

My Life Story



My name is Cleone Smith Isom. I was born 15 June 1905 in Provo, Utah. Sounds dull? Not so! I've lived from the Horse and Buggy Days to the Space Age when men walked on the moon, and even beyond that.

More progress, in every field, has been accomplished in my life time, than in any comparable period in all of history.

In 1905 most homes were lighted with kerosene lamps and candles and some few with gaslights. Practically no electricity was found in homes. Most homes were heated by burning wood and/or coal in fireplaces and kitchen stoves, which also cooked the food and heated the needed warm water. Very few homes had water piped into them.



1907 - 2 years old

I remember my grandmother Gee had a large and rather tall pipe of water with a faucet outside not far from her back

door. Pails were filled, brought into the house, and the water heated on top of the stove and also in a reservoir on the side of the range. Bathing was done in a galvanized tub, placed near the stove and filled with water from the reservoir. More than one child was bathed in the same water.

Toilets inside the house were almost unknown. Outhouses were all most people knew.

Telephones were far from common. Washing machines were the women rubbing clothes on a scrubbing board. Clothes were scrubbed and boiled clean. As a teenager I saw my first washing machine. It was operated by hand. And I was raised in cities, not on a farm.

There were no radios to distract us from our studies. Even when I was at the university most radios were the old crystal sets with headphones. We were slower than many, but it was 1953 before we had a television set in our home.

During my high school years we danced to tunes on records played on a hand wound phonograph, or by an orchestra.

I had my first automobile ride in 1910. It was many years before I had another one. I was 16 years old before my father purchased his first car.

On the occasion of the first ride, a Brother Nielsen took us in his car to the Los Angeles Railroad Station to catch the train for Utah. When we got off the train in Provo, Utah, my grandfather Gee met us with his surrey with the black fringe on top and his four matched horses which took us to the Gee household on the corner of 2nd North and 4th East.

My first airplane ride was in 1954. It was a "prop" plane. Jets came later.

Transportation was only one field of progression. Every field advanced and flourished. Marvelous things, even miracles were accomplished in the field of medicine. There were no antibiotics until after my children were born. Heart and other organ transplants were beyond our dreams. Giant strides have been attained in all fields. If only man would use all this technology only for the good of mankind!

Aside from living on earth at this particular enlightened time, I, Cleone, have had a very special and privileged life.

I have a remarkable heritage. 9 of my ancestors came to America on the Mayflower. 2 or more ancestors fought in the American Revolutionary War. 11 ancestors crossed the plains and arrived in Utah before the railroad arrived.

But that is not all. As my grandmother wrote in her history, and as Nephi of Old wrote in his, I was born of goodly parents.

I was the first of 8 children born to Hyrum Gibbs Smith and Martha Electa Gee. My father was the eldest son of Hyrum Fisher Smith, the eldest son of John Smith. At the time of my birth, John Smith was the Presiding Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. John was the eldest son of Hyrum Smith, the brother of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. John's mother was Jerusha Barden. Hyrum and Joseph were killed by a mob at Carthage, Ill., 27 June 1844.

Both of my mother's grandmothers were first cousins of Hyrum and Joseph. They were daughters of Asahel Smith, a brother of Joseph Smith, Sr. They were Mary Jane Smith Gee and Esther Smith Fuller.

This is supposed to be my life history. It is said, we are sum and substance of what we eat, but I've found that my

heritage certainly helped to shape my life. It has been something to live up to!

My first memory is of the morning following the birth of my brother, Eldred Gee Smith, the present Patriarch to the L.D.S. Church. He was born 9 January 1907 at Lehi, Utah. We were living in Lehi because Father was teaching school there. I remember asking for a bottle and was told, "Jack Frost took your bottle." I looked at the kitchen window, which was iced in a beautiful design. Evidently, I considered it a fair trade, as I've been told I never again asked for a bottle.

In the fall of 1908 we left Utah for Los Angeles, California. Father entered U.S.C. Dental College. He was the only Mormon in attendance.

At that time California was a Mission. W.O. Robinson was Mission President. His daughters, Kate and Inez, helped Mother care for us children. Before we left L.A. Father was Branch President. He and Mother held many important offices in the Mission and Branch. The Adams Ward was under construction when we returned to Utah.

My father was of light olive complexion with dark hair and dark piercing eyes. He was very calm and soft spoken, athletic, straight as a ram rod, and looked dressed up in overalls. He played baseball for U.S.C. and could have gone "professional".

Mother was a beauty. Many artists wanted to paint her. She had long heavy hair of true Titian Auburn color, large green eyes with long dark lashes, and peaches and cream complexion. She carried herself like a queen and had a flair for wearing clothes.

When we were small the older children called Father, "Papa". The younger children were allowed to call him "Daddy".

September, following my 4th birthday, I wanted to go to kindergarten. At the time, the Los Angeles City Schools required every child to be vaccinated for small pox before entering school.

I remember Papa took me to the doctor's office. Mother was pregnant. Helen was born 23 October 1909. The doctor used what I am sure was a pocket knife, and scraped a spot the size of his thumbnail, on my upper left arm until it was about to bleed. He then applied the vaccine and bandaged it. I still have that large ugly scar.

Soon I was sick, thought to be the result of the vaccination. It developed into pneumonia and empyema. By the time Helen was born, I was very sick. Doctors said nothing could be done for me.

In February Dr. Samuel Allen came to Los Angeles, and Father persuaded him to come and look at me. He decided there was a slight possibility he could save my life, but that I would be a cripple.

So Mother and Father scrubbed every inch of the kitchen, and the kitchen table became the operating table. Dr. Allen snipped and removed part of a rib and placed tubes to drain both my lungs. My matted curls had been shaved off previously.

I began to get better. I'm sure the prayers of my parents and many others had kept me alive and were now blessing me to health.

Papa made a contraption of glass tubes connected to small bottles. As I blew on the tubes fluid would flow from tubes to bottles changing colors as it moved from bottle to bottle. Father

should have copyrighted that wonderful tool to exercise the lungs.

In May, I was learning to walk again, and my hair was growing. I've felt that my illness was a test for my parents.

In the fall, when I was so sick, my parents were told that grape juice would be good for me. One day Father stopped a truck bringing grapes to market. After that, on each trip 2 lugs of grapes were dropped off on the corner. The driver refused pay. Sometimes the grapes would be there several hours before Father could pick them up on his way home from school. We then lived on North Broadway in downtown L.A. No one ever touched the grapes.

The summer of 1910 Father took the Utah State Dental Exam, and passed it. He then took over Dr. Stuckey's dental practice in Lehi for the summer. While there, I remember 3 geese hissed at and chased me. I never really liked any animal except a horse after that.

In the fall we returned to Los Angeles where Father taught some lab classes, as well as continued his dental studies.

That fall I entered 1st grade. However, I insisted my father teach me to read before I began, which he did. Since I could read the school wanted to advance me to 2nd grade. My parents refused.

That year I received my first and I think my only spanking. Usually, Father's quiet words made me feel so guilty, a spanking was unnecessary. One afternoon instead of coming home from school, I went to the home of a Mexican child and stayed all afternoon. I remember the sun was setting as I walked home.

My parents were frantic. It was nearly time for them to leave for some doing at church. All the missionaries and many of the church members and some neighbors had been searching for me for several hours.

I received a most deserved spanking that I think helped me to learn responsibility.

The day I was 6 years old, 15 June 1911, Father was graduated from U.S.C. Dental College. Mother and I and Eldred attended. Father was Valedictorian, and also received the gold medal for being the best in the field of operative technique. He missed the scholarship medal by one-fourth (1/4) of a point.

Following the ceremony we went to a restaurant. It is my first memory of eating out. I recall the oyster crackers on the table (they were small round soda crackers).

Father opened an office in downtown Los Angeles and began his dental practice.

About 3 months later Great-grandfather John Smith came to visit. It was a surprise visit. Father was at the office. I remember stroking Great-grandfather's long beard as he held me on his lap and rocked in the chair while Mother dressed. He took Mother to Catalina Island that afternoon.

I remember very plainly how disappointed and upset Father was when he came home and learned about it. Father had planned on taking Mother to Catalina himself as soon as he could afford it. Now his grandfather had taken Mother first.

Great-grandfather John Smith, the Patriarch died 6 November 1911 and our lives changed.

My father's father, Hyrum Fisher Smith, was next in the patriarchal line. Grandfather Smith was a good man. But in-

active in the Church. Father still hoped the position would go to his father.

However, at April Conference in Salt Lake City, Hyrum Fisher Smith was passed over, and my father, Hyrum Gibbs Smith was sustained as the Presiding Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I remember the day very well. We were in Los Angeles. Kate and Inez Robinson were at the house when the cablegram arrived. Everyone was excited. Father had mixed emotions, feeling sorry for his father, yet honored to receive the calling.

So Father gave up his dental practice and we moved to Salt Lake in May of 1912.

From this day on, I lived a very privileged life, associating with General Authorities and their families.

At first we lived in the lovely home of George Albert Smith. This three-story house was on West Temple Street directly west of the Tabernacle. George Albert Smith and family spent that summer at Laguna Beach, California, hoping to improve his health.

President Joseph F. Smith took us in as though we were immediate family. President Joseph F. Smith and Great-grandfather, John Smith were half-brothers. However, President Smith always declared there was no such thing as a half-child or half-brother or half-sister.

To go back in history John was the oldest son of Hyrum and Jerusha Barden. When Jerusha died, Hyrum married Mary Fielding and Joseph F. was her only son. Mary raised Jerusha's family and they were all family.

When we moved to Salt Lake, President Joseph F. Smith lived in the Beehive House. We were always welcome there.

Whenever there was a family gathering we were all included. Marjorie was near my age and I spent many nights and days at the Beehive House with her.

By fall, my parents had purchased a three-story house on "C" Street. It was the 2nd house south of 9th Avenue, directly across the street from the Latter-day Saint Hospital. We went to the 18th Ward until the Ensign Ward was built. I entered 2nd grade at Ensign school.

One week before I was 8 years old, on the 7th of June 1913 my sister, Miriam, was born. So my baptism was delayed until August. Of course, Father performed the ordinances. They were held at the Baptismal Font of the Tabernacle.

Father was gone to Conferences every weekend except one in July and at Christmas time. Soon after Miriam was born, Mother became a member of the Stake Mutual Board and soon after that a member of the General M.I.A. Board.

I skipped the 4th grade at school. When I was in the 6th grade we used to walk to the Lowell School once a week for lessons in cooking and sewing.

Late in the summer of 1916 Mother sent me for a two-week visit in Provo. Usually, I loved to go to Provo. I loved to go to the home of Mother's sister, Ina. I dearly loved Aunt Ina and my cousins, Ethelyn and Marva Hodson, Aunt Ina's daughters, near my age. Father's sister, Evelyn Haws, had a daughter, Ora, whom I also liked to be with. There were other cousins there, too, and I always had a great time.

This time however, I accused Mother of sending me away while she had a baby. She denied that she was going to have a baby. (Her day was different than ours!) Anyway, I'd been in

Provo 3 days when Aunt Ina told me I had another brother. Barden Gee Smith was born 1 September 1916.

For the 7th grade, I went to Bryant Jr. High School. World War I was on. Because street-cars made me sick, I walked down hill to school and up hill home in all kinds of weather that year. Bryant Jr. High was on 1st South between 7th and 8th East.

Our home on “C” Street was close to Heber J. Grant’s home. He lived on the corner of “A” Street and 8th Avenue. His daughter Florence, wife of Willard Smith, lived next door east. The next door east of that was the home of another daughter, Lucy, married to George Cannon. The Smith children were cousins and the Cannon children were good friends.

Directly across the street from Heber J. Grant lived Dr. Samuel Allen, who operated on me as a child. He had daughters, Ruth and Margie, who were my friends. Whenever Dr. Allen would see me he would call me over and run his finger down my spine and say, “It is growing straight.” He called me his “Miracle Child”. I was cautioned not to run as I had a heart murmur.



1918

In June, at the end of 7th grade, I went to Summer School at the Oquirrh School, and completed the 8th grade. This was the summer of 1918.

That fall I did not enter school. Instead I took piano lessons and ballet. At the close of my 3rd ballet lesson the teacher called my mother and asked her to withdraw me. He said my lips turned blue with the exercise and he didn’t want the responsibility of me. I continued with piano,

but I played mechanically. My teacher told my father that I was smart enough to read notes and play correctly, but I could do the same thing with a typewriter.

The War ended, 11 November 1918. I remember the celebration in Salt Lake City. I watched people in the streets from the window of my father's office in the Church Office Building.

A year or two before this, George Albert Smith had moved to the corner of Yale Avenue and 13th East and his mother lived 4 houses up the street.

The Latter-day Saint Hospital needed to expand its facilities and bought all the houses on "C" Street from 8th to 9th Avenue, including our house.

George Albert Smith persuaded Father to hire a contractor and build us a house 6 lots east from his at 1356 Yale Avenue.

We moved in December, a couple of days too early. We had no heat nor lights for a couple of days. Mother was pregnant again and too anxious to get settled before Christmas. We survived.

My brother, Hyrum Gee Smith, was born 14 January 1919. He was blessed at home at 8 days of age. I remember it well. We were gathered in Mother's bedroom. She was in bed. George Albert Smith and his wife, Lucy, and their children, Emily, Edith, and Albert and all of us were waiting. Father had brought the dictaphone machine from the office to record the blessing. Uncle George Albert insisted he name the baby Hyrum. Father said he didn't think so. He took the baby in his arms, George Albert Smith helping him, and blessed the baby naming him Hyrum Gee Smith.

That winter Albert, son of George Albert Smith, didn't go to school either. He had poor health. We spent many days together that spring and summer.

The following fall (1919), Albert and I started school at the Latter-day Saint High School.

At this time there were only 19 General Authorities of the Church. The Authorities socialized together, and we, their children, spent time together. Mother and "Aunt" Ethel, wife of the then Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith, were the youngest wives in the group and were very close.

At the Latter-day Saint High School were many children and grandchildren of General Authorities. To name a few, Albert Smith, Helen Talmage, Margaret Lyman, two of the Ballard boys, Josephine and Julina Smith (daughters of Joseph Fielding Smith), Geraldine and Margaret Smith (daughters of Hyrum M. Smith), and Ann Widtsoe.

The homes of these boys and girls were Open House to me at anytime. Many of their mothers I called "Aunt".

It was many years before I appreciated the privilege of growing up in such company. As a youth, it was sometimes aggravating. Mother was constantly reminding me that I couldn't do some things. "What would the neighbors say and think?" I had to set an example at all times, not only for the youth in and out of church, but for my younger brothers and sisters. "Didn't I realize I was the oldest child of the Patriarch?"

As a youth I didn't want to be accepted for who I was, but what I was, I wanted a testimony of the Church for myself. So I studied and prayed and received a testimony of my own.

School was always easy for me. But I liked school. I liked to study. I would come home from dances and parties and

dates and get out my books and get my assignments done, even if I didn't get to bed until 2 A.M. I dreaded going to class unprepared.

I had a good time at the Latter-day Saint High School. I was a leader, being president of a debating club (IPSA Loquitor) and a club (Seagull) organized for compassionate service. I'd made up my mind when I was 6 years old to be a teacher and get a degree. Soon after I entered High School I knew I wanted to teach English. I took 2 years of Latin, which I think was the most valuable subject I ever studied. All my life it has taught me to better understand the English Language.

When my senior year began, the Latter-day Saint High School became the Latter-day Saint University, offering college credits for some classes. Since I only needed a couple of credits to obtain my High School Diploma I also took some electives and English I and II, and Economics I and II for college credits.

Another valuable class at high school was an Embroidery or Needle Work Class taught by Mrs. Leidermman. She taught us the correct way. We learned cross stitch, hardanger, French embroidery, Italian cut work, Mexican drawn work, etc. The back had to be as neat as the front and never, never, use a knot. I also took classes in dressmaking and millinery.

My mother and her mother sewed. I learned to sew and use a thimble so early in my life; I do not remember it. At home I was taught to use the sewing machine, sew by hand, embroider, and quilt. These skills have been a great help to me and also a source of happiness.

When I graduated from the Latter-day Saint High School, Richard L. Evans (we called him Dick) was the editor of our year

book. He wrote all the little sayings that went under our pictures. I've always been secretly proud of mine:

“Born to excel, and to command!
As by transcendent beauty to attract
all eyes, so by pre-eminence of soul
to rule all hearts.”



1923 - high school graduation

This was 1923; I was 18 years old in June. In many ways I was very young for 18. I'd lived a very sheltered life in a special inner circle. 1 August beamed bright and beautiful. All the children except me were sent away for the day. Mother was to have another baby. The doctor arrived and a practical nurse. The doctor called me to the bedroom door, handed me the just delivered baby, and said, “Take care of the baby. The nurse and I are busy with your mother.”

I didn't know what to do. I tried washing her with oil. The bloody goo wouldn't wipe off. So I washed her with warm water and castile soap, rinsed it off, dried her, and rubbed her with olive oil. Then I dressed her in the things that had been laid out for her. I do not remember her crying, but maybe I was too scared.

Anyway the doctor praised me. She later was named Verona.

Three days later Father brought home six bushels of apples to be bottled. I went to pieces. Apples would be in season for several months. It was hot. I was tired. I threatened to run away. Provo was the only place I could go. I had less than a dollar, not enough for fare on the interurban train. The nurse

calmed me and said she would help. So we bottled apples. Father praised me. For some reason or another Father always thought I could do anything and everything.

That fall I entered the University of Utah. I enrolled for 19 units each quarter. 12 units were suggested only. Late in the 3rd quarter I was called to the Dean's Office and questioned why I registered for so many units. He looked up my records, all grades were A or B and he learned that I dated plenty and didn't miss dances or games, so no future restrictions were made.

I joined the Delta Epsilon Sorority, which later became Delta, Delta, Delta, or Tri-Delta. Phyllis McGinnley and I were accepted into the Chi Delta Phi Fraternity at the same time. This is a National Fraternity for writers. I'd had an article I'd written and had it printed, which was one of the requirements for entrance. One also had to be recommended by the head of the English Department of the University. I remember Dr. George Marshall did so for me. Phyllis McGinnley has become world famous for her children's books and other writings. It is a good example of using talents. She used hers. I neglected mine.

I decided I'd like to go to B.Y.U. to school the next year. I loved living with Aunt Ina and going to school with Ethelyn and Marva.

As far as studies were concerned, I was bored at B.Y.U.; school was still on the lower campus. The uncompleted Heber J. Grant building was the only one on the hill. I traipsed up the hill 3 times a week to a typing class for which I received no credit. I had a very good time socially at B.Y.U., but the classes held no challenge for me.

Since I was returning to the University of Utah in the fall of 1925 and they would not accept some of the B.Y.U. credits, I went to Summer School for 6 weeks at the University of Utah that year. Mostly I took classes in Education and Teaching.

At 15 years of age I taught in Primary. At 16 I began teaching in Sunday School. I've spent many years teaching Sunday School. At 17 I was teaching Beehive girls in Mutual and helping Mother write lessons on Courtship and Marriage to be published in the Young Women's Journal and taught in M.I.A. These lessons were very popular throughout the Church.

With fall semester at the University of Utah I began my practice teaching of English at East High School. One of the teachers supervising me had to go East for 3 weeks and I took over her 2 morning classes as a substitute teacher while she was gone.

Later in the year, Ruth Stewart and I were called to the Graduate School Office by John T. Wahlquist. This is the man who began the Teacher Improvement Movement in our church. He called us in because Granite High School needed a substitute English teacher and our names were given to him. Ruth had not yet taken her Teacher Training, so I was sent. Granite High School sent for me several times that school year.



1926 June - U of U

8 June 1926, 1 week before I became 21 years old, I graduated from the University of Utah with a B.A. Degree and a Teacher's High School Diploma, which entitled me to teach in any grade in the State of Utah for life. I had a double major in English, a minor in Spanish and more credits than required.

That summer I worked for Brother Russell

in the Church Office Building. The genealogy department realized that much Temple work was being duplicated. So all Temples had to send to Salt Lake their records. We were expected to sort and file them alphabetically at the rate of 1000 each hour. Brother Russell set an alarm clack. We started at 8 A.M. sharp, had a 10 minute rest in A.M. and P.M. and ½ hour for lunch and finished at 5 P.M. It was quite an experience!

In spite of my records, I looked too young for any Superintendent of Salt Lake or nearby schools to hire as a High School Teacher. At that time I was 5 feet 1 inch tall and weighed 100 lbs. In 1926 we wore quite short dresses and I looked more like 15 than like 21.

However, I was hired. I went to Hurricane, Utah. I was the only female teacher in the high school. I taught every student. I taught 4 classes of English before lunch and 3 classes of dressmaking after lunch. I didn't see a regular dress pattern that year. We obtained a roll of paper from the mercantile store and cut out our own patterns from pictures in Ward's and Sear's catalogues.

In addition to teaching 7 classes a day, I taught the Literature lessons in Relief Society.

For the school, I also produced a play, making all the costumes, stage props, and decorations.

This was a new kind of life for me. I expected to board with Lena Gates, the daughter of the late Bishop and Mrs. Isom. However, it had been arranged that I board with a Mrs. Ballard. The Isom's house had a bath and a toilet. The Ballard house had an outhouse and a galvanized tub in my room for bathing. Mrs. Ballard was a fine woman and took good care of me.

I loved to dance and went to the dances held each Friday night. Some of my students were nearly my age and I danced with them. They were good basketball players and good dancers.

However, in the classroom, I had no discipline problem. There, I was the teacher, and in control at all times and they knew it.

Toward the end of the year, 2 state inspectors of teaching walked into my classroom. Some students were giving short speeches. One student gave a talk about a man who had cheated his way to power. When he sat down, I named his errors in grammar, etc., but said I was more concerned about his subject material. Did he admire such a man? Why not tell a success story of an ethical man!

After class was over, one of the Inspectors told me he was surprised to find one as young as I so knowledgeable about English and yet realize it was more important to teach correct principles.

I was married before the next school year. At that time marriage cancelled a teacher's contract in the State of Utah.

In March, at a Friday Night Dance, I met the man I married. I'd prayed for a long time that I would know the right man to marry. That night, his back was toward me and I heard a voice whisper, "This is your future husband." He turned around, was introduced, and we danced.

From then on he filled my spare time. He was Alma Isom, the son of the late Bishop Samuel Isom, who had been Bishop for 19 years until his death in 1923. Alma's mother had died in March 1926. Alma had been in Los Angeles and had come home to Hurricane to look after the farm.

Late in April I picked up a copy of the Deseret News and read that I had a new baby sister. She was born 22 April and named Donna, my parents' 8th child. I did not know Mother was pregnant. I hadn't seen her since Christmas, and as usual, she didn't tell me.

School was over in the middle of May and I returned to Salt Lake, but not before I knew I was very much in love and the Wedding Day set for 1 September.

A few weeks later, Alma came to Salt Lake. The first thing he told my parents was that he had come to accept their invitation given 5 years earlier to see their daughter. This was news to me. No one had told me about it. Anyway, 5 years earlier my parents had been to his parents' home in Hurricane. Alma had then recently returned from a mission to the Eastern States. And my parents did at that time invite him to come to Salt Lake and meet their oldest daughter. Then Alma asked for my hand in marriage.

He returned to the farm and I spent the summer preparing a trousseau. He returned to Salt Lake the last week in August. On the 30th of August I received my endowment in the Salt Lake Temple. We were married 1 September 1927. At this time I was 22 years old and Alma was 28.

Father performed the marriage ceremony. George Albert Smith and David O. McKay signed as witnesses. Joseph Fielding Smith, David A. Smith, Apostle Melvin J. Ballard, and their wives were



married September 1, 1927

present. There were other authorities there, too, and many loved relatives. I was so happy.

That evening a large reception was held at my parents' home. I had six bridesmaids. Alma's brother, Alston, was best man. The Governor and the Mayor and many notables and many, many friends and relatives were there. I remember when President Heber J. Grant came, he didn't kiss anyone. One of the bridesmaids told him she was disappointed and he very happily started down the line again and soundly kissed every female in the line.

Alma and I went to the North rim of the Grand Canyon for our honeymoon. That was before any lodge was built. On the way back to our apartment in Salt Lake, we stopped in Hurricane to check over the farm.

Alma entered the University of Utah to continue his studies in Medicine. I went to work as Father's secretary.

When Spring came, I was pregnant and we returned to Hurricane to see about the farm. Several years of drought had kept Alma from making any profit. Now he had to mortgage several hundred acres of dry land to buy seed, oil, and gas to run the tractor and prepare the land for planting. The tractor was in the middle of the field up on the flats of Zion National Park. Alma was not a mechanic and he couldn't get anyone to go out there and fix it.

So I talked him into getting some tools and a manual. There was a partly built shack that we slept in. We cooked over a bon fire. I was afraid of snakes and anything that moved; but I would not admit it. After about 10 days of being in oil and grease to my elbows we had the old tractor running.



Martha

We returned to Salt Lake in time for our 1st child, Martha, to be born 26 August 1928 in the L.D.S. Hospital. The night before, we saw our first talking picture.

Martha was blessed and named by her father in Hurricane.

Again, the crop was a failure. The Great Depression was upon us. Before it was over we lost all the land, the dry land and the 40 acres of orchard, and even our Model T Ford car.

Alma went to Livingston, Montana the winter of 1930-1931. Mother's sister, Bertha Summer, and Grandmother Gee had died a few days apart late in December of 1930. Martha and I joined Alma in Montana in February and learned about double doors and double windows and Chinook winds.

In June 1931 we returned to Salt Lake for my sister Helen's marriage to John Huefner.

I was pregnant and we remained in Salt Lake. Our 2nd child, Samuel Smith Isom was born 6 November 1931, a month earlier than expected. He was small but healthy.

Father's health had been failing him for about 5 years. We learned later that he had Multiple Sclerosis. The doctors could not do anything for him, but they didn't tell us until later. Late in January 1932 Father was taken to the hospital. He died 4 February 1932, at age 52.

Mother was inconsolable. I did my best to keep her busy.



Samuel

The Depression was on in full force and Alma could only get snatches of work. In September Mother drove us, me, Martha, Sam, Donna, and Verona, to Wilmington, California. Father's youngest sister, Ruth Nielsen, lived there. After our visit Mother returned to Salt Lake with her 2 daughters and I stayed with Ruth with my 2 children.

Alma managed to make it to California a few days before Christmas and we moved for a while to Bell, California with his brother, Alston, and family.

Alston worked for U.S. Rubber. Because of Alston's pull and Alma's brawn, Alma got a job. It only lasted a few months. In the meantime we moved into a small house in Wilmington.

Alma had very broad, thick, shoulders. He looked like a football player and probably would have been one. But they didn't play football at Dixie College. He played basketball and ran the hurdles while at school. He had dark curly hair and very blue eyes.

I had dark hair and hazel eyes. Now my hair is gray.

Back to my story. Alma finally got a job as a longshoreman. Then came the big strike. I began teaching in the Adult Education Department of the Los Angeles City Schools. I taught Dressmaking, Ladies' Tailoring, and Parent Education. I taught winter and summer for 40 months. I taught at Wilmington Park School, Banning High School, Carson Street School, and Narbonne High School, and at Terminal Island. The Terminal Island School was most interesting. The women in the class were all Japanese. They spoke no English. I spoke no Japanese. So I demonstrated and talked in English. They learned fast and did beautiful work. They gave me a pair of Large Weiss Scissors when I left.

I became pregnant for the 3rd time. In November 1937 I asked to be released from teaching. A replacement was not found and I continued to teach through the 1st week of April 1938.



Robert

Robert Smith Isom was born 21 April 1938 at Torrance Memorial Hospital. He weighed 8 lbs. 1oz. and was my easiest delivery. Samuel was now 6 ½ years and Martha 9 ½ years old.

Alma was working as a longshoreman and also working in the church. He became a member of the Wilmington Ward Bishopric. Alma was a great speaker, in fact, an orator.

I had been president of the YLMIA, a Literature teacher in Relief Society, a Sunday School Teacher, and a member of the Stake Board of Sunday School.

The winter of 1935 Alma contracted a case of “flu”, from which he never completely recovered. He had never had any sickness, not even “a child” disease. He never had Chicken Pox or Measles or Whooping Cough, etc. He had a few “colds” only.

At least 7 industrial doctors diagnosed his problem as bronchial asthma and gave him too much adrenaline, which enlarged his heart.

We went to Salt Lake for a year to try to improve his health. It was not successful. We returned to California, settling in Lomita in September 1940. Alma went back to longshoring.

We still belonged to Wilmington Ward and I was asked to be Relief Society President. I became pregnant again, but continued as Relief Society President.

30 July 1941 James Smith Isom was born at Torrance Memorial Hospital. He weighed 8 lbs. 2 oz.

7 December 1941 Pearl Harbor was bombed. Alma had enlisted for World War I, but before his papers were processed the Armistice was signed. He was a few months too old, and not well enough to get into this one.



James

Soon after James' birth we learned that Alma's condition was Cardiac Asthma and he was given digitalis. It was too late to repair his damaged heart.

When James was 1 year old I had to give up my Relief Society responsibility. In those days we didn't have baby sitters. Robert was running around, and James too active to hold on my hip as I conducted meetings.

I had been on the Sunday School Stake Board before, and was called to work there again. In fact, without moving I was on and off the Sunday School Stake Board for many years, in several stakes.

When we moved into the Wilmington area, we belonged to the Southern California Stake and went to Huntington Park for Stake meetings. Then a Long Beach Stake was formed with a building at Xemino Avenue. Then another division was made with a stake building at 37th and Elm. The next division was the stake building at 15th and Pine Avenue. At that time as a Stake Board member I went to Huntington Beach, Anaheim, Santa Ana, and Lynwood on assignments.

Later we were transferred to the Redondo Stake (now called North Torrance) with a building on Artesia between Crenshaw

and Western. At this time also we were divided from the Wilmington Ward and called the Lomita Ward and meeting in Torrance.

Soon the Los Angeles Temple was being built and we were contributing to it. Then we built the Torrance Stake. We were then in the Rolling Hills Ward, of the Palos Verdes Stake, which we also helped to build. We then broke grounds for a Palos Verdes Stake Building at High Ridge and High Crest roads. I lived in the same area all the time.



Gilbert

Now, I'm ahead of my story. 31 January 1944 our last child, Gilbert Smith Isom was born in the Torrance Memorial Hospital; he weighed 7 lbs. 5oz. In August that year we bought a house. The address was 25300 Feijoa Avenue, Lomita, California.

One morning in May 1946 Alma came home from work with the report he could work no longer. He was then working at Todd Ship Yards. The insurance companies would no longer accept him for work. His blood pressure was 210 and his weight almost as much. We soon got his blood pressure down and his weight to 160 lbs., but his heart was badly damaged and he was ill.

In September of that year, we sent Martha to Salt Lake to attend the University of Utah with Donna and live with my mother. Martha worked part time and made her own way.

The next morning I began teaching 5th grade at Harbor City School. Gilbert was 2½ years and Alma was able to putter about the house and yard and look after Gilbert. James was in

kindergarten and Robert in 3rd grade at Lomita Elementary School. Sam was in his 1st year at Narbonne High School.

During the Christmas Holidays of 1947 we all went to Salt Lake for the marriage of Martha to Calvin C. Whitehead in the Salt Lake Temple.

Alma had such a hard time breathing the few days we were there, we realized he could never go to Salt Lake or any high altitude again.

Sam went to B.Y.U. on an athletic scholarship in the fall of 1951. The Korean War was now on. The following summer Sam enlisted in the Air Force, where he remained for 22 years. Sam enlisted at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake so I went to say goodbye and drive his car home and try to sell it for him.

My mother returned with me. His car was in such poor condition, I didn't dare drive over 35 miles per hour; with no air-conditioning, of course. At home, the mechanic said he didn't know how we made it. The universal joint might just as well been held together with a stick of gum.

After Basic Training, Sam was sent to Santa Monica where he met Margene Ware. They were married 27 June 1952 in the Saint George Temple.

To supplement my income, I began selling World Book Encyclopedia. This I did on a part-time basis for 21 years, until I retired from teaching in 1970.

I taught at Harbor City School until February of 1954, transferring at mid-term to Lomita Elementary.



1952 - Cleone & Alma

Alma was gradually getting worse. So was my sister Donna, who had Multiple Sclerosis.

After school, the Tuesday following Easter (1954), I took Alma to the doctor, who was very pleased with his condition, saying his heart action was better than it had been for a long time.

That night Alma wanted to go to Mutual. I was too tired after a day's teaching. For some time now Alma had not been allowed to drive. So a friend took him along with others.

Around 12:30 that night Alma went to the bathroom. I heard him stumble and ran to him. He leaned against the wall and slid down taking me with him. By the time I extracted myself, he was dead. It was now 21 April 1954. It was Robert's 16th birthday. Martha was in Salt Lake and Sam at Langley Field, VA.

Alma's funeral was held on Saturday at the Wilmington Chapel and he was buried at Green Hills Cemetery.

I was numb; I can't remember to this day much of what happened. I'd known for a number of years that his death could occur at anytime. Yet, I was not ready for it. He was a wise man with a strong testimony of the Gospel. He was a kind and loving father. We had been deeply in love with each other ever since we met.

Next week, I went back to teaching. I have never had time to properly mourn Alma's death. I had to make a living for my children and me. I had to educate them and send them on missions.

In July, Mother came to visit and to help me. One day I received a telephone call asking me to come to Hollywood for an interview for the purpose of competing for a trip around the

world on Art Linkletter's, "People Are Funny Program". I had been recommended by World Book Encyclopedia. The requirements were to be a teacher of middle age, who had not traveled much and be personable for TV.

I went for the interview and was accepted. My opponent was a male teacher. The questions were questions of alertness rather than knowledge. We competed for 2 Thursday nights in succession. I won by the skin of my teeth on the last question.

I was asked to be at a certain Hollywood Travel Agency by 9 the next morning. There, arrangements were made for a passport. I spent the next week getting vaccinations, inoculations, and visas.



1954 - world trip

One week later, Saturday, 21 August 1954 with very sore arms I entered my first airplane and was on my way for a 21-day trip around the world. It was a "prop" plane. Jets came later.

I traveled alone. Guides were provided, hotels and tours arranged. All expenses were paid except tips.

The next morning, Sunday, I was met at Honolulu, Hawaii by a guide and two dear friends, Chris and Russell Robertson. I dismissed the guide and went with my friends. First we went to Conference then a tour of the Island, even to the Temple. That night I took off for Tokyo. We stopped to refuel at Wake Island. We also crossed the International Date Line, so it was Tuesday the next day when I arrived in Tokyo. I went from Delhi to see the Taj Mahal on my 27th Wedding Anniversary. Then I was on to Beirut, Lebanon, where I met Mr. and Mrs. Linkletter who were making

their first trip around the world, but in the opposite direction. I spent the entire next day with them, going to Baalbeck and back. They went on to India and the next day I left for Rome, stopping at Athens Airport to refuel. No one met me at Rome Airport, but I knew the Hotel was the Flora, so I took the airport bus there. I was contacted later with apologies. I went from Rome to Paris and on to London. Soon after, we took off from London on a Saturday night. It was announced over the intercom that we were headed for a hurricane. So we would stop briefly at Shannon Airport and then on to Iceland for the night. We spent the night at the airport in Iceland. This delayed the trip so I had just 2 hours in New York, leaving there Sunday evening. At Chicago I was rushed from one plane to another. I arrived at the Los Angeles Airport at 5 A.M. on a foggy morning. This was the 1st day of school, and at 8:30 I was in the classroom ready for my new 5th graders.

During the 24 years I taught elementary school, I taught 4th, 5th, and 6th grade, but mostly 5th grade.

When Robert was 20 he went on a mission to Uruguay. Between 2 and 3 months later he was sent with a companion to Peru to see if a Mission could be opened there with headquarters in Lima. Robert was successful and with his companion had everything ready; a Mission Home, a church, an organ, and some members were there by the time a Mission President arrived.

When Robert returned from his mission he went to work immediately building houses. He met and on 27 July 1962 he married Lynne Olson. At that time she was the only member of her family who belonged to the L.D.S. Church.

She was 16 when Robert met her. Her father said she had to wait until she was 18. She turned 18 on 24 July 1962 and married in the L.A. Temple 3 days later. Her family gave her a nice reception at their home.

When James was 19, the Church began sending missionaries at 19. James was called to the Eastern States Mission. So for 6 months I had 2 sons on missions at the same time.

When James returned from his mission he went to B.Y.U., preparing to become a Dentist. The Vietnam War was on and he left B.Y.U. for a semester and was threatened to be inducted into the service. He had planned to marry Carleen Peterson before he left on his Mission. So he married Carleen on 21 December 1963 in the L.A. Temple and went back to school at B.Y.U. and then on to U.S.C. Dental School where he graduated June 1969.

Gilbert was called to a Mission in Argentina, but Gilbert does not have the gift of tongues and ended up serving in the Gulf States Mission, where he was very happy.

After Gilbert finished his Mission he continued to work and live in Lomita. On 11 September 1976 he married Rosemary Lyell, a girl from Australia. She had been a member of the L.D.S. Church since she was 8 years old. They were married in the Los Angeles Temple.

Following his Mission Gilbert enlisted in the Air Force. It was the Vietnam War this time. However, Gilbert spent most of his service in Japan.

1 April 1964 I had an emergency appendectomy.

The summer of 1964 I went with Martha on a tour of our National and Churches Shrines. It was great.

I had always been interested in genealogy and have tried to gather information about the family since I was a teenager. I have taught many classes.

I stayed in Salt Lake following the trip with Martha to the East. I spent several weeks in the genealogical library and gathered all I could at that time of our family.

From this time on Mother's health grew worse. She had an aneurysm of the aorta. When the pain would strike it was excruciating. These pains continued to come more often and last longer.

I tried to spend my Christmas, Easter, and Summer Vacations with her, so I could be there to give her a "shot" when necessary.

Mother died 13 May 1968 at 85 years of age in Salt Lake City, Utah.

1 May 1969 I tripped on a chair leg in my classroom and fell, striking my head near the temple on a book case corner. I guess I was "out" for several minutes. I'd been having trouble with my nerves, but the doctors didn't have much empathy for me. I'd had 2 attacks of Vertigo.

Following this classroom incident I had to have approval of the school doctor to continue. I feel I owe my present good health to her. She told me not to return to the classroom before next September. She said if I would have a complete rest until then I could probably return for my final year of teaching and have good health during my retirement. If I insisted on going back to teaching at that time she could promise me nothing. This was a physical and mental breakdown!

I followed the doctor's advice. I now have very good health for my age.

I retired from the Los Angeles Unified School District 19 June 1970, 4 days past 65 years of age. I also retired from selling World Book Encyclopedia, which I had been selling for 21 years.

Retirement permitted me to do many things I wanted to do. Foremost, I think, was to return to Relief Society. I was soon helping with the quilting and teaching the Spiritual Living Lessons.

I also joined the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers and have been Captain of the Lomita Camp and served as County President for 2 years.

In November of 1972, I went to Peru with Robert and his wife, Lynne.

In May of 1973, I went to Israel, Greece, and Italy with Eldred and his wife, Jeanne.

I make 3 or 4 trips a year to Utah. Since my retirement I've driven, stopping each way to spend a night with Alma's sister, Lena, in Hurricane.

The Joseph Smith Sr. Family Organization was founded in 1972. I have been to every reunion except the last 2. The first was in 1972 in Nauvoo. In 1973 we met at Independence. In 1975 we met in Salt Lake. In 1977 we were at Kirtland, Ohio.

In May 1976 I was called to be Relief Society President of the Rolling Hills Ward of the Palos Verdes Stake; I was 71 years old. It is a very large ward of 250 Relief Society members and very large geographically.

In December I fell and broke my left foot and badly sprained my ankle. The position demanded too much of my strength and I was released in May 1977.

I also keep in touch with some fine women with whom I taught school.

Between Church, family, and friends, I keep myself very busy. After retirement I continued to live in Lomita and go to Salt Lake at least once a year.

In the summer of 1982 I had been working in my yard with the help of my grandson, J.P.; I stood on my porch and looked around the corner to see how J.P. was doing. I lost my balance and fell forward striking the cement ledge that separated the lawn from the flowerbed. I broke my upper left arm bone completely and mashed my elbow. J.P. called his father who left his dental office and took me to Kaiser Harbor City Hospital where they operated on me. I was there for 14 days. I underwent therapy. After a year I still could not raise my left arm, so I combed my hair and did everything with my right hand and arm. In the summer of 1984 I realized I could not take care of my yard or house that I had lived in for 40 years. So with the help of Martha and Calvin I moved to Salt Lake City where I am now.

I began to do extracting for the Genealogy Society. I had been doing it in California. I am still doing it in Salt Lake in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building.

On 4 December 1988 I had a Strangulated Hernia. I was at the hospital within the hour of the 1st pain. I was operated on. Gangrene had already set in and I lost 8 inches of intestines. I was home 1 week later.

30 August 1989 I had a cataract removed from my right eye. I've always had good eyesight; I still do, but now in just the left eye.

1 October 1989 I had an attack; Dr. Ralph Tingey came to the apartment and said it was the worst case of Menier's Disease (Vertigo) he had ever seen. The disease comes and goes without warning, so I take an anti-vert and rest and then go on.

10 January 1990 I had a cataract removed from the left eye. 22 May 1991 I had laser surgery on the retina of the right eye. 19 June 1992 I had laser surgery on the right eye again. At present I have periphery sight in the right eye. The center is blind. However, I have almost 20/20 vision in the left eye and seldom need glasses.

CONCLUSION: by Martha Isom Whitehead and Samuel Smith Isom, (children).

After 1990 Cleone was unable to take any extended trips and only attended family reunions that were held locally in the Salt Lake City area.

She continued to be in relatively good health until about 1995 when her health began to deteriorate. She continued to put up a good front and was always happy to have family come and visit.

On 27 June 1999, Mother's physical examination indicated she had extremely low blood and real problems with her balance and water retention. Also indications of Congestive Heart Failure were found.

During the months to follow, her activities became more and more limited. She suffered from short-term memory loss and as most people her age do, she showed signs of Dementia.

Martha was the primary care giver; she lived just down the hall. Mother required increased assistance for at least the last 3 years.

In February 2000, Cleone was hospitalized for excessive

water retention and stayed for 7 days. Upon her release from the hospital it was determined that she could no longer live alone and must have constant care. On 23 February 2000, she was released from the hospital to live with Martha and Cal until she was called home 29 November 2000.

Cleone's posterity at the time of her death includes:

- 5 Children
- 20 Grand Children
- 63 Great Grand Children
- 8 Great Great Grand Children
- 104 Total Descendants

Cleone Smith Isom

Our beloved mother, sister, grandmother, and aunt, Cleone Smith Isom, 95, returned to her Heavenly Father on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2000, peacefully at the home of her daughter, Martha Whitehead, in Salt Lake City.

She was born June 15, 1905 in Salt Lake City, UT, a daughter of Hyrum Gibbs Smith, Presiding Patriarch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Martha Electa Gee.

On September 1, 1927, she married Alma Isom in the Salt Lake Temple. He passed away in 1954.

She was reared in Salt Lake City, graduated from Latter-day Saint High School and the



University of Utah.

After her marriage she lived in Hurricane, Utah, Lomita, CA., and recently in Salt Lake City. Cleone was a faithful member of the LDS Church and held many leadership and teaching positions. She was a member of the Daughter of the Utah Pioneers. She taught school for 22 years. She was always the Family Genealogy representative. Cleone dearly loved her family and was an excellent seamstress teaching dressmaking and tailoring, and made many quilts and afghans for her family. She will truly be missed by those who love her.

She is survived by one daughter, Martha (Calvin C.) Whitehead, Salt Lake City; and four sons, Samuel Smith (Margene) Isom, Layton, Utah; Robert Smith (Lynn) Isom, Hawaii; James Smith (Dianna) Isom, Lomita, CA.; Gilbert Smith (Rosemary) Isom, West Valley, Utah. Cleone is also survived by two brothers, Eldred G. (Hortense) Smith, Emeritus Patriarch of the LDS Church, Salt Lake City, and Hyrum G. (Golda) Smith, Encino, California.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, four sisters and one brother, three grandchildren, and one daughter-in-law.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, December 2, 2000, 2 p.m. at Salt Lake LDS 14th Ward, 142 W. 200 N., Salt Lake City, conducted by Bishop David H. Taylor. Friends and Family may call Saturday, from 1 p.m. until 1:45 p.m. prior to services.

Interment at Green Hills Memorial Park, Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. Monday, Dec. 4, 2000, 3 p.m.

The family would like to express their gratitude to Martha and Calvin Whitehead, for the sacrifices, and loving care, as primary care givers for the past several years.