred to Westport. In Westport, Willis was called as Branch President. It was while serving as Branch President that Grandpa experienced what he called "the highlight of my mission."

On July 23, 1989, Willis felt impressed to ask Kathy Neil to be Re-





lief Society President. She didn't accept, but didn't say no either. Grandpa slowly worked on her for three weeks, teaching her the importance of the calling and asking her to do it. Finally, she accepted the call, and, some time later, gave a talk in sacrament meeting. She told how she was baptized. She said that one day two elders knocked on her door and she invited them in. They taught herself, her husband, and two boys the gospel. Her husband and boys wanted to be baptized but she wasn't sure. Because of circumstances at the time, the missionaries were pulled out of Westport. Kathy realized she had made a mistake and that it was too late. She ordered all the church material she could and "converted her own self." Six years later, the missionaries returned and "got the shock of a lifetime." She seen them and said, "Where have you been?" They looked puzzled and said, "down the road a piece." Se said, "It's about time you came. I want to be baptized." They about fell over. After the lessons she was baptized (but not her husband and sons.) She had to be dunked four times because they couldn't say her middle name. After the fourth time she said, "I was squeaky clean."

On October 9, 1989, Mark Nepia, from Milton, came to visit Willis and Carol on his holiday. He had not been back to the temple since he was reactivated. Willis encouraged him to get on a plane and go to the temple. When he flew back a few days later, Mark was very excited about his trip. He had sealed his mom and dad together and he had been sealed to them. Neat experience.

As well as serving as Branch President, Willis and Carol seemed to be the steady rock. They had several missionaries that were struggling sent to them so that they could straighten them out. They seemed to be "mother and father" to these missionaries.

They saw a lot of neat country, planned some fun beach parties, and even got to make a trip to Hamilton, which took several days, to visit the temple. They loved the people of New Zealand and really enjoyed serving the Lord and growing in the gospel. They were glad for everything they experienced and built a lot of memories.

To all our offspring, it is a great experience to go on a mission and help others learn of our most wonderful gospel. It not only strengthens your testimony, but it helps build your character and helps your fellow





men know of a happier and more peaceful life.

Dad and I did enjoy our mission so very much, but was so happy to return home to our loved ones that we had missed.

When the branch would have a beach part by the ocean, I would stand and look way out across the waves and say to Dad, “Somewhere through those waves is home.” Dad told me that he was more homesick on our mission than he was on his mission or in the army, and yet he was right by the side of the one he loved.







CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

A Letter From Carol to Her Mother

Mother,
Because I had such a happy childhood, with many happy memories, I am having a hard time picking one or two memories and writing them down.

I have always been proud of the parents I was born to, and the time and effort they put into teaching and guiding me in the right direction.

Home—my home was always inviting and warm, with the smell of good cooking.

I'll never forget the hot new bread and jam and a cool glass of milk. Your home made vegetable and chicken noodle soup, the pie and cream cake with raspberries and whipped cream, bread and milk and onions or radishes or honey.

The raspberry and strawberry patch, the vegetable garden with turnips, sweet peas, and tomatoes, all handy for us to piece on anytime we would like. We would snack on them just like the children snack on potato chips and slurpies nowadays.





Even though I didn't like getting up early and go to the lower pasture to get the milk cows, you made it worth the effort by cutting us a thick slice of bread and spreading thick cow's cream on it with a sprinkle of sugar, so we could enjoy as we got the cows.

In the cold winter months when the cold winds blew, you would have warm rocks to take to our cold bedroom, and beds to snuggle in the warmth and listen as the cold winds blew.

The sewing and remodeling of old clothes that you spent so many hours for me. I'll always remember a dress you remodeled from a old suit or pair of pants of Dad's, and then you embroidered some colorful flowers on the bodice. It was so pretty. When I was about thirteen, you made me a drop waste taffeta dress that I felt like a million in.

My first prom (and probably only) you sent to Montgomery Ward for some neat stripped taffeta and made me a formal that I think I looked as nice as any other girl there. Now that I am a mother and grandmother, I know the sacrifice you had to do to sew that lovely formal.

Well, Mother, like I said, so many good memories, and they all came from a caring, loving mother who loved her children and wanted to do all of these things to make our childhood full of good memories.

I do love and appreciate all you have done, because I know now how many tired hours you spent to make me who I am.

Happy Birthday and I do love you.

Carol





CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



Willis shaving on his mission.

Excerpts From Willis’ Mission in Hawaii

Although Willis shares a bit of his mission history in his original work, we thought the family would enjoy a little more insight taken from his missionary journals. He wrote faithfully every day of his mission, so we have included what we thought were highlights. —Diane Southam Smith

Willis’ first assignment was Hilo. There were twenty members in the branch. They were busy having cottage meetings, tracting, studying, and showing church movies to anyone that would come. They went to homes and schools, met with primary children, and had outings and parties and ball games to encourage members to bring nonmembers to these activities.

In his journal, Willis mentions many firsts—eating with chopsticks, seeing a turtle and a shark, eating coconut and pineapple, his first luau, fishing with nets from the ocean, his first earthquake and tidal wave scare, and buying his first harmonica.

He and his companions walked many miles every day, even during the





rain. They always hoped and prayed for rides and usually things worked out for them.

Willis always mentions how happy he was to get mail. Many times he would receive cakes or money with his letters and he almost always was down to his last few dollars when this happened. He also loved getting to read the Vernal Express.

He and his companions were very willing to labor to help investigators and leave a good impression about the church. Willis shares experiences of helping to cut cane in the fields, feed chickens, and do chores, make visits to hospitals and give blessings.

March 1948

Willis and his companion have a 5:00 p.m. meeting to attend fifty miles from Hilo. They start out walking and weren't having any luck getting picked up. They started to get concerned about arriving on time for the meeting. Willis wrote, "We was doing our part, the Lord would have to do His part. Well, about that time here come two cars. I said to my companion, 'The second one will pick us up.' He did and we got to our meeting okay. I gave my talk, then we had a fireside and singing,

then we all went to the cafe for ice cream. The next morning we started back for Hilo. We was almost gave out when a car picked us up. We rode for about ten miles and then walked to the next little town. Some Japanese people gave us dinner. I told my companion we were going to get to Hilo by 4:00 p.m. so we walked until 3:00 p.m. and still had eighteen miles to go. At 3:15 p.m. I said, 'We'll be picked up anytime now.' A jeep came along and took us right into Hilo, we arrived at 3:55 p.m. and I was plenty tired."

April 1948

Willis is going to a luau/baptism. They hitchhike thirty miles to Kalapina and this is their schedule:

"9:00 p.m.	Meeting
"11:00 p.m.	Feast
"1:00 a.m.-6:00 a.m.	Singing and Hawaiian music



Hilo, Hawaii in 1948.





"6:00 a.m.

Sunrise service and baptism

"8:30 a.m.

Hitchhike back, clean house,
do laundry, read scriptures,
fall into bed.

"We tracked into a Mr. Fuji. He had some horses and let me ride one of them. We helped him clean up his place and cut the lawn. After supper we had a good gospel talk and then listened to a ball game on the radio with him."

June 1948

"All the elders in the district went swimming at Warm Springs and did we ever have fun—more fun than I have had in a long time."

July 1948

The elders and sisters of the area got together for an outing. They were headed up to a volcano. The sisters packed a lunch and they explored, took pictures, had a picnic, and a grand time. One sister missionary dropped her purse down a deep crack about twenty feet deep. Willis got some old clothes on and climbed down and got her purse for her.

September 1948

"We all got up and had breakfast. Then Elder's Coleman and Scott went up to Sister Tan's to do the washing while my companion and I cleaned the house up. At three-thirty we went over to the Hawaiian mission chapel and got everything ready for the big wedding. Elder Johnson performed the ceremony and when the fellow took the bride up to the alter he almost fell down. When he started back, he had his feet all wound up in the bride's long gown. After that we went to the big supper and dance. There were about two hundred people."

October 1948

Willis writes about a church fund raiser the elders helped with. They made lava-lava's to sell. They worked with the members at the church until 4:30 a.m., slept until 9:00 a.m. and finished them up at noon. They had helped to make 775 lava-lava's. That night the four elders went to a movie, "Green Grass in Wyoming," Willis thought it was "a good one."



Willis (R) with Mr. Fuji (L)





December 1948

Willis shares his first Christmas season in Hawaii. He and his companion are in charge of a "Christmas charity clothing jumble" complete with program, dance, and refreshments, including building a stage and decorating the hall and doing all the advertising. All the clothing would be shipped to Japan for the poor and needy there. Willis mentions that everything went very well and the next day they took everything down, placed the chairs back at the high school and loaded the clothes on the ship. The mission president came to Hilo to hold meetings and interviewed and watch a Christmas play and dinner. Willis was told of a transfer to Honolulu Park and was made senior companion. On Christmas Day, all the elders met and opened gifts and packages and had dinner. They went caroling to hospitals and visited members. Later, they had a party with punch and donuts.

December 31, 1948

After a day of cleaning and doing laundry, Willis and his companion team up with the other elders and couple missionaries for a movie and supper, after which they listened to harmonica music and brought in the new year watching the fireworks in Hilo. "Was it ever beautiful to watch. We got the bed about 2:00 a.m."

January 1949

"One night before going to bed, I set the alarm clock for the time I had to get up. The clock had been stopping, but this time I knew I had to be up at a certain time. So I prayed that it would keep running until it went off. Well after it went off it stopped five minutes later."

February 1949

Willis and his companion need a ride and they have an accordion to transport a fair distance. They offered a prayer that a ride could be provided then, even though they were out of money, they went to the bus stop and waited in line having faith that their prayer would be answered. Soon a member drove up, recognized the elders and offered them a ride, waited during their appointment, and drove them home afterwards. Willis writes, "And so the Lord's blessings was upon us this day."



Laundry day.





February 1949

All the elders in Hilo got together to help Brother Tan harvest his cane. "We had blisters on our hands where we had the cane knife handles and was we tired when we got through."

March 1949

Apostle Matthew Cowley visited Hawaii and had meetings with all the elders from the Big Island. Willis enjoyed the meetings very much. Afterwards they got to eat with the Mission President and Elder Cowley and his wife. Willis gets a transfer to the island of Oahu and is made a senior companion and district president in the Waipahu/Pearl City area.

April 1949

Willis and his companion decided to have their pictures taken and sent to their mothers for Mother's Day.

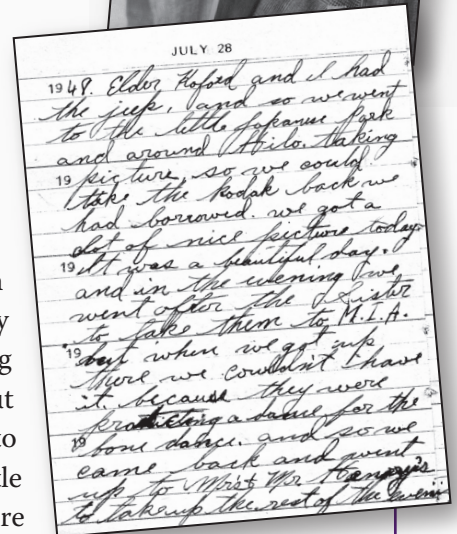
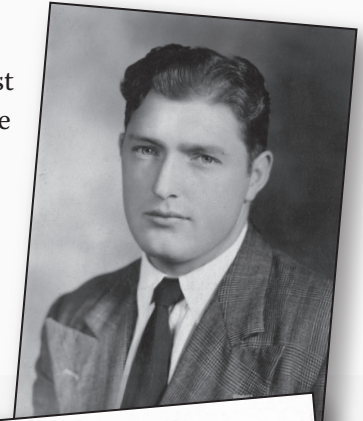
June 1949

"This morning about three o'clock I awoke up from a good sleep and couldn't go back to sleep. As I quietly started to think about my future life and what I was going to do and how I was going to do it and also, a lot about temple work until about six o'clock and I got up then to catch up on some back work. We went tracting a little while before going in to Honolulu to help on the welfare cannery. We got there about five o'clock and worked until eleven-thirty and then cleaned up and President Weenig brought us out home, got here at twelve o'clock."

Willis had another faith promoting moment about his money. He was all out of money and thinking about how he just trusted the Lord to take care of him. He went to the post office and there was a letter with \$40.00 in it. In addition to the tracting and cottage meetings, he is fulfilling his duty as district president and having extra meetings with President Weenig. They also go to the temple quite often.

July 1949

This is an insight to the house that Willis lived in and also his house-



Above: portrait taken for Mother's Day.
Below: A page from Willis' mission diary.





keeping tricks. "As the house was all up set from the other two elders living there, why it needed cleaning very bad. So we worked and got everything up off the floor and then got the hose after it and cleaned it out, then

hurried and done our washing." Willis and his companion were tracting and in talking to one woman his companion had asked if there was anything they could do for her. Her response was that she wanted to become a Mormon. "Well, after that he asked the same question in every home. The first thing I know, we was on the end of a garbage truck helping a woman with her garbage." Willis found that if he spent his money on things he didn't need for his mission, his money always ran out, but as long as the money was used for his mission he had what he needed. Twenty-five

elders got together to build a new home for the missionaries. A nonmember Japanese couple living next door kept bringing these elders drinks and lunch and supper. Willis was really impressed by these people.

September 1949

Willis writes about the first big party he was in charge of organizing, a Labor Day beach party the President Weenig was going to attend. It was held in Nanakuli. There were sixty-five people that attended, many of them investigators. They went swimming and played ball and had a picnic.

October 1949

Willis writes that their Japanese is getting good enough to go to a "Japanese" show. It cost seventy cents each and they had to sit down near the front and all the Japanese people were agog at having American people drop in to their movie. They went to the post office and had a letter telling all the elders to be at the cannery that day at five o'clock. They were going to can pineapple. They finished at eleven-twenty at night and had canned 1179 cans.

November 1949

He got "one of them killing eye aches again, but still went to Pearl City for a meeting and said closing prayer." Willis receives a transfer to Kaliki, after first spending three weeks in the mission home working. Wil-



Willis celebrating his birthday.





lis starts the information transfer to the next district president and travels to the other side of the island and meets his new companion and gets settled in. He states that “this city missionary work was all together different than the country like I had just come from.” He went to the temple to help guide the tourists. Willis talks about his last Thanksgiving in the mission field. He had two dinner appointments and went to a dance at the tabernacle “we missionaries could only visit but that was okay.” Willis received a cake in the mail. For his twenty-fifth birthday he got mail from home and one letter from Ezma.

December 1949

In early December of 1949 all the elders meet together to work on a farm. President Weenig was impressed with how Willis handled a tractor and made sure he was on a tractor the next week at the farm.

January 1950

The last three weeks of Willis’ mission was spend in the usual way—tracting, teaching, and cottage meetings. He also had a baptism and helped administer to President Weenig who was ill. Also, going around and saying goodbye to people. He gets packed up and moves into the mission home for the last few days until the boat sails.

February 1, 1950

“This day was here before I know it, this was my sailing date.”

I have a footnote to add to Willis’ mission biography, one I think you will enjoy.

Sixteen years ago, in 1993, I was in the South Jordan Temple for a wedding of my husband’s niece. While seated in the sealing room waiting, the sealer walked in and I saw his name tag read “Weenig.” I thought to myself, “What are the chances?” After the wedding, when it was appropriate, I asked Brother Weenig if he had been a mission president in Hawaii during 1948-1950. He answered that he had. Then I said, “I am the daughter of one of your elders, Willis J. Southam.” The biggest grin came across his face and he grabbed my hands and put his arm around me and told me how much he loved my dad and what a good and faithful elder he had





been. Dad's influence for good, and the respect from those around him, was once again shown to me and confirmed that we are a noble generation having been born of goodly parents and I was grateful.



APPENDIX

Excerpts From Grandpa's Little Black Book

“No man is small who does a small job in a big way.”

“Always keep your ambitions just out of reach, and never let yourself catch up with them.”

“Go as far as you can see, and when you get there, you will see farther.”

“The promises of the Lord can be relied upon in the future as they have in the past.”

“If it is very painful for you to criticize your friends, you’re safe in doing it, but if you take the slightest pleasure in it, that’s time to hold your tongue.”

“A wise old owl lived in an oak. The more he saw, the less he spoke; the less he spoke, the more he heard. Why can’t we all be like that wise old bird.”

“Only a weakling will excuse himself for being a moral failure because of





the difficulties with which he is surrounded.”

“The right way to kill time is to work it to death.”

“All too often a clear conscience is merely the result of bad memory.”

“If we treat people too long with that pretend liking called politeness, we shall find it hard not to like them in the end.”

“Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing has happened.”

“The purpose of prayer is not to get something from God, but to allow God to make us into the kind of men He would have us become.”

“Is your religion a pastime or a passion?”

“If you cannot find happiness at home, you will hardly find it anywhere, for it depends not so much on where you live as how you live.”

“Happiness—it is an illusion to think that more comfort means more happiness. Happiness comes from the capacity to feel deeply, to risk life, to be needed.”

“One of the Christian opportunities facing modern youth is to put higher ethical standards into commercial life.”

Listen Christians

By Bob Rowlands

I was hungry and you formed a humanities club and you discussed my hunger. Thank you.

I was imprisoned and you crept off quietly to your chapel in the cellar to pray for my release.

I was naked and in your mind you debated the morality of my appearance.

I was sick and you knelt and thanked God for your health.

I was homeless and you preached to me of the spiritual shelter of the love





of God.

I was lonely and you left me alone to pray for me.

You seem so holy; so close to God.

But I'm still very hungry and lonely and cold.

So where have your prayers gone? What have they done? What does it profit a man to page through his book of prayers when the rest of the world is crying for help?

Highs-N-Lows

By Jack L. Brinkerhoff

A mission is a strange experience. It's a trial and a test.

A mission throws at you the worst yet teaches you the best.

They told me this would be the best period of my life. But I guess they didn't explain it all too clear.

I came out looking for a bed of roses. I just wasn't expecting all the thorns I've found out here.

Since I've been out I've never been so happy. I've never been so depressed.

I've never felt so forsaken. I've never felt so blessed.

I've never been so confused. My mind has never been so clear.

I've never felt my Heavenly Father so distant. I've never felt him so near.

I've never been so discouraged. I've never been so full of hope.

I feel like I can go forever. I think I've come to the end of my rope.

I've never had it so easy. I've never had it so tough.

Things have never gone so smoothly. Things have never been so rough.

I've never traveled through more valleys. I've never ascended so many peaks.





I've never met so many neat people. I've never met so many freaks.

I've never had so many ups. I've never had so many downs.

I've never worn so many smiles. I've never worn so many frowns.

I've never been so lonely. I've never had so many friends.

Man, I hope this is all over with soon.

Gosh, I hope it never ends.



