

Recollections of Dora, by Vernon Leavastis

Dora has always had the distinction of being the only one of the family born in a tent. She was born on Feb. 23 1911 in West Hiawatha Utah, a newly developed coal mining town in Carbon County. She was the 11<sup>th</sup> child of 14 children born to John Martin Leavastis, and Millie Whiting.

The family had two tents. Both of them had board walls about 4 feet high and were board floors. One was used as a kitchen and sleeping quarters, the other for sleeping. She related a story of the first rats having watched Dad make fires in the stove, one morning they awoke & found the kindling all piled up by the stove ready to be started. The rats having it stacked just as Dad did but on the floor by the stove.

The family only spent the one winter in tents. The following summer the coal company had houses built along the narrow canyon for employees to move into for a minimal rental fee. The town consisted of a company minimal office, & post office in one building made of rock walls. A butcher shop, also of rock construction, which was constructed in an excavation in the mountain side. An amusement hall was later constructed of concrete & lumber. This consisted of pool tables, card tables, a Con Sectionary on the bottom floor, the upper part of the building was a large meeting room, used for all community activities, dances, weddings, parties, church etc. It also had a moving picture screen & projector for silent movies. Music

For the shows was <sup>2</sup> played on a player piano, using roll music selections. The operator had to sit at the piano & pump the mechanism with his feet. Chas. Pells and operated the bellows.

The main recreation in summer was picnicking, hiking, fishing, riding horses, parties. Winter recreation was mainly sleigh riding, dances, movies, parties. Sleigh riding was the part I enjoyed most. We could take one of our sleighs, get it off snow the little flat space dug out of the hillside to lead out down comfortable walking. I start down the steep canyon road and ride 3 miles to East Hiawatha. The only drawback was the long walk back pulling the sleigh. It was fun but a lot of accidents & injuries resulted from it. I do not know what happened to Dora but I remember her having to stay home in bed for quite some time; as a result of a sleighing accident. Also Clara trying to push a model Ford out of the road with a sleigh. Result a big gasp on her head, plus a lot of excited people, & a badly shaken driver of the car.

In 1925 the family bought a home in Probo, when Dad & the family, soon FMM down moved to Probo to attend school- Dora and FMM attended High school, Carrie, Clara & I I Grade School. The boy's Fom, Alon, & Del boarded with Alida & En continued working in the mine at West Hiawatha. In 1927 Fom & Del ~~were~~ were working in Hiawatha, and thought it would be a good idea for us to buy a

Home in Huntington.<sup>5</sup> They would drive to work from Huntington and the family could be to-<sup>to</sup> rather than consequently, we traded the home in Reed, in on the Old Nicolson Home in Huntington, and moved to Huntington.

Dora graduated from High School in 1928 and on June 9<sup>th</sup> of that year married Joseph<sup>th</sup> Fielding Arnold. A star Football & Basketball player of the Huntington High School.

One funny thing that happened shortly after we moved to Huntington. One night after a show one of Dora's boy friends had walked her home, while romantically kidding her good night, he was leaning on the front door. Dora turned the door knob and he fell flat on his back.

On the front room floor. Dad was sitting in his chair by the fireplace reading. He just looked down at Jim over the top of his glasses, didn't say a word.

Jim looked up from the floor and said "I just thought I would drop in." The rest of us who were there just broke out in an uproar of laughter. Dad less to say Jim made a very hasty retreat.

Having been born in a tent must have started a love in Dora for nature. She was always longing forward to a picnic, a hunting, or fishing trip, or just to ride or hike in the forest or desert.

Thinking of the next few years I cannot recall just how they occurred I remember them living with mother & Dad for a short time after Bill was born. Also helping to build Mrs Arnolds

home. Also building the home for Dave & Jo  
on 1<sup>st</sup> East & Center st.

While they lived in Hiawatha Tom & I  
boarded with them for quite a long time.

We had a bedroom in the back part of the house.  
As I think back I surely missed our their  
good nature of bringing in my friends. Some  
times in the middle of the night to go to bed  
after being out on the town. Also I took advantage  
of their generosity by continually borrowing  
their car. They were always there when I needed  
them.

After Korea & I were married we lived just a  
few hours from them in Hiawatha. An engaging  
part of our lives. It was not long after this that  
Tom received his appointment to Highways Patrol. A well  
deserved and valuable change in their lives.

After we started our diving operation in  
Huntington Canyon, Dave spent a lot of their time  
& money trying to keep us afloat. We spent many  
hours on boats & records. What a trying experience.

We took in a lot of money but never as  
much as we needed to have. We worked long hours  
& tried every way to make things come out but  
it did not. There was all ways more out for them  
if did not.

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As I ~~can~~ recall our lives, I am reminded of the  
sad times we have shared which were hard to bear. Ann's  
long sickness, & death. Dad's death, Bell's death, Stan's accident.

Dora + I were at <sup>5</sup> mother's bedside when she died. Allen and I were at Dora's the day Joe died. There was also Carries long illness + death. Hilda, Fon, Alice, Alex. Stan. Thinking of the special happy times we have enjoyed. The many family get togethers at the old home before + after Dad died. The many canyon picnics, + hunting trips, as a family and together.

Perhaps some of the most pleasant experiences, was the many trips we were able to go on in Bob + Clara's Green Chev. Van, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Yellowstone, Sun Valley, Mt. Rushmore to me the highlight of them all was the trip, with Dora + Jon, Bob + Clara, Alice, Leora + Ed. As we staged in the cabins in the Redwood forest, ~~was~~ then up along the Oregon coast as the ocean was on a rampage during a storm. The tour Alice + Jon + Ed. who could ask for more pleasant company, and happy days.

Another memorable trip was the one with Elzabe and the visit to Victoria + the ~~Bea~~ beautiful Beaumont Gardens. Dora we are indeed blessed + thankful to be your brothers + sisters - blessed to have had the special family we have - blessed to have the love and concern we have each had for one another, and for each others own families. None of us has ever had great material wealth, but we have always been exceedingly Rich with the love we have had for each other. We love you and may God's special blessings always be with you. Love Jean + Clara.