



Norma Bringhurst Empey

## LIFE HISTORY OF NORMA BRINGHURST EMPEY

I am Norma Bringhurst Empey. I am 68 years of age. I have worked at writing this history of my life several times. With the Lord's blessings helping me, I hope I can finish it now.

I was the oldest child of my father, Marias William Bringhurst, and Lillian Dalton, my mother. The first grandchild of my grandmother, Mary Janet Stapley Bringhurst. My grandfather, William Augustus Bringhurst, had three wives and twenty-five children. My father was the oldest child of the third wife. My Grandfather Bringhurst died March 8, 1912. I was born May 29, 1912. He never knew any of the grandchildren of the third wife. I was the first grandchild of my Grandfather Orley Dalton. My Grandmother Alice Ann Langston Dalton was married to Newman Brown and had one child, Alice. She had four children older than I.

Ila Spilsbury, a little girl who lived next door to my Bringhurst family, told me a few years ago when we happened to meet, how much she hated me when she was a little girl because I took her place with the Bringhurst family when I was born. She never felt she belonged anymore; they made such a fuss over me.

I told my mother and father of an incident that happened when I was so young they didn't believe that it was possible for me to remember. My description of the house and things were so accurate and had never been discussed they knew I would have had to remember. My brother, Ivan, as a baby had the croup very bad. One night he was so bad, Dad had gone for help from the midwives in town. I had awakened and no one saw me, but I saw it all. They had Ivan laid out in front of the fireplace working with him. Someone said, "He is dead." I remember my mother says, "He is not; he can't die." Picking him up and working with him, he started breathing and coughing.

We lived in the old Stapley house--one of the first houses built in Toquerville. It was long and narrow with one little window. The doors were small, a tall man had to stoop to get in. That was the way homes were built in the early days. They didn't have the time or materials to do more. The houses were built of native adobe and low roofs with a fireplace in one end for heat and light at night. At first all homes had dirt floors which were wet down and hardened. As time went on they had floors of some kind of lumber. Rooms were added on as they were able to. When we lived there, we had a floor covering. I do not know what kind. The room then seemed long and large, but remembering it so distinctly, it would probably be a hut that would get lost in today's homes. Outside the small window on the south side of the house was a large pink oleander bush. I remember how beautiful it was. Later a large black rock, three-story house was built in front of this house and two small lumber rooms were built on the north of it. After the black rock was built, the back part was all torn down. I think we were the last people to live in the first adobe part of the house. It was torn down when we moved.

We next moved to a rock house that was back of the George Kleinman home and garage. It was quite nice--two rock rooms with a small lumber kitchen on the south side. The house was built up about four or five feet with a space under for storage. We never used it, and I never remember playing in it--even hide and seek. There were two real large pear trees and weeping willows on the lot. The pears were not Bartlett pears. They spread out like a shade tree.

The summer I was seven years old we moved to the place which has been the family home since. It was an old home, too, one of the first built. It was one small adobe room with boards covering the outside so the adobes wouldn't wash away. With single boards stood straight up for the walls to make a bedroom on the north and a small lean-to chicken coop type room on the back of the main room. The holes between the boards were covered with heavy cloth soaked in paste made with cooked flour, then papered over. After many years and layers of paper and paste, it made a nice wall. As the dooby in the walls of the front room fell out, I took worn out denim soaked it in paste and filled in the dooby walls and papered over it. It

was there solidly until the house was torn down. Dad built a nice cellar and granery back of the house. It is still standing. We always talked about having a new home. That didn't come until after I was married.

I was about five years old; Mother needed a start of yeast. You couldn't go to the store and buy yeast cakes or yeast. If your yeast went sour, you borrowed a start from someone else. Dad was going to the field to work--we lived in the rock house then. I was going to ride with him to the lower end of town and get a start of yeast from Clara Kleinman. They lived down by the big rock building at the lower end of town which is still standing. The horses were hitched up and standing out in the street while dad was loading in which he needed to work with and his lunch and water. We had a horse called Old Bally. He was the one Dad used to break other horses for work horses. He made a little extra money doing this. He had another horse he thought was about broke hitched with Bally this morning. Walter Beatty broke horses to ride. He came up the street on a horse he was breaking. As he came near the team, his horse started to buck.

The horse with Bally became frightened and started to run. Bally tried to hold back but finally couldn't so we were off to a seriously bad runaway. I was in the wagon ready to go. Ivan, my three-year-old brother, had climbed up on the side of the wagon and wanted to go. Mother had told him to get down and come back. There were lots of people on the streets when the horses started to run. The bucking horse had brought people out of their houses. As the team started running--some were hollering for Ivan to jump, others for him to get in the wagon. I went back and pulled him over the side of the wagon box into the wagon. Someone called for me to get the reins, but before I got to the front of the wagon they slipped out the front and dragged on the ground. It was one of the worst runaways that ever happened in Toquerville.

We went down the street south two blocks, turned and went west one block, then south to the end of the lower street. The wheels went off the end of the bridge and nearly threw us out of the wagon. Everyone ran out, threw their hats, tried to stop the frightened team, but on we went. Lyle Bringhurst had a race horse. He caught us as we got to the end of the lower street before we had time to turn and go down a dugway over the West Fields. We probably would have been killed if we had gone there. It was a bad situation. When they stopped the team, Math Beatty had an old wagon with dump boards on it. He was coming from the field and everyone got on with Ivan and I to go back home. We met Mother half a block up the street. She had run all the way and was so exhausted. I can remember she thought having to get on that wagon and ride was the last straw she could stand.

I remember crying part of the way; but, when they got us and brought us back and everyone was giving us gifts, I thought it was exciting. When we started out in the runaway and I had Ivan in the wagon, he thought it was great fun and the horses weren't going fast enough. He was standing up holding on to the sides of the wagon yelling "Diddup", jumping up and down trying to get them to go faster.

When I was five years old, my Grandmother Bringhurst took me to Salt Lake City with her on the train to visit Aunt Veda. The only thing I remember was getting on the train and the ride back from Lund in a wagon, also the street cars in Salt Lake. I tried to beat one, one day, and get across the street before it got there. It seemed like it had to stop and some came running after me.

Wash day was a problem back in those days. Water had to be carried from the ditch to fill the black tub outside and a fire made under it to heat the water. The tub sat on three black lava rocks to hold it up. After the water was hot, lye was put in to soften the water and the dirt came to the top and was skimmed off. The hot water was then put in a tub with soap and clothes and punched, then scrubbed, then were put in the black tub and boiled. From there they were sudsed and rinsed in bluing water, wrung out and hung to dry. There weren't as many clothes as we have today, but they were dirtier and wash day was a drag.

In the summer the milk wouldn't keep from going sour from morning until night. When Dad milked, we would take a small bucket of milk out to the ditch, set the bucket in the cool water and stir it until it was cool for supper. We always had bread and milk for supper with grapes, cheese, radishes, preserves, etc. I still think bread and milk, cheese and grapes are the best tasting of anything.

Of course, the bath in the No. 3 tub was the main event every Saturday night. All the big pans available were put into use heating water on the top of the stove. The baths would start with the youngest child and go up, everyone would get scrubbed in that tub from head to toe, and each one rinsed with clean warm water. In the summer we waded and played in the ditch and the LaVerkin Creek down to the field. If we had time we might get to go swimming up to "Old Cradle." It was a fun swimming hole under the bridge on the old road. There was a smooth rock to slide down. I didn't get to go very much. I tried to learn to swim later in life, but never did learn. I guess I'm afraid of large bodies of water I can't stand up in.

When I was a child our beds were ticks filled with corn- husks. So each fall the corn had to be pulled, husked, and the softest cornhusks packed in the ticks until they were almost round. It surely was fun to jump on and sink down in it. Before the next fall when it was time to empty, wash, and refill the ticks, it got quite thin and lumpy.

I can remember the first car that came to town. I don't know how old I was, but it came down into Ash Creek at the bottom of the land where George Bringham lives now. It was a one seater with a jump seat you could raise. The wheels had spokes. Martin and Anna Laura Anderson lived closest to where they came. I don't know if there was a bridge over the "Old Cradle" or not. I know the horses were all frightened of the car.

As a child I was never late or absent from school. I rarely became ill. I had the regular childhood diseases, but lighter than anyone else. I remember mother and dad coming home from a dance one night and I had a fever. They woke me up and tried to give me a quinine tablet. They doctored with quinine then like they do antibiotics now. I couldn't swallow a pill of any kind. Dad put that capsule down my throat and it came back until it dissolved. He got really upset. I don't remember whether I ever kept it down or not. I was coming down with the measles. When I was young, the teachers gave prizes in school and church for never being late or absent during the year. I nearly always received those gifts at least more than anyone else. One day I was late for school. It was before the third grade. I remember crying all day: the teacher didn't know what to do with me. I was competitive in school and worked hard to get the best grades I could.

When I was eleven years old one of the highlights of my childhood happened. President of the United States Warren G. Harding came to Utah. He was the first President of the United States to come to Utah. He was coming to Zion National Park. The names of all the Primary children in the St. George Stake were put in a hat and two names were drawn out. This was done in front of grandma's store which was in the center of town by one of the county officials. (Grandma was Primary president at that time, so was out front with the group when they was done. I was in the house. My name and Dorothy Anderson's were drawn to present the President and Mrs. Harding with a large Indian basket of fruit and a horseshoe of flowers. I never had seen my grandmother so excited. She ran in the house, kissed and hugged me, and danced around. I had a new white dress, beautiful for then, and I presented the basket of fruit. President and Mrs. Harding kissed me and I sat between them during the ceremony. I received a letter from the Whitehouse. President Harding died in California on that trip after he left here--supposedly of food poisoning.

Special things we did occasionally were to go on hayrack rides to the hot springs at LaVerkin. It took the afternoon and late night to do that. One year a group of us went to Harrisburg Canyon on a hayrack ride Eastering. It seemed glamorous then but our own canyon, Old Cradle, or LaVerkin Creek,

was as good or better. And we wouldn't have had to spend the whole day riding in the hot sun and getting sunburned.

I was always large for my age. I was taken to be 17 or 18 years old when I was only 13 or 14. I was matured and five foot eight inches tall when eleven years old. The figures are on my report cards. I always worked in the fruits and berries that came on from the time I was quite young. Dad had a big orchard and there were lots more. Contractors for Salt Lake came in, contracted the crops and shipped them out. I could really pick fruit fast. One year they brought a boy in who was the champion apple picker in the state. I was about 13 so that was a challenge to me. The first day he was there we picked in the same orchard in the West Fields. I picked two more bushels of peaches than he did. The next day, one more. The third day, Mother found out what was going on and wouldn't let me go back. She probably thought I didn't have any sense.

For years Dad had the best melon patches. We couldn't sell them like you can now except Casabas. He would take these to Cedar and peddle them. I remember putting Casabas in the barn and covering them with hay and also in the cellar. They would keep until February. Dad would bring melons to town by the wagon box load. He would pull the wagon under a big apricot tree. We could have all we wanted, so we could take the heart out and feed the rest to the pigs. We had many pigs to eat surplus crops so they wouldn't waste. We had to wash our dishes without soap, so the dishwater and scraps could be fed to the pigs. If we used soap it would give the pigs the scours and make them sick. Mother always had a tea kettle of boiling water to scald the dishes. A house wasn't a home without a large tea kettle on the stove.

When I was a child growing up we had three animals that grew up with us and lived a long time. A horse--Old Bally; a cow called Jersey; and a dog, Jack. The horse lived to be 24 years old. His hair turned grey. His legs became stiff and wouldn't bend. He went up and down like a rocking horse. It was several years after I was married before he died. Ivan finally got up the courage to kill him.

The cow, Jersey, was past 16 years old. She didn't have calves anymore. Dad took her to the field to fatten her up to kill her for, beef. He left her there for a year or two until she died. He couldn't kill her, either. The dog, Old Jack, was 15 or 16, too. He lost his teeth, was sick and became cross. I remember one day he was having a fit or something. Mother went after Dad's gun and got Mack Peterson to kill him. I was in my teens and was embarrassed to cry over a dog, so I developed a bad toothache. I can remember Mother smiling as she tried to find a tooth to doctor. I sure did cry a lot over that toothache.

Each summer or when we killed animals we made soap to do the washing. We couldn't use the good fats we could render out for food, so mostly we used the fats from the entrails, the hides from the pigs and other waste products. It was not easy as it is now to make soap. You put the black tub or a big brass kettle, if you were lucky enough to have one, on the fire. In went three cans of lye, three buckets of water, and all the fat and scraps you thought might make up to 12 pounds and started boiling it until the fat all dissolved. After you had cooked it for two or three hours, you began experimenting according to the way it looked, adding more fat or lye as you could tell was needed. Water was needed sometimes to thicken it. You could take some out in a small dish and add bits of water, lye, and grease to see what it need to make it come to a good soap. It was a long, hot, unending job and a great satisfaction when you had a tub of good thick soap develop. It was an art which I eventually became fairly good at. I only remember getting so aggravated I threw away one batch of soap. This soap business always had to be done if you wanted to wash clothes--there never was enough money to buy it. After it was done, it was poured through a screen wire while hot, into a tub to cool, and then cut into bars after it had hardened enough.

In front of our old house we had a Chinaberry tree and an Ash tree. The Chinaberry had a strong limb that came out on the south side. We always had a swing on it. After that were old car tires, they were cut out and used for a swing turned inside out. The plys of the car tires were separated and used to half sole shoes, too. We always went barefoot in the summer a lot of the time. One day I was in the swing with the baby on my lap. Clouds were going over, but it wasn't stormy. A bolt of lightning came down and

struck in the school yard across the street and burned a pile of weeds there. I was so frightened I cried. That was the closest experience I had of lightning in my lifetime.

We always sang in the evenings at home and when we were working on fruit or other jobs we did. Mother read books out loud to the family in the winter evenings. Dad would give us a nickel to comb his hair and scratch his head. Mother liked her hair combed, too. She had long hair a large part of her life. We had a happy home. The house may have been a hut but it was a happy home with lots of love when we were growing up. At the top of the hill back of our house stands a big black rock. It was always called "black rock." It was a challenge and sentinal for everyone who lived there. We would climb the hill and cook breakfast or race to the top. Up on top you can see the St. George temple. Each spring I would climb the hill to find Segó Lilies. I always took the first Segó Lilies to school each year. One spring Estelle Jackson wanted to go with me and I let her. I saw the only one we found that day, but she grabbed it first. I never trusted her after that and wouldn't take her with me anymore.

When I became 12 years old in May, I was the youngest girl in the Seagull class. Primary went to 14 years old until it was changed to 12 and one went into Mutual (M.I.A.). That year the Seagull class of Toquerville was to give a program in June Conference at St. George. I was chosen to do the solo part in the program. We were assigned to go to the homes of girls in St. George to stay while we were down there. Conference was all day Saturday and Sunday. I was assigned to go with Una Pickett. She was a pretty and very nice girl. I went home with her and we had supper. They had bakery bread--why that started me off crying I will never know. We never had bakery bread and I thought you were poor if you had bakery bread. I had never been away from home before with strangers. What ideas one can have at times would baffle anyone. Anyway, I began to cry and couldn't stop. We went uptown and ran into Rhea Wakeling. She took me home with her. I think it was to a hotel and things went smoothly for the rest of the time.

I don't know or remember if we had piped water to our homes before Hurricane brought drinking water and piped it to Hurricane or not. But it was in 1917, it was piped to Hurricane.

Life wasn't easy when I was young for us or anyone else. There was very little money. We always had plenty of food. We raised or traded for food products we didn't have. We talk about food storage today--that was a way of life for people when I grew up. If you didn't have a year's supply ahead you may not survive. I never knew anything else. We made our soap, cheese, and butter. We had our milk, meat, chickens, and pigs. When the Model T cars came out, Dad bought one--a two-seater. He trucked, gardened, and peddled his fruit, melons, dried fruit, and molasses to Cedar and vicinity or traded for produce we didn't grow.

Our main crop we made our living on was fig trees. We made fig preserves to sell. Mother had labels for the bottles. We shipped fig preserves all over the United States. The travelers to Zion Park bought a lot. We had a sign like a fruit stand--Fig Preserves. One year we made 150 gallon of fig preserves and sold it to the Arrowhead Hotel. They were bottled in half gallon bottles. Mother tried hiring girls to peel figs, but they were so slow we couldn't make any money hiring them. I was only 11. Mother and I peeled all the figs. We would have to wrap our fingers with cloth--the figs ate the skin off your hands like lye. Before we started making fig preserves and after we stopped making it, we would let the figs ripen will and fall on the grand then we would pick them up, spread them on trays to dry. One year we had one to two ton of dried figs that we steamed and packaged and sold to the stores and peddled. It was always a big job.

I guess I grew up disliking lazy people who lived off other people. I had a few experiences when I was young with these people. I guess I shouldn't relate my opinion of these people, probably wouldn't sound too good.

We always had a big garden--all kinds of fruit, nuts, raspberries, Himalaya berries, strawberries, currants, goose- berries, pomegranates, etc. It was all hard work. I remember going up to Grandma Dalton's at Rockville. I was very young. Dad took **us** up. There had been a storm, but wasn't storming then. Dad had the horses hitched up preparing to come home when a rider from Springdale ran through town hollering that a flood was coming. If there was a big flood, each town above did this so the people below could get their barrels full of drinking water so it wouldn't be too muddy to settle. The barrels were on a sled and pulled by a horse to the river, filled and then back.

Everyone had two or three barrels so the water would settle while they used out of the other barrels. They were wooden barrels, wrapped with gunny sacks. In the summer water was poured over them so the water kept cool. The rider's warning gave people time to get their cattle off the river bottom where they were turned out to graze. Many animals were lost in the floods. There was also seven river crossings between Rockville and Virgin. We all hurried to the wagon and started on a trot to try to beat that flood to Virgin. I was young, but sensed the anxiety and became frightened as Dad made the horses go fast enough to beat that big wall of water coming. We just made it across the last crossing as the flood got there. Dad was kind to his animals, took good care of them and didn't abuse them.

I always had a very healthy respect for the Virgin River and the havoc it wrought over the years during my lifetime. There were many more storms and rainfall when I was young than now. One summer it stormed every single week. The first thunder and lightning started at two o'clock on Sunday morning. It awakened everyone. There were floods off the mountain back of our lot. Each week the storm would come one hour later, just like clock-work . All the entertainment we had Sunday afternoon after church was gathering on the sidewalks and walking up and down the street. We knew almost to the minute when to be home to miss our weekly storm.

One day on Sunday, the boys had a snake up the street. I heard the screaming and went uptown. I ran up the street and back down once and decided to stop and defy them. They threw the snake at me. I picked it up and went after the boys. They were more afraid of that snake than the girls and begged for mercy. That was the end of that ! !

My first years of schooling were under the direction of a teacher--Louise Thurston. She married Edwin Slack before the end of **my** second grade year. It was an old building and had three **rooms** in it for the whole school until the new school-house was built. We moved into it the beginning of my fourth grade. We moved down to the house in which we lived most of our lives **when I** turned seven years old. The home was across the street from the new school house. The school house is now the ward chapel.

To build this school house, they brought a brick machine I think from Kanab area and used the local red clay to make the bricks. Then they burned them. I can remember how they laid the bricks and stacked them like an igloo type house called a kiln. Dad and Martin Anderson bought the brick machine. They were going to make bricks to build themselves a new home. They never did get around to making brick, and I do not know what happened to that brick mill. When the family finally got around to building a **home** after I was married, they made it out of cement block.

Every spring and fall as long as I was at home from the time I was nine or ten years old, I papered that front room. We had a loom woven rag carpet on the front room floor. We finally moved the kitchen into the back lean-to room. That's when we cooked all that fig preserves. Mother tried every recipe and method of making fig preserves. I will tell you how to make the best preserves. Peel your figs and don't cut through into the seeds. Weigh the figs, put pound for pound figs and sugar. Add enough water to barely cover. Cook on high heat until (that's high heat on a wood cook stove), adjust your electric stove to keep it boiling good until the syrup is fairly rich and clear. Put in bottled individually with a spoon, strain the syrup you put over the figs. so there won't be seeds floating if a fig breaks in cooking and seeds are in the syrup--um good!

One day before the old house was torn down, I was up **home**. Dad said, "Come on, Norma, let's go visit the old house. I'm going to tear it down this coming week." The wallpaper I had put on the walls the fall before I was married was the last put on the house. I told Dad if I'd have gotten married sooner maybe they would have had a new home sooner.

I went to school in Toquerville until I was out of second year high school. We really had fun and some good teachers. We had a good time and a lot going. The year I remember best: Alva Armstrong, Linna and Elizabeth Snow, Keith Seegmiller and Wyatt Hiles were the teachers for the upper grades. I then went to Hurricane High School my third year of high school. The bus was the old black barn driven by Earl Parkinson. Next year I went to St. George and stayed with Grandma Bringham. She was working in the temple. That year I finished two and a half units in high school and 43 hours in college.

Mother suffered with gallstones for many years--she really suffered. She wouldn't be operated on because she had been in pain for so long she thought she had cancer. I had gone to Provo to sign up to go to school at the BYU. Mother had a gallstone attack each day for ten days and decided she may as well be dead. She couldn't stand the pain any, longer. They called and I went home on the bus and Mother was operated on later. Dr. McFarland operated and counted 250 gallstones with much gravel and gall-stone crystals. She had the most gallstones known in medical history at that time. She was written up in medical history books. I worked at the county courthouse writing tax rolls for several months--Uncle Charley was county assessor.

In my youth I was active in 4-H work. One summer when I was about 16 years old, I did a project raising 300 chicks. I had to borrow money from the bank for the project to build a coop, brooder equipment, and feed for the birds. The chicks were ordered. Everyone in the family helped. We all worked like the devil was after us to be prepared for the arrival of the chicks. No one in the family had raised baby chicks without a hen to do the work for them. We were not prepared for the problems ahead even with all the reading and study we had done on the subject. I had never even handled a baby chick. I was afraid of hens with chicks. The day arrived and the chicks came. The first squirming little chicks I touched sent chills through me. I dropped the check with revulsion. It was with sheer fear and from necessity that I made myself handle those chickens and care for them.

Then I remembered what caused my fear. When I was a tiny child just walking, I was up to my Grandmother Bringham's. I was catching baby chicks. The hen was flying at me and on me time and again picking me, but I wouldn't let go of those baby chicks I had until the commotion of the outraged hen and my crying brought someone running. They picked me up and carried me to the house and convinced me to let the baby chicks go. I had not remembered this experience until I handled baby chicks again. I can still remember what and where grandma's barns, cows, corrals, cellar, granery, chicken coops, and trees were as the lot appeared then. I am sure the experience with the hen caused me to remember it so well.

I overcame my fear of the chicks and even carried them out when they died. Those chickens were a good, but expensive, schooling which taught me much that was worthwhile later in life. I didn't realize how much I had learned from this project until I became involved raising turkeys after I was married. As a result of my chicken project I became the alternate for the Union Pacific Railroad Scholarship to Utah State University. Emma Sanders was first and used the scholarship.

When I graduated from the Seagull Primary class, I was asked to teach the Bluebird class. That year I had the best class in the stake and was asked to present the program in June Conference with the girls. I was only 15 years old. Next I taught the Trail Builders class of boys. It was a challenge. We had lots of fun and activated one boy I remember. He came to see me before he went overseas in the war to tell me how much he enjoyed the class. I was a secretary in the M.I.A. The bishop came and asked mother if I could be Primary President when I was 16 years old, and mother told him no.

We used to go to dances at New Harmony, Kanarrville, and other towns in the summer when I was a young girl. All the dance halls were open air. It was a lot of fun.



In our town we had many interesting people with many different characteristics. Some were nose-y, officious, and gossipy. I think we had at least one of each type of character there was. My father was constable for a few years when I was a young girl. I stood with my mother as she listened at the bedroom window when a man threatened my father's life. She wrote the conversation on the bedroom wall. My life as a child, growing up, was happy and protected. I thought everyone was as good as my father and mother.

One thing I remember so distinctly when I was young--we always had snakes and lizards around our place. Dad would not like it if we killed any, snake other than a rattlesnake. The other snakes were allowed to be in the cellar, granery, and backyard. Dad said they ate the mice and varmints. We grew up with them with no fear. The rattlesnakes weren't any joke.

All the big fig trees I told about earlier were located in sections--we had what we called the corner tree, the corral trees, the trees by Naegles, and the middle tree. This middle tree was something to see. It had one of the biggest trunks of any tree I have even seen in my life. We never measured it, so it would sound like a tall tale if I told you how large it was. Remembering the amount of figs we used and picked, one could tell how enormous those trees were. It was the biggest job from early morning to two or three in the afternoon, picking up those figs every day--these figs that had dropped--then putting them out to dry. There were four or five crops of figs during the season and when they were on, that was about all we did ever day--pick up figs, take care of them, put them out to dry.

There were a lot of weeds and peppermint plants quite high growing around the fig trees and there was a large rattlesnake that had come down off the mountain resting in the weeds. My brother was hitting the weeds to make them lay down so he could see the figs when this rattlesnake came up. LaRae was a baby then and we had her sitting in one of those little metal red wagons while we worked. This big snake came up on its tail, out of the weeds and started rattling and hissing. I got a club and I had a bad time fighting with it. The kids were all screaming and hollering, I told them to get the wagon and take the baby to the house as fast as they could. I started hitting at the snake. As soon as the wagon started going, the snake started following the wagon. I think Marx Alice had hold of the wagon and she was pulling it and running as fast as she could. I was fighting the snake, and the kids were all screaming and hollering. Before Mother and Dad could get there, I had struck the thing two or three times. It was really angry then. I can't really remember exactly what happened, but we got the snake and no one was bitten which was a miracle.

We used to go down to the field over an old rocky road, you couldn't go down into the fields with a car either way. We had to pick the fruit and carry it up over a big hill to load the car to go peddling. On the trail that went over this hill, in two different places, were rattlesnake dens. Most of the time they would never bother us and we would never try to kill them. We would see them lying out there. One day one of them started getting kind of nery, Dad was with me that day. We decided we had better get rid of them before someone was bitten. A rattle-snake isn't mean and hard to handle if people would leave them alone. They are really quite peaceable.

The only snake I ever saw in my life that I was afraid of, and I'll say I was afraid of it, was a sidewinder,. When I got married we moved to Price Bench. A sidewinder is a little tiny snake, not more than a foot long, and as deadly as a rattler if it bites you. They are real fast and will climb up in bushes and strike out. You can be right on them before you see them and they can strike before you know. Believe me, I'd give one of them a wide berth if I knew they were around. I had a healthy respect of them. I didn't want to be bothered. I've had a lot of experience with things like that. In the early days, too, I guess the reason there were a lot of snakes around the lots--front., back, sides--were the fences were black rock that were hauled off the hill and stacked and built up for fences.

When people settled those places all the fences were made of lava rock. As time went on part of the height of the fence was taken down but the rock foundation and halfway up was always left and the

wire fences were added at the top of it. Long after I was married, it was too much work to haul all that black rock off unless you were building a house and had a basement you could put it into the cement or something. The rest of the rock was left as the base for the fence, therefore, the snakes had a good place to hide, multiply, and breed.

On February 3, 1932, I was married to Howard Empey in the St. George Temple. We had a wedding reception and received many gifts. We had three tubs full. I received many glasses. It was 80 some odd and many other lovely gifts. It was really nice for those days. We had a dance after.

After we were married we moved to Price Bench. On our way down the first time in February, it had rained and it was just a mud road. Half of the mud was gyp so it didn't take us long to get stuck in the mud and have to walk in and have someone come and pull us out with a team. We moved down on Joe Milne's farm at Price Bench. He had a four room house--two rooms and two screened rooms on the back which were really quite nice for those days. It was on stilts up off the ground--didn't have a foundation. There was no cooling back in those days and with the screened porches and the wind, the wind blew quite a bit, it was cooler in there than a lot of places. We build sheds around the house, set up posts and then cut tree branches and put over it for a shade.

The spring we moved to Price Bench, we went to the old Price Town and hauled rocks from the old houses down there and built coops to raise baby turkeys. There were two or three acres that was in alfalfa. We had to grub sagebrush and start from scratch, planting alfalfa and other crops. Dad had given us a cow when we got married as a wedding gift. There was a lot of salt grass pasture, really good pasture, so we had plenty of feed to keep our milk cow, raise calves and lambs. We had a little pig we had brought home with us from Toquerville. It had rained and there was an enormous flood in the river. We had to get home as soon as we could to take care of the turkeys. So we rode with Will Harradence across that flood. He went in at a crossing just before the Santa Clara Creek as it empties into the Virgin River. The stream was so big and swift at times it seemed the wagon box would float. It was about a mile and a half down stream before we could find a place we could go out on the other side. The stream had left the banks so badly cut, Howard was having a fit--afraid the little pig would drown. I was large with Keith. Will was really nervous after he got in that flood especially with me being there. He blew up at Howard over Howard's concern for the pig. I am sure no one else but Will Harradence and his special fine team and years of experience would ever had made it across the flood. I wasn't afraid at that time. I guess I did my worrying about it after it was over.

When we arrived home, the storm had blown in on the turkeys. They had piled up in the corner and many were dead--half grown turkeys. There is one thing for sure, there is nothing as dumb as a turkey. This was my first experience with turkeys and Howard knew less than I did. It was mostly experience we got out of it. I had raised chickens.

Down on that farm we surely had a rugged schooling. We grubbed sagebrush and burned it, had to plow with that team of horses that couldn't even cross the river if the water went above their ankles. We would have to get someone to get us out of the river. Much of the ground had gyp in it. If a stream of water hit it, it would flow into the ground for weeks and one would never know where it went or came out. You could be watering a new alfalfa patch, step on a perfectly dry looking piece of ground and drop in up to your armpits. We hauled all our drinking water and water to wash, etc., from St. George in 50 gallon barrels. When we had to go around by the Washington Fields 7 miles, that 14 miles took most of the day. Then there were good sized clay hills east of Price Bench and no roads--just several good cow trails there. Our wagon didn't have brakes. I rode down those hills once with Howard driving--he turned the horses loose. That is as afraid as I've ever been in my life. After that I drove that team down if I was on the wagon and held them back.

There was a bull that came in off the range that belonged to Nutter, a big cattle baron, for those days. There was not a fence that would hold that animal. It went where the best hay and pasture was and lived off the fat of the land--taking his harem with him. You never knew where you might meet him night or day, at home or abroad. He would fight a horse or anything else. We had been to the sheriff and done

all we could. Nutter's men would take him back out south, and he would beat them back in. The bull would just tear down and destroy stacks of hay. The sheriff told us if we had anymore problems and were in danger, to kill the bull. Howard had to go to the dry farm to put in crops. That bull was in our pasture and we couldn't milk our cow. Guess what? That bull died!

The wind blew a lot at Price Bench so we built a cooler. It was pretty neat then. It was probably five or six feet square, built with shelves like a cupboard, covered with burlap sacks four or five thicknesses with a pan on top filled with water dipped from the ditch. The burlap in the pan dripped the water over the sides. The breezes kept everything quite cool for those days. Every thing was fine unless we had a bad wind and dust storm, then sometimes if things weren't covered, the pig had a feast. That little pig we had lived on milk and corn. He was so fat he couldn't waddle. He sat on his behind, opened his mouth, and waited for food.

From the floods that came down the Virgin River, we accumulated lumber. We built our home with this lumber--the home we are living in today. They were building that bridge that crosses the river going to Hurricane. The floods that came down washed the lumber away several different times. We would go down on the river bottom, gather it up, dry it out, and stack it up. All the wood we had for a long time was drift wood from the river. I have seen floods that looked about like a logging operation. The Virgin River has more fall per mile of river than any other river in the world, except one. It has changed towns, lands, and been as destructive as any body of water for its size could be. It carries a heavy silt.

Keith was born ten months and three days after we were married. We moved to town for a month. Keith was born in Aunt Lottie Bryner's home. It was the old Bryner home. Dr. Donald McGregor, A. W. McGregor's father and Konrad's grandfather, was the doctor. Howard called him the first pain I had. Dr. McGregor came down an hour or two later and gave me a shot. Keith was born seven hours later.

Keith was a very healthy baby. Because of the type of scales we had to weigh babies, you couldn't tell what they really weighed. He probably weighed ten pounds. He was the biggest baby I had. We weighed him at Skaggs store in St. George **when** he was three months old, and he weighed 19 pounds. He was very active. While I was out taking care of the turkeys and working on the farm, we had a jumper that I put in the doorway. He could swing back and forth through the door. Before he was six months old, he had worn that jumper out. When Janice was born, I bought another jumper and the next four children didn't wear that jumper out. I finally gave it away before Kendall came along ten years after Carla. Kendall was born when Carla was past 10 and Keith was 21. When I bought a new jumper for Kendall, I had given the other one away.

We had wood floors with no coverings on the floors and couldn't put Keith on the floor because he would get splinters in him while crawling. One day we were up to Howard's sister, Nellie's place, and Keith was so active they asked me if he could walk. I said, "I don't know. I haven't tried." We put him down on the quilt on the lawn, and he just walked off. He didn't just take a step or two but trotted off. He never stopped running after that. He could outrun everybody.

One day Howard started off to town with the wagon. Orlene was down at Price Bench with me, and I was taking care of the turkeys. I asked, "Where is Keith?" It wasn't ten minutes after Howard had left because the dust from Howard's wagon was up on the turn when we started looking for Keith. We looked everywhere we could think of and ran around all over the farm trying to find him. We finally decided he was following the wagon because we could see his footprints going up the road. Before we caught him he was up past Stuzenegger's almost three-fourths of the way to the river. He wasn't very far behind his dad. Because he **was** so covered with dust from the wagon, we could barely see him. Howard was trotting the horses all the way so Keith was keeping up pretty well.

Keith was a good natured baby. The men at Price Bench used to drink quite a bit. One weekend they were having a party and they came and cut the screen on the porch and dragged us out of bed. They wanted us to go to a place called Little Arizona across the Arizona line--this was one o'clock in the

morning. So we took Keith up out of the bed and took him with us. While we were dancing, he never cried. He just played and had a really good time and was so good natured. When we got ready to come home, he dropped off to sleep. You could take him up out of bed and put him back and he was always pleasant--never fussed or cried or was any problem.

When I was pregnant with Janice, we only had a two-year lease on the place. We had worked very hard and had a lot of the sagebrush out and ground planted into alfalfa. When we wanted another lease, they didn't want to give us the same terms especially when they saw all the work **we** had done. We hadn't made a cent off the place, and we were just destitute because we had bought alfalfa seed and everything to plant. We had no income from the property. Anyway, I was in such bad condition after Keith was born that when I got pregnant with Janice, the doctor said we would have to move to town because of the problems I was having. He said I could die before they could possibly get me to town if things went wrong. So we moved to town. We moved into a one-room granery.

We lived there until just before Janice was born--about two months before. Howard finished Lee Empey's front room, and we moved into that one front room. When it was time for Janice to be born, the doctor wouldn't deliver the baby there because it was not big enough or in good enough condition. So, I had to go to the hospital for her birth. I went to Toquerville afterwards and Mother took care of me for two or three weeks. When I came back to St. George, we moved into Madge's little two-room house. We lived there until we bought the home we are living in now. It was a two-room adobe house with a full lot, and we moved into it in the first week of March, 1937, and have lived here ever since.

Of course, it is like other places, you add on and improve. You wouldn't recognize it from the first picture that was taken. We only borrowed \$500. The house and property cost \$1,000, but we had saved \$500 and only had to borrow \$500 from the bank. We didn't have to give a mortgage on the place, just a note. We had two years to pay it off, and we paid it off in nine months.

We always raised everything we ate. The children grew up with made over clothes. We bottled and made do with what we had. Sometimes things were pretty short and pretty meager. In all the years **we** have been married, the only other time we borrowed money was \$3,000 to build the laundry and pay for the equipment. I had two years to pay off that loan, and I paid it off in 11 months.

The stress and strain told on my health. In November of 1948, Howard's father died. In December of 1948, Mary Alice's husband, Tony, died and left her with three children under four years of age. In March 1949, Orlene's husband, Clyde, died and left her with three children under 11. In May of 1949, my father died with a heart attack. I didn't even know he was ill or having any problems. When I heard about it I was at Paula Mathis' visiting on a Sunday evening. Howard burst in very angry because I wasn't at home. In August of 1949, I had been working to pay the loan. It was just a year and I had paid off all this indebtedness--\$3,000--I had a heart attack. I wasn't a severe **one**, but it was a heart attack and I was down for awhile. My ability to work was just half--there were five people trying to do the work I had been doing and they still had to send the mangling out to be done .

Early in my married life I realized if my children were to have schooling and other opportunities and a home, I was going to have to work. I didn't want to be away from home so I talked Howard into helping me build a place for a self-service laundry. We lived in the very center of town--all the schools were within two blocks of us. I told Howard it would be a means of support when we were old. He took me at my word--as soon as the laundry was opened, he retired. He got old awfully fast.

That first year in business was a nightmare. People back in 1948 were still washing on the washboard. Most people didn't even have a washer, much less an automatic, so most of the business was travelers or commercial work. I did motel laundry in small washers and hung them all on the line--summer and winter.

Following through on the businesses I have had: I ran the laundry for 13 years, then Kendall was born and my health became so poor that I couldn't keep up with the laundry business, so I closed it out. I rented the building for a year, and I wasn't making any money out of it. LaWanna graduated from beauty school and I didn't want her to stay in Salt Lake because of a boy friend she had met up there, so I finally talked her into coming home and going into the beauty business with me. I kept the beauty shop for 14 years. After LaWanna married and moved to Cedar, I decided I'd have to do something else to make a living. There was a lady who wanted to go into the floral business and would teach me the trade. Anyway, it didn't work out, and I had to go to Denver, Colorado, to school to learn flower arranging. I had the flower shop for seven years. Not one of the businesses was easy work.

Hair sets were \$1.25 for a ratted or bouffant, and it took the long hair sometimes an hour to do. There wasn't that much money in it. Paying the operator one-half, the overhead, and all the supplies did not make this a profitable business. However, I really enjoyed all those years of work while Howard had no source of income. I really enjoyed meeting the public and working with people.