

## Chapter 8 – The Lakeview Chapel, the Fall and Our Friends



On June 25, 1955, I was cultivating corn over on a piece of land I was renting from Uncle August. I looked up to see Jess running up through the fields excitedly calling, “The Church House is on fire.” We speedily made our way over to the church in our truck. As we arrived there were people from all directions coming, and there must have been a hundred or more standing around there when we arrived.

Some steel plant workers had first noticed smoke coming out of the building as they were returning home from their 4:00 shift. The alarm was quickly turned in and the steel plant traffic stopped. Men rushed into the building by the score, and within a very few minutes every church pew and bench, the organ, the piano, and everything that could be pulled loose, removed from the building. The entire building was a total loss.

There were many tears shed this day and sentiment ran deep. Even I shed a few tears. Uncle August said, “My Father helped build that chapel, and it was dedicated in 1902 while he was Bishop. Then I helped remodel it 15 years or so ago.” I heard him say with tears in his eyes, to Scott Taylor who had helped on the building committee at that time, “We put a lot of hard work into that building. Scott, it’s hard to take when you see all that work and money go up in flames.” He responded, “No one will ever know the time and effort we spent in getting money and workers to help with the remodeling.” Many said, “It was my little white church in the valley.”

We spent the rest of the day and far into the night moving all the contents which had been salvaged into different places in the ward where storage space was available. Nearly all of the church pews and benches were stored in my chicken coops, also the pulpit and the sacrament table. The carpet in the chapel was also saved and stored at Elvin Bunnell's.

This disastrous fire happened late Saturday afternoon. Sunday morning we held Sunday School in the open air on Spencer Madsen's lawn. After the close of the services I handed a check for \$500 to Bishop Paul Taylor. "Here, let this be a start toward the building of a new Chapel," I said. Tears filled his eyes as well as mine as he thanked me.

We were indeed blessed to have a bishop who was really on the ball. Within three days a building committee was appointed consisting of Elvin Bunnell, Chairman, myself, and George Cropper as assistants. It was later decided to include Uncle August advisor to advise the Committee. Clarence Zobell was the Building Supervisor.

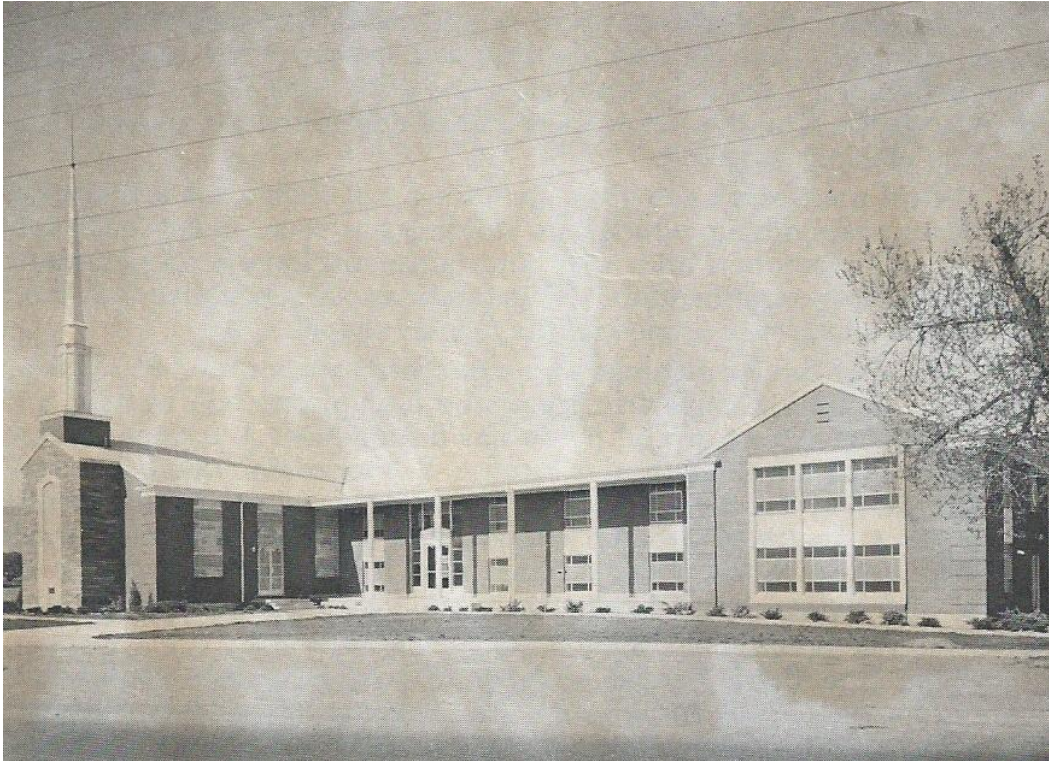


***Standing, Dean Johnson and George Cropper. Seated, Clarence Zobell, Elvin Bunnell and August Johnson***

Events moved along very fast. The Bishopric met with the Church authorities, and the fire insurance amount was determined. The old walls and rubbish of the church was entirely hauled off and dumped near the lake; part of it went into Elvin's pond. Plans were drawn up and a building supervisor appointed. Within 30 days of the fire we were pouring footings for a new church. The whole ward united in helping raise money and volunteer labor in building a new church patterned after the one that burned down. It was far enough along that we were able to meet in it in less than two years.

The building was completed, furnished and landscaping including sidewalks, coping, and hard topping of the parking area in record time. Lawns were planted and an automatic sprinkling system installed. On

June 1, 1958, our new building was dedicated with Joseph Fielding Smith giving the dedicational prayer. I had the honor of giving the invocation at the service. It gives me joy to note that me and my family donated over \$1100 in cash, along with over 500 hours of work toward the construction of our beautiful new church. I am very thankful to my Heavenly Father that he blessed our family so much that we were able to do this.



From early spring of 1955 to February of 1958, were three years of real hard work. I had bought the sandhill property, serving on the building committee, and taking an active part in church, as well as teaching my Sunday School class, and working on the construction. I was kept plenty busy.

Jess was doing all she possibly could at this time too. She accepted a job in Provo at the ASC office doing secretarial work, where she was supposed to work three days a week. They were constantly after her to work extra days, so I think she was averaging at least four. She also helped on the farm during the summertime, as she had always done, driving the tractor, and putting up silage. Corinne, Diane, and Laraine also helped a great deal at haying time. The children do nearly all of the milking now. I hardly even go to the barn in the evening but remain in the fields irrigating.

In February 1956, it was again necessary for me to enter the hospital to undergo a third operation for hernia. I got along fine and returned home in time to attend Fast meeting the following Sunday, where I bore my testimony. The girls again took over the duties of the dairy herd. As I was unable to do any work, we planned a trip to Los Angeles to visit the Temple prior to its dedication.

This too was a glorious vacation. Our friends George and Thelma Cropper and Margaret Taylor went with us. The tour of the Temple more than fulfilled my expectations and we enjoyed sight seeing trips to Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm, Boulder Dam, and some Las Vegas night clubs. Our close association

with these good friends made us appreciate how fortunate we were and more closely united us together.

During the late fall of 1956 and Spring of 1957, I began building a new dairy barn. This proved to be quite the project. I hired a man by the name of Grant Seeley from Mt. Pleasant to help. He was a good fast worker, and we were able to put up the barn quickly. However, I stepped off a high platform and sprained my ankle badly. It was during the time we were putting up the walls and roofing. I kept working although my left was in a cast. I had to hobble around on one foot doing all the plumbing, and electrical wiring. I built all the metal gates the cows went in and out of during milking. In addition to my work the total cost of the barn and contents was almost \$15,000.

After the barn was completed and we were ready to start using it, I bought ten cows from Dean Jacobsen along with 153 lbs. of milk base. These cows cost \$3,000 and the milk base \$765 for a total of \$3,765. With this addition to the herd, we were milking about 45 cows each night and morning. I had to borrow about \$8,000 to cover these costs. We borrowed most of it from Jess's mother at 4% interest. By the late fall of 1958 we got out of debt again. It was a good feeling to make my final payment to Mom, and receive our note back marked, "Paid in Full."



**The fall, standing in a body cast**

No, it was not the fall of Adam but the fall of Dean. It was the last Sunday in February of 1958. It was our custom to take Sundays off, each of us taking a turn a week apart. The 23<sup>rd</sup> was my night off.

Corinne, Diane, and Laraine were at the barn doing their chores. They had been a little late starting so I thought I would go down and help out so we could get through in plenty of time for Church at 7:00 p.m.

Corinne and Laraine were in the barn while Diane was up in the silo throwing down the silage. I climbed to the top of the haystack and began throwing down wet, soggy bales from the top of the stack. They were badly damaged from the wet weather during the long winter. The second bail I got hold of by the strings and as I lifted it and was turning to throw it off the stack the strings broke, and I lost my balance. I felt myself falling to the hard, about 22 feet frozen ground below. I landed feet first with such force that my knees gave way bending upward. My head and shoulders came forward crashing into my up-coming knees with such force that it completely knocked my breath out of me.

I lay on my back on the wet half-frozen ground unable to call for help, just struggling and gasping for breath for some seconds before I could call for help. After a few seconds and a great deal of pain, I finally managed to call out loud enough for Diane to hear me. I struggled desperately trying to get to my feet, but try as I would, I just couldn't do it. Twice I got on my hands and knees, but I just couldn't stand on my feet. By this time Diane had hurriedly climbed down the silo ladder and came running up to me saying, "Daddy, Daddy, what happened?"

"Get some help quick," I answered, "I think my back is broken." She ran into the barn to tell the other girls who quickly came to my assistance. Diane then ran over to Dad's barn to get Ted and Dad. They came quickly in the Pick-up to where I was laying. I was all covered with mud and hay leaves from squirming around on the ground trying to get up.

Dad and Ted each kneeled on either side of me and I placed my arms over their shoulders, then the three of us raised up together. They got me into the truck and brought me to the house. Using the same method, they were able to get me into the house and on to a bed.

I remained home that night, enduring lots of pain. After church many friends and relatives came to see me -- Uncle August being the first one to arrive. Jess called Dr. Poppen, who advised me to get to the hospital as soon as possible. However, I didn't go, thinking I might feel better the next day. When morning arrived, I tried to stand on my feet again, but just couldn't do it. My back would buckle, and I would go to the floor in terrible pain.

I was taken to Utah Valley hospital in an ambulance. They wheeled me into the X-Ray room, placed me on the table, and took several pictures of my spine. After being taken back to my room, Dr. Poppen came in. He said, "Dean your back is broken; you will have to remain here for a few days. We will suspend you out on your back, with your stomach highly elevated, and your head and feet lowered. This should open up your vertebrae that had been crushed. After being in this position for a few days your swelling should go down; then we will put you in a full body cast for five months and this should fix it. When I take the cast off, if you are careful, your back should be as good as new."

I wasn't surprised to hear that my back was broken. I had felt that from the beginning telling Diane to "get some help quick; I think my back is broken." The idea of being laid up without doing a thing for six months, was unbelievable.

The rest of the day Monday and Monday night, as well as Tuesday, and part of the night, I felt sure I was going to die. I've never felt such severe pain. Gas bothered me terribly. I was bloated up like a balloon and I wished I could die; anything to get out of this suffering.

Finally, after Jess called the Doctor and Uncle August complained to the nurses, Dr. Poppen put a tube up my nose and down my throat so I get rid of some gas. The thing kept clogging up and I suffered terribly until about 8:30 P.M. Wednesday night. Dr. Poppen cleaned the tube out again and Karl Johnson and Dean Taylor arrived to administer to me. From that point on I began feeling better.

The following Friday they put me in a body cast. It extended from my chin down to below my seat. I couldn't sit down. I had to lay down flat on my back or stand straight up. I remained in this condition for five months. My cast was changed at the end of two months. While the first cast was off, they took more X-Rays to see if it was healing all right. It seemed to be okay, so they replaced a new body cast just like the first one, only it was a little longer and a little tighter. I went back several times to have it trimmed as it choked my wind off when I tried to bow my head. It also cut the front of my legs when I walked. No one will ever know how much I suffered and what a "hell of a shape" I was in those five long months. I was real thankful in knowing that when it was over I would be all right again.

I am grateful to my Father in Heaven that I was not killed, or that I received no permanent injuries. I have had just hours and hours of time; days and weeks to just think and realize how grateful and thankful I am for all the good things that have come my way. After being grateful to God, my family comes next. Jess was so devoted; no one ever had a more faithful companion to love, work and pray for her husband through this trying time.

My children! What would life be without them? Thank heavens they knew how to work. They did the milking and cared for the cattle just as good as I would have had I been able. Corinne helped with all the cutting and bailing hay and I never heard a complaint from any of them nor from Jess. Rather they all just seemed grateful to have me around. No one ever had a more wonderful family. I love them dearly.

We were fortunate in having Bert Quarnberg and his family as neighbors. Bert had been laid off from the Steel Plant due to the strike and worked for me all spring and summer doing the heavy farm work, irrigating, and helping the girls. He was able to help until I returned to work about the end of August. My brothers who lived nearby were also on hand to help when needed.

I am very grateful to my friends and relatives. I had been placed in a position where I could really appreciate the worth of my extended family-- Dad, Francs, Nathan, Ted, Uncle August, my in-laws Wanda, Mary. It seemed like everyone who heard about my accident were deeply concerned and offered their faith and prayers in my behalf. People by the score came to the hospital to see me, and when I went home, came to visit to help pass the time. I made a list of those who came to visit, and it was quite long. I especially appreciated those we have partied with over the years. We enjoyed a party once a month during the winter in each other homes. It was Thelma and George Cropper's turn to host everyone, but they held their party at our house so I could attend in my hospital bed. I wrote this poem for the occasion.

### **Our Friends**

***'Tis the friends we have, and the love they share, which makes of this life the courage to bare, The sorrows, the pain, the disappointments and care, Each cause us to value this friendship so rare. So, to each of you, our friends—we thank you sincerely, For your kindness, consideration and thoughtfulness so dearly. And we wish for all of us, more friendship and love, Trusting the destiny of our course to him up above.***

***So to each of you, our friends—we thank you sincerely, For your kindness, consideration, and thoughtfulness so dearly, And we wish for all of us, more friendship and love, Trusting the destiny of our course to Him up above.***

The crowd we party around with here in Lake View has brought much joy and happiness to us. Cleo and Karl Johnson, Earl and Margaret Taylor, George and Thelma Cropper, Lynn and Ada Goodridge, Wilford and LaVon Oveson, Herschel and Edith Clinger, Mary and Nathan. We have taken turns having a dinner party, one each month at different homes during the winter months. In the summer we usually have a few canyon parties. I wrote this poem to honor them when I returned from the hospital

As time and life moves along and we grow older, I believe we value our friend, neighbors, and relatives more. How I have appreciated living in this community. There are always people around who care. My father and uncle August work together before grandpa divided the farm between them and continued to do so afterward. I have enjoyed the same association with my brothers Ted and Nathan.

My cousin Lynn Goodridge and I exchanged lots of work during the early years. We also went on many trips together with our wives and children. There were deer hunts and pheasant hunts; dinner parties with Lyn and Ada, Effie and Elliott Sabey, who now live in Lake Shore and Jess's cousin Mink and her husband Chick Rohbock.

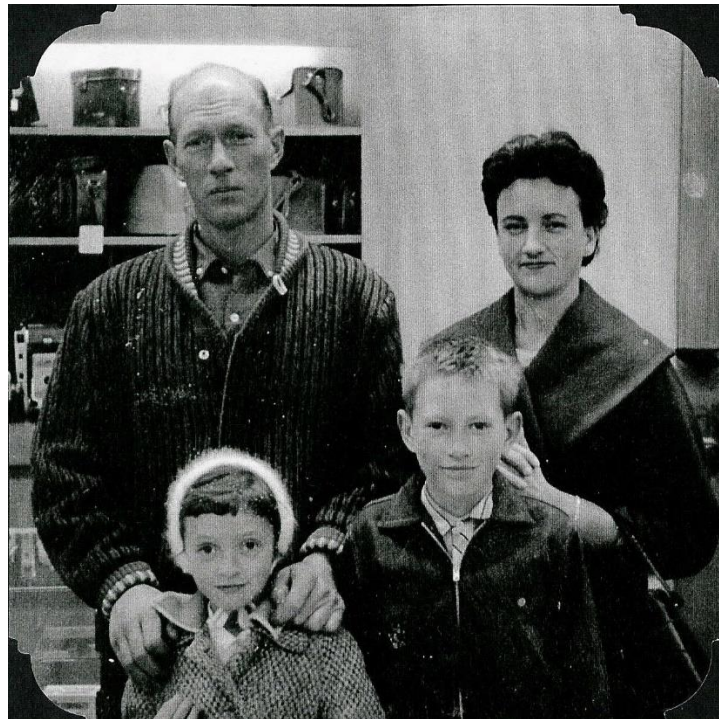
Jess and I have been very close to Nathan and Mary. We went on a very exciting trip a few years ago down to California where we visited Mary's brother, Arthur Birk. While there Nathan, Arthur and I went deep sea fishing in Mexico. It was the most exciting fishing trip of my life. We stopped in Las Vegas and took in a couple of evening of entertainment at Casino, even doing a little gambling.



After Mary had polio and had to move about in a wheelchair, we took a trip with them into Colorado to Mesa Verde, Durango down the Million Dollar Highway; and to the Black Canyon of Gunnison. Nathan, Dad, Ted and I enjoyed going on deer hunts together.

We went on a short trip with Chick and Mink Rohbock, and with Lucille and Frampton Collins. Last summer (1959) we went with Fram and Lucille to Las Vegas and saw the new Glen Canyon Dam site. I think Lucille and Fram have been our very closest friends, as well as relatives, throughout our married life.

Our very closest neighbors have been my brother Ted and his wife Wanda and their children Dale and Judy. This has been a wonderful association for Wanda and Ted have been like a brother and sister to our children. Corinne has spent hours in their home while our home has been a second home to their children. We have exchanged work and whenever I have needed Ted's help, whether it was a simple task or helping to lift the heaviest piece of machinery on my farm, as soon as I asked he was there to do it. Wanda has been very close to us as well. She is concerned about us and never a day passes that some word of friendship and love is exchanged. We have lived together as neighbors in close harmony and love, with never an exchange of ill feelings.



During the first part of February, 1958, just before my back was broken, Corinne with one of her girl friends from Orem High, accompanied me to Salt Lake where I purchased a 1955 Oldsmobile, 4-door hard top car for her. This was somewhat of a graduation present, but more especially a gift to show her my appreciation for nine years of milking cows and doing farm work. Corinne was always so dependable and hardly ever took time off from her milking duties. I felt she deserved this extra consideration. I had also promised her that when she reached eighteen she would no longer have to milk cows. This proved to be wrong however, for a few months after her birthday I broke my back and she assumed full responsibility for seven months of more farm work including milking morning and night.



When Corinne started at B.Y.U. in the fall of 1958, she graduated from the Dairy Herd with full honors. She has really enjoyed her car. She must have, for Corinne drives about 1500 miles each month and spends all her money for clothes and car maintenance. She attended the "Y" until the first part of 1959 when she got a job at the National Finance Company in Provo doing secretarial work.

During the last of March, 1958, while I was incapacitated a large group of friends and relatives from the Ward turned out and in less than a day they put in cement ditch lining on my sand hill property under the leadership of Elvin Bunnell. I will always be grateful to them for taking on this project.

In June of 1959, I bought ten acres from Joseph Blake for \$10,000. I have always wanted this ground ever since I began leasing it, back in 1944 but was never able to buy it. The payment of \$1,000 an acre seemed too high, but only time will tell how it's going to turn out.

At the same time, I bought about 18 acres of land from LeRoy Williamson, adjoining my property on the Sandhill. Roy was anxious to have me buy it as he needed some money in a hurry to close on a deal of eighty acres in South Payson. I paid Roy about \$14,000 for his property, or nearly \$800 per acre. I bought this more as a business investment, as the new Freeway is going in close by. I am in hopes of selling this property for building lots or some businesses in the future.

With what little money we had on hand I had to borrow about \$22,500 from the Federal Land Bank. I had to mortgage all our property except our home to obtain the money. Last fall (1959) I spent a lot of hard work as well as \$600 in getting about ten acres of Roy's land leveled. I also intended to cement a ditch across the top of the place this spring, which will cost another \$500 besides a lot of hard work. To the present time the total price of the property I have acquired is \$45,000. Leveling land, ditch lining and drainage will probably be another \$5,000 making the total investment nearly \$50,000. This does not include building, machinery, cattle, etc. I am now farming about 66 acres of irrigated land and hold the deed to about 75 acres. I have one-half interest in the accretion land that dad got from Grandpa.



During June of 1959 Diane entered Utah County Dairy Princess Contest. We were on hand that evening and had the thrill of hearing that Diane was chosen as first attendant to Dairy Princess Mary Ann Gray.

She spent the summer attending every parade in the county and appearing in radio and on television shows. She has been taking debate classes at Orem High School for three years and we have been very interested in her speaking ability. In 1959 Diane entered a speech contest sponsored by the Utah County Farm Bureau and won first place. This qualified her to enter the Utah State finals at the Fair. At age 17 Diane won first place and was awarded a trip to Chicago with all expenses paid and an opportunity to compete in the national contest.

Nathan, Mary, Jess and I were at Salt Lake to listen to her compete at the State meet. I believe it was the greatest thrill of the year when they announced, "We will now introduce the person who will represent Utah at the national Speech meet at Chicago in December, "Miss Diane Johnson." I think Diane was rightly chosen; she really did have the best talk, and her delivery was excellent. Nathan and Mary were as excited as we were. I was glad they were along, for they were as proud of her as we were and I'm sure Diane appreciated their interest and support.

After the speech meet, I could hardly wait to call Laraine and tell her the exciting news. "Diane won the and we are all going to Chicago with her." Laraine exclaimed, "Me too!" I said, "Yes, the whole family. We are all going by train in December." Laraine was told to call Grandpa Johnson and Grandma Farley and let them know our exciting news. By morning nearly everyone in the ward knew of her success.

The following Sunday night our family was asked to give the program at Sacrament meeting in our own ward. Diane gave the talk she had given in the contest. She finished by just saying the things in her heart and expressed her love and appreciation for her Mom and Dad. It was wonderful. I cried and Jess shed a tear or two. In fact, I think half the people in the audience had a lump in their throat and a tear in their eye. The chapel was full to capacity. It seemed that everyone turned out, and there were many who commented about it being an outstanding meeting. After Diane spoke, Corinne and Laraine played a duet on the organ and piano. I took up the rest of the time. Jess gave the closing prayer. This was the most thrilling meeting for me since my family spoke about our trip to the East five years earlier.

The next event we enjoyed was our trip to Chicago. We left on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December -- Jess, Diane, Laraine, Paula Taylor and I. We went by train over the mountains to Denver. Then changed trains and arrived in Chicago at 8:30 A.M. after two nights and one day on trains. Diane was to compete in the speech competition that evening. There were seven other contestants from eleven western states. Diane did well and placed second. I have always thought she would have won had she used her original speech with some slight modifications to fit her subject.

Chicago was exciting for Jess and the girls who spent most of their time Christmas shopping. I took everyone to several shows including a musical called "The Music Master." I attended several sessions at the Farm Bureau Convention with Jessie. The last few days were reserved for sightseeing. We took guided tours by bus of the city and a few places along the lake. We came home by way of the Burlington Railroad to Denver, thence by Union Pacific Railroad through Wyoming to Salt Lake City. Corinne met us at the station at 11:30 P.M. to drive us home. I think that we had all the train travel we ever wanted. Our train stopped at every station, probably to pick up and deliver Christmas presents and other mail.

The next day I had another close call with death. As I was working on my tractor my clothes became caught in the power take off and were torn from my body. As my torn clothing wrapped tighter and tighter, I struggled harder and harder to keep from being pulled along with it. Finally, the engine died and I was safe again, with only a few scratches.

One of our happy experience has been our neighborhood tour on Christmas morning. Starting at my home, the Johnsons began to congregate. Next, we went to Ted's, then Nathan's and Dads', with various families joining in along the way. We always ended up at Uncle August and Aunt Bee's where there was ham, homemade bread, fruitcake, eggnog, and lots of delicious things to eat that only Aunt Bee could make. I believe our neighborhood activity on Christmas Morning was the best part of the holiday.

It has not been our desire to only have four children. But due to several miscarriages and circumstances beyond our control, my family has been limited to three daughters. They are lovely girls, and we are proud of them; we take joy in their beauty and many accomplishments.

Laraine is now in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. She will graduate from Lincoln Junior High School in the spring. Diane is currently a Freshmen at BYU living in Heritage Halls. She is extremely busy with her studies and many activities. Corinne is still working at National Finance in Provo. I believe she enjoys being a secretary better than going to college. The Lord has been good to me and mine. Six times I have been very close to death through accidents. Each time my life has been spared.

This brings my story up through March 1, 1960. I am fifty years old and have enjoyed quite an eventful life. We as a family are all in good health and have been greatly blessed. I believe that anyone who works hard, prays often, and remains close to the Lord will find joy and "He who has good health has great wealth!"

