

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF
GERTRUDE (TRUDY) SHERMAN GORDON

Arranged and written by Lilly Engle who had these events related to her.

I was born in Fountain Green, Sanpete County, Utah, on October 18, 1874. May (Gillispie) Brasher was my niece and lived with us at that time. I well remember of her and me playing together and going to the neighbors. I was but six years old when we left Fountain Green, so of course I would not remember too much of that period of my life. However, the year I worked at Manti Temple (1938) I visited France Hansen (Amos Johnson's daughter) at my birthplace and she said to me, "Just where or in what direction do you think you lived here in Fountain Green?" I pointed to a lot, which seemed to me to be the place, although there was now nothing on it. It was bare of all buildings and every thing. France remarked, "Good Lord, that's exactly the place." We visited awhile and then she said, "We'll take a walk and see how many places in town you remember."

As we walked about I recalled the places of many of the old neighbors such as Berdleson, Hicks, Aunt Jane Woodward, Mariah J. Wakefield and others. We crossed a swale where watercress was growing just as it grew in my childhood days. I recalled going to the post office for the mail and that the postmaster was Mr. Harrison, a Welshman.

As we went around the block we came upon the site of the old fort, which was built to shelter the residents in case of an Indian attack. Though I was very young yet I do remember seeing the Indians come through town on one of their begging expeditions. We youngsters trailed behind picking up beads or other trinkets, which they lost. My father was a very good Indian interpreter. Also Mother could talk Indian.

At times the people, especially the women, were very frightened, even panicky, when a band of Indians appeared in town. I recall that on one such occasion I was over to the neighbors and the mother opened her flour bin, put a cloth over the flour and then put me and another little girl in the bin on top of the flour, and closed the lid, thus hiding us away. We were scared enough to be very quiet.

One night, it may have been after being hidden in the flour bin, I dreamed that I saw a band of Indians riding down the mountainside. I could hear their bell and other trappings. After the dream I was so frightened that I could hardly sleep for several nights.

When the Indians came begging they usually went to the bishop. One time when they came the bishop was a man who could neither speak nor understand Indian. So he sent for my father to come and be interpreter. The Indians demanded three beeves. The bishop told them they could have but one, for the pale faces were poor and had to have beeves to feed their own families. The Indians were angry and insisted that they be given three beeves, but were finally persuaded to leave with one.

On the east side of the fort the men built a corral to hold the stock at night so that the Indians might not steal them. The boys of the community herded the cattle in the day time on the hills or in the canyon, and boy-like, they used to think it a practical joke to occasionally alarm the town by crying, "Indians!" Like the boy who cried, "Wolf, Wolf!" this time when they really needed help.

Usually a man accompanied the herd boys, but his day they had been trusted to go alone. They had guns but had been cautioned not to shoot unless they needed to in self-defense, because the noise of a shot might let the Indians know where they were. While herding they saw a rabbit and forgot everything but to shoot it. They were all interested in the skinning of it when suddenly there was shooting all around them. Indians surrounded them. Some say that one boy was killed; another was wounded. These young herders held the cattle as best they could, but it was a sad group of boys who cried "Indians" when they reached home that day.

In 1866 when my brother George was about six months old, Father went back to the Missouri River in Captain Abner Lowery's Company to help bring emigrant Saints from Missouri to the Salt Lake Valley. He left in the late winter. It took six months to make the trip. There were about thirty teams of oxen in all.

The Indians were very mean at that time. So the men who were left in Fountain Green moved part of the families to Moroni where there was more protection for them while their husbands were gone. This left the men at Fountain Green freer to care for the farm crops. As soon as the crops were harvested the families at Moroni were moved back to their homes in Fountain Green.

I don't recall anything else of consequence until we were on the road to Castle Valley. Father was called to come and help settle this place. He and my two other brothers, Albey and Roy, and my oldest sister, Virie, who accompanied them to cook for the men, came in the spring of 1879. On the way they had to stop awhile for one of the mares to foal. After a rest the colt was put in the wagon, the mare was harnessed up again and the travelers were on their way. Virie had her little girl Mary Gillispie along with her.

Arriving in Huntington, Father and the boys took up farms. In that year they helped to make ditches for getting water on the land.

Father and Albey came and moved the family over in the fall of 1880. Of course we came in wagons; there was no other way. I remember one team of mares we had, Pet and Jane. Pet was sorrel, (very light red) and Jane was roan (black and white or gray). Seven of us children had to take turns walking, for there were not enough horses to ride, neither was there room in the wagons which were loaded to capacity with our belongings and food supplies. Albey had part of a load of flour in his wagon and a box of chickens fastened on the back. Father had two little pigs in a box on the back of his. Albey bought Mother a cook stove several weeks before we left Fountain Green. Cook stoves were a rare thing, so of course the stove was brought along.

As we children walked we drove the cows. They were milked morning and evening on the way over. Mother put the milk in a large coffee pot we had, and by stuffing something in the spout and putting the lid on tight she had milk for her family at every meal.

We must have come down Price canyon, for I recall being in Helper, where there was but a house or two and here we children first saw a railroad. We went over to the track and placing our ears on the rails could hear the rumble of a coming train. It was really a thrill when the train came puffing into sight, the first we had ever seen.

We moved right into a dugout, which Father and the boys had prepared on the north side of the river, which is on the north side of town. I think William Avery had a house down the creek at the site of the Avery Dam and there could have been a house or two on the town site, but I do not recall them if there were any. What I do recall vividly is the prickly pear beds, which covered the town site. The whole flat was a vast garden of flowers in the summer with only a trail threading between the beds of blossoms. Lyman Martin did surveying and my brothers helped survey the town.

The first winter the six boys slept in two wagon boxes, which were placed on the ground and covered with two wagon covers over the bows. Father, Mother, one little boy and three girls slept in the dugout. Virie had married in November and Delcena and Ellen remained in Fountain Green where they were working so that left only the three girls, who occupied one bed in the dugout; Father and Mother occupied the other.

I don't recall whether Father harvested any grain the first year we were in Castle Valley, but if he did he must have threshed it with a flail, since the first threshing machine in the county had just come in and could not have reached all the threshing at that time. A flail looked like a "T". It consisted of a short stick fasted to the end of a long one, the long stick serving as handle; the short one as the flail.

Our farm was north of the Rob Gordon farm. John Sherman, a grandson of Father, now occupies it. My oldest brother Albey's farm was north of Father's. To get the water to these places it had to be taken out of the river above Chris Otteson's place.

Father's farm consisted of 160 acres. That enabled him to have something for the boys to do and help make the living and stay to home rather than going away to find work. Oh, the great stacks of hay and grain they used to put up after they got the farm in shape; and what a big chaff house they did build. It seems to me that we used to have the threshers for a week at threshing time. If the threshing machine broke down sometimes repair parts could not be obtained this side of Salt Lake City. That happened once when we were threshing and we had to feed some of the threshing hands all the time they were waiting for the repair parts.

Those threshing days were big events for the threshing hands when mealtime came, for Mother always put up the best food she could. For instance, there were fresh

homegrown vegetables, dried fruit pies, pickles home-cured meat, molasses, honey and plenty of generous slices of homemade bread.

Father was an excellent butcher. If we lacked meat of our own he would go out and butcher for others and by that means bring home meat. It really took a plenty of it to feed seven husky boys besides the rest of the family. There were fourteen children in all. The first one died, leaving with parents included, fifteen mouths to be fed daily. Mother used to open a hundred-pound sack of flour every week.

We had to procure flour from over the mountain before wheat was raised here in sufficient quantity and before a flourmill was accessible closer to home.

We had pigs, chickens and also kept bees on the farm. There was a molasses mill in the community so we raised sugar cane and had molasses as well as honey for the table. We dried corn, squash and as soon as they were to be had, also apples, plums and peaches. Also we used to gather bull berries and dry them. We raised plenty of dry beans; we had a good cellar on the north side of the hill where the cabbage, carrots, beets and potatoes were stored in abundance for winter use. We always had a barrel of sauerout and a barrel of cucumber pickles. So you see that with our own eggs, milk and butter our living was pretty well secured.

The next spring after we came the boys built us a one-roomed log house on the farm. By the time I was nine years old we had a new house over by the hill on the east side of the farm. It had three rooms, all on the ground level. Also we had a granary by this time and were doing as well as any of the other settlers. Any of us girls could saddle a horse and ride it. We could harness a team also, although we didn't have to do that as other were plenty of big brothers around home.

Some of the early settlers, most of them having families, that I remember were Sim Dudley Drollinger, Lee Lemmon, Bill Gentry, Frank McCadan, Elias Cox and his son Elias H. Cox, William Avery, Benjamin Jones, Anthony Nielson, Bill Woodward, Joseph E. Johnson, Johnny Wakefield, Milas E. Johnson, Elam and David Cheney, Jens Nielson, Charley Brown, Bill Wimmer, Fred Fin, William Cordingly, Wash. Caldwell, Chris Otteson, "Uncle" George Johnson and James Woodward.

The latter made wooden tubs and barrels. Mother used some of them. What a picture of washday they bring to mind. It was a full time hard day. All the clothes of our large family had to be rubbed on the board. The men and boys wore such heavy underwear then and such big long-sleeved shirts. No light shorts then, and no wearing of suntan to the waist in lieu of a shirt. Agreeable to Mother's laundry standards the wash had to go through two tubs of rubbing and wringing of clothes by hand!

Uncle George Johnson raised broom cane and made brooms. We used some of them in our home.

At first Mother had a “post” bedstead, no springs. Instead rope was laced back and forth around pegs in the sidepieces. On this rope lacing was placed a straw tick; on top of that the feather tick was used until Mother got some ducks and made a new tick from their feathers.

I have a tureen that was Mother’s. When I was a child I used to think that when it got broken I would have the bottom of it for one of my play dishes. But it never got broken, except the handles. Many is the time that we children helped ourselves from it at the table.

In our early home we used several of the black, three-leg, iron kettles so characteristic of the period, in which cooking was done on the little old cook stove.

Characteristic of that period, too, is Mother’s trunk, which I have to this day. James Woodward made it here in Huntington seventy or more years ago. It is 2’4” long by 18” wide and 18” deep. It is made of lightwood, reinforced with strips of barrel-hoop, strap iron. It is lined with wallpaper and it has handles and a lock.

Incidentally, I also have the school slate, which was my father’s. A slate on which to cipher and write with a slate pencil was a cherished possession even in my school days. How my father did prize his.

A church organization, a “ward” had been organized by the time Father’s family came. In fact, as I have learned in later years from the ward’s history, it was formed October 7, 1879. So church activities had been functioning a year when we arrived.

Elias Cox was the Bishop. He had a little store in a dugout on the north side of the river, carrying little more than bare necessities, such as raisins, sugar, spices, tea, salt, pepper, baking soda, coal oil, candles, lamps; also a line of notions such as pins, needles, hooks and eyes, buttons and thread. We used to use a lot of them. There were some dry goods too, factory – now called muslin, calico, like percale now and denim, in fact the most needful things which people could hardly get along without. Bishop Cox’s store was about the only means the early settlers had of getting commercial Christmas supplies such as toys for their children. Among the toy attractions was one which was new to me, a little plastic mound with a bird on the top of it.

However, there was that childhood luxury, candy. There was stick candy of different kinds and flavors, separated into bundles wrapped in paper and packed in a thin wooden box. Lump candy was more common. It came in mixed flavors and was in muslin bags. A supply of these bags in turn was packed in burlap sacks. Also there were motto candies. But most wonderful of all were the Christmas candy roses. These were as large as real yellow roses. Some were white, some pink and some yellow.

The first raisins I remember came from this little store. We used to buy them by the box – a thin wooden box about twelve inches wide by fifteen inches long, lined with brown paper. Stick candy came in similar boxes only a little larger.

Finally, Bishop Cox built a couple of rooms in town and moved his store into one room. Some merchandise he could get at Price, but not always. He ordered most of his goods from Salt Lake City. Father used to haul the merchandise from Price over here (Huntington). Whether that is the way Father secured clothing for his family I do not recall, but I do not remember of ever being without shoes.

I well remember that the railroad was through Price at that time and had a depot there, for I recall a Chinaman who worked there, his head all shaven except his queue. It was braided in one long braid, which hung down his back. As a child I was afraid of this Chinaman; he looked so queer.

Church services as well as other public gatherings were held in the old "Brush Bowery." To the best of my recollection, the bowery had a wall constructed of posts or poles with willows woven in basket wise. The roof was of poles covered over with willows and brush. I think there was an improvised rostrum of boards and the seats must have been slabs or boards. Later there was a bowery in town. On holidays there was furnished in the bowery a barrel of lemonade. Over the rim of the barrel was hung a long-handled dipper and drinking the lemonade from the dipper was a free for all.

I joined the first Primary that was organized in the ward. Eliza Jane Avery lived just east of town and it was to her place we used to go for our little Primary parties. It runs in my mind that Annie Johnson was the first President, although I am not sure she was.

The first school we had that I remember was held in one room of Jens Nielson's home, which was just across the river north of town. There was a foot bridge across the river and I graphically recall that once when the river was quite high Julia my sister and I were crossing it and she caught hold of one of the bridge timbers and swung out over the dangerous water. This so frightened me that I still remember the incident.

One winter, I think it was my second, the school was held in a room of my father's house. Homemade desks were provided for the children. They were somewhat like boxes with the lid sloping toward the pupil so that it would accommodate him when writing or studying. School supplies were kept inside the box. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar and spelling were taught. Of course we used the slate and pencil and not books for our written work and read from a primer. Our early schools, as a rule, were opened and closed with prayer. When we got so we could use pen and ink we did our practice exercises in a penmanship book. I recall going to a night school to learn penmanship.

Elias H. Cox was the first schoolteacher. He taught in the Jens Nielson room. Then "Nan" Luce taught in Father's room. John Scott was one of the early teachers also. He taught two or three winters in one of his own rooms. By that time the community built a schoolhouse, locating it against the hill just across the road east of Rob Gordon's home. Thus the school was centrally located between the children who lived down the creek and those who lived up the creek.

It wasn't long, however, until people began to build in town, which naturally took part of the school children from the farms and created a demand for a schoolhouse in town. The people were too poor to hire a teacher for the "North" school and also one for a school in town. The result was that eventually children still living on the farms had to go to town for their schooling. Among the first teachers in town were Elias H. Cox, Ira Whitney, Sade West, Elisha Jones, Zera Terry. Later there were J.W. Nixon, Stell McMullin, D.C. Woodward, George Miller, Jess Washburn and others.

I was sixteen when the seminary was started in Huntington and I attended when its first teacher, James E. Brown, taught. I remember him well for he boarded with my sister Elvira Cox, who incidentally, was the wife of Huntington's first Bishop.

The settlers early sports in winter were skating, sleigh riding, horseback riding, dancing and candy pulling. Before there was a public dance hall we danced in private homes wherever there was a good floor. I think our second Bishop, Charles Pulsipher, had the first, or at least one of the first saw mills where lumber was procured.

For other entertainment a dramatic organization was effected early in the history of the community. I had a role in a couple of plays. Elias H. Cox took part in the plays all the time. It was through him that I got in one. I helped to sing one of the songs, which was about the wars. Others who were in casts in those early days were Ira Whitney, Joseph E. Johnson, John West, Sadie West, Will Green, Annie Johnson and Maggie Johnson (sisters). Annie was Joseph E. Johnson's wife and Maggie was Will Green's. Will always had the role of the villain and John West usually played a humorous role. These dramatic presentations furnished not only many enjoyable evenings but were often a source of revenue for helping meet the needs of the ward organizations or some other worthy public purpose.

When I was a child the community always observed a May Day celebration and of course, the May Pole was braided. A few times we braided the Liberty Pole but more often a pole was set up in the meetinghouse. Once we went up to Lee Lemmon's place in the canyon. It was a general occasion and looked pretty with girls in dainty lawn dresses, white stockings and high-top shoes. It would look clumsy now, no doubt, but it was beautiful then.

Mention of those high-top shoe days reminds me that years later than the May Day occasion I once had to buy my daughter Florence a pair of high tops because I could not find any thing else in the town stores. She did not hesitate to wear them. They cost eleven dollars.

I heard my older brothers and Father tell of the 24th of July celebration, which was observed by the settlers the year of 1880. They built a bowery in which to render the program and they danced in a log house near the bowery.

I used to love to dance, almost more than to eat. Most of our family did. So we went together, a wagonload of us, singing all the way going and returning. I recall well

the evening my big brother took me on the floor to teach me how to dance the quadrille. I was still just a girl. He was surprised but plainly pleased to find that I could step it off right along with him.

One thing I can say is that the whole family got along well together on the farm. How we did love to horseback ride, girls as well as boys.

Uncle James Martineau and two of my brothers surveyed the town site of Huntington. Afterward Elias H. Cox took up surveying professionally. After the town was laid out the heads of families "drew" lots as I recall it. Father drew lots 3 and 4 of block 44. Here he planted a large orchard and we had fruit from the orchard while we still maintained our home on the farm. After the children were married my parents moved off the farm onto these lots. At the present time (August 1955) lot 4 of this block is owned by Afton Brinkerhoff, who runs a blacksmith shop there.

Elias Cox and his son Elias H. wanted only one lot each. So they got the south half of this block 44. Of my brothers, Albey (Allie we called him) got the two lots comprising the north half of block 53. His boys Gerald and Verl still own and live in the house he built on lot 4 of this block. It runs in my mind that George got the south half of this block 53. Roy got the two lots comprising the north half of block 45, where his house still stands on lot 4. Frank got the south half of this same block 45.

While we were yet children living with our parents on the farm, once a peddler came to our house and sold Mother a bundle of cloth. From it she made six suits and three dresses. Father wore one suit. The rest were for the boys. It seemed to be no task for Mother to make up those suits and dresses. I heard her say that when she was only nine years old she could stitch by hand as pretty a hem as any woman could.

When I was a girl I worked a lot for my married sisters Virie, Delcena and Ellen. Their babies were coming along regularly and a girl to help at such times kept me with one sister or another so much that I scarcely felt at home back with my parents among my big brothers.

Babies were not blessed as regularly when Mother was raising her family as they are now days. I recall Mother saying that at least on one occasion she had several children blessed at the home on the same date by the elders who came for that purpose.

When I was young, the young ladies' hair-do was chiefly bangs. We wore them from ear to ear over the forehead. I had my turn wearing the high-top shoes, mostly the button ones. Imagine the buttonhook getting misplaced in the home of such a large family as ours and of a girl in a hurry to dress to meet her beau!

One dress I had which I wore a lot was made of a material called "maroon luster." Susan Wakefield Loveless made it for me. The basque was pleated in front and buttoned down the front, the buttons about an inch apart and all the buttonholes worked by hand. The skirt was the long flaring style. To make it stand out there was sewn on the inside

around the bottom a strip of buckram about six inches wide. Over the buckram was sewn a strip of velvet to save the skirt. The bottom of the right side of the skirt was finished with a bias strip of the same material as the skirt, about five inches wide. Around the top of the bias strip was sewn a twist for trimming. When I danced how that skirt did flare out! It cost me as much for the making of the dress as it did for the goods. But it fit me like a glove and I enjoyed wearing it.

My first boy friend was Jim Gordon and he was my last. We followed the courtship trail for eight years. I was his girl when I was twelve and married him on my twentieth birthday. During our courtship we used to come to town either on horseback or in a two-wheeled cart. Of course we had to come to town for our entertainment as we both lived on farms. Incidentally, the farms were adjoining.

He was a violinist and fiddled for many of the dances, which were held in private homes. Jim's sister Agnes and my brother Lionel were wed the same time that Jim and I were. In fact we held a double wedding in the schoolhouse across the river, where we furnished a supper for our guests. We got lots of presents. We gave a dance in town in the log meetinghouse. Agnes and I had our wedding dresses made alike and of the same kind of material, a blue cashmere. Hebe Leonard was a good friend of ours and a jolly sport. He sang, on this occasion, "Two Little Girls in Blue."

Following our wedding Jim and I set up housekeeping in one room of his father's house, which was on their farm. Here our first child, a little girl whom we called Estell, was born prematurely. She lived only a few minutes.

A short time afterward we moved to town where we had bought a house on the northeast corner of the block where my sister Julia Black now lives. In the town plot our house was on lot 4 of block 25. We bought this place from John Cordingly. It was large log room, possibly 15 by 18 feet. Our furniture consisted of a new cook stove, a homemade table and a big rocker. We had bought six chairs, but gave two of them to Lionel and Agnes.

After my last baby was born I went up the canyon and cooked for the men who surveyed the road up the canyon. Here I cooked about three months. My husband was one of the crew. Later when the road was being built I again cooked for the workers.

One summer and part of the next my husband was foreman of the Millerton Ranch just east of Hiawatha. I did the cooking for the ranch hands. I still had four children to care for. While at this ranch, one day a rainstorm drove the men to the house. Jim Brinkerhoff, one of them, said, "Mrs. Gordon, if you had a quilt on or a pile of carpet rags you might get some help." My husband responded, "We haven't either a quilt or carpet rags but we have a big box of pears in the cellar." So he brought out the pears. All the men washed their hands and while some peeled the pears others cored them. In a short time the fruit was in the bottles, which was a big help to me.

I joined the D.U.P. when it first organized in Huntington that is I attended the meetings and participated. However, membership was not granted to me formally until July 16, 1945.

In church service I was a Relief Society visiting teacher for 35 or 40 years.

My husband died in 1936. In 1938 I filled a four and a half months mission at the Manti Temple, doing ordinance work for the dead. The day I arrived at the temple, July 13, 1938, I received my own endowment that afternoon. My sons Ellis and his wife Mae went through with me and received their endowments also. All my married life I wanted a temple marriage, but my husband never got around to it.

March 19, 1938, the temple workers were invited to the Old Folks Party in Manti where we were treated to a banquet, a program, a picture show and finally a dance. It was truly a time of enjoyment. 226 guests were served.

I have played the Jew's harp ever since I was child. I started to learn the accordion but gave it to one of my grandchildren before I had learned it very well. A few of the songs I have sung in public are: *Barbara Ellen, My Pretty Quadroon, Sweet Estell, After The Ball, Last Rose of Summer and Fair Charlott*, the prettiest song I ever learned. Our family were all good singers. They did not all do singing in public but they had voices good enough that they could have done.

In my later years I have given many readings in public. Here are the titles of several typical ones: *When I was a Youngster Small, The Old and the New, Daddy the Provider*.

Also in my later years I have had several trips outside of Utah. I had not been out of the state before except once when I was went with my husband to Idaho. This was in May and must have been the year of 1904, as Luella was the baby then. We stayed on summer and my husband worked in the beet fields. There he got sick and his father came and brought us home.

My next trip out of Utah was to Nevada where my daughters Florence and Edna lived. Here I saw what was called a "man-made hole," said to be the largest in the world. The workers were bringing up ore and processing it in a mill near by.

Incidentally, when I arrived in Nevada my daughter was not at the station to meet me but the sheriff was. When he approached me and I saw his badge I began to wonder. But his kindly explanation soon dispelled concern. He knew Florence was expecting me to arrive. So he drove me to her place where we found her just ready to leave to meet me.

Later I made a trip to Nebraska to visit my daughter Florence. I went alone on the bus. All one could see for miles was cornfields. Still later I went to the state of Washington to visit my daughter Pearl. Here I saw a daffodil parade that was really wonderful. There were fields of daffodils as extensive; it seemed to me as large fields of

alfalfa. Such a sight could well enable one to understand the poet's feeling who wrote of daffodils:

“I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vale and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.”

- Quoted from William Wordsworth

My trip to Washington gave me a deeper appreciation of our Utah snow in winter for in Washington it rains most of the time. Of course this makes the vegetation green and profuse and the landscape beautiful. But I still prefer my Utah home.

It is now at this writing October 6, 1955 and I have just returned from a visit of about two months with my two daughters in the state of Washington. I went and returned by airplane without mishap.

OUR FOLKS

BISHOP ELIAS COX

A little history of Elias Cox, the first bishop of Huntington may not be amiss here. He was the son of Jacob and Sarah Cox and was born in Indiana, January 15, 1835. He came to Utah with his parents in 1848, crossing the plains in an ox-train under Captain Kimball. He located in Salt Lake City until 1860. At that time the family moved to Fairview. His father died there.

Elias married Martha Richards in Salt Lake County in 1855. Silas and Elizabeth Richards were her parents. She died in Fairview in 1861, leaving one son, Elias Henderson Cox.

Elias was a veteran of the Black Hawk War. He took an active part going on all the expeditions against the Indians.

He went to Salt Lake City in 1868. After about five years he moved to Thistle Valley, remaining there five years then came to Huntington in 1878, where he became one of the first selectmen appointed for Emery County in 1880. When he had served six months he was elected probate judge. This judgeship he held five years, afterwards becoming a selectman again.

After becoming the first Bishop of Huntington, October 7, 1879 he served in this church capacity until 1883. He later became a home missionary and a member of the High Council in Emery Stake of Zion.

In addition to running his little store, he engaged in farming, owning a farm of fifty acres.

His second marriage was to my sister, Mary Elvira Sherman, November 10, 1880, in Salt Lake City. They became the parents of nine children.

SHERMAN'S AIN:

“Our campfire shone bright on the mountain
That frowned on the river below.
We stood with our guns in the morning,
And eagerly watched for the foe,
When a rider came out from the darkness
That shadowed o'er valley and lee,
And shouted, 'Up, boys, and be ready,
For Sherman will march to the sea!'
Then cheer upon cheer for bold Sherman
Went up from each valley and glen,
And the bugles re-echoed the music
That came from the lips of the men.”

Whether bold Sherman who marched down to the sea was of the same blood strain as my Sherman ancestry I do not know, but I do know of one who possessed kindred loyalty and devotion to a great cause and like courage in promoting and defending it. He is my grandfather Lyman Royal Sherman. He was selected in the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith to be one of the twelve apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but died before he received his ordination to this high calling. By revelation, as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 108, he was designated one of the first missionaries of the Church.

He and Grandmother (Delcena Diadama Johnson) joined the Mormon Church before my father was born. They were among the earliest members.

Father was born in Chautauqua County, New York, October 30, 1832. About 1834 the family moved to Kirtland, Ohio, then to Far West, Missouri and later to Nauvoo, Illinois, passing through all the persecutions experienced by the Saints in those places.

My mother, Mary Elvira Swan, daughter of George Swan and Elizabeth Warrender, was born December 15, 1835 in Scotland. She left the land of her birth to join the Church. Her brothers and sisters disowned her for this. However, after Mother had her family, one of her sisters came out to see her.

One day Mother said to us children, in a joking way: "I suppose you children think I never had a marriage. Well, I did. Your father and I were married while crossing the plains June 10, 1854, at a point called South Platte Woodriver Center."

I liked my father very much. He was a dear, gentle quiet man, very industrious and a talented handy man. It seemed that he could do any thing and he did apply his energetic industriousness to many and varied pursuits. In him, it seemed to me, was ingrained the sturdy, resourceful, self-reliant character of the pioneering stock he came from; and he practiced well the qualities which circumstances and training from his boyhood doubtless had drilled into him.

After coming to Utah he and Mother moved to Payson in the spring of 1855. Next they went to Santaquin and in 1860 to Fountain Green, being among the early settlers of that place.

Father was counted one of the best butchers there, an expert teamster and an efficient man in the timbers. Slender of build and agile of body, he was dependable swimmer and usually accompanied the swimming parties to serve as lifeguard. As a baker Father made good soda crackers to sell. I heard him say that in making the crackers he mixed the dough so stiff it had to be pounded out flat with the side of an axe. This is what made the crackers so brittle and flaky.

He used to like to fish with a seine (net). The people of the community were poor: they hadn't much to eat. So Father and two other men seined enough fish for the

town. One man cut heads off the fish, another disemboweled them and a third one salted them. The Indians called this team "Chourab, Puggiab and Meatenab." Father dried fish one year to help out the food supply for the town.

Father was a Black Hawk War veteran. He filled several church offices. Before his death he had attained to the office of a High Priest.

CONCLUSION

This October 1955 I will be eighty-one years old. Physically, I have been strong and healthy most of my life. When I was nine years old I had typhoid fever and that is about the only disease I have had.

I am still getting around, doing my own housework. I get to church most every Sunday. Of course that is no task, as I live just across the street from the ward's new chapel. Also I am able to render the service of keeping the sacrament dishes clean when I am home.

In faith I am a Latter-Day Saint; was born and raised as such and hope to continue a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to the end of my days, for I verily know that the Gospel as revealed to and restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith is true and hold forth everything desirable which I hope to gain in the eternity to come.

My greatest desire for my children is that they will all be true Latter-Day Saints and live the principles of the Gospel and gain the rewards, which come from doing so.

To this end that they may do so, I dedicate this brief history of my life. To my children and posterity after me I leave my blessing and solicitude.

Lovingly your Mother,

The Histories of:

Robert James Gordon

&

Gertrude Estelle Sherman



History of Gertrude Estell Sherman Gordon

Compiled by a Gr. Granddaughter, Bernice M. Payne
from a history that Gertrude had written. Photos added and
information from the Internet to enhance the story.

Gertrude was born in Fountain Green, Sanpete Co., Utah on the 18th of Oct. 1874 to Albey Lyman Sherman and Mary Elvira Swan. Her father was born in New York. His father and family had joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints a few years before Albey Lyman was born. They joined the body of the Saints and went through all the hardships and persecution that was heaped upon the members of the Church at that time. Gertrude's mother Mary, was born in Scotland. Mary's family joined the church when she was only 6 years old. When they could save enough money, they traveled by ship to America and arrived in Nauvoo about the time the prophet was being hounded and chased by the mobs.

Albey and Mary were married while crossing the plains, in June of 1854 while camped along side the North Platte River, in Nebraska.

Gertrude was the 12th child born to this couple. Her early years were spent in Fountain Green. Her older sister Mary Elvira moved back home after a failed marriage and brought her small daughter Mary, who was only 6 months younger than Gertrude. They were very close and played together as if they were sisters.

She has recorded in her writing that Indians were a common visitor to their town. At times the people, especially the women were very frightened, even panicky, when a band of Indians appeared in town. She recalls that on one such occasion she was over to the neighbors and the mother opened her flour bin, put a cloth over the flour and then put Gertrude and another little girl in the bin on top of the flour, and closed the lid, thus hiding them away. They were so scared they were very very quiet.

One night after being hidden in the flour bin, she dreamed that she saw a band of Indians riding down the mountain side west of town. She could hear their bells and other trappings. After the dream she was so frightened that she couldn't sleep for many nights.



(photo: Ute Indians from Google Images)

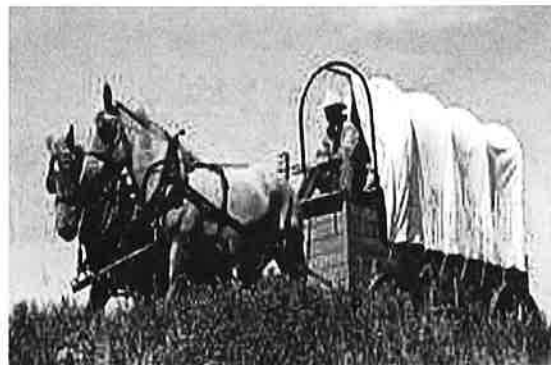
She recalls that when she was very young, she does remember the Indians came through town on one of their begging expeditions. We youngsters trailed behind, picking up beads and other trinkets which they lost.

Gertrude wrote:

When the Indians came begging they usually went to the Bishop. The bishop was a man who could neither speak nor understand their language. So he sent for my father to come and be interpreter. The Indians demanded three beef. The bishop told them they could have only one for the pale face were poor and needed the beef to feed their own families. The Indians were angry and insisted that they be given 3 beef. But with much persuasion, they finally left with one.

When Gertrude turned 6, the fall of 1880, the family moved to Huntington. Her father was called to help settle the Castle Valley by Brigham Young. He had come over the prior year with his 2 older sons and daughter Virgie (Elvira), who came to cook for them. They staked a 160 acre claim for a homestead, and built a dugout on the river.

Gertrude remembers the team of mares that pulled their wagon. Their names were Pet and Jane. Pet was a sorrel, (very light reddish brown) and Jane was a roan, (black and white or gray). On the way they had to stop a while for one of the mares to foal. After a rest the colt was put in the wagon, the mare was harnessed up again and the travelers were on their way.



Seven of the children had to take turns walking, for there were not horses enough to ride, neither was their room in the wagons which were loaded to capacity with their belongings and food supplies. Brother Albey had part of a load of flour in his wagon and a box of chickens fastened on the back. Father had two little pigs in a box on the back of his. Albey bought mother a cook stove several weeks before they left Fountain Green. Cook stoves were a rare thing so of course the stove was brought along. As the children walked they drove the cows. They were milked morning and evening on their way over. Mother put the milk in a large coffee pot we had, and by stuffing something in the spout and putting the lid on tight she had milk for her family at every meal.

Their route from Fountain Green must have been through Price Canyon instead of coming over Huntington Canyon, as Gertrude can remember being in Helper and it was their first time to see the railroad. They went over to the track and placing their ears on the rails, could hear the rumble of a coming train. They were all very excited. when the train came puffing into sight, the first they had ever seen.



The large family moved right into a dugout which their father and brothers had prepared on the north side of the river, which was on the north side of Huntington. That first winter, the six boys slept in two wagon boxes which were placed on the ground and covered with two wagon covers over the bows. Father, mother, three little girls and a little brother slept in the dugout. It had two beds. Virgie had married in November, and Delcena and Ellen had remained in Fountain Green where they were working.



(photo: courtesy Internet)

The dugouts were amazingly comfortable homes; cool in summer, snug and easily heated in winter. The thick sod walls and roof made excellent insulation in a day when few knew or appreciated the value of insulation. When properly located on the south side of a low hill, with adequate drainage to provide run-off for rain and melting snow, the dugout was probably as comfortable a home as any our pioneering forefathers ever knew.

When the family arrived, Huntington was a bed of pricklypare cactus which covered the townsite. The whole flat was a vast garden of flowers in the summer, with only a trail threading between the bed of blossoms.

Father was an excellent butcher. If we lacked meat of our own, he would go out and butcher for others and by that means bring home meat for his work. It really took a lot of food for 7 husky boys besides the rest of the family. Mother used to open a 100 lb. sack of flour every week. Flour had to be brought in from over the mountain until sufficient wheat could be raised and a flour mill was accessible.

The family raised pigs, chickens, and also kept bees on the farm. There was a molasses mill in the community so they raised sugar cane and had molasses as well as honey for the table. They dried corn, squash, and as soon as there was available fruit, they also had apples, plums and peaches. They also gathered bull berries and dried them. They raised plenty of dry beans. A cellar was built on the north side of the hill. Garden vegetables such as cabbage, carrots, beets and potatoes were stored in abundance for winter use. They always had a barrel of sauerkraut and a barrel of cucumber pickles. So with their own eggs, milk and butter their living was pretty well secured.

The following spring after their arrival, the boys built a one-room log house on the farm. By the time Gertrude was 9 years old, they had a new house over the hill on the east side of the farm. It had three rooms, all on the ground level.



(Internet Photo)

Gertrude says that any of the girls could saddle a horse and ride it. We could also harness a team, although we didn't have to do it very often as there were plenty of big brothers around to help.

Wash day. What a huge chore, Gertrude recalls: Mother used big wooden barrels. It was a full time, hard day. All the clothes of our large family had to be rubbed on the board. The men and boys wore such heavy underwear, long sleeved shirts and heavy pants. Mother's laundry standards were that two tubs were used for rubbing the clothes on the board, then they were boiled on the stove, then in a boil of suds and finally a rinse water. What a lot of rubbing and wringing of clothes by hand.



This was the day that mother really needed help. But then all days were hard work in those years. Nothing we needed was available at the corner store. The only store we had was a small one in a dugout on the north side of the river. It carried little more than bare necessities, such as raisins, sugar, spices, tea, salt, pepper, baking soda, coal-oil, candles and lamps. Also a line of notions such as pins, needles, hooks and eyes, buttons, and thread. We used to use a lot of them. There were some dry goods, too--factory cloth called muslin, calico, and denim. In other words, the most needful things which people could hardly get along without.

However, there was that childhood luxury, candy. There was stick candy of different kinds and flavors, separated into bundles and wrapped in paper and packed in a thin wooden box. Lump candy was more common. It came in mixed flavors and was in muslin bags. However, my favorite was the Christmas candy roses. These were as large as real yellow roses. Some were white, some pink and some yellow.

Church services, as well as public gatherings were held in the old "Brush Bowery." The bowery had a wall constructed of posts or poles with willows woven in basket-wise. The roof was of poles covered over with willow and brush. I thing there was an improvised rostrum of boards, and the seats must have been slabs or boards. On holidays there was a barrel of lemonade and on the rim hung a long-handled dipper. Drinking the lemonade from was a free-for-all.



(photo courtesy of Google images)

The second winter we were in Huntington, a school was held in a room of our home. Home-made desks were provided for the children. They were somewhat like boxes with the lid sloping toward the pupil so that it would accommodate us when writing or studying. We could keep our school supplies inside the box. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar and spelling were taught. Of course we used the slate and pencil and note books for our written work and read from a primer. Our early schools, as a rule were opened and closed with prayer. When we got so we could use pen and ink we did our practice exercises in a penmanship book. Gertrude recalls going to a night school to learn penmanship. Our teacher was Nan Luce.



(photo may be similar similar to desks used.

After a few years, a one-room school building was built a little east of Rob Gordon's home. Thus the school was centrally located between the children who lived down the creek and those who lived up the creek.

It wasn't too long however, until people began to build in town, which naturally took part of the school children from the farms and created a demand for a school house in town. The people were too poor to hire a teacher for the "North" school and also one for a school in town. The result was that eventually children still living on the farms had to go to town for their schooling.

Our early entertainment was skating and sleigh riding in the winter. We also enjoyed dancing and taffy pulling. Before there was



a public dance hall we danced in private homes wherever there was a good floor.

(Photos courtesy of the Internet)



When I was a child the community always observed a May Day celebration and of course, the May Pole was braided. A few times we braided the Liberty Pole, but more often a pole was set up in the meeting house. It was a big occasion and looked pretty with the girls in dainty dresses, white stockings and high-top shoes. It was quite a beautiful sight.

“I used to love to dance” said Gertrude. “Almost more than to eat. Most of our family did also. So we went together, a wagon load of us, singing all the way going and returning. I recall well the evening my big brother took me on the floor to teach me how to dance the quadrille. I was still just a girl. He was surprised, but plainly pleased to find that I could step it off right along with him.”

“While we were yet children living with our parents on the farm, once a peddler came to our house and sold mother a bundle of cloth. From it she made six suits and three dresses. Father wore one suit. The rest were for the boys. It seemed to be no task for mother to make up those suits and dresses. I heard her say that when she was only nine years old she could stitch by hand as pretty a hem as any woman could.”

“When I was a girl I worked a lot for my married sisters Virie, Delcena and Ellen. Their babies were coming along regularly and a girl to help at such times kept me with one sister or another so much that I scarcely felt at home back with my parents among my big brothers.” Babies were not blessed as regularly when mother was raising her family as they are now-a-days. I recall mother saying that at least on one occasion she had several children blessed at the home on the same date by the elders who came for that purpose.”

“When I was young, the young ladies’ hair-do was chiefly bangs. We wore them from ear to ear over the forehead.”

“I also liked to sing. I often was asked to sing in programs. Our family were all good singers. They did not all do singing in public, but they had good enough voices that they could have.”

“One dress I had which I wore a lot was made of a material called “maroon luster.” “Susan Wakefield Loveless made it for me. The front was pleated and it buttoned down the front. The buttons were about an inch apart and all the button-holes were worked by hand. The skirt was the long flaring style. To make it stand out there was sewn on the inside, around the bottom a strip of buckram about six inches wide. Over the buckram was sewn a strip of velvet the same as the skirt. The bottom of the right side of the skirt was finished with a bias strip of the same material as the skirt, about five inches wide. Around the top of the bias strip was sewn a twist for a trimming. When I danced how that skirt did flare out! It cost me as much for the making of the dress as it did for the goods. But it fit me like a glove and I enjoyed wearing it.

My dress shoes were high-topped button shoes. We had a button hook that we inserted in the button hole and hooked the button



and pulled it through the buttonhole. Imagine the button hook getting misplaced in the home of such a large family as ours and of a girl in a hurry to dress to meet her beau”!



“My first boy friend was Jim Gordon, and he was my last,” Gertrude said. Jim was about a year and a half older than her. “We followed the courtship trail for eight years. I was his girl when I was 12 and I married him on my twentieth birthday.

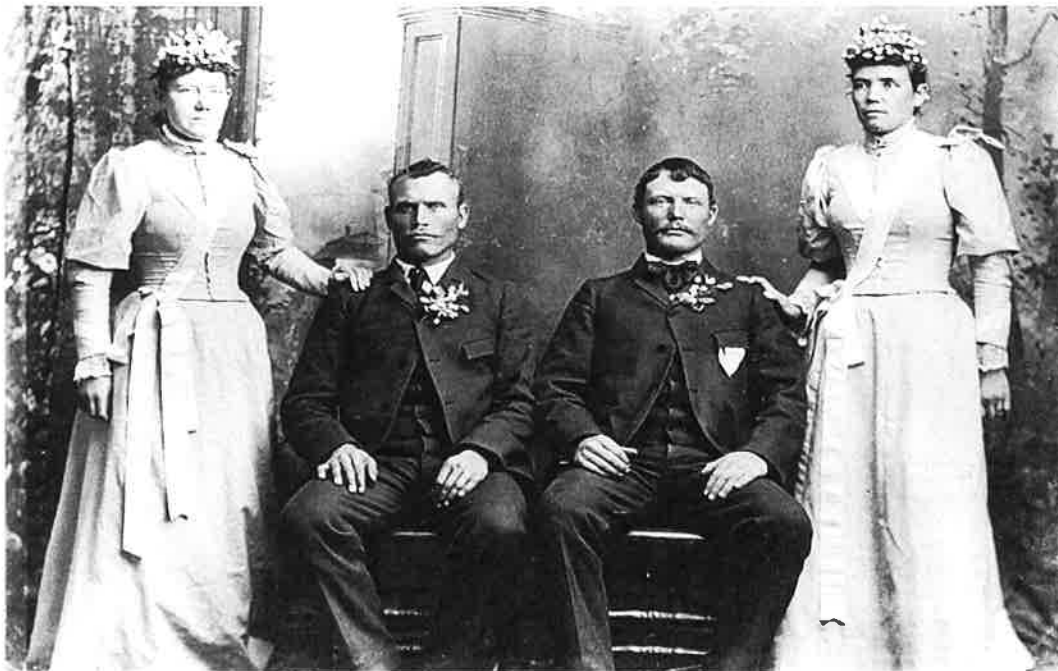


“During our courtship, we used to come to town either on a horse-back or in a two-wheeled cart. Of course we had to come to town for our entertainment as we both lived on farms. Incidentally the farms were adjoining.”

“He was a violinist and fiddled for many of the dances which were held in private homes.”

In addition to singing Gertrude also liked to give readings and did so almost until the end of her life.

“Jim’s sister Agnes and my brother Lionel were wed the same time that Jim and I were. In fact we held a double wedding in the schoolhouse across the river, where we furnished a supper for our guests. We got a lot of presents. We gave a dance in town in the log meetinghouse. Agnes and I had our wedding dresses made a like and of the same kind of material, a blue cashmere. Hebe Leonard was a good friend of ours and a jolly sport. He sang, on this occasion, “Two Little Girls in Blue”.



Agnes

Lionel

Jim

Gertrude

Following our wedding Jim and I set up housekeeping in one room of his father’s house, which was on their farm. Here our first child a little girl whom we called Estell, was born prematurely. She lived only a few minutes.

“A short time afterward we moved to town where we had bought a house on the north-east corner of the block. In the town plot our house was on lot 4 block 52. It was a large log room, possibly 15 x 18 feet. Our furniture consisted of a new cook stove, a home-made table and a big rocker. We had bought 6 chairs, but gave two of them to Lionel and Agnes.”



Typical log home of the time. (Internet photo)

Gertrude and Jim had 11 children. The first one being the little girl mentioned above. Then Corean Cornelia and Robert Donald came along only 1 ½ years apart.

Then another tragedy in September of 1889 when the next son was still born. Vaughn was born in 1900, followed by 3 girls, Luella, Florence & Edna Dawn. Ellis James came to town in 1910 and another girl Pearl, born in 1918. That made a very large family.

“In about May of 1904, Luella being about 6 months old, Jim took us to Idaho where he worked in the beet fields. We only stayed that one summer because in the fall he got very sick and his father had to come and bring us back home.”

“One summer and part of the next my husband was foreman of the Millerton Ranch just east of Hiawatha. I did the cooking for the ranch hands. I still had four of my children to care for.”



“While at this ranch, one day a rain storm drove the men to the house. Jim Brinkerhoff, one of them, said, “Mrs. Gordon, if you had a quilt on or a pile of carpet rags you might get some help.” “My husband responded: “We haven’t either a quilt or carpet rags, but we have a big box of pears in the cellar.” So he brought out the pears. All the men washed their hands, and while some peeled the pears others cored them. In a short time the fruit was in the bottles, which was a big help to me.”

“After my last baby was born I went up the canyon and cooked for the men who surveyed the road up the canyon. Here I cooked about three months. My husband was one of the crew. Later when the road was being built I again cooked for the workers.”

“I joined the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers when it was first organized in Huntington, that is, I attended the meetings and participated. However, membership was not granted to me formally until July 16th 1945.”



Meetings usually consisted of the reading histories of our ancestors that were pioneers. That is those coming to Utah between 1847 and 1859.

“I have played the Jew’s harp ever since I was a child. I started to learn the accordion but gave it to one of my granddaughters before I had learned it well.”



The jew’s harp is a musical instrument of ancient lineage composed of a small metal frame containing a flexible metal tongue. The frame is held between the teeth and the metal tongue is plucked with the fingers. Each jew's-harp can produce only one tone, the quality of which may be varied by modifying the shape of the mouth to emphasize different harmonics of the tone.

In 1936 at the age of 64 Gertrude’s husband Jim died. He was not feeling well for sometime and passed away from chronic endocarditic on 29 July, 1936.

“In my church service, I was a visiting teacher for 46 years. I was also the first child to register for Primary in Huntington.”

“All my married life I wanted a temple marriage, but my husband “never got around to it.”

“In 1938 I filled a four and a half month mission at the Manti Temple, doing ordinance work for the dead. The day I arrived at the Temple, January 13th, I received my own endowments that afternoon. My son Ellis and his wife Mae went through with me and received their endowments also.”

Gertrude was so upset at Jim for not taking her to the temple that she did not do his temple work for 5 years after his death.

At the conclusion of the history that Gertrude wrote is the following:

“This October 1955, I will be eighty-one years old. Physically I have been strong and healthy most of my life. When I was nine years old, I had typhoid fever, and that is about the only disease I have had.”

“I am still getting around and doing my own housework. I get to church most every Sunday. Of course that is no task, as I live just across the street from the ward’s new chapel. Also I am able to render the service of keeping the sacrament dishes clean when I am home.”

“In faith I am a Latter-day Saint; born and raised as such and hope to continue a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to the end of my days, for I verify that I know that the Gospel as revealed to and restored through the prophet Joseph Smith is true, and holds forth everything desirable which I hope to gain in the eternity to come.”

“My greatest desire for my children is that they will all be true Latter-Day Saints and live the principles of the Gospel and gain the rewards which come from doing so.”

“To this end that they may do so, I dedicated this brief history of my life.”

“To my children and posterity after me I leave my blessing and solicitude.”

“Lovingly your mother, Gertrude Estell Sherman Gordon.”

Gertrude’s family had a celebration for her 75th birthday, and photos taken.



Gertrude abt. 70 yrs.



Gertrude about 1960, age 76 years



Before Gertrude died she visited her children and stayed awhile with each of them. She spent time in Omaha, Nebraska; Tacoma, Washington; and Ely, Nevada. She spent her last two years with Luella in Cleveland, Utah.

I remember going to Huntington to visit my Gr. Grandma Gordon as a child with my Grandma Luella. What I remember is that Grandma Gordon usually wore and a full apron. My Grandma McMullin (Luella) told me that she never saw her mom without the apron except when she got cleaned up to go somewhere. It was on her from rising in the morning to going to bed at night. She didn't even know when her mother was going to have a baby, because the apron hid everything. This poem probably typifies that time period.



Grandma's Apron

The principle use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath, but along with that, it served as a holder for removing hot pans from the oven; it was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken-coop the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came those old aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids; and when the weather was cold, grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove. Chips and kindling-wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled it carried out the hulls.



In the fall it was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees. When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out on the porch and waved her apron, and the men knew it was time to come in from the fields for dinner.

It will be a long time before anyone invents something that will replace that old-time apron that served so many purposes.

- Author Unknown -

Gertrude passed away on 12 September, 1962 just 5 weeks short of her 78th birthday. She is buried in the Huntington Cemetery next to her husband.

