

# **MABEL COOK SMITH**

## **A PERSONAL HISTORY**

Written July 1984

### **MY BIRTH**

I was born January 11, 1914, the first daughter and fourth child of thirteen children born to Barnes Alma and Alice Adeline Southam Cook, in Cedar Fort, Utah. Mother said it was a beautiful Sunday morning. There was lots of snow, but the sun was shining. Dr. Heber Robinson of American Fork was Mother's doctor.

There was no prenatal care in those days and the babies were born at home. When Mother asked him to be the doctor for her delivery, she told him she wanted a girl, as I had three older brothers. He told her if she would have hers baby during the day and have good weather, he would do his best. He rode eighteen miles on horseback from American Fork to Cedar Fort and when he got there Mother said, "It is daylight and the weather is good." I was born at 10:25 Sunday morning, weighing 5 1/2 pounds.

Mother said I would sleep all day and cry all night at first and had them all tired out. Dad always had Mother a hired girl when she had a baby, and Francell Chamberlain was her hired girl when I was born.

### **BLESS BY MY GRANDFATHER GEORGE H SOUTHAM**

I was blessed and given a name on February 22, 1914, by my Mother's Father, George H. Southam, when he was visiting Mother. He lived in Vernal, Utah. I was always a little special to him, because I was the only one of my mother's thirteen children that he blessed. Most were blessed by my Grandfather William Cook.

### **HELPING WITH THE HOUSE WORK**

Mother and Father had a large family, but Father always saw to it that Mother had plenty of help. He would leave one of my older brothers at home to help her and take the other two to the field to help him. He did this until I was able to help with the work.

### **BEING BAPTIZED**

I turned eight on the 11th of January, 1922, and the next July 28th I was baptized by James E. Peterson in the north ditch that had been dammed at a headgate so it would be deep enough. I was confirmed by my Uncle Alfred Andersen. A lot of my friends were baptized at the same time.

### **CHRISTMAS AT OUR HOUSE**

It was the custom in Cedar Fort on Christmas morning when people came, you would see who could say Merry Christmas first. For many years our Christmas dinner was oyster stew. It was a real treat for us, because they were expensive and we could not afford them very often. We also had Mother's famous pumpkin pie. Another treat was the orange we would find in the toe of our Christmas stocking. Oranges were not as plentiful as they are now. I loved the ribbon hard tack, and try to find it now for Christmas. But it is hard to find.

### **NEW YEAR'S BASKET DANCE**

On New Years there was a Basket Dance for the younger children. The girls would decorate a basket and fix a lunch for two. The boys would bid on them and the one that bid the highest would

eat lunch with the girl. When I was older, in my teens, we would go to the dance, then at twelve o'clock we would go to someone's home for supper, then go back and dance a while longer. A family tradition for the men was to go rabbit hunting on New Year's Day.

## **WE LIVED WITH GRANDFATHER COOK**

We lived in the Cook Family home of my Grandfather Cook. When Grandma Cook died, the family asked Mother and Father if they would move in the home to be with Grandpa. They had my two older brothers at that time, Sheldon and Thayrel. Sheldon says he can remember when they moved. I have many fond memories of Grandpa Cook. Most everyone in town called him Uncle Bill. He taught us many things and he said he was to the meeting when Martin Harris bore his testimony to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon after he came to Utah and rejoined the Church. Grandpa raised one of the best vegetable gardens in town and was very generous with what he raised. I remember the orchard with the different fruit trees. Growing under the trees was tall orchard grass and we loved to play in it. There were lots of slumber parties out under the trees during the summer.

## **LIFE AROUND OUR HOUSE**

We had no radios or televisions, so we had to create our own entertainment. One evening we were playing Hide-The-Thimble. Everyone but one person would go out of the room. The person left in the room would hide the thimble some place. Then the other ones would come back into the room and see who could find the thimble first. I was looking for the thimble and reached up on the shelf of a corner cupboard we had in the corner of the living room and tipped it over. It had my Mother's pretty dishes in that she got for her wedding. Some of them were hand painted. It broke most of them and they carried them out in a tub. I felt very bad, but Mother seemed more concerned about me being hurt and said it was careless to put the dishes in there because the cupboard was in two parts and the top was not fastened to the bottom part.

We did a lot of sleigh riding during the winter and in the summer we would play outdoor games. We loved to take a lunch and hike to a spring up in the hills just above town.

## **I WANTED A NEW BLOUSE**

When I was fourteen I wanted a new blouse. So Mother told me she would give me the material and I could make me one. Mother made most of our clothes when we were young. I was in my teens before I had a boughten dress. I was sewing my blouse in the evening and Mother told me it was getting late and said I had better finish it the next day. But I kept on sewing because I wanted to wear it the next day. I got my hand under the needle and broke it off in my finger. My dad tried to get it out, but it was in too far. Mother got Uncle Bert Rodeback (he had one of the few cars in town) to take me to Lehi to the doctor to get it out. I had a very sore finger for a while.

## **PICKING UP POTATOES IN IDAHO**

During my teen years I went on some trips with my Father's cousin, Sam Wilcox. He never married, so adopted the young people in the town. He took a group of girls to Idaho one fall to pick up potatoes. We stayed in a small building that belonged to my Uncle Henry Hacking. It was close to their house and Same stayed with Uncle Henry and Aunt Martha. They paired use in twos to pick up the potatoes, and they put me with Elvira Weeks, the fastest girl in the valley. It was hard to keep up with her, but I did and made more money then the rest. She and I became very good friends. After we were through with the potatoes we stopped off in Rexburg and some of us got a permanent. It was my first and the girl that gave it to me burned my head. She went to the door to see the Ricks football team go by in a parade and left me with the hot electric curlers on my head. Those first permanent were terrible, just a lot of fuzz.

Sam also took a group of us on a trip to Bryce and Zion Canyons. Fon Cook went along on that trip and we camped out in tents.

## **ATTENDING SCHOOL**

I attended the first seven years of school in a two room school house with a large pot belly stove for heat. We had no indoor restroom. By the time I was in the eighth grade they had put in a furnace and indoor restrooms. I graduated from the eighth grade May 20, 1924. Myself and two of my cousins, Evelyn Cook and Bernice Hacking, did the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades in three years.

I attended high school in Lehi and had to ride the bus 15 miles on a gravel road. I loved school and was in the Posture Parade and took first place in the District. I was on the relay team and I played basketball. My favorite classes were English and literature. I graduated from high school May 22, 1931. I also completed projects in cooking, sewing and forestry in the 4-H club.

## **I LOVED TO DANCE**

I loved to dance and the young people of Cedar Fort went to Saratoga and Geneva to the Saturday night dances. It was at a dance at Saratoga that I met the boy that later became my husband. Ralph Smith would come with a group from American Fork and we would dance with them. I took part in plays that the M.I.A. would put on and take to different places.

## **DATING AND MARRYING RALPH SMITH**

I dated quite a few real nice boys. The summer of 1934 I started dating Ralph. We dated for three years, but both of us dated others until June of 1937 when we decided to get married. We were married September 15, 1937, by Steven L. Chipman. He was President of the Salt Lake Temple and a very good friend of the Cook Family. My family gave us a reception and dance. It was nice and we had a large crowd.

## **LIVING IN MERCUR**

Ralph was working in Mercur and we lived in a Tent House we rented from Sam Wilcox until Ralph built us a two-room house. He finished it so we could move into it before winter. They had a branch of the L.D.S. Church there and I was put in as a counselor to Myrle Burbidge (Ralph's Sister) in the Primary. We held church in the school house.

## **OUR FIRST CHILD - CLEO**

Our first child, a daughter, was born while we lived in Mercur. She was born August 13, 1938 in the old American Fork Hospital. Dr. Kenneth Noyes was my doctor and his fee was \$25.00. We named her Cleo. Glee, Ralph's sister, had a baby girl on June 4th and named her LaVee. Cleo and LaVee had a lot of fun playing together and were the best of friends.

Our first Thanksgiving after we were married we had in Mercur and Glee, Bill, Ralph's Mother and brother, Merrett, came and had dinner with us.

## **MOVING TO AMERICAN FORK - 262 SOUTH 100 EAST**

When Cleo was a year old we moved to American Fork at 262 South 1st West. It was a nice brick bungalow style home that had been built by Walter Chipman. When we moved there in 1939 there were only four wards in the city and with the Alpine and Hyland Wards it made the Alpine Stake. Clifford E. Young was the Stake President. He was later sustained one of the Assistants to the Twelve Apostles.

## **YOUNG & SMITH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**

Before we left Mercur Ralph had started a construction company with Dugal and Joe Young. They called their company The Young and Smith Construction Company. The first job they did was in Joseph, Utah, building a bridge.

Ralph was away from home a lot, because of his work. I would go with him on some of the

jobs, when we could find a place to live. Some of the towns we stayed in while he worked were Ogden, Garland and Ferron, Utah. We also lived in Paonia, Colorado one summer.

### **OUR SECOND DAUGHTER - LARAINÉ**

Ralph was working in Garland when our second daughter, Laraine, was born--July 31, 1941. I called Ralph as soon as I took sick, but he didn't make it home until after she was born. The doctor didn't make it in time either. She was delivered by the nurse, Maud Humphries at 10:15 a.m. on Thursday. She was born premature and weighed 5 pounds. The chord was wrapped around her neck five times, and if it had not been for the quickness of the nurse we would have lost her. She was blue and they had to give her oxygen. While she was a baby she had pneumonia twice and we finally took her to a Dr. Blood, a woman specialist in pediatrics.

When Laraine was four months old, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. The United States declared war on Japan. We were already involved in a war in Europe. We thought Ralph might be drafted into the army, but because of his dependents and his work which was on defense jobs, he did not have to go.

### **OUR THIRD CHILD - BARBARA**

It was during the war, on April 20, 1944, that our third daughter, Barbara, was born. Dr. Kenneth Noyes who had been my doctor was in the army so I had Dr. Guy Richards for my doctor. Barbara was my easiest birth of all my children, but my milk did not agree with her and we had to put her on a special formula. The doctor also told me to give her sunbaths. I would put her in the buggy on the front porch every morning in the sun.

### **MY APPENDIX**

When Barbara was six months old, I had my appendix removed. After I got out of the hospital I had some boils and could not sit down for a while. It was very miserable.

### **THREE BROTHERS IN THE MILITARY**

I had three brothers in the Service. Marion was in the Army and Rulon and Donald were in the Navy. It was a happy time when the war ended and they all came home.

### **OUR FIRST SON - KENNETH**

Our first son was born on a Monday morning, October 6, 1947. The family was very excited because we had just about given up having a boy. We named him after our doctor, Kenneth Noyes, who was back from the Service. When Kenneth was eighteen months old we spent the summer living in Paonia, Colorado, where Ralph was working. As soon as Kenneth was old enough he loved to go out on the jobs with his dad.

### **CLEO'S CHALLENGES**

About this time some sadness came into our lives. When Cleo was twelve years old she started having problems. The veins and arteries in her right leg were not right and it was causing an overgrowth. She was operated on to correct the problem. About this time she started having bad headaches and passing out. We took her to one doctor after another, but none seemed to find her problem. When she was fourteen we took her to a doctor who said she had a brain tumor, and said they would have to operate the next morning. The operation lasted seven hours. She recovered from the operation, but it left her physically handicapped. She also saw double and had to have an eye operation.

### **OUR FOURTH DAUGHTER - MARILYN**

Our fourth daughter, Marilyn, was born November 7, 1951, weighing 6 pounds 1 ounce. She was the first of our children born in the new hospital on Third North. Dr. Noyes was my doctor again. She was a pretty, dark-haired little girl. When she was nine months old I got pregnant again. It was hard at the time, Cleo took a lot of my time. I was president of the Latona Music Club, president of the Young Ladies Mutual. The Bishop released me from that in June of 1951. We had Ralph's Mother with us part of the time and she was becoming quite a care at that time.

### **OUR FIFTH DAUGHTER - ARLENE**

Our fifth daughter, and sixth child, was born May 18, 1953. We named her Arlene, after a girl friend of mine, Arlene Wingett--a girl I had picked strawberries with in Orem. Arlene had blue eyes and when she got some hair it was blond and curly. She and Marilyn played so good together. I would dress them alike, except in different colors. I dressed Arlene in blue a lot because of her blue eyes.

### **LARAINÉ'S HELP**

Laraine, our second daughter, had the responsibility of Marilyn and Arlene quite a bit. I was taking Cleo to doctors and to therapy a lot. Every time we heard of something we thought would help her we would try it. Ralph was away working a lot of the time, so it would fall to me to take her.

### **LARAINÉ MARRIED**

September 19, 1959, Laraine married Joe Burrows from Murray, Utah. She had graduated from High School in the Spring and was working at the Bank of American Fork. She was married by Bishop Fred Bowen at our home. Joe's father and mother were there. I was six months pregnant at the time.

### **OUR SECOND SON - BLAINE**

When Arlene was 6 1/2 years old the Lord answered our prayers and sent us our second boy, the baby brother the children wanted so badly. We had given up having another baby, as I was near 46 years of age. He was born the 19th of December, 1959. I went home from the hospital Christmas Eve. Joe and Laraine came down Christmas Eve and spent Christmas with us. It was a happy time. Kenneth was so happy to have a baby brother.

### **A NEW HOME - 236 NORTH 500 EAST, AMERICAN FORK, UTAH**

During the summer of 1963 we sold our home on First West and bought a home from Edmond Hall, at 236 North 500 East. The freeway was being built and it took part of our lot and we thought we would be too close to the freeway. They built a chain link fence between the freeway and our home. One day I went out and Blaine had climbed to the top of the eight-foot fence. He was only three years old.

The children had to change schools. It meant leaving their friends and being in a different ward. It was especially hard for Arlene and Cleo. Marilyn seemed to adjust a little better.

### **BARBARA MARRIED**

The next fall, on September 11, 1964, Barbara married Gerald Anderson in the Salt Lake Temple. She had graduated from American Fork High School, attended college at Utah State and B.Y.U. She was voted first attendant to the Angel Flight Queen while at B.Y.U.

### **CLEO GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL - BYU**

Cleo also attended B.Y.U. after graduating from High School. It was so hard for her to get around, so she only went the one year, but later took a correspondence course. She loved the "y" and

went there every chance she got. She worked at the Bishop's Storehouse in Orem and also at the American fork Hospital. She was gradually getting worse. During this time I worked at a cafe in Pleasant Grove and the Frost Top in American Fork. In February of 1965 I started working at the Utah State Training School as a matron, helping take care of the residents.

### **KENNETH GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL**

Kenneth graduated from American Fork High School in May of 1965. After he graduated he worked on construction with Ralph for a while, until he was drafted into the Army. He spent Boot Camp at Fort Lewis Washington, then spent the remainder of his time in the Service in Germany. It was the time of the war in Vietnam and we were glad he was sent to Germany. After he came home from the Army he worked on different jobs, but finally got a job working for American Fork City on the Street Department, working under Ralph. When Ralph retired they put Kenneth over the Street Department.

### **CLEO GOT WORSE**

Cleo was getting worse and she was in so much pain, we put her in the American Fork Hospital. She was so bad they had us take her to the L.D.S. Hospital in Salt Lake City. She was operated on for another brain tumor and never regained consciousness. She died June 30, 1968, and was buried July 3rd in the American Fork Cemetery. I was so glad to have a job to go back to. It helped to get my mind on other things. It was so hard to lose her, yet we knew she was better off and would be happier. She had been through so much and could not get better. The Red Cross brought Kenneth home from Germany for the funeral. The faith we have in a life after death helped to ease the sorrow we felt. It has been 25 years since she left use, but at times I long to see her again.

### **DISABILITY RETIREMENT**

I worked at the Training School until June of 1975, when I started having some problems with my heart. Our family doctor (Joe Murdock) said he would not sign a release for me to go back to work, but would sign for me to get disability Social Security. I put in the claim and it went right through.

### **MARILYN AND ARLENE MARRIED**

Marilyn had married Moyle Greenwood, June 9, 1972, in the Salt Lake Temple and we were busy planning Arlene's wedding to John Heiner on August 15, 1975. I was wondering how I was going to get everything done, feeling well, and working. So when I quit working and I could get some rest it helped a lot. They were married in the Salt Lake Temple. We had nice receptions for both Marilyn and Arlene with a lot of help from friends and family. We were very pleased with the boys they had chosen to marry.

### **BLAINE GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL**

Blaine graduated from high school May 1978. He was class president the year he was a Senior. He worked that summer then went to Snow College for one quarter. He was called to go on a mission to New Mexico, Albuquerque Mission. He left on January 4, 1979. While he was gone I had a heart attack on April 19th. I recovered, but it made a difference in what I could do.

### **BLAINE MARRIED**

When Blaine came home from his mission he went to B.Y.U., and while there met Jaime Gram from Las Vegas, Nevada. After going together for a while they decided to get married. They were married February 4, 1983 in the St. George Temple. We had a wedding breakfast for them in St. George, then went to Las Vegas where Jaime's parents gave them a nice reception. Merritt, Ralph's

brother, and his wife, Gail, came up from Los Angeles to take some wedding pictures. They both continued their schooling.

## **TAKING TRIPS**

While our children were young we liked to take trips to some of the places Ralph's company had jobs--in California, Oregon and Washington. One summer we took a trip to California with Arvilla, Dick and family and spent five days on the beach. We also took some trips to Yellowstone with Glee and family.

After our children married and left home, Ralph and I spent a lot of time with Ralph's sister, Glee, and her husband, Leo Lott. Her first husband, Raymond McKinney, had been killed in an automobile accident on the 4th of July, 1948. Grant, her youngest son, was a few months old. She married Lynn Gurney May 9, 1952. Lynn was a good father to Glee's children. He died following heart surgery the 20th of April, 1964

Glee was alone again. After a few years she married Leo Lott from Lehi, who had lost his wife some years before. They were married June 11, 1977, in the Provo Temple.

Glee, Leo, Ralph and I went on some trips together. In 1978 we went on a three-week trip to the Hill Cumorah Pageant and saw many of the historic places of the Church and also places of American History. The summer of 1980 we took a tour into Canada. In 1982 we went to Hawaii and 1983 we went to the Rose Parade.

We loved to camp up American Fork Canyon. When our children were small we had tents and would camp with Glee, Lynn and family. Later Glee, Leo, Ralph and I would camp in our trailers.

Leo died in the Fall of 1992, and Ralph and I lost our desire to camp out. We decided we would settle for going to the canyon for picnics.

## **VOLUNTEER WORK**

The last few years Ralph and I have done some volunteer work. Se spent quite a few years working once a week in the Genealogy Library in Provo, the T.I.B. Department. We spent one summer at Timp cave Visitor Center, giving information to visitors to the cave. One summer we spent one day a week at the Provo Temple as tour guides. I enjoyed the peaceful feeling we had there. The last few years we have spent Wednesday for 1 1/2 hours serving lunch to the Senior Citizens. Glee works with us. Ralph also spends two hours each week at the Recreation Center as a Marshall, checking on things. I go with him when I can and check the girls' side dressing rooms.

## **1992 - A FAMILY PICTURE**

I was happy a year ago when we had our entire family together and had a picture taken. The day after Christmas 1992 we had our family holiday party and had our entire family to it. Wondering if we could ever have them all together again, I had a photographer come and take our picture. He took several different poses. They turned out really good, and I am so thankful we got them. Our family means so much to us and we are proud of all of them.

## **I HAVE A TESTIMONY**

*I want the Cook Family to know I have a strong testimony that the Gospel is true and I know that the Lord answers our prayers. I hope we will always stay close as a family.*