

## Personal History of Dixie Mae Scott Harris (daughter of Sarah Elinor)

I was born May 25, 1913 in Leeds, Washington County, Utah to Sarah Elinor Stirling and Wilson (Lee) Lenoir Scott. My older sister, Jessie Scott (Redmond), was born March 12, 1912 in Modena, Iron County, Utah. My younger brother, Wilson Wilber Scott, was born December 24, 1914 in Leeds, Washington County, Utah. My father, Wilson L. Scott, died September 2, 1915 in St. George, Washington County, Utah at the age of thirty-nine due to complications associated with kidney failure leaving my mother with three little kids to raise: Jessie—three years old; me, Dixie, two years old; and Wilson, only eight months old.

At the time my father died, we were living in Modena, Utah. Modena was a small mining town on the railroad—close to the Nevada border and just west of New Castle. Mother ran a boarding house and father did assaying for the mine. Father was working at the State Line Mine when he took sick with kidney problems. Associates transported him by wagon to St. George, Utah, but the doctors were unable to help him at the time of his death.

To my regret, I have no memory of my father. However, I have missed him all my life. I remember going to bed crying once when I had my feelings hurt thinking that if my dad would have been there, they wouldn't have done "it" to me; what "it" was, I don't remember. I also remember often thinking that I was glad father had died rather than getting a divorce like Maime Olsen who was left with a small son. Divorce was truly unheard of in those days and was a very tragic demise to the covenants of marriage.

The earliest thing I can remember is returning to Leeds in the wagon from Modena a short time after my father's burial. The wagon was full of stuff—I guess it held all of our belongings. We moved into the old family home that Granddad William Stirling had built. We lived in the house with Uncle Dave and Aunt Ruth who were still single at the time. Ruth taught school in Manila, Utah and was gone most of the time. Mother kept house for them. Uncle Dave farmed Granddad's place until Uncle Joe came home from the army (World War I) and joined him. They had pigs, milk cows, a few range cows, a team of horses, and a riding horse or saddle horse. They also had a peach orchard and a small sweet cherry orchard.

My father, Lee Scott, my Uncle William Stirling, and my Granddad William Stirling all died within three months of each other. Uncle William left a large family. Uncle William and Aunt Sue lived kitty-corner across the street from us. Aunt Sue, Uncle William's wife, died shortly after that—leaving their kids without parents. The kids stayed in their family home. Some of them were old enough that they took care of the younger ones. The youngest son, LeGrand Stirling, was a little bit younger than I, and the next older, Leona, was a little bit older. Luceil, Veria, Alta, then Adelbert (Delbert)—was the oldest child. He kind of looked after the family financially. Alta took charge of the daily affairs of cooking and cleaning for the family.

Our families played together often. Their house was a low, single-story home, so we used it to play *Ante-I-Over*. We would divide into teams, throw a ball over the house, and then the team on the other side would do their best to catch the ball. We also played *softball* down

the lane east of our house. It was always a great deal of fun and leaves me filled with lasting family memories of a very happy time.

Soon after we moved to Leeds, a big, Red-Delicious apple came to mother from Beaver Dam. It came from some property that my dad had owned there. I guess he must have planted a tree and when it started to bear fruit, the new owner mailed a single apple to my mother. Getting things in the mail was common in those days. I even remember getting a block of ice in the mail one time.

Another early memory I have was that mother had sold a thrashing machine for which she hadn't received payment. She and Uncle Dave started for Mesquite, Nevada in the buggy to collect the amount that was owed. I ran down the road after the buggy, crying. They stopped and picked me up and we went on our way. I was frightened when we got to the Virgin River, but they took me across anyway. There was a crossing, but no bridge.

To my memory, I was never given any special attention from Uncle Joe or Uncle Dave. Uncle David Stirling was our *Ward Bishop*. I remember going to Sunday school with my brother and sister. Uncle Dave was on the stage along with Ed McMullin, Henry Jolley (Uncle Ammon's father), and Riley Savage. The church was a one-room, rock building with a door in front and a stage at the opposite end. My first class was outside, under the trees on the east side of the building.

As a little girl, I remember sitting on rocks in a half-circle with the teacher, Pheebee Fuller, standing in front. Her lesson on the *Word of Wisdom*—including abstinence from drinking tea and coffee—must have really left an impression on me to remember it all my life. One little boy in the class said that his grandma drank tea. Sister Fuller explained that some people from the old country had the habit and it was hard to break. She convinced me, and I never had that problem. The next class I remember was on the stage with the curtain drawn. Hazel McMullin taught us from The Book of Mormon—about which she seemed to know a great deal. We later went to her house for some of our classes; she lived very close to the church.

To help survive financially, mother got a little money from the farm that Uncle Joe and Uncle Dave ran. Once in awhile, she would sell eggs, butter, or milk. Mother had two cows—a Jersey and a Guernsey—which she milked all the time. She never let me learn how to milk, though. She said if I learned how to milk, I would have to milk all the time. I kept asking to milk one of the cows, but she wouldn't ever let me. She said, "If you start to milk, you will always have to milk. If you don't start, then you will never have to milk!" That was her philosophy.

After mother milked the cows, I, or whoever was around, would then take the bucket out to the ditch and lower it into the water. We would kneel on the ditch bank and stir the milk to cool it for dinner. Although I never milked, I used to tromp hay and, sometimes, I would even ride the "derrick horse" while the hay was being stacked.

After the cows were milked, Jessie and I herded them from the barn, down main street—about a block—then headed them west toward the cemetery to Uncle Dave’s pasture every morning so they could graze. There was a spring at the pasture that came right out of the hill. In the summertime, it would be cool and in the winter, it would feel warm to the touch. The cows would come up to the gate in the evening and Jessie and I would let them out and follow them home to the barn for their evening milking. They were fairly well trained and seldom gave us any difficulty as we traveled the same trail to and from the barn on a daily basis.

Mother received a cash settlement from my father’s life insurance policy. She paid off her debts and bought a car from some fellow in Leeds. She loaded us kids in the car and we drove off towards the open fields north of Leeds. We drove four or five miles, then mother decided she needed to turn around and head for home. Somehow, she failed to get the car to shift into reverse; then it killed. She couldn’t get the car started or shifted out of gear. In the process, she got scared and frustrated. She took us three kids by the hand and we walked all the way back home. Uncle Dave rode his horse out to get the car. It started right up and he drove it home with the horse trailing behind. From that time on, Uncle Dave drove the car and mother arranged for him to drive her when she needed to go somewhere.

I have many fond memories of living in Granddad Stirling’s home. It was a large, three-story brick home located near the center of Leeds. There was a large, wooden deck across the front of the house on which we would sleep in the summertime. You could easily see the North Star from the deck. The basement was more of a cellar with a dirt floor for storage. The stairs into the basement ran along the back of the house. It was quite a large room filled with many fruit shelves. After Uncle Dave married, we had our shelves and Aunt Ethel had her shelves.

The kitchen was the central “gathering place.” There, the old Home Comfort stove served many purposes. The irons we used to iron our clothes were heated on top of the stove. They were also wrapped and used at the bottom of the bed on cold nights as “foot warmers.” Mother also warmed the nearly lifeless “doggies” or “bummer” (abandoned) lambs on the oven door that my brother Wilson would often bring on horseback from the sheep camp.

I went for a ride with him once on his horse out to the sheep camp. He got frustrated with me, however, and told me not to hold on around his waist, but to his shirt—like cousin Vernon did. It was a vicious, cold, winter day. We didn’t get a lamb to bring home that day—it was so cold that they probably didn’t live long enough to be rescued.

I was about seven or eight years old when tap water and electricity were brought into town. Before that, mother was up before sunrise carrying water from the irrigation ditch which ran through town. It was poured into a fifty-gallon barrel that was wrapped with burlap. The burlap was kept wet to keep the water cool. The barrel was close to the house and under an English walnut tree. A cupboard—located nearby—was also covered in burlap with a four-inch tin around the top filled with water that dripped down—keeping the burlap wet. Before the days of electricity, light had been provided by several kerosene lamps; each had to be cleaned and refilled with oil every day.

With the availability of electricity came the washing machine. This appliance replaced the scrubbing board and the “dolly” which we moved up and down like a toilet plunger.

Aunt Ethel’s folks gave her a washing machine with a wooden tub, but I don’t remember us ever using it to do our laundry. We did get a washing machine—which was a Maytag—later, when we moved to Cedar City where mother took in washing for people.

My father was from back east, mainly Illinois. He came out, I guess, during the boom in mining. He was interested in the entire mining operation and was a licensed *gold assayer*. He came to silver reef and that was where mother met him for the first time, or so I have been told. He was employed by the Independence Gold Mine and Mining Company located at State Line, Utah. Prior to his marriage to mother, he purchased 7,000 shares of the company stock at the price of \$1.00 per share on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 1902. The mine failed, and so did his investment in gold.

My mother saved letters from dad’s family as they corresponded back and forth. They expressed appreciation that father had found a nice girl and always told him to take good care of her. Once, they wrote that they really appreciated the potatoes, carrots, and beans he had sent them. They had experienced a very hard summer with little rain. Their garden had not produced any vegetables except for a few tomatoes. My father’s mother wrote how much she appreciated the potatoes and told her that she had fixed them for her Sunday dinner. She was anxious to meet everyone and hoped they would be able to travel to Utah someday.

My mother was from Leeds, Utah. My Grandfather Stirling originally settled in Harrisburg and then, as the story goes, they were having trouble between them and others in the community and the church leaders said, “Move to Leeds and get out of the situation in Harrisburg.” I don’t know if they were having trouble with the water, or something, as well as having some family disputes or a combination of all of the above. The church leaders said, “This is no place for you. Go to Leeds and settle there,” so they moved to Leeds.

Grandfather William Stirling was well educated and quite a prosperous man. He built the family home—the red brick home—in Leeds early in his marriage. He owned the whole block where it was built and when Silver Reef was closed down, they did away with many of the structures in the area. He purchased and moved the old Catholic church building and all its pews all the way from Silver Reef down to the lower part of his property to the front of the lot. It had a nice, strong roof on it. It was just a big, one-room building with a stage at one end, stairs going up to the stage from each side, a large door in the back, and nice double doors in the front. It became known as the “dance hall.”

The dance hall had two big doors in front and wooden benches inside which were placed in straight rows for programs, then turned to the side for dances. The dance hall was down in the corner of Granddad’s property. The community used to have programs and they used to hold dances almost every week in the dance hall.

We had a school program in the dance hall once. The benches were all placed in straight rows and the performers all climbed up on the stage. And then, in the back of the building on

the outside, my grandparents had some hives—beehives—as well as lots of tools and equipment. And then there was a great big walnut tree back there, too, where we would gather nuts in the fall. After the wind would blow the nuts down, mother and I would go and gather them off the ground.

One of my Grandfather's well-established enterprises was his "Dixie Wine" production. He made a fine quality wine and people would travel long distances from points north of Salt Lake and more distant than Denver to secure their purchase of this commodity. The *Word of Wisdom* wasn't strictly enforced at that time, I guess, and Grandfather understood the process of making wine very well. During the years, we had many opportunities to get acquainted with a large number of strangers and travelers who stopped to purchase some of Granddad's wine.

Granddad Stirling also purchased and relocated both the Silver Reef mercantile store and the Jail. The Jail was made of several thick layers of lumber with a heavy, thick door with steel bars. He used it for a granary. These buildings covered a full block, but I don't know how many acres were included. It must have been pretty good sized, however, because there are several homes located on sizeable lots along the front part of the property to this day.

After relocating the old Silver Reef Mercantile building to their property, my grandparents decided they would manage a store—which they did for some time. It was located just below the house and a little way between the house and the dance hall. There was quite a bit of space in that building. The store had three rooms in it. It opened up at the front on the right side. The left side sat close to the fence line, as did the front. It had a nice sidewalk from the roadway that led directly to the front door.

My cousin, Edith (Granado), often remembered her mother saying she had clerked in the store for quite a long time. I remember they didn't have the store in the same location later on, but they still had some of the old glass display cases—large glass cases where they had sold lace fabrics, notions, and a few things like that which were kept out of the reach of shoppers who would come into the store—and they kept the cases just outside of the old brick house after the store was moved and remodeled.

Down the lane, on the other side of the house, down quite a way farther on the lane, they had the jail that they moved down from Silver Reef. It had big, thick walls and it still had bars on the front door and the windows. It had just small windows. They also used it one year for an icehouse. They cut the ice out of the pond, loaded it on wagons, and stacked it inside the old jail packed with sawdust. It was a fairly good-sized, square structure.

Uncle Dave was married in 1920 to Ethel Isom. They lived in one part of Grandfather Stirling's house, and we continued to live in the other part.

Uncle Joe was married in 1921 to Marguerite McMullin. I remember them moving the store to the field before it was remodeled to be a dwelling for them I'm not really sure exactly how they moved buildings back then. I know they used logs to roll them with chained teams of workhorses. Sometimes, they used wagons and things like that with wheels. I remember them moving the building out to the field. It was rolled on poles with horses pulling it. They lifted it

with some jacks and rocks, then rolled it up the street as far as the school house, down the lane, through a gate, then about a block more—crossing a ditch—and stopping where it stands today. (Now it is in a very dilapidated state, but it was a nice building back then.)

My uncles later rented out the store as an apartment to the Carlows. They lived there when they came from Beaver. They moved from Beaver to Leeds for Mr. Carlow's employment. Mr. Carlow worked at the mine; he was kind of a caretaker of the properties around Silver Reef after the mine was closed. There weren't many employees left, he and Colback were the only ones still working at the mine.

After Uncles Dave and Joe got married, they divided what land was left—I think some of the other siblings had received their portions earlier—divided among them. At this time, mother had her own chicken coop and Aunt Ethel had hers. Mother also continued milking the two cows by herself. They provided a steady little income.

As I remember, there was only one building still standing above Leeds. It was the Wells Fargo Building. That's where Colback lived. He was the manager of the Wells Fargo Bank, I suppose. He married Maime Olsen. She had been married before and had one son, Glen, from her first marriage to a Beall.

## CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Mother was the one to whom I looked for security, love, support, and friendship. I remember standing by the sewing machine watching her sew—seam after seam—without stopping. She would then clip the seams apart; I think she did it this way to save thread. There were times we shared together going down in the field to pick asparagus. We picked currants together one summer; I sold mine and bought the material for my 4<sup>th</sup> of July dress—which was green voile. (I've always wondered if mother didn't help pay for it, but I don't know for sure.) I was proud of my accomplishment, nonetheless. In the fall, we gathered English walnuts under the big tree in back of the old dance hall and from the black walnut tree that grew by the house.

I was baptized just over the hill from Leeds in a large, clear pond. The highway now runs between town and where the pond was then located. The pond was just west of I-15 and north of the cemetery. It was called Angell's Pond. I guess the Angell family owned the land and pond. It was a clean pond, and I guess it was the one most often used by the people in the area for baptisms. It was June 5, 1921 when I was eight. Maxine Olsen was the same age as was Grace Stirling; we were all three baptized on the same day.

## CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

For Christmas, we used to go on the hillside and find a nice little pine tree, cut it, drag it home, then decorate it. Mother had some little paper Santa Claus faces with different designs on

the opposite sides. The ornaments were just paper—heavy, glazed paper—with Santa Claus on it. On the back was a holly, or poinsettia, or something like that. Then, around the edges, we attached some silver tinsel.

Mother had some candleholders and candles that she would put candles into, and then she would fasten or clamp them onto the tree branches. The candleholders had little clips with springs that held them tight to the branches. They held real candles. The candles were larger than you would put on a birthday cake. I remember they were all bright, red candles—about the size of a pencil—about that big around; about half as long—maybe three- or four-inches long.

Mother used the same candles year-after-year. We didn't light them very often or for very long because of the extreme danger of catching the house on fire. Mainly, we lit them only on Christmas Eve.

For Christmas, Jessie and I got dolls (which I think came from Grandma Scott) and, once, a China tea set for us to share. The dolls were not homemade. We had some quite nice dolls. I remember having some really pretty dolls, once, that definitely came from Grandma Scott in the mail all the way from Florida. One year, she sent each of us a buggy and some little chairs. The doll buggies were just like real baby buggies and Jessie and I rolled them all over town.

Grandma and Grandpa Scott always moved to Florida in the wintertime; one year, they sent a black doll to Wilson from there. Someone asked me if it was mine. I was flabbergasted. I quickly said, "No, no, no Nigger baby here! It be Wilson's!"

I also remember getting some leather dress gloves from Grandma Scott when I was bigger. Later, when we were older, grandmother sent \$50.00 to each of us for Christmas. That was a lot of money back then.

On Christmas Eve, we would always hang up our stockings and get some nuts, an orange, and some candy; stuff like this was in each of our stockings for Christmas morning. Then, we would usually get a doll and a few other little things maybe as presents. Later in the day on Christmas morning, we would go around to everyone else's places and carry our dolls. I remember well the fun we had walking up and down the streets and stopping to see what everyone else got for Christmas.

## EASTER COMMEMORATION

When it started to get close to Easter, I remember we would rush home from school. The first one that would get home would go out and gather all the eggs that could be found and cache, or hide, them for later. Then, just before Easter, we would sell maybe a dozen fresh eggs at the store and go and buy some luncheon meat, a candy bar, or some kind of candy for Easter. Then, the other eggs that were stashed, we would boil and color.

After Sunday School was finished, we would have our picnic all fixed up. We would go up on the hill—along with several other girls our age—and we would crack the eggs and see who could win on some simple targets designed by mother. Sometimes, we would just crack the eggs—have an egg fight you know. We never wasted any of the eggs. We would salvage each one to eat then, or later. Usually, we would each end up with four or five eggs to eat.

This was a traditional family activity. The important thing was to get the eggs cached so we had a good supply for Easter time. We always included Maxine, Leone, Grace, Jessie, and maybe the Carlow girls—Nettie and Jessie (she lived in Silver Reef). The rest of the year, Mother, Jessie, Wilson, or I gathered the eggs to bring them into the house to cook or to sell to the store. Easter time was different. We wanted to get enough to take care of the Easter activities and stuff.

## 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we couldn't have been very old, my mother and I went down to the bottom of the lot to pick currents. We picked them so we could sell them to the people who stopped at the house for some Dixie Wine. This is one of the ways that Jessie and I got a new dress for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Mother used to make them with lots of ruffles. Usually, they were dotted-Swiss dresses—pink, blue, sometimes green. The fabrics were the same, but the colors were always different. Mother would hem-stitch them with ruffles; she knew how to make fancy little dresses that everyone noticed.

Also, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we would have a little money to spend and we would buy an ice cream cone for a nickel, and we would usually run races with the other kids in town and get a prize for participating—an all-day sucker or something; that was about it. Sometimes, we would have several nickels to spend that day, and then, once in awhile, when we were a little bit older, the whole group of us girls—some of them would come from other places like Maureen Sullivan—would go to a movie.

## SUMMERTIME ACTIVITIES

We went barefoot all summer, except for Sundays. We always got a new dress for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July; it was voile, dotted-Swiss, or organdy. My favorite dress was pink; Jessie's was blue—with lots of picos and fancy ruffles. Some of the material had to be taken to St. George to have the ruffles sewn “commercially” on their machines. We had black, patent leather shoes. Mother made all our dresses; we never wore pants in those days. She also made pantywaists and bloomers from bleached flour and sugar sacks. Sugar came in 100 lb. measure; flour in 50 lb. bags. Salt came in bags, too, which we later used to strain the milk. Later on, the mills started putting the flour in patterned, colored cotton bags. Mother made a conscious effort to try and buy two or three bags of flour at the same time so she could save the printed fabric to have enough to make a blouse for the girls, or a shirt for Wilson.



In the summer we would often go swimming in the irrigation ditch. We would sneak into the house, grab a dirty dress out of the dirty clothes hamper, put it on, and then go swimming. Mother was never very happy about it. I think, for the most part, she was afraid of us getting drown in the ditch water. But once, we put on our fancier Sunday dresses, and they got really dirty. I think mother gave us both a spanking and a good lecture—which reinforced her disapproval of our behavior.

I spent a lot of time doing things with Maxine Olsen. She lived closest to our house in Leeds. She was more of a “Tomboy” than most of the other girls. We used to do a lot of crazy things. We used to spend a lot of time hunting eggs and nests—bird eggs. Once, I remember going down around the pasture and getting a dove’s nest. I remember getting a matchbox, lining the bottom with cotton, and going down to the field to see how many bird eggs we could find. Maxine and Iona Olsen—they were sisters—Maxine was my age and Iona was a year younger. I believe they spelled their last name O-L-S-E-N, but, I’m not certain. I played with Maxine a lot. She was truly my closest friend.

Chris Olsen was their grandparent; they lived across the road from us. Maxine lived in the house where Uncle Ammon lived. Later on, they moved up to the old Olsen house just across the lane. After our family moved to Cedar City and the Olsen grandparents passed away, they moved into their grandparents’ house and Uncle Ammon moved into the house where Maxine was raised as a kid.

Another friend was Grace Stirling (Tom Stirling was her dad). She lived quite close to the school. We would walk down the street and Grace would go home. The rest of us kids would walk on down the street to our houses. Grace would not walk down much to our houses to play. She felt it was far, too far, away for her to come play.

As kids, we used to make playhouses. We would save the old curtains, especially the lace curtains. I suppose they had been discarded. We would hang them up and sweep the ground and mark the rooms off with a stick or something to have different rooms in our house, and then we would hang up those old lace curtains on the limbs, or branches, or whatever we had around to make the walls of our playhouse.

On Saturday afternoons, the girls would get together and they would all go around town to each girl’s home and beg their parents for a nickel. We would go to the store and buy a candy bar or ice cream cone. You could buy a candy bar with a nickel. That’s about all the money we ever had as far as money goes.

Neither Jessie nor I ever had dance lessons or vocal lessons. We did take a few piano lessons, but they didn’t do anything towards getting any sort of a lifelong musical talent. Aunt Ruth had a piano. She taught school. She lived with us, but she taught school in Daggett County—so she wasn’t there too much, and we never touched the piano when she wasn’t around. The piano was hers. She used to play some. She used to play for Willard McMullin who was often asked to sing and she would accompany him during the summertime when she was not teaching school.

I didn't baby-sit much, either. I remember going to baby-sit for one family who lived clear to the other end of town, but I just didn't like it at all. The kids were okay, but it was just too late at night to walk home in the dark.

Baby-sitting wasn't much of a common practice back then. I think if they had a dance in the community, they would take the kids with them and lay them on their blankets—leave them in the wagon or buggy, or something, and they would normally just take them with them a whole lot. I think that was more the custom. They just didn't leave their young families. It was more of “everybody goes to the event” and everyone seemed to be happy about it.

## SCHOOL MEMORIES

I started kindergarten at the age of six in Leeds, Utah. The schoolhouse consisted of two rooms with a big, “pot-bellied” wood-burning stove in one corner of each room. There were four grades in each, with a woman teacher for the younger four grades and a man for the older four grades. There was a hall located between the two rooms. It was used at times when we lined up and marched or entered into the building or before we left to go outside. My teachers were Eda McMullin (her name was Edith, but they called her “Eda”) and her sister Ethel who taught some. They lived across the street from us. They taught in the lower grades. Vernon Church, Mr. Moody, and Mr. Hansen taught the upper grades.

Upon coming home from school, it was always a great pleasure to find a batch of hot bread just out of the oven. The first one home was lucky and got the heel or crust. We didn't stop to cut the loaf, but broke it into chunks and added butter and sorghum—which to my recollection was out of this world. Mother was a great cook—her bread, pies, and cakes were exceptional.

I remember one time neighbor borrowed a loaf of bread. When she returned a loaf, mother could not eat it. It was too tough and way overcooked. I think she ended up feeding it to the chickens and even they had a hard time eating it.

Chicken and noodles—or dumplings—were quite often our Sunday meal. We even enjoyed homemade cottage cheese—made from sour milk and warmed on the back of the stove for a long time with the whey taken out and salt and pepper added. This was a choice delicacy. My mother knew how to make good cottage cheese.

After Jessie completed the eighth grade in Leeds, mother and the three of us children moved to Cedar City. Leaving Leeds was very difficult, but there was no other choice. If Jessie and the other two of us were to continue our schooling, we had to move.

Mother's cousin, Roy Pack—Jessie Stirling Pack's son—had an ex-wife named Ellen; she wanted to sell her home located in Cedar City. Mother decided to buy it. The little house was located at 376 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Uncle Dave agreed to buy mother's share of the home in

Leeds, but her portion wasn't enough to pay for the house in Cedar City. Uncle Dave paid a little each month, but mother was left to come up with the rest of the mortgage.

The house had a bathroom, but it had no fixtures. Finances were tough while we were still in high school, and we moved into the basement and rented the upstairs to a family from Escalante for the winter. The mother and her boy (and several other high school students) lived in it. They put the fixtures in the bathroom for their rent payments. We went outside to an outhouse during that time.

In order to meet the monthly mortgage, mother took in washing for other families in the area. That is when we got our first electric Maytag clothes washer. She later got a job at the Cedar Hotel doing their laundry. She also did some of the guests' private laundry. Jessie and I went to the hotel and helped iron with her. Jessie used the fancy mangle (an Ironrite Model 75 Mangle Ironer), and I used a hand-iron to do people's clothes. Jessie and I also worked as maids in private home after school on weekdays as well as on Saturdays. It was a big change for both of us to have to carry so much responsibility.

I attended Jr. High School in a building that was just north of the B.A.C. (Branch Agriculture College) campus until the end of my eighth grade school year.

I graduated from the B.A.C. or the Branch Agriculture College in May of 1932. The B.A.C. was a branch of what is now Utah State University. It had three high school and two college grades. They just had a Jr. College back then. It was all the same kind of college program. It was staffed by all the same teachers, but each student had their own classes and subject matter to study. I wasn't much into dating at that time, and I don't remember ever going to any school dances or proms.

Mother always subscribed to the Improvement Era from the Church. At that time, it cost \$2.00 for an annual subscription. Mother was always diligent to read each magazine from cover to cover as it came each month. Then she would stack them in a little woven basket in the living room so she could go back and reread some of the articles a second time at a later date.

## EUREKA

After I graduated from high school in 1932, my cousin, VeRue Tullis, wrote and asked if I would come and work for the Fitches as a maid; they lived in Eureka. She was working for them as a cook. This was break for me because there was no work in Cedar City besides working for the Utah Park Services. Some of us girls had been to the Utah Parks to apply for a job. Mr. Rogers opened a drawer that was full of applications. (You had to have some "pull" or special talent to use for entertaining guests during the evenings at the parks.) It was in the middle of *The Depression* (1930–1940). I moved to Eureka.

During the first year that I went to Eureka, Uncle Dave's payments ran out on mother's portion of the family home in Leeds. I sent \$25.00 of the \$50.00 I earned each month home to her while I was employed by the Fitches.

VeRue—who was five years older than I—took me over as a big sister would. VeRue was active in a crowd of individuals who, for the most part, was married. They had parties and she often took me along as her guest. She liked to dance and was quite a “go-getter.”

I dated some while working in Eureka, but not frequently. We went to church on Sunday evenings and attended M.I.A. on Tuesdays. I was also in a crowd that had house parties. Since this was the time of *The Depression*, we made our own entertainment. To attend a show at the theater cost twenty-five cents, dances were ten cents for ladies. There was no T.V. at that time, but we had a small radio in the cottage where we lived. The cottage was constructed in back of the Fitches’ house. It consisted of a sun porch, a living room, two bedrooms, and a bath—which was the first indoor bathroom I enjoyed in my life.

Soon after I moved to Eureka, mother went to the doctor and found that she had diabetes. Jessie was home and wrote me saying she was making special “bran muffins” and weighing all of mother’s food portions. Mother had to take insulin shots. Jessie was afraid to give mother the shots, so Wilson gave them to her. Wilson was at home—still attending school and working part-time for Reuben “Rube” Winterose at the funeral home.

VeRue Tullis married Lon Sandstrom who was from Eureka. She was working for Fitches up there when she met him.

The Fitches were wealthy mining people; they were staunch Catholics. I worked for them for six years or so. As their maid, I served their meals and their tea. It was all quite different than just living “the ordinary life.” I had to clean house and, of course, I would set the table and serve the meals—always good cooking. And then, they would have their tea.

I loved the Fitch family. They were good people—very, very, nice people. They were always really considerate. VeRue got \$75 a month and I got \$50—plus our board and room. Of course, that was in the *Depression* times. Pretty good wages back then, really.

Mr. Fitch used to tell us about working for a dollar a day, or something like that. He was a nice old gentleman. He didn’t think that we were overpaid, but he wanted us to be satisfied. He would tell us about his experiences; he would come out into the kitchen just to talk. He was just a nice old gentleman and they were always dressed up. He always wore a suit with a collar shirt and tie. He never wore anything but a suit all day long. He would have his coat on when he came downstairs in the morning for breakfast. That is the type of people they were.

Mrs. Fitch would go to mass just about every morning. John, the chauffeur, would come and get her and take her to mass. He drove their car. It was a Cadillac—very nice and new. Sometimes, they would go to Salt Lake. They had a very large home that they lived in while in Eureka. It had a sun porch in the front, and then it had a living room a little smaller than the porch. The living room was not really large, but it was still fairly good sized. Then, they had two bedrooms in the back and three bedrooms upstairs. They had a stove in the front room, but their heat was piped through radiators throughout all the house from a large boiler that was located outside the house and used to heat and circulate the water. That was pretty fancy heating for a home back then.

In those days, you could buy things a lot cheaper. I could buy a dress that I would wear to dances or to church for five or ten dollars. We got off in the afternoon at two o'clock—that was when we got finished with lunch. And then we would come back at about four to serve tea. They always had dinner at six o'clock P.M. When we finished cleaning up after dinner, we would be off for the evening. But on Sundays, they would have dinner served at two o'clock in the afternoon; they would always move the time up on Sundays. They would have us leave them something light for supper on Sundays—salad, sandwiches, or something like that.

We didn't have any days off—only hours during the day. We did get Sunday afternoons off and we were able to attend the evening services for church.

When I served tea in the afternoon and dinner in the evening—and lots of dinner parties—I was always expected to be wearing a maid's uniform. They had many dinner parties, and they would be very elegant. Mrs. Fitch had some elegant China dishes, and she had one gorgeous centerpiece. Her dishes were always placed in the China Closet after each meal as soon as they were washed and dried.

The Fitches did a lot of traveling—to Italy, Venice, and all over the world for that matter. She had a lot of vases and things that she had picked up during their travels. She did her own shopping when she went out—even in Salt Lake—and she often had fresh, cut flowers. Many of them came from her own flower gardens around their home.

Mrs. Fitch had white, linen tablecloths that she used for every meal. She had someone that would do her laundry. The tablecloths had matching napkins. She enjoyed her silver pieces and had heavy silverware place settings—enough for twenty-four or more people. She also had some big plates (chargers) with a heavy quarter-inch rib of solid gold around each one. They would serve fruit first—they had a special China fruit dish—then they would take that off the charger, the put the dinner plate in its place. Mr. Fitch would do the carving. When they had turkey, he would carve the turkey. When they had ham, he would carve the ham. After dinner, they would have cocktails—their champagne or their beer—in champagne glasses. They would always have goblets for their water, of course, and goblets for their wine with their meal.

We didn't have many cars at that time. Usually, we would walk to town. We would walk down past the house and over to the side, then through the fence, down the road that lead to a mine that was in back of the house, and down past another mine down below the hill toward town.

Each year, Fitches would go away in January and VeRue and I would return home to Cedar City for a week. This continued until VeRue got married. Virginia Knell took her place; she was from New Castle and the same age as VeRue. Virginia had been there a year when Fitches went to Death Valley. It was a bad winter and they stayed in Death Valley longer than usual. Virginia and I returned to Eureka after our week of vacation and stayed by ourselves for about a month before the Fitches returned home. The Fitches were happy that we had been there and we both got a small bonus for our loyalty when they returned.

Fitches traveled to Salt Lake and stopped at their daughter's home—Mrs. (Lilian) Fredrick Johnson. Mr. Fitch suffered a stroke while visiting there and became bed-ridden. Mrs. Fitch sent for me to come help and John Cronan, the chauffeur, returned to Eureka and drove me to Salt Lake City. Mr. Fitch died about ten days later. On the morning after his death, Mrs. Fitch called me to her room. At that time, she asked me to promise to stay with her for at least a year. I'm sure she knew there would be some changes.

Mrs. Fitch's daughter, Mrs. Maude Hillsdale—whose husband was killed in a mine accident leaving her with a boy, Paul—came to live with Mrs. Fitch in Eureka during the summer. Mrs. Hillsdale would take Paul to England (beginning at age five) to attend school during the winters, and then return home during the summers. After Mr. Fitch's death, things were not as pleasant as before—especially with Mrs. Hillsdale's input. After a year's time, Virginia wrote and secured a job as a cook at Cedar Breaks National Park. We left Eureka together.

## AFTER LEAVING EUREKA

After leaving Eureka, I went back to Cedar City. One day, Wilson drove me to Cedar Breaks to see Virginia. She was working there as a cook in the lodge. She asked me what I was doing and I said, "Nothing."

She said, "Why don't you come up here and work?" While I was there, I met Miss Hammer, the boss. I suppose, with Virginia's help, I soon got a call inviting me to come work at the lodge as a waitress.

We had two busses of "Dudes" for lunch each day. They came on tours by train to Lund, then to Cedar, and on to Cedar Breaks on busses driven by college fellows. They also went to Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon, and Zion Canyon before returning back to Cedar City. It was a weeklong tour for them. We became family: the boss, the cook, four waitresses, the maintenance man, and two boys—who helped with the cabins and in the kitchen (cleaning up and whatever else was needed). I got to town to see mother about once a week. By this time, my sister Jessie was in Salt Lake City working.

We worked for Utah Parks Council which was under the Union Pacific Railroad with headquarters located in Omaha, Nebraska. Utah Parks took care of all the parks. A lot of kids went back to school at the end of the summer. I returned to Cedar City and worked part-time at the Escalante Hotel as a waitress. Mr. Larsen came in one day early in the spring and sent me to Grand Canyon to open the cafeteria for the season. Miss Hammer went down to work for a fellow on leave. When she saw me, she said, "What are you doing down here?"

I said, "I don't know. I really don't like it down here." She let Mr. Larsen know that she wanted me at Cedar Breaks. It wasn't many days until they had a bus that came through and I was headed back to Cedar Breaks.

I was working at Cedar Breaks when World War II started on September 1, 1939. At that time, all the lodges in the parks were closed. The Air Force Cadets came to Cedar City. They went to school and trained at the college. They roomed at Escalante Hotel (located where the Sizzler Café is today). The Union Pacific garage was turned into a mess hall. The hotel kitchen was the bakery with one baker who was also the butcher. The chef and four cooks, one of whom was a woman, came from the Parks. They all brought their families who ate in the mess hall. The families were given lodging nearby. I was put on as a salad girl working with three other ladies.

I traveled to Denver, Colorado by train and worked in the Mission Home the winter before I was married, as a cook. I was referred to President Seegmiller, the Mission President, by his oldest daughter who was married to a Mr. Wood. When I went to Denver, I was to meet Mr. Seegmiller, the Mission President, at the train station. I knew what he looked like, but he didn't know what I looked like. He said that it was the first time that he hadn't been able to pick out someone; he had never missed spotting a missionary. I guess that he suspected that I would be someone considerably older.

The Seegmillers had quite a large family, but only three who were not married. They had a daughter working in Denver and two boys that were attending college in the area. With their family and others, we usually had about thirteen individuals every evening for dinner.

## MY FIRST CAR

While working in Denver at the Mission Home, I was paid fairly well and learned to be extremely frugal with my money. There was not much I wanted to do in Denver, and there were few opportunities to go out with anyone else—after all, I was surrounded by missionaries. All my financial needs were met; I was provided board and room at the Mission Home.

When I returned to Cedar City, Wilson was getting really anxious to move on. He wanted to move to Arizona and accept a job working on a large cattle ranch. He had a car that he really wanted to sell so he could follow his dreams. That's when I bought my first car. It was a black Dodge with a mauve colored interior—it was “gorgeous.” (I looked really pretty in it when I wore pink.) Wilson took excellent care of the car. It had a lot of miles on it, but the mechanical parts were in great condition as was the interior. He taught me how to drive it by going on the back roads, and then we drove into town and parked along the city sidewalks several times. He made me back up, change gears, then drive down the road. After our first major drive, he had me drive home. We parked the car and he taught me how to check the water in the radiator. Then he made me drive up on some wooden blocks to change the oil. He was meticulous with the maintenance and care of that car and I was proud to become its next owner.

We took the car for another drive to get some gas. He paid for the gas, then said, “The rest is up to you.” He was satisfied that I would take as good of care of that car as he had done. I didn't have a driver's license, but then again, not many others did either.

I drove that car for several years without ever having a moment's trouble that I can recall. I changed the oil about every two thousand miles and got to visit new places and see wonderful sights all around the state of Utah.

## DIXIE MEETS FRED

I met Fred Burt Harris through his cousin, Ronda Walker, who told me about him. She was younger than I, but there were no girls my age after spending six years in Eureka. Ronda lived just a block away in Cedar City. We started palling around, going to shows, and such. The Church had some kind of Mutual Conference in Beaver, and Ronda invited me and two other girls to go with her. We stayed at her Aunt Jean Harris' place. That is when I first met Fred. However, he was not around much at that time.

Later, Fred came to Cedar City to go fishing with his Uncle Erwin, Ronda's father, and family living there. Ronda invited me to go with them. That was the start.

Fred came over to Cedar City a few times, and then he invited me to Beaver a few times. I had a car so I drove Ronda and her Aunt Sue. We went around and met some of the family. We went down to Uncle Kent Morgan's place and the girls introduced me as Fred's girlfriend. Uncle Kent caught on immediately and really encouraged me to pursue Fred. We didn't go together for too long. I had gone out with other fellows, but they were just not the "right" ones.

At the end of World War II, September 2, 1945, the hotel was taken back by the Union Pacific Railroad and was reopened to the public. The salad girls were kept on to help with the clean up. It was at this time, when I became engaged to Fred. Mr. Rogers, the one who had shown us all the applications in his drawer, knew us all by our first names. (I am certain he knew all the employees' names in each park.) At first, he offered me a job as a hostess in the café, but instead, gave Fred and me a cabin at Bryce Canyon as a present for our honeymoon.

I was thirty-three years old when we were married—considered an "old maid" in those days. I married Fred Burt Harris on September 14, 1945 in Beaver.