

MY STORY by George Fenton Whitney

I was born November 27, 1899 in St. Thomas, Nevada to George Luke Whitney and Julia Ann Wardell (Syphus). (*St. Thomas was in Lincoln County when Dad was born, but it later became part of Clark County.*) There were no doctors when I was born, but an old traveling woman helped bring me into the world.

The home my parents were living in at the time I was ushered into the world was a one-room adobe house with a Toole (cattails roof) and a dirt floor. Muslin sewn together formed the ceiling. It was a humble home, but a happy home as it was filled with love and harmony and a deep abiding faith. (*When Dad was born he was the sixth child so eight people were living in this one room house.*)

As a baby I was very sickly and Mama despaired of my life many times. Because my father was in the freighting business, it was necessary for him to be away from home a lot of the time. One night when father was away on one of his trips, she was sure I wouldn't live until morning. She sat up all night with me on her lap, and by the light of the oil lamp, she made a little shirt from a scrap of silk left over from sewing she had done for Aunt Ellen. The little silk shirt was to be my burial garment. But as she sewed she prayed, and when morning came, I was better.

One of the first events I remember is the birth of my younger sister, Flora. I remember this event very vividly though I was only four years old. We didn't have doctors in that wild era, and at that time, Aunt Ellen Gentry was the midwife. My mother and father would trade produce to her to cover the \$5.00 fee for bringing us into the world. It was four ducks for one of us and some bottled fruit for others.

I was sent across the street with Levi while he chopped wood until the event was over, and then I was taken over to see my new sister Flora. Father and Mother tried to get me to kiss my new sister but I rebelled.

It was terribly difficult in those early 1900's to earn a little money to buy shoes, equipment and other things that a family could not produce for themselves. Father did everything he could to make a few dollars. He would buy and raise produce, chickens, pigs and what have you and haul them to the mining camps in the White Hills, Searchlight, and Eldorado Canyon.

This trip to White Hills, Searchlight or Eldorado Canyon would take two weeks to make a round trip, and if he cleared \$10.00 he was very lucky. But we got along. This was before the railroad was built. The railroad came into St. Thomas in 1912.

It was during this period of time that the Grand Gulch mine was running. The ore was hauled from the mine by six, eight, or ten horse outfits over very treacherous roads. There were hills with such names as Syphus's ladder, the "S," the Shelf, and Bitter Springs Narrow. The names more or less indicated the nature of the road. The Syphus Ladder was a very steep dugway with many sharp turns. A lot of it had nearly a 50% grade. The Bitter Springs Narrows was a narrow box

canyon with barely enough room to get through. The wheels of the wagons would rub on both sides.

One time Jess O. Bonnelli was driving Uncle Harry's freight outfit through this canyon. A cloudburst came up suddenly back up the canyon. The flood caught him in the canyon. A wall of water 20 feet high caught him, drowning four of the six horses and almost taking the life of Jess. This flood washed two new wagons down the Virgin River.

When I was five years old, I started going with Father on these trips to the Grand Gulch mines and I became very familiar with all of that territory. It was hot in summer and cold in winter but that was the only way we had of making a living.

Father would set on the wagon seat with six lines in one hand, his foot on the brake, book in the other hand and read aloud to me out of the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, Added Upon, Pinney Ridge Cottage, Marcus King, Mormon, and many others.

It was on one of these freighting trips with my father that a very memorable experience took place...one that really frightened me. I was 10 years old at the time Haley's Comet passed the earth. The night it passed nearest the earth was also the night of an eclipse of the moon. The scientists had predicted that if the comet hit the earth, it would knock the "props" out from under the earth and the world would come to an end. Haley's Comet was visible for about ten days or two weeks, but at the time it was nearest the earth and we didn't know whether or not it would miss us, it passed through the sky at 11:00 o'clock at night. At that time there was an eclipse of the moon.

I had gone with Father to the Grand Gulch Mine for a load of ore. We arrived back at Mud Springs for the last night camp, but there were so many teams there that it was necessary to go on as there was not enough water for all of the horses. It was seven miles to Red Rock Springs and they were one and a half miles off from the road. The moon eclipse made such hideous shadows on the high sandstone ledges and with the "end-of-the-world" stories and I only a boy of ten, I was really scared. The comet passed with a near miss, as the wise men said, but that comet was really something. "The extremely bright star leading a tail that glittered with sparks. The tail reached clear across the sky going northwest." (G.L.W. 1964)

About a year later when I was 11 years old...in the year of 1911, in May, we all loaded into a white-top buggy and took a long journey that changed our lives very much. We traveled east for many hours, and seemed like many miles but it was only twenty. Thus it was my Father and Mother took their four young children: me, Flora, Afton and Clarice to investigate the possibility of buying a ranch in the Bunkerville mountains east of St. Thomas. This ranch was owned by Bert Nay, an uncle of Allen Nay, who later married my sister.

The reason for our going was to find a place where Mama could have better health. Living conditions in St. Thomas were very primitive. We dipped the water out of the

ditch into a barrel, let it settle, and then drank it. It had so much alkali in it that it made your stomach feel like a salt barrel. (Also, I'm sure it was filled with germs of all kinds.) Since mama had had malaria in previous years, it was imperative that we move someplace. *(Mamma said that there was a lot of typhoid and diphtheria in St. Thomas because the ditch ran through corrals and the animals would stand in it and drink from it.)*

I remember very well this first trip to the ranch. We left in the afternoon and traveled most of the night. I remember I had just won a book, "Black Beauty," as a prize for good behavior in school. I had been sick all winter and didn't have the strength or pep to make as much racket as the rest of the kids. By this means, I had won the book and I insisted that I take the book on the trip. But because of the bouncing over the rough ground, my priceless book was lost from the wagon. But I'll never forget how beautiful the desert flowers were along the way. The sight is still vivid in my mind.

After a long, hard night we reached the ranch. The Nays had a little bed of strawberries about sixteen by thirty feet in size. They were ripe at the time. All in all it looked like paradise. The climate at the ranch is the best in the world. It is high enough so the heat is not too bad, and far enough south so the winters are very mild, and the warm water makes things grow early. The water was really something. We stayed two or three days.

In August we made our second trip, as mother was so bad we had to leave St. Thomas. The peaches were ripe and we had a glorious time, even if we had to camp out in the rain. It was on this trip that Father made arrangements to buy the Airvada for \$1,500. A lot of money in those days.

During the next seven years we all worked hard clearing rocks and brush from the land, forming the different terraces of the ranch, planting and harvesting crops. For the next eighteen years we earned our living raising and selling fruit, vegetables, berries, cream and eggs. All during the summer our Father would take wagonloads of these things to St. Thomas, Overton and the Grand Gulch Mine, where they were sold for money or exchanged for things we needed.

Although we purchased the ranch and lived there during the summer months, we still retained our home in St. Thomas and lived there during the winters where we children attended school in St. Thomas.

It was necessary for us to leave for the ranch early in the spring – March or April – in order to get the crops in, and then remain until the first part of November to harvest the crops and get things tucked in for the winter. Consequently, I missed some schooling. But I loved it at the ranch and could hardly wait for the time each spring when we would go back. It most certainly was a boy's paradise.

When I was 12 years old, I worked as a janitor on the side, besides going to school myself. I had to chop wood and bring it in, make the fires early in the morning, draw

water from the well and fill all the fountains, plus sweep the floors and take care of many other duties. My wages – all of \$5.00 a month!

When I was about 13 years old (around 1913 or 1914) the first automobiles started coming into our country. I remember well the first truck; the Grand Gulch Mine shipped it in to St. Thomas on the train. The company sent a man to run the truck. He was dressed in a long, flowing duster, great huge goggles, fancy leggins, cap and all the trimmings. Everyone turned out to watch the unloading.

The truck had the old hard rubber tires, and when they backed it off the railroad car into the sand, it would go no further. They had to get a team to pull it down the streets of St. Thomas. They loaded all the kids of the town in the back of the truck for a ride, except for a few of us.

Just a few days before this, the Charles and James Foxleys moved to town. They had an old Model T car and a few of us were privileged to ride in this.

I don't remember the year that radio came to St. Thomas, but I remember well that Mr. & Mrs. Nutter got one of the first ones. We would line up to get a turn to put the earphones to our ear to hear it.

When I was thirteen, my grandfather Wardell died, and of course one didn't call the undertaker in those days. It was July 12, 1914 when Solomon Wardell died at the ranch (twenty miles east of St. Thomas). Grandpa had been living with us since early spring. Father had gone to town on Saturday and would not be back until Monday morning. On Sunday we ate dinner and Grandpa Wardell went up to the old house to lie down as he never felt too well. He had only laid down for a few minutes when he got up and as he came out the door, he fell dead on the steps.

Father had the team and wagon in town so we had no way to get the body to town. We had to get to town with the word so someone could come and get the body. It fell my lot to ride Old Babe to town. It was very hot and right over the hot part of the day. I left the ranch at 12:45 p.m. in that Muddy Valley heat and rode to town in one hour and 15 minutes. Old Babe was white with sweat and had about had it.

Father left as soon as he could get ready and went back to the ranch for the body and the family. He arrived back in St. Thomas at 8:00 o'clock the next morning. We held the funeral after dark that same night and buried Grandpa Wardell in the night. We had no ice and no way of preserving the body so we had to move very fast. As it was, Grandpa Wardell's body was in very bad shape by the time we got him buried.

As a youngster I loved to hunt and trap and fish and took every available opportunity to do so – both in St. Thomas and at the ranch. Rabbits and quails were my specialty, also ducks. Although when I grew older, and especially after I was married, I trapped for coyotes, foxes and bobcats and sold the furs to bring in a little extra money.

On many occasions when I was still quite young, I carried my homemade fishing pole down to the Muddy Creek to do some fishing. This was down below St. Thomas. My catch consisted mainly of catfish and carp, but I sure had a lot of fun.

There was also one particular duck hunt that stands out vividly in my mind. It was wintertime and COLD! I rose early one morning with gun in hand and headed down to a pond (quite a good-size pond) that was formed where the Muddy Creek ran into the Virgin River. I took my place among the rushes and waited. I became so cold and numb – I don't believe I've ever been so cold – but I bagged myself 7 ducks and went proudly home, though I was half frozen.

In this day of speeding automobiles (1967) we are carried across the desert so fast that the young ones do not get a chance to really get acquainted with the desert. But in those days, through the many trips we took migrating back and forth from the ranch to St. Thomas – jogging along – the pace of the horse's stride was slow enough for us to feel the desert. I came to know and love all the different desert moods – the silent mystery of the breaking dawn – the glowing splendor of the sunrise – the stark brightness of the noontime with shimmering waves of heat – the stillness of the desert air ruptured by the sharp, piercing, zinging sounds of locusts – the delicate softness of the evening – of shadowed cactus and Joshuas – the muffled call of distant owl, or dove, or quail; and the rustling and fluttering in the brush – the stillness of the desert night bathed in moonlight; moonlight on the cactus and the Joshua trees – the distant howl of coyote. Then how quickly the mood could change as a desert thunderstorm gathered, and the sky darkened, and the thunder clapped, and the lightning flashed, setting the Joshua trees afire. Looking down from the ranch across the Joshua forest, we could see the Joshua's burning, brightly lighted against a storm-blackened sky.

I recall a time coming from the Paoon in such a storm – and in that great forest, several Joshua's were burning at once; and the overcast sky and the lightning flashing, and the crackling thunder gave such an errieness to the forest that I was frightened to enter it. But after the rumblings of the storm had subsided, and the desert was all moist and dripping wet from the rain, how wonderful to breath deeply of the air so deliciously scented with the smell of rain, how wonderful to breath deeply of the air so deliciously scented with the smell of rain-soaked chaparral and sagebrush.

The different moods of the desert – all this became a part of me that years cannot erase. And the beautiful desert flowers along the way – how I loved them and marveled in their beauty. Once I gathered a great bouquet of them and gave them to my girl friend, who later became my wife.

Yes, in the many trips we took back and forth from the ranch to St. Thomas, I did learn to know and love the desert.

As I mentioned before, I loved to go to the ranch and looked forward every spring to going back. Although we worked very hard to raise our fruits and vegetables and get them ready for shipping, we had lots of fun too. Occasionally I tackled Billy

Goat Peak, which took most of the day to go up and back again. Any many times we went on picnics down to the caves. The one cave is a large room about 100 feet long and very cool inside. It has a rock floor with some sand and we spent many pleasant hours here on picnics.

Also, if the day was particularly a hot one, and if I felt brave enough – I would go for a swim in the cold, cold water of the spring reservoir. And if I felt in a particularly mischievous mood, I would engage in a water fight with my brothers and sisters.

Then there was those 4th of July's at the ranch. What fun we had. Father would set off some dynamite in the early dawn which caused great excitement among the young fry – and there were scads of people there, many who live there all summer long, and many who came from St. Thomas to visit and escape the heat for a while. The rows of tables set up under the trees and filled and refilled with the most delicious foods.

The ranch was a beautiful and pleasant place in the summer time with natural springs and reservoir with weeping willow and cottonwood trees all around it. The cabins and reservoir was on the second terrace --other tents and cabins were on the third terrace. Many people came here to stay the summer and escape the terrible heat of the Muddy. My wife has said many times that the Arivada was a pregnant woman's paradise.

We sold butter and eggs and fruits and vegetables to these people and charged a small rent, which brought us in a little extra money.

My mother always kept the cabins and yards at the ranch spotlessly clean. She would bustle around putting things in order, and would sweep the black dirt yards clear up to the mountain. She worked from early morning 'till late at night, cleaning and cooking and helping prepare the fruits and vegetables for shipping. Even when we went camping, she always kept the camp like a palace.

There was certainly lots of work for all of us at the ranch. One of the big jobs was the watering, which we did from the reservoir. From a full reservoir (it took about a day to fill from the spring), we could water for about an hour with a full stream and we really had to be on our toes to get everything covered and we would water most every day.

When working away from the cabin, we didn't have to worry about knowing the time to go back to eat our noon meal. In the mountains east of the ranch there is a peak that sets off to itself, and when the sun was directly over it, we knew it was time to eat. We called the "Noon Peak."

My Father and I built the road to the ranch over the hill and around the dugways. It was a tremendous job. We used a team with plow tongue and scraper. This is the same road that is being used today, although of course, there has been improvements since then.

Going up over this road over the mountain, when we were riding in a wagon pulled by horses, we would have to get out and walk the last five miles to the ranch, because it was too hard for the horses to pull the wagon and us up that steep hill.

On our trips from St. Thomas to the ranch, the “Whitney Pockets” was always a welcome milestone where we would stop and water the horses and rest in the coolness of the narrow canyon. When traveling at night, it seems I would always go right to sleep, as the horses knew where to go and would go along on their own. But even though I was asleep, they would automatically stop at the “Whitney Pockets” to be watered.

The Whitney Pockets is the name of a watering place formed in a huge outcropping of rock near the foot of the Bunkerville Mountains. The rain and wind had dug pockets in the rocks and these pockets, which always held rainwater, were the source of water for all travelers who crossed the desert in that area. My father and I put cement dams in to enlarge these pockets and my name is in the cement. During the 1930's the C.C.C.'s built a higher dam but it was never watertight.

Across the road from the pockets is a natural campsite with caves in the sandstone hills, which afforded protection from wind and weather for many a weary traveler. When I was around 15 years old, I camped here in this spot for six weeks at a time herding our cattle in the lush tall green grass (or filleree, as we called it). So succulent was the vegetation then...and green, for the weather was wet in those years, not dry as now.

I had my tent set up with bed, and table and stove inside and a milk separator set up right out in the open. I did my own cooking, tended to the cows; did the milking and the separating. And most every day my mother would drive down with the team and wagon and bring water and the necessary staples. She would bustle around washing the separator dishes and clean and churn.

And here I stayed for six weeks alone, with no companionship except for our two dogs. Was I ever lonely? Did I miss companions, alone day after day? No one to talk to...was I every lonely? No – not for a moment, ever! I loved the peacefulness I found here – the chance to contemplate and meditate – I loved the desert flowers – the silent mystery of the desert. And here I felt at home – safe, secure, and yes, contented, too. My chores to do, riding to see about the cattle, companionship of a faithful dog – and in my spare time I love to read. “The County Gentlemen” was my favorite magazine. I also love to read Zane Grey's books. And sometime, maybe of a late evening, or perhaps in the middle of the morning, I would walk – or sometimes just sit, leaning against a rock or hill, listening to the desert, and feeling – well, like a part of it myself.

It was while I was camped here that a dramatic incident took place. It seems there was always an old prospector or two hanging around by the ranch and we always tried to help them out and kind of look after them. At this particular time there was an old prospector who lived up in the hills nearby. Dad and I was up that way and found the old prospector dead along the trail. It appeared as if he had stumbled on

something and accidentally discharged his gun, shooting himself in the head. Since it was close by, the Justice of the Peace and the Coroner held the inquest in my tent and I was sworn in as a witness. I had also fixed dinner for the visiting dignitaries.

There was another old prospector who had a shack up on top of the mountain. On another occasion, while Dad and I were building the road, we were up that way and decided to check on the old prospected and see if he was all right. He was not in his shack and we looked all around for him. Finally, we saw him lying dead at the bottom of a 200-foot shale incline. Apparently he had been sick, and in a delirious condition walked from his shack and fell down the steep incline and was killed.

While we were working the Arivada Ranch, we also purchased the Pacoon Ranch, which was 12 miles beyond the Arivada and at a much lower elevation and much hotter. To get to the Pacoon ranch, you must go through a great Joshua forest. When we bought the Pacoon ranch it had not been worked for 2 years and was in a very run-down condition and took a lot of work to build it up again. My father and I cleared the land and fixed the reservoirs, which were all broken (these were fed by natural springs also). When asked why we undertook this difficult task of rebuilding this ranch, I could only answer, "it just seemed to be in our blood, this pioneering spirit." But we did finally get it in good shape and get a good crop of corn in.

Here I also had some interesting experiences. There was one spring there, quite a big spring and fairly deep that kept bubbling up (and does so still). We kids always maintained that the devil lived in this pond. We would swim in it and the huge air bubbles rising from the bottom would send us shooting to the surface.

There was a deep hole a little way up the hill that had skeletons of some sort in it. I used to visit it quite a bit and it always seemed quite mysterious to me. When I visited it later in my life, it was filled in = so it is even more of a mystery now.

On one occasion I rode horseback by myself down to the Pacoon ranch to fill the reservoir and look after the cattle we had there. I had not planned to stay overnight, but it started raining and I had no choice but to stay. I had no bedding except for a saddle blanket, which I lay on top of two feet of cornhusks in a shed there. Here I lay down and slept, except when awakened by rats scurrying back and forth across me through the night. The rain had made them wet and when they flipped their slimy tails across my face it was quite disconcerting. (These rats we called trading rats, because they always left something in place of the things they stole – manure and peach pits for almonds and dried apricots.) The only food I had to eat was a dried-up, two-week old sandwich that I had left in my saddlebags and it was soaked by the rain.

During the years at St. Thomas and at the ranch, we experienced quite a few humorous experiences. On one occasion when Clarice and I were in our teens, mother asked Clarice to go down in the cellar and get a bottle of fruit for supper. It was a real dark night and Clarice said she was afraid to go, whereupon I made fun of her. "Afraid," said I. "There isn't anything to be afraid of." And forthwith I

proceeded to show her what a brave boy I was by marching out to the cellar with Clarice close at my heels. When we got to the cellar steps, I dramatically shouted, "Boo! Come out of there!" and it came!" A huge cat came bounding up the steps. I let out a blood-curdling yell and beat Clarice to the house, almost breaking the door down in my haste to get inside.

"Other episodes that always provoke laughter when we speak of them were our owl hunting adventures. We always had chickens to supply our table with meat and eggs, and it was usually when Papa was away on a freighting trip that the owls came looking for our chickens. It was when we were all settled for the evening when they sent out their challenge. Whoo? Whoo? Whoo? That was the signal for all of us to take action. Huge cottonwood trees grew in front of our house and we always supposed the owls were in them. Fenton would load the old shotgun and lead the parade. Clarice would follow close with a lighted coal oil lamp, and Flora would stand at the gate with another lamp. Mama would give advice and directions from the open doorway, while I, who have always been a coward, clung to her long skirt. Often the owl was over in O'Donnell's trees or down by the graveyard, which of course was out of bounds for us unless Papa was around to protect us. But sometimes the owl was in our trees and the blast of the old shotgun would bring the villainous bird down if the moon and the oil lamps made enough light." (Afton Hannig)

On one occasion we were taking a load of produce to town. Not long after we had left St. Thomas and was headed down a steep grade, the brakes (which were not too good) gave way and the horses ran away down the hill and the wagon tipped over, spilling the produce all over the area. We had a 5-gallon can filled with eggs cushioned with wheat. When the wagon tipped over, the 5-gallon can went rolling down the hill scattering eggs in all directions in the oak brush – but one a one of those eggs was broken.

The wagon in tipping over had pinned Alfred's leg under it and he was yelling for help. We hooked "Old Lil" to the wagon to pull it off Alfred's leg. The horse lunged forward, pulling the wagon off slightly then Lil would fall back again, and the wagon clumped down on Alfred's leg and he would let out a yell. This was repeated two or three times. The whole thing struck his wife Verda very funny and she stood there laughing at the whole situation. We finally got the wagon off poor Alfred's leg and the wagon righted onto its four wheels, gathered up the whole mess of eggs and was on our way again.

Another time Clarice and Verda and I were riding in the three-seated buggy on our way to town. Clarice was busily occupied in crocheting – but myself, being a fun-loving lad of 17 with nothing to do but sit – the long, slow miles became quite boring to me, so I contrived to liven things up a bit. I grabbed the ball of yarn from Clarice, at the same time flinging the crocheted work out the back of the wagon. Holding tight to the ball of yarn, I slapped the horses and set them loping and watched gleefully as her beautiful crocheting quickly unraveled. Oh, poor Clarice was outraged (as well she should be) and started screaming and bawling, all the while pounding me on the head. (Well, at least the monotony of the trip was broken, to

say the least.) We finally got the horses stopped, retrieved the badly depleted remains of the crocheting, and went on into town without any further outbursts of mischievousness on my part.

Another humorous incident also happened on the road between St. Thomas and the ranch when I was in the process of moving chickens. I pointed the horses' heads in the general direction of St. Thomas, and as usual, immediately fell asleep. That was all very well along the flat stretch, but in that particular model of wagon, it was necessary to be away to put on the brake before descending a steep grade, which I was not (awake I mean). Consequently, the wagon overturned, the chicken cages were thrown open and out flew the chickens, squawking to break the band. It took me a while to gather them all back again, but then found that I was still missing two. They seemed to be nowhere in sight so I went on to St. Thomas. When I got there I found the two missing chickens. They had rode all that way roosting on the sway bar under the wagon.

While on my mission I had learned (or at least I thought I had learned) to yodel. After I returned home to the ranch, one day I was doing some chores on a knoll a short distance from the house, when I suddenly had the impulse to break forth into a fancy yodel and thus show off this valuable talent that I had mastered. And so, with all the gusto that I could command, I commenced yodeling (and thought I was doing a fine job too) when all of a sudden my mother came running up, puffing and panting, and scared to death. She had heard that horrible noise (referring to my yodeling) and thought I was being killed for sure. My ego was certainly deflated and on the spot I gave up yodeling forever.

There were many little things that happened to make my life with my family a happy one. We had a good family life as Afton put it in her story of our father:

"Our father and mother were always kind and gentle with us, although strict enough to keep us on the straight and narrow. They joined in all the fun – water fights, chicken and quail roasts. They took us over the mountain to gather pine nuts; over to the caves for picnics; and when we were in town, they would bundle us all into the wagon or white-top buggy and take us fishing down the creek. All the hard work was a family affair – and we always managed to crowd in some fun. We with our antics, Papa with his funny little songs and poetry, and Mama with her stories of pioneer life. Is it any wonder we have such fond memories of our parents?"

It was in the year of 1918, just after Thanksgiving that I left for my mission in the Canadian Mission. I returned January 22, 1922. For the events prior to my leaving, I quote from the life story of my wife, Lettie:

"Mother prepared a nice dinner at Thanksgiving and Fenton and his father, mother and two sisters came to dinner. The next day we took him to Moapa (13 miles) in our white-top buggy. There was snow on the ground (one of those rare times) and Dad took some pictures of us in the snow. In Moapa we watched Fenton get on the train and wave to us until out of sight. Seemed like the joy was gone out of living,

and I cried going home. Fenton became a good missionary after he recovered from the bad spell of influenza he had when he first reached the mission in 1919. He worked hard at missionary work and was very happy in doing so.”

(When Dad arrived in Salt Lake City he reported to the church offices. There were no mission training centers then. One of the brethren sent him to the temple to get his endowments and then to ZCMI to buy a suit. He was put on the train and left for the East Coast. No one told him he would need food and he and many other missionaries would have had a hungry journey but one of the mothers had packed a large picnic basket and they all shared the food. Dad became very sick on this trip and when he arrived in the mission field he was not able to begin working. He was taken to a boarding house and left there to get better. He stated he probably would have died but a kind lady took pity on him and nursed him back to health. His mission was a hard one and involved a lot of working side by side with members and investigators in their fields. His journey home was as hazardous as his journey out. He only had \$20 that Mom had sent him for Christmas and a train ticket. For some reason he had to get off the train near Cedar City, Utah and caught a ride on the mail truck. They were going up the steep road to the top of Mormon Mesa in a bad storm and had to get out and push. Dad's shoes were full of holes so he had his rubbers on over them but lost the rubbers in the mud so he had to continue practically barefoot. It was a very hard trip.)

I arrived in the mission field at Toronto, Canada on the 15th of December 1919 and was there for one month. Later I was moved to Branford where I served eight months and then to Woodstock for eight months, and then to Hamilton for another eight months. A total of 25 months altogether.

It was a very difficult mission as the people were predominantly Catholic and very set in their ways. But I studied hard and learned the gospel and gained a strong testimony of the gospel, which has never wavered or diminished. Though the work was hard, and very discouraging at times, I loved working for the Lord and I had great faith in what I was doing. On one occasion I was asked to administer to a blind baby, and because of the strong faith I had, and the faith of the parents, her eyes were healed.

Along with the hours of study and the hard work, we did have some lighter moments in the mission field. At one time one of the missionaries was having some dental work done, so my companion and I took his place for a week. In the area in which we were to work, the homes were holes in the mountainside with ladders to climb to the different levels. We were staying at one of these places over night and the bed was thick with bed bugs, which my companion fought all during the night. I slept peacefully among the bed bugs all night without waking. (My experience of sleeping while riding over rough terrain came to my rescue – nothing could disturb my sleep.)

Another time I had been to conference and it was late when I returned home (between 11:00 and 12:00) and I was very tired. My room was on the third floor and the bathroom was on the second floor. I went first to the bathroom and was ready

to ascend the stairs to the third floor to my room and bed. The halls were dark and I groped for the stairs going upward. (The situation of the stairs is important in this case. The stairs came up to the second floor and turned and went up to the third floor, so the stairs going upward were right next to those going down.) Whenever I went up the stairs I always bounded up, taking two or three steps at a time. Well, as I said before, it was dark, and I went to where I thought the stairs going up were and took a giant step upwards. Imagine my shock as I went crashing downward instead of climbing upward! In the darkness I had misjudged the distance and had not gone quite far enough for the “up” flight of stairs. I fell all the way down the stairs and landed in a heap at the bottom. I thought I was killed and my beautiful celluloid high collar was smashed flat.

One night we had been invited to stay at a home, which was clear around on the further side of a mile block. We thought we could save time by cutting through the block diagonally. It was dark and we walked around for two hours through the brambles and the brush and thought surely we would soon be arriving at our destination. At last we came to a gate, but to our surprise it was the same gate we had entered two hours ago. In the dark we had been walking around in circles. We decided it was quicker to walk around.

When I came home from my mission, I worked with Alfred, My half-brother, at the salt mine. He had a contract getting out salt for \$1.00 a ton. With this and the seventy-five dollars I borrowed from Frank Bonelli, Lettie Tobler and I were married on June 14, 1922. We went to the ranch and made a little apartment in the Old House, which still stands and is being used. It was built in about 1900.

I would like to add my wife’s account of our courtship and marriage from her life story:

“In 1917 we moved to Overton right next door to the school. It was about this time that a new boy came to school from St. Thomas. His name was Fenton Whitney and I thought he was real nice. Of course, he had a girl, but we were friends anyway. After his girl quit him we began to go together. We played tennis and went horseback riding on Saturday. He worked for his board at President Willard Jones’ home. We had many good times together until spring when he moved with his folks to their ranch 20 miles from St. Thomas high in the Bunkerville Mountains. I remember the beautiful wild flowers he gathered and sent to me and also the nice letters I received. I liked him very much. Gradually we began talking of marriage when we finished school. At Christmas 1918 he gave me a pretty little ring. My folks were quite upset as I was only 16 and my mother said I couldn’t wear it. However, I did wear it and enjoyed it. But time moved on and our wedding day June 14, 1922 came. We made the trip to St. George with Fenton’s team and Dad’s buggy. Dad, Mom and baby Barbara, who was five weeks old, went with us. In St. George Fenton and I stayed with his grandparents the night of the 13th and walked with grandpa about 19 blocks to the temple early the morning of the 14th. Mom and Dad and many people from Santa Clara came to go through the temple with us. We were very frightened and my new husband forgot to put the wedding ring on my finger until we got outside.”

The winter of 1922-23 my wife and I spent at the ranch preparing ground for trees and strawberries in the spring. It was a wonderful winter. I trapped coyotes for the few dollars we had. It was a glorious winter. My wife tells of this honeymoon winter:

It was a wonderful winter. We lived there at the ranch all alone and we were completely happy just to be with each other. Everything we did, we did together. We got our meals together, went trapping together, worked together on a retaining wall (mostly I just kept him company while he carried all the rocks). Then in the evening after our supper, we would sit together in front of the fireplace and read from the Bible, or just talk – perhaps we would make plans for our baby that was on the way – or dream of the future and what it held for us. But it was so nice and cozy just to be together in front of the crackling fire, with just the light of the fire, or the mellow light from a kerosene lamp.”

“Many times we had a candy pull together. We started out with 50 pounds of sugar, and before the winter was over, we had used it all to make taffy candy. It tasted good, but mainly it was just fun to do.”

“We always went together to make the rounds of the traps on the trap lines. Taking along a gun, we would hunt along the way and shoot at a rabbit or squirrel if we happened to see one. It was really an outdoor type of life we had and we both loved it.”

About a month before Julia was born, we moved into St. Thomas. But truly, it had been one of the most wonderful winters we have ever spent.”

We spent the summers from 1922 to 1926 at the ranch. It was hard work and we never did make much, but were very happy. The winters we spent in St. Thomas, as did my parents. These years brought new responsibilities and blessings all in the same packages. Julia was born March 5, 1923; Wilma was born February 3, 1925; Dorothy was born February 23, 1927; Venice was born March 14, 1929, Beth was born June 12, 1930; and John was born March 14, 1932. The girls did not grow well; the food did not agree, but John grew very well.

(I believe it was after Wilma was born that she was very ill and they needed money for medicine for her. Dad had an opportunity to sell some chickens in Las Vegas but he had to have them in St. Thomas at a certain time in the early morning to meet the truck that would take them on to Las Vegas. They loaded the wagon and as was their custom he started off to St. Thomas after dark. He immediately went to sleep and left the horses to find their way alone. Usually this worked out well but they had a new horse, which hadn't learned to work well with the old, trusted one and kept crowding against it. About halfway up the mountain, he crowded the old horse too near the edge of the ravine and they tipped over the bank. The wagon rolled into the ravine and the boxes of chickens scattered across the ground. Neither Dad nor the horses were hurt, but it was a rude awakening.

Dad was able to hook the horses to the side of the wagon and get it upright and then he set about to try and re-load the chickens. They were caged in large wooden crates, which held about a dozen chickens each. They were extremely heavy and very long and awkward; seemingly impossible for one man to handle alone. Dad knew he didn't have enough time to go back to the ranch and get help and still make it to St. Thomas on time. He was desperate with worry for their new baby girl and prayed for the strength to lift the boxes. He told us many times that as he lifted the boxes back on the wagon; it felt as though unseen hands were lifting the other end of the crate. He was able to load all the boxes and make it to St. Thomas on time to meet the truck. He testified to his family many times that it was a true miracle that happened to him that night.)

As a young man and for several years after I was married, I spent a lot of time in the outdoors. I did a lot of hunting and trapping. I would make the rounds of my trap lines every so often and was always happy when I made a good haul as about all the money we would make those early winters was from the pelts of these animals, and from hauling wood and cedar posts.

A lot of times during those early years, I spent camped out in the wilds of the mountains in the wintertime. I would go out with wagon and team on a Monday and stay until Saturday, and chop and haul wood all during the week. I would bring one load down to the main road, and back and forth until I had three or four loads piled up by the main road – easily accessible to haul into town.

In the evenings I would build a fire – and then fix a bite to eat. (I had a big pot of beans cooked up before I came.) Each night for my supper I'd put on the beans to warm, throw an egg in and stir it up – doesn't sound too good, but I enjoyed it. Then after supper, maybe I would sit by the fire a while watching the flickering flames cast dancing shadows on the surrounding trees and brush – the circle of light from the fire seemed as a circle of safety to me. It was nice just to sit there in the crisp fresh air, and the aroma of smoke from the burning logs, and the flickering flames – and sometimes the sound of the wind rustling through the trees. Then I would crawl into my bedroll and sleep soundly through the night. There were many nights the ground was covered with snow and it was so cold that I did not linger by the fire very long, but quickly wrapped myself in my bedroll for the extra warmth.

On one of these trips I was camped about five miles beyond Quail Point and knew of course that there were cougars in the area. However, I had always been told that a cougar would never come near a fire so I had not worried about them. I always slept with my bed as close to the fire as I could get it. This particular night I was awakened by my horses neighing and stomping and carrying on. I knew something was near that was frightening them, and I became very scared myself. The next morning I saw the paw marks and the scratch marks of the cougar's paws and it had been within ten feet of the fire – disproving the story that cougars do not come close to a fire.

During the entire winter of 1925, following the birth of Wilma, I hauled posts and wood from the west side of Bunkerville Mountain. On one trip I stopped as usual at

the Whitney Pockets for noon. I watered my horses and fed them a bit of grain and had and cooked dinner for myself. Afterward I hitched up and started on. Just after leaving the campground the road crossed a little wash and went up a sidling dugway. Just as I got to the top of the hill I heard a shrill whistle like someone wanted me to stop. (It was the custom for travelers meeting in the desert to always stop and exchange information and news and a whistle was this signal.) I looked all around but could see no one. I climbed on the high ledges so I could see in every direction, but could still see no one.

It was in the days of Queho. He had killed three men and one woman five or six years previously and had never been captured. He was still in the country so I was very nervous.

I walked back down the road and as I was going down the dugway I mentioned earlier I found that my bedroll had fallen from the wagon. When I had taken my grub box out to prepare dinner, I had set my bedroll on the water barrel and had neglected to put it back down in the wagon. A feeling of peace came over me and I knew it was all right to go on. It would have been serious if I had arrived in the snow-covered mountains without my bedroll. A little thing, but it goes to show how the Lord looks after us. The still, small voice often speaks to us, but this time it whistled.

I spent weeks alone in the mountains cutting and preparing posts and wood to haul and would often see no one in all those weeks. I had to be so careful not to get in places I couldn't get out of. Such poor roads! I look back now and am so thankful for all of the experiences I had. It makes me realize more how we depend on divine power. So many times I have been directed away from trouble. Through all of my life I have tried to do that which the Lord would have me do and in return He has always blessed and provided for us. From the history of my wife, Lettie, the following:

"The winter that Dorothy was born (1927), we were especially poor and my husband took our last five dollars to give to a missionary. We were in need of things, but he thought he should help the missionary. We felt the Lord would help us. The very next day we were able to sell some lumber for ten dollars."

In the fall of 1926 we had a chance to buy a farm below St. Thomas. We worked hard to clear the land and get it planted into crops but we loved it. We took great pride in the crops we raised. It was a joy to go out of an early morning and see the sprouts just pushing through the soft earth.

Though we worked hard we did have some good times also. Many times with the folks we would go down to the creek and have corn roasts. On Easter we would go to the sand hills by the river. Here the children romped and rolled their eggs down the sand hills. They also enjoyed playing on the old skeleton girders of a burned-out bridge that spanned the river. Here also I trapped quail to provide us with meat, and the children loved to tag along and got real excited to see the traps full of quail. Julia writes of this time:

“I remember how my sister Wilma and I used to lie and sway on the tops of the asparagus bushes. They stood up under our weight because they grew so close together that they formed a closely-knit mat. We shipped asparagus in sloped crates with wet moss in the bottom. My father could never allow old or hard stalks to be put in the bundles just as he would never allow us to put poor peaches in the baskets later at Hurricane.”

“In St. Thomas I remember helping father put hot caps over the tomatoes. This has nothing to do with crops, but I can still see the saucy quail, with their topknot held high, strutting around in the wooden cages. A trigger affair held the wooden cages up, grain was put under the trigger, and my it was exciting to go around a mesquite bush and find quail in the trap. We must have had other meat from time to time, but I can still taste those quail.”

In 1927 I was put in as counselor to Robert O. Gibson, Bishop of St. Thomas, and remained in the bishopric until we moved to Hurricane in 1932.

The move to St. Thomas proved to be a good thing, as we had to leave the ranch in order that the children could go to school. I paid \$150.00 down on the farm in St. Thomas and I cleared a lot of land, or all we had, of mesquite bushes and had it all in crops by the time the government bought us out as part of the Hoover Dam project.

We left St. Thomas with a new Chevrolet Sedan and \$5,500.00 in July 1932. This was not much but we purchased our home in Hurricane for which we paid \$2,200 and also eighteen acres of ground on which we still owed \$600.00.

My wife writes about this move: “We bought a large old-fashioned home and put in and furnished a bathroom with hot and cold running water. That was really wonderful after pulling the water from a cistern and carrying it in the house, then heating it on the stove to have a bath in a small round washtub. We also had electric lights in every room in the house. No more filling kerosene lamps and carrying them from room to room with their dim lights. An electric washer helped too after washing on the board and scrubbing blisters on my knuckles each week for so many years.”

It was while living in this big house in Hurricane that our children attended school and grew up and married. They were hard times and money was very scarce. Here too, four more children were born to us: LuRae was born September 25, 1934; Anna Mae was born January 21, 1936; George Lloyd was born May 23, 1938; and Janice was born May 14, 1942.

My parents had moved to Hurricane also and we continued to farm and work together as we had always done.

From my daughter Julia's story: “Farming is my father's great love. He accepted the challenge of making the land produce against odds of little water and much

work. He especially liked the challenge of making new land produce a bounteous harvest.”

In 1935-36 Levi, Alfred, father and I raised turkeys. We rented a piece of land out on the Big Plain east of Hurricane (near Short Creek). We raised Milo Maize for our turkeys and then took our turkeys out there to finish them. We didn't make much money, but stayed in the black.

We also had fruit trees and I would try to bring in a little extra money from peddling. From Julia's story: "Father often peddled fruit. He never took poor fruit to peddle however, and would never let us girls put the big peaches on top. The fruit must be uniform throughout. For some years he peddled through Long Valley and took chickens in exchange for fruit. Then they sold the chickens in Las Vegas. This worked fairly well except the Las Vegas Chicken buyer went out of business and was never able to pay for the chickens."

"He often peddled fruit in the Muddy Valley. He used to say the housewives looked for him each year to get a new clothesbasket. They would trade the old one for the basket of fruit and father didn't like the additional bruising caused by dumping it. If the housewife had a basket she could turn it in."

"The best flavored fruit in the world comes from southern Utah. Does it have something to do with that red soil? (Somehow the soil didn't seem so red when I lived there.) Good almonds, pecans, pomegranates, figs, grapes, all fruits and nuts do very well there. My mouth waters to chew some sugar cane and the molasses candy made from sugar cane molasses haunts my taste buds yet."

In 1939, when we were just coming out of the depression, a group of farmers under the Hurricane Canal Company, with some extra water, decided to put in a pump and pump the water 33 feet to where there was 2,000 acres of nice land. Mr. Emil Graff, Wills Imly, John Spendlove, William Wilson and myself were the first board of directors. We incorporated as the Bench Lake Irrigation Company. We made an assessment of one dollar cash per share and one dollar labor. Cash was to buy a pump and motor; power was bought from Hurricane one mile away. I was put in charge of labor and building the ditch. Mr. Imly was the engineer. We worked all winter, got the ditch done, and Dad and I planted 30 acres of wheat. When we turned the water in the ditch, it ran fine for about an hour and then it would go in a sinkhole. The whole five second feet would go down, nobody knows how far, then the ground would settle for about 100 feet clear around the hole. We would have to build a new ditch around the hole and settle the area. We barely got the wheat watered once and got about 20 bushel to the acre. This procedure kept up for about four years before we got the ditch settled and in a condition so we could depend on it. Some very good beet seed, alfalfa, silage, grain and orchards are being raised at the present time. Seven years ago we started cementing ditches out there. At present we have about 8 miles of cement ditch.

From Julia's story: "My mother says one must read between the lines to know the many days and weeks my father spent in supervising the digging of the ditch and

installation of the pump. Also, after its completion, how many days and weeks he spent trying to get the pump and canal to work, and the many, many nights he “slept” with the pump to keep it going. It was he who got out of bed in the middle of the night to go nurse that pump along. To him fell the whole responsibility of keeping it going. Many times he couldn’t get anyone to come help with the work, so he would work at it alone.”

“There was never any wages for this job – at least in money. He received some merchandise as a wage, but certainly nowhere near enough to cover the many hours spent on that project. For many years until he sold his Bench Lake property, he was always the first to respond when the ditch sank out of sight or the pump quit. Irrigation is the first activity of the farm, and in the Hurricane Valley, every drop of water must be tended and carefully spread.”

“During my high school days, Father was Justice of the Peace. There weren’t too many cases tried in our dining room, but those that were, created quite a stir. I shall never forget the one marriage he performed. We tried to listen at the dining room door, and we probably snickered.”

“Father has served a term on the town council, and was always active in trying to get more culinary water in Hurricane. Some summer days you must draw your bath at 4:00 a.m. unless you have several hours to wait for it to run.”

During World War II I spent some time as an electrician in the plants at Henderson, Nevada. Also, I got a dollar a school dance to be a “supervisor-ticket-taker-disturber/drunk bouncer,” etc.

In the year 1944 I had a bad accident. I was trying to help John and Larry catch some wild mustangs that we had in our corral. There was a haystack in the middle of the corral and we couldn’t catch the horses because they kept going around the haystack. Finally we decided to tie a rope from the haystack to the wagon so we would be able to corner the horses and catch them. But the horses came at me pell-mell while I was still holding the rope stretched across from the haystack. I was thrown 10 feet into the air and then landed on the ground with my leg doubled up under me, very badly broken.

Because of the nature of the break (bone shattered and in very bad shape) it was necessary to get me to the hospital in Cedar City. For conveyance I was put in the back of a pickup truck and was bounced and jounced all the way, causing me agonizing pain. When we arrived at the hospital I was taken to be X-rayed. I was left on that very hard S-ray table all day, still in agonizing pain. (They could never seem to get the pictures to come out right.) I was in such terrible pain and felt I just couldn’t endure it any longer. Then they bored a hole in my ankle, putting two screws in it (without giving me any anesthetic). I’m sure this was the most painful experience of my life.

After they had so tortured me, they put a 30-pound weight on the break for 92 days, but still it did not heal. Then I was taken to the hospital and operated on. The

bone had to be re-broken and re-set. I had never knit or healed at all. I was in the hospital 5 more days and had the cast on another 6 weeks, but my leg has never healed right and I have had trouble with it all these years.

(Dad broke his leg twice more in his lifetime. The second was about 1950. We were living on the farm at that time. He was raking hay with a horse-drawn rake. He was leaving a field enclosed with an electric fence. He was opening the gate when the horse touched the electric fence and bolted, running over Dad in the process. I think this was when his kneecap was shattered. Instead of repairing it, they took it out and threw it away. His leg would no longer bend. They also failed to prop his leg straight and let it lay to the side as it healed so the foot always turned out. It would be impossible to say how many times he fell as he was watering or working in the fields because the foot would get caught in the weeds or crops as he tried to do his work. The third time Dad broke his leg was when he was building an addition onto the house. He was breaking a channel in the existing cement porch to put in a drain for an automatic washing machine. He was using a cold chisel and a sledgehammer for the project. The chisel slipped and hit him in the shin. He limped around for several days before he would admit it might be broken and went to a doctor. This was about 1956.)

On June 20, 1947 we moved out to the fields and lived in part of the milk barn until our new home was built, where we have lived until the present time. For 12 years we ran a dairy business with all the latest scientific milking equipment and the whole works. It was a lot of work and in 1961 we sold our cows and equipment.

I have been doing a great deal of genealogy work the past few years and enjoyed it very much. I have searched out many names, and had had hundreds of sheets printed up so that all in our organization might have a copy, thereby knowing what has been done and what there is yet to do. Any one of our kin can know at any time just where to start if they desire to do this work. *(Dad also made sure that every one of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren had a Book of Remembrance with all the genealogy included. He even prepared books ahead for children not yet born. It was a huge work and he and Mom spent many thousands of dollars on this project. What a great legacy they have passed on to their posterity.)*

We have enjoyed living in the Hurricane Valley and enjoy our associations with the people who live here. I have always tried to work diligently for my Heavenly Father in his church.

From Julia's story: "My father has always actively supported the L.D.S. Church and continued to do so after he came to Hurricane. In November of 1932 he was put in as first assistant in the Sunday School with Chauncey Sandberg. From February 1934 until 1936 father was Scout Master. From 1938 until 1940 he served as superintendent of the Hurricane South Ward Sunday School. Also in 1938 he was selected as Ward Clerk and during these years had the responsibility of changing from the "old membership book" to the new card system. In 1941 he was made a High Councilman. On June 9, 1953, the stake presidency of the Zion Park Stake was reorganized with Leo Reeve as president, Dad as first counselor, and Al LaVor

Hinton as second counselor. He served for ten years and was released in October of 1963 due to poor health. While living in St. Thomas Dad was Elder's Quorum President counselor in 1922 and in 1923 was made Elder's Quorum President. In 1924 he served a 2-year stake mission in the Moapa Stake. In 1927 he was put in as counselor to Bishop Robert O Gibson and remained in the bishopric until 1932."

"As first counselor in the Zion Park Stake Presidency father had charge of the Stake Welfare Farm. His great love and interest in the progress of the farm kept him working there many hours a week. He was very desirous that the irrigation water went as far as possible. He was anxious to get good cement ditches, needed to be sure, that the hay was cut and bailed at the proper time, even if he had to do it himself. When he was released from the stake presidency, he instructed my mother that if anyone should ask what he would like for a present, she was to ask for a metal watering trough for the Stake Farm calves and to suggest a farewell party at the Stake Farm where they would build fence and haul hay. Nothing ever prevented my father from attending to his church duties even if he had been irrigating all night for several nights."

(It should also be said the Stake Farm was in very bad shape when Dad took it over. There was a huge gully that covered much of the land making it useless. Dad took this raw land and made a showcase farm out of it. He loved this kind of challenge. What many do not know however, is that he used his own equipment, bought the gas, paid for any repairs out of his own pocket and diverted water and labor badly needed on his own land for use on the farm. The gully was filled in and the land turned into beautiful orchards. As on all church farm projects, work days would be scheduled but often he was the only one there. In all his life, much of Dad's service was "off the books" and out of the public eye, but God knows and I know Dad has earned a great reward for his tireless efforts.

After finishing his story Dad went on to many other projects. He and Mom moved to St. George and bought a small house near the temple. They helped take care of Grandma Tobler and both did a lot of temple work. Because Mom couldn't leave Grandma Tobler she couldn't go as often as Dad did, but they both went a lot. Dad had become very hard of hearing by this time so he couldn't be an ordinance worker but he could work in the baptistery and served there faithfully for all the time they lived in St. George. He also remodeled the house, completely redoing it inside and adding a room on the back. He turned the yard into a showplace with flowers covering every inch of the front and vegetables covering every inch of the back. He thought lawn was a waste of space so they didn't have any. During this time he helped John build a house on Pine Valley and turned that lot into a showplace as well as farming another lot John owned. Even in retirement Dad could not quit taking on the challenge of turning impossible ground into fantastic gardens.

In 1978 Dad and Mom moved back to Hurricane, the place they loved best. They moved into Dorothy and Arlond's house at the foot of the Hurricane Hill south of town. Again, Dad worked hard to turn the large lot into a showcase. This was an exceptionally hard challenge but he managed to do it.

In 1970 after moving into the small home John had built for them in town, he once again had the opportunity to make their small lot into a beautiful paradise. Dad was able to keep working in his garden almost to the day he died. Along with that work he continued to work on his genealogy and even took up the hobby of helping Mom sew quilt tops and tie them. He also bought an old typewriter and taught himself to type so he could fill out the genealogy sheets himself.

Dad's legacy of service to God and to his fellow man as well as the value of hard work and accepting any challenge no matter what the odds is a valuable example to all of us.)

INTERESTING SIDE NOTES:

Before the 1900's, Uncle Alf, Mother's first husband, and family lived in Eldorado Canyon 20 miles below the present site of the Hoover Dam. (The boats would come up the river in high water time and haul ore from the mines to ElPaso.) Mama and Uncle Alf's oldest son Alfred learned to talk Indian language before he would speak English because he was the only white child in Eldorado. Uncle Alf and Mama later moved back to St. Thomas. There Uncle Alf died and later my father married Mama.

Queho and his mother was adopted by the Piute tribe as refugees of a tribal quarrel. He was a hard-working Indian trying to do for his family, but his employer, a Mr. Woodward would not pay his wages. One day Woodward came home drunk and Queho insisted on his pay. In the fight that ensued, Queho hit Woodward on the head with a stick of wood and he died. This started him on the road that made him one of the most noted outlaws in Southern Nevada.

Several years after the experience when I heard the whistle at the Whitney Pockets after having lost my bedroll, the Boulder Dam (Hoover Dam) project started. About that time or soon after we had to move to Hurricane. Someone found Queho's body barricaded in a cave below Boulder Dam. He had seen the work on the dam and it looked too big for him to fight. He had eaten turtles and rattlesnakes, but was afraid to come out and fish and hunt mountain sheep as he had formerly done. He died in the cave and his bones are still on display in Las Vegas.

MY TESTIMONY – George Fenton Whitney

TO MY CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN, AND ALL GENERATION:

I have an urge or feeling that I would like to leave my testimony of the divinity of our Heavenly Father's work here upon the earth. I have never doubted that Joseph smith was a true Prophet of God. From my early childhood it has thrilled me to even read the story of the boy Prophet Joseph, and I want to leave my witness that the Gospel that the Lord restored through him is divine; and that the plan and programs of this great universe is true. (We all gave our approval to come here and endure the temptations and disappointments, sorrows, and pain that we knew were here; and each of us had a voice in the planning of it. We very likely had a choice in choosing our parents in the pre-existence.)

Though it is not easy for me to understand all the things about the atonement and all the greatness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I believe He is the Son of God literally and truly; and that by magnifying the Priesthood we may come back into His presence.

I have never seen the Savior, but the many times He has snatched me from the jaws of death and preserved my life, the many times the Holy Ghost had directed me in my life and in my genealogy work, I know all these things are divine. I wake up at night with strong impressions and if I follow them through, I always get results that add to the list of names of our kindred dead.

I hope when I leave this life I will have done enough from my kinfolk that they may be willing to go before the Master and plead my case that I might be forgiven of all my sins. And that when I am weighed in the balance, that my works might in a measure offset the evil. I hope that the offering (D & C 128:24) will be acceptable, the Book of Remembrance, with the names of our kindred dead and histories. I hope that I will not neglect any of my dead ancestors and that it will be possible for me to obtain the necessary data to do the work for them.

THE VISION OF UNCLE STOWELL EDWARD WHITNEY

After the death of my father, Uncle Stowell was the oldest living male member of George Burton Whitney's family. He was in charge of the Family organization, and I was selected as Chairman of Genealogy.

Not too long after this change, Uncle Stowell and Aunt Isabel drove from Logandale, Clark County, Nevada to Hurricane, Washington County, Utah to see me. He related the following vision to me and my wife, and he was very much concerned about it. According to his own testimony, the things he was not a dream as he was as wide-awake as he was when relating this experience to me.

This is the vision Uncle Stowell saw: "It seemed I was climbing up a very steep mountain, very rough and at times it was almost impossible to continue, but finally I reached the top. As I reached to top, the land was more or less level and I could see some distance."

"To my right I could see a vast multitude of people and they were extremely happy and were enjoying everything about them. When they saw me they smiled at me and went on about their labors. Off to the left I could see a small group of people who were very crestfallen and beckoned me to come help them. As I came nearer I could see a great barrier that separated them from those who were so happy. At this point the vision closed but the Spirit said, "You are missing some in the research of your kindred dead."

After relating this to me with very much concern he said, "Fenton, we are missing some of our kindred dead. Don't let money hinder your efforts in finding the ones that have been missed."

The committee struggled for two years to find the ones that had been passed over in previous research but all we could find, the work had been done. In 1963 the committee decided we would collect every family group we could find, and after four years of gathering and research, we have collected and printed 240 family groups. Of this number only about ten has needed work done on them. Only two that we have had to do all the ordinance work on and one that one child had been missed, but mostly the sealings had been forgotten or neglected.

All of this is a testimony to me that what Uncle Stowell saw was true and given as a guide and help to the genealogy of the George Burton Whitney family organization. He, being the oldest male member of this family and holding the Holy Priesthood, had the right to receive this information.

---George Fenton Whitney

GEORGE FENTON WHITNEY

Written by his daughter Janice Whitney Ruesch

In re-reading Dad's story, I feel that it doesn't begin to do justice to the years of service and self-less devotion that Dad gave to his church, his family and his community. There is no mention of the hours and resources he gave to building the Hurricane city park or serving on the city council and justice of the peace and the many other civic projects he helped with. There is no mention of the helping hand he gave his neighbors or the free milk, fruit and produce or countless other acts of Christian kindness he performed. And all of us in his family can testify of the countless times he and Mom stepped in to help us with their means or just plain moral support. The way he and Mom dropped everything to go spend months to help Wilma while she was so seriously ill before she died, is an example of this support we have all received. The prayers offered in our behalf alone have been a priceless gift. John said at Dad's funeral that Dad was more like the Savior than any man he knew, and I agree with him completely.

John also said that he was glad that Dad was finally free from pain and able to walk without dragging his poor old leg along. In his story, Dad tells of the first bad break to his leg and the terrible time he had with it but he doesn't mention that it was broken twice more. That first break happened when I was about two years old and Mom says that is why we were so close because he tended me that year he was laid up while Mama did the work. The second time was soon after we moved out to the farm south of Hurricane. A horse pulling a hay-rake "spooked" on an electric fence and ran over him. The last time I was in my teens and he was working on a room they were adding to the house for me. He was breaking out concrete with a cold chisel and a sledgehammer. The chisel slipped and broke his leg in two places between the knee and the ankle. Mom said it was like sleeping in a gravel pit for years sleeping with all those casts. Pieces of the casts would break off in the bed

making it very uncomfortable. Dad was in constant pain from this leg for most of his adult life. He certainly had his "cross" to bear.

In the summer of 1968, when Dad was nearly 68 years old, he was completely exhausted and decided that he could no longer do the hard work for such long hours required to keep up with the farm. He told Mama that he wanted to sell the farm and get himself and "eight-hour-a-day job with a regular paycheck," and so he started working for John in his gas station in St. George. Mom said she also thought he had inherited a bit of the "wanderlust" from his grandfather and just felt a need to move. It was also reasoned that if they were in St. George, they could do more temple work and also take better care of Grandma Tobler who could no longer be left alone.

So in August of 1968, Mom and Dad sold their house and the last of the farm in Hurricane and purchased a small house just two and a half blocks from the temple in St. George. This home had belonged to Arlond Hawkin's Mom and Dad and the folks purchased it from Arlond's sister for \$10,000.00. It was in very bad shape and Mom said, "a cockroach haven," and they really had to work hard to get rid of them. Dad worked for several months fixing it up before they could move in completely (sometime before Christmas). He added a room on the back as well as a large storeroom. He completely paneled the entire house, put in new windows and new shingles on the roof. While the remodeling took place, Mom stayed with Grandma Tobler in her house and Dad spend most nights in the new place.

This little house was next to the Dixie Sun Bowl and even with the "additions" was very small and the lot was about a quarter of an acre. But once the remodeling was complete and the yards fixed up, it became a very comfortable home for them.

In October of 1968 Dad was moving some of their things from the house in Hurricane. As always, he was reluctant to ask anyone to help him and was trying to load the refrigerator into the pickup by himself. Lawrence Hinton (a neighbor) saw what he was doing and went to help him. They had a board laid into the bed of the pickup and Dad was in the bed pulling and Lawrence was pushing the refrigerator up this board. At some point during this process, the refrigerator slipped and Dad fell on his back in the bed of the pickup and the refrigerator fell on top of him. He knew his back was hurt was managed to secure the refrigerator and drive the pickup back to St. George. Mom said he didn't seem too bad that night but when she went back the next morning, he couldn't move for the pain and she had to call an ambulance to take him to the hospital where they found he had crushed three vertebrae. After staying in the hospital for five days, he went home wearing a "corset." He completely shingled the roof wearing that corset and could only lift a few shingles at a time because of the pain. This also ended his "eight-hour-a-day job with a regular paycheck," and he never had an "outside" job again.

During the nine years that Mom and Dad lived at this house in St. George, they made a very happy life for themselves. As Mom said, she puts down roots wherever she is and they had good friends and good neighbors and were happy there. Their

home became a stopping-off place for many relatives and friends and I never visited in their home but what someone didn't drop in to say "hello" and visit a while.

The yard was a showplace of fruits and vegetables and beautiful flowers. Even strangers driving by couldn't resist stopping to take a closer look. Dad thought a lawn was a waste of ground and soon began farming every "inch" of the lot. Mom told me later that everyone thought that Dad did the gardening alone but that she always helped him, especially with the planting. Dad said she had a "master hand" with the planting. The beautiful yards and flowers and gardens at their place in Hurricane were almost totally done by Mom because Dad was so busy on the farm. He would help prepare the ground and the rest was up to her. Later in St. George and when they moved back to Hurricane they worked together.

One special event that occurred while they lived in St. George was their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary. It was a wonderful occasion and all the family was there. Here is an agenda of the events:

During much of the time the folks lived in St. George, Mom's time was tied up in caring for Grandma Tobler. She couldn't be left alone even for a few hours so Mother wasn't able to do as much temple work as Dad, but she still did a lot. Dad however spent an enormous amount of time in temple work. They didn't keep track of how much time, but it would be nice to know. For several years (before his hearing got too bad) Dad worked every Wednesday confirming at the baptismal font and every Tuesday evening working at the Vail. In addition, he did many, many sessions each week. Later, when he could no longer do those jobs, he would do five sessions a day, five days a week. In addition to this he taught the Special Interest class in M.I.A. for two years and was the High Priest class instructor for seven years as well as regularly doing his Home Teaching. And above all that, he worked untold hours on the Stake Welfare Farm. (In 1970 alone, he worked 656 hours.)

In discussing this incredible record with Mom, she told me that nothing in this world came near to being as important to Dad as the church. No amount of money, no sacrifice was too great to give to the church. She told me that during the time in the late 60's and early 70's when Dad was running his own farm as well as the Zion Park State Welfare Farm, he would literally pray to God to "Please help me do three men's work today." He knew he had to do at least that much, and then he would proceed to work until he dropped into his bed from exhaustion.

We also discussed why she and Dad didn't go on a mission for the church like many older couples do. Mom said that Dad had this fear that they would be sent to a big city somewhere and he didn't feel he could drive and live in a city. In addition, their health was bad and they had Grandma Tobler to look after. It is my opinion, however, that Dad (and Mom too, because without her support and consent and sacrifice it couldn't have happened) have filled many "missions" for the church. I know couples who have gone on work missions who haven't put a fraction of the time and money into them that Dad has in his thousands and thousands of hours

and dollars donated to Church Welfare Farms. Couples called on temple missions would have to serve several missions to equal his service to the temple while living in St. George. And not least of all the almost incomprehensible amount of work that he has performed in genealogy.

I remember when I was a young girl sitting by Dad in the evening as he would work extracting names from the records. He encouraged me to learn to type and later bought a typewriter so I could type sheets for him. Each summer he would attend the Whitney Reunion on Pine Valley and he would report his progress as Family Representative, a position he held until he died. I had the privilege of spending several different days at the genealogical library in Salt Lake City helping him, and I know Anna Mae took him many times. He made note on his Personal Record sheet that he and Mom and his two sisters spent a month in Salt Lake City doing research at the library. After I left home, he was the Ward Genealogy Specialist when the Church began its first four-generation program and worked tirelessly to help the entire ward reach this objective.

I have the cherished memory of Cal and I doing sealings for some of the names that were submitted through Dad's work and the work of the organization. Later Dad bought a typewriter and taught himself to type with a "one-finger" method and over the years typed hundreds and hundreds of sheets himself. In addition to his family, he went to work on Mom's family and as she said, "knew them better than she did." He had a burning desire to copy all the records he could find and make Books of Remembrance for all the extended families. The organization paid for some of this but much of the money came from Mom and Dad. He spent much of what they had from the sale of their farm in this work. Later he worked on keeping up with all the new information (births, baptisms, etc. of our large family and prepared books for the all the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren (even anticipating those not yet born, and made them up ahead). How diligently he recorded each event and seemed to be able to remember each and every addition to the family. The far-reaching effect that this work will have on Mom and Dad's extended families as well as their posterity is impossible to calculate. Surely no "mission" they could have served would have reached so many or influenced any more people for the good. Certainly in this work Dad personified the words of Elijah in "turning the hearts of the children to their fathers" and spread the binding power of family unity throughout many generations.

While the folks were still living in St. George, John bought a couple of pieces of property in Pine Valley. Dad helped John build a house on one piece, which was on a hillside. In the process, Dad managed to plant some trees and vegetables and flowers. The other piece was down in the valley and Mom and Dad built a little "shack" on it and had a little trailer house and spent one summer driving back and forth and raising a beautiful garden. One night Mom said the wind blew so hard the whole place shook and she couldn't sleep at all. A few weeks later, they had moved the trailer house but the little house they had built blew away completely over the fence. They decided it was just too much work for them.

When I asked Mom why they decided to move back to Hurricane, she said she really couldn't figure it out. She felt settled in St. George and they had good friends and people were very good to them but Dad told her that he thought that they "weren't important" there and they needed to go back where they came from--where they "fit in better." Both he and Mom had had serious problems with their hearts (Mom had a blocked artery to the heart and Dad had a bad heart attack) and he felt they couldn't keep up the place any more. I think that perhaps for the first time he was beginning to realize that he and Mom wouldn't live forever. But as Mom said, it could have been a little bit of the "wanderlust" again, also. At any rate, he was determined and Mom didn't oppose him. As it turned out, Dorothy and Arlond were planning to go on a mission for the church. They had just finished building a large house on the side of the hill south of Hurricane. It was built with an apartment downstairs and they asked Mom and Dad to move in with them and look after their place while they were gone. One of Dad's fondest wishes was to send a child on a mission and this had never worked out so it made him very happy to help Dorothy and Arlond.

Mom felt very sad when the "For Sale" sign was posted, but in retrospect it is easy to see that it was a great blessing to them to make the move back to Hurricane. Almost before the sign was posted, a man came and said he wanted to buy the house. He didn't even look inside. Later Mom asked him why he bought it without looking at it, and he said it was because of the beautiful flowers.

So in October 1987 the family gathered to move the folks back to Hurricane. Arlond and Dorothy's house was beautiful and Mom and Dad began to make themselves at home. Of course Dad set about trying to farm that rocky hillside but the going was tough. Mom said that when you wanted to plant anything, you had to use a pick and shovel. Trying to water was impossible as the water would run back into the hill somewhere, but Dad was determined and kept at it.

During that winter, Mom was ill a great deal and Dad had a lot of time on his hands. He had always been interested in Mama's quilt projects and had often expressed a desire to help her because he realized what a big job they were. He had tried to learn to "quilt" but just couldn't manage the small needles and stitches, but he could "tie" a quilt and became very good at it and helped Mom a lot. He also had a good eye for design and loved to arrange the blocks on the bed in the pattern he wanted Mom to sew them. But that winter in Dorothy's house he cut and sewed on the sewing machine two large quilt tops and one small one by himself. He had a little trouble with the sewing machine and Mom would have to straighten him out from time to time. He was sure he could handle it because when he was a boy at the ranch, if his clothes needed patched or mended, he would sit down at the sewing machine and do it himself. Anyway his three quilts turned out beautifully and the two large ones were given to John and Buck as a "thank-you" for building their house and the small one was to be his "camp quilt" for sleeping out at the ranch. I don't know how true it is, but I was told that Dad got very resourceful in procuring material for his quilt blocks and even coveted a lady's skirt he sat next to in church one day.

As it became time for Dorothy and Arlond to return home, Mom and Dad purchased a small lot in Hurricane between Kieth Tobler and Lafe Staheli (cousins of Mom's) and began thinking of a place of their own. At this time John was having some personal problems and (I believe) was inspired to build Mom and Dad a home as a means of helping him cope and of helping them. He told his friend Buck Flowers of his intention and Buck said he wasn't doing anything right then so he would help. The folks had \$30,000 from the sale of their home in St. George but the family owes John (and Buck) a large debt of gratitude for giving so generously of their time and means to make this "dream" a reality. Beth drew up the plans, and on a cold February day, she and John (after building fires to thaw the ground) started digging the footings.

Over the next few months many of the family pitched in with their time and talents and money to help with this project. It was a great blessing to all of us to participate in making such a nice home for Mom and Dad. We thank John for letting us be a part of it. It was a wonderful occasion when in June 1979 the family gathered to hold a dedication of the new home and welcome Dorothy and Arlond home from their mission. Nearly all the family was able to attend.

Dad immediately began (with Mom's help and Venice and Beth, too) to farm every inch of ground in their small lot. He and Mom immediately made their new home a haven for all of us and, as always, shared generously of the fruits of their labors. I especially treasure my memories of my visits during this time. It seemed that Dad was not so involved in other things when we came and he spent many hours telling me stories of his life and discussing points of doctrine. I was teaching Gospel Doctrine and Spiritual Living at this time and he could always help me clarify my thoughts and gain new insights into the lessons. Dad retold many of the stories that he has shared with us before and I wrote some of them down. These stories are in his life story, but I am going to include them again as he told them to me during this time:

"Julia was a very sickly baby and we really had a hard time raising her. Many a night I would sing myself to sleep trying to get her to sleep. We had a flock of chickens and had a chance to sell them if I could get them to town at dawn on a certain day. We put the chickens in three large wooden crates about two feet wide and four feet long. There was a divider in the middle to keep them from bunching up too much. Each crate held about twenty-five chickens and weighed about sixty or seventy pounds. We loaded the chickens in the back of the wagon and I started into town about dark."

"We had a real good team of horses that had never pulled with anyone but each other. They really worked well together. But one night one of them was scratching her neck with a hind hoof and got her shoe caught in the rope around her neck and choked to death. We had to get a new horse for the team. The old horse never like having a new partner and was always biting and crowding her. This was the team I was driving that night with the chickens. Because I had been up so many nights with Julia, I was tired and went to sleep."

“A little ways below the Whitney Pockets, the old horse crowded the new one off the road and the wagon overturned, dumping me and the chickens into the wash. The wagon landed upside down. I used the horses to turn the wagon over but it wouldn't stay because the bank was too steep. I had to crimp the tongue of the wagon around and let the wagon roll down into the wash.”

It was midnight and I was all alone and I knew I had to have those chickens in town by morning. I also knew it was impossible for me to lift those crates by myself but that is what I did. As I lifted them back into the wagon it was as though someone was standing on the other side helping. I could feel the crates being lifted from the other side. I know that I was alone, but I also know that someone helped me lift the chickens back into the wagon.”

“When Dorothy was just a baby we were living in St. Thomas during the winter. Mother and the baby were sick. We had no food for the baby and no way of earning any cash money until summer when I could sell a load of posts or wood or something. Sunday morning in Priesthood meeting they asked for donations for a missionary. Without hesitation I gave the last five dollars we had.”

“The next morning I was out milking the cow when the neighbor across the street came over. I had a pile of used lumber that Dad and I got when we tore the buildings down at Gold Butte Mine for the owner. My neighbor asked if the lumber was for sale and I said yes. He asked what I wanted for it and I responded, what will you give me for it? He replied, fifteen dollars. So the Lord gave me back the five dollars we had and added ten more.”

I loved asking Dad about his missionary experiences and wish I had written some of those stories down. I do remember him telling me that the entire town of St. Thomas took up a collection for him when he left on his mission and raised \$200.00. This was probably all the “cash” money they possessed at the time. They believed in supporting with everything they had. Dad left for his mission with the clothes on his back and used this money to pay his way and purchased what he needed when he got to Salt Lake City.

Julia reminded me that as Dad traveled from Salt Lake City to the mission field in Toronto, Canada, there was a terrible snowstorm and the train was snowbound for three days. All the missionaries had to eat was one lunch that was prepared for one of the missionaries by his mother. When Dad arrived in Toronto, he was very ill with pneumonia from the cold and lack of proper food, etc. on the train. The mission president assigned him a companion and took him to his room and then he and the companion proceeded to go on with their work. Dad said that two non-member ladies looked after him for the next month while he was seriously ill and probably saved his life. Money was always a problem while on his mission and the picture of him leaning against a fence was taken when he had taken a month off from his mission to work because Grandpa couldn't send him any money. When it came time to come home, all the money Dad had was twenty dollars that Mom had sent him for Christmas. He made it to Cedar City on the train and then had the chance to go the rest of the way with some friends. His shoes were completely without soles, so

he was wearing “rubbers” over them. As they were pushing the wagon up the steep grade by what is now the Quail Creek Reservoir, he lost his “rubbers” in the mud. He made it to St. George and stayed a week with his grandparents and then went on to St. Thomas with another group.

The first Mom knew that he was on his way, was when he walked into her “study hour” at high school. What a happy reunion for them.

I remember talking to Dad about his Home Teaching and how proud he was that he had served faithfully as a Home Teacher his entire adult life. It was a great sorrow to him that he had to be relieved of this calling in his last few years because he was physically unable to continue. His record has got to be among the great ones, however.

For Mom and Dad’s Sixtieth wedding anniversary in 1982 we had a special family celebration at the Whitney Ranch in the Bunkerville Mountains. Nearly all our large family was able to attend and it was wonderful. Dad often said that the ranch and the surrounding area were “sacred” ground and he loved to be there with his family.

I have always admired the way that Dad pitched in to help Mom whenever he had the time. Mom said he would always come and empty the wash tubs and would never let her carry the bushel baskets of fruit. After he retired from farming, he would help sweep, or do dishes, or make beds, or help with the cooking, or tie quits, or whatever needed to be done. Mom said he just couldn’t stand to watch her work while he sat idle. What a wonderful example of a loving, giving partnership. It is no wonder that they shared 63 years of happy marriage.

As Dad’s health failed, he had to rely more and more on Venice and Beth and Julia and others to help. This was hard for him as he was very independent. While speaking at his funeral, Julia tells of some important lessons Dad taught us in his last days and hours but there is one she didn’t mention which means a lot to me. His grandson, Bevin, had been instrumental in getting a “speaker” that Mom and Dad could keep at home and be able to listen to Church services when they were too sick to attend. But even though he had a perfect “excuse,” so to speak, to stay at home, he always went to church if it was at all possible. Even though he was many times too sick to go, he would do it anyway. He always said, “listening to the speakers was not enough. He couldn’t support the Bishop and the other leaders unless he was in church.”

As Beth and I stayed with Dad in the hospital that last Saturday night, it was heart-breaking to see him struggling to leave his bed and the hospital because he felt he had to go to Church. He was very ill and not really conscious of his surroundings at the time and I don’t know how he even knew it was Sunday morning, but he did know. And even though we sometimes laughed and sometimes cried as we tried to persuade his to use the “speaker” or pretended to get him ready for Church in order to ease his anxiety, his determination to support those in authority over him, re-emphasized this important lesson to me. It was his final example to all of us that nothing should keep us from being in our Church meetings on Sunday.

But the end came, as it must come to all of us. Our dearly-loved Father went home, and it was hard to see him go, but a joy to know he is in a better place and has left his pain-racked mortal body behind. Mom keeps Dad alive for us and through her, we have them both. More “honored” parents cannot be found. We are a “chosen” family.

A TRIBUTE TO MY FATHER

By Wilma Whitney Adams

I would like to pay a tribute to my father, George Fenton Whitney -- being spokesman for all of his children. Most certainly we are all indebted to him for all he has done for us, and the good name he has handed down to us, and the example he has set for us.

I'm sure my father was one of those noble sons in the great council in heaven for in him there is greatness. Not that he ever sought after, or held, high office. Not that he ever received public acclaim, nor was he ever renowned of man in high places. But within him are the quiet qualities of greatness -- dedication, faithfulness, zealousness, example, generosity, sincerity, tenderness, humbleness, and many more --which are surely recorded in the books of heaven and in the hearts of those who know and love him. Yes, my father stands tall in strength of character.

Throughout his life he has been devoted to the Lord and has put his whole might and mind and strength to serving Him. In all his endeavors in church activities (as in everything he does) he puts his whole heart into whatever job he is doing. How faithfully he worked -- he always felt the Lord's work should come first.

This was certainly typified while he was serving as counselor in the Zion Park Stake Presidency for ten years. With all of the work he had to do on his own farm, he would arise at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning and work all day and then go out until late at night taking care of church business. In addition to all their other duties, the Stake Presidency gave a blessing to all the pregnant women in their stake (and how much this was appreciated by them) and many bore testimony of the great help received from these blessings.

While in the Stake Presidency, the responsibility of the Stake Welfare Farm was under his direction. Because he could envision the possibilities of this farm and because he felt so dedicated to it, he worked zealously and unceasingly to fulfill this vision. This drive within him that cannot let him rest until the best that is possible is achieved, pushed him on until he had made of the Welfare Farm one of the best in the valley. He helped fill in a deep wash that ran through the farm; he cleared and leveled the land; he took water and other materials from his own farm to give to the welfare farm to make sure it got enough; he used his own equipment and gas; and when he could get a crew to help on the farm (or with the cement ditches), he personally supervised everything so it would be done just so. He spent hours and

hours of every week working at the Welfare farm, yet he was glad to do it -- because it was the Lord's work.

This same drive which has always been a part of him is currently pushing him on in, what I think, is his most important work yet -- genealogy. He has spent many, many hours seeking out names and compiling those already available. And because of the urgency he feels for this work, he wanted all of this work available for all of his grandparent's posterity so that should any of them have the desire to do this work, no time would be wasted in repeating work that was already done. They would know right where to start. And I'm sure it is his hope that many will be inspired to take up this work and keep their own records in good order.

Although my father never learned to type officially, he got himself a typewriter and using the "one-finger method," typed all of those hundreds of record sheets and with the financial backing of the Whitney Organization (the organization was also very helpful in collecting available names), had the sheets printed so they were available to all his extended family. As he has a new batch printed, he goes around and personally places them in everybody's book in the proper order because most of us do not understand how they should go. (Our father and mother gave all of their children and grandchildren one of these nice Book of Remembrances to keep their records in -- 66 in all. Dad also compiled a book to give to each of the great-grandchildren -- even anticipating those not yet born.) At the present time he is working on the records of my mother's family and already has over 50 sheets printed up and many more ready to be printed. I think this is a tremendous job that he has done. I know of no one else who has done anything like it. Certainly, this is a great mission that he is engaged in.

My father stands for honor and integrity. He has always been more than fair in all his dealings with his fellowmen. As Julia states in her story, "Father...would never let us girls put the big peaches on top. The fruit must be uniform throughout. He never took poor fruit to peddle... We shipped asparagus. . . and my father would never allow old or hard stalks to be put in the bunches." Janice says, "I remember how whenever Dad had anything to sell, whether it was an animal or machinery, he would always point out all the bad features instead of the good because he didn't want whoever bought it to feel cheated." And I think this pretty well typifies all his dealings with his fellowmen. He never took advantage of anyone, even in the smallest matters.

My father was a kindly man. He would far rather lose money than to hurt someone or to lose a friend. He cannot bear to hurt anyone in any way, even in the smallest matters. "Dad would loan his farm equipment to anyone who needed it and always when he loaned it out it would be full of gas and in good running order. Many times when it was returned, the gas tank would be empty and sometimes the equipment would be broken, but he never got mad and always loaned it out again." (J.W.R.)

My father has an appreciation and a love of beauty and especially wild and rugged beauty -- the wild flowers of the desert, the giant cactus, and the colorful hills and

valleys of the wilderness. "Dad could see beauty all around him. One time when we had one of the general authorities staying with us he asked Dad how his business was. Dad told him the farm didn't bring in much over a living but he pointed out the view of Pine Valley Mountain from the kitchen window and said, "The view we have in this valley is priceless, so we are rich." (J.W.R.)

Within him there is a deep sentimentality, too. I have walked with my father in the desert places of his youth, and I have watched his face aglow as he told of his early life there long ago. How much he loves the desert and all the happy memories associated with it.

It is said that the character of a man is reflected in the manner he treats his parents. My father certainly honored and respected his parents. My mother has expressed many times how impressed she was because my father always kissed his mother good-bye before leaving to go somewhere, even after he had grown to manhood.

And how harmoniously my father worked with his father through the years. On the farm helping each other, sharing each other's work, and sharing each other's joys and hardships. It was truly a wonderful relationship.

"Another trait that shows Dad's character is the love and respect he has for Mom. He would never allow us to talk spiteful to her or to be disrespectful. He always treated Mamma like a Queen." (J.W.R.)

My father has always loved working the land but he has sold most of his farm now and has only a small part left -- yet he still delights in growing things and watches over each plant tenderly and proudly. He takes such pains with things and they always seem to do their best. I'm sure no one in the land grew finer tomato plants than did my father this year. He had them carefully staked up and they grew to giant proportions. Of course, he always shares what he has raised with us and every time any of the family comes, he sends them away with their arms full. In the winter when there is nothing growing, they give away what they have bottled. In addition to fruits and vegetables, their yard is always a show place of beautiful flowers.

My father has always known hard work. Throughout the years working on the farm he always arose before dawn and worked until way after dark. Many nights irrigating through the night and then arising and working through the day as usual. After he had broken his leg, it never did heal properly and was very painful which made it hard for him but he continued to work just as hard.

My father was a generous man. Though he has never had much in the way of worldly wealth, he is always giving of what he has. All through the years, even when there was hardly enough money to take care of their own needs, he would always help the missionaries and always meet his obligations to the Lord first.

The many, many patient hours he has spent cracking and shelling nuts that each of us might have a big containerful each year. And that delicious molasses candy that

he and Mom slave over each year to give us, and all the fruits and vegetables that they gladly share with us.

“Dad lives the gospel every day in everything he does. The gospel and his faith are his life. I have never known him to give a speech or a blessing or even visit a home in a church capacity but what he didn’t kneel and ask God to be with him. Family prayers were held every day and blessings were asked in every undertaking. Although Dad never made a lot of money, he is rich indeed in blessings from the Lord and in knowledge of the gospel, and the respect and love of his family and everyone with whom he comes in contact. I feel very close to Dad and I could never express the depth of my love and respect for him. All the years I was growing up I spent most of my time with him. He would take me with him to plow or take the water or haul hay. If he went on a trip anywhere, he would usually take me along. The things I remember most about him during those years is his great kindness and his sense of humor. He would always sing to me as we went along. I have heard many people comment on how well Dad can speak. He knows his scriptures word for word, but more than that, he can make the stories so real and interesting that they seem part of our lives, as they should. I wish there was some way of “painting” a man’s character on paper so we could leave a record so that all Dad’s descendents (who will never know him) would be able to tell what a wonderful man he his.”
(J.W.R.)

TO OUR DEAR FATHER --

We want you to know how very much we love you, and appreciate all you have done for us, and are doing for us now. We are grateful for the wonderful example you have given us. For the heritage of your good character that you have bequeathed to us -- we will try to live worthy of it.

Love,
YOUR CHILDREN