



For Time and All Eternity

The Story of
Randolph Erickson Fife
and
Norma Berry Fife

Compiled by:
Diana Fife Rice
JoAnn Fife Larsen
Bonnie Fife Middleton
Randolph B. Fife
Bradley Fife

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Parents' Life Sketches

The Parents of Randolph Erickson Fife

[Click on photos or names to read their stories](#)



[Randolph Wilson Fife](#)



[Mabel Victoria Erickson Fife](#)

The Parents of Norma Berry Fife



[Herbert Alonzo Berry](#)



[Anna May Whiting Berry](#)

The Life Story of Norma Berry Fife



After completing dental school in Chicago, Illinois, Norma's parents, Herbert and May Berry moved their four children into a nice cement block house in St. Johns, Arizona while Herbert prepared for the dentistry exam.

Norma was born in that house February 27, 1917, their fifth child.



Her Aunt Elda crocheted the beautiful crocheted cap Norma is wearing here, with great big bows over her ears.

It had been five years since their last baby, and Norma was born smiling, according to her Aunt Myn. She was a ray of sunshine whenever she entered a room, and was interested in everyone and was loved in return.

No. 14

CERTIFICATE OF BLESSING

NAME Norma Barry

FATHER Herbert A Barry

MOTHER May Whitney

BORN July 27 1917

AT St Johns, Arizona

BLESSED May 13 1917

BY Chas P. Anderson

ENTERED IN RECORD OF MEMBERS NO. 544

SIGNED Geo E. White CLERK



Marie Berry Hamblin wrote about her memories of their childhoods. “My little sister, Norma, was born in St. Johns, Arizona. I was almost ten years old, and would sit spellbound, listening to the folks talk about world events. Having just recovered from the disaster of the Titanic in 1912, they had turned to long discussions of a great English hero called Lawrence of Arabia, who had led a revolt against the Turks and routed them from their long reign of terror. The bloody assassination of the Czar and his family had triggered the Russian Revolution, which resulted in the birth of communism. The events of 1917 changed the course of world history dramatically. It would never be the same again.

“Norma was four months old when the United States declared war on Germany and rushed our boys to France. In those days there was no TV, no radio, and no outside news except the Sunday paper that Grandpa EM Whiting took. He kept us up on what was happening in the outside world. He could spot propaganda and kept everybody straight on that, for it was widespread and scary.

“Norma’s arrival was a heavenly gift to our family that relieved the dark shadows of wars and rumors of wars that hung over us. She was a sweet, sweet baby that seldom cried, was pretty as a picture, and she lit up my life.

“Her first four siblings had been born in a log cabin that Grandpa Tom Berry had given our parents for a wedding present. But before Papa went to Chicago to study dentistry, he built in its place a new cement brick house, and we were all very proud of it. This is the house where Norma was born.

“Mama had really prepared for her baby. A new dining set from Sears, with fancy chairs, was round and sat upon lions claw feet. Everyone in town came to see it. She also ordered a new rug for every room, two rocking chairs, a curved glass bookcase and a new bed. The bed that Norma was born in was cast iron, painted white, with fancy curly cues on head and foot boards. The upstairs, including the girls and boys rooms were furnished with their old furniture.

“Papa made a chest for baby clothes and Mama lined it with white cloth printed with tiny rose buds. Papa even made a till for all the little things like safety pins and stockings. The outside and the lid Mama covered with a white soft material scattered with tiny pink dots. She shirred the material around the front, back and sides. It was so enchanting, even down to the big pink bow that draped over the handle that opened it. She also made a complete new set of baby clothes. We first four had worn out the ones she had made for her first baby.

“Norma was the first of the brood to be delivered by a real doctor. The first four had been brought forth by old sister Sherwood, who had never heard of germs. Uncle Frank Brown, fresh out of medical school, delivered Norma. Grandma Mariah Whiting assisted.

“The Victorian era was still very much an influence, and it was still an influence well after the end of the first World War. No lady would think of talking about having her baby,

even to her best friends, until it had actually arrived. I saw Mama hide her sewing many times when her friends were at the door, since baby clothes would be clue.

“The word pregnant wasn’t used in polite society, even in private homes. “In a family way” was the only explanation I ever heard either of my parents use when referring to a pregnant woman, even after they were grandparents.

“The big baby buggy Mama had bought and used for four babies with the green silk parasol, had worn out as much as the old baby clothes. Mama bought a new wicker buggy with a wicker hood. It was the first in St. Johns and big enough to hold Lee at the foot end.

“Aunt Elda said she always enjoyed tending Norma, she was such a good baby.”



After Herbert took the dental exam, he was offered a job in Prescott, Arizona.



In Prescott, the family lived in what became known as the house with hidden rooms. (this photo is an example of the type of Victorian house that had the hidden rooms.)

Again, Maree continued her narrative: “One day, Kay and Lee came down with the measles, and soon Norma followed. None of them seemed very sick, and soon they were all well again. But Norma had a relapse, and became very, very sick. When her throat glands began to swell, the Doctor became really worried. He was also concerned that she might lose her hearing.

“As soon as Papa came home from the office each day, he would take Norma in his arms and ask her where the little kittens were. She couldn’t yet talk, and she was in a miserable condition with her throat swollen terribly, and her eyes watery with fever. But she

would always smile at Papa and point to a long picture above the dining room entrance of six little kittens playing with a big ball of yarn. That picture was Papa's greatest comfort for as long as she would point, he knew she could still hear.

"Days went on, and Norma still did not get better. The doctor stopped giving false hope. Mama only let her baby out of her arms when Papa came home.

"When her baby kept getting worse, Mama just went to pieces, and Papa phoned Uncle Frank, who was still in St. Johns. Uncle Frank said he would do what he could, so Papa loaded us all in our Model T Ford, and we moved hurriedly back to our St. Johns home. Papa would continue to work in Prescott, but he would return to see our family in St. Johns as often as he could.

"Grandma Whiting and one of the Uncles met us at Holbrook in the middle of the night. We stayed at a hotel overnight, and Mama and Papa slept while Grandma walked the floor with Norma, giving them the first good night's sleep they had had in weeks.

"When we arrived in St. Johns the next day, Uncle Frank took over. He spent hours, from then on, over Norma. He just wouldn't give her up. The whole town was praying for our little baby.

"One day, Uncle Frank told Papa that he would have to operate, it was her only chance. Papa prepared Mama as best he could, and they all went down to Grandma Whiting's where the surgery took place on the kitchen table. Mama wasn't allowed in the house, so she just walked and walked through the orchard and the garden.

"Norma survived the surgery, and Uncle Frank was hopeful for a full recovery. The operation consisted of lancing several places under her throat. The pressure was so great, the fluids shot to the ceiling. Uncle Frank did a real neat job, for the scars were barely visible. After the operation, Norma didn't cry any more, and she slept most of the time for weeks.

"We had moved back to Prescott, and were somewhat back to a normal family life when the Spanish influenza swept through the nation. Mama was the first to come down with it. Schools and everything else closed but the grocery store, and they were only open a few hours a day.

"Papa moved all of our beds down in our big front room, where he made his hospital. Everyone in the family came down with the flu but Papa. I guess the Lord wanted our family preserved, and Papa did a fine job of seeing to that.

"Others were not as fortunate, for every day the big black hearse would drive past our house taking away our friends and neighbors.

"Norma seemed to take the flu better than anyone had hoped. I had the lightest case, so was soon up to help Papa take care of the others.

"One night about midnight, the siren went on. When the siren didn't stop, Papa got up, dressed, and went to town to find out what the matter was. Back then, you couldn't make

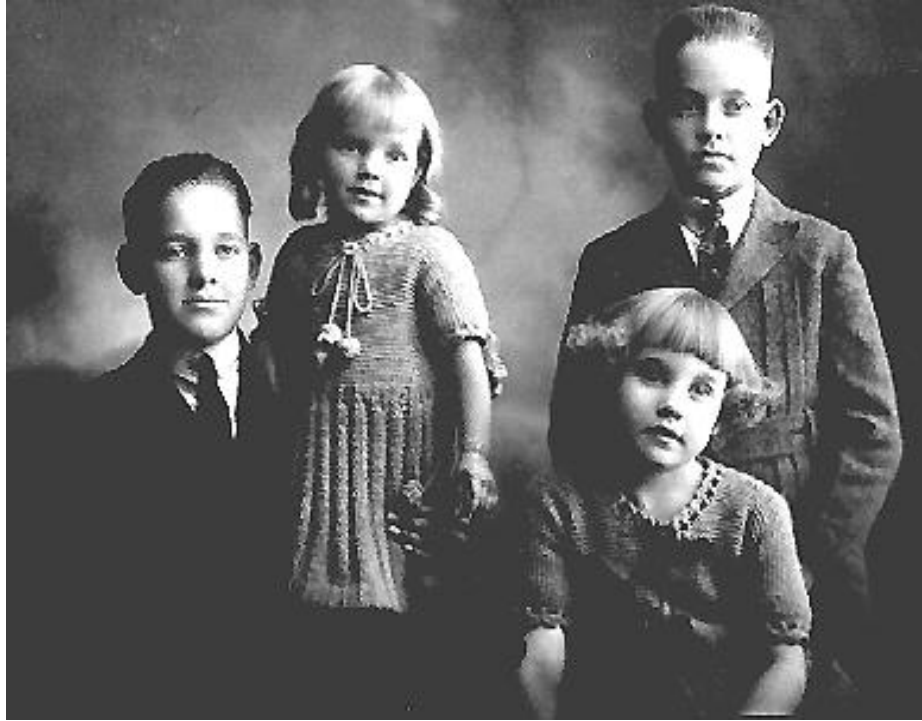
a phone call after six p.m. He ran all the way back home to tell us that the war was over and the armistice had been signed.

“The flu began to wane. Norma had survived, but the doctor thought she was too frail and she needed to be moved to a milder climate. Within a month, Papa had located a practice partnership he could buy in Mesa, and we moved there.”





This Professional photo of Norma was taken some time after her bouts with the measles and the flu. It was possibly taken in Mesa or Phoenix.



From left, Kay, Helen, Norma and Lee

When Norma was small, her mother wanted to send her to the store for bread. Norma hesitated and said,

“I’m afraid of that big dog.”

Her mother assured her the dog would not bite her. Norma said,

“But I’m afraid he will taste me!”

School Days for Norma

Everyone liked Norma from the first day of school. She was a quiet but noticeable person, well mannered, energetic, and intelligent. She was always neat and clean and dressed in the most darling clothes that fit so attractively. She was a grateful person too, for she would say how proud and thankful she was that her mother was able to sew her clothes.

She was very good at reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history and spelling, but her specialty was memorizing and reciting poetry.

She seemed to excel in all she participated in—anything requiring strength, skill or speed, she had it. Her running was fast and smooth. She always outran every kid in the lower grades.



First grade: Norma is on the back row, third from the right.

Tuesdays at 4:15 pm we went to the old academy for Primary. As soon as the bell rang, we were dismissed and most of the girls ran on down to the church. Regardless of how fast we ran, we'd always find Norma waiting at the iron gate on the Southeast corner of the church yard. Being a fast runner would give Norma a chance to rest before we got there, so she held the gate open for us and we walked very slowly up the long path to the church house, huffing, puffing and panting, trying to catch our breath before going into the chapel.

Her friend, Lenore said, "I shall never forget the morning she was sitting beside me in church. The Mother's Day program was to follow the Sacrament service. When her part was announced, she looked at me and smiled. I smiled and patting her hand said, "Don't be afraid." She had not told me she had been asked to be on the program. That was her style, she never bragged or boasted, but she could do everything perfectly.

"As she stood up and walked away from me, I thought, "What a pretty dress she has on for Mothers Day." The Bishop had her stand on a box at the side of the pulpit. She stood and said,

"Good morning. The author of this poem is unknown—but it is a story in verse which could happen at any street corner at any time. It is not only dedicated to mothers and grandmothers, but to everyone in this room."



Somebody's Mother

The woman was old, and ragged, and gray, and bent with the chill of the winter's day. The street was wet with a recent snow, and the woman's feet were aged and slow.

She stood at the crossing, and waited long, alone, uncared for, amid the throng of human beings who passed her by, nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout, glad in the freedom of "school let out" came the boys, like a flock of sheep, hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray, hastened the children on their way; nor offered a helping hand to her, so meek, so timid, afraid to stir, lest the carriage wheels or the horses feet should crowd her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop, the gayest laddie of all the group; he paused beside her, and whispered low, "I'll help you across if you wish to go."

Her aged hand on his strong young arm she place, and so, without hurt or harm, he guided her trembling feet along, proud that his own were fine and strong.

Then back again to his friends he went, his young heart happy and well content. "She's somebody's mother, boys, you know, for all she's old and poor and slow.

And I hope some fellow will lend a hand to help my mother, you understand. If ever she's poor and old and gray when her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed her head in her home that night, and the prayer she said, was "God be kind to that noble boy who is somebody's son and pride and joy."

Precious Memories of a Dear Friend

Norma Berry Fife

by Lenore N. Suman

I am pleased to be asked to share special memories I have about Norma. She was a dear, sweet, lovable person and a good friend to all. I was three months older than Norma, and felt a responsibility to look after her (you see, I was number six of nine girls in our family.) It came naturally for me to help someone younger, however we were about the same size.

Norma was a real "cutie"--everybody liked her from the first day of school. She was a quiet but noticeable person, well mannered, energetic, and intelligent. She was always neat and clean and dressed in the most "darling" clothes that fit so attractively that she looked like a perfect grown-up model. She was even striking in the black bloomers and white blouse which were required for our track meets once each month.

She was a grateful person too, for I can remember her saying how proud and thankful she was that her mom was able to sew her clothes.

She was very good at reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history and spelling, but her "specialty" was memorizing and reciting poetry. Of course her English was OK also. She liked filling in the blanks on the blackboard to complete a sentence, making a list of adjectives, nouns or verbs, or whatever the teacher suggested. She was always willing to figure an arithmetic problem on the board in front of the class.

One day we had a "Spelling Bee." Today they call it a "Spell down." The word that put all the girls down was geography. At recess, Alton Heap and his group of friends gathered around us to ask if we'd like to hear their secret. We tried to be cool, but then someone said, "What kind of a secret?" "It's something you need to know," they said. We gave in, "OK." With a smile they blurted out "George Edwards Old Grandfather Rode A Pig Home Yesterday." As they so proudly left, they assured us if we would remember that phrase we'd not miss on that word again. (GEOGRAPHY)

The talents I've mentioned thus far are not all of Norma's abilities, for she was very talented in athletics, evidently from an early age. Her brother Kay or perhaps her cousins must have coached her a lot, because when she was in our group, in sports, games, or exercises--anything requiring strength, skill or speed--she had it. She liked to be active--everything was easy for her to master. She seemed to excel in all she participated in.

Her running was fast and smooth. She always outran every kid in the lower grades. Recess was a fun time because everyone in the entire school (including the principal and all the teachers) enjoyed this break together. Due to the good supervision, suggestions, and the example set by the teachers and enforced on the school grounds, we learned quickly that those teachers were there not only to draw their pay, but because they had our future education and our ability to excel in sports activities at heart.

They were dedicated teachers, to be sure. We were learning as they were teaching-- 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mr. Wilford Hamblin was a good principal and organizer. His teachers were super helpers. They were:

- First grade....Miss Ester Isaacson
- Second grade...Miss Maud Isaacson
- Third grade....Genevieve Gibbons
- Fourth grade...Frank Marion Whiting
- Fifth grade....Maggie Jarvis
- Sixth grade....Miss Alred/Norma Coleman
- Seventh grade...Clyde Davis
- Eighth grade...Albert Jarvis/ Marion V. Gibbons
- Music.....Mr. Osler
- Janitor.....Soloman Waite

The teachers even took turns supervising the playground from 12 to 1 p.m. each day. I'm quite sure Norma realized, as I did, that all our teachers wanted us to do our best in the classroom and on the school grounds. They encouraged us to have self-confidence, to exercise our abilities and to never, ever, give up. They always said, "Complete what you have started."

Throughout the year our teachers would encourage us if we were lagging. They would offer suggestions on how a task could be done "easier" and would even take the time to show us what they meant.

Sometimes those little suggestions helped make us winners. We were always training for competition which took place on May Day each year. When I started first grade in 1921, we only braided the May Pole for our competition, but years later, at the time Norma was in our group, the first grade did jump rope and pitched horse shoes for competition.

To organize for "Competition Time," the teachers very carefully divided all the grades into two groups, equal in abilities, age and grade. The girls wore black bloomers and white blouses and the boys changed into track suits before starting time. As we entered our class that morning, red or blue ribbons were tied on our left arms, according to the chart which had been previously arranged.

When the bell rang, the Blues went to the North and the Reds went to the South of the school yard. We had been training all year on all events, so we were placed in the events the teachers and coaches thought would be best for us.

Fortunately, Norma and I were chosen on the Blue and also entered in the relay. I was to carry the baton from 3rd to her, and she ran it in for the Blues to win. While waiting for our pending dash event to be called, a bunch of us sat on the ground and watched the high jumpers go over the rod with a pole, which was very exciting to us. We then walked around for a while and watched the third grade broad jump (the former name for the long jump) after which we watched the first and second graders jump rope and pitch horse shoes.

The dash was called and Norma won by at least four feet. As this was our last event we rested momentarily and talked about what a fun day it had been with lots of good competition, sportsmanship, and a lot of happy kids who had never won a prize before.

The mothers, who had been there since noon serving hot dogs, punch and cookies, had joined in the fun also. They told us how much they had enjoyed the afternoon, being with us, serving, and watching the events.

We picked up a cup of punch and got closer to the score table to hear the results. We were very excited, for the "blues" had won most of the events. The teachers had done another super job, for the teams were very evenly matched. The Blues had won only by two events. Each year it seemed to be more fun than the last.

We were all grateful for the patience the teachers had put in for our benefit. It was their close supervision and encouragement that paid off for us again. Everyone had done their best and had fun doing so.

Since the whole school and a lot of visitors from the town who had come to see us compete were out on the grounds for the entire day, our two small out-houses (we called them "The Privies") were very popular.

Sometimes there was a line waiting. The girls house faced East, the boys West. Brother Waite scrubbed them out with lye and soap each week so the floors and tops around the holes were clean. Each night he'd spray around the holes with chemicals. Comments were heard as to how neatly the privies were kept.

We had another house on the grounds which we called the "wood shed." It sheltered the school's wood and janitorial supplies. Brother Waite kept it as neat and clean as a classroom, except it had a dirt floor.

Soloman Waite was a kind person with grey/white hair. He spoke very quietly and always kept the rooms supplied with wood for the big iron stoves. He kept our floors clean, furniture dusted, and windows shining.

Each morning a roaring fire was started in all the rooms so it would be warm and comfortable by 9:00 a.m. In addition to his having to keep plenty of wood on hand for each stove, he was also responsible for keeping the ashes from backing up and falling on the floor. He watched that chore very closely and when it was time for a change, he'd bring the wheelbarrow to each door and carry the ash-collector pan from the bottom of the stove and dump it into the wheelbarrow.

He'd then go on to another room until he'd emptied enough stoves to fill the barrow. He'd then take it to the "Privies" and empty the ashes into the holes. This would go on for about four more trips, until all the stoves were emptied of ashes and each hole of the two out-houses had been serviced. This would keep the odors down in the out-houses for a couple of weeks.

The ashes were also used for marking the school grounds for competition time or track meets, or to line the baseball court, volley ball, etc. At 9:00 a.m. each school morning the old iron bell would ring loud and clear. It could be heard all over the town. The students were trained to quickly gather and take their places in line at the front of the building.

Teachers were there to supervise and keep order. If there were no announcements to be given, Mr. Hamblin would signal, and the bugle call would sound. I learned about politics from the Berrys and the Hamblins. The Whitings were poor politicians until Aunt Elda Brown's boys grew up, having learned from their father, who was the son of Aunt Thurza, Tom Berry's sister.

These grandsons of Aunt Thurza learned their politics well, for when Jack Albert Brown was in the state legislature, he changed the political map of Apache County. He was on a first name basis with Barry Goldwater, and he could have become governor of Arizona if they would have moved the Capitol to St. Johns.

Jack Albert, always true to his roots, would never have moved. But it was my Grandpa Berry who could squeeze a vote out of a voter as surely as Brother Heap could squeeze a squawk out of the silver dollar eagle.

I know because Grandpa squeezed votes out of me. I didn't dare squawk, even a little bit. I voted exactly like he told me to. He had a lot of Brigham Young's qualities in him. I think my Grandpa could have led everybody across the plains, if he had been asked to do so.

By the time these original pioneer women had raised their children to take over, their husbands were dead. Grandpa Berry was one of the last to go. When I taught school there, every neighbor Grandpa and Grandma Berry had were widows. Even the next generation of men didn't survive much better.

When I was teaching Family Living at Snowflake High, I had my senior girls survey how many widows and widowers there were in the little Mormon towns around the two counties. This was 1956, and the results were shocking. There were 36 widows and 3 widowers in St. Johns. The other towns surveyed showed much less difference.

The Berry women, like most women of the day, were always submissive to their husbands and fathers when it came to politics. This made block votes a sure thing. There was an exception: my Grandma Anna Maria Whiting. She was a free thinker, almost a rebel. She would have made a fine hippy because she was the first woman in northern Arizona to cut her hair like a man's and the first to wear her husband's pants when she had a man's job to do.

In all my years in St. Johns, not one of the pioneer men ever spoke to me, even when I was in High School. The same bishop served for 40 years, and I passed him many times on the sidewalk. Never did he even greet me, but I thought nothing of it during those days, for I was almost afraid of every one of them.

Norma's Growing Up Years



In her teen years, Norma became the tallest of the girls in her family, 5 feet ten inches, but her feet remained an average size, 7 1/2.

Norma loved her family, and spent a lot of time at home. She had learned from her oldest sister Effie to only talk about the good qualities in people. When questioned about what Effie thought of someone known for obnoxious behaviour, Effie had said, "My, he has beautiful eyelashes."

She also enjoyed her friends. Friendship was very important to her. Her closest friends were Phil Dana, King Udall, and Wendel Noble. They were such good friends., and went everywhere together.

Norma's patriarchal blessing was very specific about the man she was to marry, and even though she had several proposals of marriage, from very dear friends, she did not feel she had yet met the man referred to in her blessing.

Norma loved people. She was unselfish and didn't worry too much about earthly things. She became an accomplished stenographer, seamstress and cook.

During the depression, her parents struggled financially. People would put off having dental care. Her parents would accept goods in trade for dentistry. And Herbert came up with the idea of a mobile dental office. For each school child, the school district paid one third of the cost, the parents paid a third of the cost, and Herbert made up the rest. He also donated dental care to the Indians. Herbert outfitted a trailer as a dental office and traveled to his patients on the Indian reservation

They managed to get by, thanks to May's thriftiness and Herbert's hard work. Norma remembered looking all through the house for stray change, one time. They took the 15 cents they found to buy a pound of hamburger for dinner.

Maree said, "Our oldest sister,



Misses Norma and Helen Berry
 Among the girls who will attend Phoenix Union high school this year will be the Misses Norma and Helen Berry, daughters of Dr. and Mrs. H. A. Berry, 517 North 13th street. The young women have been attending the Powell School for Girls in Washington, D. C. Miss Helen Berry was assistant editor of the Powell Echo and Miss Norma Berry was active in art circles at the school.

young women have been attending the Powell School for Girls in Washington D.C. Miss Helen Berry was assistant editor of the Powell Echo, and Miss Norma Berry was active in art circles at the school.

"The Powell School for Girls may have been the closest school they could walk to, cheaper perhaps than to afford a taxi to any other."



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Effie, not yet married, was alone back in Washington D.C. and she was homesick. Mother always wanting her children to enlarge their horizons, so she let Norma and Helen go stay with Effie. (Then Mother and Dad had an excuse to go visit back east and bring their two youngest daughters back home.) Effie lived close in to the heart of things in D.C.

"This was the tail end of the Victorian period, and our Mother was very Socially minded. When they returned home, this clipping ran in the Phoenix paper: Among the girls who will attend Phoenix Union high school this year will be the Misses Norma and Helen Berry, daughters of Dr. and Mrs. H. A. Berry, 517 North 13th street. The

Being tall, about five feet 10 inches, clothing hung well on Norma, and she would dress very strikingly.

She had beautiful hands, and her nail-beds were set deep on her fingers. She would meticulously file her lovely nails, and kept them polished.

She had lovely dark hair, sometimes wearing it long, but usually it was waved in the style of the day, or set with bobby pins into curls around her face. Her forehead was high, so usually she wore bangs. She had high cheekbones, and a wonderful complexion.

Her earrings were usually a screw type fastening mechanism rather than clips, often of rhinestones, sometimes in pretty, jewel-toned colors or set with turquoise stones, as she was raised in Arizona and loved the Indian designs. She also loved to wear hats, especially ones with wide brims. Some of her hats had little stylish veils. If you have ever seen the actress Loretta Young, Norma very much resembled Loretta.



She saved special things in her cedar chest. There was a cape, brocade in white, silver and gold weave. There was a silk kimono that her brother Kay brought back for her when he traveled through the Orient on his way home from his mission in Africa. She probably never wore that, it was a treasured memento from Kay's mission. The cedar chest also contained a leopard collar and hat, made of real fur. There was also a gray shawl, but we don't know anything about the shawl's history.

It is significant that the items were from the days before she married. When she became a mother, she devoted herself to her new duties with all her heart. Her nails and hair were still cared for, but glamour was willingly traded for raising children and making a home for her family. Her finances were very limited and she simplified her wardrobe accordingly. She typically had one nice dress, and one for every day, and then did her laundry every night.

Diana remembers her mother sewing herself a coat one year in Fresno during a rare cold winter. Norma came home from a day working at the office with pattern and fabric in hand, and whipped out a very nice coat that evening. It was even lined.



Norma and Randy working at a fund-raiser for the Fresno third ward in about 1958. Norma is wearing the coat she made in one evening.

Come Monday to my party
For I'll be sweet sixteen
Come at seven, stay till eleven
and we'll eat and play between.
Norma Berry
517 North 13th Street

Handwritten invitation by Norma Berry

Norma was unaware of her ability to sing until my senior year in high school. In choir, the director suddenly stopped the music and demanded, “Who sang that high note?” Norma thought maybe her note was off-key, so she didn’t come forward. The director soon found it was Norma, and taught her to be a soloist. She learned to love singing.

Norma also followed the dramatic traditions of the Whittings. She and her brother Lee were in one of the Whiting plays, a Mutual play, and the senior class play. After she was married, she directed many evenings of entertainment and dance floor shows in Gridley. In Tucson she directed two plays for the stake. One was called “The Family Upstairs”. They rehearsed at the institute building at the University of Arizona.

She kept in touch with her old school friends. Phil Dana wrote her:

“How are you getting along on your opera work? The great Prima Donna Berry, that’s you, isn’t it? More power to you, Norma, that’s what makes an individual worthwhile---things like that.”



During her high school years, her parents owned the Forest Motel in Holbrook. All the older children were married. Norma worked hard at the motel. Her mother was seriously ill during those years, but Norma was a whiz at getting things done. She was the child always at her parents’ side, helping them all the time in their financial and health problems. She was always so good to them.

A Powerful Spirituality

When Norma was 15, she had a dream which was very important to her. She told very few people about her dream, it was so sacred to her. Norma was always worried about her family, feeling that they were growing far apart. Her sister Effie was always sickly, One night, she had a dream. She was in a double bed with her sister, Helen, asleep. She woke up, and two men dressed in white were standing beside her. They motioned for her to follow them, which she did, and they went to the closet. When they were all three there, they started to rise in the air, like they were in an elevator. She looked down at the bed, and her body was still there beside her sleeping sister. They went through a great deal of space in a very short time. She saw a man who reminded her of the Savior. She could not say for sure that it was Jesus, but emphasized he reminded her of him.

She saw lots of people and recognized some of them as relatives and friends. She was told not to worry, that her family would be all right, and that they would all go on missions. (Effie served a stake mission, and all the rest of the family, including Norma and her parents served missions.)

Everyone she saw was dressed in white, and they all seemed very busy. She saw her grandfather, who rushed over and told her escort that it wasn't time for Norma to be here. She turned away, and was suddenly back in her bed. She felt unwell, but dressed and went to school as usual. That afternoon, she was sent home from school because she looked so pale. She told her mother about the dream, and her mother asked her to describe the clothing the people in white were wearing. Norma perfectly described temple clothing, even though she had not yet been endowed or seen anything inside the temple.

Patriarchal Blessings

In Norma's youth, it was not uncommon for a person to have more than one patriarchal blessing. Norma had two. The first one is undated, but we feel it was the first.

A blessing given by John F. Nash, Patriarch, upon the head of Norma Berry, daughter of Herbert A. Berry and Anna May Whiting, born February 27, 1917 in St. Johns, Arizona.

Sister Berry, I lay my hands upon your head and seal upon you this Patriarchal Blessing that shall be an inspiration to you all of your life, and a protection to you against the power of evil, for Satan is striving for the last time to win the hearts of the youth of Zion. You were loved in the spirit world because of your integrity and purity of life and you have brought with you the faith you possessed and at times you seem to remember some things that occurred before you came to earth. You shall know your Companion to be one who was your companion over there, with whom your life shall be a happy one upon the earth.

You are of Ephriam, the Son of Joseph, and inherit the blessings of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Your faith is such that you shall receive inspiration from the eternal world, that you shall know beforehand occurrences that shall come to pass. You shall be known far and near for the testimony that you have received of the Lord and his works. It shall be your privilege through dreams and visions to communicate with your progenitors that are in the Spirit World. They shall bless you and direct you in the work that you shall have to do in the House of the Lord, for you shall be called upon to officiate therein and to administer ordinances for the living and for the dead. You are loved of the Lord and his blessings shall rest upon you. As you continue in your faithfulness no power shall mar your peace and happiness while you live upon the earth. Be active in the work of the Lord and in the service of your fellow men, then shall you be secure against the power of the destroyer and shall come forth in the morning of the First Resurrection to meet the Father and the Son face to face and to be crowned Queen over your posterity forever. These blessings I seal upon you through your faithfulness, in the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Long Beach, California

August 31, 1942

A blessing given by Patriarch Thomas Thompson Durham on the head of Norma Berry, daughter of Herbert A. Berry and Anna May Whiting. Born February 27, 1917, in St. Johns, Arizona.

Sister Norma Berry, in the authority of the Holy Melchisedek Priesthood and according to my calling in the Church, I lay my hands upon your head and pronounce a blessing upon you as the Spirit of the Lord shall give me utterance.

You are one of the choice daughters of Israel. Thy spirit was one of the true ones with the Father. You were blessed with an understanding; and as the plan of earth life was presented, your spirit was made to rejoice; and when the vote came, you voted with the righteous spirits to come upon the earth. You are one of the righteous blood and have been bequeathed a lineage through thy righteousness. You are an heir to the blessings given to Joseph and the righteous Patriarchs. You came through Ephraim, one of the choice and true sons of God. And you are entitled to the blessings and covenants of Israel; and as you are faithful to the covenants upon earth as you were in the Spirit Home, these blessings shall be given unto you. It is your right to the sealing power of God and to the rights and privileges, through a noble companion, of the Holy Priesthood; and through prayer and true supplication, your life shall draw one of the noble sons of God who shall seek thee as a helpmate and you will visit the Temple of the Lord where you will be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise to one of the faithful sons of the Eternal Father; and you shall be blessed to give forth of your strength, according to the will of the Father, to bear the souls of men, for I bless thee with the key to the increase allotted by our Father in Heaven. There are spirits held in the Spirit Home that are marked to come upon earth through you and to call thee mother; and as you are true to your motherly instincts, not one of them shall be lost unto thee, for they will be spirits that shall be easily taught in the light of truth. Be faithful to the covenants that you have made in the waters of baptism and you shall be honoured of God with great and glorious testimonies of the divinity of the mission of our Lord and Savior. Thy mother instincts shall be touched by the Comforter and you shall not be led away in by and forbidden paths and the noble talents which God has blessed you with, as you use them liberally, other talents shall be given unto you and thou shalt live to become one of the great benefactors and leader among thy sex. Position of trust shall be imposed upon you and the Holy Ghost shall reveal unto you in times when the crossroads come unto you and the will of God shall be accomplished. You shall help sing the songs of Zion and thy voice shall increase with the sweetness of the Spirit and it shall become a power that shall touch the hearts of those you associate with. The talent of speech shall increase upon you and the power to discern the right from the wrong shall be true to the trust that is placed upon you. Be faithful and diligent day by day in offering thy supplication unto the Lord, for the world is sick because of their forgetfulness of this privilege granted unto them, and it shall light thy countenance and it shall be remarked as a witness of the words of this blessing that the Spirit of the Lord, filled with the holy love shown by our Lord and Savior, shall rest upon you.

I seal upon you the power to be resurrected that you may become a Queen and a Priestess unto thy husband and a mansion of glory shall be prepared for you and those you love. I bless thee with immortality and eternal life to reign as one of the noble mothers of Israel and a never ending increase to the glory of God our Eternal Father. Be comforted for you shall be guided and protected by an angel from harm and danger and you shall live to the fulfilling of thy earth life mission. I seal you up against the powers of the adversary and pronounce

this blessing upon you according to my Patriarchal calling and in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. (signed) Thomas T. Durham



Norma Berry and two of Art's boys

source: Diana Fife Rice

Dear Norma

After a month's delay I will attempt to answer your most wonderful birthday letter—and as I am neither a poet nor can I paint you a picture, I feel that you did both in your letter to me. ... I shall always love and appreciate this letter to me. I know every word of it came from your heart. Mother and I often wonder what we have done to warrant such a wonderful family of children, Inlaws etc. I don't believe that it can be beaten in the Church

Lots of love

Dad

While growing up, Norma's mother would occasionally make large batches of fudge and divinity, then divide it all equally among the family, letting each one have their own plate. Kay and Lee would gobble their share quickly, then talk Norma out of most of hers. She was a loving sister, and gave these treats willingly to her big brothers. A favorite family treat was watermelon. Norma liked to save the heart of her piece to eat it last. Much of the time one of her older brothers would talk her into giving up the delicious morsel, and again, she was willing to share.

Norma had the ability to treat everyone as if they were her best friend. Elizabeth Berry said “She was and still is my favorite in-law,” Virginia Berry said, “Norma was my best friend. I’m not sure I was hers, but she was mine.” Correnne McCray Magee said, “Norma always gave me the feeling that we were very close cousins. I felt she was the only friend who really knew me. She would treat the poorest or the queen equally well as guests in her home. She made every visitor feel welcome and happy.”

Another close cousin, Louine Brown Shields had been chosen to be the Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.” Louine was excited, but worried about what to wear to her coronation at the Sweetheart Ball. She had no money to make or buy a dress. A package suddenly arrived by mail. Norma understood her circumstances and had sewn a beautiful white formal as a surprise for Louine.

It was typical for Norma to think of others in this way. She would frequently tell her children if they were injured or suffering that she would willingly endure the pain for them, if it were possible to do so.



Mission and Higher Education

Being so loyal to her family, Norma lived at home and helped support her two older brothers, Kay and Lee, who were serving missions. She worked for several years before serving her mission and starting her schooling.

Norma was living in Holbrook when she got her mission call to go to the Southern States Mission, based in Atlanta, Georgia. President LeGrande Richards was her first

mission president followed by Merrill D. Clayson. She spent a lot of time working in the mission home, and got to know both of her mission presidents and their families very well.



Norma entered the mission field June 9, 1937. It had only been 40 years since the first Sister Missionaries had been called on Missions. She was twenty years old. Her farewell was in the Holbrook Ward, Snowflake Stake.

She was a good missionary with a deep spiritual commitment to the Savior. Even though much of her time was spent doing office work in the mission home, she had many

opportunities to teach the gospel. She observed how harsh life was for the poor, and yet the rich still lived in splendor. Norma saw that the South was still deeply scarred from the Civil War. She returned home a year and a half later.

After her mission, she went to Salt Lake and stayed with her Aunt Myn and Uncle Don. They lived several blocks from the temple in a lovely old two story home. They lived at 100 First Street in downtown Salt Lake City.



Norma, possibly in Salt Lake City. Notice the car in the background.

Also living with the Priestleys were her sister Helen and some of their cousins.

She attended school at LDS Business College, with her cousins Irma and Elma, where she learned to take shorthand, improved my typing skills and bookkeeping. Her sister Helen and cousin Geraldine went to the U of U.



This photo of Norma on the right and her cousin Maydene with President Grant at left was taken in front of Uncle Frank’s medical office. Maree Berry Hamblin explained, “Uncle Frank’s office was right downtown, handy to President Grant’s business office. President Grant was a very down to earth man. Mother and Dad always called on him when they went to Salt Lake City.”

The Church was much smaller in those days. President Heber J. Grant walked around without any thought of body guards. While serving as Prophet, he was also a business man—president of an insurance company.

Norma’s Uncle Don Priestley worked for the Deseret News. He and Aunt Myn both had beautiful voices, and they sang on radio and as guest soloists with the tabernacle choir. Her cousins, sister and Norma all cherished the time they spent living in the Priestley’s home.

But the time came when Norma was needed at home, so she returned to Holbrook to help her sister Maree get the Motel back into condition to sell it. In addition to running the

motel, cleaning the rooms, Maree and Norma painted everything inside and out. They lived in whatever rooms were not rented. The motel was located right across the main highway in Holbrook where the famous Teepee Motel is still located.

Two Sisters, a Motel to Save, and Christmas

According to Maree Berry Hamblin: “In the fall of 1940, with the threat of World War Two, it was necessary for my four children and me to leave Alaska. Joycell was in eighth grade, Leilani and Markay were in elementary school. Jeannine was a toddler. It was too late in the year for me to find a teaching position, so I was relieved when the folks offered me a chance to go with my sister Norma to Holbrook to get our parents’ motel back in shape.



“Mother was not well, and Dad had leased out their 36-unit motel in Holbrook and they had moved to Lynwood. Now the three-year lease was up and the place was in shambles, just awful. The gas station had closed down, and the café was the only thing left bringing in a small rent. The plumbing was shot, windows were broken, and the doors on six units facing the wind could not be shut due to the drifting sand blown in. All but the newest units in the back needed painting, including the service station and the café.

Dad was in poor financial condition since he had not yet had time to build up his practice in Lynwood, nor did he have anything coming in from the Motel except repair bills. The plan was an opportunity for me, since it would mean free lodging and utilities, plus a

very modest, but life-sustaining food allowance. We could help ourselves to Mother's ample cellar at the Motel.

I had expected my husband, still in Alaska to send me the monthly checks he promised, but he never did. There would be no wages for Norma or me, but I could have the real estate commission if I could sell the place. Norma, always willing to help her family, would be compensated in other ways.

The Forest Motel, once the nicest in Holbrook, looked so shabby Norma and I decided to paint the outside first. As soon as we settled in the managers' unit, and got the older kids in school, we started in. It was war time, and no one could be hired to do the heavy work. Besides, we didn't have enough cash, since not a single unit was fit to rent to tourists.

One of our hardest jobs was to tend the furnace. Every morning we would shovel out the ashes, carry them up the basement steps and dump them out on the prairie. Then we would build a big coal fire to heat the 900-gallon tank for hot water.

The motel was stucco outside and in, and in poor condition. Grandfather Whiting and the Uncles had a lime kiln. They gave us what we needed to mix a solution of lime and water, like Tom Sawyer used, called white wash. It was hard to get the right solution, and we had to use brushes like you use to paper walls. The brushes leaked and the wash ran down our arms and into our rubber gloves. No matter how often we stopped to wash up, Norma and I blistered our fingers, and that was the most painful part. However, it did cause us to speed up, and we worked each day until it was too dark to see.

It took us a week to finish, and although we only painted the walls that showed, it looked like a new place. In fact, it looked so good that Morris Barth, who owned the Tee Pee Motel down the road, came by and offered us quite a sum to paint his place. We couldn't spare the time, and suggested he get Ed Benner, the local unhandyman. Mr. Barth was not amused.

Norma and I finally got so swamped we decide to hire a couple of Indian women who came by asking for work. We offered them fifty cents per hour. One had a little boy who played nicely with my little Jeannine, the same age.

The Indian women borrowed my sewing machine to use in the evenings, since we had furnished them a room. And as soon as they finished their full, flouncy velvet skirts for the big Gallup Pow Wow, they took off for New Mexico, and left their assigned work unfinished. They were supposed to sweep the sand and debris out of the 36 units, and then start in on the piles of dirty laundry. Low and behold, we were stuck with both.

Norma and I were a fantastic team. We could do most anything, as long as we had each other, and kept laughing a lot.

In two days, on an old chug-chug washer, we washed, rinsed twice, and wrung through a hard rubber wringer, 36 bedspreads and a hundred sets of sheets, pillowcases and towels. Hanging them on the line was hard on our backs. By the time we had finished the worst of the overhaul on the place, we had each lost ten pounds.

It was nearing Christmas and we had decided to open for business on New Years Day. By then, everything would be in tip-top shape. Ordinarily, I would have been making things for the children to fill out their expected toys and things. But Norma and I were so tied up in hard labor, we had no extra time or energy.

I had been expecting a check from my husband up in Alaska. He had promised, but had not followed through. I kept thinking that check from Alaska would arrive soon.

Not until a kind relative brought us a beautiful tree on Christmas Eve, did Norma and I come alive. I left her and the kids trimming the tree with mother's old decorations, and rushed to the post office one more time, just an hour before the stores were to close. I found only the same cold, empty mailbox.

Upon returning home, Norma and I faced each other. We had barely squeaked by on food, so didn't even have a chicken for Christmas dinner. "You make some of your divine divinity and chocolate fudge, and I'll think up something for presents" I said. It was war-time and sugar was rationed. But our clever mother had long ago packed 50 pounds of sugar into fruit jars. We let the kids play in a far away unit, and went to work.

In the kitchen next door to where the kids were playing, Norma assembled the sugar and other ingredients she needed from Mother's cellar for the candy-making. Soon mounds of fluffy divinity and a nice pan of fudge were cooling. Norma also found new towels and wash cloths in the Motel linen closet, as well as new tooth brushes and new bars of fragrant hand soap for stocking stuffers.

Norma fed the children, fixed them hot chocolate, got them ready for bed, sang carols, told stories and settled them down for the night. Then she finished filling the stockings with her divine divinity and chocolate fudge wrapped in wax paper. A teddy bear and a tiny doll left behind by tourists were placed in eighteen-month-old Jeannine's little stocking.

I set up my sewing machine in number six, and pondered. The year before, Santa had brought the girls each a Snow White doll, inspired by Walt Disney. They were beautiful dolls, but their dresses had always been rather plain, so I decided to make the dolls new dresses.

I had no cloth, and no money to buy any. We wore long evening dresses a lot in those days, and always dressed up for dances or parties. I grabbed my two evening dresses, and soon I was cutting them up for doll dresses. Luckily, both formals had lots of ruffles, so I was able to make the dresses and petticoats so full they could stand alone.

Norma came over to give me a sample of divinity, and when she saw the dresses, she assured me they would be a dazzling success. She took two feathers from her best hat and made each doll a wide brimmed hat out of the scraps from the formals.

She then went to sleep next to the children, and I was left alone to ponder Markay's present.

Markay was in the third grade, and had requested a cowboy outfit and some boxing gloves. The material was the big problem. Then I thought of the very expensive suede jacket I had brought from Alaska. I made a bolero vest, with fringed edges.

The fur jacket my folks had given me as I left for Alaska, would be just the thing to make the chaps. I lined them with suede from the sleeves of the suede jacket. The outfit turned out remarkably well for something cut with no pattern.

By now, it was 4:30 a.m. I was excited, and just looking at what I had created helped sustain my enthusiasm. There were just enough scraps of the suede jacket to make the boxing gloves. But by then, I was so tired that I couldn't remember how they should look, and began searching magazines for a picture.

I couldn't find a photo, so shut my eyes to try and remember what Uncle Ralph's gloves had looked like in my childhood. It finally came to me that the tops had to be bigger than the bottoms for all that padding. I cut a paper pattern, then the suede, and started sewing. I couldn't give up now.

The gloves soon began to take shape and looked like the real thing. I used medicated cotton from Dad's medical supplies for the padding. An ice pick helped me punch the holes in the cuffs for the laces. I found the laces in the cellar in a pair of Dad's old shoes. Finished, I took everything to the decorated tree and placed the gifts by the children's stockings.

I fell into bed just a half hour before the children followed by Norma, burst in to show me what Santa had brought them. But try as I might, I couldn't get my eyes open. I finally managed to open them long enough to "Ah" and "Oh" over what Santa had brought.

Strangely, that is the only Christmas my children ever talk about. Markay's gloves fitted him to a T and he shadow-boxed all day in his cowboy outfit. After having to see what Santa had brought, I fell back on the bed, and Norma let me sleep for hours. I didn't see my girls again until late afternoon. Norma had let them go show off their dolls' dresses to all their friends. She had fed them cream of wheat for breakfast and Vienna sausages, biscuits and canned peaches from Mother's food storage cellar for dinner.

Although the two evening dresses, the suede jacket and the fur were my prized possessions at the time, I had no need for them after my move to California. As the war worsened, no one dressed up for any occasion, and by the time the war was over, they were all out of style.

Someone gave us a small turkey for New Year's and no sooner than we had turned on those motel lights and our VACANCY sign, than a handsome young captain came into the office to rent to whole motel for his green recruits who were coming in to learn to fly. We kept the six units in back for tourists.

Business boomed and we rented out the service station that had been vacant for three years. We even rented the grease room one night to an elephant, when a small circus came through. Everything began coming together, and paying off. Within three years, I sold the motel for cash, and our parents gave me the real estate commission.

Norma went back to Salt Lake City where she enrolled in school to become a nurse. She could not complete the first year because she developed a serious foot problem and had to have surgery. Dropping out of school, the surgery was performed on the toe next to her left pinkie toe. The joint in that toe had to be removed, making that toe her shortest.

My children and I moved to California where our world started spinning again in the right direction.

After the motel was sold, Norma returned to Washington D.C. where our brother Lee was attending medical school. He and his wife Virginia invited her to live with them and find a job in Washington. With the war, there was a great need for typists, and Norma soon found a good job as a stenographer.” --Maree Berry Hamblin

The Romance - How Norma met Randy

by Norma Berry Fife

After the operation on my foot, and I had tossed my crutches away, Lee and Virginia convinced me that I should pay them a visit in Baltimore. Lee was going to medical school and Virginia was working as a punch board operator for the Social Security office there. Norma Jean was about 3 1/2 years old. I finally decided to go, and at that time, Mother and Dad were going to Houston to a big Dental Convention where Dad was to introduce a new method of removing stains on teeth. I decided to go that far with them. We had a wonderful time at the convention, and Dad was really quite a celebrity, and the Dental Society accepted his demonstration very well.

I took a bus from Houston to Baltimore and decided to stop off on my way at Albemarel County, Virginia and just see if I could trace any Berrys there. Our line had ended there. The night the Bus arrived in the little town of ????? a lady sitting next to me asked if I were stopping there. I told her I was, and she asked if I had some place to stay. It was during the War and very hard to get Hotel accommodations, no matter where you were. I told her I did not, but hoped to stay at the Hotel. She was horrified, and said the Hotel was no place for a lady to stay. She had some friends that lived there, and insisted I go to them

and ask them if I could stay the night with them. I took their name and address and after thanking her for her kindness, hailed a taxi and went to find their home. It was raining, and I was very thankful for the warmth and safety of the cab.

The people were most gracious and as soon as I told them, introduced me and showed me to a lovely room. I told them I needed to leave early and would appreciate it if they would call me about 7:00 O'clock the next morning. The next morning I was awakened by a knock, and the woman invited me into a lovely hot breakfast she had prepared.

When I was ready to leave, I asked where I could find the County Courthouse, and the woman laughed and took me to the front door. Right across the street stood a small white County Courthouse. I could hardly believe my eyes.

I spent the day going through records, deeds, etc. and found about three deeds made out to George and Sarah Berry. I found what I believed to be George's father. His name was Bradley. I am the only one who believes this connection to be right.

I walked out of town to a little old cemetery but could find nothing to help me.

I went on to Baltimore-- took the civil service exam--got a job as a serial--took Norma Jean on the bus to see Helen--met Preston--went to cemetery to see???



Virginia Ellsworth Berry and her sister-in-law Norma Berry probably Chevy Chase, Maryland Source: Evelyn Ellsworth Gwartney

Helen stopped in Baltimore on her way home from her mission to see us. Sunday after Sunday School she wanted to go over to Washington to see Ruth Udall. Lee had invited Sherman Brinton to dinner. We were late getting the train to Washington because we didn't know how to leave Sherman. When he found out our plan, he insisted on taking us to the train. He called a cab and he and Lee rushed us to the station. When we got there, the train was pulling out and we ran to catch it. I remarked at the time that there must be a reason for us to get to Washington--and there was. I met the man I was to marry that night.

We were late for church, and of course had to walk in and sit on the front row. Everyone saw us come in including Ruth. We did not know we were as late as we were and we were really shocked when the choir finished singing and they closed with prayer. Very embarrassing. We saw Ruth and met many of her friends. There was a very nice young soldier and a missionary that we met. They had both filled missions in Helen's mission field and knew so many people in common. The missionary was also returning home and knew Helen quite well. The soldier knew of her.

I enjoyed talking to the soldier who told me his name was Randolph Fife. I like him very much and was surprised to find myself inviting him to a hay rack party our branch was having the following Saturday. He said he would come. And I was delighted.



Ruth invited us to go to a Fireside Chat with her. I wanted the soldier to go so badly, but did not dare to ask him for fear he would think me too forward. Anyway, I had hoped someone else might ask him. We all took a cab and as I looked back, I saw the soldier standing all alone, and I wanted to run back and stay with him. All evening I found myself thinking of this fellow who had made me feel so important and so comfortable to be with. All week I thought of him and wondered if I would ever see him again. I counted the days until the hayride. Saturday morning, it rained, and I wanted to die when they had to call the hay ride off. I just knew I would never see him again. Sunday morning I was sitting on the stand. I lead the music then, and when I got up to lead the first song, my heart skipped right up to my throat when I looked down and the soldier walked in and sat down.

After the meeting, I wanted to run down and take hold of him so he could not go away, but I purposely talked to others so he would not think I was interested. I finally made my way back to him and Lee and Virginia came up so I introduced him to them, but to my horror, I could not remember his name. I was mortified. Lee quickly asked him to dinner and he

Norma Berry & Randy Fife early courtship, before Randy went overseas during WWII

seemed pleased and I again was afraid to let him know I liked him, so I invited another soldier standing nearby. We went home and spent a wonderful afternoon and I found myself regretting having asked the other soldier along.

Source: handwritten notebook in possession of Diana Rice.



The soldier is Randy Fife, the darling little girl is Jean Berry
They are in front of Lee & Virginia's apartment in Washington D.C.

source: Diana Fife Rice

Randolph & Norma's Courtship and Marriage

by his mother, Mabel Erickson Fife

Randolph got home from the service in October of 1945 from Italy. Gwendolyn, her baby Daphne and I met him at Camp Beale (now Beale Air Force Base). Daphne was a year old, and Randolph wanted to know who the little girl was. He expected a wee baby, I suppose. He was home a couple of days, then went to San Francisco and then down to Los Angeles to see a wonderful girl he had been writing to, Norma Berry.

I well remember him getting home, it seems like it was a Sunday night, and most all were bed. How well I remember his eyes shining and so happy. Then he told me about your mother and her folks and said he had given her an engagement ring, and wondered if I would care if they should be married soon, or I needed him to help me. I told him if he'd found his sweetheart, to get married.

Norma came up the first part of November and I met her for the first time. It was a joyous meeting and we felt love and kinship, you might say, from the beginning. Well, I went with Randolph to Salt Lake and Ogden, where we stayed the night. They got their license, I believe, in Ogden. I went down later. They had a family party at Priestley's, where I met Norma's parents, the Browns, and many others of the family, and we were all there to see them married in the Salt Lake Temple, November 26, 1945. I went back to Los Angeles with Norma's parents and the newlyweds.

The Browns gave them a big reception in Salt Lake, and as I said, we drove back to L.A. and a reception was given in their ward. Uncle Will and Aunt Dorothy Fife and my daughter Mabel drove down from Gridley for the reception. Uncle Isaac and Margaret Fife, my brother Leon and his wife Clarita and other relatives were there. Norma and her family were very active in that ward, and had many friends.

We came back to Gridley with Norma and Randy, although in separate cars. We stayed in L.A. while they had a short honeymoon. then they had one car loaded with gifts and Mabel and I had another car loaded.

After getting to Gridley, we held an open house for them in the ward, where they were gladly greeted.

Randolph was only home from his mission about 3 weeks when he had to leave for the service in January of 1942. We got home 2 days before Christmas and he left the middle of January. He had one furlough home in September before being sent over seas and it was the last time he saw his father. Randolph left in January of 1942 and his father died November 14, 1943.

source: a letter written Sept. 4, 1972 to Diana Fife Rice



Norma & Randy's L.A. Wedding Reception and Trip to Gridley

by Mabel Fife McDowell

I couldn't help but cry when I read Norma's history. It brought back so many memories. It is funny, but I seem to remember things about Norma only when I'm around her daughters. Bonnie reminds me a lot of Norma, and I kept recalling things as I talked to her.

Probably the only correction or addition to Norma's history are the ones about the wedding reception in Los Angeles and the trip home.

Norma asked me to be one of her bridesmaids, so I went to L.A. with Uncle Will and Aunt Dorothy fife. They stayed at Uncle Isaac's and mother and I stayed with Uncle Leon and Aunt Clarita Erickson's. We left the reception early, because Uncle Leon danced with mother, his sister, and Aunt Clarita was so jealous that she developed a headache. (The picture of the bridesmaids doesn't show me, but I was there. I wonder if that picture was taken of just the cousins? I can't remember the others, because everyone was new.)

I helped drive the two cars back to Gridley, so Randy and Norma were together part of the time. The two cars were packed with wedding gifts. Norma's cedar chest was in the back seat of one of the cars. I was eighteen and that was the first time I had ever driven a car with automatic shift and it was quite exciting.

We had arranged a signal of flashing our lights when we were tired or wanted to contact each other. Besides not having driven an automatic shift, I was not (and still am not) in the habit of putting on the emergency brake every time I stopped.

I took over driving from Norma. Mother and I were in the new Desoto and as we drove, I noticed the car was acting funny and I smelled smoke. I pulled over to the side of the road and as I stopped, my door was yanked open and Randy said, "Get Out! The car is on fire!" We ran to the side of the road. A truck driver had also stopped and had his fire extinguisher in hand, and put out the brake fires. I had not released the brake, so it caught fire.

Randy and Norma had been following and signaling, but I had been so concerned about the car that I hadn't looked in the rearview mirror. The truck driver was also trying to get me to stop, so when I finally did, they were ready. After the fire was out and my legs had returned to flesh and bones instead of rubber, we continued on our way. As far as I know, the car was not damaged. The wedding presents were saved!!

Norma and I also took a trip together when she was expecting you. We went to Holbrook, AZ to get a car that one of her Uncles sold to them. I'll write that story later. [She never did.] August 9, 1990

Read about Norma's and Randy's married years in Randy's life story pages:



The Life Story of Randolph Erickson Fife



Birth at the Stewart Ranch

My father brought my mother from relative luxury to rugged ranch living in a stone cabin in the high Uinta Mountains of Utah, the Stewart Ranch. I was born in this rugged house at 11:10 p.m. on November 19, 1919. The temperature outside was 19° below zero, the nurse's name was Aurelia Frost, the doctor's name was S. M. Snow. The stone kitchen is all that remains of the original structure.

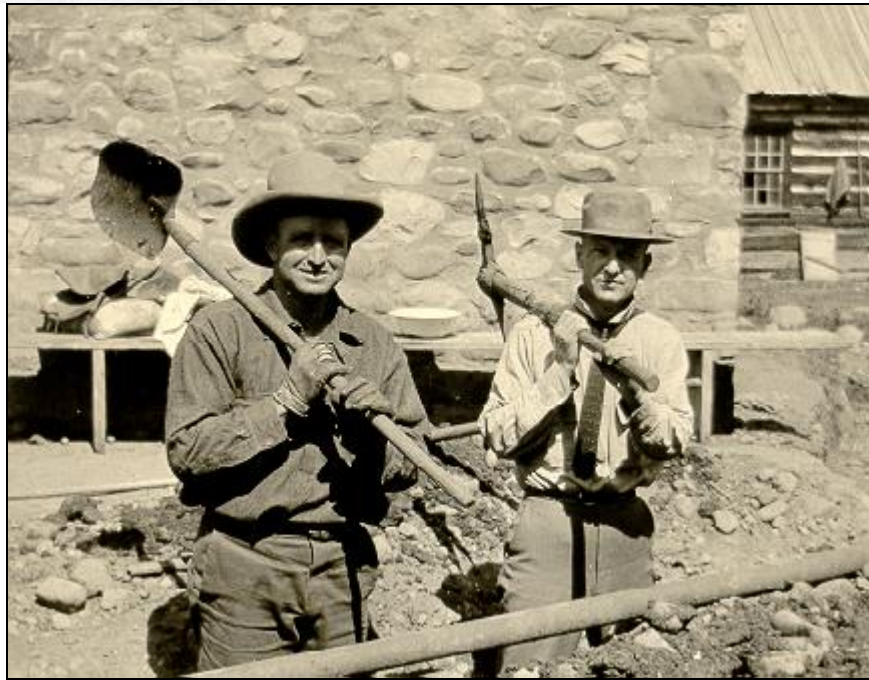


My father and my Grandfather Erickson enlarged the house to that which you see today at the Stewart Ranch, which has recently been designated a Utah Historical Treasure. My mother has told me stories about that period, but my version as a two-year-old is that wandering around such a beautiful landscape was wonderful.

I enjoyed it then, and I enjoy the beauty of it now.



The house had a big, open fireplace with a blazing fire in it. We had about ten men at each meal for the five years my folks lived there. My mother made all the bread, processed the milk, made cheese and cottage cheese, and did all the cooking in and on a wood-burning stove. I still can recall the warmth and camaraderie between the hired men and my father and mother. One cowboy would pick me up, give me a hug or play "horsy" bouncing me on his knee, and hand me on around to the next one. I felt loved by everyone.



Randolph W. Fife

Working on the house at the Stewart Ranch

(Left - In front of fireplace)

My father was a great candy maker. He loved to make taffy and had a taffy hook in the middle of the room in a ceiling crossbeam. When the candy became the right temperature, he would roll it into a ball, throw it up on the hook, and then put on quite a show pulling the candy into four foot strings, keeping his hands well-buttered for protection. When the color of the candy changed from the hook as one long strand about an inch in diameter, and wind it around and around in a buttered platter. At times, he would make it blue, pink or yellow. To a two-year-old child, this was a mind boggling show! My father made candy this way all his life. Even in Gridley, there was a taffy hook. He could make it as quickly as I could make a batch of popcorn.



The first Christmas I remember, my folks spent a lot of money to give me a big Christmas. I picked up a stick with a piece of leather on it (a stick horse) and played with it all day long. My father and the hired men spent the day with the toys.

For ironing, my mother had a quick-release handle with which she could pick up a new hot iron from the top of the coal burning stove when the one she was using became cool. She had an old piece of cloth for testing the temperature of the "hot" iron so it would not burn the good clothing. If too hot, she would put it aside to cool for a few minutes. Between the old kitchen and the added living room, there was a step. My father made a heavy duty walking horse from a log and three iron wheels. I would get it moving as fast as I could, stand up, and let it sail out from between my legs, crashing into the next room.

Next to our house was a blacksmith shop in which the blacksmith, my father, used to repair the farm machinery and shoe the horses. Next to it was the icehouse. That may seem like a peculiar name for a house, but there was a river nearby which froze four feet deep in the winter. The hired men would pull a sled onto the ice and cut one foot by two foot squares on the surface of the ice and as deep as the ice was frozen. They did this by drilling a hole with an ice drill, inserting the saw and cutting around the ice chunk. Securing it with ice tongs, it took two men to lift the chunk, loading it on the sleigh or sled. The bigger the chunks, the longer they would last. When the men completed their work, they would leave flags to mark the holes they had made so that skaters would not fall through into the water. The sled had runners on it so it could move smoothly on ice or over the snow. At the icehouse, there was a pile of sawdust waiting. As the men placed the blocks of ice in the building, they would put sawdust between them and on top of them. By doing this, the 12 by 12 foot icehouse would provide us with all the ice we could use for the full summer.



REF on walking horse

As the cowboys would come riding through the yard, they would swoop down and pull me up onto their saddles and ride around the house, barn and yard. At times, one would take me to the barn across the street, unsaddle his horse, rub him down and give him his hay and oats before returning me to my mother.

Going to California

My mother and father had spent five or six years working 12 hour days at the Stewart Ranch. The goal of the ranch was to raise roughly 800 head of beef cattle and enough summer hay to help maintain them. They were exhausted with the work, the cold and not making

headway into their future. He had enough and decided to take a vacation to California. I have heard that the only time the Stewart Ranch was profitable were the years when my father managed it, but I do not know whether it is true or not.

My parents packed up the Model T Ford in mid-November. There was a lot of snow on the ground. I remember my father putting the Ford on a bobsled, pulling the car to the snow line. He sent the bobsled back, and we went down the hill and on to St. George. There was a glass windshield in the car, but the side enclosures were canvas curtains. The end of November is pretty cold in Utah without heat and without adequate protection against the elements. We were all bundled up to our eyebrows. We averaged 15 to 20 miles an hour. Driving eight hours a day, we drove about 170 miles a day and the trip took five days. My father commented on how easy we had it in comparison to the pioneers because we could go as far in an hour as they could in a full day.

Somewhere along the line two sisters had entered my life, Gwendolyn Victoria and Helen Josephine. My first memories of playing with them were on the long drive to California. We played while my father drove; I am sure we were a handful. I had my fourth birthday in St. George, Utah. We camped along the way in a tent and cooked by open fire. I never remember "eating out" in a restaurant with my family. I felt very safe because my father kept a pistol in the tent under his head. One night while we were going to sleep, a mountain lion stuck his head in the tent. Everyone froze! Finally, the lion went away without our firing a shot. Pretty exciting for a child of four!

My Dad would stop the car at times and get us out to examine anything that looked interesting, a cactus plant, a tree or an animal. When we arrived in San Bernardino, he saw what he thought was an orange tree. Oranges were only for Christmas in Utah at that time, so he asked the farmer for permission to see the tree more closely. It was a wonder for him to see, feel and smell the oranges and the blossoms. He said right then, "I am never going back to Utah"! True to his word, he did not return for three or four years and never returned to live there.

Childhood In Garden Grove

Love of the Ocean

We rented a house in Garden Grove. My father loved the ocean and would take frequent trips to Huntington Beach to drive along the beach front even in wintertime. At Huntington Beach, there were no parking areas and few life guards. You could drive right onto the sand and enjoy the day. The winter we moved there, a dead whale washed up on the shore. My father let my sisters and me run up and down from the head to the tail of the carcass and then slide down to the sand. How we enjoyed that old dead whale!

Summer Saturdays were fun because we took trips to the Beach. Gwendolyn, Helen Joe, my mother, father and I would change into our swimsuits at home before going to the

beach. My father loved to spend the day with us running into the waves and teaching us to swim. By five years of age, I could swim quite well and really enjoyed riding the waves and body surfing. For lunch we would cook hot dogs over a fire pit!

Newport Beach had huge numbers of non-descript shacks made of boards and tar paper all along the wonderful beach front, referred to as "my shack at the beach." Where those shacks used to be is where all the million dollar homes are today. In 1987, Barbara and I priced lots and found the cheapest 30 x 60 foot lots facing on water cost from \$850,000 to \$1,500,000. My Dad had three beach front lots which my Mother urged him to sell because she thought they would lose money. He just barely broke even when he sold them. She did not like anything about the beach. This is the same area where oil was struck and today you see oil pumps which look like giant grass hoppers.

Calvin's Birth

One day when I was five years old, Gwendolyn, Helen Joe and I were sent to the neighbors for all day. When we returned home, my father told us we had a baby brother named Calvin Barnard Fife. I could not believe we could get a baby just like that! I was so shocked, but there he was in a basket! I remember asking my father where we got him because I certainly did not notice anything different about my mother. In those days no one talked about "going to have a baby" or having a baby--they just had them.

Not long after Calvin was born, a neighbor boy came into the house and bit through Calvin's nose and ear. When I looked at my brother, he was all bloody! I ran to my mother who was hanging clothes on the line, crying. When she came in she was horrified!

Building a House

We lived in a couple of rental homes the first year or so. Then we decided to build a house, with two bedrooms and one bathroom. My Grandfather Erickson, my mother's father, spent a year with us helping my father build it. He was a cabinet maker and regarded my father's construction skills with disdain, but he was a great help and gave me some acquaintance with my grandfather. My father was so impressed with the moderate climate of California that he put in a false fireplace with a gas jet instead of a general household heater. At the end of three years, he had become acclimated and put a little heater with clay burners in the fireplace. It was not vented to the outside which caused it to burn the oxygen out of the room and made the walls and windows sweat but was typical for the times. I thought building a house was lots of fun. I had many friends around the neighborhood. There were many things for a small boy to do. I pounded nails into blocks, played in the sand, crawled under the house, dug holes in the back yard and had a whole lot of neighbor kids around me all the time having as much fun as I was. My father seemed to enjoy watching me play. My mother compared me to Tom Sawyer. Years later I read the book and knew what she meant-I had the whole neighborhood working around the house.



The Fife house in Garden Grove

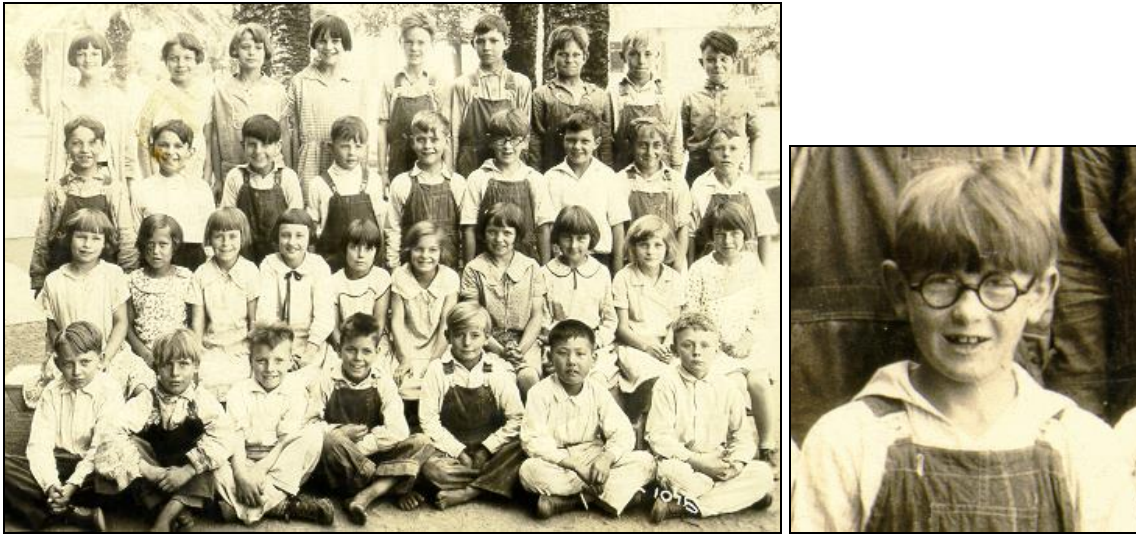
Lots of Company

Once we were in the new house, it seemed that we had a lot of company. The families of my father's uncles, the Stewarts, came to visit. Uncle Leland's family came to visit also. These were such fun times because we all went to Huntington Beach for wiener and marshmallow roasts and would ride on our fathers' backs in the ocean. They played with us all day. How we enjoyed the ocean! Then, toward evening, we would go to the Nu Pike, an amusement center in Long Beach. We all rode on the roller coaster-what a scary ride! I think my father and Uncle Leland were just as scared as the kids, but all of us talked of how much we enjoyed it and said, "Let's go again!" I for one was glad when my father said "Once is enough for this time." From Garden Grove, we explored all of Southern California. We went to the Griffith Observatory and to the LA and San Diego Zoos. My father was always a strong booster for the state, and we were always taking excursions throughout the various parts of Southern California.

Beginning School

I began kindergarten in Garden Grove. In first grade, school was close and I could come home for lunch. In the second grade, I found that I was treated differently than the other children. The teacher put me at the back of the room by myself, did not call on me or give me any books. After several weeks, I relayed this to my mother which prompted a visit to school. My mother was informed by the teacher that she "was not going to teach a Mormon." She then went to the principal of the school to challenge this attitude in the teacher. The woman principal indicated her support for the teacher, did not apologize, gave my mother the books and told her to teach me. My mother had been a teacher, so I was in good hands. Nevertheless, I wondered what it was about a Mormon that made me different from other children. However, during those years the missionaries came by and played with us. We thought they were great, and I began to be proud I was a Mormon also. One of the missionaries suggested that my

father start a missionary fund so that, when I became of age, I would be able to go on a mission. This we did, and years later it enabled me to fulfill my dream.



Randolph – Third row 4th from the right (about the age of eight)

Building a New Church

Our church was held in a rented Masonic Hall in Santa Ana. It was an old hall and everyone would have to clean it up before church services. I remember the odor of the cigar and cigarette butts that were all over the floor. Our Branch President was named President Francis. The area of the branch included all of Orange County and part of San Diego County. We were the only members of the Church in Garden Grove, and would drive in our Model T from Garden Grove to Santa Ana for all Church meetings.

Many Saturdays my Dad and I would go to Santa Ana to work on the new Flower Street building. The new structure had a chapel on the first floor, a baptismal font on the stage and missionary quarters on the second floor. It was a stucco-frame building, and my father did most of the stucco and plastering, and other work as needed. Other sons of the workers were with their fathers, and we would do cleanup work like sweeping and carrying pieces of wood to the rubbish dump. I am sure we boys were more nuisance than help. There were big piles of sand in which we loved to play. When we moved to Costa Mesa in 1961, our Stake Conferences were held in Santa Ana, but the little building had been replaced. While living in Fullerton, I met Charles E Middleton II and was telling him about the building of the chapel on Flower Street in Santa Ana. As an eight year old, he remembered going with his father to work on the building and play in the sand with the other children. Many years later, his son and our daughter, Bonnie, were married.

Baptism

After the building was completed, I had my eighth birthday and was eligible for membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Water was put into the font and about nine of us were dressed in our swimsuits and allowed to play on the stage in the

water. We thought this was a really fun day. Finally the serious part of the afternoon came, and all of us were baptized by the missionaries. In those days, they did not have the fathers baptize their own children. However, my parents were there witnessing and supporting my decision. Always I will remember the day I was baptized. I later learned the Gospel in its fullness and have taken my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints very seriously.

While in Garden Grove, I had a little wooden wagon with a six inch slatted frame around it. Where we lived, we were completely surrounded by orange groves, and there was an orange packing house about four blocks from our home. I would take my wagon to the packing house where they would fill it with cull oranges. I would then go house-to-house selling oranges for a penny a piece, not stopping until they were all sold. This was my first business-selling oranges to people who had orange trees in their yards. I guess they bought them because I was a small child, but it kept me in penny candy from the corner store.

My Father's Work

In Garden Grove, after our move to California, there were no jobs for the skills my father had developed. One day he inquired about the building trades and found the highest pay was for plasterers. He had learned something about plastering in Metropolis and thought he could do it for a living. He bought the proper uniform and tools and applied for a job. When the contractor saw him, he said, "At last the union has sent me a person who looks like a plasterer." He got on the scaffolding and did what the others were doing. The man who worked beside him said that my Father was doing so much better than he was that he would be fired, so he quit that night. My father kept on until he perfected the plastering trade. He became a specialist in making intricate, detailed molding and designs in plaster which you see in elaborate bank buildings and hotels.

Summer Work

In the summertime, my father bought a tent with sidewalls which the family would use for camping at his jobs. Construction work was for short periods of time; when the building was complete, you needed a new job. A worker would then look in the newspapers to see where the next job might be and go to the place where they needed his specialty. My Dad's skill was plastering; his specialty was the more highly-skilled, highly paid Mold Making for which there was less competition. He would make the fancy designs at the top of walls in banks and large structures. When he could not get that type of job, he would take standard plastering work. In those days, California was largely rural, business was slow paced, and he had to travel to where the work was.

He had a job in San Bernardino one summer, and we camped around the job site. We were close to the rather shallow San Bernardino River, in which we could swim. Life was much more simple in those days, and parents did not supervise their children much during the day. They just turned them out to play. Along the river was a pile of telephone poles brought in for installing a new telephone line. I thought it would be fun to ride those poles down the river. A lot of kids under eight years of age, who had been playing together, were able to roll

those logs across fifty feet of ground into the water. Twenty to thirty kids would climb on a timber and ride it as far as we wanted, get off and let it go down the river. Then we would return for the next pole.

The newspapers were full of articles about the mystery of how the telephone poles could get into the river. Little did they expect such small children to be able to do such a big thing. The logs ended up jamming the river at a dam. It was simply amazing what large things many small children, well organized, can do. Our parents were admonished to keep their eyes on us.

The New Car

One day we drove to Santa Ana where my father traded our Model T Ford for a used Hupmobile 4-cylinder Touring Car! We were so excited! My mother called my father "RW." On our way home, Daddy was trying out the car for its comfortable speed. The comfortable speed in the Model T was 20 MPH which was acceptable to my mother. When he hit 40 MPH, she shouted to my father, "RW, slow down, you speed demon, slowdown!" We kids loved speed. How I loved that old Hupmobile! It had button curtains similar to the Model T, but these were a lot better because the eising glass stayed clear and did not yellow. I would help my father overhaul it. I remember rubbing grease over my face and hands. When my father asked what I was doing, I told him I wanted to look just like him. This really pleased him. At regular intervals we took the engine apart, put in new rings and ground the valves. I would put bolts in, use wrenches and wash parts in gasoline. I would get very tired before the whole day was over, and it took a whole day to do it. It was fun to do with my father, but I never really liked it.

We had the car for a lot of years. In fact, we drove it from Garden Grove to Gridley several times to visit Uncle Will, and finally we moved to Gridley in it.

Editors Note: In 1974, the City of Garden Grove removed several blocks of houses including the one built by the Fifes. Prior to that time, we often took Mother Fife by her old home for a nostalgic visit. One night she had a dream in which she thought the house had been replaced by a mausoleum or some other large structure. When I told her that there were considerable changes in the area, she accompanied me to see for herself their house was gone and the public building of her dream was in deed the Garden Grove City Hall!

Childhood In Gridley

Moving to Gridley

My mother had a lot of allergies while we were living in Southern California and did not like being near the ocean. Uncle Will had moved to Gridley, enjoyed my Dad and wanted us to live near him. Will asked my father to help him build his house in Gridley. He had a three-acre lot and gave my father half the lot as payment for doing the work. My Dad decided it would be a good place to live. Having the land, he built his own garage and barn in his free time. The garage was no ordinary two-car garage. It had a kitchen, laundry, bathroom and

workshop on the ground floor and an attic above with sleeping quarters. Actually, it was an apartment adequate to house our family for a short time.

We vacationed for a few months while the family made sure it was doing the right thing. During my third grade year, I attended schools in Garden Grove, Ogden, Oroville, West Liberty and Gridley.

Utah?

First we made a temporary move back to Utah, and I was enrolled in the Mt. Fort Elementary School in Ogden. There I was "the kid from California" which meant I was fair game for any practical joke anyone could pull on me. One of the kids asked me to come up to the second floor with him. He had a paper sack full of water, and told me to hold it out the window. I was too short to see what I was doing, but held the sack as told. When he said, "Drop it," I did so, and tried to see out of the window. He ran. Suddenly I was confronted by a really angry lady coming up the stairs. She asked if I dropped something. When I said yes, she spanked me on the spot. I did not like that school after that day.

We left Utah, and I enrolled in Oroville while my Dad had a job there. It lasted for only a month so we moved in with Uncle Will while our things were moved to the garage, and I went to the West Liberty School. When we began our house, I ended the year at the Woodrow Wilson School in Gridley, entirely confused. I stayed there the remainder of my elementary school years.

Building the House

After getting settled and saving some money, we started construction of our house located just in front of the garage. It took approximately three years to build and had no mortgage when completed. My father was a believer in pay as you go, but this feeling was heightened when my parents saw property repossessed during the depression. When the time and the money were available, another part was built. While we were living in the garage and facilities were limited, my father developed a solar heater for our hot water supply. Over a black tank of water, he put heavy car windshields which magnified the sun's rays, heating our water by solar energy. He was a man ahead of his time-this was in 1925.

These were wonderful days for me working with my father, mother, sisters and little brother, Calvin. We all were able to saw boards, pound nails, paint, clean, sweep and play in the sand, all the good things connected with building a house.



The house, shown above, was considered a very large and, including the garage, had three bathrooms, which was unheard of in those days in Gridley. There were four bedrooms with two bedrooms and a bath downstairs and two bedrooms and a bath upstairs. I spent many a happy hour nailing siding and lath (this was before drywall), learning about building a house without realizing how much I was learning. Building a house is a wonderful family experience which I would recommend to any one. It was completed when I was in the sixth grade.

In addition to the house and garage, we had a barn, chicken coop, a one-half acre garden and a three-fourth acre pasture for the cow, all irrigated by a ditch behind the barn. The pasture was divided into two halves so the cattle could eat one part while the other part grew fresh grass. It was very effective because it fed two cows and two calves all of the time. Our barn had one stanchion in which the animal put its head to eat hay, and a bar was moved into a slot holding the animal's head during milking.

We had our own water well and pumped all our drinking water. We had two underground storage tanks, one for our motor car fuel and one for heating oil which we would fill once a month at three to four cents a gallon. At the time I graduated from high school, we converted our furnace to natural gas.

My Dad's Work

Although he had become a plasterer in Garden Grove, the population within the 50 mile radius of Gridley could not keep a plasterer busy. He obtained a plastering contractor's license so that he could serve as a subcontractor for all the contractors in the area. Because the work demand even for a contractor was not adequate in the sparsely populated rural area, he added new fields to his repertoire. There was a big demand for tile layers, so he contacted a Sacramento tile company who taught him how to prepare bids and how to block out and layout a job. Once he knew, he set tile in hundreds of bathrooms and kitchens. When they asked if he could do cement work, he accepted. When asked if he could remodel a house or barn, he never said no, and he and his crew did the framing and remodeling.

He did all the fireplaces in the area. We had a load of Heatilators in stock ready for construction of a new fireplace. The bricklayers thought a good fireplace could not be made without using a Heatilator, but he could make one and the draft drew properly. In all the years I worked with him, not one person complained about his workmanship. Contracting then was not like it is today. It was an "out of your backpocket" situation - many times he never gave an invoice. Instead, he told the buyer what the price was and when he finished, they wrote him a check. When he bought material, he sent me with a signed blank check and wanted the discount for cash. He had no unions to contend with because the area

was so small and there were no labor laws so the whole building industry was far more simple than today. As time passed and the area grew larger, he hired five plasterers on his crew. Much of the time, he was hustling the contractors and figuring jobs to keep the men going. When they were loaded with work, he became part of the crew.

His favorite candy was a Baby Ruth bar. At the end of a long hard day, he would stop to buy a couple of Baby Ruths to eat on the way home.

Self Sufficiency

On the acre and a half, we maintained two cows, two calves and 100 to 400 chickens, at various stages of growth. We had more eggs than we could eat. I would take a couple of dozen eggs to Safeway every morning for spending money (at about 10 cents a dozen). We had six hives of bees. Beside our house we had a row of asparagus, a strawberry patch and a vegetable patch for the usual seasonal vegetables. Cherry, peach and apricot trees were scattered around the place. About the only things we bought at the store were flour, sugar, potatoes, onions, spices, salt, pork and bacon. We killed a pig every year, but we would buy it at the auction and dress it out and salt it down. The salt would keep the pork fresh and my mother would make hams.

We had no freezer so would can everything, even beef. The whole family would work in canning the food each year until our basement was full of hundreds of bottles of meats, fruit, vegetables beets, green beans, corn, tomatoes, spinach. We bought the spinach because it was readily available. We had a big pressure cooker to aid in the canning of vegetables and meat where more care had to be exercised. We had every kind of jam and various kinds of marmalade.

In our basement, we had two lugs of raisins about 40 pounds, 20 gallons of honey, 100 pounds of Brazil nuts, 100 pounds of peanuts, a couple of hundred pounds of almonds and the same of walnuts which we bought on a wholesale basis. We dried peaches, apricots and prunes and always had a box of 20 pounds of dates. Potatoes and onions were so cheap, we bought them by the hundred pound sacks to store in the cool basement. My Dad would buy a 3 to 3 ½ foot stem of bananas and hang it from the floor joists in the basement. I doubt if our children would remember when bananas came on a stem just as they were cut from the tree.

We had our own milk, cream, butter and cheese. My Mother would make cheese by leaving it on the counter until it would curd, the curds were put into cloth bags so the fluids could drain and the whey wrung out, and it was placed in a round form or wash tub. By putting weights on it, it became firm enough to slice.

Mother would also make her own cottage cheese at that time you could not buy it in the store in small packages. She loved sour cream and made it by using lemon juice to "sour" the cream. The rest of us thought that sounded terrible. It is not "sour" but thickened by enzymes as is yogurt. It is a process that we all enjoy now. Ten cents worth of ice would freeze as much as 12 quarts of ice cream. Our little place provided all the ingredients except sugar and ice.

When we would sit around the house listening to the radio, my Mother would hand one of us a gallon churn filled with cream, and we would churn the butter. In those days, there was lots of time to spend with your family because there was nothing else to do. We had no labor-

saving devices, everyone helped with everything. The family was the center of our universe socially and economically, and church was our spiritual center.

Winter or summer during the years I was in the third through eighth grades, my chores were to do everything on the outside of the house. The girls did everything inside, helping my mother. My chores were to mow the lawns, milk and feed two cows night and morning, clean the barn daily, feed and gather the eggs for 100 to 500 chickens, kill chickens as needed, and to plant, weed and harvest the extensive garden. Beginning with the fifth grade, I also kept the car clean and full of gas. I rather enjoyed the chores except for cold weather or rain.

Bloated Cows

One day when my father had been away at work, he returned to find two cows lying bloated in the field. He called me to help him run the cows up and down the pasture until they could pass the gas created by eating the fresh, rich, alfalfa grass in the new pasture. If the bloating continued too long, the cow's heart would stop, and she would die. My father knew he would not be there every time, so he bought a sticking knife from the farmer's supply. It had a gauge and was especially designed to prevent entering too far when being stuck into the cow's abdomen. Dad showed me which rib to insert it under. I was about 12, and it seemed to me to be a lot of responsibility and I was concerned with the responsibility of putting a knife into a cow.

Within six months, I came home from school to find two cows down. I managed to get one up, but the other one would not budge. I ran to the barn for the knife and stuck her. Out came the most putrid gas I have ever smelled. My father also told me that if the cow's heart should stop before I could get her up, I should cut her throat. We had a portable tripod made of three 12 foot 2x6's bolted at the top, which spread like an Indian tepee. By putting it over the cow and using a block and tackle, one person could raise a 1000 pound animal. The object was to enable the blood to drain out so that the meat would be edible. Fortunately, I never had a cow's heart stop.

Our Next Door Neighbors

Our next door neighbors were Uncle Will, Aunt Dorothy and their two sons, William S. Fife, Jr. six years older than I and Robert Layne Fife, two years older. Bob Fife was like a big brother to me. When my father did not need my help, I would work with Bob and Uncle Will. We discussed whatever we were thinking about at the time, whether it was farming, girls or sex, and he taught me many things. Bob spent many hours practicing the piano, and as he grew older became a fine pianist and an accomplished ballroom dancer.



Uncle Will

Florence says that Uncle Will looked and talked like Harry Truman. His favorite person was Will Rogers, and he was always quoting him. He could not miss an episode of "Amos and Andy" on the radio, laughing until tears filled his eyes. If he could not listen at home, he would be at our house listening and laughing the entire show.

Aunt Dorothy felt their marriage was one of contrasts. She sought refinement. Although she was a large woman, she was light on her feet and loved dancing, dramatics and the arts. She directed numerous successful plays at church and developed Bob into an entertaining and competent pianist by her love of music. Teaching piano students has been his life profession.

Aunt Dorothy argued with Uncle Will from daylight to dark - nothing he did ever satisfied her. I still hear her voice, "Oh, Will!" with so much disgust. He always sneaked over to our place to visit with my father and mother whenever he could. Then you would hear the thundering voice calling, "Oh Will, Will, come back right away!" With a knowing wink to my Father, he would say, "Call her and tell her I am not here." My father spent a lot of time with Uncle Will to keep him company.

Hunting and Fishing

Many mornings when I was eight and nine, I would arise early and go hunting with my father's 12-gauge, double barrel shotgun. I was so little that when it went off, it would strike my upper body so hard I would return with a badly bruised shoulder. I soon learned to lie down on the ground before aiming. I loved to hunt with that old gun. As I grew older and bigger, I was better able to handle the kick. I was able to roam all the ranches and fields west of Gridley, shooting pheasants, quail, ducks and geese, of which there was an abundant supply. I could not have spent a more enjoyable childhood.

Some mornings, I would walk nine miles from Gridley to Butte Creek to fish. One morning while still living in the garage, I saw a big frog sitting in the drain ditch and wondered if he would jump at a worm. I baited my hook with a big, juicy angle worm and hung it about six inches from his head. He jumped, and I had a frog-not just an ordinary little frog but one measuring 18 inches long! I put it in my gunny sack along with the few fish I was able to catch and took it home with me. When my mother opened the sack to see how many fish I had caught, the frog jumped right out at her. She screamed! At first my father was alarmed, but when he realized what had happened, he started laughing-which really upset my mother!

Summer Fun

Until I was 12, except for my chores and occasional work, my summers were spent mostly in play. There was a canal about 1/4 mile from our house. Every afternoon in the hot summertime, Bill and Loren Stoddard, who lived just across the street, my brother and sisters would congregate at the canal to swim, dive, play tag, float on tubes, have water fights -- whatever we could think to do. We spent endless hours of pleasure in this canal each summer. I can still see all the kids playing there when I pass by that old, water hole! A big sign, -NO SWIMMING ALLOWED - now marks the spot because of the danger of drowning and lawsuits. Suing another person was almost unheard of in those days.



Swimming in the canal

Bill, Loren and I grew up almost like brothers. At our home we had a pile of wooden lath bundles used in my father's work. We would take a long piece of wooden lath, sharpen one end and put a short lath piece across the top to make a handle. We would then get a washtub

lid for a shield and have sword fights. One time I remember fighting with Bill from our place, across the street, into the front door of his house, past his mother standing in the kitchen and out the back door.

The William Wilson Fife Reunions

The Fife brothers were an enthusiastic group of men. They kept close touch with each other through what they called "The Chain Letter," a round-robin type in which you took out your old letter and added the latest news and photos, sending the letter to the next person. By their letters and frequent visits, they kept in touch and looked forward to the William Wilson Fife reunion every two or three years. Gridley was the chosen location. The brothers all had loud voices and were extremely boisterous when they were together. Most of the time, they were all talking at once. When they arrived, you never knew what to expect.

Uncle Leland would bring hundreds of railway flares with little spears in the bottom so they could be stuck into trees or into the ground. Uncle Walter had a brass cannon with a charge so large it would shoot a flame eight feet, and you could hear it for at least two miles. The police finally asked them not to shoot it in town so they took it farther into the countryside. We had wonderful times together, swimming in the canals, playing baseball with Uncle Ike at the park - and every other type of activity you can imagine. It was quite a sight to see a canal bank with flares every foot along the bank and the water full of swimmers.

I was the chief ice cream maker. For the reunion I would make five six-quart freezers every day. Sometimes I would make two for each meal. We had so much milk and cream, it was a good use for it. One of the reasons for the choice of Gridley was the warmth of my parents and their willingness to host such a gathering.

The cousins became very close and really were friends with their uncles. It is important that all nieces, nephews, uncles and aunts not only be acquainted but have meaningful relationships.

Uncle Ike

Uncle Ike, Isaac Stewart Fife, was one of my favorite uncles. He was interested in almost everything, especially mechanics. He really loved playing baseball and was a semi-pro player in his youth. I first remember him in Salt Lake on one of our trips to Utah. When we visited him, Aunt Margaret and their four children, we would go to Wasatch Springs to swim. Clyde, their youngest, was about my age. Later they moved to Hollywood. All the brothers and their families came to the reunions held every two or three years, and we would visit them in Los Angeles about once a year.



Uncle Ike

One summer when I was about ten, I visited Clyde. Most of the time, Clyde and I sold newspapers on the streets of Los Angeles. We sold the Evening Herald, later the Herald Examiner, for three cents a paper. Out of the three cents, we received one cent for our wages. Clyde "bought" a corner, so we had an exclusive area. In order to make the most of cars being stopped at a light, we would skate in and around the cars, delivering papers to the drivers. If

the light turned to Go, we would have to kneel on the running board until the next stop light, where we would get off and skate back to our corner. I really enjoyed the excitement and fun of the work.

Aunt Margaret was so careful with her money that the entire month I was there, I was given water instead of milk with my meals. Aunt Margaret said this was because we had a cow in Gridley so I had all the milk I wanted while they had to buy theirs. Then she would give Clyde two glasses. It was ok because for breakfast we had hot cakes or cereal which I covered with butter.

Uncle Ike and Aunt Margaret's relationship was strange. It seemed to me that Aunt Margaret had assumed the position as head of the house and Uncle Ike was merely the wage earner. When we would be together, I can still hear her, "Now, Ike, or "Oh, Ike", with the strong emphasis of derision. Then it resounded into "Oh Father" or "He's just a mechanic" by the children, with the same note of derision.

Uncle Ike was one of my very favorite uncles, a real live wire who loved to talk and had many friends. Today he would be called a mechanical engineer and inventor. He was hired by Douglas Aircraft working as the personal mechanic to Donald Douglas, Sr. He worked directly with the inventor, combining their skills to execute a functional working machine part. Together they created the DC-3 airplane for which Douglas became famous. Uncle Ike could make a motor from a piece of steel. He could cut and mill to precision size and shape all the parts for the newly invented machines or motors. He was the best at a now vanishing art. He also invented the original automatic transmission used by General Motors, the Power Glide.

Uncle Ike never seemed as happy as he should have been, but always made the best of it. He was a good provider, investing his money in real estate during the depression and had a good estate at his death.

The End of an Era

When I was about twelve, the worst thing that could happen was to have my father awaken me in the morning to say, "Son, you will have to take the cow to visit the bull this morning."

Impregnating the cow was an essential function to maintain a constant milk supply for our family milk needs. After having a calf, a cow gives milk for nine or ten months and then becomes dry. If she is pregnant and has a calf, she is good for another nine or ten months. When she begins giving milk again, she is termed "freshened." Arrangements had been made with a farmer named Rube Scott, who would provide the service of his bull for the price of five dollars.

One twelve-year-old boy is no match for a lovesick cow, so I ran to the Stoddards to break the bad news. All about the same age, Bill, Loren and I were to take the cow the five miles to Rube's place. Before we returned, we would have walked, run and been dragged at least 15 miles over roads, rocks, grass, and streams. Our clothes and shoes would be in shreds. When a cow feels amorous, she lets the whole world know it with her bellowing, and there

were interested bulls in many farms along the way. At times, all we could do was to hang on to keep her from running free; at others we had some control.

We placed a halter on her with 25 feet of chain. The theory was to use a chain to put half-hitches around successive fence posts along the route. The cow would nearly break her neck as she jerked to a stop at the end of the chain. If we had caught our hands or fingers in the half-hitch, they would have been cut off as the 1200 pound force hit the post. After hitting the end of the chain several times, the cow had more respect for us and our power to control her.

Starting from the pasture, the cow broke loose on a dead run in the wrong direction, towing three boys. Somehow we managed to turn her and get her going toward Scott's. We slowly became experts at throwing half-hitches around fence posts. It seemed that there were a hundred bulls between our place and our destination, and every so often the cow would turn suddenly into one of the ranches.

After about four hours, we arrived at Rube's farm and paid him five dollars. He lectured us about "what a cheap fee it was because most people paid seven fifty," and that we were to remember this was for only a few minutes. By this time, our cow was lathered with sweat, mucous was running out of her nose and mouth, and she had a crazy look in her eyes.

Mr. Scott, as we called him to his face, sent us out to the back pasture. Seeing the huge, red bull nearly scared us to death because he was snorting and pawing the earth. One of us opened the gate, and the cow shot through. We quickly closed the gate. In our innocence, we thought the bull was angry with us. We soon found out what his intentions were.

After a little while, Rube Scott began calling, "You kids get that cow away from the bull!" Carefully, we slipped in and took hold of the chain while Mr. Scott grabbed a club and went after the bull. We pulled and pulled, and the cow kept getting away from us. Rube's swearing at the bull had no affect. Suddenly, to our amazement, the bull became very docile from fatigue, but the cow did not want to leave. Finally, with Mr. Scott's help, we were able to tug and pull her out of the pasture. The bull no longer was a threat. He had crosses in his eyes and seemed satisfied to rest and relax.

We started home, but the cow kept trying to retrace her steps. By this time we had become really proficient with our half-hitches, which kept her under control until we hit the intersection where there were no posts. There, the blasted cow got away from us and ran back to Scott's. Wearily, we went back to find the cow outside the pasture fence with the bull, each one licking the other.

We had left at 7:30 a.m. and arrived home at 5:30 p.m., completely worn out and entirely disgusted with the idea of sex. We lived in terror for the next 30 days awaiting assurance that the cow was pregnant. If not, we would have to take the trip again. This is now accomplished with artificial insemination by the veterinarian.

Too Much Enthusiasm

I was a rather enthusiastic child and thought up plenty of mischief. However, my happy nature earned me a number of undeserved spankings along with the deserved ones. My father told me he would give me a spanking for every one a teacher felt I needed, so I was pretty careful. I have an unconscious habit of whistling under my breath when I am searching out a problem. (I even do it in my sleep, my wife tells me.) I have no idea I am doing it and have no control over it. When a class was having silent study, even a quiet sound like that makes the students and teacher think someone is out of line. It earned me a lot of wacks with hands, rulers and books. One time the teacher took hold of my hand to strike it. When she came down with the ruler, I could not help the reflex action of pulling my hand back. Unfortunately, she hit her hand hard. Then I really got it!

In those days all the classes had a room extending along the back of the class called an anteroom or cloak room where everyone hung up his coat. I was being disciplined by being sent to stand in the anteroom. The teacher was teaching music and the class was singing HOME, HOME ON THE RANGE," one of my favorite songs. I was singing along with the class, just as loud as I could. Since I could not see the teacher leading, when she stopped the class, I continued on. The door opened to reveal a truly angry teacher. She said, "When you are being disciplined, you are not supposed to enjoy it or to upset the class." For that I was paddled.

One day when I was walking up to the pencil sharpener, I saw a circle of smoke coming from next door, and cried out, "FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!" When the teacher looked out, the circle of smoke had blown away, thought I was acting up, and hit me three times over the head with a book. About five minutes later, she saw the flames coming from the roof of the house and ran to call the fire department. She later apologized for having hit me.

At noon we played speedball, something like soccer. Because this was before anyone had heard of ball point pens, all of our desks were equipped with ink wells and real ink. We were issued pens with steel nibs or points. You would dip the pen into the ink well and then write on your paper. At the hardware store, we were able to buy carbide, a substance which looked like gray rock salt. The trick was to walk toward the teacher's desk and slip a couple of pieces of carbide into an ink well. The ink well would virtually explode ink all over the desk. The principal came into the class to say he was outlawing anyone bringing carbide to school-and to please put any we had in the wastebasket being passed around the room. For fear of instant reprisal, none went in. Then came recess, and we all filed out to play speedball. The perspiration of the hard play went into my pocket and through the little brown paper bag with the carbide in it. I felt like my leg was on fire! I ran to the side of the ball field and emptied the carbide from my pocket. When I looked up, who was standing in front of me but the principal! He did nothing more to me because he knew I had learned my lesson.

One day I had forgotten the assignment of an essay for English. Quickly taking a pen and fresh piece of paper, I wrote: RAIN, No GAME and submitted it. The teacher did not see much humor in it and gave me an F.

Teaching Calves to Drink

I was thirty minutes late for class because of my chores at home and did not have an excuse because my mother had left before me. The teacher, Miss Armstrong, asked me why I had been so tardy. I told her I was late because I had to teach a calf how to drink milk. With that she grabbed hold of my shoulder and marched me to the principal's office, saying I had tried to make a fool of her in front of the class.

The principal understood the situation. As a city girl, the teacher did not realize how hard it is to teach baby calves how to drink milk out of a bucket when it can no longer nurse from its mother. The way it is done is: You take a half full pail of fresh warm milk, hold it between your knees, ram the calf's head down into the bucket, hold your first and second fingers slightly apart in the milk. Somehow the calf gets the idea of sucking your fingers and ends up sucking the milk. After a few times you do not need to use your fingers any more. The first times are real struggles, often ending up with the milk and the trainer spilled, but you must persist until the calf is fed.

Calvin was five years younger than I. As he grew up and was able to assume more of the chores, I was freed to provide more time to help my father. Even so, I would play cars with him even though I was a little too old for it. We slept together in the same room all the time I was home. He was always very thoughtful and I enjoyed him. When Calvin was about eight, he enjoyed all the building activities, especially hammering. One rainy day, he went down the basement and hammered a nail in a can of honey. It was such a firm, satisfying feeling that he hammered nails in all the cans. When my father found the sticky mess, he sent Calvin out for a willow for a spanking. He was gone for the longest time. When he returned, he had a 2x4 and was crying as hard as he could cry. He said through his tears that this was the smallest he could find. My father doubled over laughing, and felt it was punishment enough just thinking about it. He began milking the cows when I was a senior in high school.

Working with My Dad

My father worked an 11 to 12 hour day, six-days week. We were all anxious to spare him as much as we could. On Saturdays and every day during the summer from the age of 12, I worked with him first as an errand boy, cleaning plaster from floors, scraping windows and doing odd jobs. I also would do a lot of playing in the sand pile with blocks. At 12, I took a written test and received a driver's

license. My Dad did not have a truck but used the car to pull a trailer. On the trailer we would load the equipment, scaffolding, cement and whatever supplies were needed for the job. From



RW Fife and RF Fife

then on, even after school, I would go to the job to put up or remove scaffolding to make his time more effective.

Then, one day, he had me mix the plaster and carry it on my shoulder in a hod. In time, I became a hod carrier. When there was no hod to carry, my father would have me use the tools of the plastering trade learning to use a hock and trowel. I became quite proficient at this between 12 and 18.

Slacking Lime and Keeping Warm

While working for my father, one of my jobs was slacking lime. In plastering and brick laying, we used a lot of lime that had to be slacked. The chemical reaction between water and dry lime is almost instantaneous. In our back yard, we had 15 or 20 50-gallon drums all with one end cut out. I filled the drums 3/4 full of water, slowly dumping a sack of lime into the water, stirring the water all the time, adding lime until it was smooth and of the proper consistency or thickness. The water bubbled and boiled as if you were boiling potatoes. On a really cold day, you could stand between the barrels to keep warm and accomplish a very necessary task at the same time.

If you poured the lime into the water too fast, the lime would shoot right out of the barrel and burn you. Fortunately, my Dad had taught me how to keep this from happening.

Carrying Hod

As a hod carrier, my job was "to wait on" the plasterers, to mix the plaster, carry it to them, and keep their scaffolding moved in front of them. This was hard work, and a job I never really liked. My father felt everybody needed a trade to fall back on because so many white-collar positions vanished with the depression.

The Great Depression

All my young boyhood was spent in a time called "The Great Depression" which extended from 1929 until 1939. No one had much money. There was no social security and almost no provision for welfare other than the kindness of your relatives. This was the time when the Church welfare program began.

During the depression, unemployment was so widespread that there were bread lines on the streets. We had various families of relatives stay with us. When the father of the family lost his job, they had to have food and housing until he could get another job, house and maintain themselves. We had the Lindsay family for about a year-James E., Verna and their father and mother. That meant four more people for whom to feed and care. Another time, we had some of my mother's nieces and nephews, the Hutchinsons, who came to stay a couple of years until they could get back on their feet.

My parents looked at these visits as opportunities to become better acquainted, a part of family responsibility, service and love. There were more mouths to feed, but we were growing plenty of food and were grateful we had so much. We were taught that service to others is an important part of serving the Lord. I grew up from the third grade on with a lot of

LDS boys and girls my same age. Those I remember were Harold and Loren Stoddard, my best friends, Doug Johns, Jack Nielson, Morrell Farr, and Verle Little. The girls were Donna Brink, Eddie McGavin, Donna Jenson, Laveme Ferrin, and my sister, Gwendolyn. There were lots of others who were not LDS. They were wonderful companions. We never had any trouble, just fun together.

My father came home from work one Saturday to find that the mission authorities had called on him. They asked him to come to the church building to meet with them. As soon as he arrived home, he showered and dressed in his suit and went to the chapel. They installed him as Branch President that day. He was shocked! Within a year the Gridley District was formed into a Stake of Zion and my father became the first Bishop of the Gridley Ward.

Apostle Hinckley and The Hill of Beans

Apostle Alonzo Hinckley and other general authorities stayed in my parents' home because there was an extra bedroom and more bathrooms than most houses. They enjoyed themselves because the atmosphere was relaxed and they could feel "at home." My father would joke with them- Apostle Alonzo Hinckley asked my father what they did with the beans growing in fields around Gridley. My father replied that they made gunpowder of them. Apostle Hinckley replied that he thought they were rather explosive. My father asked each of them if they had ever seen an olive grow and whether they would like to see one. In front of the tree, he would ask if they would like to taste one (they were really bitter). When they bit one, they would know they had been set up. After laughing until he would cry and have to wipe his eyes, my Dad would then follow it up with a handful of dates to take away the bad taste. Then they would feel enough at home to ask for whatever they preferred for dinner-such as bread and milk or fruit and cheese. They had so many big and rich meals traveling that they wanted something simple like their meals at home.

The Church Welfare Plan

The Church Welfare Plan came out in about 1936. Most families around us were already self-sufficient. When this plan was begun, Gridley was the peach center of the world, and we shipped thousands and thousands of canned peaches to Salt Lake City and probably still are shipping them. We had a church cannery used solely for this purpose. Many communities had community canneries that they used for themselves and could do Church Welfare canning from it.

During the depression, the only thing we were short of was money. Life went on just the same. Now our lives are specialized and we must depend on the rest of the world for each little part.

Whenever my Dad did not need me to work with him, I would help Uncle Will out at his place all through my school years, including high school. Uncle Will became a specialist in melon farming, growing cantaloupe, Persian, Honeydew, Casaba, Crenshaw and watermelons. Will grew the best melons I have ever tasted. He knew exactly how to regulate

the water to make them sweet. He loved farming because he was his own boss and was pleased with the job he was doing.

Working for him one summer was a real education to me in how to farm because Will would get me up at daybreak so that Bob and I could pick fruit and load the truck. Then the three of us, Bob, Uncle Will and I would travel to Marysville, Oroville and Yuba City to sell and deliver melons to Safeway and other grocery stores. He had a two ton truck onto which we packed about four tons of melons. Will was so quiet about his earnings that no one ever knew what he earned -- he pleaded poverty all his life. He hated the Japanese with a passion because they were his competitors and were willing to work for low wages. He always commented on how much money my father was making on construction, saying, "Rand, you can afford a large family."

One year, my cousin, Paul Fife, worked and boarded with Uncle Will all summer hoping to earn enough money to pay for his school clothes. At the end of three months, Paul decided to ask him for his money. Uncle Will pulled out a long change purse and poured out a bunch of coins. When Paul counted them, they added up to just less than five dollars. Every person I have ever known who had one of those purses was penurious. He collected in cash from every store for his melons, put the money into the purse, folded it up and put it in his front pocket.

Bob and I were great friends. During the hours of picking and loading the truck, if Bob saw a melon which looked especially good, he would give me a wink. I wouldn't throw it quite hard enough for him to catch it, and it would fall to the ground and break open. Bob would jump down, and we would both eat the heart out of it. Bob's brother Bill was in high school when we were in grammar school and became a medical doctor and psychiatrist.

Once while Uncle Will was working out in his back farmyard, he struck a hive of bees. We could see him running up the path as fast as he could to our house shouting as loud as he could with a swarm of bees right behind him. My father opened the door and shut it quickly behind Will. He had a few stings but was not harmed. Afterwards, my father could not resist the temptation of saying "Will, watch out, there are bees coming after you!"

The Garden Party

In the early afternoon one spring day, Aunt Dorothy was having a luncheon party for some of her Relief Society friends in the patio behind her house. The tables were set with linen and china, and the ladies were dressed in their best. Adjoining the patio was a driveway that ended at the garage. At the height of the party, Uncle Will drove into the driveway, brakes screeching, jumped out of the car and took off all his clothes except his underwear, reaching, grabbing and searching, completely unaware of the garden party. Suddenly a mouse ran out of the leg of his pants. When the horrified women screamed, he was more than embarrassed, but Dorothy never let him live it down. If you talked to Uncle Will about it, he would just grin. Actually, it was the very most successful garden party in the history of Gridley.

Gridley Union High School

Entering High School

After graduating from the 8th grade and entering high school, a whole new world opened in front of me, one that I eagerly awaited because the young men and women who were in high school seemed so smooth and sophisticated. It was everything I expected and more.

Realizing that I was growing up, my father took me aside and gave me a one sentence course in sex education. He said, "Treat all girls as you would want your sisters treated."

My intent was to study agriculture in high school, and I knew the initiation practice of an agriculture major was to castrate a sheep. When I found out the method of castration, I changed to college preparatory. Our high school had an enrollment of about 300 which seemed large to me. Changing rooms every period was a real innovation after spending the entire day in one room during grammar school. I now had six subjects, Algebra, World History, English, P.E. and Band. Education has always been exciting to me. I cannot understand the youth of today. How can anyone go to school and say things like "Boring! "? A library with wonderful books was a place of extreme excitement for me. The interplay with the students, the activities of sports, plays, chorus, band, orchestra-we all took part in everything!

When I tell about my "mischief," these instances actually were some of the more interesting softening of our days. Most of the time we were engaged in sincere study with no-nonsense teachers dedicated to their job of instructing young minds. The men teachers wore suits and ties, the women teachers wore suits or nice dresses. Everyone tried to dress their best in respect for their profession. As this was the very heart of the depression, our teachers looked successful and we looked up to them.

My Father's Illness

While I was a freshman in high school, my father became sick with a sort of seizure. At first they thought it might be epilepsy, but the doctors ultimately decided that he had a defective heart valve which caused the heart to malfunction and fail to pump the blood. When this occurred, no blood would reach his brain, he would lose consciousness and chew his tongue. Because there was no blood going to his brain and head, he would turn purple. He carried a stick covered with cloth for others to stick between his teeth. He had workmen with him on the job, did more selling and estimating, continued working long hours, and life went steadily along despite this illness.

Two years later, when my brother, Calvin, was in the fourth or fifth grade and was riding with my father in Colusa, my father blacked out. Calvin was able to grab hold of the steering wheel, stop the car and get help for my father. My father never knew when he was going to have one of these attacks. When anyone came to class with a note from the office, my heart would stop with anxiety because I thought something might have happened to my Dad. This was a constant source of worry for all family members. The way my family functioned despite this great physical challenge was a wonderful testimony of their trust in the Lord and his keeping. They kept on doing what they had been doing for their family, their ward, stake and community.

Shyness

While growing up, I was extremely bashful. I felt particularly embarrassed around relatives who did a lot of hugging and kissing. When the Fife aunts came, I would head for the barn to give the cows some hay and would stay to keep them company. My Dad had a radical reaction to the Erickson family because they spoke Swedish around him. He thought it was impolite not to speak English when he was visiting them. My problem was the hugging and kissing.

My shyness was a real problem to me even on my mission. I was very bashful and quiet, would blush easily and would never ask a girl for a date.

When my brother, Calvin, was in the fourth or fifth grade and was riding with my father in Colusa, my father blacked out. Calvin was able to grab hold of the steering wheel, stop the car and get help for my father. My father never knew when he was going to have one of these attacks. When anyone came to class with a note from the office, my heart would stop with anxiety because I thought something might have happened to my Dad. This was a constant source of worry for all family members. The way my family functioned despite this great physical challenge was a wonderful testimony of their trust in the Lord and his keeping. They kept on doing what they had been doing for their family, their ward, stake and community.

Family

Every summer and Saturdays, I worked with my father. He worked twelve hour days, six days a week. Sunday was his only day off and he was the Bishop. When he would come home from work tired, he would take a shower, put on his suit and go to do the work of the Lord. Loren and Bill Stoddard's father was no longer living and they looked to my Dad for a lot of the support a father gives. He even cut the hair of most of the boys in the neighborhood.

In addition to her family responsibilities, my mother answered the phone, made all the appointments and served as what we now call an executive secretary. My mother was ward organist, Stake Primary President and on the California PTA Board. She went all over California to their conventions and loved every moment of it. Mabel had been born while I was in grade school. James was born the year I was a freshman; Florence was born when I was a junior. My sisters were a great deal of assistance and helped make her activities possible.

In those days, we worked so hard all of the time that it was essential to play a little as we went along—a little humor, a little joke in the course of the day. We were up at 6 a.m. and were in serious endeavor until we went to bed. Our Dad taught us to walk rapidly because he felt we could accomplish so much more in a day by hustling. Everything we did was analyzed to prevent wasted motion. We managed to get enjoyment out of each day by the give and take of living.

Love Is Enough

When I was 16, my Dad and I saw a sporty, red, 1930 Model A Ford roadster with shiny wire wheels. My father looked at it, turned to me with excitement in his eyes and said,

"Boy! Would I like to buy one of those for you!" I felt so extremely rich at that moment--just as if I had received one because my father wanted me to have it. The fact that he loved me enough to want to buy me such a sporty car filled me with an appreciation of his love. I did not need a car with love like that!

Late Arrival

Each Saturday night one of the Big Name bands such as Benny Goodman, Paul Whiteman, or Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, came to Palm Grove, a huge dance pavilion surrounded by artificial palm trees, which held about 2,000 couples. The dances in our day were from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. because everyone was hungry after the dance and would go to a restaurant in a neighboring town. We considered this as "coming straight home" after the dance.

I had gone to the dance at Palm Grove with the strict instruction to "come straight home." On this particular night, it had taken at least two hours to eat, and I was quite late. As I approached my home and turned into the drive, ostensibly to keep from awakening anyone, but really because I did not want my parents to realize the hour of my return, I turned off the motor and the lights, coasting into the driveway. I opened the door of the car and closed it without even a click. As I neared the kitchen door, I took off my shoes and slipped through the door. About that time, I thought a glass of milk and a piece of pie would taste good.

Reaching for the switch to turn on the light, instead of the switch, I felt a hand! The person with the hand was just as startled as I but turned on the lights. There I stood, face to face with my father! We were both so shocked we roared with laughter and relief. As my heart started to beat again, he asked how in the world was I so quiet when I usually was so noisy? We both sat down to pieces of apple pie and milk. I expected a lecture-but we talked about the dance, my friends and our family. The humor of the situation overcame all.

Sunday Evening

As I was growing up, our family would get together every Sunday night after Sacrament meeting. My mother would read from the Book of Mormon and the Holy Bible. My Dad loved to have her play the piano and we would all sing together. Before the evening was over and I went upstairs to bed, I had a wonderful feeling inside. These were really family home evenings long before it was proclaimed by the church. They had very special meaning in our lives because they contributed a feeling of unity, well-being and closeness with the spirit of the Lord. This was our practice all the time I was at home, and I can testify to what a joy it is to have harmony and happiness in the home.

My Testimony

One of the very most important experiences for me and one I remember as clearly as if it were yesterday is the day I received my testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel. I was 16 and had attended Sacrament Meetings and Sunday School all of my life My sophomore English teacher was Elsie Johnson, a member of the Church and a memorable teacher to each of us in Church and at school. We had a particularly inspirational lesson by Sister Johnson in

the morning followed by Sacrament Meeting on Sunday afternoon. I was listening to testimonies given by other members of the congregation when I had a great desire to testify of my beliefs. I was so full of the Spirit that I had a difficult time talking, but I knew as never before that the Church was true. The years since have magnified my testimony of the truthfulness of the Church, that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, the General Authorities are Prophets and Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

My Patriarchal Blessing

When I was sixteen, I went to John C. Nielson, Gridley Stake Patriarch, for my Patriarchal Blessing. I knew it would tell me much of what the Lord had in store for me and how I should conduct my life. It has always been a guide and inspiration to me. When reread during my life, different messages have come through in bold print as the particular need has arisen.

I note a message: "For the preserving hand of the Lord will be over you and will preserve you, grasp you from the pits and snares that are laid to entrap the children of men and grasp you from death." All during the war, my friends and companions were killed. My occupation was often hazardous. My illness at 67 years of age definitely showed that I was grasped from death. It promises that I will be here in the millennium building temples and preaching the word of the Lord.

General Conference Representative

In 1937, I was 17 years old and was serving as an MIA Stake Secretary for the Gridley Stake. At that time the Church population was not large and all stake leadership was supposed to attend Conference. Because of other commitments, I was the only member of the Stake able to go. I was given all the tickets with instructions to attend all meetings, take notes and report to the stake authorities upon my return. One ticket was a dinner with the Presidency of the Church and all the Stake Presidents. Of course, I was by far the youngest there, and President Grant asked me to stand, introduce myself and tell where I was from. He then asked me to sit with him at the head table. It ruined my dinner, I was so nervous. He had me give a talk about the work I was doing in the Gridley Stake, way out in California. I was very young for my job, but was able to attend the dinner with President Grant and be in the presence of great men.

Working

Saturdays and summers were spent helping my Dad on his jobs. One summer, Loren Stoddard and I were fresh out of school for vacation and were to work on a job in College City. We started about 7 a.m., mixing plaster and carrying hod for three plasterers. My father never had a power mixer, so we mixed the plaster with sand in a 4'x8' mortar box, raking it with a hoe with a blade 9"x12" with holes in it. The water was lifted by bucket from a barrel. We had to carry the 100 lb. hod up a ladder to the second story. An hour into the work we were teasing each other, making it a kind of game. After an hour we were sweating so profusely and were so tired we could not say a word to each other-we just worked. By noon, we were almost too tired to eat, so we stretched out under a tree and went to sleep. The lunch hour was 30 minutes;

the afternoon seemed to be many years long. We were two tired boys when night came, but had to repeat this procedure for four or five more days.

MIA

Mutual was a great institution in my life. It was the fun arm of the Church. The Church sent people from Salt Lake to teach us how to dance, to conduct singing, to become a chorus, choir or musical group. Mutual was held every Tuesday night and members of every age participated. We all took part. Gene Stoddard was our leader in music, and we would go to Salt Lake June Conference to music festivals and dance festivals. The Church was small so these were Church-wide gatherings. The total population in those years was about 800,000. To all of us, the big event of our lives was going to participate under the direction of the Tabernacle Choir Conductor, famous guest conductors and the Tabernacle organist. These were truly spiritual events. Some years we would go back to Salt Lake City for the dance festival. Bob Fife and Etta Todd were our leaders. We really had some fine experiences together. One of the dance festivals was held at Saltair on Great Salt Lake. It was so dramatic to have so many dancers moving in unison on the huge dance floor with the water lapping beneath and the sunset in the distance.

In those days there were no budgets. We would travel by paying shares of the gas, eight passengers in the car of a member, one car would be pulling a trailer with luggage for the stay and the performance. At my high school graduation, half of the graduates were missing because we all were in Salt Lake City at a music festival. The school would not cater to the church by changing the date.

I Loved School

Education has always been exciting to me. The director had half the school from which to choose. If you would compare the facilities then with those available to children now, there would be no comparison-but money does not make intellectual excitement. The whole world was available to us in our classroom, and we knew our geography and recognized the differences in world peoples.

Some of my other activities were being Senior Class President, Band Club President and head of the Student Body Activities Program.

One time we had an assembly and the Principal announced that Randy Fife would present the program. I had completely forgotten about it. I walked up to the stage and said, "I am the Champion Indian Wrestler of this school, and I hereby challenge anyone to wrestle me."

A number of takers came forward. They never had Indian Wrestled before-which is to lay on the floor with heads in the opposite direction, interlocking your right legs in an effort to pull the other person over on his head. The trick was to do it fast. I was able to roll some very big guys.

Everyone in the student body became excited and the program was a big success, to the surprise of both Mr. Hanna and me. This taught me I could not keep my schedule in my head. I thought I had another week. From then on, I paid more attention to preparation and scheduling.

Mischief

My geometry teacher, Miss Guest, stepped out of the room for a moment when WHAM! Leo Edson threw an eraser and it struck me on the side of the head. As I crooked my arm to throw the eraser back at him, I saw Miss Guest's face framed in the glass pane of the door. I quickly made the decision that as long as I was posed to throw, I might as well let it go. When the door opened, I was sent to the principal and expelled from school. This meant coming back the next day on bended knee with plenty of apologies. I had so many friends who were ready for nonsense that I became quite fluent in memorizing poetry and reciting it to the class. Because I was so shy, all the teachers felt this was my most painful punishment. The classes would grimace and say "No, no, not another poem! "

Boys State

Along with the opportunities in sports, I was a member of the Older Boys Senate which took in three counties. At the end of the year, we went to Boys State at Sacramento. These were all interesting extra-curricular activities. We had very little time to sit at home at leisure, and TV had not been invented.

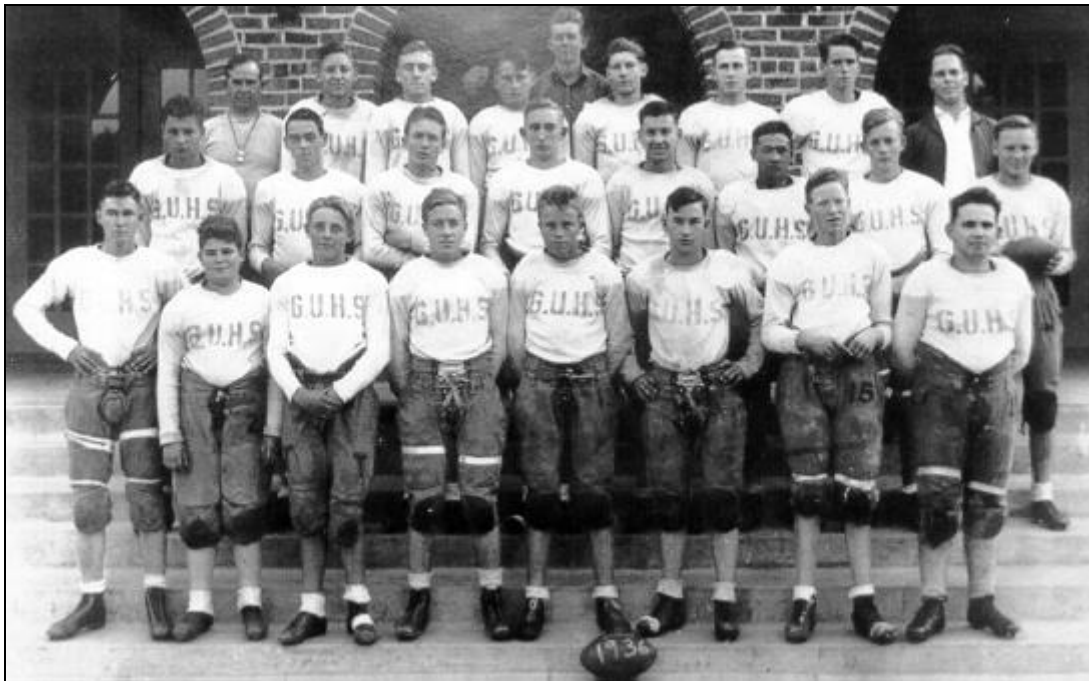


Boys State

Sports - Football

All the boys wanted to be football players. Because I was nearly six feet tall and weighed 170 pounds, I was made a substitute guard on the Varsity Football team as a freshman. Loren Stoddard was full back and Harold Stoddard was a tackle. Football was a different game then than it is now. One team playing the whole game, offense and defense. The facilities were something like Pop Warner ball. Under the best of circumstances, it was played on Bermuda grass, and, at worst, on gravel fields. The field was unfenced and usually without seats. There were no fancy uniforms and barely any protection. Adequate helmets and pads did not come in until the 1940's.

My career was rather routine except for one dramatic reception. I was so surprised to catch the ball and afraid of dropping it--that I slipped the ball under my shirt and began to run to the goal line. Instead of cheering me, the crowd roared with laughter. When I reached the goal line, I had to take it from under my shirt to "touch it down" for the score.



Randolph – back row third from the right



Boxing

The coach of the Gridley Union High School decided to sponsor a boxing tournament with the surrounding schools. We had no boxing class or organization to teach boxing. Certain of us were selected to be the team and grouped by weight; a ring was rigged in the center of the gym, and we were to learn by sparring with others in our weight class. This was not too bad because we did not want to hurt each other. I still did not want to fight, but was "appointed" and pressured into it.

The night of the dreaded tournament came and I found myself in the ring with a man who looked like a real fighter 10 x bigger than I, and we were to fight three rounds of a minute each. The first round we both gave it everything we had, and it was pronounced a draw. The second round was much the same, but I felt I was getting the worst of it because his blows really hurt. As the third round opened, a sudden strategy came to my mind to swing a hay maker something like throwing a discus, miss him the first time and really hit him squarely in the head as I completed my circle. It worked and I won the bout. But going to the showers, I felt I had lost. That was my only boxing attempt, and I have never watched a fight since.

Track

GUHS had a track man who could run the 100 yard dash in 9.4 seconds--the world record was 9.2 seconds. He won every race but was slow in starting. I was a quick starter. In order to speed him up and to draw the other runners off, I was put in to start. For the first 50 yards, I was ahead. Then I would be overtaken and end up last. In those days, you did as you were told, but it was not very satisfying to always be last.

Basketball



Randolph is the tallest in the front row

Photography

One of the subjects I really enjoyed was photography. We started out by making our own cameras by taking a Shredded Wheat box and taping all the edges. In a dark place, I put silver bromide on a piece of glass, taped it to the back of the box, and taped the top of the box closed. I took it outside, placing it on the steps to take a picture of a building. I then made a pin hole in the box, taking the place of a shutter, and timed it for one minute. Putting my finger over the hole, I carried the box into the darkroom, removed the glass and developed the negative. We had an excellent picture with outstanding detail because of the small aperture. It was an exciting study of the scientific detail behind photography.

Band and Orchestra

One of the more enjoyable parts of our school was our school band. It really started for me in my Sophomore year when Gene Stoddard became our teacher and band leader. It was unusual for a school of three to four hundred students to have a 50-piece band and a full orchestra. We started practicing at 8 a.m. and had an hour of band in the afternoon. We entered innumerable band contests, many of which we were rated very highly.

I was also a member of the Gridley High School Orchestra. Gene Stoddard was our instructor and orchestra leader. He needed a viola player for a piece he wanted to perform so he handed me a viola and said, "This is what you are going to play, Randy." We went into a practice room, where he taught me how to use a bow and the elementary finger exercises so I could learn to play the scales. There he left me sawing the bow against the viola and making some of the worst sounding scales you could possibly imagine. We later were learning to play part of Beethoven's "Unfinished Symphony" and in it I had a four bar solo. I practiced this solo at least a thousand times. We played at various school competitions and the judges would always comment, "The viola player is flat." When we went to San Francisco, I made up my mind I was not going to be flat. When I reached that part, I stretched my fingers as far apart as I could. The judges comments were, "The viola player was sharp."



Randolph in the orchestra

During the learning of the viola, Gene Stoddard had us practice at least 30 minutes a day on each instrument we were playing. At grade time I was short eight hours of practice slips and would be "flunked" if it were not made up. I went home determined to make up the lost hours. I was practicing in my room and after about six hours, my roommate and brother, Calvin, could not stand it any longer - he went into the bathroom and threw up. To this day, he cannot stand violin playing.



Randolph - 7th from the left

State of California Band Contest

After practicing for months and months and competing in a series of band contests, the Gridley High School Band won the right to compete in the State of California Band Contest at the San Francisco Opera House.

Of all the high school bands at the contest, we were from the smallest town. Our town was not only small, but derived its income from farming, so the schools had little money. Because of this, our band uniforms were homemade and consisted of white duck trousers, white shirts, black bow ties (the same used by service station attendants at that time), homemade military-type hats and green and gold satin capes that hung over our shoulders and tied around our necks. The contest was an elimination type with each band playing until losing. It was to last for three days with the remaining bands playing three times a day.

On our way from Gridley to San Francisco, we stopped at The Milk Farm, which displayed a large sign, "All the Milk You Can Drink for 10 Cents." Naturally, all the boys decided to hold a contest to see who could drink the most milk. Johnny Campbell, our star trombone player, won by drinking 4 ½ quarts. Because this exceeded the capacity of his stomach, he made a quick exit to the restroom where he lost a great deal of the milk. When he returned, we noticed that one of his front teeth was missing. It had been knocked out playing football and had been replaced with a bridge. Without this tooth, it was impossible for him to play the trombone.

Without a trombone soloist, we were out of the contest! So, our band director and only chaperon, Gene Stoddard, ran to the toilet to see if he could find the tooth. It could not be seen, so he placed one person as a guard to the room to be sure no one used or flushed the toilet. He ran to the owners of the restaurant for permission to remove the toilet. With wrenches, we

took the toilet off and flushed through it with a hose. Our luck held, and the tooth came floating out! One of the gold wires had caught within the toilet.

Because it had been in the toilet, the problem now was how to get Johnny to put it back in his mouth. It was first taken into the restaurant and thoroughly boiled--Johnny still refused. The band director was forced to threaten physical violence - backed up by the rest of the band.

For the good of the band, Johnny put his tooth in his mouth, gagged for five minutes, and finally settled down with a big smile on his face. We were still in the contest!

Arriving in San Francisco, we settled our belongings in the hotel and went to the Opera House. It was truly a sight of grandeur to us from Gridley. The hugeness of the stage, the props, the curtain, the seating capacity, and the building itself completely overwhelmed us.

Then, we saw all the other bands with beautiful uniforms! They were from larger and more wealthy school districts. Upon seeing us, they all laughed and made fun of our clothing.

Apparently the ridicule developed a highly competitive spirit within us, enabling everyone to play far better than they had ever played before. At the end of the first day, we found that we were still in the contest and some of those who had laughed at us were on their way home.

The next day the same thing happened, and we played even better! Our band director said that he was more than pleased, and even if we lost in the coming day's competitions, he was well satisfied with the way we had performed. We had made it to the finals!

When we finished that day on our last piece, the tears were streaming down his face, and he was unable to talk. We were all struck dumb when we realized that our Gridley High School Band had won the State of California Band Contest!

The judges comment was: "This band played far beyond its ability."

Our band of about 20 boys and 20 girls was out of town for three days with one chaperon and had no behavior problems.

On another one of our trips to San Francisco, a bus broke down in a small town called Rodeo. Several of us volunteered to stay with the vehicle because there was not enough room on the other working bus. The adventure appealed to us.

As we bid farewell to the girls, they all obliged by putting their heads out of the bus to kiss each of us goodbye. We walked up and down on both sides of the bus, kissing one after the other.



Gridley High School Band – State Champions



Randy

Preparation for the Future

At the close of my elementary school years and throughout high school, everyone thought of our country without reference to other countries or nations. No one thought in terms of world events. We all felt the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans were barriers so formidable that we in America were safe.

Moral standards were high. We had no fears for the years ahead. My life was ideal. My future prospects looked great. The "Big Depression" was nearly over; everything started loosening up in 1937-38.

I had learned the value of work in my early school years. I had learned that economics played a very important part in the life of a family. I knew from experience the importance of family.

I gained a testimony of the gospel that has served me during my entire life. I felt then as now that I understand where I came from, why I am here and where I am going.

There are enumerable people outside of my family who have helped me in my life, mainly members of the Gridley Branch and Ward. To these unnamed people and to my many friends, I owe a debt of gratitude. Only by serving others during my ensuing life, and trying to keep myself unspotted from the world, have I been able to return their efforts.



Randolph's High School Senior Picture. Look closely at this photo, and think of each of his sons and grandsons, you can see that three generations look very similar at the same age!

My parents did everything they could and more. My sisters and my brother were an integral part of my growing up years.

My sisters really spoiled me. They were always doing things for me. As I mentioned before, they took care of everything in the house and sometimes helped me on the outside of the house as well.

Helen Joe and Gwen took care of my room, made my bed and kept it in order. Mabel used to love to listen to stories about my dates and reciprocated by keeping my shoes shined. Gwen used to help me milk the cow. She would milk one side and I would milk the other.

We visited and confided about everything-especially Gwen, Helen Joe and Calvin. I did not have a lot of interaction with James and Florence because of the age difference.

Calvin and I slept together in the same room all the time I was home. He was a very thoughtful brother. When he was about 18 years old and saw that my mother needed a new range, he saved his money and bought one for her.

We were a close-knit family. When one of us was glad, we all were glad. If one was unhappy, we all felt the same pain. My parents were all that parents could be. They gave us everything we needed in the way of cooperation, love and understanding.

College

Freshmen

Bill and Loren Stoddard, Johnny Campbell and I decided we would room together to attend Chico State College. Two days before college began, we registered. Because none of us had a car, we put our suitcases on the old Sacramento Northern Railway, and went from East Gridley to Chico for 50 cents. When we arrived in Chico, we felt we were in a great big city, it had about 15,000 people.

We went up a week in advance to rent a one bedroom, one bath, and basement apartment. Because it had a kitchen and living room, it was considered a three room apartment. Loren and Johnny slept in one double bed; Bill and I slept in the other. Before the end of the year we had seven people sleeping in it. One slept in the bathtub, two on the couches in the living room. We paid \$30 a month, but sharing it seven ways gave us low rent. The place was full of rats. When we would come home, we would quickly close the doors, turn on the lights, and take old brooms to kill the rats. The rats would chase us and climb our sticks to try to bite our hands. We were both fighting for our lives, the rats and us. We were like women and would climb up on the table for safety. Loren said, "You bunch of cowards!" and got off the table. He struck at a rat, it began to pursue him, and he rejoined us.

We had very little money for school. None of us could afford books so went to the school library to study the class reference copies, but this did not provide enough study time for good grades. We brought most of our food from home and would go home each weekend to refill our boyish appetites. We used salt and soda for tooth paste, had no deodorant and brought soap from home. I grew a beard so did not need a razor. We did not own a radio or typewriter and the modem-day electronics were not invented.

We lived and thrived on daily arguments about everything-political, educational and historical discussions by the hours. I had read that an airplane could go 400 M.P.H. Everyone laughed, and Loren said, "The dam thing would melt going that fast." One of our friends said that they had never walked by our apartment without hearing an argument. These "discussions" went on until the wee hours of the morning and were educational in themselves and caused us to research the facts. If you did not have proof, someone would argue you down. At times we would have as many as 20 people in the apartment expressing their opinions.

All the freshmen had to wear blue jeans and blue work shirts. The pants cost \$.98 and shirts cost \$.49 at J.C. Penny's. We were issued clean socks by the athletic department at the school when we had gym. There were no such thing as automatic washers and dryers so we either washed by hand or took our clothes home on the weekend and brought back clean ones. These were simple times.

I remember eating lots of beans and spaghetti, and we would buy chili by the brick. We each took turns cooking, washing dishes and doing the housework. We had a duty roster which worked well. If you did not do your job, you got a beating by six guys. When we bought a week-old cake, one person would measure seven pieces. The one cutting had last choice so he made an extreme effort to make each piece equal. There were no secrets. Each of us knew the others most private thoughts and dreams, the girls he would like to take out, his fears and worries. We plastered our walls with cinch notices during that first semester.

To return the next semester, we each had to have conferences with each instructor--and we had learned our lesson. We did not have any trouble the next term. We cut out the discussions and spent our time at the library. The library became our best friend because the class texts were there.

Professors and the Church

All our professors had their doctorates from Stanford and were the best in their field of study. It was the Great Depression and a secure job was hard to find. One interesting experience was an oral exam with my Professor of Western Civilization, Dr. Fuller. I had read the extensive selected reading as recommended. The oral exam lasted an hour. I was asked all sorts of questions on the assigned reading materials, and discussed the various articles and ideas with the professor. At the end of it, he asked me what I was going to do the next year. I told him I was going on a mission for our church. He asked which church and when I told him, he said, "What a waste of time." and added, "You have a good brain. You should go on into law school." He told me to study more history and I should not waste my time going on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He told me one of our reading assignments would be Mein Kamp: and that, inevitably, I would spend time in the war which had not yet been declared. I loved history and enjoyed every minute of college. I wondered if one reason I enjoyed it so much was that I worked so hard when I was not in school.

I remembered the teachings I had at home, the every Sunday night reading of the Book of Mormon. I really faltered when Dr. Fuller told me that my church was a waste of time. I respected him so much that I wondered if he was right, but I went on my mission and worked to develop an even stronger foundation for my testimony. I heard a few years later that Dr. Fuller had committed suicide. He lacked the understanding of the meaning of life which the gospel gives to us.

I loved English and one of my English teachers was Dr. Stephen Douglas Hume. The Elements of Geography was a very dry subject. We were taking notes at about 1:30 in the afternoon, the instructor was droning on and on--suddenly he shouted "Wake Up!" and we almost fell on the floor. We took new interest in the class after that. We worked climate equations such as: given certain conditions in San Francisco, what will the conditions be in the central valley.

Home Sweet Home

Recreation should have played an important part of college life during this first semester, but we could not afford even 15 cent movie tickets. The night before the Chico State Homecoming Football game was always heralded with a tremendous bonfire. We all picked up the spirit of that special night. Most of the time, each of us hiked the 30 miles back and forth from Gridley to Chico even for an occasional evening to see our folks or to get a good meal. Our group ended with graduation from high school. The girls scattered. The friends I made in Gridley are still my friends. The friends I made in college I have forgotten long ago, but they all contributed to my educational experience

On My Own

The beginning of summer after college, I went home. My ailing father felt he could not keep me employed for the summer so he drove me to San Mateo, in the South San Francisco Bay area, where he found me a job with a plastering contractor. He put me up in a working man's hotel and said, "Save your money and work hard. I'll see you in the Fall." This was rather hard on a 19year-old boy because now I was really on my own. I worked for the plastering contractor for the summer. After a week, I found a boarding house with college kids which was a lot better than living in the other hotel. I worked hard that summer and learned a lot about people and how to work more efficiently. One man who taught me a lot was called "Deگو Red."

Deگو Red

Deگو Red was an Italian hod carrier who was very proud of his profession. He kept his plaster mixer cleaner than when it was new, and would not let anyone else use it. It was so clean that they would use his mixer to knead the bread at hod carrier's picnics.

Deگو Red's motto was "If anyone has to ask you for something, you are not doing your job right." He thought ahead of the plasterer's every move and was there with their needs before they asked. He could keep three plasterers working and was paid more than a journeyman plasterer. I have thought that motto was a very good one and would make anyone successful in any job. Think of how smooth life would be if everyone had that philosophy.

Friends and Relatives

On weekends in the Bay Area, I would visit Uncle Lee or other relatives. I would also visit Don and his girl friend, Betty, whom he eventually married. We had some enjoyable times together. Bill Fife was taking his internship at the San Francisco General Hospital. Often, I would spend the night with him at the hospital, eating dinner and sleeping there. This was less expensive than a hotel room. If I was on my own, I spent most weekends going to the World's Fair on Treasure Island where I could get odd jobs pushing sedan chairs for rich people to tour the many exhibits.

During this time, I received a call to the East Central States Mission and was to report in October to the Mission Home.

Demon Rum

Don Fife was my confidant at this time of my life. One night soon after I received my mission call, we both had dinner with Dr. Bill Fife at San Francisco General Hospital where he took us through the Alcoholic Ward, showing us what DT's and alcohol does to the human body.

Then Keith Garner, Don and I went into San Francisco to see two of the places we had never been. One was the Top of the Mark Hopkins Hotel and the other, the Top of the Fairmont Hotel. At the "Top" of these hotels were bars and gorgeous views of San Francisco. All three of us were LDS and none of us had tasted liquor. The bartender insisted we have something to drink. Somebody ordered ale so we all ordered ale. It was such foul tasting stuff that it took quite a while to get it down, and we moved to the next hotel to see the sights.

By this time, we were a little boisterous. Somebody asked, "Have you ever tried a Tom Collins." None of us had so we then tried a Tom Collins. It did not taste bad, so we tried two or three. Don whispered to me, "I have to go to the bathroom." Everyone in the room laughed because it was more of a shout than a whisper. Don stood up and fell flat on the floor. He said, "Somebody pushed me!" I helped him to the toilet. He said, "I think I'm a little drunk. Everyone around us was laughing so we decided to get out for some fresh air. When we got downstairs, Don became terribly sick and threw up on the sidewalk. People would disgustedly say, "Look at that drunken kid." Keith went to his apartment in San Francisco. Don and I tried the bus, but they would not let Don on the bus, and told me to get him a cup of coffee and sober him up. I took him to the restaurant and ordered him a cup of coffee. Don was so sick he could hardly hold his head up. He said, "Ran, what is this?" I told him it was a cup of coffee. He took his arm and pushed it from the table top, saying, "I'll not drink coffee--it is against the Word of Wisdom!" I finally walked him around the block in the cool of the San Francisco night and he sobered up enough to get on the bus, at which time he promptly went to sleep. We went to my apartment and spent the rest of the night. This was my one and only engagement with Demon Rum, and was quite by accident.

Keith Garner became the Mission President in Hong Kong. He was the Mission President for David Low and Robert Mouritsen. Don spent many years as a Bishop.

East Central States Mission

Readying for My Mission

Upon arriving home from working in the Bay Area for three months, my father asked me how much money I had saved. I replied that I had no savings but had bought my suits and clothing for my mission. He said, "It is a good thing you have a savings account accumulating since you were six years old. It amounts to \$800--enough money to get you by." The mission cost was \$30 a month, a lot of money in those days, which kept many a worthy young man from going on a mission.

I had worked that summer as an apprentice plasterer earning about \$5 a day. Paying my board and room did not leave much to save or to spend. My father agreed that I had done pretty well to sustain myself, and said he hoped I had learned a lot by being on my own.

One of the requirements of going on a mission was a physical. When they received the form from my doctor, they requested that my tonsils be removed prior to entering the mission home. I drove the car from our home to the doctor's office. My mother went shopping while I was upstairs having my tonsillectomy. (Now this is considered a rather dangerous operation, particularly for an adult, and requires being in a hospital.) Our country doctor gave me a shot of local anesthetic, had me hold a basin in front of me, and proceeded to reach down my throat to cut out my tonsils. When he completed cutting out the first one, he presented it to me and said, "Look at that nice cut!" He had no nurse or other assistant. After he had removed both tonsils, he said, "You'll have a sore throat for about six weeks, take aspirin and chew aspergum. After the operation, I walked down a flight of stairs, got into the car and waited for my mother a few minutes to complete her shopping. Then I drove home, carried the groceries from the car to the house. By then, I was not feeling well, so went up to bed. Two weeks later, my parents took me to the train and bid me farewell for the trip to Salt Lake to enter the mission home to begin my two year mission.



Elder Randolph E. Fife

The Mission Home

The Mission Home I entered in Salt Lake City has since been tom down, but it had an auditorium on the top floor in which we had classes all day every day. The bottom floors were the men and women's dormitories. The men's dormitories were presided over by the Mission President and the women's dorms by his wife. We were there for about two weeks and had a

very exciting time being taught by different members of the Council of the Twelve each day. Even the First Presidency, President Heber J. Grant, J. Rueben Clark and David O. McKay came in to talk to us.

I remember President McKay's talk was about our grooming. He said every missionary should have three brushes and use them daily: A tooth brush, a shoe brush and a clothes brush. Imagine having the Second Councilor of the Church talking to missionaries on a level like that--how small the Church was then!

My throat was still sore when one of the Council of the Twelve, Elder John A. Widsoe, a very elderly man, stopped during his talk, pointed at me and said, "Will the elder I am pointing to stand up!" He was pointing directly at me, so I stood up. He proceeded to "dress me down" for having been talking. My throat was still too sore to talk with anybody, or to even to answer him. I immediately left the room, went downstairs and started packing with the tears streaming down my face. When I was nearly packed, the Mission President came down to ask me to forgive Brother Widsoe as he was elderly and had thought I was another person. I told the Mission President in whispered tones that my throat was too sore to talk, and if any one was going to be that unfair, I did not think I wanted to go on a mission. I was ready to return home. The Mission President advised me to stay a few more days because he was sure I would be excited about serving my mission. He was right--by the time we finished our course, we were really ready to go!

We departed from the Union Pacific Depot by train to Louisville, Kentucky. Traveling in coach class means you sit up for the four-day trip. Upon arriving in Louisville at about dark, I was met by missionaries and taken immediately to a street corner to hold my first street meeting. I was so tired after the trip I did not know what was happening. Then, someone announced that Elder Fife from California would be the next one to speak. From that time on, I knew I was a participant and not a spectator.

Mission Headquarters

The President of the East Central States Mission at that time was President Tew. Although I spent only one day in the mission home at 1440 St. James Court, Louisville, Kentucky, when the door bell rang and I answered it--in front of me stood Elder George Albert Smith! He was very tall and thin--and spiritually imposing. He was the President of the Council of the Twelve at the time and later became President of the Church following President Grant. His tour of our mission was a complete surprise to my companion and me.



President and Sister Tew

North Carolina East District

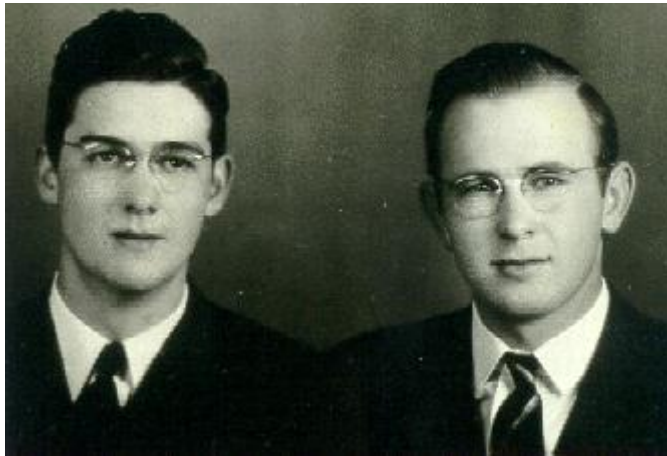
Next, I was put on another train to Goldsboro, North Carolina. Goldsboro's big business was selling mules, and every other store was a mule dealership. Mules were used to cultivate tobacco, the local cash crop. The industrial revolution had not fully reached the laboring man. They had not begun to use tractors. This was 1939, and my father did not have a power plaster mixer. Most things were still being done by hand. The South was extremely poor then and may not be much better off now, but I am quite sure few mules are sold there today.

My first missionary companion, Adrien Clinger, had just returned from Norway to finish his mission in North Carolina because of the war in Europe. I remember our first day of tracting. Elder Clinger told me to watch him do a door approach, he would show me how. We rapped hard on the first door. Because he had been tracting in Norwegian and had learned all his scriptures in that language, he slipped right back into it when the lady appeared at the door. I said, "Elder Clinger, speak English." He was very embarrassed. Then the two of us gathered near a corner to go over our introductory talk several times. Although he would slip back into Norwegian when he would get excited, it became less awkward. There were six missionaries in Goldsboro, all living in the same apartment house. One was a district president. He wanted all of us to fast for a member for three days. After the end of the second day, I just had to have something to eat, so I slipped out and ate a couple of hamburgers. When I returned, everyone could smell the food in my clothes and on my breath, thus ending the fast, much to the district president's disgust. He felt a fast was not of value unless it was for a three-day duration.

After a month or so in Goldsboro, I was transferred to Wilmington, North Carolina, a very pretty coastal town. My companion was Elder Mark Taft Hatch. Working in the town were two sister missionaries, Sisters Myrna Black and Mary Erickson. We used to compete against each other tracting and holding meetings. Week after week, the sister missionaries topped us by an hour or two. My companion, Elder Hatch, was extremely competitive and took the whole thing very seriously. We arose at 5 a.m. to study and were on the street knocking on doors by 8 a.m. Each team kept improving, but over the approximate nine months, I can never remember a time they did not surpass us. We had all sorts of theories about how

they did more. The best one was that they lived with nonmembers and could call early morning visiting as meetings. We tracted in the country where there was distance between the houses -- and they tracted in the town. The most likely reason was they worked harder than we did.

Elder Hatch was a very dominating type of person, a "You do what I say and don't ask any questions" type. I spent my time trotting along behind him. With the competition, he was even more aggravating. One preparation day, I suggested we go to the local YMCA to box a little. We went after each other as real enemies, and we were pretty good friends after that. I was not going to take that treatment. Part of his problem was all Utahans hated Californians. His idea of a great way to spend a day off was to take a big sack of peanut clusters and see three or four cowboy movies.



Elder Hatch and Elder Fife

Throughout my mission, we tracted daily, held innumerable meetings, and as far as I know, I was part of the conversion of a widow with four children. I was not there for the baptism and was deadly afraid that she was joining because she wanted me to marry her eldest daughter. The Branches at Goldsboro and Wilmington were very small with one or two strong extended families who had joined over the many years of missionary work. This was in the Bible Belt country where the Baptists were the "in" group. It is still difficult in those areas today. There was great distrust of the "Mormons" developed through the early years of the church. You were always asked how many wives you had. I am sure we softened the hearts of quite a few people, but seldom saw the fruits of our labors. Mary Erickson later became Mary Eatough and we have been good friends for more than fifty years. Myrna Black married one of the Henderson boys of Wilmington and spent her life there.

One of our responsibilities was to attend "Home Sunday School" in Hampstead, a little fishing village on Tops'l Sound. They had a combined Sunday School and Sacrament Service in one of the member homes. Their occupation was fishing and oystering in the Sound. One day, Elder Hatch and I responded to their constant invitations and went out oystering with some of the members. All day long they were breaking and eating raw oysters. This had no appeal to me. About noon, I was really hungry. When I asked what they were planning for lunch, I received the response, "What could be better than oysters?" They cracked me a big

juicy one. I looked at it, closed my eyes and gulped it down. Within the same motion, it came up as fast as it went down. The members said, "You'll never get used to them like that-you have to chew them!" I waited an hour or so until my hunger got the best of me, accepted another, chewed it, and it tasted very good. I had learned to eat raw oysters! There were so many oysters along the coast of North Carolina that MIA parties would be held at the beautiful beaches and would feature roasting oysters over a fire and eating them with corn bread. I really loved the parties and the oysters. Later, while in Fullerton, we met a member from Hampstead, Emily Linnell. She was a member of the Singleton family. In Hampstead, everyone was a fisherman. The members in Wilmington were business people.



In an Oyster Boat – Elder Fife in front

One time while tracting with Elder Hatch, we went into a nonmember home. As he walked in front of me across the carpet, I could see about a foot of toilet paper hanging out of one leg of his pants. I tried stepping on it, but it would jerk ahead of my foot. When we sat down, I told him he had toilet paper extending below his pants, he reached down and neatly folded it up.

Kentucky East District

After my labors in North Carolina, I was transferred to the Kentucky East District. Our whole mission consisted of six states: North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and part of Maryland. Each state was divided into two districts; there were between six and twelve missionaries in each district, usually twelve to a state.

In Kentucky, I was the senior companion and we labored with headquarters in Winchester. I learned in Winchester that my grandfather, William Wilson Fife, had labored in Kentucky, and some of the older people remembered him. Ruth Wall's family had a newsletter written by my grandfather, and he had converted their family to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

While laboring in Kentucky, we had a district missionary meeting between Christmas and New Years at Covington, Kentucky, which was across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, Ohio. Our district president decided that this period was not a fruitful one for missionary work

and planned a trip with his twelve missionaries to Cincinnati. We stayed in a motel in Covington at night, six to a room, and crossed the river to visit the sights in the daytime. We had a great time! When I returned to my field of labor, the realization struck me that I had to make a Weekly Report. I put on mine, No work, saw the sights. The next morning we were awakened early by a knock at the door, and there stood my Mission President! After a half-day interview, the Mission President, James R Jensen, decided not to send me home. I was the only missionary who told the truth. All the other missionaries and the district president, Max R. Rogers, counted each calling card handed out as a tract because of the Articles of Faith on the back and did not disclose what we actually did. To redeem ourselves, we were to have the best statistics on all future missionary reports. We had two mission presidents, whom we saw only four times during my mission.

Because of my good work, I was soon redeemed and President Jensen made me the Traveling Elder responsible for all the families in the country outside of the towns. There was only one such team to a district. My companion and I were to spend as much time outside of the towns as possible. This necessitated buying a car, so I found a black 1934 Ford V8, two door sedan for \$45. It gave me nothing but trouble, so I traded it for a 1929 Model A Ford, two door sedan, painted bright blue with yellow wire wheels. The color was not suitable, but it ran.



Model A Ford at right - bright blue with yellow wire wheels - Elder Fife center in white shirt

In Kentucky, after I became a Traveling Elder, Elder Richards S. Miller was my companion. He was one of Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith's nephews. He could be called a Salt Lake City aristocrat. He was very proper in his dress and his grooming. He was considered a playboy by his former companions who had difficulty in getting along with him. President Jensen placed him with me hoping we could get along together. He turned out to be an excellent companion. He was willing to do anything and go anywhere. He loved country work! It was highly exhilarating because you were accepted at every house. It was not the

routine of knocking on doors and being rejected. The people were very poor in creature comforts but were always willing to share anything they had with a stranger. They would always invite you in to eat. None of these people were members, we were proselyting full time. We seldom met a member.

The work was arduous. When we would see a trail, we would park our car on the road and walk for several days into the hills to houses completely unapproachable by roads. These people had to bring in their supplies either by foot or by mule. Our object was to have a meeting every evening. We would go to a house, meet the people and begin to read the scriptures to them. They would invite the neighbors from as far as ten mile away. When meeting time approached, there was almost no one at home. Then, you would begin to see people coming over the hill. By meeting time or shortly thereafter, the house would be filled to capacity. There were no telephones. The only way to communicate was to send a child around to the various homes or to yell from hill to hill. I have heard a woman stand on one hill and converse with a woman on another hill by a series of shouted, prearranged codes. All of these people knew how to yodel. The whole idea of yodeling was early day communication.

All of these people hungered for the scriptures, and they loved to hear them over and over again. Many could only read the Bible because they had memorized so much of it. Every family had a Bible even if they had no other books. If you misquoted, they would catch it immediately. Our mission president recommended we read the scriptures to avoid misquoting.

When they wanted to make a false assertion and the missionary asked for the scriptural reference, they would tell him it was in Jude 2. When the missionary looked it up and found there was no Jude 2, the people would laugh boisterously. I am sure that many missionaries were very chagrined when they finally looked up Jude 2 and found it to be nonexistent. The mountain people all had a great sense of humor.



Elder Fife and Elder Wilder

Almost all of these people were "moon shiners," who had a whiskey still some place in the backyard--even the members. We tried to convince the members not to distill whiskey, with little success. This was a major stumbling block to conversion.

There was no indoor plumbing. You would wash and shave outside the house. Your weekly bath was in a wash tub. We would stay out a month and then come into town for one weekend to have our clothes cleaned. The hours that people kept were rather strange. They would get up at 4 a.m. and want us to read the scriptures to them. They would keep us up until 9 p.m. having a cottage meeting, at which time everybody went to bed. We did many things every day. We would repair their houses, hoe or tie tobacco, or whatever was needed to be helpful. We made special efforts to seek out and help the widows where ever we were. To make up for the lost sleep, we would slip out in the middle of the day when it was warm and lay on a hill taking a nap. We would stay one night at each house. "Close by" meant within a couple of miles. Never had I walked so much before in my life. From the road or the last house we were at, we would see a foot trail which we would follow until we found the house at the end of it.

Many houses were infected with bed bugs. One night I woke up scratching and saw Elder Miller sitting by the kerosene lamp, picking the bugs off of himself, counting them and dropping them into the flame. He was at about 100. We began to carry a can of insect spray called "Flit," which we would spray between the sheets and covers before crawling in.

If in a town, we would go to various stores and churches to hold meetings. Every night, we would stay with a different nonmember family. They would invite their neighbors for a "preaching service" as they called it. We would then proceed to read the scriptures and preach the gospel.

Appalachia

When I was in Kentucky, I met a woman who was being interviewed to receive a cash payment from the government. Because of the depression, President Roosevelt and congress had specified that a small amount of cash be paid to the very poorest of the people and that it be in cash because they did not know how to or have facilities to cash a check. This woman was a widow with two children, living in a log cabin so drafty you could see through the logs. She cooked over a fireplace and had one feather bed. She had a half dozen chickens, a razor-back hog and was very poorly clothed. In fact, I have never seen anyone who appeared to be more poverty-stricken than she. The government man looking around and observing these conditions asked her what she would do if he gave her \$50. She said, "Laws, that is a lot of money!" She thought and then said, "I reckon I'd give it to the poor." She was poor, but was not poor in spirit!

This whole area is called Appalachia. It was the poorest area in the entire nation then and still is. The land is hilly. Most of the people earn what money they receive by raising tobacco on an acre or less of ground plowed by using a hand plow and a mule. The amount of cash earned was about \$50 a year. (This would be about the same as \$1000 for an entire year now.) Tobacco is still a subsidized industry because the government does not know what would happen to the people if they could not raise tobacco. The people had to and still have to be very resourceful just to feed themselves. In certain parts of Kentucky and West Virginia there are coal mines, and many of our members are miners. In those days, John L. Lewis, who became a very famous labor leader, felt that the coal mine owners were not paying enough wages to the men going underground. I went down into the mines for about an hour and found it to be the longest 12 hours of my life. These people are still barely subsisting today.



Elder Fife with a coal mine

Elder Miller was the envy of all of us because he could call Joseph Fielding Smith "Uncle Joseph" during Apostle Smith's visit of several days. A question was asked on some subject, and Elder Miller, wishing to impress his uncle, answered it. President Smith responded, "Where do you find that answer, Elder"? His nephew said, "I read it in your book, *The Way to Perfection*." Elder Smith said that was not what he had meant. He advised us to be well grounded in the scriptures so that we would get the proper interpretation of what was written. One question asked Brother Smith was: "Where are the lost 10 tribes"? He replied, "Lost. Next question please."



Sunday School In Appalachia

President Jensen often commenting how well we were doing in Kentucky and that I had come along way since my "vacation" in Cincinnati.

Occasionally we would have people contact us saying, "Are 'you all' the elders? Granny died, please come." We would drop everything and go to their house. Granny would be on the cooling board with two pennies holding her eyelids down A coffin would be being made and the grave being dug in a yard a mile or so away. We would hold the funeral service, bury the lady, and then cover up the grave with the help of some of the family. I preached at 19 such funerals. This was all done without the help of any kind of undertaker, and usually they were buried the same day they died. The cooling board was a system to tie the body in a flat position with arms folded so that the body would not pull out of shape.

One time I was called to Johnson City, Tennessee, to the Veterans Hospital to see one of our members. Everybody called him Doc. He was an herb specialist and a manipulator, something like a chiropractor. We went to him and administered to him on a Tuesday. To us he looked as healthy as anyone. He said for us to stick around a couple of days; he would die on Thursday. His family were all waiting around for his death. Sure enough, at the appointed time, he died. We put him on a freight car in a U.S. Government coffin, flag-draped because he was a veteran of World War I. When we reached the destination, there were people with a mule and a sled upon which we put the coffin and went five miles up into the "holler." No one had dug the grave, so Elder Miller and I dug the grave. By the time it was prepared, there were 200 people present for the funeral. We held the service, put the coffin in the grave with the help of the relatives, and everyone left. Elder Miller, the widow and I were the only ones left at the grave site. I looked at Elder Miller and he looked at me. We each grabbed a shovel and covered up the grave. We did not know the customs. They would have helped if we had asked them for assistance.

West Virginia North

One Friday, I received a letter from President Jensen asking me to be at a meeting at Fairmont, West Virginia, the following Sunday, nearly 500 miles away. He said it was very important that I be there. Immediately, I got into the car and drove there, arriving early Sunday morning. Upon arriving, I went right to the church. The meeting was underway with the Mission President on the stand. He saw me enter and as I sat in the audience, President Jensen said, "Our next speaker will be the President of West Virginia North District, Elder Fife." Letter of my appointment had not yet reached me, and it came to me as a big shock.

President Jensen had often complimented us about how well we were doing in Kentucky. Now I found myself with a whole set of different responsibilities which seemed overwhelming at the time. I had twelve elders under my supervision as well as the northern half of West Virginia and half of Maryland. It was an even bigger shock to Mary Erickson because she thought I was such a shy person.



Church in Fairmont, West Virginia

Elder Fife also lived here

In the Smoke Holes of West Virginia, the ground was frozen during the winter and the bodies of deceased people would freeze on their boards at the side of the house. In early spring, we had a lot of funerals to attend to. In one instance, we were notified that a very prominent member had died in a West Virginia town who wanted the elders to preach at her funeral to be held in a Baptist chapel. During the funeral, my companion and I got the giggles. We tried to cover our faces with our handkerchiefs, but the tears were streaming down our cheeks. It turned out all right because people thought we were grieving. One little old lady said, "Don't take it so hard, Elder, she has gone to a better place." When the funeral was over, the funeral director asked us to pull our car behind the hearse as was the custom for the minister's car. When he saw our sporty blue Model A with the yellow wheels, he had us pull it out of the line and promptly substituted a limousine. We were ruining the look of his funeral.

I had a companion by the name of Elder Franklin Birtcher who was a very good missionary. After I left the mission, his father, an insurance man from Globe, Arizona, came to pickup his son to tour the East Coast before going home. After he was released, they went swimming in the ocean and his father was drowned. Elder Birtcher had to bring his father home in a coffin. Elder Birtcher, an outstanding student, accepted an appointment to the Naval Academy in Annapolis, spent four years in engineering school and became a naval officer during World War II. When his service was over, he wanted to go into a type of engineering he could practice in a small mining town like Globe. When he went to register at the University of Arizona, the lines were so long that he decided to walk around campus until they became shorter. He said he had stood in so many lines at Annapolis, he would not stand in another. When he noticed there were no lines at the law school, he became a lawyer. I saw him when I was living in Tucson. He probably is practicing Law in Globe today.

As District President, there were not enough missionaries to go around so I served without a companion. In touring the districts, I would go out with the various missionaries to observe their methods and to encourage them. One day in touring the district, I came to the apartment of the Elders of Elkins, West Virginia, and could not find them in their quarters. I asked the landlady where they were, and like all land ladies in those days, she knew everything. She said they were off on dates with a couple of girls. I was very uncomfortable while waiting for them to return at about 10 p.m., and they were extremely embarrassed to see me. At that time, a District President could transfer a missionary to any town he wished, so I admonished them and transferred them out of Elkins to two other locations. They became very good missionaries. Some missionaries enjoyed tracting young girls their own age which is now discouraged.

It was customary for a member of the Council of the Twelve to visit in the mission field and travel with the Mission President through the various districts. Apostle Callas was visiting us. It was his practice to call you to the stand, put his arm around your shoulder and say, "Elder _____, will now speak to you on _____ subject," a most terrifying experience. He felt you should be able to speak on any subject any time. One of the things we missionaries were ordered to wear and disliked intensely were garters on our socks. Most garters ended up in the missionary's pocket unless he was in the presence of the mission president. The most pressing moment of my life occurred when Apostle Callas called me to speak. I bumped my leg on the bench which caused my garter to come loose. As I walked, I could hear it going clickety, clack, so I stopped, bent down to put it together, and then continued to the stand while President Callas waited for me. It added to the stress of what I knew was to come.

Brother Callas had a bad stomach. Because of his position, everyone invited him to eat. He would substitute me to eat in his place. By the time he left, I was sick of food, the meals were so rich. Even for breakfast the meal would be huge steak and eggs and two kinds of pie. Some of you will remember that President Callas was the father of Pearl Dean in Fullerton. He also was C. W Jensen's Mission President in the Southern States Mission.

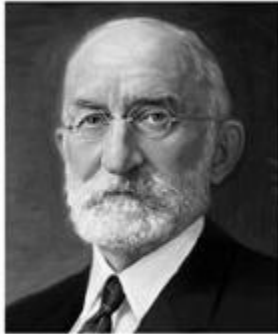
Drafted Into the Army

I was serving as District President of the West Virginia North District of the East Central States Mission when I received a letter from the U. S. Government stating in terse language that I had been inducted into the Army of the United States. I was to report to the National Guard Armory in Louisville, Kentucky for a physical examination to be given prior to being sworn in as a soldier in the Army. I was in shock!



Elder R.E. Fife

I thought missionaries could not be drafted, so called my Mission President to explain what had happened. He immediately called President Heber J. Grant, the President of the Church, who in turn called General Hershey, who was over the Selective Service System of our government. President Grant called me and told me to report for duty as I had served more than two years. He said I was the first LDS missionary to be drafted. General Hershey had given me permission, following the physical examination in Louisville, to go to California for induction so that I would be a California veteran instead of a Kentucky veteran.



Heber J. Grant

Following President Grant's instructions and being allowed to drive home, I had approximately ten days of freedom. After calling my parents in Gridley, my father, mother and sister, Gwen, planned to meet me in New Orleans where we would visit Uncle Walter and Uncle Joseph's families who lived there. After completing my physical examination and passing it with flying colors, I drove back to West Virginia where my release was awaiting me.

Thursday, two other newly released elders and I left Virginia for Washington, D. C., to visit our capitol for the weekend. Friday morning we started sightseeing. Before lunch, I decided to pay a visit to Sheridan Downey, one of our California Senators, whom I had heard always offered to take a visiting constituent out to lunch. After talking with the Senator for a few minutes and presenting him with the *Book of Mormon*, he said he would like to take us out to lunch but did not have time that day. He gave me five dollars for my lunch and asked if there was anything else he could do for me. I said that I would like to have a ticket to the Senate on Monday. Since few people went to the Senate on Monday, he could assign me a choice seat in the Senate Gallery and signed his name to the request.



Senator Downey

We were thrilled with the sights of Washington, D. C. On Saturday, the other two elders left by car for Idaho. I went to church in the Washington, D. C. Chapel, which at that time was quite a showplace for the church. President Ezra Taft Benson was the Stake President and Edgar C. Brossard was the Bishop. Bishop Brossard was also the Chairman of the U. S. Tariff Commission.

While in the meeting, we heard the news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Their planes surprised our armed forces and sank many of our battleships. It was December 7, 1941! We were all stunned and shaken. My prayers were for Lt. Loren Stoddard in the Air Corps stationed at Pearl Harbor at that very moment. We had grown up as closely as brothers all our lives.



Picture of Capital by REF

Declaration of War

On Monday morning, I wondered if I would be admitted to the Senate. Taking a chance, I stood in line where most of the people were being turned away. Today, the President would speak to the Senate. When my turn came, I was seated in the choice seat to which I had been assigned. Soon a hush came over this senior part of our Congress, and everyone stood while the President of the United States entered. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had such charisma and was a very popular President. After he was introduced by the Leader of the Senate, and as President of the United States and Commander in Chief of all the armed forces, I heard him give his famous "*Day of Infamy*" speech and declare war on Japan.



President Roosevelt addressing the Senate

(Picture from Life's Picture History of World War II)

I was so moved and motivated that I could hardly wait to be sworn in. If I had not been drafted already, I certainly would have gone home and enlisted as thousands of other young men were doing at this time. You never heard of anyone not wanting to go. Everyone had to get into the conflict. It was a time of great excitement. I knew that my life was making a drastic change.

Reunion

At five a.m. by Greyhound Bus, I departed from Washington, D. C. en route to New Orleans, Louisiana. I could hardly wait to see my family.

As we came through a corner of Mississippi, there were flares across the highway, sirens were wailing, red lights flashing. State Troopers and their police cars were everywhere. Two State Troopers hailed the bus and came aboard. One demanded in a gruff voice, "Do you have a Randolph Fife on this bus?" I was tired and had been half asleep, but with the noise and lights, I was wide awake. When I heard my name, my heart started pounding. I raised my hand weakly and said that I was Randolph Fife. They rushed back and took me bodily, forcefully, down the aisle and from the bus. I was in a cold, fearful sweat wondering what was happening to me. They walked me about a hundred yards and--to my surprise--handed me over to my Uncle Walter and my father! Everyone had a great laugh. Uncle Walter was a great practical joker. He wanted me to have a reception that I would never forget, and I have never forgotten it!

After visiting with our relatives, my father, mother, sister and I drove back to Gridley, California. It was the first time I had seen my family in over two years. It was a wonderful trip and was one of the last experiences I was to have with my father. How we enjoyed each other! We sang, we laughed, we shared our love. The four-day drive seemed short. We stopped along the way, but the pleasure was in being together again.

Immediately upon reaching Gridley, I reported to my Draft Board, which informed me I had three days in which to report for swearing in for duty at the Presidio of Monterey.

THE PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY

Monterey Induction Depot and Assignment Area

G.I.

When I arrived at the Presidio of Monterey, although no one knew anyone previously, everyone was standing in groups. Men with suits went into their groups, men with overalls gathered into another group, each seeking his own level. Then we went into a room and were sworn-in as soldiers of the Army of the United States of America for the duration of the war (or death, which ever came first).

Next we walked through the Quartermaster Supply Depot. All our civilian clothes came off, and we were stark naked. We walked through the Clothing Depot and dressed in the olive drab garb that was handed to us. When we reached the yard on the other side, there was no more segregation as to class or clothing-we all looked alike!

The early rising at Boot Camp was not much of a shock to me because as a missionary I was used to arising at 5 a.m. The hardest thing to handle was the difference in language. Everyone seemed to feel swearing added to their "macho" image as a soldier. We spent endless weeks testing for placement, wondering where we would be assigned. Lots of men wanted to go to the paratroops, but I had no desire to jump out of an airplane. First choice among the men was the air Corps and second was Signal Corps. After the testing and interviews, I was to be sent to the Signal Corps Training Center at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. I had no idea what I was in for but it was a lot better than being placed in the Infantry with two-thirds of the men at Monterey. Five of us went to the Signal Corps. My first choice would have been the Air Corps, but my positive verbal aptitudes and one weak eye determined my assignment.

K. P.

One day my name came up on the duty roster for KP (Kitchen Police) which started at 2 a.m. Kitchen Police meant peeling potatoes and other lackey work in the kitchen. I found out about it when I saw the Duty Roster thumb tacked to the company bulletin board. While walking down the company street, I saw a door "Typing School" and a room in which there were 40-50 typewriters. The thought struck me that if I retyped the duty roster and left my name off, I might not be called for KP the next morning. When I awoke at 5 a.m., I realized it had worked! I was not assigned to KP again the entire war.

The Signal Corps

The next thing I knew, the five of us who were assigned to the Signal Corp were aboard a troop train heading for the East Coast. It was the middle of winter when we arrived at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. Little did we know that the heavy woolen overcoat issued in California and laughingly put into our barracks bags would not be heavy enough for the zero degree weather we were about to encounter.

Training

The kind of work I was preparing to do as a Code or Cipher Clerk was to encode and decode messages. Messages encoded were those going out. The purpose was to keep the enemy from knowing what was being said. Once or more each day we were given a "key phrase." This key phrase was sent to all the units at the same time and was changed to keep the enemy from breaking it and reading communications.

We had a machine called a **Sigaba** (pictured right) into which you put the key phrase. When you typed the meaningful outgoing message, certain letters, spaces and punctuation were changed so that the message no longer made any sense. This new message was then sent out by telegraph via radio waves or by teletype via wires.

To decode an enemy message, it was received from the radio platoon. It would be in an unintelligible form and often was in a foreign language, but that made no difference. The trick was to find their key phrase, and it took a certain kind of abstract reasoning to recognize it. When our



aptitude tests showed this type of reasoning, they put us in the classification of "code clerk." We were all trying to get out of this job, but our classification was so scarce, we could not be replaced. The other thing a code person had to have was FBI clearance because of the level of secrecy.

The message came in five letter groups, and we were to take 26 letters. When a certain letter appeared frequently, you would give it a certain number such as " 1. " You did this with each of the more frequent letters, giving them sequential numbers. You then began to substitute letters which might apply to those numbers. Because military messages were phrased very simply, somehow you would get an idea of what was being said. You then would develop the key phrase being used by the enemy and could decipher everything they said for awhile.

Code Section

Other platoons thought code personnel were especially fortunate because they did not have to stand guard or take their turn at other company duties. We were the smallest group in the company, and were so few that we had double shifts of 12 hours on and 12 hours off, seven days a week. Encoding outgoing messages took priority, but there was always a backlog of incoming messages to decode. We were usually attached to the general's staff. In the movie, "Patton," the general was standing over a cipher clerk who was attempting to break the code of a crucial message and being spurred by the general with his swagger stick.

Cipher Personnel

The men with whom I associated had all been drafted and were designated code clerks when tested and found to have a particular ability in abstract verbal reasoning. Nick Natopolus had a PhD., was professor of Greek at Amherst College and was serving as a corporal. Bill Thompson was a lawyer from the law firm of Donovan and Donovan. General Wild Bill Donovan came across him in central Italy and made him a Major right there in the field. Bob Adams was a graphic arts director for a utility company in Illinois. He used to say to me, "I'm glad you are from the West. We Westerners have to stick together." Jim Kennedy was studying to be a chemical engineer. The cipher personnel were chosen at the start of the war and never had replacement. There never were enough of them and they had to work longer and harder than most soldiers.

Many career telephone people were given their rank and stripes commensurate with their work in the telephone company. They were electrical engineers who could rewire the boards and keep communication equipment working

There were various types of work, many different skills and an assortment of people in a total company. Elphage Napoleon Lanouette, 45 years old, owned a carnival which cost him \$1,000 a day for storage while he made \$21 a month. He tried to make it up by playing poker with company personnel. His thinking was that he was a better than average poker player and had more money than the others. If he played enough, he would win eventually. Everyone wanted to play him, but he felt it was like taking candy from babies. The men had little money, so he had to play a lot of games to get enough to offset his expense. I have never met a more streetwise man. He was a private with talents essential to the motor pool because he was used to keeping vehicles running.

For the first four months, Army pay was \$21 per month, out of which was taken \$7 for laundry and company charges of \$5. If you took insurance, it was another \$5. We were left with \$4 for all expenses. Most GI's would not have enough money to leave the barracks. To add further insult, we were told we would get no passes for four months. I felt like I had been imprisoned. In World War II the telephone was the basic source of communication and was the subject of our wartime assignment. One courses taught me how to splice telephone wires. One day, while marching around the perimeter of the Fort, I saw a tree next to a fence and the thought came to me "wouldn't that be an ideal place for a hole"! We were issued TL 13's, or wire cutting pliers and were to keep them on our person at all times. One dark night, after several days of contemplation, I took advantage of the tree's protection, cutting a hole in the fence and carefully splicing it back together. I now had an open door to the outside world!

Attending Church In New York City

On the other side of the fence was an Expressway from New Jersey to New York City. The first Sunday at the fort offered absolutely nothing for me to do. The only church services held were Catholic. Early the next Sunday morning I decided to take a chance and go AWOL (absent without leave) to attend Church. Opening up the previously cut hole, I closed it behind me with care and went to the highway, hitching a ride through the Holland Tunnel to the Manhattan Ward in New York City. Bishop Bennion was a Supreme Court Justice for the State of New York. His brother had just been killed as Captain of the USS Arizona which was sunk at Pearl Harbor. He took a real interest in servicemen, invited me to his home and introduced me to my cousin, Isaac Stewart, who was an executive in Union Carbide Corporation, a chemical company. There were many outstanding men in that ward. Brother Engstrom was a stockbroker in New York at that time. (Do you remember him in Fullerton?) We remembered each other when we moved to Fullerton. He was about 15 years older than I.

Manhattan

I joined the choir the first Sunday and learned that at 99 Park Avenue they gave servicemen tickets to restaurants and theatrical productions. Wealthy sponsors contributed theater tickets and dinners at fine restaurants for the benefit of servicemen on their free time.

The price to ride the subway in New York City at that time was five cents, so despite my meager earnings, I could travel all over the City. I took the subway back from Church to the Holland Tunnel and hitchhiked back to the Fort. For this outing, I had spent ten cents. Brother Bennion had invited me to his place for dinner and I paid two subway fares. I watched for my tree, entered through my spliced hole and returned to my barracks at 11 p.m. My buddies had covered for me but were very curious as to where I had been all day, and they gathered around my bed to hear of my exploits. I had promised to go to choir practice the next Sunday and wanted to go to a show, so invited my five buddies from California to come to New York with me. One of them did come but was so nervous the whole time he could not enjoy himself He never went with me again, even though we saw a \$10 top stage production and had a \$10 meal. Today the meal and show would each cost \$50 or more. He thought it was a fantastic day but felt the risk was too great.

For four months, with one exceptions weekend with guard duty-I spent each weekend in Manhattan. By going in on Saturday afternoon, I could get tickets for a dinner and show. I spent Saturday night with a member of the Church and was ready for Sunday services, another good meal a visit with members and return to base. It made an otherwise dreary time a very exciting one.

First Sergeant's School

Fort Monmouth was our basic training and I graduated from First Sargent's School which was the administrative half of Officer Candidate School. The entire group was scheduled for OCS, but the 229th Signal Corps Operations Company was being formed and needed three Signal Intelligence Code Clerks. By the luck of the draw, three of us were chosen. Otherwise we would have been officers in 45 more days. One good thing about it was the salary increase to \$65 per month.



Randolph at 1st Sergeant School

Our company was activated at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, March 28, 1942. I arrived at the company May 14. On June 23, the company departed for maneuvers, leaving six of us at Fort Meade. I was in charge of the administration of the company, making payroll, etc. for the next three months. Payrolls were paid in cash, put into envelopes with the name of the recipient and sent to Louisiana. I was in charge of the other five and as a free entity, wrote all passes. My title was Acting First Sergeant.

Attending Church In Washington, D.C.

With my free time, I went to Washington, D. C. Ward on Sunday morning and to Mutual on Tuesday nights. Because I had no place to stay overnight in Washington, I returned the 20 miles back and forth from base. While in Washington, I was assigned to a young FBI agent named Cleon Skousen as a junior Home Teaching companion. Ezra Taft Benson was our Stake President. In the Washington Stake, we had several Senators and Representatives who were members of the Washington Ward. I was assigned to teach the Gospel Doctrine class in Sunday School where they thought of me more as a young missionary than as a serviceman. I soon was in full swing of the ward social events and had a very good time meeting a lot of people there.

One Sunday morning, every bus going toward Washington was full but on the return trip which was toward Baltimore, the buses were all empty. After waiting for more than an hour and becoming late for my meetings, the thought occurred to me to walk across the road, take the bus and attend Church in Baltimore.



1st SERGEANT SCHOOL (Groups 346-7) S.C.R.T.C., April 27, 1942 FT. MONMOUTH N.J.

Meeting Norma Berry

The first person I met at the door was a young medical student and counselor in the bishopric by the name of Lee Berry who invited me and some other servicemen to their apartment for dinner. His sister, Norma was leading the singing. An interesting side light: when I first saw Norma, she seemed very familiar. When I told her I was from the East Central States Mission, she had a sister, Helen, whom I had met several times, and a boy friend in that mission. The reason she looked so familiar was that her missionary friend, Preston Adair, was one of my companions and had her picture on his dresser. He said she was the girl he was going to marry. It gave us a lot in common.

The next Sunday I was able to catch a bus to Washington and continued life as before. The following Sunday, the busses were packed and I ended back in Baltimore. Lee Berry was at the door again. He invited me for dinner, but this time I was the only serviceman. This began a courtship that ended in marriage in approximately four years because I was soon on shipping orders overseas.



Norma's version of the first time they met differs from Randy's. Her version is in her lifestory earlier in this book. She asked him to go on a hayride with her ward Mutual. It was cancelled due to rain.

Nevertheless, Randy and Norma's first date, was the rescheduled hayride. Surrounded by singing, laughter and camaraderie, they began to get better acquainted.

It was a clear evening, with the stars forming a beautiful backdrop for their relationship to begin.

Norma loved to tell about the fireflies. It was a perfect evening, fireflies twinkling. Randy caught two and dusted Norma's earrings with their effervescence. –DMR

They saw each other as often as possible, fell deeply in love, and Norma and Randy agreed to write when Randy got his next military orders.

Randy's next orders were to go to Fort Dix to be processed for overseas shipment. He waited day-by-day to be shipped.

The Athlone Castle



February 7, at New York Harbor, we boarded the Athlone Castle for a 21 day voyage. This was an English luxury liner built to hold 1000 passengers which had been converted to a troop ship holding 6,000 people.

While in the New York harbor, Gabriel Heater, a famous newscaster made a prognostication. He said, "I will assure all of you that this will be a quick war, and our boys will be home within six months. Three years later, we came home.

If anyone knows how to cook a bad meal, the English win all the prizes. Aboard the ship, we soon discovered the British sailors had a black market going where we could buy unlimited quantities of vanilla wafers, sardines, Hershey chocolate bars and sweetened condensed milk. I lived on these for the full time aboard the liner. A couple of us would sneak to the bow or stem of the ship, quietly spread sardines on a vanilla wafer, eat it and spread condensed milk on the next. I have not eaten vanilla wafers, sardines or

condensed milk since then.

The Athlone Castle
(Picture from the Web)





We were jammed into bunks four high and so narrow between that you could not turn over without hitting the bunk above you. It was hot and smelled of acrid body odor with no facilities for bathing. The officers had staterooms with hot baths. Some of us would slip in to bathe when no one was there.

Typical bunks that were installed in ships carrying troops

arrived at invasion. With boat by which extended approached the bottom, we hooked a shore rope to the front of the backpack. When you stepped off into the water, you dropped 8 feet below the water, and the rope proceeded to pull each of us on to the beach.

The trip lasted for 21 days, and we

Casablanca, North Africa during the heavy back packs on, we had to exit the climbing down a huge net made of ropes along and down the liner's side. As we

Upon getting ashore, everything with us was wet except items wrapped in plastic. Our blankets, shelter half, extra clothes and personal belongings were drenched. Fortunately my scriptures, the worn and tattered ones I still have, were wrapped in plastic. This was our first encounter with the Arabs, which were promptly nicknamed "A-rabs."

In North Africa we landed at Casablanca where all British, French and American troops were attached for three months to the Allied Base Sector under General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

General Patton

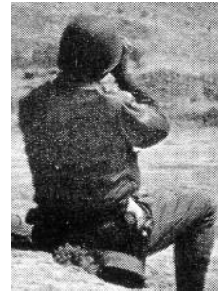
In June, the company was assigned to General Patton, Headquarters 1st Armored Corps, in Oran. Patton was a sudden change from a lackadaisical attitude to firm repeat firm military discipline. We were really put through our paces. General Patton was a colonel when he came, soon was promoted to brigadier general, and much later became a four star general. At the time, we thought all this military discipline was unnecessary. After the first combat, we knew it was the only way to go. We tightened up on all exercises, all training and no longer encouraged laissez faire attitudes.



Morale instantly improved-the "esprit de corps" was high. While some doubted we would win, we knew that under Patton success was assured. My personal opinion at my young age was that I did not like him because of his foul mouth. By the time the war ended, and I gained more understanding of combat and war, I began to appreciate the man for what he was--a great motivator and leader of men. He directed the kind of battle that gained the most ground or objectives at the least cost of men. We saw him on various occasions and he was always spit and polish and demanded the same from everyone else. Most news stories you read about him were derogatory. He was a tough, demanding military leader. "Had he been given

more authority," General MacArthur said, "The war in Europe would have been finished a year earlier. He was always bedeviled by the news media who would pick up out of context things he had said or done and played upon it. At one time, he almost went home in disgrace. After many months of idleness, he was given a command in France where he distinguished himself even more. He continued to be controversial until his post-war death in Germany.

The general had two pearl-handled revolver pistols which he wore constantly, one on each side. Near Oran, I rode in the command car with him to load his pistols while he shot insulators on telephone poles along the highway. He loved to shoot and was very good at it. One time in my capacity as code clerk, I had to enter his quarters with a message that was "For the eyes of the General only. " When I went in to his room, he was on his knees praying. His aide put his fingers to his lips for me to be silent until the General finished. I was very impressed. The code people were attached to the General's Staff which was the reason for my close contact.



General Patton

During our bivouac at Casablanca, the Big Three Conference was held with Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. Stalin didn't feel that he could leave so it ended up being the Big Two. Even without Stalin, or perhaps due to his absence, the Casablanca Conference was successful. I was one of the two authorized code technicians in the room during the high level conferences. I felt I was witnessing history being made. This was my second close up view of Franklin D. Roosevelt, my first contact with Winston Churchill.



Roosevelt and Churchill at Casablanca Conference

(Picture from the Web)



Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Casablanca Conference

(Picture from Life's Picture History of World War II)

My buddy, Jim Kennedy, and I made the trip from Casablanca through Rabat and along the coast to Mers El Kbier, on the way to Oran. It was a long, hot, dusty journey in which we half walked and half rode. This was the area patrolled and guarded by the famous French

Foreign Legion. The French Foreign Legion was one of our fantasies as we grew up because Hollywood presented it in such a glamorous manner. It was very disappointing to find how decadent, inefficient and useless the Foreign Legion actually was. But, on with the story.

Kennedy's Swim

When we arrived at Mers El Kbier, there were cliffs above an inviting cove of beautiful water. Some of the men went down the cliff to swim. Suddenly we heard cries for help. I recognized the voice of the person in trouble-it was my friend, Jim Kennedy, and no one was making any effort to save him. To climb down the cliffs would take several minutes of precious time, so I quickly took off my clothes and combat boots and ran as hard as I could, jumping off the cliff feet first. It felt about 100 feet high, but I am sure in reality it was only 40-50 feet in height.

Kennedy was nowhere in sight, but I hit the water not too far from where he was last seen struggling for his life. I surfaced and still could not see him. I dove under the water and, luckily bumped his body. He had ceased to struggle. I put my arm around his chest and swam as hard as I could to the shore, where I gave him artificial respiration. The water came streaming out of his lungs with every thrust. He gasped for air! I kept up the resuscitation until he was breathing. Then, he began to vomit water and to clear his stomach. When his breathing was normal, he returned to consciousness. He said he thought I should have let him die because he had never been so sick. After a couple of hours rest, a few members of our company made a rough sling and hauled him to the top. He was in top condition a few days later, and we spent the war together as very close friends.



Jim Kennedy and Randy

Several years after the war, he joined me in California and worked for me for about a year. His wife became angry with him whenever the war was mentioned, which was quite often. She thought Jim had had a secret Italian girl friend while overseas. One time when I was having dinner with them, she became angry with Jim and began to throw plates at me. As I ran out the door she shouted, "Why did you save this useless so and so?!!" She apologized later, but she was still very jealous.

Many years later, Jim had a fatal heart attack. I spent the evening at his wake telling his family war stories. They all wanted to hear of the time when I saved their father's life. His son and his brothers all expressed gratefulness to me for having saved Jim, and I found that Pauline did not mean what she said.

Hate

A few months fighting in North Africa had developed us into seasoned troops. However, our Commanding General, George S. Patton, felt that we were at a distinct disadvantage in not knowing how to hate. Unlike people in Europe who seemed to hate people in every other country, most Americans liked other people, whatever their origin. The General constantly lectured us on how we should hate the Hun--that we would never become good soldiers until we had learned **TO REALLY HATE!** We all thought about it, but it seemed that we hated the military life far more than we hated the enemy. In our company of 300 men, camp sanitation was always a problem. A latrine, so called, was a canvas tied to stakes around a series of trenches that were called slit trenches or straddle trenches, over which a person squatted to defecate. These trenches were about eight feet deep when first excavated. Each day, as they were filled with excrement, the latrine orderly would spread a layer of lime over the refuse to sterilize it and prevent the odor and flies from being so offensive.

At that time, we were under constant aerial attack by Messerschmitts, German fighter planes equipped with machine guns for strafing troops. A strafing attack is not dangerous if you are below the ground. We all had good foxholes in which to sit out any strafing attack, and it did not take us long to get into them. However, out in the open and above the ground, you had a good chance of being a casualty. While squatting over the trenches, a conversation between soldiers was to the effect that if they were strafed in that particular position, they would rather die than dive into the 3/4-full trenches.



Messerschmitts Flying over North Africa

(Picture from the Web)

One day it happened -- our company was strafed by four planes just after breakfast when the latrine was about half full of soldiers. Fortunately, I was not among them. The planes made four passes over us, wrecking trucks and shooting holes in tents. No one was hurt, but loud swearing was heard from the latrine where nine men were coming out of the depths,

covered with lime and rotting, stinking debris. We found that, as the attack began, not one person who was in the latrine even hesitated to jump into the terrible mess! We were in the field, so there were no showers or baths. These men had to clean up as best they could with water from their helmets. The men who dove into the latrine were now effective soldiers. They had learned **TO REALLY HATE THE GERMANS!**



Destroyed U.S. Tanks in North Africa

(Picture by REF)

Bizerte, Tunisia

Tunis, North Africa. After a grueling Tunisian Campaign, we found rest at the edge of the Mediterranean at a place called Bizerte and were digging in. Starting our foxholes in the hard, rough, rocky ground with small folding shovels, our first attempt required eight hours to dig a hole one foot deep. That night we were awakened from sleep with the strafing and bombing of our position. By morning, everyone had foxholes four to five feet deep. No mention was made about the inadequate tools. The motivation had changed so much that our holes would have been that deep if we had used our hands and a stick.



U.S. Tank Entering Bizerte

(Picture from the Web)

As in all wars, no one really knew what was going on or what was to happen next. However, when we began training sessions on how to prepare truck engines so they could run under water six feet deep, we knew we were planning for an invasion. We spent several weeks preparing the many types of mobile equipment. "Cosmolining" was spreading thick petroleum jelly over all parts and extending the exhaust well above the six to eight foot water line. After we completed each truck, it was tested by being run into the surf and under water for a few hundred feet before returning it to the beach.



Bizerte, Tunisia

Sicilian Campaign

A U.S. Navy flotilla composed almost entirely of Landing Craft Tanks (LCT's) appeared at dusk one evening. Previously attached to the Allied British Sector, the 1st Armored Corps was now in the newly formed 7th Army under newly promoted Major General George S. Patton, who had received another star for his leadership in North Africa.

Our orders were to drive all vehicles off the beach into the landing craft. The trucks were backed up onto the ramps of the landing craft ready to disembark forward at the unknown landing area. As we pushed off the beach into the sea, we were overcome with the eerie feeling of leaving the safe haven of our foxholes in Mother Earth to be exposed on the open sea.

We started out in the black of a moonless night. Each landing craft held two trucks or two tanks and about 40 men. There were no quarters, so we sat or laid around on our trucks on the decks of the landing craft. Each had a 20 m.m. anti-aircraft gun and a few 50 cal. machine guns. There were no decks below, but the Navy personnel who were there to man the guns and engines of the boat had a small galley or kitchen. The smell from the kitchen almost drove us out of our minds, and we knew we were in the wrong branch of the service. We were all on D-rations, a combat ration made almost entirely of the driest chocolate bar you could ever imagine which was not sweet, would not melt, and must have been filled with talcum powder. They claimed it to be a complete meal, having all the vitamins, minerals and food value necessary to maintain a combat soldier for at least a day and usable for a week's duration. While we were eating our D-rations, the smell from the Navy mess almost drove us insane, convincing us we were in the wrong branch of the service.



LCT Beach Landing

(Picture from the Web)

During the crossing from Bizerte to our landing at Licatta, Sicily, many of the men became seasick. Almost all of us had diarrhea from the change of food. It was some sight to see about forty men hanging their buttocks over the rail in order to relieve themselves. We learned to wash our clothing Navy fashion by tying our clothes all together on a line and trailing it behind the boat. We washed ourselves with sea water by dropping a bucket and a rope down the three or four feet to the water line. Sanitation is a constant problem during war conditions.

A day later, at daybreak, as our flotilla approached the beaches of Licatta, a German aircraft tried to bomb our small landing craft, and our Navy gunners were firing unsuccessfully at the plane. A bomb from the German plane burst 15-20 feet from our boat, showering our entire ship with a foot or more of wet sand, silencing our antiaircraft guns and causing our power winches to fail, forcing us to drop manually the ramp on the front of the boat. As the Navy ran our LCT into shore, we were all aboard the trucks with the motors revving. The breakers appeared to be about two feet high as we drove over the end of the ramp and dropped about four feet into the water. Many men were thrown from the truck and had to scramble ashore on foot. The trucks raced up the beach as the landing continued. On the boats, we were issued the first recoilless rocket gun, the Bazooka, which we shot at the enemy.



LCT Landing – place unknown

(Picture from the Web)

The 82nd Airborne Division was in the process of dropping infantrymen ahead of us. They came in very low, at about 600 feet, in DC-3's under a lot of ack-ack. One paratrooper told me that he had dreaded the jump all the way from the airfield to Sicily, but when the ack-ack shells started going through the airplane, he could not get out fast enough. Some of the paratroopers were so excited they did not hook up to the static cord on the plane which opened their chutes for them. At that low altitude, they did not have time to pull their rip cords and jumped to their deaths. Hundreds of chutes were in the air, an awesome sight. Some of the men landed in trees and were severely injured. Some were cut in half by landing on electrical wires and many planes were shot down before anyone had a chance to jump. It was

a new experience for everyone. No matter how much training a person has, you wish you had more when placed under survival circumstances.

Night came very quickly, but the sky was brightly lighted by the battle in progress. We were supposed to move behind the enemy lines to hook up into their communication system-but more important to us just then was to stay alive! Kennedy and I were crawling up a hill together, not knowing what was on the other side. Suddenly, I saw a dark spot which I thought must be a shadow, and lunged toward it to find myself falling 20 feet, landing on my stomach with the breath totally knocked out of me. I thought I had been shot. A second later, I felt crushed to death as something landed on my back. There was absolute silence ... then I heard Kennedy say, "Are you alive?" In trying to regain my breath from the two blows I had suffered, I weakly said, "Is that you, Jim?" We decided not to move from where we were until morning and to keep as quiet as possible during that endless night.

We must have gone to sleep just before daybreak because, when we awoke, a shaft of light was coming through the hole in the ceiling. We were in sort of a cave. We were badly bruised and skinned up, sore but able to walk, and seemed to have no broken bones. As our eyes became accustomed to the dim light, we saw we were in a wine cellar and the hole above was a vent to keep the air circulating around the giant oak vats of wine. Each vat must have held nearly 3,000 gallons of wine. Jim's eyes widened at our great discovery. His first observation was, "Let's not tell anybody about this. Let's just drink it all ourselves!" But, that was no way to win the war.

That morning we made our way out of the cave back to our unit only a few hundred feet from where we had fallen and continued fighting our way up the coast of Sicily. Sicily is a rocky, hilly, historic island. It was and probably still is a most beautiful place with lovely ancient ruins, especially around the city of Agrigento. I'd love to revisit there.



A Sherman tank moves past Sicily's rugged terrain

(Picture from the Web)

General Patton was always trying to provoke our anger toward the "hun," and in this campaign, he denied all servicemen both mail from home and cigarettes. It was not long before

he had men whose anger and will to win pushed the adrenaline level to where almost everyone was doing a superior job. Our company received several decorations and commendations in this campaign, of which we were all justly proud.

The mosquitoes were enormous and malaria was rampant. The mosquitoes seemed to like the fair skinned foreign soldiers better than those with darker skin. In the early part of the campaign, I came down with a severe case of malaria and was hospitalized in a field hospital. Because of it, I did not participate much in the campaign after reaching Agrigento. We were introduced to a new medication called adabrin, a substitute for quinine.

I was in the field hospital at the time of General Patton's historic visit. Because he needed every man for combat, he walked through the hospital looking for men who were not really ill. As he went through the tent hospital, he talked to most of the soldiers, asked them where they were from and how they felt. After he looked at the diagnosis at the end of my bed, he reached his hand to feel my head which was hot with fever. He then told me to get well as soon as I could and to join him up the road. That same day, he found a soldier who seemed to have no injury or temperature indicating illness. He slapped the soldier--which caused the General to lose his command, and he nearly received a dishonorable discharge from the service. This was a tragedy because he was a brilliant general. This is recorded history and would be interesting reading for anyone. The balance of my time in Sicily was spent in recuperation from malaria and regaining weight, down to 140 pounds from my usual 175.



A Field Hospital in Sicily

The Hospital which Patton slapped the soldier was

93d Evacuation Hospital at San Stefano

(Picture from the Web)

The Invasion Of Italy

Paestam

We convoyed over the mountains from Agrigento to Palermo, Sicily. After several weeks in Palermo, we were getting ready for a big invasion to an unknown place. Some thought it would be to Southern France, some thought it would be Germany. After embarking on Naval landing craft, we found the invasion to be the mainland of Italy.



Entering Palermo

(Picture from the Web)

With a large flotilla of miscellaneous Naval vessels, we went from Sicily to the toe of the boot of Italy, landing on a beach called Paestam. The day was raining and overcast. I felt very sick to my stomach which I attributed to fear of the invasion. In making the invasion, we were all in water up to our arm pits. Upon arriving on shore we were walking wet from the sea water as well as the rain. Our orders were to dig in as close to the shore as we could. We spent a couple of nights under shell fire, just digging in. We were wet, miserable and cold, had not taken our clothes off for several days and were covered with mud. The stomach condition continued to persist. When one of my buddies said, "Fife, your eyes are as yellow as urine-Open up your shirt." I opened my shirt and found my stomach was a bright yellow. By this time our infantry had taken the Bay of Naples. I was sent immediately to the medics, put into an ambulance en route to a hospital in Naples. Terribly ill, I bumped around for hours on the ambulance cot, but was relieved to know it was not just fear causing the problem. I had a severe case of yellow jaundice or hepatitis.

We were put in a hepatitis ward on the sixth floor of the Naples Hospital. It was full of bed bugs, but we were too sick to be bothered. Each morning they would take several dead GI's from our ward. One of the treatments for yellow jaundice was to eat adequate sugar. The nurses would bring in their hard candy and encourage us to eat it constantly.



Naples during the War

(Picture from the Web)

While on the sixth floor, we had an air raid which called for an evacuation to the bomb shelter in the basement. We were too sick to be moved and did not care if we died, so stayed where we were. The German bombs came shrieking down, stripping off the brick wall of an apartment building next to us. You could see it uncover the toilets from the top to the basement of the building. Then the concussion hit and knocked out most of the windows in the hospital. Glass was everywhere. Instead of being on the beds, we were hiding under the beds.

Within two or three weeks of partial delirium, we started to improve, and after the third week we were able to walk around. Another GI patient and I walked to the Harbor at the Bay of Naples where a man in a row boat offered to row us the three miles to the Isle of Capri for a few lira. After what we had been through in the invasion, this seemed as beautiful and unreal as a trip to Disneyland. Everything was beautiful and unreal. We were able to get great meals and found it so good we stayed on the isle for three days AWOL from the hospital. There was so much disorder at the time that no one missed us. We leisurely strolled through the shops and stores and visited the Blue Grotto, a cave on the leeward side of the island. Because the cave opens below the water line, you have to wait for the right wave to enter or depart. Otherwise, the boat would be crushed. What an eerie site when the opening is partially under water. We had several meals, stayed a couple of nights, and then found another boatman to take us back to the hospital.

I recuperated another couple of weeks before joining our company at Maddaloni near Sorrento.



Panoramic View of the Isle of Capri at the time of WWII

(Picture from the Web)

Decoration Day

On Decoration Day, I was asked to be an honor guard for Memorial Day Services to be held at the Beaches of Paestam where we lost 5,000 men. This figure does not include the wounded. General Mark W. Clark was the speaker. I will not forget his words in looking over our many fallen comrades, he said that the torch of liberty had been carried by many there and urged us to continue to carry the torch where ever we went and to never forget the soldiers who had perished for the sake of liberty." I have been proud of my country and proud to be an American all my life, but never more so than at that time.



General Mark W. Clark

(Picture from the Web)

Detached Service

Most of the time our company was split up in what was called detached service. We were very seldom all together as a unit. Each crew or segment of the company would have different experiences to tell about the war. Out of 300 men, you would find 300 different accounts of the war. Each crew operated as a separate entity. We were called a Signal Operations Company but had specialized units for radio, telegraph and telephone facilities, wire crews and cipher crews. The function of the cipher crew was to encode and decode messages. These crews could be called to assist any combat unit. You could be assigned to

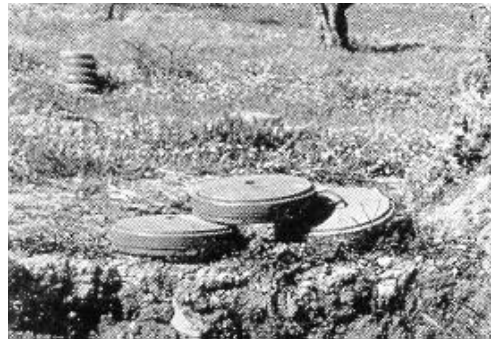
work at or from corps headquarters or to field operations; they could be military units of various allied countries, such as the French, English or Gurkha's.

To be in our group you had to take a lot of individual responsibility. We made up our own rosters and duty assignments from the general orders which came from higher headquarters. As a result, no one knew exactly where we were at any time. We were to report in once a day to our company headquarters by radio or telephone. This was not always possible but was strongly recommended.

Many times our orders would have us laying wire into enemy communications which were ahead of the infantry and behind enemy lines. When any of these units were to move forward, we would be asked to go ahead of them to establish future communications or to hook into the enemy telephone lines so that we could tell what the enemy were saying and to know what their orders were. The main communication was not the radio-it was by field telephone. Radio was a secondary means. This meant that about one-eighth of the time we were in enemy territory, ahead of the infantry. Our lives depended upon our initiative and trust and dependence upon others within the crew. We had varied experiences including the following.

Mines

We were driving cautiously along a road that had been mined with **Tellar mines**, but had been cleared by the Corps of Engineers. A Teller mine was about a foot in diameter, six inches thick, and was filled with enough TNT to lift a Sherman tank several feet into the air and possibly turn it on its side. It had a detonating device on a ratchet set to explode after a certain number of vehicles had passed over it. These mines were stacked in piles along the side of the road where the Corps of Engineers had dug them up, removed the detonators and stored them for disposal. From our experience, we found that one or two mines were missed every so often. Such mines were of great concern to those who were traveling.



Teller Mines with detonators removed at roadside

(Picture from Life's Picture History of World War II)

Several days before this particular trip, we had witnessed a woman carrying sticks on her head walk off the side of the road and step on a land mine called a "bouncing baby." This mine was a small German mine which lifted about four feet off the ground when detonated and was filled with nuts, bolts, nails, and any type of steel particles. As this woman stepped on it, it detonated and decapitated her. The only defense one had against this type of mine was to

drop to the ground when you heard the ping (sounding much like a 22 rifle going off) as it detonated. You would thus escape, terrified but relatively unharmed, with only a few scratches. As a result, at the slightest sound, we were accustomed to dropping immediately to the ground. After seeing several mines explode, you learned to walk carefully, drive carefully and walk around anything that looked disturbed, either on or off the road.

As we drove along on this particular bright and sunny day, we heard an explosion ahead and saw a jeep rise into the air about 15 feet. Men were thrown every place. Most of them were unharmed, but the driver had a badly injured left leg. The concussion from the explosion had rolled his skin and leg muscles up above his knee to the middle of his thigh in a very tight roll. When we picked him up, we were surprised to find there was no bleeding-just a long, white, exposed series of bones. We laid him in our jeep to take him to a first aid station. He was semi-conscious, but the only sounds that came from him were those that many wounded soldiers expressed -- they cried for their mothers. This soldier, an Englishman, kept calling for his mother to help him. We took him to the nearest first aid station and never found out if they were able to salvage his leg.

Occasionally we found a "potato masher," a German hand grenade attached to a foot long wooden handle which, when thrown into a lake, would get a fish or two for a meal. The fish would come to the surface at once because the explosion was small.

One of the men of our company was very fond of explosives. One day, he picked up four or five Tellar mines, put a fuse on them and swam with them, one by one, to the center of the lake, where he tied them together with a cable attached to the bank. He announced, "We are going to fish for supper!" and blew the mines. The whole lake seemed to go up into the sky and then slowly returned to earth. Not one fish appeared. As it was dusk when he exploded the mines, we soon went to bed. When we awoke the next morning, we found thousands of dead fish. Because of the powerful charge, the fish went directly to the bottom of the lake and did not appear at the surface for several hours. What a stinking mess!

Fiesta for a Small Town In Italy

Many times a person's existence in the Army with any degree of comfort depended on one's ability to trade, beg or steal for additional food and supplies from the Quartermaster Corps. We were stationed in the small village of Maddaloni. Everyone seemed hungry. A can of C-Rations given to a villager was a cause of great rejoicing. These poor sharecroppers had suffered for many years under Mussolini and his Fascist regime, having little say over anything-yet, they had shown us so much goodwill and kindness! We felt it would be a great idea to have a village fiesta, but our issued provisions were meager, not the feast we had in mind for them.

The QM Corps was about 30 miles to the rear of this village. I took several bottles of choice wine I had obtained from the villagers and many items volunteered by the GI's, hopped in a jeep and traveled back to see if I could trade for additional food. While at the ration dump, I saw a truck being loaded with turkeys, flour, butter and assorted cans of

delicacies going to what was called "The General's Mess." Although I had tried everything, I had been unable to trade or exchange any of the things I had for food, including my watch, wallet, and the souvenir guns we had gathered collectively.

As I saw these supplies being loaded onto a 6x6 truck, I abandoned the idea of trading for lesser fare. Somehow, I had to obtain some of the provisions from this truck. I continued to watch the truck being loaded. As it started off, I could see that the two men in the front seat could not see directly behind the truck. My driver drove close to the tailgate. I climbed onto the radiator of our jeep and gradually inched up to the tailgate, where I jumped from the jeep onto the back of the truck. Then I started throwing out sacks and bundles to be picked up later. There were six or seven turkeys, sacks of flour and many other good things. After the driver came up to the truck to retrieve me, we stopped to pickup the packages I had thrown down. We were elated with our success!



Village Women

(Pictures by REF)

We drove our cache back to Maddaloni. We were going to have a village feast! Knocking on the doors, we showed our food and explained what we wanted to do. Everyone picked up the spirit-excitement reigned! "Mama Mia! Mama Mia!" they laughed and shouted. Everyone began to hum and sing as they worked! All the ovens for baking bread were made of brick. They were heated by being filled with faggots which were burned, heating the brick to a high temperature. The coals and ashes were then removed so the bread could be baked. It was decided we could bake the turkeys in them after baking the bread. The women made bread and spaghetti with the flour while the turkeys thawed. There was indeed enough to feed the entire little village!



(Picture by REF)

Several hours later, we and the villagers were stuffing ourselves, dancing in the Piazza and having a great time of fellowship. How those people enjoyed themselves, and how they loved the GIs! They could not believe we Americans could supply such a feast! We were just as surprised as they were. We have always wondered and would have liked to have seen the look on the faces of the truck drivers and would like to have heard their explanation to the General as to where the rations had gone!

Randy wrote more description in a letter to Norma: “This is a wonderful country, the women do all the work and the men sit around and watch. I marvel at the sense of balance and the size of loads these women can carry on their heads. It is a common sight to see a woman with her hands full and a three gallon water jug perched on her head walk along and talk to her neighbors then go leisurely on. Every day the women go to the well with their jugs, just as Ruth did hundreds of years ago. Nobody moves very fast. Most of the fields are ploughed by oxen.

“You should see the way milk is delivered over here. It is strictly fresh. The milkman drives a herd of milk goats down the street and when anyone wants some milk they bring out their containers and the milkman milks into the container. Most of these people use goats’ milk. We never touch it, even if we were allowed to.”

Randy enjoyed light hearted banter with the Italian homemakers. He shared his package of popcorn sent from home, which the villagers had never seen. He showed the women how to pour oil in a heavy pan with a lid, add the popcorn kernels, then shake over heat with the cover on until it all popped. They marveled at the delicious treat that was produced in such a way. When Randy visited them again, he found they had tried popping regular feed corn, and were disappointed when they had scorched many pans of kernels trying to make them pop.

These women, who were still doing laundry in rivers, pounding the wash with rocks and hanging them out to dry in the sun, were eager to hear about America. Randy would explain how an automatic washer worked. Oh, how they marveled. Then he would describe an automatic dryer, again to much amazement. He couldn't resist teasing that the clothing came out of the dryer folded. They were thrilled at the very thought.

Life In the Bivouac

(or Staying Warm In a Hot War)

Surviving a mile or two behind the front lines was never easy, and we were always seeking creature comforts. For instance, instead of a mattress, we were issued two mattress covers -- one to keep in case of your death, the other for stuffing with straw or whatever you could find to put into it. After sleeping on the ground for a few days, it was surprising how fast you could find something to stuff into your mattress cover.

Because we had no tables, all our meals were eaten sitting on the ground. When we were living in a so-called "protected area," we were issued olive drab six-man tents. There was a center pole which held the tent up, four corner poles and many guy ropes which buoyed it against wind and storm. The tents were three feet high on each side and sloped up to ten feet



in the middle with a hole in the top. There was no way to heat these tents and the

Tent encampment – place unknown

snow was up to two or three feet on the ground around the outside. It was often necessary to jump up to hit the top of the tent to keep the snow from breaking the fabric.

Our main problem was how to keep warm? In bombed-out buildings, we found pieces of pipe and fittings which we managed to put together. We borrowed a five gallon can of gas from the motor pool. From the can of gas stored outside as a supply, we piped gas into the tent through a little trench in the floor. Using elbows on the pipe, the line ended at the top of the center pole. Two feet out from the center pole, we made a gooseneck extending the pipe into a #10 tin can. At that point, we squeezed the end of the pipe so that only a drop of gas could come out at a time and lit the end of it. We had a heat generator!

This was against all army regulations. We were told not to waste gasoline because the people in the states had rationing, and it was not allowed for heating here. Zero degree weather soon makes you forget the regulations and gas rationing. Our only alternative was to stay in bed all the time. With the heat generator, we could eat, visit, or play cards or games either standing up or sitting down, actually looking at each other eye-to-eye.

One day at chow call, or what the army called Mess Hall, which was very descriptive, one of the people in our tent blew out the flame but did not turn off the valve on the gasoline, and it leaked all the time we were gone. When we returned, one of the men threw a match into the generator and flames came out the front door of the tent. Six men clad in long-john underwear came running out to throw snow into the tent to smother the flames.



Randy in front of tent encampment – place unknown

Others heard us shouting and thought we were having a good time, so they joined us. We had one of the biggest snow fights of all time!

Finally, at the end of the cold season, we were given the good news that we would be issued down sleeping bags. This was met with great enthusiasm by men who had one army

blanket each. When the bags came, they were wool blankets made into mummy bags with a zipper and a hood.

The first night, we all zipped ourselves up like mummies with the hoods over our heads. It was so dark inside that we all panicked because we could not find our zippers. We were like woolly caterpillar worms falling all over ourselves in our panic. Some stood up and in standing up, fell over. Some crawled. What a bunch of woolly worms trying to shed our cocoons! We soon learned not to zip them all the way up because, being subject to strafing at any time, you have to be in control.

The first proof I had that the Army had down sleeping bags was when I saw one in an army surplus store. We did not see them at the front where we needed them. The same thing happened with combat boots, combat jackets (leather with a wool lining), or any other equipment that would have assisted troops living outdoors in inclement and freezing weather. We kept seeking any kind of creature comforts we could find.

News from Home

Somewhere in Africa in December, I received a sympathy card for the passing of someone in my family. Two weeks later, I received a telegram and a letter from my mother telling that my father had passed away on Sunday, November 14, age 51 years. In the same mail, I received my copy of the Improvement Era mentioning the excommunication of Apostle Richard R. Lyman. Apostle Lyman interviewed me for my mission, so I felt a special bond to him. I actually felt worse for Brother Lyman than I did about my father because my father's election to the Celestial Kingdom I felt to be assured. For Brother Lyman, the future appeared very dismal.

Randy wrote in a letter to Norma:

“I Received some very shocking news from home about four days ago--a letter from mother telling of the sudden death of my father. As yet I haven't received many of the details or anything about the funeral. However this is what I've learned about so far. My father died on Nov 14 and was buried on my 24th birthday Nov 19. I received word of it on Dec 14, a month later, and it was quite hard to take being 9000 miles away. My brother Calvin was at a port of embarkation in New Jersey and managed to get home a day after the public funeral, so a family funeral was held. I was really glad that Calvin could get home, all the family was there except me. I have been reading a great deal from the scriptures and know that father is much better off, but how the family will miss him especially mother. Mother said he was laughing and joking right up to the last--very typical of him. I wish that you could have met him. He was a wonderful man and father.”

Randy wrote in a letter to his mother the same day:

“Father has always been more than a hero to me—he has been my father in the fullest sense of the word. We have worked, played and worshipped together. His council and teaching was always done in such a humble and sincere manner that I could never forget. My greatest lesson on living a full and useful life is the way Father lived. I fully believe he lived more in his fifty-

one years than most people do in seventy. His achievements cannot be counted for many years, but they will be many. I mourn Father's passing, and no one can take his place. The Savior said, "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." Father led an abundant mortal life and is now placed where he can live even more abundantly.

I am truly thankful for the close relationship I have been privileged to have with Father. He has truly made the world better for having been here."

The Tragedy of War

We were at an observation post on a hill. On one side was our artillery, on the other side were the Germans. We and the Germans thought we were hidden from the eyes of our enemy. Early one morning we observed a German armored car approaching cautiously along a road. Little did they know our forces were well entrenched nearby. On our field telephone, we called the artillery and told them of the approaching armored car. Just as the car poked its engine around the hill, our 90 mm fired, destroying the car and all personnel with it. When it was hit, we all cheered!

After this, a few of us slipped down to examine the destroyed machine and saw the sickening sight of five, badly mutilated, dead bodies. In our hearts, we all wondered why we had cheered. We did not feel like going through the bodies for souvenirs, but one of our party picked up a letter a German soldier had been carrying in his uniform. Art Hefner, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, could read German. In the toughest voice he could muster, he said, "Let's go back to our command post and find out what the dead kraut's sweetheart had to say." So we gathered in our dugout on the top of the hill and started reading this letter. It was from the German's wife telling her husband how much she and her two children missed their father and that they were praying each night for his safe return. We read no further. Tears were streaming down our faces, and again we were brought to the full realization of the tragedy of war.

The Fortunes of War

Different day, same hill, approximately a week later. We had spent a most boring week observing the Germans. The Germans seemed so far away, we decided not to post a sentry, and all five of us turned in for the night. We were awakened at about 2 a.m. with flashlights in our faces. Six Germans were holding their guns on us. We raised our hands in surrender. We had been captured! We had made a serious mistake in not posting a guard! To our surprise and amazement, each of the Germans handed us their guns and said, "No, we don't want to take you prisoners; we are your prisoners. We will be good prisoners!" They had watched us and felt safe in surrendering to a good natured group who were careless about military discipline. Some soldiers simply shot their captives. It was too much trouble to process the enemy.

We sat up all night, sharing food and sharing stories, conversing in Italian and sign language. We had five more days to stay on this hill. The Germans cooked our food, cleaned our guns and stood guard. They were especially efficient sentries because they did not want

the German Army to know they had surrendered. After five days, we marched our prisoners, now good friends, down the hill four miles behind the lines, to the POW Escort Guard Company. We told them we might have to treat them a little rough. They said they understood. As we approached the point of turnover, each of us gave the one we were guarding a hard shove. Each one of them looked back at us with a wink and a smile. All I could think of was -- what mockery war is, and I have felt guilty for many, many years for the mark on my service record crediting me for capturing six prisoners.

Statement of Charges

For several weeks, we had been on the banks of the Rapido River. Every day was the same. Our artillery would explode a barrage on the German troops who were in foxholes on the opposite side of the river, then we would settle down deep into our foxholes while they shot a barrage of shells onto our troops. In looking through our binoculars at enemy territory, we saw two telephone poles bolted together carrying all of their communication lines. If the lines were cut, they would have no incoming communications.

Several more weeks passed. The captain commanding us approached saying, "Fife, take two men from your platoon, cross the river and cut those lines." I chose two of the best trained men who were professional linemen in civilian life, much better prepared than I. But how could one, two or three men cross the river and cut the lines under direct observation of well-armed German troops? Crossing the swift, 80-foot wide river was a difficult assignment in itself. To the three of us, it sounded like a sentence of death. Nevertheless, we tried to figure out how to do it and what equipment would be needed: a rubber boat big enough for three persons; hooks for pole climbing and safety belts. We had TL-13 pliers, the small, lineman's pliers or wire side-cutters. We even included a small telephone set in a leather case for each person to provide group communication. Two telephone poles, 12-14 inches in diameter had been bolted together side by side to make a 40-foot pole. The more we figured, the more unlikely the project looked.

We chose a moonless night, hoping the blackness would conceal the action. Gauging the swift current of the river, we started upstream about a half mile so we could strike our landing point. The night was extremely cold, and a hard wind was blowing. As we landed the craft on the German side of the river, the wire could be seen to be higher than our previous estimate. The older, more experienced linemen were too terrified to proceed. They agreed to stay with the boat waiting for my return.

I put on my hooks and lineman's belt as quietly as I could. Approaching the pole, looking up, I could not see the top. It seemed between 40 to 50 feet in height. Because it was very icy and slippery, I placed each hook into the pole with caution and as silently as I could, inched my belt up the pole each time I took a step. The higher I went, the colder it was and the harder the wind was blowing. When I reached the splice, I had to walk around the first pole trying to work onto the second pole to continue my upward progress. It seemed like an hour, but probably was just a few minutes.

I finally reached the top and found the wire was hooked onto a 3/8 inch cable. My side cutters were only eight inches long, so I laboriously started cutting the cable by circling it with the pliers in a rotating fashion. First I could hear one wire of the cable break, then another, then another. Finally, the tension on the wire and pole caused the cable to snap. It sounded like a rifle shot! As this happened, the pole slammed into my face, almost knocking me off. When I came to my senses, search lights were being turned on by the Germans. I slid down, dropped my belt, unbuckled the hooks on my legs, and ran as hard as I could for the boat.

When the confusion started, my companions jumped into the boat and headed toward the other shore. They saw me when I dove into the icy river and stopped about 30 feet out. I started swimming, but in trying to get aboard, the boat capsized, throwing all three of us in the river. Lights played against the river, bullets ripped through the boat and water, but they missed us as we were swept by the current down the river a mile or two before we could get to the side. We scurried ashore like wet rats, so scared that our adrenaline kept us warm. By the time we reached our pup tents a couple of hours later, we were chilled to the bone. We crawled into our blankets with our wet, woolen clothing and waited for our bodies to warm up.

The next morning, I was called before the company commander, a new captain with no combat experience, fresh from the states. He was angry with us because we lost a boat and several hundred dollars' worth of telephone equipment. No comment was made as to the success of our mission or our narrow escape-only that through my seeming neglect, government equipment had been lost. I was being requested to sign a statement of charges to be taken out of my meager pay.

I immediately broke all rules of military courtesy by about-facing, getting into a jeep and driving five miles to the Office of the Inspector General. I explained the situation to a colonel, who became as upset as I was. After a few telephone calls, he asked me to follow him to our headquarters. Upon arriving, I returned to my tent. The next thing I saw was the captain loading his gear into the colonel's jeep. That was the last I ever heard of signing a statement of charges.

Anzio

Our company headquarters moved from Maddaloni, just south of Naples to Caiazzo on January 9. We were not here long before the invasion of Anzio took place. As was typical, our whole company did not move at one time. The radio and cipher teams made the invasion on "D" day. We were attached to the British Forces to facilitate the use of American codes. To assure secrecy, we did not give them access to our codes and instead sent the men who could use them. I was a member of one of the teams going in.



LCT Landing – place unknown

(Picture from the Web)



Truck landing on Anzio

(Picture from the Web)

"D" day was made with hardly a shot being fired. We took the Germans entirely by surprise. After the third day of the invasion, they threw everything they had at us in the way of artillery and bombardment. We had not quite dug in. The Canadian Tunnelers were making tunnels for about a month before completion. We were all dug in our own little holes after the first eight hours. We kept refining our "digs." With the heavy action loosed at us, our holes got deeper and deeper.



REF at tunnel entrance

At Anzio Beachhead, we were dug in deeply. Our headquarters in which we worked was made up of huge burroughs in the bowels of the earth made by the Canadian Tunneleers. We lived in dugouts on the surface of the ground. All supplies came by boat from the sea. We were in a triangle on the beach completely surrounded by heavily supplied Germans. The front lines changed so constantly, one wire crew was captured in the process of laying lines. The front lines had changed in the night and four Germans simply jumped on the truck and drove our wire crew into German territory. They had been captured before our very eyes!



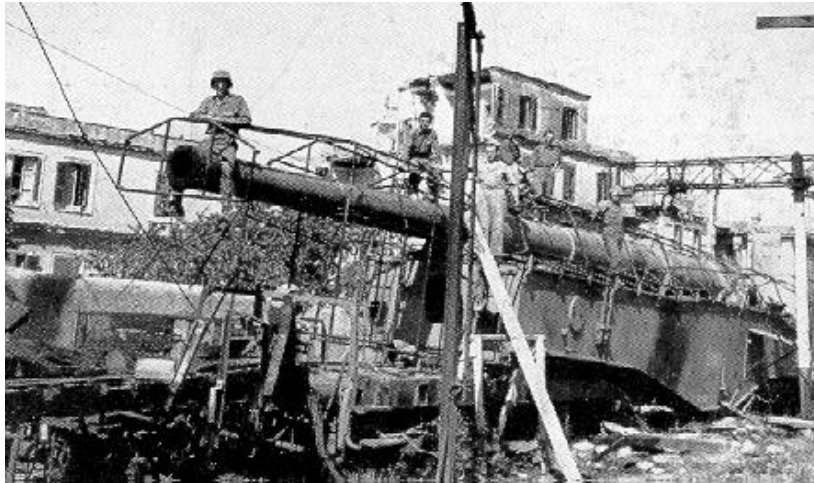
Tunnel Entrance at Anzio

(note head in entrance left of the soldier with a helmet)

(Picture by REF)

Every night it was see-saw action. Our bombers were dropping tons of bombs into the German headquarters and the German ack-ack of anti-aircraft batteries was shooting at our planes and downing many of them. It was a sickening sight to see smoke spew from an

American plane as it tailspinned into the ground. The nights were almost as bright as day because of the firing on both sides. In the morning, the ground would be covered with bits and pieces of steel and shell fragments. Some of them would be down in the dugouts imbedded quite deeply in the earth. This is the area where we slept. Occasionally, a fragment would go down through the earth to upper tunnel levels and kill all of the occupants, usually five or six men. We worked at headquarters which was positioned so deep in the ground that nothing ever penetrated.



The Anzio Express

(Picture from Life's Picture History of World War II)

We had several rather unusual experiences at Anzio. My particular job was in Signal Intelligence. Part of our mission was to decipher code and encode messages. On a beachhead, you never knew whether your position could be held, or if you would be pushed off into the ocean. Each night, our harbor would be shelled by "The Anzio Express" a huge German gun moving on a railroad track. It was so big it was mounted on four railroad cars, and it struck terror in the hearts of all when it was fired. Its purpose was to shoot at the supply ships trying to maintain us. We had great respect for this gun because of the damage it caused, and we had nothing to compare with it. Each night our bombers tried to put it out of commission, but never did.

Most of the time during these battles, our group was relatively safe because of our depth in the ground. However, at one time it was thought we might lose the beachhead. A message came in **"FOR THE EYES OF THE GENERAL ONLY"** which said **"KILL ALL CODE PERSONNEL BEFORE CAPTURE."** We deeply resented such a message and began to secure grenades, ammunition and automatic weapons so that if anyone came in to shoot us, they were in for a real struggle.



Shellfire Hitting the Beaches of Anzio

(Picture from the Web)

During this same period, I was nearly part of a real catastrophe. I received a message from the Commanding General which was supposed to have read - " No hospital ships needed, " but the *No* was garbled. The encoded message was sent. The next morning, amid a great deal of enemy shelling, a huge, white hospital ship with a huge Red Cross painted on it, came steaming in. The General was furious, and an investigation was immediately launched. We were told how many people could have been killed by such an error by someone in the code room. The General wanted to know who sent the message. My answer to the General was: That was not the message I was given to code and send." I produced the original copy which was in his handwriting. It was easy to see a mistake had been made by him and it was obvious that the message read: "Hospital ship needed." One could not read the word "NO." The usual procedure where there might be a question was to repeat it several times. The General should have said, "No, repeat, No hospital ship needed," and no error would have been committed. Fortunately, the hospital ship was able to reverse its action and get back to sea without injury.

It was a sickening sight to see all the American dead piled in the area of the graves registration. I think we lost between 5,000 and 6,000 dead in the Anzio campaign. It seemed to last a lifetime, but it probably was six months before we were able to move freely toward Rome. Before the battle, Anzio was a beautiful beach community with olive trees, villas and with productive, green valleys extending inland. When we finished, there was not one stone or tree standing. I understand it has been rebuilt, and I'd like to see the area again.

Better Dead than Dirty

For months, we had been living in huge holes dug in the ground, covered with timbers with dirt piled on top which protected us from shell fragments. As the bombardments took place, the fine sand continually fell through our cloth-covered top, making our teeth and food gritty.

Mice and rats loved to come into these dugouts to forage for food. We spent a lot of time catching mice, cultivating them, staining them with different colors of ink, and racing them to see whose mouse was the fastest. We set them loose in one end of our borough to run for food at the other end. This occurred with wild cheering while bets were made for candy bars, cigarettes or some of the good things we received from home. When someone received a box, we began to think of ways to share it with them.

In the meanwhile, we became dirtier and dirtier. The Army felt there would be a mosquito problem at Anzio so sent hundreds of bottles of mosquito repellent oil to be rubbed on our skin. Because we had no source of light in our underground shelters, we burned the over abundant oil which gave us a medicinal, oily smell which penetrated everything we had.

After a couple of months, our filth became almost unbearable. One day, Sam Yowell exclaimed, "I would rather be dead than to live in this filth any longer." Casually he walked out on the beach, found a 50-gallon drum, built a scaffold on which to place it, and laboriously climbed up the scaffolding to haul enough water to fill it. Because he wanted a hot shower, he decided to let the water heat in the sun for a few days. Now bear in mind that all of this was done in the open in the full sight of the German Army, who had to be amused at what this crazy American was doing. The time came for the great bath. Sam was anticipating this with the greatest of pleasure. He would talk about lathering with soap, feeling the water flow down his body, telling us how clean he would feel until we were all sick of him.



REF's buddies by tunnel

The great day came when he walked out, stripped down, put a hose into the barrel, siphoned the water and let the water run over his body. Then he started soaping himself. As soon as he was fully lathered, we heard a great KABOOM! The 50 gallon drum left the scaffold and the concussion knocked Sam to the muddy ground. The next thing we saw was Sam streaking stark naked back to the dugout. His legs were flailing, his arms and everything else flapping as he ran in terror. I can't explain to you how mad he was at the "Tedeskies" from then on. He came back a sticky, dirty mess. The sticky soap coated his body, and mud caked the moist film. Because his only relief was a rinse off in his steel helmet, he had to lie around all day much dirtier than before. At dusk we were able to retrieve his clothes. He did not leave the shelter for days. It was several weeks more before he had relief. I talked to an Artillery Observer who was watching the Germans through a telescope as they zeroed in on Sam. They were bent over with laughter. They had no intention of killing him -- it was too much fun knocking his water over. It was a good laugh for everyone on both sides. Everyone kidded him, and he never heard the end of "BETTER DEAD THAN DIRTY!"



British troops moving through Anzio

(Picture from the Web)

The Showers of Casino

The Casino battle had been going on for months in constant rain and mud. How we longed for a bath. A corporal and I, driving through the village of Piedamonte, screeched to a halt at a sign "Public Baths." Inside was a small room with two shower heads in the ceiling, six feet apart. We stripped off, the corporal took one shower and I took the other.

While we were luxuriating in this bath, two others entered. They disrobed in the anteroom. The tall man with the bearing of a field-grade commander joined the corporal in his shower. An older man of about fifty, whom we assumed was the driver, joined me under the shower. We got along great. He said to me, "Son, if you will wash my back, I will wash yours." We chatted freely about our homes and families. The comradery was stimulating.

As we had come in first, we left to dress first. The corporal dried off and dressed. The handsome gentlemen put on his shirt with eagles on the collar. The discomfort of both was immediate. Laughing and joking with the colonel's driver, I was ready to go when he put on his shirt with two stars-he was the Commanding General! We both responded with smart salutes! This showed us how deceptive rank is!

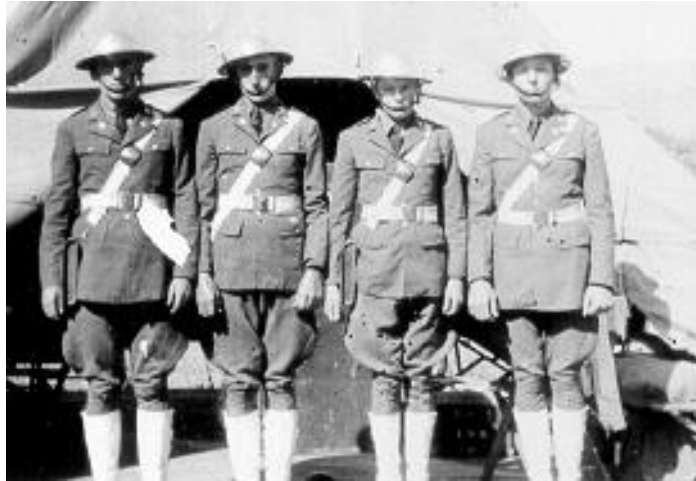
Those Damn Yanks

We were on detached duty as communication specialists with an English Infantry Company. Because of their terrible food, their jealousy and constant ridicule of us, we disliked working with them.

When the British entered their tent, they would line up their helmets outside so that, if there was an air raid, they could come out of their tent, put on their helmets and fall into their foxholes. With a practical joke in mind, we acquired a firecracker which sounded like a bomb being dropped and placed it next to one of the tents in which four British soldiers were playing cards. We poured a little water and a generous quantity of ink into each helmet, lit the firecracker and ran for cover under a bridge.

The firecracker whistled like a bomb, the soldiers exited as usual and discovered the trick only when they felt and saw the ink running down their faces and uniforms. Seething, "Those damned Yanks!" They spent the entire night fruitlessly waiting for us near our tent.

The next morning at mess, four, still ink-covered British came near us. Every time we thought of these four soldiers, we inwardly broke out in great peals of laughter, but we had to appear sober faced, not daring to even ask a question about their condition. They knew we were the ones, but we never gave it away. We were transferred back to our own service unit before international relations deteriorated further.



The picture above is of four English Solders in front of their tent.

This picture was found in REF's war photo collection. It is assumed that these are not the same solders that the practical joke was played on. (There isn't any ink on them!)

The Testimony Meeting

It was a Sunday morning. I was walking through a bombed-out city looking for signs of a Latter Day Saint meeting. It was the custom for the first LDS person in the area to find an appropriate spot where a meeting could be held and then post a sign. I penciled out in crude letters:

LDS MEETING PLACE

putting it where soldiers on the march could observe it. Then I sat down to await results. There were hundreds of such meetings going on in the campaign area in World War II.

Within three hours, about twenty soldiers gathered in fellowship for an LDS Sacrament Meeting. These meetings were always Testimony Meetings because of the times and conditions. As we became acquainted with each other, great bonds of friendship, trust and love were formed instantly. Each person was from a different outfit, was lonely and wanted association with others who embraced the Gospel. Each person desired to have the Sacrament. Two soldiers officiated in this sacred ordinance. This meeting was held in a roofless building in the open air. No one had any bread with them, but a couple of the men had some stale donuts which were given to them by the Red Cross. Since we all had canteens, the water was

no problem. A typical Sacrament Meeting followed, with each partaking of the Sacrament with tears of remembrance in his eyes. Following this, it was suggested that each person stand and tell a little bit about himself and bear his testimony. Each testimony provoked great emotional response. We had to wait for long moments to regain control of the deeply-felt emotion. All testimonies were outstanding, and we felt the presence of the Lord.



Patrol moving through Cisterna

(Picture from the Web)

Two testimonies were given by our Japanese brethren of the 100th Infantry Battalion, a unit solely composed of Japanese soldiers whose parents and relatives were being "detained" in camps in California and else where. This meeting was held on the eve of a major battle. One of these soldiers testified he knew this would be the last time he would bear his testimony on this earth. He knew he would not survive the battle. He expressed how fortunate and blessed he felt in being a member of this church because he knew he had a fullness of life very few people are permitted to have no matter how long they might live. He then expressed his love for all of us and the opportunity of meeting together. The other Japanese soldier stood up and said he felt very strongly he would be preserved and would live to fulfill a mission for the church. Soon after, the meeting was dismissed and everyone of us shook hands, embraced, blessed each other and went on our way.

Approximately a week later, after the battle, I decided to inquire as to what had happened to our two Japanese brethren. I found that the first one had been killed on the first day of battle. In some battalions, before going into a action, it was the custom to draw five names out of a hat to choose men to go home to make sure no group would be wiped out—always someone would remain to remember them. The men whose names were drawn were immediately sent home before the engagement started. The second Japanese was sent back to the U.S. before the battle. I met him at General Conference in Salt Lake City several years later. He had just completed a mission.

Rome

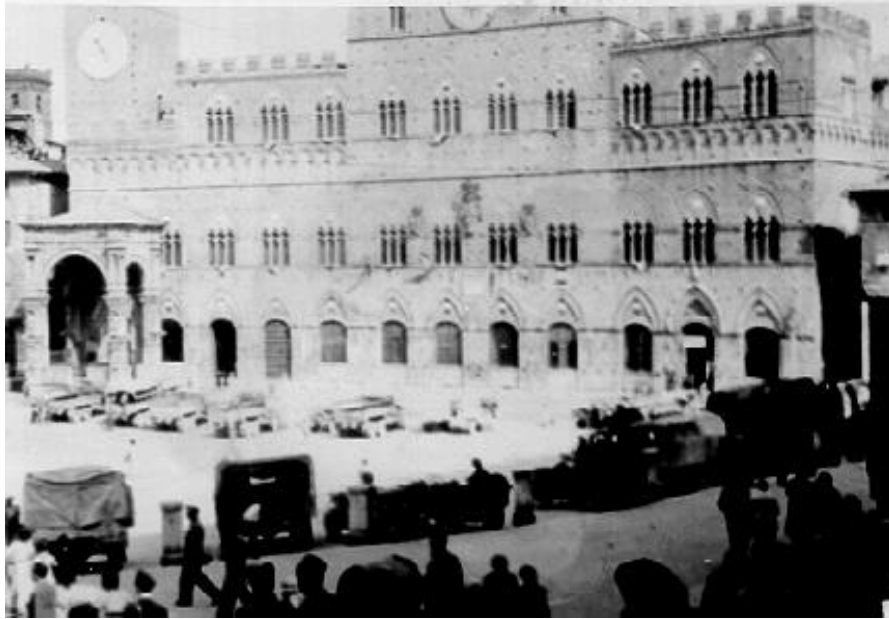
Anzio Beachhead, Italy. The Anzio Express, a rail mounted artillery piece, has just fired its last salvo for the day. I am about 30 feet under ground in a code room working on enemy codes. Word has just come through that we are to back out of the beach head and capture Rome. Everyone is excited. After months of living like rats in a hole, anything would be an improvement. We have been weeks without a bath; the smell of dried perspiration is everywhere.



Entering Rome

(Picture – REF)

Soon we are in the process of packing our belongings and saying goodbye to men from other units. We know that the capture of Rome will lose its impact the day after tomorrow, June 5, 1944, because that will be D -Day in Normandy (we knew it a week before.) On June 4 we were making our entrance into the Eternal City of Rome. Outside the city were dead corpses of Germans lying all around from recent combat. As we entered the interior of the city, thousands of Romans were there to greet us on our triumphant entrance. The conquest was short and sweet. The welcome was joyous. Everyone was kissing and hugging everyone else in spite of the way we looked.



Entering Rome

(Picture – REF)

Audience with the Pope

On the way into the city, I saw beautiful residential areas. Because Rome was not bombed, the stately old buildings and lovely gardens were untouched by the war waged around them. My buddy, Jim Kennedy, and I decided to hike into a residential area and found a quiet, seemingly empty Piazza. The address was #10 Via Boline, Rome, Italy. The shutters on the surrounding houses were tied closed. Thinking no one was looking, we took off our guns, helmets and belts and laid down. Little did we realize that in every house unseen eyes were upon us. I listened to someone playing the piano and was thoroughly enjoying the music when a stately gentlemen approached and asked if we were Americans. He introduced himself as Count Benidito Peffoti and asked us other questions, one of which was "Are you enjoying the music?" I said I always enjoy *Aida* by Puccini. He said, "Oh, you know the music." I replied that I used to play it in a symphony orchestra before the war. He became excited and said his wife was playing the music would we care to be his guests? Of course we took him up on it, leaving our guns, ammo and helmets under the bench.

When we entered the house, he asked us whether we wanted to retrieve our belongings and sent the maids to bring our things. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief because of our attitude of friendliness. We were asked to stay for dinner. By this time it was about 2 p.m. and dinner was at 9 p.m. We used the intervening time in getting acquainted. The Count's brother-in-law was a Cardinal in the Catholic Church serving as Secretary to Pope Pius XII. Soon after meeting them, the Countess was on the phone inviting her brother and other friends from the neighborhood to visit with us. We soon had a houseful of people all asking questions. We laughed, we cried, we ate bread and cheese, and Kennedy drank wine with them.

At about five in the afternoon, the Cardinal came to invite us to an early morning meeting tomorrow, June 5, with His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, for an interview to be held in the Pope's quarters. A Vatican car would pick us up at 6 a.m. By now our Italian friends were really excited. Our uniforms were so dirty that they had to be washed and pressed. We had a bath to remember. Our hair was cut; our nails manicured. While our clothing was drying, they brought each of us a bathrobe and a fez with a black tassel to wear for the rest of the evening. With typical Italian exuberance, our new found friends loved us. Being clean, even dressed as we were, made us more acceptable company. Kennedy's robe fit him better than mine. He fit in with the Italians with his dark complexion and small stature. I felt like Ichabod Crane dressed in their undersized clothing.

While we were feasting, much to our amazement, a large cake decorated with Welcome to Rome, Jimmy and Randy. When you realize how short of supplies they were, making a cake like that had to be a community affair. Each family had contributed a little of one thing and a bit of another.

We partied all night long going to bed at 4 a.m. At 5:30 we were awakened. Our shoes were shined, our uniforms had been cleaned and pressed and we really looked sharp. A car from the Vatican picked us up. We were so tired and sleepy that we did not fully appreciate what was going on. All our friends and neighbors were there to see us off.

We arrived at a back entrance of the Vatican, led by the Cardinal. As we approached the Swiss Guards, they stood at attention as we passed through the exterior corridors into the living quarters of the Pope.

The living quarters were simple, comfortable and well-done in an Italian flavor-dark with religious paintings on the walls. A moment of extreme awkwardness came as we were brought before the Pope. I had no idea of the etiquette or procedure suitable to meeting such an important person. Kennedy fell to his knees and kept saying "Hail Mary, Mother of God." He was completely white faced and so overcome that he could not speak. I just as awkwardly stood up and shook the Pope's hand. We were then seated around a small table with the Pope and the Cardinal asking me many questions.



The first question was: Were we Catholics? Jim Kennedy was and when I said no, he asked if I was a Protestant. I said, "No, I am a Mormon." The Pope was very puzzled because he did not know what a Mormon was. He asked, "Do you believe in Christ? Do you Believe in the Holy Ghost? Do you believe in God? When I answered yes to each, he said, "Then you are a Catholic."

I was questioned for three hours about the war such as what towns we had been in, which towns had been bombed, in short, everything that had happened in the war. Because I had been in communications and been with the generals, I was a good source of the information he needed in preparation for meetings with the allied generals.

Around 11:30 we had a light luncheon of fruit, cheese, bread, fruit juice and a little salami. While there, news came over the radio that the Invasion of Normandy had begun.

Before leaving, the Pope asked us if there was anything he could do for us and gave us autographed pictures. On the spur of the moment, I suggested he send a rosary and a picture to Mrs. Edson, the mother of one of my best friends, who was a Catholic. This he did. Some 50 years later I went to a reunion where I met the Edsons, and they were still telling me how much that meant to their mother.



Randy's autographed picture of the Pope

Also, we were told we could have passes to visit the Vatican Museum and other restricted places within the Vatican. We were lead from the Pope's quarters by the guards, past the Swiss Guards into a car and were returned to our friends at #10 Via Bolini in Rome.

The day following our visit to the Pope, he had audiences with General Mark Clark, General Montgomery and other top brass. In the Army newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes*, General Clark remarked how well informed His Holiness was about the war.

Corporal Nicholas Natopolus, 45, was the oldest and most educated man in our outfit. Prior to the War, he was Professor of Greek at Amhurst College. He had made several attempts with all the appropriate credentials to get into the Vatican Museum where he could study artifacts and ancient books. He told me he couldn't get in. I told him I could get him in. He said, "You, who are you? I went with him and had appropriate passes to enter the very museums he had sought. Nick was in 7th heaven because so much history had been written in Greek. I spent a boring seven hours looking at a "bunch of old junk" as it seemed to me. We made arrangements so that he could return to study. He would read, examine, evaluate and write an analysis for endless hours.

R & R - Country Living

After visiting the Pope, Jim Kennedy and I became fast friends with Senor and Senora Palaio. We were guests at their beautiful Apartment in No. 10, Via Bellini in Rome. Senor Palaio owned a large chain of movie theaters throughout Italy and had several estates scattered from one end of Italy to the other. He suggested we borrow his Fiat and go to a place he had in the country about 100 km from Rome. Without thought about the consequences of our actions, we immediately set off on our journey to his country estate in the Fiat owned and treasured by our host.



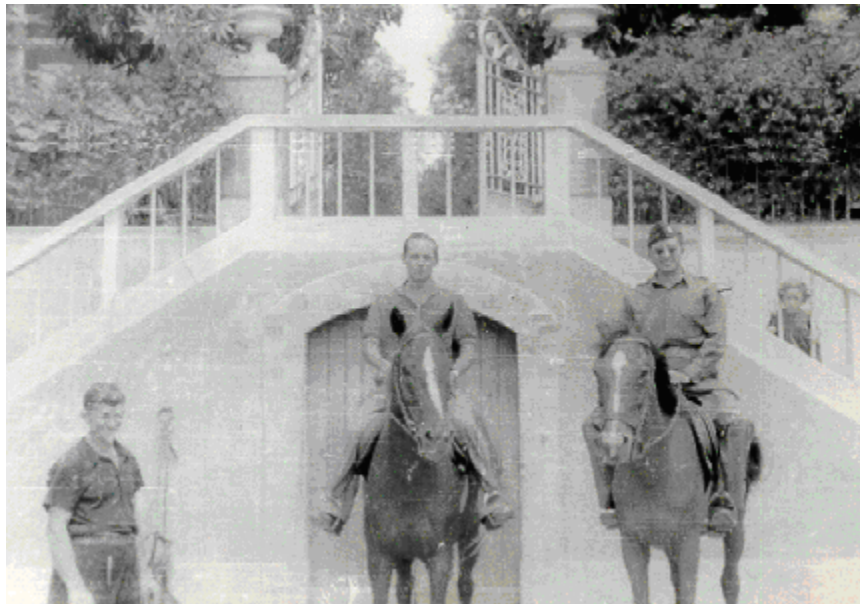
The Perotti family – Count & Countess Benedetto Perotti are on the Right

We thought we would be very safe on this country estate because it was in the British Sector. As we were going out of the U.S. occupied territory into that of the British, we were stopped and had to show our papers, orders and permission as to where we were going and why. While we were being questioned, the British soldiers were eyeing this shiny, well-kept, Fiat automobile. They really did not listen or pay too close attention to our papers, they just kept looking at this automobile with envious eyes. Finally, it was decided that because we were in the British Sector and we were not in a U.S. military vehicle, they would confiscate the car.

Because this left us on foot, they arranged for a lorry to drop us within a mile of our destination. We walked that mile dreading to meet our host who had arrived a day earlier. We were dropped off by the British at a big, iron gate for which we had been given a key. Within the gate was a beautiful, long drive lined with mulberry trees. It was mulberry season, and as we walked along, we stopped frequently to eat the berries. When we arrived at this "country place," it was not what we expected. Rather than being rustic, it had spacious grounds, reflection pools and swimming pools all beautifully landscaped in fully traditional Italian elegance. It had the splendor of a beautiful castle and was very large with 75-80 rooms.

We were ushered into the home as if we were long-lost relatives. We received full embraces and kisses on each cheek. Then we had to break the bad news about the loss of the car. In American money on the black market, this car would have sold for at least \$6,000. At that time, Jim and I were both making a military salary of \$120 per month. Thinking of how to pay this back was of great concern to us. Senor Palaio listened with half-hearted interest to our sad tale and said it was enough to know we had arrived safely at our new home, and that the loss of the car was of no consequence. He asked that we never mention it again. (After many months of red tape, through the U.S. and British Armies, we were able to return the car to its rightful owner.)

We were entertained and were participants in a variety of entertainment, singing, dancing, swimming and horseback riding.



Randolph in the middle – at the Count's "country place,"

To our surprise, we had a lot of milk to drink. In questioning our host as to where he was able to obtain milk -- the Germans had scoured the countryside for everything edible and had taken whatever they found. Senor Palaio told us about the huge basement under his house where he kept his Jersey cows. We had fruits of every variety, including mulberries and cream. We each had a bedroom with clean sheets and a good bed.

We mutually decided this was the proper time to desert the army. This would be a most comfortable place to sit out the rest of the war. We spent the next five or six days living the life of the idle rich. After about the fifth night, I could no longer sleep and arose in the morning feeling tired and restless. I met Jim Kennedy coming in from the pool. He looked like a wreck -- he could not sleep either. Fully realizing that we had a once in a lifetime experience, we also came to the conclusion that we had been AWOL long enough.

Hitchhiking Back

We decided to go back, find our unit and turn ourselves in. Our host had gone back to Rome a few days before, leaving the place to us to be waited on hand and foot. Because of this, we had no transportation back to Rome. We decided to hitchhike back to rejoin our company. How anxious we were to return! War is extremely disorganized. We thought we might not have been missed.

We walked out to the highway and stopped at a little farm house to try to buy some food for our journey home. The farmer had two eggs. We told him we wanted to buy them. We were charged five dollars each, and the farmer was very reluctant to sell them to us. In his words, "I can't eat your money, but I can eat the eggs" -- an interesting economic concept. We carefully wrapped and placed the eggs in our front shirt pockets, returned to the highway and walked toward Rome.



Randolph at the Count's country home

Along came a truck completely filled with women. The truck was a little two-cylinder model of some old Italian vintage with a flat bed surrounded by posts. As we were walking, they stopped to pick us up. We did not see how to fit onto the truck because every inch of space was taken. There were 10 or 12 women standing on the bed of the truck. They all got off to greet us. Most of them pinched our cheeks and felt our stomachs exclaiming, "Multa Mungare!" which meant we were well fed. They all were emaciated. They were returning

from Northern Italy where they had worked as slaves in a Tedeski (German) factory. They were returning to their village. We knew it had been almost completely destroyed, but did not have the heart to tell them.

We mounted the truck, squeezing to be as small as we could. The truck went along the road, putt, putt, putt, putt, at about 15 miles per hour. One of the women was very pregnant. We felt guilty about having two eggs in our pockets. We pulled out our eggs and gave them to the pregnant woman. Everyone on the truck had to handle the eggs and marvel at them, they had not seen one for so long. The Germans had taken all the chickens from the countryside. The people had only a starvation ration of flour for food each day.

It was now dusk. Before the sun went down, they decided to eat. All the women reached into their pockets and took out dried pieces of black bread. The pregnant woman handed the eggs to one of the women in the group who shook the eggs until they were mixed within the shell. Then they pierced the shell at each end and passed the egg around, each one taking a small suck to go with their crust of bread. They gave some of their precious bread to us, but we refused the egg. Some of them had a little wine, some water and some a little juice. All this time, the truck kept chugging along.

Just before dark, the vehicle stopped. The driver got out, kicked the tires and exclaimed, "Nienda benzino!" "No gas! We are out of gas!" Everyone was upset. This was a major crisis. It was getting cold. The women all climbed off the truck, knelt and began to pray for a miracle. All this time, the driver who was fluent in swearing, said that God would not hear their prayers. He gave more vent to his anger by kicking again at the truck. Then he saw a tin can at the side of the road. The women continued to pray. He kicked the can and let out a scream of pain because, instead of flying in the air, it was full of something. Kennedy and I ran for the can and found it to be a can of gas. The truck driver immediately knelt with the women. We put the gas into the tank, and with gratefulness in all of our hearts, we chugged into Rome.

Kennedy and I spent the night at a GI Replacement Depot, where we ate lots of good food and began to appreciate the good living conditions we had in comparison to that of the Italian civilians. The next morning, we inquired about where our outfit had gone and hitched a ride to the front.

We found our unit in Leghorn, some 70-80 miles north of Rome. We reported to our Company Commander, He said, "WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN FOR THE LAST 10 DAYS?!!" We told him the story. He was so envious that he said, "I need to verify whether or not this is the truth or I shall have you court-marshaled for desertion." So, with our CO in his jeep, we retraced our steps.

We introduced him to our friends the Count and Countess Beneditto Perotti, Senior and Senora Palaio and others we had met. They held a fine party in the Major's honor, and we spent five more days in the company of our commanding officer. He remarked that these were the greatest five days he had spent in the service. He added, "The next time you have such a great time, invite me along."

When I was ready to leave the Count in Rome, he had prepared for me a letter of introduction to a friend of his who lived in Pizza, a little further north than Rome. When we reached Pizza, I contacted his friend, a university professor who spoke English, who invited me to visit. He was most cordial in showing me around, telling me much about the local history over dinner and invited me to stay overnight. We exchanged ideas and pleasantries, and he gave me a letter of introduction to one of his friends in the area ahead of us. I spent a night and had a meal with each of these professors. Each would tell me the history of the city, discuss current politics and open new avenues for me. I did this all the rest of the way through Italy to Milano. I visited professors in Florence, Bologna, Milano, and Lago de Garda. Each professor volunteered a letter of introduction to the next one. I learned a lot of history and met some wonderful people whom I could never have met any other way. Various officers and enlisted men wanted to go with me when I went into a new town. A soldier has a difficult time meeting quality people during wartime. I had a wonderful time all through Northern Italy. War had become a secondary event in our life because the Germans had moved north and west to fight in France and Belgium. We were functioning much like a peacetime occupation force.

After returning to my outfit, I met Julius Pappa, a boyhood friend, and we returned to #10 Via Bolini to have dinner with the Count and Countess and discuss my meeting with the Pope. Pappa is now the President of the Oakland Temple.



Randy, Julius Pappa, Harold Sellers

Official R & R, at Last

Above Rome, I was given a pass to spend a week in Rome at the Mussolini Forum to "rest and recuperate." It was a large athletic facility which the government had constructed for training Olympic athletes. There were dorms, swimming pools and every type of athletic facility. It gave me more time to visit the beauties of Rome. I spent a day in the Sistine Chapel looking at Michelangelo's Ceiling, following The Creation through from beginning to end, laying on a bench as is the custom.



LDS Services Men after Church Meeting in Florence

REF - Left front row

There was one catch - none of us had any money because we had not been paid for several months. One day, returning on the street car, I saw many soldiers in just their shorts - I asked them where their uniforms went. They told me that they had no money and sold their clothes and shoes to the Italians for \$35. The next day, I went to Rome and sold my clothing at the end of the evening. It was the only way we could obtain even a small amount of money for essentials. We had to sign a statement of charges to get new clothing, but we were sure they would not charge them to our pay. At the Forum, they had a quartermaster unit which furnished new clothes to any who needed them, night after night. You could hear all the Italians saying, "Oh, those crazy Americans!"



Randolph E. Fife's ID card

The End of the Italian Campaign

By the time I arrived in Milan, Mussolini had been killed by the Partisans in the Italian Alps and had been brought back to Milan the very day we entered. He was hung upside-down by a statue, so every Italian could vent his spleen by spitting on him as they passed. When I

came by, he was hardly recognizable. Still people continued to express their anger in this way. Mussolini, a dictator and their former head of state, usurped their democratic government and took them into war. I had a lengthy stay at Lago de Garda near Verona. This was total relaxation on a lovely lake. I had the best tan of my life.



Mussolini and Mistress hanging in the Street

(Picture from the Web)

We were given points for combat and length of term overseas. A few of us had far more points than needed to go directly home, but the war was still raging in Europe and Japan. All the men with lesser points were assigned either to go to France or to Japan. Those of us with "too many" points were no longer considered active troops, and had no priority on transportation. We had to wait several months in an embarkation area until a Liberty Ship going to the states was available. We were in Montecatini which was famous for mineral baths, so we spent several days a week in these mineral water pools and our skin became literally "squeaky clean." The big day finally came for us to leave.

The next 30 days were spent on a Liberty Ship heading to New York City. After spending most of the war outdoors, to stay below decks with stagnant air and stale odors was beyond me. It was October, and we caught a storm. I tied myself on the deck so I would not be washed overboard. Never in my life had I seen such big waves -- they dwarfed the 200 foot long ship. I spent a day drying my clothes after the storm.

We disembarked in New York through Fort Dix, the place from which we left. At Fort Dix, a Colonel welcomed us home, and among other things said, "This is a tie, wear it at all times!" Many soldiers could not or did not want to remember how to tie them. We were to be in Fort Dix for two weeks and were to have no passes. This seemed like a long time to me, and I recalled the ease I had in going to Manhattan. Our old group had been broken up in Italy, but I gathered a few new buddies, and we left to see the sights. In New York, I was approached immediately by an MP who said, "Where's your tie?" I said, "No comprendo English." They had issued us the same clothing used by the prisoners of war and there were hundreds of Italian POW's in New York City. The MP said, "Another damn Deggo!"

On the way home everyone was hungry for ice cream and milk shakes, so we went from store to store filling ourselves. Not one of our group wanted liquor. It was unbelievable

to be home again. Coming back was a complete cultural shock. The roads were smooth and cars wonderful. The lights of New York were dazzling after the dark-outs of Italy. On the way back to camp, we rode a train. Our reentry into the camp was at the back part of the enclosure. We had left during the light of day and could see our way. Our return was unlighted. I walked through a shadow - a big ditch. Twenty of us went head first 10 feet down into the gully, scampered up the other side and went under the fence. I was completely covered with mud. I could wash my clothes, but my face was cut and scratched. When I arrived home to Gridley, I looked like I had been through the war. One day I received orders to go home by airplane. This was my first flight. In an army plane, we flew direct from Fort Dix to Camp Beale, California.



The Route that World War II took Randolph E. Fife

Medals Awarded to Randolph E. Fife

Good Conduct Medal

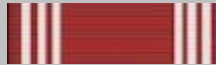
(Army)

Awarded for exemplary behavior, efficiency and fidelity while on active duty.



The Good Conduct Medal Clasp is worn with both the medal and the ribbon to denote subsequent awards. The color of the clasp and the number of loops indicate the number of awards of the Good Conduct Medal:

Bronze = 2nd and 5th awards
Silver = 6th and 10th awards
Gold+ = 11th and 15th awards



Europe-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal

(All Services)

★ A Bronze Service Star denotes subsequent awards for periods of service or campaigns in the Korean theater of operations.

★ A Silver Service Star is worn in lieu of 5 Bronze Service Stars.



(Army/Air Force) Bronze Arrowhead device denotes participation in parachute, glider or amphibious landing or assault.



(Navy) Marine Corps Device denotes combat service with Marine Corps units.





New

Beginnings

Home At Last

On October 9, 1945, I was mustered out of the Army and returned home to Gridley. My family had changed greatly. My father was no longer alive, leaving my mother struggling with the challenges of a single mother raising two children, James almost 13 and Florence 10. Gwen and Helen Joe were married; Mabel was at BYU; Calvin was still in the service. In my father's brief life, he and mother had developed enough property to provide adequate finance for her needs, which left me free to look to my future.

I was constantly asked what I was going to do. I had one standard answer-"I haven't the slightest idea." During the war I had been living from day-to-day in a situation where everything was planned and provided for me. During my childhood and teen years, my life was directed by my parents. My mission had not been much different. This was the first time in my life I had the sole power of decision, and the questions were momentous, crucial ones upon which life is based!

My church calling was decided in November when I was called into the Bishopric as Second Counselor to Bishop Clifford Jensen. I was ordained a High Priest by Alma Sonne, a general authority. To help with the decisions about school, I spent a day at Stanford inquiring about entrance requirements and how to finance a college education. The GI Bill of Rights was just starting up and no one knew much about how it would actually work. I sat in class for half a day and had no idea what was going on. It was such a change from the non-intellectual Army life that I wondered if I could succeed. Most pressing of all, I was 27 years old and felt I had delayed my life too long.

Next, I went to Southern California and became engaged to Norma Berry. I had courted her for three months in Baltimore and we had exchanged weekly letters all the time I was overseas. I felt I had known her family for my whole life. Norma had been waiting for the man she was destined to marry and felt I was that person. Norma and I were married in the Salt Lake Temple with many of the Berry family and my mother in attendance. We were very much in love and very happy together.



Norma and Randy

Family Arrangements

My mother owned a garage with living quarters for one person known as "Whistler's House". A Mr. Whistler had bought a garage to live in, borrowing the money from my Dad and putting it into a life estate so that when Mr. Whistler died, the house went to my mother. We converted it into a one bedroom house with a living room by removing the garage door and replacing it with windows; the attic became a bedroom; a shower and toilet were installed on the back porch. Whistler had a kitchen, and the small bedroom was made into a dining area. It was a cute little house. We even added a white picket fence. This was our honeymoon cottage. We had nothing but furniture given to us by relatives which we painted or recovered. We took a lot of furniture out of the Ettiwanda ranch house owned by Norma's father, Herbert Berry.

During the war, Bill and Donna Stoddard were married and had their first child. They already had a car and were living with her parents, the Jensens.

Making a Living

With a good marriage and the possibility of children in the offing, the question became even more insistent, "What are you going to do?" On the steps of the Gridley Church chapel one Sunday, I met Bill Stoddard. He asked, "What are you going to do?" He was besieged by the same question. I said, "Why don't we build a house together?" We flipped a coin to decide on the name, shook hands and were in business as Fife and Stoddard. There had been no new construction in Gridley for five years so there were other contractors girding to meet the backlog of demand. Houses at that time had been selling for about \$3,000.



In December our budding business bought two building lots. Neither of us had been thinking of construction for a long time -- Neither of us had ever built anything on our own. We were just two eager young men, each with a set of hand tools and no power equipment.

We acquired a set of plans for a two bedroom and one bath house, which was standard at the time. It was not much more than a floor plan. At night we would check buildings under construction to see what we should do next and how to do it. The Diamond Match Company was our supplier and our charge account with them served as our interim financing. We knew nothing about bank financing or bank loans. Our Stake President, the manager of the local Bank of America, encouraged us and promised help if we needed assistance. We arranged for trade training through

the Veteran's Administration and felt we had "all the money in the world" because we could each draw \$100 a month for four months.

Ordering lumber and materials, we set to work with our hands to build a house. It took almost six months to complete, with Bill and I working from 6 a.m. until dark, six days a week, with our wives feeding us on the job site. We had charged nothing for labor, yet the cost of materials and subcontractors amounted to roughly \$7,000. We had to get \$8,000 for the house to make any kind of wages, and thought, "No one has that kind of money." The inflation had struck! With great demand and short supplies, price controls no longer worked. The OPA, the Office of Price Administration, had set a selling price limit of \$8,000 for this house. The OPA later was declared unconstitutional.



Our alarm was heightened because none of us had had much money during our lives. With fear and trepidation, we decided to sell the house ourselves to save the real estate commission. While I was watering the lawn and showing the house, an unkempt, older man of about 50 drove up in an old Plymouth pickup. After walking through the house, he came to where I was watering to ask the price and responded, "I'll take it!" After looking at his car and clothes, I wondered how he would get that much money. From his truck he brought cash in two brown paper bags and bought it for his daughter. We anxiously kept the money over Sunday to go to the title company. Later we found he was a very rich man from the Bay Area who had been roughing it while working his large sheep ranch and had just sold a herd of sheep. Having it sold took a lot off our minds. We had learned the facts of business life and would handle our finances differently in the future.

Relieved of "going broke" and with \$1,000 cash in our business, we were fired with enthusiasm to build on the other lot! We felt the need for time and labor saving equipment so bought a 16 inch Comet Radial Arm saw, an 8 inch skill saw and a power drill at the cost of \$600.

We set up the saw in a lot next to the Whistler house and called it Big Bertha because its 16 inch blade could whip through 2 x 4's like butter. At an army surplus auction, Bill Stoddard bought a 1 ½ ton truck with a steel GI bed on the back which I drove as a personal car. Because the saw was installed next to my house, all the main cutting of this house was done there and hauled to the building site. Life was such a joy! With Big Bertha, a skill saw and a power drill, most of our hand work was eliminated. The work on the new house moved much faster and we kept track of the cost as we built. We realized the day of the \$3000 house had long passed. In the Post World War II era, the houses for the average person would range from \$8,000-12,000. The second house sold well, and we made money on it. Each of us had

drawn \$75 a week for our family living expenses. Profit beyond this we kept in the business as capital.



Randy, Norma, and Diana

It was a real pleasure to work with such a close friend as Bill. At the beginning of our third house, Loren Stoddard bought into our business. Bill and Loren were two fine partners. No one was trying to take advantage of the other. I thought all partnerships would be the same, but several partnerships later I found this was not true. We really had a good time, and the business continued to prosper.

Children

Diana and JoAnn were both born in Woodland and were brought from the hospital to the Whistler house. Everything was a new experience as we embarked on parenthood! We had a washer on the back porch and hung the clothes to dry. Diana was a climber. Before she

could walk, she could climb out of a baby bed faster than you could put her back. She carried this over into her crawling and early toddling years. Time after time, we would find her screaming from the upper cupboard shelves. At nine months, she could climb up but did not know how to get down.



At two years, we took Diana with us on an overnight business trip to Klamath Falls, Oregon. She went to a movie with us in the evening, the first movie she had ever attended. She sat between us, very adult and lady-like, watching the show and passing popcorn back and forth. I am sure she did not know what was going on in the show.

We enjoyed entertaining and had lots of house guests who would stay in the living room. Whole families came, and somehow we put them up and had a good time. David and Loueen Berry spent a summer with us while their mother was ill.

It was a very happy time with lots of friends and numerous parties and dances with the church group throughout this period. This was the same time the Bishopric, with a vote from the Priesthood, decided to build the new chapel for the Church. This was an imposing dream, but we were full of the energy of youth, and nothing seemed impossible! It seemed so good to be out of the service and the war. Freedom and peace are wonderful. Our homes, church and working environments were perfect.

We attended church dances each Saturday night bringing our little babies with us. We would park them sleeping in their baby carriages in the chapel while we danced in the

amusement hall. These were days of wonder. All the youth we had grown up with were there. Most had been in the war. Loren had had the hardest war experience because of his capture as a prisoner of war. No one who has experienced war has emerged unscathed. The scars are all reminders of the precious price that is paid for freedom.



Grandmother's Woody

Top of Car:

Standing: Lucy, Dick McDowell, Mabel, Julie, Florence, JoAnn, Norma, Mabel, Gwen, John, Helen Jo, James

Front: Calvin and Ruth Fife

Vacation

One of the first trips we took was to the first of the now famous Whiting Reunions at the Homestead. We went in our 1946 Ford purchased from the Whiting Ford company. The families of Kay and Lee Berry had small children. The Whiting brothers had pitched white canvas army surplus tents with army cots inside for beds. We brought our bedding but no food. The uncles and their children cooked all of the meals. There was no running water or wells for water. The bathroom facilities were two wooden "two holers", one for men the other for women. Uncle Eddie had an elaborate Mexican costume loaded with silver and a huge sombrero with ball fringe around the brim.



Golden Green Ball in Gridley 1946



Randy and Norma at the Ball



Randy's sister Mabel, Queen of the Ball

Everything we did was in the open. Sierra Trigo had few trees. The Whitings had purchased an army surplus half-track which would go straight up the 1,000 foot elevation of Sierra Trigo mountain. Everyone had a lot of fun, even Grandma Whiting in her 90's, enjoyed the ride to the top of Sierra Trigo where it seemed you could see for hundreds of miles in every direction. One of the activities was the hauling of the half track full of old truck tires to the top of the mountain. The tires were then loaded with rocks and aimed at targets placed a mile below. These contests went on for thousands of tires and decades of family gatherings.

The Whiting Brothers told us about underground caverns called the Harris Caves. One day we all formed an expedition to search for the opening to the caves. Using flashlights, we

crawled into the passageway which fit so tightly I almost had claustrophobia, but could not back out because of the number of people behind me. After crawling 50-60 feet, I bumped into someone's ankles with my head. The other person was standing, so I stood up in a tall "room" or cavern which had an edge wide enough to walk around. Rocks thrown into the hole in the center took a very long time to hit water, which indicated the depth of the cavern and the danger of the expedition.

About half the group wanted to explore the rest of the caverns, the other half followed me out. Those remaining tied ropes on themselves and explored two to three hours finding more and more caves and more treacherous areas. It was then decided this was no place for amateurs. Bats were everywhere and the wind was blowing through, so there must have been other openings. As far as I know, these caves have still never been explored.

Fife and Stoddard Construction

The wives all got along, and we kept branching out. Our two next buildings were schools. Then we decided to bid on a theater The Sutter Theater in Yuba City, which still stands, and a small shopping center. All the time we were together, we were working on the church in the evenings and on Saturdays. We loaned our equipment freely, our pickups, trucks, and all the other equipment. Our company really served as the contractor for the construction of the church. We then branched out bidding and getting more school work. We did several schools and many houses.

Philosophy of Life

On one of my trips into Oregon seeking huge beams for a school we were building, I met a man by the name of Potts. This was before huge beams were laminated from small pieces of wood. It required



Diana in front of the Fife & Stoddard truck

special equipment and great skill to keep a beam straight for 32 feet and could be supplied by only one man. Approaching the steam driven sawmill, I saw a Cadillac with a trunk full of tools. Then I saw two feet sticking out from under the steam engine of a mill. When I asked if he was Mr. Potts, he said, "Yes, but give me some purchase on this wrench." The wrench was four feet long; together we loosened the nut, and he came out from beneath the engine, all greasy and grimy. I said, "Mr. Potts, with all the money and wealth you have, why are you working on this sawmill?" He replied, "Young man, if I knew I was going to die tomorrow, I would start a new sawmill today."

The Gridley Ward Chapel

At the time I was called to the Bishopric, we were meeting in a church built in the 1920's which had outside walls of wood siding and inside walls of decorative tin. Classrooms were divided by curtains, there were no bishop's offices in the building, and every aspect of the structure was inadequate. Despite lower per capita income in Utah, we noticed their ward meeting houses were much more adequate than ours. We decided we needed a new church building. Bishop Jensen appointed me Chairman of the Building Committee and Cliff Carlin, Chairman of the Finance Committee. We started the long process of funding in 1946 and dedicated the building in June of 1950.

It is very interesting to see the idea for a chapel take root. When we began raising money, we had no particular church in mind. After about a year, LeGrand Richards of the Presiding Bishopric suggested we contact an architect and, to save us money, use a plan which had already been built. We contacted Brother Harold Burton, a Church Architect who sent his son and partner, Douglas, to Gridley to look at our site, a low rolling hill. He suggested we take a trip to see a recently completed ward on Xemino Avenue in Long Beach. Our Building Committee, Bishop and Stake President were overwhelmed by the beauty and spaciousness of the new facilities. We fell in love with the whole complex. We now could visualize the goal for which we were striving. We employed the Architectural firm of Burton and Burton, and they proceeded with the drawings and specifications for the chapel. They were our supervisors and helped us in every way they could to make our money go further, even designing our furnishings.



Building Committee – Randolph back Left

In those days the church gave matching funds. All the money and labor donated in the ward would be matched equally by the church. Despite having many dinners, plays, and dances - every type of activity you could imagine to encourage contributions, still we raised little money. We had a good time and became closer as a group, we realized it even more fully that our greatest asset was the labor of the ward. Gridley is a farming community. We had been reared on farms in the depression and gone through World War H. We knew how to work.



Lunch Break – Randolph at left

The U.S. government decided to tear down buildings at Camp Beale, California. For several thousand dollars we were able to buy four barracks, each one a building 40 x 100 feet, two stories high, all wood. We took the money from the building fund, bought the barracks and started tearing them down, cleaning the lumber (pulling nails, etc.) using volunteer workers. We managed to get enough lumber virtually to build our new building.

We had to truck all the lumber the 30 miles from Camp Beale to Gridley. We had one truck loaded so heavily on the back that one man rode the radiator to keep the wheels on the road! Visualize it if you can. If we would hit a bump, the wheels would go up and there would be no steering. The man on the radiator would have to adjust his weight and get the wheels down. You can tell the roads were not as regulated as now.

I was a member of a construction company by the name of Fife and Stoddard Building Contractors. We also had another company called Butte Builders Supply through which we sold the excess -- enough lumber and building materials from these barracks to get all of our money back. We had six months to tear our buildings down, and it took us the full six months. By putting ads in the newspaper, we were able to tap the great public demand for all building materials caused by the limited supply during and after World War II.

Drexel Tolly's father was the contractor on the church building being replaced, the one purchased by the Masons. He also was the Fife and Stoddard superintendent of construction and became the superintendent of construction for the new building. We had a Building Committee meeting every Sunday night after Sacrament Meeting in which we would plan the next week's activities and from which I ordered all the materials. None of us ever counted the time spent in meetings.

The Gridley Chapel was built entirely with volunteer labor. We had bankers, physicians, musicians and every other occupation doing any and every type of work that

needed to be done. What we lacked in efficiency, we made up with camaraderie. Over the period of construction, several hundred men and women were doing what they could with the skills they had. Some of us were trying to do work for which we had no skills. One of these was roofing the church.

First we put down a water-proof membrane made of five layers of 15 lb. felt with hot tar mopped between each layer. Over this we put roofing tile. We borrowed a tar pot so that we could heat the tar, little realizing how dangerous working with hot tar could be. My assignment one night was to mop on the roof under flood lights, something no roofer would consider. A "bucket brigade" handed the hot boiling tar buckets up to me. Others rolled on tar paper. I had been mopping with tar for about three hours, was getting tired and perhaps a little careless. Up near the top gable, on the highest point of the roof, I stepped where I had mopped. Losing my balance, I knocked over the fresh hot bucket with my arm, sloshing the tar over my left arm and down my left side. This cascaded me, tar, bucket and all down the roof. Fortunately, I was able to grab onto the gutter. There I was, burning with hot tar, hanging with both hands on the gutter with other members scurrying to find a ladder to get me safely down. Immediately I was taken to the Gridley-Biggs Memorial Hospital. Ronald Brown was my doctor. He cut my clothes off and proceeded to clean and dress my burns. To this day I have a scar on my left elbow and my left leg. My scars have outlasted the building which was torn down a couple of years ago. Diana saw me come home all bandaged and was really impressed. She would take everyone to me and tell them about my burns.

One man, President John T. Nielson, Jr., a Second Councilor to the Stake President, personally provided all labor for the sheet metal work, which included gutters and flashings. He had the highest number of hours of any man in the ward. I suspect a lot of the group forgot to list all their hours.



Luncheon Committee – Norma in the middle

Every Saturday we had pot luck dinners for 20 or 30 workers and their families-about 70 people. In all my years in the church, I have never seen more dedication, more selflessness or more fun in doing the Lord's work. The clowning lightened the load.

When we began, about half of the men in the ward did not observe the Word of Wisdom and were inactive. To build such a large building seemed to us to be an insurmountable task, and we needed the "Smoking Elders" to help with the labor. We made an agreement with them that, if they would work on the chapel, they could go off the property for a smoke when they needed one. During construction, we carried on the usual MIA activities of baseball and basketball, and the Smoking Elders could always beat the non-smoking elders. As the building progressed and the men worked on the chapel, one by one they lost the desire to break the Word of Wisdom. By the time the chapel was completed, there were very few Smoking Elders left. Many of them became bishops, high councilmen and other responsible leaders within the Church. Without them, it would have been a much more difficult job to complete the building.

When it came to furnishings, we decided to make the pews and furnishings in the Fife and Stoddard Cabinet Shop. The Burtons designed the furniture which we built. The pews were made of wood and not upholstered, and the women in the ward did a fabulous job of sanding and finishing them. We made the banquet tables but bought the folding chairs. After three years, the Gridley Ward Chapel was completed.



Gridley Stake Center

Dedicated April 22, 1951

At one of the Semi-annual Conferences in Salt Lake City, some of the members of the Gridley Ward Bishopric had the opportunity to speak with the First Councilor to the President of the Church, David O. McKay. We asked him if he would dedicate our church for us. He checked his calendar and agreed, setting the date aside. Between the time of the beginning of construction and the dedication, President George Albert Smith passed away, and David O. McKay became President. We thought, "He will not be able to dedicate the church; he will

send someone else." When the date arrived, we were notified that President David O. McKay still intended to give the dedicatory prayer. Along with others, I was fortunate to be able to speak on the same program. Everyone was thrilled to see and shake hands with the President. President McKay said that our Chapel cost was \$6 per square foot and the equivalent building in Fresno at this same time cost \$20 per square foot.

The churches built by volunteer labor were a source of deep spiritual faith and joy. It was a privilege to build your own church and demonstrated to the children how deeply their parents believed the principles of the gospel. Most of the children of these people remain steadfast, fulfilling missions and holding every level of church office. For me, the building of churches remains one of the greatest experiences of my life.



Randy, JoAnn, Diana, and Norma in Gridley

Now there are no building funds. The church headquarters contracts to build the entire church. The only participation the membership has is to pay their tithing. We used to feel it cost 20% to belong to the church because we had tithing, budget to pay the cost of branch or ward expenses, fast offerings, building fund and missionary fund. You were not considered an active member if you paid only your tithing. Now, the payment of tithing and fast offerings is all that is expected. Although we sacrificed a great deal, the feeling gained from working for the Lord, and the brotherhood, fellow shipping and fun of working side-by-side with fellow members do not exist for me to the same degree under current programs.

I had been working in Gridley with the firm of Fife and Stoddard for five years when the Korean War erupted in June of 1950. Since the Bill and Loren Stoddard were in the reserves and were called into the service, we completed all our jobs, and the partnership was dissolved. In wartime, the government limits credit for all industries and causes shortages of building materials which made construction difficult. I sold the equipment and good will of the construction firm to Wilbur Mills, my brother Calvin, and my cousin, Clifford Coffman.

The name of their firm was Fife, Coffman and Mills and they went into building metal farm and industrial buildings. They did quite well for a year.

In Arizona, Norma's uncle, Eddie Whiting had a promising business opportunity for us. We left immediately after the dedication, and I do not believe I attended a regular sacrament meeting at the Gridley Chapel until years later.

Why I'm Not a Hunter

After the war, Bill, Loren, Gene and I were working hard in construction and decided to take a five-day holiday to go deer hunting. Anticipation was high as we took our camping gear to Modoc county where the muletail deer flourished. The first day we walked through the lovely forests but saw no animals. The second day, Bill and I were at the bottom of a hill about five miles from camp when the biggest, most magnificent muletail buck appeared. I raised my rifle for a cinch shot, but I could not shoot him. I called to Bill and he aimed-but he put his gun down and threw a rock at him. As the deer scampered off into the brush, we both gave sighs of relief. Deer hunting was over for both of us. We explained our actions by saying it was too far to carry it out, but actually, we both realized the worth and beauty of God's creations. They will have immortality just as we will, and we must cherish them and be responsible for their welfare and safekeeping. He and I spent the rest of our holiday cooking, talking, sleeping and really enjoying each other. Only Gene brought in a deer.

It recalled my experiences with a Remington automatic 22 caliber rifle given to me by my Uncle Walter when I was 16 years old. All the boys my age had some type of 22, bolt action, single shot or automatic. I thought a lot of this gun. By lots of target practice, all of us became quite proficient. Because rabbits ate the crops, the farmers considered them to be pests. One day we went hunting west of Gridley, shooting rabbits and leaving them. After having shot a number, the last lovely, furry rabbit came running towards me, crying like a baby, dying at my feet. It made me sick to my stomach and filled me with remorse. I wanted to throw my gun in the river. Remembering it was a gift, I kept it for target practice.

Tucson



Norma, Mabel Fife, Diana, & JoAnn

The Move

In December of 1950, Norma's Uncle Eddie Whiting had a promising business opportunity for us. The Whiting Brothers Lumber Company had furnished lumber and supplies to a contractor who had gone bankrupt, leaving the company with a large number of houses under construction. We made the move, I applied for my Arizona Contractor's License and organized the Fife Construction Company.

Uncle Eddie had a house for us, but it was occupied by the former manager of the lumber company while he and his wife found other quarters. Our future home also had an area intended for a maid which had one bed, a toilet and an outside exit but no cooking or storage space. There was an evaporative cooler which helped to offset hot days. Expecting to have the house available daily, the four of us lived in these "maid's rooms" for two months which was an extreme trial.

Diana, 4, and JoAnn, 1, had no toys to play with when we first made the move because the toys were packed with the furniture. They were so cute amusing themselves with no toys. It was a revelation to us to see what imaginations our two little girls had. The two of them would go out to play in the cactus, inevitably coming back with needles in them. After several encounters with the needles, they learned to stay away from the cactus. They seemed to think they did not touch the cactus, but that the needles "jumped at them."

An entourage of "former employees," many of them relatives, decided to make the move from Gridley to Tucson with us, including Gene and Maree Stoddard, Paul and Carol Quist, and Nathel and Russell Burdick. When we arrived in Tucson, the ward said they had never had so many new members at one time. While Maree Stoddard waited for the sale of the Motel Markay in Gridley, Gene lived with us.

I felt rather responsible for them and went about getting everyone employed. I bought out a cabinet shop and set Russell Burdick to work making cabinets. Paul Quist went to work as a plasterer. Gene became a very effective construction superintendent.

There were 150 houses in various phases of construction scattered over 150 linear road miles in the city of Tucson. We made a check list of what had to be done on each house and an inventory of materials needed, completely missing the human element of stealing. If you had a subdivision, you could guard it-but these houses were in every type of neighborhood and so scattered that people felt free to steal. We finally had to schedule the men to work and the materials to be dropped simultaneously.

Construction in Tucson was brick outside and lath and plaster inside, entirely different than California construction. In order to get a truly competitive cost on my houses, I put them out to bid by other contractors. Their highest bid was much lower than my cost which indicated they had a better way to do it. I watched them build and learned the short cuts. This enabled us to bring our cost down to what was considered a profit in the housing industry of Tucson-\$200. This was a ridiculously low profit for building a \$10,000 two bedroom house, but the selling price was set by the Federal Housing Authority. We completed all 150 houses in approximately one year.

In the meantime, I formed a silent partnership with two Tucson men, Knute Gardner and Vern Beers who had an option on between 400-500 lots from a Los Angeles food broker by the name of Gullie Burcham. We built several hundred houses together and were doing well. I did all the construction and had 300 men working under me. Usually 1 ½ houses were finished each day; at times we called FHA to make four final inspections a day.

When we built our subdivision, the four developers had houses on Craycroft Road. The first was mine, the second was Gene Stoddard's, third was Gardner's, and fourth was Beers. This was a mistake which became obvious as we sold houses. Anyone having a problem would come to my door any time of day or night or ring us on the phone. We soon realized we would have little or no privacy while living there the next two and a half years.

Tucson was a special experience in brotherhood, seeing the Church of Jesus Christ in action, hard work and a happy family.

Richard E. Martin

Our very first Sunday morning in Tucson, when my family and I went to church, we met the Bishop. Before the day was over I was sustained as the Ward Clerk even though I did not know the names of anyone in the ward. This is not the story of my tenure as Ward Clerk but the story of the Bishop, one Richard E. Martin, a man of character and decision led by the Lord.



Richard E. Martin

This is how he became Bishop. Brother Martin owned and operated a road construction company, living out on the road during the week and coming home for weekends. One weekday, Stake President Trejo came to the construction site. Brother Martin had a big mug of coffee in his hand. He greeted Brother Trejo with, "What are you doing here?" Brother Trejo responded, "I did not want to come, but the Lord has called you to be the Bishop of the Tucson Ward." Bishop Martin turned white, threw away his coffee and said, "I feel it is the Lord's call. I will repent of anything I've been doing wrong. I will spend Thursday, Friday and all weekend working for the Lord -- and more if necessary." He did repent from that day forward.

This happened before I arrived. The ward was really shocked to have an inactive elder called as Bishop. There were many "suitable" men in the ward, one who had a string of grocery stores, several nationally known Lawyers and a half dozen top college professors. The Lord did not consider any of them the right man for the job. They did not have the "push" that Bishop Martin had. His counselors were Mark V. Gardner and Joel Fletcher. The four of us made up the Bishopric throughout this period.

Every Sunday evening, all of the ward leadership was invited to the Martins for ice cream and a discussion of various concerns within the ward. Much of pleasant companionship and ward business was accomplished there. Everyone had a question or two for the Bishop. Those he could not field were discussed and decided by the group.

At our first Bishop's Meeting, he said, "Randy, you were in the Bishopric in Gridley and Chairman of the Building Committee. Call up your architect and have him come to Tucson to talk about building a new chapel here." We were meeting in a 50-year-old, totally inadequate structure. I said, "Bishop, you have to have permission from the Church Building Committee before you can hire an architect." The Bishop said, "I am the Bishop. We need a new building, and if I have to hire the architect myself, I'll do it. Here is the phone, call the architect." So I called Brother Douglas Burton who was one of the recommended architects of the church at that time and had drawn the plans and supervised the recently completed Gridley Ward Chapel.

Brother Burton said, "Do you have church approval?" Bishop Martin said, "Brother Burton come over next week." During this visit to Tucson, Bishop Martin commissioned him to do the plans for the Tucson Second Ward Chapel. When Brother Burton said he needed a site to build it on, Bishop Martin replied, "Stay over a day and we will have a site." He then went along Cherry Avenue and bought several adjoining lots. "Now," he said, "this is the site."

Brother Burton agreed to have a foundation plan within two weeks because Bishop Martin wanted to start construction immediately. We measured the land, obtained a plot plan from the title company, and within two weeks we had a foundation plan. No one knew what the building would look like -- Bishop Martin had such a good reputation he could get a permit without a complete set of plans. We were to get approval as we went along. Brother Burton said, "I wonder what the church will think of this?" and Brother Martin said, "Don't worry, I will pay you."

I had a large concrete mixer which allowed me to do the concrete work on four houses every day. It was so large I would load the sand, gravel and cement with a tractor loader. The Bishop said to me, "You are in charge of all the concrete work." The church had 27,000 square feet of cement plus walks, curbs and driveways. He told Morse Holladay, "You are in charge of the masonry work." It was a cement block building. He then told both of us that we were in charge of roofing the church, which meant we were to make all the cement roofing tile as well as install it. Morse Holiday and I bought an automatic machine to manufacture concrete roofing tile. Because we were both carrying on full-time contracting positions and were working on the church building on Saturdays, the only time we could spare was from 4 to 7:30 a.m. Every morning for a year, he and I made roofing tile for two churches with 30,000 square feet of roofing surface each.

In accord with his premise of assigning all of the work on the building to various people, the parking lot was Richard's responsibility because he did blacktopping as part of his road construction. The entire church was completed by volunteer, donated labor.

I was made Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Building Committee in addition to being Ward Clerk. How he got me to work so much, I'll never know. I was running two full-time businesses during this period. My regular daily schedule was to get up at 3:30 a.m. to be on the job making roofing tile from 4 until 7:30. Having breakfast at 7:30, I would be on my work at 8 or 8:30 a.m. and until 6 p.m. On Fridays I would finish the day at 2 p.m., then go to the church to pour concrete from roughly 2 until 10 p.m. Saturday we would pour from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. We would try to have the concrete poured by noon and do the finishing the rest of the day.

As Ward Clerk and the Financial Clerk, I had all the records piled on a desk at home. Every so often Bishop Martin would arrive at my home at 10 p.m. announcing that he had come to help me with the books. We would then work until 2 a.m. getting caught up. He would tell me I was the worst Ward Clerk in the church. I would suggest he fire me -- but he said he wanted to keep me until I improved.

We had no authority from any church leader except the Bishop. The Stake headquarters during this time was located in St. David, 60 miles south of Tucson. Brother Trejo "heard" we were building a church so he came over to see what we were doing -- to his surprise, we were pouring concrete. He said, "Bishop, you cannot do this without permission from the church." Bishop Martin said, "Why do we need permission from the church?" President Trejo said, "In order to get matching funds." President Martin said, "We don't need matching funds."

President Trejo said, "I think you had better get permission from the church, anyway." So Bishop Martin agreed. Everyone involved was scolded by the Building Committee, but the building went ahead and was completed in two years.

Everybody in the ward rallied, and it was sheer joy to build the chapel. When we finished, we had \$50,000 left in the building fund. A little controversy came up between the Bishop and the Relief Society Presidency because the sisters could not agree on the decor of the Relief Society Room. Bishop Martin told them he was taking over all decision making on the subject -- they demanded his release from the Bishopric. Unknown to them, he hired a professional decorator to choose the carpet, drapes and furnishings for their room, and did not let them look at it until it was finished. When the room was opened, all the sisters hugged him with delight and withdrew their complaint.

I spent every Saturday, two or three nights each week and every holiday for eight years working on churches in Gridley and Tucson. All this time I was working night and day on my own business.

I always looked forward to being with my family, and we had a lot of quality time together. Every Friday and Saturday the husbands, wives and children had a potluck supper with all those working at the church. We had a special bond arising from our mutual dedication. We had such - a nice life together.

One of our favorite family activities to escape the heat was to drive up to Mt. Lemon. It was a complete change of climate and scenery, an altitude of 5,000 feet, with beautiful, pine tree covered picnic areas. We would take the children and anyone around home, including the maids, leaving early in the morning and coming back at night. We did this often in the summertime. Many other ward members had the same idea, so we would visit and play games together. Everyone had a really good time getting away from the desert for awhile.

The Welfare Farm

I came to a meeting one day and Bishop Martin said "I have just had a vision. I saw us on our welfare farm with all four of us standing in cotton up to our chins." We said, "Come on Bishop!" He said, "It is true, do you want to see the site?" We went to a creek bottom just outside of Tucson. He announced, "This is the farm!" I had never seen such an un-level, unlikely site for growing cotton. There were 100 acres of untouched land made up of rolling hills covered with mesquite trees and brush. It could be bought for almost nothing. We told him what we thought of it -- but he said, "No, this is it. I have a plan." He said proudly, "This is our welfare farm!" We all said, "Of course, Bishop," thinking the idea would pass. When looking at it the Stake President said, "This is unsuitable for a welfare farm, Bishop -- I think you should reconsider. You have to have permission from the Welfare Committee." The Bishop said, "OK, have them come out in a couple of weeks."

As I mentioned, he was a man of action. He bought the welfare farm. He was a road builder and had huge earthmoving equipment. He had his friends, large road contractors, donate all their equipment and the union donated all the labor. One Saturday, they had

engineers with their transit levels placing grading stakes, huge bulldozers scraped up the mesquite, roughly 25 earthmovers were moving soil, and caffy-alls were going in every direction. Well-digging contractors were drilling wells. In one day they created the most beautiful, level farm land you have ever seen. It was a low area filled with fertile silt.

When the authorities from the church came out, all they could say was, "My what a beautiful farm!" The Stake President was shocked at the change. We planted cotton -- and I added record keeping for the welfare farm to my duties. The four of us had our picture taken with cotton up to our chins in the fall!

Richard Martin was Bishop for the next five years while I was there. When the Stake was divided, he was the first Stake President for the Tucson Stake. He will be one of my very special friends always.

Friends and Relatives

During our life in Gridley, we had had a lot of relatives come to stay for a week or so. Because we now lived closer to many of the Berrys and Whitings, their visits became more frequent. The Berrys and the Whitings had lived for decades in St. Johns where everyone knows everyone else, have great affection and share life's trials and humor. They would do anything for each other. They were all very friendly and you always felt included. All the families of the Whiting uncles, two of the Brown uncles, Herbert Berry's three brothers and two sisters, Aunt Etta and Aunt Famie, came to visit. Each of these two sisters had 17 children. Aunt Famie's daughter and her husband moved to Tucson, and I later employed her as a secretary

Children

The most important part of our lives was our children and our family life. In relating the stories of the intense amount of work involved with earning a living and church activities,



it has been difficult maintain continuity and to mention those events closest to our hearts, the births and happenings involving the children. For this reason I will talk about some of them here.



Diana and JoAnn in Tucson, the yard on Craycroft Avenue

When I moved the cement mixer from place to place, I would let Diana and JoAnn ride on the front of the tractor. They loved it and begged for more rides. These rides are still one of JoAnn's lasting memories.

On January 22, 1953, Bonnie was born. She was born in such a hurry that she arrived in the hall on the gurney of St. Mary's Hospital. Most of the patients were of Spanish descent and had coal black hair. Bonnie arrived with bright red hair and made a big hit with all the nuns and nurses. Everyone coming to look at the babies was shocked to see a white skinned, red-haired baby girl. She received lots of attention and made her parents very happy.





JoAnn and Bonnie

On November 18, 1955, Randy was born at the Tucson Medical Center. We were thrilled as he was our first son. He was taken over by Stella McMahon and Maria Pauda. They fell in love with him. Every minute they could spare from their work, they would have Randy in their room. He was deluged with attention from his Berry grandparents, his two loving parents and his three sisters -- but especially the maids. I doubt there are many children born who have had so much affection lavished on them during their first year of existence. He never cried because there was always someone to pick him up the minute he would whimper. Stella nicknamed him "Little Boy Blue" because he was always dressed in blue. His every need was scheduled – if he were the slightest bit damp, he was changed.

On September 10, 1955, ten months after Randy's birth, along came Bradley! He received equal attention to that of Randy except sometime during the year after Grandmother Berry's death, Stella left to marry a young Mexican. Stella was half Mexican and half Irish with her first language Spanish. She completed high school and received "A's" in English. She was bright but bashful. She and Maria waited on us "hand and foot." Stella was very observant and knew what was to be done before anyone asked.

Randy's Leukemia

At about two years of age, Randy B. became very anemic, and the doctor could not find the cause. We changed his diet and gave him food supplements. Finally we were asked to take him to the Tucson Medical Center for observation. They decided he might have Leukemia, and performed a biopsy on a gland in his neck to send to Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

When the test returned marked positive, and we were told that Randy would not have long to live. Several transfusions were given but he was terribly ill, barely moving in his crib. The whole ward fasted and prayed. His doctor was a member of the church, and he and I administered to him. During the blessing, he stated that Randy would get well. When he finished, with tears in his eyes, he said, "As a doctor, I feel we are going to lose him. I do not know why I said he will get well."

Within a short time, Randy began to show some color. Within two weeks, much to the amazement of all the doctors, he was playing and standing up in the crib. To this day, he has had no further problem with anemia. It was a miracle of faith and prayer, a special blessing from the Lord.

Bradley and Randy were so similar in coloring and size, most people thought they were twins. We added to this by dressing them alike. Over the years, they were constant companions. We really enjoyed the five children and spent many an hour playing with them at home and at playgrounds.

Sometime after Brad was born and Stella left, Maria became pregnant although unwed. The father of her child was a very high-class Mexican whom Maria thought was rich and in love with her. When confronted, he told me he had no intention of marrying her --"If she was unwise enough to get pregnant, she had the responsibility of the child, not him." The higher-classed Mexican men often have affairs, but when they, marry, they do so within their class. I asked him not to come around any more, much to Maria's chagrin.

Troubles in Paradise

Despite the long hours worked and the time we spent serving the Lord, depression came to the building business. When the Republican Dwight David Eisenhower administration came into power, it was decided the inflation rate of 2% was out of hand so immediately cut off all credit. This meant that even approved FHA loans were canceled. All of our houses were pre-sold and the people had qualified for an FHA loan, yet we had to go to insurance companies as a source of funds and pay them an added 5 points. Whereas our profit was \$200, we had to pay \$1,000 to complete the financing and lost \$800 for each house under construction. This destroyed all contractors, bankrupting almost everyone in the building industry-contractors, subcontractors and suppliers. Tucson was reactionary, and the city panicked when Douglas Aircraft, the big employer in the city, laid off 5,000 men and closed the plant. There was an immediate and great depression in Tucson. The unemployed put their houses up for sale and moved back to California.

As a housing contractor with a subdivision of lots for future building. Of the 300 lots remaining, I had an equity of \$200 and an indebtedness of \$300 per lot. By today's standards, this is a high equity position. In the six months after I left Tucson, these lots increased in value from \$500 to \$6,000. To see the amount of money lost in this transaction, simply multiply 300 lots by \$6,000 (= \$1,800,000). Because I was constructing homes, this was only part of the loss-and it was caused by a temporary fluctuation in the business environment. We knew we should hold on to them but reached the limit of our finances.

You may wonder why I could not raise needed capital, but my advisors said the Republican Administration would bring the economy, to its knees and I had better bail out when I could. My reaction was that I was making a terrible mistake, but my relatives and advisors, Stewart and Morris Udall, were all progressive Democrats. When I asked advice from bankers and others, everyone felt we were going into a drastic depression. This proved to be false. For the want of \$40,000, I was to withstand a very substantial loss which precipitated my moving from Tucson to Fresno, leaving everything for which we had worked so hard.

During this problem, after about two years, as Construction Superintendent, Gene Stoddard decided to teach school, so he and Maree moved to Flagstaff. As I cut back, Paul Quist went back to Gridley, Russell and Nathel Burdick moved to St. Johns, Arizona.

My Brother, Calvin took over as construction superintendent and did a great job, he was very efficient, proficient in knowledge of the job and worked easily with the crews. Our family really enjoyed having Calvin, Valeta and their children while they lived in Tucson. We had them over for barbecues, went to church together and loved sharing our lives together.

In 1954, we finished the subdivision. Having neither financing nor buyers for the houses on the other lots, Fife Construction Company went into general contracting, building a laundry, clothing factory and several other commercial buildings and a few pools. I had been running Hercules Concrete Company for four years and continued to pour concrete daily.

Realizing you could make \$1,000 on a \$2,000 pool, I then decided to go into the swimming pool business under the name of Patio Pools and Wall Company. I began to sell pools and walls for Patio Pools along with the other two companies and worked daily in all three companies. Calvin was the superintendent for Patio Pools and Wall Company and Fife Construction.

Calvin had developed the round pool that we both used for several years. It was the cheapest and structurally best pool we could build for the money. We built a lot of these round pools and also constructed masonry, and stucco walls. Calvin really perfected the walls and the pools. Calvin and I became very close at this time. We talked about going into a partnership together, but the uneven income of the business was terribly hard on Valeta, and Calvin decided to apply to the City of Phoenix where there was an opening for a building inspector. He took the job and built pools on the side for a few years, finally quitting the pool business completely.

We had long realized our need for a larger house for our growing family. In 1955, we bought a lot and had Douglas Burton draw plans for a new home. Calvin and I were doing most of the work on this new structure. All the framing was done and it was ready for the concrete roof tile which I had already made. The Saturday I planned to begin roofing, Bishop Martin asked me to take a group of kids to Mesa for baptisms for the dead. I tried to talk him out of this, but he said, "No, I'm your Bishop. You and your wife are to take these eight kids in your station wagon to the temple in Mesa." I did so, but with a poor attitude. The temple trip took all day. After returning the children to their homes, we drove past the new house as was our custom. To our surprise, the roof was on and completed. The Bishop had arranged for the

priesthood to help me with my roof! This job would have taken me weeks to accomplish by myself. In a Saturday I could have done no more than to bring up the roof tile and place on the roof. The following day we had a cloud burst which would have damaged the inside walls and woodwork. The Bishop had been inspired to help me by roofing the house. With the house enclosed, the inside was preserved. My attitude changed, but I went to Priesthood Meeting very humble and repentant for my actions and pride. Everyone was warm and wonderful as usual. This was a good lesson in pride and certainly humbled me.

The economic outlook for Tucson continued to be "depressing." Consequently, we did not live in this house but sold it to finance our move. We considered all of the members of the family as our most valuable assets. Our world revolved around the children. Randy and Brad were babies, Bonnie was three, JoAnn six and Diana nine years old, so we had a family of five children from 0 to 9 years old.

When we moved, Maria moved with us. She stayed with us three years more, six years over all, and looked upon us as her parents. Maria was able to take care of all of the small children and assist with some housework. The baby, Angela, was born in Fresno and was the darling of the family. It was the best for her to move with relatives, but we missed her terribly. She and Angela had become family.

Hearing from Helen and Aubrey Andelin that Fresno was a hotbed of activity, we decided to move there. I feel I made a mistake in not taking Lee Berry's advice to move to Southern California where the business climate was much superior to that of the San Joaquin Valley.

A Spirited Approach

While serving as Ward Clerk for the Tucson 2nd Ward, the Bishop assigned to me a one-member family, which had no ward teacher. When I asked him for information, he said with a twinkle in his eye, "You'll find out when you visit them!" He also asked for a report on how I found everything.

It is customary to phone for an appointment before going ward teaching, but these people were in a rather isolated area and had no phone. One evening I found myself knocking at the door of a stranger I had never met and knew nothing about. Because the husband was not a member of the church, I introduced myself as a ward teacher from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The minute I mentioned the church, he whistled, alerting two Dobermans inside the house. He said, "I don't want to listen to any damn Mormons!" and sicked his dogs on me. As they pounced against the screen ready to come out, I started on a dead run for my car. It was a warm summer evening so I dove right through the open window with the Dobermans at my heels.

I sat in the car for a moment, too angry to talk and more than a little scared. Then I switched on my lights, drove off the driveway onto his lawn and right up to his front porch. The dogs were still barking and the husband was standing on the porch laughing. As I drove up, I called out some uncomplimentary remarks. He thought for a moment, called his dogs,

chained them on his porch and invited me into his home. We began a congenial conversation in which I learned he was a carpenter and he learned I was a building contractor, which gave us something in common. He apologized for his inappropriate actions, and I for my language. We sat down and visited.

About 45 minutes later, his wife arrived thinking something terrible had happened to her husband when she saw a strange car on the lawn with its lights blazing into the house. She was white faced and breathless as she entered the door. When her husband introduced me as their ward teacher, she was really surprised because he had been chasing away the home teachers for many years. We had a good discussion, and to his wife's amazement, he invited me back. I taught this man for the next year.

When the Bishop heard that I visited this family, he asked how it had gone. This was one of his sly jokes. He knew I was in for a bad evening when he sent me there. When I said, "Just fine," he said, "Just fine? This man has chased off every ward teacher that has ever visited him!" That was not the last of the Bishop's surprise. The following Sunday, Cecil came to church by himself, without his wife who was a registered nurse on duty at a local hospital that Sunday. I left Tucson a short time later, but heard he had joined the church and he and his wife had gone through the Mesa Temple.

Fund Raising

Instead of going direct to the members to raise money to build churches, some wards were putting on public events for entertainment. Bishop Summerhays of Hollywood was an impressario and would assist wards in Southern California to do this as a means of raising funds. Because most actors do not work on weekends, many would offer their time for worthwhile charitable causes and to increase their visibility and popularity.

With this in mind, we decided to rent the University of Arizona Auditorium which seated 6,000 people. We obtained Pat O'Brien, a very prominent actor at this time, as master of ceremonies. Pat was an alcoholic, and the only way we could insure his sobriety was to hire him and his wife. For the two of them, we paid all expenses on the train, meals and hotel plus \$ 1,000. He was our only paid performer. Bishop Summerhays lined up forty actors and actresses who would perform if we paid their expenses and transportation to and from Tucson. For them we chartered a DC-3 from Paul Mantz, a famous stunt pilot who also flew the plane.



When President Trejo heard of the production, he was against it because he felt the Mormon minority in Tucson would be unable to draw support from the Catholic community. We agreed that without the Catholics, the program would not work -- but with Pat O'Brien in person, a famous Catholic, it would work. President Trejo insisted we hold the church not responsible for the program, and we had to agree to underwrite the ticket sale. He felt it was very risky business and was totally against it.

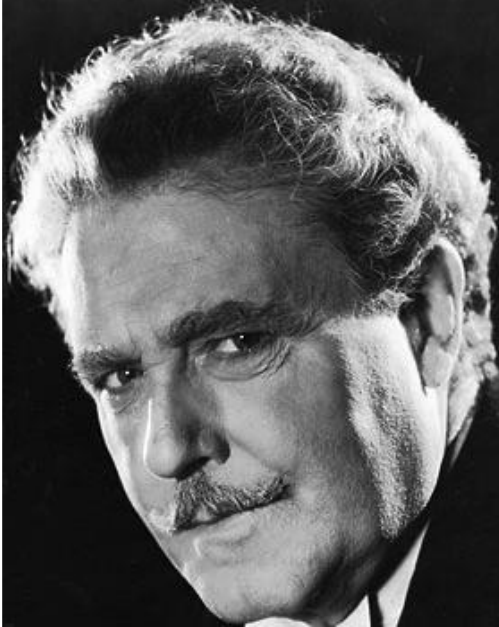
Morse and I started a group selling advertisements for the program. By making the program a booklet, the income from ads paid all expenses. With the expenses covered, we then underwrote the ticket sales. Every ticket was sold two weeks before the performance, assuring us of a profit of \$5,000 which was a lot of money in those days.

Morse said, "Let's do this full time -- it's a lot better than building houses. The day of the performance was very exciting for us. All the actors came early Saturday morning, and we had groups of people showing them the wonders of Tucson and sharing its history.

Pat O'Brien and his wife stayed in the hotel. Morse and I visited with them and went over the jokes to assure they were wholesome. We did this with all the performers, but thought there would be no



problem with adagio dancers. When they began their act, it was so far below church standards I felt myself sliding down in my seat, almost expecting President Trejo to stop the dance. Everything else in the program was excellent and everyone appreciated this kind of entertainment in Tucson.



The most outstanding performance was Bill Farnum giving Marc Anthony's Oration from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. He seemed to be a very frail old man and asked me to take him to a hotel room to spend the day resting.

When I picked him up just before his performance, he no longer seemed old -- his appearance was striking with his white hair contrasting with his tuxedo and tails. On meeting him at the hotel, he said, "Please don't talk to me until after the performance."

At the auditorium, I could hear people comment, "I wonder why they put *Julius Caesar* on a program like this." When he came onto the stage, he electrified the audience before he uttered a word. As he recited the oration, everyone was on the edge of their seats. He gave me new insight as to what an actor could do for a Shakespearean play.

He was the only one who engendered enough emotion for a standing ovation. Even the actors behind the curtain came out to applaud him. I have loved *Julius Caesar* ever since. Later I read in an encyclopedia that he was the most famous American Shakespearean actor, earning more than \$4 million in his lifetime.

At the dinner after the performance, instead of being a very quiet person, he was a great conversationalist and very friendly to the church. He said if he had felt stronger, he could have made everybody in the audience cry with a piece called "The Seagulls of Salt Lake City." I have tried to find that article but have never found it.

Shortly thereafter, we received a letter from the First Presidency stating that there were to be no more theatrical productions for building funds or other uses. We must have been the last to put on such a fund-raiser.

We attended the dedication of the new Tucson building before we moved to Fresno, California.

Fresno

Norma and I set out from Tucson with our five children, Bradley, Randy, Bonnie, JoAnn and Diana, ages one to nine, and \$2,000 to make the move. I felt I needed \$10,000 cash

to begin business again, but was to be sent \$12,000 by my partner as my share in the sale of a small subdivision of 25 homes. Upon arriving in Fresno, instead of the payment, I received a notice of the partner's bankruptcy. It does not seem like a lot of money now, but it was all I had and seemed tremendously important at that time.

After the move, I had \$700 to enter into business. I talked to several of my friends, and they said it was totally impossible to do because I could not buy the materials, etc. After much prayer and thought, I spent the whole \$700 on a newspaper ad and entered a full square into the pool business. Since the housing mortgage market collapsed and the swimming pool business had become the most profitable, I had already been building pools in Tucson as Patio Pool and Wall Company.

The ad in the Fresno Bee broke on Sunday and received 10 inquiries upon which I made calls. The week prior to our coming to Fresno, someone had come from Arizona, taken deposits on pools and left, making headlines in the newspaper. Needless to say, this caused suspicion of any pool builder coming from Arizona. Every time I went out on a lead, upon returning home I was met by everyone in the house with the question -- did you make a sale? I had to admit failure every night of that week. Of all these inquiries, I was unable to sell one pool and was criticized severely for spending all my money on the newspaper ad.

How we prayed during that entire week! On Sunday morning I had another call. The man said he had just seen my ad from the prior week -- could I come over Sunday afternoon to talk to him about a pool? He bought a pool with all the extras on it at a total cost of \$2,200, a down payment of half of the pool cost and with the balance upon completion, enabling me to begin the swimming pool business! I did not have money for labor, so I built the whole pool myself--all plans and preliminaries, the excavation, electrical and plumbing, built the forms and formed it, poured the concrete with the help of two laborers for the day, and did all the concrete work by myself. It was completed in one week.

Then I spent another \$700 for an ad with the sinking feeling I was supporting the newspaper instead of my family. However, after that first pool, there was no problem with sales. We risked everything we had on a newspaper ad -- and fortunately, it paid off!

I had a Studebaker pickup and a Chrysler automobile. I painted the pickup white, had an artist design a logo which he painted on the side, and was formally and professionally in business! Because of my lack of money, I had to make up the difference with my labor. I would get up at 3:30 a.m., be at the shop at 4 a.m., work on the books (accounting), assembling filters and stocking the trucks with the supplies and plumbing components needed for the pool that day, such as pumps, motors, filters, pipe fittings and reinforcing steel. As I developed more capital, I would buy my supplies in quantity loads and then take the daily needs from the inventory stock.



Fife Family at the first house in Fresno with Studebaker pickup in driveway

(from Lt to Rt: Brad, Randy E., Diana, Norma, JoAnn, Randy B. – Bonnie not pictured)

From 8 a.m. until 6 p.m., I would work on production of the various pools. A typical day would involve instruction of the crews, trouble shooting, pouring concrete, whatever needed to be done solving any problems. If a man did not show up for work, I was that man on that crew. I also did all the filing for permits and drawing of plans. In the evenings, I did the selling of the pools. We built pools all over the San Joaquin Valley from Bakersfield to Sacramento.



We moved three times in the City of Fresno, buying a house each time. The first one was a newly constructed, two story house which began to sag until you could not close any doors. In crawling under the structure, I found there was no foundation under the piers. The weight and dampness made the piers sink into the ground, rendering the house almost useless. I complained to the Veterans Administration; they let me out of my contract and took over the house.

We then moved three blocks away and lived there for about a year. When a large house off of Shaw Avenue became available, we moved again and remained there for the balance of the time we were in Fresno. We were always very concerned about Randy B because of his anemia. Maria left after three years and moved to San Jose, California, to keep house for her brother and earn more money. She still could not speak English with ease.

When Diana was ten, we found she could not throw a baseball. She and I bought baseball mitts and began playing catch by the hour as she learned to throw and catch. It was a nice feeling, looking forward to our time together. JoAnn was always athletic -- I loved to watch her run everywhere.



Brad and Randy

We spent five years in Fresno. Helen and Aubrey Andelin, Dean and Marion Berry, Jack and Joycell Cooper, and all of the children in their respective families made life warm and interesting for our family and helped us at every turn. We had many picnics on Saturday afternoons in Rhoding Park in Fresno. The ward was full of good friends. At that time, our stake extended from Merced to Visalia and from Hanford to Coalinga. I was appointed chairman of a committee for the planning within the stake along with Brother MacDonald, an Engineer, and another brother who was in insurance. We spent every Sunday for about two months gathering material about the growth patterns for the whole area. We predicted there would be a stake in the Visalia and Hanford area. The area soon passed that stage. There are now two stakes in the Merced area, three in Fresno, one in Visalia and one in Hanford. We had a very fine relationship with all the leaders of the then Fresno Stake. At that time, there were four wards in Fresno plus a Spanish Branch.

Church and family was our life and was extremely enjoyable. Each summer, we went up to Dinky Creek for at least two weeks, sometimes with other family members at Camp Fresno Jr., and other times, in the tent cabins with just our family. This was the busiest time in the pool business so I was unable to spend a great deal of daylight time at the camp, but would drive back and forth every other day to enjoy the family. That was a hard drive in those days because every road was two lanes and very winding. A lot of logging was being done, constantly jamming the road with huge trucks hauling logs to a sawmill in Clovis. Nevertheless, this was a time for wonderful experiences and fond memories for each member of our family and those of the extended family.

My work was still seasonal and we had a hard time going through each winter, so Ray Brown had a client who had a subdivision being built in Indio, California. In the winter of 1960, we planned a joint venture on a pool and recreational club which we thought would bring in income winter and summer in the warm climate of Indio. We made a market survey, knocking on about 1,000 homes, asking if they would join such a club. About 80 percent said "Yes." With an area of about 5,000 families as a market, the figures seemed very positive, and we decided to proceed with the Penguin Pool Club. We had three pools: a diving pool with a high dive, a large swimming pool for swimming and play, and a small, shallow pool for little children. We started our planning in January and had every thing ready to go by June. We had purchased a trailer to be used as both a construction office and sales office. In it, we installed all of our drawings, drawing paraphernalia, calculators and typewriters.

Finally we felt we were ready to go. We had packed for a couple of weeks and decided to leave early in the morning of May 5. We had just worked over the Lincoln with a new motor and everything was running in top shape. Norma and I had decided to leave the girls with Marion Berry and take the two boys with us. Early in the morning of the 5th, Marion said, "Let me take the boys." Their clothes were all packed in the trailer, but she said, "That's ok, I have plenty of clothes for boys," -- and she took them with her.

We set out on the long day's drive to Indio. Just as we were getting into Bakersfield, the car stopped. I had filled the gas tank in Fresno and was sure we had enough to go the 100 miles to Bakersfield, but something malfunctioned in the car and we had to pull off to the side of the road just before crossing the bridge of the Kern River. I told Norma I would go to the service station to get a can of gas, thinking that we had to rule out the most common problems first. I went to the station, got a can of gasoline and was in the middle of the Kern River bridge when I saw a huge truck run over our trailer and car, pushing everything through the railing and into the riverbed.

I ran to the car, being the first on the scene, and there no longer was a trailer, and the car looked like a convertible. Norma was slumped down in the front seat, but I found no wounds nor bleeding. I pulled out a seat of the car and lifted her onto it. By then a huge crowd had gathered and someone had called for an ambulance. Norma was still breathing but unconscious as she was placed in the ambulance and I was allowed to sit beside her as it sped off to the hospital. On the way, she stopped breathing and died in my arms. She was pronounced dead on arrival.

Someone told me I should go to the morgue to get Norma's rings for the children, but they were already gone. A California Highway Patrol man asked me to return to the wreck so he could make a report. There were hundreds of people around the wreck. I made my report and found that the truck driver had been killed too. The officer agreed that we were off the road as I had explained. I picked up Norma's handbag. He then called a wrecker to take the car away. By this time, I was really in shock. I thought I had better call for help, so dialed Dean Berry. I told him his sister had been killed, we were in Bakersfield, I was at the Highway Patrol Office, they were through with me, I was confused and did not know what to do. Ray Brown was staying at the Berry's, and they both said they would come for me.

I went outside to walk up and down, very numb. Everything had happened so fast. There were so many unanswered questions. I was questioned for approximately an hour by the CHP. I was so restless, I could not sit down. While walking, a black gardener came up and asked me what happened. He showed great sympathy and concern and said, "My house is across the street -- Come over and rest." He took me there. His wife held my hands, and we all cried together. This was the first sympathy I had had. All other conversations were very cold and professional. I have always thought the world of black people from that time on. They understand suffering and have warmth for each other.

Dean and Ray stopped to look at the wreck and saw for themselves what had happened. From the home of the kind people, I saw their car drive up. The couple gave me some hugs and walked me to the car. I do not remember the trip back to Dean's. Dean told me he had not told the children because he thought I would prefer to tell them and talk with them about it.



The Fife Family after Norma's funeral

Front: Randy B., Bonnie, Brad

Back: Diana, Randy E., and JoAnn

Arriving in Fresno, I gathered my five children around me. They knew something was wrong. I looked into their inquiring eyes and told them their Mother was dead and tried to help them to understand. Then we had a prayer circle and all prayed together for strength and understanding about what had happened. A very happy time of my life and theirs had just gone. Even as an adult, acceptance of such an event takes forever. Overcoming such a loss

and adjusting emotionally is tremendously difficult. How difficult it must be for a child whose every physical and emotional want has been satisfied by a loving, caring Mother.

I returned to Bakersfield the next day to pick up the children's clothing and things from the trunk of the car. There was not one piece of cloth or one suitcase left in the trunk - it had all been stolen. I especially wanted the two little sailor suits that Norma had made for the boys, but they were gone.

The funeral was taped and is in the hands of the Fife children.



Randy B. wearing
sailor suit

The next week began a nightmare that lasted for over a year. My insurance company was cited by the state to recover the cost of the broken bridge railing. My bank accounts were closed because of death. I had about 15 people working for me who all became belligerent during the time I had to petition the judge for payroll money. This set off a series of labor problems which I eventually solved.

During this time my employees were plundering my business, selling fittings, filters, chemicals, furniture and anything they could find, while still on the payroll. I was working at about 20% efficiency because of shock and grief. After a week of settling affairs in Fresno, everyone thought it would be a good idea for me to go to Indio and work on construction of the Penguin Pool Club.

I feel Randy and Brad owe their lives to Marion Berry's compassion and thoughtfulness. I am forever indebted to her and Dean for that one act. In addition, during the next year, all the children stayed with Dean and Marion and had nurturing care during that very difficult period of adjustment. My mother later came down to assist with their needs for love and care. I would drive from Indio to Fresno once a month to see them.

I worked in Indio from daylight to dark working out my emotional turmoil. I brought two men from my old crew to help with the actual construction, and at first we all stayed in a cheap motel.

Jim Kennedy and family moved to Indio, rented a house and settled themselves, with Jim taking on the responsibility for selling memberships and managing the Club. I moved in with them. Jim did quite well. It took me about two months to complete the Penguin Pool Club, and then I taught swimming to children at the club as we attempted to sell memberships and make it profitable.

Lee Berry met me one night at the Riverside Inn in Riverside and we spent a long and difficult evening. He and Norma were very close and her passing was very hard on Lee as well as the rest of the family. My relationship with the Berry family has never seemed to be the same because of the painful memories her passing left.



Living with the Berrys

Front: Randy, Diana, Brad

Back: JoAnn and Bonnie

Lee said he came to give me some good advice. He said, "Your life with Norma is through in this life. You must start a new life and put the past behind you. Don't put up pictures and other paraphernalia that will be a reminder." Helen Andelin went through our home and picked up all of Norma's clothing, pictures, etc., helped clean out the house getting it ready for sale so that I could start a new life. The advice Lee gave me has to do with Bill and Effie Berry Ellsworth's experience. Bill kept Effie's picture around the house and referred to the children as Effie's children and those of the new wife as her children. Lee pleaded with me not to make the same mistake. It was a painful experience but has proved, in my mind, to be a right course.

Several times my children visited me at the club, once during spring break and once for the grand opening. It eased my pain to be with them. How I loved my children! After nine or ten months at the Penguin Pool Club, I was beginning to function quite well, I thought.

Penquin Pool Club

Watching Dad prepare for the grand opening of the Penquin Pool Club became for me a summary of Dad's best qualities. When we children arrived in Indio by bus, the grand opening was just days away. The idea of a neighborhood pool club supported by those who paid for a share of the usage was a new concept. The opening was intended to advertise and entertain by inviting the public to see what it would be like to belong to the club.

When we arrived from Fresno for our visit, the pool and landscaping was still under construction. The workmen and Dad had been working nonstop to get everything exactly right. There were three pools, a clubhouse, and an outdoor kitchen all connected by an elaborate deck. The largest pool was standard with a shallow and a deep end. The second was four feet deep so that water volleyball and other games could be played. The third was a generously sized shallow kiddie pool. The scheduled day quickly arrived, and the three pools still had no water.

As soon as the last details were completed on the pools, near noon, Dad got on the phone and talked the local fire station into filling those pools from the nearest hydrant with their fire hoses. The firemen came right over, and the task was completed in two hours. It would have taken several days to fill those pools with garden hoses.

We kids were put to work sweeping up the construction debris and hosing off the decks while Dad ran to the grocery store. He bought the food he planned to serve at the luau, along with a dozen tiki torches and butcher paper, cups and napkins. Upon his return, he lit the charcoal in the outdoor kitchen barbecues, and started the chicken marinating in soy sauce and brown sugar in the refrigerator. Next, he set up the serving area using plywood and sawhorses, and covered the surfaces with butcher paper.

He set up an assembly line for cutting up the fruit, and got his daughters busy preparing fresh pineapples, watermelon, cantaloupe and strawberries. Dad showered and changed into an aloha shirt, nice slacks and a straw hat. The food was set out on the newly built buffet tables: platters of fruit, boxes of fresh rolls, Hawaiian punch, and sheet cake all ready to take around on napkins and eat while socializing and touring the facility.

When the first guests arrived at six o'clock for the luau grand opening festivities, the tiki torches were lit, ukulele music was blaring through the outdoor speakers, the three youngest children were playing in the kiddie pool, and the chicken smelled delicious, done to perfection on the barbecue. The guests would have been amazed if they had seen what things were like that very morning. Not once during the feverish preparations had Dad seemed nervous or overwhelmed. He remained positive and focused, relishing the challenge.

R E Fife Continues

The pool club had quite a successful opening, and my old friend from the army, Jim Kennedy took over as a pretty good manager.

After completing the Penquin Pool Club, I moved to Sacramento where Bill Stoddard had a cooperative apartment house, The Belfort Arms, and needed me to sell the various units. This concept was what developed into the idea of condominiums. A revolutionary idea is hard to sell to the common man and sales were going slowly. The apartment house was not quite finished when I got there, but three apartments and the recreation room were furnished by a decorator. The pool was not built, so I immediately set about building the pool. During this construction, I brought a cot in and "lived" at the Belfort Arms.

Ray Brown came to me one day saying he had a client who had 50 new houses almost finished but the builder had gone bankrupt. They stood to lose a lot of money unless I would come to Fresno to help sell them. I prepared a sales campaign and became totally involved in the selling of these homes. I sold five houses in one day! The night I finished those sales I was so high I jumped in my car and drove to my old house, rushed in the kitchen door-I was so anxious to tell Norma and the family of my success! and -- sitting there was a family I had never seen before with shocked expressions on their faces! I stood there for a minute in utter confusion -- I apologized and stumbled out to my car. Again I realized my life had completely changed. No one can ever realize how painful it is to lose your wife and to break each connection with the joys and experiences you share unless they have gone through it.

After disposing of these homes, I moved to Sacramento where Bill Stoddard had a cooperative apartment house, The Belfort Arms, and needed me to sell the various units. This concept was what developed into the idea of condominiums. A revolutionary idea is hard to sell to the common man and sales were going slowly. The apartment house was not quite finished when I got there, but three apartments and the recreation room were furnished by a decorator. The pool was not built, so I immediately set about building the pool. During this construction, I brought a cot in and "lived" at the Belfort Arms.



Randy B., Randy E., and Brad in Sacramento

Across the street I found a house for rent to which I moved my children from Fresno. My mother came to help and was the chief housekeeper, but was not there all of the time. Diana and JoAnn supported me in maintaining the home and did a fine job of it. Diana was a freshman in high school. JoAnn was a sixth grader, Bonnie in third, Randy in first, Brad in kindergarten.

We were all starting out on a new life together. With the children swimming at the Belfort Arms, I took them to a barber and have everyone's hair cut as short as possible. I did not even know that it took a hair stylist to cut girls' hair. I will never forget going to church that first Sunday. Every women there scolded me for cutting their hair so short! I soon came to the conclusion that a father is the most useless member of a family. I was being criticized by my mother, my sisters and the ward. I am sure I deserved every word of it.

I was now 41 years of age.

Memorial Obituary

for Norma Berry Fife

Published in the Fresno Bee

May 5, 1960

Mrs. Norma B. Fife, 42, of 84 Griffith Way was killed today when a truck-trailer rig struck the stalled car in which she was seated on the Golden State Highway just north of Bakersfield.

Also killed was George Raymond Peterson of Hayward, Alameda County, the truck driver.

the accident occurred at 7:40 a.m. at the north end of the Kern River bridge. Highway patrol officers said the car, which was out of gas, was pinned against a rail of the bridge.

Truck Rises In Air

Randolph E. Fife, the dead woman's husband, was returning to the car from a service station when he saw the truck rise into the air. He told the officers he "felt it must have struck my car."

Fife, the manager of Patio Pools, Inc., a swimming pool contracting company, said he and his wife were en route to Indio, Riverside County, on a business trip.

About two hours was needed to free Peterson's body from the wreckage. At impact the cab of the truck reared and hurtled through the railing and across a slough which connects with the river.

Trailer Breaks Loose

The trailer, which was loaded with empty glass jars, broke loose from the truck and rolled across the bridge. The shattered glass covered the highway.

Mrs. Fife was a native of Arizona and had lived in Fresno four years. The Fifes moved to Fresno from Phoenix.

Other survivors are three daughters, Diana Maree, 13, JoAnn, 9, and Bonnie Lee, 7; two sons, Randolph Erickson, 5, and Bradley James, 4; her father, Dr. Herbert Berry of Alhambra, Los Angeles County; three brothers, Dr. F. Dean Berry of Fresno, Drs. H. Lee and A. Kay, both of Alhambra, and two sisters, Mrs. Helen Andelin of Fresno, and Mrs. Maree Stoddard of Oahu, Hawaii.

She was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Editor's note: This hastily written article, published the day of Norma's death, had several inaccuracies. The misspelled names of family members has been corrected. Other discrepancies: Randolph and Norma owned Patio Pool Company, we are fairly certain Randolph witnessed the crash, the car had a full tank of gas (but the carburetor had been recently replaced and may have malfunctioned), and the Fifes had moved to Fresno from Tucson.

The Loss of Our Mother

No more a stranger, nor a guest But Like A Child at Home

23rd Psalm

By Diana Rice, JoAnn Larsen, Bonnie Middleton, Randy Fife and Brad Fife

Foreword

It has been more than sixty years since the day we five mother-less Fifes moved into the Berrys' residence in Fresno, California. The memories are still clear. Our losses had been severe, but many experiences in that fateful year are dear and precious. It is time to record and share those memories.

We were sheltered by the love of our extended family, especially Uncle Dean, Aunt Marion, and their own five little ones--Anna Marie, Jonathan, Karen Matthew and Mark. (Brent was not to arrive for several more years.)

We write this as a loving tribute to Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion Berry, both of whom we owe an eternal debt of gratitude.

Friday, May 5, 1960 started out as a clear, beautiful spring day. Our parents, Randy and Norma Fife left early in the morning on a business trip. Diana was to get Bonnie and JoAnn off to school, and then Ray Brown was to pick Brad, Randy and Diana up and take them to our Aunt and Uncle, Dean and Marion's house where we were all going to stay for the weekend until Norma returned from settling Randy into a job on location, building the Penguin Pool Club in Indio, California.

They owned the Patio Pool Company in Fresno, and were expanding with what was at the time, a new idea of establishing a neighborhood swim club. They were pulling Aunt Maree's small trailer so that Randy could live on site while the club was being built, and Norma would continue running the office and keep the rest of the business and the family going in Fresno.

Diana had not "felt" like going to junior high that day, and had instead volunteered to look after Randy and Brad at the Berrys. The weather was perfect, and we spent a good deal of time in the back yard.

A New Perspective

Diana was changing a diaper in the front bathroom and happened to look out the window. She was puzzled to see her father get out of a car with Uncle Dean and Ray Brown. What was Dad doing back so soon? Someone came and took over her work, and she was ushered into the living room, where Bonnie, Randy and Brad were assembled. JoAnn was at an after-school activity and was not yet home.

Our dad soberly explained what had happened. They were almost to a bridge near Bakersfield, they thought the car was out of gas. While Dad was walking back to the car with a full can of gas, a Semi Truck and Trailer crossed over the lanes hitting our car and crushing it. Our precious mother was dead.

Diana immediately felt the anguish and sting of the truthful words. As she struggled to grasp the meaning, a still voice assured her, that her mother was in the arms of the Savior and that her mother would have a lot of missionary work to do. This comfort was to be a major support from that time forward.

When JoAnn arrived back from school, she was also told the basic details, and the other children, still in shock listened a second time. Then, less than an hour after hearing of their mother's death, our father escorted all five of us to the mortuary, where our mother's body, which had been retrieved earlier in the day, was prepared for burial and already in a casket. It was a startling shock to see her so soon after hearing about the accident. Looking at her body without her spirit was another shock. We all felt she wasn't really familiar to us without the presence of her spirit.

The extended family of both Norma and Randy gathered that evening at Helen and Aubrey Andelin's house. Shock and grief was universal. Many members of the family have described exactly what they were doing when they heard of our mother's death, years later.

Over the next several days, as the family discussed what to do with the children, the discussion centered on whose homes each of the children would stay. Marion insisted that all five be kept together and that she and Dean would take care of them while Randy completed the Pool Club Project.

Funerals were held in Fresno and Gridley California, and Norma was buried in the Gridley Cemetary. They had begun their married life in Randy's hometown of Gridley, and had spent some of their happiest years there. It was a grueling week for the children, who were expected to attend both the viewings, both the funerals, and the burial.

A final shock occurred at the cemetery. The funeral had been longer than planned, and the cemetery crew was near the end of their workday. As soon as the crowd thinned out, they began to shovel dirt into the grave. The image of two little red-headed boys watching the dirt fill the newly dug cavity, was a heart-breaking moment. But the nightmare was not a dream. Reality had set in.

About six days later, Uncle Dean drove the five Fife children home from Gridley to Fresno. It was a long trip down highway 99, and Diana remembers Uncle Dean talking cheerfully about the future: who would be in which school, how the dogs would get along.

He recited every child's name and age in birth order, interweaving both families right down the line. That became a joyful roll call, frequently recited. Being included on that list was a great reassurance to five young children suddenly without either parent. A few days before, we had been basking in the warmth of home life, then our parents had left on that business trip, and suddenly we were going to be living with others, bereft of both parents.



Photo taken the day of the Fresno funeral. Randy and Brad were in new clothes because theirs had been in the accident. JoAnn and Bonnie were wearing dresses Mother had made. The picture was taken in the yard at the Andelins' house.

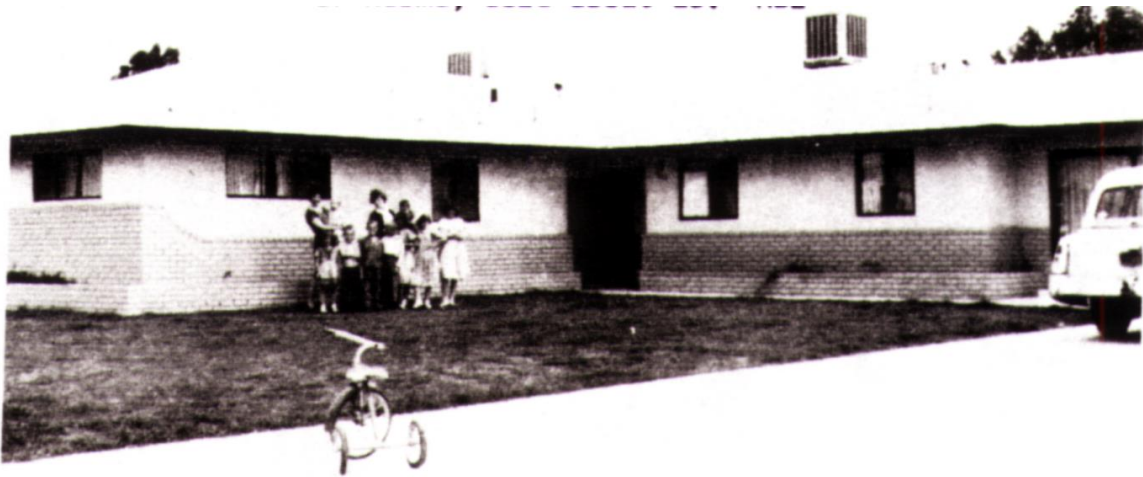
When we arrived back in Fresno, Aunt Marion had been busy. She had reorganized the house and had found places for each new child to be sleep and have a place to put their things. When they had considered purchasing this house, it was not what they had been looking for, having much more space than they needed. But it was such a good price, in a great neighborhood, and would be comfortable, so they had decided to buy it. The house was exactly what they needed when the Fifes came, easily adapted to handle ten young children.

In the largest bedroom, they had put a bunk bed, a single bed, and a crib. Jon, Randy, Brad, and Matthew stayed in there. That was the middle bedroom.

Baby Mark slept in his parents' room. The master bedroom was on one side at the end of the hall, and the girls' bedroom, where Anna Marie, Karen and Bonnie slept was on the other side, near the main bathroom.

The hallway led to the large living room, entryway, kitchen, family room, and laundry room. Beyond the laundry room and a half-bath, a remodeled breezeway was converted into two sleeping areas so that JoAnn and Diana could have their own rooms next to the garage.

Aunt Marion, Aunt Helen, Joycell, and others had packed up our things and moved our clothing and some furniture into our new quarters. The other household items were put into storage. So when we arrived at our new home, there were familiar things waiting for us, and even our little mongrel dogs, Teeny and Tiny were romping in the back yard with the Berry's large black dog, Sam.



We are standing in front of the Berrys' house.

You can just see the corner of the station wagon.

Meeting the Challenges

We all still had a few weeks of the school year to finish, so a routine was quickly established. Randy was in kindergarten, Bonnie in 2nd grade and JoAnn was in 5th grade. They finished out the year in the same school they had been attending. Jonathan and Anna Marie still attended Ruth Gibbons Elementary school, which the four younger Fifes transferred to in the fall. Diana finished her last year at Wawona Junior High. In the fall she attended Bullard High School. Both the Fife's and Berry's houses were in the same district, definitely a plus for Diana, having her same friends at school. Both families had been in the same ward, so that was not an adjustment either, and our ward friends continued to be supportive.

Imagine the adjustments that were necessary. Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion were in their early thirties. Uncle Dean had finally finished medical school at USC, and a residency in Merced, and had started a family practice. For General Practitioners, house calls were still routine then, along with early rounds and late rounds at the hospital and on-call weekend rotations.



Aunt Marion had given birth to Mark 3 months earlier. They had just bought their first house in Fresno. The Berrys had five young children aged eight and under, and now they were doubling the size of their family--ten children ages 13, 10, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 3 months. Five girls, five boys, five in elementary school, one teenager and 4 preschoolers! During the remainder of the spring, the four Fife school children remained at their old schools making carpools necessary. To top it off, Uncle Dean was Elders Quorum president!

The transitions went very well. There were challenges, but they were met, one by one. It did not take long to realize that the laundry was a major problem. Also, Aunt Marion, a meticulous housekeeper, was used to vacuuming or sweeping every floor every day. Meals for 12 people were major undertakings. And keeping that many young children safely and happily occupied took extraordinary effort. One day a woman named Mrs. Dwyer knocked on the door asking for directions to a new job she was taking as a housekeeper. Aunt Marion explained her situation, and Mrs. Dwyer gave notice to the new employer and began work right away. She came twice a week--one day to do nothing but laundry, and the other day to take over the general responsibilities so that Aunt Marion could have a day off.

Eventually, our grandmother Fife came to stay and help full time to keep the household running. After she was widowed, she immediately came to be of service with her many homemaking skills. Standards remained in place, and we settled into a comfortable existence. Aunt Marion had been decorating their new home, and although the pace slowed down, she still found time to finish café curtains for the family room, and to continue her deep cleaning schedule. She also would work on sewing a new outfit for herself. Handwork such as rolled hemming the edges of a beautiful piece of silk for a scarf was relaxing to the young mother.

Grieving Children

The day routines kept everyone busy, but at night, Diana would wait until the house was still, and then cry and grieve for her mother. She would fall asleep late and then force herself up early to get off to seminary on time.

JoAnn began waking up in the middle of the night and was too frightened to go back to sleep. For some reason she was afraid that her mother would appear to her. It got so bad that she tried to wake up Diana. Because Diana had early morning seminary that was not a good solution.

JoAnn used to lie in bed hoping that Mark would wake up and Aunt Marion would have to come to the kitchen to make a bottle. Just Aunt Marion's presence in the next room would comfort JoAnn so she could get back to sleep.

She also tried to leave a light on. That didn't work: Uncle Dean asked her to please keep the light off. So she finally resorted to going into Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean's bedroom and sleeping on the foot of their bed. This strategy was especially scary to her because she would have to run past the dark living room where her father had told her about the accident.

Uncle Dean finally had enough and asked her what was going on. For the first time, she told him her fears. Uncle Dean wept and held her tight. He told her that she could leave the light on and come into their room anytime she needed to. His reassurance took care of the problem. Just knowing that someone understood and loved her was enough to stop her sleepless nights.

Sunday, the Day of Rest



Saturdays were spent getting ready for the Sabbath. Matthew and Mark had white high-topped shoes with laces, which needed regular polishings. The older boys had dress shoes with laces, which meant five pairs to polish. Aunt Marion did not consider the job finished, however, until the shoelaces were removed, washed, dried and replaced. Fortunately, the girls all had either patent leather or velvet Sunday shoes that either buckled or slipped on! Clothes were ironed and laid out, and baths and shampoos completed Saturday night.

Back row, left, Aunt Marion holding Mark, Diana holding Matthew. Front row left, Karen, Brad, Randy, Jon, Bonnie, Anna Marie, and JoAnn. We were undoubtedly photographed on a Sunday!

Early Sunday morning, Uncle Dean would leave for Priesthood meetings. Usually he was unable to make it back in time, so Aunt Marion and Diana would load everyone into the Station wagon dressed and ready and head for Sunday School.

Transportation was simple: Uncle Dean had a small English Ford for work, and the family car was a 58 Mercury station wagon. The station wagon seats in back were folded down, and all nine "little kids" sat cross-legged on the "platform" in the back. There was room in the front seat for Uncle Dean, Aunt Marion, and Diana, who at 13 had reached her full height. When Mark was too little to sit, he would be held by one of the front passengers.

Before thoughts of criticism come to mind, remember that this was in the days when cars did not come with seat belts, and car seats for children were practically unknown, and totally unsafe. We have come a long way in safety technology, but the transportation solutions for large families in 1960 were similar all over the country. That was what a station wagon was for!

After Sunday School, about noon, we would all assemble back at the Mercury for the ride home. Aunt Marion, looking beautiful and young, would load the back with exuberant children. She would skillfully maneuver the standard transmission, coax the car out of the difficult street parallel parking space, and head home. On the way, she would recite: "What are we going to do when we get home?" The kids would reply "We're going to change our clothes and hang them up!" "Then what are we going to do?" "Put on our play clothes and come to the table!" Then we would sing songs. One of Aunt Marion's favorites was:

**I'm a little Soldier who is trying to be good,
and do the many, many things a real good Soldier should.**

To my pets I will be kind, the truth I'll always tell.

I'll think good thoughts and eat good foods and I'll be strong and well.

Meanwhile, Uncle Dean would be picking up two gallons of milk and a couple of Me and Ed's pizzas. He would arrive home and quickly spread out "Sunday Dinner." Everyone would arrange themselves around the large picnic table in the eating area of the kitchen and soon all would be fed.

On one Sunday, we were just finishing the Me and Ed's pizza when the phone rang. It was someone at church saying that we had left Jonathan there. We looked around the table and sure enough, he wasn't there!

After dinner, came rest time. It didn't matter whether you slept or not, but you had to stay on your bed until time to get ready for Sacrament meeting, about 3:30 or 4 p.m. We are pretty sure that Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion got their naps. The boys enjoyed their naptime with various semi-quiet antics. The girls played with dolls and stuffed animals, or pretended

they were pioneers and their beds were covered wagons. Diana learned more doctrine Sunday afternoons by studying church magazine, the Improvement Era and the Children's Friend, than she did in class her first year of Seminary.

Uncle Dean took complete responsibility for the children during Sacrament meetings, so that Aunt Marion could relax on the stand because she was ward chorister. Diana would sit on one end of the front row pew, and Uncle Dean would sit on the other side by the wall. Nine children sat between. Uncle Dean had promised that everyone who sat reverently during the sacrament would be given some special game or toy to play with. Some weeks he might pass out silly putty. Perhaps it was crayons and paper. Sometimes it was comic books or little golden books or coloring books.

One week Uncle Dean figured out a way to prevent crayon messes and bought magic slates for each child. A Magic slate had a black waxy coated board with a piece of heavy cellophane on top and an attached stylus. A child could draw on the cellophane and the black would show through. Then, to erase, the cellophane was pulled off the waxy board, and it was ready for drawing again. It was an efficient item, definitely less messy than crayons and regular paper. At the proper time, out came the magic slates. All was blissfully quiet until the first child decided to erase. ZIIIIIP went the cellophane as it released. Wow, all of a sudden, there were loud ZIP, ZIP, ZIP, ZIP's coming from the front row. The children loved the sound and began making a quick scribble just so they could release the cellophane. It was astonishing to see how long Uncle Dean's arms were, and how quickly those Magic Slates were put away!

President McKay had encouraged families to sit together, and even then, teenagers wanted to sit in groups. Diana's teen age friends were allowed by their parents to sit near us, since she was not allowed to sit with them. One day, as Uncle Dean and Matthew were returning from a trip to the restroom, Matthew proudly said in a loud whisper, "I went potty, and Daddy went potty, too!" After that, those teens sat with their parents.

When it was time for stake conference, the Fresno Stake met clear downtown at the Shriner's Auditorium. We had a morning and an afternoon session. Aunt Marion prepared a luscious fried chicken picnic for us to enjoy on the lawn between sessions. She had helped Diana learn how to make a three-layer chocolate cake from scratch for a Beehive Bake-off, and that was served for dessert. Attending stake conference together is definitely a happy memory.



Between sessions at Stake Conference

From left, Karen, Jonathan, Randy, Brad, JoAnn, Bonnie and Anna Marie.

Diana and Grandmother Mabel E. Fife are in back.

The Good Old Summertime

As soon as school was out, there should have been less laundry, but that pack of energetic little kids found many ways to get really dirty. If there was dust, they would find it, roll in it, explore it. Due to the irrigation ditches surrounding the nearby fig orchards, mud was also easy to find. If the ditches were dry, the tree-climbing covered everyone in dust. If irrigation was going on, the boys rolled in the mud. Aunt Marion hosed them all off and sent them in for baths.

Running barefoot, Brad had deliberately stepped on a game piece for a Sorry game. He said it really made him SORRY. It punctured his foot and had to be medically treated. Another time, Jon's torso was injured on a tree branch. The other kids were upset, thinking the protruding branch was a bone sticking out, but Grandmother Fife knew what had happened and pulled the branch out of his wound. By and large there were few medical emergencies, and few illnesses. We didn't know, though, whether it was an advantage or not to have a doctor as head of the house because Uncle Dean discovered that one of the kids had pin worms, so we ALL had to be treated--those pills looked like horse pills, and we were very glad when there were no more dosages doled out.

Work to be Done

There was work to be done, and weeding was a family activity. Aunt Marion took pity on us and let us weed on the shady sides of the house. She also worked right along side us, and her singing and laughter definitely helped the job go faster.

Cooking became a shared experience--it took a lot of sandwiches to feed 12 people. The girls would help make peanut butter sandwiches almost daily. Aunt Marion insisted on homemade whole wheat bread, thinly sliced, with a thin layer of peanut butter on one side and honey on the other. We remember mixing a lot of kool-aid, too, served in aluminum tumblers, it was icy cold, a real favorite.

Uncle Dean taught us a little about gardening, too, and how easily zucchini grew. We hadn't tasted the squash before, but learned to love it the way Aunt Marion cooked it--boiled until tender and then pureed with salt and butter. We didn't plant watermelon in the garden, but it was definitely a summer favorite. Aunt Marion, when she wanted a little peace around the house would slice up an ice-cold watermelon, put it in a large pan, and send it out for everyone to eat it in the yard. It wasn't long before we noticed that when you looked around the play area of the backyard, there were watermelon starts growing everywhere.

Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean were upgrading the landscaping, and Randy remembers watching Uncle Dean prepare the holes for planting trees by digging small holes. He hired a professional to stick dynamite in the holes and covering them with an old mattress weighted down with the old fashion type of box springs. After detonation, the upside down bed was removed and leaving perfectly prepared sites for the trees.

Children Were Welcome

This young couple was very child-oriented, and their yard had a nice play area with surplus concrete pipes forming a play structure of sorts for make believe and for shelter from the sun. The family room had a low table made of a hollow core door with legs attached. Child-sized chairs lined the table. There were books and puzzles and art materials nearby. We remember a little footstool, kind of flower shaped that was made from pineapple juice cans covered in naugahyde. There was a television, but it wasn't used very much--with ten children around, we didn't lack for fun things to do.

None of us remember harsh words, not ever. One of the familiar pieces of furniture moved from our old home was a green chair that Randy and Brad had always fought over the privilege of using. It soon became the time-out chair, and they quit vying for a turn. Stronger discipline was unnecessary, because the truth of it was that all the children loved playing together so much that it was horrible to be separated from playmates by sitting for the required minutes in "The Green Chair."

The discipline was consistent, fairly meted out, and it added to our security. Bonnie remembers that every child who behaved during Sacramento Meeting was given the privilege of watching The World of Disney Sunday evening on TV. One time she and Anna Marie misbehaved at church, and they both had to miss "The Wizard of Oz." The consistency of the rules helped each child feel secure and safe.

Individual, kind treatment was also an effective parenting tool frequently used. Bonnie remembers Aunt Marion taking her into the bathroom to shampoo and style Bonnie's hair, just pampering her and helping her primp. Diana remembers Aunt Marion setting her hair for her at the Whiting reunion so that she would feel her best among her cousins.

When shopping for shoes, Aunt Marion caught Diana admiring a pair of Capezio baby doll shoes. She probed and found out that style was the most popular and most expensive. She urged Diana to try on a pair. Diana's feet were not a normal size, and we found a pair long enough but not wide enough: the straps were too short to fit over the cute little buttons. Aunt Marion insisted that we buy that pair, then went around the corner to a shoe repair shop and had them alter the straps so that the shoes fit perfectly. Diana was stunned that she was so understanding of how important those shoes were to a girl who just wanted to fit in. When Uncle Dean acted disgusted that such a flimsy pair of shoes could cost so much, that made the gift even more wonderful for a teenager--it seemed a little unconventional to the adult world!

Aunt Marion was unflappable, amazing and wonderful. But she did have a very large set of demands to constantly meet. Uncle Dean eased her load by making sure she had regular time off. We have referred to the Sunday routine, where mealtime was simplified, and that he took charge of all the children during Sacrament meetings. The scheduled time off was on one of the days Mrs. Dwyer came, on a non-laundry day where she could take over the child care and keep the household going.

One of Her Days Off

Diana went with Aunt Marion on one of her days off, and has pondered about what she chose to do on that day ever since. Aunt Marion explained she usually scheduled a voice lesson, so Diana got to sit through one and listen to her incredibly beautiful voice. Then she dropped a copy of a Book of Mormon off to a friend to whom she had been talking to about the Church. She did a little shopping, and then returned home, refreshed and ready to go back to the noisy bunch waiting for her attention.

Various Summer Activities

As the heat of summer got more intense, it got too hot to play in the yard. We would sometimes run through sprinklers, or go over for a family swim at the Brown's, a family in our ward who owned their own swimming pool, and who had generously offered.

One time JoAnn, Bonnie and Anna Marie decided to build a tent in the front yard. They used poor judgment and dug a hole right in the front yard. As a consequence they were not allowed to go swimming at the Brown's that day. They said that it didn't matter and took great care in choosing lots of games and activities to take and telling everyone how much fun they were going to have. When they got to the swimming pool on that hot summer day, they didn't use any of the activities they brought. They could only watch the swimmers and wish that they were swimming too!

Aunt Marion gave Diana sewing lessons. She taught the technique of ironing patterns before the fabric was cut out, to insure accuracy. She emphasized the importance of pressing every seam, and that anything worth doing was worth doing well. Diana made three summer tops that were stylish, comfortable, and properly made with facings and neat hems. The next spring, she helped Diana make a tailored suit, fully lined, complete with bound button holes.

Near the end of the summer, Diana had the leading part in the Beehive play, an annual tradition at the time, and Aunt Marion helped her with her lines, and drove her to the practices. She encouraged Diana to make her own white dress to wear at the finale of the play. The play was a story about a group of witches who despaired of one young witch who was too nice.

There was to be a vocal solo, during intermission, which was a worry to Diana. We lost the sheet music the same day it came home. Thinking that was a reprieve, Diana was saddened to find it had slid between the bed and the wall in the master bedroom where she had been showing it to Aunt Marion. So when the music was found at the last minute, Aunt Marion taught her the song and offered to accompany her.

The play went well until intermission time. The piano had been rolled to the back of the stage, so Aunt Marion had to play it behind the curtain. Someone put a microphone there to be sure it was audible. Diana went out in front of the curtain, ready to sing the song, "*I can't be bad enough to be a good witch.*" The music began, and Diana's mind went completely blank. She couldn't remember a word of the song. She ran backstage and Aunt Marion convinced her to just sing by the piano, behind the curtain. The rest of the play went without incident, but the lasting lesson Aunt Marion taught of support and courage under fire is the most significant part of that experience.

Back to School

It must have been a relief when the new school year began. Six of the children were attending the same elementary school, and one started high school. Brad began kindergarten, Randy and Jon were in first grade, Bonnie was in second grade, Anna Marie was in third grade and JoAnn was in sixth grade. That left only three preschoolers at home! And they all took naps.

Diana began her first year of seminary, and was picked up before the family was up. Getting everyone ready for school every morning was an amazing feat, and we don't know how it all worked so well, but it did.

Family home evening was held weekly. It was a priority to Uncle Dean, and he juggled the time for it. He taught mostly from the Book of Mormon, but there were games and fun and treats, too.

Priority for Culture and Education

We don't remember how many children took piano lessons, but the piano teacher came to the house, and seemed to be there quite a while. The piano students practiced on the

big black grand piano in a corner of the living room by a window. Aunt Helen picked all the girls up weekly, and with her own daughters, took us to ballet lessons--managing to be dignified even while driving a car full of girls dressed in black leotards and pink tights! She also kept her composure when on the return trip the girls were giggling about the absurd mannerisms of the ballet master, a man extremely easy to characterize.

Soon, JoAnn began bringing home difficult homework. Both Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion helped her learn to study. Of particular concern was a science report, and JoAnn has fond memories of Uncle Dean helping her with a report on the human eye. It is not surprising that she did well on her report, even though it was before he specialized in ophthalmology.



Randy and Jonathan were in the same class when they attended Ruth Gibbons Elementary school. Randy is in the back left corner, Jon is in the next row, 6th from the left. Randy says he is looking over at Jon in this photo. They were very close friends.

Every once in a while Uncle Dean would take one of us on rounds with him. We'd go to the hospital or on house calls. Diana remembers listening to him whistle as we drove.



Randy, first grade

Such a Comfort

Aunt Marion was such a comfort and so understanding. When one of Dad's letters would come, we would just hold it, unopened, and cry from the loneliness we felt at being away from him. Aunt Marion would hug us, and reassure us through our tears until we were calm enough to read the letter.

Diana felt a desire to for her Patriarchal Blessing. She had the interview and when the patriarch returned her call to set an appointment, he remarked, when he realized who she was, "Oh, you're the girl who lost her mother." At that point, Diana was overcome with emotions, threw the phone to Aunt Marion and ran to her bed to cry for a while. She forgot to ask how Aunt Marion handled the remainder of the phone call. On Diana's birthday, Aunt Marion took her on a surprise visit to receive the Patriarchal blessing. It was a sacred occasion made more so because Aunt Marion was there to share it.

Understood Without Question

We enjoyed trips to Rhoding Park, which had a small zoo and a big playground. Aunt Marion packed up the big woven picnic basket with sandwiches, fruit and cookies for everyone. We children set the basket down and went to play on the playground for just a few minutes, and when we got back the basket had been stolen. We feared Aunt Marion's reaction, but she was more concerned with feeding her hungry brood than casting blame. We all felt badly that even her red and white checkered tablecloth was gone, but understood without question that we were unconditionally loved.

At Christmas time, Aunt Marion prepared a packable Christmas for the Fife children, as we were going to be traveling with our Dad back to Gridley where we were to share Christmas with Grandmother Fife in her home. It was probably wise to have such a huge change in routine, being without mother that first time, and we remember being touched by the time and care Aunt Marion had taken in preparing our gifts. We missed our cousins though, and we were glad to be reunited in January, and settled back into the routine.

More Light Troubles

Uncle Dean was puzzled by the lights being turned on in the boys' room. He would turn them off, and they would go back on. When he checked, everyone would be asleep. Finally, he listened outside the door, and heard chu-chug, chu-chug, chu-chug as the crib was scooted to the switch. Then he heard the sounds as it returned to its place. He was surprised to find that Matthew, in his crib, had discovered how to lurch the crib enough to move it over and turn on the light. Matt was smart enough to return to original position. Uncle Dean had not thought to check the crib when searching for the possible culprit!

Many Kindnesses

Jack and Joycell Cooper also lived nearby, and spent time with us. Jack did all our dental work, at no charge, and Joycell helped with the transportation to many of the activities. We were blessed to often get together with the Andelins, too, who were by that time had moved to a ranch on Copper Canyon Road. One time we all went out to ride the horses on that ranch, and Bonnie discovered she was more comfortable when there was a fence between she and the horses!

Eighth Grade Graduation Dance

Diana dressed for her Eighth Grade Graduation Dance in the white dress she had made for the play. She went to her best friend's house and watched her friend's mother fuss over her dress and hair style, and the mother gave both girls graduation gifts. Then they went to the dance. Diana was disappointed to see that most of the girls at the dance wore spaghetti strap dresses. Even worse, she stood at the sidelines all evening. Uncle Dean picked her up afterwards. On the way home, he asked if she'd had a good time. She explained her disappointments: how much she had missed her mother as she watched her friend get ready for the dance, the many spaghetti strap dresses, and no boys asking her to dance. He listened, and quietly said, "Don't worry, things will get better." That reassurance helped her look beyond the present, and things did get better.

Grand Canyon, Grand Memories

We traveled to the Whiting Reunion just before our stay with the Berrys came to a close. Imagine traveling with such a large family. But as usual, everything was well organized. We even stopped along the way to visit the Grand Canyon. We didn't understand at the time, but Uncle Dean was extremely nervous about the visit to the rim observation area. It had a sturdy stone wall, and was well built. Before we left the parking lot, Uncle Dean lined us all up, pulled out a neatly coiled clothesline, and roped everyone of us together at the waists, even the adults.

We tried not to look too conspicuous as we walked slowly in sync to the observation area, one by one. At the rim, we each got to look over the edge, while everyone else stood back. Uncle Dean was last, and seemed to spend the least amount of time looking. At the time, that seemed like a phobia to Diana, but looking back she understands his concern, especially because there are regular reports of fatal accidents when people fall over that rim.

We are touched that he wanted us to have the experience of seeing the Grand Canyon, and equally impressed that the outing came at such personal sacrifice.

Saying Goodbye

Time quickly passed, we all had completed another school year, and our Dad returned to claim us in July. We Fifes had visited him in Indio during Spring Break. He had completed the pool club and we joined him again after school was out to watch the grand opening. It was the last job for The Patio Pool Company. Dad could not continue the business without Mother's help. We packed up our things and said good bye to our beloved Berry family when we moved to Sacramento where Dad was going to sell condominiums, another new idea.

As Randy puts it, "That year was a perfect time because we lived in a perfect family setting." We had been strengthened, taught, encouraged, and prepared for our future without our mother. We had learned to shoulder extra responsibility and had come to accept the changes in our lives and we knew that we were loved. With the help of the Savior, Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion had created that warm and loving environment for us all, and we will never forget their kindness, their patience, their good humor, and their unconditional love.

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

23rd Psalm

Paraphrased by Isaac Watt (1674 - 1740)

My Shepherd will supply my need,

Jehovah is his name

In pastures fresh he makes me feed,

Beside the living stream.

He brings my wand'ring spirit back,

When I forsake his ways,

And leads me for his mercy's sake,

In paths of truth and grace.

When I walk through the shades of death,

Thy presence is my stay:

One word of thy supporting breath

Drives all my fears away.

Thy hand, in sight of all my foes,

Doth still my table spread:

My cup with blessings over flows,

Thine oil anoints my head.
The sure provisions of my God
Attend me all my days;
Oh may thy house be mine abode
And all my work be praise!
There would I find a settled rest
While others go and come,
No more a stranger, nor a guest;
But like a child at home.



Girls from left, JoAnn age 11, Diana age 14, Bonnie age 8

Boys from left, Randy, age 6, Brad age 5

Photo was taken in the Berrys' living room, near the green chair.

Diana is wearing the white dress Aunt Marion helped her make for a play.

Spring, 1961, shortly before we moved to Sacramento with our Dad.

The Rest of the Story: We Are A Blended Family

By Diana Rice

The summer Randy was selling condominiums at the Belfort Arms, he began to date. He was missing Norma very much and said there was nothing lonelier than a single high priest at a church social. The children remembered one memorable time when he brought a high school home economics teacher to our house for dinner. She looked a lot like the actress Donna Reed, immaculately groomed, very well dressed. She sat next to Brad, aged 5, and he barely breathed or moved the entire dinner. He couldn't eat a bite.

Randy continued to do what he could to reorganize his life. He recorded the fact that July 24, 1961 the house on 84 Griffith Way was sold. It was a reminder that his life with Norma was in the past. He later referred to working on that house in September and October, but did not mention why he was working on it. Some chapters are difficult to close.

In late August, an old friend introduced Randy to Barbara Seymour. Randy recorded in his journal, August 25, 1961, "Had a date with Barbara Seymour. Greatly impressed." They dated for a week before Barbara returned to her home in Long Beach, then they wrote letters daily, and called frequently. Neither had met the other's children. They met in central California for a couple of dates. Randy traveled a couple of times to Long Beach, where he met Barbara's three sons, John, Lew and Doug. The Seymour kids told Randy they knew they would like his children, as long as they didn't have red hair.

The Seymour boys were stunned to learn that Randy had **four** red headed children. It was soon arranged for the Seymour family to visit Sacramento for Thanksgiving. Despite the red hair, everyone was reasonably compatible. At the end of their visit, Randy proposed, Barbara accepted.

This was definitely not to be a Brady Bunch type of wedding. Finances being tight, Randy drove to the wedding in December by himself. Grandmother Fife and the children remained in Sacramento. Randy and Barbara were married at Joe and Loren Stoddard's home in Southern California. The Stoddards had more than hosting duties on their minds: Hours before the wedding, Aunt Joe was rushed to the hospital in labor with her youngest son, Chris. Uncle Loren rushed back from the delivery just in time for the wedding, and then took care of his four sons at home, plus Barbara's three during the honeymoon.



Diana said: “When Dad returned from getting married, he loaded up our things while I was still at school. Not knowing the moving plans, I had left my term paper in my upper bureau drawer. By the time I got home, it was impossible to retrieve.

“In a few days, Grandmother Fife took the younger children by train to Costa Mesa, California, where the newlyweds had rented a three-bedroom house, newly built in a nice subdivision. JoAnn and I rode in the cab of the moving truck with Dad. He purchased a large box of donuts when we stopped at the first gas station, and that was our only food for the entire 18 hour drive. There was no freeway system the length of California, only highways, so it was a long, slow trip.

“I remember wondering out loud what I should call Dad’s new wife. Dad instantly insisted that we all call her Mom, because she was going to be the mom. Meekly, I sank back on the seat of the truck and felt the first of years of stabs of disloyalty to my own precious mother, but I did as Dad suggested. I ambivalently called Barbara “Mom” until I was a mother myself, living far away from home. I realized when talking to my friends I needed to distinguish between my own mother and my stepmother.

“We encountered heavy fog when we got to Harbor Boulevard in Anaheim, and crept very slowly along until we got to Costa Mesa. We had left at six in the morning, it was now past midnight. Barbara had waited up for us, with a snack of hot boysenberry pie a la mode. We tried to eat politely, but the donuts had blunted all desire for sweets.

“Beds were waiting for us, and we quickly fell asleep. We were awakened early in the morning by John, Lew and Doug, our new stepbrothers whom we had only met only the one time at Thanksgiving. The Seymour furniture was already unpacked, so most of ours was stored in the garage. New family, new furniture, new city. The back yard was unlandscaped, and the younger kids spent the day outside, digging in the dirt.

“It was now Christmas Eve. The whole family went to Long’s Drug store that evening, and each child was given one dollar to spend for Christmas presents for the family. At the time, there were many items at a drug store that only cost ten cents, so this was not an impossible task. We soon found that if we pooled our money it would go further. We scurried around, and little gifts were found for each to exchange. We went home, wrapped our presents and decorated the tree.

“JoAnn and Bonnie were disappointed Christmas morning to realize that they each had gone in on the purchase of a protective curler hair-net for the other one. Neither one was old enough for setting their own hair.

“Santa was wise, though, in giving a new item called shoe skates to the younger kids in the family. The subdivision had blocks and blocks of connected sidewalks. Soon, Bonnie, Doug, Randy and Brad skillfully navigated the neighborhood. It was fun to watch them whiz by as time they circled the subdivision. In a year’s time, they wore their rubber wheels almost down to the axels.

So Many Adjustments to Make

During kindergarten and first grade, young Randy B had attended four different schools and lived in four different households, all while he was learning to read.

Brad had similar experiences, but being younger, he only attended three schools in a year and a half.

Bonnie had learned to read before the accident, but math became very confusing because each of the four classrooms she attended in a year and a half were not consecutive in presenting the math facts.

JoAnn left one school without learning about multiplication. At the new school, the teacher put her through needless embarrassment, insisting on drilling her in front of the class. Finally, the teacher realized JoAnn had not even heard of multiplication tables.

Diana attended three high schools in three different cities before the second semester of her sophomore year.

During this very turbulent time, the children learned there were many ways to make a peanut butter sandwich.

Their Mother had loved peanut butter and butter.

A temporary babysitter had packed peanut butter and cheese sandwiches for the school lunches. Aunt Marion insisted on thin slices of whole wheat bread with a little honey and peanut butter. Grandmother used peanut butter and jam. And the Seymours ate peanut butter and mayonnaise sandwiches. The children tried to keep their preferences to themselves. What they liked didn't seem to matter.

The Costa Mesa Years

Life quickly settled down as school started. It was a mild winter, and to settle into the three bedroom house we had rented, there was the master bedroom with bath, the girls room and the boys room and one bathroom for general use. Because there were five boys, John and Lew slept in a bed set up in part of the garage. The two boys set their hearts on winning the school chess tournament. Both would play endlessly. John would study books on chess strategy. Lew competed just as hard. It ended up so close that John took first and Lew took second over the entire school.

We spent several weekends traveling to Laguna Beach, in the same stake as Costa Mesa, and the shallow tide pools there were teeming with sea life. We came home with all kinds of "specimens". Some of the creatures ended up under Diana's pillow, but she didn't take the bait, and quietly returned the critters to their bucket cage.

Barbara was teaching school, so Grandmother Fife stayed the first few months to get the household running smoothly. Randy was getting started selling real estate at the same time selling pools for the Anthony Pool Company. He was home in the mornings, and would cook breakfast every day. He frequently let Doug choose breakfast because he would always ask for hot cereal. (In fact, he was going through such a rapid growth stage, Doug would eat a bowl of cereal large enough to feed a family of four.) Other days, Randy would fix eggs, and loved to butter the large platter of toast all at once using a brush and melted butter. On the weekends, the family would eat waffles with chocolate chips sprinkled on the batter just before baking, and topped with Imo, a sour cream substitute, and frozen strawberry jam.

Right away, there were many relationship issues. The new Seymour stepbrothers had never been around girls. They also had no memory of their father.

Barbara had grown up in a small family and raised as an only child. After earning a degree at Stanford, she had married Bill Seymour, a pilot for the Navy. After three years of marriage, the Korean War was in full swing and Bill was sent to serve in Korea. His plane went down, and Barbara was left a widow with two children. A month after Bill died, she found she was expecting her third child. She taught school full time and raised her boys for ten years before she had met Randy. She was used to raising her three boys alone.

Randy was able to ordain John to the Aaronic priesthood as he turned twelve soon after the family was blended. He was able to do the same for all five of the boys in the family as they became of age.

Suddenly there were eight children, all with different needs. We had lost our mother just eighteen months before, and were still in grief and shock. Barbara was soon under too much pressure. There was cultural shock, as she was the first woman the Fife kids had ever heard swear or lose her temper.

The Court Trial

Dad had hired a lawyer to sue the trucking company that owned the truck involved in Norma's accident. It was a wrongful death suit. The trial was scheduled for mid-summer 1962 in Bakersfield, California. His lawyer advised Dad to bring his children with him, but not the new wife. Just before the court proceedings, JoAnn came down with a terrible case of chicken pox. Determined to follow directions exactly, we all arrived on the appointed day, dressed in Sunday best, feeling like court exhibits.

It was a terrible experience for all five of the children for different reasons. The courtroom was dark, had lots of rails and stairs, and empty seats. Positioned just across the aisle from the Fifes sat the widow of the truck driver involved in the accident. She was in her early thirties, obviously still grieving.

The children were purposely in clear view of the jury, and had to remain as quiet as possible. Randy B and Brad grew restless, sitting there for hours with nothing to do, and would crawl around and play below the chair-line, trying not to make much noise. JoAnn sat in her uncomfortable best clothing, tortuously suffering from itching poxes. Bonnie tried to color quietly, but was deeply disturbed by the graphic photographic posters and charts of the accident. Diana, while trying to keep order in the little group, understood the photographs and charts as well as every word of the explanation of the accident. It was traumatic to hear the minute details of their mother's death.

In the motel room that night, JoAnn was in such pain, that she and Diana spent many sessions in the bathroom where Diana would apply calamine lotion to JoAnn's angry welts. JoAnn begged not to be touched, so we developed a method where the lotion would be poured over the oozing red poxes. Blessedly, the morning, Dad decided JoAnn should be left in bed, so she spent the day alone in the darkened motel room, trying to sleep and applying her own calamine.

The rest of us spent the second day listening to the lawyers finish up. Our father was questioned and cross-examined on the witness stand. The prosecution questioned him repeatedly about Dad's explanation that he had pulled over to the side of the road because the car seemed to be out of gas. Investigators had found that the gas tank was almost full. Dad couldn't explain it. The tank had been filled in Fresno, but as it sputtered he wondered if the gas tank was leaking. He testified the car should have worked perfectly because they had just had the engine re-tuned.

Thirty five years later, Diana found out from Jack Cooper that when a motor is being tuned, if the mechanic does not adjust the carburetor correctly then it sputters like it is out of gas. The intense questioning and indefinite answers made Dad look deceitful.

The judge spent a long time carefully instructing the jury as to the legalities they were dealing with. Thus prepared, the jury was sent out to determine the verdict.

Then came the long wait while the jury deliberated. Everyone but JoAnn waited in the hallway of the old court house. At least we were away from the stairs and railings, but the younger children were understandably restless. Finally, about ten pm, the jury reconvened and ruled the accident to be a wrongful death.

Damages of \$50,000 were awarded to the five children, to be secured in trust funds. Surprisingly, the jury refused to award any money to Dad. It seemed they didn't believe his testimony. After the trial was over, one of the jurors pulled me aside and said, his only regret was that he had been unable to convince the others to award more money to the children. He had tears in his eyes. The case had been difficult for others in the courtroom besides the children.

It was a stinging verdict. Even in those days, \$50,000 was not overly generous, and half of it would go to the lawyer's fees. Accounts were set up so that each child was awarded \$5,000 to be held in trust until they needed it for education or until they turned 21. Randy had been depending on a settlement to help him with his financial struggles.

Thankfully, the next morning, JoAnn was feeling a little better. Before they left Bakersfield, however, Randy took Diana to a fancy department store, where he asked for help picking out a nice gift for his new wife. It was a long trip home. As they returned to Costa Mesa, Bonnie, Randy B and Brad each developed full blown cases of chicken pox.

After the trial, trying to ease the mounting stresses, the family moved to another rental house in the same subdivision in Costa Mesa. It had one more bedroom, so John and Lew no longer needed to sleep in the garage. Schools remained the same. It was still crowded, with ten people in a four-bedroom house, and Randy and Barbara began planning to build a home of their own. —Diana Rice

The Fullerton Years

Randy and Barbara located a choice hillside lot in Fullerton, CA, about a half hour away from Costa Mesa, where we were living. They hired Mr. Burton, the same one that had designed the Gridley and Tucson Chapels, to draw up the plans. They qualified for a \$40,000 loan from Barbara's teachers' credit union, and got to work. Randy served as general contractor while working full time selling pools. Barbara worked full time teaching school.

After school and weekends, the whole family worked on the house at 1310 Miramar Drive in Fullerton. At first, we kids just cleaned up after the workmen. But we also helped lay quarry tile in the hallways, the family room, the kitchen, the entryway in the house, and the open courtyard walkway that led from the front gate to the front door. It was a lot of tile, and we learned to set the tile, grout it, and we buffed many layers of polish onto those floors before the house passed final inspection and we could move in.

The children's efforts were just a small part of the building of the house. Randy and Barbara had worked well with the architect, and had chosen carefully. They managed the construction wisely. The whole project was completed in six months, including professional painting and landscaping. It was a beautiful, tasteful house with six bedrooms, 3 baths, a large living room, family room 3-car garage and an office for Dad. The patio was well designed, with a large swimming pool and pool house at the edge of the lot. The view was beautiful.

Grandmother Fife had lived with us for the first year, but it was time for her to move on in her life. Diana took over much of the meal preparation because Barbara was teaching every day. There was still too much stress to deal with. Two full time jobs, eight children, building a large house on a shoestring budget, so many pressures. With Randy away each day for long hours, Barbara became unpredictable. Her moods would swing from sunshine to darkness in a flash. The children were bewildered, and did their best to keep out of her way and stay out of trouble.

One constant battle was keeping the house clean. The children were normal, clutter was constant, and various strategies were tried. Everything worked for a short time, and then there would be a collapse of some kind. The plan that worked the best was to divide up into teams and take care of the various duties together. The kids enjoyed the camaraderie, and had a lot of fun making the house sparkle. Barbara put an end to that plan because it irritated her to see the children having such a good time.

It had to be hard to start a marriage under such circumstances, with so many children near the same ages. But the children were in a situation they had not chosen and had no control of. Inviting friends over to our house was out of the question. The younger children had spent a great deal of time playing in the dirt in the backyard in Costa Mesa. They built whole cities with roads, buildings and people all formed from the heavy adobe soil. The children were good, but never could be good enough.

Not surprisingly, given the chaos of their beginning years, Bonnie, Randy B and Brad were having trouble in school. Barbara pulled the boys out of regular school, told them they were slow and needed private school. In a few months, the expense didn't seem worth it to her, and she moved them back into public school.

Next she enrolled them in an experimental program where the theory was that children who walked too early would have to be retrained so that they could read properly. She assumed her young stepchildren had walked too early yet didn't try verifying her assumptions. The experimental training required creeping and crawling exercises, and the use of colored lenses to read through. During the process, the boys were constantly belittled by their stepmother and she told them frequently that they had low IQ's .

Our loving extended family remained in the dark as to the kinds of conditions we were living in. Everyone wanted so badly for things to work out well for us, and for life to resume its equilibrium, that they could not identify what was happening in our home. We children were so emotionally dependent on our father, having been away from him for a year, that we didn't want to create any more problems for him than he was already handling.

The house was completed in January of 1964, halfway through Diana's senior year. As soon as the family was settled in the new house, Randy and Barbara started taking many weekend trips. It gave them time together, but it was hard for the children to be left alone so frequently. Cell phones were decades away from existing, and the parents left no way to be contacted in their absence.

Diana left for BYU in September using her share of the Bakersfield Court trust fund. The entire family piled into our Chevy Greenbrier van, to drive to Utah. Everything bound for college was contained in one heavy wooden footlocker. That footlocker was unloaded every few hours during that long trip because the heavily loaded Greenbrier's fan belts kept breaking, and the replacement site was just below the footlocker.

As the family returned to Fullerton and started a new school year, tensions continued to rise. Slowly, Barbara became even more exacting in her cleaning standards. The swimming pool was to be cleaned daily. The floors would all have to be stripped and waxed weekly. The windows had to sparkle. The kitchen was to be spotless.

Shortly after the move, one of the children had not realized there was a special detergent for dishwashers. Laundry detergent had too many suds, and the dishwasher was beyond repair from the damage. All dishes were done by hand from then on. In a large family, that became a very challenging task. JoAnn and Bonnie began adding extra kitchen duties to their schedules after Diana left for college.

Randy B and Brad and sometimes Bonnie were sent out every Saturday to weed the ivy in the front yard. (insert orange wars story here.)

Randy B remembered at about age seven, realizing that his new step-mother was not of sound mind. She seemed to take her frustrations out on him quite regularly, but he figured he was not the problem, she was. He protected himself with a layer of detachment that safely guided him through the many difficult years ahead. One time, Randy B, packed and ready for a scout trip, was told after his scout leader and friends had arrived at the curb, that he had a poor attitude, and could not go. Not saying a word, he returned to his room and unpacked.

Bradley developed his own sense of self worth. He excelled socially at school, and developed a confident personality.

Barbara was a dog-lover, and doted on her various miniature poodles. There was Mouche, Mouche II, Pierre, Pedro etc. Each dog would be pampered and fed special meals of chicken or beef. The dogs seemed to understand they were in a priority position in the household. The children were eating beans, ground bologna past its' expiration date, and spaghetti sauce diluted with flour paste.

Mysteriously, each dog would eventually run away. It was years before Brad admitted that the dogs "ran away" after he had enough of the milk of human kindness that was awarded

to the dog but not the children. He would leave the front gate open, and somehow those little doggies would run off.

Bonnie, now a beautiful young woman, took a large share of the criticism and unkind words and actions from her stepmother, feeling unable to let any of her YW leaders or Priesthood leaders know of the circumstances she was living in. The criticism was so harsh Bonnie could not see anything attractive about herself. She could not bear to even look in the mirror.

By the time she was the oldest daughter at home, Bonnie learned to ease the tension of their situation by thoroughly cleaning the house on Saturdays. Then she would organize pot-luck dinners with the kids in her ward coming over and eating in the pool house before they all went off to the Saturday night dances together. Those parties became legendary. Barbara tolerated the gatherings because she received so many complements for appearing be a fun mom.

Cracks in the “fun mom” image continually formed. Bonnie was invited to a slumber party at Lucy Black’s house with about ten girlfriends. They were gathered around the barbeque fixing their hamburgers when the doorbell rang. Barbara, so angry that she had left the car running, burst in, and in front of the startled group, scolded Bonnie and told her to come home immediately as punishment for not doing a good enough job on her chores. Bonnie silently grabbed her sleeping bag and jimmies, and went home. She didn’t even get to eat her hamburger.

Barbara would frequently belittle the children, telling them they would never amount to much. When really angry, she would add that they wouldn’t even be good enough to dig ditches or be garbage collectors. The children usually would not react, they would just try harder not to ruffle her quills.

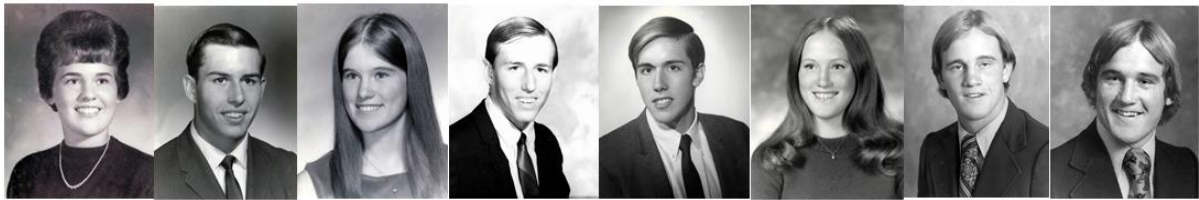
Once, before Randy B was old enough for a driver’s license, he and Bonnie were the only ones home, and Randy B needed transportation across town, too far to walk. The only car available was a Volkswagen Bug. Bonnie was licensed, but she had never driven using a standard transmission. Randy B demonstrated how to use the clutch, and offered to do all the shifting of the gears if Bonnie would drive. They drove the car together, Bonnie steering and operating the foot pedals, including the clutch, and Randy shifting gears. They arrived at their destination safely and on time.

“You’ll never amount to a hill of beans,” was often said to the stepchildren. One time, Bonnie, Randy, Brad and Doug were sitting at the table quietly talking with each other. Barbara came by with a rolled up newspaper she used to discipline the dog, and without warning began hitting each of them on the head telling them to stop sitting around doing nothing.

Money pressures by now were very difficult. JoAnn and John went to BYU, JoAnn using trust fund money and John depending on government education grants for children of soldiers killed in action. The issues of Barbara’s cruelty and neglect intensified. Food was

harshly rationed. Clothing was hard to come by. And the parental trips on weekends continued. Bonnie would be left in charge, the parents would not leave any way to contact them, and they would leave with no food in the house. Bonnie began feeding Lew, Doug, Randy and Brad with groceries she bought with her babysitting wages.

As the pressures of life intensified, Barbara's verbal abuse turned physical. After Lew left, her beatings were regularly administered to the four children still living at home. She would often use a hanger, or would resort to an extension cord or belt. Each choice would produce welts and bruises. If the belt did not provide enough of a reaction, the buckle end of the belt would be used on the boys. When Barbara tried the buckle on Bonnie, she grabbed the belt, yanked it away and said a few bad words, then stalked off, ashamed of herself for swearing, but unwilling to allow herself to be treated so cruelly.



A New Stage of Life

Diana married Roger Rice in the Los Angeles Temple in 1968, and they lived about 30 minutes away in Maywood California for two years. Lew and then Doug both graduated from high school, applied for government grants for children of veterans killed in action. With the grants, they each went to BYU for a year and then served missions. Lew went to the French Canadian Mission, and Douglas served in Argentina.

The Rices with their babies, Stephanie and Michael, returned to BYU for Roger to go to graduate school. The children were Randy's first two grandchildren.

Ham for Dinner

Randy and Barbara, often exhausted on weekends, would occasionally have the children walk to church, and they would sleep in. Getting ready to leave for to Church one time, Barbara got an early start on dinner by putting the ham in the oven. Canned hams were very common in those days. She had an impulsive idea there would be less mess if she warmed up the ham without removing it from the can. Setting the unopened can of ham in the oven, she turned on the heat and left for Church.

Randy stayed home still asleep. Randy B was also home, asleep when the ham exploded, blowing the oven door off its hinges. Father woke up son and both Randys rushed to the kitchen to see what had happened. The expression on Randy's face was so shocked and grim that his son realized the sound had brought back memories of serving in World War II. It had recalled an old memory of artillery fire.

As they surveyed the damage, the rest of the family arrived home from church. Brad was startled, but hungry. He looked around at what was left of dinner, and then started eating the shreds of ham off the woodwork.



Fresno Leaseback Corporations

By R E Fife

In the spring of 1970, I organized two medical-dental trade and leaseback corporations in Fresno, California. To organize one of these, you must first locate a doctor who thinks it will be of financial advantage and have him sign a pre-incorporation agreement. He recommends some of his friends, they recommend their friends, and each one signs a pre-incorporation agreement. The law says that each corporation has to be under ten people, so we would try for nine doctors. The purpose of this type of corporation is to (a) shelter present income from taxes and (2) to use dead assets to create investment capital.

By using computer programs based on current tax laws, we could tell if the corporation was of advantage to the doctor. We then had his equipment appraised and the proper legal documents completed to develop a lendable package meeting bank lending requirements.

This took a lot of work by three of us in Fresno over a three-month period to ready the two corporations. A Fresno bank agreed to finance them and one of Norma's cousins, a lawyer who was providing legal advice, to complete the bank financing as a nicety. Instead, he cancelled the financing, gave the dentists their money back and closed up the corporations formed.

This decision resulted in a real financial blow. It wasted three months of hard work, and all our start-up expenses. Without warning, the lawyer decided to cancel the bank loan of \$300,000 and gave back the doctors' lease money. Everyone was angry. The nucleus doctor who had assisted with the founding, also relative, holds hard feelings against me to this day. A total of 18 doctors and dentists had paid their attorneys and accountants for their efforts, all

had agreed on the value and chosen an investment--and the related lawyer inexplicably ruined it all.

The pressure of working under these conditions had led me into the hospital with a bleeding ulcer. I probably would have been a traffic fatality, but moments before I was to drive off, a doctor I was negotiating with had been walking me to my car when I lost consciousness. He took me directly to the hospital where I spent several days. We had to borrow money from Barbara's mother to get me out of the hospital.

Had the Fresno Leaseback Corporation been successful, we would have been in a fine financial position. There was no reason for us not to have had financial security for the rest of our lives. All of this was destroyed by one non-mutual act of judgment by one lawyer.

Surgeon Search

During this time, Barbara's hips failed. She was able to walk only on crutches and she could not negotiate a four-inch step. When she was born she did not have hip sockets. They were re-formed surgically on the leading edge of orthopedics for that day and had little problem until 1950.

Barbara was in such pain, appointments were made with Chiefs of Staff at major orthopedic hospitals. All doctors agreed that her hip condition was extremely complicated and could only be solved by full hip replacements. The doctors concluded however that the case was too risky unless the patient was 80 years old. For Barbara's 40-year age group, the risks were too high.

Randy read of the remarkable hip operation of George Maharis, owner of the Chicago Bears football team, by a Doctor in England who had done 8,000 hip replacements. Sir John Charnley was a master surgeon, innovator and bio-engineer. Knee and shoulder replacement surgery developed directly out of his work on the artificial hip. His work has been an outstanding contribution to the relief of human suffering.

Randy called Dr. Charnley and was told that the waiting list was three years, but that there were three doctors who could do the job as well as he could, one of them was Dr. Charles Hutter, who practiced in Hollywood.

Over to Dr. Hutter's they went. Many orthopedic surgeons recommend fusing the back and using a wheel chair. Dr. Hutter said, "I'll have you walking in 30 days!"

There was no medical insurance, and they had no money to pay for the expensive operation. They decided to remove the remaining Bakersfield Settlement trust fund money that the court had awarded to Bonnie, Randy B and Brad. By that time, both Diana and JoAnn had used their shares for college and were about to graduate from BYU.

This unauthorized diverting of funds was illegal. The money was never repaid to the trust funds. As a result, Bonnie, Randy and Brad were unable to finish their college educations. Bonnie was given a few hundred dollars of her share after she was married. Randy B and Brad

never received a dime of the money that the jury trial had awarded to them for the loss of their mother.

On April 1, 1970, Dr. Charles Hutter completed the bilateral full hip replacement and it appeared to be very successful. There was still a difficult recuperation period with a private nurse and extensive therapy.

As their financial situation worsened, Randy flew to New York on business. His friend, Don Sedgewick had an office at a prestigious Manhattan address in New York and a contact with an officer in the Chemical Bank who offered financing for the doctors' lease-backs and investments.

With Barbara still in the hospital, Bonnie took care of Randy B and Bradley at home. She would frequently drive the car thirty miles by freeway to central Los Angeles so the teenagers could visit their stepmother. Randy called daily. In mid-May, Barbara returned briefly to Fullerton. At this point, Diana and Roger had offered to take their siblings to live with them in Provo for the summer.

Still on crutches and the house threatened with foreclosure because of the Fresno fiasco, Barbara joined Randy in New York, leaving the three teenagers to finish a month of high school. JoAnn returned from BYU in time to attend Bonnie's graduation. The teenagers and JoAnn packed up the entire household and stored as much as they could in the garage, in case the foreclosure happened before the parents returned in the fall.

When all was ready at the end of June, the siblings in Fullerton drove themselves to Provo, and the four lived in the basement apartment of the house the Rices were renting.

It was a busy summer. Diana had just had her third baby, Cindy, and was taking a summer school class, finishing up her bachelors degree. Her sisters watched the three babies at noon every day during that class. Randy B and Brad brought their pet baby alligator to Utah, and kept it in the bathtub and fed it live goldfish. It was a unique pet who remained in the tub in the basement!

Roger, and the Fife siblings started a tie manufacturing business, the Gnu Tie Company, and they set it up in the kitchen of the basement apartment. Not much money was made, but we all enjoyed each other, and we did manage to break even.

In her spare time, Bonnie pursued two interests. She sewed clothes for her wardrobe preparing for entering Ricks College in the fall. She also was sending off her missionary, Chuck Middleton, who was in the Language Training Mission, the precursor to the MTC.

The LTM was housed in the Amanda Knight building, down, about a block from the Rices' house. Bonnie would bake a batch of cookies, or stir up a batch of homemade toffee and make frequent deliveries to Elder Middleton at the LTM. By the end of the summer, after Chuck arrived in Italy, he sent Bonnie a beautiful wool rug. She hung it on the wall in the basement apartment, and then took it with her to college.

New York City

When Randy arrived in New York City, he set up his office at 635 Madison Avenue on the 8th Floor. It was a small office about, just big enough for one desk, two telephones and a sofa. Actually, it was a storeroom in a larger office, but the very posh address made it a perfect place to work. The sign on the door read Newport Management Corporation. He spent eight hours each day calling up doctors, making appointments and going out on appointments.

On weekends Randy stayed in Oyster Bay on Long Island with the Sedgewick family.

When he was in town, he would sleep on the office sofa. Since the building was closed at night, he would wait until everyone went home by going into the men's room, standing on the toilets when the last inspection was made, and was locked in. As soon as he was sure he was alone he would wash up thoroughly, do his laundry in the bathroom sink, and forage for leftover food in the lunchroom refrigerator. He would hang up his laundry and get a good night's sleep, safe and warm. This arrangement allowed him to live in the office without cost.

“I worked hard until Barbara was strong enough physically to travel to New York. The night before she came, I stayed on the 9th floor of a Manhattan hotel on about 37th Street, a decidedly low rent district,” Randy explained.

“At 1 a.m. I received a telephone call stating, "The hotel is on fire, stuff towels under the door and do not open it." I heard the fire engines, all kinds of chopping, but did exactly as instructed. The next morning when I opened the door--the outside of it was charred! The elevator was out of order and I had to climb down a ladder. There was a lot of burned area outside of the room. The types of doors they had would stand flame for one hour and they knew that the fire could be put out in less than an hour. (I wish I had understood that!) Barbara arrived to stay in that very room the next day.”

Barbara scurried to find a low cost apartment in the general area of the office. Amazingly, she found one on 60th between Lexington and Park Avenues just two blocks from the office for \$300 a month. It was a half block from Bloomingdale's Department Store in what would have been a \$1500 rental district had it been a newer apartment. Although it was on the 5th floor with no elevator, it was a truly livable, compact, pocket sized apartment in an old brownstone. Barbara was on two crutches but felt that the stairs would be just a part of the exercise she needed. The bedroom was a loft big enough for a mattress. The kitchen was so small it could only be entered and used sideways.

Randy would call doctors to make appointments. He had a full-sized Teletype machine of 70 lbs. with a 30 lb. coupler, which connected with a computer so that we could do instant computer calculations as to the suitability of the program to the needs of the doctor. Sometimes it would take two of them to carry the Teletype machine to their appointments. Don would carry one piece and Randy would carry the other. In the world of today, the equipment could be carried in a coat pocket.

The banker offered the use of the Chemical Bank conference rooms for presentations. He even helped by calling up clients to make appointments for Randy. Things progressed nicely and they had 25-30 doctors signed up ready to go. One doctor knew a doctor in Fresno

whom he called. He found out the same Newport Management Corporation had been unable to complete the plan in Fresno. That immediately killed the plan in New York, due to a single decision their lawyer had made independently and inexplicably in Fresno.

Randy was down to his last five dollars and did not know where to turn. He said,

“I felt impressed to buy a box of candy to take to the secretary of the Manhattan Medical Association. I walked over to the association, met the receptionist, gave her the chocolate candy and handing her my business card, told her I was in the business of tax shelters for doctors. Returning to the office, I sat by the phone. Shortly after my return the secretary called to tell me to call Dr. H. L. Nubold. I made an appointment with him to meet at 1 in the morning.

Barbara went to Long Island to stay with the Sedgewicks while I stayed in town to meet with Dr. Nubold. Needing the paperwork, I went over to a brokerage, picked up the paper work of their tax shelter on cattle, whited out the names of the company and re-xeroxed (copied) the contracts and brochures. I made a presentation to Dr. Nubold that morning and came away with cashier's checks totaling \$42,000. These were endorsed over to me and were the same as cash”. REF

After Randy left the appointment, the secretary asked the doctor, "Why did you give a perfect stranger \$42,000 in cash? You will never see him again!"

“Getting to the bank with the money was hazardous because I was traveling by subway. I had a good chance of being mugged on my way to the apartment. I took off my tie, unbuttoned my shirt and put on an old trench coat with the collar turned up. I picked up an empty wine bottle in a bag and tried to give the impression of being drunk by hanging onto things to provide an opportunity to see if anyone was following me. The next morning I banked the money, called Dr. Nubold and told him everything was secure and we were moving ahead in the cattle program. He said, ‘I knew I would hear from you again.’ He visited with me several times in California.” REF

Randy and Barbara enjoyed each other and the city of New York. There was always had something to do. They went to a TV show during production. Finding bargain tickets, they saw "Fiddler on the Roof", and other Broadway shows. They could both see the shows for less than a movie. Even though, Barbara was on two Canadian canes, they thought nothing of walking 20 blocks. They loved Manhattan with all the action, color and electricity of the city. The reputation of the Fresno deal continued to weaken the confidence of the doctors in New York who had decided to invest. The investment money was fully refunded, and Newport Management Company of New York went out of business.

“With the failure of the business in New York, before I could leave, I needed money and Don Sedgewick was starting the Vitamix Blender business. He and I went to Philadelphia and learned how to pitch Vitamix at a dental convention. We sold enough to make expenses. Because Don had to go to Conference in Salt Lake City, I went to Vermont to handle a convention by myself which earned me enough money for my plane fare home, a little to get the family going -- and for the Chevrolet eventually purchased from a rental agency.

School was starting, so Barbara left to return home in August and I flew back a couple of weeks later in September to a terrible homecoming. The house was in foreclosure, our car had been repossessed and we had only the prospects of a possible cattle business to look forward to. Barbara returned to her job at the Welfare Department in Santa Ana, but had no car to get to work, so would walk down the hill where a friend passed enroute to Santa Ana each day.

Because there was no telephone at home, I would go to Smith's Food King where they had two public phones. From these phones, I sold several hundred thousand dollars worth of business for investment in cattle. My legs would ache as I stood there for hours. We made enough to get our house temporarily out of foreclosure and get back to normal living. There was so little money coming in. Barbara had disability insurance and some other disability allowance from the Welfare Department, which eased us over.” REF

Family Milestones Continue

The children’s achievements continued on. JoAnn met Barry Larsen in her ward at BYU, and they were married in the Salt Lake Temple, then returned to Provo while they completed college. Barry has worked in real estate, politics, and at Brasher Auto Auction. Among his many duties, he is a trained auctioneer. They had four sons and one daughter: David, Julianne, Keith, Brad and Jared. Barry has been a Bishop three times. JoAnn has served in many leadership capacities.

JoAnn and Diana graduated from college the same day that Roger earned his MBA. The two weeks before, Diana had given birth to her fourth baby, Randy Lurn Rice.

Back in Fullerton, the financial situation was so intense, Randy and Barbara were unable to attend the triple graduation or visit the new grandchild.

John married Diana Cook in the Salt Lake Temple. They met at BYU. John continued working on his undergraduate degree and his wife entered graduate school. During those years in Provo, they had baby Carol. John joined the Air Force and they moved to Pensacola Florida where they had John Jr. During the years they added three other children to their family: Robert, Heidi and David.

Soon after Chuck Middleton returned from his mission in Italy, he proposed to Bonnie. They were married a few months later in the Los Angeles Temple. Chuck joined the Air Force, and the newly married couple moved to their first assignment in Biloxi, Mississippi. After they had their first child, Emily, they were transferred to Panama, where they had their first son, Charles Franklin Middleton IV. As their family grew, Cathy, Becky, Steven, Jenny and Crystal joined them. Chuck has worked most of his career in the computer industry. He has served as a bishop at BYU.

The Rices settled in Walnut Creek California, where their last three children were born, Anna Marie, Christopher, and Brian.

Lew completed his mission and returned to BYU. He graduated single, but eventually married Penny in the Los Angeles Temple. They had a beautiful baby girl named Katie. Lew became an accountant and worked for his stepfather for several business ventures. They eventually had Joseph, Marie and Paul.

Doug finished his mission, returned to BYU, and married Susan in the Los Angeles Temple. Doug was admitted to Dental School at George Washington University in the Washington DC area. They had their first baby Scott during the dental school years, and bought a practice in Texas. They would eventually add Tyler and Nikki to their family and move to the state of Washington.

Randy B graduated from high school and served in the French Canadian mission. Brad left the next year for his mission in England. Both missionaries, unable to count on any money from home, survived through extreme frugality, and the kindness of others. After their missions, both sons worked hard on the beautiful Miramar house, adding a second walk-in closet to the master bedroom and doing extensive re-landscaping. They worked for their dad at no charge and without complaint.

Both brothers briefly attended BYU where they met their future wives. Brad married Susanne Woodard in the Los Angeles Temple. A year later, Randy B married Christa Nebeker in the Oakland Temple. Both young couples had their first babies the same year, during difficult financial circumstances, because both sons were still working for their Dad, whose business ventures were all failing.

Financial Troubles

Consistently Randy would trust partners he thought he knew, who would prove to be untrustworthy. Loss of money was difficult enough, but one venture became legally disastrous when Randy, as President of Allergy Control Foundation, was forced to take full responsibility for the actions of others. The penalties were severe, and the financial situation for the family continued to spiral downward.

The beautiful house on Miramar Drive after many near disasters, was eventually foreclosed. Randy and Barbara found a small house to rent in Fullerton and downsized. The things they could not bear to part with were stored in boxes outside, under the eaves of their new home.

Looking to the Future

Randy B found work in the oil fields, first in Oregon, and then on an island in Long Beach Harbor, working for THUMS as an oil rigger. Randy B and Christa would have five children: Coban, Normandie, Kaylee, and Cortney were born in California, and Errickah was born after they moved to Utah. Eventually Randy B would change careers doing IT work for the LDS Church.

Brad found work at Hughs in building maintenance, using the construction skills he had inherited from his father and grandfather. Brad and Susanne had Jason and Karrie, and

they served their family and their community in remarkable ways. Brad would eventually work in the Trucking and housing industries while serving in a Stake Presidency and twice as Bishop.

Randy E became involved in the gold market, and spent almost three years in South America. Most of the time, Barbara was with him.

After returning from many challenges and adventures in South American, the Fifes tried getting reacquainted with their grandchildren. The littlest ones didn't know they had grandparents. They settled in Salt Lake City, in a condo near the Stoddards.

Randy's Final Illness

While visiting his sister in Sunnyvale, Randy suddenly became very ill. His children all rushed to his bedside, and didn't even recognize him. He had been given penicillin, and was covered in a raised red rash that made him look like he been skinned. Even though told of his long-time allergy, the doctors had reasoned that penicillin had been refined and improved since WWII when Dad had his last reaction. They were wrong. Coming in with an unknown illness, he was now in intensive care.

By the time the original problem was discovered, and Randy had his gall bladder removed, he was so ill, there was little a chance of survival. The undiagnosed gall bladder attack left him to battle serious infection, and due to his allergy to penicillin, there were few choices. Eventually, it came to the choice of dying or taking one of the few antibiotics he could tolerate that had the terrible side effect of destroying his kidneys. The choice was made, life. Dialysis became a permanent part of his life.

He was weak, very weak, and there didn't seem much hope. His diabetic condition, which he had had for many years, didn't help.

Norma's cousin, Ronald Brown, a physician, flew to the hospital and asked to see Randy's charts. He was given a stack twelve inches high. Ronald read through all of them. At that point more than twenty different specialists were working on Randy, all working on separate issues. Ronald concluded that Randy was dehydrated, and needed more calories in order to regain health. He recommended the patient be fed lipids. IV bags of lipids were immediately given. (Lipids are fats, and in this situation were life-saving).

Randy slowly recovered, and after 10 weeks in intensive care, and almost nine months in the hospital, the children rented a nearby apartment for their dad to come "home" to.

Randy lived five more years after this illness, and it was precious time to his children. Aunt Joe and Uncle Loren rented a truck and moved Randy and Barbara's household things to Campbell, California, and they and the Fife children helped set up an apartment for them.

Even though he was never completely comfortable, his closest relatives were able to have long talks with him, satisfying visits, and two reunions.. He wrote his life story. He

served as a Home Teacher. He attended the temple. He became closer to grandchildren, attending performances, baptisms, farewells and Courts of Honor. This final struggle Randy went through remains a powerful example to his posterity of positive thinking, and of never giving up.

Randolph Erickson Fife died November 14, 1992 and was buried on his 73rd birthday, in a grave next to his beloved Norma's in Gridley, California. His children and grandchildren, except for David Larsen and Randy Rice who were on their on missions, all gathered to bid him farewell.



Post Script

The Seymour children insisted on having a family meeting directly after returning from the cemetery to determine what should be done to care for Barbara. Dad's medical care and their lifestyle had left Barbara without any resources. She could not live on her social security alone, they had barely squeaked by with combined checks. It was agreed that the cost of her rent would be shared. That ended the first month. The Fifes decided to buy Barbara a house, only a few years old in Sacramento. She was never happy the seven years she lived there.

An act of Congress re-awarded pensions to widows whose husbands died in action, previously remarriage would permanently delete pension rights. Barbara rented an apartment

and the Fife children helped her move. After many years, she felt she could no longer live alone. She moved to Utah, where she now lives in a full care facility. The children visit when they can.

“If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.”

George Bernard Shaw

**Family Photo Album
of
Randy and Norma Fife**



Norma and Helen Berry visiting their sister, Maree near the school house in Piney where Maree taught school. Norma is on the left.

Source of photo: Norma Berry's Album. Source of identification: Maree Berry Hamblin



Four Generation Photo:
Norma holding JoAnn, front row, May, Diana, Maria
about 1949



Norma, graduated from LDS Business College with skills in bookkeeping, typing, and shorthand. She took care of all bookwork and payroll for dad in all the years they worked together. -DMR-



The only existing photo of Norma and Randy and all of their children.
Back: Diana, Middle: Norma & Randy
Front: Bonnie, Brad, Randy, JoAnn



Married November 26, 1945

From left: Herbert & May Berry, Mabel Fife, best man, Randy, Norma and bride's maids.



Diana & Norma at our first house in Fresno, about 1955. -DMR-

Randy and Norma Fife and Family at Work and Play

Diana's Memories of her parents

Dad took Mother and I to see the pig he had just bought. It was still running around in a pen with the other pigs, and Dad insisted that we inspect our purchase. Mother was not anxious to get a close view, but Dad kidded and joked, and teased until she gave in and leaned over the railing to pet its back. Just then, it snorted, Mother screamed, and Dad just gleefully laughed, and hugged her close. We didn't return for another look.

The next thing I remember is Dad slicing pieces of bacon from a big slab, fixing me breakfast. I had noticed that Mother was not home, and while he cooked our breakfast, he explained that during the night, Mother had new baby girl, and that her name was JoAnn. I loved the way Dad said my new sisters name as though it was a velvet pillow with a diamond on it. JoAnn. He described her, promising that I could go along when it was time to bring them home from the hospital. The drive to the hospital seemed to take forever. Mother had been gone three days, and I missed her deeply. The nearest hospital to Gridley, where we lived, was in Woodland, at least a half hour drive from our home. When we finally arrived, I waited alone in the car because children were not allowed in hospitals unless they were sick.

Soon, Dad appeared, pushing Mother in a wheel chair. Along side them, a nurse carried JoAnn. I felt an immediate rush of love when I saw her, that has only intensified during the years. It was a relief not to be the only child in the family. Mother had such a radiant smile, and it was so good to be with her again.

One of the earliest and most vivid memories I have is of our family attending Sunday School, in the old Gridley meetinghouse. I felt panic as I made my way through a forest of legs in the crowded front hall that led to the main doors. Mother was waiting outside with JoAnn in the baby buggy. I was so glad to be out of the crush of people inside, and mother smiled and waved when she saw me. She was dressed in a shirtwaist dress made of soft fabric, and she wore a crown-less hat that looked like it was made the same way the stiff crocheted snowflake Christmas ornaments are made. The hat was white, with a wide brim, and it surrounded her dark brown hair like a halo. I peeked in at tiny JoAnn, who was beginning to fuss. Her bright red hair and little button nose always fascinated me, and I felt like she was the most special and beautiful baby in the world.

Mother said she needed to take JoAnn right home to feed her, and asked me to stay under the big spreading tree we were standing near, and wait for Dad. She asked me to tell Dad that she had already walked home. I waited for a long time, before Dad was finished with his meetings, gave him the message, and then we both walked home together. Dad wore a brown double-breasted suit on Sundays, and I liked the pinmark design on his brown Sunday shoes. When we arrived home, JoAnn was asleep, and Mother had dinner ready.

Our living room was painted white, with white filmy curtains. There was an oriental rug on the floor, and the sofa was a reddish brick color with a nappy floral design. It was a hida-bed, and was regularly in use, because my parents often had company. Usually, our guests were relatives--cousins, nieces or nephews. There was a very large boston fern on a little table at the front window.

Whenever I see a huge, healthy fern, I am reminded of my earliest home. The accessories and lamps were arranged tastefully around the room: a pair of large ceramic black panthers, crouched low and facing each other, several ceramic free-form vases filled with fresh flowers, an oriental boy and girl bowing at each other, two bookends that featured sleepy Mexicans asleep under their sombreros with their backs to the books, and a tiny set of Japanese slippers that were made from a brass mortar shell, a lingering reminder of World War II.

There was a folding rocking chair in the corner that was my favorite piece of furniture, because I loved to sit and rock on Mothers lap, or to stand beside her while she rocked JoAnn and sang little songs to us. It had an oval upholstered back surrounded by a carved frame with scrolls and roses in dark wood.

My favorite lullaby was:

"Rock-a-bye, dont you cry,
We will go see Granny!
Over the hills,
And through the thrills,
To see my little lamb-y."

I would listen by the hour to that little chant, it was so comforting and soothing.

Our dining area adjoined the living room. Mother was an excellent cook, and Sunday dinners seemed extra special. Most often we had pot roast, with the drippings from the meat turning the potatoes, carrots, and onions into glazed deliciousness. With cold milk and freshly baked rolls, the dinner was a feast. The tablecloth was embroidered, and often mother would turn it so that the corners would drop from the straight sides of the table. Dessert was often a cake or apple pie or banana cream pie, but we usually saved it for the evening, when company dropped over after Sacramento Meeting.

Sunday afternoon was always rest time. When I was too old for a nap, I soon learned that if I visited my parents bedroom when they were resting, Dad would give me a nickel and send me to the little store at the corner to spend it. This was before the counsel was given to avoid shopping on the Sabbath. I loved these little trips to the store, stepping over the cracks in the sidewalk along the way, each time saying to myself, "Dont step on the crack, or youll break your mothers back!" After looking carefully over each tempting possibility at the store,

I usually chose a green ice-cold bottle of 7-up. Slowly walking home, sipping 7-up I would wonder how I was so lucky to have such generous parents.

When I returned, my parents always looked happy and contented. It was years before the memory of their expressions helped me understand their generosity.

Whenever guests came over, they were welcomed, and after a lively conversation they were always offered something to eat. Mother was famous for her date nut cake, which was crammed full of dates, and she kept some on hand if Sundays dessert ran out. Dad and Mother had a lot of friends, and I remember names like Quist, Little, and Carlin.

Sunday evenings were often social times, and our little house was comfortable and inviting, with games like Matthew, Mark Luke and John adding sparkle and fun to the evening. Sometimes they would make a batch of fudge or divinity at the end of the evening, and it was obvious that the group of friends just enjoyed being together. I stayed up as late as I could, and remember being tucked in bed with a kiss and a prayer, looking over at JoAnn's crib across the bedroom, and feeling happy and secure at the end of the Sabbath.

The news was startling: Grandmother Fife had the mumps. We often met at Grandmothers for dinner, with all of Dads nearby brothers and sisters gathering in the family home. On one of those recent occasions, Grandmother had surprised her children by driving up in her brand new "station wagon" while everyone was gathered in the front yard. It was the very earliest of the wagon models, with a third seat in the back, and with wood panels attached to the sides, the kind that surfers in the 60s came to prize so highly and affectionately called "woodies." The whole group had piled into the car to go for a spin, but it was quite a tight fit, even though it was a large car. Grandmother had been so full of enthusiasm, and now she was in bed with the mumps.

An adult mumps patient has a harder time fighting the infection, and Grandmother had a very severe case. There was no one who could take care of her, but Mother. She explained, each morning as she prepared me for another day at Aunt Joes house, that Grandmother helped so many people, that it was a privilege to be able to help her in return.

I really loved to visit at the Stoddards because Eric was my closest cousin in age, and it was so much fun to play with him, but I had never been away from Mother so much before, and each day seemed to never end. Eric and I would ride our tricycles, play house, pretend we were in wartime by hiding from the bombers, and look for slugs under the Stoddards front porch. It was a lot of fun, but I missed my Mother! Then she would finally come to collect me, explain how Grandmother was convalescing, and best of all, tell me how much she had missed me.

After about two weeks, Grandmother recuperated enough to take care of herself, but she had been very ill, and it was a long time before her health returned. During that time I learned that Mother enjoyed serving others, and that I really missed my Mother when she was away!

I had a wonderful play area in the back yard. The garage was in the back corner of the lot. Along the driveway leading to the garage, my parents had planted tomatoes. They had fussed over those tomatoes for months, and gave me a bite of the first one to ripen. I was amazed that they could get so excited over something that tasted as nasty as that tomato did!

There was a grassy area directly behind the house, and in back of the lawn, right under the clothesline, I had a very large sandbox. The day I decided to try chewing a whole pack of gum at once, I sat in my sandbox so no one would notice me, and learned that there really is too much of a good thing: I couldn't even close my mouth.

At the side opposite the driveway, there was a very large oak tree. Dad made me a swing that hung at least twenty feet high from the sturdiest branch of that tree. My favorite activity was to swing, and Dad usually pushed me. I remember thinking I was so high that I could see the telephone wires up close.

I had many toys inside, but the only reason I remember them is that when my cousin Lane Andelin came to visit, he wanted to play with them, and I didn't want to share any of them with him. We especially fought over my favorite little golden book, "The Saggy Baggy Elephant," my ball, my top, and my trucks. I wouldn't even let him sit in my little red wooden rocker.

We talked quite a bit about sharing for several days after Lane left, but I had lost interest in my indoor toys, and loved exploring through Mothers kitchen cupboards. One day, I was walking along the counter, as I had many times before, looking at the bowls stored on the highest shelf. I lost my footing, and as I slipped, I grabbed the glass mixer bowl from Mothers Sunbeam Mixmaster (the white kind with the black dial at the end.)

As the bowl and I crashed to the floor, my left wrist was slashed by a piece of the broken bowl. It was bleeding quite a bit as Mother ran in to investigate the crash. She spoke calmly to comfort me, wrapped my hand in a towel, and called Dad for help. Since Mother had the car, she bundled me in, and we drove to Dads office. It was a quonset hut, with a sign in front neatly lettered: Fife and Stoddard Construction Company. As usual, things were very hectic there, as Dad and Uncle Loren were riding the crest of the post-war building boom.

Dad had been working on a slanted desk piled high with blueprints, but he immediately left to drive me to the Doctors office some distance away. I still have the scar from that exploring trip, and I don't remember looking up in the high shelves after that.

In the heat of the summer months, my parents loved to have root beer floats after dinner. Once we got a phone call, indicating someone needed to be picked up at the train station, and we had just begun our root beer floats. We all three hastily finished our floats, and I floated into the bathroom, and threw mine up. This was very embarrassing to me, but my parents just laughed, told me I needn't have hurried that much, and we went to the train station.

Mother had a strong theatrical flair, probably inherited from the Whiting side of the family. Her aunts and uncles had always enjoyed putting on their own plays, and her older sisters were good actresses. Mother had an excellent voice, and was a graceful dancer. But her greatest theatre talent was in directing and producing the shows. I remember watching in the basement of the old Gridley meetinghouse, as finishing touches were made on their yearly show.

Two numbers are still vivid to me. In one, about ten women were all dressed as mammies, in black face, singing "Mammie, how I love ya, how I love ya." And they each had a matching "Chil'e" rag doll. The other number, a number of women and men, dressed in bathing costumes from the turn of the century (bloomers to the knee, middy blouse, and mob cap for the women, a chest-covering one-piece suit to the knee for the men) sang "By the Sea, By the Sea, By the Beautiful Sea." The choreography was as catchy as the tune, and it was a favorite number of the cast.

Mother had her hand in every detail--auditioning, rehearsing, designing and sewing costumes, arranging the set, and getting everything to work together to form an exciting show. She was responsible for at least two of these Gridley shows that I know of. She and Aunt Maree, who lived nearby, also organized wonderful adult parties. The one I remember they planned in Gridley was a luau, with the feast arranged on a low platform, guests sitting on the floor, and the hula dancers strolling around the room giving performances in and among the guests. Shells and nets and fresh fruits and banana leaves served as decorations.

The first day of kindergarten, very eagerly anticipated, finally came for me. Eric Stoddard was in my class, and in just a few minutes, I could tell I was going to love school. This wonderful time only lasted two weeks.

Uncle Loren decided to reenlist in the Air Force, Dad had an opportunity to move his construction business to Tucson, Arizona, and we moved just two weeks after the beginning of school. Two big trucks were loaded with household goods and construction tools. JoAnn and I rode in the truck Mother drove, and we traveled to Tucson, Arizona, just after the hot summer season.

Do You and your sisters and brothers have a copy of what Ruth B. Lewis wrote about your mother, Norma? I was re-reading it last night and I think it is excellent. It expressed so accurately my feelings about Norma. I dearly loved her--as Ruth L. pointed out--you couldn't help loving Norma--her presence always brought love and sunshine. Can you imagine the role she must be filling on the other side? but I think her love still reaches to earth to her family and others who loved her. There must be a gathering of the Berrys over there and I am sure they are enjoying each other as they did here. They have it made--Hope the rest of us can do as well--Sounds from new of the Berry Patch that your family are all doing well. I'm proud of you. My love and best wishes, Aunt Beth Berry

THE VOCATION AND VALUE OF A SALESMAN

By Randolph E. Fife

If I had known I was a salesman, I would have started selling much earlier. I had suspected it, but I never knew it. I could have made more selling houses than building them. My father always had a saying, "There is nothing more useless than a damn salesman." When your own father says things like that, it impresses you. His problem was insurance salesmen keeping him from working on his jobs. The materials salesmen he loved--the insurance salesmen were the ones bothering him. He did not think of the materials salesmen as salesmen--they were just friends.

My Uncle Walter interviewed me for about an hour when I was about 16. He had been reading about career counseling. He told me I was a natural salesman and should follow that line of work all my life. I did not understand what he was talking about.

I should have realized because I had been selling oranges at six years of age, wrenches and gardening services at 12. Few people realize the value of a salesman in our society. Without the sale, no amount of profitable production is possible. Without the money promoted behind an idea, the idea cannot reach fruition. There is an old saying, "Nothing happens before the sale is made."

My second error was in not charging enough for my services as a salesman. My third was in taking full responsibility for everything I sold.

CHURCH PRESIDENTS I HAVE KNOWN

By Randolph E. Fife

We were asked at Priesthood Meeting if we had ever had contact with any of the Presidents of the Church. It caused me to pause and remember: I have shaken hands with all of the Presidents of the Church from Heber J. Grant to the present day.

In 1937, I was about 17 years old and was serving as an MIA Stake Secretary for the Gridley Stake. At that time the Church population was not large and all stake leadership was supposed to attend Conference. Because of other commitments, I was the only member of the Stake able to go. I was given all the tickets with instructions to attend all meetings, take notes and report to the stake authorities upon my return.

One ticket was a dinner with the Presidency of the Church and all the Stake Presidents. Of course, I was by far the youngest there and President Grant asked me to stand, introduce myself and tell where I was from. He then asked me to sit with him at the head table. It ruined my dinner, I was so nervous. He had me give a little talk about the work I was doing in the Gridley Stake, way out in California. I was very young for my job, but was able to attend the dinner with President Grant and be in the presence of great men.

I later thought about a similar experience in President Grant's life and wondered if it caused him to bring me to his table. Jedediah M. Grant, Heber J. Grant's father, was a close friend of Brigham Young. Jedediah died early in Heber's life and he was raised by his mother. Wondering if Heber would ever develop into a strong leader, Brigham sent him to Tooele Stake as a Stake President at 21 years of age. President Young thought serving as a Stake President might help him to develop and he was right. He must have felt empathy with me.

I talked to President Grant on the phone after I was the first missionary drafted into the Army while on my Mission in Louisville, Kentucky. He was able to have me transferred to California for induction. It was a shock to have him call me personally at our apartment. President Grant was a large man, about 6'2" and 190 lbs. Not only physically, but in calling and youth, I felt small in comparison. He was able to have the laws changed to allow the missionaries to complete their missions before being called to active duty.

President Grant died in 1945 and was succeeded by George Albert Smith whom I met when he was President of the Council of the Twelve. One day while in the mission home, 1440 St. James Court, Louisville, Kentucky, the doorbell rang and when I answered it--in front of me stood Elder George Albert Smith! He was very tall and thin--and spiritually imposing. His tour of our mission was a complete surprise to my companion and me.

While I was on my Mission, my cousin, William S. Fife, married Lois Smith, a daughter of Joseph Fielding Smith. I met the future President of the Church many times while visiting the Fifes.

My biggest personal experience with him came while on my Mission because I was a companion of one of his nephews, Richard S. Miller. Elder Miller was the envy of all of us because he called him Uncle Joseph during President Smith's visit of several days. A question was asked on some subject and Elder Miller, wishing to impress his uncle, answered it. President Smith responded, "Where do you find that answer, Elder"? His nephew said, "I read it in your book, THE WAY TO PERFECTION." Elder Smith said that that was not what he had meant. He advised us to be well grounded in the scriptures so that we would get the proper interpretation of what was written. One question asked of Brother Smith was: "Where are the lost 10 tribes"? He replied, "Lost. Next question please."

At a General Conference in Salt Lake City in about 1950, I met President David O. McKay, then President of the Council of the Twelve. Bishop Jensen and I asked him to come to dedicate our new building. When the time came for the dedication, he had become President of the Church. Despite his new position, he came as scheduled and I spoke on the same program. What an overpoweringly humble feeling it is to speak at the same podium with a

President of the Church! He gave a great talk on Discipline, mentioning that the main purpose of the Word of Wisdom is to teach physical self-discipline.

In 1936 when I was 16 years old, I met Harold B. Lee during a conference on welfare in Sacramento. Previously, all the bishops had been transported to Salt Lake City for General Conference. When I was in the Bishopric for Gridley Ward, I was privileged to represent my Bishop and share in two Solemn Assemblies in the Salt Lake Temple in conjunction with these Conferences. These Assemblies were a very spiritual experience because the First Presidency administered the Sacrament and the Council of the Twelve passed it.

I first met President Benson in 1942 when he was the Stake President of the Washington, D. C. Stake. I was a serviceman stationed at Fort George G. Meade just 20 miles from our nation's capitol. On Sundays, many members of the Washington Ward would invite servicemen to their homes for dinner. On a couple of occasions, I was invited to the Benson home for beans, hot bread and ice cream. I understood that President and Sister Benson had servicemen over every Sunday and sometimes during the week. It was fun to share the warm and loving hospitality of a home with a lot of small children. He was an outstanding Stake President.

I met him again in the Gridley Ward after he had been made an apostle. They used to send apostles around to stake conferences. It always was a pleasure to hear his counsel and to watch his upward progress and development. When you have memories of him as a young and active man, your heart moves to him in his advanced age.

Businesses R E Fife Either Started or Helped to Start

Early in his career, Randy developed a predictable pattern with his businesses. The names changed, but the business practices and the types of employees remained the same.

First, a detailed business plan would be drawn up, including projections of potential earnings, and a study of the best location for the work site. A professional logo artist would be hired to design truck signs, business cards, stationary and envelopes. Partnerships would be formed, equipment purchased, a well-stocked office would be assembled, as would every needful tool. Then, Randy would put in long workdays for as long as it took to get things going. When things began to fall into place, and the venture was looking successful, something totally beyond Randy's control would unexpectedly go wrong. Often, partners got greedy, but shifts in the economy, an accident or injury, or other sudden reverses would cause each business to fail.

The failures never quenched his desire for success. Even in intensive care, on full life support, Randy had been sending Barbara on business errands and tasks. Five years later, in his last days, he was still full of plans for future success. —Diana Rice and Randy Fife

The names of the various businesses that RE Fife either started or helped to start are the following:

During school years:

- Selling oranges in Garden Grove
- Selling Liberty Magazine, a national magazine with the biggest readership in the country at that time
- Fife and Campbell, experts in mowing lawns.
- Selling Zip Grip Wrenches, a sole proprietorship, when in high school
- Selling melons to cannery workers
- Raising chickens and selling eggs to Safeway

Post WWII:

- Fife and Stoddard, General Contractors, a partnership of Bill Stoddard and myself, later including Loren Stoddard Butte Builder's Supply, Inc.
- Fife Construction Company of Tucson, Arizona
- Hercules Concrete Company
- Western Builders
- Patio Pool and Wall Company, Arizona
- Fife Construction Company of Arizona
- Fife Construction Company of California
- Fife Construction Company of Nevada
- Patio Pools, Inc., of California
- Real Estate Salesman in Costa mesa
- Sales Manager, Anthony Pools, Los Angeles
- National Sales Manager, Anthony Pools
- Aaron Rothenberg & Associates Consulting for:
 - Taco Bell
 - Dunkin Donuts
 - Swensen's Ice Cream
 - Interior Systems
 - Allied Builders
 - Pail O' Chicken
 - H. Salt, Esq. Fish and Chips
- Franchise Dynamics

- Newport Management Company of California, a Medical Leasing Company; established Delmaco of Orange County
- Rainbow Slide Corporation
- Newport Management Company of New York
- Newport Management Company of Atlanta, Georgia; established Comaco of Georgia
- Corona Capital Corporation
- Holstein Beef Corporations Nos. 1 and 2
- Vitalean Beef
- Connecticut Capital Corporation
- Great Basin Management Company of Utah
- Sierra Minerals Corporation and Monte Cristo Mine at Mammoth
- Allergy Control; Allergy Control Foundation
- FELT--Feline Testing Laboratories
- Precious Metals Processing
- Grupo Supervisores de Minas Costarricenses, S.A.
- Panleasing

Lessons From Our Father

By Randy B. Fife and Diana Rice

Victor Borge liked to tell the story of the man who experimented with beverages for years. The man was a dreamer and a visionary, who worked very hard on his creations, but eventually stopped trying after he invented a soda he called 6 Up. He was so close to success.

Randy was like that inventor of 6 Up. He came so very close to making a fortune.

In Arizona, Randy and his brother Calvin developed a stucco fence that was good looking, and long-lasting with no maintenance necessary. Some of those fences are still standing, 60 years later. People had trouble accepting non-traditional fencing. Now, concrete fences are highly sought after.

In the 1950's, Randy and Norma experimented and applied for a patent for a fast food item they called Pronto Pups. The snack consisted of a circle of bread dough surrounding a filling such as ham and cheese, which was then deep fried. Pronto Pups' equivalent today is the wildly successful Hot Pockets!

Neighborhood pool clubs like the Penguin Pool Club are now widely accepted as a convenient way for families to have access to swimming pools without having one in the back yard.

There is no doubt how hard Randy worked with concept of condos at the Belfort Arms. Today, people have accepted the idea of condominiums, which have become a major share of the real estate market, even though land ownership is not part of the transaction.

Randy owned a successful swimming pool company, then he worked as a sales manager for the largest swimming pool company in southern California. He turned to making sky slides, a new idea where people would rent time to slide down elaborate fiberglass slides on gunny sacks. If the two ideas had been combined, he would have developed the first waterslide park.

Another project was to sell an invention Randy found that was called a motorized surf board. People laughed at the name, and wouldn't take the idea seriously. If motorized surfboards had been renamed wave-runners or jet skiis, they would have been very popular.

Randy's feed-lot investment company led to the need to sell the high quality, pen fed beef the lots produced. He developed the idea to sell it through mail order. He found that the meat could be shipped frozen and insulated with dry ice so that it would be delivered overnight still frozen. People did not trust the idea that the food could be delivered in perfect condition. Shipping frozen high quality food is now routinely acceptable in the mail order business.

Each product started with a great idea, was diligently worked on, but didn't quite make it.

We don't know anyone who worked harder than Randy Fife. Even in 1987 when he was in ICU in Sunnyvale California, clinging to life, he was still working on a business deal and sending Barbara to Alpha Graphics to duplicate contracts, certifications and other elaborate paperwork. His dreams of fortunes never quite came to fruition, but he did instill in all five of his children a deep and abiding work ethic.

A Look Back at Family life, Growing Up, and Faith Promoting Experiences

Herbert and May Berry

Herbert A. Berry and May Whiting Berry were married in their early 20's. Herbert was herding sheep, May was teaching school, and they were barely making a living. May had a good business head so she decided to move into a very small place to save money toward a better education for her husband. By the time enough money was saved, they had four children. Having decided to go to dental school, Herbert, 35 years of age, moved to Chicago, began school and worked as a dental technician. May continued teaching school, joining him later with the children. No one had money to help them nor were there any grants or scholarships. They had it to do it all on their own, doing whatever was necessary, making any sacrifice to complete the project at hand. They were successful!

He began his practice in Phoenix. At about this time, the depression came and he found himself unable to pay his rent. To prevent his equipment from being repossessed, he had to put everything on a trailer and move out of the office building in the dark of night. They moved to a 'store in Holbrook, partitioned across the middle of the store so that he could practice in the front and the family could live in the rear for a minimum rent. As soon as he had money available, he tried to locate the landlord to repay his bill, but could not find the man or the company. Even years later it worried him so much he had me search through the title records to see to whom he could pay the amount, but the building had been through bankruptcy so many times, the information was not available.

During those early years and realizing there was no dentist in Northern Arizona, Herbert and May equipped a trailer as a dental office which could be operated without electricity. They put in a foot pedal drill and all hand equipment. It could be connected to a hose for rinsing the mouth, etc. They then would spend one week each month doing the work for the people in the little settlements. In return, they received eggs, meat, produce, quilts or whatever the people offered, which he would sell to buy enough supplies for the next trip. Our Stake President, Leon Ballard, grew up in Snow Flake. When asked if he knew Dr. Berry, both he and his wife had had their dental work done by him when they were children.

May Berry was highly motivated and sometimes absent-minded. One day she went into a department store in Holbrook to buy a dress. She tried on several and decided there were none she liked. When she got home, she discovered she had put her dress on top of one of their dresses and walked out. The clerks knew what had occurred and knew she would return with it as soon as she realized what had happened.

One day while shopping in Holbrook, she absentmindedly got in a police car parked behind hers and drove it home. This police vehicle was a well marked, guns in racks and bars

on the windows. In those days everyone left their keys in the car. It was a small town, everyone knew everyone else and had seen her leave. The police were really embarrassed as they drove her car to her house pick up their car.



Herbert and May Berry

When Jack Cooper first married Joycell, he was an 18-year-old high school dropout. As an apprentice diesel mechanic, he was not making sufficient money for an expectant father and newlywed. He was complaining about his lot in life to his grandmother, May Berry, detailing Aubrey Andelin's dental practice and that of her husband. Suddenly she said, "Jack, do you have a wishbone or a backbone?" Angered, he said, "Grandmother, I'll show you!" and stormed out. He enrolled in school, completing high school, pre-dental and dental college. This took great courage, determination and dedication on his part.

The New Car

In about 1947, Herbert A. Berry decided his De Soto had so many miles on it that he should trade it in on a new one. (The De Soto, by the way, was the car I drove for our honeymoon.) After much looking and tire kicking, he decided he preferred an Oldsmobile 98.

Without consulting any of his sons or sons-in-law, he went to the local Oldsmobile agency and made the deal to trade his old car for the new one. The salesman obviously knew he had an easy buyer, so he made the best deal he could for himself and the company he represented. Because there was not time to detail and deliver the car on the day of the trade, the salesman suggested Dr. Berry take the De Soto home that night, and the new car would be ready the next day.

When he arrived home, he remembered one of the things that down-graded the De Soto was the tires. He took the car next door to his office and had four new tires installed. The station reported the brakes were in bad condition, so he had these repaired, too.

Upon returning the car to the dealer the next morning, the salesman looked it over to be sure nothing had been removed and that the car was in the same condition as the previous

day. To his surprise, he saw four new tires on the car! He said, "Doctor, why did you put new tires on the car?" He replied that he was afraid the person buying the De Soto might have a blowout or other tire trouble which might cause a serious accident. The salesman was so overcome with his honesty, and on the spot said, "I think I made a mistake on the price of your new car." He lowered the price to the lowest possible dealership cost and gave up half of his commission. I found this out when I brought it in for the 1,000 mile check up and met the salesman. He said, "I don't know what came over me, but I had never met a man like Dr. Berry before -- I just did not have the heart to take advantage of him. This was the first time I have ever reduced my commission."

Declining Years

In Tucson, Arizona, during the last two years of May Berry's life and after several strokes, Dr. Berry was unable to care for her by himself, so we invited them to live with us.

We hired two live-in maids, Maria and Stella. Mother Berry had to be carried to her bath and these two young maids with the help of Norma were able to bathe her and care for her.

She told me many stories of her childhood and about her life. I wish I had taken them all down.

Norma was pregnant with Bradley at the time. About two weeks before the delivery of Bradley, Mother Berry had another stroke and could not communicate with anyone.

The day Norma delivered, I was in the hospital, the same hospital that Mother Berry was in. After Brad was born, I went into Mother Berry's room. She was lying there with her eyes open and halfway smiled at me in recognition. I told her she had a new grandson, and with that knowledge, she smiled, closed her eyes and passed away.

I then went into Norma's room and told her that her mother had just passed away. Norma started planning to go to the funeral to be held in California. The doctor said this was unwise with a newborn baby, but she was determined.

Dr. Berry escorted the casket by train back to southern California.

I made a bed in the back of the station wagon and drove to Southern California with Norma and our infant, Bradley. We made it to the funeral and stayed a few days at Kay Berry's before coming back to Tucson.

Father Berry stayed awhile with Kay, then called to ask if he could return, he felt so at home with us. He lived with us for several months more.

He and I joined the astronomy program at the University of Tucson every Thursday night. Arising daily at 4 a.m. to work on the church roofing tile, I would fall asleep laying on my back in the grass during these binocular sightings. Father Berry was so enthused about the class, we continued.

He also enjoyed installing hardware on the houses I was building and would patiently put all the window hardware on each house.

When Norma and I moved our family and business to Fresno, California, he decided to live near Kay and Lee, and after about a year, married Aunt Martha Brown, his former sister-in-law. We kept in touch with them as they spent many happy years together playing Chinese Checkers.

–Randolph E. Fife

Grandma May Berry's Final Illness

By Diana Rice

The year 1955 was very difficult for my mother, Norma. It was a joy to be the new mother of a son, as Randy had been born the previous November. Norma had much physical hardship during her pregnancies, and she soon found she was expecting her fifth child. Her mother, May Berry, who had suffered for years with kidney problems, was dying, and my Norma begged her parents to come live with us.

Herbert and May came to be near their dear Norma. They were settled into my parents' bedroom. Mother was helping her husband Randy with the office work for his business, was pregnant with her last child, Brad, and caring for her mother, May. Eventually we had two young Mexican girls live with us to help out. Brad was born the day before his Grandmother Berry died in the same hospital.

It is not easy to watch a loved one slip away, but in the process, I became better acquainted with both my grandparents, and could see clearly how much my mother adored them, and they her. My grandmother May was a strong woman, and fought hard to remain living.

At first, she made weekly visits to the doctor's office. Wanting to look her best, she and Mother bought a beautiful turquoise Navajo outfit, a simple blouse trimmed in silver, a skirt that had tiers of ruffles, squaw style trimmed in silver rick-rack. A silver concho belt completed the outfit. I remember May saying to her daughter, "Norma, this is so lovely, when I don't need it, let's cut it into squares so all the women and girls in the family can have a piece!" I don't know what happened to that outfit.

Grandma, May Berry, went into kidney failure, and a hospital bed had to be brought in, and home-care nurses were called for. Tubes seemed to be everywhere. Grandma was sick and in a lot of pain, but she continued to think and talk about her family clear up to the time she lapsed into coma.

Grandpa, under heavy grief and worry about his beloved wife, did not shut himself away. Rather, he made it a point to spend a lot of time with us, even though we were young children. He bought us roller skates, and a large swing set, sturdy enough to last all of the

rest of the kids in our family and survive all of our moves. He took us on walks, and gave us fascinating glimpses into scientific research.

Grandma May took a sudden turn for the worse, and was hospitalized. I saw the ambulance take her away just as I returned home from elementary school. Mother soon rushed to the hospital herself, and delivered another healthy baby boy. Bradley James Fife was born September 10, 1955. Grandma Berry died the next day, in the same hospital. What a range of emotions our mother handled in just about twenty four hours. The thrill of a new baby, tempered with the sorrow of losing her mother.

We loved being with Grandpa Berry, and he didn't let us know how deeply sad he was, until after Grandma died. In grief and sorrow, he insisted on escorting the casket on the train, even though it was necessary for him to travel alone, from Tucson to L.A. Norma was also deeply mourning the loss of her mother, and my dad Randy fixed up a bed for her in the back of the station wagon, for the trip to LA with newborn Bradley.

Life Sketches of the Children of Randy and Norma Fife



Diana Maree Fife Rice

Autobiography of Diana Maree Fife Rice

My parents met in Washington D.C. a few months before my father was shipped out with his army regiment to spend the next 3 years overseas, serving in Africa and Italy. They wrote to each other the entire time. They were married shortly after Dad's return, November, 1945. I was born October 4, 1946. There was no hospital in the town of Gridley California, where they lived, so I was born in Woodland, California.

Although my parents' courtship was a little unconventional, dating with the uncertainty of what kind of future they could hope for, and then carrying on their deepening friendship entirely by correspondence, by the time they were married, they were crazy about each other.

I think of my parents' marriage as being one of the great love stories of the world. I always knew they loved each other.

Gridley Years

The first five years of my life, we lived in Gridley. where my Dad had grown up, and most of his immediate family still lived. I vividly remember watching my Dad cook breakfast, and having him tell me that during the night my mother had given birth to a new baby, my sister JoAnn. I had turned three exactly two weeks before JoAnn's birth. I also remember riding in the car with Dad to Woodland, so excited to see the baby I couldn't stand it. Little children were not allowed in hospitals, so I waited in the car. Pretty soon, I watched my mother being wheeled out in a wheelchair, holding JoAnn.

The Gridley years were happy ones for my parents, even though they faced the challenges of establishing a home and a living. Dad had wanted to attend law school, but had only had one year of college, and that had not been a priority year for grades. Also, while he was overseas, his father had died, leaving a young family. Even though my grandfather had left the family in somewhat comfortable financial circumstances, Dad felt responsible for the welfare of his mother and young brothers and sisters.

There were many young couples in Gridley at this time, also having been separated by the war. My parents had a large circle of friends, and they had an active social life and were very involved in the Church.

My Dad was the chairman of the building committee that built the original Gridley Ward Chapel. A vivid memory is of seeing my Dad shaving one morning, covered with bandages seemingly from the neck, down. He had been mopping hot tar on the roof of the meetinghouse, slipped, managed to grab on to the edge of the roof as he fell, and was able to hold on until help came, even though the bucket of hot tar had tipped when he fell, and the hot tar oozed on to his shoulders and arms. He carried permanent scars from that accident. To me they were a constant reminder of the commitment level my Dad had to church service.

Mother was a wonderful example to me of service in the Church, too. She and other wives would organize the food for the men who volunteered to construct the chapel. This was the only way chapels were built in those days, with donated labor. It meant many months of working on the building in the evenings and Saturdays. I will never forget the personal tour Mother gave me of the new building, conveying such a reverence and respect for the meetinghouse that I have never forgotten it.

A Visit From The Prophet

Another exciting thing happened at the completion of the Gridley Chapel. David O. McKay, still an apostle, had promised to dedicate the building. Before the building was completed, he became President of the Church. Even with the change in responsibilities, he came and spoke to the dedication. Dad gave one of the talks, as chairman of the building committee,

and Mother and Nathel sang a duet. Even though I was only three years old, a treasured memory is of shaking hands with the Prophet, David O. McKay.

Cousins Together

My mother put on several plays and variety shows, and she and Aunt Maree, newly divorced and also living in Gridley, collaborated on a lot of parties. One of them stands out in my mind, a luau, where the feast was laid out on cloths on the floor, with the center of the eating area loaded with flowers and platters of food. The guests sat on the floor, as if they were at a regular table. Aunt Maree was in an elegant hula skirt outfit, draped with leis, and she danced the hula. There were palm trees constructed of cardboard and crepe paper, that had real coconuts hanging among the leaves.

My mother was devoted to her family, and she and Aunt Maree and their cousins, Nathel Burdick and Ronald Brown were often visited by members of the extended family, and then they would all get together, laugh, talk, and enjoy each other. This was the group of cousins that started The Whiting Tree. They lived close to each other, formed a committee, and produced three or four issues before they gradually all moved away from Gridley and the responsibility was taken over by others.

Fife and Stoddard Construction Company

Dad and his best friend (and brother in law, Loren) formed a construction company, Fife and Stoddard, and in post war boom they built many homes, schools, and commercial buildings. Fife and Stoddard built the Mortuary that 45 years later handled Dad's funeral arrangements. They built themselves homes, too. Eventually, Uncle Loren and Aunt Joe decided to return to the Air Force as a career pilot, and my parents ventured on their own to Tucson, Arizona, a larger urban area than Gridley, by far, that was supposedly the fastest-growing area in the U.S., and was also nearer to my Mother's birthplace, St. Johns, Arizona.

Memories of Early Whiting Reunions

We always attended the Whiting Reunions at the Homestead, even when we lived in California. I have very dear memories, even at an early age, of attending those reunions. I remember standing by my mother's side as she sewed an Indian costume for me to wear, for some reason one year we all dressed up as cowboys and Indians. I also remember my great grandmother Anna Maria. I remember the loving way she was treated by her family, and I especially remember her riding on a burro!



There is a picture in the “Red“ Whiting book, page 294a, with the caption “Anna Maria Isaacson Whiting and some of her posterity, reunion at the Homestead 1948. I am pretty certain that the year is incorrect on that caption, because my sister JoAnn and I are standing just to the left of Anna Maria (I am wearing my Indian headdress) The reason I question the date is that JoAnn was born in 1949. In this photo she is at least two years old. Back to reunion memories: I remember the pancake breakfasts, of course, the flipper contests, horse shoe contests, the tire rolling contests, the children’s talent shows, and entertainment at the outdoor theater that is pictured in the photo I just mentioned. That stage is where I remember seeing my grandmother May and her sisters sing “Who Shot the Hole in My Sombrero?“!



AT THE HOMESTEAD, about 1948
 Norma Berry Fife is talking with Joycell Hamblin Cooper
 I am holding my mother’s hand.
 Source: Diana Fife Rice

Moving to Tucson, Arizona

Our move to Arizona was not premeditated, and due to the kindness of mother’s Uncle Eddie, we lived for a few weeks in the back room of one of Uncle Eddie’s rentals, until the renters moved out. We lived in that red brick house for about a year. I had spent the first

two weeks of kindergarten in Gridley, before we moved, and was very sad to find that Arizona did not have kindergarten, so I had to fill some very long hours. My toys were in storage, and although there was grass in the front yard, it wasn't a good place to play. The back yard was unlandscaped, except for the many sticker patches, as we called them, low growing weeds that were loaded with thorny stickers the size of peas. There was a clothesline at the back of the yard, and it had a platform to stand on while clothes were being hung out. That platform became my imaginary playhouse, and I played there almost exclusively, even in winter, with my doll, a few detergent bottles, and a wooden crate.

Great Grandmother's funeral

We moved to another rental, closer to Dad's construction office, and Bonnie was brought home from the hospital to this second house. I also attended first grade that year. We lived there until our new home was completed in the subdivision Dad was building. A vivid memory is of attending Great-grandmother Anna Maria's funeral in St. Johns. I was seven, and my Mother let me attend the funeral with her. I remember the love that was there, and I remember a small chapel with lots of light, and it seemed filled just with members of the family. I also remember visiting Great-grandmother's little house. To me, it was like a fairytale cottage.

School Years

I was in second grade when we transferred to a school that seemed very old, built hacienda style with a Mexican tile roof and adobe like appearance with long corridors and an open courtyard in the center. By the time I was in third grade, a new school had opened up, to serve our new subdivision, so everyone in our neighborhood was transferred to the new school. We lived clear out on the edge of the city, on Craycroft Avenue. There were still many uncleared parts of the desert around us. We crossed our street at the crosswalk near our home, and then walked through about a block of cactus. The school was at the edge of the desert area, so we only had that one street to cross. There was a dirt path through that little desert, as we called it, and you were fine if you stayed on the path. However this was a path used by school children, and you can imagine what happened. So many children either stepped on or touched thorns, that the crossing guard kept a pair of pliers in his pocket for thorn removal! I had a few of those thorns removed, myself.

The school was unlandscaped, except for a small patch of blacktop, where we played dodge ball, hopscotch, and basketball. But the majority of our recesses in that brand new school, we played house by scratching houses into the finely powdered dirt beyond the black top. It was the favorite game for most of the children, but we also liked to make mud puddles, and sift through the mud looking for garnets. (There were numerous clear red pebbles in that dirt, and I can't tell you if they were valuable or not, but we loved to find them.) Imagine how hard it was for the teachers to cope with dirty school children coming from recess into to brand new classrooms. There wasn't enough black top for everyone to play there, and they just couldn't keep us out of that dirt and dust. It is not surprising that over the summer, lawns were installed.

My Dad was called to be Ward Clerk, and I was baptized in the basement font of that meetinghouse. I remember my baptism, and the preparation my Dad gave me, even practicing on dry land, how the baptism would work. My mother was involved in dramatic productions again, and many of them were put on at the Institute building of the University of Arizona. I especially remember the play *The Family Upstairs*, because it was a comedy.

My brother Randy was born that year, and he developed a leukemia-type of illness, spending much time in the hospital. He had been delivered by an LDS doctor, Dr. Austin, a good friend of my parents, who monitored the puzzlingly high white-blood-cell count. I understood how sick Randy was, but did not understand how he returned to good health, and was overjoyed when he finally came home for good.

Moving to Fresno, California

Half-way through fourth grade, due to threats from the mob and wildly fluctuating mortgage rates, my parents decided to sell the Fife Construction Company and move to Fresno, California, to be nearer my mother's sister, Helen and niece Joycell. This was again a rather spur of the moment move, and we spent two weeks living with Aunt Helen and Uncle Aubrey and family until the home Aunt Helen had picked out for us was completed. There had been four of us when we moved to Tucson, but there were seven of us when we moved to Fresno, plus one of our Mexican housekeepers, an unwed expectant mother named Maria. How Aunt Helen managed to assimilate 8 people into her home, when she already had at least five children of her own, I don't know. But I remember having a lot of fun with my Andelin cousins while we lived with them. I attended the last few weeks of fourth grade in Fresno.

My parents had decided to go into the Pool Construction business, reasoning that an area as hot as Fresno was, in the days before air conditioning, would be a good place to have a pool company. They established the Patio Pool Company with more hard work, courage, and bravery than money.

By the time I entered fifth grade, a new school had been built to accommodate the new subdivision we lived in. So I started fifth grade in the 6th school I had attended, counting my two weeks of kindergarten in Gridley. We sold our home after about a year and a half and moved to a cheaper rental nearby. I attended sixth grade, and then began junior high. When my parents found a home to buy, it was across town, so I spent the remainder of seventh grade and all of eighth grade at Wawona Junior High School. I did enjoy this move, because we moved into the same ward our Cooper cousins lived in, and Janice was near my age. We also attended junior high school together, and we became close friends.

The Accident

That was the year my mother died. She was killed in a terrible automobile-truck accident, which my Dad witnessed. I was thirteen, JoAnn was ten, Bonnie was seven, Randy was five, and Brad was four. She died May 5, 1960, the week before Mothers' Day. My childhood ended with her death. My mother was my best friend, and I still miss her very much.

Living With Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion

Dad went to Indio California, to finish a Pool Club he had contracted to build. The five of us went to live with my mother's brother and sister-in-law, Dean and Marion Berry. The Berrys had completed medical school and residency and had moved to Fresno several years before. Uncle Dean had a family practice, and Aunt Marion had just had her fifth baby.

I began high school and Seminary that year, and it was the same high school I would have attended anyway, Bullard High, so Janice and my friends were there. It was a difficult year for me, suddenly without both parents, but Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean were very compassionate. My testimony became stronger, even though I had never had a doubt that the church was true. It was difficult to get up for Seminary, but I admired the kids older than I who had been examples and had attended Seminary faithfully. Usually, I was the first one up in the household, and slipped out to my ride without seeing one member of the family. Occasionally, though, Uncle Dean would drive me to the church.

My Patriarchal Blessing

I wanted to have my patriarchal blessing, and was interviewed by the Bishop. When I called to make an appointment with the patriarch, he recognized my name and asked if I was from the family that had lost their mother. I was so overcome with tears at the unexpectedness of the question, that I handed the phone to Aunt Marion, and fled to my room. I forgot the incident, not even asking how Aunt Marion had handled the remainder of the phone call. On my birthday, October 4, 1961, Aunt Marion took me for a surprise visit to the patriarch, where I received my patriarchal blessing. The Patriarch was a very kind man, and I was very touched that he would give me this blessing, when his wife laid very ill in a nearby room. His commitment to his calling impressed me very much. Aunt Marion was at my side during the blessing, and I appreciated her support and loved having her there. I spent many sleepless nights thereafter reading both my mother's and my own blessings for comfort and inspiration.

Life with a Single Parent

By the end of my freshman year, Dad had completed the Penguin Pool Club in Indio, and had relocated in Sacramento, California. He decided to join his old pal Bill Stoddard and sell condominiums in a large complex Bill had built. (Bill, Loren, and Gene Stoddard were brothers who had lived across the street from my Dad for most of Dad's growing up years in Gridley California. Loren Stoddard married my Dad's sister Helen Joe, and Gene Stoddard married my Mother's sister Maree.)

Grandmother Fife and all five of us children moved in with Dad to a rental home across the street from the condominiums. Grandmother got us established, and then spent a month that summer in New York. I was in charge of running the household in grandmother's absence. Everyone survived. Upon grandmother's return, I went back to Fresno for a week of Girls Camp. While I was gone, Dad was introduced to Barbara Pickering Seymour by a mutual friend, Brother Stewart, who was my Sunday School teacher at the time. Barbara had been

visiting friends when they met, and she returned home to Long Beach before I got back from Girl Camp.

Dad Remarries

Dad immediately told me about meeting Barbara Pickering Seymour after I returned from camp. Their romance was carried on by letter and by phone, with an occasional visit to Visalia, where Barbara's mother lived, equidistant to both of their homes. By Thanksgiving they were engaged, and Barbara brought her three sons to meet our family. They stayed for several days, and then we did not see them again until after the wedding and honeymoon, December 23, 1961, when we moved into a rented house in Costa Mesa California, already occupied by Barbara, and her sons, John, Lew and Doug Seymour. We had met the Seymours just once, had not been invited to attend the wedding, and were now sharing house and parents with strangers. It was quite an adjustment for us all.

The house was decorated for Christmas. Our parents took their newly blended family to Thriftys, gave us each a dollar, and had us buy gifts for everyone with that money. Buying gifts for nine people with one dollar was a challenge even in 1961! We managed, though, mostly by pooling our resources together to buy nicer gifts. It did get us going on cooperation, and it was fun to be all met with the same challenge. I did have two unhappy sisters, though, because I noticed that hair nets, a bargain at ten cents each, were nicely made for wrapping a head full of rollers (which of course interested me, age 15). I urged each of them to buy a hairnet for the other, and when each gift was opened, it was clear that hair care products were not what either girl was hoping for.

After Christmas holidays, I enrolled in Costa Mesa High School. I was a sophomore, and was attending my third high school. Since my mother's death, less than two years before, this was the third household I had lived in. I immersed myself in school, seminary and church, and spent as much time as I could with my brothers and sisters, getting acquainted with my three new stepbrothers.

Dad and Barbara decided to build a home large enough to accommodate eight active children. In anticipation of the date of completion, I transferred to Fullerton High School for my senior year. The first semester, JoAnn and John, who were freshmen attended seminary with me in Costa Mesa and then I drove the three of us to Fullerton for school. We moved into the house at 1310 Miramar in January, ending a very challenging commute. I had attended a total of 12 schools, including 4 high schools!

Whenever the subject of high school reunions comes up I wonder which school I would return to. I had the interesting experience of attending school in central, northern and southern California. I have never returned to any of them. They remain as they were in my memory. I do wish I had been able to keep in touch with my friends. I would love to know how life has treated them.

BYU Years

I attended BYU as a freshman in September of 1964, a month before I turned eighteen. We loaded up the Greenbriar and the whole family accompanied me back to school. The underpowered van was not equal to the challenge, and we suffered numerous breakdowns, due to broken fan belts. The trip took more than a day, and I do not remember where we slept at night. We may have just driven straight through.

I had never seen BYU, but knew I wanted to attend. My family drove to Wymount Terrace, where a section had been converted to girls housing, and they dropped me off and left. I remember driving by the campus on 900 East going toward Wymount and being terrified by the size of the campus. It was much larger than I had imagined, and I wondered if I was doing the right thing. In a few days, I was quite comfortable, and at BYU, I had my first chance to put down real roots. I attended school there for four years and returned for another two years to live in Provo when my husband was in graduate school.

The Story of our Romance

I met Roger Rice at a Back to School Mutual dance in the Harris Fine Arts Center, room B201-203 at the beginning of my Sophomore year. He had returned home from his mission shortly before the beginning of the semester, and I was the first girl he asked to dance. I was immediately attracted to him, and remember clearly the first moment I saw him. He was so recently returned from his mission, that he forgot how to escort a dance partner off the floor at the end of the dance. So we danced several dances, and then he finally said, "I've got to get a drink of water," and then bolted off the dance floor!

In a few weeks, he became interested in someone else in our ward, and it was hard to watch that growing romance from the sidelines. I joined the Honor Council that fall, and kept busy with school and Honor Council activities. In January, I was stunned to find Roger and I had both registered for the same genealogy class. It was a large class, and several ward members were in it, and he sat by them.

I had become restless for a change shortly before Christmas, and had dyed my hair platinum blonde. Then, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when I had genealogy, I also had synchronized swimming and creative writing, two consecutive class periods. I had 10 minutes to change out of my swim suit, climb the steps from the Richards building and dash to the library, where my creative writing class was held on the top floor! The only way to make it on time to my writing class was to dress quickly, pull a wig on over my wet hair, and dash up a total of 6 flights of stairs. Genealogy was in the morning and my other classes were in the afternoon. I wore the wig all day, because, where else would I put the wig?

Wigs were kind of a novelty at the time, and I had bought mine from my Startup cousins, who had a little wholesale supply going. The only kind they had when I bought mine, was red, so I was this red-headed person on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I am explaining this, because Roger was having trouble recognizing me. He had heard that I was in the Genealogy class, but he had met me when I had natural medium brown hair, and now I was a blonde on Sundays, and a red-head on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Roger finally figured out who I was, even though he did not remember me from that Back to School Dance at Mutual. He became interested in getting to know me because of hearing me bear my testimony on Fast Sunday in January, 1966. He found out a little about me, and joined Honor Council in order to become acquainted. We quickly became good friends, and he began leaving me notes in the filing cabinet in the honor council room in the basement of the brand new Wilkinson Center. There was a spindle on the desk, and he would leave a note, "Check your file" and there would be a cute, customized-by-Roger greeting card or thought in my file. I began leaving him notes in his file, too. He began walking me home from school, and we would eat dinner every night together in the Morris Center Cafeteria. He didn't ask me out though, and I had the uncomfortable experience of working in the Honor Council office at a time when the line for the movie theater upstairs overflowed to the basement and past the door of the honor council room. While I was typing, Roger appeared in line with a date, and he introduced me to her, very casually. I was beginning to feel discouraged.

In the meantime, I had met someone else, and we dated a few times. He asked me to the Prom, and I accepted, not knowing Roger had planned to ask me to the Prom. Roger was terrible, the night he knew I was sewing a formal for the dance and had to finish it. He called me from the lobby and had ice cream cones for both of us, and he kept me talking way longer than I should have. I sewed most of the night. The dance was nice, but after my date had invited me to the Prom, he met the girl he eventually married. So even though we were both very good friends, neither one of us fully enjoyed the evening. The morning after the Prom, Roger sent up a clever invitation and a box of See's candy, asking me to attend a formal dinner dance his Mission was having in two weeks. I accepted, and that night we went to the movies, and dated every chance we got for the rest of the semester.

It was a beautiful early courtship. Perfect, at first. We both lived in Southern California, and although Roger lived 30 minutes away from my home, we dated a lot through the summer. We enjoyed being together, and we had a special song, "Cherish," by the Association. When Roger gave me a record of that song and explained why he thought it should be "our song," I played it so often that my family got really tired of hearing it. I worked at Disneyland, at the glamorous job of selling hamburgers at the Space Bar, and Roger worked in his family business, L.R. Rice Mortuary. Sometimes he picked me up for dates in a hearse, and it was fun to watch the shocked looks of my co-workers as he drove up, helped me into the car and drove off in the coach.

We had both been asked to be Y-Group leaders in the fall, and drove back to school together with Roger's Dad and his "lady-friend." (Roger's mother had died while he was on his mission.) We were going back early, in order to attend a leadership training conference at Fish Lake in southern Utah, before taking up our Y-Group duties at Freshman orientation. The trip to Utah with his Dad was a strange one, and Roger avoided me during most of the leadership conference. Finally, he explained that just before leaving Maywood, his Dad, influenced by the woman who he was dating, had decided to ask that Roger break off our

relationship. Roger was a dutiful son, and yet he had deep feelings for me, and was very torn as to what he should do.

We decided to remain friends, but not to date. We were in the same ward and housing complex, but did not share meals, or walk to and from campus together. We both began dating others. I was sure our relationship had ended. At Christmastime, after long talks with his father, Roger realized that his father was afraid of losing him. He was already widowed, and his other children were grown and established in their own homes. His father had gotten to know me a little better, and gave his blessing for Roger to continue our courtship. This was a painful period of my life, because I had such deep feelings for Roger, but I remain impressed that he had such faith in his father that he would listen to and respect his counsel even under such difficult circumstances.

With the set-back, our courtship did not resume automatically. It took several ups and downs. Finally, I got discouraged, and deliberately signed up for summer school at BYU, to get a new start. I felt this relationship just wasn't going to work out, and I wanted to go on with my life. Well, absence did make each of our hearts fonder. We wrote frequently, and Roger called often, and also set up a little system of ringing once, whenever he just wanted to let me know he was thinking of me. By the end of the summer, I decided to fast and pray to see what the Lord thought of our relationship. The friend who had taken me to the prom suggested the fast, and he fasted with me. I was given a very calm, peaceful assurance that I should marry Roger.

We still had a few obstacles, however, because both of us were afraid of making a commitment. There would be risk involved in sharing our feelings, and in making the announcement to the world that we were in love. I invited him to go camping with my family to Dinkey Creek, the week after I returned from summer school.

He picked me up from the airport when I came home, in his newly acquired Mustang. We went out to dinner, to Yamados, a Japanese restaurant. It was a beautiful evening, and we both felt very comfortable being with each other. Roger also survived the week of camping with my family. The blended family included a total of five boys, and Roger slept in the boys' tent. They all gave him a thorough test of endurance!

When we went back to BYU, we both had leadership positions, and both were speaking in Sacrament meeting. Roger had other things on his mind, and neither asked me to walk down to Sacrament Meeting with him, nor saved a place on the stand for me to sit by him. His third mistake was to immediately leave after the meeting. I walked home alone, fed up with the complications of comparing my expectations to his. I got angrier with every step home.

I had not known that Roger was preoccupied with a good friend's farewell. It had been in Idaho, Roger had been unable to attend because of the talk he had given, and he rushed to a phone to call his friend and wish him the best on his mission. I walked right by the phone on my way to my dorm room. Just finishing the call, Roger could see how upset I was, and caught up with me to see what was wrong. He suggested we go for a walk.

Neither of us has ever been able to explain how it happened, but we started that walk with me being angrier than I had ever been in my life. By the time we arrived back at my dorm, I was on the other end of the scale, completely happy. Somehow, after I calmed down, and after we told each other how we really felt, Roger asked me to wear his pin. At that time, it was customary for couples who weren't able to jump right into engagement, to pledge they would only date each other, and a pin would be given to the girl, which of course she would wear constantly. Originally the pin was a fraternity pin, however, at BYU, young men had to be resourceful. Roger gave me a beautiful handmade pin fashioned in the shape of the seal of the United States, which had been made for him when he was in Central America on his mission.

Becoming "pinned" put our romance back on track, as it has been the spring we met, my sophomore year. I was a senior now, trying to finish college. He was MIA President, I was Relief Society President, in our student ward, the 46th ward, BYU 6th stake. Before we knew it, Christmas vacation arrived. We traveled home together.

My five brothers were keyed up, watching us closely. They were sure Roger was going to propose to me soon, and were very interested in the small gift-wrapped box Roger slipped under our tree. We planned to spend Christmas morning with our own families. Because Roger wasn't there when I unwrapped my present, I felt it couldn't be a ring. I saved it to open last, and all eyes were upon me as I finally opened the small box. It was a watch! Ohhhh, the disappointment around the room. I tried to explain what a thoughtful gift that was, because I needed a watch, especially on Sundays when I was conducting meetings.

I received my endowments the week before Christmas. A very dear friend, Elaine Boozer, the head-resident of the dorm where I lived and worked as a resident assistant, was marrying in the Salt Lake temple, just after Christmas. I talked with my Bishop, and he agreed that was a good time for me to go through the temple myself. I went through the Los Angeles Temple, and my Dad, step-mother, and Roger went with me.

We both returned from vacation early, in order to attend Sister Boozer's wedding. A friend, Dennis Devereaux, drove back with us. At the beginning of the trip, Dennis told me how much fun he and Roger had the night before, going to a discotheque (disco-dancing was popular at that time.) I didn't realize he was teasing, and he thought that was such a ridiculous idea that I would catch on. I believed him, and was quiet the rest of the trip. Roger and Dennis were good friends, and had a nice visit clear back to Provo.

The next morning, Roger and I both attended Sister Boozer's wedding. It was a thrill to be able to go inside the Salt Lake Temple. We were shown to the sealing room, and it was explained that there had been a delay in the schedule of the sealer. Spencer W. Kimball, an apostle, had agreed to perform the sealing. While we were waiting, Roger whispered, "come with me, I want to show you something." Thinking he meant architecture, I followed him into the hall. We were alone, and turning, he faced me, and asked me to marry him. I didn't hesitate to say yes, and he pulled out a tiny box, the one my brothers had yearned to see, and gave me an engagement ring. Because of the disco-comment of our friend, I was completely

shocked, and absolutely had no idea that we would become engaged inside the Salt Lake Temple. It was a moment I will cherish always.

Meeting an Apostle

As if we weren't happy enough, we floated back into the sealing room, and told the others about our engagement. Then, Spencer W. Kimball walked in the room, and when he heard we had just become engaged, he sat us beside the bride and groom, and directed his remarks to all four of us. I was in such a state of shock, I regret that I remember very little of his counsel. He talked a lot about love and courtesy, and thoughtfulness, but he also talked about the commitment a couple needs to make to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I do remember clearly that he admonished us to bear our testimonies frequently throughout our lives. I have since taken that to mean testifying both in word and deed, and have tried to live up to that standard.

Our Wedding

We were married June 7, 1968 in the Los Angeles Temple. Neither of us had our mothers, and we didn't know much about the planning of weddings (We didn't know it was customary for the fathers to be the witnesses, so Roger asked his best friend, and I asked Uncle Dean. We also didn't even think of having our picture taken outside the temple. The thought just didn't even occur to us, and no one suggested it!)

What we did have was a perfect wedding. We were in the house of the Lord, surrounded by many members of the family. Even though my mother wasn't there, much of her family was, including Grandpa Berry and Aunt Martha, Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion, Aunt Elizabeth, and her sister Ruth Brown, and many others. We were sealed by Benjamin Bowring, the president of the Temple, a close friend of Roger's Dad. Everyone was dressed in white, and it was one of the happiest days in my life. (Welcoming my babies and grandbabies are also ranked high on my "Happiest Days" list!)

We had a reception at my family's new home in Fullerton. I had only lived in Fullerton for six months before I left for school, and felt more secure having the reception at home. My step mother did all the planning, as I was finishing up school until the week before the wedding. My brothers and sisters worked overtime getting the wedding festivities planned and I appreciate their help very much. We had very little money, yet the evening was lovely. Don E. Priestley, as a wedding present, offered to take photos of the reception at no cost. I am doubly attached to those photographs because they are momentos of our wedding day, and because Don E. took the pictures!



Diana and Roger Rice's wedding day
Photographer: Don E. Priestley

Our Honeymoon was spent in Laguna Beach, California. We stayed at the Chalmers Apartments, where we rented a tiny place with a kitchen and living room. We loved the ocean, enjoyed looking through the art galleries, and window shopped for our future home. I had wished we could travel to Europe, but finance was a definite obstacle, so instead, I had a theme for each dinner, and we “traveled“ to Russia, England, Japan, New York, the South, and Hawaii. The one night we could afford to eat out, we ate in a Mexican Restaurant. For our first anniversary, we brought a picnic back to Laguna Beach for an afternoon of enjoying the beach and more window shopping. Our second anniversary, we were more affluent: we returned to Laguna Beach, and splurged at the Victor Hugo Inn for a luxurious dinner.

Married Life--the “Happily Ever After“ Part

We started out our marriage the week after Roger graduated from BYU with a bachelors degree in Spanish. He began working for the family mortuary business the week after we returned home from our honeymoon. We had the 1965 Mustang Roger had purchased the summer before from his summer earnings at the Mortuary. We had our personal belongings from college, three hundred dollars, and our wedding presents! We were able to move into an apartment next to the mortuary. The apartment came with the job, fortunately, because the salary started at \$350 per month. It was a one bedroom apartment over a garage, but it was ours, and we enjoyed fixing it up (it hadn't been occupied for several years.)

We lived in a tiny ward, and people routinely held several callings. Roger was called to be Young Mens President of a tri-ward group of youth. I was called to be a Primary teacher and to teach Cultural Relations in Relief Society. We felt life was so full as we worked on our apartment, Roger established himself at work, we had our new callings, and soon we found that our first baby was on the way. It was with profound joy that we received the news that we would be parents. We drove away from the doctor's appointment feeling so blessed, and so happy, (and a little scared) to know we two would soon be three.

Roger was very patient with me, as morning sickness became a daily occurrence. Morning wasn't the only part of the day I felt ill, and I became hyper-sensitive to smells. The smell of anything could make me sick, like orange juice, or a strong perfume. But worst of all was the smell of meat cooking. I had planned to be a good cook, and couldn't even stand the smell of dinner.

Roger was drafted, and decided to join the air force delayed enlistment program to enter officer-training and become a pilot. In that program, you joined up and three months later began active duty. We timed entry so that our baby would be several weeks old before Roger would enter military service. Before the baby arrived, we packed up most of our things, put them in storage. One day, we spent the day at Roger's Dad's house, doing small repairs, and visiting. I began to feel back pains. I had wondered what labor pains felt like, but assumed I had hurt my back.

By morning, it was clear that I was in labor. We drove to Lynwood, to the hospital my doctor preferred. It was just down the street from where Grandpa Berry's dental office had been. I wished my grandparents were still there. We checked into St. Francis, a private, Catholic Hospital.

There were strict rules--the father could only be in the labor room 10 minutes out of every hour, and was permanently banished to the waiting room during delivery. There were no exceptions. I was alone much of the time during my long labor, in a lot of pain, and frightened. I just hung on for the 10 minute visits from my husband. He gave me a blessing of comfort during one of the visits, and that continued to sustain me.

By nightfall, I could not handle the pain without screaming. The nurse gave me a sedative to help me sleep, turned off the lights, removed the call-button, and shut the door. That was the

most terrifying and lonely experience in my life. I was in tremendous pain, and I was all alone. The only thing that seemed to give me relief was to concentrate on screaming. I am not proud of this. I was alone, screaming, for several hours, and of course could not sleep at all. My baby was posterior. Her head was in the correct position, but she was face forward instead of toward my back. This meant a longer labor, and more back pain. At that time the only pain relief came from what was called a saddle block. It could not be given until near the end of labor, and it numbed everything from the waist down.

When I reached the delivery room, and was finished with the pushing, then I received the spinal block. Stephanie was born without further complications, and she seemed to me to be the most beautiful baby in the world. I was able to tell Roger he had a daughter, before he went to the nursery to meet his newborn child. The first moment I held Stephanie, after she was cleaned up several hours later, was such a moment of wonder to me. I had thought I understood parenthood, because I was a child, but until that moment had no idea of the absolute joy, blessing, and responsibility a parent feels for their child.

When Stephanie was a week old, we moved the rest of our things into storage, and spent the time before Roger was to report to Air Force duty, with his Dad and step-mother. During the night, we got a phone call that changed everything. Roger's brother, Royden, who ran the family business, had just suffered a heart attack, and was gravely ill. It was important for Roger to run the business while Royden recovered. When the Air Force was called about delaying entry a second time, they were sympathetic to the situation, but were unable to delay--they could only discharge. So Roger received an honorable discharge from the Air Force without ever serving a day.

This was an emotional and hectic time, as Roger worked with the business, and we unpacked our things from storage. This time the large apartment above the mortuary was available, the "house" Roger had lived in all of his life. His Dad had recently moved from that home of 50 years, after he remarried. It was a huge place, and we had few belongings. We did have plenty of room, and I remember thinking that most young couples try to make rooms look bigger, and we were trying to make them look furnished. Too much and not enough are both out of proportion. Ironically, I have dealt with lack of space during all the years of raising our family since then!

Not long after we knew we were expecting our second child, Roger received a draft notice again from the Army. This was during the Viet Nam war, and draft boards had quotas for how many men per month they needed. There was no time, this second draft to make other arrangements. Roger was to report for duty the week before our second baby was due. No communication was allowed during basic training, so it looked like not only was I going to have this baby without Roger's help, he would not even know about the birth for several weeks!

By then, his brother had recovered enough to resume management of the Mortuary. I did not have anywhere else to live, so I was allowed to remain in the apartment above the Mortuary. By then I was Primary President, and Stephanie was almost a year old. The morning I drove

Roger to the induction center, we left for downtown L.A. about 4:30 a.m. I was trying to be brave, but broke down completely as we said good-bye. It took me several minutes to compose myself enough to be able to drive home. I felt ashamed because I had been unable to be stoic, and Roger had been sent off knowing his wife was in hysterics. I also felt scared, it had been hard to only have Roger by my side 10 minutes of every hour, and facing the pain of childbirth on my own was difficult to handle.

That day was a Primary day, so I was forced back to the real world, and it did help to have much to do. Roger called a few times, when he was waiting around between processing stations. I had calmed down quite a bit, and was able to at least try to be cheerful. After Primary, as I reached the stairway to our apartment, I heard the phone ringing. Holding Stephanie, I dashed up to answer the phone. It was Roger, saying, "I didn't pass the physical, come and pick me up at the induction center." I couldn't believe it, I had imagined he was on his way to Fort Ord by then, and I was being summoned back to where I had dropped him off!

What had happened is, I had been such an emotional wreck (maybe it was my pregnancy hormones) that Roger's blood pressure had been high when he was given a physical. They told him to relax for a while and they would recheck, which they did repeatedly throughout the day. While waiting, he would call me, thinking another dose of hysterical wife would help. But each time I talked calmly. Of course, early in the day, after the send-off I'd given him, his group had also been told that every other person in line would be going into the Marines rather than the Army, because there was a need for extra troops in the Marines! Even though I had become more composed, perhaps the thought of being a Marine kept Roger's blood pressure high!

They sent him home, with instructions to have a doctor read his blood pressure a week later. That reading was also high. He was given a permanent exception from military service. His blood pressure came down and remained normal for 25 year at which time he needed mild blood pressure treatment.

Our second Child

The arrival of our second baby, Michael, was much easier, although I developed hypertension, and the baby had to be induced. Same doctor, same hospital, same rules. This time, I didn't mind the 10 minute restrictions on Roger's visits nearly as much. We had been very close to having no visits whatsoever. This baby was also posterior. The doctor had told me after my first one, that almost never happens a second time! The labor was not as long, I was assisted by ptosin, and I did not have any time alone in a dark room! I was thrilled to be able to tell Roger that our son, Michael Dean Rice had arrived. I had chosen that name for a son years before, loving the name, and wanting to name a child after my wonderful Uncle Dean.

Graduate School

During the two years we tried to fulfill Roger's father's dream of L.R. Rice & Sons Mortuary, we had our first two children, Stephanie and Michael. We also learned that family businesses aren't always a good idea, and prepared to return to BYU so that Roger could earn an MBA. While we prepared to go to graduate school, I continued to be Primary President. Our former bishop, Gordon Low, who had been the bishop during our courtship, called Roger to be his counselor in the 46th ward when we got back to school. Soon after we traveled to Provo to find a place to live, we learned that we were expecting our third child.

Our ward in Maywood had many opinions about the closeness in age of our children, and had made cutting comments, such as, "how nice, your family is complete, now that you have a son and a daughter." I was very uncomfortable with being in the center of public opinion. Coward that I was, I didn't tell anyone that we were expecting our third child. We moved to Provo, prepared for our third child's arrival, and Roger entered the MBA program. We were happy to be blessed with a third child, but didn't appreciate the many negative comments.

My sister, JoAnn shared our apartment the first semester we were back in Provo. Roger plunged into the MBA program, and bishopric responsibilities. With caring for two children, and pregnant with my third child, the time passed by very quickly. In late summer, I set to work putting up the low-cost produce abundant in Provo at that time. One day I was peeling peaches at the sink with my step-brother John's wife, Diana. It was a hot day, and we had worked several hours, with the canner on the stove making it steamy and hot. She said, "Wouldn't you hate to be pregnant on a day like this?" That is when I told her I was!

My days were filled with caring for the needs of my two children, and enjoying their sweet personalities. They were both learning to talk, Michael learned to walk, and he grew so rapidly, that he passed his sister up in size before he was a year old! He was especially fun to tickle, and had such a good imagination, that the mere threat of a tickle would send him into a fit of laughing!

My new doctor, and Utah Valley Hospital were much less rigid in their policies. Husbands could be with their wives during the entire labor. However only those husbands who attended a two-hour orientation, were allowed to remain during delivery. Roger was never able to squeeze the mandatory class into his MBA schedule, so for the third time was banished to the waiting room. The delivery was completely different, because the baby's head was in proper position. The labor was shorter, and I tried a paracervical block. It did not work, but the labor was so much easier, I felt in control. The block had worn off, and I needed nothing else for the final delivery. This time, I was comfortable enough to be able to enjoy telling Roger that he had a baby daughter.

Cindy was a pure joy, a perfect baby, and Stephanie and Michael adored her. She was beautiful, and fit right into our noisy household.

The children were my major focus. Cindy was six weeks old before Stephanie, our "oldest" turned two. I avoided questions of age, because of the shocked looks I got when I admitted that the oldest of my three children was still under age two! Roger was away many hours

with his graduate school load and bishopric responsibilities. I was very busy, concentrating on the care and nurturing of my three darling children.

It was not easy to venture outside the world of my little home, however. I did try walking around the block once, with Michael in the front of the double stroller, and Cindy in the back, in an infant seat. That left Stephanie on her feet, and it was the longest block I have ever been around. She loved the independence, and ran up and down each driveway, the entire block!

The children grew quickly, and every day was a new adventure. Michael and Stephanie had such cute personalities, and Cindy soon learned how to keep up with her siblings. As soon as she could sit up and play with a toy, Stessie or Myco, as they called each other, would grab whatever she was holding. She would not cry, she would just watch the journey the toy took, and as soon as it was discarded, she would pounce on it, and resume her play. Stephanie and Michael talked constantly, and Cindy, by the age of nine months began using language. She startled me by crawling over to the counter where I was unpacking groceries, and clearly asked, “banana?” It was her first word.

Stephanie, JoAnn and President Joseph Fielding Smith

At the end of the first year of graduate school, my sister JoAnn and I decided to attend the opening session of Education Week. It was being held in the fieldhouse across the street from our house. We especially wanted to go because of my two year old, Stephanie, and because the Prophet, Joseph Fielding Smith, was speaking. Stephanie had seen the flyer advertising the event, and was drawn to the picture of President Smith. She would carry it around with her, and would say, “Christ.” She was so young, we were struck by the sacredness of her response. We determined we would attend, even though my three children were all very young. JoAnn assured me she would help, and it was the only way we could both go.

We arrived early enough to get seats on the front row of permanent seating at either side of the speaker’s platform. Folding chairs were set out in front of that platform, but we got good seats at the side, and we were about twenty yards from where the Prophet sat. He was also there early, and as I settled my new baby Cindy, and one-year-old Michael, JoAnn decided to take Stephanie up for a closer look at the Prophet.

This is a scene forever in my mind. I watched as JoAnn went to within about 15 feet of the Prophet and his wife, and stood quietly talking to Stephanie about the Prophet. Sister Jesse Evans Smith saw them, and motioned for them to come over. JoAnn shook her head “no” and President Smith joined in motioning. JoAnn did as was suggested (it was the Prophet) and went over, and they were both able to shake hands with President Smith and his wife. It was a thrill to see my little girl, who had so responded to a photograph, be able to shake hands with the Prophet.

The remainder of the time we lived in Provo, whenever we passed the fieldhouse, our little Stephanie would reverently say, “Christ.” I began to realize I had as much to learn as to teach as a mother.

Summer with my Siblings

That summer, Bonnie, JoAnn, Randy and Brad joined us in Provo. Dad and Barbara were spending the summer in New York. We rented the apartment basement of our house for them all to stay in. Needing income, we tried setting up “The Gnu Tie Company” and we hand-sewed ties in the basement living room. The income was low, but we did learn a lot about business! It was fun having my siblings nearby, and we enjoyed many happy hours together. Bonnie and JoAnn watched my children for me while I attended one summer school class every day. We also sewed for Bonnie, who had just graduated, and was getting ready to attend Ricks College.

Half-way Through Business School

We found that we were again expecting a baby. I went through my second winter in Provo, never needing a coat, because I get so warm during pregnancy! This time, Roger was able to take the mandatory orientation class, and Randy’s birth was the first of our children Roger was able to witness.

By now, I was really streamlining my standards. I simplified, eased up, and studied efficiency. I got a planner, and I never had the feeling of being in complete control of my life. It was joyful, but busy. JoAnn became engaged and married at this time, and I helped with the wedding reception. There was a change in Bishops, and Roger was the only remaining member of the bishopric, so had extra hours of meetings during the transition. Our new Bishop was Bruce L. Christensen, a man of many talents. We enjoyed getting to know Bruce and his wife, Barbara. Bruce became director of KBYU, went on to serve as President of PBS for many years, and is now the Dean of the college of Humanities. We still enjoy a friendship with the Christensens.

When we married, I was six credits short of earning my degree, and it took me four years to earn them! Of course, having four children during that time did slow down my academic career. The English department at BYU was changing, so I realized if I was to graduate, I would have to finish while Roger was earning his MBA. By taking a summer school class, a correspondence class, and one night class, I completed my degree. Roger and I both graduated when our fourth child, Randy, was two weeks old!

Randy’s birth was complicated by posterior position, my third one! The doctor turned him three times with forceps, and each time, he flipped back over, facing upward. Finally, he turned on his own, and the birth process was soon completed. It had been a long labor. At one point, labor stopped completely, and we were sent back home. Uncle Barry and Aunt JoAnn had been caring for the other children, and as they left, Barry said, “call us even if it is 2:30 in the morning.” Sure enough, at almost exactly 2:30 a.m. the labor resumed and Randy was born that morning. This time, the paracervical block they gave, helped me

manage the pain. It was wonderful to have Roger with me during the entire labor and delivery.

For my graduation gift, we had this portrait taken of our family. Randy was really too young to tell what he was really like in the photo, but we wanted a memento of our family as we both graduated from BYU.



Roger had been hired by EDS two months before he finished graduate school. Our big dream going in to the MBA program was to someday earn \$1,000 per month. And here we were, with a good job, at our goal salary. They were ready to move us as soon as school was out, and were not sure where they would assign us. They offered health insurance (which we had not had during graduate school) and would hire professional movers. The movers were an especially welcome part of the package because we would have a brand new baby just before the move.

A “Carefully Planned” Move to California

EDS delayed in giving us our assignment until the week before Roger was to report to work. It was the San Francisco office. His client was Blue Shield of California. EDS employees work at the job site of the client companies they serve. We heard on a Monday about the San Francisco assignment, the movers came on Thursday and packed up all our things. I sat on the front lawn all day with three little toddlers playing around me, tending my newborn, and watching Roger and the movers dismantle our home. As they left, we told them to take their time. They told us they would call the EDS office on Monday to get the address for delivery of our household goods!

While we had been waiting for our assignment from EDS, one day I was looking into the eyes of our newborn son, and noticed the darkness in his eyes was clearing, and that it looked

like the pupil was torn in his right eye. We rushed to our pediatrician who told us the condition was congenital, we just hadn't been able to see it at first. He also told us that he wasn't sure if there was any sight at all possibly in either eye! We were worried and distracted, and planned to visit an eye specialist as soon as we knew where we were going to be living.

When we learned of our San Francisco assignment, I called Uncle Dean, who was an ophthalmologist practicing in Fresno, not far from the Bay area. We explained our worries and our situation, and he invited us to come see him and he would examine Randy's eyes.

Side-trip for a Professional Opinion

We traveled to California on Friday, driving straight to Fresno. We just couldn't wait any longer to find out about our baby's vision. We drove in our 1965 mustang, with three children in three car seats strapped into the back seat. There was no more room there, so I held Randy's car bed in my lap the entire journey. In those days, we were considered extra cautious because we used car seats for our children. Most of our friends didn't even own them. A baby was either held, or put in a car bed or infant seat. But the devices were only for holding children who could not sit up themselves, they were not attached to the car in any way. Children were allowed to move around a car, pretty much as they wanted. Actually, seat belts even for adults were still quite a new idea.

Early Saturday morning, Uncle Dean took us to his office, where he examined our son. He told us that Randy had a coloboma. That is a condition where the embryo eye, as it is being changed from a disk shape to a sphere, sometimes does not fully complete the closure. What we thought was torn, was actually the remainder of the "seam" each eye forms, which normally leaves no reminder of its former shape. Uncle Dean found that only Randy's right eye was affected. He felt it was probably functioning, but that it would be unable to know for sure until Randy was about a year old. When Randy was old enough, we took him to see Dr. Hilton, a world renowned retinal specialist who was a friend of Uncle Dean's. Dr. Hilton told us that Randy's eye was fully functional and that someday, just like anyone else, the eye treatment he would most likely face was glasses. We were so happy to know that our son did have the precious gift of sight after all.

My family all during my childhood had depended upon Uncle Dean for our medical treatment. My parents had no insurance and very little money, and Uncle Dean at that time was a general practitioner with a family practice in the same city we lived in, Fresno. I am sure that he never charged us for the stream of medical needs he treated. Even when we were at family reunions, Uncle Dean was usually nearby, treating all manner of ailments that happen on camping trips.

For that reason, I was especially relieved that now we had medical insurance, and I could finally pay Uncle Dean for a treatment. Then I attempted to arrange to pay him for the eye examination. I insisted, explaining that we were insured. Uncle Dean just stared at me, waved my offers aside, and chuckled softly and gave me a big hug. At that moment, I finally

understood that all of the care he had given to my family had not been out of obligation, it had been out of love for my mother and her children!

Setting Down Roots

We drove directly from Uncle Dean's office to Walnut Creek, a suburb of San Francisco, where we were to meet the EDS person assigned to help settle us in a motel. We would stay in a motel until we found a place. However, if we didn't find a place quickly, our belongings would go into storage, and we would have to pay to have them delivered. We had so little money, it was very important to find a place by Monday. We checked into a motel, and Roger called a recommended Realtor, while I bathed and fed the children. We searched fruitlessly with the Realtor for the rest of the day. While still in Utah, we had checked around, and felt that the area closest to San Francisco that we could afford would probably be in the East Bay, somewhere around Concord, Pleasant Hill, or Walnut Creek. So we concentrated our search there.

Early Sunday morning, Roger went out for a newspaper, and we looked at all the ads, concentrating on the cities we had targeted. I got the children ready for church, and we thought we'd look for a house to rent, and then go to church wherever we could find a meetinghouse. The first house we went to was perfect for us. It was a four bedroom home with a big fenced yard. It seemed like a castle because we had been living in a tiny two bedroom house with a small unfenced yard in Provo. Of course it was a big shock to adjust to the California housing prices. The house we were looking at, very reasonable for the area, was more than triple the \$100 per month rent we had been paying during our two years at BYU.

The landlords, a young and childless couple, had determined that they did not want to rent to anyone with children (not against the law at that time) but our children were all dressed in their Sunday best, and were well behaved and adorable, so they agreed to lease their house to us. The ad had just started in the paper, and we were the first to look at the house. As we signed the rental agreement, several others came by clutching their newspapers.

After signing our lease, we went to a phone and called the nearest meetinghouse, asked for meeting times and directions. We drove straight to church, and attended Sunday School and Sacrament Meeting!

The next morning, the movers met us at our new home, and we settled in enough to sleep there that evening. We had only needed the motel for two nights! Tuesday, Roger reported to work, and I unpacked and of course tended to the needs of our four little children.

It felt wonderful to be through with the challenges of graduate school and bishopric duties. I was almost 26 years old, with four children, and in a home of my own, a definite answer to a long time prayer.

I remember unpacking the day after the movers left, exactly a week after we had been told in Provo where Roger would work, and thinking, “now what city are we in? Oh, Wal--nut -- Creek.” We bought a home a few blocks away from that rental house a year later, and we have been living in Walnut Creek ever since, more than 25 years in a city that we took less than a week to choose for our first home after college! We have raised our family here, and have enjoyed the many advantages the Bay area has to offer, even though the cost of real estate is so high that we have lived very simply in a three bedroom house.

It was challenging to have many small children to care for, but I felt the Lord had sent them to me, in that order for a reason, and that He would also show me how to care for them. For example, I spent a total of three years caring for three children in diapers. They weren't the same three, when one was trained, another had arrived. Disposable diapers were not an option. How did I do it? I felt directed in buying large quantities of pre-folded cloth diapers. I had a good routine for laundering them, and instead of folding, I stored the clean diapers in a large plastic storage container, and just pulled them out of the container as needed, which was often!

I learned it was easier to run to a fabric store late at night without the children, and then sew for them at home, than to take them shopping for ready made clothes. I learned how to sew more quickly, and saved money by making a huge batch of bibs, and then just dropping them in the laundry to clean, rather than wiping off each one. Each day I depended on nap time, and I needed a nap the most of all! Bed time was early, they were all still babies, and that gave me time to myself each evening.

At times I felt like an airline hostess to little people, and I sometimes tired of getting drinks of milk, juice or water, making peanut butter sandwiches and cleaning up messes, but those were very special years in my life, and I am so happy to have each of those children in our family. The years of routine, ordinary tasks, necessary to nurture a child were more than worth it. I would do it all over again.

Roger was soon called to be Priests' Quorum advisor. We went to Dallas Texas for three weeks of training for EDS, and then were lucky enough to be reassigned to the San Francisco office, so we returned to Walnut Creek.

The Raising of Children

The years child-raising years flew by quickly. After two years of having four preschoolers at home, Stephanie began kindergarten. One day she said to me, “Mom, howcome we've never had a baby?” Memories really dim quickly, don't they? I explained that Heavenly Father helps decide when babies are sent to families. A few weeks later, she said, “Mom, I have been praying and praying for a baby, and we still don't have one. Have you been praying?” I had to admit to myself, that I had not been praying for a baby!

In 1975, we had our fifth child, Anna Marie. She was an answer to prayer. It had been three years since the birth of our last baby. I had needed the rest, and in addition to caring for our children, had worked on many remodeling projects. We were delighted, though, to be

expecting once again. Right away, I developed high blood pressure, and for six months had weekly doctor appointments. I received excellent prenatal care.

Eventually, Dr. Kenneth Drellich determined that it was time to induce, a little earlier than I had anticipated. Unprepared, I begged for extra time. He gave me two hours. I dashed home, packed my bag for the hospital, put one child down for a nap, welcomed another one home from school, send a third off to a birthday party, and kissed the last one goodbye, leaving my household in the capable hands of my sister. Then I drove to the BART Station, picked Roger up and made it to the hospital at the appointed hour. It felt strange driving myself to the hospital! Anna was posterior, and the labor was prolonged, but she arrived safely that evening. By now, epidurals were available, even though quite new, and I was amazed at the difference! There was no significant pain, and delivery was much easier.

JoAnn and Barry had just finished school, and were staying with us. They were such a help, and again, took care of the other children when we had our baby. JoAnn helped me in so many ways, and I especially appreciate how she helped me establish the nursing schedule. I was able to nurse Anna much longer than I had been able to for my others, clear until she was ready for a cup.

JoAnn, was the mother of two, and along with mine, there were six little children clamoring to see the new baby. When Anna needed a nap, I would lock her in the bedroom, and wear the key around my neck, so that I knew I could rush to her at any time! It was the only way to keep her undisturbed.

Chicken Pox, and more

That summer, friends dropped by with a child who had chicken pox. One by one, we went through cases of chicken pox, with even our sister Bonnie's two children catching them, for a total of nine cases of chicken pox within a two month period. Even our little baby caught a light case. We learned to make yogurt pops that summer, and made a gallon of yogurt at a time, and froze hundreds of pops. With my sister there, I over-estimated our abilities, and ordered cases of apricots to can. They all ripened at the same time, we lost at least half of them, and canned the rest in a flurry of activity. We call that time our "Chicken Pox--Apricot-Yogurt Pop Summer, and it was indeed memorable.

A Half-Dozen children!

Christopher was born a few days after Stephanie was baptized. Again, I had hypertension, and made weekly visits to the obstetrician. I had my first ultrasound test ever, and they calculated from the ultrasound that the baby's due date would be April 6th. We decided to name him Christopher, servant of Christ, because we thought he would be born on Christ's real birthday. He fooled us though, and was born April 1st. We still named him Christopher James Rice. James is in honor of my youngest brother, Bradley James Fife. (Christopher thinks we should have named him Christopher Thomas, because then he'd be CTR. I tease back that we could have named him Victor Christopher, and then he'd be VCR.) Christopher was an adorable baby, and once again, I wondered how I got along so long without this child.

My sister Bonnie had moved nearby, and she helped me care for my other children, and just as JoAnn had done when she helped me with Anna Marie, Bonnie helped me establish a good schedule so that I could care for and nurse my baby.

Raise up a child...

As each child became school age, my life in the cocoon of home-life, enlarged. Primary (at the time, mid-week) volunteering at school, dance lessons, music lessons, cub scouts, soccer practice and visits with the children's friends all contributed to a lot of time on the road driving everyone around. I squeezed in time for Relief Society, and often substituted in both Primary and Young Women's. Having Primary on Tuesdays, Relief Society on Wednesday mornings, and Young Women's Wednesday evenings, pretty much took the slack out of every week.

When we had five of our six children in elementary school, my sixth child thought something was wrong if we didn't spend half the morning in the car! The others had enjoyed a regular routine at home as toddlers, while we still pretty much stayed home-based. But by the time Christopher arrived, we had become a family on the move! The year we had Christopher, Roger was released from the Priests' Quorum and called to the High Council. I was called to be Laurel Advisor. I thought our lives couldn't be any busier.

Then we hit adolescence. It seemed like we went from a world of soccer, dance lessons, and scouting, gradually into a world of mutual activities, girls camp, scout camp, Youth conferences, Saturday night dances, skin care, braces, after school sports, and clothing allowances. Our children were learning independence and adjusting to peer pressure. Those were the best of times, and the worst of times. We had thought nights were sleepless with newborns, but the sleeplessness of waiting for a child who is out for the evening is an even stronger test of endurance!

It was a privilege to escort our family through the growing up years. I really enjoyed being able to be a full time mother, and Roger and I attended every recital, concert, game, or other important event in our children's lives that we could. Of course we couldn't do it all, but we tried to attend everything possible. I remember one night I had concerts to attend at three different schools all the same night. Roger was out of town, so couldn't help me, and by pure luck, I made it to all three schools and watched the music performances of four children

Six was not enough

Stephanie was fourteen when we found that we were expecting our seventh baby. We were delighted to adding another person to our family. Christopher was born just after my 30th birthday and now I was 36. I had adjusted, and had sometimes counted to see where everyone was, and felt somehow that one was missing. It must have been preparation for Brian.

We had a special family home evening and told the children about the baby. Christopher, whom we had worried would feel threatened, was absolutely delighted that he was no longer going to be considered the baby of the family! We had Brian when I was 37, and Roger had

just turned 40. Stephanie was a freshman in high school. By the time Brian was three, he had four siblings attending high school. He came along with us to all many sports events, dance shows, and open houses at school. Brian is the most prepared person I have ever seen for high school. He has been attending events all of his life. When he is a freshman this coming fall of 1998, he will be very comfortable at school!

Hypertension continued to be a challenge for my final pregnancy, and once again, I made weekly visits to my doctor, this time a high risk obstetrician, a woman named Harise Stein. We call Brian our High-tec baby, because sophisticated scientific advances made this pregnancy very different from my first. In 1968, the doctor had surmised I was pregnant when I was examined at 2 12 months, but he said to come back at 3 months to be certain. In 1983, a Home Pregnancy Test confirmed that Brian was on his way, and we knew when I was six weeks pregnant! I contacted a High Risk specialist, because of my previous problems with hypertension, by two months, and had monthly prenatal care from then on. We had at least four ultrasounds taken of Brian. The first was so much better than the picture I had seen of Christopher. I was captivated with the image of a tiny baby, on his hands and knees. At a later ultrasound, we were able to determine the gender. It felt so strange to know well in advance that we were having a boy.

Brian was our tie-breaker since we had three sons and three daughters! Although we were cautious, the pregnancy progressed very well. One of the major risks with hypertension is that the placenta might not circulate enough nutrition to the fetus. No such problem developed, in fact Brian was our largest baby by almost a pound! He was so large, in fact, that it became a problem during delivery. I was glad Roger could be with me, for once again, I was delivering a baby who was in posterior position, my fifth. In that position, as large as he was, he could not travel through the birth canal. After twenty-four hours of labor, I had a cesarean section. Fortunately for me, much of the time I had an epidural block, and the epidural was continued clear through surgery--the only anesthesia needed.

Due to a low grade fever, I was kept in the hospital for five days. Brian stayed with me. It was very special to have my husband and children visit frequently, but I was very happy to return home with our baby. Our first baby had cost a total of \$350, including the doctor, the delivery, and three days in the hospital. Our last baby cost more than \$10,000, due to the surgery and extra days in the hospital, and a high risk obstetrician. Also, during a C-section, a second obstetrician is needed, as well as a pediatrician, and an anesthesiologist. The four doctors require extra nurses, so a crowded operating room is expensive!

We were happy to bring Brian home to a loving family, and our children, now clearly old enough to enjoy him, learned a lot from our "new" routines. Stephanie was 15 and Christopher was 7. We think of Brian as being our "trainer baby," because he was the baby his siblings all got firsthand experience with.



Rice family, 1985 back row left, Michael, Stephanie and Randy.
Front left, Anna Marie, Roger, Diana, Christopher, Cindy, and Brian is on his mother's lap.
Source: Diana Rice copyright release has been obtained.

Sunrise, Sunset, Quickly Flow the Years

The years have gone so quickly, seemingly in a storm of events. Our children attended Mutual and seminary. We have been through eight sets of orthodontia (one had two stages) All three daughters received their Young Womanhood Recognition. Three of our sons have earned the rank of Eagle, and our youngest, at 13, is a Life Scout with four merit badges and his project left. Six of our children have graduated from high school. All have had music lessons, and sports activities. Six have served full time missions for the Church. Six have attended BYU. Four have graduated from BYU, one has graduated from Ricks college, and will be graduating from BYU next year. Christopher is soon to complete his mission and will resume his studies at BYU this fall, 1998. Michael has completed a Masters in Physics and is halfway through his Masters in Business Administration. Cindy and Stephanie both graduated with teaching credentials, and both taught school for two years. I am sure we have a few more years of college left. Our children have worked and sacrificed to put themselves through at least 34ths of their college years. Those who have married, have married the right

person, in the right place, the Temple. We are proud of every one of our children, and love their spouses..

Oakland Temple Pageant

The summer we moved to the Bay area, we saw the Oakland Temple Pageant. At that time, I remember thinking how nice it would be if each member of our family could have a chance to be in the Pageant. Our youngest, Brian is in the Pageant balcony chorus this year, completing that goal. All of us have participated in the wonderful Temple Pageant, the only one in the church that has actors delivering their own lines, a troupe of dancers, a full orchestra, and two chorus' one on stage, and one (of several hundred voices) in the balcony, with the script, and music written especially for the Oakland Pageant.

Our first involvement, right after Brian was born, was when Stephanie and Michael played bassoon and french horn in the orchestra. Cindy, Randy, Anna, Christopher, and I have sung in balcony chorus, and now Brian is furthering that tradition. Stephanie sat in the orchestra and dreamed of being a Pageant Dancer. Her dreams came true. She was a dancer in the next Pageant. She inspired her siblings, and Cindy and Randy danced in the Pageant when Stephanie was serving a mission. The next Pageant, immediately after she returned from her mission, she was asked to be the dance director. That year, Michael, Anna Marie and Christopher were dancers. (Cindy and Randy were both serving their missions.) That was a banner Pageant year for the Rice family. Roger, at Anna Marie's urging, tried out and was cast in the role of the apostle Paul, with a speaking part. Christopher was double cast--he was a dancer, and had a speaking part. That was also the beginning of Michael's romance with Emily Wilson (they married a year later.) Stephanie was asked to return for a final turn at being dance director for the Pageant just before her marriage to Jared Taylor. We have loved the experiences we have had as a family participating in Temple Pageant.

BYU Folk Dance Ensemble

Stephanie started another family dance tradition her freshman year at BYU. She worked her way through the ranks of BYU Folkdancer teams, and eventually traveled on three summer tours, Japan, and Canada twice. Several side trips were made to New York and Hawaii. Cindy toured with the SPAC Folkdance team, as have Randy and Christopher. Michael and Anna have had folk dance classes, and both have dated members of the team! Michael's wife, Emily, was a musician for two tours the summer they were married. None of this was premeditated, it just started with Stephanie's good example, and everyone's hard work and dedication. However, our youngest child says enough is enough, he doesn't even want to THINK about folk dancing.

Dad's Illness

While visiting his sister in Sunnyvale, my father suddenly became very ill. We all rushed to his bedside, and I didn't even recognize him. He had been given penicillin, and was covered in a raised red rash that made him look like he been skinned. Even though told of his long-time allergy, the doctors had reasoned that penicillin had been refined and improved since

WWII when Dad had his last reaction. They were wrong. Coming in with an unknown illness, he was now in intensive care.

By the time the original problem was discovered, and Dad had his gall bladder removed, he was so ill we didn't think he had a chance of survival. The undiagnosed gall bladder attack left him to battle serious infection, and due to his allergy to penicillin, there were few choices. Eventually, it came to the choice of dying or taking one of the few antibiotics he could tolerate that had the terrible side effect of destroying his kidneys. The choice was made, life. Dialysis became a part of his life. He slowly recovered, and after 10 weeks in intensive care, and almost nine months in the hospital, we rented a nearby apartment for Dad to come "home" to.

Dad lived five more years after this illness, and it was precious time to us. Even though he was never completely comfortable, we were able to have long talks with him, satisfying visits, and two reunions.. He wrote his life story. He served as a Home Teacher. He attended the temple. He became closer to grandchildren, attending performances, baptisms, farewells and Courts of Honor. This final struggle Dad went through remains a powerful example to his posterity of positive thinking, and of never giving up.

Randolph Erickson Fife died November 14, 1992 and was buried on his 73rd birthday, in a grave next to my mother's in Gridley, California. His children and grandchildren, except for two grandsons on missions, all gathered to bid him farewell.

Stages of Development

We have noticed that our lives seemed to be drawn through stages. It seemed in the early years of our marriage, we were always having someone play in the toilet or pull all the books off the lower bookshelf. Then we were into the elementary school years, with crayons, carnivals, open houses, and a lot of beginning musicians concerts! We turned to the adolescent world of dance cards, dermatologists, orthodontists, scouting, mutual, sports, dating, and we didn't think we'd live through the years of drivers training. Then it was Proms, Graduations, and years of establishing a college freshman. That led to missions, and suddenly we arrived at WEDDINGS!

Michael blazed the trail. The Christmas after Pageant, he proposed to Emily Wilson. They were married June 26, 1993. Emily, accomplished at both classical violin and fiddling, traveled as a musician for two folk dance tours, one just before the wedding, and one about 3 weeks after they were married. It was a chance of a life time, and we are proud of Michael for making it possible for Emily to go on those tours. The first tour was in South American, and the second one was in Europe.

Serious Back Trauma

Four months before Michael was married, I fell and herniated a disk. I was in bed almost three months before surgery was decided upon. I had surgery three days before our son Randy returned home from his mission, a month before Michael and Emily's wedding. I recovered enough to attend the wedding, but was in a lot of pain, had a gall bladder attack,

and was facing gall bladder surgery. My entire family, including my brothers and sisters, helped me with the wedding luncheon, sewing the bridesmaids outfits, and even so, I barely made it through the celebration. I had a relapse. The surgeon had not removed enough of the disk material, and exactly a week after Michael's wedding, I had a re-do surgery on my back. When I recovered enough, I had the gall bladder removal, three surgeries in less than two months!

How did our family cope with the serious illness of their mother? Everyone took on extra jobs. There were six of us at home. The other five took turns cooking. Even nine-year old Brian learned to fix two specialties: either pancakes or hamburgers. Anna Marie took on shopping, errands, and basic housework. Christopher did all laundry, and also helped with housework. Brian emptied the dishwasher, every load, for a year. Roger managed to handle both heavy responsibilities at work and holding everything together at home.

It took me two years to recover from my medical challenges. I spent a total of about 9 months in bed, and it was agony to return to normal life. As promised in my Patriarchal blessing, recovery came through trying to resume my role as homemaker, wife and mother. Going through the motions of caring for my family, I began to make good progress in recovery.

It helped to become a grandmother. Michael Benson Rice was born July 23rd, 1995, (the day his Uncle Christopher completed his Eagle project). Father in heaven has been sending me just what I needed all along, and I needed to have Benson in my life, right then! It was a privilege to be able to visit that new family, right after Benson and Emily returned home from the hospital, and I cherish that special time we spent together. I found every excuse I could to travel to Provo to see my little red-headed grandchild.

A Summer of Wedding Festivities

About the time I really began feeling better, Stephanie became engaged to Jared Taylor, a wonderful young man from Hood River Oregon. They met in their student ward in Provo. When the Folk Dancers toured that spring, they happened to tour through Jared's home town. Jared had invited us to secretly be in attendance at the Hood River performance. Stephanie had no idea any of us were there, including Jared, and was stunned to be summoned on stage before the performance, where Jared bent on one knee and proposed. The engagement was hectic. Stephanie prepared to go on her final BYU Folk Dance tour that summer, and had also taken on the job of temple pageant dance director and was completing her degree in Dance Education. She ran all the Pageant tryouts, and trained all the dancers, and then left on tour without seeing a single performance! She arrived home from tour one week before her wedding!

When Cindy was a missionary in the Ohio Cleveland Mission, she met Elder Aaron Case from Sandy, Utah. He soon completed his mission. After he returned home, they corresponded during the remainder of Cindy's mission. After Cindy returned home, they dated for two years. Aaron was a romantic and thoughtful suitor. Cindy's room was filled with roses as she and Aaron became best friends. Aaron is very talented and creative, both as

a performer and as a media artist and technician. He recorded a sound track for an elementary education unit on reading Cindy was preparing. The tape was hilarious and charming, and Aaron did all the voices and wrote and played original music on his keyboard. He wrote and performed a song for Cindy. He even wrote music for Stephanie's Dance recital piece she choreographed on the theme of the Warriors of Helaman.

Memorial Day Weekend 1995, four months after her sister's engagement, Cindy and her sweetheart, Aaron were engaged. Cindy had just completed her college work, and was getting set to teach her first class in elementary school. She had been working on preparations for the coming school year. Both brides needed to consider back-to-school schedules while planning their weddings. Cindy and Aaron were married in the Jordan River Temple in July, two weeks before Stephanie and Jared were married in the Oakland temple.

With Cindy in Utah, determined to set up the perfect 2nd grade classroom, and Stephanie on a Folkdance tour across Canada, what this meant for us, was that we had two wedding receptions to plan, without either daughter being nearby! The rest of the family pulled together, the brides did what they could, and miraculously we prepared a month of celebrations.

July 29, 1995, Cindy and Aaron were married. We prepared a reception for them in Orem that night, then drove the next day back home to Walnut Creek. At home, we immediately pulled together a Walnut Creek reception for Cindy and Aaron for the following weekend. Stephanie arrived home, and the next weekend, August 12, 1995, was married to Jared Taylor in the Oakland Temple. We then put on our third reception in three weeks. (My two dear sisters handled the wedding luncheon that day, and it was lovely.)

I had to miss the famous Missouri Berry Reunion in August 1995, even though I handled all of its advertising. Yep, the fourth weekend of celebrating in a row was spent in Hood River Oregon at the lovely reception put on by Jared's parents. We had sent out a thousand wedding invitations, traveled two thousand miles, Brian and I laundered 65 tableclothes, the family had helped with setting up all four receptions and one wedding luncheon, and my sisters and I had baked and decorated three fondant covered wedding cakes, prepared tuxedos, bridesmaids dresses, wedding dress and each bride made her own veil. We had become a well-practiced wedding machine!

Surprise Ending

In the middle of the festivities, Roger was called to be High Priest Group leader. The weekend after the final wedding party, JoAnn and I drove Christopher and Anna Marie to BYU and Ricks for them to begin the school year. I returned home, barely able to move. I was so fatigued. My feet hurt. I just barely functioned for about a week. One day, a Sunday, I got up and thought, "I almost feel human, again." I straightened the house, and fixed a real dinner. (We had lived on wedding refreshment left-overs long enough!) I even had a nap. That evening, the Bishop came over and called me to be Relief Society President!

Deciding to Marry

Randy met Debbie Palmer three years after he returned home from his mission. After they were introduced by a mutual friend, Randy and Debbie talked on their first date for hours. That night they each called their own mothers and remarked that they had met someone they could talk to about anything. They tried hard not to fall in love because Debbie's parents still had a year to serve on their missions. Debbie's father was a mission president in Porto Alegre South Brazil Mission. By November, Randy proposed. It was a poignant decision for Debbie, for her parents could not attend the wedding. After announcing their engagement to Debbie's parents, they were offered a trip to Brazil as a wedding present. Randy and Debbie were married in the Mt. Tempanogos Temple December 20, 1996. They flew to Brazil for their honeymoon, and for Debbie to introduce her new husband to her parents. We don't know of many newlyweds who spend Christmas and part of their honeymoon in a Mission Home!

Abundant Blessings

My life is full and rich, I am so blessed. In the past two years we have had five more grandchildren. Benson was joined by Joshua, and recently by Jessica. I was able to witness the births of both Jordan and Ashley Taylor, and they will have a new sibling in August. And I was so happy to welcome our darling little Miri to the Case family. Anna Marie returned home from her mission just before Christmas, and started at BYU in January. Christopher will soon be home from his mission, and my youngest is now getting ready to start attending Saturday Night dances. Adolescence, here we come again!

--This section will be updated by January 2020--

My Gethsemane

For years, I felt that I was living a charmed life. I thought simply: "if you live a good life, God will bless you abundantly."

I met Roger Rice, a recently returned missionary at BYU when I was 18. Three years later, we married in the Los Angeles temple, completed our educations, lived frugally, had our precious children. We created a home where we held regular family home evenings, and endeavored to develop the habit of nightly reading as a family from the Book of Mormon. We went to Church together every week. We served in various callings, we took family trips. We even tried a family garden, most years.

We taught the children to work, study, participate in music, dance, scouting and sports. We laughed and played together, served others, and focused on loving family, home and God. Our children were active in YW and YM, earned Young Woman recognition or Eagle Scout, graduated from seminary, high school and college, served missions. married in the temple, had families of their own.

Quite a few years ago, one of my daughter-in-laws said to me, “Why is your life so perfect?” I innocently replied, “I try to keep the commandments, and I think my big trial in life was losing my mother when I was a child.”

Two years after that conversation, my husband confessed to me that he had been living a double life for almost 30 years. I was in shock as I listened to him try to explain himself. I tried to understand, but there really wasn't an explanation that made any sense. We talked for hours, before he went to meet with our Bishop. He was already feeling somewhat relieved, and hopeful.

At the same time, I felt my whole world had been turned inside out into a frightening, chaotic, unfamiliar landscape. It was a new world full of uncertainty, pain, and helplessness. My agency seemed to be removed from my control due to my husband's misuse of his agency.

Nothing I had ever heard, seen or learned had prepared me for this type of problem, and this type of suffering. At first, I felt very alone.

Discussions of a sexual nature had not happened when I was growing up. One of my grandmothers overheard my mother discussing my impending birth with her brother who was in medical school. When one of them used the word “pregnant” my grandmother soundly chastised them for such language. She used the term “*in confinement*” and my other grandmother said “*In the family way.*” I don't think I heard anatomical terms pronounced out loud until I was at least 35. I was not prepared for the uncharted territory that lay ahead for me.

We gathered our children and the spouses of those who were already married, and my husband confessed to them. They were stunned. None of them had seen or suspected the trial their father had been wrestling with. We prepared them for the likelihood of his excommunication. Telling the children was one of the worst experiences in my life. I still suffer when I think about it. Even so, I knew open communication with our children was vital.

Trying to hold everything and everyone together took every ounce of courage I had. At the time of the disciplinary council, I had never personally known anyone who had been excommunicated.

My husband assured me of his testimony, and I believed him. It was confusing to process that someone could have a testimony and break covenants at the same time. Reassurances for me came in general conference when Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained the difference between having a testimony and being converted.

A few years after the excommunication, my husband was re-baptized, and we began rebuilding our lives, I thought. We were both in therapy, we tried several marriage counselors, and he worked with his Priesthood leaders. There were some wonderful moments as our family began to heal and settle into our new normal. But there were horrible times, too. Very horrible times.

Eventually, restoration of blessings came, and I thought, OK, now we can really begin to recover. Even then, I had no understanding of the role addiction played in my husband's life.

Back in 1999, neither my husband nor I, nor anyone who tried to help us, understood the addictive nature of pornography and lust. We all thought, just stop it, stop the behavior, and put your life back together. I really believed I understood the repentance process, and the Savior's Atonement, and continued on trying to hold everything together.

I was too busy to recognize how traumatized I was. Being at great risk, I was faced with unpleasant medical appointments, and sessions with a therapist who was truly shocked to hear my story, and I felt the strain of needing to appear positive in public, no matter what my frame of mind.

I kept myself together because I still had my last teenager to raise. I was brave in front of my friends, and tried to encourage my husband to move forward with his repentance.

For him, there were therapy sessions, support groups, and many meetings with his Priesthood leaders, who gave him blessings of courage and strength. He struggled with depression and went through times of deep sorrow. As his life spun out of control, he became more demanding and controlling of me. I tried to reduce unnecessary stress for him, to keep everything going smoothly. The emphasis was on his needs, and I didn't know how to take care of my own.

One of the most helpful things for me at that time, was the arrival of our grandchildren. Many grandchildren. They had a profound healing effect on me. They were welcome familiar reminders of my own adored children. And they ran to greet me whenever we gathered, and threw their hands in the air in excitement as they rushed into my arms. They made me feel like a celebrity at a time when I felt no self-confidence whatsoever. They were a major tender mercy. They still are constant blessings to me.

For my husband, things seemed to be going OK, but whenever I asked how he was doing, he would say "I feel stuck." Or "I feel numb." When I occasionally asked if pornography was a problem, he would say no. After 15 years of trying to rebuild, I was beginning to think things were improving, just slowly.

Then, further details of his addiction to pornography were revealed. The Spirit led me to conclude two things.

1. My life was not working, and
2. My loved one needed help I could not give him.

I knew it was time for me to leave, to separate from my husband.

I have had a difficulty with the length of time my husband had concealed his secrets. "How could I have been so clueless for 30 years. When I realized that once again, I had been lied to, I felt like a fool. Instead of 30 clueless years, it was now 45!"

I left him two weeks after our 45th wedding anniversary. The Lord was able to help me leave without bitterness, just an overpowering sadness that I was doing what was necessary to survive. We were separated for 6 years.

We had heard about the 12-step program, but it had never occurred to us to go, because we still did not realize we were dealing with addiction. Soon after we separated, my husband went back to therapy sessions, and he began to attend the 12-step program.

Now that I was alone, and had time to think, I began to realize just how traumatized I had been. I began to read about betrayal trauma, and was stunned to find that I was no longer able to cope, to keep being cheerful, and positive. I returned to therapy, determined to go on with my life, regardless of my husband's circumstances. I began to value and treasure the thought that I had not broken my covenants.

I also realized I was through telling the Lord what I need to be happy in the eternities. We have to have faith that everything will work out as it should, and be ready for whatever that is. I have faith in the Savior, and I know that he will work out the details of my life.

As some of my burdens became too heavy to bear, I learned to hand them over to the Savior. I learned to attend the temple more often, study the scriptures more deeply, and pray more fervently than ever before.

I have learned to ask questions in my prayers. And the answers do come. I asked and received insight as to why this happened to me the way it has, and I feel calm and less foolish now that I have a more spiritual perspective.

It took a while to get up the courage to attend a spouse and family support group nearby, and I soon discovered I was not yet ready. At the meeting, I blurted out my whole name, then found out it was first names only, I cried through every share, and I don't remember what I said. In tears, I mumbled to a sweet Sister missionary that I felt I needed more mental health care, and bolted out the door.

After about a year I went back, and I am so glad I did. Instead of the 12-step program, as before, there was a new Spouse and Family Support Guide, based on 12 principles. It is published, and is also available online. I learned that the material the church provides for recovery from addiction and for spouse and family recovery are two separate programs.

The addict can heal through following the 12-steps. However, anyone can benefit from studying both manuals. I know many women who have gone through the 12-step program. In fact, we attend a weekly couples group where husbands and wives rotate through both programs together. It is helpful to hear the discussions with couples because, as we all know, men and women do not think alike.

I am impressed with the growth and self-discipline I have seen in my husband over the years he has been working the steps. He goes faithfully (and early) to meetings, serves others whenever he can, has grown spiritually, and has become more aware of my trauma issues. He recognizes Fatherhood is an eternal assignment, and works to be a blessing to our family.

He has supported me in every way he could. I admire the courage he shows in preparing himself daily to fight successfully in the battle between good and evil.

Favorite thoughts from the Spouse and Family Support Guide

I am forever grateful for the ARP missionaries who donate their time, their talents, and their wisdom in order to make this program work. They have been conduits of healing, emissaries of the Savior. I have learned:

1. God will never abandon us.
2. We are not to blame for our loved one's addiction. We are free to act for ourselves. We each must decide what is best to do, and we have the choice.
3. Elder Dallin H. Oaks says, No blessings will be denied if you love the Lord, keep His commandments, and just do the best you can.
4. We can draw near the Savior by studying the Scriptures, Partaking of the Sacrament, attending the temple, and seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost.
5. It is difficult to accept that we cannot smooth the way to healing for our Spouses. We must focus on our own healing, take care of ourselves, and learn as much as we can about addiction.
6. Support is vital and can come from family, friends, Priesthood and Relief Society leaders, mentors, support groups, or professional help. Gratefully, I have used every one of these sources. They have been vital to my recovery. I have been very fortunate having support right from the beginning from my four wonderful siblings. Whenever I need them, they are there for me. I don't think I could have survived without them. Support is so important in handling the greatest challenges in life. And mine have been exemplary brothers and sisters. They help me to feel secure and safe, inspiring me to seek peace and happiness.
7. Gratitude helps keep things in a positive perspective if we realize the things we have are pure gifts from Father in Heaven. I have learned to be grateful for my talents, for the valiant people and good things in my world. It is essential that we recognize the divinity within others.
An important part of the healing process is to look past the addiction to who our loved ones really are: beloved sons or daughters of God. If we make an effort to listen and observe with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can see the potential in everyone, even those who have hurt us.
8. Boundaries that protect spouse and family are essential. It takes honesty and prayer to decide what boundaries are necessary. The intention should never be punitive, but consequences must be firmly in place if a boundary is crossed. We do not need to endure abusive behavior.
9. Honesty and openness fosters trust. . . While we may not now be able to fully trust our loved ones, we can trust the Lord and His protection. He helps us effectively cope with the many worries and fears we encounter. He provides us with assurances through His Spirit that help us find peace and hope. It is an opportunity to strengthen our dependence on the Savior.
10. When I am serving others, my own problems are crowded from my thoughts. It is a blessing to have many opportunities to serve, and I try not to waste any of them.

11. Patience is a lesson I keep learning. I am still struggling with how to deal with relapse.
12. Peace can come even when circumstances are slow to change.

In a book called *Covenant Keepers*, by President Russell M. Nelson's wife, Wendy, Sister Nelson says,

“We can become **sin-resistant Saints**. Men and women who, because of time spent in the temple, know how to deal with the adversary and how to pray with power!

“We can be *diligent* covenant-keepers, followers of Jesus Christ in this digital age and who **know how to use technology—righteously, and are not swayed by every ‘wind of doctrine’ that blows through a blog!**

Sister Nelson closes by saying “It is my testimony that there is *nothing* more important than making covenants with God and then keeping them with increasing precision. **Making covenants with God calls forth the divine within us. And keeping our covenants with God allows Him to pour His divine power into us.**”

I have noticed the direct guidance we need in dealing with addiction is prominently addressed throughout all the scriptures.

I read in 3 Nephi 22 where it describes the pouring of His divine power that Sister Nelson was talking about:

6. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.
7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.
10. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.
11. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.
12. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles (garnets), and all thy borders of pleasant stones.
13. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.
14. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.
17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

In the years I have been attending ARP meetings, I have become acquainted with some of the strongest, most amazing women I have ever known. These are women that I have been inspired and uplifted by, women of great courage, and faith. Women I laugh and cry with, sometimes at the same time. Women that I need to be near, because together we study and pray and feel the sweet, warmth and comfort from the Holy Ghost. They have become some of my dearest friends.

My road to recovery has caused me to change in ways I would never have believed possible. I had the notion before that the healing effects of the Atonement would somehow be handed out just before the judgment day! I am so happy that I have been healing despite the difficult circumstances of my life, despite not knowing how my story is going to end. I feel peace and contentment, in abundance. And I look forward to each new day.

In May, 2019, I developed a pain in my leg I at first thought was a charley horse or pulled muscle. After several days of it getting worse, I was diagnosed with a hematoma and blood clot in my left leg. I had an ultrasound scan and an MRI, which confirmed the diagnosis. I was hospitalized in grave condition, and had a filter installed in a vein to prevent blood clots from circulating to my vital organs and ending my life. After a month of treating what we thought was bleeding and blood clots, which interfere with the standard treatment of both conditions, we found in a second ultrasound test that I did not have blood clots, had never had blood clots, instead I suffered from a Baker's cyst which had burst and caused the bleeding which formed the hematoma. My leg hurt terribly for five weeks before we found out the cause. I was grateful to learn blood clots were not the problem, but I still had to find out what to do about the cyst that was causing all the pain. I went to an orthopedic surgeon who has quickly resolved the issues, and through physical therapy and cortisone treatment. I am hopeful for a full recovery.

During all of this time, though I was helpless and suffering, Roger came to my side and has never left. He slept in the hospital room, has been a willing and tender caregiver, and been full of support and encouragement. The silver lining is that my illness showed us how and when to rejoin each other and live together again. I am grateful for the new life we are sharing, and each day is a grand adventure. He has recovered many of the qualities I fell in love with more than fifty years ago.

I have learned that the Savior's atonement is for all grief, all loss, and all unfortunate circumstances. We all need the great sacrifice the Savior gave for each of us.

JoAnn Fife Larsen

Autobiography of JoAnn Fife Larsen



I am the second child and second daughter born to Randolph Erickson and Norma Berry Fife. Diana Maree is my senior by three years. Because of special needs my mother had, she had to travel from the small community in which they lived, Gridley, California, to the hospital in Woodland, California for me to be born. I was born on October 18, 1949. I don't remember much about Gridley at that time because we moved to Tucson, Arizona when I was one.



4 Generations

Norma, standing holding JoAnn.
Sitting: May Whiting Berry, Diana Maree, and Anna Maria Whiting.

Memories of Tucson

Dad was in construction and built houses. My first recollection of Tucson was when we lived in the house that my father built there. I loved that house. It had a tree in the back yard with a tube going in the dirt so water could get right to the roots.

Dad also built Mother a big clothes line that swung around so she could hang out clothes. It was set in the ground and made of heavy wrought iron, and we love to hang on and be spun around the yard. One day I was supposed to be watching my younger sister, Bonnie, in the back yard. She was about 3 and I was about 6. Bonnie wanted to hold on to the clothes line and have me push her.

I knew she was too little, but she insisted. I lifted her up so she could grab hold of the bar. I had swung her around just a bit when she fell...right on to a tricycle with no cover on the handle bar. If you looked hard enough you can still see the small half circle scar she had from that accident.

When I was 3, my older sister, age 6, taught me the alphabet. It was not an indication of my amazing intelligence but of Diana being diligent and a great teacher. Since there was no kindergarten in Tucson at that time, I went to a pre-school when I was five. My younger sister Bonnie Lee came with me. I only remember one day. Bonnie was two and walked in front of a swing and got hit. I guess the teachers were mad at her because they made her stay inside the rest of the day and I had to stay with her.

One of the things I loved to do most was ride on Dad's tractor when he moved dirt. He brought a pillow for me to sit on. I loved to go to work with Dad. I remember thinking that I was really his first son. I don't remember being jealous when first my brother Randy (Randolph Berry) and then my brother Brad (Bradley James) were born.

For awhile my mother's parents lived with us. Grandma Berry was ill, so mom and dad moved out of the master bedroom and gave her parents their room. One day I went in to see Grandma Berry laying in bed. She told me to hand me her purse and she got out a huge sewing needles. She told me it was the largest sewing needle in the world and gave it to me. I thought it was very special.

Grandpa Berry brought his TV, one of the first around, and I loved to watch Howdy Doody Time (a man and his ventriloquist puppet named Howdy Doody). I also watched the Lone Ranger.

My best friend, Rusty

When I was in first grade I got to walk through the desert (a vacant lot full of cactus) on the way to school with my best friend Rusty Burdick who lived about a block away from us. This was always an adventure. Someone gave me a little pin with a tiny pocket knife that I could pin on my blouse. When we heard that someone had been murdered in the town, I told Rusty not to worry, because I could protect him with that knife.

In the middle of my first grade, Dad started building us a new house across town. I changed schools because we were going to be moving. When the house was done someone else wanted it and Dad sold it. I went back to the first school. At the end of first grade we moved to Fresno, California.

Our move to Fresno

I remember the trip to Fresno because I got to ride in the truck with Dad and even got new crayons. It was very traumatic when I opened the glove compartment and the crayons had melted. After a short stay with Aunt Helen and Uncle Aubrey Andelin, we moved into a great, yellow two-story house. It had passage ways between the closets up stairs which we loved to climb through. Since school had not ended in Fresno, I attended first grade for another two weeks.

After about a year we moved to a green house that we rented for about a year. Next we moved to a pink house until I was ten. It meant that I attended another grade school for fourth and fifth grades. That house had a big vacant lot, behind the back yard, that we spent hours digging holes there.

An accident with a semi-truck

It was when we lived at this house that my mother was killed in an accident with a semi truck. We were to stay with Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean while my parents were away on a trip, but I had a special meeting after school. Aunt Marion picked me up after the meeting to take me to her house. We stopped at Aunt Joycell's house on the way and Aunt Marion went in for a few minutes. I remember thinking it strange that Aunt Joycell came out with such a sad face and waved to me. When we got to Uncle Dean's house, I walked in and saw Dad. I asked where Mother was, and he took me in the living room and told me that mother had died that morning.

I remember sitting in a kitchen listening to the adults talking to each other about what was going to happen to the five Fife children. Dad was going to be out of town building the swimming pool complex in Indio, California. One person said they could take the two boys. Someone else said they could take one of the girls. Aunt Marion said, "They have just lost their mother, and they won't have their father, they HAVE to have each other. We can take them all." I will be eternally grateful for Aunt Marion, my mother's youngest brother's wife. Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean had just bought a house that they thought was too big for them. I was perfect for the five of us aged 13 to 4 and their five children, Anna Marie, Jon, Karen, Matthew and Mark aged 8- 3 months. They had about 3 days to get ready for us to move in and they were AMAZING.

We lived with Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean for a year so I changed schools for sixth grade. Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean were wonderful that year. I will always be grateful for them taking the five of us when they had five young children of their own. I know that I was a trial, because I had many challenges that year.

Valuable Lesson

Since we had moved so much, I never felt like I had friends at school. Thankfully I had cousins that lived near me and were my best friends. At school I was usually the “new girl” and was last to be chosen on every team. One time when we were moving again, a girl brought me a present of Pop Beads and told me that she would miss me. I was shocked and sad that I had not even realized that I had a friend. We need to be friends with everyone around us, because we never know the affect we have on other people and everyone can use a friend!

Life with Dad again

The summer before I entered 7th grade we moved with Dad to Sacramento, California. Again there were many adjustments, and I shared a room with Grandmother Fife who stayed with us. I went to Arcade Jr. High and remember that I played a witch in a play because I could cackle so well.

Dad met Barbara Seymour and married her in December of that year. She had three sons, John (who was two weeks older than me), Lew (a year younger) and Doug (two years younger). We met them once at thanksgiving and the next time we met, we were moving into the same house in Costa Mesa, California. I finished Jr. High there.

Dad built a new, bigger house in Fullerton, so I started my high school years there. We stayed in the same house through out these years, but because a new school was built, we were transferred to the new school my sophomore year. I think that it was in this house that I realized what wonderful sisters I had and grew very close to them. In fact I have been blessed with wonderful brothers as well and feel that Heavenly Father has blessed us all with a very special bond.

BYU

After I graduated from High School I attended BYU. My freshman year was great, because Diana lived in the same dorm. It was the year she got engaged and it was great being a part of all that. When they came back from their honeymoon, they bought me a big iron key and told me that their door was always open to me. And it has been.

Meeting Barry

Before my senior year in college Roger and Diana moved back to Provo with two children and I moved in with them. I lived on the back porch. That year as the semester began in January at a Ward social, I saw a very handsome young man. I told the friend I was standing with that I saw him first so he was mine. He happened to be in my family home evening group and we had to meet at our house because Roger and Diana’s third child, Cindy, was born that day and I was babysitting Stephanie and Michael. It was there that I met Noval Barry Larsen.

Barry was so good looking that I didn't think I had a chance, but he was always nice to me. One day he said "If there is a basketball game on Friday night will you go with me?" I was ecstatic until I got home and found out that there was no basketball game. I wasn't sure if we had a date or not. Sure enough we did.

We went to the budget movie in the Joseph Smith Memorial Auditorium, where we met his twin sister, Jeannene, her husband Harold and April, their daughter. We went to the Wilkinson Center where we played foosball, and I beat him every time. Then he tried to buy me a lettuce, bacon and tomato sandwich and I told him I hated tomatoes. He bought me an ice cream cone and I hit the bottom of his while he was licking it to tease him. I hit it a little too hard and he got it all over his face. He walked me home. We stopped to talk and when he turned to me I hit him with a snow ball. I found out later he was trying to kiss me. (It serves him right for trying to kiss me on the first date.)

When I got home Diana asked me if I had a good time. I told her I did and would really like it if he asked me out again. After I told her about the date, she said I had a funny way of trying to impress a guy. He did ask me out though, but dated many other girls, too. Then it got so we would go out on one night of the weekend and he would ask someone else out the other night. Finally, we started dating exclusively.

The Proposal

That summer I stayed in Provo while Barry went home to Marsing, Idaho to work on his father's farm. I went up twice to see him. In September we were both back in school. One evening he took me to Temple Square in SLC.

We went downstairs at the visitor center, where there was a display on the temple with an alter. We sat there and Barry didn't say anything. He seemed kind of fidgety. He just jumped up and we went somewhere else. I thought something was really wrong.

Finally we went outside to walk around the grounds. Just then they announced that they were closing in 5 minutes. I said that we had better go because the Rice's were expecting us. He said, "Alright if you will marry me." I asked Barry if he was proposing to me, and he said yes.

I had already prayed about it and had my answer, so I said yes immediately. We walked to the car and I said I couldn't wait to tell the Rice's and to call my family. He had expected me to want to think about it and felt a little overwhelmed and said, "Wait, I am not sure about this."

I thought great, now that I had committed myself, he is not sure. After the drive home and a prayer together, he was sure again and we were married in the Salt Lake Temple on January 25, 1972.

Early married life

We moved into an apartment at 411 East 300 South in Provo. We enjoyed our time there with a good ward and friends. Our first child, David Barry Larsen was born on November 30,

1972. It was a wonderful time and we really enjoyed our precious little son. He has always kept us on our toes and has been a joy.

On February 14, 1974 we were blessed with the birth of our princess, Julianne Larsen. She was such a little thing with a sweet disposition.

When Julianne was just a few months old, Barry got a job managing the Geneva Recreation Association Park. It was perfect for college students, because he would run a crew of youth for the summer and we got to live in the park all year round in a trailer home rent free. In fact, in the winter months we got paid a small salary just for living there. David loved living in the park with a full sized locomotive engine in the playground.

Into the workforce

In May, 1975 Barry graduated from BYU and we moved to Northern California. We stayed with Diana and Roger while Barry checked out some jobs. He got one of them, working for PPG Industries, but was to be transferred to Southern California at the end of the summer, after some training. We stayed with the Rice's for the entire summer, and they were very gracious to us.

Their third daughter, Anna Marie was born that summer and that made 7 little children and 4 adults in the house. Bonnie came for part of the summer with her 2 children. That summer all of the children got chicken pox in intervals. We still have very fond memories of that summer.

We moved to Fullerton in September of 1975. It was a good job and included a new car, but it was a different lifestyle and required him being gone most weekdays. We went to Barry's parent's home in Marsing, Idaho for Christmas and ended getting a job offer.

We moved to Idaho at the end of January and lived with Barry's parents because the house we were going to be renting wasn't ready.

Keith Dwaine Larsen was born on March 14, 1976. He has always been a very special, caring child. He always watches out for others. A few weeks after his birth we moved into a rental home. We loved Idaho and the people. We had a great ward.

Becoming "The Bishop's family"

Bradley Eric Larsen was born on November 30, 1977. He has always been quiet, but has a deep inner strength. We moved to a house that we had built on January 15, 1978.

On Mother's Day in 1978, Barry was called to be Bishop of Marsing, Idaho. We had 4 children 5 and under and we were expecting our 5th baby. Jared Scott Larsen was born on December 29, 1978. He is our one that is always on top of things. His mind is always active. It was a challenging, but very rewarding time in our lives.

A move and an uncommon workplace

We loved our life in Idaho, but vocationally it was a dead end road for us. After much prayer, we moved to Sacramento during the summer of 1986, California for Barry to attend

McGeorge School of Law. We decided that I should get a job just for the three years of school.

Jared was just starting 2nd grade. I applied for many jobs, the only one that would pay very much was as a correctional officer at Folsom Prison. It was hard, but I never felt physically threatened while I worked there. It showed me a very different way of life and not a happy one.

I started the job in January of 1987 and the next October conference during the Priesthood Session, President Benson gave his talk about women staying in the home as much as possible. Barry came home and told me that the Prophet was talking to us. When I watched the tape, I was sure also. It took us another 2 years to get in a situation where I could quit and stay home. Barry had to give up law school, but we have never been sorry.

The rewards of raising our family

David went to BYU for a semester then entered the MTC January 22, 1991 and served a mission to Brazil, Campinas Mission in 1991-93. He returned to BYU where he met and married Tricia Marie Tincher on August 17, 1996 in the Manti Utah temple. They have a daughter, Brinley Elizabeth Larsen, born April 2, 2003 and twin sons, David Tyler Larsen and William Tanner Larsen born December 8, 2008.



Tanner, Tricia, Tyler, Brinley and David.

Julianne started BYU in 1992. In 1994 she went to Jerusalem for a semester and met her husband Kerry Miles Muhlestein who she married on May 19, 1995 in the Oakland Temple. They have six children.

Our first grandchild, Benjamin Joseph Muhlestein was born on May 24, 1997. He went on a mission to Billings, Montana, returned and married Brianna on August 31, 2018. They are expecting a son in early September, 2019.

Tashara DeAnn Muhlestein was born October 2, 1998 and married Joseph Ammon Martin on July 3, 2019.

Kaleb Joshua Mulestein was born August 19, 2001, Alexia Rachelle Muhlestein was born April 17, 2003, Sabrina Kalani Muhlestein was born September 10, 2005 and Jacob Larsen Muhlestein was born May 26, 2007.



Bri & BJ



Back: Kaleb, Julianne and BJ.
Front: Alexia, Kerrv, Jacob, Tashara and Sabrina.



Ammon & Tashara

Keith attended BYU and went on a mission to the West Indies Mission, speaking French. He married Kristen Michelle Matheson on October 17, 1998 in the Salt Lake Temple. They have four children. Taylor Keith Larsen born September 8, 1999 who is currently serving a mission the Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Alison Michelle Larsen born May 21, 2002, Lindsey May Larsen born May 20, 2004 and Isaac Matheson Larsen born June 26, 2008.



Alison, Taylor, Lindsey, Kristen and Keith holding Isaac.

Brad attended Ricks before his mission in the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo East mission. He returned, attended BYU and married Cara Marie Frazier on August 5, 2005 in the Portland Oregon Temple.

Their firstborn was a son Benjamin Bradley Larsen that was born with Anencephaly on January 23, 2006. He lived for about 30 minutes.

Timothy Tyler Larsen was born November 29, 2006.

Abigail Anne Larsen also had Anencephaly and died a few days before birth on July 19, 2008.

Nicholas Noval Larsen was born January 7, 2010.

Lucy Elizabeth Larsen was born January 2, 2012. Brad and Cara had a late term miscarriage, William Randolph Larsen on July 13, 2013.

They adopted Colin Michael Larsen who was born December 24, 2015 with Microcephaly and Lisencephaly.



Colin, Cara, Brad & Lucy with Timmy & Nicholas in front.

Jared attended BYU one semester in 1997 before serving a mission to Ecuador, Guyaquil South Mission. He married Karen Gilbert July 25, 2002 in the Columbia River Temple.

Kate Larsen was born October 4, 2004, Jackson Noval Larsen was born October 8, 2006,

Bryan Jared Larsen was born May 22, 2008 and Dane Erickson Larsen was born May 20,

2011. Jared and Karen had a late term miscarriage, Carter Lamar Larsen, on May 10, 2013.



Back: Jared, Karen & Kate. Front: Bryan, Dane & Jackson.

We have been greatly blessed to have a wonderful family who we love very much.



Brad, Julianne, JoAnn, Barrv, Keith, Jared and David.



Bonnie Lee Fife Middleton



Middleton Family History

Beginnings, written in 1984

Bonnie Lee Fife spent most of her growing up years in Fullerton, California. In the ward, one of the families that her family became acquainted with, was the Middleton family. Some of Bonnie's brothers became good friends with David Middleton, the youngest of the Middletons. Throughout the years, the boys continued their friendship with David, and the Fifes and the Middletons became better acquainted.

When Bonnie was seventeen, she was surprised and delighted to be asked out on a date by Chuck Middleton, the older brother of David. Chuck was nearly nineteen at the time and preparing for a mission. Chuck and Bonnie began dating steadily for about six months. At that time, Chuck was called on a mission to Italy. Throughout the mission they

corresponded, keeping up on each others lives. At the end of his mission, his parents and sister met him in Italy. Bonnie met Chuck at the L.A. airport. Two days later, they were engaged and on December 30, 1972, they were married in the Los Angeles Temple. They began their life together with much love and admiration and it continues to grow with every experience.

Chuck had his first job making guitars and enjoyed it very much. Having feelings for adventure, Chuck decided to join the Air Force. This decision brought many experiences and blessings. Chuck's first assignment in the Air Force was in Bilox, Mississippi where he attended technical training in the field of radio repair. It was here, on Halloween night, 1973, Emily Rachel Middleton was born.

From Mississippi, the Middletons were transferred to Panama where they lived for two years. The second baby was born here, Chuck IV. In Panama, they had many unforgettable experiences. Like the time Bonnie ran over an iguana that darted out into the road in front of her car. The six-foot-long lizard tumbled around underneath the car for a minute and then shot out into the jungle. Chuck served as scout master and spent many creepy nights in a pup tent listening to a chorus of the strangest sounds he had ever heard.

In the fall of 1975, the Middletons moved to Chuck's new duty station in Tucson, Arizona. It was here that Chuck changed fields and spent the last year in the Air Force as a painter. Tucson holds happy memories for them, particularly having their third child Catherine Marie Middleton born. Bonnie served as Homemaking leader in the Relief Society and Chuck served in the Elders' quorum presidency. In December of 1976, Chuck completed his four years in the Air Force

He began looking for a job in the outside world. His search ended with a good job working for Electronic Data Systems in San Francisco as a computer operator. For almost a year, they enjoyed living a few miles from the Rices while Chuck and Roger Rice worked for the same company.

Then Chuck had an opportunity to transfer to Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. Wanting to get more experience behind him in computers, they went to Pennsylvania. They spent the next two winters learning to live in the snow. In March of 1978, Steven was born into their family. While living back east, the family enjoyed visiting many of the nation's historical places and also attended the Hill Cumorah Pageant.

Being away from the family was hard, so they took another opportunity to transfer again, back to San Francisco. Chuck began working as a programmer assistant in the summer of 1979 he accepted a job in Southern California as an engineering computer programmer for Hughes Aircraft Co. One month before moving, the fifth child, Rebecca Louise Middleton was born.

Shortly after they arrived in Fullerton, Chuck's father retired from his job and sold Chuck the home he grew up in. Chuck's parents then went on a mission to Bolivia. Just

before they left, the sixth child, Jennifer Lee joined the family and the grandparents were able to see the baby before they left on their mission.

Nearly three years later, the Middletons still live in the same house, a record for them. Chuck still works for Hughes, (also located in Fullerton.) And he has just been ordained as a Seventy. Bonnie is serving in the Relief Society. The Middletons are happy raising their six wonderful children and never have any dull moments.

Update written in 2019

I, Bonnie Lee Fife Middleton, was born on January 22, 1953 in Tucson, Arizona.

My father is Randolph Erickson Fife. My mother is Norma Berry Fife.

My siblings are Diana Maree Fife Rice, JoAnn Fife Larsen, Randolph Berry Fife and Bradley James Fife. They are amazing people!

My mother tragically died when I was age 7. I have but few memories of her and those have faded. Many of my childhood memories after that I wish to forget.

At age 17 I was lucky enough to date a wonderful and amazing man, Charles Franklin Middleton III (Chuck). We dated for 6 months before he left for his mission to Italy. After graduating high school, I attended Ricks College for a semester.

The best part of my life really began when Chuck returned home from his mission and we married in the Los Angeles Temple in 1972.

We have been blessed with 7 great children who are: Emily Rachel, Charles Franklin IV, Catherine Marie Wilson, Steven Arthur, Rebecca Louise Sorensen, Jennifer Lee Anderson, and Crystal Ida.

As the years have passed, we have also been blessed to have wonderful spouses added to our family. Larry Brant Wilson, Jr., Kimberly Laycock, Erica Thomas, Karl Jacob Sorensen and Drew Wesley Anderson. We've also been blessed with 17 amazing grandchildren.



Emily



Charles and Kim Middleton Family

Aerie Hannah

Charles Franklin V

Brandon Fife (Branney)

Elijah Redd

Catherine and Brant Wilson Family

Tyler Brant

Bryce Charles

Ethan Jeffrey

Tabitha Marie

Kate Rachel



Steven and Erica Middleton Family

Jack Arthur

Mary Annalise



Rebecca and Karl Sorensen Family

Jacob Holger

Oskar Charles

Dylan Timothy



Jennifer and Drew Anderson Family

Henry James

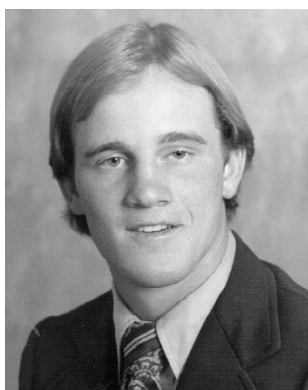
Cameron Jay

Kyle Jackson



Crystal





Randolph Berry Fife

The Beginnings, written November, 1984

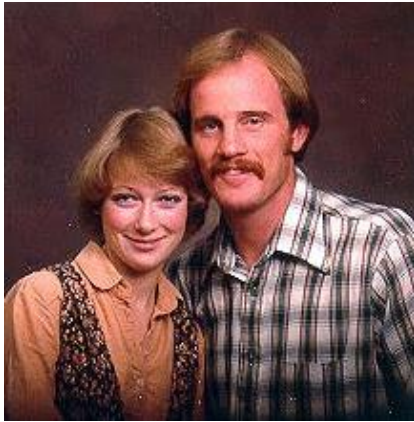


Randy Fife, working as a "rough neck"

I hate dances! Guess where I met my wife Christa? I was living in Provo earning money, working at the Utah State Prison. I decided I didn't want to make a career out of being an inmate (pay was lousy.) I had oped to return to B.Y.U. to further my education. I had a roommate that enjoyed going to dances. Now, I was twenty-five, and he was worried about his social life, which was zero. So he dragged me off to a B.Y.U. dance.

I sat through the whole dance without dancing once, because I was too shy. My roommate picked up on a girl who he was really interested in. After the dance, my roommate introduced me to his girl and her friend, Christa. Even though angels sang and heavens opened, I guess I wasn't in tune because I wasn't interested. My roommate was so excited about his girl, that I talked him into going over to her apartment (just to get him off my

back.) Christa happened to be there and talking to them, I became interested. My roommate list interest in his new friend. Things progressed until Christa and I were married on November 6, 1980.



On August 12, 1981 we had a bouncing baby boy. Coban Blaze Fife. Coban was a name we made up and Blaze was for his red hair (we could have named him carrot-top.) He was 8 pounds 10 ½ ounces and 22 ½ inches long. He's happy and healthy and the best baby in the whole world.

At present, I'm a roughneck, working on an oil rig, off the coast of Long Beach on an island. I haven't yet found my niche as far as employment.

Our hobbies are collecting musical instruments of all kinds and we try to play them as we can. We enjoy making things with our hands.

We like traveling and have had a chance to do much of that since our marriage.

Our church positions are: Christa's in the Primary with the 3-year-olds, and I'm on the Activities Committee.

My Story, written July, 2019

Forward

I have always been reluctant to write my history. I grew up listening to stories from my father, and the amazing experiences he had throughout his life. He grew up during the Great Depression, spent three years fighting in Africa and Italy during World War II. He was a part of the Great Generation and also a gifted story teller. He met and worked with many famous personalities and built many interesting companies.

Compared with his life I wondered how I could possibly write anything remoting interesting to somebody reading my history. Now I am in my later years and as I reflect upon my life and to write about it, I have realized that it isn't about as much as setting of the experiences but about how we handle the trials and obstacles we encounter in our lives. That's what makes us who we are.

I will never know if I could have been as brave a hero like my father during World War II. I do know I can be true to my values and beliefs in a challenging environment like my father. We are the witness of our life and our story is a testimony of our life, whether it be good or whether it be bad. With this thought I will share the testament of my life and how I handled it.

The events at the time of my birth

I was born ten years after end of World War II and one year after the end of the Korean War. Dwight Eisenhower was president of the United States and David O. MacKay was President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I was one year old when Rosa Parks remained seated on the bus which started a much-needed Civil rights movement. This time was also during the cold war and the nuclear arms race. Disneyland opened that same year. Elvis Presley was just starting his career in Rock and Roll music.

The Beginning

I was born on November 18th 1954 in Tucson, Arizona to Randolph and Norma Fife. I was the fourth child and first son. In those days a couple did not know if they were having a girl or a boy until at the time of birth. My father said he was so excited about having a boy, he would show everyone that I really was a male which could have been one the many reasons that caused my shyness.

My father was a contractor, building homes Tucson. My parents took in two Mexican teenaged girls (Maria and Stella) and hired them to help around the house, take care of my ailing grandmother, and babysit me. Over forty years later I was able to meet Stella. She said that she and Maria had me sucking on tortillas as a pacifier. This would account for my love of Mexican food.

The following is an account by my father of me and my experience with Leukemia: “At about two years of age, Randy B. became very anemic, and the doctor could not find the cause. We changed his diet and gave him food supplements. Finally, we were asked to take him to the Tucson Medical Center for observation. They decided he might have Leukemia, and performed a biopsy on a gland in his neck to send to Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. When the test returned marked positive, and we were told that Randy would not have long to live.



Several transfusions were given but he was terribly ill, barely moving in his crib. The whole ward fasted and prayed. His doctor was a member of the church, and he and I administered to him. During the blessing, he stated that Randy would get well. When he finished, with tears in his eyes, he said, "As a doctor, I feel we are going to lose him. I do not know why I said he will get well."

Within a short time, Randy began to show some color. Within two weeks, much to the amazement of all the doctors, he was playing and standing up in the crib. To this day, he has had no further problem with anemia. It was a miracle of faith and prayer, a special blessing from the Lord."

I remember my father telling me every day for a week he would leave work in the evening and go to the hospital wondering if he still had a son.

Earliest Memories

When I was around three, we left Tucson and moved to Fresno where my father started a swimming pool business. I remember the first house we moved into was a two-story house that had two gables. There was a crawl space from one gable in one room to the other gable in another room. We had lots of fun going from one room to another through the "secret" passage.

There was also a sandbox in the back yard with a swing set. I would climb on top of the fence and jump into the sandbox. It would hurt a little but then I would go do it again.



Fife Family at the first house in Fresno with pickup in driveway

(from Lt to Rt: Brad, Randy E., Diana, Norma, JoAnn, Randy B. – Bonnie not pictured)

The next house we moved into was a single-story house. This was a time where there was a fear of that Soviet Union (Russia and a block of surrounding counties) would launch nuclear missiles and destroy our way of live. The city would have tall poles with big sirens on top of them throughout the area. Every so often we had air raid drills. I remember my sister, JoAnn, would have us practice and hide us under a table. There she would explain to us the reason for hiding. It wasn't very comforting.

My sister Diana said that one day I came into the kitchen with a red burn around my neck. When asked how I got the burn I said that I had tied one end of a rope on top of the swing set and climbed on top of a box. Then I tied the other end of the rope around my neck. Somehow, I then slipped of the box. I then was asked how I got down. I said that I kicked around until I was able to get back on the box. There have been several times during my life where I fell of the "box" and with the help from a watchful Heavenly Father I was able to "kick around" until I got back on the box.

One Sunday morning Brad and I went to the car as everyone else got ready for church. I saw a box of glass vials full of liquid with different colors in the glove compartment. Thinking that I might get my little brother in trouble, I told him it was root beer and to have a drink. I think I was jealous because he was so cute and cuddly.

As he drank some of the liquid Diana came out and saw what we were doing. She ran in and got our parents and I thought "mission accomplished. When my Dad came out, he asked who drank the liquid. We both turned to each and pointed saying, "he did". As it turned out the liquid were chemicals to test the water in pools and very poisonous.

Dad didn't want to take any chances and took us both to the hospital. Brad went in first and they pumped out his stomach.

It is just what it sounds like. They stick a long tube down your throat and suck all the contents of the stomach. I could hear him screaming and I knew this wasn't going to be pleasant.

The reality hit me all at once. I knew I didn't drink it, Brad knew I didn't drink it, but where was nothing that was going to save me. They came and got me and I started screaming, "I didn't do it! I didn't do it!" As it turned out the tests showed that I did not do it and Brad did. After that I never tried to get Brad in trouble again. At least for a little awhile.



The last house we moved to in Fresno was where a major event occurred that would change the course of my life and had the greatest impact. The house was pink and Dad had us all stick a foot and a hand in a small slab of wet cement to make prints. I guess this his way of making turning a house into a home.

The backyard had a large field behind it and at the end of the field was a railroad track. We would dig pits in the ground and use them to make forts. As trains went by, we would wave at the engineers and they would wave back. We had a great time there.

I remember Mother gave a birthday party to Brad and Karen Berry. They were dressed up like a king and a queen and sat on thrones. I was very envious.

My Dad had a large piece of slate which we would take some chalk and scribbled on it as we played school. After we were done, the slate was laying on a bed where I ran by it. The slate did not have anything to cover the edges and was sharp as glass. As I ran by it, I felt something different. I looked down and saw a large cut across my leg.

My first reaction was I was going to get in trouble, as if I broke a lamp or something. Unable to walk, I crawled into the kitchen. It was there that Diana found me laying in a pool of blood. She was about twelve at the time and had been left alone to care for all of the kids.

Now some adults, let alone children, would freak out or even faint at such a sight. Diana ran to the next-door neighbor's, who she barely knew, and got help. The neighbor wrapped my leg in a towel and Diana told her to take me to our Uncle Dean Berry. Diana didn't know where his office was so they had to look it up in the phonebook.

I remember being in his medical office. The first time I started to cry was when Uncle Dean started to wash out my wound. The next thing I remember was Dad and Mother hugging me and taking me home. Days later all the neighborhood kids brought me presents and wanted to be my servants. I was treated like a King! I finally got to be a king like Brad, but I nearly lost my leg.

Years later I asked Uncle Dean how bad the cut was, and he said that the cut went right up to the main artery in my leg. If it had gone any farther, I would have bled to death in minutes. All I could think of was how glad I was that Diana didn't find me in that condition.

I have some fond memories of my Mother in that house, putting baking soda on a bee sting, and feeding me my favorite, chopped olive sandwiches, and I knew I was loved. As I was healing from my leg mishap, I was told not to walk for a few weeks. One night as I crawled into bed, I saw a spider just about my head and I ran into Mother's room. At least I didn't walk.

Brad and I were a handful and one summer. Mother was at her wits end with us. She said that if we didn't straighten up, she would call Santa. We begged her not to and we straightened up, a least for a little while.

Dad was building a cement fence on the side of the house. After each section was set there was about six inches of rebar sticking out every foot so that the next section could be attached to it. To Brad and I it looked like a wonderful ladder going up to the top of the fence. I didn't know if we would get into trouble climbing it so I had Brad go up first. He was about half way up when he slipped and fell. As he fell, a few of the rebar ends cut into his chest. To this day Brad has three thin scars about three inches long. I said to myself that I would never try and get Brad in trouble again. At least for a little awhile.

It was a tradition that Mother would make all the girls Easter dresses for Easter Sunday. When I said I wanted one, she made Brad and I sailor outfits. I was in kindergarten at this time and wore it for school pictures. I loved this outfit and was very proud of it.

I think it was during that Easter Sunday after learning about the death and resurrection of Christ I asked my Mother what death was like. She answered and said it was like walking into another room.

Fresno was a great place to live at that time. We had the Berry's, Andelin's, and Cooper's living close to us. After getting out of school I would walk to the Cooper's to play with Shawn and Lance. We were always visiting each other and would go camping at Dinkey Creek.

Dad and Mother were working long hours trying to get the pool business going. When they were home we had a great time being together. Life couldn't get any better with wonderful parents and siblings. There truly was beauty all around because there was so much love in this home. This all was about to change.



My Dad was getting ready to build a pool club in Indio which was about 350 miles south of Fresno. He planned to stay down there several days and then come home and visit. Mother, Brad, and I were to go with him when they pulled Aunt Marie's small trailer, to settle him in.

All our stuff was packed, the trailer hitched up. At the last minute, Aunt Marion insisted that Brad and I stay with her instead. I was so excited to be staying with the Berry's. We didn't even unpack our clothes because Aunt Marion said she had enough clothes for us. We loved our Uncle Dean and Aunt Marion and had so much fun playing with Jon.

Later that same day Uncle Dean called us to meet in the living room. There my Dad was waiting for us and began to tell us that our Mother will not be coming home. My sisters started to cry. I was very confused. I didn't understand why my Dad was here and where was my Mother? After wards people started to come over to visit and all the adults were upset and talking amongst themselves.

Later that day I remember going to a large home (funeral home) and being brought into a room with no windows. There in the room was a woman laying down as if asleep. My Dad picked me up and said to kiss my Mother goodbye. I still did not understand what was happening. I refused to kiss the woman and wanted to leave. I know that many people need closure at a viewing before the casket is closed. I am not one. To this day I struggle with going to viewings.



I remember going to the funeral service where everyone was crying and I felt like I was supposed to cry also. I started to cry, not because of the loss of my Mother, but I didn't want to be out of place. I was young enough to remember, but too young to understand. The understanding part took a life time. My Mother went to another room and wasn't coming back. I wasn't going to see her until I went into that room someday.

The death of my Mother was very hard on Dad. After my Mother was buried, my aunts and uncles were discussing how our family was going to be split up as my Dad got back on his feet. Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean did not want us to go to different families and insisted on taking us all. We were already living there.

Living with the Berry's

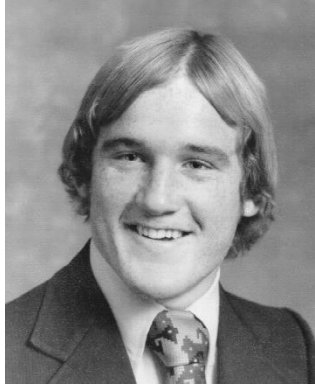
Living with the Berry's was wonderful. It was the perfect situation to help me cope with the trauma losing my Mother. Aunt Marion and Uncle Dean did a marvelous job in making us feel at home and a part of their family.

I remember Uncle Dean giving Jon and I each a Mercury Dime coin collection booklet. We had a pile of Mercury Dimes and put them in our booklet under the right date. The US mint stopped making Mercury Dimes in 1945 were getting hard to find. Years later, after I was married, I asked Jon if he remembered the dime booklets. He said he didn't quite remember where they came from and had wondered why he had two collections. He figured one was mine and give one to me. It was wonderful to have the collection back and the fond memories that came with it.

I started first grade and was in Jon's class. At that time Jon was like a best friend and I never got tired of being with him. Around the house where we lived was a large Fig orchard. Jon, Brad, and I spend hours playing, climbing the trees, and throwing soft sticking figs at each other.

- - To be continued - -





Bradley James Fife

Biography

The beginnings, written November, 1984

Bradley and Susanne are a match made on the softball field. In fact we could say Susanne really fell for Brad—right in the mud—running to first-base. (Some girls will do anything for attention.) Brad was quite amused and he laughed at the spectacle she made of herself. Susanne wasn't amused and her first words to Brad were, “So I’m a jock.!”

This romantic meeting transpired in the spring of 1979 in Provo, Utah, the Land of “For Better or Worse.” As the relationship developed, it proved itself to be “Better.” The result being, Brad and Susanne were married on the 17th of November of 1979 in the Los Angeles Temple.

After five months of fighting “For Richer or Poorer” in Provo, (leaning toward the poorer) Brad and Susanne moved to Colton, California. Brad was employed by his father at the refinery in Rialto for a year. The wedding vows continued to Provo themselves true as Brad discovered how you spell “In Sickness and health:” P-R-E-G-N-A-N-C-Y. Poor Brad didn’t get a home-cooked meal for six months! A bouncing baby HULK was born on January 23, 1981. He could have been a photocopy of his Dad with Mom’s pug nose. The obvious solution was to name him Bradley with his middle name Jason for a little distinction!?

The Bradley Fife family wasn’t limber enough to lean any further into the poorer side of the marriage vows, so after Jason’s birth they picked up and moved to Huntington Beach, California. Bradley secured employment at Hughs Aircraft in Fullerton, where he is presently employed. B.J. or Jason is growing in the fashion of all future football stars. He is 16 months old and weighs 34 pounds!

Bradley is currently applying to be a fireman and later on a paramedic for L.A. county. In the Huntington Beach 4th ward Bradley serves as teachers quorum advisor and assistant scoutmaster. Susanne serves as the Homemaking leader for Relief Society. Huntington Beach has been good to Bradley and Susanne and Jason, and they hope to settle

there or near there in the future. There must have been an impression made by Brad and Susanne's first meeting because softball continues to be an active interest for both. Brad plays on a mens team and even coaches Susanne's womens team. He must still see potential in Susanne's first words of declaration to him.

Update written July, 2019

Our family became complete with the birth of our daughter Karie. (We didn't know it then, but after many tests we learned we wouldn't be able to have any more children).

Before Karie was born, the doctor kept telling Susanne she was going to have another boy. But Susanne could tell it was a girl from how she moved around. Instead of punching, she felt fluttering dance hands moving inside of her. Sure enough our little girl surprised the doctor when she was born.

She was affectionately known as baby Karie to her cousins, until she grew up so quickly and began walking at 10 months. Then she was embraced as just one of the pack because she could keep up with them all, especially her brother. She just adored her big brother.

Jason was always a busy, happy, social child and sensitive to others. He had a friend who was Down Syndrome in our ward, and he never hesitated sitting with him or sharing conversation even though it meant listening to stories over again. Later on Scout camp-outs, other boys didn't choose to share a tent with his friend Evan, but Jason volunteered and never seemed to get tired of the same constant questions he asked.

Jason loved school and made many friends. In kindergarten Jason met a friend named Ben, who is still his friend today. They stayed friends through all the years of school even after they no longer lived close to each other, and went different directions with their interests.

Jason worked hard in school and was motivated to get good grades. He loved math, science, music, art, and wrote amazing stories as a young boy. He also loved playing sports; soccer, and baseball from 5 years old through High School.

As a child Jason would spend his days outside creating forts or space ships with crates, the jungle gym, an old longboard surfboard, a plastic turtle swimming pool, and any 2 by 4's or planks he could find.

Karie was right in the middle of such creativity and both children would play for hours in their made up adventure stories. Jason loved Comic Books, and faithfully read and collected them over the years. He knew every story line and helped all of us to follow the SuperHero movies that came out much later about the characters.

Karie always wanted to wear dresses, even if climbing trees, playing in the mud, or riding bikes, whatever the activity. She had an enthusiasm for fashion. She put together

unique outfits on a daily basis and proudly wore her designs, sometimes to the chagrin of her Mother.

Karie loved playing with dolls; baby dolls, rag dolls, stuffed animals, and Barbie dolls. Many times, finding her on her bed took a second look due to the many dolls, or stuffed animals she had around her.

Karie also loved school for all the social reasons, she loved all her teachers and had many friends. Karie loved art, books, and music, and was willing to work harder than other students to learn what she needed to learn. She walked to a retired teacher's house after school and received tutoring, and that woman knew just what to do. It was just about using Karie's Learning Channel to prove to herself she was a good student. Karie just needed to go about things in the way she made them work. She never faltered because of her keen imagination.

She animated any inanimate object into an adventure or dialogue. Karie played soccer and softball from 5 yrs old to Middle School. She was such a social and friendly child she had to develop the ability to be aggressive on the soccer or softball field.

When Karie started High School she played Volleyball and Basketball for the first time. She attended a Volleyball camp and she was enamored with Volleyball. It didn't hurt that she grew 3 ½ inches in High School and that helped her abilities and skills for playing volleyball as well as basketball. She attended a clinic for Freshman basketball and it clicked for her.

She developed a good shot, and great defensive skills. She played JV Volleyball and Basketball her Freshman year and Varsity the next 3 years. Karie was awarded MVP her JV year of Basketball, and Tournament MVP her Junior Year. She was the only female athlete who was awarded All League and All Valley Awards in both Volleyball and Basketball her Senior Year.

Karie continued to be a good student, she was close to her teachers and coaches and a good group of friends. Karie was selected as the Freshman ASB rep, and was elected as the ASB Board Activities Officer her Sophomore year. She earned her YW medallion, attended 4 yrs of seminary, and earned Athlete of the Year her Senior year.

In High School Jason fell in love with football and wanted to play the sport. He had never played football, never practiced throwing a football but wanted to play quarterback. He went to the first practice and discovered he couldn't throw the ball like the others trying out for quarterback. He came home devastated he didn't do well. But they had all been instructed to learn the play book. The next day he was allowed to work out with the quarterbacks in spite of having a lot to learn.

Now Jason being a good student took seriously the task of learning the playbook. In two weeks he learned and memorized the plays. He began improving with his throwing technique and accuracy.

Unbeknown to Jason the Freshman head coach decided to let him start as the quarterback. This was discovered when Susanne told the coach Jason would miss the first game, because he had to work. Jason had been doing commercials, and small parts and a director of a previous job contacted him to do a sequel commercial for a Brazilian athletic shoe. Thinking he wouldn't be missed at the game Jason took the job.

When the coach found out, he yelled at Susanne and said, "don't you know he was going to be our starting quarterback?" She responded, "When were you going to tell him?" Jason fulfilled his contract to work and missed the game and the coach made him pay for it the rest of the season, by barely playing him as a Safety.

Now the reason Jason had been chosen to quarterback was due to his learning the playbook better than the other players. The Freshman team did not have a strong season. When the Head Coach found out what had happened, he fired the Freshman coach and Jason started as the JV quarterback next year.

Jason demanded a lot from himself, he was a good student, being selected for National Honor Society & California Scholastic Association. He developed close relationships with his High School teachers and coaches. He continued excelling in football all four years, 1 yr JV, 2 yrs Varsity and played baseball all four years, varsity 3 of those 4 years. He also served as captain two years for Football and Baseball.

Jason was selected as a Freshman Rep in ASB, and was elected the ASB board Academic Officer. He served as the Bishop's assistant, attended 4 yrs of Seminary, awarded Student of the Year, and Athlete of the Year, and earned his Eagle Scout Award.

During the years of Jason playing baseball, soccer and participating in the Scouting program Brad was a constant support. Brad was either coaching or being the Scout Master or the Venture Scout Leader for seven years of Jason's youth, Brad coached soccer for 3 years, but he dedicated most of his time and effort into coaching Jason in baseball. He took Jason to pitching and catching lessons and by doing so, he gave Jason skills to throw and catch with confidence and he acquired better control.

In the meantime Susanne coached Karie in soccer and softball. Susanne knew softball due to the 8 years Brad dedicated to coaching her women's softball team, Friday – City League, and Saturday – Church League. Brad's patience was remarkable. Susanne learned the game and enjoyed it so much. Due to the years she played, she had the knowledge to coach Karie when she began playing. Karie played first base, catcher, second base, and out field. Karie developed into a strong player with a good arm, and a sure and quick glove. Those long arms helped her field the ball and make incredible catches.

Karie earned a partial basketball scholarship after graduating from High School to Dixie State College (now Dixie University) in St. George. She met life-long friends at Dixie and learned to love the red rock hills, and the outdoor opportunities of camping, swimming in rivers and lakes, and hiking. She played and worked hard as a contributing member of the

women's basketball team and then transferred to Utah Valley College (now Utah Valley University) to finish her degree.

She majored in Recreation Management with many challenging classes, like: rock climbing, scuba diving, mountain bike riding, backpacking, river rafting, and wilderness rescue. She thoroughly enjoyed her major and included an internship with the Athletic Dept. Women's Basketball Office. When she graduated she received her diploma from Utah Valley University, one of the first degrees awarded through the new University.

Jason was offered a full ride football scholarship after graduating from High School to University of Oregon, and committed to be a Duck. He was so excited to be able to play in the Pac 10 (now Pac 12) Jason went to visit University of Oregon on his 18th birthday, what a memory! He entered school early August and practiced with the team every day rain or shine until Sept. He remembers riding his bike to practice, practicing in the rain and riding home in the rain.

His first year he was a red shirt Freshman, but he traveled with the team as a back-up every year. His Freshman year he was put in the last half of the Spring game and had a strong performance. He told us about how the coach told him he was going to play, but that wasn't the best part, and then how well he did, but that wasn't the best part, and then after the game fans came up to him to sign hats, shirts, programs, but that wasn't the best part.

He saw a young man in a wheelchair who had been waiting, and his mother asked if Jason would mind taking a few minutes to talk to him. Jason got down on one knee and talked to this young man, signed his hat, and thanked him for his strength and for being such a great fan. The young man rolled away after the boy's Mom hugged Jason with tears in her eyes. That was the best part!

Jason continued developing his arm, muscle tone, speed and knowledge of stratagem of the game by working with his quarterback coach who challenged him using checkers to counter offense and defense. Hewas a back up getting into numerous games to play. He went to five bowl games and played in two.

Jason earned his starting quarterback position from his hard work overall and the performance in the spring game his Junior year. He lead his team to a victory scoring four touchdowns and a field goal. It was a proud day for the family members that came to see his performance, Mom, Uncles, Aunts, cousins, and many friends.

Jason was the quarterback who played the first game in the brand new expanded renovated Autzen Stadium and his Mom and Dad, 3 of his Uncles and Aunts were there to share the exciting day. It was a perfect day in September with a strong, steady performance from the new starting quarterback Jason Fife. The season took off to a six win start, but as football proves to be a sport of wins and losses, there were losses experienced as well. He carried the good with the bad and kept his faith and hope to continue doing what he loved.

The support of family and friends was overwhelming at times. Aunt Sue baked chocolate chip cookies and held them on her lap in a warmer during a game in a snow storm.

Uncle Shaun and Uncle Lance almost got into a fight in the stands defending their nephew. Uncle Randy, Aunt Christa and Aunt Diana drove to the Seattle bowl game in miserable conditions. At one point Jason had the 3rd highest college quarterback rating in the nation.

Jason's senior year began with an announcement he wouldn't be the starter, but would have playing time in a tandem pattern for games. He had performed so well in the position of 2nd that he helped win several games and his stats were almost equal to the starter.

At this time the team won their biggest win over an eastern opponent, Michigan. Jason made a move avoided a tackle and ran in a score and ended up on the cover of Sports Illustrated. A fax came to Susanne's office that said, not bad for the 2nd quarterback, huh? She almost fainted right there in the middle of her office. Then she received a call from a National Radio Sports Reporter asking questions about Jason and his family and had to be completely poised and calm.

The year ended in disappointment because Jason was given even less time in games, and usually only put in to try to win a game that wasn't going well.

The best thing that happened to Jason his junior year was his marriage to Rebekah Willis in the San Diego temple. This lovely young lady became his rock and helped him in every way to handle the path he was on. With her by his side, he felt stronger and more capable of handling whatever happened. He was honored at his last football banquet with great respect from all his coaches.

After college Jason entered the NFL as a free agent. He and Rebekah traveled from Detroit to Minnesota to Europe and then played Arena Football in Vegas and Dallas, and then for the NFL New Orleans Saints. At that time they both felt their family needed to go another direction.

Jason decided to attend Dental School and was accepted to the University of Oklahoma, where he received his doctorate of dentistry. He was offered an opportunity to join as a partner with Mike Ferguson returning to Eugene, Oregon. He and Bekah are currently living in Eugene. They have four children; one daughter, Gwen, three sons, Logan, Grayson and Kallon.

Karie married Brian Harker the same year Jason moved back to Eugene, and she and Brian moved to Eugene also. They currently live and work there, and are glad to be close to her brother.

To be continued

The Legacy Continues

Memories of the Larsen Family

By Diana Fife Rice

Some of the fondest memories Roger and I have of our early married life, is of watching JoAnn and Barry fall in love. They met in our home during a student group family home evening, the night our daughter Cindy was born, February 8, 1971. JoAnn was living with us that year, across the street from the BYU tennis courts, before the indoor courts had been built.

We had a perfect view of the path they strolled down from upper campus after their dates. Time seemed to stand still for the happy couple--in fact it might take them an hour to travel what was normally a 3 minute walk. There was a little stream along the path, where they would stop, make "boats" out of twigs, and have boat races. These races didn't speed them up much, because the starting and ending points were not very far apart, and the winner had to "console" the loser after each competition.

As they neared the house, we could hear their laughter, and see the great animation in their faces. At that point, Diana would leave them alone to say their good-nights, but Roger just couldn't resist keeping an eye on the happy couple once in a while. It was wonderful to witness the joy they felt the evening they became engaged on the Salt Lake Temple grounds. The strolls were over, and the race through life had begun!

Another wonderful set of memories is of their early married life at BYU. This was a couple who thoroughly enjoyed each other's company, yet didn't hesitate to serve where ever needed in church callings, or in their very extended family. We remember the time they were watching our three children as we returned from the hospital after a disappointing bout with "false labor." Barry said, "Don't hesitate to call us if you need us, even if it is 2:00 a.m." Sure enough, at 2:00 a.m. labor pains started again, the Larsens were called, and came right over. Our son Randy was born a few hours later, and we knew our family at home was being well taken care of.

As each of their children joined the family, it was a privilege to see what wonderful parents Barry and JoAnn became. They worked together to nurture, inspire, lead, tend, feed, clothe, discipline, teach, play, laugh and worship with each child. We have such wonderful memories of those years, of JoAnn, the lovely young mother making clothes for her tiny son David. Of Barry extracting a live snail from the mouth of his dainty, immaculately dressed little daughter Julianne. Of both parents comforting Keith after he survived a freak bus accident. Of JoAnn staying up all night at a ward camp-out walking the floor with their normally happy baby Brad, who suffered with what they later found to be an ear infection. And of course, we vividly remember JoAnn and Barry welcoming their son Jared to the family with great joy and faith, the year Barry became Bishop.

We remember Barry calmly reading the scriptures to the children as they rushed around eating breakfast, while JoAnn got them ready for school, and then all of the children racing down their long driveway to be picked up by the bus on a snowy Idaho morning.

Countless family home evenings, trips to get a twist ice cream cone, cub scout achievements and pinewood derbies, Young Womens programs, plays, track meets and football games all came tumbling along in a blurr of vitality and activity for the growing family. Dates, proms. many extracurricular school activities and Eagle scout service projects, sports, and church activities seemed to accelerate to high school graduations and college years and missions began.

Suddenly, David was a returned missionary from Brazil, Julianne was married to Kerry, and Keith was leaving for his West Indies mission. Now Brad is leaving for his mission and Jared will soon be in college. The time has flown by, but it has been joyous, productive, wonderful time in raising an outstanding family.. –December 14, 1996

The Answer Came to Me Plain and Simple

By Bonnie Fife Middleton, Super Mom of Seven, 1989

Wednesday, September 6, 1989. The day began at 5:45 a.m. First I woke everyone up. Then I rushed downstairs to start the morning routine by fixing breakfast. Lunches came next, seven of them, with different requests, and of course the older children would die if a name got on their lunch sack, so it was rather tricky to get things in the right sack. I hurried to comb two of the girls' hair, being extra careful on the one who had gotten stitches on her head a week before. Of course there was the usual "I need money for such and such class," and "Mom, could you please finish calling the girls in my MIA-maid class and ask their moms a little-known fact about them by tonight at 6:00". And "remind Dad that he said he would help me on the computer game for mutual."

8:00 a.m. and everyone except the baby and one son who leaves at 9:20 had gone. I thought how nice it would be to make dinner early (this was a fluke, believe me), so I started dinner and popped into the shower while my son watched the baby before he had to leave for school. When I was drying my hair, my son brought the baby to my room and left for school early. (What Never!) I finished getting ready while the baby made a mess, played in the toilet paper and begged for makeup. (18 months is really pushing it to wear make-up). I finished making dinner, loaded the dishwasher, picked up the house, did the laundry, did some errands, treated myself to a hamburger, and got home at 11:30, just in time to let my son in for lunch. By this time, I was feeling pretty proud of myself. I fed the baby lunch, too, and scooted my son back to school.

At 12:15, the son who had just left, called from school to tell me that today was the last day to return his book order that he wanted more than life itself. I wrote a check and as I put the baby into the van, I remembered that a friend was coming to borrow the van at 12:30.

Well, I just made a run for it, and luckily my friend was a few minutes late. At 1:00 I put the baby down for a nap, and decided to make a nice dessert for dinner, and I even made a treat for after school. I continued the laundry and other housework. At 3:30, two of my girls had to go shopping.

We rushed to find a pair of jeans shorts and a shirt and shoes for gym. At 4:45, we dashed home so my soccer daughter could change before her game. As I was leaving, the daughter who needed the mothers' little know facts, wanted to know if I had called all of them. I had gotten all but two. She also had forgotten that she was to bring punch and cups to Mutual. A son really had to have a compass and a protractor in order to do his math homework, otherwise he'd just have to play!

We got to the soccer game at 5:03. She was a little late, so I stayed long enough to make her feel better and see her play a little. I ran to the store (I'd run in there only this morning, but I'd better keep running) and bought the punch and cups, the compass and protractor and arrived 5:30 to find a daughter trying to held herself together to because her father had not gotten home yet to help her on the computer. At 5:45 her father arrived, at which time I quizzed him about being late. (Poor man, he probably felt like going back to work, but no such luxury could be afforded.) He managed the computer game for mutual then rushed off to pick up our soccer player. Meanwhile, a mother called to ask if I know of anyone who could help her sew dance festival costumes. I felt the sting of pain, thinking of the costumes I have yet to sew for my own children.

At 6:00 pm I quickly changed and left for my interview. The Bishop's counselor wanted to know how I felt about being called to be (excuse me, as I am writing this, my baby got the lid off the diaper pail, you know, the kind that is supposed to be child-proof, so I had to clean her up, and put back all the soiled diapers) now I was saying—oh yes, would I accept a Primary calling? I of course said yes. We got to the High School Open House late, but we listened to the speech on self-esteem (not what I really wanted to hear. I needed to hear waves crashing on the beach and soothing music). We met all of our daughters' teachers, and made it home by 9:00.

Longing for bed, I still had to hem the gym clothes we had bought. But the owner wasn't home from dance practice yet. We had family prayers and I waited up for her, but she needed to talk. At 10:30 we decided to hem the clothes in the morning. Before going to bed, I put out the cat, locked the doors, put more clothes in the wash and folded some. As I put my head on my pillow, I wondered why we mothers put ourselves through days like this. The answer came to me, plain and simple: LOVE. The last thing I remember was thinking what to have for breakfast.

Roger Rice's Ensign Articles



The Most Important Job in the Church?

Published in the *Ensign*, February 1982

By Roger L. Rice

Suppose the bishop called you into his office after sacrament meeting and said, "I have a very important calling for you in the ward. I would like you to be songbook coordinator for the ward choir." What would you do? You might think to yourself, "But bishop, that's such a *little* job. Couldn't you give me some-thing important to do, something I can sink my teeth into, like Young Men's president or Relief Society president -- a position where I can really be of service?" But, having been taught never to turn down a calling, you smile and say, "Why, yes, I would love to be songbook coordinator."

On your first day as songbook coordinator for the ward choir, you arrive half an hour early and carefully place the songbooks; after the practice you hurry to collect and return them to the proper closet. No one, you observe, puts an arm around you and tells you what a fine job you did. The next week you arrive a bit later and rush through your responsibilities. Again, no one notices your efforts.

The third week comes along, and you don't even show up. After all, it's such a *little* job.

It may be true that songbook coordinator is not necessarily the most difficult job in the Church. The most difficult job in the Church is the one that begins with the word "just" -- I'm "just" a home teacher; I'm "just" a visiting teacher; I'm "just" an usher; I'm "just" a deacon. The most *important* job in the Church, on the other hand, is the one in which service is willingly, faithfully rendered.

I've determined that there are three types of people holding positions in the Church. One is the worker who says, "Yes, I'll do the job," but then doesn't fulfill his responsibility. Another is the person who does the job, but does no more than the minimum expected (and he really doesn't enjoy it). The third type of individual is one who not only does the job, but finds joy in going the extra mile.

You might ask, "But how can a ward choir songbook coordinator go the extra mile?" Let's think about that. He might notice that several books have broken bindings, and he takes the time to repair them. Perhaps some of the books have missing pages; so he xeroxes those pages from other books and inserts them into the books where they are needed. He might

even build a container to carry the books so that he will not drop them as he is distributing or collecting them. There are many ways to enhance one's service.

Let me tell you about some church workers I have known who went the extra mile. President A. Harold Goodman, of the Provo Temple presidency, once lived in Tucson, Arizona. While there, he was called to be home teacher to a man that no one had been able to visit. After attempting several times without success to find him at home, he went to the neighbors and found out that the man was working two jobs and left home every morning at 5:30 A.M. So the next morning at 5 A.M., Brother Goodman was sitting on the front porch; when the lights went on in that house, he jumped to his feet and knocked on the door. The man answered the door, and Brother Goodman said, "Good morning, I'm your home teacher." The man was surprised to see someone so interested in him, and a warm relationship developed.

I have an aunt living in Ogden, Utah, who says that as a young girl she had a memorable Sunday School teacher. When he was called, he said, "A Sunday School teacher is the most important calling in the Church," and he was the best Sunday School teacher she ever had. His name was David O. McKay.

I believe that the most important job in the Church is the one we hold right now. Maybe you don't even hold a specific position. I remember being in a ward where there were just not enough ward positions to go around, so the bishop called certain people into his office and asked them to be celestial members -- to set a good example for others; to fellowship those in need; and to be one-hundred-percent participators. That was an important calling -- as is *any* calling we now or in the future will hold in the kingdom of God. For it is through righteously serving others that we bless our own lives, enrich the lives of our neighbors, and further the work of the Lord.

Roger L. Rice, a systems consultant in data processing, is a father of six and a high councilor in the Walnut Creek California Stake.



Sitting on the Sidelines for My Priests

Published in the *Ensign*, August 1978

By Roger L. Rice

"If you want to love God, you must learn to love his children and to love serving his children. No person loves God unless he loves his service and unless he loves our Heavenly Father's children." (Harold B. Lee, Provo Temple Dedication Services, 1972.)

These words mean much to me now as I think back on my assignment as priests' quorum adviser in a new ward. After being called, I tried to remember a strong priesthood leader to emulate. The most obvious example, next to my father, was a former bishop at Brigham Young University, Bishop Gordon M. Low.

That bishop had influenced me because he cared about me, and I knew it. Because I knew he had my best interests at heart, I was willing to listen to him. I decided that to have any influence on the priests in my stewardship, I would need to let each one know that I sincerely cared about him. That was the challenge.

I hardly knew any of them, so it was difficult enough just remembering their names. I realized that to care about them I would first need to know them. I started following the example of my former bishop; my wife and I invited the priests over for dinner, usually one at a time. The priests thought we were crazy.

I remembered being impressed by the knowledge my former bishop had of each person in his ward. He had taken the time to learn the full name and the hometown of each ward member. So I tried to collect as much information about each priest as I could. Since there were only thirteen, I was able to gather quite a lot. They were all impressed with how much I knew and curious about my sources.

I still faced the challenge of helping these young men feel that I cared. Some of them doubted my motives. Others didn't seem to want interest from anyone outside their immediate families. Nevertheless, I attended as many of their extra-curricular activities as I could -- football games, basketball games, wrestling and swimming meets, school musical programs, and stake dances.

At first it was a sacrifice, and some of the young men were a challenge. But gradually I noticed a change. No, the priests didn't change -- I did. I began to look forward to their school activities, to priesthood lessons and to Mutual.

The principle I learned is that with sacrifice comes love, though not in the way I had thought. The person receiving the service does not necessarily love the person making the sacrifice. In fact, the one receiving the service may not even realize that a sacrifice is being made. However, the person giving the service gains love for those he serves. The more he serves, the more he loves and the more he loves to serve.

After a time, my sacrifices ceased to be sacrifices. I did many of the same things I had done before, but it was out of pleasure. I felt a genuine love for each of those young men! When they were called on missions, I felt as proud and excited as their own parents.

Then I realized how my former bishop was able to show me that he cared. A person cannot hide his feelings. The bishop sacrificed for others: as a result he had a great love for those he served, and they felt that love even if they did not recognize the sacrifice.

President Lee's point is clear: If you want to truly love another person, you must sacrifice for and serve that person. That is why parents love their children. That is why missionaries love their missions and the people they have served.

The Savior can love all mankind because he has truly sacrificed for each of us. We do not necessarily love him because of that sacrifice. To be able to love him, we must be willing to sacrifice for him. This means service to others.

-Roger L. Rice

Stephanie, JoAnn and President Joseph Fielding Smith

By Diana Rice

At the end of the first year of graduate school, my sister JoAnn and I decided to attend the opening session of Education Week. It was being held in the fieldhouse across the street from our house. We especially wanted to go because of my two year old, Stephanie, and because the Prophet, Joseph Fielding Smith, was speaking. Stephanie had seen the flyer advertising the event, and was drawn to the picture of President Smith. She would carry it around with her, and would say, "Christ." She was so young, we were struck by the sacredness of her response. We determined we would attend, even though my three children were all very young. JoAnn assured me she would help, and it was the only way we could both go.

We arrived early enough to get seats on the front row of permanent seating at either side of the speaker's platform. Folding chairs were set out in front of that platform, but we got good seats at the side, and we were about twenty yards from where the Prophet sat. He was also there early, and as I settled my new baby Cindy, and one-year-old Michael, JoAnn decided to take Stephanie up for a closer look at the Prophet.

This is a scene forever in my mind. I watched as JoAnn went to within about 15 feet of the Prophet and his wife, and stood quietly talking to Stephanie about the Prophet. Sister Jesse Evans Smith saw them, and motioned for them to come over. JoAnn shook her head "no" and President Smith joined in motioning. JoAnn did as was suggested (it was the Prophet) and went over, and they were both able to shake hands with President Smith and his wife. It was a thrill to see my little girl, who had so responded to a photograph, be able to shake hands with the Prophet.

The remainder of the time we lived in Provo, whenever we passed the fieldhouse, our little Stephanie would reverently say, "Christ." I began to realize I had as much to learn as to teach as a mother. —Diana Rice

A Reward for Recovery

By Diana Rice

Written after recovering from two back surgeries and gall bladder removal

11/2/93

I am happy to be nearly recovered from my various surgeries of last summer. One thing about having everything you enjoy doing taken away, it is almost like starting a new life to be able to go back to your favorite activities--it's almost like you've never done them before.

I was unable to attend any church meetings for five months, so taking the Sacrament has become a profound experience for me. Being unable to care for my family for half a year, I now feel much joy and satisfaction being able to do the dishes or manage the laundry. My children still at home, Anna Marie, Christopher and Brian have worked so diligently to keep things going for me.

I am very thankful to be returning to health, and feel deep gratitude for the many kind acts of service and encouragement lovingly poured upon my family and me. Best of all, I feel a deeper relationship with Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. I have definitely been assisted through these challenges due to prayer.

As a special treat, a reward for recovery, my husband and family at home sent me on a week-long trip to Utah. With frequent flyer miles, I flew to Salt Lake, picked up a rental car at the airport, and drove to Orem, where Bonnie and Chuck had prepared for me everything a back patient would ever need in the way of luxury and pampering.

I had been in the hospital when Michael and Emily opened their wedding presents, so it was fun to see everything unpacked and in use in their darling apartment. I attended Stephanie's Relief Society, and it was a step back in time for me to watch her conduct the meeting.

The five of us Rices had Sunday dinner at Michael and Emily's. Tuesday, I watched Stephanie dance at the Etruscan Exhibit in the new Art Museum.

Wednesday Bonnie and I shopped at all our favorite places in Salt Lake, and then watched Cathy qualify for the State Cross Country Finals. I heard a man standing next to Bonnie at the finish line say as Cathy passed by, "Wow, she's a lean mean machine!" And he was right, she is in top condition, and ran an unforgettable race.

We went from the race to Cedar Hills and got a grand tour of Randy and Christa's new home and gardens. They have a very lovely home, the type you could happily spend the rest of your life in! We enjoyed our visit there, and even got to see Coban march off to scouts in full uniform. Isn't life passing by quickly?

Normandie, Kaylie, and Courtney are growing up, too. How can this be--everyone else's children seem to grow up faster than mine did! (are) [Note: This was just before Errickah's birth and before I became a grandmother!]

I loved visiting with the Middleton children, and Julianne, they are all doing very well. We saw the musical "Rags" in the DeYoung Concert hall, courtesy of Stephanie. It was very good. Friday evening,

Randy and Christa, Bonnie and Chuck, Michael and I all had dinner at the "Stagecoach", where Emily performs in a dinner show of Western music. Our daughter in law is quite a fiddle player. She is a violin major, but she makes the transition to fiddling in the flicker of an eyelash.

Saturday I watched a rehearsal of a dance Stephanie choreographed and is producing with the theme "the Sons of Helaman." She has 18 young men dancing, and has original music written by Aaron Case that really sets the mood.

Then I watched Randy march in the Homecoming Parade. It was memorable to see Randy march right past the house where we brought him home from the hospital, his first home! I finished up the week by going to the first half of the Homecoming game against Fresno State, and then left as soon as I watched Randy perform in the Half time show with the Folk Dancers. Bonnie picked me up at the portal, whisked me to my car, and I miraculously made it to the plane 10 min. before flight time!

A Matter of prayer

by Susanne Fife

We have a special testimony of prayer. In August, 1986, Brad survived a week of Scout Camp at Camp Cherry Valley on Catalina Island—just barely. He thoroughly enjoyed having his nephew, Randy Rice and his senior patrol leader along for leadership and support. But some of the younger boys in the troop were another story, a never-ending story of frustration and amazement that some 12-year-old boys could act the way they did.

By day two, Brad was already feeling he would swap his car troubles at home for the bad food and conditions at camp. He felt he could accomplish anything after making it through seven days at scout camp. The worse part of all was that after 6 days of hard work, he didn't get the 7th day to rest or the pleasure of seeing any great creation for his efforts.

While Brad was at the scout camp, he began feeling very ill, and his symptoms worsened in the damp air. His assistant came home sick two days early and told us about Brad even being more sick than he was. We felt helpless because we couldn't communicate with the camp. We decided to have family prayer. We knelt together and asked the Lord to bless Brad's health and to help him be well under the circumstances of giving service to the scouts.

We all felt much better and were able to sleep soundly that evening.

When Brad returned home, he looked quite well. He said he had gone to sleep Thursday night in a lot of pain. He could not swallow and had white pox on his throat. But by Friday morning, they had disappeared and he felt much stronger. We had had our special family prayer on Thursday evening. We are so grateful for the power of prayer and for the blessings of service to others.

**Letter from Norma to her mother-in-law
of interest to her posterity**



I am grateful to my Father-in-Heaven for the privilege of being born under the covenant and of being worthy enough to have Randolph for my Husband for eternity. He is such a wonderful man and so I have his parents to be grateful for the teachings they gave him.

We really keep busy and it looks like we... have a wonderful future ... I know that the Lord has really guided us... and I am very humble when I think of how we have been blessed.

Norma Berry Fife

When Norma passed away in 1960, a posterity of 5. In 2019, there are 155.

Norma and Randy's Grandchildren

The Posterity List

- 1 Stephanie Rice Taylor
1. Michael Rice
2. Cindy Rice Case
3. Randy Rice
4. David Larsen
5. Emily Middleton
6. Julieanne Larsen Muhlestein
7. Charles Middleton IV
8. Anna Marie Rice Tiberius
9. Keith Larsen
10. Cathy Middleton Wilson
11. Christopher Rice
12. Brad Larsen
13. Steven Middleton
14. Jared Larsen
15. Becky Middleton Sorenson
16. Jenny Middleton Anderson
17. Jason Fife
18. Coban Fife
19. Karie Fife
20. Normandie Fife Latourelle
21. Brian Rice
22. Kayledene Fife England
23. Crystal Middleton
24. Cortney Fife
25. Errickah Fife Fucile

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Posterity of Randolph Erickson Fife and Norma Berry

Randolph Erickson Fife was born 19 November, 1919 on the Stewart Ranch near Woodland, Utah. He died 14 November 1992 in San Jose, California. He married Norma Berry 26 November 1945 in the Salt Lake Temple. Norma was born 27 February, 1917 in St. Johns, Arizona and died 5 May 1960 in Bakersfield, California. Both are interred in the Gridley, California Cemetery.

Children of Randolph Erickson and Norma Berry Fife

- I. Diana Maree Fife
- II. JoAnn Fife
- III. Bonnie Lee Fife
- IV. Randolph Berry Fife
- V. Bradley James Fife

I. Children of Diana Maree Fife and Roger Lourn Rice

Diana Maree Fife was born 4 October, 1946 in Woodland, Yolo, California. She married Roger Lourn Rice 7 June 1968 in the Los Angeles Temple. Roger was born 18 December, 1943 in Los Angeles, California.

A. Stephanie Lee Rice b. 21 Mar 1969

+Jared Mark Taylor b. Oct 1972 m. 12 Aug 1995

1. Jordan DeSpain Taylor 2 May 1996 married 22 Dec 2016

Skyler Allowitz Taylor 13 Dec 1995

2. Ashley Houston Taylor b. 27 Jun 1997
3. Megan Aubrey Taylor b. 31 Aug 1998
4. Nathanael Asa Taylor b. 13 Mar 2000
5. Jonathan Ammon Taylor b. 29 May 2004

B. Michael Dean Rice b. 28 Feb 1970

+Emily Wilson b. 3 Jun 1972 m. 12 Aug 1995

1. Michael Benson Rice b. 23 Jul 1993 married 23 May 2015
 Kenzie Lauder Rice b. 29 Sep 1994
 - a. Ellie Rice b.
2. Joshua Dean Rice b. 10 Mar 1996
3. Jessica Celine Rice b. 20 Apr 1998
4. Aubrey Lauren Rice b. 7 Dec 1999
5. Jackson Douglas Rice b. 16 Sep 2004
6. Alexander Steele Rice b. 22 Jan 2009

C. Cindy Rae Rice b. 8 Feb 1991

+Aaron Benson Case b. 19 Nov 1971 m 29 Jul 1995

1. Miranda Katherine Case b. 13 Oct 1997
2. Raven Jade Case b. 11 Jun 2001
3. Damon Mikhail Case b. 18 Jul 2005

D. Randy Lurn Rice b. 8 May 1972

+Deborah Palmer b. 31 Aug 1972 m. 20 Dec 1996

1. Matthew Lurn Rice
2. Ethan James Rice
3. Elizabeth May Rice
4. Jacob Spencer Rice b.

E. Anna Marie Rice b. 13 May 1975

+Charles Edward Tiberius b. 18 Mar 1972 m. 26 May 2001

1. Mariah Tiberius b. 1 Mar 2002

2. Mason Charles Tiberius b. 11 May 2003
3. Andrew James Tiberius b. 14 Jul 2004
4. Allison Michelle b. 3 Feb 2007
5. Sarah Lynn Tiberius b. 31 Jul 2010

F. Christopher James Rice b. 1 Apr 1977

+Heather Marie Stewart b. 1 Mar 1977 m. 21 Aug 1999

1. Madison Emma Rice b. 23 Jul 2001
2. Katelyn Marie Rice b. 24 Sep 2003
3. Levi James Rice b. 30 Mar 2006
4. Bridget Leah Rice 24 May 2008

G. Brian Cameron Rice b. 19 May 1984

+Rachel Rowbury b. 13 Aug 1984

1. Cameron Jackson Rice b. 4 Oct 2007
2. Thomas Roger Rice 16 Jan 2010
3. Leah Marie Rice 7 Sep 2012
4. Claire Rice 4 Feb 2016
5. Parker Erick Rice 19 Feb 2018

Children of JoAnn Fife and Noval Barry Larsen

JoAnn Fife was born 18 October 1949 in Woodland, Yolo, California. She married Noval Barry Larsen 25 Jan 1972 in the Salt Lake Temple. Barry was born 15 Jan 1950.

A. David Barry Larsen b. 30 Nov 1972

+Tricia Marie Tincher b. 5 May 1973 m. 17 Aug 1996

1. Brinley Elisabeth Larsen b. 2 Apr 2003
2. David Tyler Larsen (Tyler) b. 08 Dec 2008
3. William Tanner Larsen (Tanner) 08 Dec 2008

B. Julianne Larsen b. 14 Feb 1974

+Kerry Miles Muhlestein b. 9 Apr 1969 m. 19 May 1995

1. Benjamin Joseph Muhlestein b. 24 May 1997
Bree Muhlestein b.
2. Tashara DeAnn Muhlestein b. 2 Oct 1998
3. Kaleb Joshua Muhlestein b. 19 Aug 2001
4. Alexia Rachelle Muhlestein b. 17 Apr 2003
5. Sabrina Kalani Muhlestein b. 10 Sep 2005
6. Jacob Larsen Muhlestein b. 26 May 2007

C. Keith Dwaine Larsen b. 14 Mar 1976

+Kristen Michelle Matheson b. 18 Jul 1978 m. 17 Oct 1998

1. Taylor Keith Larsen b. 8 Sep 1999
2. Alison Michelle Larsen b. 21 May 2002
3. Lindsey May Larsen b. 20 May 2004
4. Isaac Matheson Larsen b. 26 June 2008

D. Bradley Eric Larsen b. 30 Nov 1977

+Cara Marie Frazier b. 15 Nov 1980 m. 5 Aug 2006

1. Benjamin Bradley Larsen b. 23 Jan 2006 d. 24 Jan 2006
2. Abigail Anne Larsen b. 19 Jun 2008 Stillborn
3. Timothy Tyler Larsen b. 29 Nov 2006
4. Nicholas Noval Larsen b. 7 Jan 2010
5. Lucy Larsen b. 2 Jan 2012
6. William Randolph Larsen b. 10 May 2013 Stillborn
7. Colin Larsen b. 24 Jan 2015

E. Jared Scott Larsen b. 29 Dec 1978

+Karen Gilbert b. 10 Sep 1978 m. 25 Jul 20002

1. Kate Larsen b. 4 Oct 2004
2. Jackson Noval Larsen b. 8 Oct 2006
3. Bryan Jared Larsen b. 22 May 2008

4. Dane Erickson Larsen b. 20 May 2011
5. Carter Lamar Larsen b. 13 Aug 2013 Stillborn

Children of Bonnie Lee Fife and Charles Franklin Middleton III

Bonnie Lee Fife was born 22 January, 1953, in Tucson, Pima, Arizona. She married Charles Franklin Middleton III in the Los Angeles Temple. Chuck was born 13 Jun 1951.

- A. Emily Rachel Middleton b. 31 Oct 1973
- B. Charles Franklin Middleton IV b. 16 Feb 1975
 - +Kimberly Laycock b. 1 Jul 1975 m. 21 Feb 1997
 - 1. Aerie Hannah Middleton b. 29 Nov 2006
 - 2. Charles Franklin Middleton V b. 7 Mar 2009
 - 3. Branney Austin Middleton b. 16 May 2012
 - 4. Elijah Redd Middleton b. 8 Dec 2012
- C. Catherine Marie Middleton b. 7 Mar 1976
 - +Larry Brant Wilson b. 20 Mar 1974 m. 31 Aug 1996
 - 1. Tyler Brant Wilson b. 23 Oct 1997
 - 2. Bryce Charles Wilson b. 1 Jun 1999
 - 3. Ethan Jeffrey Wilson b. 7 Feb 2001
 - 4. Tabitha Marie Wilson b. 30 Mar 2004
 - 5. Kate Rachel Wilson b. 30 Mar 2004
- D. Steven Arthur Middleton b. 7 Mar 1978
 - +Erica Thomas b. 1 Sep 1977 m. 30 Dec 2010
 - 1. Jack Middleton b. 16 Aug 2013
 - 2. Mary Middleton b. 28 Aug 2014
- E. Rebecca Louise Middleton b. 12 Jul 1979
 - +Karl Jacob Sorensen b. 18 Nov 1978 m. 7 Jan 2010

1. Jacob Holger Sorensen b. 12 Oct 2017
 2. Oskar Charles Sorensen b. 12 Oct 2017
 3. Dylan Timothy Sorensen b. 12 Oct 2017
- F. Jennifer Lee Middleton b. 18 Jul 1980
- +Drew Wesley Anderson b. 11 Apr 1983 m. 28 Jul 2007
1. Henry James Anderson b. 13 Mar 2009
 2. Cameron Anderson b. 5 Aug 2012
 3. Kyle Anderson b. 17 Dec 2014
- G. Crystal Ida Middleton b. 3 Feb 1988

Children of Randolph Berry Fife and Christa Nebeker

Randolph Berry Fife was born 18 November 1954 in Tucson, Pima, Arizona. He married Christa Lee Nebeker 6 November 1980 in the Oakland Temple. Christa was born 22 March 1959.

- A. Coban Blaze Fife b. 12 Aug 1981
- +Heather Eaton b. 10 Oct 1982 m. 8 Feb 2002 DIV
1. Mirra Ramona Fife b. 20 Aug 2002
 2. Icey Rose Dearlee Fife b. 8 Nov 2006
- +Christina Nelson (Kina) b. 25 Dec 1980 m. 14 Aug 2010
- B. Normandie Fife b. 3 Dec 1983
- +Daniel Duante Latourelle (Damien) b. 9 Sep 1984 m. Mar 17 2007
1. Breelyn Janea Latourelle b. 28 Jan 2004

2. Jaxyn Skye Latourelle b. 4 Oct 2005
 3. Tearsa Randi Latourelle b. 5 Sep 2008
 4. Akaisha Clover Latourelle b. 21 Dec 2011
 5. Draven Jakob Latourelle b. 8 Feb 2019
- C. Kayledene Fife b. 29 Dec 1985
- +Matthew Martin England (London) b. 27 Jan 1984 m. 12 Jan 2007
1. Randall Hatch England b. 25 May 2012
 2. GracieMae England b. 16 Apr 2014
 3. Isabel England May 2019
- D. Cortlerin Fife (Cortney) b. 20 Mar 1989
- E. Errickah Fife b. 19 Mar 1994
- +Chris Fucile b. 19 Sep 1993 m. 28 Dec 2013
1. Eloria Fucile b. 29 May 2014
 2. Armaus Fucile b. 10 Dec 2015

Children of Bradley James Fife and Susanne Woodard

Bradley James Fife was born 10 September 1955. He married Susanne Woodard 17 Nov 1979 in the Los Angeles Temple. Susanne was born 1 March 1955.

A. Bradley Jason Fife b. 23 Jan 1981

+Rebekah Ann Willis b. 10 Feb 1981 m. 22 Mar 2002

1. Gweneth Jayden Fife b. 14 Apr 2005

2. Logan Benjamin Fife b. 5 July 2008

3. Grayson Connor Fife b. 16 Apr 2010

4. Kal (Kallon) Luke Fife b. 16 Aug 2017

B. Karie Fife b. 30 Jun 1983

+Brian Harker b. m. 14 Sep 2013

Appendix

Barbara Jean Pickering Seymour Fife



Barbara Jean Pickering was born April 22, 1926 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Her parents were Paul and Leone Pickering. Barbara had many challenges throughout her life. Due to congenital hip problems, numerous surgeries were performed before she was in school, and occasionally thereafter. Her parents divorced when she was small. She had a succession of stepfathers.

She attended the College of the Sequoias where he met her future husband, Lewis William (Bill) Seymour II. Bill had been a Naval pilot during World War II. They were married in 1948, and both became students at UC Berkeley. Their first son, John Richard was born 25 Sep 1949, while they were in Berkeley. Lewis William Seymour III was born 14 months later, 1 Dec 1950. Barbara completed her degree at UC Berkeley with teaching credentials.

When the Korean War was declared, Bill was called up again to serve as a Navy pilot. Ten days after he left for Korea, in January 1952, his plane crashed near Japan, with no survivors. Notification came slowly in those days, and Barbara had read about the crash and had a strong feeling it was Bill's plane, before she was officially notified. Weeks later, she found she was expecting again. Douglas Alan Seymour was born 7 Sep 1952.

Barbara spent a decade as a single mother, supporting and raising her three young sons. She taught school, had her own home built and invested in real estate specializing in duplexes and apartments. The summer of 1961, she met Randy Fife, a widower with five children. The two lived on opposite ends of the state of California, and were single parents to a collective total of eight young children, yet managed a courtship and were married in December of 1961.

Barbara and Randy raised their large family together, and had many adventures in life before Randy passed away in 1992.

Barbara was a member of the American Association of University Women, and Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. She served a stake mission, she was a temple worker in the Oakland temple four years, and she served as a volunteer in the Salt Lake Genealogical Department for two years. She took many art classes and painted as a hobby.

She passed away peacefully at Lake Ridge rest home in Orem January 12, 2015.

Her graveside services were held Saturday, January 17th at 10 am at East Lawn Memorial Park in Sacramento, California. (4300 Folsom Blvd. Sac CA 95819).



Postface

We have compiled this book, to preserve for their posterity the story of Randy and Norma Fife. Both have been gone for many years, more than 50 for Norma and almost 20 for Randy. Theirs is not an easy story to tell. They were both complex personalities, and they had a wide variety of experiences, some of them tragic. Norma's mother, May Whiting Berry wrote,

“[A biography]... means more than just statistics or even history. A common interest will bring us closer together, both to our living and to our dead. Our future posterity will read and visualize the messages and testimonies contained in these pages.”

God has created a world where there are many more good things than bad. Harold Kushner explained: “We find life's disasters upsetting not only because they are painful but because they are exceptional.

“Most people wake up on most days feeling good. Most illnesses are curable. Most airplanes take off and land safely. Most of the time, when we send our children out to play, they come home safely. The accident, the robbery, the inoperable tumor are life-shattering exceptions, but they are rare exceptions.

“When you have been hurt by life, it may be hard to keep that in mind. When you are standing very close to a large object, all you can see is the object.

“Only by stepping back from it can you also see the rest of its setting around it. When we are stunned by some tragedy, we can only see and feel the tragedy. Only with time and distance can we see the tragedy in the context of a whole life well lived, and a whole world.”

As background to Randy's and Norma's biographies, we offer life sketches of their parents and progenitors, and then with word and picture, the story of this remarkable couple unfolds. We conclude with choice contributions by some of the family and finally have compiled information on the descendants of Randy and Norma.

We hope that the readers will come to treasure the lives of the people written about in this book. Struggling against difficult circumstances, enjoying a high level of love for the family, achieving well above the average, there is much we can learn from their examples.

Diana Fife Rice