

MARTHA ELECTA GEE

Personal History

My Childhood Days

I remember-- We lived on the corner of 2nd North and 4th East in Provo, Utah.

Of course, I can't remember when I was born, but this adobe house on this corner was the house in which I was born. As far back as I can remember, I lived and was always surrounded by a large family of girls and boys. I, being the next to the youngest in the family; Adelia May was my youngest sister, being two years younger than I.

I, like Nephi of Old, was born of goodly parents, always trying to teach us to live righteously. Our parents always took us to Fast Meetings, which were held on Thursday in those days, where we received a name and a blessing. I think we were all baptized when we were 8 years of age. We learned to fast and to keep the Sabbath Day holy; going to Sunday School and Primary, etc. In fact, there was always a path from our house to the meeting house.

Looking back over the years, trying to recall my earliest remembrances, a kind of flood of events covers my mind.

Father was so anxious that his daughters would be raised as true daughters of Zion. I remember Georgiana coming home with cut and curled thick bangs and how my father objected and how my father chided her, telling her he feared she was going straight to hell. Mother was more lenient and understanding.

In Provo, at 2 o'clock every Sunday, the entire town went to the Tabernacle for a meeting. We used to have a Tabernacle Choir and J.R. Boshard was the conductor. Among the outstanding soloists were three that I remember, John Johnson, Emma Ramsey Morris and Lydia Roberts.

I remember on one of the Sundays I was sitting on the door-step half in and half out of the doorway with my back against the door jam. My two sisters, Mary Jane and Esther were in the bedroom getting ready for the meeting in the Tabernacle. (Mary was plain-looking but Esther was a beautiful girl with skin like the skin of a peach). Mother was sitting in a rocking chair reading. Mary came out of the bedroom and went to mother and whispered something in her ear. I was all curious, of course. Then mother called Esther out and told her to go wash her face. I remember she had on a black thin dress (summer cotton) and wore black mitts without fingers with a half thumb. Then Esther began to remonstrate and said, "I haven't a thing on my face." She began to rub her face with her black mitt, showing mother there was no powder on it. But mother insisted on Esther washing her face anyway, which she did. I mention this to show how strict they were with us.

I remember the first day I went to school. I think I was only 5 years old. I had thick, long auburn hair. It took mother a long time to brush and comb and brush and comb and made long braids that reached to my waist. She couldn't let me go until I looked just so. This a.m. I went from home all in a huff because it took too long. I remember my struggling with the teacher's help to learn my ABC's. At noon time I went home and didn't want to go back anymore, but I did. My mother knit long stockings for all of us. I can still remember the clacking of her steel knitting needles at night. Night after night she had me sit beside her on a stool while she knit and taught me my ABC's. She taught me well as I always loved reading after that.

We had a wonderful apple orchard across the west end of our lot. I can remember we had an apple peeler fastened on a trestle or post. All my older sisters were busy working with pans on their laps peeling and coring the apples and climbing on to the roof of the woodshed and wheat granary and spreading the apples to dry in a just-so manner, and covering with a mosquito net and placing rocks on the edges so the wind wouldn't blow the net away.

I was always anxious to run the peeler, but my big sisters thought I was too slow or not efficient enough so I could only sneak in to peel an apple on the peeler just once in a while. Some of the peelings were washed at the hydrant that was between Mother and Aunt Ursula's houses. If we had enough sugar Mother would make jelly, but sugar was scarce, so jelly was few and far between. Most of the peelings and cores, etc. went into the swill barrel for the pigs. I remember whenever father would kill a pig, mother and the girls always made so many fine things. Like fresh pork sausage. Oh, those breakfasts—soda biscuits, sausage and eggs prepared and served, etc.

Thinking of my Friends

We lived three blocks from the Parker School. Grace Harrison was my first close friend. She lived one block to the west and one to the north. In those days there was a ditch at the side of the road with a bridge over to the sidewalk. We each had a block to walk, but we always met on the bridge by the Boschard house to go to school.

Another family moved in on the next block, named McEwan and Rhoda and Mabel. Mabel went with my sister Bertha, but Rhoda went with me and Grace to school. We passed the old foundry. Kate Elliot would meet us on that corner one/half block farther north.

Grace's parents were both from Scotland and spoke with a brogue. One evening I was with Bertha and Ina and the Boshard girls standing on that bridge and we saw three deputies do to the front door of the Harrison house and one around each side. They brought Grace's father out and took him to the "Pen." Grace's mother was his second wife. We saw them take him away and I didn't see him again until I was quite grown. They were scrupulously clean housekeepers. Jeanette was the oldest, then Hyrum,

then George, then Mame (a pretty blonde), then Belle, then Grace and Ephraim. Brother Harrison ran a tin shop in town.

Bro. McEwan ran a store—feed, grocery and they always had plenty of good things to eat at their house and were also very generous and gave us things we didn't have at home—like bread, butter, preserves, etc. Dean McEwan was older than Mabel. Mabel and Rhoda had a very pretty sister, I think named Laura. Mabel and Rhoda had a baby sister. The first time she went to Sunday School, she came home and said they only had bread and water and not even any preserves. I thought it was cute and told my mother. She didn't think it was funny at all. Then she gave me a lesson on the purpose of the sacrament and told me the story of Jesus Christ and told me never to make light of sacred things.

Mrs. McEwan certainly knew how to get the work out of the girls. When we got home from school, there was always a big stack of dishes to do. But Mabel and Rhoda were good about it, and I usually helped them and was given goodies to eat that we didn't get at home. Mrs. McEwan was always reading yellow-back novels (paper back). She was the nicest person, always cheerful and jolly and we all liked her. The McEwans were not religious. I never remember seeing Mr. McEwan at church and Mrs. McEwan only seldom. But the girls always went to Sunday School and Church and Primary, etc. They raised a fine family anyway.

Kate Elliott's mother was a very fine woman. All her work was done on schedule; early Monday morning the wash was out, etc. Bro. Elliott was not religious either, but Mrs. Elliott was very religious. Kate's sister just younger than she was, Hazel, who was Adelia's pal up to the time of their marriages, Genevieve was the baby, just younger than Hazel. Hattie was next older than Kate. Nell was next older. Vilate Elliott became a school teacher. Fanny was the eldest in the family. She became Mrs. Dunn. Our acquaintances grew as we continued in school. Alice Bigelow and Myrtle Maibes were my dearest friends and lasted throughout our lives.

I remember when father sold our apple orchard to Theriots who pulled out a few trees and built a house right in the orchard. They came from Park City and did not claim to be members of the Church, but the children joined. Lulu Theriot and Hazel Elliott were pals of Adelia up to the time of their marriages.

The New Home

It now became necessary for father to build a larger house; we were growing up so big we were busting out all over. Cash was very scarce around our home. My oldest brother was Elias.

Next Georgiana.

Next Mary Jane

Next Esther

Next Ina

Next Don Carlos
Next Bertha
Next myself (Martha)
Next Adelia

My oldest brother, George W. Gee and mother's first child, was born about five days after my father left on his mission. When he was 9 months old, he contracted diphtheria and died. Hence, father never saw his first child.

Father was on a mission to England. He was doing well there and was a district leader. Then he was transferred to Sweden. He did not know the language and had a very difficult time. He studied hard and still had difficulty as he was laughed at by the Swedish people because he would say the wrong word. A conference was coming up and he was to make a report. He studied and studied and got on his knees and prayed and prayed. On the day of the Conference, he was very worried because he could only say a few Swedish words at the time. When he was called on to speak he stood up and began the report. He spoke very fluent Swedish and spoke for about twenty minutes. The people were astonished. He had received a gift—the gift of tongues! From then on he knew the Swedish language.

Father was gone from home on the mission three years and five months. Father's brother Elias died in his middle teens (16 years?), so father's mother lived with my mother and father, all the rest of her days. She was a school teacher. Her name was Mary Jane Smith Gee.

Mother tells in her history how she didn't get her full share from her father's estate. But part of what she did get and received at about the time of her marriage was a wagon load of bolts of material. Some of this was baby flannel. So while father was on his mission mother made and embroidered baby petticoats from this flannel. These she sold and thus supported herself while father was on his mission. She paid for the baby and his burial and even built a small bedroom on the adobe house. All this happened before I was born.

So father, being a farmer, we had food to eat, milk, cream and fruit, but cash was scarce. Father was a very honest man. We never went in debt for anything. When the cows were doing well we had plenty of cream and butter, but if the cows were dry or not doing well, we went without butter until the cows were fresh again.

Our home faced the south and the east and we had a vegetable garden there; a few potatoes and beans and peas, etc. We had a tomato patch with lovely tomatoes. I didn't like ripe tomatoes but Alice and Grace did. They couldn't understand me not liking those luscious tomatoes and tried to teach me to like them. At first I practically buried the tomatoes in salt, but I never really liked them until sugar was plentiful enough so I could have sugar on them.

It was about this time when I was dusting the front room. I picked up a thin, flat, black purse. I laid it down again and went on dusting. The purse seemed to be empty. The next day when I was dusting I picked it up; I felt something hard on the inside. I opened it and there was a thin dime. I didn't tell a soul it was there. Next day, when I dusted it was still there. Then I opened it and took out the dime, shut the purse up and laid it down again. That dime burned a hole in my hand. Next day I took Grace Harrison and Alice Bigelow and went to town and bought candy. We could get a big sack of candy for a dime in those days; hard tack, etc. We weren't going to tell anyone and thought we could eat it all before we got home, but we passed Esther and one of the girls said I was treating.

So mother called me to her and asked where I got the money. I wouldn't tell her because I knew she didn't know there was a dime in that purse. She threatened to spank me but I wouldn't tell. The next day she got after me and tried to make me tell. She shook me and said she would spank me. I still wouldn't tell. She had my older sisters check to see if they were missing any money and they weren't.

The third day she told me that she would not punish or spank me but I must tell her where I got it. Then I broke down and told her. She didn't punish or spank me, but she gave me a life-time remembered lesson in honesty—that I was never to touch anything that wasn't mine.

I Remember

Of playing Guenia with my sister Bertha. I think Guenia is a lost game. I never hear of children playing it anymore. Well, we played it only a certain time of the year. In the Spring when the mud had dried up but the ground was still damp and soft.

The boys would make us girls Guenias all sizes, according to the block of wood they had in their hands. Bertha always liked the large ones. They were about six inches long. The boys, Don or Asahel would whittle each end to a point.

We used to play it as soon as our morning work was finished. Bertha always let me have my first turn. This the way we played it. We would choose a place about a yard square. We would pick out all the little rocks and throw them away and pick a rock about as big as the palm of my hand and plant that in the middle of the square or circle. Then the one whose turn it was to play, held a stick about a foot and a half long—the stick was cut from a tree limb—and stood over the goal. When the Guinea was pitched, the idea was to try and hit it and send it as far as possible. That was hard to do, and it was still harder to judge how many humps you could make it from the goal to where the guinie lay—no matter how unreasonable the number of jumps Bertha would give me I always try. Of course, no matter how unreasonable the number of jumps given me I would always try to make it, until I became exhausted. Bertha was three years older than I and of course had three years better judgment. But one day I just knew I could make it in the number of jumps she gave me. So I gave it the very best jump I could muster, as tired as I was. Well, Bertha's gain over me was over 100, while mine was

around 10 to 15. So I gave it the very longest jumps I could, and I thought sure I had made it. Bertha still contested I hadn't. I had missed it by ½ inch. The ground was damp and I could see my heel marks plainly. What was a ½ inch in all those jumps? I still held out that it wasn't fair. Besides she was too far ahead of me for me to ever catch up with her that morning. So I threw down the guinea, went into mother, saying I would never play with Bertha again and I never did.

This shows an insight into a streak in my disposition. That streak of stubbornness has occasionally helped, but in many case it would have been better to have been more humble and forgiving.

I Remember

There was talk of a new house. I was all ears but didn't seem to get the right answer, until I saw a couple of men in our yard and began driving stakes and drawing a tight line from one stake to another.

I asked the men what they were doing. He said "So we will dig the foundation straight for the foundation for the new house. Then I remember they had to tear out a corner of the old house to make room for the corner of the new house. It must have been the corner of the kitchen because we moved the kitchen table to the north side of the house. I remember washing dishes out there. Always two dishpans, one for washing the dirty dishes and one for the rinsing them. This rinse pan always had very hot water. I remember of being splashed with that hot water in my face and sometimes on my dress, as I attempted to bring out a plate to dry. Then because the plate was so hot I let it go, then splash—I got hot water in my face and down the front of my dress.

You grand and great grand children will wonder why we didn't wash those dishes in the sink. We didn't have a sink, not in the new house either. Not for many years after that.

Then came the City water, piped down 2nd North and past 4th East.

I remember one night especially. Ina was churning in our new churn. We had always churned the cream in a big churn with a dasher pulling it up and down until the butter separated from the milk, then we had buttermilk to drink and fresh butter.

Now we had a round churn with a handle that churned the dash round and round. The faster one turned the handle the quicker the butter would come. Unless the cream became warm, then we had trouble. That is why we usually in the summer time we churned in the evening. This particular evening, while the new house was being built, we had the kitchen table outside to the north of our old house. I was finishing washing the dishes and when I was about through Ina brought out the new churn, poured cream into it, and began churning. She was turning it lickety cut, first with one hand and then the other, as fast as she could.

All along the east sidewalk of our home there was a row of white locust trees. I must stop and tell you how very lovely those trees were. They were tall and straight; a little ditch of water was always flowing and rippling along the other side of the trees. Every Spring the white locust blossoms would burst out filling the air with sweet fragrance. These lovely trees gave a beautiful shade all over the east side of our house and yard.

Well, while I was finishing wiping the dishes and putting them away in the house, I heard someone calling, "Ina, Ina Gee." I called out, "Ina, some one is calling you." She paid no attention to me. Someone called out again. "Ina, Ina Gee" and I repeated that someone was calling her. She said "Be quiet, I know who it is, it's Josh Hodson, he is up in one of those locust trees and I'm not hearing him." Needless to say, in later years she married Josh Hodson.

Ina was seven years older than I. Then next to her was Don Carlos and then Berth, myself and Adelia May two years younger.

Father and the boys always brought the corn when it was ripe from the farm where they cut it, shocks and all, home. They were tied in big shocks, like what is cut and tied in shocks. These big corn shocks were stacked in our back yard. It covered the yard from our back doorsteps to the barn, leaving just enough room to drive the wagon between the corn and the barn.

My, when we saw the boys hauling and stacking corn in great shocks, how we did rejoice. Not only we children, but the whole neighborhood for blocks around came a running. My what fun we did have. Have you ever played "Hide and Seek"? That was the most fun of all. One was chosen to blind. He would put his arm over his eyes and put his arms up against the house, so one could not see, and call "Run sheep run" and then count up to ten as fast as he could, ending by calling out "Ready or not, you shall be caught!" Every kid was out of sight among the corn shocks. Then "It" began looking here, there, around and about when "It" would spy some one he or she would call out their name, run for the goal. The one who touched the goal last was "It" for the next game. Every one had to be found and their name called out, even to the last one hiding. Oh, the screaming, the yelling, the running, the chasing, the red faces. Oh, what fun!

I often hear the running, the chasing, the screeching of those in my day dreams of the long, long ago. Whenever Don or Asahel, the big boys had a moment, they would grab one of these big shocks, pull it apart, pull off the ears of corn, put the shocks in the cow corral and shuck the ears of corn throwing them into the corn bin.

Sometimes the boys would make quite a haul especially around our back door steps, which made mother rejoice. She had room to step out and get to the milk and fruit cellar without jumping over corn stalks.

Little by little that whole yard of corn stalks would disappear and the corn bin got fuller and fuller of ears of corn. Father always planted a few rows of sweet corn. When it got

real dry the boys would shell it off the cob and when the winter nights came the big iron fry pan would be put on top the kitchen range. When hot, my bigger and older sisters would take a handful of that sweet corn and parch it, stirring all the time and you could see the kernels swell and get brown. Then some butter if we had it would be put in and stirred and stirred. Our mouths watering all the time. If there was no butter a little grease from the salt pork would find its place there. Then what a treat for each one would take handfuls and chonk, chonk. Sometimes we would grind some in an old coffee hand mill and give it to father or mother in a dish covered with cream.

We had a lovely big farm home and on winter nights all work and chores done how we did enjoy those evenings sitting around the kitchen range eating parched corn and juicy red apples and listening to each tell of the events of the day or solving mathematical problems for one or another. Mother's knitting needles were constantly clicking, clicking, knitting stockings for us children.

Father and mother were both great readers, especially of the Bible and other church books. As I look back on it now I think I learned more about the doctrines of the church just listening to their discussions than I ever learned in Sunday School or elsewhere.

My sister Ina was a whiz in school. How I longed to be smart like her. But mother's seven girls and two boys had to fight to get the schooling we were all so anxious to obtain. I managed to get in two years at BYU/

In those days that college as we called it then were the only buildings located on University Avenue now, but at first it was called Academy Avenue. I remember President George H. Brimhall saying "The time would come when Temple Hill (as we called it in those days) would be covered with buildings of this school." I never thought that the time would come in my day. But here it is—and what a beautiful campus—the loveliest in the world. I remember when President Brimhall announced one day in Assembly that if we got the water sewer for the school, we would have to dig the trench. So, the school spirit was at its height, each class year vying against each other that they could accomplish their allotted length sooner than the next one. Of course, there was more than the discussions that came out of it. There was throwing of arms, loud words, yelling and declaring that they were the champions in finishing their allotment first. President Brimhall, as he came up out of the trench, pick and shovel in hand, wiping the perspiration from his face, was told that the boys had gathered in college hall and were fighting and pushing and would pull the seats up. He said it is their school, if that is what they want to do to their school let them do it. It soon subsided and we were all singing "All Hail the College that we Love."

That reminds me of the origins of that song. President Brimhall felt we should have a collage song. Anna Pike was student and a poet attending school at that time. So one night after dark—so I was told—he went to her home and asked her to write it. He wanted it by the next day. Of course, she did more than hesitate. She felt and said she just could not do it—but she did. My, how I used to love that old song. Now, even now, I'm past eighty years old I find myself singing parts of it.

It was at that school I first saw the man I later married.

As I said, money was scarce. When it had to be spread over father's two families—my mother's children numbering nine. Aunt Ursula's five or six.

So even before I went to the "Y" while I was in the grade schools a man and his family lived a block or so from our home. His name was Mickel. He had a sawmill. He hired girls and boys to make strawberry boxes. So I got a job. I earned enough money that summer to get me a new dress and gloves and other things. I remember my mother was really proud of me. I was about 13 or 14 years old. This Mr. Mickel was the same man who built our new house.

A Few Years Later

I got a job in the Provo Co-op Store as a clerk in the dry-goods department for one summer. Then I went to the Provo Woolen Mills to work. I learned to weave cloth as also Ina and Bertha, sisters older than myself did. Ina was seven years older than I. She did everything on the top level. I struggled along trying to imitate her. Then, of course, I made enough money to buy all my clothes and I still had many friends both in Provo and among the girls and boys who came to Provo to attend BYU.

It was during this period of my life that Hyrum G. Smith and I became really close friends. Some of my older sisters were married and had left home. My sister Bertha, three years older than myself and I were leaving one Saturday about 3 o'clock to go to town to do some shopping. My mother said to Bertha to go to the butcher shop and bring home a large pot roast of beef and gave her 50¢ to pay for it. Well, when we finished our shopping Bertha had the meat neatly wrapped in very dark brown meat paper. (we never see paper like that nowadays) We were all finished shopping when we met some girls who said they were going over to the "Mozart Hall" to a dancing matinee. Of course, just the word dance got my feet going.

So I said to Bertha, "Oh, come on, let's go." It was about four o'clock and it was a beautiful spring day. Bertha hesitated, saying we can't go. I've got this large pot roast, what could she do with that if we went over another block to the dance. So I said, "I'll take care of the meat. Come on, let's go." So she handed me over the meat. (It only cost 50¢ but it would cost six dollars if I purchased that amount today).

We went to the farthest corner of the dance hall, passing a large crowd of boys anxious to dance. The meat was deposited in a corner of one of the benches that lined the hall, covered with our packages we had purchased at the store. The music began and the boys who—we knew all of our lives—made a bee-line in our direction and the way we danced and danced and danced! Oh, what a grand time we had.

About the second or third dance I saw that Smith boy who I had met while I was at the BYU making his way toward me asking me for a dance. The Sunday night before this I

was sitting on our front portico waiting for my Sunday night date. As I said before, our large home which used to be filled was now housing father, mother, Bertha, myself and Adelia—the rest had married and gone to their separate homes. So, as we used our large parlor seldom and as money is always needed, Mother decided to rent it to some school girls. Lisle Finlayse and her aunt Laura Hickman rented that room. It was a corner room on the south and east of the house. We used the south entrance and the parlor had an east entrance. The gate led to the south entrance and anyone who wished to reach Lisle or Laura went around to the east to gain admittance to their room. That afternoon Lisle said she had a date with Hyrum Smith, but she had promised to go for a buggy ride that afternoon with a boy she had just met, but she would be back in time for her date with Hyrum Smith. So would I look out for him and if she didn't get back before he came would I take care of him until she arrived. I told her I had a date at 6pm, but I would make an effort to catch him and ask him to wait for her.

I got ready early and was sitting on our portico waiting for each of them. When here came Hyrum. I told him that Lisle wasn't here now but she would be back so if he would like to sit on our porch until she came. He gladly accepted. We began conversing and I was enjoying him very much when my date arrived. I introduced them and as we had an appointment for church for Hyrum to make himself at home for I knew Lisle would be back any minute.

Early the next a.m. I met Lisle in our back yard. She asked me about Smith and told her what happened. She said she didn't return in time to see him. I told her that I only had a few minutes conversation with him, but he had impressed me as being one of the very nicest boys I had talked with or that I had met. She said, he's a nice fellow but too good for her.

I replied that I would like to see the boy who was too good for me.

The reason for her to make this remark of him was—he was soft-spoken, very polite, not for bagging or showing off. Lisle was always a very lovely and beautiful girl and was never the noisy or cut-up of a girl as I was.

I was always the leader, looking out for all the fun and activities I could find or invent—which accounts for the remark my mother made when I married Hyrum—"I just can't believe that you Martha, the girl always laughing, talking incessantly, seeing fun and activity a mile away, could fall in love with a boy as quiet and thoughtful, fastidious as Hyrum." He has certainly proved to be my soul-mate.

After going with him for two years, wearing his ring for a year and a half, I had earned, made, sewed and purchased a trousseau to my liking. I then knew as I did the night he brought me home from the matinee dance, that I loved him so much that nothing in the world mattered.

So, on the a.m. of August 16, 1904, my mother, Hyrum and myself took the train for Salt Lake City. Hyrum's grandfather, Presiding Patriarch, John Smith, met us at the station

in Salt Lake. Mother and I went to spend the night with my mother's cousins, Lucy Smith Acomb and her husband, John Acomb and Lucy's sister, Edith A. Smith. These two girls were daughters of Elias A. Smith, one of Utah's foremost lawyers. He was also a brother of my two grandmothers—Mary Jane Smith Gee and Esther Smith Fuller. All three children of Asahel Smith II, a brother of Joseph Smith, Senior—father of the Prophet Joseph and Patriarch Hyrum Smith, who were martyred pm June 27, 1844.

My grandmother, Esther Smith Fuller came after husband's death to Salt Lake City, bringing her children to her brother Elias Smith as she was dying with what they called "Quick Consumption," of which she died 31 October 1856, leaving her children to her brother, Elias Smith and his wife, Lucy Brown Smith. My mother being the youngest lived with Uncle Elias Smith until he was married; thus being reared with his daughters Lucy and Edith Smith. So the natural place for us to go was to her dear cousins Lucy Acomb and Edith Ann Smith.

The next morning we were in the Salt Lake Temple by 7 o'clock. Grandfather John Smith and Hyrum met us there.

Oh, what a wonderful, glorious, beautiful day that was. No! I will never forget it. Never before have I ever felt or conceived of such a heavenly influence or spirit. That was not only t5he happiest day of my life, but was a glorified day.

True, I didn't understand all that was going on, but my mother was by my side all the way. True, I have lost the memory of the details and etc., and etc. of the occasion, but that heavenly feeling, spirit, or influence, call it what you may, I shall never forget. That same spirit to that extent I have only felt a few times in my life, since. Neither do I think that it has entirely left me since that day. I didn't realize it then, but God was very good to me. He gave me that day one of His very choice spirits, for my husband. Besides being a very good-looking man, he was more than that; always the gentleman, clean and immaculate in habit, in thought, in speech; kind and gentle, faithful in every trust given him; considerate of others' feelings; just in all his dealings with man and his God.

I often think to myself, how did I—poor little me, ever gain his interest, then affection and love that lasted throughout our lives together of twenty-eight years? Again, I say how did this partnership ever come about? I thank God every day for our happy union.

Mother, Hyrum and I returned by train that night to Provo and to my parents' home. I remember that night as we stood in our bedroom before retiring of Hyrum reaching for my hand and said, "Come let us kneel down here and give thanks to our Heavenly Father for our union together. From that first prayer together until the family members were born and married and made a home of their own, prayer was the rule in our home.

The very next day was a very busy one for the whole family making preparations for the big wedding reception. I remember my older sisters who were married and moved into their own homes, arriving at our home early in the morning.

The wedding reception consisted of a hot supper, but as I look back on it, it was more than any supper. It was a banquet in every way. My sisters' husband were stretching tables in our large dining room along by the three sides of the room, with just enough space for us and our parents and guests to pass in from the spacious parlor. My, what a wedding supper—chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, salad, rolls, butter, and wedding cake, ice cream. As soon as those guests were through, they were ushered out into the sitting room and their places were again filled with more guests. There we sat until a few of the last guests were being served when we—Hyrum and I made our getaway—No, not off on a honeymoon. We didn't ever know about honeymoons in those days, but back into the room packed with guests. My! What more could a girl ask for before leaving her lifelong home all the years of twenty-one years. My parents did more for their children in sacrifice in frugality and teaching us how to live to be happy all the days of our lives, but being obedient to the principles of the gospel, which were climaxed by each of their children being married in the temple.

It is well to be born of goodly parents as we all read of Nephi in the Book of Mormon.

We stayed with father and mother and Adelia (the only child not married at that time, she being my parents youngest child) for about ten days longer, before we had to take the train to Charleston in Wasatch County, where Hyrum had signed a contract to teach school.

My! As the time drew near for us to leave, whatever got the matter with me. How I hated to leave that dear old home where I had lived ever since we had moved into the new brick home so large and spacious where I had spent my childhood days, my "growing up days" where I had known so much living and learning and enjoying the family. No! I felt like I just couldn't pull myself away and yet I wanted so much to be with my husband always for time and eternity. So the night before we left, it was a night of many tears, for I knew that tomorrow I must say "good-bye" to all my growing up of fun and frolick, learnings and sometimes punishment well deserved. But I took with me a testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ instilled in me by the teachings of my faithful parents.

So the next morning I found myself going on the arm of a great and good man to school with him all the joy and sorrows and training that comes with the learning, sharing and _____ of _____ of two who found their soul mate and was sealed in the temple of our God by one having the authority to seal for time and all eternity, even Hyrum's grandfather that great and good man, the Presiding Patriarch, John Smith, eldest son of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith, who was martyred in Carthage jail with his brother, that great latter-day prophet, Joseph Smith.

We walked to the station, took the train and when we arrived at Charleston, Wasatch County, Hyrum had secured the front part of a large white adobe double house. The home of Brother and Sister Baker, consisting of two rooms. The first door coming off the front porch, which we used for kitchen, dining room and living room. Then a bedroom.

On the front lawn was our new furniture that Hyrum had purchased, all wrapped up in packing straw. I was anxious to see it. So I donned a bright blue robe—part of my trousseau and with my red hair I made quite a picture; so Hyrum thought and told me so. The front lawn had four large poplar trees near the fences and green lawn covered the ground; a path from the gate to the porch steps and our front door.

My! What a beautiful and long remembered afternoon we spent fixing our first doll house. The floors were covered with bright home-made carpets, which belonged to Mrs. Baker. Hyrum was a marvelous shopper. I'll never cease being thrilled with the cupboard. I had never seen anything like it before. In my mother's home it was large with a pantry, bathroom with a tub made of galvanized tin, kitchen, dining room, parlor, sitting room, halls and stairs which led to five bedrooms upstairs. Porticos on the south and on the east, which reached to the other story where we could walk out from the bedroom above. No this cupboard fascinated me no end. It held everything I needed for cooking and dishes for the table. It had massive doors and when you opened them wide there were places on the inside for spices, etc. The shelves were for the dishes and below the doors opened wide like the one above, where I put all the cooking utensils. There were drawers between the upper and lower part where the silverware and cooking knives and forks were arranged in perfect order.

The cooking stove belonged to the land-lady. Hyrum had bought a lovely golden cake-round dining table with six chairs, a cot to sit on, lounge or take a nap. I had put up two lace curtains up the two windows. My! What such a lovely room. My! The happy hours we spent there.

The bedroom was a green and white iron bed. Mother gave us a lovely feather bed. I had lots of sheets and pillow cases, bedspread, and curtains at the windows. In the corner was an adorable dresser; one large drawer at the bottom, two small ones above and a beautiful oval mirror, all in mahogany wood and a chest of drawers to match. I used them all my life. We still had them when Hyrum passed on.

That was our first home and what a lovely honeymoon we had. Hyrum was in school all day, but I kept busy doing things I loved to do and watching for his return about 4pm everyday then we had the evenings together, but I had never been away from home before and I did suffer with homesickness. About once a month the teachers of that district had their faculty meeting in Heber City. That was a nice outing because Hyrum had a dear friend, Orson Ryan who had a cute wife and a small baby. We would usually stay all night with them, and the four of us would have such a nice time together.

Of course, we always had church and school meetings to attend. They made me a Sunday School teacher of about a dozen boys about 11-12 years of age. The superintendent said they had had so very much trouble with disciplining them and he was afraid they would give me so much trouble. They were farmer boys and I came from the big city of Provo. They weren't at all afraid of that small town, but the fact that I had some training at the BYU gave them a small sense of respect. I suppose, because

I had no trouble with keeping them interested, but I was pregnant and morning began to bring me bad times so before long I had to quit up, but what pleased me was the boys kept asking when was I coming back.

By vacation time Hyrum felt that we had better move to Provo which please me no end, as he felt that he must find some employment.

1990 – by Cleone

As you will notice some of the handwriting is mine. When I would come from California to visit, mother often dictated and I wrote.

I promised mother I would complete her history. So far, I haven't done so. Next year it will be my number one priority.

Of course, I can't write of mother's emotions or descriptions or feelings. Nor can I write a complete ending.

I will try to write the facts as I know them. If either of my brothers or my sister can add to what I write, I will be grateful.

--Cleone

NOTE:

Martha Electa Gee died at age 85 on 13 May 1968 after a long, full life. After 28 years of marriage Hyrum died unexpectedly and she continued to raise six of eight children (ages 25 down to 5) who were unmarried at the time she was widowed. She worked as the first hostess and manager of the Lion House for 8 years and served on the General Board of the Young Women for over 20 years.

Hyrum Gibbs Smith graduated Valedictorian from USC Dental School in 1911. He then served as Presiding Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for 20 years until his untimely death at the age of 52 of multiple sclerosis on 4 February 1932.

Martha and Hyrum had eight children: Cleone, Eldred, Helen, Miriam, Barden, Hyrum, Verona and Donna. Helen, Verona and Donna all contracted multiple sclerosis and died at various ages. Miriam died at age 26 from surgical complications for an ingrown goiter. Barden died at age 68.. Hyrum died at age 84. Cleone died at age 95. Eldred is still living at age 101.

May 2008