

## Chapter 2 – The Tender Years

***The tender years in my life as a boy, were guided by mother and teachers with joy, to train my little branches in the way that was right, to make them strong and straight and my intellect bright.***

My next adventure began with the day I first went to school over in the old Lake View School House built about 1909. My first-grade teacher was Anna Nuttall. She also taught me in the second grade. She seemed to take a special interest in me and one day gave me a book as a gift. I was very happy with it. I think it was the first book I ever read from cover to cover. Time went by all too quickly for us growing children during the grade school years. Along with obtaining knowledge and learning new skills we had fun.



One of my boyish pranks took place when I was in the sixth grade. ***The other two culprits were Jarvie Scott, the boy sitting in front of me in the picture above and Melvin Starley, the boy in the second row from the right in the next to last seat. I am seated in the third seat from the front on the right side of the room.*** We had been having a lot of fun by blowing up empty tin cans during our noon hour and recess with some carbide we had obtained. We would dig a little hole in the ground in which we placed a little water and a small amount of carbide. Over this we placed a can which had been pierced in the center with a nail. When the dirt was firmly tamped around the can, we would place a lighted match fastened to the end of a stick over the nail hole. The whole thing would fly straight into the air—sometimes for nearly a hundred feet. We decided to have a little fun and cause some excitement in the classroom. As we marched into class from recess, we had several small pieces of carbide in our pockets. As we went down the row of seats the first kid removed the corks from the ink bottles, the second dropped in the carbide and the third replaced the corks. Just a few seconds later as the whole class quietly took their seats, the corks began to pop, one at a time pop, pop, pop down the whole row. Ink

and all hit the ceiling and so did the teacher. There was a lot more damage than we had anticipated but no one was hurt. Besides the room being a mess, we were all expelled from school. Mrs. Barnes rushed to the phone and called my dad. She excitedly told him what happened and that I had been expelled for putting carbolic acid in the ink bottles.

Dad had to come to school and make restitution. He had to pay to clean up the classroom. Another time Jarvie Scott and I decided to play a trick on Joseph Johnson. It was agreed that as he marched up the steps, we would each pull down one of the suspenders that held up his overalls. Our aim was better than we expected for they fell to his knees. He stumbled forward with his bare hind end exposed to everyone's view. We were severely chastised for that prank and never did it again.

Vacation time meant working on the farm, helping with the thinning and hoeing of sugar beets, along with haying, threshing and harvesting. Also, there were cows to milk and all the other chores connected with life on a dairy farm. But there were also many pleasures. On the first warm days of spring we would get sticks, forks and any old kind of club and chase carp (fish) up and down the small streams that drain through the marsh lands into the lake. We met Melvin Starley, Lynn Starley, my brother Harold, Morris Clinger, Weldon Taylor, the Olsen boys and most of the kids in the north end of the Ward.

We would spend days on end just having fun down at the Lake. We would chase the young ducklings, mud hens, killdeer, blue crane and all sorts of wildlife from their nests. Sometimes we would rob them of their young. We would bring partly hatched eggs home to place under an old setting hen just to see what would happen. Mother took me to Relief Society with her in the old buggy and many other places around the neighborhood. Photo of Lakeview Relief Society – **Murl is second from left in back row.**



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This was the only means of transportation in those days. In the early spring the old dirt roads were cut up and the mud holes would become so deep that Old Queen could hardly pull the buggy through them. Many times, the teams hauling heavy loads would get stuck in the mud on the main road to Provo.



*Leila with brother Nathan*



*Leila at age four*

I was in third grade and returned home from school on October 25, 1917 when I met father in front of the Lake View church. He told Harold and I we had better hurry home to see our new baby sister.

“What?” A baby girl after all this time?” We were so excited that Harold and I ran all the way home to see this wonder baby. I am sure Mother was the happiest woman in the whole world. When she was first told of the sex of the child, she could not believe it until the baby was shown her and the fact proven. This new child was named “Leila” after one of mother’s sisters by that name. Lila had died in infancy. Mother loved the name but did not want it to be exactly the same so called her sweet baby daughter Leila. She was a very beautiful child. Mother took great pride in making frilly, fancy dresses for her and bragging about her naturally curly hair. All of us children were named and blessed by Grandpa Johnson when we were eight days old. Our family did this prior to the regular blessing and naming took place in church.



Uncle Will Goodridge died during the bad flu epidemic of 1918 so my Aunt Josephine moved to Provo. She built a home on a lot next to Grandma and Grandpa’s home. Lynn Goodridge was Aunt Josephine’s only son. I had spent a lot of time with Lynn when he lived near the sugar beet plant in Lake View. So of course, I made a bee line to his house when we went visiting in Provo.

Lynn’s sister, Wilma, came to live at our place the winter her mother moved so she could complete eighth grade. She told us bedtime stories to hasten our sleep. One summer about 1919 when Lynn was out playing at with us, we decided to go down to the Lake. We were interested in the old cabin Grandfather had moved down to be used in helping him homestead the marsh lands. We decided to take it apart and use the wood to build a raft. We spent many days and evenings that spring and summer in building our raft.

Lynn would ride out from Provo each day, work all day long on our raft and then ride back to Provo at night on his bicycle. After several days and lot of anticipation our raft was finally complete. “What shall we call it?” someone asked. “Let’s call her Martin!” So, the raft was christened “Martin,” in honor of Martin Williamson, the father of Roy Williamson. We found an old boat that summer which had been abandoned by duck hunters. We repaired it and named it “Inger” after our grandmother.

Many happy and wonderful times were had that summer and the following year along the marshes. We floated “Martin and Inger” down the channel from the Little Lake swimming, diving, and playing as if we were on some kind of grand adventure. About 1920 when the lake was very high, we built a diving board

at the east end of Little Lake. We went swimming there at the end of each day. We spent many happy hours swimming, diving, and playing around the lake shore.

It was at Little Lake that I first learned to swim well. My brother Nathan was old enough to come along with us. He was brave enough to jump off the diving board when he was only five or six years of age. So, it was not very long until he learned to swim. He had to learn quickly as he was jumping off the board into eight to ten feet of water.

Grandfather and Uncle August took me on my first trip up Provo Canyon and out into Strawberry Valley. I can still remember the excitement of hearing Grandpa say: "We are going to Strawberry after some lumber Alf, and you had just as well let Dean come along with us!" After a little coaxing and lots of planning and anticipation I was off on my first big adventure into the mountains. Uncle August had his team and wagon and Grandpa and I had Dad's team and wagon. We loaded just the running gears down with all the hay we could carry. We had a few sacks of oats for the horses and a big red grub box. The moment for departure finally arrived and we set out for Thacker's Saw Mill located in one of the Forks that led into the Strawberry Valley.

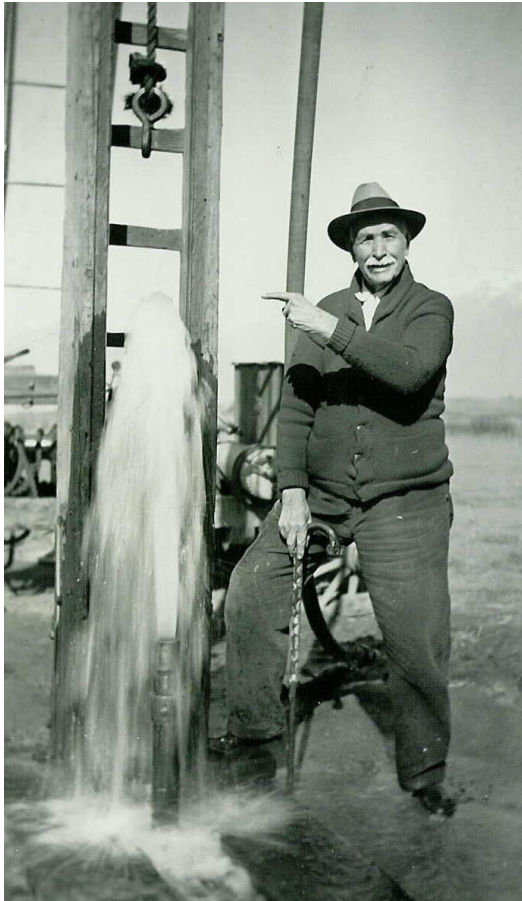
I had made a special trip to Provo with father to borrow a gun from Lynn, a special air gun that held about 100 shots. It was sure I could shoot pot guts or Ground Dogs along the way. Lynn wasn't home that day but Aunt Josephine let me take the gun, making me promise to take extra good care of it. We left early in the morning and drove up through Provo Canyon. We camped the first night at Charleston. This was before Deer Creek Reservoir was built and the road followed the river bank right up the bottom of the valley where the lake is now. Supper was ready and a bed prepared under some big cottonwood trees by the side of the road. "Do you want an egg-poop Deanupper along with your supper?" Grandpa asked leaning over the campfire.

"I don't know Grandpa; what's an egg-poop?" "You'll see," he said as he began stirring a broken egg in a tin coffee cup. After the egg was beaten well, cream and sugar were added. Grandpa poured boiling coffee over this. It made a delicious drink. After supper we bedded down on the ground under a star lit sky. I really thought this was a long trip.

The following morning, we were up bright and early and on our way. I think we made it to the saw mill on the second day, just before dark. It began raining a little as soon as we got to the mill. We hurriedly fixed our supper and made up beds under the big pine trees in a little hollow at the side of the mill. "Looks like it might rain in earnest," Grandpa said as he scanned the sky. "We'll cover over good with the wagon cover." About midnight we must have had a cloud burst because I remember waking up to find a stream of water running right through our bed. Grandpa slept on one side of me and Uncle August on the other. I had the lowest elevation. I remember being on my knees and elbows for the rest of the night as the water ran under me.

We loaded the two wagons the next day. It rained most of the time. The lumber was sawed from green logs and was very heavy as well as wet. We put up in an old shack the next night after fixing a big pile of saw dust to sleep on. The saw dust being wet made a very hard bed, but it was better than lying out in the rain. About the fourth day our wagons were loaded, and we started for home. The sun shone bright that day, so we spread our wet quilts over the wagons to dry. On the way home I entertained myself by shooting pot guts and birds along the road. During all this excitement I lost the magazine part of Lynn's gun. I was struck with horror thinking about what I would do when I got home. The story ended happily.

Dad bought a new magazine for the borrowed gun and I was able to return it in good condition. I really enjoyed this adventure with **Grandpa and Uncle August**. *Photo of August with Aunt Ruth.*



Grandpa sang songs in his native tongue and told stories of his life in Norway as a boy. The lumber we obtained on this trip was used to build Uncle August's new barn. It still stands today just north of his Lake View home. After this trip I went on many fishing trips to Strawberry with Grandfather in his old Model T Ford. He would take one of his grandsons on each trip. I think my turn came around more often than some of the other eight. Grandpa liked company and needed one of us boys along to run small errands for him like getting the water from the spring, bringing wood for the fire, or handing him food from the grub box. I always set the table and helped with the dishes. "Come on, wake up Deanupper; it's 4:00 o'clock and time we were out on the Lake!" he would say each morning. "We'll knock 'em today."

Half an hour later we would be out on the lake in the cold and the fog with hardly enough light to tell where we were going. In those days we would hear the spin of the reel every few minutes. We hardly ever came back to camp without a good catch of fish.

Many Sunday afternoons after church during the summer nearly all the boys from the ward would go down to the Provo River to swim and have fun. We called our favorite swimming place "Knudson's Hole." It was located just a little below Grandpa's river farm. We had lots of fun diving into the deep water there to see who could bring up the largest rock. From all this experience I became one of the best swimmers in the ward. I had a great desire to use my swimming ability to accomplish something unusual. So, I got it into my head to swim across Utah Lake. I confided my plans to my friend Bud Starley

who agreed to accompany me on this the grand adventure. Several days later we left home fairly early in the morning. I plunged into the water about 10:00 a.m. Bud followed closely in our trusty boat. By 1:00 p.m. I found that I was only a little over halfway across Utah Lake. I was very tired and cold and somewhat discouraged. I could see I would never be able to reach the other side and still have time to row the boat back to the Eastern shore before dark. No one at home had any idea where we were. We decided the best thing to do was to give up for the time being. Bud pulled me into the boat, and we started rowing toward home. I thought of trying this again years later but was never able to gather the courage to make another attempt.

School Days My third-grade teacher was Miss Peterson from Provo. In fourth grade I was taught by Miss Anderson, an old maid whom we called "Old Lady Jiggs." I was having trouble reading and had broken my right arm in a very bad fall from a tree. Mom and I had to make several trips to Provo to see a doctor. My broken right arm kept me from writing, so I was not getting my lessons done. My parents decided that it would be best for me to repeat fourth grade. So, I quit school about the first of March and repeated fourth grade over in the fall.

My fifth and sixth grade teacher was Mrs. Barns, an old lady of about sixty. She was an excellent teacher and helped me a lot. She seemed to understand me and encouraged my interest in drawing. I enjoyed drawing maps and that caused me to have a great deal on interest in geography. I had a deep desire to see the world and understand its many different cultures.

Seventh and eighth grades were taught by Thorit Hebertson of Vineyard who was also our principal. He was a good teacher though I gave him a hard time because of my pranks and other acts of which I am not too proud.

About this time a great sorrow came into my life. It was while I was in seventh grade that my dear and beautiful mother died following an operation for gall stone and appendicitis. This occurred on March 22, 1923. It came as a great shock to me and has had a lasting effect on my life. I was a large boy of fourteen at that time. I stood six feet tall and needed the guidance of a mother very much to help me through the "Green Years".

I found I could receive a great deal of comfort and help in my troubled mind by using the avenue of prayer. My mother was very near to me during the times as I sought the Lord for help. I am sure it was these experience that caused me to have deep thoughts concerning religion. I began to recognize and really appreciate how much the church meant to me.

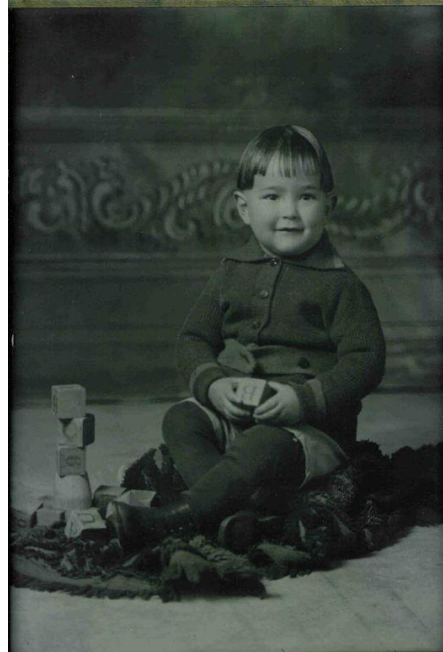
I had been ordained a deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood on May 30, 1921 and was appointed President of the Deacon's Quorum in Lake View Ward. At the time my mother died I was working for Uncle August. I continued to work for him for many years. It was he who encouraged me in my church activity. He provided much help and inspiration and perhaps sparked a fire as I developed a burning desire to serve a mission for the church one day.

After mother's death I lived with Uncle August and Aunt Ruth for a few days and was treated like a son. Uncle August paid me \$15.00 a month to help milk his cows during the winter. I earned \$45 per month for milking and helping with his farm work during the summer. After saving all the money I could, I was able to buy a few things I always wanted: a watch, a camera and later a bicycle of which I was very

proud. Uncle Henry Williamson and Aunt Ray came to live at our home for a few weeks after mother's death. Aunt Ray helped with the household duties, cooked and helped care for our family.



***Murl and Nathan***



***Robert Earl***

Mother had given birth to a fourth son which she named Robert Earl on December 3, 1921 about a year before her death. When she realized she would not recover from her surgeries she asked that Julia Hatton, one of father's sisters, be given her baby to raise. On April 13, 1924, a little over a year after mother's death the baby suddenly became ill and died a few hours later. I guess mother was just too lonesome and wanted her baby with her. Robert Earl was a beautiful child with big black eyes like his mother and brother Nathan.

Events of sorrow and misfortune had been coming plenty fast these days for a young lad. Having suffered the sorrow of losing your mother, the loss of Robert Earl was another tragic event. I had a great deal of love and respect for my mother and for her wise counsel. My love for her and dad burned deep within in my heart.

Mother was a beautiful woman with a rather dark complexion, deep brown eyes and hair. She was well built, standing about five feet five inches tall and weighing about 150 pounds. Her hair was always neatly combed. It was naturally curly and little ringlets escaped from her neat 10 bob and clustered around her neck. She took a great deal of care in her dress, skin, and nails. She had a loving personality which brought her a host of friends. People admired her for her beauty. She was a woman who had a great capacity for love and devotion to her family. She seldom scolded us boys but taught us through love and affection. Dad and mother seldom had any cross words between them. They were always deeply in love all through the time I knew them. I am sure that mother was dad's true love and that she felt the same about him. There were very few cross words exchanged but many times I saw tears of joy and laughter because of their rich love for each other.



Dad was rather a strict man and commanding in his ways. He took great pride and delight in his wife and growing children. He always has been a very hard worker and always had his work caught up. He used to say, "Crowd the work Dean but don't let the work crowd you." I am ever grateful to him for teaching me how to work and work hard and to take pride in what I do. "When you plow a furrow, plow it straight my son. Anybody can plow a crooked furrow." Besides his family, dad took a lot of pride in his horses. He always drove the best teams in the community. He was a master in training horses to pull, and in minding him when he spoke. Many a time I have become stuck in the mud with the team pulling a heavy load. Father would come and pick up the lines and would yell at the team in a loud commanding voice, calling them by name and away they would go. The horses would lunge forward with all their might and the wagon would be pulled out of the mud. This not only happened with me but with other people in our community. Dad could drive their horses better than they could drive them. Dad took life as it came. He had a cheerful happy disposition. His code was "Work hard, play hard and give life the best you have, no matter what you are doing."



***Standing, Harold, Dean, Nathan and Ted. Seated, Francis Madsen Johnson, Kay, Alfred and Leila.***