

# FAMILY LIFE, CHILDHOOD, TEENAGE YEARS

## INTRODUCTION

An article in the *Christian Science Monitor Weekly* portrayed a young girl touching a tablet screen.<sup>1</sup> That is modern childhood as today's parents and grandparents know. Even three-year-olds call their grandparents on a smartphone. What could be more wildly different from the likes of children between 1880 and 1930? Much has been written about childhood since then.

In the MHA Tanner Lecture at the annual meeting in 2001, Elliott West presented a fine overview of the “Children’s Story,” suggesting that many children suffered because of their Mormon membership between 1830 and 1870. Many were driven from their homes in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. Those in Europe experienced leaving that continent, crossing the Atlantic, and settling near the Mississippi River—only to then face crossing the Great Plains. Many lost parents, and all struggled, especially with hunger.<sup>2</sup>

West says of the early Mormon children that “the struts that had held life together suddenly fell away [when they became Mormons]. Everything altered. Power shifted instantly.”<sup>3</sup> They became part of a new religious minority. There were fears of separation and loss of homes. He points out

that the difficulties parents faced by converting to Mormonism especially had an impact on the children.

When the decision was made to transfer the Church headquarters to the Rocky Mountains, the children faced more hunger, more cold, more trekking, and sometimes more separation from parents. Disease was a huge danger, and medical care was unavailable. "Some remember the adventure and excitement, but for others it was an agony of exhaustion and short supplies, especially during the handcart disasters."<sup>4</sup>

West's focus on the earliest period of "Becoming Mormon" gives a firm picture that contrasts with childhood in the 1880–1930 period. Children still had trials in mid-nineteenth-century Utah, but they did not have the fears of their ancestors. Children were obviously a large portion of the settlers of Utah. Pictures, songs, and even statues about them abound in the state, but their personal statements are limited in comparison to their pioneer parents. Considerable scholarly attention has been devoted to the children, but the sources (their words) are limited. It is usually the parents who tell of the children rather than the children telling of themselves. Recently, several scholars have focused on the children. They have found a few journals, many pictures, some letters, and a lot of oral histories. Most of them are written by adults reflecting on their youth.

Once the Mormons settled in the Great Basin and established scores of cooperative villages, life changed dramatically. Soon, each family had an acre-sized garden where they grew fruit and vegetables. They also raised chickens, pigs, and cows for their daily food, and they had a farm out of town that was also their support. Stability returned, but so did intensive labor. Children were a main source of that labor. William G. Hartley tells of life in Gunnison, Utah, in the second half of the nineteenth century. There were between 500 and 1,200 people living on the twenty blocks and their expansion over those fifty years. Initially, there was an ungraded school that taught through the fifth grade with little equipment and no books. There were endless health problems and some childhood deaths. The children worked on the gardens and the older ones on the farms, but they also played with their many siblings and neighbors. They participated in the regular Church meetings and socials.<sup>5</sup>

Susan Arrington Madsen has written widely about childhood and has written several articles on the same topic. She authored an article titled

“Growing Up in Pioneer Utah: Agonies and Ecstasies,”<sup>6</sup> in which she suggests four reasons to honor pioneer youngsters. First, they were the largest minority. She quotes Elliott West, professor of history at the University of Arkansas, who wrote that “a large portion of the actors have been left out of history.”<sup>7</sup> A second reason, according to Madsen, is to give credit where credit is due: “Pioneer children and adolescents carried a heavy load on their relatively small shoulders.”<sup>8</sup> Third, she said that young pioneers are worth watching to learn about their interests and challenges. And “fourth is that the courageousness and optimism of the children contributed significantly to the well-being of the group.”<sup>9</sup>

Madsen includes an example of Martha Cragun Cox, who as a child sat up all of one night in St. George with a widow’s dying infant. The mother was totally exhausted from attending the dying infant for two weeks and caring for other children. She lay down and went to sleep, and Martha watched the child die. This experience deeply influenced her, and she later became a lifelong nurse and midwife in southern Utah. Another author, Martha Sontag Bradley, also wrote an article about pioneer children.<sup>10</sup> It deals with the impact—particularly the negative impact—of polygamy on children as the federal government attempted to enforce the anti-polygamy laws. The fathers often had to go into hiding and the children often had to lie about that. Children were considered illegitimate by the government. Sometimes, they were left to provide for themselves and even became estranged from their fathers. These children had no luxury of childhood. This is a powerful article, but it is more about the parents of the people interviewed for this book. These people came after polygamy had ended, but their parents were those children; and some who settled in this area came from northern Mexico during the 1910 revolution, where polygamy was still practiced.

Davis Bitton wrote yet another article about pioneer children.<sup>11</sup> He points out that non-Mormon visitors considered the Mormon children to be neglected, filthy, disorderly rebels. On the contrary, the Mormon view of children was that they were workers, were part of an eternal family, and were gifted with divine creativity. They were considered to be faithful, indispensable, and divine increase. They were to advance the kingdom of God and learn the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bitton discusses the issue of teaching religion in the schools. The local village schools were sponsored by the towns and not the state, so members of the local congregation took turns going to the schools to teach a weekly class on religion. The high schools were governed by the state and did not allow religion in the schools. The Church organized Sunday schools and Young Women and Young Men associations to fill that gap, but attendance was only 50 percent. In the 1930s, the Church took the next step and established seminaries adjacent to many high schools for released-time religious instruction. Again, attendance of the LDS youth was less than half. Davis emphasizes that the role of mothers was pivotal in raising children, teaching them skills and especially the principles of the gospel, even to the rowdies.

The people who will tell such stories in this study, like Emma Lucinda Nelson Larson, lived mainly in villages, though some were on ranches. The central community in the region for these families was St. George, where the tabernacle, the temple, and the courthouse were located. Santa Clara was ten miles to the west. About twenty miles to the north, Veyo was founded in 1911. Nearby was Gunlock, already fifty years old. About fourteen miles north of Gunlock was Pine Valley, an important lumbering and cattle community. Even further north, people began settling in 1896 in what became Enterprise, especially after the Enterprise Dam was completed in 1910. Newcastle was nearby but did not become a rival to Enterprise as it was anticipated to be.

About six miles to the east of St. George was Washington city, the site of the old cotton factory and many farms, founded in 1854. In 1906, some twenty miles further east, Hurricane and La Verkin were founded. They were the sites of canals that were built on the side of the canyon, diverting Virgin River water into those new towns. Just north of La Verkin was Toquerville, one of the original villages, and north of there were Harrisburg and Leeds, also settled very early. Even further north, Harmony and Kanarrville were settled. Pinto was up in the mountains west of them. Harmony was founded in 1852, the first town in the county.

Hurricane, also founded about 1906, was at the foot of the Hurricane cliffs, adjacent to the Virgin River, where the Hurricane Canal came out of the canyon. A difficult trail had been built up that cliff as early as 1858, and the town of Virgin had been built at the entrance to the upper canyon. In

1860, Rockville was founded further up the canyon, and Grafton nearby at about the same time. Springdale and Shunesburg were also established then at what became the entrance to Zion National Park. Several towns in nearby Nevada were also part of the Dixie environment—Logandale, Mesquite, and Bunkerville. Some towns in Washington County had been abandoned by the time this story begins—Hebron, Harrisburg, Bloomington, and Price. The village towns were small, between 100 and 300 people. In contrast, St. George, the capital, had 1,500 people by 1900 and grew to 4,600 by 1950.

Ranching was an alternative to village living. Ranches were well developed in the western area between Santa Clara and Pine Valley. Many ranches were established on the Arizona Strip and a large one was at Pipe Springs, east of Hurricane. Others were scattered throughout the area, usually away from the villages and farms.

The farmers living in the villages left their homes in the morning and rode out to their farms. The farms were small because their existence depended on scarce irrigation water. These people were living in a desert with only five to eight inches of rainfall annually. Each of the villages, however, was located on a small stream. The limited water required that irrigation be tightly regulated. Each family was assigned a four-hour water turn once every three or four days. These villages and the water system were well established by the time this story began. By 1900, most of the villages were in existence, including a school and a church in each town (often in the same building).

Those living on ranches and the few who tried dry farming focused mainly on cattle and sheep. It was a risky business, dependent mainly on fluctuating seasons of rainfall. Some years, there was little precipitation. These men were essentially capitalists instead of being in the cooperative system of the villages. They lived away from schools and churches, which were important to them. They had to find markets for their products. But above all, they had to find water and food for their animals. They were often away from their families and community for weeks and months.

Some men tried living by working in mines. Southern Nevada had several of them, but work was often transient. Living near a mine was not conducive for family men. Sometimes, though, they went to work in the mines and came home only occasionally. They were dependent on employers and surrounded by a lifestyle often in conflict with their values.

Other alternatives included cutting timber and finishing it into lumber in mills. This was an essential industry for community building, but it, too, was seasonal, and it took fathers away from families. School teaching was a valued employment and the teachers often farmed in the summers. Those who undertook this work had to get advanced education, often outside the county. A couple of families built ice plants, and a few people tried to make a living as shoemakers. Road building and carpentry attracted quite a few, and working on the railroad drew many to that work, but they had to live outside the county. In most cases, women and children continued to maintain gardens and small farms to provide the food for the families while the husbands and older sons were away.

Central to all these people in “Utah’s Dixie” and nearby areas was family life. This chapter will quote about thirty people as they describe life with their parents, siblings, and friends in their childhood and teenage years in these villages, ranches, and elsewhere. Now, let us turn to the words of people who were interviewed about their childhood.

## INTERVIEWS

### EMMA LUCINDA NELSON LARSON

Emma Lucinda Nelson Larson was born on 18 February 1891 in St. George, Utah.<sup>12</sup> “About the earliest [event] I remember was [when] my mother had a little baby. I think I was about four years old. When the baby [Charles Nelson] was about a month old, it died [from] pneumonia. I remember my father making a little casket to bury the baby in. Then about a year later they took my mother to [the Utah State] Mental Hospital in Provo [Utah County, Utah] where she remained for fifteen years.

“When the sister six years older than me married at the age of eighteen that left me the oldest [one] at home. [I was] twelve [years old.] I had to assume a lot of responsibility, but I had a lot of good brothers. They were good cooks and helped with the laundry and the housework. We got along fairly well. My father was a boot and shoemaker. He also hauled freight with a team from Modena [Iron County, Utah]. That left us children at home alone a lot. There were a number of things that we

did that we shouldn't have done. We didn't know any better, but we got along fairly well.

"Yes, I had a lot of fun. I was the wild one. I think sometimes if my children had done the things that I did when I was a child I wouldn't have liked it, but I really didn't know any better a lot of times. We did have fun. We played ball. We would get out in the street in the evening and play Run, Sheep, Run and Hide-and-Seek. There were about eight or ten of us, all about the same age, and we huddled together. We had molasses candy pulls and a lot of fun.

"I went to school most of the time. In those days, there were no bakeries. You couldn't buy a loaf of bread anywhere. My father would be gone. My brothers would be away. They went to the mines to work. I would mix our bread in the morning before I went to school. When my father was home, he would write me an excuse for the teacher to let me out so that I could bake the bread. Then he [had] the teacher understand that when he wasn't there, she would have to let me write my own excuse, because I had to go home and take care of the bread. We had cows. My sister younger than me used to help. We had to milk the cows, [take care of] the pigs and the horses, and do all the chores when the men were all gone.

"I remember a lot of things about [my father.] He was a good shoemaker. There wasn't much money in those days. I remember he would take us two younger girls in the wagon and go over to Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah]. We would gather up a gunny sack full of shoes to mend or repair. Then he would bring them home and get them all fixed. He would take us back with him when he took the shoes back. It was mostly trade. I remember we used to get squash, grapes, dried fruit, and very little money. He had a farm that he tried to run. He [grew] enough hay for his own stock, the horse team, and the milk cows. He always had a good garden."

## DANIEL WINDER

Daniel Winder was born on 29 April 1905 in Mt. Carmel in Kane County and lived some of his life in Springdale. He went to school in Mt. Carmel for four grades and four more in Springdale. He recalled the following: "When I was nine years old I was working for Henry Esplin who at the time was bishop of the Orderville Ward [Kane County, Utah]. I was on a ranch

about a mile from this ranch and we were clearing and plowing ground. We had about forty acres cleared. Charles and Homer Esplin, Henry's boys, helped clear the ground and then they had to go down on the Arizona Strip to bring their sheep up. I stayed there at the ranch and plowed [the] forty acres with a hand plow. [It was] the first time it [had] ever [been] plowed. Anybody that knows anything about running a hand plow knows that was quite a job for a nine-year-old boy to do. Three years later, I was on that same ranch [and] I cut and harvested forty acres of corn alone. [I] had to cut it with a hoe and load it on a wagon, haul it into the yard and shock it.<sup>13</sup> I worked there for forty-five days and never saw a soul."<sup>14</sup>

### MYRTLE CRAWFORD WINDER

Myrtle Crawford Winder was born in Springdale on 20 February 1908. She gives a girl's view with both fun and difficulties: "I remember before I even went to school [and] after grandma [died] my little sister Della was just a baby. Mom used to ride a horse from Oak Creek [Washington County, Utah] down to Springdale to clerk in the store and help grandpa. One morning it was cold. Mama always rode side-saddle [as] she was quite a horseback rider. As we went down [the trail], the saddle turned and mama turned and the horse started to run. The horse ran up the hillside, up on the bank, and we fell off. I took Della down to Aunt Fannie [Gifford's] place and stayed there with her while mama went back [to] get the horse. She had to go clear back to the corral to get her. When we [went] down to Springdale, I would watch Della while [mother] would work in the store and help grandpa.

"I had a cousin [Merle Crawford] my same age [and we went to school together]. The first year I guess we [arrived] home all right but the next year there were boy cousins her age, Norman Crawford, Heber Crawford, and Roger Rupert from Springdale and Edwin Stout from Hurricane. The four of us [would] find hills to climb and roll down and slide. We would be let out [of school] about 2:30 p.m. [and the other youngsters were] let out at 4:00 p.m. We would be home most of the time because we had places to go.

"I remember the last year (eighth grade when) we were to school, there was a boy there by the name of Cecil Hepworth. He would take the powder out of shotgun bullets and then cut the bullets up and make all the girls [rings]. We called them engagement rings. He would put the powder down



[on] the floor and strike a match to it; right [on] the schoolhouse floor. I don't know how he got by with it but the teacher let him do it. Maybe she couldn't handle him. One day he went up the trail and [took] some powder [from] where they were making it. He filled his pocket and then stooped over and struck a match to some [powder]. [It] burned and flashed up into the powder in his pockets and he died from [those] burns.

"Grandfather [William Robinson] Crawford had a great big barn. That was the best place that you could ever pick to play run-sheep-run or hide and seek. It had some great big swings in it and we enjoyed that. We also had candy pulls. At these parties we would have candy pulls or just go outside and play. I could play with any of the girls and some of the boys in basketball or baseball. There were four of us girls. I used to play marbles with the cousin of mine and two other boys. Sometimes the girls would be against the boys and sometimes we would do it the other way, one of the girls and a boy [as a team]. We really tried to see which one could get there first to start that marble game."<sup>15</sup>

## MARY HAFEN LEAVITT

Mary Hafen Leavitt was born on 5 November 1877. She tells about life on the west side of the county in Santa Clara: "My mother's first husband was John Reber. He only lived ten days after they were married. They went to Salt Lake to be married. [It happened] the day after he came home. He had another family besides my mother then. She was the second wife to him. They went out in the field to see the crops after they had been gone ten days. On the way back they stopped at a little stream of water [because] the horses wanted a drink. He caught his bridle on the wagon tongue and ripped it off. That scared the horses. They had blinds over their eyes. As soon as the bridle was off, [the horses] were frightened and began to run down the lane as fast as they could go. [They] went over a wood pile and almost tipped the wagon over. It threw the husband [John Reber] out and a [wagon] wheel ran over him and crushed him. He died that night. None of the women were hurt. They all hung onto the rack. It was just a hayrack they were riding on. Mother was a widow for a year or so; then she married my father, John [George] Hafen.

"I remember lots of little things in that first home down here. I was looking over this book a while ago. My mother was a very congenial woman.

The young folks often came there to spend the evening with her. She made the most beautiful valentines you ever saw. They would come, maybe three or four of them, to get the valentines made for their best boyfriend. Each could have one of mother's valentines. They thought that was all they needed. They would often do her work while she [made] them. She taught them to crochet and to knit. So many times they would come and spend the evening with mother. I will always remember those lovely evenings.

"There was a man who came from Switzerland. He lived there. Rick Sickel was his name [and] he taught all the young folks to make baskets. [This area] was great fruit country and everybody had to pick fruit, so they had these baskets to fill up and dump in the wagon. We would often go [to pick fruit] before sunrise in a big double bed. Do you know what a double bed wagon box is? We would take these baskets along, fill them and dump them in the wagon. [When] the wagon was full, [we would] go home and spend the rest of the day cutting. It would take all day long to cut the wagon load of peaches.

"We cut them in halves and put them out on scaffolds to dry. We would fill one board at a time, and put on another board and another board, until we had the whole yard full [of scaffolds]. Then my father would take these to Beaver [Beaver County, Utah] and exchange [the peaches] for clothing and cheese. [He would] come home with all kinds of nice [items]. He was a very enterprising man. He did a lot of peddling besides tending his store. Of course, his wife took care of the store when he was gone. He had a big family. He had about ten children [in] his first family. Arthur K. [Knight Hafen] is one of his grandsons."<sup>16</sup>

## VERA HINTON EAGER

Vera Hinton Eager was born on 14 August 1899 in Hinckley, Millard County. Several families from Washington County had moved there to start that town. She later moved to Hurricane, and these memories tell of the earliest settlement there: "In 1905, we moved to Virgin, Utah, which was Father's home town. In March of 1905, they moved to Hurricane [Washington, County] Utah [and we were] the first family to move to Hurricane. I was six years old at the time.

"When we moved on the Hurricane Bank, as we called it, it was a big, flat place. It had chaparral, slippery elm, and sagebrush all over the flat

[land]. We made trails through this to go from one place to another. While we were the first family to move there, it was only a few days until other families moved in. The first church [meeting] that we held in Hurricane was under a bowery which the men [had] built. They put the posts up and posts across. They would find cottonwood trees—which there were quite a few [of] around Hurricane—[and] put them across the top of the bowery to make shade. They would split poles and fix them for seats for people to sit on. This is where they had the first [meetings of] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They [found] a bell [and] anchored [it] to three poles. It would ring one half-hour before Sunday school meeting and Primary. My brother had to ring the bell for Primary, as my mother was the president of the Primary. It was his job to ring the bell one half-hour before each Primary. When my sister was born, he was unhappy because she wasn't a boy. He wanted a brother, so the brothers could take turns ringing the bell. He thought that he would have to ring that bell forever.

“While we were living there, we would go out on the hills. Father took up a lot of land, so we had hills to roam. While we were exploring one day, we found a place called a skeleton hole. The reason for this name is that it seemed that part of the ground had just dropped from the surface. It was a deep hole. When we found [it], it was large enough for a man to get down in there. [The men would] go down in there and pile rocks up so they could get in and out of this skeleton hole. At first, there were a lot of dead animal carcasses down there, like rabbits and coyotes. They would come running along, and they wouldn't notice this hole soon enough [and] down they would go. They would just drop down into this hole. It smelled really bad down in there. We had lots of fun down in there when the rocks were piled up so that we could get in there. We didn't have flashlights, but we would light a stick and go way, way back in for about a mile. . . . We were really quite frightened to be down in there for fear some wild animal would drop down in and it would be hungry. Maybe it would attack us! We didn't like to go down in there too [much], but we sure did like to go over there and look down in [to] see what we could see.

“We would walk over the hill and go swimming in the Virgin River. We had so much fun swimming in the river. The boys would find holes that were deep that they would swim in. [The] girls were a little bit [afraid] to go in

the deep holes, so we would swim [and] wade around, and float on the river. Then we would cross the river and go over to Ash Creek. Under the rocks in Ash Creek we would find suckerfish. We would catch those and take them home. Our mother would fry them in the frying pan, crisp and brown. We would eat them, bones and all. I never remember fish being as good as those suckers were that we caught down at Ash Creek. One day, while we were going down there, my husband Thomas's sister killed a rattlesnake. [Thomas and I] weren't married at the time. All of the rest of us were frightened to death. We didn't know what to do, but she got a big stick and a rock and killed the rattlesnake. We all thought she was so brave for killing the rattlesnake."<sup>17</sup>

### **BLANCH MATHIS MCCOMB**

Blanch Mathis McComb gives a city girl's view of youth. She was born on 21 July 1903 in St. George and describes the capital-city life of advantaged young people: "I remember having such a happy childhood and the fun we had with all the neighbor children. We had our little playhouse where we had divided rooms and a real little stove where we gathered vegetables from the garden and made soup. We picked Pottawattamie plums and pears and our mother let us bottle them. We would play that were bottling [canning] fruit. One of our neighbor friends, Wilma Church, and I used to play on the Black Hill a lot. We had playhouses there. That is why we are so fond of the smell of chaparral now because we always remember those little playhouses we had on the Black Hill.

"My cousin Helen Miles and I were very dear friends and [we] spent so many happy times together. I remember especially the time when Helen and I were eight years of age and were to be baptized. Our mothers couldn't go with us and so they fixed our clothes and we went down to the temple alone. I remember how they praised us for being such brave little girls to come that far alone.

"We had a lot of the fun days [at school]. All the [students were] together when we would go on picnics and hikes. I remember the Arbor Days over on the Woodward School grounds. There was no landscaping there but we would plant trees and make little gardens. Each class [had a] little garden. Arbor Day was quite an outstanding day. I remember the big wood piles because the furnace burned wood and the huge stacks of wood

[were kept] out on the playground. [We] marched up and down the stairs. All the classes formed out in front of the school and the school orchestra [played] and we would take turns and march up those long steps.

“It was a real event to get to [Dixie] High School where we could have different teachers for each class. All through high school, I remember the fun class was chorus. We would go up to the Tabernacle where we held chorus [practice] with Brother [Joseph William] McAllister. We loved [him] so much. He taught us so much [about] music. We had the operas up in the old opera house.

“Nearly every family in town had [the] flu in 1918. I remember when we had [it] in our home. Nearly all of us [were] ill with it and I was ‘out of my head,’ [as] they used to call it. I remember my father administering to me and how it helped and calmed me down. Of course, we all recovered.

“I do remember one incident though. We were juniors [and] after the ‘D’ was put up on the hill, we came to school one morning and someone was standing at the door asking if we were juniors. They said we were not allowed to go into the building. This surprised all [of] us because we didn’t know what had happened. It turned out that two boys in our class had gone up in the night and painted a ‘22’ in the center of the ‘D’. It spoiled our fun. So the letters were removed because they had marred the official block ‘D’ on the hill. We all joined in and went up the hill and helped erase it, although it wasn’t our fault.

“All through my life, from the time when we were quite young, it seems like we had fun. We had our slumber parties on the Fourth of July, hay rides in the morning and playing down in the Seegmiller farm with Helen. All the adventures that we had are so much fun to think about. I remember Anna Miles and I were Beehive leaders [in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]. We went to Pine Valley Mountain and camped. We rode horseback one day over Pine Valley Mountain with a large group from St. George. We wound up through the canyon and the mountains. I especially remember [Dilworth] Snow and the marvelous voice that he had. As we rode along the trail, single file, he would sing and his voice would just echo through the mountain. We went up over the pass of the mountain and went to Cabin Valley and back down to Pine Valley that evening. It was a lot more fun going up than it was going down, I can say that! I remember going to the

dance in Pine Valley that night in their church with the lamps lighted and the old orchestra. [A] thunderstorm came up [and] we were all so frightened.”<sup>18</sup>

### **LOLA BELLE DEMILLE BRYNER**

In contrast to the life in St. George is this report from Lola Belle DeMille Bryner in Rockville. She was born on 21 May 1901 about the same time as Blanch McComb from St. George. Her lifestyle was different, even though they lived in the same county, and she was very positive about her family and community life: “I was born while my father was on a mission to the Southern states. In his diary he [wrote] that he saw in [a] dream the buggy that was going around the narrow dug way from Rockville to Springdale [Washington County] to get the midwife to come back to Rockville to help my mother [with] her delivery. When he received the letter from my mother stating that he had a daughter, it was no surprise to him because he knew that I had been born.

“Rockville is hemmed in by beautiful mountains on each side and the Virgin River flows down through the green little valley. I had four brothers and three sisters. We grew up here, untouched by civilization. We had a freedom that is seldom known because we were so isolated in this small town. In those days, the only means of [transportation] was by horse and buggy so we didn’t travel very far. We roamed the mountains, hills, and valleys. We watched the birds, gathered wildflowers, and had a wonderful childhood in spite of the hardships which we had [to] endure, but most everyone was poor in those days so we didn’t notice it.

“We also had a town Christmas party that was always special. It was held in the school building which was used for church, dances, and all community gatherings. Our Christmas party was held there. A huge Christmas tree was put on the stage and each parent would bring a gift for [their] child and it was hung on the Christmas tree. Then, at night, we all went to [the] party. They had a program. Then they would open the curtains on the stage and there was this beautiful tree. Our eyes must have looked like stars as we looked at it! Then Santa Claus would come in the door and run up the [aisle] crying, ‘Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas,’ and go up on the stage. He would take the gifts from the tree and call the children’s names that were on the gift. Only one gift for each child was on the tree. The child

would go up and get their gift and a bag of candy, popcorn and nuts that he had in a bag on his back. My father was usually the town Santa Claus. I thought this was extra special because I knew he was the Santa Claus. He loved little children and was always so kind and good to them.

“Thanksgiving time was also celebrated in a special and friendly way. We had the town dinner when we were children. We gathered in the same building and large tables were set up. The children would gather around and watch all the festivities. The food [was] brought in by each family and put on the table. I imagine we got in the way many times, and [I] remember being told to go out and play until we were called. Later, when I was a little older, I was able to help set the tables and help prepare [the food] for this dinner. This was a very special time for us which we enjoyed.

“Our home was a very humble two-room home. We used one end of it as a bedroom. We had two large double beds, and I remember mother had a trunk in between, which was always a curiosity to me. There she kept some of her most cherished treasures. We had a fireplace at the other end [of the room] and a table for us children to study [at]. A little shelf hung on the wall with our few books, our Holy Bible, and [other] important books that we had. I remember pretty lace curtains hung at the window, and we had a woven carpet on the floor and chairs and a fireplace at the end.

“The fireplace was the center of our lives. Here, in the evenings, we roasted potatoes, popped corn, and told pioneer stories. My father [grew] lots of apples of every kind. Nice juicy apples were brought in, at times, around the fireplace in the wintertime, and we ate those. Grapes that we had picked were brought in, and sometimes in the wintertime we would make ice cream in the evenings. We couldn’t make it any time, only in the winter, because we did have the ice. We would get the snow and ice and put it in a large tub and get a bucket that had a bale [handle] on it. [We would] put our ice cream mixture in this, put the lid on the bucket, and turn the bucket back and forth, back and forth, taking the lid off and scraping it until it was all frozen. This was a special treat for us.

“Around the fireplace I had cousins and uncles, my father’s brothers and relatives. They were musical and would play the guitar, the mandolin, and the harmonica for us. I thought the music came straight from heaven; this was enjoyable for us. I remember the home teachers coming

[to our house] and we would sit around the fireplace. They would always kneel with us, and we would pray. Then they would give us a sermon out of the Bible, [a] gospel sermon, and then they would pray again before they left. I always had a good feeling and felt that the Lord was close by watching over us and that we were loved by the elders in the ward. These were some of my fondest memories of my life there.

“Another fond memory was of my father. When he was on his mission, he got [a ride on the train]. [He] knew about the train which we children knew nothing about. He got up in the morning [at our house] to build a fire in the fireplace in our kitchen stove. It became warm, [and] he would want to wake us up. He would start calling us, ‘Get up, it is time to get up. Don’t let the sun burn blisters on your eyeballs. Get up and be about your work.’ Then he would start dancing the train dance. He would shuffle his feet slow, slow and then finally go a little faster, a little faster. Then he would say, ‘It is the first call to breakfast.’ And then, ‘The last call to breakfast.’ [He was] trying to get us up in a kind [and] pleasant way. I didn’t know what a train sounded like, but later when I heard a train, I realized how real his train dance was—how much it did sound like a train.”<sup>19</sup>

### EDWARD SIRLS TERRY

Edward Sirls Terry offers a boy’s view of rural living. He was born on 21 December 1886 in Mesquite, Nevada, but the family soon moved nearby to Beaver Dam Wash, Arizona. “In my early childhood my father and mother moved up on the Beaver Dam Wash. They took a farm there above the Blue Ranch. I was very small and had one sister younger than me. We worked along with the rest of the family, hard [work] at all times, grubbing ground and planting it into crops. My father was a wonderful orchard man. He planted a vineyard and orchard and [they were] wonderful. We also raised a fine garden every year. [We] raised corn, cane, and alfalfa hay. We made molasses for years and years. Even after I was married we made lots of molasses and [were known for] having the best molasses [made] anywhere in the country. We raised lots of beans. [When] we were little fellows, we used to go out after the beans had been gathered and thresh [the beans] in a wagon-box or on a canvas with a flailer.<sup>20</sup> We used to go out and spend hours and hours going up and down the rows picking up the beans that had [been] threshed



out so none of them [were] ever wasted. My father had a few head of sheep, five head to start out with, and they kept increasing. I and my older brother would herd them with the milk cows out on the hills in the spring of the year.

“We chased the chipmunks and little rabbits. [We] ran and barked like we were dogs. They would go down in the hole [and] we would get two sticks and dig in the holes and put our nose down to the holes and smell them and go to growling and digging again. . . . When I was about sixteen years of age, I was doing a lot of trapping. In fact I trapped all my life up [until] two years ago. I’ll have to tell this one trapping experience. We would [take] our coats or pelts into St. George and get the bounty on them. [There was] a bounty [of] fifty cents apiece. Old Uncle Charlie Miles was the recorder in the courthouse [where we picked up the bounty]. [One] time I brought in a bunch of hides, and he said to me, ‘Edward, did you catch all of these in Utah? You know we can’t give bounty on the ones caught in any other state.’ I said, ‘Well, I caught them all but this big one here.’ He said, ‘Where did you catch it?’ I said, ‘In Nevada.’ He said, ‘The law says they have to be caught in the state of Utah.’ I said, ‘No, the law says they have to be killed in the state of Utah.’ He said, ‘That is right, but you caught it in Nevada.’ I said, ‘Yes, but I drug him across the line to kill him.’ He paid me.”<sup>21</sup>

### MARTHA VILATE HUGHES KNIGHT

Martha Vilate Hughes Knight was born on 29 January 1903 in Mesquite and tells another version of youthful fun: “Yes, we had lots of fun. We had fun when we were out of school. We had to make our own fun, because there wasn’t television and things like that then. We would decide that we were going to have a dance maybe late in the afternoon. [George] Bowler, [who] was one of our schoolteachers, would play his violin and his wife [Nancy] would play a mandolin. Their daughter [Rachel] would play the piano. All the boys in town would go and help him on his farm so he would come and play for dances.

“We used to go hay-rack riding. We would take a team and go hay-rack riding. On May Day, the first day of May, they always had such big celebrations. They would go up to what was called Johnson’s Ranch a lot of times and put up big swings in the trees and have sport [events.] They always had a queen and her maids. It seems as though I was always chosen to be

one of the maids. I was little and was always one of the maids on these occasions. The whole town used to [turn] out.

“They had footraces. At Christmastime they would [have] sport [events] for two solid weeks. They had sports all day and danced at night. They would have different kinds of dances. The girls and the women would all have to fix lunches, and the boys would draw their names or put their tag on their toes. They would have to take them to lunch.

“Those days weren’t like it is now. When they dance now, they just dance with the same person or get in a little clique. But then if a young girl went to the dance, she spent as much time dancing with the married men as she spent dancing with the young boys. Everybody danced, and they used to have wonderful times.

“If they decided they were going to have a rabbit supper, the whole town would go up to the Tunnel Point. They would have all kind of sport and cook the rabbits and have big suppers. So we had lots of enjoyment when we were youngsters. The boys used to play ball. A lot of the time the girls would stand against the boys and play ball. Then the two towns, Bunkerville and Mesquite, used to play ball. There was quite a rivalry between them. We used to stand up to watch those ball games.”<sup>22</sup>

## JOSEPH TERRY

The story of Nels Anderson gives a different view of Terry’s ranch because he was a hobo who drifted there after being kicked off of a freight train but became part of the community. Joseph Terry, the rancher, tells the story: “The station then was Acoma, [Nevada]. They came to Acoma and found him on the train, and they put him off. The conductor hailed him, and they pulled the train out and [went] down the line two or three hundred yards to slow down [the train]. When the conductor let loose of him, they started the train and went on.

“This boy walked down the tracks until he [came] to Clover Valley. That was five miles below. My brother-in-law, [who] married my younger sister, was raking hay alongside the railroad there. The boy came walking along down the tracks. He went to the side of the fence and stopped close to the track. He started talking to the boy and asked him what he was doing. The boy talked to him a little but he did not have much to say. [My

brother] said, ‘When did you [last] have something to eat?’ He said, ‘I had a sandwich yesterday.’ He said, ‘Crawl through that fence.’ He crawled through the fence and said to him, ‘You go across the field to my house over there and tell my wife to fix you something to eat.’

“The boy walked across there, but going across he came to the wood-pile before he came to the house. Everybody had wood-burning stoves. He picked up the axe and went to chopping wood. My brother-in-law saw him chopping wood, and so he rode around towards the boy as close as he could get and stopped his horse. He went over and took the boy into the house. He told his wife to fix him something to eat. He had not had anything to eat since the day before. She fixed him a good meal. He ate and then he went out and went to doing chores around and worked around. The next morning my brother-in-law took him over to his parents’ place over to the Wood’s home. They made their home there. He said, ‘Here, Father, I brought you a chore boy. You have him do your chores and take care of him.’

“[Soon] Grandfather Wood said, ‘This is a good boy. I better take him out to the ranch to do the chores for you.’ My brother picked him up and brought him over to the ranch there, and he did the chores for us. He came to live with me there, and he took up with us. We took care of this young lad. He was very ambitious and anxious to work. . . . He stayed right with us. When they started school, they went to school, and he went through school that winter and then worked around with us the next summer. . . . The next winter my oldest brother went down to St. George to put his children in school there, and this boy went down there and went to [Dixie High] School with them. He got along nicely in school. He was very bright and active. His name was Nels Anderson.

“He lived with us in the summertime and went down there in the winter until he [was] old enough so he could branch out and take a job. . . . [Then] he went to school [at BYU] in Provo. The war [World War I] broke out, and he was called into the [United States] Army. He went in the Army and was [sent] over to England. They finally located in Germany. The war was called off while he was in Germany. He came back to the United States. He went to work here and worked his way until he finished college work in the Brigham Young University. He kept going right on from there.”<sup>23</sup>

## DIXIE SAINTS

While at Dixie College, Nels Anderson associated with Juanita Brooks and was later able to help her obtain a grant during the Great Depression to employ women in Washington County to transcribe pioneer journals. Anderson wrote a famous book about the Mormons titled *Desert Saints*. He obtained a doctorate degree in sociology from New York University and became a key leader in the labor programs of the New Deal. During and after World War II, Nels was associated with the United States Army in Europe and the Lend-Lease Act. He was not born in the area, nor was he actually related to the people of the county, but he knew the area completely and became one of the most famous people to have lived in Utah's Dixie. In 2012, Dr. Charles Peterson delivered the Juanita Brooks lecture titled "Hopeful Odyssey: Nels Anderson." Allen Kent Powell published Anderson's World War I Diary,<sup>24</sup> which includes a good summary of his life. One aspect of the journal reflected his mentality at the time. He tells of using his spare time to roam in search of other Mormons, particularly some from Utah's Dixie and Arizona so they could reinforce their Mormon values.

## MARY ANN STARR

Mary Ann (Adams) Starr was born on 29 October 1902 in Cedar City. She reflects on her childhood: "I remember when the lightning struck our home when I was a [young] girl. I remember when we [had a] dairy at the old ranch in Ellie's Canyon. The bear [would] pass [by] the milk house. I remember the old squaw [who] came to our home in the middle of the night looking for Thomas Urie. It was a bad storm that day. The south field ditch ran right through the top part of our lot. We had an old fireplace, but it was summer and a homemade board was put over the fireplace. It struck the chimney, and it blew the fireboard out and clear across the room. It stunned us all. My mother was sitting in her rocking chair and it turned the chair right upside down. I can remember my father jumping [up] and grabbing all [of] us. He thought the house was on fire. [He] took us down [to] the old dirt cellar [in] the back of the house. This ditch was going through our lot; it overflowed and the cellar began to fill up with the muddy water. We had to run back in the house. The neighbors had come and put the fire out. It was a mess in there, [and] the water was running around the house. I will never forget that [experience]."

“The time the Indian came [we were living in] the same house. The Indian camp was south of town, and my father was off freighting to Milford and Delamar mines in Nevada. We had all gone to bed. Something woke mother up. She heard someone breathing hard. She told us all to be quiet, and she got up. She was afraid to light the lamp. She could see the outline of this woman. She asked who it was, and the old squaw jabbered and said she wanted ‘Tom.’ Of course, mother knew she meant Thomas Urie, the city marshal. She told her where she [would] have to go down to get [him]. The squaw told her that all the Indians were drunk and were beating up on their squaws. She had come for help. She seemed confused. Mother told her, the best she could, where to go. It was in the middle of the night, late for us anyway. She left and Mother barred the doors, because [people] didn’t used to lock their doors. . . .

“I came down with pneumonia. They only had one doctor here at that time, a Doctor Green. He was out of town. I would like to mention this. We called Grandma Pryor. She was well known around here, Margaret Pryor. She was a midwife and the only doctor half of the time. My father went down on a horse to get her, and she took care of me. . . . Father asked her if she thought she could save me. She said, ‘With God’s help I will save your girl.’ And she did. She slept on the foot of my bed for one solid week and brought me out of it. . . .

“In those days, we didn’t have cars. We always had saddle horses at home though. I remember two [of them]. We called one ‘Kelly’ and one ‘Fawn.’ We practically rode them to death. We loved them. Everywhere we went we [were] either in a wagon or on a horse. The neighbor girls, my pals across the street, they had horses too. We would ride up to the old mill, up Cedar Canyon, especially for Easter. For Easter we would go up there, have our lunch, and ride our little ponies up there.”<sup>25</sup>

## **BODIL MARGARET PULSIPHER**

Bodil Margaret Johnson Pulsipher was born on 13 February 1890 in Colonia Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Her family later moved to the upper Virgin River area in southern Utah, where her father, Nephi Johnson, had some interesting adventures with American Indians regarding Zion Canyon. She tells: “The Indians were going up [into Zion Canyon] and they

wanted Nephi to come with them. . . . He said, 'Okay.' They said, 'We go now, but we come home before dark. The bad men will get us if we don't.' . . .

[I liked to] ride horses, wild ones; if they would buck, I would stay on them. . . . I didn't do it too much. I think once is about all I did. My brother rode anything, and I snuck them to the farm. . . . Yes, I was more scared than he was. I would only ride them bareback and then they could kick me off. . . . We had fairs and would give prizes to the ones who could do things quicker than the others. One time . . . they said, 'We will see who can put the harness on this horse the quickest and get it back in its place.' The same with the saddle; 'put the saddle on the blanket right and the saddle.' They got through and then they said, 'Come on, Maggie.' I said, 'I am not going to get out there.' I was always acting like I was [very] scared. I won the most prizes for a whole bunch of women, and I was just a young girl. . . .

"The boys got the chickens and roasted them and we would eat them . . . from the neighbors. . . . We used to have big family chicken suppers. You would go part way up the mountain and cook them in a bake oven."<sup>26</sup>

### **LORA ANN CHRISTENSEN**

Here is a brief memory from Lora Ann Gifford Christensen. She was born in Springdale in 1881 and remembers a less combative group of friends: "It was like all one family here in Springdale and we played with everybody; we were all out together. . . . We were like one big family [when] we went out to play and have our fun. When we [were] almost grown, we went out on the streets [to] play different kinds of games. . . . Run, Sheep, Run and all [those] kinds of [games].

"I went to school here in Springdale. . . . We went to [the] eighth grade. We stayed out [of school] a few times. Some winters one of us would go, [and] then someone else would go [the next winter]. Other winters we would change."<sup>27</sup>

### **LAURA SNOW WOODBURY**

Here, Laura Snow Woodbury gives a St. George version of gangs of friends. She was born on 9 March 1897, almost the same time as Lora Ann Gifford Christensen but in a larger town setting. She reports both about childhood and teenage friends, but also about work: "My childhood was a happy and

a normal one. I was fortunate in having the living care and protection of both a father and a mother. As children, we had the whole quarter of the block in which to roam. At the side of my home there were large almond trees, whose nuts promised a real treat to us on the long winter evenings. Eating almonds before the cheery blaze of the fireplace was much more fun than harvesting them in the fall. I remember the time I used to spend helping pick up almonds off the ground and then husking them.

“One of our chief recreational areas is now a busy highway. It was not unusual for the [children] of our day to play in the sandy and unlighted streets on a hot summer evening. Our chief games were Run, Sheep, Run; Steal Sticks; and Come to Court. Our neighborhood pals in those days included Abel and Nettie Riding, Burt Bentley, and Willa and Chauncey Andrews, who lived directly across from our place. [Also] there was Gwen Gardner and my cousin, Polly Kemp. Often we gathered at the small, black rock house of Sister Riding’s and made molasses candy and cracked black walnuts. . . .

“I remember the evenings that my grandmother, my aunt, and my little orphaned cousin would spend [time] with us, especially in the wintertime. My grandmother and my aunt raised [my cousin, Polly Kemp]. . . . We would spend [time] around the fireplace popping corn and munching on apples. We didn’t have treats then [like] they have now, but we had our type of treats. . . .

“We were born [at] the end of the pioneer times. We had to carry the coal oil lamp from room to room. We had to clean the lamps, fill them, and trim the wicks. Our home was a large two-story home. I remember the first time we had electric lights. When the lights were first put in, we turned on the lights in every room in the house. Then [we] went outside to the sidewalk to look at it. That was one of the wonders of the world! . . .

“In my teens I made no attempt to shirk from the many household tasks, in spite of the fact that part of my day was spent in the school room. Wrapped in an old bathrobe, I have at times started the family washing at four [in the morning]. On many occasions I arose early enough to have most of the ironing done before an eight o’clock class at school. We had no such conveniences as automatic hot water or automatic washers. Friday afternoons after school, I could be located cleaning the upper floor of our

home to lessen the Saturday's work the day following. These tasks did not hurt me and they surely must have given my mother a lift. I do not want to infer that, while I was thus engaged, my dear mother was idly sucking her thumb, for she was not. In the early part of these days, all baking, washing, sewing, etc. had to be done in the home. There were not always bakery goods and ready-made clothing to be had.

“For twenty-five years my mother entertained church dignitaries four times a year at stake conference time because father was stake president for these twenty-five years. Her duties were also many. House cleaning in the spring was really a job. It meant pulling up the carpets [and putting] new straw under them. Every speck [of dirt] that could be washed was washed, transoms included. One spring, Mother and I worked side by side from dawn to dark for three weeks before we had finished the spring cleaning. Believe me; it was clean when we were through. . . .

“One lonely Sunday afternoon, Polly and I were wondering what to do with ourselves as we stood on the David H. Morris corner, now where the telephone building stands. While I was pondering, along came Vernon and Annie Worthen and David Woodbury. An invitation to go riding with them in the Worthens' white-topped buggy was an answer to our needs. That was the beginning of many good times and a lifelong friendship with them. Soon after that, we found that we belonged to a gang of some twenty to thirty people—a gang who could any time, in fair weather or foul, go trooping into the George [and Leonora Woodbury] Worthen home, regardless of mud on our feet or regardless of frequency of visits. Any time we wanted to go [there] we could depend on being welcomed at the Worthens'. They lived across the street north of the tabernacle. I shall always cherish the fun and memories of the evenings there.”<sup>28</sup>

## ROBERT PARKER WOODBURY

Robert Parker Woodbury grew up in St. George and was born about 1875. He was interviewed after he turned ninety-two. He tells of teenage fun: “We played ball, went fishing, swimming, and [did] a lot of those things together. When we grew up and [were] a little older, the boys began to think about girls, and the girls about the boys. We used to have home parties, and there were kissing parties. I guess you would say it was



unsanitary now, but we had a lot of them, and I don't remember one of them getting sick.

"We had to make our own fun [because] we didn't have picture shows or anything [like that] in those days. So we had lots of parties in the home. We would have something to do that we had to gather a forfeit, a handkerchief, or a pocketknife or whatever they had. After you [had] a number of them, they had to be redeemed. I had one person sitting on a chair, and the person had one of these articles, and he would say, 'Heavy, heavy hangs over your head.' The [person] would say, 'Was it fine or superfine?' Fine stood for boys, and superfine stood for girls. He would announce it and tell what he had to do to redeem the article that he had. You know there was some kissing there! . . .

"[Dancing] was the joy of my life. I started dancing when I was a young fellow [and] danced until I was ninety-two. [The] last dance [that] I went to [was when] I was ninety-two! Then I had a sick spell, and I haven't danced since. It was like missing a lot to miss a dance. We used to have those old quadrilles [where] they would have a caller. He would say, 'Fill up the floor,' and [we would race across the room]. In those days, the girls would sit on one side of the hall and the boys on the other. You would break a neck to get over to get a girl [for] a partner to dance. We did enjoy those old quadrille dances.

"[We had] a violin and a banjo or something like that, but the violin was the main [instrument]. It wasn't noisy like it is now. You could sure dance to that violin! [There were] a lot of older men that played the violin, and we had real good dances."<sup>29</sup>

## LUCY CRAWFORD SCHIEFER

Lucy Crawford Schiefer was born on 16 December 1904 in Virgin, Utah. She also lived in Springdale and Oak Creek, and she tells about ranch life as well as community life in Springdale: "I used to run and gather the eggs for my grandmother. She was a hard worker and would work in the garden. She knew I was dependable and I would gather those eggs. Each night I would bring the eggs to her. She would say, 'How many eggs did you gather today?' I would tell her. Always she was one egg short. She would give me articles to count to see whether I knew how to count because there was

always an egg missing. One night she didn't work in the garden; she sat in the laundry room and watched through the window to see what happened when I gathered the eggs. When I came to the corral gate to come out, Grandfather met me. He picked up one egg and poked a hole in the end of it and sucked his egg for the day. I came in the house and Grandmother would say, 'How many eggs did you gather today?' She kept strict count because she paid tithing on those eggs. Every tenth one had to go for tithing. Then she knew why I miscounted the eggs. . . .

"We were raised on a big ranch. To go from one side [of the ranch] to the other took quite a little while so we had horses that we would ride. Once in a while, I didn't stop for a bridle or even a rope. I would just walk out, whistle, the horse would come to me, and I would pile on. One day Father caught me out on the street that way on the highway. He gave me a severe bawling out for that. He said I had no way whatever of defending myself that way. If anything startled the horse and it wanted to ride—and I did have horses run away with me a time or two, so I knew he was right. I never stopped for a saddle if I wanted to ride the horse over the field anywhere unless I had to carry something.

"We had a big row of currant bushes across the river. This, I guess, was three quarters of a mile from the house. We would go over there in the spring and the summer and pick currants. Mother and I would each ride a horse and each carry two buckets of currants back to the house on these horses. We could put the bridle over the horn of the saddle when we had the saddle on. To go across the [Virgin] River, if it was very important, we usually rode a horse. If they were busy in the hay field, then we would have to wade [across] the river or cross on a footbridge that my father made.

"One time a cousin of mine, Nora Jolley—she was Nora Crawford at the time—waded across the river. It was a clear day. [She] carried her shoes and stockings. When we went to come back, the river was up just under our arms, and it was getting kind of muddy, [but] it wasn't too bad. We got out, and by the time we [were] on the outside, a larger flood came down. It would have swept us away if we had [stayed longer].

"Another narrow escape that I had was with my father and mother. It was on the twenty-fourth of July. We had been celebrating in Rockville. We came home, and we had pigs across the [Virgin] River in [the] orchard

under the currant bushes. Father had to haul water for them because the water was out of the ditch that ran past. We dipped up water, filled the barrels, and took them up to the pigs. [We] came back and he said, 'I will fill these barrels to take to the house.' We lived about a half a mile from the river. At that time, there was no water system here. All our water [came] from the river. He was dipping up water and said to Mother, 'Whip the horses quick!' She didn't understand, so he yelled for the horses to move. They did, and when we turned to look back, a flood had gone past us. If we hadn't [moved], we may have been swept down. . . . "We had to have our own parties because there was no television or radios. We had our own orchestra through the town. Various ones [who] knew how to play instruments would get together and find their own music for dances and [events]. We always had parties, especially in the wintertime, and a dance about once a week. Friday night was our dance [night]. We always [planned] Saturday night was family night. We didn't have [a] dance or anything. My father had a home evening [on] Saturday night in my home. We always had refreshments after reading the scripture and talking over the messages from the Holy Bible, or he would give us lessons. We didn't have a lesson book that I remember back in that day. [It was] about 1915, I recall, [when we had home evening]. But he always read from the Holy Bible. Then we would have singing. My father played the organ. Some of the time we would invite neighbors in. One boy, especially, used to like to hear the tunes my father played that would jiggle the organ, he called it. The floor must not have been even so the organ would kind of jiggle on some of the pieces like 'Turkey in the Straw' and 'Marching Through Georgia.' Dad could play very good that way and he played for dances, too."<sup>30</sup>

### **DELLA HUMPHRIES HARDY**

Della Humphries Hardy was also born in Virgin in 1908, four years after Lucy Crawford Schiefer, but she then moved to Hurricane as one of the earliest settlers: "I remember my mother telling [me] that the morning I was born, it was a windy March morning. We did not have a doctor in that section of the country, and they did not come out this way very [often]. All they had were midwives. This lady was the one [who] had moved in with her husband and family at the time [we had what] we called the 'oil boom'

in Virgin. We had another fellow [who] used to come out there all the time for eggs and milk. He came this [particular] morning. When he came in, he saw they were feeding my older sister breakfast. He said, 'Where is your wife?' She was always there. They said, 'She is in the other room. We had us a new baby girl this morning.' Brother Lyons said, 'I know better than that.' Just then Dad said I let out one of my usual squalls, and he said, 'I guess it is true.' My father used to always say that I got my windy disposition from the month I was born in.

"I remember going into Hurricane. There was still sagebrush, boulders, and rocks. You did not drive straight up the road like you do today. You drove in and out around the big boulders. We lived on the hillside on the southeast end of town. My mother used to say that Dad would have had to hunt hard to find a place fuller of boulders and rocks. We moved into a little one-room house and lived there until my father was able to go to Virgin and bring the other home, [which was] a bigger place, down and put it on another section of the lot.

"I had an accident on one occasion. My neighbor friend and I, being so far from home [at school], would take our lunch a lot of times. We would hurry up and eat, and then [we would] run to the swings to get our turn to play. Usually the older girls and boys got the swings [most of the time], so we would try to get ours at noon. She was singing when two of the boys came through the fence and told her to get out. They wanted to swing. She would not give in. They said, 'If you do not, we will throw a rock at you with this flipper.' It did not scare her much so they flipped. Instead of hitting her, it hit me in my right eye.

"They took me home and took me to the doctor. They thought I had lost my right eye because it had pierced the flesh and the liquid had come out of the eyeball. I never see a pretty sunset that I do not think of the first time that the doctor took the bandage off this eye; it was as the sun was going down. I heard this car drive up, and I was lying on the bed in the front room. Father and Mother were out in the front yard because it was getting [to be] warmer weather. I do not remember whether it was fall or whether it was spring, but I heard this car stop. Soon, I could hear someone running. It was the doctor. He was a big man, and he came running up the walk. He said, 'Where is Della?' My mother said, 'She is in

the house.' He said, 'Have her come out.' She came and took me out. He took this bandage off of my eye. The first thing I said was, 'What a beautiful sunset.' My mother began to cry. I was older before it dawned on me why my mother cried and hugged me so hard just because I said it was a beautiful sunset.

"We grew up as most children do [and] had good times. We lived close to the mountain. We used to like to climb to the top of [the] old black lava hill. It never dawned on us to wear shoes. We went bare footed and hopped from one rock to another. It was our job, along with all the neighborhood [youngsters], to herd the cows. We were always glad when spring came so we could take off our shoes and socks and get out and climb the hills.

"Children in the neighborhood used to have me cut holes in these big five-gallon cans [to] make little stoves. There we would fry meat, potatoes, onions, and cook all kinds of meals. We would invite the neighborhood [youngsters] over, and we would take our turn. We had as much fun as those who had riches. We did not think we had any less than the rest. We enjoyed life together.

"In the summertime, we used to wade and swim in the canal. When it was very hot, we would sit in the canal and go up maybe four, five, or six blocks [and] wade in the canal upstream to the next person's place that we wanted to visit. We sang all the way [and] had a good time. In those days, different ages played together more than they do now, too. The older ones were the father and the mother."<sup>31</sup>

## ERASTUS SNOW GARDNER

Erastus Snow Gardner lived in Pine Valley all his life. He was born on 10 January 1892. Here he gives a boy's view of ranch life: "I remember when I was a boy, there used to be roundups bringing the cattle from the winter ranges. There used to be a lot of cattle owned around Pine Valley. I remember as youngsters, we just about lived to see [the] cattle come over the ridge into Pine Valley. They would string over the ridge for hours. We youngsters would go down to the lower end where the fields were and climb up on the fence to watch them come into town. They would bring the cattle right up into town [to] separate [and] each man [would] take his cattle from there.

“Ranchers from the whole southern part of the state would ride together on the ranges to gather their cattle. They would separate their cattle at what they called [the] Magotsu [Creek] corral [and] take them to the different towns from there. We would drive all the cattle that belonged to Pine Valley into Pine Valley, separate them, and each man would take his cattle to his summer range. . . . We had bears there that would kill any amount of cattle. They had hunters come in and hunt bears. They finally killed one, and the other one left, but he [had] killed thousands of dollars’ worth of cattle. . . .

“I had a little gray mare, one of the best little animals [there] ever was. She was a speedy little animal too. I had gone to the upper field to get some cattle out of the field that [they] shouldn’t have been there. [There was] a neighbor [who] was just a little younger than I was in a field higher up. He saw this little mare standing in the field for a long time and he came over to investigate. When he got there, I was sitting on the ground with my arms around her hind legs. I was unconscious [and] didn’t know anything. . . . He [put] me on the horse and led her home. Just before we got down to my home, I regained consciousness enough so that I could remember him bringing me home. . . .

“I have been [a rancher] all my life, ever since I was big enough to ride a horse, [since I] was about three years old.”<sup>32</sup>

## LUCY JEPSON ROBERTS ISOM

Lucy Jepson Barnum Roberts Isom was born on 21 September 1885 in Virgin. She tells of childhood memories of thirteen siblings: “I remember a great many things about our home life. I remember the little chores we had to do as [young] children. Every Saturday I had to scour the knives and forks with sand. We had no scouring preparations in those days. We had an upstairs room in our home. I had a brush and always had to sweep the stair steps down. I remember we had to pick up [wood] chips. We always had a pan to pick up the chips so there would be kindling to start the fires with in the morning. We had to carry in the wood. When I was a very small child, I carried five or six sticks of wood at a time and filled the wood box by the stove. We always had a wood-burning stove.

“I remember more especially the evenings that we spent together. My oldest brother [James Anthony Jepson] was perhaps ten or twelve. We would sing and listen to the stories in the evening. Sometimes we would play games like: Three in a Row, Fox and Geese, or Button, Button. [These were] some of those games that the family could play together. One of the things that I remember most is the family prayer we had every night and every morning just before we ate our meals. We would gather around the table. We always knelt and had the family prayer. As soon as the children [were] old enough to appreciate what we were praying for, they were asked to take their turn in the family prayer.”<sup>33</sup>

### **AMANDA AMELIA MILNE**

Amanda Amelia Hannig Milne tells a story of hard labor instead of fun. She was born in Washington, Utah, on 4 June 1883: “I worked in the cotton factory [in Washington] when I was twelve years old. I went to work at 7:30 in the morning and worked until 5:00 at night for twenty-five cents a day. That was [the] factory pay. I worked all day when I was only [twelve] years old. That was about all I did. Father died and left mother with seven children. He had a stroke and starved to death. They could not feed him like they do now. . . . [Father] started the factory, took care of the machinery, [and] oiled it. I was about eight when he died. I had to quit school and help Mother. I don’t know what we would have done if it had not been for the [cotton] factory. . . . Mother was a hardworking woman [and] took care of all of us. She had a big house and worked in the factory sewing blankets. She would take blankets home [and] sit up until 12:00 or 1:00 [at night] sewing blankets.”<sup>34</sup>

### **LOUIS RUMELL REBER**

Louis Rumell Reber was born on 23 September 1899 in Santa Clara in a family of thirteen children, to a mother who weighed one hundred pounds. She also worked in the cotton factory in Washington. His family raised cotton in Santa Clara and in Middleton. There were so many children that four of his brothers slept in a wagon with a canvas cover and cotton to sleep on. He gives a teenager’s view of the flooding problems there: “The

biggest [flood] was in 1910. [It] did all the damage. It took [out] a couple of houses, corrals, hay, and grain. . . . One woman wouldn't come out of her house (Dora Iverson). . . . [We had to] pack her out in water waist deep. Water was all around her and she wouldn't [leave]. Water was out quite a ways to the hill area. [We] packed her out. [We] got her furniture out but it washed away during the night. The flood came higher during the night and took it all. There [were] some people [who drowned]. We also lost a lot of animals. [There was one horse that was washed] about one-and-one-half miles down [the river] and crawled up on the [bank] of a wash and was there for a few days before he was [found]. There was a flood in 1906, 1909, and then the worst one in 1910. This area has required a lot of hard work to make it go. There was a typhoid epidemic in 1902 and 1903.”<sup>35</sup>

### LORENZA “RENZA” BARNUM DAY

Lorenza “Renza” Barnum Day was born in Hebron and then lived in nearby Enterprise. She tells of childhood fun and adventure: “We lived on the ranch where there were lots of snakes. We killed lots of snakes. We always did a lot of fishing when we were young.

“My father owned a field that was a couple of miles from town. He used to grow a little alfalfa, corn, and everything that went in the garden. I remember there were a bunch of willow [trees] on the bank where we were one day. We went down to eat our lunch in the shade where we usually fished and there was a rattlesnake. We could see it coming down the trail. The sand was kind of deep and it never stopped. It came right toward us. It stood a foot off from the ground with its head [up], and it came right at us. My father had stood a shovel up against the willows and he jumped up, took the shovel and threw the snake [away from us]. As soon as it lit [on the ground], it came right at us again, right towards us, and he killed it with the shovel.

“We had raccoons also. I remember a ‘coon’ came one night. We had a bunch of little pigs. My father was out teaching this evening. Mother and the rest of us had gone to bed, and we could hear one of these little pigs squealing and squealing. It was quite dark and finally it quit [squealing]. When my father came home, my mother told him [about the squealing]. He went down to the pigpen and the little pig was dead. The next morning, he could see two [small] holes on the side of [its] neck where a ‘coon’ had gotten ahold of it.



“There were five girls and, next to the baby, was a boy, so he was alone. We had to milk the cows, forty of them. The two sisters, older than me, helped too. Of course, the cows didn’t give [as much] milk [as] cows do now. We left Hebron [because] there was no room for any advancement or [for] any more people to live there. They had trouble with [having enough] water. They could not get the irrigation water that they needed. They had to leave and come where they could get water on their land and have more room to expand.

“I think we made fun out of most things when we were young. I remember my father and mother used to sing together a lot around the fire at night. We didn’t have heaters in those days; we had a fireplace. I remember helping my Grandmother Pulsipher make [the] candles that we used. We had cook stoves, but in our living room, at night, we would sit around the fire. Father and mother would sing a lot when we were young. When we were older, we all used to sing.

“I remember the first inkling I had ever about Santy Claus. On Christmas Eve, a party [was held] at the church house and they would have Santa Claus pass around hardtack candy in a dishpan. My father was holding the handles [of the pan]. When he came up to me, I looked at his hands and I said, ‘Mother, that is “pa,” isn’t it?’ She said, ‘Why, what makes you think that?’ ‘That is his hands. I know.’ That was the first inkling I had of who Santa Claus was. I must have been six years old.

“When we went to school, we played baseball. That was the only kind of ball [games] we knew then. The girls played [baseball] with the boys. They used to choose up sides, and we would play ball. We did lots of wading in the canals. We always found something to do [even] if it wasn’t any more than picking flowers on the Indian Hill.

“We always danced. Dancing was about the only public [activity] we had. We had the violin, mandolin, and the organ. We danced quadrilles and the Schottische. We also did round dancing. I would still rather dance than do anything else, if I could.”<sup>36</sup>

## LEAH BUNDY JENSEN

Leah Bundy Jensen was born in 1923 and lived at Mount Trumbull. She tells of a life of ranch work for a girl and some fun for a teenager: “I

remember my older sister, Helen [Bundy], used to drive the truck a lot for Dad before I [was] old enough [and] before she left home. She would drive into St. George to get supplies. It seemed like she was the one [who] brought all [of] the diseases out to Mount Trumbull. At least she [was] accused of it! She was the first one to come down with everything that came out [our] way. She came down with the mumps, and Mama isolated her in the bedroom. Nobody could go in but Mama. She had already had [the mumps]. Eventually, we all got [the mumps] anyway. [It] seems like [the] mumps were worse those days than they are now. Our jaws swelled up so we couldn't eat for three [or] four days or a week or more.

"I remember when my dad got his first Model T Ford. He was driving it up the road, and we came to a gate. Instead of grabbing the brake, he said, 'Whoa, whoa, whoa,' and he went right through it! I thought it was quite funny. He never did get over that. For the longest time, as long as we had the Model T Ford, he would just say 'whoa, whoa, whoa' when we came to a gate.

"We always had good times on July fourth and twenty-fourth. I will always remember that my mother made us girls new dresses [for those holidays]. It seemed like [those were] the only new dresses we ever had. . . . We would go down to the schoolhouse, have races and a big family dinner, a community dinner. The whole valley, ranchers from miles around, would come. The mailman or someone [else] would go into St. George and bring out ice. We would always have homemade ice cream and a great big [feast] and then a dance that night.

"A lot of times we didn't have too much music. I know [there were] a lot of times [when] we would just have a harmonica. My cousin would play [his harmonica] as he danced and we all had a good time. I had an Aunt Edna [Bundy who] would [play] chords [on] the piano when we had [the dance] down at the schoolhouse. She would chord and he would play the harmonica. [There were] times when the young folks from St. George and Fredonia [Arizona] would come with guitars, banjos and accordions. When the Kenworthy boys came to live on the mountain, they always furnished us with good music. They were very talented.

“As a child, I thought my dad was quite hard on us. He made us work. A lot of times it seems like my cousin’s dad didn’t keep them busy. They would go off for a joyride or something, but we always had corn to hoe or something [we had to do]. He always had something for us to do. We were always kept busy, and I thought he was kind of hard on us. But as I look back, I don’t know what more I could say, what appreciation I could show my dad than to thank him for [teaching] me how to work, because it has really been a blessing to me to be able to know how to work.”<sup>37</sup>

### AGNES MELINDA LEAVITT

Agnes Melinda Leavitt Leavitt tells of teenage fun in Bunkerville, Nevada. She calls it “the group of thirty.” “We had one [child] out of every family in town. What was mine was theirs. If we decided to go down to my melon patch, we all went [there]. If we decided to go down to their [sorghum] can patch, we all went [there]. If we decided to go into the fruit trees, we all went [there]. Our parents just let us go because we were all [friends]. [We had] sorghum candy and chickens. [We had] fried chicken [and] oyster suppers. There was something going all the time. We had to make our own amusement, [and] we did. We went to Mesquite sometimes as young people. There were a lot of us. We had thirty [young people] in my crowd. There were five or six different crowds in this little town.

“We had choir practice twice a week where we met and sang songs for church. Altogether, we had about every night taken [with activity]. Some [nights were our] religion class and choir practice and our dance night. Then [we had] our parties in the spring. That about did it.

“During Christmastime, Mesquite [folks] would come over here for a day and we would go over there. You know how it is with one town against another. Aubrie and I were children and going to school. They had to have the sheriff right there to keep us in back of the line. They would run races. Some of the boys had been running races for months to get ready to run against each other at Christmastime. [We had] horse races, hose pulling, and ballgames. It was every day during [the] holiday [season]. There was not one day that was lost during the two-week holidays. [There was] a dance at night with [a] big supper. They had talent night sometimes. [People from] Overton, [Nevada], came up.”<sup>38</sup>

## LORIN “DUTCH” ABBOTT LEAVITT

Lorin “Dutch” Abbott Leavitt gives another report on Bunkerville. He was born there on 18 January 1909 and he focuses on some of his version of fun: “[We used to] steal a lot of melons and chickens! We did a lot of [horseback] riding. We had our horses, and Daddy always ran cattle. We used to do a lot of riding on the [Virgin] River for the cattle. My biggest pleasure was hunting in the valley here. I hunted duck and geese and trapped quail. [I] did a lot of trapping of coyotes [and other] fur-bearing animals here all my life.

“I made most of my spending money off of trapping. I used to love to hunt. For that matter, I still do [it]. Hunting and fishing are my recreation. [I like] any kind of dancing. A week never went by that we did not have a dance. All during school, I was in athletics, music, drama, and [activities] like that. I participated in [those activities] all the time. In fact, my wife’s oldest living sister’s husband, Kenneth Earl, was the thespian of the valley. He did a lot of theatrical work. It seemed like I was always with Kenneth.

“We used to play a lot of games when we were children. We had to create our own activities and recreation. We built a big bonfire out in the intersection on the streets [in front of] one place or another. That is the way we would go.

“Down at George Hunt’s place, [which] is a couple of blocks away, we had a haystack. We would play what we called Willows. The game was that there would be eight, ten, or twelve boys. Lots of times, [there would be] girls too. Two [people] would be given willows. I mean they were really tangled willows. The idea was that if you could catch them, you could whip these children with the willows. You would have to run! I was after Stan Neagle. I was just getting up close enough that I could make that willow crack him every step he made. There was a stick sticking out of the haystack. I tripped over the stick and fell on an old wagon post that was laying there. The bolts were sticking straight up. [It was] the U-bolts [or] the clamp bolts. I hit that with my right knee and just opened it up for about two and a half inches. [It] let all the knee water out of there. I was about eighteen months tied up with that [injury].

“[I] broke my arm trying to crank an old Model T [Ford]. My brother was sporting his girl and I was standing there waiting for him to come out so I could crank it. I took hold of it and pulled the crank. It backfired and the crank hit me across the wrist and broke my arm.”<sup>39</sup>

### **RHODA HAFEN LEAVITT**

Here is another Bunkerville story. Rhoda Hafen Leavitt was born there in January 1905. She included a tender memory about her father, Albert Luther Hafen: “[We children would] go in the bedroom and start gossiping, talking low, about our friends saying this or that. I remember one time he came to the door and shook his finger and said, ‘If you cannot say anything good about anybody, you keep your mouth shut. Not one word. You can talk all you want to, but if you cannot say anything good, you keep still.’ He was strict on being honest and was proud.

“His old age pension was coming before he died. He would no more take that pension than anything. He was too proud to go on that pension. He made his own way. He did not want any help on the farm. They were independent. . . . He always tried to teach us to be the same way, to be honest. If we could not say anything good, don’t say anything.”<sup>40</sup>

### **MARIE BLAKE GUBLER**

Marie Blake Gubler, born on 24 December 1901, gave a few comments about ranch life in Pine Valley: “Yes, we had fun, especially at the ranch in the summertime. There was another family [of Gublers who] lived up there that had a lot of children. We would always get together and had a lot of good times together. We even tried to hold a Sunday school. We had a lot of fun together.

“We did not have many parties at home, [but] at the ranch we used to party. Every time we would go to the top of Pine Valley Mountain, we would bring ice home and make ice cream. The two families would always get together and make a party of it.

“I used to love to go to dances. Even at the ranch, we had just one big lumber room. We would go in there and try to dance. It had a board floor, [and] it was not very smooth. We had an old phonograph that we used to play [records] to dance by.”<sup>41</sup>

## EVAN ERASTUS COOPER

Evan Erastus Cooper was born in Washington, Utah, on 4 February 1915. This meant that he was still a teenager at home when the Great Depression hit in 1929. He tells a story of those challenges: “My father grew up with very little education, but he was a hard worker and had a fairly good head on him. He was very good [doing] mathematics in his head. He could figure out a problem in his head about as quickly as most people could on paper.

“He chose farming for his career. He married my mother when they were around eighteen or nineteen years old. He farmed and freighted with horses and [a] wagon. He was a good teamster. He loved and drove fine horses. He would not have a horse that was not good to pull. If he broke one, it was always good to pull. To my father and mother were born eight children.

“My mother was about eight years old [when] her father died. She has been a wonderful mother. Her father was ill a long time before he passed away, [and] it exhausted about all they had accumulated to live on and to dope [medicate] him until he passed on. Somehow in the growing-up years, my mother developed an inferiority complex or she felt that other people were better than they were, not because they were better, but I guess because they were better clothed. They had to work hard for a living doing janitorial work and they had to haul their wood.

“My mother developed this inferiority complex and she seemed to not be able to cope with it as time went on. She passed it on to many of [her] children and gave us the idea that other children were better than we were, even though she and my father provided as good a home or average home for their family. I would say lots of times [it was] better than an average living. Before cars came along, he drove a nice buggy [with] nice harnesses and nice horses. We went for a ride on Sunday which was mostly the means of recreation and family entertainment. We had plenty to eat and plenty to wear. When cars came along, we always had a car, but still she could not accept the fact that we were an average family. I do not think anyone should feel that they are better than anyone else unless they do better, but were an average family. It was passed on to us, especially me, until I became older and began to realize what was happening to me. I do not know how the other children feel about it.

“It was here that Mrs. Sproul entered into the picture. She had a wonderful outlook on life [and] was talented in many fields. She was talented in music, drama, in singing and instrumental music. She came to my rescue and really helped me by talking to me. During the [Great] Depression years, she and her husband were on what they called an unemployed schoolteacher’s program. They used to give night classes in music and drama. I took some of the leading parts in some of their plays. I am sure they gave me the leading parts to help me. With her coaching and talking too, it helped me a lot. It helped me to overcome my self-conscious inferior attitude towards people and what people thought [of me].

“My mother was a wonderful mother. She was a good cook, a good seamstress and very economical. My father could have never done for us children what he did if he had not had the kind of a wife he had. All of us were practically grown before we ever had what we called a store-bought shirt. She made them [all]. My sisters were up in their teens before they ever had a store-bought dress. She made their dresses. A lot of them were made out of older clothes, but they always looked nice. She was an excellent seamstress. She could darn trousers and [clothes] until her hands [were] so shaky [that] she could not [do it] anymore. You could hardly tell where the hole was. She could take a dozen eggs and a pan of milk and make a wholesome meal for our family.

“My job around home helping my mother was on wash day to cook and punch the clothes. We had an old puncher. Some people bought punchers [from] the store but ours was a homemade one. It was a big gallon pan put up over the end of a board and nailed there [with] holes punched all through. It had sort of a suction. The first method of washing was to fill the black tub, the kettle they called it, outside and build a fire around it. After the water [became] hot they dipped part of the water out and put it in the scrub tub. Then they put the clothes in the tub [with] the homemade soap and the lye. First, they put the lye in the water, and a scum came [to] the top. They skimmed this scum off. I think the purpose of the lye was to soften the water. Then they would cut up the homemade soap in thin threads and put it in the water. After this dissolved, they would put the clothes in and then we would punch them with the puncher. I walked a million miles around the black tub punching these clothes with suction!

Then they took the handle of the punch and sorted these clothes out of the hot water and put them over in the scrub tub [where] they scrubbed them, rinsed them and hung them [to dry].

“Our meals were always regular. At seven o'clock in the morning we had our family breakfast. The chores had to be done before seven o'clock. We had to have the cows milked, the horses fed, the pigs fed, and were washed and ready to come to breakfast. We always had our family blessing on the food. The regular mealtime and the family blessing seemed to regulate and start the day off with regularity. Our dinner was always ready shortly after twelve o'clock [noon]. In the evening we had our evening meal around six o'clock. Then the dishes were done, and we always had visiting. Neighbors came to visit, or we went to visit neighbors. That was another old tradition in the rural areas because there were not movies [and] there were no cars to go [anywhere].”<sup>42</sup>

### MYRZA LANG BOOTH

Myrza Lang Booth was born on 25 May 1916 in St. George. She reported on the limitations of life during the Great Depression but had a positive attitude that led her throughout her life: “I only went [through] the ninth grade. When I [started] the ninth grade, that was in high school, the tuition was \$10.00 then. I did not have the \$10.00, but they let me go anyway. I never could raise the \$10.00 all during the year so, consequently, when it came to be the tenth grade I could not go because I still owed the \$10.00 for the ninth grade.

“When [my son] Lloyd [Booth] graduated from high school, I went back and took what they called GED [General Education Development] tests. These were tests made up to give to the soldier boys to see if they could go into college. I passed these, and they gave me my diploma. So I graduated with Lloyd. I did not have enough nerve to walk up and get my graduation certificate. Lloyd had gone to California to work the week before. If he had been there I think I could have, but I was backward enough that I could not get up in front of all those people. If I had to do it over I would very proudly get up, walk up and get it. I am very proud of [receiving] my diploma after [so] long [a time].



“The only times that we ever really had fun was on the Fourth of July and the twenty-fourth [of July]. We would get up early in the morning and get tin pans, and we would beat on [them]. We would go all over the streets, up and down all over this end of town—we called it Sand Town—and we would go around and beat [the pans]. We also had [a] martial band that would go around and play [music]. These are the noises that stand out in my life.

“Those were the fun noises. Usually we would have ten or fifteen cents to spend. We would go down into town and take all day to spend this money. When you finally made a choice of how you were going to spend it, then all decisions were made. You spent it and that was it. You could go home. I remember once I bought a balloon. It was one that you put helium in, and [it would] go up in the air. I was going around [town] and I was so proud of this balloon, and some little [child] broke it. He reached up and broke it. It nearly broke my heart. It was something that we did not have at the time.

“We used to go on Easter trips. Those were fun times anytime we could get a few people to go. We had a few Easter trips. For everyday fun, life was serious. I think the things that I remember more than anything else, as far as our home life was concerned, was that my mother worried all the time. We never opened a sack of flour that she did not worry about where the next one was coming from. Then it was hard to get shoes.

“We never went without food. I know Fred has told about how they were hungry at times, but we were never hungry. We always had food, but the thing of it was my mother worried about it so much that it took the joy of having it away. My mother was an immaculate housekeeper, even though we lived in three rooms and one of those was almost a pantry. Our house was clean. People used to say they would not be afraid to eat off Hazel’s floor because it was that clean. We were raised with cleanliness, even though we had very little. The thing that Mama always worried about was food. She was raised at a time when—you can appreciate this—food was at a premium, but then Mama was a born worrier.”<sup>43</sup>

## INEZ HEATON HOYT

Inez Heaton Hoyt was born on 9 August 1891 in Orderville, Long Valley. “Mother was a good housekeeper. She was clean and neat. She was kind to us girls, and we enjoyed being with her. She kept our clothes neat. As fast as we grew up, she taught us how to take care of our clothes. My Saturday job every [week] was to clean out the dish cupboard. We had a lovely cupboard between the kitchen and the dining room. I had to wash all those dishes and put them back every Saturday; besides [the] other things, that was my special job. I would help with the other Saturday work.

“One time, Mother could not do much work. We were trying to build another home or add-on to the one we had. Mother and [my sisters] took in washing during the winter to help keep up so that what Dad could earn could be put on the house. . . . We would have to carry water from down [at] the creek and fill a fifty-gallon barrel each night with water after we were through washing [so that] the water would settle so it wouldn’t be so roily to wash in the next day. We had a lot of that, but it did not hurt us. It was good.

“As a girl, I remember mother was sick a lot. Maybe it was because I did not like to do the work so much. It seemed like she had sick spells quite often. I know several times my father would call in his brother, Jonathan [Heaton], and they would administer to her. It always helped her. I used to wonder why they did not call him more than they did because she did suffer a lot with her stomach.

“When I was about eight years old, they took her to Cedar [City, Iron County, Utah] to the doctor. She had something wrong with her. They took me over too. They thought my heart was not good and they took me to be examined. I was all right, but she had to have an operation. They [removed] tumors from her. She never was very well after that. She lived a long time. She did a lot of genealogy work after that. In the hospital they had the elders come in, and she was relieved of suffering and helped a lot. She was really relieved a lot through faith.

“Nowadays you do not know there is a moon half [of] the time. You do not know when the moon is up or when there is [one] because there are so many electric lights. We appreciated the moon, and we enjoyed it. In the

neighborhoods we would get out and play Steal-a-Stick and many [other] games in the evening. I really enjoyed those times we had together.

“We had our girls’ singing group. I remember one day we all decided the day before to get our Saturday’s work done early and then get together and sing the rest of the day. We had a group of girls about the same age. We got together and went down to the meetinghouse. We [asked] Brother Cox, the janitor, to let us go up into the little tower room where they rang the bell. We all [were] in there and we sang the whole afternoon. Then we wanted to do it every Saturday but they would not let us. I liked to do things like that.”<sup>44</sup>

### JOSEPH FIELDING HARDY

Joseph Fielding Hardy was born on 3 October 1908 in Bunkerville, Nevada. He tells about boyhood fun: “I remember in the summertime when those flash floods, rain and floods [would] come down [the river]. We would all go down to the [Virgin] River and swim in [the] flood. The older fellows would throw the smaller fellows in, and we would float down the river, and the older fellows would fish us out. We did not fear that we would not be caught. Nobody worried about us; we would just have confidence that they would get us out. I remember one time when the water was out, we would have to take our cattle down to the [Virgin] river to water them and drive them down during these floods. I remember one time I rode my horse out into deep, swift [water], and it forced me off the horse. I almost lost my hold there. If I had, I would have panicked because I was alone, but I held onto the horse’s mane, [and] he drug me out.

“I might tell [about] a prank we pulled as teenagers. One of the men here harvested melons. He brought them up and put them right up side of his house. Then he came up to the store where we all hung out—young fellows and the old fellows. He said, ‘Boys, I brought the melons all up and stacked them right up by my house. You are welcome to them if you can get in get them and get out without me catching you. I have a shotgun ready and a dog out there that will notify me.’

“Of course, we all took the challenge. We took a pound of bologna. One of the [fellows] knew the dog well, and he [went] in and gave the bologna to the dog, and the dog took off. We filed the melons out [and] ate

what we could. After we could not eat any more, we cut the rest of them open and took every melon.

“The next day he came after us and was going to have us arrested. Some of the older fellows [who] were there and they heard what he said. [They told him]; ‘You cannot have them arrested. You told them to get in there and out without you catching them. They could have every melon.’ Finally, he turned, ‘Lordy, I did, didn’t I?’ That was the end of it. He said, ‘I will never make that statement again.’”<sup>45</sup>

### REED PRISBREY

Reed Prisbrey was born on 16 February 1905 in Middleton and lived in New Harmony and Washington, Utah. He tells of teenagers who were somewhat wild: “We used to make our fun. There used to be a bunch of young fellows here in New Harmony. We would have parties [with] neighbors, back and forth around the neighborhood, chicken suppers, parties, or something like that. We made our fun. Sometimes we would steal our chickens from different ones. I have to tell this incident. We would choose up sides [as to] who [would] go. This one time, Pratt Prince, a young fellow who lived here, and myself were chosen to go steal chickens from Brother Schmutz. Pratt was in the coop. [Brother Schmutz] had it boarded up about half way. He [Pratt] crawled in and picked up three chickens and handed them out to me. I seen [*sic*] him a-coming with a flashlight, and I said to Pratt, ‘Better go, he is a-coming.’ I took off and he didn’t hear me. The old man came up to the coop to the door. Pratt hands him two or three chickens, and he turned them loose. [He] kept turning them loose. Pretty soon, Brother Schmutz said, ‘Don’t you think you have got enough?’ Pratt damn near knocked him down getting out. Maybe he did knock him down. He dove out of there and ran. Of course, they didn’t catch us.

“We used to go out when the snow was deep in the wintertime. Maybe [after] a foot of new snow and all of us would get on horses and choose up sides. The losing side would give a dance or a party. We would go out and take the ears off the jackrabbits [and] kill them. We would chase them down in the snow. Sometimes it would be ten people deep after one rabbit. One of them would come out with one ear and the other side with the other. That is the way they would do.”<sup>46</sup>

## EMMA BRADSHAW CORNELIUS

Emma Bradshaw Cornelius was born in Woodruff, Arizona, and later lived in Virgin, Utah, where she was interviewed. She gives a childhood memory in Woodruff: "Dad had to go off to herd sheep. He had a cabin built up in the mountains. He had another man come and sleep in the wagon box and stay with mother at night while he was gone. She had two or three little children.

"One night, she woke up after hearing something outside. They had killed a sheep under a tree out in the yard the day before, and she heard something out there eating the entrails of the sheep. She got up and looked out the window and saw a big animal. She could see it because the moon was shining. She said she did not want to yell at the man in the wagon because she was afraid the animal would get her, so she kept quiet. They did not have anything [over] the doorway except a piece of cloth, and the bear could come in. It passed by the door and went on down to the corrals and got after the cow and calf. [It] scared them out of the corral, and they ran away. The man happened to hear the [commotion] and got up and went after [the bear]. It ran down to his place and killed a calf that night.

"The next night they decided they would sleep down there because they thought [the bear] would go back to where it killed the calf. It did not go back there, but it went down to mother's place and went into the house [because] nobody was there. That night, mother had gone to the man's place to stay. The bear tore up the bedding. It drank her milk and ate a piece of butter. It scattered things all over the yard like it was mad because it did not find anybody home."<sup>47</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

Taken together, these interviews give a picture of life for children and teenagers between 1900 and 1930, the period before modernization, in the Mojave Desert area of southern Utah, northern Nevada, and northern Arizona. The most powerful message from them is the influence of family life. Stable marriages were the dominant pattern. Children learned to work beside their parents in the home and in the field. Parents were their models, and the youth adopted their values.

The most surprising thing is what the children did not say. They never reported being hungry. They had plenty of food because their family raised it in their own garden adjacent to their house and bartered for what they could not raise. They had ample home-cooked meals with fresh-baked bread almost daily. They lived in their own houses, even if they were modest and often self-built. Most everything was made at home. Children felt adequately cared for in this barter economy. Lola Belle DeMille Bryner reflected, "Most everyone was poor, so we didn't notice it."<sup>48</sup>

Most families had many children, so children of all ages had nearby friends and undertook many activities together. Nature was their life, and because there was no commercial entertainment, they created their own entertainment. Many spent much of their lives with horses and cattle.

One reason they were so satisfied is that most of them lived in a village instead of out on a farm, separated from each other. They were all together, and their lifestyle lacked no imagination as they interacted. The community-organized fun, such as music, dances, town celebrations, Christmas, and Thanksgiving, was also much easier to promote in the village. At these events, everyone came, including grandparents and parents and their babies. Another form of fun was the family fireside. It was common for a family to sit around the fire at night in the darkness and sing, tell stories, and play games.

Life in the capital city of St. George differed somewhat because there were so many more people. They had the opera house where vaudeville shows were regularly performed. Dixie College existed after 1911 and had an orchestra, musicals, and a dance hall, and eventually it featured athletic teams. Some youths, however, were unable to participate in either village or urban fun because the death of a parent required them to be employed full-time.

These stories, admittedly fond memories, depict powerful family life of stable laboring families. They are positive, probably because they were survivors. The many children who died, and even the parents who died young, did not get a chance to be interviewed and may have given different views.

## NOTES

1. Stephanie Hanes, "Toddlers on Touch Screens: Parenting the 'App Generation,'" *Christian Science Monitor Weekly*, 20 October 2013, <http://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/Family/2013/1020/Toddlers-on-touch-screens-parenting-the-app-generation>.
2. Elliott West, "Becoming Mormon," *Journal of Mormon History* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 31–51.
3. West, "Becoming Mormon," 38.
4. West, "Becoming Mormon," 44.
5. William G. Hartley, "Childhood in Gunnison, Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 51 (1983): 108–32.
6. Susan Madsen, "Growing Up in Pioneer Utah: Agonies and Ecstasies," in *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah's Mormon Pioneers*, ed. Ronald Walker and Doris R. Dent (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 317–28.
7. Madsen, "Growing Up in Pioneer Utah," 318.
8. Madsen, "Growing Up in Pioneer Utah," 318.
9. Madsen, "Growing Up in Pioneer Utah," 320.
10. Martha Bradley, "Children on the Underground," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 51 (1983): 133–53.
11. Davis Bitton, "Zion's Rowdies: Growing Up on the Mormon Frontier," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 182–95.
12. Emma Lucinda Nelson Larson, Oral History Interview, Voices of Remembrance Oral History Collection, file number 68-081, Dixie State University Special Collections, St. George, Utah. Hereafter cited as Interviewee Name, VOR File ##-###.
13. A shock would contain fifty to one hundred stalks of corn tied into a bundle, forming a pyramid.
14. Daniel Winder, VOR File 68-128.
15. Myrtle Crawford Winder, VOR File 68-129.
16. Mary Hafen Leavitt, VOR File 68-100.
17. Vera Hinton Eager, VOR File 68-044.

## DIXIE SAINTS

18. Blanch Mathis McComb, VOR File 68-096.
19. Lola Belle DeMille Bryner, VOR File 68-015.
20. A flailer is a small implement used to separate grain from husks and other chaff.
21. Edward Sirls Terry, VOR File 68-102.
22. Martha Vilate Hughes Knight, VOR File 70-020.
23. Joseph Terry, VOR File 69-102.
24. Allan Kent Powell, ed., *Nels Anderson's World War I Diary* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013).
25. Mary Ann (Adams) Starr, VOR File 69-197.
26. Bodil Margaret Johnson Pulisipher, VOR File 70-035.
27. Lora Ann Gifford Christensen, VOR File 68-131.
28. Laura Snow Woodbury, VOR File 68-007.
29. Robert Parker Woodbury, VOR File 68-038.
30. Lucy Crawford Schiefer, VOR File 69-008.
31. Della Humphries Hardy, VOR File 69-007.
32. Erastus Snow Gardner, VOR File 69-018.
33. Lucy Jepson Barnum Roberts Isom, VOR File 70-025.
34. Amanda Amelia Hannig Milne, VOR File 69-036.
35. Louis Rumell Reber, VOR File 69-056.
36. Lorenza "Renza" Barnum Day, VOR File 69-112.
37. Leah Bundy Jensen, VOR File 69-070.
38. Agnes Melinda Leavitt Leavitt, VOR File 69-071.
39. Lorin "Dutch" Abbott Leavitt, VOR File 69-072.
40. Rhoda Hafen Leavitt, VOR File 69-078.
41. Marie Blake Gubler, VOR File 69-123.
42. Evan Erastus Cooper, VOR File 69-027.
43. Myrza Lang Booth, VOR File 69-135.
44. Inez Heaton Hoyt, VOR File 68-070.
45. Joseph Fielding Hardy, VOR File 69-080.
46. Reed Prisbey, VOR File 69-206.
47. Emma Bradshaw Cornelius, VOR File 70-016.
48. Lola Belle DeMille Bryner, VOR File 68-015.