

Family Group Record - 244

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Husband				
Abel Alexander DEWITT-636				
Born	1 Oct 1865	Place BigCottonwood, Slk, Utah	LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened		Place	Baptized	21 Jul 1874
Died	18 May 1953	Place Modesto, Stanielaus, California	Endowed	8 Dec 1885
Buried	21 May 1953	Place	Sealed to parents	BIC
Married	8 Dec 1885	Place Saint George, Washington, Utah	Sealed to spouse	
Husband's father Abel Alexander DEWITT-24			MRIN: 19	☒ Deceased
Husband's mother Margaret Miller WATSON-25				☒ Deceased

Wife				
Caroline SKOUSEN-637				
Born	3 Jun 1867	Place Draper, Salt Lake, Utah	LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened		Place	Baptized	
Died	18 Feb 1906	Place Eager, Arizona	Endowed	
Buried		Place	Sealed to parents	
Wife's father James Neils SKOUSEN-3416			MRIN: 1289	☐ Deceased
Wife's mother Zedkele Marie PETERSON-3417				☐ Deceased

Children	List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.	LDS ordinance dates	Temple
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1	Sex M	Abel Alexander DEWITT-1618		
	Born	23 Jun 1888	Place Springerville, Apache, Arizona	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died	Sep 1966	Place Marysville, Calif	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Jessie Donna SLOAN-1624		
	Married	3 May 1916	Place	MRIN: 563 Sealed to spouse

2	Sex F	Margaret Mary DEWITT-1619		
	Born	21 Nov 1891	Place Springerville, Apache, Arizona	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died	8 Nov 1959	Place Salt Lake City, Utah	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Guy Earl STEPHENSON-1625		
	Married	8 Nov 1911	Place Globe, Arizona	MRIN: 564 Sealed to spouse

3	Sex M	David Kenneth DEWITT-1620		
	Born	16 Dec 1894	Place Springerville, Apache, Arizona	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died	17 Sep 1986	Place Mesa, Arizona	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Elizabeth Adelaide FULLER-1626		
	Married	24 Nov 1917	Place Mesa, Arizona	MRIN: 565 Sealed to spouse

Select **only one** of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.

- ☐ **Option 1 -- Family File** Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.
I will provide proxies for: ☐ Baptism ☐ Endowment ☐ Sealing
The temple will assign proxies for ordinances not checked.
- ☐ **Option 2 -- Temple File** Send all names to any temple and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.
- ☐ **Option 3 -- Ancestral File** Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.

Your Name George D. & Gwenevere D. Hulse	
Address 1622 W. Argon	
Mesa, Arizona 85201	
Phone (602)964-3817	Date prepared 18 Aug 1996
Your relationship to the husband and wife on this form Husband _____ Wife _____	

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Husband Abel Alexander DEWITT-636			
Wife Caroline SKOUSEN-637			
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.		LDS ordinance dates	Temple
4	Sex F	Lucy Winifred DEWITT-1621	
	Born	23 Jun 1901	Place Eagar, Apache, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died	27 Dec 1974	Place Piedmont, Ca.
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	Charles K. NELSON-1627	
	Married		Place
			MRIN: 566
			Sealed to spouse
5	Sex M	James Otis DEWITT-1622	
	Born	29 Jul 1898	Place Eagar, Apache, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died	11 Feb 1980	Place Escondido, Calif
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	Vivian Kathleen BROWN-1628	
	Married	20 Jun 1931	Place Michigan
			MRIN: 567
			Sealed to spouse
6	Sex F	Florence Caroline DEWITT-1623	
	Born	17 Feb 1906	Place Eagar, Apache, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died	1908	Place
	Buried		Place
	Spouse		
	Married		Place
			Sealed to spouse

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Husband			
Abel Alexander DEWITT-636			
Born	1 Oct 1865	Place BigCottonwood, Slk, Utah	LDS ordinance dates
Christened		Place	Baptized 21 Jul 1874
Died	18 May 1953	Place Modesto, Stanilaus, California	Endowed 8 Dec 1885
Buried	21 May 1953	Place	Sealed to parents BIC
Married	4 Oct 1911	Place Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah	Sealed to spouse 4 Oct 1911
Husband's father		Abel Alexander DEWITT-24	MRIN: 19 ☒ Deceased
Husband's mother		Margaret Miller WATSON-25	☒ Deceased

Wife			
Ruth Leila KEMPE-1185			
Born	29 Jul 1880	Place Richfield, Sevier, Utah	LDS ordinance dates
Christened		Place	Baptized 6 Sep 1888
Died	7 Jul 1943	Place Modesto, Stanislaus, California	Endowed 4 Oct 1911 SLAKE
Buried	12 Jul 1943	Place	Sealed to parents
Wife's father		Christoffer Jensen KEMPE-3418	MRIN: 1290 ☐ Deceased
Wife's mother		Anna Dorthea JOHNSON-3419	☐ Deceased

Children	List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.	LDS ordinance dates	Temple
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1	Sex M	Elijah Kempe DEWITT-1186	
	Born	16 Jul 1912	Place Mesa, Maricopa, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died		Place
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	Roma Katherine SMART-1192	MRIN: 411
	Married	12 Aug 1946	Place Glendale, Calif
			Sealed to spouse

2	Sex M	Lincoln Earl DEWITT-1187	
	Born	6 Aug 1914	Place Mesa, Maricopa, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died		Place
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	Beatrice Olive Betty BEMIS-1193	MRIN: 412
	Married	5 Sep 1938	Place
			Sealed to spouse

3	Sex F	Anna Elizabeth DEWITT-1188	
	Born	5 Oct 1916	Place Mesa, Maricopa, Arizona
	Christened		Place
	Died		Place
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	Charles William WARREN-1194	MRIN: 413
	Married	2 Oct 1938	Place
			Sealed to spouse

Select **only one** of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.

☐ **Option 1 -- Family File** Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.

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Your Name
George D. & Gwenevere D. Hulse

Address
1622 W. Argon

Mesa, Arizona 85201

Phone
(602)964-3817

Date prepared
18 Aug 1996

Your relationship to the husband and wife on this form
Husband _____ Wife _____

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Husband Abel Alexander DEWITT-636				
Wife Ruth Leila KEMPE-1185				
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
4	Sex F	Edith Vivian DEWITT-1189		
	Born	20 Sep 1918	Place Mesa, Maricopa, Arizona	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died		Place	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Gaylord Ricardo WERT-1195 MRIN: 414		
	Married	11 Feb 1938	Place Modesto, Calif	Sealed to spouse
5	Sex M	Robert Leigh DEWITT-1190		
	Born	20 Nov 1920	Place Phoenix, Maricopa, Arizona	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died		Place	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Edith OPENSHAW-1196 MRIN: 415		
	Married	22 Jan 1944	Place Hollywood, Fla	Sealed to spouse
6	Sex F	Ruth Leila DEWITT-1191		
	Born	19 Apr 1922	Place Inglewood, Los Angeles, California	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died		Place	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place	
	Spouse	Edgar Odell WAKE-1696 MRIN: 416		
	Married	14 May 1960	Place Eureka, Humboldt, California	Sealed to spouse 25 Jun 1963



ABEL ALEXANDER DEWITT
1865 - 1953
and his two wives



RUTH LEILA KEMPE
1880 - 1943
Married 4 Oct 1911



CAROLINE SKOUSEN
1867 - 1906
Married 9 Dec 1885

**ABEL ALEXANDER DEWITT, JR. And His Wives, CAROLINE SKOUSEN AND RUTH
LEILA KEMPE**

ABEL ALEXANDER DEWITT JR., CAROLINE SKOUSEN, RUTH LEILA KEMPE
(compiled by Ruth L. Wake, daughter)



Alex, as he was known throughout his life, was born in Big Cottonwood, Salt Lake County, Utah (a little south and east of Salt Lake City) 1 October, 1865.

Following are some quotes from dictation to his daughters when he was in his 70s:

"I think the first incident in my life as near as I can remember is when I was about somewhere between three and four years old. My mother and father used to go to the dances and leave me and some of the other children home. I remember I did not like that very much, so they took me with them one night, and that was worse than ever. The bright lights and music and such a large crowd of people, women so beautifully dressed, many of the dresses covered with beautiful beads--(I think women dressed with more style then than they do today). I was so frightened and so bashful I never wanted to go again.

"Another thing I remember, I think maybe I was about three years old, my mother took me with her on a visit for the day to some aristocratic neighbors nearby. Their grown daughter played the piano, and that about scared me to death. She had to quit I cried so much. I remember at dinner my mother said she was so ashamed of me she could hardly stand it. They had some pickled beets, and that was all I wanted to eat, was beets, and then some more beets, and how I did bawl for more beets.

"Next I remember my father took me with him in the field. He had a garden and some berries, currants, and gooseberries, and the berries were just getting ripe. Dad told me to stay there while he went up to the end of the field to turn down a stream of water. He told me not to pick the gooseberries and eat them, but when he got out of sight they looked too tempting. When he came back and found that I had been eating the gooseberries he got a willow and gave me a good trouncing. He never did whip me very hard at anytime, but a very few times. He always frightened me so badly by letting on that he was going to hurt me, but always scared more than hurt."

"The next thing I remember was going in the field, where he had the horses hitched to a wooden cultivator and had me ride on the cultivator. I thought it was great, but got sleepy and fell off."

"Soon after, I went with father to Salt Lake City. He kept a rope on the halter of the horse I rode and led him behind his horse. That was about the most wonderful trip (to me) ever taken. It was the first time I remember of being in Salt Lake. I remember riding on the street and looking at the signs over the big stores. A picture I will never forget was of a great big elephant on a big sign board, and I

remember crossing a little stream of water which was full of little fish. We rode sixteen miles that day, and when I got home I was so tired I could hardly walk."

"I remember quite a lot about my mother. She was a small woman and Scotch. She came from the city of Glasgow, Scotland. She had very black hair, dark complexion. She was always happy and good natured, kind and nice to us kids. If she ever wanted to chastise us for anything, she would tell us she was going to tell our father on us. That kinda scared us up a little. I can remember how we used to love to have her sing to us. I thought she was a beautiful singer. She would sing lots of funny Scotch songs."

As he remembers it, he was about seven years old when his father and others were called by Brigham Young to go to Arizona (he referred to it as a mission) to find places for the saints to settle. When his father returned he sold their home and all they had in Utah to their very dear friend Bishop David Brinton. He said he didn't think his parents ever had better friends than the Brintons. His dad had four horses and a covered wagon and his mother drove a yoke of oxen on another covered wagon and followed behind Father. Alex, Jr. and the other children rode with their mother, and Alex, at age 7, learned to drive a yoke of oxen.

"Mealtimes were a well-remembered memory. Traveling made us ravenously hungry. Supper and breakfast were cooked on the campfire, making hot pone bread in a big bake oven. We were allowed to have only one piece of meat each to eat with the bread and some gravy. For dessert we would get a big slice of hot bread filled with stewed peaches. If we wanted any sweetening on it we sweetened it with molasses. I never did have all the sugar I could eat until I was 14 years old."

Some, discouraged, returned to Utah--not Dad's father. He was faithful to whatever Brigham asked of him! It was wintry when they arrived in Upper Kanab so they stayed there for a time and went on to Kanab in the spring. There were many Indians there (Piute) and every time one came to the place he was sure they were going to scalp him, but eventually the children played with each other.

After about seven years, as he remembers it, just as his father was preparing to build a nice home, Brigham Young asked them to continue to Arizona where they were originally called to go.

A few quotes re his youth:

"I remember 4 or 5 of us boys went down to the river. None of us knew how to swim much. After we got through and put our clothes on, we started home and followed up along the river bank. In places there were great big deep holes. We got to playing what we called "black out." We jumped off into the water with our clothes on. I was in the lead so I jumped off into a hole and didn't know it was so deep and promptly went down out of sight. The other boys all came to the rescue, or I would have drowned."

"Andrew Christopherson and I went one time way up in what they call Round Mountain by Eagarville. He had what they called a derringer pistol and I had a .44 Colt pistol, a cap and ball affair. Never shot cartridges as they do now. They put in lead bullets and powder and a cap on the tube.

We were gone all day. About all we did was shoot at everything we saw. My pistol got so dirty shooting it so much the bullets lodged in the barrel and split the barrel. Then we took the barrel off and held a stick against the cylinder. It's a wonder we weren't killed."

"We got to playing 'black out,' jumping in the snowdrifts. We would jump in and light head first in them. I got up on a big rock and dove into a snow drift head first and couldn't get out, so Andrew had to help me. If I had been alone I never would have gotten out, but if I had been alone, I wouldn't have been doing such a thing."

As a youth the boys went barefooted and their soles became like leather. They could run over brush and sticks and rocks and nothing seemed to hurt at all.

Going to Arizona they stopped at Swallow Park in the mountains for a time, and Dad told of his father going to hunt some lost cattle, and when he did not return the family sat up all night and the next day watching and waiting. Finally about sundown they saw a speck. It would move, then stop, then move, stop. (His father was exhausted and kept stopping to rest.) He had gotten lost in a snowstorm and wandered all night walking to keep from freezing to death. Then they went to a little town on the Pyree for a week and stayed with the Smithsons. One night twelve head of yearlings froze to death. They traveled close to a couple of other families which helped, especially since one had some girls who were good singers, so the group sang most every night until bedtime. At Brigham City they stayed two months and lived with a group who were practicing the United Order. In the spring they went on to the forsaken area of St. Johns. Dad said he thought St. Johns was the most forsaken country on the face of the earth before it was settled, so they soon moved to Springerville, also called Round Valley, which was much better. Here his father got a job with some German Jews, the Becker brothers, who had a store.

When they first moved to Round Valley, now called Springerville, they had about 100 head of fine Durham cattle, several head of fine mares, and a stallion on what they thought was good ranging country (lots of green feed, beautiful place, and the cattle thrived), but then the cows, as they calved, would lay down and never get up again, so they lost nearly half of them. The horses all got what is called Loco (from a green weed with a purple flower that affected their brain) and died. They finally were able to build up quite a nice bunch of cattle.

Alex worked hard all his life from the time he was a small boy, as did most pioneer boys. He thought back to the long months they spent building the 100 rod of heavy rock fence, living mostly on cornmeal mush and molasses. There was a time when the Apaches were on the war path that other grains and even other foods were hard to get, especially for the Mormons.

"Being the oldest, I spent most of my time caring for the cattle, attended all the round-ups, rode the range, spent several years of my life among the wickedest men and outlaws that ever lived, I think. My father was a good faithful member of the church and would have kept pioneering under the directions of the authorities of the church if he lost everything he had on earth."

Dad went with his father into southern Arizona, way out near Fort Bowie, when the government was

at war with the Apache Indians, and one day went through the cemetery near the government post where there were hundreds and hundreds of graves and almost every headstone was marked, "Killed by the Indians." They were gone about eight months. How he suffered with fright the eight or ten days crossing the heart of Indian country. They dared not make a fire night or day.

"I always thought my father was as brave a man as ever lived when it came to danger. He weighed over 200 pounds and was tall and stood straight as an arrow. He had a very strong commanding voice. Most of 15 years of my life was spent with him working on railroads and wagon roads with all kinds of men. Farming and freighting was about the only way of making a living in that country. Almost every day a freighter or someone would be held up and robbed of their money. I have seen him in serious trouble with some bad men but never had I seen him fight. I do not think he ever had a fight in his life because when that commanding voice of his said to a man to do so and so, they always did it."

"We finally moved to a little town or ward of Saints at Round Valley called Omer. Father hauled most of the logs from the mountains from which we built a log house, with dirt roof, across the street from the old log school house. We had to keep the snow scraped off so it wouldn't melt and leak in. Here Dad built a fireplace, was so proud. He pulled up his chair in front of the fire, leaned back, and rested his feet on the fireplace. Suddenly there was a 'bang,' father fell backwards, and rocks and mud were everywhere. Took three days to rebuild, but it worked fine that winter."

Dad said they had land for a time on the Nutrioso Bottom, but after they farmed it for a few years the water dried up, and the country was worthless, so they sold out. He said Springerville was a Mormon town, a gentile town and a Mexican town altogether. The Mormons lived on the east side and the others mingled together on the other. They worked on the railroad and freighted, and one time for two weeks hauled water from the mountains about 7 miles away. "Made about \$10.00 a day -- big money."

"I'll never forget the long rough rocky roads from Winslow to Flagstaff. The wagons would bounce over the rocks all day long...when you did strike a nice smooth piece of road for 100 or 300 feet at a time the wagons were so used to bouncing they just kept on bouncing!!!" He spoke of hail one time so large he believed it would have killed a person if he had to stand in it too long."

"I think I was about 16 when we moved to the White Mountains, to a place called "Boneyard," took our stock up there for the summer. It was called Boneyard because a family from Arkansas came there, and the snow got so deep the whole family and their hogs and cattle died."

He remembers a time being alone in an old cabin in the mountains when he heard something like a woman screaming (it was a panther) and as it got closer and closer his hair began to stand on end--worst night he spent in his life. The panther lit on the house, but the door was good and solid and he remained safe. Another time he tied his horse to the foot of a big tree and from his back climbed up the tree about 50 feet, got in the forks and stayed all night. He laid out many nights with the cattle, sometimes in the cold and the rain, and, of course, he never forgot the time they had about 1000 cattle in a big corral and they stampeded due probably to some sudden noise. For that reason

the men used to take two-hour shifts at night riding around the cattle keeping up a noise of some kind, like whistling or singing.

"We used to have a dance through the winter every Saturday night, sometimes two dances a week. I think I would have gone every night if they had them every night. Lyman Hamblin (son of Jacob Hamblin) was the fiddler, and, believe me, he would fiddle. The Church wouldn't allow us to waltz, so I never learned how. We used to have theaters, a number during the winter, all home talent. I guess they were silly plays, but I thought then they were great and quite wonderful. I used to take part in lots of them. About the most fun we ever had was at the rehearsals. We had more fun out of that than anything else."

Alex says he only went with one girl all his life up till the time he got married.

In his own words: "When my father built that new house at Springerville, and we moved in, the Church was right across the street. It was the school house we used for the Church. I never went to it because I was gone most of the time. My folks went. I came home from the roundup. I had been riding the range and was about 16 years old. One Sunday I decided to go to Sunday School. After we took our seats I looked over the rows and sized them all up. [He was still sizing up people at age 87.] Right across in front of me on the further side of the house was a girl. I looked at her, and before the Sunday School was out, and we all started to go home, I had fallen in love with her. I didn't know a thing in the world about her, but I knew if I got old enough I wanted that girl, and I think it was six years after that we went in a wagon with a span of horses from Springerville to the St. George Temple in Utah, 300 miles to get married. Her name was Caroline Skousen."

Dr. Platt was one of the best doctors in that country, and one day he told Alex that if he married Caroline, he wouldn't have her more than 20 years. He was right--that was as long as her lungs lasted, and she died a few weeks after 20 years of marriage.

The book Skousens in America states: "After returning to Springerville [after their marriage] instead of settling down, she found herself moving about to be with her husband who was a railroad construction contractor. Caroline worked hard to help support her husband in his work. While at Clifton, Arizona she operated a boarding house to feed the men."

A little background re Caroline from the above book: "Caroline was the seventh child to James Niels Skousen and Sidsel Marie Pedersen. She was born 3 June 1867 at the family farm in Draper, Utah. She was a beautiful child and was taught to work helping her mother and other members of the family do the many chores about the home. At the age of ten she, with her family, moved to northern Arizona. Her first home here was in St. Joseph, Arizona, and it consisted of a single room.

"When Caroline was thirteen years old her family moved to Round Valley. At Springerville she took part in school and church activities and became quite popular with the young men. Alexander DeWitt, a tall handsome young fellow, became very interested in Caroline, and she fell in love with him. When Caroline reached her 18th birthday they decided to get married."

In Alex' words: "When we went to get married we drove in a covered wagon from Round Valley, Arizona to St. George, Utah. Also in our group was Caroline's brother, Dan, and Jacob and Dwain Hamblin. We all went through the temple the same day, 9 December, 1885. We rented a house right near the temple. We all cooked and ate together and stayed for about one week.

"We had a great trip. When we got back home my father owned a house and lot in Springerville. It was a log house with a dirt roof, chinked up cracks and plastered with mud. Two small rooms, so we went to Becker's store and bought us a housekeeping outfit and moved into this little log house. About the only thing I can remember now of the things we bought was a large dishpan full of dishes, and all I can remember was there was six glasses with handles on--goblets. I forget what we had for chairs and one thing and another, but it wasn't very much."

"My wife's father and family moved to Old Mexico the first year we were married." (Her father spent six months before this move in the Ft. Yuma prison for practicing plural marriage. Her father returned and stayed primarily with the second wife in Arizona until she died, then went to Arizona with the first wife, Caroline's mother.)

"Before I married her she clerked in the co-op store and they finally turned it over to her and put her in charge to run the business. She had a good education, was a good writer, and had a good business head. A couple of times she advocated on our business affairs, things that if I would of done them, I think financially we would have been fixed better than we ever were. I found out later it would have been the best thing we could have done. She taught school pretty near a year before I married her, the only teacher we had, then she went into the store."

Caroline sold lots of home-made taffy. She had a large hook on the wall that she would put the candy over and pull it. It is reported that she was a fabulous horseman and could ride with the best of the men.

But as they started their family, which grew to three boys and two girls (she died at the birth of their sixth child, a girl) it was necessary to stay at home and care for the family.

In 1904 Alexander was called to go on a mission for the church, and he accepted the call, which left Caroline to care for the five children and make the living. This she did as postmistress for the small community of Eagar. When he got to Salt Lake for instructions and to be set apart, he was spoken to rather roughly by someone of whom he asked instructions. He was a bit lonesome anyway and said he felt like turning around and going right back home. However, he went on up to J. Golden Kimball's office to be set apart, and made this comment in his diary: "When I walked up that stairway I was the most lonesome, bluest human ever lived. When I left after my talk with Brother Kimball and received my setting apart blessing I think I was the happiest person that ever lived." He went to the Central States Mission, Oklahoma Territory, with some time in Kansas, traveling without purse or scrip. This meant they had to ask for their food and shelter from the people and hoped to teach those giving them shelter. They did a great deal of walking. He stated in his diary that "I was gone just exactly two years to the day from the time I left till I got home."

"I spent the winter in malarial country...got malaria chills and fever...saw many people that looked ill and bad in their complexion. Many had chills and fever...traveled when I was so sick I could hardly get going." He got so sick he had to stop, but no one wanted to take in a man with malaria. Finally a man pointed to a little one-roomed house and said they could go there and fix up a bed with hay that was there and he would loan them a couple of quilts and a pillow. He then told the storekeeper to let them have anything they needed at the store and charge it to him. So they stayed there for about a week until a replacement came, and Dad went to Kansas City to the doctor and to rest up. He insisted on staying to complete his mission. He worked in Indian territory a lot, mostly with the Cherokee and Choctaw Indians.

Just a few entries from his diary to show what missionary life was like in those days: Bathed in river often and washed clothes there, preached in church or school houses when possible, sometimes slept in them, some days got in the hollows out of the wind and/or sun and studied, made reports, shaved, read mail, wrote letters, etc., stayed at hotels sometimes, sang hymns for people in the evening, great country for hailstorms and cyclones. Lots of times people would feed them and then say, "Now you can go, we don't care anything about Mormonism," but would treat them kindly and sometimes give a bed for the night. From what Dad said later in life they usually got a place to stay and something to eat, but there were sometimes days without. One lady told them her husband's father helped kill Joseph Smith. One day they met a man who claimed to be Elijah the Prophet and that he was to be the last prophet that would be born on the earth.

In one area he mentioned they were treated kindly, but received, also, more abuse, ridicule, and prejudice than before. One day the children threw rocks at them until they were out of sight. "We see some awfully filthy things--poverty, is no end to that, and ignorance too." Slept in tents, dugouts, barns, outside, school houses, but usually in a home. One more entry: "Next morning the little girl cooked breakfast--cornbread and bacon. I thought I was Old Dan Tucker. They gave me a frying pan to wash in, but did not give me a wagon wheel to comb my hair with...This is awful country filled with all kinds of people, thieves and murderers, poverty and ignorance and filth. Many of the people cannot read nor write, no schools to amount to anything, old log houses full of cracks and the cold weather, it is dreadful."

A page from his diary: April 1, 1903 - Cash Account - Left home with \$100.00 on April 1st. My mother gave me 2.00, my wife 2.00, my sister Lucy 1.00, June-from wife, 10.00, July-from mother 1.00, Sister Goldbracen 2.50, Aug-Mother 1.00, sister Lucy -stamps .30, mother 1.00, Aug 25-from Bro. Skousen 5.00, Sept. 18-mother 1.00, Oct 6 my wife 2.00, Oct 17-Kenneth .25, Oct 31 - mother 1.00, Nov 14 Brother Elijah stamps .10.

Sample of some expenses: socks 30 cents, shoes \$3.50, pants \$3.50, shirt \$1.00. He got chills and fever again later. He didn't like Elder Frankum because "he wanted to walk as fast as he could all day long. Sometimes he would be over half a mile ahead of us. He would set down at the side of the road and wait till I came up. Then, when I got about ten feet from him he would get up and go again."

Alexander returned from his mission in 1905 and he and Caroline were together again for only a little less than a year when she gave birth to Florence Caroline, a beautiful baby girl, but died the next day, 18 February 1906, at the age of 38, and Florence joined her mother at the age of 2. This left

Alexander alone with five children to care for.

We have very little information re Caroline. From a portion of a "Resolution of Respect" written at her death we learn that she was "secretary and treasurer for many years of the Relief Society of the Eagar Ward...an able, efficient, and devoted saint and an earnest worker in the Relief Society cause."

"Caroline left a small family that has developed into a large and wonderful posterity."

After his mission he owned about 10 acres of ground at Eagarville and went to work farming and then freighting.

Dad spoke of the Indians being on the warpath and Becker offered to pay two times as much for freighting to anyone who would go for him. Dad and William Eagar volunteered. They knew they might well be attacked and have their wagons burned and horses taken. They did see some Indians, and Dad said, "It was the most serious moment of my life." They turned out to be Zuni Indians going to Salt Lake to worship and get salt. "Anyway they cut off and rode right by us and never even looked at us." Going back they didn't worry so much about the Indians because they had heard that they (the Apaches) were being chased down near the border of Mexico.

"We freighted a lot for Becker Brothers, and most of the time were scared about the Apache Indians. Sometimes they were getting pretty close...General Miles of the U.S. Army was sent out with soldiers to help fight and capture the Indians. I traveled with him and the soldiers and hauled hay and grain for the mules and horses way over into New Mexico. The General was awful good to me because I knew the country. I could tell where the watering places were, good place to camp, where we could find grass, how we would have to drive--sometimes early and sometimes late."

Dad tells of a time when he was asked to take charge of the dances. "In the square dances we weren't to swing the girls around the waist and weren't to stamp on the floor too hard, and no one was allowed in the place who drank whiskey. We used to have some trouble with the fiddler. He was quite a hand to drink himself. Sometimes he would be so bad that we had to take him out and get someone else to play...[they had a committee of three, then of seven but still had problems.] Finally the priesthood decided to suspend all the rules, disband the committee, and turn it over to me to run the dances according to my own way of doing it. So for about seven years, as I remember it, I managed all the dances they had alone."

He talked with the boys and told them how he felt and what he expected, and he said they had no more serious trouble. Alex took little interest in the dances after Caroline died. In fact he roamed about quite a bit. He freighted, farmed, and eventually went into the livery business. He had a fine business on Main Street in Globe, finest place in the city. After a year he sold out all his horses and equipment and went to Mesa, got some cows and ran a dairy. There he met Ruth Leila Kempe whom he later married.

The following chart shows the ages of the children, the first row being at the time of their mother's death, the second at the time of his marriage to Leila.

Children by Caroline

Alex III	Margaret	Kenneth	Jim	Winifred	Florence
17	14	11	7	4	1 day
22	19	16	12	9	4

It is not clear who cared for the children. As mentioned above Dad roamed around quite a bit. I understand that Caroline's sister took the baby and Winifred, the other kids lived with Grandma DeWitt some and Grandma Skousen some and the two older boys more or less took care of themselves, and then Otis went to live with Dad and Mom when they got married. I believe Aunt Maude, Dad's sister-in-law helped some. I guess it was a "community effort. I believe the older boys were with Dad some though.

When the boys got older they went into partners with their dad on a ranch, but this did not last long.

Alex III went on a mission to the Northwestern States, but gave it up after a short time. He married a lovely woman, Jessie Donna Sloane, and they reared four fine children. Alex "dragged" his family all over as he worked in the oil wells of Texas and California, logging in Oregon, and the woods in California etc., but finally, when the older ones started high school and Jessie wanted to remain "put", Dad encouraged her to do so, and she and the children "settled down." Alex came home occasionally and made sure the family had plenty of food, clothing, and the other necessities and returned to his work. He loved his family, but could not stay in one place. As he grew older he wrote in a letter: "I hope Mormonism is true, but I doubt it. I have never since my mission taken an active part in the church. I wish now that I had. I have a fine family...I wish I could have lived by them." In a letter to Jesse and Maude he said: "I am lonesome. All this day I have been thinking of the times I could have visited you."

Margaret married Guy Stephenson who soon joined the church and remained very faithful to the end. They began marriage in the little town of Hayden, Arizona about 100 miles from nowhere, a mining town, where he worked for Kennecott Copper. In about 20 years he was transferred to San Francisco. Margaret was awed at moving to such a large city, but I think she learned to love it. They were a very respected addition to the church and community there. Then came a transfer to New York City--oh my! She again adjusted and was satisfied, but Guy died within a few years. She remained for some years and then settled the remainder of her years in Salt Lake City. She kept in close contact with our family, and I remember she often sent packages. She was an inspiration to me and I'm sure to others in our family. Like one of her nieces, Kathy, said of her: "My mother would say to me, 'Kathy, sometimes you are like Aunt Margaret' when I was at my best." Lincoln said: "Yes, you wanted to stand a little taller, didn't you?" Edith remarked: "Yes, Margaret was a great influence for good in our lives and helped Mom instill in us a great respect for learning." And for me, Ruth, I had a great love and appreciation for her. I still think of her often with love and gratitude.

Kenneth said "We all had a disease: It's called "What's over the hill?" To quote his daughter, Carol: "His young life was spent drifting around after his mother died. He lived in Springerville, Eagar, Globe, Gila Valley, Mesa, Chandler and also Glendale. He remembers freighting and driving a wagon, at age 8, from Springerville to Magdalena, New Mexico and back and working on the farm with his dad." Waldo described him as a man of honor beyond question. Gayle: "He became a road contractor all over Arizona and married Elizabeth Adelaide Fuller, had four daughters, away from home a lot, and the family used to spend the summers with him. He was a real good well-liked boss." Jim once said, "Ken had to do what he had to do; you had to be tough, and you had to have them do what you had to have done, or you were stuck, but he was honest and respected and fair with the men." Waldo, who worked some for him, heartily concurs.

Mom offered Jim money so he could go on a mission, but he wanted to enter the service and help the war effort. After the war he returned to America, then back to England for a year to help clean up, and then to Germany. After his discharge he went to N.Y., then Detroit, Michigan and then settled in Flint. He married lovely Vivian Brown from Canada and also reared a fine family. He worked 50 years with the same trucking company. He started as a truck driver, then dispatcher, and finally office manager and supervisor. One day after his retirement, and when he was living in California, he said, "It's too bad Alex and Leila couldn't have hung onto the place in Chandler. They'd have been millionaires. That place is worth over a million dollars now."

Jim visited a couple of times when we were young and he quickly gained our love. He overhauled the car on one trip. His comments regarding our mother, Leila, were: "Your mother was lovely. She and I always got along fine. No monkey business...Leila was a good Joe, first class citizen. It was sad to see her lose her land in Chandler, but she took Dad's leadership and lost it all." He said his mother died of pneumonia. His comments re the Indians as he remembered in his old age was interesting: "Once in awhile some of them in Fort Apache would get drunk and raise Cain a little bit, but it was the renegade white man and the Mexican that pulled the dirt and blamed it on the Indian. He always got stabbed in the back. They were nice people."

Jim: "Sometimes Dad would leave me alone for three or four days. He'd say, 'O.K. you've got everything you need, you know how to take care of yourself. He'd get on his cow pony and go. I was between 8 and 10 years old. I was a quiet boy and enjoyed reading, didn't really mind being alone. Dad loved to ride; he was a regular cow puncher."

Edith: "I loved to hear dad talk about Jim. He always seemed prouder than at any other time. I guess Jim showed him more attention than any other of his first family after I was old enough to remember. Everyone else was raising a family too. He brought a beautiful cameo back from Europe for Mom and a German Luger pistol for Dad, both of which were prized possessions."

Let me quote Ward Christopherson regarding Winifred: "I got a letter from my cousin, Winifred. When she was little her mother died, and Mrs. Turley (Caroline's sister) took Winifred and set her cap for Uncle Alex. She thought he ought to marry her 'cause she was Caroline's sister. She didn't like it when he married Leila. She really got mad. She poisoned Winifred's mind against Leila and caused her a lot of grief. Mrs. Turley took her to Canada one time to escape the law. Alex had a dickens of

a time getting her back. Boy, Winifred was a beautiful girl. There was no way to counteract the teachings about wicked stepmothers etc. of Mrs. Turley, and they finally let Winifred go back to her."

Winifred visited her father and his second family a couple of times, but in time ceased to write or visit. Her sister, Margaret, kept Dad informed of her whereabouts, but Winifred chose not to keep in touch, which was a great sorrow to him. She married well, and I think she felt there was too much gap between her social status and ours. The depression and Dad's long illness with cancer left our family in some pretty dire circumstances, which she could not tolerate. She was a nurse. Her husband and stepson were both attorneys. Gayle said she knew her very little about Winifred but said she met her when Winifred was older and she was a very attractive, nice, and interesting woman.

Now it was "From Riches to Rags" as Dad called it:

In 1911 Alex married Ruth Leila Kempe, a school teacher. More about her early life later. She had 160 acres of land that she had homesteaded, also 80 acres of school land south of Chandler--homesteaded. It was covered with mesquite, so Dad hired some Mexicans to chop it down and dig up the stumps and sell the wood and then put 80 acres into grain. Dad bought more cows and ran quite a big dairy. He remembers it as having over 40 cows--over 100 head of cows and dry stock.

In 1916 they sold the ranch south of Mesa and bought a ranch northwest of Phoenix, south a little of Glendale. People all over the country got excited about raising cotton, so Dad and Mom bought a ranch for \$30,000 - 200 acres. Alex, Kenneth and Otis, Dad's sons, came in as partners. Mom and Dad owned all the horses and mules and put up the \$5000 down payment. Otis stayed just a few months and wanted out. Mom offered him \$600 so he could go on a mission, but he wanted to join the army, so she gave him \$150 and he pulled out.

Most was in alfalfa and pasture and at one time they had 105 fine dairy cows, mostly Holsteins. Dad said, "We was making money." The boys soon wanted to buy a tractor which cost about \$2000 in those days. Dad insisted it was poor business to spend so much on a tractor when they already had plenty of horses and mules and could take turns plowing (from 4 a.m. to about 10 a.m. when it got too hot), so the boys got dissatisfied and wanted to quit and divide up.

Dad couldn't run the ranch alone, so they sold it with the right to gather all the crops before they left. They sold all but 20 cows. Cotton brought good prices so they bought a 40-acre ranch for \$13,000 with a fine big black house on it--beautiful home. Otis had gone to the army and "although they hadn't put any money into the venture Ken and Alex still weren't quite satisfied even though we divided it equally when they had put nothing into it."

So they raised cotton the next year on the new ranch for which they had put down \$9000 as first payment. "Prices got so high people went crazy over raising cotton--sold their dairy cows, ploughed up their alfalfa. Some cleared as much as \$400 an acre raising long staple cotton. We did the same. Everyone made lots of money."

Then they sold their fine home in Mesa and bought land by the river towards Tolleson. Dad went into

partners with someone else and rented land and put in 800 acres of cotton on the Mesa-Phoenix highway. The war ended, cotton was no longer needed and down went the price. It had been \$1.19 the year before, now it went down to 10 cents a pound gathered and baled. Mom had \$1500 in the bank, so they used that all up harvesting the crop. They now had a beautiful big cement house--8 or 9 rooms.

Just before things began to look really bad, Dad said they had better sell out while they had the chance. Mom didn't agree and they turned down the offer of \$32,000, but, as things began looking worse, they decided to take the offer, but by this time the man had decided he would give only \$22,000. They turned it down, and as things went from bad to worse, they couldn't raise the payments and lost the place.

They sold the house in Phoenix to purchase a ranch on Old Back Canyon Road--10-acre chicken ranch and lots of nice buildings. That summer the floods came from Black Canyon through Grand Canal, tore out the canal and filled their cellar and the forty acres with sand, boulders, and rock and ruined the whole place. Mom lost almost 1000 or 1500 pounds of books stored in the house.

"Things went from bad to worse and we lost everything we had. We decided to leave that country and go to California. We had a big fine Studebaker car. It was parked in the garage of one of the ranches we had leased, a family living on it that worked for us. There was about 10,000 pounds of cotton stored in the buildings joining the garage. It all caught fire one night and burned up the buildings and all the cotton and the car."

So they turned back all their property and "bought a Ford touring car -- brand new, spare tires and all the tools, nice outfit for those days." They paid half down and were trusted to take the car out of state still owing half and with payments of \$50.00 a month.

"With that Ford car and owing about \$500 or \$600 on it, my wife and I and 5 small children and our belongings all inside of that car, and on top of it, on a hot summer's day, started across the desert before there were any paved roads - dust and chuck holes - 118 in the shade - and no shade to get in. We had saved out of the wreckage about \$600 in cash. We made it to California all right." They had some possessions sent by railroad.

"We rented a house, two rooms upstairs over a grocery store on Pasadena Avenue." Dad started looking for work. There were plenty of jobs but not ones he could handle. "I was a farmer and cattle man, and they didn't run cattle or a farm in Los Angeles."

He then had various jobs -- ran a hay baler for a month (50 cents an hour) loading bales of hay average of which was 225 pounds each. He said he never worked so hard in his life. So he tramped the city looking for another job and couldn't find any. Still unemployed, but with a little money, they took the family to Long Beach to see the sights--the ocean, "rode everything there was to ride on and had a great time and forgot all the sorrows. When all that was over we had about \$300 left."

Finally got a mule skinner job hauling sugar beets. He liked the mules a lot better than the man he

was working for. He said if he had seen him in daylight, he would never have hired out to him. He was almost impossible to work for, but Dad was able to get the other men to cooperate on a system he devised which made the job bearable and he "stuck it out" till the last beet was taken from the field. The job paid \$90.00 a month. One day about this time they received a letter from the Bank of Arizona. Thinking it was a bill for the cotton Dad threw it in the wood box. Finally, Leila picked it up and found a check for \$53. They took \$250 of the 300 they had left and put it down on a house at Fair View Heights. In this area he got a job lathing, something he'd never done before. He told them he could do anything from digging the trench for the foundation to working on the roof (big exaggeration, but he figured he could bluff his way which he did). He just told them to show him how they did it there, that it might have been done differently in Arizona, so as soon as they showed him a little, he "went to it" and they were very satisfied with his work. The job was finished in six weeks, and he found a job as night watchman for the Hollywood Laundry Company in Hollywood. He took the electric train from Los Angeles to Hollywood every evening. Besides working night shift he put in about 4 hours a day building a garage, porch, and another room onto their home, and planted fruit trees. Then he found a job closer to home as night watchman for some home builders.

Finally, he decided he'd do better as a farmer and went up north to check out the farming country. He came back and they sold out, got a fairly good automobile, touring car, and with about \$600 or \$700 cash for a place they headed north to Tipton-Tulare area.

They got a place at Tipton, about 160 acres, about half in clover, 60 acres in vineyard, 120 acres in alfalfa and were to upgrade the place. They were very happy, thought they had a "fine layout," worked hard pruning the vineyard most all winter, arranged to get cows and pigs, were doing fine. Put in 40 acres of cotton. Arranged to get 25 cows, began separating the milk, throwing the skim away, so bought some pigs to feed the skim milk to, sold them at a good price and "believe me we was making money." It was here that an interesting and frustrating experience occurred. Let's hear it in Kempe's words:

"One day I delivered a load of raisins to the packing plant in Tulare, ten miles north of the ranch. On this day Dad was falsely mistaken for a man who had bought fur coats with forged checks. The investigators spent most of the day insisting that Dad was a Mr. Gray and that his handwriting was the same. The clerk said Dad looked like the man. Late in the day, about 9 p.m., Dad was rescued by the sheriff from Visalia, a nearby town, who identified him.

"However, my return home had not been facilitated as Dad had requested, and I had to drive it in the dark. I was only twelve or thirteen at the time. Dad was mad. He also found his German Luger pistol had been removed from under the seat of the car. It was returned with permits to carry it. More exciting was the double-barreled shotgun behind the seat of our Dodge touring car. Edith must have been about eight when her searching fingers pulled the trigger and blasted a hole in the side of the car. Dad had generally been careful with guns. He could not tolerate playful pointing of weapons in an unsafe direction."

Just as they felt they were doing fine, the water pump quit running. Dad put in another and a lot of neighbors did likewise, and there just wasn't enough water. Dad decided they had to sell out. They

found a place near Turlock, sold out again and started north. To quote Dad "Well it looked like everything was coming our way fine. We had a nice house to move into, six nice young cows, half a dozen nice young pigs. It was June and the weather was hot. We thought now we would have a nice summer, be our own bosses, work the place and have a little rest. We had worked so awful hard up till that time. We liked the country fine.

"We went back and got our belongings, started on our journey back to Turlock. When we got about five or six miles south of Chowchilla, it was getting late. We decided to pull off the road and camp, stay all night, and then get up early in the morning and go on to Turlock for breakfast, get some groceries and go on to the ranch we had rented. We had a purse with \$600 in greenbacks and a fine recommend from the governor of the State of Arizona, Governor Hunt. My wife had been caring for the purse, froze to it like grim death. She thought I took it up and put it in the car. Anyway, we went off and left that purse on the running board of the car. We discovered our loss after we had got onto the highway about two miles from where we had camped. That's the last we ever saw of that. I can't describe how we felt. A man and his wife in a strange country with six small children and had to borrow enough money from the real estate man in Turlock to get some breakfast, and in debt \$500 on the new car.

"Flat broke -- all the money gone. We got a job, my wife and I and the oldest boy, hoeing weeds in the cantaloupes and in the vineyard. Worked all summer in the hot sandy land full of puncture vines and sand burrs, hot in the boiling sun. Finally we rented a house a mile west of Ceres and spent the rest of the year picking grapes and working the dry yards drying apricots and peaches, picking berries, and other odd jobs.

Next came illness with Leila and the boys (about 12 and 14) taking over the farm work. It was here, also, that a neighbor's bull killed two very fine horses we had. In Dad's words: "I spent a good deal of time in the hospital, first with one doctor and then another. Finally, one doctor told me that no man the Lord ever made could do anything for me. He was sure I had cancer...So we all gave up, doctors said I couldn't live, told me to arrange all my business and talk it over with my wife...I told her I was worth more to her dead than alive. They would get my insurance (\$14,000) go back to Arizona...she made lots of money before I married her and I thought she could make money still. So they all gave me up for the same as dead.

"A friend suggested I go to the Robertson Hospital, so we went there...There were two doctors, besides Dr. Robertson, attending me...one doctor told my wife I had about one chance out of 90 to get through the operation, it was doubtful I would live till it was over. One of the doctors was from the cancer clinic in San Francisco. He said, 'That's one of the finest pieces of surgical work I ever saw performed.'"

Before the surgery the elders had administered to Dad and told him that "through the power of God and through the skill of the surgeon's knife you will be healed." This must have been in 1927 and he lived till 1953 (age 87) about 27 more years.

Dad bought a place in Hughson and "we began to feel like somebody again." However, the people

went back on their agreement and we had to give up the place. Anna was not well and had to stay out of school that year so when Dad broke three ribs he made good use of her on the farm plowing, disking, and harrowing the ground. The exercise improved her appetite, and the fresh air did its part in helping her regain her health. She got so she could harness the horses alone and change them from the plow to the disk and to the harrow. Coincidentally, Mom had taken out an insurance policy advertised in the newspaper the day before his accident and he was able to collect a bit of money during his disability.

The job Dad said he hated worse than anything he ever did was pruning peach trees. He worked at it two weeks, six days a week. He had about five different bosses and three or four different superintendents. The boss would come along and say he was doing fine, the next boss would come along and say it was all wrong. At the end of two weeks he said he knew less about pruning peach trees than when he started. Listen to him tell the rest:

"One day the boss said, 'Now we are starting on a different orchard and the trees are pretty high. You will have to use a 10-foot ladder now.'

"I stood it against the tree and was standing there looking at it. The boss said, 'What are you waiting for, what's the matter?'

"I answered, 'I was just studying whether to tell you to go to hell or get up and risk my neck on that ladder.'

"Well,' he says, 'You can do as you please about it.'

"Well, I says, 'I will try it because I would hate to see you go to hell.'

"So I pruned the rest the afternoon. That night I quit and I hope I never ever prune another tree as long as I live."

Well, Dad continued to renovate farms for the rent, sometimes buy and lose, and, if renting, when it was time to pay actual cash for rent moved on. There was Riverbank, Palmbrook and Ruble Roads in the Crows Landing area. Then it came time to retire and he sold out his interest to some of the boys and he, Mom, and I moved into Modesto. According to Lincoln's calculations we lived in 15 different houses in 15 years. Bob says he went to 15 schools by the time he finished high school. I know I went to eight grammar schools in eight years. One summer he and the two older boys, Kempe and Lincoln, worked on the railroad being built on the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Here are a few thoughts from what his children have written about Dad. From Kempe:

"Dad rode the range with skill and ability, roping and branding livestock and living in the open with saddle for a pillow. They had a lot of fun horsing around and throwing the bull. It was rough on the horse if a wild steer horned in, but a wild one could get wilder if turned loose with flaming banners tied to his tail. Dad remembers such stunts sending one bull on a wild flight.

"Occasionally a cowboy could get tripped up. It was an adventurous life and more fun than a football game. After the roundups came periods of peaceful plodding or herding to market.

"Dad drove some of the freighting teams thru hazardous country-- geographically steep mountain grades, dry parched deserts and politically hostile Indian country subject to attacks from the legendary Geronimo whose name struck terror to many of the early settlers.

"Dad did not have to suffer from Indian attacks, but he did take a nasty spill down a mountain grade when his brakes failed to hold. When the wagon, top heavy with large bales of wool, capsized on the mountain downside, Dad was catapulted out and fell thru trees below. His fall was slowed as his heavy clothing was snapped by tree branches and ripped off. The load buried him and he had to wait for help to get out."

"Dad was tough enough, but his son, Alex, was stronger. In his blood flowed the Skousen blood and genes for athletic ability. I've seen Alex use his herculean strength to push a plow as much as the team were pulling. He made a subsoiler go thru hard soil. He made good as a mule skinner. It is hearsay that while coming down the canyon with a wagon load of freight, the left rear wheel caved in. Alex tossed the broken wheel on top of the load, signaled his team, as he picked up the fallen axle and brought the load out of the canyon. Competing strongmen in town snidely remarked -- 'So what! it was all downhill.'

"I think some of the winters got pretty cold and must have lasted a long time, 'cause,' Dad said, 'it wouldn't warm up till the snow melted, and it wouldn't melt till it warmed up.' At any rate, he said he knew how it was going to be, as soon as he saw how it was."

"From this same ranch, Dad rode off to round up straying work horses. Thru fields with squirrel holes he raced. The stallion he rode stumbled, landed on Dad, and with broken neck, collar bone, and ribs, Dad slowly made his way home, which was miles from the accident. That was the only time I ever heard Dad comment on pain that seemed to become unbearable. He was not used to taking pain killers and suffered it out."

"We were like nomads in those days. On one of our relocations we drove the cows all night across country for approximately forty miles. Most of the night was moonlight, and most property was fenced. Cross roads and drowsiness were worrisome problems. Real worries came later during these unsettled times. The strain on Dad must have been what brought on cancer while I was away to a wonderful year of high school in Hayden, Arizona."

"I know Dad enjoyed traveling to and from San Francisco with me or Lincoln. He would relax to the music as we sped thru the night. At these late night or early morning hours traffic was light and the quiet speed with which our DeSoto ate up the road captured Dad's imagination. Not so in daytime when he threatened to get out and walk if I did not slow down. On one trip to Arizona I remember topping a hundred miles per hour."

"Dad was a remarkable man. Many in the church acknowledged him because he loved them and

showered his good will on all. He was a giving person, but when giving my efforts away when not in line with the Lord's work I was not appreciative. Mom at one time pled with me to get agreements in writing, but I never did."

"Dad kept his horse in a fenced field at the edge of town [in his 80s now] close to a large canal where hundreds swam during summer. He had a large garden and gave away much garden produce. In his younger years he would have liked to have become a lawyer. He read some law books. I think he would have settled cases in the fashion of Abe Lincoln by telling stories. His stories of his church mission were more exciting than his diary would indicate."

"Dad was a family- and people-oriented person, much involved with serving the church. I've heard him described as a man without guile. He was capable, idealistic, and practical. His strength and endurance were great. He met reverses in life with courage and quiet fortitude, picked himself up and forged ahead to recovery. He helped us participate in the end of frontier history and span the industrial revolution into the space age and enter into the world of electronics, computers, and the marvels of word processing."

"Dad, in his later years, served as a patriarch in the church. At 87 years he left this earth with many friendships assured for eternity. I look forward to his welcome in that day when I escape these earthly frustrations. I love them much better than the alternative."

Lincoln: "One morning, when we finished milking the cows, Dad says, 'I need to go to San Francisco today. Will you please get ready to drive me,' which I did, and we arrived in San Francisco about noon. He says, 'Go to that man's place that we bought the ranch from,' and just at the corner before we got there he said, 'Now, to the right two blocks and turn to the left one block and just around the corner stop.' When I reached that distance, he said, 'This is fine.' We were right in front of a little grocery store. We walked in. It had a deli counter. Dad bought a quart of raviolis. With a couple of spoons we sat and ate those raviolis. When we finished he said, 'That was good, let's go home.' That was all we had gone to San Francisco (90 miles one way) for, was to get a dish of raviolis. He had got some when we went to San Francisco to buy the ranch about two weeks before, and he had to have another taste."

"I do know that he wanted to be a farmer. He always wanted a good farm. He was always set on building it up, but could never get enough money to do what he wanted to do. He loved good horses."

Anna: "One of my earliest memories of Dad was of him putting me on a horse. I don't suppose I was old enough to even walk as he had to hold me on as he guided the horse around. Whenever we went to town, and I was sick with a sore throat, he bought me ice cream to soothe the fevered throat. It always felt so good."

"It was not the right thing to do, but often the young people would get together on Sunday evening, and, instead of going to Church, they would go to the movies as a group. One Sunday after Sunday School it was being discussed about which movie to see, etc., but someone spoke up and said, 'Oh

we can't go tonight, Brother DeWitt is speaking.' He appealed to the youth with his talks and teaching, I think, probably because he told so many interesting stories with his talks. He had a big Sunday School class much of the time, and the youth all attended very well. He was a master story teller and whenever we had a ward (it was a branch at first) entertainment on Friday nights, he would usually be on the program to tell 'tall tales.' The little children would crowd around in front of the stage in the cultural hall to be sure they heard every word, and they believed it all. I thought it was all true for a long time, and sure enough some was, but I found a lot of it was "tall tales." However, he had lots of experiences in his lifetime and told them with great enthusiasm. He had a great sense of humor which must have been inherited, because his brother, Jesse, was the same way. No one ever equaled them that I know of. I guess Jesse's son, Waldo, comes the closest."

"He went on two stake missions and a temple mission. One stake mission was with Mom, and she seldom got a chance to say a word. Many times she was left in the car for him to make the contact and then he was to come and get her, but he seldom ever did! He loved to talk and forgot others when doing so."

"After Mom died, Dad, Ruth, and I lived together. My husband, Charles, had been killed in World War II. When he was in his 80s he still wanted to drive and was always getting into some trouble or other. Finally I kept both sets of keys. I don't know how many houses and barns my mother painted and fixed up. He would help when he could, but was usually busy with the farming and milking the cows, so she did the painting and most of the fixing up. [Anna commented to me one day 'I sure did get tired of red paint. He painted the house red every time it seemed to me. Thank goodness Mom had something to say about the inside or he might have painted that red also!!!'] He would probably have made a good lawyer. He had all the qualifications except the education. He only went through third grade reader, but read well, and a lot, in spite of it, even though he mispronounced many of the words. How mother wanted to correct him, but never did, even when he read aloud to the family. He would go to the court house in later years and listen to the cases, make up his own decision as to what the verdict should be and then praise the judge if he agreed. He would often visit with the judge and talk about the cases (after the case was closed and the judge could talk). He talked with the lawyers whenever he could and spent many hours at the courthouse. He loved to dance and was always on hand at the dances whenever possible. Though raised in the pioneer, hard working, uncultured way of life, he loved music and often accompanied us to the concerts held in Modesto. He liked plays and other cultural events, and we all went together as often as possible."

"After I met Russell, Dad said he was content to die as he knew Russell would take care of Ruth and me. In fact, the last stroke he had he wouldn't let anyone but Russell touch him, so Russell paid someone to do his work at the base in Crows Landing and stayed with him 14 hours a day the last week of Dad's life."

Edith: "I think Dad was parties--singing and fun--and I never saw him hit anybody, but I was scared to death if he raised his voice which he did--threw his shoe at me when I was half way across the field. I think of him as being very honored and respected, being the head of everything, which he wasn't, being the most important man at church, which he wasn't particularly. I just thought the whole world revolved around my father. I thought he was very strange when he was older, that he

liked to sit at the curb in the car and watch people go by. That was dumb--he wasn't walking, he wasn't talking, he wasn't running around, he was just sitting there watching."

"He would go to someone's place for business, and they would have him stay. He would go over to Sorensen's, and if they were having supper he would stay and have a meal."

"My favorite memory is sitting on the back steps with him while he sang 'The Preacher and the Bear,' and in the fields when he'd hit the ground with one swack to raise it for me to drop 3 or 5 seeds in. Then, while I counted the next, he'd pat the earth firmly once, and we quickly moved to the next spot. When we came to a bit of shade he'd often lay down, and I'd fan his warm face and mainly shoo the flies away. When someone says 'the good old days' I quickly remember that and before meals everyone getting on one side of the dining room with towels and shooing the flies out the door, set the table, and, with the first dish of food someone had to sit down and use a towel to shoo flies away, and there were mosquitoes, and then there were fleas. No thanks, mainly for the insect reasons they aren't the 'good old days' to me. I loved the rest of my life and my Dad."

"One of Dad's favorite stories was how he'd go to dances and sometimes race his horse home with time only to change shoes and jerk a pair of overalls over his dancing clothes and hope his Dad wouldn't notice, and he'd get on with the milking. How angry he'd get at the boys if they were out after midnight. and oh how I hated that 'Baby' nickname he had for me. Mom said, 'You should be pleased. He always called me Baby till he took his first look at you and said, 'Baby,' and you've been Baby ever since."

"Except for Dad's temper I thought him perfect and that we had the perfect family. I loved my life as a child of my parents. He liked Mom as a missionary companion--got aggravated at Brothers Jones and Sorensen for their 'narrowness' He said of Mom: 'She can always get me out when I talk myself into a hole.' They both loved people. And they both loved children, but Dad hated my cats."

"A couple of years before he died and I was rubbing his shoulders he said, 'Baby, I'm going to rest a long time in hell for the way I treated your Mammie.' Anna said, 'I can forgive him a lot to know he realizes that.'"

Bob: "When I was 12 I learned what Dad's reputation was in handling of animals. One morning at breakfast Dad looked out the window and saw a man leading two beautiful big horses up the road. He said to Mom that he could sure use a team like that. The man, Mr. Beckwith, turned into our driveway and came to the door. 'Are you Mr. DeWitt?' he asked. 'Yes.' 'Well, I've got two extra horses right now, and since I understand you know how to handle and treat horses and other animals, would you like to take these two horses and use them as you need?' Dad was flabbergasted, but the man had done his research well...Later he switched these for a team of mules...I rode one of the mules when I was 13 and loved riding the animal because he was easy to ride and was very smooth."

"One day he was out in the wilderness between two wilderness towns. He camped one night, hobbled the horses, and let them go to forage for the night. Morning--they were gone. He tracked them down. They were in a meadow surrounded by trees. He knew they would not have wandered that

far without someone driving them there--so what now? He snuck up through the trees on the side, then ran out and chased the horses as fast as he could. He swears he was so afraid of the guys, who were probably back in the trees away, that his hair turned gray that day from fright."

"Dad lived in Kanab when he was under 14 years of age...When Dad was about 80 Edie and I took him through Arizona on a trip. Before reaching Kanab, going through mountainous country, Dad looked around and said, 'There is a mountain up ahead with a yellow side.' Within one or two minutes at the most we rounded a blind curve and there it was--a huge yellow sulfur bank. His memory amazed me tremendously.

"When growing up Dad hit me once. That was when I was 15. I sassed him, and he cuffed me on the side of the head. That was enough, one time. His very strong penetrating voice was enough other times. [Oh yes, many is the time I have heard him say, "I'm going to box your ears," but I never saw or heard of his doing it. rw]"

"Some people, who had trouble with the color barrier, and other problems with people, could, and some did, come to Dad for help. Dad went to bat for them. I remember well a crippled black man who was being cheated out of labor pay. Dad went to the other party and soon had the fellow's money for him. He had a tender spot that covered his whole heart. He too, as Mom, loved people and loved to see them treated right."

"I loved him dearly and wish I had been able to show it more."

I think he domineered mother, but compared to other men of his time perhaps it was not that bad. He was the head of the house for sure. I feel he could have been more understanding. But I loved my father, was taught to respect him, honor him, and obey him. He never knew a stranger. He used to tap a serviceman on the shoulder sometimes as we walked down the street, and say, "What's your native state?" and in that manner start an always upbeat short conversation leaving the soldier feeling good.

When Bob wanted to fly airplanes Dad was against it, until one day Bob was telling him how it felt up in the air. Then Dad said, "Well, if that's the way it makes you feel, go to it.!" It seems all he needed to know was how a person felt, then he could go along with them. He had to come to realize there were other ways to feel about something than how he felt by their explaining it to him so he understood, and he could then change his mind. I, too, had a couple of experiences like Bob with Dad and it made me realize more fully how important it is to explain how we feel not just what we want.

Here are a few of Dad's tall tales:

1. Brother Watson made a harness out of raw hide. Dad went out after a load of wood two or three miles from home and it rained, road got muddy, kept stretching the harness till, when he got home, the team had stopped but the wagon was out in the flat out of town. He took the harness and hung it on the post on the fence and left it there, and the sun came out hot the next day and the wagon

came on in of itself. The rawhide pulled it in up to the woodpile.

2. They didn't have much wood, and they only found one log. He really hated to cut that up. He went up to it and rolled it over. Just as he started to roll it over a big rattlesnake under it started to strike at him. He let it roll back and the rattlesnake bit into the log. Well the poison went into the log, and it started to swell till it was so large they cut it up and got a cord of wood from it.

3. He said this one was really true. Used to have some nice pants made out of buckskin, deer hides, Tom Hamblin, a kind of a hoodlum of a kid, always getting into mischief. Him and I went out hunting squirrels with bow and arrow, rained like the dickens, got wringing wet. His buckskin pants got a way down over his feet, took and cut them off just right length. Well the rain quit and the sun came out hot against his pants, and when they got dry they were right up to his knees. I knew something about buckskin, and I didn't cut mine off, kept rolling them up.

4. One I'm sure was true: He and some kids dug a hole under a bank near 4 lots that Brigham Young owned at Kanab. They built a little fire in front of the hole, but it started burning the board fence and burned the whole side of the fence on one side to the ground before they could put it out. Also burned up two or three hundred cedar posts piled nearby, worth at least 40 or 50 dollars.

He also liked to say shocking things when it got quiet at the dinner table, like "Why are you eating this dead cow?" He was lots of fun at the dinner table.

Dad loved flowers and often planted them around the yard and he and Mom usually had a vegetable garden.

Some of the positions Dad held in the church: Sunday School superintendent, stake Sunday School superintendent counselor, high counselor in the stake high council, counselor to stake high priests, chairman of genealogy, full-time missionary, Sunday School teacher, counselor to bishop, counselor to branch president, ward teacher, home missionary, temple missionary. stake patriarch.

He often told his family the name "Dewitt" was an honorable one and we should always live to honor it and be a credit to the family. He was always insistent that we sustain the leadership of the Church. His circle of friends included those from every walk of life from the wealthy to those of meager means.

Dad's second wife, Ruth Leila Kempe, was born 29 July, 1880 in Richfield, Utah. Her father, Christopher Jensen Kempe, born in Denmark, 26 June, 1837 had joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there at the age of 22. He was soon called to be a missionary and spent the next six years in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway as such. Because he would not forsake the gospel his uncle withdrew his \$60,000 inheritance, but this did not trouble Christopher. Before coming to "Zion" (Utah) he married Anne Ongerod on 17 March 1865. She died from smallpox in Quincy, Illinois. Christopher arrived in Salt Lake City 8 November 1865.

Not long after arriving in Utah, Christopher married Oline Olsen and three months later (it being the

time of plural marriage in Utah) married Anna Dorthea Johnson both of whom he had known in Norway. Anna Dorthea Johnson became the mother of Ruth Leila Kempe DeWitt. Both women were converts to the church and at great sacrifice of family and homes had left Norway for the gospel. Ten children were born to the first wife. Only 4 lived to marry and have children. Pioneer families often lost half their children before adulthood. Mom's family consisted of six girls. One died at age 18.

The families were just getting settled nicely with gardens, orchards and homes when they were called by Brigham Young to help settle Arizona. Mom was just a few weeks old when the journey started in 1880. It was an arduous journey, with two wives and about 11 children, over a rugged pioneer terrain to St. Johns, Apache County, Arizona.

Her earliest recollection was of following behind the thresher with a little sack tied to her waist and picking up the heads of wheat (gleaning) which were later ground on a coffee mill for cereal. Until she was seventeen she was not well, being plagued with chills and fever, rheumatism, whooping cough, measles, severe bilious headaches, and, finally, typhoid fever--one of the most severe cases known at that time, but it was said that her courage and determination, plus her mother's excellent care and abounding faith in healing, brought her back to health.

After living in St. Johns several years, her father was called to be bishop of Concho Ward where he moved with his first wife and family. Leila's mother (Anna Dorthea Johnson, Christopher Jensen Kempe's third wife) had a good home so they remained in St. Johns where she ran a small dairy and did dressmaking to help support a family of six girls. Another reason to remain behind was that the government had outlawed polygamy, retroactively, and Anna wanted no suspicions cast upon them. All the girls learned to sew, milk, farm, and be generally useful.

The hardships of that pioneer life, living in covered wagons, dugouts, sometimes almost starving for lack of food, coping with an unproductive area, produced strong characters, and during her whole life Mom demonstrated the results of a splendid training that made her an asset to every community in which she lived.

Mom received her early education in the district schools in St. Johns, in Mesa, and in the Indian school at Phoenix. She entered Provo Academy when eighteen, later went to Flagstaff and Tempe Normal in Arizona and to summer school at the University of Utah.

On her seventeenth birthday she began a journal (July 1897-Nov 1900) which indicates she was a busy young lady--scrubbing floors, preserving crab apples and apricots, washing, cleaning house, sewing, attending church meetings, dances, peach outings, lectures, parties in homes, Church School on Sunday nights, outings in the country, and theater plays. She writes that she attended all five dances during the Christmas holidays and made a resolve not to eat any more pig meat. She refers to a testimony meeting from 12 to 3 o'clock at which time there were 98 present, 97 of which bore their testimonies and spoke in tongues. She often mentions boy friends; she seemed never to lack for a date.

Summer of 1898 she spent two to four hours a day practicing music. Her lessons cost fifty cents per lesson. In September of 1899 she got rheumatism so bad she had to stay out of school a few days. She "could not stand to miss school at all so went back and got worse and took down with typhoid fever and missed the whole year."

There was lots of visiting between families in those days, a lost art for many nowadays.

In the fall she attended Brigham Young Academy and stated her board was \$2.00 per week. A few of her expenses: shoes, \$2.00; vaseline, 10 cents; scratch tablet, 5 cents, comb, 15 cents, drawing pencil, 5 cents, medicine, 5 cents, bleach, 20 cents; thread, 5 cents; eggs, 10 cents; laundry, 5 cents; 3 pencils, 5 cents.

She was constantly making plans to live better, once stating her worst fault was scandalizing her neighbors: "I must stop being so fidgety and let my pencil remain quiet, not mark on my books, or tear the corners of my notebooks"...Later she writes that she can control herself much better, is slowly growing both spiritually and intellectually, gaining in not wanting to speak evil of her neighbors, tastes are higher and she is not quite so quick tempered, learning slowly to unbend her will to others. She mentions receiving money from various relatives but also wrote of earning some money sewing, ironing, and milking.

The following is taken from her diary which she began while at the Brigham Young Academy starting 15 February 1901:

" 'Not today, but tomorrow' I have found to be a very poor motto to follow, therefore I decided to get me a book and start a journal today. It is my earnest wish to keep a daily journal and with the help of the Lord, I will do so. My wish is to place some thought for every day [which she did] and if possible some improvement. I place my blessing at the first of my book that it may be a guiding star to all I write, also that I may read it often that it may be as a restraining hand to my weak nature. I also place it as my testimony to the truthfulness of the established Church of Christ upon the earth..."

Brother Carl G. Maeser, past president of the college, died the day she started her diary. She reported that they practiced a song to sing at his funeral in Salt Lake City and were told they should not wear crepe [meaning black I'm sure] at the funeral. At his home there were white roses on the porch and white ribbon over the door which symbolized his pure sweet life. At the service the stands were all draped in white and on either side of the coffin, which was covered with most delicate tints of pink and yellow roses, was a star and crescent of flowers. On one was written in purple letters "A star is set." In a book of white flowers was written "Thy will be done." The coffin was lowered in a bed of roses.

From her autograph book at BYU April 8, 1901:

"To do one's duty and to enjoy the doing is living of the most perfect type. You have lived as a student of the Brigham Young Academy."

Your friend and teacher, G. M. Brimhall

In looking over the previous year, one entry says, "I do not wish to record anything about the balls, parties, socials, etc. as I can see no direct benefit from them, and they are only trivia affairs." Then, "It is my aim to learn one verse from the scriptures or a useful gem every day."

Yes, she took her studies and other activities seriously. This did not mean she did not find a lot of enjoyment in life. She enjoyed many social entertainments, family, friends, learning, music, art, nature. A dairy entry: "I am very happy this afternoon. We have had a heavy rain, the air is so cool, fresh, and invigorating. My heart responds to the happiness of nature...The broad level farms stretching onward for miles and miles, the herds of fat cattle feeding on the rich alfalfa fields, the long flowered hedges of oleander, the profusion of flowers of every variety gave a charm to the country that will not soon be forgotten...I shall never forget the happy thoughts and recollections of days spent at the B.Y.A." July 29, 1903: "Twenty-three years old. Really I don't feel a day older than I did a year ago. I am as happy as a lark and expect a pleasant day. I was just wondering if I shall feel as illy prepared for the final examination at the end of the world as I do for the next three days. I trust not, but fear. This has indeed been a happy year." She had been teaching school that winter.

In the examinations which she took at Flagstaff January 8, 1904 she records: 99%, 95, 93, 92, and 88. To show the contrast in teachers, she commented that she entered one class with a very light and happy heart, but another she never entered without a feeling of dread and shudder.

She then taught elementary grades for nine years. While teaching in Mesa, she homesteaded a ranch, taking children with her each weekend to spend the time on the lonely desert. She also spent some time teaching in the Indian school in Phoenix. It was considered a special privilege to be one of her piano or mandolin pupils.

She began teaching a class in Sunday School at 14 and held many positions from then on, some of these being president of religion class four years, member of the choir, secretary of Primary, president of Primary, secretary, 1st and 2nd counselor and president of YLMIA, member of the Sunday School Stake Boards in St. Johns and Maricopa, assistant organist in Mesa Sunday School four years, organist in Mesa Sunday School for a short time, organist for the choir in two stakes, president of Relief Society for two years, taught various classes, filled a stake mission with Dad.

She was always an active person. When she had a few minutes to spare she thought of self-improvement and that she must keep time from wasting, so she could always be found reading, studying, sewing, embroidering, oil painting, practicing music (mandolin and piano)--always constructive things. Outdoors and elsewhere she stood shoulder to shoulder with Dad in the work.

Following are some items and observations taken from a short diary she began on February 25, 1937, 26 years after marriage:

"About one o'clock I rode to Modesto with Alex to get acquainted with a family of DeWitts living on High Street in Modesto. We did not make any definite plan, and we had never met them, so when we got there he got out of the car and I started to get out on the opposite side. He, however, planned on meeting the folks and then coming to get me. I waited and waited but he didn't come back. A lady came out and invited me to come in until Alex came back. She said her husband had been a traveling salesman and she knew the monotony of sitting in the car waiting. Of course I excused myself. I waited about an hour, when she came out again and insisted that I come in. It was cold as it had been raining hard. What a wonderful hour the next one was. Seated by a lovely gas heater I got acquainted with one of the nicest ladies I have met. Having raised a large family, given music lessons, and done oil paintings, done nursing, she is quite happy now to be taking care of a lovely home. I could write pages about the afternoon. Alex enjoyed his visit greatly." This was undoubtedly only one of many times she was left waiting while he talked with people, for no one was a stranger to Alex DeWitt.

Another entry: "In the middle of 10th and I there is a sign 'No Left Turn.' Alex didn't see it as the rain had blurred the window. Of course he made the left hand turn and knocked down the sign. Just as he was returning to put it back in place a policeman came up. He spoke up very quickly and said, 'Someone was careless and knocked down that sign. I saw it and thot I'd better put it up.' The policeman just said, 'Oh' and Alex walked away. He had expected a \$10.00 fine!"

Sometimes she indicated that the children, teenagers and older by now, had cooked a meal or cleaned the house while she was gone and how grateful she was at those times. She spoke of how the children helped financially when they started working. Sometimes she would have a chance to read a good book or play the piano, but generally there was little time for her pleasures. It must mostly work.

She apparently painted the entire outside of the house alone, and, of course, the cooking, cleaning, canning, gardening, baking, ironing, quilting, and all the chores connected with raising a family and living on a farm. Listen to this entry: "During the day I have read some from Readers Digest, crocheted on bed spread, put up 4 quarts of tomatoes fresh and some preserved, prepared, and roasted a chicken and did most of the house work. Orders from the doctor (be an invalid.) Also cared for Gale, Edith's boy. It is now way past bed time." There was much work, but there were some parties, visiting friends and entertaining friends, and occasionally a movie on a Sunday or some other evening.

One of the sisters in Relief Society was particularly unkind and cruel to her with very vicious criticisms etc. One day she was asked how she could put up with it and not retaliate. She just said, "She will have to apologize to me before she can enter the Celestial Kingdom" and that was all she ever said about it.

From articles by her sisters and a niece we learn how much she was loved by her siblings and nieces, her great teaching abilities, talents of sewing, painting, teaching, elocution, endurance in the face of pain which once included twenty-one boils on her back and another time taking a two-day grueling state test for teaching with a severe leg injury just before taking the test, unselfishness, love of her

religion, appreciation of others, sweet disposition, music and poetry, patience, innovative, sense of humor, embroidering, pyrography and various kinds of fancy work, generosity, kindness. One comment was: "Aunt Leila--she was music, painting, singing, laughter, joy of joys, delightful, the life of the party. How good she made us feel about ourselves. She was sound as a rock."

From her children:

"I believe in Angels here on Earth. Mother was often described as one. As far as possible, without surrender, she was on good terms with all persons.

"Mother was given to speaking the truth, quietly and clearly, and listening to others, for they too have a story. My memory of Mother and family included a sense of being needed to get work done. There was opportunity for work on our farm enterprise, and even at the age of six, I had a sense of ownership as I weeded cotton or tended livestock. Mother helped Dad in many ways as his first family were spreading their wings, and she was incubating another six. A lot of Indian children had been helped by Mom's teaching career before marriage. She had also homesteaded some land which was to become good farmland. Her training for teaching is accounted for most beautifully in her diary with lovely thoughts and penmanship.

She gave up teaching to marry Dad and be his back up support. Pursuing that vocation later in California was prevented for lack of transferable credentials, but her talents for teaching improved in church and family activities. The praise of aunts and uncles was eloquent in Mom's behalf. Her vision was of Eternity and sensitive to the source from whence the winds blow. Most of her artwork was destroyed by fire when I was too young to remember. I do have one of her beautiful oil paintings of the White Mountains of Arizona. It's a special treasure on display in our home.

"Mom was kept busy tending the needs of others. There were no automatic washing machines. We were in close touch with our clothes on wash day. Fingernails were automatically cleaned. The kitchens were large and well lived in.

"I remember with fondness the Sunday dinners. Weekday meals were often based on home made bread and home canned fruits and jams; broken bread in bowls of rich fresh milk. Mom prepared delicious chicken dinners, roasted or stewed, with dumplings and vegetables,. I helped in preparation of the chicken from the time I could swing an ax to a chopping block, after catching the chicken.

"Mom encouraged Dad to read aloud to the family. We enjoyed many fine stories from The Saturday Evening Post, The American Magazine, and other sources. Dad was a natural storyteller and blossomed with this appreciative audience.

"Mom's artistic talents included many practical abilities. She made very good dress suits for Dad, and I loved the Indian costume she made for me. Her beautiful artwork on fabrics and superb needlework are prized possessions by us children. They are such as win blue ribbons at State Fairs.

On Saturday Night

Near the old wood range
The weekly bath draws nigh
Six children after six long days
Must bath in the laundry tub

As the kerosene lamp sheds its rays
Facing the range, our front was warm
We took our turn on the chilly night
Looking back, it must have been a sight!

The kitchen, the range and the laundry tub--
Draw the curtain, and leave them there
I'm going upstairs
To my attic bed warm and snug

"The years of childhood, youth, and manhood were filled with never ending schedules of work with the earth and life springing from it and from our livestock. I remember mother assisting with the birthing of calves. She would reach into the womb to manipulate an unborn calf into position and pull it out. Mom helped in the fields and with the milking. The animals, the cows, and milk added warmth to life. We didn't always wait for a Saturday night bath to clean up.

"Space beneath the rafters was shared by brothers and sisters. I appreciated any sleeping quarters. After all, it was home and Mom was loving and dependable. I felt peaceful and secure.

"Homemade ice cream abounded, with twenty minutes of turning our two gallon freezer. We were eager to start sampling as we extracted the dasher. Saturdays were special in so many ways. Maybe a second freezer full would be prepared for Sunday, and if the remaining ice were sufficient we made another two gallons for Monday.

"I remember family, including Mom, working in fruit fields and cannery to augment farm income. Mom's presence and participation enriched the experience. Our common needs made for closer family ties. My enthusiasm was extra high when I manipulated for one of the jobs tending the peach processing machine and occasionally clocked a hundred or more hours a week. It was my idea of a peach of a job. Mom was the Super Peach; she raised peaches and processed them and made sure they were well taken care of.

"Life was busy taking care of work needs to satisfy other needs. Mom and Dad set an example and lent encouragement that had me accepting work responsibilities and loving work. I love them for it.

"Mom did attempt to teach me piano. [Kempe, Lincoln, Edith, and Bob all told the same story]. She taught others on a professional basis. Dad, however, saw to it that I spent the time with field work.

Mom did a fine job preserving our family life and persevering through thick and thin.

"Work is often our solace and God's gift to man, Mothers his supreme creation and ours one of the best. I remember--with Love--Kempe."

Lincoln remembers that when the children were small Mom's foot slipped off the brake and onto the gas pedal and instead of stopping she went faster. The telephone pole had moved five or six inches at the ground level. She never drove after that. He remembers taking her the ten or so miles into Primary each week when he was about 12 years old.

He referred to her as an over-ruled lady. If she planned to teach one of the kids to play the piano or drums or to do a dance step Dad always felt this wasn't really important; the important thing was to get out and take care of those cows and pigs. farm.

"Dad could be very rough, but mostly was very gentle. He expected things to be done when we were told to do them whether we were practicing or not. We had to get his work done first."

Anna remembers her many talents, already listed, and added: but most of all, a great mother who taught her all she learned on the piano. Of how she rose above the mean and petty things some of the women said and did at times.

"Once when I was about 8 or 9 years old, Dad brought in a big bouquet of roses from the yard. They were the big cabbage roses, and he dropped them on the dining room table. Mom started to pick them up, and I asked her to please leave them and would she paint them for me. In spite of six children to take care of and all the other duties on the farm, she stopped right there, went out into the barn area and found a clean board (there was no money for painting supplies) and sketched out the roses. Then as the days went on she did a little at a time, and shortly the painting was finished. All she changed was to add a bee to the picture. It is about 28 inches wide and 11 inches high and the colors (1988) are still bright and lovely. It is one of my most cherished possessions. I also have the picture she painted of a big buck and two does in the mountains. She did not have a frame for it at the time, so she took an old clock frame and used it. I think she was about 18 years of age at the time. It is amazing how the colors still stay bright after 90 years!"

"Mom and I started some embroidery, and she said the first one finished got both pieces. As I look back, hers was almost finished long before mine was, but somehow she never did get the time to do those last stitches until I had finished mine, and when mine was finished all of a sudden hers got finished, and, lo and behold, I got both pieces and still have them. I didn't realize what had happened. Oh the devious ways of a mother."

"When Edith and I were growing up we didn't always see eye to eye...we fought a lot. One day Mom got tired of it and said to each of us, 'Go out in the yard and cut a switch off the tree, the biggest one you can find, and bring it back to me.' So we each did just that. I am not sure we found the biggest one, because I was sure she was going to give us a good whipping, which, as I remember, she almost never did. We both got out switches, came back into the house and she said to us, 'Now

you two use these switches and fight it out and get it out of your systems.' Of course, we never touched each other, and also, needless to say, we got along quite well for a long time after that!"

"When Mom was ill for many years with what turned out to be cancer... she never complained. Only once did she ever say anything about the pain and 'hell' she was going through...A few days before she died I was hemming a slip. She asked if she could do that...When she was finished it was perfect, as all her sewing was. Nor was there ever a complaint when she had five down with the mumps at the same time."

"When a set of her treasured dishes got broken she was really heartbroken, but she never scolded or let on like it had bothered her although she disappeared for a few minutes, and when she returned her eyes were red."

Edith: "I thought Mom was wonderful. She encouraged me in being silly and dancing around the house and making up songs that I sang, for encouraging me, laughing and pretending the bread and milk were wonderful roasts and pretend, pretend."

"One day mother was on the table painting the kitchen. I couldn't have been over 6, but I see myself as 14. A salesman knocked on the door, 'Your mother home?' 'Yes' 'What's her name?' 'Mrs. DeWitt' 'Who is your father?' 'Alex DeWitt' 'Ruth Leila Kempe is your mother,' and he rushed into the kitchen, grabbed her off the table, hugged her, whirling her all over the kitchen, and they laughed, and laughed, and laughed. Then they started talking. I didn't know if he was a college friend or some other friend from the past, and he was just beside himself with excitement. That was the youngest I ever saw my mother except when we were 'silly' of course."

"Once Mom made a beautiful cake for something at church, but the frosting hardened, and she had trouble spreading it. It was a thick, fairly hard, fudge and cracked badly when she cut it. She'd promised it and had no time to make another so took it. Some one said, 'Oh this looks terrible' and set it in the back with no intention of serving it. Linc had told his pals about all that fudge and they came to the counter demanding some of Sister DeWitt's cake. It was first 'all gone' and had the most compliments."

"The hardest thing she had to do was to be Relief Society president when we first came to Modesto. She didn't know anyone and the branch president suggested Sister Wright and...as counselors. She accepted them only to find Sister Wright was a backbiter, complainer, and gossip. It was almost more than Mom could stand, and then Sister Wright decided Dad had a halo and had been grossly short changed in his spouse."

"One day Mom was teaching our Sunday School class and the Sunday School superintendency came in to observe. They were sitting in the very back and started whispering. She quit talking and stood quietly in front. They soon realized she had quit and was watching them. They suggested she go ahead, and she said sweetly, 'Why I wouldn't presume to interrupt your conversation.' They quickly left. Afterwards she offered to resign, and they apologized all over the place. She had the quietest classes I ever attended, good participation, and I believe people really felt reverence in her classes,

not just discipline. Years later when she and Dad were missionaries and would sit in the park and talk to people--and in their homes too, but I only remember the park because I saw them in the park having discussions, Dad said, 'Every time I talked myself into a hole your Mammie was able to pull me out and save face for me!!'

"How I loved to hear Mom give musical readings. She was a trained elocutionist and had such a natural feeling for it. I loved to hear Mom sing. My favorite was 'Nellie Gray.' Also, 'China Cross the Bay' and 'Listen to the Mocking Bird.' At a classical community concert years later a double quartet started the second half of their program with 'Nellie Gray' and 'Mocking Bird.'

"She loved her grandchildren. She was a fighter and far ahead of the medical world. They told her she had a heart problem and to take it easy. She tried to not run, but she worked early and late and hard."

"Mom told me they didn't go steady in college, but sometimes were 'engaged to be engaged.' You were sometimes engaged just for the school year as you usually had a boyfriend at home that you planned to marry!"

"One time when she went away to school she worked for room and board. One day the employer said he'd be out of town for a few days and for her to milk the cow. She exclaimed, 'But I can't milk a cow.' 'Then I'll teach you.' So after a half hour lesson of his showing and explaining, and her not getting one decent stream, he exploded with, 'You can't tell me a girl raised on a farm in St. Johns can't milk a cow. I've got to go. Goodbye.' And he was gone. Mom had sworn if she ever got off the farm she'd never milk another cow, and here she was stuck with it. I'm sure she never again told another half truth or lie in her life."

"Mom said something once about her awful temper, and I said, 'But you don't have a temper, just Dad is frightening.' She replied 'There isn't room in one family for 2 uncontrolled tempers so I had to learn to control mine.'

"Mother never really felt a part of the DeWitt family, and when Maude and Caroline and Wilmerth found out at the 1937 reunion how she felt they were aghast and so apologetic. They just took it for granted she was one, but she had always felt they preferred 'Aunt Caroline,' Dad's first wife. Oh, the protestations. She felt better I believe after that."

"Dad often complained of her incessantly busy hands. 'Why can't you just sit here and relax - get some rest.' Most men never understand a woman's need to keep her hands busy, and few just accept that we don't ALL relax and rest the same way. To sit as he did would have tried her more than any work she did."

"For a long time after I was aware of Dad's putting sugar on tomatoes and cottage cheese and Mom putting salt on them, I was very uncomfortable with their 'You're not going to put sugar on those tomatoes?' 'How can you swallow them with salt on them?' One day I suddenly realized it was an old ritual - a fun thing - just between the two of them. Probably from courtship, and I knew for the

first time that they weren't just my parents and Jesus' helpers, but people with jokes and fun that only they knew and understood and cherished."

"For Mom, laughter was an inside thing, but it was there. I asked her once why she didn't ever laugh, and she said, 'I'm happy inside. My mother taught me, 'Not with much laughter, for that would be sin.' Your laughter isn't boisterous, and it makes me happy, so don't stop. Remember, 'a cheerful heart doeth good like a medicine.'

"She was a wonderful mother. She used to sing, 'Little drops of water, Little grains of sand, Make a mighty ocean, And a wondrous land, Little deeds of kindness, Little words of love, Make the earth as happy as the heavens above' most every day. And surely every day we heard 'Politeness is to do and say the kindest thing in the kindest way,' and 'Idle hands are the devil's workshop.'

"We loved to hear the many stories of her childhood and of the dances. Teen-agers were a trial to the chaperons then too. She told how the boys weren't to put their arms around the girl's waist when waltzing. One nite the chaperons were particularly strict so the boys went and got sticks and held one end of the stick and their partner held the other end. By the end of the dance the chaperons were so frustrated the kids were dancing just as we waltz today and in the square dances putting their arms around the girl's waists and swinging them high in the air. On entering the 'cultural hall' half the girls were given red cards and half green so every girl was to get a chance to dance. There was always some friend of Mom's who didn't want to dance and would give her ticket to Mom so she was eligible to dance every dance. Grandma could sit on her front porch and watch everything going on across the street at the dance."

"Mom had three dresses, one for school, one for church, and one for home. If the school dress didn't dry overnight she'd try to dry it with the heavy sad-iron from on the back of the wood burning stove or wear it still damp. Sometimes when she was teaching she'd get so sick she'd have to dismiss her class and have them march into the other teacher's class room. After the first time it was so orderly the host class would hardly notice the intrusion."

Bob: "I was about seven. When I would come home from school Mom would let me go swimming in the big canal 40 ft. wide and 6 feet deep. There was strong grass along the side to grab in case I needed it. She honored me by figuring that I had the sense to stay close to my help, 'the grass.'

"She could play the piano with real expression. It was great to hear her play. She understood what music was for. She arranged for our family to sing songs, as a family, at some of the church parties during the 1930s. That's when lots of teenagers came to the church family events."

"She sewed almost all of my sisters clothes. She cooked great things and kept the men and lots of times girls, working hard in the field."

"Mom did a lot to give us confidence in ourselves. She praised us all the time. We were always working on the farm so much that time would run out for doing some of the preparation for life otherwise."

"Mom had a strong faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ and in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as restored in 1830."

"She taught all her children, 'If you can't speak well of someone don't speak of them at all.' She believed wholeheartedly in saying good things about people."

"I believe that she, had she lived till television, would have said,"

'Smile, you're on the Lord's candid camera.'

I remember Mom as not teaching much by word of mouth. I learned by her example and the little mottoes, thoughts or poems around the house. There was the motto on our wall:

"A soft answer turneth away wrath
But grievous words stir up anger." Proverbs

And the poem that hung by the doorway for a long time:

Suppose, if all that we say in a single day
With never a word left out
Were printed each night in clear black and white
"Twould prove queer reading no doubt.

And then just suppose e're one's eyes he could close
He must read the day's lesson through
Then wouldn't one sigh and wouldn't one try
A great deal less talking to do

As for example, there was the day she tried for at least 20 minutes to fix the broken oven door. A visitor watched and finally said, "You didn't even say darn." Mom replied, "What good would that have done?"

She was in bed the last two weeks of her life. On Sunday evening she wanted to hear my talk for the following Sunday. I started: "400,000 strong" She sat up in bed and with strong emphasis said, "No, 400,000 strong!" She was gone just three days later, interested in my welfare to the last.

She was loyal to Dad and always insisted we respect him. One day someone came to the door and asked for the "old man" She said there was no old man there. So they asked for "the boss" She replied that she was the boss. Finally they asked for Mr. DeWitt, and she let them in.

Betty, Lincoln's wife, remembers how Mom sewed several dresses for her after her marriage to Lincoln, was quiet and easygoing, helpful, sharing, appreciative, and never criticized. She said Mom was the reason behind her really understanding the church. She didn't tell her anything, just asked questions that guided her to learn what the truth was.

Edie, Bob's wife, remembers how pleasant Mom was to her and said Mom and Dad loved her so much more than her own parents. They accepted her and she so appreciated it.

To quote Edith once again: "It seems that Mom always had a pot of soup or beans on the back of the stove when we got home from school. Sunday afternoons were for company and roast beef and vegetables and home made ice cream. She was never overweight, had a beautiful complexion, didn't wear make up, and had the most beautifully-shaped back I've seen. When I asked Mission President Elijah Allen if I could get a temple recommend he replied, 'Of course. I went to college with Leila and worked in Mutual with her. Any girl of hers couldn't be anything but a good girl.' Of course I still had to go through the regular channels."

"It was a hard life for my parents and a wonderful happy world for me."

"Church and family were constant and so we never developed hang-ups about losing friends. Dad had lots of company and 'cottage meetings' (similar to the present missionary lessons only lots of visiting and refreshments afterwards). Dad was a fascinating man to listen to: pioneer stories, inspirational, comic--true and false. The whole family went to church dances and entertainments and most everything together. We younger kids went with our brothers and their dates to anything connected to church. We didn't get into trouble except with each other, and I never realized we were poor."

Some brief comments re their children: Kempe, married Kathy Smart, became a landscape architect, children: 2 boys, three girls. Kathy teaches piano. Lincoln, dairyman for many years, then turned to building inspecting, married Betty Bemis, who office work for a time, children: 3 boys, 5 girls. Anna married Charles Warren who farmed (?) killed in WW II, She worked about 20 years for the American Automobile Association, until receiving a ready-made family of 2 boys and three girls with her marriage to Russell Stephen. Edith married Gaylord Wert, Sr. who drove truck, worked for police department, and then for a storage and moving company. Edith worked in the avocado and orange packing plants, then 23 years for the employment office as a placement interviewer, children: 2 boys, 3 girls. Bob married Edith Openshaw, worked primarily in engineering for Kaiser. Edie started a wedding catering and consultaton business and assisted by doing the wedding pictures and then wrote a book on how to do your own wedding reception, children 3 girls. Ruth, secretary fifteen years, married Edgar Wake, plywood mill worker, soon to become a plywood inspector, children 3 boys. (Edgar had three girls from previous marriage.)

Leila not only took an active part in church activities but entered into projects that were for the welfare of the community. She was a musician and gave private lessons on the piano and mandolin. She was an artist. Her work in oils produced beautiful decorations for her homes as well as those of her friends. Her hands were always busy. She studied dramatics, and helped in the ward with plays, and also did a great deal of reading and public speaking. She did very little painting or music teaching after her marriage in 1911. She was too busy helping with her husband's five motherless children (ages from 9 to 22 at the time of their marriage) and had six of her own--three boys and three girls. She loved the scriptures as noted in a letter to her daughter: "I am reading the Doctrine and Covenants now and it is simply wonderful, and the Book of Mormon is just one grand page after another."

Here is truly a woman of whom it has been said by those who knew her well, quoting from Proverbs, "...her price is far above rubies. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also and he praiseth her."

A brief rundown of Mom and Dad's children: Kempe, landscape architect, married Kathy Smart who teaches piano part time, children: 2 boys and three girls. Lincoln, dairyman for many years, then building inspector, married Betty Bemis, office worker before motherhood, children: 3 boys and 5 girls. Anna married Charles Warren, carpenter, worked 18 years for the American Automobile Association until receiving a ready-made family of 2 boys and 3 girls with her marriage to Russell Stephen, medical corpsman in navy and after service worked for Department of Corrections. Edith married Gaylord Wert, Sr. who drove truck, police department, and finally storage and moving company. She worked in the avocado and orange packing plants for awhile, then 23 years as placement interviewer in employment office. Bob married Edith Openshaw, worked primarily in engineering for Kaiser. Edie started a wedding catering and consultation business, also doing wedding pictures, then wrote a book on how to do your own wedding reception, children: 3 girls. Ruth, secretary fifteen years, married Edgar Wake, plywood inspector, children: 3 boys. (Edgar had three girls from a previous marriage who lived with their mother.) All the men, but Lincoln, served in WW II. He went for induction but was turned down when they found he had only two toes on one foot. He did get a chance to serve a mission though, but it had to be cut short due to a leg problem.

Mom passed away 7 July, 1943 in Modesto, California, a much loved, honored and respected woman, one of the Lord's choicest spirits.

After Mom's death Dad lived with Anna (her husband had been killed in WW II) and Ruth for just under ten years. His work as stake patriarch, a temple mission of six months in Mesa, Arizona, a vegetable garden, raising some pigs once, all of which died, visiting, reading, attending movies, musical concerts, and sometimes the church dances, riding his horse, and his interest in public affairs kept him active.

Even though he lived to be 87, he never seemed to grow "old." He kept his fine posture, and Anna commented, while on her mission, how gracefully he had grown old compared to the people she saw. He stood tall and straight until the day he died. One day not long before his death, I looked out the front window as a man started across the lawn. I began to comment on the fine-looking gentleman out front and suddenly realized it was my own father. The day before the stroke which took him in death two weeks later, he had nothing to eat but an orange for a week because of his stomach condition. Yet, he went to the garden--about three blocks down the street--to check on it. One day when in his 80s he said, "They say you are only as old as you feel--today I am 21."

He died 18 May 1953, a respected man, with friends from many walks of life.