

WHAT ON EARTH EVER HAPPENED
WHEN THAT DRAMATIC READER MARRIED THAT SCOUT MASTER?

By

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Our mother was practically an only child. She had no sisters, just a half brother seven years younger than herself.

"It's not fair," she wailed, "Everyone but me has lots of brothers and sisters! It's just not fair!"

And when she married at the age of seventeen, she told everyone, "Now I'm going to have a family -- a big one. Maybe I'll even have twelve children."

She nearly reached that goal, too. This is the way it happened.

Mom and Dad had just graduated from Weber Academy, a private high school, when they were married. The wedding ceremony was performed in Grandpa Roberts' law offices. Grandpa probably selected that place, also the date and the time. There is no probability about his selecting the wedding ring -- he did.

A few days before the wedding he announced (Grandpa always announced everything, almost with a fanfare of golden trumpets), "Llewellyn (my Dad's name), I have purchased a ring for your wedding. It's a good solid gold ring and should last a lifetime (Grandpa had great respect for the sanctity of marriage).

Dad accepted the ring without any discussion or argument. He had never disagreed with any of his father's announcements, at least not openly, and neither had any other member of the family. When Dad placed the heavy gold band on Mom's finger, she didn't disagree either, but she never did like it. Years later she said, "It was heavy and ugly, not like the rings the other girls wore, but I didn't dare start married life opposing my new father-in-law."

That wasn't the last decision Grandpa made in their lives. These decisions weren't cruel or selfish, it was just that he felt that he was the best qualified person to make all decisions for everyone.

Mom and Dad's wedding was in June, on the longest day of the year. Mom wore her white graduation dress and carried red roses. Both sets of parents attended the simple civil ceremony.

The following October, the marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Temple. On this sacred occasion, they knelt at an altar and pledged their wedding vows again. They were joined together in holy marriage to last not only on this earth, but for all eternity. For this solemn ordinance both of them were dressed in white and Mom carried no flowers. It's peculiar though, that on this day which linked not only Mom and Dad together for the eternities, and assured them that all their children would be theirs eternally, that neither set of parents were there. Grandpa Roberts must have been really sick to miss such a great family occasion.

Mom has often said that she doesn't remember too much about that ceremony as she was so miserable with morning sickness that she was beginning to wonder if one child wouldn't be enough.

In May of the following year, I, the number one of ten children, was born. As I was the first grandchild on either side of the family, I was considered an absolute marvel in everything I did except one thing, and that was the way I grew - grew larger and larger. Dad's people are all diminutive, dark Welshmen. Mom's people are large, fair Englishmen, and my genes must have come straight down the English lines.

My Welsh relatives looked at me aghast, "But you're so big!" All during my childhood I felt like a clomping giant.

My birth certificate on file in Weber County reads - Carmen Roberts. But by the time my parents had reached the church for my christening and blessing, they had decided that I should be Janet. And that's the name I was given.

Grandpa Roberts didn't care what I was christened. The important thing was that I was. I was another link in the vast generations of THE FAMILY. Grandpa felt that the PRESERVATION OF THE FAMILY ranked right along with THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE, and he made sure that we grew up revering these ideas along with saying our daily prayers, saluting the American flag, sustaining the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the president of our country. Grandpa was always in full accord with the church president, but didn't always see right down the line with our national president. As an enthusiastic Republican, Grandpa frequently damned the reigning president and the "foolish doings of that bunch of Democrats."

Eighteen months and a day after I was born, child number two became a member of the family. He was named David Richard. Mom discovered that she wasn't quite so miserable before his birth if she had a steady diet of

graham crackers and milk. So she ate and ate.

Her grandmother kept saying, "Mamie, (Mom's real name was Mary Eliza, but she was always called Mamie) you're getting too heavy. You'll have trouble with this birthing."

Mom laughed and ate. She put on weight and forever lost her handspan waist. That son weighed twelve pounds at birth. Because he was a son, our Welsh relatives forgot their horror of large sizes.

Grandpa announced to all, "A fine boy! A fine boy!"

Dick, as the son was called, helped not only the PRESERVATION OF THE FAMILY but he carried the Roberts name into another generation, and that ranked nearly above everything else, even though it was very obvious that all his genes were straight down the English lines, also.

Nearly seventeen months later another son was born - Darwin Llewellyn. He was called Darwin. One Llewellyn in the family was enough.

My Dad received the name Llewellyn in one of the few times that anyone ever squashed any of Grandpa's announcements. Grandma did it in her quiet gentle way. She refused to carry on family tradition of naming the eldest son David Robert Roberts and then having the eldest son of the next generation switch given names and become Robert David Roberts. Grandpa was David Robert Roberts and he assumed that his first son would be Robert David Roberts. But Grandpa had assumed without realizing the will of that tiny Welsh woman he married. She wanted her son named for the Welsh Prince Llewellyn.

Now, as is Mormon custom, Grandpa pronounced the name of the baby at the church and gave the child a father's blessing. He could have said,

"By the authority vested in me, I give thee the name of Robert David Roberts." But he didn't. He said, "By the authority vested in me, through the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, I give thee the name of David Llewellyn, by which name he shall be known on the records of the church." And if that was to be his name, that's what Grandpa called him - Llewellyn. Grandma did, too, but with a different inflection. She thought it was a lovely name. But to everyone else, my Dad became Loo.

Darwin was even more fair and English than his older brother and sister. But he was a Roberts - and that's what counted.

In another fourteen months daughter number two was born. Mom wasn't kidding about her big family. This one was Ruth, a tiny, premature, four pound bundle. Five months earlier Mom had had a miscarriage. But a few months after that she found, to her surprise, she was still pregnant. The doctor told her that obviously she's been carrying twins and lost one. It was a new idea to Mom, but the doctor assured her that it wasn't a rare occurrence.

Baby Ruth became fair haired and plump. Grandpa was pleased; it was another link with the eternities. He announced to all, "Llewellyn and Mamie are keeping their sacred covenants by bringing God's spirits to mortal life."

Ruth had the privilege of being the baby for twenty-two months. By then another baby was due and it was mid-April. Spring was early that year, the catkins had fallen from the poplar trees and the lilacs were in full bloom.

We were living in the little three room brick house at the end of Cole's Court (named for Great Grandfather Cole who had once owned all the

property in that area). Mom, Dad and Ruth had their beds in the bedroom. Dick and I slept on a folding couch in one corner of the kitchen. (Darwin had died the previous summer.) Maybe the house seemed crowded to Mom and Dad, but we as children weren't aware of it.

Early on this April morning before it was fully light, Dad awakened Dick and me, and crawled into bed with us. He gathered us close to him and whispered. "Guess what? You have a new brother."

Dick and I jumped out of bed, "Where? When? Can we play with him?"

"Not now." Dad said. "Come back to bed for awhile and when it's light you can see him."

When daylight finally came, we dressed and Dad brushed our hair - Ruth's straight and blond, mine and Dick's red-brown and curly. Then we rushed across the street to the home of Grandpa and Grandma Crittenden (these were my mother's parents) where Mom and the new baby were staying.

The next two weeks were strange to us. We were a little bit in awe of our Mom propped up in Grandma's big brass bed. Just seeing Mom in bed was startling enough, as she was usually dashing about. But there was something about the way she looked that made us stare in silence. Over her nightgown she wore lacey pink and blue jackets, and on her head she wore the most elegant caps covered in ruffles and bows. Whenever she moved the ruffles and bows moved, too. We could see only a trace of her long brown hair.

The room was filled with lilacs. Everyone that came, and I suppose that nearly all of the Ogden Second Ward came, brought lilac boughs. Vases of them overlapped each other on the dresser, the bed table and even the floor. When Dick, Ruth and I were allowed in the bedroom, we lurked shyly

behind the lilacs and watched our Mom in her flutterey caps show the baby to the visitors.

But we hated the visitors who stared at us and said, "My, but you children are getting big." or "How do you like the new baby?"

We never answered them, 'cause they didn't listen, anyway. Once I tried to tell a lady that when my new brother had his didie changed, he shot out a stream of yellow water all down the front of my clean dress. She didn't even listen to that, we we stopped answering any questions.

Choosing a name for the new one stirred up quite a hassle. Mom and Dad liked the name of Russell. That was the name of a close friend. But he had been nick-named Buss, and they couldn't stand that name, so Russell was forgotten. Finally, they settled for Kenneth (I don't know why) Oscar (for Grandpa Crittenden and was he pleased in his quiet manner!) Roberts. But we've never called him anything but Buss. That odd sounding name had caught on with us kids and we never let it go.

Grandma and Grandpa Roberts came as often as possible to visit this new link that carried the Roberts name. It was an odd thing that whenever the Grandparents Roberts came to the home of Grandparents Crittenden, Grandpa Roberts rarely made an Announcement. He seemed to go right along with the general conversation. It was probably because Grandma Crittenden liked to make Announcements of her own.

One day about a week after I entered the second grade, I came home to find the whole household apparently gone mad. Really! All of the furniture except the big oak bookcase that Dad had made, was moved from our little front room into the bedroom (we were still in the three room house on Cole's

Court) and Mom and Dad's big white bed had been moved into the front room. Who but mad people would do such a thing? And there was Grandma Crittenden washing and polishing windows so furiously she couldn't take time to answer my questions. And there was Mom so busy hanging freshly ironed curtains that all she could say was, "Don't bother me now. Go out and sit on the front porch."

It was the smell in the house, though, that really tipped me off. The whole house reeked of that horrible smelling disinfectant that my mother and Grandmother used. When we sniffed that smell we knew something awful had just happened or something terrible was going to happen.

I went out and plunked down on the top porch step, glad to get away from that smell. I was scared. What awful, horrible thing was about to happen?

In a few minutes, Dad came wheeling up the road on his bicycle, and before I could get out a what or a why, he rushed into the house. My Mom and Dad had never behaved this way before. What was happening? In a few more minutes, Dad flung open the screen door and shoved the big white wicker baby buggy out on the porch. It was loaded with Ruth, Buss, a suitcase, and odd shaped bundles. Dick followed him out. And then came Mom and Grandma.

"Now you be good kids and do what Grandma Roberts says," my Mom said. "Don't give her any trouble."

By this time Dad had pushed the bulging buggy out the front gate and was running with it up the street. Dick and I took a backward glance at Mom and Grandma on the porch and then raced after Dad.

"Dad," we panted, "Where---why---?"

"Haven't time to talk now," he said.

We had to run to keep up with him. "Don't go so fast, Dad!"

"Hurry!" he answered. "We can't waste any time."

Before we realized it, we had gone - raced - the eight blocks to Grandma Roberts' house. I knew the family had gone crazy when I saw the same frantic activity at this house, too. Some of the aunts were cutting and sewing yards of white flannel and before I could get out a what or a why, we were hustled upstairs and told where to put our things.

Dad had already slammed out the front door saying, "I'll call you when it's over."

"When what's over?" I wanted to know.

"Well," I was told, "there's going to be a new baby at your house."

"Is that all?" I was stunned. All this excitement for a baby? And then I had another thought. "How do you know? Did you see the doctor and his little black bag?" I knew that doctors carried babies in their bags.

At eight that evening when Dad phoned and said there was a new sister, I was still wondering and asking questions. Of course, I was happy with another sister, but for a long time I wondered how people knew about the baby before it came to our house. Especially did I wonder, when I overheard people say, "Isn't it nice the baby came early?" How did they know it was early? It never occurred to me to ask about this for a long time. I just thought about it and finally decided there must be something about that doctor's black bag I didn't know. Two years later after I'd had a long illness and much time for reflection and observation of the doctor's black bag, I asked my Mom about it, and received a full answer.

The new sister had scads of black hair. We finally had one who had the dark Welsh coloring. She was named Mary Lou -- after Mom and Dad.

After Mary Lou's birth, Mom had a vacation from child bearing for five and a half years. Then she started in again on the second part of the family. It would have been easier in many ways to have had all the children close together. Many times Mom said, "I just got everyone over chicken pox, measles, mumps and all the rest of those childhood ailments, and then I had to start all over with the next bunch."

This time I was aware that a baby was on the way. Even the younger ones who were more wise about such things than I had been, knew about it. It was an eagerly awaited birth.

It was early December and I had been home from school for about three weeks with an injured knee (some smarty boy stuck out his foot, I tripped, and knee ligaments tore). Mom had spent most of those three weeks hot packing my knee.

On this cold morning after all the others had gone to school, Mom said, "No hot packs this morning."

"How come?" I asked. The doctor had said hot packs every morning and my Mom followed orders explicitly. She never forgot, ever.

"I think the baby will be coming sometime today," she said. "So I'd like you to take your school books and go spend the day with Mrs. Elliott." (By now we were living in Salt Lake City and didn't have a grandmother nearby).

"Mrs. Elliott?" I gasped. "Why? I want to stay here and see what happens." It wasn't that Mrs. Elliott was unpleasant or anything----. But she liked to talk, and I'd rather read, and besides I wanted to stay home right smack in the middle of the excitement.

But I should have known better than to try and change my mother's mind. We just never got anywhere trying to coax her from her original idea, and

she was generally right, too. So, off I limped across the street to spend the day with Mrs. Elliott.

At the Elliott house that day I hobbled to the front window five hundred times to look across to our house and wonder what was going on there.

"Why does it take so long?" I asked over and over again.

Mrs. Elliott smiled smugly, "Oh, you'll find out all about it some day."

Every hour or so she'd trot importantly across the street to our house and return to say, "Everything's going along nicely."

"Nicely!" I thought. "How could that be nicely?"

Right after the noon whistle blew, I saw the doctor and nurse arrive and hurry into the house with a couple of suitcases and something that resembled an ironing board. Then after what seemed a million hours they left and carried out the same articles.

But still no word to us. Mrs. Elliott was stuck just about as permanently as I was to her front window. Finally, we saw Dad come out of the front door. He was beaming all over. And before we could hear him say it, we knew he was saying "Boy! Boy!" It was just what he'd hoped for.

Without a grandmother handy to help, Mom hired a practical nurse to live in for the next few weeks. Her duties were to care for Mom and the baby and take over most of the household chores. We'd never had a stranger living with us before and we weren't sure how we'd like it. But it worked fine with Mom giving orders from the bedroom, Dad giving orders from every room, and the nurse ignoring all orders and going about things in her own way. Everything went along peacefully except for one thing.

The woman had told Mom at the pre-birth interview, and she told us the evening that she arrived, that her name was Mrs. Schmidt. At least it

sounded like Schmidt to us. So everytime we'd holler, "Hey, Mrs. Schmidt, where's my galoshes?" or "Mrs. Schmidt! Mrs. Schmidt, the oatmeal's boiling over!" she'd stomp her foot and say, "No! No! I'm not Mrs. Schmidt. I'm Mrs. Schmidt."

We'd look at her with great curiosity. We really thought she was slightly batty. But she was really good to us so we'd say, "Okay, Mrs. Schmidt, if that's what you want."

She'd look indignant and turn back to the stove or the washer or whatever she was doing and mutter, "Them kids---."

This went on for quite a few days. One day one of us had the bright idea to ask her to write her name for us. She snatched the pencil and paper we offered and printed in large letters MRS. SMITH.

"Oh, you mean Smith?" we all said.

She nodded happily, "Yah, yah, Schmidt, Schmidt."

But by this time we were in a rut and she was always Mrs. Schmidt to us and she gave up trying to change us.

That new baby surely changed everything at our house, though. Any comfortable ruts we used were soon heaved up. All that baby did was scream and scream and scream. Then he'd start all over again and scream - scream - scream. Everyone took turns walking him, rocking him and patting him. The rocking chair grooved lines in the carpets, the buggy springs squeaked as Mom jiggled the sheel with one foot, and we learned to sleep to the monotonous walk - walk - walk as Dad, Mom and even Mrs. Elliott took their turns with the baby at night.

One day, Grandpa Roberts came down with the Family Cradle and gave it to Mom. Now that cradle didn't do much about shushing that squalling

baby, although we lined up to take turns with this novel rocking baby bed. But that cradle did make Mom and Dad feel that they were finally responsible, mature, dependable, able-to-carry-on-the-family-name-and-dignity-people. You see, Great Grandpa Roberts (he was a Robert David Roberts) had made that cradle for his own first born, who was Grandpa Roberts, and all the babies in the family since that time had used it for long or short periods. The cradle was almost black with repeated coats of varnish and was crusted with broken heat bubbles, which though ugly, showed that numerous mothers had kept their babies warm by placing the cradle near a blistering hot coal fire. Not until many years later when the old cradle was refinished for another generation was it discovered that it was made from smooth, honey-red cherry wood. Great Grandpa had been a carpenter by trade and this cradle showed his skill. All the vertical dowels had been lathe-turned and the hand-carved balls atop each of the corner posts were intricately designed.

Now, the coveted Family Cradle belonged to Mom and Dad. It had taken seven children to convince Grandpa that they were worthy recipients of this treasure.

Mom wanted to name this seventh child Dean. Dad wanted the substantial name of John. It was the first time they had disagreed on a name choice. When Fast Sunday (this is the first Sunday of every month after a twenty-four hour fast) came and they took the baby to church for his blessing, Mom was happily surprised to hear Dad give him the name of Dean Crittenden Roberts. However, she wasn't too sure she'd heard correctly, as the baby had screamed so hard during the ceremony.

It's three years later, and I'm just finishing my Junior year at Granite High School. We all knew that another baby was due and were in various stages of concern about it. Even the neighbors were concerned, or maybe they were just curious. Every morning when I'd leave the house for school, two or three women in the neighborhood would holler, and I mean holler, "How's your mother this morning?" or "Your mother had any pains yet?"

And I'd holler back, "Everything's just fine." I really didn't know if it were or not, but I wasn't hollering that kind of information all around the neighborhood.

The thirty-first of May came, and it was cold and rainy. The first thing I heard that morning was Mom at the telephone asking one of her friends if the younger kids could come over for a couple of days. So I knew that the time had arrived. Dick and I could stick around during the day and help get a few things done, but Mom asked us to make arrangements with friends to come for the night. From experience, Mom knew that the baby wouldn't arrive during the day when we were home. Mom's labors were so long that she always had time to get all the washing and ironing done, the house cleaned, and some emergency food cooked before the baby made its appearance. Of course every little while she'd have to stop what she was doing and clutch the stove or the washer for a few minutes until the pain subsided. Then she'd be back at work until the next pain came. Not until they were so close that she found herself hanging on to the stove or table most of the time did she give in and get ready for the bed.

I was delighted with the prospect of staying overnight with my best friend, June. She, too, was the number one in a large family (her mother had just had number 8) and we had lots to talk about....family....boys.... school....boys....church....boys....parties....boys.

That evening June and I went to a Hooray-we're-out-of-school-for-the-summer-party. We had fun dancing, talking, eating and listening to the radio, but all evening I wondered about Mom and how she was doing. On the way to the party, I had seen our doctor's car parked in front of the house, so I assumed that things were "going nicely" as Mrs. Elliott would say.

When we walked home from the party, a little after midnight, the doctor's car was gone and so I slipped quietly in the back door. I heard muffled voices and saw a dim light in the big bedroom, so I peeked in. The smell of ether pushed at me. A drowsy-eyed Mom lay very still in bed. A tired Dad drooped in a chair near by.

"Hi," I shispered. They looked up and smiled.

"How's it going?" I asked.

"Everythings fine." Dad stood up. "Come and meet your new sister."

How very tiny she was. She hardly filled one end of the big wicker clothes basket that was her temporary bed. There was a perky twist of black hair on top of her head and black-lashed, closed eyes.

The next few weeks taught me many things. A nurse stayed for a few days, and then a woman came in every day for awhile to help Mom get cleaned up, but I became chief cook (not very good,) bottle washer (baby bottles) and diaper-hanger-outer. Dad said he'd wash the diapers, but he wouldn't hang them out on the lines. I suppose it was those neighbors again. He just couldn't face the barrage of personal questions over the back fence or across the street. It was easier for me to say to them that I didn't know as they hollered, "Is your mother still having afterpains?" Now how would I know that? What in the heck were afterpains? Or "How come your mother can't nurse the baby?" Mom never discussed that with me, but

she must've had a good reason. Or "Is this your mother's last child?" That's up to our Father in Heaven. Those 'good' Mormon women ought to know that.

The washing of diapers or anything else at our house was quite a complicated affair. At that time we had an old wooden tub washer with sort of a milk-stool-dasher business on the underneath side of the lid. This was the agitator that was supposed to clean the clothes. It did quite well, too, considering that the clothes were always soaked overnight and then washed in two hot waters before going through two tubs of rinse water. The last rinse contained bluing. Sometimes we just poured in a little dark blue liquid and sloshed it around until the water was an even royal blue. Other times we tied some little round things that looked like chalky blue marbles in a piece of old sheeting and sort of swished it back and forth until we had just the right shade of blue. By the time we built a roaring fire (this was always Dad's and the boys' chore) in the old kitchen stove that was down the basement to heat the water, filled the wooden washer, arranged the rinse tubs on a couple of old discarded kitchen chairs, blued the water, wrung out the clothes that had soaked the night before and prepared the washing soap (bars of hard white soap were grated into a pan of water and put on the stove to melt into a slick, gelatinous jelly), we were ready to begin the wash. We felt that we really had a fine set up for washing. It was a great improvement and a lot easier than the big copper boiler and scrubbing board that Mom had used in the early years of her married life.

It was the wringer on the washer that was a real dilly. It was a wringer in name only, and I often wondered why we ran the clothes through the soft white rollers. Even I could wring things drier by hand. By the

time I had hung out the diapers and everything else each day, I was drenched all down the front. But I didn't care. The weather was warm, school was out, and the new baby, Carolyn, was an angel. Who cared about dripping clothes?

When little Carolyn was four days old it became my duty (?) privilege (?) pleasure to give her her daily bath. So while the old stove heated up the wash water, I arranged the baby's clean clothes and basin of bath water on a table near the hot stove. This is when I learned how slippery a squalling baby can be at bath time. Each day as I handed her sweet-smelling and blanketed to Mom, I felt that it was a major miracle that somehow I'd managed not to drop her.

Everyone agreed that this new baby was a sweet little soul. Whenever anyone came to visit, Dad would point out the baby's charms and say, "Isn't she something? The more we have the better we get." Well, as I was number one, that surely put me in my place. Dad had lots of kidding about that statement, especially from me.

Mom didn't recover very fast from this confinement. She had something called milk leg and stayed in bed most of the summer with her legs elevated. After a few weeks, Grandma Roberts came to stay with us. She and Grandpa had made one quick trip down before to see the newest link in the family chain and pronounced it a very fine link. I was surely happy to see Grandma come for awhile and share the household duties, especially the cooking, because mine was just plain y-y-i-i-k-k.

There were so many things that happened the year Kathryn was born that it's hard to know where to start. Most important, we had moved to Pocatello, Idaho where Dad was to be the Boy Scout Executive. And it seemed as though we had just settled down and made a few friends, when all at once we were waiting for three things. The Big Three, we called them. Most years we had just two -- the first snow and Christmas. But this year we had an added anticipation -- another new arrival.

Now Christmas we knew, and eagerly counted the days. We were thankful it came on the same date each year. First snow? Well, in Idaho that's quite unpredictable, any time from September to January. Babies are unpredictable, too. Mom just said around the middle of December.

Each of us, depending on age and interest, favored one of the three. Mom and Dad didn't say much, but the coming baby was their big concern. To Ruth and Dick in high school, and Buss and Mary Lou in Junior high school, it was a continual debate between the fun and skiing of first snow and the new clothes and glitter of Christmas. To five year old Dean it was the dazzling aspect of Santa down the chimney with everything in the Sears catalog. To eighteen month old Carolyn it was just exciting. She was too young to remember snow or Christmas, and babies--she had plenty of those tucked upstairs in her doll bed. Me? I was a freshman at the local university and anything that happened was exciting -- school, dates, dances, snow, Christmas or babies. It really didn't matter.

As the middle of December approached, we did three things. The first one of us kids awake each morning would look out the window for snow and awaken the rest of the household with shouts of, "No snow! No snow!" Then we'd all look out at the frozen grey ground and the naked trees and

groan loudly. The boys really hammed it up. They were sure their sleds and skis would rot from disuse.

After that ruckus died down, we'd dash to Mom's room to see if she were still there.

"No luck last night, Mom? Heck!"

Dad always laughed, "Sounds as though you want to get rid of your mother."

"Oh, no! It's just that we want her back for Christmas."

The idea that she might be gone on that day was too awful to think about. She could be gone before or after, but not on that day.

The next thing to do was mark off the day on the calendar. As each day was smudged out with a red crayon, excitement grew. If only we could count the days until first snow or until the baby arrived as easily as we did the days before Christmas. But as the days were marked off, Mom had no alarms to rush her to the hospital and we were sure we'd never see snow again.

Christmas Eve came and was like all our other Christmas Eves. We could hardly eat dinner because of excitement.

Dad said, "Don't know what all the excitement's about. Santa will miss this house tonight."

"You can't kid us. That's what you say every year." We told him, but we'd have been disappointed if he hadn't said it.

He was really more eager about Christmas than we were. He'd look out the door and say, "I'm sure that's Santa's bells I heard down the street."

Dean and Carolyn raced to the front window to look out. The rest of us looked wise and giggled, but not too loudly. We couldn't say for sure that Dad hadn't heard Santa's bells.

No one had to coax us to do the dishes that night. We didn't argue the least bit about who was going to wash or dry. No one made excuses about homework, or a headache, or a prolonged visit to the bathroom. Everyone lovingly, kindly helped.

Then Mom played a few carols on the piano. The little ones sang and recited some Christmas stories. The favorite was the one we all had first learned.

"Do you know what I'm going to do
When Santa Claus comes knocking?
I'm going to hide behind my stocking.
And then when he comes in I'll say, "Boo!"
And he'll drop all his toys and run.
Won't that be fun?"

Each Christmas we'd try to teach the youngest to say it. The last line was always the problem. Instead of saying it, they'd answer it. And when they finally caught on that the last line should be said instead of answered, we felt our baby was really grown up.

We had no special Christmas prayer, as we had daily prayers. Only at this time we thanked our Father in Heaven for the birth of his Son. And there wasn't one of us that couldn't have told the story of the Nativity with full details and what it meant to each of us personally. It was something that was discussed just about every day. Anyway, most of us had been in Christmas plays at church and school. We also made up our own plays and put them on at home. Dad was frequently called on to give the story of "The Other Wise Man" at church gatherings. When Mom wasn't about to have a baby, she too was very involved with Christmas programs.

Well, after the songs and the recitations, we hung up the stockings. With seven socks that's a big event. That many socks simply can't be hung in a minute. If we had a fireplace, that took care of the sock problem quite well, but in this house there was no fire place. So each sock was somewhere that the owner chose. The only rule was that it had to be in the living room.

There were all colors and sizes of socks. None of those fancy red ones for us. You can't wear those afterwards with tingling memories of what they once held.

Dick said, "I surely hope that baby comes by next Christmas. Then eight socks -- wowie!"

Mom smiled wearily, "I hope so, too."

Another major problem in a big family is for each person to decide where they want Santa to leave their gifts. Naturally the two little ones would find their stuff in front of the tree. Ruth and Mary Lou decided to share the sofa. Ordinarily those two would rather be cast in the Portneuf River on a winter's day than share anything, but the spirit of Christmas was working on them. Dick and Buss were both trying to see who had the best claim on the big chair near the foot of the stairs.

Dick said, "I spoke for it six weeks ago."

Buss said, "No fair. You had it last year."

So they tossed a penny. Buss won. Dick decided to have the piano bench.

That left me. I looked around and said I'd take the arm chair in the corner. It was out of the way, and I didn't want anything I might get trampled by the wild rush in the morning.

I thought it would be much nicer to wrap everything and put them under the tree. But Mom says as long as there are little ones to look for Santa, we'd better do it this way. It looked as though we'd be doing it this way for a long time to come.

The next thing was to settle down for the night. We made bets as to which of us would be the first one to awaken in the morning. The boys said they were going to stay awake all night. But they'd been trying to do that every year and had never succeeded.

I thought I'd never get to sleep. There's something special about this night. There's no other feeling like it in the whole year. It seems quieter and darker.

I did sleep and then someone was shaking me. I awoke to see Mom at my bedside. "I hate to wake you," she whispered, "but ---"

The baby! I was up in an instant. I looked at her closely. She looked the same only more tired. With my pink flannel nightie flapping about my ankles, I followed her down stairs. I was so much in awe of what was happening to her that I was completely oblivious to the gifts and stuffed stockings in the living room. I only half listened to her instructions as she opened the refrigerator and the cupboards. I was only dimly aware of how much cod liver oil to give Carolyn.

Mom said, "It's all written down on this paper, but I thought I'd better tell you, anyway."

Just then Dad came in from outside. He was blowing on his hands and slapping them together. "The car's heating," he said, "For heck sakes, let's hurry."

He helped Mom with her coat and picked up her bag. "I'll let you know when anything happens," he said. And they were gone.

This was Mom's ninth child and her first trip to the hospital. The doctor said she was to go there when she started her labor and not waste any time. She was probably as apprehensive about this new experience as she was having her first baby.

I was very conscious of the sound of the motor fading away in the night. The kitchen was so quiet and still. The only thing I could hear was the whirr of the furnace in the basement. I'd never thought the furnace was noisy before, but then I'd never been alone in the kitchen at that time of night, either. I looked at the clock -- two forty-five A.M. It was really Christmas morning. One of the Big Three had arrived and it looked as though the other was on its way.

After a few minutes of trying to decide what to do, I gave up and went back upstairs. Everything was quiet there, too. No one was awake, not even the boys.

It was even more difficult to sleep this time, but I must have, 'cause it seemed like no time at all until I heard someone shout, "Hey, it's Christmas! Can we get up, Dad? Can we get up?"

I heard Buss rush to our parents bedroom. "Mom, Dad, can we-----" His voice faded on the last word. "They're gone!" he shouted.

That brought everyone to stare at the neatly made bed in the darkened room. They all looked at each other in silence. Carolyn began to cry.

"Don't cry, baby doll," Mary Lou said, "Mommy's gone to get us a new baby. Won't that be fun."

Mary Lou looked at me and I nodded. And then I realized they were all looking at me. I decided it was time to be firm or Carolyn wouldn't be the only one in tears. So I said in a voice that I hoped sounded like Mom's, "Now everyone of you get dressed this very instant, and don't forget to comb your hair."

That's what Mom always said on Christmas morning. No child of her, she'd say, would greet the most important day of the year in night clothes and tousled hair. What mad, exciting dressing it always was. No dawdling or indecision about what to wear. We had stacked our clothes in neat piles the night before and the boys had spent hours in figuring the fastest way to dress. A stuck zipper was a major calamity.

On this morning I had to work extra fast. Not only myself, but little Carolyn had to be dressed to meet the deadline. However, I even managed a blue ribbon in her brown curls.

Dean was so excited, he kept peering down the dark stairway. We had to keep grabbing him by the back of his belt, so he wouldn't go all the way.

All of us were dressed and combed and ready to go downstairs, but two of us were missing--Mom and Dad. Never before had we had our Christmas morning without them. Dad always had the tree lit and a battery of bright lights facing us as he took movies of our first joyous gasps. Mom would always stand at one side and beam as we each saw the things we had wanted. We were never disappointed, but then, we never asked for the impossible.

That's what happened other years. This year, I just hoped I could find the light switch down there in the dark.

I said to the others, "Stay here until I turn on the lights. Don't dare move a step. Do you understand?"

I started down the steps when suddenly the lights blazed on. There were cries of surprise from each of us. It was Dad. He had timed it just right.

"How's Mom?" we shouted.

"Pretty good. But it'll be awhile yet."

Well, Dean found his train. Carolyn hugged her new doll. The rest of us were in a tizzy about our new things. My new black formal was a college freshman's dream. I could hardly wait to wear it.

Each of us showed all our stuff to Dad just as though he'd never seen it before. He tried to be enthusiastic and tell some of his usual jokes, but they were quite flat. He was very pale and quiet. He did remember to tell me that Mom said the jello salad was on the back porch. There hadn't been room in the refrigerator for it. After about an hour he went back to the hospital and said he'd call when the baby came.

About that time someone thought to look out the window for snow. It was just getting light, and we could see that, as usual, there was no snow.

The kids stayed right around the house that morning. Generally, they can't wait to see what their friends have and then drag them back here to see our loot, but this year everyone seemed to think they'd better stay home. No one said anything about it, it just happened that way. Oh, the boys took their new ski stuff outside and looked at the grey ground and sky, but they soon came in again. They really surprised me, too, when they cleaned up the tissue paper and ribbons without being asked. Ruth and Mary Lou vacuumed and dusted. Being Christmas morning it was hard to believe.

I was struggling in the kitchen, Kitchen duties weren't exactly new to me, but this was the first time I had had full responsibility and on Christmas, too. Breakfast hadn't been too bad -- no one was very hungry, anyway. But the prospect of Christmas dinner was staggering. Thank heavens, Mom had prepared much of it the day before. Still there was the meat to cook. And the meat that year was an elk roast that one of Dad's friends had given him. That darn roast looked a yard long and I could just barely squeeze it in the big black roaster. I had put that in the oven before

breakfast. The big problem was that none of the cook books we had said how to cook an elk roast. So I just hoped the oven would take care of it. Even worse than that though, would be the gravy. Even cook books didn't help me there. Mine was always lumpy -- well, they'd just have to like lumps. The potatoes were no worry. I could do those with my eyes closed. I just hoped that I could have everything done at the same time.

Everytime the phone rang we'd all make a dive for it. But the phone calls weren't important -- some of Mom's friends to ask for her, and how they twittered when they heard she was in the hospital, -- and some of the kids friends wanting to come over. There was no call from Dad.

Along about noon I heard shouts and screams coming from the living room.

"Now what?" I thought. I ran in from the kitchen fully expecting to see an unexpected bomb in the middle of the floor. My heart stopped pounding when I saw all the kids lined up at the windows with the curtains pulled back. They were watching it snow. The snow flakes were the most beautiful I had ever seen -- large as nickles and as thick as pudding. They had come so softly and silently, and were already covering the frozen ground.

"If it keeps up like this," Dick said, "we can ski tomorrow."

The phone rang and we all dashed toward it. I, being the longest legged, reached it first.

"Hello -- yes -- what? -- when?" I turned to the waiting circle of faces. "A new sister!" I shouted.

Then I heard the rest of the details from Dad. He said the baby looked like most of us had as babies (those English genes again), and that Mom was still asleep, and to be sure and have the boys keep the sidewalks

cleared of snow, and that he'd be home later in the day.

I said, "Okay - okay - and tell Mom when she wakes that we miss her terrifically."

"Another sister." Ruth said. "That makes five girls."

"Too many girls in this family already," Dick said.

"Girls all over the place," Buss said.

"Just accept it," Mary Lou taunted, "We're just superior."

We tried to explain to Carolyn about the new sister, but I don't think she understood much. She was too interested in watching the snow.

Well, after that it didn't take long for all but the two little ones to decide that they must go see their friends and tell them the big news. No one could top that for a Christmas present. So they put on all their new clothes, those that would show, anyway, and left the house.

It was so quiet after they were gone. Dean was absorbed in some color books and Carolyn was napping. I continued with dinner. I basted the roast. It looked okay and smelled delicious. I peeled a ten pound sack of potatoes and set the table.

And I spent a long time at the window watching it snow. The Big Three have arrived, I thought. But none of us in our wildest imaginings would have guessed that Christmas, the first snow and baby Kathryn would arrive all at the same time.

And now the last one -- Julie, really Julia, named for Grandma Crittenden. It's too bad that Grandma Roberts' name was Cedy Tryphena or she might have had a namesake, too.

A few nights before I was to be married, Mom told me that she was expecting again. I was quite startled and upset. I knew that she hadn't felt too

well in the past months, but I was too involved in my own plans (becoming engaged and teaching school in a small town ninety miles away), or maybe just too stupid again to realize what was going on. I knew too, that Mom would need much help in the coming months and that I'd be nearly a thousand miles away.

Mom said, "Now don't change your plans and don't worry. Everything will work out fine."

But to me it was an unhappy situation. Mom had had problems with the last two confinements and the doctor had warned her that it would increase with each birth. Even with all of us helping, she faced much misery.

In mid-April I was married and went to Portland with the understanding that I'd come home the first part of September. And so on the night of the thirty-first of August, Ray and I drove all night towards Pocatello. It was the night that Germany invaded Poland and all the way we listened to the ominous radio reports of the beginning of World War II.

We arrived in Pocatello about noon the following day. My family was living in a different house now. They had moved from the big two story house to a one story house so Mom wouldn't have to climb so many stairs. It seemed strange to me to stop at a house where I'd never lived before. The front door was open so we walked in, but no one seemed to be at home. As we went through the strange rooms filled with the familiar things I'd always known, I was momentarily filled with fear. Where was everyone? What could have happened? Then the back door slammed and in they came -- Dad, Dick Ruth, Buss, Mary Lou, Dean, Carolyn and Kathryn. But no Mom.

"We have a new sister!" they all said at once.

I knew I was home!

Dad said, "Yes, about eight this morning and they're both just fine. It was the easiest delivery your Mother's ever had."

We were all surprised that it was another girl. A boy was anticipated, and here we were with three girls in a row.

Mom sent directions for the running of the house from her hospital bed and all would have gone well if it hadn't been for the war that had just begun in Europe. This event caused somewhat of a panic among the people here in our country, so some of Mom's close, well-meaning friends decided to save the Roberts family from disaster during the coming crucial months. They informed me that they were coming to do the peach canning for the season. I'm sure they thought it was laziness on my part when I told them that all this preparation for canning was unnecessary. Their attitude was, what did a bride of four months know about such important matters. They were very nearly right, too. Except on this one point, and on this I knew what I was talking about.

The thing was we had never been a family for a great deal of canned fruit. We preferred it fresh. With Mom in the hospital and unable to defend her own domain and Dad too harried or maybe too polite to disagree with them (It was probably politeness. All Mom's friends were forever after their husbands to act like Loo Roberts. They thought he was a perfect gentleman. So did we.), Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Jenson and Mrs. Davis descended en masse on our kitchen to can peaches.

Dad was delegated to buy the jars, the caps and the sacks of sugar. They didn't trust him to buy the peaches. They did that and the peaches they bought were the best. Then I never saw such scalding and peeling and boiling as went on in our kitchen. I was trusted to do the peeling after having been shown the correct way. Each of them peered over my shoulder from time to time to see that I wasn't getting slip-shod. Ruth and Mary Lou were allowed to wash bottles and carry garbage. The boys were told to stay

out of the kitchen and that didn't hurt their feelings.

Each night when we'd go to the hospital to see Mom we'd report how many more rows of bottled peaches we'd stacked in the basement.

Mom would groan, "Oh, no!"

The next day we'd say to Mom's friends, "We surely appreciate all that you've done, but we think you've done enough."

"We'd better do a few more," they said. "After all we don't know how long this war might last and if sugar becomes scarce you'll be glad you have them."

And so we peeled and scalded and boiled some more.

Finally the last bottle was capped and stored away. Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Jenson and Mrs. Davis went home glowing with the joy of good work.

When Mom came home from the hospital she went down stairs and looked at those rows and rows of beautiful yellow peaches. After a few minutes she said, "That was done for us with love and kindness and we're going to eat them, every last one. And the family did. It took four or five years, but they ate them. But with one slight change, Mom made most of it into jam.

Baby Julie was the last one and everyone determined to spoil her, and that was easy to do. She was a pretty cuddlesome child with the dark Welsh coloring. Both she and Mary Lou were much like Grandma Roberts in appearance and I'm sure this made Grandpa happy. But the thing that made him most happy was that we were ten happy, healthy links in the great organization of THE FAMILY.

GREAT GRANDPARENTS

GRANDPARENTS

UNCLES AND AUNTS

AND

VERY LITTLE ABOUT VERY FEW COUSINS

We were fortunate children. We not only had a living mother and father and brothers and sisters, but we also had four doting grandparents, two awe-inspiring great grandparents, and assorted uncles and aunts. The cousins weren't too numerous at that time and as the few that were lived far away, we had the grandparents almost exclusively.

Our great grandmother Cole was our mother's grandmother, and when we were very young, this great grandmother seemed to us to be an ancient, wrinkled woman, who shuffled around with a cane and never ever covered her bright, hennaed hair with shawl, cap or bonnet. But as we grew older and were taught the stories of the Mormon Pioneers and their trek across the vast plains and high mountains of our country, we came to realize that our great grandmother had been one of those pioneers. Then we stared at her with wonder, because we'd just figured that all those old pioneers had been dead a million years or so, and here was a real live one -- a real pioneer who'd lived in a covered wagon and watched Indian fights and buffalo stampedes just like the people in the stories. Great grandmother had a story, too.

She was born Martha Charlotte Banford in Worchester, England where her father owned and operated a grist mill and bakery. According to family tales, the home and mill were situated on a large mill pond surrounded by a great stone wall and with grass, willow trees and vines dipping into the pond.

Into this pastoral setting came two Mormon Missionaries. They preached and taught. Soon Martha Charlotte, some of her brothers and sisters and her mother were baptized into the new faith. But not her father. He couldn't accept their belief, but in no way did he hinder his wife or children in their new religious practices. Shortly after their baptism, however, he was killed by a runaway horse. His grieving widow determined to emigrate with her seven children to the United States -- to Utah, the land of Zion.

The mill and home were sold and passage on the sailing vessel "George Washington" was secured. The mother paid \$20.00 fare for herself and \$10.00 for each of her children. They left Liverpool on March 25, 1857, and sailed a rough voyage to Boston.

It was difficult for the family to leave the comfortable mill home, the lush green hills, and their father's grave. But they looked forward with eagerness to the sea trip and the covered wagon trek across a great part of the United States to the mountains of Utah.

With them on the trip, were other convert families from their area of England. Most of these families clung together for years. Eventually, most of them settled in Ogden, even in the same neighborhood so that they might attend the same meetinghouse.

Great grandmother Cole was eight years old when she left England, and once in awhile when she was older, she'd tell a little about the trip. She told how each family furnished their own bedding and cooking utensils to be used on board the sailing ship. She told about each family bringing their own food and doing their own cooking in the common kitchen. She also told how each person had to do his share of the work to keep the living quarters on board clean, and how those families who forgot to bring candles were without light at night. She told us it was a long, long voyage.

After arriving in Boston, she and the other immigrants rode in a cattle car to Iowa. Here they purchased oxen and covered wagons and all the other necessities to make the two month trip to Utah.

It was summer. The weather was warm and there was plenty of time to make the journey before cool fall days arrived. The little group of English converts started their journey with exuberant eagerness, but before long they were plagued with sickness. Most of the children including great grandma and her brothers and sisters, were miserable with the measles. The baby in the family died of what was called black canker and was buried in an unmarked grave by the side of the wagon trail. Great Grandma told us, "We were all weak from the measles, but mother gathered us around the small grave that some of the men had dug for our baby. With no father to lead us, Mother asked us to bow our heads with her as one of the leaders offered a prayer. Then we climbed into our wagon and rode tearfully away leaving the small grave behind."

In a few weeks they reached the buffalo country. By this time, Job and Sam, grandma's older brothers had learned to handle the oxen team quite well. But these boys were without the strength of men and found the team difficult when buffalo were near.

One evening, after encountering roving herds of buffalo during the day, the oxen were skittery and nervous. As great grandma told us, "Job and Sam tried to keep those oxen quiet, but they pulled against the stakes and stamped the ground. I guess it made all of us nervous, because while we were cooking our evening meal on the open fire, someone dripped a metal pot and it clanged against the ground. The noise frightened the oxen and they broke loose from where they were tethered on the inside of the circle of wagons. Some of those terrified oxen jumped right over the tops of the

wagons -- and then -- it happened" Here, Great Grandma always stopped for a minute before she could continue her story. "My younger brother, John, and I had just run a short distance from our wagon, when two of the oxen turned and charged toward us. Before we could move, they knocked us down and trampled on us." Again, Grandma stopped, and we waited. "Those stampeding oxen crushed little John's back and when the wagon train left the next morning, our family left another small grave beside the trail."

Grandma didn't say much about the injuries she'd had in the stampede. But we knew that she rode the rest of the hot, jolting, bumpy ride in a covered wagon. Her hip bone had been broken. No one had the skill to set the break and she suffered intensely during the months of healing. She was a cripple the remainder of her life.

A few days after the little group of converts reached the Sale Lake Valley, they decided after conferring with the church leaders to make their home in the new settlement of Ogden, forty miles to the north.

Of their first home in that area, Great Grandma said, "We were happy to have arrived at last in Zion. But it was hard -- hard to accept sometimes how we had to live. The land was so barren compared to our home we left behind in England. There were few trees, little water and it was so cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Sometimes it seemed as though our beautiful mill pond and stone home had existed only in our dreams. Our home here in the Weber Valley was made of stacked grass sod and a heap of buffalo robes in one corner on the dirt floor was our bed.

"Mother would put a strip of cloth in a bowl of grease and we'd light it from an ember. It was smelly and smokey, but our only source of light after dark. We called this light a 'bitch'. Later on, we were able to get a candle mold and made our own candles of tallow. It took a long time

to make those candles, but what a fine light they gave."

The first few years, food was scarce for the family, and as much as possible they used what natural foods the land produced. The whole family went into the hills and gathered berries and sego lily roots to supplement their meager supplies. One spring and early summer they had little to eat but the dandelion greens which grew abundantly on the valley floor. Great grandma said, "At first we enjoyed the greens, they were such a welcome change, but after a week or so they gave all of us cramps and diarrhea."

In a few years the family left this primitive home and moved near the mouth of Weber Canyon to homestead a large farm. Here, Great Grandmother, her mother and her sisters milked thirty cows morning and evening.

Of those years, grandma said, "Yes, the work was exhausting, and mother tried to do her work and a father's work, too. Besides the farm work, she gathered straw, braided it into hats and sold them. One time, she took the sun-bleached cover from our covered wagon and made dresses for us. It was all she had to use and we had nothing else to wear.

"Besides the cows, we had sheep. We helped mother shear the sheep and she taught us to wash and card the wool. We learned to dye it in the juice pressed from the burdock which grew everywhere. From this weed we could get quite a good blue dye. Then we helped mother spin and weave the cloth. We really prized our clothing that took so much work.

"One summer we'd gone barefoot all the warm months. Shoes had to be saved for cold weather. It was my turn to have some new ones. Even the hand-me-downs were worn out. We made a two day trip into Ogden to exchange some farm goods for some winter staples. Mother bought me the sturdiest shoes she could afford. They were also the ugliest -- heavy, brown boys' shoes with metal protectors over the toes. They didn't look as though they'd ever wear

out even if all of us had a turn at wearing them. Even so, I was cautioned to wear them only to church until the weather became really bad. And so that the shoes would wear even longer, I'd go barefoot until nearly reaching the church, then I'd put on those heavy brown shoes, shine up those metal toe caps with the edge of my skirt and walk the rest of the way as proudly as if I were wearing golden slippers. It was a good thing to have good shoes in those days."

When Great Grandma helped herd the sheep and cows in the foothills, she saw bear tracks and other signs of wild animals. Sometimes the tracks were so fresh she was afraid she'd meet the bear face to face. But she never did.

By the time she reached age twelve she was old enough to hire out for pay. The work was hard and the pay was small. One of her jobs was in Kaysville, Utah, a little community about twenty miles from her home. Here, she lived and worked for a family for about four months. Her pay -- one butter churn for her mother. It was while she was living here that her eyes became infected. Of course, no medical help was to be had, so the family with whom she lived swabbed her eyes with strong whiskey. This aggravated the infection and she lost her sight. Some way she sent word to her mother about her condition. Her mother walked the twenty miles as soon as she could and came to aid her daughter.

Great Grandmother was now crippled and blind and she clung to her mother's hand as they walked up through the hills the twenty miles back to their home. She was thankful when after a few weeks of loving family care, her sight returned.

One autumn after the threshers had been to the fields and harvested the wheat, the whole family was allowed to glean on their neighbors' fields. From many acres they carefully gathered up the stray wheat kernels and heads

threshed them with sticks. Great Grandmother sold her share, one bushel, for ten dollars. She enjoyed recalling this incident. "Well, I wasn't very practical," she laughed, "I spent the whole ten dollars on some gold earrings. I'd wanted some for a long time."

The summer she was thirteen years old, she carried fresh water and food to the men working in the fields. Here she met twenty-one year old Charles Martin Cole. Of this summer and what followed she said, "We made friends right from the start, and he seemed to look forward to seeing me come with the supplies each day. We did a lot of laughing and talking. He was a convert from England, too. When the harvesting was finished in the fall, he came on horseback from his home in Ogden to see me. Well, and then you know ----" she almost blushed, "we were married that December after I turned fourteen. Our simple wedding was in my mother's home."

"Grandma, weren't you married in the temple?"

"No," she replied, "There was no temple then, but the same marriage for eternity could be performed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. We wanted to go there, but we had no record of our baptisms. Those records had been left behind in England. And we couldn't enter the Endowment House without that record."

"So what did you do?"

"Well," she said, "as we were eager to have this sacred marriage ceremony to be performed, we had to be rebaptized. So one cold January day we went with the elders of the church to the Weber River, broke the ice and were rebaptized."

"Wasn't it freezing cold?"

"Yes, it was freezing." she said, "But we climbed back on our horses in our dripping clothes which soon froze to ice and rode home. But the Lord

watched out for us, even though our clothes were frozen to us by the time we reached home, neither of us had a bit of sickness. A few weeks later we went to the Endowment House in Salt Lake City and were sealed together as man and wife for time and all eternity."

Well, great grandma had her first child the next year. She was fifteen years old. She had twelve more children -- the last one born when she was fifty years old. After the birth of the last one, she decided that was enough, and she banished great grandpa to the lean-to built at the back of their house.

She was teased many times about a remark that she made after the birth of her seventh child. The child was a girl and her sixth daughter. Only one son had been born to them. She'd hoped that number seven would be a boy and was indignant about another daughter.

"You wait and see," she told everyone. "I'm going to have six boys now -- six in a row."

And she did! Six boys in a row! After the birth of the last one she said, "If I'd had the wildest idea that I'd have six sons in a row, I'd have turned over and died -- turned over and died right there!"

She didn't die until she was ninety-two years old. Her last eight years were bed-ridden, as she had fallen and broken her hip again.

Now, these are just a few of the many things that could be told about our great grandmother and her long life. And what a life! No wonder we were just a little scared of her.

Great grandfather Roberts (Robert David Roberts) my father's grandfather died when I was only five years old, but the impression he left was vivid. To me he was an old, old man always wearing a neat dark blue suit. What type

type of shirt he wore or if he wore a tie, I never knew, as his long white beard came right down to the top button of his suit coat. His eyes were a clear blue and his thin fingers seemed permanently curled around his bony knees when he sat and observed all that was going on around the house.

He was a handsome old man and had been a good looking young man with black hair, short black beard, clear skin and those clear blue eyes. And although he wasn't a tall man, he was sturdily built.

Great grandfather (now it's peculiar, but I can't speak of him as great grandpa as my father always referred to him as grandfather. My mother always spoke of Great grandma Cole as grandma so that's why she wasn't grandmother.) was born in Llanfrothan, Wales. The family lived in a stone, slate-roofed (the family worked in the slate mines) cottage in the wooded hills of the area. Here they farmed along the banks of the River Pandy. In season salmon and other ocean fish were taken from the river and enjoyed by the family.

Great grandfather's father, David (see how those names alternate every generation?) was the first of the family to listen to the Mormon Elders and become a baptized member of the church. Of this incident, Great-grandfather records in his history -- "With Father's acceptance of Mormonism came bitter persecution, constant abuse and slurring remarks from the people, which I resented at times with my fists. I thought under such conditions I should not be baptized until I could control myself better or until conditions changed, because if I joined under such conditions, I would likely do something to cause my excommunication, and this I did not want. So I was not baptized until after I came to Utah."

When he was eighteen years old, with his parents and five younger brothers and sisters he sailed from Liverpool in April of 1856 on the packet

ship S. Curling. They were bound for Boston. As the family lacked money for the full fares, they borrowed from the Perpetual Emigration Fund established by the church for such needy people. This fund was used by many converts, and many of them did not or were unable to repay the church for their fares. But over the years great grandfather paid every cent of the money they had borrowed and was grateful that he owned a "Paid in Full" receipt.

In his history, great grandfather records in detail the instructions for, the preparations for and the trip itself, and his feelings concerning those events. (All of this information may be found in the Roberts Family Record Book).

Some of the events he recorded ----

"We had very rough weather during the voyage..... I went on deck one day alone when the ship was rolling fearfully. I was thrown violently against the rail on the side of the ship and was very nearly thrown overboard. Rough though the sea was, I was not seasick, but the other members of the family were not able to get out of their bunks for a time."

The ship docked in Boston Harbor after a six weeks voyage. After being detained for some while in the customs offices, great grandfather's family and the large group of Welsh converts made arrangements with the railroad to tak them to Iowa. Here preparations for the journey to Utah were made. As funds were extremely limited, it was decided that there would be no ox teams. Instead, the people, on the advice of the church authorities, built small two-wheeled cards into which they put only the necessities. (Great grandpa brought with him a number of heavy leather bound books -- an English Welsh Distionary, the Book of Mormon, and other religious books all printed in the Welsh language). The converts then pushed and pulled these carts thirteen hundred miles to Salt Lake City.

Great grandfather was reluctant to discuss this part of the journey, but he did relate the following. ---"There were eight in our family and we had two handcarts. Twenty people were compelled to sleep in one tent in order to give shelter to everyone. On our first day's journey we traveled about three miles and very early in the evening it started to thunder and lightning with a very heavy rainstorm. We camped near a small stream which seemed a good place. The wind was blowing terribly and we had to cling to the tent poles to keep the tent from blowing away. In the course of half an hour the rain came in such torrents that the water rose over the banks of the stream and in some places around the tents the water was about six inches deep. We had few clothes except the ones we had on, the rest being left behind to come in some wagons and so we had to remain at this place until we could dry our clothes. This was very trying for our first experience, and we were practically strangers to each other. But we had a divine testimony of the gospel we had embraced, and it gave us strength.....

Traveling was very hard on us. The handcarts were hard to pull and the rations were scant..... The suffering from the heat and thirst were terrible and some of the people became so exhausted that they gave up and stopped their journey..... I was compelled to walk the last three hundred miles barefoot as my boots had worn completely out..... The last five days we were only allowed one half pound of bran a day..... Several of the company died along the way from starvation and exposure. After we arrived in Salt Lake City several more died. They were too weak to survive after suffering many hardships. I passed my nineteenth birthday while on the journey, and much was expected of me. I was tired of life. I had never before felt so. Life had always been so full of hope and brightness, but now hope was gone, so severe had been the strain and I felt so near dead, that if there

had been a war on, and I could have enlisted on either side and have gone to the front, I would have gladly done so."

After a short rest in Salt Lake City, the family settled in Farmington, Utah. Work was scarce, food was scarce and the family suffered much from physical hardship. It was while they were living here that orders came from the church leaders that all church members were to move to the southern part of the territory to escape the persecutions of the United States Army. Great grandfather records in his history ---- "I thought to myself, 'What shall I do? Shall I go to California or join the church? I must do one or the other. Well, it would be cowardly of me to run off and live somewhere else when danger and trouble threaten. I know the gospel is true and I will stay with my people and run the risk with them, even though we have to fight the army of the United States.' I said to father, 'I wish to be baptized.' So the next day Father, Mother and I went down to the creek below Farmington to where there was a nice pool of water and I was baptized by my Father and was then and there confirmed by him at the water's edge." (His father had the authority to perform these ordinances.)

The family had been in Farmington only two years when the father died, and great grandfather assumed the responsibility of caring for his mother and younger brothers and sisters. The winter following his father's death, he and his younger brother went to Logan, Utah, where they went into the hills and cut logs, hauled them down to the valley and built a one room log cabin. In the spring, the rest of the family joined them and this was their home for many years.

Twice during the next five years he accepted mission calls from the church leaders to go to Iowa and drive back wagons loaded with immigrants. These trips were long and he encountered Indians, brigands, sickness and physical hardship.

He was thirty three years old before he married and of the courtship there's no record, only this note in his history book.... "June 1, 1870, I started to Smithfield after Hannah Roberts (yes, her maiden name was Roberts) and came back to Logan the same day. Next day we started to Salt Lake City, arriving there on the fourth. On the sixth we went to the House of The Lord (Endowment House) and were married and sealed by Joseph F. Smith, one of the Twelve Apostles, son of Hyrum Smith, the Patriarch..... I rented a house in Logan and we go there to live for the first time in our lives. All is well."

They had but eight years together when Hannah died leaving two small sons for great grandfather to rear (the eldest one was our Grandpa Roberts). Great grandfather accepted this responsibility with seriousness. He devoted his time and efforts to his boys and not until the youngest was nineteen years old, did great grandfather remarry.

Of his second marriage he records another brief entry: "Logan City, July 21st, 1895. On the sixth of February, 1895, I had the honor of leading to the altar before President Merriner W. Merrill in the Logan Temple, Miss Eliza Neagle. We were married and sealed for time and all eternity as husband and wife."

From this union came two more sons and two daughters.

But again, Great grandfather was to have a happy marriage shortened by the death of his wife. Eliza lived but twelve years after their marriage. At this time Great grandfather was seventy years old and had four small children to care for. Again, he devoted his time and efforts to the task. He continued with his farming, his carpentry work; he cooked, he washed, he sewed, he took his children to church, he admonished them and loved them. He spoke Welsh and English to them and they spoke only English to him.

Great grandfather was a busy man, but he still found time to read and write the poetry he loved. This was a natural talent, as his father and his father before him had been bards for their small villages in Wales.

When he was eighty-three years old, he was struck by a car and injured. He died three days later.

Now this is just a little bit about our Great grandfather, a man who was a handcart pioneer, a missionary, farmer, carpenter, husband, father and loyal member of the church.

OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS WHO WERE IMPORTANT IN OUR LIVES

Both of our grandmothers were short and stout. They hadn't always been stout, but that's the way they were when we knew them. Neither of them had much of a lap in which to cuddle grandchildren, but that didn't stop them from acting as all good grandmothers should. I never remember either of them when they weren't happy and cheerful, although both of them had many sorrows in their lives. They welcomed us to their homes, and when there was a need for it, they fed us, washed our faces, combed our hair and took us to church. In all these ways they were much alike, but in other ways they were so different.

Grandma Crittenden (Julia Cole) had lived all her life in and near Ogden. She always lived near (next door most of the time) her sisters, brothers, and parents. An early marriage ended in divorce and left her alone with one small daughter (our mother). Two years later she married Oscar Crittenden in the Salt Lake Temple, and at that time had her small daughter sealed to her and her new husband. Our mother thus became the

true daughter of Oscar Crittenden as if she had been born to him and they became a family for time and all eternity.

After this marriage Grandma lost three children in premature birth, but was happy to finally have one baby son who lived. After Mom was married, and because grandma had only the one son at home, she spent much time with us and doing things for us. She was creative and original in her thinking and we always knew that whatever she did would be different.

Each Easter, she'd make the most elaborate Easter baskets for us. The baskets were large, the hardboiled eggs brightly colored and highly polished were numerous, at least three dozen to each basket. The rims of the baskets and the handles were massed with gauzy ribbons and cotton chicks, interspersed with minute satin daisies. We recounted the eggs and rearranged the baskets every day for days. We couldn't bear to crack or eat an egg they were so beautiful. But after about three weeks that day came when Mom said, "It's time to get rid of those eggs." And so we'd take them way out in the back lot where there was plenty of fresh air and no sensitive noses, and there we'd faithfully crack and peel every egg. Then we threw them away and took the baskets back to Grandma and she'd stash them away on her top closet shelf until next year.

Grandma loved parties and if she weren't having one at her house she was helping prepare for a party at another house. On my sixth birthday, which was in May, she made the most elegant table decoration that had ever been seen in the neighborhood. No one ever tried to outdo this effort. In the center of the table was a tall ornate brass Maypole. This brass pole was one of the posts from the foot of her big brass bed. I don't know how she took it off, but Grandpa was more concerned with how she'd put it back. He wasn't the least bit mechanical, so he hadn't taken it

off nor could he put it back. The prospects of sleeping in a three-legged bed didn't appeal to him at all.

Anyway, this brass post made a gorgeous Maypole. From the top of the pole and out to each plate were blue and yellow satin ribbons and at the end of each ribbon was a small racing car for each little boy or a china kewpie doll for each little girl. No one else ever had a birthday party like that.

One day as I walked into her house, she cautioned me to walk quietly as she expected the kitchen ceiling to fall down any minute.

"The kitchen ceiling!" I gasped and immediately ran to the kitchen. If that ceiling had fallen it would've brought down more than plaster and dust. Grandma had really rigged up a contraption to keep the ceiling intact. On her kitchen table which was in the center of the room, she'd piled four or five large books, balanced on top of that was the broom (handle down) and right flat against the ceiling and balanced against the broom's bristles was her heavy wooden ironing board.

Grandma pointed to the ceiling, "There's a big crack right under the ironing board," she said, "and some of the plaster fell down while I was eating breakfast this morning."

"Aren't you afraid the ironing board will fall down, too?" I asked.

"No, I wedged it good and tight," she said.

It did hold, too, until Grandpa came home and decided what should be done.

For years I wondered how Grandma hoisted that ironing board up against the ceiling. Same way she pried that bed post off of her bed and replaced it, I suppose.

She was also an imaginative cook. For frying the fluffiest doughnuts in Ogden, she won one of the first electric waffle irons seen in that area.

A three layer white cake she made with divinity frosting full of black walnuts (she grew and cracked) and maraschino cherries (she preserved) was sold by the slice for fantastic prices. She pickled watermelon rind and peaches and simmered home made catsup by the gallon. This interest in cooking is almost unbelievable when she was on such a limited diet herself. She had sugar diabetis and ten minutes before each meal she gave herself a shot of insulin. Many times I watched with horrified fascination as she plunged the needle in an arm or thigh that was already a mass of needle scars.

Grandma kept her greying red hair cut short. It had a natural curl and always looked nice. She had one small vanity and that was an almond-smelling cream which she made and rubbed into her skin with a small sponge. I could hardly wait until I grew up and could use some, too.

Grandma Roberts also had one small vanity. Her hair was long and black and she pulled it into a tight coil on the back of her head. But in the front around her face she wore a short frizz of curls. Every morning one of the first things she did was to heat the curling irons over the gas flame and curl her frizz. We never saw her without these tight curls.

Because she was so short and heavy her dresses were very nearly square in shape. Her daughters teased her about the tents she wore. They were colorfull tents anyway.

Grandma's parents were Welsh converts, and after leaving Wales, they settled in Pennsylvania for a few years while the father worked in the coal mines so as to save money for the trip to Utah. It was while the family was in the eastern area that Grandma was born. She came west as a girl and settled in Logan. Here she met and married Grandpa and a few days after the wedding he left for a mission for the church. The newlyweds were

separated for two years while he preached the gospel in the southern part of the United States. When he returned their first home was in Logan, then Washington D.C. and the final home in Ogden. During these years eleven children were born to them. Our Dad was number two. At the time Grandma was such a part in our lives, she still had five children living at home, so a visit to her house was always noisy and exciting.

Grandma was always busy. Besides her family and home duties, she was always involved in a project -- braided rugs, crocheted table cloths, quilts and clothing for her children and grandchildren. When she was sitting doing handwork (she never sat without some kind of work), she enjoyed having someone unpin and comb her long hair. We all wanted to do it. After we'd removed the heavy amber pins, we'd brush and brush the hair, then comb and braid. Sometimes we'd make one braid, sometimes two and sometimes we'd give her a Medusa-type hair do with many braids. I first learned three-strand braiding on her hair. Once I said, "Grandma, can I braid some ribbons in your hair?"

She laughed, "Oh, I'm too old for such fussing."

Her church responsibilities were heavy. Both she and Grandpa had good voices and sang in the ward choir. In their early years together, they sang duets at many social and church functions. Both of them worked regularly with ordinance work at the Salt Lake Temple.

One day when we went to see them Grandma was crying and it looked as though she'd been crying for hours. Our first thought was, "Who died?"

"Mother," Dad said, "what's wrong?"

She could hardly talk for sniffing and gulping, but we finally understood that she'd been called by the Bishop to be the president of the Relief Society.

"Great!" Dad said. "But why all the tears?"

"Oh," she wailed, "I can't do that. I'm not worthy. I don't know how. Someone else would be better."

Grandma was a very humble woman and truly felt inadequate, but, of course, as a good church member, a call from the Bishop was not refused. So she assumed the duties of the Relief Society President. She held this position for seventeen years. Part of those years were those of the 1930's -- the time of the great economic depression. The responsibility for the needy families in her area was enormous and never ending. She worked closely with the bishop in helping those whose funds were meager or non-existent and always she was discreet and dependable.

During these years of responsibility, her two counselors Sister Ballenger and Sister Van Limburg, became such a part of her life, that they became part of our lives, too. And while these sisters in the Relief Society ranked lower than our Heavenly Father, they were, in our young minds, right up there along with President Heber J. Grant (he was the church president at that time) and our Grandma was their boss.

Grandma was a good cook, and we liked to arrive at her house just as she pulled the hot bread from the oven. Some of these loaves she made a special way. Small balls of dough were rolled between the palms of her hands or on the bread board until they were about the shape and size of her index finger. Then she dipped these pieces in melted shortening and placed them in a loaf pan. When they were baked they peeled off in layers. It was pre-sliced bread before the days of sliced bread and so much better. Then there was her lacy oatmeal cookies and a different type of turkey stuffing (mostly apples and onions) and mustard pickles and apple butter and -- oh, the list could go on for pages.

One more item, to amuse us she taught us spool knitting. On to a large empty thread spool, she hammered three nails, wound yarn over and around the

nails someway or other, and then with another nail, we'd wind and slip the yarn over the nails. Soon a long knitted coil dangled from the bottom of the spool. We knitted yards of this and it kept us busy for hours.

On reading this over, I see I've skipped the part about Grandma Crittenden's church activities. I don't want you to think she was shirking in these responsibilities. Her Bishop had called her to be the President of the Religion Class. This was the organization responsible for teaching the young people the principles of the gospel. She gave to the position many years of enthusiastic dependability. But probably the part she liked best was making sure that on the special programs for parents and the body of the church her grandchildren always performed. As soon as we could barely lisp out a few words she'd stand beside us and prompt our mumbled responses. No matter how poorly we did, she'd beam and expect the congregation to do the same.

Another item about both grandmothers -- when they took us to church, they always tucked a fresh supply of white hankies in their handbags. During the services if we became restless, they tied and rolled the hankies into tiny "mice" for us to cuddle. They both expected us to attend church and they expected us to be quiet.

Our two grandfathers were entirely different characters. To us they appeared physically large men. Both seemed tall with Grandpa Crittenden on the lanky side and Grandpa Roberts on the heavy side. Both of them were college graduates. Grandpa Crittenden from the Agricultural College at Logan and Grandpa Roberts from the National Law School in Washington D.C., and both of them married wives whose formal education stopped at about the eighth grade. But that's about as far as their similarities go.

Unlike the families of my other Grandparents, Grandpa Crittenden's family had been in this country from its earliest beginnings. Massachusetts was their home, and on a direct line back a number of generations were two governors of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the first woman writer in America, and one of the founders of Yale University. Members of the family had fought in the Revolutionary and the Civil Wars. In the late nineteenth century one branch of the family had joined the L.D.S. Church and had come to settle in the mountains of Utah.

Grandpa was born and reared in the small community of Hoytsville, Utah, and after his graduation from college, he taught school for a few years, but eventually became a conductor for the Utah-Idaho Electric Railroad Company.

He was a mild mannered man, quiet and soft-spoken. He was ready to listen to a long tale, or sit quietly and watch the people around him. Working in his small garden, fishing the mountain streams, and taking a ride on a summer evening with all of us squeezed in his touring car were his main interests.

I never saw him in anything but a neat dark blue suit, summer or winter, inside or out, with the vest buttoned, and a gold watch chain stretched across the front. He continually checked the watch, I suppose because he was a trainman. We thought him the perfect grandfather as he was never too busy to take time for us.

There are so many more things to remember about Grandpa Roberts. First because he lived much longer and second, he was the type of person that made things happen.

There were many facets to Grandpa Roberts. To some people he appeared to be a religious zealot. He was dedicated to genealogy, temple work and the encouraging of others to do the same. He was not only the patriarch of

his family, but he was the patriarch for a large segment of the church and gave patriarchal blessings to hundreds of people. Sometimes he made people unhappy and angry because he insisted on church attendance and family record keeping. As a child, I helped read long lists of dead ancestors for the books Grandpa was compiling. But I didn't object, I really enjoyed it. So did the other children who were asked to do this. Grandpa made us feel that it was a rare privilege.

To other people, Grandpa was a prominent figure in civic affairs. For many years he was a judge in the Ogden City courts. He was a member of the Utah State Legislature, and while serving in this organization, he became known throughout the state as "Good-roads Roberts." The road system in the state at that time was quite primitive and he headed and pushed the legislation that brought many good roads to the state.

He was also an enthusiastic gardener, a competent and published writer of religious and legal articles, plays, pageants and sentimental poetry. He entered into all ventures with vigor and efficiency, and assumed that all mankind had the same terrific drive and energy that he possessed.

One year, a group of business and professional men in Ogden, decided to climb Mt. Ben Lomond, a high peak to the north of town. One of the men who made the climb said, "Who was fifty feet ahead of the rest of us all the way up the mountain? Your Grandfather. Who kept shouting to the rest of us to hurry along? Your Grandfather. And who reached the top first and was ready to start down by the time the rest of us had huffed and puffed our way to the top? Your Grandfather, of course."

Knowing Grandpa, I presume that by the time the other climbers had reached the bottom of the mountain, Grandpa was deeply involved in another project.

To others Grandpa was a family man. He thought the family was foremost in all things. He complimented and praised those who had large families and worried and schemed over those whose families were late in appearance, scanty, or worst of all, non-existent.

Though Grandpa awed us considerably with all his activities, we considered him, too, to be the finest type of a grandfather. Like Grandpa Crittenden he always wore neat, dark suits and white or finely striped shirts with stiff collars. The only time I ever saw him coatless was when he helped Grandma with the weekly washing or yearly canning. At those times he was always right there, telling Grandma just how it should be done, and helping, too. He never just stood around and gave orders. And Grandma in her quiet way, just worked right around and in between him without the tiniest friction.

That was a great thing about both sets of grandparents. They were never heard to say a cross word or an unkind word to each other. There always seemed to be the greatest love and consideration of each husband for each wife and each wife for each husband. If we'd ever heard any unpleasantness between them or unkindness and quarreling between our parents, we'd have thought the world was surely ready to collapse. These were families whose basis was love and each family worked to keep it this way. We knew we'd be together through all eternity, linked with our departed ancestors (that's why Grandpa wanted us to become acquainted with them in this life) and to those who'd come in the future.

One last item about these four grandparents. With three of them, I associate definite songs that seem to fit their personalities. Grandpa Crittenden gathered us on his knees and the arms of his big chair and quietly sang "Old Dog Tray." Grandma Crittenden would, when we coaxed, boom out with "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay." Grandma Roberts sang as she worked the plaintive "Billy Boy." And Grandpa Roberts --whatever he sang, he sang lustily, and he had two preferences -- patriotic songs and church hymns.

My mother had only one brother, a half brother, who was seven years younger than she. His name was Byron, and we were scared into quiet little nothings by him. All he did was scowl at us and growl. "Can't you keep these kids still?" We hardly dared chew our food around him for fear the noise of our chewing, even with our mouths properly closed, would reach his sensitive ears. He had a lot to learn about being a loving member of an eternal family. We were happy that his consuming passion for girls, motorcycles, and sports cars kept him away from home much of the time.

Dad's family situation was different. He had an older married sister, Cedy Prudence, and a younger married brother, Robert Merddyn (you can see, Grandpa tagged his first two sons with the family name). As this brother and sister lived out of town, we didn't see much of them.

Of those that were around, the first one was Faunce, really Florence Annette, who was a BIG IMPORTANT (that's how it seemed to us) secretary for a lithographing company. She had scads of pretty clothes, a long line of boy friends, and she even broke her ankle in a Charleston Contest. Best of all, she had stacks and stacks of empty candy boxes stashed in the back of her closet. We had helped empty many of those boxes. Every time we went to Grandma Roberts' house, we'd search in Faunce's closet (with permission, of course) to see what boxes had been added since our last visit. She kept us supplied with fancy boxes for our paper dolls. We could hardly wait to grow up and start our own collections of boy friends and candy boxes. We would have been so disappointed if she hadn't married the most handsome of all her boy friends. But she did and she and Bill lived happily in an apartment house up on the hill. This brought more new events to us -- another place to go and stay all night, more new records to play on her snazzy

new Victorola (our favorite which we nearly wore out was a xylophone recording of "Pirouette") and our first and fabulous introduction to tuna fish sandwiches. Who wanted bread and jam after sampling tuna fish!

Next down the line was Ollie, short for Olwyn Geneva. She was small even for a Welshman. For one thing, she wore a size two shoe and she kept all her little shoes lined up on one side of the stairway between the kitchen and front room. Why there, unless it was convenient, I don't know. She had a closet. One of these pairs of shoes was black brocaded satin with high heels and a little satin bow on each instep. We thought they were right out of the Blue Fairy Book. If we had permission, we could wear these or any of the others and pretend we were grown up. My dreams were short-lived, though, as after I reached the age of eight or nine, I could only look at the shoes. I couldn't begin to wear them. Then I'd enviously watch Ollie slip them on, hold her head over the steaming teakettle to frizz up her permanent and off she'd dash to have a wonderful time. She worked in a store.

Next came Reed. His full name was William Reed Washington Roberts. There's a tale behind such a name. Grandma and Grandpa had been quietly and happily rearing their family in Logan, when Grandpa decided to complete his education. He chose to do this in Washington D.C. In those days it was almost unheard of for a married man to return to college when he had a family. But nothing daunted Grandpa. He loaded his family of six and all their belongings on a train and they headed east.

In Washington D.C., while Grandpa attended the National Law School, he also worked in the office of Senator Reed Smoot. During this time while Grandpa attended school and worked, our Dad and his younger brother, Merddyn, also attended school and sold newspapers on the streets. The money they earned was carefully saved for the trip home. They also defended their

opinions with their fists. Their opinions that differed from the local boys were (1) there was nothing wrong with Mormons, (2) there was nothing wrong with their Dad being a student and (3) Logan, Utah was a better place to live than Washington D.C. Now according to our Dad, he and his brother always came out on top.

Anyway about Reed's name. The William was for the current president of the United States -- William Howard Taft. The Reed was for Senator Reed Smoot and the Washington was for his place of birth.

Reed didn't let this awesome name stop his activities. He seemed to be always busy planning some adventures in the mountains with the Boy Scouts or consuming prodigious quantities of cracked wheat mush (we generally saw him at breakfast). Really, my best recollections of Reed are with both of us in a kneeling position. We always had family prayer at Grandpa's house (I refer to the house as Grandpa's now, as Grandpa and prayer just can't be separated). He was adamant that everyone attend morning prayers. We all knelt in front of our chairs and Grandpa prayed. Naturally and properly, he thanked the Lord for all the blessings we had to enjoy, our food, our health, our homes, our talents, our restored gospel, our opportunities, our church leaders and our civic leaders. Then he asked the Lord for a special blessing on our food, our homes, our health, our talents, our restored gospel, our opportunities, our church leaders, our civic leaders and anyone else who was in need of a special blessing at the time. Grandpa prayed as if he were talking directly to the Lord. The prayers were humble and inspiring. Sometimes. Grandma and the older family members offered the prayer and although they said about the same thing that Grandpa did, it didn't have the same jolt to it.

While all of us were on our knees without elbows on our chairs, our heads bowed, and our eyes supposedly closed, it was a good time to peek under the

table and observe the others during prayer. Grandma and Grandpa always had their eyes closed and knelt quietly. But we could see the others yawn, look around, glance at the clock, pat a curl in place, or tug at a belt. Reed kept only one knee on the floor, the other was up and flexed, ready to spring him into his chair as Grandpa said the amen. But as Reed had neither candy boxes nor high heeled shoes, my interest point in him was quite low.

After Reed came Delano -- Laura Delano -- the latter for Delano, Pennsylvania where Grandma was born. She wasn't too many years older than I, and I thought that everything she did was perfect. She was small and vivacious, involved in as many activities as Grandpa. She'd sit at the old reed organ and pedal vigorously while she sang the popular song of the day -- "Pagan Love Song", "My Blue Heaven," "When The Real Thing Comes Your Way," and "Charmain."

One day when she was visiting at our house and we were both cozily seated in our two-holer outhouse, she stretched out her legs to show me her first pair of long silk hose. I was enthusiastic about them until I noticed a thread hanging from them.

"Oh, look!" I said, "I'll pull that off for you." So I pulled and to our amazement, the top and bottom halves of the stocking separated. She was quite unhappy with me and never let me forget it.

"My very first pair of silk stockings!" she kept saying. "My very first pair!"

A few years later, when she was living with us in Salt Lake City, we had another mishap. She was working in Dad's office and took her lunch in a brown bag every day. One day we took each others lunch. When I opened the bag I'd brought, and found salmon sandwiches, I gagged. She said she felt the same way about my scrambled egg sandwiches. I thought she must be crazy, as no one in my seventh grade class would eat any sandwich that year but scrambled egg.

The last family member was Della Rae. As she was just two years older than I, we had our spats. We too, had a lot to learn about loving and living for eternity. Like most of her family she had black hair, deep blue eyes and a fair freckled skin. She was a very pretty girl. I was envious of her straight hair, her large collection of paper dolls, the elegant outfits she sewed for her china dolls and the fact that she was always two years ahead of me in school. I just couldn't seem to catch up with her in any way except height and shoe size. I passed her in those by the time I was eight years old.

Grandma had three other children -- two daughters who'd died in infancy and a stillborn son. But because our belief is that these children will still be members of the family in the hereafter, they were much a part of our life here. We were familiar with the names and pictures of the daughters and were assured that Baby Boy was waiting for us in heaven.

SOME OF THE PETS WE OWNED OR WHO OWNED US

We weren't a family addicted to animals, but we had our share. There was the usual assortment of stray cats and dogs that wandered in and out and stayed for a few days or a few years. There were the mason jars filled with spiders, caterpillars and local bugs. There were makeshift cages for mice and white rats. There were occasional bowls of goldfish, but they had a tendency to die quickly.

At one time we had a beautiful white persian cat. She'd been born on a dry farm in Blue Creek, Utah, and there her long fur had been spotless, but after we took her home to our place in Salt Lake City, she became grey and shabby with the soot from the coal fires. Her favorite place to sleep was in the coal bucket. When we awoke one morning, she was in the coal bucket as usual, but stiff and hard. We never did know what caused her sudden death.

Dogs, too, came to sudden death. Some were hit by cars; some were poisoned by dog haters and other dogs just disappeared. Once a cousin gave us a black water spaniel puppy. We called him Ladd and he stayed with us a number of years. He stayed so long he was more family than dog. If we'd drive off in the car without him, he'd run after us barking frantically.

"Stop the car! Stop the car!" we hollered to Mom or Dad. "Ladd wants to get in."

"Not this time," they said. "That dog has to learn to stay at home." And they'd step on the gas.

"Oh-h-h," we mourned, "he's still following us. Do you want him to get lost?"

"All right, all right," they said. "But this is the very last time. After this he can just get lost."

The car was slowed and stopped. Ladd bounded up and leapt into the back seat of our touring car. He never waited for the door to open. Then he'd smile, he really did, sprawl his long length all over the back seat, and push three or four of us into a heap on the floor. It happened this same way every time. He's one of the dogs that disappeared. He was gone one morning when we arose.

Then there was our pig. I don't remember how we acquired it, I suppose Dad bought it. But we had it all one spring, summer and fall. At first, Dad built a little pen out in one corner of the back yard and we spent hours tempting it with tidbits and coaxing it to do tricks. It wasn't too smart about that, though. Then as the pig grew larger and the piggy odor grew stronger, we abandoned it for other projects. By early summer it was obvious that other quarters must be found for pig. We never did give it a name. Dad secured an old chicken coop on the edge of town and there pig was installed. After that we'd collect our food scraps and those from both the grandparents and visit our new pig quarters each evening. As the weather became cooler and pig became larger we were made to understand that butchering day wasn't far away. We were happy then that he'd never been a real pet. After the meat was cut we had our first experience with frozen meat. All we had to do was wrap it and hang it on our back porch. The temperature was colder than a deep-freezer that year. This was the first and last time our family tried raising its own meat. Butcher shops were more convenient.

We had a small acquaintance with chickens, too, as both grandparents had them in their back yards. We chased the chickens, threw them grain and gathered their eggs.

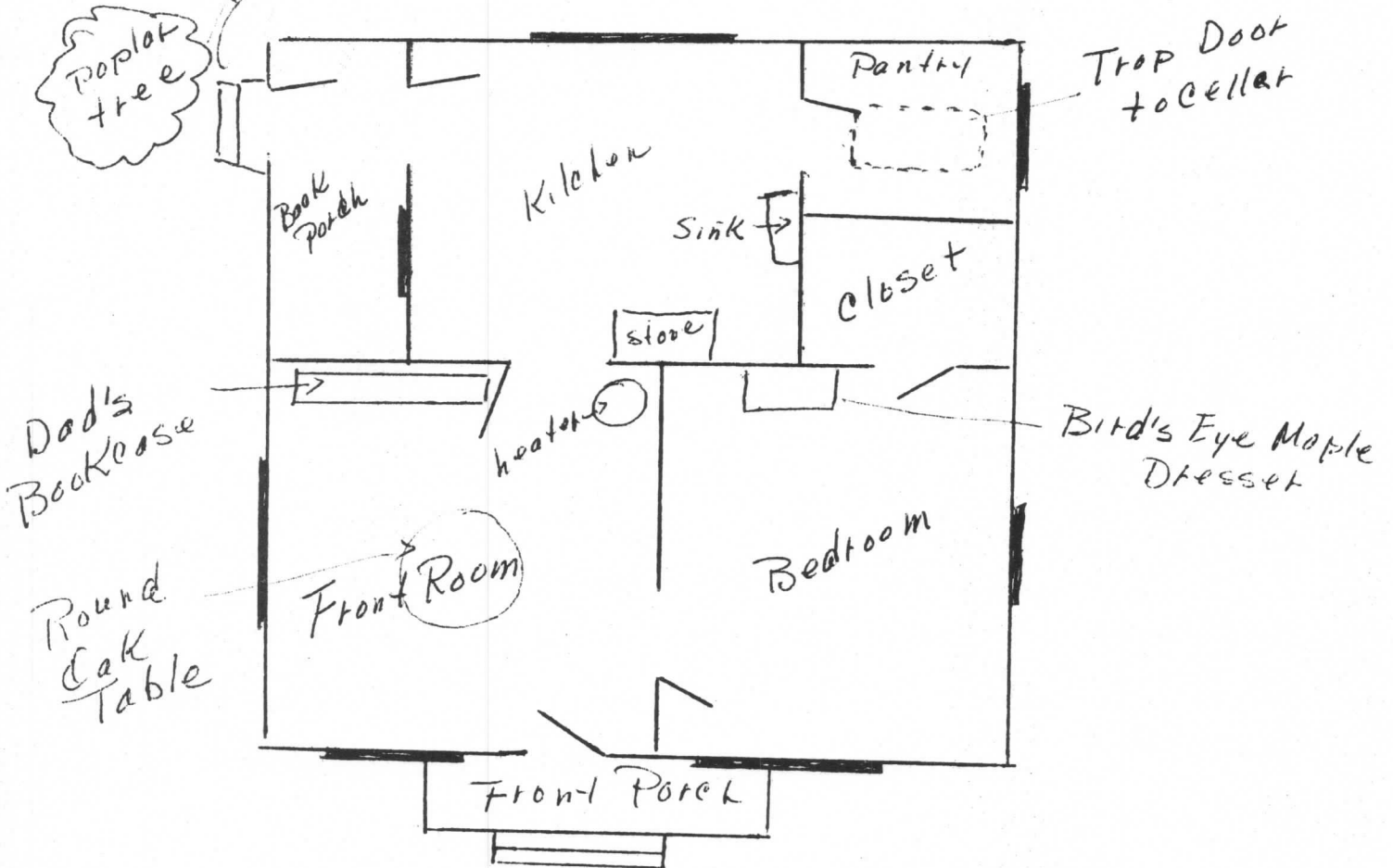
And that's about it.

WHERE WE LIVED

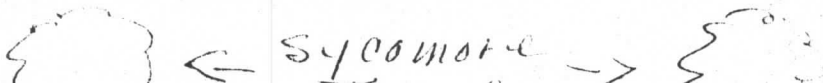
House #1

When we were very small we lived at the end of Coles Court in Ogden. This court was named for Grant Grandfather Cole. At one time he'd owned a large tract of land in this area. Here, he alloted homesites to those of his children who wished to settle near the old home. Our parents rented a house from the youngest son in the family.

It was a small square, three room, red brick home. This is a floor plan of that place.



Out in back of the house, down a flower-bordered, wooden planked path, was our outhouse. It was hidden by the clothes lines. Not too well hidden when there were no clothes flapping around, though. The yard was large



with numerous sycamore, poplars, lilacs, mock orange and other trees and shrubs. There were dim hiding places for hide-and-seek, and a cool, green-bowered corner for a playhouse. A large part of the yard was surrounded by a chicken wire and wood fence. This was supposed to keep the little ones at home, but they soon learned to climb over it.

In the kitchen we had a Majestic range, a white table and chairs. Also a couch where Dick and I slept. Right in the middle of the front room was a round oak table and placed at intervals around the room were four oak dining chairs with brown leather seats, a large oak rocker with an upholstered leather seat and some plant stands. We thought it was a fine room. The bedroom was crowded with a white iron double bed, a gold painted iron crib, a blue wooden trundle bed, and a bird's eye maple dresser. We thought that a fine room, too.

This house was across the street from Grandma Crittenden's and eight blocks from Grandma Roberts' house. We were also close to the Second Ward Chapel where we attended all church activities, but we were quite a few blocks from the Lewis School where Dick and I started. However, we always walked to school. No one ever considered giving us a ride. We didn't have a car, anyway. And we walked alone. If we were big enough to go to school, we didn't need an adult tagging along to see that we crossed busy Washington Avenue without harm. The thought of anyone bothering us was unthinkable. As all normal kids do though, we didn't miss wading through all water puddles and snow banks. As we had no waterproof boots, only low rubbers, more than once we arrived at school and lined up with the other students to hang our long black stockings on the steam heaters to dry. Then we'd pull our chairs up near the heaters and participate in learning to read while our long winter underwear (stained black and grey from the wet stockings) steamed dry on our legs.

It was while we were living in this little house that we thought we had a spook. One evening when the house had quieted down for the night and all the kids were in bed and Mom and Dad were quietly reading before the little coal heater in the front room, they began to hear eerie noises coming from the cellar. Every few minutes they heard the same sound again. "Screech -- screech -- squeek -- ra-a-asp!" Dad put down his book and walked quietly to the pantry and listened. "Screech -- screech -- squeek -- ra-a-asp!" He leaned over and lifted the trap door to the cellar.

"Oh, Loo, maybe you'd better not go down," Mom whispered.

"Sh-h-," he cautioned.

The noise had stopped. He waited but nothing happened. Suddenly it started again. "Screech -- screech -- squeek -- ra-a-asp!" This time Dad tip-toed down the wooden steps. The noise stopped again and was heard no more that night.

But the next night the same thing again. Dad went down the stairs and sat in the dark with a flashlight. When the noise started Dad flipped on the light and the noise stopped. Mom hung over the trap door and begged him to come up, "Loo, don't stay down there. You might get hurt."

"There's not a thing out of the ordinary down there," he told her. "I've searched this cellar from top to bottom and there's not so much as a cat down here."

The spooky noise continued at night when the house was quiet. Dad had Byron and Reed come and watch with him, but they couldn't find the source of the noise. Then Dad had a number of boys in his Scout troop (he was the Scout master) come over. Each boy brought a flashlight and they gathered in our cellar one night.

"Now don't move or make a sound." Dad cautioned them. "But when that rasping sound begins, turn your lights on at once."

So Dad and the Boy Scouts sat quietly in the pitchy dark cellar. Mom sat on a chair in the dark pantry by the open trap door. Five minutes -- ten minutes -- fifteen minutes -- not a sound. Suddenly, "Screech -- screech -- squeek -- ra-a-asp!" Eleven flashlights snapped on at the same time. The noise stopped. But in one corner for a few seconds, a flashlight's beam reflected in a small pair of glistening eyes. They the eyes disappeared.

"I saw something! Right over there." one of the scouts shouted. He jumped over the other boys to a corner of the cellar. There was nothing there with eyes now. Only one of our old, slightly rusty wagons lying askew some packing boxes.

One of the boys put a hand on a wagon wheel and it moved slightly. "Screech -- screech -- squeek -- ra-a-asp!" That sound. He moved the wheel again.

"There's your spook!" everyone said.

"But what moves the wheel?" someone asked.

"Look," Dad said, "this old piece of lace tied to the wheel (we'd decorated the wagon the summer before for a children's parade). Pull the lace slightly and the wheel moves, and it looks as though mice have been chewing on the lace."

So the mystery of the spook was solved and traps were set and we had no more screechy sounds in the night.

This little house was our home for about eight years and it was the first home for Dick, Ruth, Darwin, Buss, and Mary Lou. It was a good little house, but too little for us so we moved.

Piggie's enclosure

Plum Tree

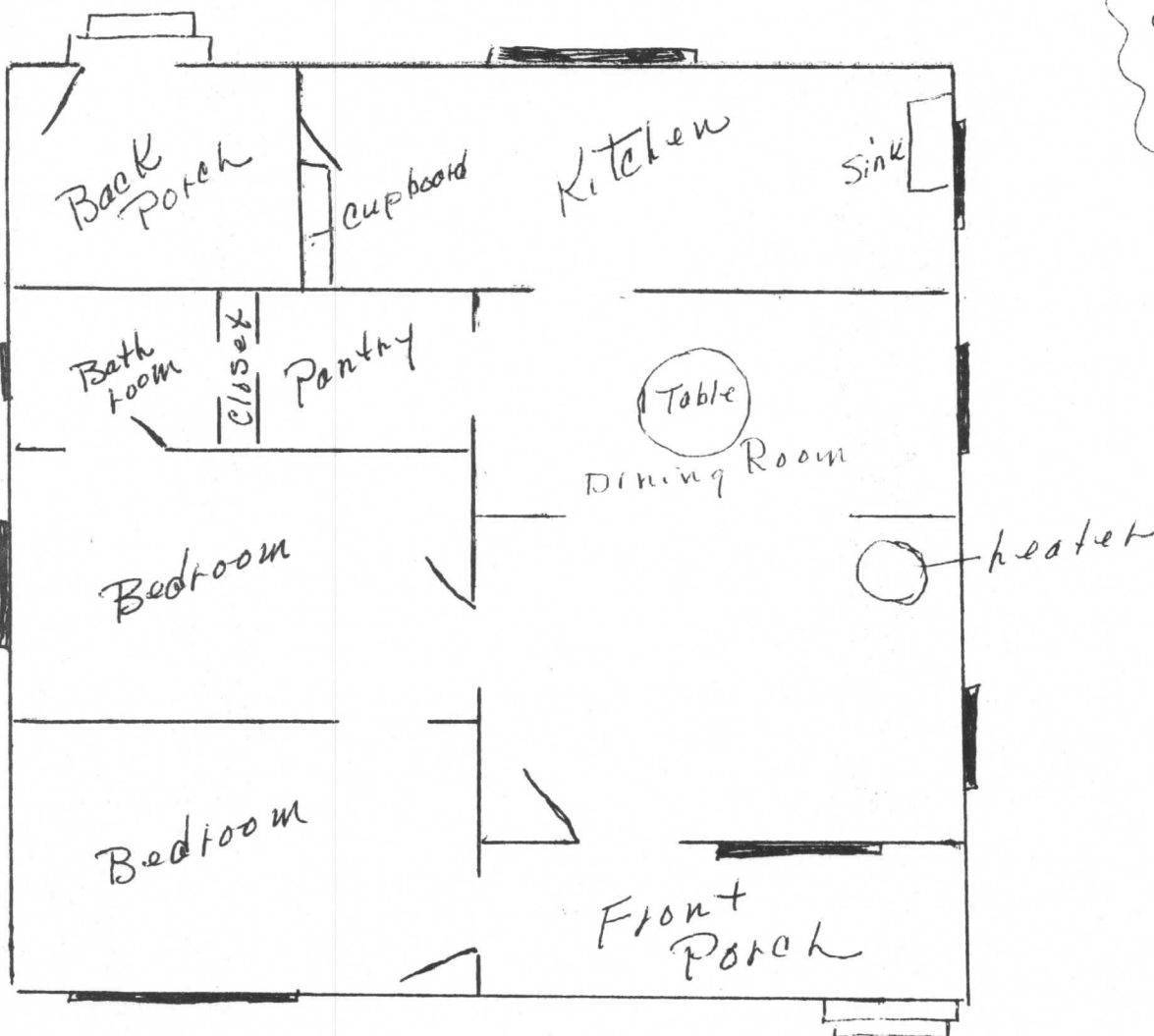
House #2

This time we were two blocks from Grandma Roberts' house and six blocks from Grandma Crittenden's house.

The house was a square red brick on Wall Avenue. That street, wo we were told, was originally the site of the walls of an old fort, hence its name.

The floor plan was something like this.

Cropes



As you can see, the kitchen and the far-removed pantry were arranged to give plenty of exercise to those using them. However, these old houses that had a pantry for food and utensil storage did give a family an opportunity to

have activities together. In the evening, Mom washed the dishes, Dad dried them and all of us kids who were old enough carried them to the pantry and stacked them. We thought it was fun.

For this house, Mom and Dad bought a new grey, black bordered rug with a spray of pink flowers woven in each end. New also was a walnut gate-legged table and a walnut rocking chair with a caned seat and sides. Each day we were more convinced that we had the nicest house in town.

Outside we had another large yard, though not so large as the previous one. There was a grape arbor, four or five fruit trees, and a small shed hedged by sweet-smelling vines and bushes. It made a perfect playhouse.

It seemed as though there was nothing but rosy future ahead, but as the first winter settled in, the picture changed. We were there for two winters so some of the problems happened during the second winter, but first or second the problems were real. The old house was excessively cold and drafty. The coal stoves in the kitchen and dining rooms burned furiously, but the heat didn't penetrate into the chilly, damp bedrooms and bathroom. The steam in the bathroom formed a thin sheet of ice above the water in the tub. Then we wished for the old tin tub in the middle of the kitchen floor in our old house where it was warm and cozy. All winter the windows of the house were opaque with ice crystals.

With this continual cold, it seemed as though all of us became sick. Not everyone all at once, but one after another, sometimes two and three together. The most serious illnesses of our lives came those two cold winters.

Grandpa Roberts said it was because the house faced east. "I warned you," he said, "when you moved in that this house would bring you nothing but trouble. East-facing houses are like that." This must be an old Welsh

superstition that he quoted when it suited, because he never said it about our other house and that faced east, too.

Everyone had a different theory about our troubles. Maybe it was just our turn. I don't know.

It started in October a few days before Halloween, and I started it. There was a pain in my side and it kept getting worse until I couldn't walk without bending over. Mom kept me home from school and tried all her home remedies, but I felt no better. Then both grandmothers came and suggested their remedies -- the favorite being a hot mustard plaster placed squarely on the side where I hurt. Well, within a few hours after the application of that strong heat, the pain was gone, but I really felt worse, all over. So the doctor was called. Doctor Nelson came, asked a few questions, gathered me up in a blanket off the bed and carried me to his car. Mom tearfully came along. Dad stayed home with the other kids. I believe he was working nights at the railroad, then. I was in the hospital for quite a long while and didn't return to school until January. I've been told it was a miracle that I returned at all. The heat from the mustard plaster had ruptured my appendix and I had peritonitis.

Dad was sick for a long time, too. He had something called quincy. We had a folding couch in the dining room and he stayed there for weeks where it was warm. There was also a crib in that room and nearly all winter long a sick child was in it. Buss had ear trouble. Mom pinned clean rag to his shoulder each morning to catch the ooze that dripped continually from one ear. The little coal heater burned night and day as Mom tended one sick person after another. It's a good thing she didn't have any new babies during those years.

During this time, especially when Dad was sick, we were helped so many times by our grandparents and their families. The two acts of kindness that

surprised me most came from our two uncles, Reed and Byron.

Besides Dad's night job at the railroad, he had a part time work with a dairy delivering dairy products. While he was sick, his brother, Reed, took the old butter truck (our name for it) and made all the deliveries. For this he would accept no payment. This service kept the job open for Dad which he really needed.

Then just before Christmas, Byron came down one evening and brought us our first electric tree light. He was beaming as brightly as the lights, and that's what we needed -- bright lights and bright smiles.

However, Christmas did bring problems. With sick kids in the dining room, how could Santa leave toys in the living room? The rooms were separated only by a framed arch, so what was in one room was clearly visible in the next. Mom and Dad did the only thing possible. They tacked a blanket up and across the archway. It was fascinating to us to think what would be happening on the other side of that blanket. If we had really wanted to, we could easily have peeked around one side of that blanket or stood on a chair and looked over the top. But we didn't. We were probably too sick.

When Mom dropped the blanket on Christmas morning some of us ran in to see our new toys, but most of us admired the sight from our bed. It was a good Christmas. Mom and Dad worked hard at that. No matter how bad the family's health or financial situation was (and both were horrible those years), they gave us a wonderful Christmas.

One delightful memory about this house -- it was here that Dad taught me to waltz. Over the pink congoleum floor of the dining room we'd go, counting one-two-three, one-two-three as our old wind up Victrola wheezed out "My Little Gypsy Sweetheart."

Well, two years in the house on Wall Avenue was enough, and luckily for us at that time, Dad decided to go into professional Boy Scout work. He quit his duties at the railroad and moved us to Salt Lake City the middle of October. We were especially happy not to have another winter in that house. Ten days after we moved came the big crash of October 1929 and had Dad stayed with the railroad he'd have been out of work. We all felt that the move had come at the right time for us.

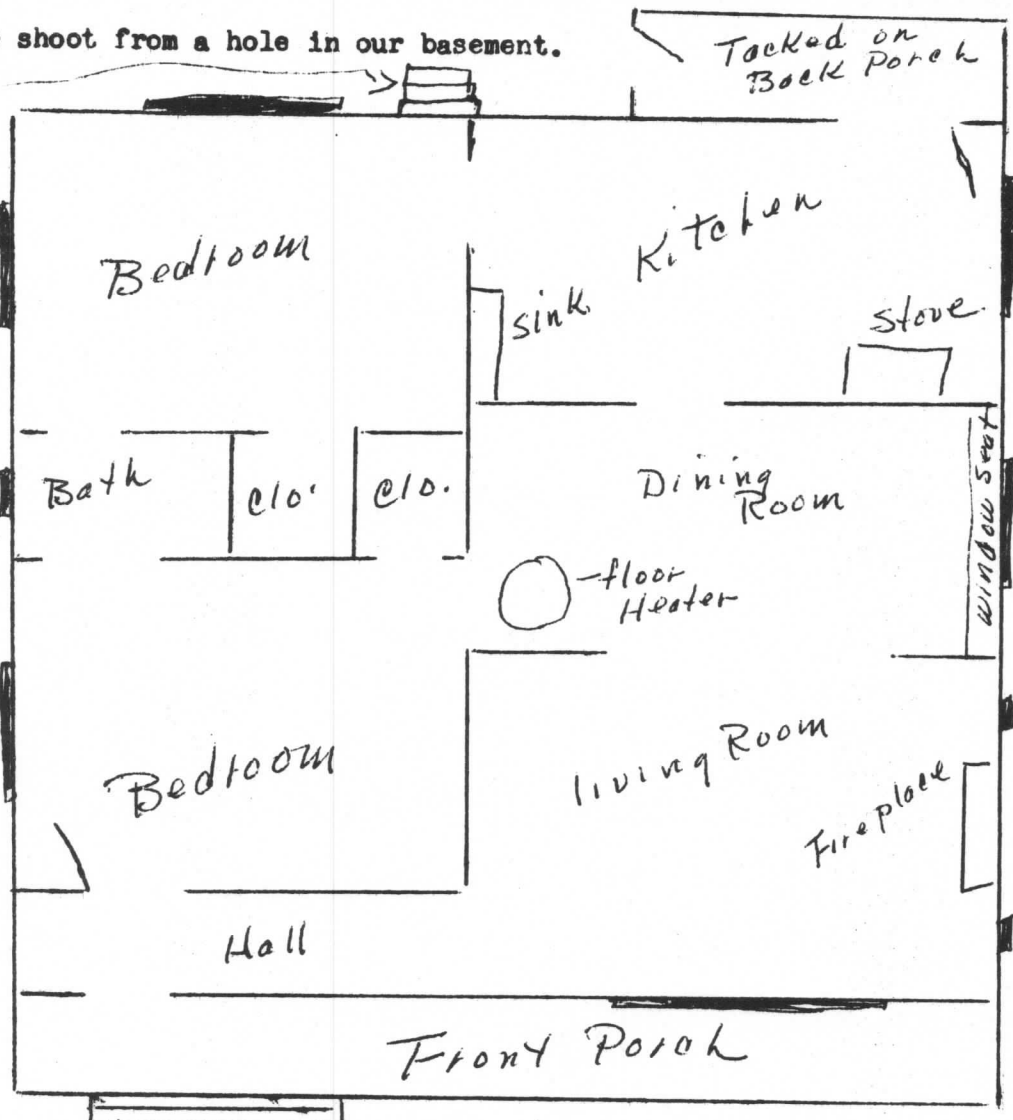
House #3

It was a difficult move for us emotionally. We'd be forty miles from our grandparents and forty miles was as bad as the other side of the world. The novelties the new house offered helped stop the home sickness. First, we were happy to see that it faced south. Grandpa Roberts approved of that. However, we seemed to be in a rut. It was another square red brick. But we had two additional features we'd never had before -- a green tiled (nauseous green) fireplace and a furnace. Although the furnace had but one large opening in the floor in the middle of the house, it was far superior to the heat we'd had previously. It's big disadvantage was we kept dropping things down through the grill that covered it. We had a full basement, too, and even though it had a dirt floor, we made much use of it. Mostly we stored little used items down there, but it was also a good place for our pets to sleep in the cold weather. It may seem odd, but we had our first archery experience here. Dad dug a hole about three feet square, from side to side and deep, and we stood in this hole to shoot at the target which was tacked to a couple of bales of straw at the end of the basement. It was a perfect place for shooting -- the bow easily cleared the ceiling rafters, it was warm, no wind, well lit at night and we all acquired Dad's passion for archery. He made his

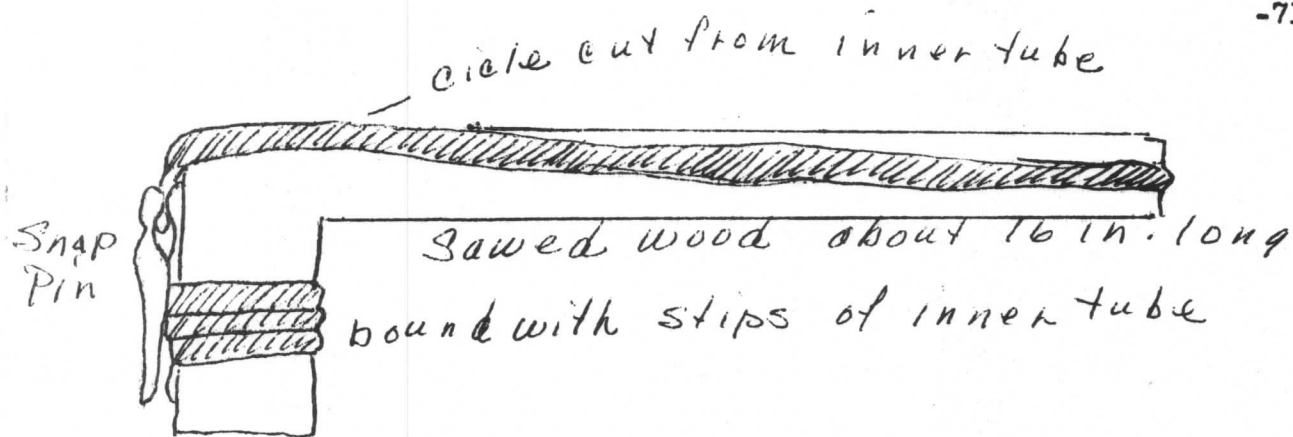
-70-
Scraggly
apple
tree

own bows and arrows and some for us, too. Years later I won the Women's Archery tournament at the university, but I had the advantage over all the other contestants. I used one of Dad's handmade bows and he had taught me to shoot from a hole in our basement.

Steps
down to
basement
entrance



The backyard of this place in Edith Avenue was just dirt and a couple of scraggly, non-productive apple trees. All the other yards in the neighborhood were similar -- nice lawn and flowers in the front and plain dirt and often junky backyards. But we had fun here. (When I refer to "we", I mean all of us kids. When I mean Mom and Dad, I'll say Mom and Dad). Each summer Dad pitched a tent for us and we were the envy of all the neighbor kids. We also learned to play "cops and robbers" and made whole arsenals of rubber guns. These guns were sawed from a plank of wood and looked like this.



When the clothespin was released, -- Whamm! We became good marksmen and nothing was safe from our fire. Neither were Mom's clothespins nor Dad's inner tubes. We snatched them as needed. Luckily for us, Dad had many punctures in his tires in those days.

It was while we lived in this house that both Grandma and Grandpa Crittenden died. So Mom brought to our home many things that had belonged in her girlhood home. There was an enormous black leather couch, many fragile crystal and china dishes and the upright piano that Mom had played as a girl. We were all elated to have the piano, but a little nagging fear began lurking in our minds. Suppose we were coaxed in from our games of cops and robbers, or from our basement archery range to practice music on the piano! We were!

We acquired our first radio while living here. It was a Philco in an ornate walnut cabinet and it had the place of honor in our front room. We spent many hours lying on the floor and drawing pictures as we listened to "Myrt and Marge", "Amos and Andy" and something that came on early in the morning about ranch life. The theme song to that was "Pony Boy." Oh, also, we never missed Jack Benny with his six delicious flavors of J-E-L-L-O on Sunday evening.

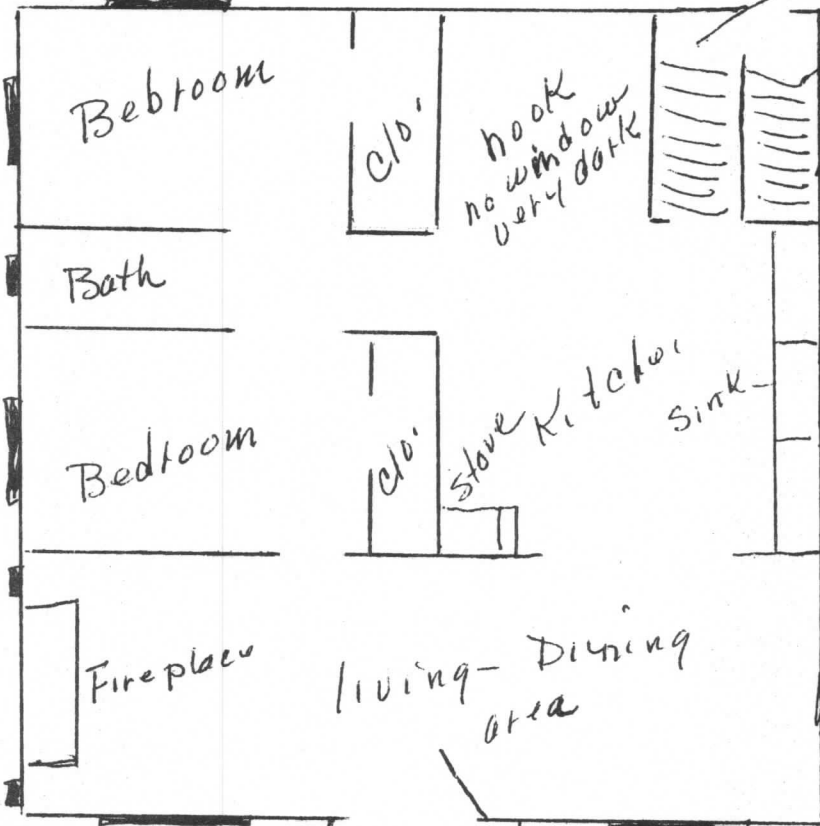
This house was Dean's first home but he didn't live there but a few months, as the landlord sold the house, or raised the rent or some other ridiculous thing and so we moved again.

Garage

House #4

This move took us way up on the each bench to the Sugarhouse area. And guess what? That's right, another square red brick house. That's four square red brick houses in a row. They really didn't look much alike, though,

Rose & Sharon Bushes



stairs up to kitchen
stairs down to basement

Elm Tree

We had a tea-apron size front porch and a little entry in the back. We also had our first garage. No more wiping a foot of snow from the car before it could be used in the winter. There came a day, though, when we wished we hadn't had that garage. One morning, Dad was in there cranking the car so he could go to work, when the car lurched forward and pinned him to the back wall of the garage. Luckily, his injuries were minor, but he limped for quite a few weeks.

The kitchen and bathrooms of this place were tiled in tiny hexagonal white tiles and our full basement was all cemented and heated. The whole house was

heated! This finished basement made the biggest difference in our living habits. Dick and Buss had a bed fixed up for them in one corner of the basement. There they could make all the mess they wanted, and they did. Ruth, Mary Lou and I luxuriated in our all female bedroom, and I had a bed all to myself for the first time. Mary Lou and Ruth shared a big bed and the arguments they had over the division of the bed went on and on and on. They drew an imaginary line down the middle of the bed, and if so much as a toe or a corner of a nightie ventured over that line, the argument was on. Ruth was the more adamant of the two about observing the rules. Ruth would scold and Mary Lou could take it only so long, then she'd sit up in bed, lean over Ruth and say, "Y-k-k-k, I vomit on you!" It was the very worst thing to say to anyone.

Ruth would answer coldly, "What do you think I am a bed pan?" (Mom always put a bed pan partly full of water by our beds when we had stomach upsets.)

So in our bedroom, away from the ears of Mom and Dad, Mary Lou and I started calling Ruth -- B.P. We even made up some verses about her which began something like this --

"Here's the truth
About sister, Ruth.
The girl with the
long and snaggley tooth."

Thank heavens, that's all of it I can remember. We were acting as normal sisters did, I suppose, but it wasn't earning us a place in the eternal family plan.

Well, back to the house again. The tile around the fireplace was even worse than the previous one. This was sort of a greenish, reddish puce. Awful!

But to make up for that we had fine-grained, highly polished hard wood floors, and Mom made sure that we kept them that way. These floors were a great improvement over the splintery, soft wooden floors we'd had always before.

Outside, grass grew in all directions -- front, back and sides. This was fine except at cutting times, then Dick and Buss yearned for the old dirt backyard.

The most impressive thing about living in this area was the enormous empty fields practically in our own yard. At the end of our block, 1400 Ramona Avenue, it was a clear uninhabited stretch of fields right up to the mountains. We hiked that area ^{the} one summer we lived there, and we tried to ski it the one winter. In the empty field directly to the west of us, we marked out a baseball diamond, (this house faced north) and spent every minute that the weather was good playing ball. Hours and hours of baseball. It was the most important part of our lives. Much more fun than the cops and robbers of a few years earlier. That year I broke only two fingers trying to catch balls. There had been three broken fingers the year before.

The enjoyment we had in this place lasted only one year. Somehow or other, Mom and Dad had the crazy (to us) idea that now we were getting older, we should do something more constructive with our spare time than play ball.

Mom and Dad said, "We want to get a place a little further out where we can have a small garden for all of us to enjoy."

"Enjoy!" we moaned. We knew what they meant. We'd seen our grandparents enjoying their gardens with all that weed pulling, hoeing, watering, and getting up before the sun arose. That didn't look so enjoyable to us. Enjoyment on one end of a hoe? No! Never! But Mom and Dad ignored our moans and groans and went serenely on looking for a new house with a garden spot. They found it, too.

House #5

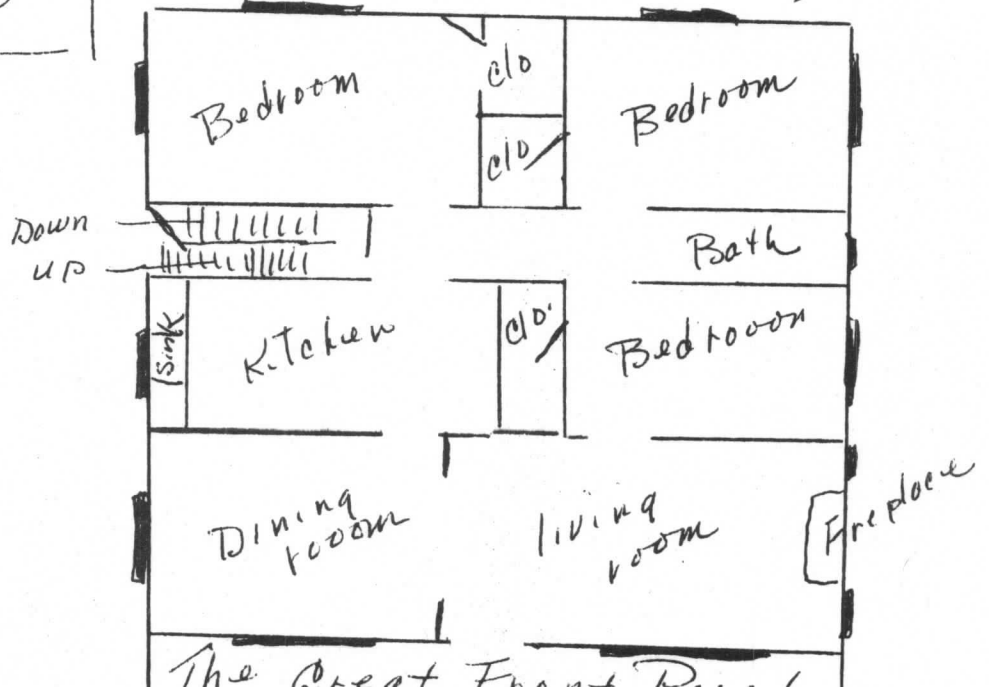
And so as soon as school was out in June we moved clear out on 33rd South above 21st East, practically to a foreign country. Lower Slobbovia would've been more enticing. We eyed all our new country hick neighbors with suspicion. They couldn't compare to our old friends. How would we ever manage to exist all these farmers? But it became about the best place we ever lived. I guess we became farmers and country hicks, too.

Naturally, the house was brick and square in shape, but we did have a change of color. It was that dismal purple that was so popular for a few years in the Salt Lake area. This house had a front porch all across the front and was a splendid place to sit on a hot summer's day and watch the cars go by on their way to East Mill Creek Canyon. One summer we concentrated on the cars and in a short time we could name every make and year. Then we had a contest to see who could spot a car first and make the correct identification. This porch became the neighborhood gathering place for our younger family members and their friends during the daytime and for me and Dick and our teenage friends at night time. On Sunday afternoon all ages flocked there. There never was a better front porch.

Garden area

Garage

all these houses are out of proportion but you got the main idea



As you see, the house had three bedrooms, so the boys were back upstairs, again. All the rooms seemed to be light and airy and full of sunshine. Maybe it's because they were large that they seemed so cheerful, all except the bathroom. Someone had really visioned an uninspiring inspiration when it was painted. The walls were sort of a medium muddy green and then it looked as though a sponge oozing moldy cream had been thrown at the walls and allowed to slip and slide. It was a MFSS. But it was cool in the summer and warm in the winter and that's what was important. And it was CLEAN all the time. Even with all our big family to use it, our Mom surely kept it clean, and everything else, too. That house and every other house we'd ever lived in or would live in were scrubbed regularly with a combination of hot water, soap, ammonia, chlorine bleach and that horrible smelling disinfectant she always had on hand. The odor of all those combined was enough to kill anything, including our sense of smell. I suppose if she hadn't been afraid it would burn our skin off, we'd have been scrubbed with it, too.

The basement of this house was different -- half cement and half dirt. It looked as though someone had run out of cement about half way through completion. We put our old coal range down there and some odds and ends of furniture. In one corner of the basement I rigged up a desk and couch. This was mine and no one else was allowed near. I spent hours here reading and drawing until the second summer when the Black Widow spiders drove me out. I couldn't scare them away with threats like I did the kids.

Out in front of the house was a good lawn and an enormous Silver Poplar tree. It was so tall it could be seen from blocks away and when we climbed up we could see for blocks away. Coming down the tree was the best part. On one of the lower branches, about seven feet off the ground, we could turn a flip-over, and land on our feet. We wore the branch shiney each summer turning this flip-over.

In the back of the house was THE GARDEN. The whole family was summoned to plant corn, peas, beans, potatoes, squash and lettuce. Besides the planting there was, as we had anticipated, hoeing, weeding and not only getting up early in the morning, but getting up in the middle of the night. The irrigating part was fun -- a new experience. Once a week our water turn came at two in the afternoon and the next week it was at two in the morning. I'd been a little apprehensive about this irrigation business as years before when we'd lived on Wall Avenue, I'd seen two women threaten each other with hoes over the small irrigation ditch that ran behind the houses on our block. But we never had any problems of this sort on 33rd South.

Dad generally did this night shift of watering, but when he was at Boy Scout Camp (six weeks out of every summer) the rest of us would take over. At that time of morning, it was cool and dark and the gurgling swish of the water seemed extra loud. Just as we were about to finish our turn, Mr. Johnson, our next door neighbor came out to take his turn. Everyone talked in low voices and looked strange in the lantern cast shadows. It was as though we were in a strange country with strangers.

It was in this house that Carolyn was born and we thought that she'd live many years here, but when she was about fifteen months old Dad was offered the position of Scout Executive at Pocatello, Idaho.

"Idaho!" we howled. "Idaho!" We wanted none of it. We were happy where we were.

House #6

However, much as we felt like objecting, we knew from experience that it wouldn't do us any good, so we packed and left in mid October. I was just beginning my senior year at high school and felt my life was collapsing

but I soon discovered that a smaller high school (286 seniors at Pocatello High compared to over 500 at Granite High) has great advantages.

We had one great loss in this move. A few years earlier a friend of Dad's had died and left him a fine library. Included were the complete works (all handsomely bound) of Dickens, Cooper, Thackeray, de Maupassant, Bulwer-Lytton and many others. As all of us were avid readers it was a treasure. By the time we'd moved, I'd read most of them except James Fenimore Cooper. I just couldn't get in it. Anyway, as the old truck moving us was limited in space, Dad stored the books at a friend's house and planned to bring them to Pocatello a few at a time. But all of the books were completely ruined a short time later in a flood that deluged the friend's home. It was a real loss to all of us.

We arrived in Pocatello at dusk on a fall evening and we strained to see through the autumn mists the shape and feel of the town. Dad drove up in front of our new home and all nine of us piled out of the car. If any of the neighbors were watching, they must have thought that horde coming from the car would never end.

We stood and looked at the house. It was square in shape, all right, but double in height -- two story. And it was a frame house painted tan with a brown trim. The family had left forever red or purple brick houses. This house had not only a back door and a front door, but a door on each side. Only five more doors and we'd have had one apiece. The house also boasted a many-windowed sunparlor, a glass windowed porch all the across the back of the second floor (great for summer sleeping) and the dinkiest little kitchen imaginable. To get all of us in there at the same time and at our place at the table required a detailed instruction. The other rooms were large, but that kitchen!

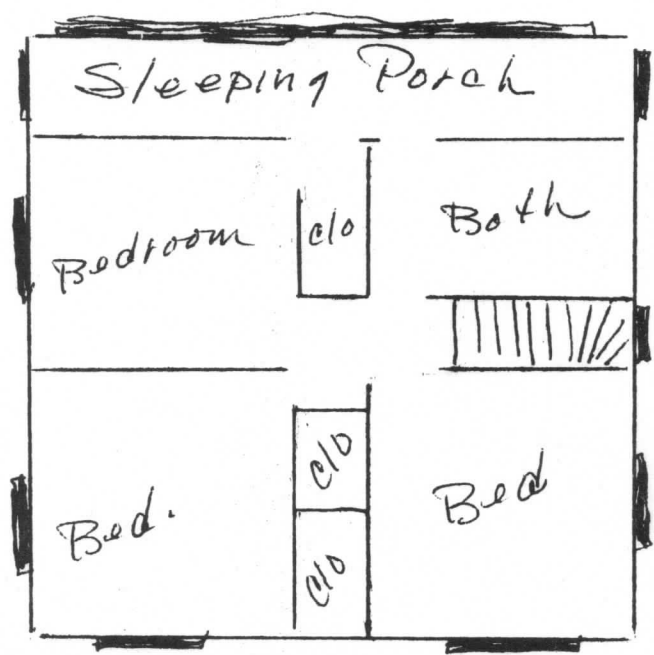
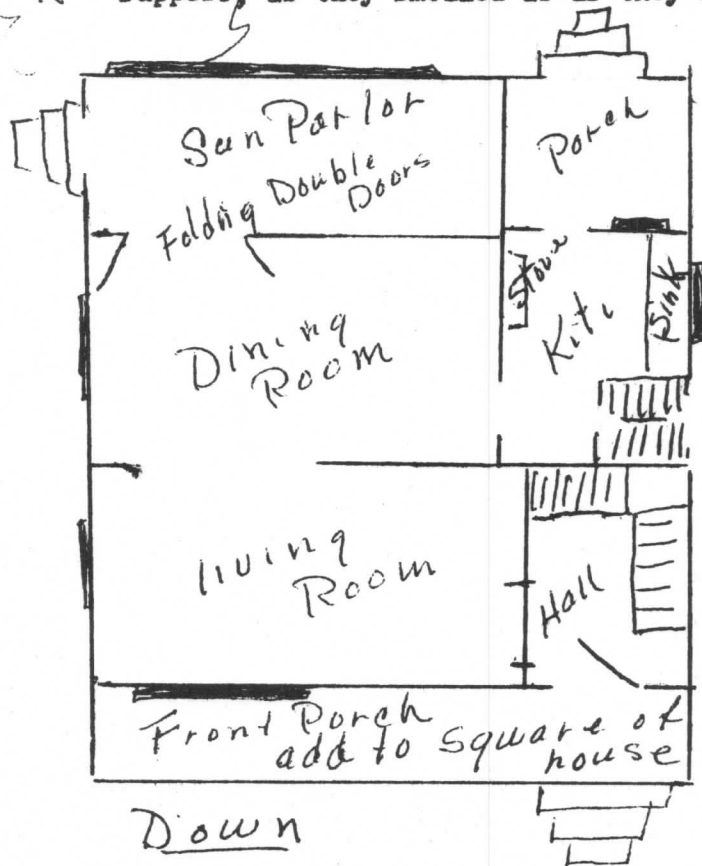
Garage

Mom said, "This house was intended for someone who had a maid to serve meals in the dining room. The kitchen's just for cooking."

But any maid service we had around there we did ourselves, so we squeezed into the kitchen. The table was in the middle of the floor and we sat crammed together around it. The one who sat nearest the sink had only to tilt back in his chair to refill the water glasses. The one who sat nearest the stove had only to tilt back to refill the ~~the serving bowls~~. And the one on the east end of the table had only to tilt back and they'd bang their head on the wall. Oh, we were cozy.

There was a small but green yard all around the house. In the back was a twisted Russian Olive tree whose pungently sweet fragrance dominated the whole neighborhood in the springtime. Just under the sunroom windows, on the south-west corner of the house was a huge, sprawling yellow rose bush. Each cane was thickly covered with blossoms, but they were for looking only, I suppose, as they smelled as if they'd been sprinkled with castor oil.

Yellow Rose



UP

We were secretly pleased that there wasn't room in our small yard for a garden. But that didn't stop Dad for long. In the spring he made arrangements to rent a small plot of ground on the edge of town. Here we would have our garden. Now we not only had to help with the garden, we had to get up early and travel to do so.

The front porch of this house became a good source of pennies for Dean. When Mom and Dad were away, Dean would call all the neighborhood kids over and say if each would give him a penny he'd climb up on the roof of the porch and jump off. None of the other little friends would dare make such a jump and eagerly paid the pennies. Dean Jumped. He was only about five or six at this time, but he showed no fear either then or any time later in his life when he did other dangerous activities. But he accepted pennies only for porch jumping.

Only once did my mother hire any help in the house, except of course, when the babies were born. But, many times, I can remember her saying, "Wouldn't it be nice to be able to hire someone to come in once a week and do the heavy work. Now that's something I'd really enjoy."

However, we all knew that if she had all the money in the world, she'd not hire help very often.

The one time she did have help was two days after we moved to Pocatello. The house was large, and although the inside walls had been freshly calsomined in cream and pink, the dark woodwork, floors, light fixtures, etc., needed a good scrub.

This time Dad insisted, "No excuses. Find some help. You can't do it all alone."

"I don't know how I'd get anyone in a strange town," Mom said.

What she meant was, "Heavens! How do I begin to find help? I've never done it."

Dad continued, "You can start by asking that woman next door, or look in the newspaper. I don't care. Just find someone."

So Mom made inquiries of the neighbors for a good reliable woman. Names were given, telephone calls made and the cleaning woman was to arrive promptly at eight the next morning.

And then Mom did just what all of us expected she'd do. She started that very evening to wipe the woodwork and the floors so the cleaning woman wouldn't think she was working in a "Pigpen." Now, Mom could've unpacked more boxes, but, no, they could wait. She wanted to go over everything lightly before eight the next morning.

Well, when the woman arrived the next morning, we didn't have much time to watch this unique happening at our house, as we had to leave for our new schools. But we did hear Mom tell the woman just exactly how much soap, ammonia, and that smelly disinfectant to use in the scrub water. We saw Mom demonstrate just exactly how to scrub -- first with a brush, then rinse with clear water and an old towel and finally dry the washed portion. Then we left. The woman was busy scrubbing as directed.

All day, I had visions of Mom lolling among the packing boxes while the woman scrubbed.

School was out at four and I could hardly wait to get home to see how the day had gone. When I arrived, there was Mom scrubbing the very same window that the cleaning woman had been scrubbing when I left.

"How come you're doing that?" I wanted to know.

Mom said disgustedly, "That woman just left, and I've checked all the places she's done and they just aren't clean, so I'll have to do them all over again." She scrubbed furiously.

I looked at the place she said the woman had scrubbed. "They look fine to me." I said.

"Why they'd filthy!" she said. "I knew that woman was a sloppy scrubber the minute I laid eyes on her."

So, Mom, with silent fury, and I with silent resignation, went all over the house again. But it was the last time Dad ever insisted she hire help. It was just too exhausting for Mom. She had to scrub twice -- once before the cleaning woman came and once afterwards.

This house on South 8th Avenue was Kathryn's first home with the family and my last. It was from this house that I married and started homes of my own.

Oh, this house faced east. Not since Wall Avenue had we lived in an east-facing house. But the old Welsh superstition failed to work for this house.

As our grandparents played such a large part in our childhood, it would probably be well to say a little about their houses. About the only thing they had in common was that they were grey frame houses, square in shape, of course.

Grandma Crittenden's house was across the street from ours in Coles Court. Her sister Mary, lived on one side of her and various renters on the other. The big Box Elder trees in front gave dense summer shade but were always dovered with those nasty little black and red bugs. In the back was a small chicken coop, which sometimes had chickens, and a small garden.

Inside were four rooms, a bath and a pantry. On the floor of the pantry was the trap door to the cellar. Downstairs, among other things were crocks of waterglass-eggs.

The front room had a coal heater with ising-glass windows, a black, leather-covered couch, a china cupboard of elegant china and fine crystal (the translucent china -- handpainted and the hand-cut crystal so sharp it could

cut a finger) and a few other chairs and small tables.

For some reason, I suppose it was the fashion of the day, Grandma had hung pictures over the doorframes. Over the door to the kitchen was a colored picture of the "Sistine Madonna," and over the archway to the bedroom hung the sepia-print of the "Empress Josephine," and high on one wall was a softly tinted print of "Christ in the Garden of Gethsemene." Grandma told me what she knew about these pictures and that information helped me many years later in an art appreciation class.

To me the kitchen always appeared dark and gloomy. It had two ordinary sized windows, but one looked out on the sleeping porch and the other was shaded by a large pear tree. At these windows were dark green blinds that were always pulled half way down. There were two black stoves in that kitchen; one a coal range and the other natural gas for summer cooking. The furniture was all painted dark brown. On the walls, up about half way was a tan (an ugly, almost khaki-tan) and black printed oil cloth which ran all the way around the room. A lighter tan calsonine covered the upper walls and ceiling. In one corner was a small sink and drainboard and there wasn't a cupboard in sight. All dishes and food hid behind the pantry door.

Small and dark as it was it seemed like a fine house to us, mostly 'cause there was an indoor bathroom.

Grandma Roberts' house was on a corner in an area that was dominated by empty fields. A honeysuckle-covered fence surrounded the large lot. Just outside the fence was a rose bordered irrigation ditch. Grandma loved flowers and they grew in profusion, inside and out. To enter the yard from the east we had to pass under a long grape arbor (shadowy and cool in summer) which ended at the back vegetable garden. At the very back of the lot was a chicken coop always full of clucking hens.

All across the front of the house stretched a vine-covered porch which in the summer became headquarters for hide-and-seek and no-bears-out-tonight. It was also a good place to have a nap in the swinging hammock. There was another vine-covered porch on the back. From this porch were the steps to the cellar. And what steps they were! When you opened the door, you stared at a blank wall a couple of feet away. The stairs started at the side of the door and went at right angles to the door down to the cellar. There was no railing on either side and they were steep, not much more than a broad ladder. As awkward as they were to use and as often as they were used, it's a wonder that no one was seriously hurt on them. Grandma and her daughters must have made the trip a dozen or more times a day, as all food supplies were kept down there. Before each meal everything had to be packed up and then after each meal all leftovers, butter, etc., had to be carried down again. I never remember any sort of an ice box. (Grandma Crittenden always had an ice box on her back porch.)

Inside the house was a large kitchen, an even larger front room, two bedrooms (Grandpa used one of these as an office in later years) and a bathroom. Upstairs were two large bedrooms and a scary dark storage room which none of us dared enter.

In one corner of the front room was an old pump organ (Grandma Crittenden had a piano), in the opposite end was a round oak table and the tall cupboard that Great Grandpa Roberts had made (he even went to the mountains, cut the trees, sawed the lumber, and from that made a beautiful seven foot high cupboard). There were also two rocking chairs, a cabinet radio which had been preceded by a Victrola with a red morning-glory speaker, and many other items of furniture. Grandma Roberts hung pictures over her doorways, too. I'll bet that Grandpa made the selection, though. Over one door was a long picture of the past presidents of the church. Over another door were photographs

of other church officials. Hanging above the organ were large gold framed pictures of the two daughters who'd died in infancy. They'd been beautiful babies. In later years, high over the sofa, hung a large ornately framed photograph of Grandma and Grandpa. It didn't resemble them much; it made them appear so stern.

Although the kitchen had the same type of dark oilcloth on the walls (that must have been fashionable, too) as did Grandma Crittenden's kitchen, and two black stoves, and the same drab linoleum and dark painted furniture, the room didn't seem dark. There was nothing to keep the sun from the two large north and east windows. Grandma even kept the dark blinds rolled to the top in the daytime.

Her bathroom must've been a nightmare to clean. The whole thing was painted a flat grey and one small bare bulb dangled over the little mirror. The toilet was in a small separate compartment that was so dark and cramped we didn't stay there long. The other part of the bathroom was jammed with a four-legged tub, wash basin, hot water tank and clothes hamper (of sorts, a bag hung on the wall). As chubby as Grandma was and as small as that bathroom was, I don't see how she could get in there to do much cleaning. But she did. She was as happy about scrubbing and disinfecting as my mother was. They loved it!

There are many more things that could be said about these houses, the ones we lived in and the ones our grandparents lived in, also the old house that Great Grandma Cole had was full in interest (her kitchen seemed as large as our first three room house), but this is enough on that subject.

A FEW OF THE NEIGHBORS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Every place we lived we had neighbors, of course. Some were friendly, some were noisy friendly, some were reserved, some were grouchily reserved, some were odd (because they weren't like we were), and some were interestingly odd.

First, there were the people who lived in the yellow brick garage (there was no matching house nearby) across the field in Coles Court. Most people lived in this garage only a short time and they were always very odd. We thought anyone who lived in a garage to be odd. We rarely knew any of their names; we just tagged them "the garage people."

Then there was my friend, Violet, and her mother who lived near the garage. Their house was always dark and dirty and had lots of greasy dishes in the sink, and the house smelled dark and dirty and as if there were lots of greasy dishes in the sink. Violet's mother never said much, but made a curious thrumming noise in her throat most of the time. She and her house made me uncomfortable, so I didn't go inside often.

Across from us in the court were the Wolds. We weren't allowed to play with their children. They not only wore filthy dirty clothes they said filthy dirty words. Our Mom had one cure for dirty clothes and dirty words -- soap, and plenty of it. The Wolds apparently had never heard of it.

At the head of the court, just across from Great Grandma Cole's house, was a small grey stucco house surrounded by hollyhocks. A widowed negro woman, Mrs. Freeman, and her son lived here. The son was just a few weeks older than I. At the time I was born, my mother and I both had health problems, and Mrs. Freeman came to the house and kindly offered to nurse me along with her son. Mom thanked her and declined the offer, as that wasn't

one of her problems. Raymond and I played together and started school at the same time. From time to time over the years, I heard of him. He became an outstanding football player for the Ogden High School.

The back fence in our yard had a loose board, and we all crawled through to play with the Greek and Italian children whose yard joined ours, and they crawled through to play with us. Mom never objected to any of our playmates if they were clean -- in body and speech.

Then there were the Piersontis who lived across a really big field. We didn't know them too well, but we heard them often. They were Italian and liked to shout at each other in their native tongue. And someone in their house played a saxophone, and played it loud and well. We all learned to identify saxophone music long before any other of the brass instruments.

There were some more Italian people who lived next door to Grandma Roberts. Their name was Marcucci, but we called them "old man Marcooch and old lady Marcooch." They referred to themselves in the same manner. Old lady Marcooch always went around with a dark cloth of some sort on her head and mumbled to herself as she worked. To us she looked like a witch right out of Grimm's book, and even though she was a good friend of Grandma's we were apprehensive around her.

Later on Wall Avenue, there was Mrs. Chapel. She was a short chubby woman who was always wiping her nose on the corner of her apron. Frequently she'd bring us pickles, jam or bread that she'd made. She'd say, "I don't know what's wrong, but nothing I make keeps. It all spoils rotton." or "Sure enjoy making bread once in a while. Kneading that bread really cleans my hands!"

Mom accepted Mrs. Chapel's offerings and later said to us, "Poor old soul, if she were just cleaner." Then Mom dumped the cooked gifts down the

toilet, washed and shined the containers and sent them back to Mrs. Chapel with a thank you.

On Edith Avenue there were the Flohns. This was a family of a man, his wife, and their daughter, Emily, who was my age. Their house and yard were perfections of neatness. The front lawn was cut and kept at exactly the same height; their oak furniture so highly varnished it was glass-like. And Emily was not allowed to get the least bit dirty. At least our Mom expected kids to get dirty in spite of her efforts. Emily surely put a damper on some of our "cops and robbers" games trying not to soil her dress while crawling around under the bushes. They didn't have any bushes in their yard, only close clipped grass and smooth, hard-packed dirt. Two things I remember about Mrs. Flohn. Many an evening she stood on her front porch and hollered over to our Mom, "Emily's albumen's bad again." I used to look at Emily and wonder what and where her albumen was. And then everytime I'd go over there, Mrs. Flohn would ask these questions.

"Do you know about babies, yet?"

"Do you know how babies are born?"

Her most persistant question was,

"Do you know how babies get started? Has your mother told you that, yet? Tell me, just what has your mother told you?"

Frankly, I couldn't remember some of the things my mother had told me and other things I did remember I didn't understand, but I wasn't going to let Mrs. Flohn know. So I'd just airily say to everything she asked,

"My mother said not to discuss this with other people." Mom did say that, too.

The worst question came from Emily one day. She said, "My mother wants to know if your mother and father take their baths together."

I was completely horrified and said emphatically, "No!"

She looked at me out of the corner of her eyes and said, "Mine do."

I never did like Emily, really.

Down the street from the Flohns lived the Nelsons. They had a little boy about five or six years old. I suppose he had a name, but we never heard him called anything but Brother, probably because he was the youngest in a large family of girls. You can believe that Brother was a little terror. We'd go home and tattle, "Brother Nelson threw rocks at us." or "Brother Nelson took our ball and won't give it back." We couldn't understand why Mom and Dad always laughed when we said such things. They told us that "Brother" was a term of respect in the church and that it didn't sould right to say, "Brother Nelson is throwing rocks." Respect or not, Brother Nelson was a brat.

And, of course, on the same block was Mr. Elliott. (The husband of "everythings-going-nicely-Mrs. Elliott). He was a young married man with a small family. I suppose he worked somewhere, but mostly he was going to school and studying to be a lawyer. Many afternoons we'd see him walking up and down the street pulling a baby carriage with a baby in it. Now this may not seem so odd, but it was the way he did it. He'd hook the handle of the carriage around his waist, hold one of those big tan and red law books in his hands, bury his head in the pages of the book and walk, walk, walk. Everyone on the street learned to watch out for him, because he was oblivious to all people. It must have paid off though, because he did become a successful lawyer.

Who can forget Mrs. Wright and her two daughters who lived in the little house next door? They all wore scads of rouge and lipstick and great gobs of mascara on their eyelashes. Mrs. Wright had trouble with her slip and bra

straps; they always hung out of her dresses and down her arms. The two daughters had bosoms of vast dimensions and everyone felt sorry for them. Such ampleness wasn't stylish in those days. Far into the night the girls would thump their player piano, and we used to be pounded into sleep to the loud thump, thump, thump of "Dancing With Tears In My Eyes." The younger of the two daughters had a fine soprano voice and when she'd sing, we'd forget the bang of the piano. One thing all the Wright females had in common was lots of boy friends.

When we moved out to East Mill Creek, we met the Osguthorpe clan. Most of them were distinguished by large noses, an amazing vocabulary of profanity among the men and smug piety in the women. Once Mrs. Osguthorpe said to me one day, "If you'll just stay as sweet and pur as my Ada, you'll never come to trouble."

You see, this Mrs. Osguthorpe looked down on me as practically a fallen woman, because I wore shorts outside in the summertime. However, sweet, pure Ada had a four months premature baby (weighed seven pounds) and she never ever wore shorts.

Mr. Gunderson, who lived across the street didn't own a horse, but that didn't stop him from doing his yearly plowing. He put the leather straps from the small hand plow over his wife's shoulders and she pulled the plow while he guided it. It took awhile, but he did get the plowing done. I don't know if there's any connection, but he later became successful in local politics.

Then there was our well-to-do neighbor, Mrs. Cady, in Pocatello. She had a hired girl, and once a week this girl stayed overnight at her mother's home in a small town nearby. Mrs. Cady asked me to come and stay with her on these nights as she was nervous about staying alone. That was a fine opportunity for me. I not only slept in a beautiful guest room (all alone, no

sisters), but she handed me fifty cents as I left. A fortune, just for sleeping. But Mom put a stop to that after a month or so when Mrs. Cady told her one day,

"Oh, that fifty cents doesn't come out of my pocket, I deduct it from the hired girl's weekly wage." We had known for some time that all the girl received was two dollars and fifty cents each week. And she worked hard.

All of these neighbors sound as if they were odd characters, and I suppose that is why we remembered them best. But there were many others, fine generous people who remained friends for many years.

HOW WE TRAVELED

For many years we never had an automobile of any kind. But Dad had a bicycle. We were told that he and Mom rode together on it (it wasn't a tandem) during their courtship days and early marriage. I know he rode us around on it when we were very small. Across the handle bars he wired a legless little red chair. Here we'd sit, grip the edges with our hands and go scooting all over with Dad. Many times we went over to Brown's Ice Cream Shop to buy a quart of ice cream (a choice of three flavors in those days -- vanilla, chocolate and strawberry). Bringing home the ice cream made the ride double fun. Sometimes, Dad rode two of us at once -- one on the chair and one on the connecting bar between the seat and handle bars. I don't remember that he ever tried to ride three of us, but I'm sure if there'd been a way to ride all of us at the same time he'd have done it.

Then, of course, there was the babybuggy or carriage. The newest in the family cuddled up under the hood. The next to the newest one sat spraddle legged in the opposite end. (I have a faint recollection of three in there some way) The next older one put their feet on the bar or the axle connecting the two front wheels (or would it be the back wheels?). Anyway, the wheels nearest the buggy handle. Then clinging to the edge of the buggy that lucky child would have a happy ride. Any older ones would walk along the sides holding on to the buggy some place. Our Mom and Dad didn't go along with the idea of kids running wildly about when we were on our way to church or town or wherever. Or if it were night and we were coming home from a family night at Grandpa Roberts' house (it was his house that night) we'd all run. So would Mom and Dad as they pushed the buggy. I rode and walked in all positions.

In the winter time, Dad fastened a wooden apple box to our sled and then squeeze us into the box or on the back of the sled. Then tying a long rope around his waist and looping it through the front of the sled he'd run over the hard packed snow. What a wonderful way that was to travel!

For a few years we had the "butter truck." It was a grey panel truck which Dad drove to deliver dairy products. There was lots of room for us to play in the back end while we traveled. There were only two small windows in the rear doors, so we saw very little of the passing scenery. But who wanted to look out? No^twe. We were elated to be riding in a car that usually carried butter and milk, and besides, it smelled like vanilla ice cream.

Grandpa Crittenden drove a Star touring car and Grandpa Roberts drove a Model T Ford. We luxuriated in one of these when we went on a really long trip, such as up to Logan on Memorial Day. On these trips we always expected and had four or five flat tires. I guess that Dad and the grandfather with whom we were riding complained (they had to take the tire apart and patch each puncture in the inner tube), but we didn't. These delays gave us a chance to climb the hills, pick the wold spring flowers, wade in the stream, and get stung by bees and stinging nettle.

One day, when we were living on Wall Avenue, Dad brought home a Dodge Touring car. It had a shiney black fabric top (which could be folded down), glossy black leather seats and, of course, it was completely open on both sides. We all crowded in and went to show it off to both sets of grandparents, and then up Ogden Canyon to see if it could make the grade. It could. Dad patted the dashboard and said, "Best engine I ever saw."

Every time he said that Mom said, "Oh, Lou, don't go so fast."

And every five minutes she told us to keep our feet off the seats. We all wanted to sit up in front and see the speedometer go to twenty-five miles

an hour. But only the two younger ones had that privilege and they couldn't even read.

The horn on the car blared a deep "Oo-gah, oo-gah." Dad liked that. He said it sounded like a big truck horn and would make the other cars move over in a hurry. It did, too. Well, we thought that car was the most fabulous car in the whole world. But we had it so long, I came to hate it.

After we moved to Salt Lake City, Dad had a little Chevrolet coupe that he used for business. Its short stubby body was dark blue and its windows rolled up and down. Sometimes in the winter when it was below zero and we were going into town, we all squeezed into it rather than take the open car. Yes, that's right, eight people in one narrow seated car. Dad in the driver's place was the only one not holding or sitting on a person. The two smallest ones stretched out on the shelf behind the seat. The rest of us sort of piled on top of each other from floor to ceiling. We were all cozy and warm, anyway.

When we moved to Pocatello, Dad finally sold the old Dodge and bought a 1930 Chevrolet Sedan. It, too, was dark blue, but had roll down windows and upholstered seats of grey plush. It seemed like absolute elegance after riding in the old open Dodge for so many years. This new car was the one that Dick overturned when he was learning to drive. The battery acid spilled all over the interior of the car and we had a holey ceiling in the car from that time on. Dick and Dad weren't hurt, just scared and shaken.

After a few years, Dad bought another Chevrolet, and then another and another. I guess he really liked them or else the turn-in value was good or something. Maybe he felt loyal to them as the first little Chevrolet coupe had carried all of us so snugly.

WHAT HAPPENED TO US

There were so many things that we did during these years and each of us saw these incidents from a different point of view. But this is the way they appeared to me.

Darwin died when he was fifteen months old. It was late summer when both he and Dick became ill. At first it was thought that they both had a common ailment that affected many babies and young children called "summer complaint." This was mostly fever and loose bowels and after a few days the sick child usually recovered. Dick did, but Darwin's illness steadily became worse. The home remedies and the doctor's remedies gave no relief and little Darwin's fever continued. In mid-September, he became worse, and one morning as his fever rose higher, his back arched and his head reared backwards until it nearly touched his heels. A frantic call went to the doctor as Mom and Dad couldn't relax the tiny body. When the doctor arrived, he gave Darwin a whiff of ether and his body relaxed. But within a short while the arching and rigidity began again. This time the doctor gave him the ether and then took a hypodermic needle from his bag, filled it from a small vial and plunged the needle into the baby's thigh.

Mom has said many times, "After he gave the baby that shot, the doctor went out on the front porch and threw that bottle far out into the field on the north side of the house. I've often wondered what was in it, because a short time after that Darwin died peacefully.

The mortician came to the house to prepare the baby for burial. After the embalming was finished, and Mom and Dad were allowed in the room, Mom picked up little Darwin for a last close embrace, but she nearly fainted, the fumes from the embalming fluid were so strong.

His small white coffin was taken to Grandma Crittenden's house and placed in one corner of her bedroom. All the other furniture except a few chairs had been removed. The dark window shades were pulled down and only a soft rose colored lamp glowed in the shadowy room.

Dick and I were awed by the gossamer veil draped over the coffin. Through it we could plainly see Darwin. His curly blond hair looked the same as always, but his face was different. He didn't resemble the happy little brother we'd played with earlier in the summer.

Four uniformed Boy Scouts carried the small coffin up the narrow path in Coles Court and across twenty-sixth street to the church house for the funeral service. Afterwards we rode in a black limosine to the Logan City Cemetary. That ride is very vivid in my mind. On two little seats that folded down from the back of the front seat the coffin was placed. Dick and I sat with Mom and Dad on the back seat, our knees touching the coffin. It was the last time we rode as a family.

At that time, the family burial plot in the Logan Cemetary was in an undeveloped area full of rocks, weeds, grasshoppers and sagging wooden grave markers. When we pulled aside the dried summer weeds, we found the markers for Grandma Roberts' three small children.

In later months as we visited the cemetary, we were reassured that Darwin was in heaven with the other three children waiting for us to join them some day.

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It was the Fourth of July after Buss was born and there were four of us kids then. I had just turned six, Dick was four, Ruth was two and Buss was three months (Darwin had died the previous September). How Mom and Dad ever conceived the idea of taking us camping on this holiday, we'll never

know. But camp we did, or tried to.

It was at this time that Dad drove the butter truck, and so over the Fourth we could use it as we wished. Mom and Dad crammed the back end of the truck with bedding, food boxes, assorted camp gear and stacks of clean diapers. Dick and I in the back end of the truck sat on top of all of it and were wildeyed with excitement.

Dad said the North Fork up Ogden Canyon was the best place to go. When hiking up that way with his Boy Scouts, he'd seen a good flat spot near the stream where he could park the truck and set up camp. As we rode deeper into the North Fork area, the road bacame rougher and rougher.

Dad finally admitted, "This is only a trail for a sheep wagon. I don't believe that a car has ever been on it before." This, of course, made Dad happy as he liked to explore new trails. (There probably wasn't a road or even anything that resembled a road in Northern Utah that Dad didn't explore with all of us tagging and gawking along.)

The truck bounced from one rut to another and humped and fell over rocks of all sizes.

"Don't worry, now," Dad said, "This old truck can get through anything." He patted the dashboard affectionately. He loved his old cars into performing well.

Mom gasped, "Oh, Lou, what if anything should happen to us so far from civilization?"

Dad looked at her as if she were crazy. After all he wasn't a Scout Master for nothing. He'd just like to see the outdoor situation he couldn't handle.

After much bumping and bouncing and splashing through small streams, and slowly honking our way through a herd of bleating sheep, we arrived at

the spot. We practically fell out of the car we were so excited. Mom immediately screamed to us to stay away from the river until she could be with us and she didn't mean maybe!

Baby Buss was tucked in some pillows in the back end of the truck and the rest of us explored our new campsite. Dick, Ruth and I climbed the rocks, picked wild flowers, threw rocks in the river (with Mom right beside us, of course) and chose the place to have our campfire.

After we'd settled our camp just the way we wanted it, and all agreed that we couldn't have found a better spot, Dick and I begged to go wading in the water. We really didn't think Mom would agree, but the water here was very shallow (it was a good place for the sheep to cross) so we soon had her permission. We took off everything but our underpants and pantywaists and my brown sun hat (hopefully to keep off the freckles) and splashed into the river. Mom sat on the bank with Ruth and she threw rocks into the stream.

The water was so cold. We'd stand first on one leg and then the other. The submerged rocks were mossy and slippery and we nearly fell down. Too soon it was time to get out, each lunch and have a rest.

Dad said, "Well, while all of you are having a little rest, I think I'll go down stream and do a little fishing."

Mom said, "Don't be gone too long, or I'll get worried."

Well after a little while we were all rested (we really didn't want a rest in the first place) and were ready for more rock climbing and river wading. The baby had been fed twice, Mom had read everything in her new magazine, including the advertisements and still Dad was fishing.

Mom said, "Let's take a walk down the river and see if we can find Daddy." It was hard work. Mom had to carry Buss, and Dick and I dragged and pulled Ruth over the rocky river bank. After about ten minutes of this

and no Dad in sight we struggled over the rocks again back to camp. By now, Mom was beginning to get awfully pale and quiet.

Now that we were back at camp, Mom put some sandwiches and cans of milk in her handbag and said, "Let's take a little walk along the road. Maybe we'll see those sheep again."

That sounded to us as if it might be fun, so off we raced. Let Ruth do her own walking on the road, Dick and I couldn't be bothered. Every time we'd come close to the river, Mom would call, "Loo, oh Loo--"

We thought that sounded like a game, so we screamed as loudly as we could, "Daddy--Daddy--"

After a while, just as the sun was nearing the western hills, we came to one of the little streams that the truck had passed over and there on a rock sat Dad. Was he surprised to see us!

"What in the world are you doing here?" he asked.

When we heard what Mom told him, we nearly fell in the stream. We hadn't realized it, but we'd been on our way home -- walking!

Mom told Dad, "I couldn't find you and I thought you were drowned, and as I can't drive the car, I thought I'd better start walking."

It's a good thing she hadn't told us what she had in mind. Dad or not, we wanted our night of camping.

Dad...? Well, he was just happy off by himself fishing and hadn't noticed the time.

It was a happy family that went back to camp and ate dinner around the campfire.

The next big thing was preparing for bed, and our beds were the most unique thing of a long exciting day. We all slept in the truck. And this is the way we did it. Baby Buss slept on the front seat with the suitcase pushed up against it so he couldn't roll off. Mom, Dad and Ruth slept on a mattress

that had been rolled out on the floor of the truck. What about me and Dick? We had the best bed of all. Half way up on the body of the truck, Dad stretched a canvas and tied each corner to the slats in the sides of the truck. With a few blankets and pillows, it made a wonderful hammock bed. The slightest motion set it to rocking. That was one night we were really rocked to sleep.

I don't know when I realized that our airy bed was rocking more than it should. It lurched up and down and back and forth. In my half awakened state, I became dimly aware of strange noises, faint voices --- something was terribly wrong. The truck moved. I peered over the top of the canvas down onto the seat below. Dad crouched over the steering wheel and Mom huddled beside him, the baby snuggled in her arms, and the ruffles and bows on her fancy "dust cap" fluttered with each sway of the truck.

I couldn't hear what they were saying, but I wondered where we were going in the middle of the night. At that moment a flash of lightning illuminated the whole interior of the truck, and the immediate roar of thunder that came seemed as if it were bringing the mountains right down on top of us. I hurriedly buried my head underneath the blankets. Being young and tired, and knowing that my Dad was equal to any emergency, I went right back to sleep.

The next thing I knew, it was morning. The sun was shining and I was in my own bed at home! I didn't even remember being carried into the house. Dick and I rushed into Mom and Dad's room to awaken them.

"What happened to our camping trip?" we wailed.

"Rain -- cloudburst -- not safe--" they mumbled.

"Well, the sun's shining now. Let's go back." we demanded.

We did go back a few days later. The sheep wagon trail had been nearly washed away and in the place where we had camped a flash flood had torn down the mountain. Boulders and debris strewed the area. Dad searched around for

the tire chains that had torn off the truck as we escaped the rushing waters, but he didn't find them.

From time to time we went back there for an afternoon picnic, but never to camp.

#####

Many tramps (hoboes, bums, knights of the road) came to our house in Coles Court begging for food. Some were young and some were old and none were ever turned away. They must've had our house marked in some mysterious hobo manner, as so many came at all seasons of the year. Sometimes they asked for money, and that they never received. Mom always said, "Food, yes -- but no money. He'll just go spend it on whiskey or something else foolish."

These ragged men kept coming even after we moved to Wall Avenue. How the word spread that we'd moved, we never knew. But spread it had, because more than once we saw one of these men come straight down the street, passing all the other houses without a glance and walk right up on our front porch and knock on the door.

Mom always told the men to wait on the porch steps or out under the trees in the hot weather, but she never encouraged them to stay any longer than necessary. While she fixed the sandwiches (generally peanut butter and jam because generally that's all we had), all of us young ones peered at the tramp from around the corner of the house or through the lace curtains at the front windows. It didn't seem to bother them to have three or four pairs of eyes staring steadily at them. Sometimes they made an attempt at conversation, but we'd duck hurriedly out of sight. Mom had warned us never, never to talk to any of them and not to dare get near any of them as they were full of DIRT, GERMS, BUGS, and all sorts of other unimagineable HORRORS. We always looked

as closely as we dared, but we never saw anything except dirt. Their hands looked as though they'd never seen any soap and water.

Occasionally, while we lived in Coles Court, and the tramps were waiting for their food, they'd spy our outhouse in the back and hurry towards it. Other times we'd see strangers go in for awhile and then hurry on their way. After such occasions our outraged mother went into full action.

First we were told to stay WAY BACK, and she meant WAY BACK. We weren't even to breathe the air of the contaminated dooley. Then armed with pails of boiling water containing that smelly disinfectant she used, and mops and brooms, Mom descended on the desecrated outhouse and scrubbed.

Starting at the ceiling, she scrubbed all the way down to the wooden floor. Even the spiders scampered away for fear of drowning. After everything had been thoroughly scrubbed, scalded and disinfected, she'd hook up all the lengths of our garden hose (big heavy black rubber) and squirt the whole interior with cold water. A germ wouldn't have dared to cling on that soaking wet surface. Then she warned us, "Now don't go inside until it's thoroughly dry." That was fine with us, as we could go over to Grandma Crittenden's bathroom where the plumbing was inside.

That old outhouse must've been used many times by strangers who escaped our mother's eagle eye. But luckily, we never caught any of those horrifyingly, fascinating diseases she warned us against.

#####

It was always fun to go on trips, and it was especially so to go with one of the grandparents. Occasionally, Grandpa Crittenden took us on one of his "runs", and this was the most fun of all, because he was a conductor for the Utah-Idaho Electric Railway.

Sometimes he'd take me and sometimes he'd take Dick and me. Mom was determined we looked and acted our best. She polished our high, black-button

shoes and made sure the buttons were firmly sewed; she checked our long, black, ribbed stockings for holes; she ironed Dick's white shirts glossy and starchy and my many-ruffled dresses stiff and bouffant; and she brushed and brushed our red-brown curls (Dick's short-cropped and mine in ringlets). Finally, after telling us a hundred times not to get in anyone's way, and to be sure and say please and thank you, and above all, to do exactly as Grandpa said, --we were off.

It was always right after lunch, and we'd walk with Grandpa to the depot. We hoped everyone saw us with him as he wore his train cap trimmed with gold braid and a coat with gold buttons. When we arrived at the depot, Grandpa helped us climb the steps into the train and let us choose the seat we wanted. Then he left us while he prepared for the trip. We watched the other passengers come in and settle in their seats. Sometimes the other trainmen would come and talk to us. And everyonce in awhile, Grandpa checked to see how we were. He showed us his big gold watch and told us where the hands would be when the train started. Then he walked up and down beside the train shouting, "All aboard! All aboard!" Just as the train started to slowly move, he grabbed the bar beside the door and swung up on the steps. We were happy when we saw him on those steps, as we were always afraid he might be left behind.

We watched with interest as he went up the aisle and collected the tickets from the passengers. He talked and laughed with everyone. In a little while he came and sat with us and pointed out the interesting things to see. The other trainmen came by and Grandpa introduced us to them. They never failed to pat us on the head and say, "Going to keep your old Grandpa company today, huh?" We never did anything but nod our heads at them.

It was always exciting to watch for the dividing line between Utah and Idaho, and as soon as we crossed it, we said, "Now we're in Idaho!" and look around as if we expected everything to be different.

After that it wasn't long until we reached Preston. Here we watched Grandpa help the last few people off of the train and then we followed him into the little yellow brick depot. We peered out the door into the street. There never were many people around that place.

As soon as Grandpa had finished checking in, he'd take us for a little walk and buy us an ice cream cone.

On the return trip (about an hour later) we ate lunch. With great anticipation we watched Grandpa unwrap the lunch that Grandma had prepared. The sandwiches (no peanut butter and jam, but deviled egg and chopped walnuts or ground roast beef and sweet pickle) were wrapped in white linen napkins, and there were extra cups so we could have milk from the big thermos. It was difficult to keep the milk from sloshing over, as the train bounced around so much. By the time we finished eating, it was getting dark, and Grandpa turned on the lights in the train. It looked darker than ever outside, now. The lights in the houses whizzed past or seemed to.

Sometimes after it became dark, we were sleepy, but we wouldn't let ourselves sleep. We couldn't bear to waste any of our train ride sleeping.

About nine in the evening we arrived back in Ogden. Grandma, Mom, Dad and the babies were there to meet us. It was good to see them again, and we could hardly wait to tell them of all that we had seen. Mom always asked, "Were you good? Did you do just as Grandpa said?"

We looked at Grandpa and he always said, "Just as good as they could be."

You see, we knew how to be invited again.

#####

When the weather was good and none of us sneezed with colds, and the washing and the ironing for the week was all stowed away, Mom took us to town. Not to shop, just to walk around. Starting when there was but one of

us and continuing until there were three or four of us, she made this afternoon trek as often as possible. For one thing, it gave her an opportunity to dress us like dolls. We were probably the most beruffled children in all of Ogden City.

Besides Mom and two doting grandmothers to sew for us, we had a childless great aunt who sent us boxes of lovely things. (see note at end of this incident for more about our fantastic Aunt Rose.)

The newest baby in the family, in a long white embroidered gown and a bonnet solidly covered in lace ruffles basked in the carriage. Perched in back of the baby's head, so it wouldn't be mussed, was a small lace and ribbon bedecked pillow. On cool days the baby snuggled beneath a white embroidered coverlet fastened to the sides of the buggy with celluloid hooks covered with pink satin ribbon. The buggy or carriage was elegant. It was an enormous cream-colored wicker buggy lined in dark blue corduroy. None of our friends mothers had one half so fine.

Mom dressed Dick in shiney high-topped shoes and short navy blue pants that buttoned to a starched white shirt. With his round face, deep-set dark grey eyes and red-brown curls, he was indeed cherubic.

Mom dressed me in black patent leather slippers (high shoes were for every day), and white silk knee length socks. In order to keep these socks from slipping, she covered elastic with pale satin ribbon to match my dress and on the outside of the garter was a large satin bow made of loops and loops of narrow satin ribbon. A loosely tied knot centered each loop. Whatever dress I wore -- pink, blue, green, white or yellow -- frothed with tiers and tiers of lace ruffles. Mom sat by the hour sewing them on and stood by the hour ironing them. I wore my long hair in ringlets and carried a parasol.

When we were all gussied up we were ready to go.

Through the city hall park first, then up one side of Washington Avenue and down the other. Through the park and home again. We looked in all the windows and Mom stopped and chatted with the many friends she met (many young mothers promenaded up and down the avenue with their baby buggies and small children). She seldom bought anything, so it was a nice inexpensive afternoon.

Once when we looked in the windows of a men's clothing store, we were amazed to see the little boy's model wearing a suit with long pants. Little boys at that time wore short pants and older boys wore knickers. Only grown up men wore long pants. So it's no wonder that we, along with many other people, gawked at the little boy's suit. The suit was a light grey wool and was cut just like a man's suit. There was even a little grey fedora type hat.

We told Dad about it at dinner that night. He was as surprised as we were.

"It'll never catch on," he said. We agreed.

The next Sunday at Sunday School, one of the little boys walked in wearing a suit and hat exactly like the one worn by the model. No one listened to the stories that day. All we did was stare at the boy. It wasn't until a few weeks later when two other little boys came wearing long pants that the novelty began to wear off. Then Dick started clamoring for some long pants and Mom and Dad finally weakened and bought him some.

I was quite envious and wished that something new and startling would become fashionable for little girls. In the meantime, I'd continue to wear lace ruffles and satin bows.

(Note about Aunt Rose) She really didn't come into our lives often, so I didn't include her earlier, but she is of interest.

Aunt Rose was one of Grandma Crittenden's older sisters, and a rousing western novel could be written about her. In her youth she was noted for her beauty, wit, and flaming red hair that grew to such a length that she could

spread it behind her and sit on it. She was also noted for the ability to kick high enough to break a light bulb dangling from the ceiling by a short cord. She married early and bore two children that died in childhood. I don't know what happened to her husband, but husband number two was a real match for her. He was a Spanish gentleman and was educated for Catholic Priesthood. Shortly before he was to take his vows, he left Spain and emigrated to Mexico. Here he gave up his religion and turn to saloon keeping and other related occupations.

Some way or other, he and Aunt Rose met (not at church, I'm sure, where all good Mormons are encouraged to meet their mates). They married and set up housekeeping in a Colorado mining town, he as a bartender, and she as the town seamstress.

One winter, while there, an avalanche struck the cabin which was their home. Aunt Rose was there alone at the time and the heavy snow crushed the cabin and buried her. She never lost consciousness, but was unable to move or speak. Soon she heard voices above her as search parties hunted for survivors. She tried to scream or shout to let them know where she lay trapped, but her mouth was wedged tight. The voices faded and she was left alone in the dark and cold.

A short time later, she again heard voices and the sound of shoveling and chopping. A man's voice said, "Their cabin was somewhere near here. Let's move some of this snow."

There was more scraping and chopping. Suddenly, Aunt Rose felt a stinging pain in one hand. A few seconds later, the same pain, only sharper. She struggled to scream.

Then she heard, "Look! Blood coming through the snow!"

Quickly and carefully the men freed her from the crushed cabin and packed snow.

Her hand always bore the scars of the ax, but she never cared; the blood that soaked through the snow guided her rescuers.

Eventually she and her husband went to Nevada where they opened a small store, bar, and dressmaking business.

Now mining towns in those areas and in that era were not without their "girls" and "houses." Being childless, Aunt Rose and Uncle John sort of became mother confessors, protectors, confidants, and seamstress for these girls. But just because her life was far different than those of her sisters back in Ogden, she never forgot her thrifty Mormon training.

One morning walking down the muddy streets of her town, she noticed in the refuse heap outside of one of the "houses" a piece of pale blue sheer wool. She pulled it from the junk and held it up --- "Hm-m-m-m, a cast off negligee -- it ought to be good for something." It was. She washed it, dyed it a deep red, and made me the most elegant dress I ever owned. The skirt, wide collar and sleeves were all accordin pleated and it was trimmed with matching red velvet ribbon. Many Sundays after she sent it to me, I primly and sedately wore to Church the cast off negligee of a Nevada prostitute.

Mom suspected that many of the lovely things that Aunt Rose sent to us came from the same source. But none of us cared. With our underclothing made from flour sacks and our outer clothing often made from unusual-sourced materials, we thought we had the best clothes in town.

Aunt Rose and her husband also had three large diamonds that had been given to him in Mexico. These diamonds were their security. On them they borrowed money for their trips, stores and other business ventures. The diamonds were the backbone of their prosperity and were carefully kept in a deposit box. Only one thing ---- years later, as Aunt Rose and her husband were ready to retire, the diamonds were appraised and found worthless. Worthless or not,

they'd served their purpose. All loans on them had been faithfully paid, and although it was a jolt to Aunt Rose and her husband to realize that the diamonds weren't worth the payment on the bank deposit box, they had given peaceful security.

Don't think that Aunt Rose participated in the type of life that was popular in some of the areas where she lived. She had been reared in the religious principles of the Mormon Church, and to those principles she remained faithful.

Aunt Rose wasn't the only one of Grandma Crittenden's family to take advantage of some of the opportunities that Western Life offered. One of her brothers married a "girl" from one of those Nevada "houses." Aunt Rose may have introduced them. This unusual marriage was a happy one. Being unable to have children, a baby was adopted, and the new mother was so anxious that people think the child was hers, that she carried the baby's bottle in the voluminous blouse of her dress. Then she modestly "nursed" the baby at church (she became a good church member), and family gatherings.

Mom often said of this girl, "She was the kindest person I ever knew. Everyone loved her."

Another of Grandma's brothers married a woman who was inclined to drink hard liquor. One day she was outside chopping wood for her kitchen stove, when she cut off a finger. She gave it no attention, but went on chopping. When her husband returned from work and saw the injury he became alarmed and called in the doctor. The doctor said, "No cause for worry. As pickled as she always is, there's no danger of infection and she probably doesn't feel a thing.

Then there was another brother who was a gambler. Really! He wore flashy clothes, drove a flashy car, (grandma's description) and had a flashy wife. At least she was surely different from the other women in our family. She didn't

dress, look, or act like any of them. Well, he was killed driving one of his flashy cars (he was on his way home after visiting his mother on Mother's Day), and his body was brought back to his mother to lie in state in her front parlor. I don't remember how he looked in death, but I do remember how his flashy wife behaved. She moaned, she groaned, she wept loudly, and she nearly had hysterics over his casket. That's not the way our Mom and Grandm's behaved when they were upset. They wept, but quietly.

If there were any relatives with such interesting foibles in Dad's family, we never heard of them. But I'm sure if there had been, Grandpa Roberts would record faithfully their histories. He'd say we have to honest and put everything in the record books. But that didn't mean he'd tell us about it.

#####

Thursday even was home night (family night) at Grandpa Roberts' house, and unless there was a serious illness all of us went. Most of the time Dad or Mom pushed the baby buggy and we walked along side of it. Or if we were small enough we rode inside of it. Those eight blocks seemed as if they were eight miles at times. In the winter, though, when we were pulled on the sled, the eight blocks seemed as if they were eight steps.

But summer or winter, once we arrived at Grandpa's the evenings were the same. After the greetings were finished, Grandpa shooed or more likely insisted that everyone go into the front room. That generally took some time. Some of the family were doing school lessons; some were pressing clothing for school the next day; or maybe they were outside talking to some friends, or maybe reading a book. However Grandpa was adamant and accepted no excuses. So eventually, everyone ended up right where Grandpa wanted them -- seated around the big front room.

Faunce or Delano sat at the old reed pump organ with the church hymnal

open and ready. Grandma sat in her low rocker by the big table, her knees covered with the current rug or quilt she was making. Grandpa sat in front of the oak desk-bookcase so that without moving he could reach any of the scriptures or family record books. The rest of us, sometimes as many as twenty, sat where we could. The floor always seemed a good place to the younger ones.

Grandpa called us to order. Then he announced a song and we sang while the old organ wheezed and thumped. Sometimes we sang two songs. Then Grandpa called on one of us to pray. It seemed almost as if we were in church. Then Grandpa preached. It seemed even more as if we were in church. Naturally, his subject was about some gospel principle or family record keeping. Frequently he called on us by name to answer a question or enforce a point.

"Delano, do we believe the Bible to be the word of God?"

And Delano who'd learned well at home and at Sunday School quoted part of the Eighth Article of Faith, "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly."

Most everyone in the room, sometime during the evening, had to explain or expound on some gospel principle.

This was the Family Home Evening in practice as encouraged by the church. Here the family patriarch, Grandpa at that time, regularly gathered his family together and taught them not only the gospel, but moral precepts.

Grandpa never forgot to include even the younger family members in this family gathering. He coaxed us to recite any poems or "memory gems" we'd learned in Sunday School. He was sincerely pleased with our efforts and praised us.

After everyone's contributions were finished, we played simple games. Mostly, it was "Simon Says." For this game we sat around the big table. We made a fist with our hands, the thumbs pointing up. Grandpa called, "Simon

says thumbs up!" or "Simon says thumbs down!" We quickly obeyed, pointing our thumbs up or down. But, if he said, "Thumbs up!" or "Thumbs down!" without the Simon Says prefacing it, and we made the lightest move, Grandpa whacked our fists with a rolled up newspaper. He enjoyed catching us as much as we enjoyed trying to outwit him.

While we laughed with Grandpa in some game, Dad and Reed huddled in the corner talking Boy Scouts. Mom, Grandma and the older aunts prepared refreshments in the kitchen, usually cookies and grape juice in the winter and fresh fruit in the summer.

Thursday evenings Home Night was as much a part of our regulated life as Sunday morning's Sunday School. And we loved every Thursday evening of it.

#####

I came home from school one spring day (I was in the second grade) and Grandma Crittenden met me in front of her house.

"You can't go over to your house," she said, "Dick has the chicken pox and we don't want you to get them."

"Goody!" I said. "Can I live with you?" To stay over night at either of the Grandmother's homes was a begged for privilege.

I went over home and peeked through the window at Dick, and admired the red spots on his face. They looked itchy and I hoped I wouldn't have any.

It was fun living at Grandma's house. I was the center of all attention. The only bad thing was Uncle Byron's scowls.

I learned in a few days, that Rugh, too, had the chicken pox, so I'd be staying even longer with Grandma. What a heavenly prospect! But that joy didn't last long. I awoke one morning feeling hot and headachey.

Grandma said, "Well, I suppose you were exposed to the chicken pox before you came here." She pulled up my nightie and looked at my chest.

"Hm-m-m, funny looking chicken pox." she said. Then she looked at me all over, felt my forehead, made me poke out my tongue and then told me to stay in bed while she went to get Mom.

Mom came and looked, Grandpa looked, too. Pretty soon, the doctor had his turn. He took a longer look than the others and put a thermometer in my mouth. After putting all his gadgets in his little black bag and snapping it shut, he looked at my silently waiting Mom and Grandma and announced, "Scarlet fever!"

He rushed Mom out of the house and said she couldn't come back for three weeks. Now I howled. I wanted to go home.

Poor Grandpa and Uncle Byron! They had to move out into the garage. They even cooked their meals out there. The only time they could come in was to use the bathroom. And then Grandma washed everything in sight with that smelly disinfectant. Once she put too strong a solution on the toilet seat, and Grandpa got a burn in a most uncomfortable spot. I never heard him complain in any way about the whole miserable situation, but Uncle Byron scowled right down to the top of his motor cycle boots.

Each day, Mom and Dad and the little ones who didn't have chicken pox came to the front windows and we waved to each other. If we talked loudly enough, we could have a little conversation. But it was tiring so didn't last long.

I'd been sick only a few days when one of Mom's cousins called and said her son had scarlet fever, too, and could he come down and stay with Grandma? This cousin said she couldn't bear to be cooped up for three weeks and as long as Grandma had to stay in with me, well

And Grandma agreed. And Theodore came to stay. She put him in her bed, as I was already on the folding couch in the front room. I guess she slept in Byron's room.

Theodore annoyed me. He was five or six years older than I was and thought he was so smart. I really learned to hate him. He made fun of everything and complained about anything that happened or didn't happen. I'll bet Grandma would have been delighted to give him some good hearty wallops, but she never did.

Theodore's mother and father joined my mother and father on the front porch to shout greetings through the window. His mother wept and wiped her eyes and felt so sorry for her poor, poor boy. Poor boy, indeed! Poor Grandma! I remember, that later, that this same cousin wept and wiped her eyes at Grandma's funeral. I watched her then and wondered if she felt sorry for dumping Theodore on Grandma.

The doctor came regularly and looked at us and gave us icky stuff to swallow. Finally, the day came when he said we could come out of quarentine in three days. We were so happy. Theodore forgot to be so smarty and I didn't hate him quite so much.

That evening Mom came over and said that Buss wasn't feeling too well. Just a cold, she supposed, or maybe the after effects of the chicken pox. But the next morning when the doctor came and checked, he had a new announcement, "Measles!"

Mom insisted that when the scarlet fever quarentine was lifted, that I come home. I'd just have to take my chances on having the measles.

Well, naturally, in a few weeks I had the measles. I was happy for one thing though, Theodore had already had them.

However, the original plan of Mom and Grandma worked fine. It was years before I had the chicken pox.

#####

Grandpa Crittenden's Star car was loaded within a few inches of its black canvas top. The running boards were loaded, too. Our family with Grandpa and Grandma Crittenden were going camping at Camp Keisel, the Ogden Boy Scout Camp.

In the front seat wedged Grandma, Grandpa and two of us kids, and more tightly wedged in back were Mom, Dad, three kids and piles of blankets and quilts. The car groaned and bucked, but finally chugged away and we started up Ogden Canyon.

When we reached the South Fork about noon, we stopped for a picnic lunch. Dick and I were sent to Bott's little resort store a short distance up the river to buy some sodapop. We felt so important and told Mr. and Mrs. Bott all about our camping trip. Not everyone, we assured them, could camp at a Boy Scout Camp.

Although the whole trip wasn't more than twenty five miles, it seemed as though it took us all day to get there. When we arrived at the camp which was at the very end of the road in a pocket of high mountains, we almost fell out of the car we were so excited. It was an effort for us to stop running around trying to see everything at once. There were other things that had to be done first, however.

Dad said, "You help us now to get all the stuff in the big cabin and the beds fixed and then we'll all go on a hike up to the Big Spring."

That did it -- a real hike up to the Big Spring. Dad had told us so much about it that we'd do almost anything to get there.

The big cabin had a large kitchen, dining hall, and three small bedrooms. Two of the bedrooms were filled with camp supplies as this was the off season for the scouts. Grandma and Grandpa made their bed on a wobbly bed that was in the one empty bedroom. Mom, Dad and the rest of us made our beds on one

side of the mess hall. The tables had been stacked for the winter, but we pulled one out and Mom and Grandma scrubbed it good. They kept lamenting over their forgetfulness of their smally disinfectant. Thank heavens! We could do without that at camp.

The food supplies were stacked on one end of the table. Dad checked the enormous wood burning range in the kitchen and said it worked fine. Mom and Grandma eyed it doubtfully and said, "Well, we hope so."

Grandpa checked all his fishing equipment and chopped firewood. While the adults were occupied in getting us settled, Ruth, Dick and I jumped on the beds and climbed up the ladder into the loft. It was dark and spooky up there and we heard the little mice scampering as we disturbed them from their winter nest building. And all the time we kept up a sing-song chant, "how soon can we go to the Big Spring? How soon?"

It wasn't too long until we were on our way; all of us going up the well worn trail into the heart of the mountains. We had to go slowly so as not to tire the youngest and the oldest. Dick and I explored up and around each high rock and hopped back and forth over the little stream. We hiked twice as far as the others.

Soon we came to Little Spring. Now Little Spring flowed out from the base of a dark over-hanging cliff. We lay flat on our stomachs and tried lapping up the icy water. We tried drinking it from our hands. It was so cold it hurt our hands and teeth. We were a little scared, too, as we lay on the damp mossy ground and looked up at the grey rock hanging over us. Suddenly, we scampered out in as fast as possible. Some day that big cliff would fall, and we didn't want to be there when it did.

We continued the climb to Big Spring. We chased up and down, pulled the tops off a plant called "nigger-heads" and threw them at each other. Sometimes we accidentally hit a family member, and sometimes it wasn't accidental.

Dad threw them at us, too, and he rarely missed.

Then without any warning we were at Big Spring. The water simply gushed out of the side of the hill, and was white and sparkling. We reached out with our hands to feel the force of the water, and then, shrieking, we pulled them back. It was like a spray of frost.

Of course, Mom and Dad and the Grandparents sat down to watch the water. But now that Dick and I had seen Big Spring we were eager to keep on going. We climbed more rocks, crawled under bushes, walked on fallen logs, and every few minutes ran back to the spring to splash in the spray.

Our hike gave us tremendous appetites and we were happy to see that Mom and Grandma had no trouble with the big stove. It looked to us as if they'd cooked enough food for a whole troop of Boy Scouts, but we ate every crumb of it.

It was dark by the time we'd finished eating, and we were exhausted, so the next thing was bed. It was fun to undress by flashlight, but it wasn't fun to peek into the dark corners of the room where the light didn't penetrate. The moon that night was bright and even after the flashlight was flipped off, the piled wooden tables, the benches, the nature display cases, and other Boy Scout paraphernalia were faintly discernable.

The night air was cold in the mountains and we pulled the bedding up around our ears. After a few giggles and whispers we were asleep.

This would probably be a good time to talk about our prayers. As you'll remember, my dear brothers and sisters, we'd been taught since we'd said our first words to say a simple prayer always before we ate, and we were taught to kneel by our bedside each night and say our prayers. Our prayers were none of that stuff about "Now I lay me down to sleep" business. They were honest, original prayers. First, we said them with the help of our parents and then

silently and alone. And so on this camping trip and any other place we might be, no matter how tired and sleepy, or how cold (and that cement floor at the Boy Scout Camp was icy) we knelt and thanked our Father in Heaven for His goodness and asked for His blessing. Not only were we expected to do this, but our parents and Grandparents did the same. They always set the right example.

Now back to the night at camp. It seemed as though we'd been asleep no time at all when we were awakened by a strange noise. It sounded as if a fight were going on in Grandma and Grandpa's bedroom. Dad sat up and turned on his flashlight. Mom called out, "Is anything wrong, Mother?"

Then came the same noise, but louder. Mom called again. Dad jumped out of bed and grabbed his pants. We heard what sounded like, "Wha-a-ck! Wha-a-ack!"

Dad had his pants on by then. The rest of us sat straight up in bed, our eyes staring at the door of the bedroom.

Grandma called, "Nothing to worry about. Nothing at all. One of those darn mice kept running over my pillow, but I got him."

"Sure you're okay, now?" Dad asked.

"Yes, yes," Grandma said. "Let's get back to sleep."

Grandpa slept through the whole ruckus. He didn't even stir. That hike must have tired him more than we knew.

But the next morning he shouted for us to bring a glass of water to the bedroom. Again we sat up wide-eyed and wondering what had happened now.

"What's the matter, Papa?" Mom asked.

"Grandma's going to faint," he said. "She just had a look at what she chased all over the bedroom and killed last night."

"What is it?" we called as we hopped out of bed and ran to their room. We didn't even wait for an invitation but went right in. Grandpa pointed out the window. We gasped. Lying on the ground outside, where Grandma had tossed

it, was an enormous pack rat. It's glazed eyes glared back at us. It was as big as our cat. No wonder Grandma was about to faint!

#####

It was my seventh birthday, and my family with the grandparents and other available relatives went to Lorin Farr Park for a picnic. This park as you'll remember, was just north of Ogden and the river from the canyon flowed along its southern boundary. Often at other picnics here, we'd waded in that river and watched older people swim in the area that was roped off. But for us there was to be no swimming or wading that day. It wasn't that type of a picnic.

I wore a new blue voile ruffled (of course) dress with matching socks and satin garters. I also wore a new flower-trimmed, shiney, white straw hat. These were part of the birthday.

At first, everything was as exciting as we'd anticipated -- the rides on all the little cars and planes, the pink Mother Goose popcorn in the square yellow boxes, the bottles of fizzing soda pop and then the picnic.

Next to our table in the bowery was another family celebrating a birthday -- their little boy's seventh. The adults exchanged pleasantries and the little boy and I exchanged stares. It was hard for me to realize that this day belonged to another person, too. I had always thought it was mine alone.

Late that afternoon as we were preparing to leave, we heard a great commotion down by the river. People started running. Dad said, "Stay where you are and don't get mixed up in that crowd. I'll go down and see what's the problem." He pushed through the crowd down to the river's edge.

From where we were standing, we saw people rushing into the water. One woman stumbled over the rocks and screamed. Her long black hair had tumbled

from its pins and streamed wild about her shoulders. It was the mother of the little boy who'd picnicked next to us.

Soon Dad came back and said the little boy was missing.

We hurriedly gathered our things and started for home. On the long walk home not much was said. It was a quiet ending for a birthday party.

The next day we kept asking our Mom what had happened. Finally she told us that the little boy had been drowned and that his body had been found a few hours later a mile down the river.

It was a long time before we were allowed to wade in the Ogden River or any other river.

#####

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, our eighth birthday is greatly anticipated. It's at this time we're baptized and confirmed members of the church. We're prepared for this event by our church teachers and our parents. We are solemnly counseled that when we reach the age of eight, we are old enough to be responsible for our acts. It's comforting to us to know, though, that the small deeds of disobedience we had committed before the age of eight were washed away with our baptism and we could begin again -- all fresh and clean.

And so my eighth birthday finally arrived and I was to be baptized. (Each of you remember your baptism and the special activities that made it just yours. Weren't you baptized in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Temple Square, Mary Lou? But this is mine, the only one I remember.)

For this once-in-a-lifetime occasion Mom bought me a new, white, lace-trimmed nightgown. This itself was special, as I'd had so few store-purchased clothes.

It was a hot day in July, about six weeks after my birthday, when we went to the church for the baptismal services. I was told to go to one of the classrooms, undress, and put on the nightgown. It's a good thing that Mom and Dad had explained the procedure to me and I knew what to expect, or I might have been scared.

There were three or four other girls my age in the room and although we knew each other and generally were quite noisy, today the solemnity of the occasion made us shy and quiet. When we were dressed, or rather undressed, we went, barefooted and in our long gowns, into a large room where our parents, other relatives and friends waited. Some boys our age were there, too, looking strangely different in their white shirts and pants. For once, they, too, were subdued.

It was peculiar sitting in church in a nightie, and I tried hard to listen to the final admonitions and instructions that were given to us. After a short while, we were called, one by one, into the next room. Here a door in the floor had been pulled up (just like our cellar door at home), and I saw a pool of clear green water.

My father, all dressed in white, too, led me down the little steps into the pool. The water was barely warm and I felt its coolness against my legs as it ballooned out my nightie. Dad showed me how to hold my nose with one hand, and he took hold of my other hand and shoulders. Then raising his right hand and arm he gave the baptismal prayer (one of the few formal prayers in our church).

"Janet Roberts, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

As he said the amen he quickly and completely immersed me in the water. Almost before I realized it I was baptized and was climbing up the steps out

of the pool with my nightie clinging wetly to me and my long curls stuck dripping across my face.

Then into the little girls' room again, where we dried and dressed and combed our hair back flat and slick. Then back again into the big room with our parents. Back on the front seats with the other damp-looking boys and girls.

Now we were to be confirmed. Again we were each called singly to come forward and take a chair facing the group. When my turn came, I tried to sit still, but I was shaking, a little from excitement and a little from not being thoroughly dry. This time, Grandpa Roberts was to give the prayer. He and Dad, changed into his street clothes, now, and another man put their hands on my head. I felt their fingers through my wet hair. As usual, Grandpa gave a long prayer. This wasn't a formal prayer and he could bless me with whatever he wished. I suppose I was more than thoroughly confirmed.

After the service, I could hardly wait to be out of the solemn atmosphere and hurry home to gloat over Dick and Ruth, because I was now a really, honestly, truly member of the church.

#####

Grandpa Roberts was a great one for family reunions. Not only did he make sure that all of his relatives clanned together yearly, he made sure that Grandma's did, too.

As a child, I was never sure which side of the family was in session, because both sides of the family looked much alike. Both sides had old (to me) aunts and uncles, young cousins with whom I had a duty to play, and buggy loads of new babies. Everybody toted out their best pickles and cakes and the men played base ball (when they could escape from reading the record books that

Grandpa brought along), and the women gossiped and hollered at their kids. And, of course, Grandpa always gave a speech. He always said the same things (THE IMPORTANCE OF TEMPLE WORK, GENEALOGY, SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE, THE IDEAL FAMILY, ETC.) at both the Davis and the Roberts reunions, so it's no wonder that I never knew which was which.

But no matter which, I was always introduced as "Llewellyn's oldest child." Someone always remarked how big I was and someone else always looked critically at me and said, "You don't seem to favor our side of the family much."

I looked back at them and thought, "Thank Heavens! I'm glad I don't!" I was thankful at those times that my mother's side of the family didn't go in for family reunions.

One year, one of the reunions, I don't know which, Roberts or Davis, was to be at Preston, Idaho. Mom and Dad weren't able to go so I was to go with Grandma and Grandpa and Della Rae. Their other children begged off for a number of reasons. The prospects of a long automobile ride and a couple of nights in a strange place was exhilarating. I wouldn't even complain about the relatives comments.

We left at dawn one summer morning and it seemed as though the trip took hours. It probably did, too, with the Model T that Grandpa drove. Time consuming, too, were the flat tires and the visiting at many places on the way so that Grandpa could prod reluctant relatives into action toward the reunion at Preston.

Late in the afternoon we arrived. The site was the grounds and buildings of one of the Mormon churches in Preston. They needed that much space. Grandpa had really spread the word. It looked as though all the Roberts and Davis families had finally teemed together. There were people all over, inside and

out. Long lines of picnic tables sagged with food and people ate all the time. As soon as one group finished, another arrived and set up their food. Della Rae and I went from table to table and sampled all the pickles and cakes. And there were enough pickles and cakes to keep us busy all day long.

One thing about this reunion, Grandpa really had most of the relatives fired up about genealogy. As soon as we arrived and again that evening, he organized meetings. It was the first and the last time that there was ever a night meeting at a family reunion. During the meeting, Della Rae and I and the other kids our age sat on the back row and sneaked out every chance we had to play under the street lights. We no sooner had a good game of Kick the Can or Washington Poke started than one of the older aunts came out and herded us back into the building again.

But at last, Grandpa gave his final statement for the evening and the meeting was at an end. (There was to be more tomorrow.) But now something new happened. The chairs were pushed back and we had games and dancing. This was Grandpa's idea. These things were a necessary part of growing, too.

Some of the families lived close enough to go home for the night. Others went with them. Still others camped out on the church grounds. But, we, Grandpa, Grandma, Della Rae and I were to sleep on the floor of the recreational hall of the church. When some of the relatives heard this they were stunned. The men cousins followed Grandpa as he carried in large armloads of bedding.

"You just can't do this, Uncle Dave (that's what most of them called him)," they protested.

"We'll make a place for you at our house," said one.

"Uncle Dave, what will everyone say?"

"It's a terrible thing for you to sleep on the floor."

Grandpa said, "I've planned to sleep here, and here I'll sleep." He

piled all the bedding by Grandma and the shrilly protesting female relatives.

"Aunt Phene, (that's what they called her) you just can't do this," wailed one cousin.

"Make Uncle Dave change his mind," said another female who obviously didn't know Grandpa very well.

"Well, you know Dad (that's what Grandma called Grandpa)," Grandma said, "once he makes up his mind, that's that." She started making beds on the floor.

Della Rae and I eagerly helped her and wished the unhappy relatives would hurry and go away, so that we could go to bed. Not that we were sleepy, far from it. It was just that we'd never spent the entire night in a church house and we wanted to get started.

Grandpa finally shushed and shooed the relatives politely from the building. We could hear them being scandalized clear out to their cars.

Then Grandpa switched off the overhead lights and we modestly undressed by flashlight. I had one brief glimpse of Grandpa in the striped whatever he wore lying down and pulling up the quilts. Grandma sat Indian fashion on her hard bed and brushed and braided her long black hair into a single plait. Then, she, too, lay down.

I lay staring in the dark for a few minutes and thought about my grandparents. Always before when I'd seen them in church, they'd been in their very best clothes and either sitting or standing upright. Now they were in their nightclothes and sleeping on the hard floor of the recreation hall. The whole incident was overwhelming.

If all family reunions turned out to be as novel as this one, I might even talk my mother into getting her family together.

#####

It may have been the Fourth of July or maybe it was the Twenty-fourth of July, but whichever day, it was fire cracker time. Dad was away -- up at Camp Keisel doing Boy Scout work and the rest of us stayed at home for a hot lonely summer.

On this day, along towards evening, Grandma and Grandpa Crittenden came down in their car. They suggested a ride and we piled in before they could change their minds. At that time we were living in our east-facing red brick house, so there must have been Mom, Dick, Ruth, Buss, Mary Lou and I.

"How about up the canyon where it's a little cooler?" Grandpa asked.

"Goody!" we all screamed. (Mom excepted. She'd probably felt like screaming all day) "Can we go up to Camp Keisel and see Dad?"

"Well, that's a little far for this evening," Grandpa said. "We'll go as far as the Hermitage and then come back and buy ice cream cones."

That was fine with us. On the way we counted the American flags that were displayed, and watched with scorn the children who couldn't wait until dark to play with their lighted sparklers. You can bet we'd have done the same thing if given the chance. Our sparklers and sky rockets would have to wait until we came home and then Grandpa said he'd help us with them.

It was cool up the canyon. A little breeze blew down through the high cliff walls and we stuck our hands and heads out of the car so we could feel every bit of it.

When we reached the Hermitage, we wanted to get out and play on the swings, but there were so many people still there, that Grandpa just backed the car around and we headed down the canyon. It was dark by now and every few minutes we saw sky rockets and Roman candles flare above the tree tops that shaded the summer homes in the area.

As we reached the mouth of the canyon, the heat from the valley hit us.

It was as if we'd opened the oven of a hot stove, and even with our hands and heads hanging out of the car, all we felt was the hot air rushing past. We stopped on top of the hill above the town for a few minutes. The lights below were bright, but the exploding fire works in every section of the town were brighter. And more exciting.

Grandpa stopped at Brown's Ice Cream store and each of us had our favorite flavor in a cone. It was still a novelty to have more than vanilla, chocolate and strawberry ice cream from which to choose. The decision of choosing from seven or eight tantalizing flavors was an agonizing experience.

Then Grandpa drove the car home as each of us silently and happily licked at the cold ice cream.

As soon as we hopped out of the car, we dashed for our fire works. We danced around the lawn and threw the lighted sparklers into the trees. We ground "spit-devils" under our heels and jumped as they cracked and spattered red flashes. Each time that we lit anything, Mom, Grandpa and Grandma cautioned us to be careful. We weren't allowed matches, only lighted punks.

After our little things were burned, the big folks set off the Roman candles and sky rockets. They glittered and flashed as they streaked up into the dark sky. And then something happened. One of the rockets seemed to go crazy. Instead of going up and up, it went up and down. It exploded in a burst of fiery sparks in the field across the street from our house.

Before we realized what had happened, Grandma and Grandpa ran out into the street dragging our long garden hose behind them. Mom ran down the street to a neighbor's house that had a telephone to call the fire department. Grandpa shouted for us to turn the water on full and to bring the brooms and mops.

By the time Dick and I raced across the street with the mops and brooms, Grandpa and Grandma were spraying water and stomping on the flames with their

feet. It wasn't doing much good though, the June grass was brittle and dry and the exploding rocket sparks had started a number of small fires all over the area.

Grandma and Grandpa grabbed the brooms from us and told us to get back on our side of the street and stay with the little ones who were by now howling and bawling.

Mom came running back with some of the neighbors and lots more brooms.

All of us kids stood on the edge of the curb and watched and bawled. From a long way off we heard the fire siren, and the sound grew closer and closer until it stopped right in front of our house. The firemen jumped off the trucks with big tanks slung over their shoulders and soon every trace of the fire was gone.

It was the closest any of us kids had ever been to a fire truck and we were so overcome with awe and delight that we stopped our useless bawling.

We weren't surprised, though, that Grandma and Grandpa never offered to shoot fire works for us again.

#####

Christman and Thanksgiving were the best of family days. At Thanksgiving, we were generally at one of the grandparents homes. Sometimes they came to our house. And sometimes, both sets of grandparents, all kinds of uncles, aunts and cousins gathered under one roof.

It was a day of happiness. Nearly everyone contributed to the work and even those that did the most enjoyed every minute of it. No one complained, or nagged or scolded or quarreled. It wasn't the custom at any time, and especially not on a holiday.

First thing in the morning we dressed for the day. It seemed odd to

wear our best clothes when it wasn't Sunday. Over our best dresses my sisters and I wore a white apron, sort of like a plain unruffled pinafore. Mom made us many of these from flour sacks and embroidered fancy designs on them. We were all reminded not to get dirty, and barring accidents we did quite well.

Then we were all bundled into our warmest coats, then into the big wicker buggy, the butter truck, or whatever method of transportation we were using at that time and whisked off to --- Grandma Roberts's house this time.

When we arrived it seemed as though the house were already bursting with people. There were always a few stray relatives that knew that somehow Grandma would feed them and sleep them.

The house was steamy with the fragrant odors of roast turkey and roast pork. (We always had both) The counters in the kitchen were covered with apple, mince and pumpkin pies, carrot puddings and enormous pots of peeled potatoes waiting to be cooked. Big, flat black pans were filled with satiny mounds of unbaked rolls ready to be slid into the ovens (both the coal and the gas summer ranges were hot and ready). Sparkling cut-glass and hand-painted china containers oozed with three kinds of pickles and four kinds of jam all made by Grandma the previous summer. Millions of steps must have been taken up and down those hazardous basement stairs to get the food prepared for this dinner.

The kitchen was also full of all the adult females, each one wanting to do her share. They tried to keep all of us kids out, but we kept sneaking back to see how soon the turkey would be done. Those turkeys seemed to cook forever.

Although the men mostly sat in the front room and talked, or went outside and stuck their heads under the hoods of their cars, or put their feet possessively on the running boards, they too, passed through the kitchen at

regular intervals. Especially Grandpa. He lifted the pot lids, opened oven doors, offered suggestions that were more like commands and reminded Grandma to keep a close watch on the turkey.

When we, the younger ones, weren't sneaking through the kitchen, we ran up and down the stairs, examined Faunce's candy boxes, tried on Ollie's newest shoes (if we could still get into them) or went outside and annoyed the chickens. A good loud shout sent them squacking to the far corners of the coop.

One of the major projects of the morning was setting the tables. This took some real engineering, as people, chairs, and tables had to be juggled around and still leave space for the cooks to cook and the sitters to sit. One long table was set up the entire length of the long front room. This was for the grown-ups. In the kitchen the old square table was extended with all its leaves, and here the younger ones sat under the watchful eye of one of the aunts. We always looked forward to the time when we'd be allowed to sit at the other table in the front room. But still, we did enjoy ourselves in the kitchen.

When we were all finally seated, and the last heaping plate of food was wedged on the tables, Grandpa called for us to be quiet. That really took some doing. Especially out in the kitchen. We'd all just start to be quiet when someone giggled. The reproving gaze of the aunt in charge made us giggle all the more, because she was giggling herself. But after a bit we'd be as quiet as those in the other room. Then Grandpa prayed. And as it was Thanksgiving and there were many things for which all of us were thankful, it was a long prayer. We thought he'd never finish. But he did and then the noise burst louder than ever. We heaped our plates high, emptied them, and heaped them again.

At one Thanksgiving dinner Grandpa continually complimented Grandma on

her hot rolls. He said again and again, "Aren't these the best rolls you ever ate? Mother really outdid herself today."

Grandma just smiled and exchanged glances with her sister, Sally who was visiting. Near the end of the dinner when Grandpa again mentioned the superior qualities of the rolls, Grandma informed him that sister Sally had made them that day! Grandpa just hadn't stalked through the kitchen at the right time that day.

At another Thanksgiving we came up to Ogden from Salt Lake City and as the weather was bad, it was decided that we'd stay for the night. So beds had to be found for our family. I don't know where the others were bedded, but it was decided that Della Rae and I were to sleep at Merddyn's apartment. Now he was our Dad's next youngest brother, and we never saw much of him and his wife, Hazel, but as Della Rae and I thought it might be fun to sleep on a folding bed in an apartment, we went off without any objections.

We rarely went in an apartment house, and so we looked around curiously as we entered. The long halls were dim with only a few shaded lamps on the walls. Our footsteps were muffled on the heavy carpets. Passing by closed doors, we heard talking and music. Mostly though we were conscious of the smell. It wasn't unpleasant, just odd. We were glad our houses didn't smell like that.

Later as we helped Hazel make up our bed, we were stunned to hear her say, "We'll put this rubber sheet on first, so if you wet the bed it won't ruin the mattress."

Della Rae and I protested. We'd never been so insulted in our lives.

But Hazel put the rubber sheet on the bed and said, "I generally wet in a strange bed, and I'm taking no chances with you."

She didn't exactly make her guests feel comfortable. Secretly, I thought

that there must be something wrong with her as she also told us that she had to wear three or four pairs of extra panties when on a mountain hike -- walking down hills always made her wet her pants. We always knew she was different than the rest of us. For one thing, she was from Indiana. Merddyn met her there while he was serving his mission for the church. He converted her to the church and sent for her after he came home.

Anyway, the next morning after we arose, (and we didn't need her old rubber sheet either) she cooked our breakfast. As we ate our bacon and eggs she told us what terrible manners we had. Again we were stunned. We'd been very careful to chew with our mouths closed, kept our elbows off the table, used our napkins frequently, and took nice lady-like little bites. What had we forgotten?

"Only very stupid people," she said, "eat bacon with a fork. You should hold it lightly in two fingers." She demonstrated the proper technique to us. Later, I looked in a big etiquette book at the library, but saw nothing about the proper way to eat bacon.

Della Rae and I were happy to leave that apartment after we had done the dishes, made up the bed, vacuumed and dusted, and ran a few errands for Hazel. She gave us something else to be thankful for -- our own families.

#####

One of Dad's favorite yearly jaunts was to the top of Monte Cristo. This was a rounded, knobby mountain that had as its peak, the corner boundaries of Weber, Cache and Box Elder Counties. At this point a person could stand in all three counties at the same time. And if a person turned around fast enough, they could almost see all three counties at the same time.

The end of the road (rough, dirty, dusty, rocky, horrible) was some dis-

tance, maybe a mile or so, from the top of the mountain. From here on was sort of a sheep wagon trail, faintly discernable through the brush, that led to the peak. But even without this faint trail, I'm sure that Dad would have driven the car up there. He loved to put the car in low gear and bump and jerk us all the way to the top. And there the car perched on top of Monte Christo -- in all three counties. Dad patted the hood of the car and said, "Good old Dodge. Best car in the world."

One summer evening, Dad announced that we were going to Monte Christo the next day. We whooped with delight as we liked the trip as much as he did. So early the next morning we left for Ogden (we were living in Salt Lake City then).

The first place we stopped was at Grandma Roberts' house. We drove up to the front gate. Dad honked the car horn, "Oo-gah, oo-gah!"

We shouted, "Hey, we're going to Monte Christo!"

The upstairs window flew open and Delano poked her head out. She was in her nightie and her dark hair was frowzy.

"Come down, come down and go with us," we called.

"I'll be right there," she said. "No one needed coaxing to go to Monte Christo."

In a few minutes Grandma had consented to go, too. She put on a clean cotton print dress, made sure her "frizz" was properly frizzed, and topped it off with her best black hat.

When Delano came downstairs we thought she looked absolutely elegant. She was wearing a sporty outfit called "pajamas." It was a one piece affair with sort of a sleeveless waist and extra wide pant legs right down to her ankles. It was a white cotton material printed with large red and yellow flowers. She also wore a beige straw hat trimmed with matching ribbon.

Just before we left, I saw her stuffing a small, bulging, paper bag into her purse.

"Oh, we've plenty of lunch for everyone," I told her. "You don't need to take any."

She laughed, "This isn't lunch. It's a --well, I'm expecting a visit from my country cousin."

I was puzzled. "Are we going to visit cousins?" I desperately hoped not.

Delano laughed again and said, "No, she's coming to visit me. She does every month."

I was more puzzled than ever and must have looked so, because she said, "She'll come visit you, too, one of these days."

I gave up. She didn't make sense.

The next business was to get all of us in the car. There was Dad, Mom, myself, Dick, Ruth, Buss, Mary Lou, Dean, Grandma and Delano. There was also a couple of big boxes of food. I don't know how we all wedged in, but we did and started up Ogden Canyon.

Up the canyon to the North Fork road, and then on to the narrow dirt road that would us further into the mountains.

Our Dad was the happiest when he was in the open country, and we knew because of the songs he sang. The songs weren't particularly gay or rollicking, but more often something melodious or plaintive. He never missed singing "The Bells of St. Mary's" or "Sweet Genevieve." Sometimes he played these and others on a mouthorgan which he always took with him. Also, when he sang, he drove with his left hand and put his right arm around Mom. Obviously, he never played the mouth organ, drove with one hand and had his arm around Mom at the same time, although, I swear it happened. If anyone could have done it, he would have.

Sometimes, we'd all sing with him, especially when he'd teach us the

songs that he taught at the Boy Scout camps. The two we liked best were a couple we'd never heard any other place. One was to the tune of "Men of Harlech" and some of the words were --- "Ancient Briton never hit on anything so good as woad to put on -- never mind if you get rained or snowed on -- never need a button sewed on (these words aren't in the right order) Woad's the thing for men!" The words to the other went something like this -- "A-looking through a knot hole in father's wooden leg, why did they build the shore so near the ocean? Go get the ax there's a hair on baby's chin! Oh, a boy's best friend is his mother, his mother!"

On every trip to the mountains we looked forward with dread and anticipation to a couple of other things that Dad did.

We dreaded to come to strange little roads going off the main dirt road. Dad always explored them, at least part way. We liked to explore, too, but it took time, and we were more eager to arrive at our destination. Anyway who could tell, we might get lost or stuck in the mud, or something equally disastrous. We knew. We'd had experience with strange roads that Dad was apt to explore.

The thing we liked him to do, though, was to push over dead trees. As we came into the higher altitude, among the pines and aspens, we frequently saw gaunt, grey, nearly limbless trees. These had a particular fascination for Dad, and he had to try and push them over. Sometimes just a few hard shoves and the dry rotten wood cracked and the tree crashed to the ground. Other times, Dad pushed from all sides, but the old tree didn't budge. At such times Dad said, "Well, we'll try again the next time we're up here."

He would, too. Sometimes he pushed at the same old dead tree for two or three years before it finally crashed into the brush. We loved to watch this tree-pushing. The trees made such a shattering sound.

As we approached Monte Christo, Dad always stopped the car in a couple of spots so he could show us the claw marks the grizzly bears had slashed in some of the Aspen trees. We goggled at the mutilated trees and looked around cautiously. You could never tell, there might be a bear behind that tree over there.

A little further along the road were the "bear wallows." These were a couple of shallow pools of murky water where the bears and other wild life came to drink and roll around in the mud. Often we saw their tracks in the dried mud around the pool edge, and Dad told us that once he'd seen a grizzly bear and two cubs near the edge of the water. We looked around in dreadful hope, and wondered what we'd do, if ever we saw a real bear.

Dad had a keen interest in the out-of-doors and passed this interest to most of his children. Although he did a little fishing, he never hunted. His interest centered in the wild animals and birds and their habits. For years when going into the mountains, he carried plaster of paris which could easily be mixed with some mountain water in a small scooped out hole in the ground. Then if an unusual animal track were seen, some of this mixture was poured in. Dad had a large collection of these animal casts and frequently we proudly took them to school to display in our nature classes. There were deer, bear, mountain lion and many of the smaller animals. Once he went to the zoo at Liberty Park in Salt Lake City, and made casts of the footprints of the caged animals, but they weren't nearly as impressive to us as the ones he collected in the mountains. He also taught us the names of the trees and plants and we grew up knowing some of these things as well as we knew our colors.

From the "bear wallows" it wasn't far to the end of the road. All of us helped unload the food boxes, gather firewood and lug rocks to make a fire

circle. Soon the fire burned brightly and we pestered Mom about how soon lunch would be ready.

Mom put two big frying pans over the hot coals. Into one went hamburger patties and into the other a heap of sliced onions. The rich fragrance that filled the air was half the enjoyment of the picnic. Mom served the cooked meat on large buns that she'd baked the day before and heaped them with golden dripping onions. With milk and slices of tomatoes, we all agreed it was the best food we'd ever eaten. For dessert -- spice cake, loaded with raisins.

After lunch was the final trek to the top of Monte Christo. Mom, Dad, Grandma and some of the smaller ones climbed back in the car and some way or other Dad coaxed it to the summit. The rest of us walked, ran and whooped our way to the top.

At the top we all wanted to be first to hug the three cornered boundary, and after much shoving and pushing we all had our turn. Dad pointed out the distant landmarks and we were properly impressed. Ruth gathered armloads of wild flowers (her favorite pastime). The whole summit was massed with many varieties.

Too soon, the sun approached the far western hills, and it was time to go home. As we loaded into the car, we all planned what we would do the next year at Monte Christo. And being on top of the mountain, and quite a distance from the clawed trees or the bear wallows, we bravely said, "Next time there'd better be an old grizzly bear around here!" But, thank heavens, there never was.

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It was the fifth of July and it must have been a Monday, as there was a big Fourth of July parade, and there would never have been a parade on Sunday in Ogden. Anyway, it was hot. Hot-hot-hot.

We had come up from Salt Lake City to stay for a few days. Mom was at Grandma Crittenden's house, as Grandma was very sick. The rest of us, except Dad (he was at camp) were down to Grandma Roberts' house. Aunt Prudence, Dad's older sister, and her children were there, too.

Grandma and Aunt Prudence took all of us to the parade. The floats were large and colorful, the bands numerous and blaring, and the ambulances were racing each other to see which one could collect the most victims who had collapsed from the heat. Grandma and Aunt Prudence stood back under some trees. It seemed a little cooler there. But we stood out in the sun and soaked up the heat and the excitement.

After the parade, we walked by Brown's Ice cream Company and waited our turn to get cones. It looked as though everyone else at the parade had the same idea. The place was mobbed. Licking our favorite flavor, we all started walking down Grant Avenue toward home. When we reached twenty-sixth street, I said I was going over to see Grandma Crittenden for a few minutes.

"Don't wait for me," I said, "I'll catch up with you later."

Down twenty-sixth street to Coles Court, and down the narrow sidewalk to Grandma's house. Everything was so dry and dusty. I could feel the heat from the hot cement seep through the thin soles of my black patent leather slippers. Even my arms seemed to burn when they touched the scorching hot material of my sheer summer dress.

When I reached the house, the front door was open, but strangely odd in the middle of the day, all the shades were drawn. The front lawn was dry and wilted. Grandma never let it look like that. Two or three times a day when it was hot, she sprayed the lawns and the windows and the siding on the house.

"I can't stand all that heat," she said. "I've got to try and keep it cool someway." And then she'd swish more cold water from the hose all over everything in sight.

I went around the side of the house and into the screened back porch. It did seem a little cooler here. I took off my wide-brimmed straw hat and pushed back my damp hair. It was as wet as if I'd just run through the spray from the hose.

Through the open door, I was surprised to see my Aunt Rose. Generally, she never left her little store in the daytime. Then another surprise! Grandpa was home. He should have been on his way to Preston. He must have planned to go though, as he had on his uniform pants and his coat and cap were on a chair in the kitchen.

My mother saw me standing hesitantly on the porch and told me to come in. I could see that she'd been crying.

Grandma was sitting in her big chair in the front room. Her eyes were closed and her face looked sort of puffy. I leaned over and kissed her and was concious of how hot and moist her skin felt. It was then I became aware of the heat and closeness of the room.

Flies clung in bunches to the outside of the door screen; motes of dust drifted in the rays of sunlight that filtered through the cracks of the dark green window shades; and the electric fan on the floor by the door merely rolled the hot air around and around. If possible it seemed even warmer in here than outside. I don't know, maybe it was the dimness, maybe it was the slowly rolling air from the fan, but the room seemed strange, almost as if I'd never been there before.

I sat tensely on the edge of the black leather sofa. Grandpa sat on a low stool at Grandma's side and held her hand. Mom and Aunt Rose huddled in the doorway. No one said much. I felt sorry that Grandma couldn't lie down

when she was so sick. She looked so hot and uncomfortable sitting there. She must have been hot, too. And she liked things cool -- cool breezes, cool rides in the evening, cool grass and flowers and tall cool glasses of fizzy home made root beer.

After a few minutes, I whispered to Mom that I'd better go. I nodded to Aunt Rose and Grandpa, looked down for minute at Grandma, then went out the back way. Mom came with me. She began crying again and told me that Grandma had but a few more hours to live. I didn't say anything. Just stood like a dummy. What could I say?

Then Mom reminded me to be sure and help Grandma Roberts with the younger ones. She said she'd call me later.

"Okay," I said and rushed out.

When I reached Grandma Roberts' house, she said, "How's your Grandmother Crittenden?"

"Oh, not so good, I guess," I answered.

I changed my clothes and went out on the big east lawn where the other kids were. It was shady here and everyone was playing paper dolls or reading or doing something quiet. The long stand at the parade and the long walk home in the heat had finally beat everyone down.

I watched Della Rae and my cousin, Carmen, set out the paper dolls.

"Here's the father doll for you," Della Rae said to me. I was always the father, because I was the largest.

"Thanks, but I'm not playing," I said.

"Oh, come on. Don't be a stick-in-the-mud," Carmen said.

"No, not today."

"Well, you can be the mother, then," Della Rae said. But even this rare opportunity didn't entice me.

"For heck's sake, what's wrong with you?" Carmen said. "You're sure onery."

I didn't answer.

Aunt Prudence who was sitting nearby sewing said to me, "Come on, play with Carmen and Della Rae. Let's not be disagreeable."

I looked at her and wondered why she was always so cross. I don't believe I ever saw her smile. All she did was boss. And she had no business bossing me!

I still didn't say anything, or did I join the play.

Grandma Roberts had come out a few minutes earlier and settled in a low rocker to do some hand sewing. After listening to Della Rae and Carmen teasing me to play and Aunt Prudence ordering me to play, she said, "Let her alone now. If she doesn't feel like playing, she doesn't feel like it."

And that did it. For the first time that day, I burst into tears and rushed into the house. As long as the others were scolding and bossing, I could be stoney-faced and keep the tears back, but one kind word from Grandma sent me howling and seeking solace.

I raced up the stairs to the bedrooms. Here, under the low ceilings, the heat was stifling, but even so, I flung myself into the depths of a feather-bed mattress and had a darn good bawl.

I kept thinking that only a few days previous, Grandma Crittenden had said that she was ready to die. I thought she was kidding as she did about so many things. It was the night after Byron's wedding, and we were all sitting in her kitchen. Aunt Rose and some of Grandma's other sisters were there, too. Anyway, Grandma began talking about how happy she was now that her two children were both happily married and that now that she was free from responsibility for them, she was ready to die. She started to cry and so did her sisters and Mom. I guess they all knew how serious her condition was. I felt uncomfortable and wondered why everyone was so weepy. But even

so, I thought she was kidding about dying.

Early, that fifth of July evening, before it began to get cool, in that last baking heat of the day, Grandma Crittenden died.

After Grandma Crittenden died, Grandpa was lonely. For awhile Byron and his new wife lived at Grandpa's house, but that didn't work out too well and so didn't last long. Then Grandpa lived alone and tried to manage by himself, but he'd never been too handy at house hold duties, and so it was difficult for him. Mom tried to help as much as possible, but living forty miles away hampered her activities.

About six weeks after Grandma died, Grandpa came down to Salt Lake City to go on a camping trip with us. We loaded the old Dodge with camp gear, food, fishing equipment, kids, parents and Grandpa and headed for the Grand Daddy Lakes country in the high Uintah Mountains. Dad had camped there with the Boy Scouts and was anxious to show it to us. The fishing was supposed to be the best and Grandpa looked forward to it.

As we neared the mouth of Parley's Canyon something happened to the car --- a flat tire or some minor engine trouble or something, I don't remember exactly what. But Dad fixed it quickly and we were off again. A few miles further on -- more trouble. This was a little more serious and we turned back to town. We stopped at the Sugarhouse shopping area and while Dad had the car repaired, some of us went window shopping with Grandpa.

He was especially interested in the articles in a hardware store. After examining and discussing everything in the window we went into the store and Grandpa bought a coil or rope.

"What's that for?" we wanted to know.

"Oh, many things. You never can tell when a piece of rope might come in handy." he told us.

We were happy about that rope. Happy that Grandpa was prepared for any of the dire calamities (that's how we saw them) that might happen to us in a strange area. We knew there would be unknown roads for Dad to explore, and many kinds of wild animals, but only heaven knew what other incidents we might encounter. So it was good to be prepared.

The car trouble was repaired and we started off again. We didn't get too far though -- more car trouble. Dad jiggered something and the motor roared. He said, "We'll try once more."

And once more was all it was. After a mile or so, the trouble started again. Dad stopped the car. No one said anything for a minute. Then Dad said. "We're going home. For some reason or other, we're not supposed to take this trip."

Yes, we were disappointed, but didn't fuss too much. I supposed we realized that this was the type of dire calamity that neither Dad's scouting experience nor Grandpa's rope could fix.

As the weeks went by we saw Grandpa as often as possible. When he had two or three days in between runs up to Preston, he came and stayed with us. He sent us an enormous turkey for Thanksgiving and spent that holiday with us.

About ten days later, on a Sunday morning, I think it was the sixth of December, a telephone call came from Aunt Rose -- Grandpa was dead. He'd been on one of his trips to Preston and had dropped dead on the street.

Mom learned later that Grandpa and another trainman had walked down the street towards a diner for breakfast. Grandpa commented how odd it was that there seemed to be no sound and that instead of the morning becoming lighter and lighter, it was becoming darker and darker.

The doctor said the cause of death was a heart attack. Mom and Dad felt that had we been able to continue our trip the previous August, Grandpa

might have had that attack in the high Uintahs. But car trouble had prevented that most dire of all calamities from happening.

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When Dean reached the age of about two and a half or three years old, Mom despaired of keeping him dry. He just didn't seem to catch on to this toilet training business. Mom said that on number seven child she should have the answer, but apparently not for Dean.

Finally, she thought the novelty of standing up like a big boy might appeal to him. So one morning she suggested to Dad while he was shaving that he might demonstrate the accepted procedure.

Now our Dad is one of the world's most modest men and he wasn't too happy about the idea. But after some persuasion from Mom, and in the interest of less soiled clothes for her to wash and fewer puddles on the floor, he reluctantly agreed.

They called Dean to the bathroom and Dad said, "Dean, it's time you were keeping dry. Big men don't go around with wet pants, and --ah -- you see, it's like this ---" Then Dad leaned over the toilet, spit into it, and quickly left the room.

Dean leaned over the toilet, spit into it and ran after his Dad calling, "Now, me big man, too!"

Well, it was some time before Dean learned to keep dry, but he wanted to show everyone that he could spit in the toilet like a big man.

#####

From the time any of us were old enough to talk, Mom taught us little verses and made us memorize them. She'd been in demand as a dramatic reader on local programs, and she was determined to rear a whole family of such readers.

The Second Ward in Ogden probably never had a program for years in which I didn't recite "a piece." Often, Dick had "a piece", too. It kept Mom busy finding just the right selections for us and then teaching us the proper way to say it. She also encouraged us to take part in school productions, and she spent hours helping us with our lines and making our costumes.

And no one objected when we created our own plays and produced them in our front rooms or on the front porch to a captive audience of admiring grandparents.

One night, shortly after we'd moved to Salt Lake City, Mom and Dad went out to do some grocery shopping. They left us with the usual instructions, -- "don't tear the house to pieces -- keep away from the matches -- and don't eat in the front room."

After they left, we scuffled with each other, spent time in seeing who could call each other the most insulting names (there was no profanity, it never occurred to us and we'd heard very few profane words, anyway, as no one in our families or friends used such words), and then hunted through the cupboards for nuts and chocolate. Each of us made a little cupful of our favorite concoction -- 1 teaspoon cocoa, 1 teaspoon sugar, 2 big tablespoons of raw oatmeal, and enough canned milk to make a gooey mixture. If there were any nuts around we threw in a few of those, too. Where we picked up this crazy, luscious mess, I can't remember. But we loved it, especially when Mom and Dad weren't home to stop us.

Buss smeared the chocolate all over his face and looked so funny that

we decided to make a play around him. We all put crayon and chocolate on our faces and were in the midst of outshouting each other as to who was to be what, when the doorbell rang. We rushed to the front door to see who was there. It was a strange man and woman. It must have been quite a shock to them to see five painted faces peering at them through a slit in the door.

The man said he was supposed to see Dad on some business. We all said at once that Mom and Dad were out but would be back in a few minutes. Then Dick asked them if they'd like to come in and wait. They hesitated, but said that if we were sure that Dad would be back soon

"Oh, yes, yes, very soon," we assured them. So they came in and sat down. We sat down, too. Each of us primly on a chair, with our feet on the floor, as we'd been taught to do. We'd also been taught not to interrupt adult conversation, so we sat there waiting for them to talk. Nothing was said for a few moments. Then the woman asked us if we'd been playing Indian. We told her we'd been making up a play.

"Oh, that's nice," she said.

"Would you like to see it?" we asked. The fact that we really didn't have anything in mind didn't bother us a bit. We could always come up with something.

The man and woman nodded their heads. What else could they do?

So we rigged up blanket with some ropes between the colonnades separating the living room from the dining room. We assembled on the dining room side and told our visitors to stay in the living room, facing our makeshift curtain.

After much whispering to each other and apologies to our audience about why we were so long, we were ready to begin. I went out in front of the curtain and announced the play and the players and then called to Dick to turn out the

lights. He did and we were in total darkness. The audience couldn't see us and we couldn't see each other. The whole effect just wasn't what we'd planned. So I whispered, loudly, to Dick to turn the light on again. On they went! The effect still wasn't what we wanted. It was too bright. We faltered and looked at our audience. They stared blankly right back at us. Then Ruth whispered loudly, of course, "Why don't we use a flashlight?"

"We'll get ours," Dick and Buss said. When they brought the lights we thought we were all set to go. But it still didn't work. We couldn't hold a flashlight and act at the same time.

Who suggested it, I don't remember, but the next thing our audience knew they were both holding a flashlight. We instructed them where to shine the beam and cautioned them against dropping the lights. They must have listened carefully, as they kept the beam right in the proper spot.

Having a new audience and two spot lights gave us added impetus and we gave a great show!!!

I don't remember a thing about the play, except that after we'd been going for a few minutes, one of the boys grabbed up a magazine, gave a running start, and then slid on the magazine as he would a sled. Not to be outdone, each of us grabbed a magazine and added this sliding bit to our part. The magazines slid beautifully on the carpet and torn pages scattered all over the room.

At this point Mom and Dad walked in.

"What's going on?" they wanted to know.

"Why are the lights out?" they asked.

Dad flipped the light switch. When he saw our audience and each holding a flashlight, he nearly dropped his sack of groceries.

Well, as you might guess, our competent flashlight holders were VERY IMPORTANT PERSONS, and Dad knew them only slightly.

And, as you might guess also, from that time on, our dramatic productions were viewed with a very cold eye.

#####

Lunch was a casual event around our house. Breakfast was hurried and we all ate the same thing -- fruit, hot or cold cereal and toast. Dinner was the big family meal. But lunch was -- well, different.

As we became older, each of us prepared for ourselves just what our mood needed or the cupboards offered.

One day at a typical lunch, Dean used a serving bowl and from it ate a whole package of Wheaties with milk and sugar (his usual lunch), Mary Lou heated a can of tomato soup, Ruth warmed up some creamed chipped beef left from the day before, two of us made hot scrambled egg sandwiches, and there were peanut butter sandwiches and jam sandwiches and fruit. Some of us sat at the table to eat, some sat at the counter, some went in their bedrooms. One of the favorite spots to eat lunch (never breakfast or dinner) was in the little corner space between the stove and the wall. Standing here, propped up by two walls, and using the top of the oven as a table was the best of all places.

Everyone read at lunchtime. Dean sat on the steps leading to the basement with a stack of comic books. Mom sat in her rocker in the front room reading as she munched on a piece of bread.

This particular day, we were all reading and eating, when the current dog strolled through the kitchen sniffing at each of us.

"What can we feed the dog?" someone asked.

"Isn't there anything in the cupboard?" Mom called.

We looked. "Not really," we told her. Our dogs never had commercially

prepared dog food. They ate just what we ate.

Mom came to the kitchen and looked around, "Well, you didn't leave a thing for the poor dog today." She looked at the dog. "I know, he loves pancakes."

So she heated the griddle, mixed and fried the pancakes, buttered and syruped them and fed them our happy dog.

No one can ever say that our dogs weren't coddled or that our Mom ignored them.

#####

All our bedrooms in the house on South Eighth were upstairs. They and the bathrooms all opened out into a central hallway. Whenever Mom and Dad went out for the evening and we, the offspring, went to bed, we left the light on over the sink in the kitchen and the one on in the upstairs hallway. This gave enough light to get around the house without stumbling if any of us had to get up for anything.

One cold January evening, Mom and Dad went to a Boy Scout affair in a nearby community, and eventually, the rest of us went to bed, leaving the two lights burning. I'd been asleep but a short time, when I awoke suddenly. For a few minutes, I lay quiet wondering what was wrong. Then I heard it -- a faint banging noise. It sounded as if someone were in the basement moving among the fruit jars. Quietly, I slid out of bed and tip-toed into Mom and Dad's room to see if they were home yet. They were still out. I looked out the front window of their room down to the street to see if they might have just parked the car, but it wasn't there where it usually spent the night. Oh, we had a garage, but it was always so full of Boy Scout stuff and junk that Dad was saving, just in case he ever needed it, that the car

had never parked in there.

As I stood there looking down at the deserted street, that noise clattered again. Someone was definitely in the basement moving around! Noiselessly, I walked to the boys' room and shook Dick.

"Dick," I whispered, "there's someone in the basement."

He opened one eye and then closed it.

I shook him harder. "Wake up! Wake up!"

"What's wrong?" he muttered.

"Listen!" I hissed.

The noise banged again. He appeared to listen, stared blankly at me, then pulled up the quilts and went back to sleep.

I couldn't have slept now if I'd had a sleeping pill, so I went out in the hallway and started to creep slowly down the stairs. In the single hall light, my shadow loomed large beside me as I crept step by step downward. The worst thing was some of those squeaky stairs. They didn't squeak nearly so loudly in the daytime.

Carefully, I stepped down one step and listened -- another step -- stop -- listen -- another step -- stop -- listen. Then I heard the worst -- stealthy steps coming up the basement stairs. Shrinking against the wall, I hardly dared breathe.

Then the sound of the kitchen door opening softly and the shuffle of footsteps across the linoleum floor. I ventured down one step more and stopped to listen. Those slow, soft footsteps were now in the dining room, and then -- horror of horrors! -- silhouetted against the living room wall was what appeared to be the shadow of a man with a club in his upraised hand. The silhouette moved slowly across the wall. By the dim light from the upper hall, I could actually see a man coming toward the stairway. I was so scared, I couldn't even scream.

Now I could see that the club was a big pipe wrench clenched in the man's hand. He moved nearer and the light fell on his face.

Good Pete! It was Dad! I darn near fell down the remaining stairs. Dad lowered the wrench and I could see Mom's frightened face peering over Dad's shoulder.

Well, one of us turned on the lights and we all took a second breath and then all started talking at the same time.

It seems as though for once, Dad had driven the car in the backyard, not in the garage, of course, but side of the garage. As they entered the house they decided to go down the basement while Dad checked the furnace. That was what had awakened me. But we never did figure out how they heard me. I didn't make the smallest sound. It was that sixth sense of Mom's working again, I guess. Anyway, she said she did hear something, and so Dad was on to the rescue of his poor defenseless children.

But I could always tease Dad after that about how he went after his supposed burglar with a pipe wrench and I went investigating (scared as could be) armed with nothing but my pink flannel nightie.

#####

Grandma Roberts drank tea and coffee! No one ever commented on it in any way, so I never knew how she acquired the habit, even though she was "born in the church."

Whenever we stayed overnight in her house, we were always awakened by the unfamiliar odor of coffee drifting upstairs. It was as natural to see her drinking coffee as to see the others drinking milk.

Now Grandma was one of the best church members that ever lived. In the first place, she was the epitome of discretion and could keep the most skeleton-

in-the-closet kind of secret, and as she never indulged in the smallest of gossip she was an ideal Relief Society President.

At no time was she ever idle. If not doing for her own large family, she was doing for others. She was a regular and ardent temple worker. On Fast Sunday, she fasted religiously, even giving up her coffee. In all ways, she was an exemplary member of the church. And if anyone ever says that the coffee Grandma drank for breakfast and the tea she drank for dinner will keep her from having her "exaltation", then we all choose to go with her.

It's odd about the whole situation, though. If we'd ever seen Grandpa take so much as a sip of either of these drinks prohibited by the Word of Wisdom, we'd have been positive that the avenging angel would have appeared immediately on the table and wiped sinful Grandpa from the face of the earth. If any of the uncles or aunts had so much as asked to taste one of these drinks, we'd have peered fearfully around to make sure that none of Satan's imps were dancing gleefully in a corner. If either of our parents had ever raised the coffee cups to their lips, we'd have huddled in deep despair, knowing for sure that they'd be banned to the darkest, coldest pit in hell.

Grandpa raved and ranted if any of us stepped from the straight and narrow, or even if we looked as if we were stepping aside. But never a word to Grandma about her tea and coffee was uttered.

Maybe Grandpa felt the way we did, that everything that Grandma did was just exactly right.

#####

At the time I started to Granite High School, the school district didn't provide transportation for its more distant pupils. The city buses made special runs out our way in the morning and after school for the benefit of the students.

In order to ride these buses it cost us four cents each trip. To us, that eight cents a day was a staggering amount. So we rode the bus in the morning and walked the three miles home each night. Even one of our teachers rode and walked with us.

After awhile, the four cents for the morning ride became a problem, so we hit upon what we thought was a fine solution. It worked great, too, but it was surely a strain on the nervous system.

Dad said that he'd leave for work the same time as the bus left our corner in the morning. As he was driving the little coupe (the one the whole family squeezed into occasionally in cold weather), he said he would take only me and my best friend, June. The trip wouldn't be a bit out of his way, and we'd be able to save some money. Really, it sounded like a good idea. But we'd reckoned without thinking of the basic differences in my Dad's outlook on time and in our (Mom, June and me) outlook of time.

Well, my Dad is conscientious, careful, deliberate -- in other words, a relaxed, slow-moving man. And further more, he can't be hurried, no matter what. He nearly drove us crazy on those mornings. I told my Mom that there was one thing I surely knew, I'd never marry a slow-moving man. She said not to be too sure of that, as she'd made the same statements to her own mother about her own father.

I said, "Well, you can bet I won't get stuck like you and Grandma did."

Anyway, by eight-thirty every school morning, June and I were ready and waiting at the front door. The bus came and went, and we were still waiting.

"Please, Dad," I said, "Hurry! We're going to be late!"

He looked shocked and said, "I am hurrying. Can't you tell?"

Then he tied his left shoe lace exactly so. Then the right shoe lace. Then he stood up and stamped his feet lightly -- to settle his feet firmly in his shoes, I guess. He always put his shoes on that way. Then he adjusted

his trousers, carefully tied his necktie (he'd told us ten minutes before he was completely dressed, but that didn't count all the little details), put on his suit coat and check each pocket to see what he'd collected the previous day. And there were always all sorts of notes and clippings that he'd collected that had to be read.

We learned after a few mornings that he couldn't be hurried to an eight-thirty deadline, but we kept trying. June kept her hand on the doorknob ready to fling the door open. I held his hat and briefcase in readiness, and Mom tried to hurry him in all sorts of useless ways.

And all of the time all of us were chanting, "Hurry, hurry, hurry!"

He looked so surprised and said, "Well what do you think I am doing?"

When we were finally in the car, he'd have to get the right key, press on the starter a dozen times (so it seemed) and we were off.

Straight down Thirty-third South Street we went. Thank heavens, we didn't have to turn one corner. June and I kept our eye on the speedometer and wished Dad drove a little faster (he always observed the speed limit). We tensed as we approached the two traffic signals and prayed they wouldn't turn red. As we neared the school grounds and saw no other students in sight, we strained to hear the tardy bell. Before Dad came to a full halt, we flung the car door open and were half way across the street. Each of us dashed to our classrooms without bothering to go to our lockers. I dropped to my seat completely flustered.

This procedure didn't happen one day or two days or three days, but every day for weeks. Dad kept his usual steady, serene calm, while Mom, June and I nearly had hysteria every morning.

But I did save four cents a day.

#####

Sometime around the middle of October plans were made that we'd all go from Pocatello to Ogden to celebrate Thanksgiving with Grandma and Grandpa Roberts. We hadn't been with them on that holiday for a few years. It's a good thing we went, too, as it was a "last" in many ways. It's also a good thing that we didn't realize they were "lasts" at that time.

Mom and Dad planned to leave Pocatello on Wednesday afternoon as soon as school was out and the kids were free. They would drive ninety miles south to the little community of Cleveland and pick me up (I was having my first teaching experience in a two room school) and then on to Ogden that evening.

School that day for me was a real hassle. First thing in the morning the county health nurses and doctor arrived at the school and proceeded to give all sixty children small pox vaccinations, typhoid shots and diptussis shots. No one escaped the scratches and jabs, not even myself and the other teacher. By noon of that day, we had vomiting, fainting students in both rooms. We pushed the desks together to form beds and insisted that those who were sick lie on these hard beds. We covered the sick ones with coats and turned up the heat in the building, but it didn't do much to relieve the shivering, chattering, feverish children. It was all we could do for them. The school bus wasn't coming until three that afternoon, and we had no telephone to alert the parents. The younger children seemed to feel fine, but the older the children were, the sicker they seemed to be. The eighth grade girls were the worst of all. The other teacher and I could sympathize; we didn't feel exactly good ourselves. Nothing definite, just icky.

I was glad when the day ended and the bus took all the children home. I knew my family wouldn't arrive at the school for a couple of hours, so I really cleaned up the classroom and prepared for the following week.

It was dark when the family arrived and everyone wanted to come in the school and look around to see where I spent my days. After a thorough inspection of both rooms, both lavatories and the gym downstairs, we all crowded in the car to go on to Ogden.

Now this ride (both going and returning) was one of those "lasts." It was the last time that this family unit all rode together for a holiday celebration. There were other rides with part of us, but as I was to be married the following April and make the first break, this was our last adventuresome family ride.

In the front seat, I sat between Dad and Mom. Mom held twenty-three month old Kathryn and I held three and a half year old Carolyn. Wedged in the back and arguing over who had the window seats (we called them the edges) were Dick (freshman at U. of Idaho), Ruth (junior in high school), Buss and Mary Lou (both in Jr. High), and Dean (second grade). We were surely off in our customary style -- jam-packed, with scarcely room to wiggle.

And to make us even more solidly packed, we tucked and covered with blankets and quilts. The weather was freezing and the car didn't have a heater. However, with that many people in a small enclosed space, we didn't notice the cold too much. But other problems did arise from that many people talking, laughing, breathing in an unheated car. The windows became so fogged we couldn't see out. The only person concerned about the lack of visibility was Dad, and he did have to see where he was driving. As usual he was prepared for any emergency. He pulled a little cloth bag of salt from his pocket and frequently rubbed it over the windsheild to keep it clean and sparkling.

Our trip appeared to be going along at it's usual happy, singing, teasing, arguing, move-over-you're-sitting-on-me-and-I-can't-breathe pace, when all at once -- yi-i-ick! ---. Carolyn upchucked all over everyone in the front

seat. Now, this was a "first" -- the first time that any of us had ever been car sick, and it was totally unexpected. Even Dad wasn't prepared for that. But he stopped the car and rummaged under the seat for some rags and Mom used some clean diapers and we cleaned off things as best we could. The big concern, other than why would Carolyn be sick right now of all times, was my coat -- my brand new fur coat (at that time all new teachers bought fur coats after they'd received a first paycheck) that I'd had only three weeks. Mom seemed more concerned about the damage to the coat than I did.

The remainder of the trip was rather smelly. The kids in the back seat really moaned and groaned about it and they hadn't even been touched. Mom warned all of us if we felt the least bit sick to give Dad ample warning so he could stop the car. There were no more car or excitement-sick stomachs, but my shots from the morning made me wonder if I might not have to yell, "Stop!"

When we arrived in Ogden Grandma and Grandpa welcomed us, caught us up on the family, and showed us where to sleep. This was another last -- the last time any of us would sleep overnight in that house where we'd slept so many nights.

It was also the last time we had a Thanksgiving with our Grandparents and the last Thanksgiving that Grandma and Grandpa were together. Grandma died the following August.

It was also the first time and the last time that all of us sat at the big table in the front room. No one ate at the kitchen table. Most of the uncles and aunts had married and had left home. There weren't even any stray relatives there for Grandma to feed and sleep.

It was a quiet Thanksgiving -- the last in a long series of happy Thanksgivings at Grandma and Grandpa Roberts' house.

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It was mid April, and I was to be married. My friends and Mom's friends gave me bridal showers. Mom gave me a trousseau tea at which we didn't serve tea, but delicious homemade candy. Mom made the fudge and penoche and Ruth made the divinity. We didn't limit our guests to our female friends, either. All the kids, including Dick, Buss and Dean invited their friends. Everyone of all ages came and stayed all evening, ate all the candy, and looked over all my new things. We really did have a good farewell party. I don't know why Mom called it a trousseau tea.

All my new things were packed and shipped to Portland, Oregon, where I was to live. Ray had gone to Salt Lake City to spend a few days with his father, and it was now time for me to leave my home and my family. Those who went to school gave me a quick goodbye- almost too quick and casual. Kathryn and Carolyn stood on the front porch with their baby-sitter and waved goodbye to Mom, Dad and me as we settled in the car to leave for Salt Lake City, where I'd be married in the Salt Lake Temple the next day.

During the drive, Dad asked me how much money I had. I checked my purse and said that I had just over two dollars.

He asked, "What will you do for money when that's gone?"

I told him I didn't know. I'd been wondering about that.

Mom said, "You'll have to ask Ray for some money."

"Oh, I couldn't do that!"

"Well," Dad said, "You'll learn."

We first stopped at Ogden where Grandpa and Grandma Roberts were waiting for us. Grandma didn't look well. We hadn't seen her since Thanksgiving and it was a shock to see how thin she was. Her tent dresses would have wrapped around her twice.

They climbed in the back seat and on we went.

It was late in the afternoon and I was getting more nervous each minute. Ray and I had yet to get the marriage license, or we couldn't be married the next day. We went straight to Ray's home where he was ready and waiting on the front porch. I hurried out of Dad's car and into Ray's and we all started for the city and county building.

When we arrived there, Ray and I walked into the lobby and looked around for a directory. We had no idea where to go. Just then, Dad, Mom, Grandpa and Grandma arrived and Grandpa said, "Follow me." Grandpa knew where everything was and how to get there.

We all followed him into the elevator. He told the operator which floor we wanted. Up we went. No one said a thing. The elevator stopped, the door opened, and Grandpa said, "Follow me." So we did.

Down the corridor for a few feet and there was a door marked "Marriage Licenses." Grandpa opened the door with a flourish and we trailed in after him. We all lined up at the counter and watched a slight, bent man approach us.

Grandpa said, "We want a marriage license for these two."

The man looked at Grandpa, at Grandma, at Mom, at Dad, at Ray and at me. Then he asked me and Ray to come to a table on the other side of the room. He told the others to sit on a shiney oak bench near the door.

Ray and I went through a little swinging gate over to the far side of the room. As we sat there answering the questions that the man asked us, I looked at my parents and Grandparents who were now separated from me by a swinging gate. They looked so stiff and solemn. For twenty years they had been the whole center of my life and there they sat together as I prepared to put more between us than a swinging gate.

And then I looked at Ray and wondered how I'd approach him when my two dollars were gone.

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EPILOGUE

It's now nine years later and Grandma has been dead most of those nine years, and though Grandpa has been able to live in his own home, part of the time alone and part of the time with Ollie, he's been lonely and sick. A stroke left his once vigorous handwriting, quavery; his booming and enthusiastic voice, slurred and whispery; and his energetic stride, faltering. Only his spirit remains the same.

About a week before Thanksgiving, he dressed carefully in his best suit, packed a small bag, called a taxi, and told the driver to go to the Dee Hospital.

The startled admission nurse couldn't believe him when he announced (with a fanfare of golden trumpets) in his slurred voice, "I want a room!"

"We don't have you on our admission list, sir," she said.

"It makes no difference," he told her, "Get me a room."

"I'll have to check with your doctor first, sir," she told him.

She called his doctor and said, "Your patient, Mr. David Robert Roberts, is demanding a room. What shall I do?"

"Give him a room," the startled doctor said. "I'll see him soon."

When Grandpa was finally settled in a room and had given specific orders to all the nurses on the floor, he called Dad.

Dad rushed to the hospital (he was living back in Ogden at the time).

"What's wrong?" he asked Grandpa. "Why didn't you call me sooner?"

"There's really no more wrong now than usual, Llewellyn," Grandpa said. "I've just made up my mind to die."

Dad was shocked. He didn't understand.

Grandpa told him again. "My life here is finished. I'm lonely and anxious to be with Mother again. So I've come here to die, so I can join her."

That was Grandpa. Once he made up his mind, nothing changed it. If he'd decided he'd had enough of life, he'd had enough. Even with this determination, though, it must have been difficult for him to walk through the rooms of his home for the last time, close and lock the front door for the last time, and walk through the front gate.

At the hospital Grandpa seemed to rapidly waste away, and on the day before Thanksgiving he died.

And our Dad became the family patriarch.

You've noticed no doubt, and wondered why I haven't mentioned the numerous church and civic responsibilities that Mom and Dad always had. And you remember that in any of these responsibilities they gave dependable and creative leadership. But I don't believe these positions were as important as the example they set for us in how to be a real family. Their positions changed from time to time, but their exemplary lives -- never.

Mom and Dad started out their married life with a number of goals, one being to have a large family. They attained that goal. Another goal was that that large family live up to the teachings that they were taught. Do we.....

A final note --

Carolyn is going to write a sequel to this - the things that happened after I left home. Anyone want to add to it - from your point of view?