

MY LIFE WITH FATHER

By Carol

One of the earliest recollections I have of Father was the time when Jean was born. I was only about 3½ years old then. I remember this because I got sick that night and lost everything I had eaten. The bed was no longer fit to sleep in, so I went into the folk's bedroom and was surprised that Mother was gone. Dad had me climb in bed with him because I couldn't go back into my own bed, and he cleaned things up for me.

I used to like to ride the combine with Dad and also in the back of the grain truck. What fun it was riding on top of the grain, and looking for green bugs. The one time I particularly remember was when Connie, Jean and I, (I believe) were sitting on the grain in the back of the truck that was stopped on the top of a hill. Dad was on the combine, and I think he was emptying the grain into the truck. Apparently the brakes came loose on the truck, for all of a sudden the truck started to roll backwards down the hill. We thought it was sort of fun, unaware of the danger of tipping over at the bottom. Dad saw the truck moving and immediately jumped from the combine and ran to the truck and stopped it in time. He injured his heel in the jump, and couldn't walk on it for a while, but I imagine it didn't bother him when he realized what could have happened had he not jumped.

It always used to be fun to take a lunch up to the farm and eat a picnic with Dad as he stopped combining for a few minutes.

When Dad would come home from plowing or such on the farm, I always used to think he looked like a walking pile of dirt with shiny white teeth. Mother would take the broom and brush him off so he

could come inside.

Thinking of Dad on the farm, I can't help but remember the many times I went with him to pull rye out of the wheat. How tiring that used to be, yet it was beautiful and peaceful on the farm. I used to think about the pioneers and how they had to walk and work so hard like that all the time, and I was so thankful that I could go home to a nice warm bath and comfortable bed.

When I was still quite young, I didn't realize that Dad had false teeth on top. I was playing in the living room one day, and Mother came walking into the room holding onto a strange man, and I was so surprised when Dad put his teeth back into place. He had them lower in his mouth, and it changed his looks so much that I didn't even recognize him.

I recall what fun it used to be as a youngster to go to the drugstore with Dad and get a 5¢ root beer. That was always the best treat. It took me some time to learn that there were other kinds of sundaes besides pineapple sundaes. It was so fun to stop at Dairy Queens when we'd go on trips and always get pineapple sundaes.

Dad was a great one for deciding on the spur of the moment, almost, to take trips, and we'd scurry around getting things ready to go. It was always so much fun to go on trips as a family, even if we had to sleep on the floor in sleeping bags. Whenever we have bologna sandwiches, I remember how we used to eat as we traveled along on our family trips. We had some good times as we went to the Black Hills, Yellowstone, the Northwest, and northern California.

One particular trip we had stopped beside the Pacific Ocean in Oregon and stayed overnight. That morning we went out on the beach looking for shells. Dad warned us all to be careful so we wouldn't get our clothes wet - we'd be leaving in the car soon. Suddenly a wave came in, catching him unaware, and soaking him to the knees. We had a good time teasing him about not getting wet, but he had a good time with us. I appreciate Dad for helping the family to stay close by taking us on trips, and giving us the chance to see as much of the country as we did.

Thinking of traveling with the family, I can't go through Brigham City, Utah, without hearing Dad say, "Brigham City, Brigham City, named after the Prophet Joseph." And, when I think of our trips to Burley, I remember well how Dad and Mother would always comment that no one would ever believe that Massacre Rocks used to be so narrow.

Daddy was a good cook, and it seemed like he could cook the best steak and make the best gravy.

We children felt secure because we knew that Dad loved Mother, and he would tell her of his love and kiss her around the family. I never heard them quarrel. There was a feeling of love and trust evident between Mother and Dad. One time they were attending an activity at the high school. Before the program started, Dad was talking to someone on the row in front of him. Some people came along and wanted to pass them on the row. Mother said to Dad, "Stand up", whereupon Dad immediately stood up without looking or questioning. Others commented, "That is blind obedience." They had such confidence and trust in each other that they knew when one

spoke, the other should listen.

As I bring my thoughts to Christmas time, I have many pleasant recollections of Dad. As a young girl I remember Dad used to always take us to the movie on Christmas Eve while Mother stayed home and made dinner preparations. I like the tradition of waiting until after breakfast and then lining up to go in and see what Christmas presents we received. That prolonged anticipation helped to make everything more special. It always seemed like it took so much longer for Dad to milk the cow that morning than any other morning of the year. He always seemed to have a special gleam in his eye as he went in to claim our presents and were thrilled with what we found. As a parent now, I can appreciate that gleam more than ever. It used to be fun to go as a family to see friends and relatives on Christmas.

Speaking of cows, even though Dad always had a cow or more to milk twice a day until the time I left home to go away to college, he never made us girls learn how to milk the cow. When he had to be gone so he couldn't do it, he had someone come over to milk the cow, even Aunt Orissa at times. He said he wanted us girls to be girls and to do girl's work. I appreciate this. Oh, yes, we did help a little on the farm at times, like driving a hay truck a few times and pulling rye and oats, but we never had to drive the tractor or grain truck or such.

Speaking of Dad letting us be girls, he always expected us to be ladies and to act accordingly. He wouldn't allow his daughters to wear shorts. Although I never really wanted to wear them, I couldn't see what harm there could be in wearing them. I'm

grateful for the stand he took in this matter, and now that I am on the other side of the fence, I don't want my daughters to wear shorts either. I don't even like to see them in sleeveless dresses.

Dad didn't use profane language, and he expected his children to use the best language when talking. One time I picked up the habit of saying "Holy cow". Dad let me know that wasn't a good expression to use, and that the Lord instructed us to let our communications be "Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay." I broke myself of that habit and whenever I hear that expression, I remember our conversation around the dining room table many years ago.

Mom and Dad used to attend many of the school and church dances when we kids were there, and Dad would always come and ask his daughters to dance. Even though he didn't dance the way the younger generation (at that time) danced, I always used to be proud to dance with him so others could see that I was his daughter.

I think I first got a love for BYU when I was in grade school and I'd sit in front of the radio with Dad and listen to the BYU basketball games. I knew more about the teams then than I did when I was a student at the Y. When I was in high school I'd come home from basketball games and sit up with Dad and watch the wrestling matches on T.V.. Mother didn't enjoy them, so she'd go off to bed.

Dad always had a great love for horses. Mother used to say that she was glad he enjoyed horses, and that would probably be one of his hobbies and interests after he retired. I enjoyed horses too, and I recall many pleasant hours as I went horseback riding with Dad. I can't help but remember the many circles I rode around in the back yard as he held onto the rope and we helped to train Silver, our

Shetland pony.

As I have had to pull many of our children's teeth, I remember how Dad pulled some of my teeth. He was always gentle and loving, and I knew he'd be as careful as possible. While in college, I caught my thumb in the car door and smashed it. There was a lot of pressure, and we thought if we lanced the nail, it would let out some of the pressure. As Dad did it for me, I knew he was being as gentle and careful as he could be, and even though it hurt, I had confidence in him doing it for me. I thought in a small way I had the faith in him that Joseph Smith had in his father the time young Joseph's leg was operated on.

Home made bread and milk must be Dad's favorite food. He never could stand all the air in bakery bread. The ward members were so good after Mother's death to always keep him supplied with home made bread.

Whenever we have company and I use my good silverware, I always remember where I got it. Dad and Dale were at the Eastern Idaho State Fair in Blackfoot one year and walking around the exhibits and displays. I understand that Dad made the comment that he wondered if anyone ever really won any of the things that they signed up for at the fairs. They came to another booth and Dale talked him into signing up for a prize. He was so surprised a couple of weeks later when he got a letter saying that he had won a set of silverware, that he almost never signed up for. He gave the silverware to me since I didn't have any in my trousseau.

One of Dad's great characteristics is punctuality. He is always plenty early to meetings, never late. I wonder why I never

picked up enough of this trait from him.

The folks were always interested in what we children did. They liked to hear about our dates, and always expected us to come in and tell them when we had returned home from dates. Many are the nights I sat at the foot of the bed and talked to the folks about my dates, and I used to always ask how I would know when I was in love with the right one. Dad always said that I would just know when it was the right one.

I'm grateful for the many piano lessons the folks let me have, and all they spent to let me develop some of my talents. The folks were always proud of what their children did, and I always knew that whenever I had to perform I could count on their support. Dad and Mom were our best audience. I'm sure all the company that Dad had me play the piano for really didn't get that much enjoyment or entertainment out of my solos, but the folks were proud enough to make the renditions worthwhile.

I didn't seem to be tempted as much as a lot of my friends as I was going through high school to break the Word of Wisdom or such, and I always felt that it was because the kids knew I wouldn't indulge because I was the daughter of the Stake President. I have been asked several times if it was hard being the Stake President's daughter, but I've always said I thought it made things easier, and it brought many, many blessings. I was always, always proud that Dad was the Stake President.

The night I graduated from Seminary, Dad gave out the diplomas. When he gave me my diploma, he kissed me. Naturally, I was a little embarrassed, and yet I was pleased for others to see that he was

proud of me.

I recall one particular ward conference in our ward in Downey. Prior to the meeting Dad asked what he should talk about, and I said kiddingly, "About five minutes." He started his talk that night by telling about that conversation and I felt so silly when everyone turned to look at me.

It was such a thrill to have the General Authorities come and stay in our home, and to be able to talk to them in an informal atmosphere. This privilege must be one of the greatest of my entire childhood. It is such a thrill to think of all the choice men who have stayed in our home, and that even the Prophet of our Church has been a guest in our home.

A humorous thing happened one time when we were kneeling down for family prayer before dinner when one of the General Authorities was with us. Just as the prayer got going, the clock started to chime the hour of 4. Dad just reached back and pulled the plug of the clock thinking it would stop the chime. We found out that the cycle has to complete itself once it gets started in the clock, even if the electricity is stopped in the course of the chime. After that we always arranged to pray before or after the clock was ready to chime.

At the dinner table on Sundays, we'd sit around and discuss our lessons from Sunday School, and if we had any gospel questions, Dad always seemed to be able to answer them. I decided then that I wanted to marry a man who knew and loved the gospel and would lead our family as Daddy led his family.

I had always wanted to be present when Dad was released from

his position as Stake President, but when the time came after serving 19 years in that calling, the distance made it impossible for me to be there. I'm proud of him and his accomplishments while he was Stake President, and I'm grateful for the blessings and opportunities his calling gave me.

Although Dad had only an 8th grade education, he was self-educated and very learned. He has a great knowledge of many things and always seemed able to converse intelligently with anyone on any subject. Once I asked what he did during the winter when he wasn't able to go to school anymore and he couldn't work on the farm, and he said he read a lot. I'm sure he had as much education even though it was self-motivated and self-obtained, as many who earned high school and college diplomas. He seemed to like to work with numbers and was always doing some kind of math, especially calculating volume of wheat production, sale prices, and such. I always used to marvel as he gave talks with his use of the language and the way he put things across so well. I have also felt that he had excellent penmanship, being a better writer than most of us.

When I went away to college for the first time, I had a very difficult time adjusting. I was able to go up to Salt Lake and stay with the folks during the General Conference in October. Dad gave me a special blessing at that time that I'd be able to adjust to school and that I'd be able to be successful and happy in my endeavors. I know it helped me in getting through college and facing new situations. I'm grateful for the Priesthood Dad held and for the way he honored it and used it. Our family was always greatly blessed because of the Priesthood he held.

It was really a choice experience for me to be able to stay with the folks in Salt Lake during most of the General Conferences while I was attending college. I felt that I was able to get closer to the folks at this time when we were able to get away from the world and listen to the General Authorities speak to us.

Dad never wrote many letters to me while I was in college, but the few he wrote always seemed to touch me deeply and I think I have all of them put away in my Treasures of Truth Book. After Mother's death, Dad maintained the correspondence from home, writing as frequently as Mother had in the past. I have always felt that it was quite unusual for a man to be so faithful in writing so many letters so frequently, but then he is a remarkable man. We always look forward to receiving his letters and hearing all the news from around home.

When Mother was in the hospital that last week of her life, I spent almost all of the time there with Dad. I felt we got very close at this time. We had a cot in the hospital room and we'd take turns sitting up with Mother while the other slept. Neither of us got much sleep. About the second night I had been sitting up with Mother for some time, and Dad had been sleeping, he got up and I lay down. I hadn't been asleep long when I heard a thud that woke me up. I looked and Dad was slumped down on Mother's bed. Panic struck me and I thought, "Oh no, not Dad too!" I had come to be reconciled to the fact that perhaps it might be Mother's time to go, but the thoughts of Dad going at this time too just sickened me. I hurried for a nurse but she wasn't much help. It seemed a long time before he came conscious. Apparently the

tension and worry of the past few days and lack of sleep, combined with his low blood pressure had made it so that not enough oxygen got to the brain and caused him to lose consciousness. It certainly worried me that night.

The morning before Mother went into surgery, Dad and I walked along outside the hospital and talked of Mother and the operation and what the future might hold in store. What great heartache he must have felt, and I just wished I could be more comforting and consoling. During the surgery he must have been wracked with great fear and concern, and I'm sure his heart must have felt about to break, yet he seemed to take it better than the rest of us. He was giving us comfort instead of the reverse. I'm sure he was being comforted by the Holy Comforter or he couldn't have taken it so well.

Dad aged so much after Mother's death, and he was so lonesome and depressed, that we were all glad that he was able to find someone so choice as Alda to bring light and happiness back into his life. He moved so fast when he fell in love, that he couldn't say much to me when Glen and I decided to get married so soon. They got married in less time that we did. The others in the family said they couldn't talk to either Dad or me because we were both way up on cloud nine.

When Glen asked me to marry him, I said I'd like him to ask Daddy. Dad was in Logan visiting Alda, and he came out to the car to talk to us. Glen told Dad that he'd like to marry me, and Dad leaned down and said, "Do you love her?" When Glen answered in the affirmative, he asked me the same question, probably because of the many times I had asked how you knew when you were in love. When we

both said we loved each other he said it would be fine, but he wanted to talk to us together before we were married. The things he told us that day were very significant, and Glen has often said that advice he received was the best he ever got about marriage. I've heard him refer to it in many talks and when he has occasion to talk to students prior to their marriage, he always gives them his "Father-in-law Special". Several of these couples have said how valuable that talk has been to them. In essence Dad said when Vesta was buried, he experienced a good deal of sorrow knowing he hadn't always been as kind and thoughtful to her as he wished he'd been, but when Mother died, he had no regrets for having ever made her unhappy. He had learned through the loss of one wife and the subsequent loneliness to do all he could to make his wife happy. (I'm sure he did it with Mother). He said he greeted her with a kiss every morning, and told her that he loved her. I'm grateful to Dad for the example he set for me in our home, and for the talk he had with Glen and me because I'm sure this has helped to make our marriage so happy.

Since my marriage we have not been able to visit Dad as often as we would have liked, but we still like to go home and we always feel so welcome. Dad makes the grandchildren feel welcome too. I like to hear him sing to them as he holds them on his knee. One of my favorites has always been, "A Little Boy Went Walking."

I'm grateful to Dad for being the man he was and is, and for the heritage he has given me. I'm sure I must be the luckiest girl to be his daughter and to have such a fine husband. I always felt I wanted to marry someone like my Dad, and fortunately I was able

to, so the fine manhood and Priesthood leadership that was in our
home as I was growing up is in my home now as I am a mother. I
hope I can be loyal to the royal that is in me.