

## LIFE STORY OF GILBERT P. SEARLE

Gilbert P. Searle was born on a Sunday morning October 1, 1922 to Asa Lyman Searle and Eleanor Amanda Peasnell. His father was previously married to Ursula Catherine Snyder who died in September 1916 leaving him with 5 small children, Jennie, Lynn, and Stanley. Gilbert was the second child of his second wife who raised all seven of his children. Gilbert's older brother was Elmer, and his two younger brothers were Ralph and Ronald. I lived in the same house I was born in till I graduated from High School in Tooele, Utah. I attended the Tooele Central School, Tooele Junior High School and Tooele High School. I attended Primary and Sunday School and other meetings in the Tooele North Ward. I was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints 1 August 1931 by Perry C. Gillette, Jr. and confirmed 2 Aug. 1931 by John A. Lindberg. I was blessed and given my name on 7 Jan. 1925 by Edwin M. Crme. All of these ordinances took place in Tooele, Utah. I was ordained a Deacon by Ralph Kenworthy on Oct 8, 1934; ordained a Teacher by John C. Bryan on 14 Nov. 1937 and ordained a Priest by N. Howard Jensen on 21 Jan 1940. On 10 Sept. 1945 I was ordained an Elder by Elder George E. Nelson while home on leave from the U. S. Army during World War II.

When I was a boy I played ball in the streets with the neighborhood kids. My folks raised a garden and had 5 cows. I learned to milk cows when 12 years old. I helped irrigate the garden, hauled hay in summer to earn hay for the cows. The cows and garden helped the family through the depression. I started driving a car when about 12 years old --would get to drive to the garbage dump each saturday with a load of manure to dump. I used to hunt rabbits where Tooele Army Depot now is. We would swim in the Mill Pond (located in what is now Stansbury Park), also swam at warm spring near Stockton Lake, south of Tooele. Summers we would go to Hooper and hoe sugar beets for Uncle Joe Struhs. I started delivering Deseret News or Tribune for the years between 12 and 16 years old.

One morning when going to Jr. High school I saw some surveyers working in front of the school and decided then and there that I wanted to know what they were doing and do it. The last two years of High School I started working at the International Smelter east of Tooele on weekends and on the swing shift (3 to 11). I worked full time in the

summer to earn money to go to college. I graduated from High School in May 1941 and enrolled in the Utah State College at Logan, Utah that fall in Civil Engineering which included surveying. I returned home weekends and holidays to work at the smelter to stay in school. I attended one year and two quarters before being inducted into Uncle Sams Army. This was the draft for World War 11 (April 1945).

My first assignment and basic training was with 118th Anti Aircraft Artillery, Battalion Headquarters Company, Camp Hahn, California, near the city of Riverside. After basic training in the summer of 1945 I was moved into the Mojave Desert for desert training. An interesting item: Our camp had a blow snake 5 feet long, 3 inch diameter that used to clean up the bivouac area before tents were put up. The snake would clean up all the spiders, sidewinders, and scorpions so we didn't have to worry about them. When the group would move one of the fellows would carry the snake wrapped around his middle. In August of that year I was informed I was being transferred to school at a small college in Pasadena for a bout a week then would go on to Washington State College at Pullman, Washington. While in Pasadena one evening while out walking with one of the fellows--ears were driving without lights due to the blackout--I was hit by a car and suffered a bruised leg as a result. I attended engineering school at Pullman for six months. It was here the church had a branch. There were some LDS fellows in our group and we attended church on Sunday. After 6 months I was transferred to the 11th Armoured Division at Camp Cook, California. We used to attend church at a little town near Camp Cook. While here I was put in the 42nd Tank Battalion. The next 6 months was spent learning the tactics of tanks. In August 1944 the 11th Armoured Division was sent to the East Coast to be sent to England. We spent about 2 weeks in New Jersey prior to being shipped overseas. I met my future wife while home on leave from Camp Cook prior to going east. I met her at a school dance and took her home that evening. On the 4th of July my brother Ronald who was a schoolmate of Joyce's told her if he could get the family car he would take her out. He couldn't get the car so decided not to go. So I said I would go take her out. We dated until I had to return to camp.

I spent August till November at a camp between Bath and Bristol, England. We would go on leave into Bristol. Went next to Portsmouth to go to Laharve, France. Traveled thru France to Belgium and saw our first fighting outside of Brussels at the Battle of the Bulge. It was here that I got wounded in a tank, was banged up around the face and head. I received a purple heart. I was bandaged up and fed a good hot meal and sent back into action. After the Bulge and winter of 44 an 45 we started the movement thru Belgium into Germany. Traveled thru Germany in Czechoslovakia and into Austria. During this time the whole Czechoslovakian army surrendered to our spearhead. I was in the 2nd tank in the spearhead. The war ended just after we entered Austria in May 1945. I didn't have enough points to be discharged for home but had too many for return to U. S. and Furlough and on to war with Japan. Therefore I remained with the occupation army until Dec. 1945 at which time I left Marseilles, France for U. S. A. on a liberty ship which traveled at 8 knots per hour. It seemed to take forever to get home. It was on this trip I got tired of peanut butter cookies, I wouldn't eat them for about 10 years after I was married. We arrived in the U.S. in Jan. 1946 and I was discharged at Fort Douglas, Utah. Myself and 4 brothers served in the Armed Services and my mother worked at Tooele Army Depot. Elmer and Ralph were in the Air Force, Lynn and Ronald in the Navy and me in the Army. My other brother Stanley didn't qualify for service because of arthrites but he worked at the Tooele Army Depot too.

I came home and went to work at Dugway, Utah until March 1946, then worked for Tooele City Engineering Department until May, then worked for Soil Conservation Service as an Engineering Technician in Tooele till I returned to college at Logan in September. During the summer I was courting my future wife, Gertrude Joyce Bell and we were married 13 September 1946 in the Salt Lake Temple. We spent a week in Colorado Springs, Colorado with my brother Elmer and his wife and 2 little daughters, Judith and Mary Ellen for our honeymoon. I left Joyce in Tooele and went to Logan to find a place to live which I couldn't find, so we ended up buying a 16 foot house trailer, no plumbing in it except a water tank for the kitchen sink. We moved it to Logan where they had a trailer park set up in the old fair grounds. It had been a prisoner camp and a large utility house with

showers, toilets and washing facilities was there for our use. It was at least a block from our trailers up a little hill. Joyce was pregnant and had morning sickness. My brother Ronald was living with us. We would make the dinette end down for a bed for him at night and hang a sheet across the middle of the trailer for privacy. He moved out at Christmas vacation into a dorm. It was 20° below during that winter and that is cold in Logan. At night our house would freeze up. We'd go to bed right after supper to keep warm. The little wall heater didn't work half the time. In the morning the ceiling of the trailer would be covered with ice and we'd put pans around to catch the drips as it melted. It was a cold miserable winter but we survived. The next year they moved the student trailers up on the campus area and we had closer utility houses. We put an oil heater and a little cupboard where one of the dinette seats had been and made a playpen-bed out of the other side for Eileen, who was born June 7, 1947 just the day after I finished my finals the first year back at school. We were living in Tooele for the summer and that is where she was born. I graduated with a B. S. Degree in Civil Engineering in May 1948 and took a job with the Bureau of Reclamation in Spanish Fork, Utah. I was assigned a Survey Crew and sent to the Uinta Mountains to survey parts of the Central Utah project. I spent the week in the mountains and the weekend home with my family. We decided we didn't like to live this way and I had an opportunity to transfer to the Soil Conservation Service and take a job in Monte Vista, Colorado. We moved there in February 1949. We bought our first car, a 1935 chev to make the move and pulled our little house trailer over the mountain with it. We had bought a home in Spanish Fork and were able to sell it before we moved. In Monte Vista I was called to be 2nd counselor in the Branch Presidency, this being the first job I held in the church that I can remember. I also taught a class in Sunday School. Grant Gyllenskog was our branch President. In the fall we were transferred to Montrose, Colorado. We moved back into our trailer for the winter and spring because we couldn't find a place to rent. Joyce was pregnant again and spent 2 or 3 months in bed that time. The missionaries lived just across the street from our trailer court and looked in on us quite often. We enjoyed feeding and visiting with them. Kathleen was born June 1, 1950 in Montrose. We rented a house for the summer from some school teachers that were going to be gone for a few months. In the branch I was called to be 2nd counselor again and also Sunday School Superintendent. After I accepted the Sunday School job I was informed the 2nd counselor job automatically went with it. In August we were transferred to Rocky Ford, Colorado. Just after we arrived we were told not to unpack because we were not staying there. We lived upstairs over a grocery store with a million cockroaches. So we lived out of our boxes, canned our fruit and ate tons of watermelon and cantaloupe the farmers were constantly sending home with me. The water in Rocky Ford was so nasty you couldn't drink it. We traveled 20 miles to LaJunta to church from here and it seemed our old chevy broke down every week on the way. People would travel up to 125 miles to come to church so we held all our meetings consecutively while we were there. In October we were transferred to Trinidad, Colorado. This is a quaint little town built on the hillside of the Purgatory River. The streets were all cobblestone. Lots of people with European background live here. There was a small Missionary Primary and Sunday School, held in one of the city buildings about a block from our Apartment. Gilbert taught the adult class and Joyce taught the Jr. Sunday School. Sometimes Primary was held in our home. There were only 6 or 7 families here. We took care of the missionaries here, fed and consoled them quite often. They were part of our family and we enjoyed them very much. The missionaries from Raton, N. M. came over quite often too. We were in Trinidad about 9 months, left there about June 1951, to go to Delta Colorado where the SCS was opening a new office. We rented a big roomy old house that was very comfortable for us and our two little daughters. We lived here for about 3 1/2 years. Again I was called to be S. S. Superintendent, scout master, Explorer Advisor, Melchizedic Priesthood instructor and 1st counselor in the Branch Presidency, some of these simultaneously. During this time Pres. Broadbent was traveling most of the time. He was released and Rollo Greenhalgh was made Branch President. I was counselor to both of them. I had my first experience with excommunication in this Branch. There were many times I presided, conducted the meeting and blessed the sacrament. The branch totaled about 90 members, a good part of them children. Joyce was busy as a teacher, or Primary Counselor, or Relief Society secretary. Our 3rd child, a son, Fredrick Gilbert was born in Delta. We had some problems with him

from his birth and had to put him in the hospital in Grand Junction for a week, but after many blessings and our prayers we were able to bring him home and learn how to take care of him. He had trouble eating and with his voice and some coordination problems. He has since fulfilled a mission to Southern California and is in his 3rd year of college. In Delta we worked on a building fund for a chapel for 3 years, it was built a year or two after we left. We met in an upstairs hall over a beer parlor and had to clean it up each Sunday before meeting after the Sat. night parties. For the building fund we worked a wheat farm owned by an old bachelor named Brother Don. He let us have part of the crop money for the building fund. The ladies had a monthly bake sale at a furniture store with regular customers. They cleared about \$50 each month. It was here we became better acquainted with the Reorganized Church of L. D. S. Their pastor, Brother and Sister Rose lived right across the street from us. We held several cottage meetings at our home with their missionaries and each time they went away angry. They wanted to talk about polygamy. I think it strengthened the testimonies of those of our group who attended these meetings. We felt bad that they would leave with hard feelings.

From here we were transferred to Delta, Utah in December 1954. The new address confused some of our mail for a time. We lived in the Delta 1st ward for a while where I worked in the MIA. Then we moved to the 3rd ward and I was soon sustained as a Sunday School teacher. I was ordained a 70 by Brother Theodore Tuttle on 4 Oct. 1959. I was called as Adult Aeronio Priesthood Secretary for a time and during this time we got 6 couples to go to the temple. One Sunday morning I was to ordain one of these men to be an elder and I got up deathly sick and was unable to do it. So someone else did it and by noon I was perfectly fine again. We feel maybe I wasn't the one to do this for him. I was also called to be Sunday School Superintendent again. With my job for SCS we got the irrigation and canal companies working together to improve their systems. We constructed the DMAD dam northeast of Delta. We made many canal relocations and improvements in ditch linings. In my off hours I worked as engineering adviser for Delta City. Also practiced some private engineering. I was vice president of Junior Chamber of Commerce one year and was President the following year and received their Distinguished Service Award for that year. These years in Delta, Utah were some of our busiest.

Our 4th child, a daughter, Sheri Ann was born in Delta on 13 August 1956. She was a happy baby and a joy to us. Paul B. was born in Delta on 1 April, 1958. He was a cute baby but very cross. With him taking so much of his mothers time and Sheri still quite young, she became her daddy's baby. Paul liked to wander away and get into the neighbors chicken coop and throw eggs at the chickens among other things. On August 13, 1960 we were transferred to the Provo, Utah SCS office and bought us home in Orem. Our last child Eleanor, named after her grandma Searle who never had a daughter of her own, was born in the Provo hospital on December 8, 1960. We lived in the Orem 5th ward where I taught Sunday School for a short time then was made S. S. President. During a ward division we were put into the 4th ward and I was called to be Ward Clerk. I held this position for six months then was put in as 1st Counselor in the Bishopric under Bishop William Cox. We spent 6 years in Orem. While we lived there my mother died of cancer on July 5, 1963. Joyce's unole died the same day. After some time my father came to live with us. We also had an Indian foster child for 3 years, Maeola Hunter, a Hopi from Polacca, Arizona. She was just between our two oldest girls in age, turned 14 the Sept she came to us. We learned to love her. Our household now numbered 10. When we left Orem Maeola chose to stay and moved with Bishop Cox. She married and divorced her first husband, her second husband was killed and at last report she had remarried again. She has two little daughters. While in Orem, Eileen graduated from Orem High School and in the fall attended the University of Utah, in Salt Lake City. I received my Patriarchal blessing from Patriarch Raymond Harding. Eileen received hers at the same time, on Oct. 30, 1961.

In 1966 I was offered a job in Ferron, Utah, which I declined at the time. About 3 months later I was offered the job again with a promotion. Everything worked out and it seemed like I should take the position. I was to move in January. I had a hernia operation during the Christmas holidays so I would be in good health when I moved. We celebrated New Year's Eve in the hospital. Joyce, Eileen, Kathy, and Maeola all came to the hospital with hats, noise makers and a treat for the 4 in my room.

I was able to travel to Ferron by the end of January. I would work there during the week and travel to Orem on the weekends where the family was waiting to sell the house. The end of May we finally sold it and the day the children got out of school we moved. My wife and Ellie came down to Ferron a couple of times to look for a place to live during that waiting time. I was rooming in a home in Ferron and Ellie thought it was fun to stay there. We made toast in the bathroom and ate in a small closet where there was a table. We were very discouraged because there was no place to live that was big enough for our family. We finally found a house in Castle Dale and moved down the first of June. My father decided to stay at Salt Lake and moved in with my Brother Ronald. After we had lived there a short time I was called to be the Priest Quorum advisor. We had been there about 10 months when I was called in by Stake Pres. Hall. My wife and I had been in Price and when we got home the message was there to come to the ward house, to meet with Elder Mark Peterson and the stake president. They told me I was called to be Bishop of the Castle Dale Ward. I had misgivings because I didn't know the people in Castle Dale. I had worked and was better acquainted in Ferron. It was a real surprise, but I accepted because that was what the Lord wanted. They asked me to pick my counselors right then so we could all be sustained next morning in Stake conference. John Jorgenson and Craig Johansson were called as my counselors and Wick Huntington was the Ward clerk. I can testify that these men were picked by the Lord. Even my wife felt this especially in the case of Bro. Jorgenson. The ward members gave excellent cooperation and full support to us. They assisted in fulfilling the 2 special assignments given to me to accomplish while bishop. These were to train someone to become Bishop by the time I was to be transferred which we knew was to be in about 14 months. The second assignment was to get the ward out of debt, and start a maintenance program. One of our fund raising events was a monthly ward dinner which was well supported and enjoyed by all. Some interesting happenings while I was in the Bishopric were that we had only 1 baby blessed and 14 funerals and I performed 1 civil marriage. During this time my wife Joyce was in the hospital in Salt Lake before she was well enough to come home. Our 2 oldest daughters, Eileen and Kathy took care of the family while I was traveling between Salt Lake and home. We appreciated more than you know all of the considerations given to us at this time of trial. Our family want to mention here that we adopted into our family Kevin and John Jensen who lived next door to us and we also shared 1/2 a puppy with the Jensens on the other side of us. We learned to love the people in Castle Dale and will never forget them. I was released as Bishop the Sunday night and we left for Salt Lake City the next morning. We were sorry to leave the many friends and neighbors we enjoyed in your community. Two months later we returned for a Ward Social where we were presented with a gift from the ward, "The Comprehensive History of the Church" by B. H. Roberts. The Lord moves in mysterious ways to fulfill the needs of his children. My family and I feel we were moved to Castle Dale to fulfill the specific purpose of being Bishop for the short time we were there. This experience has increased our testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel. Brother John Jorgensen was sustained as bishop when I was released. I bear this testimony to you that this Gospel is true and if we go and do what the Lord wants us to we will be greatly blessed. It has happened so many times in our lives. We'll never forget our dear friends in Castle Dale and surrounding areas.

In Ferron my job was to design the Millsite dam and other flood control dams along with it. We went there for a two year period to accomplish it. When this time was completed we transferred back to Salt Lake City where I became the State Conservation Engineer when George Lawrence retired. I am now the Assistant State Conservationist for the SCS in Utah. We came to Salt Lake to look for a home and felt we were led to the one we bought in Taylorsville. Since here I have been Ward High Priest Group leader, S. S. teacher, a Sunday School President in Taylorsville 10th ward for 4 years and am now the Taylorsville Central Stake S. S. President. My wife Joyce was Relief Society President of 10th Ward for 3 years, and the Stake R. S. Counselor and President for 3 more years and now teaches a class in Relief Society. Three of our daughters have been married in the temple. Kathy and her husband John Western and their three little boys, Danny, Russell, and Randy live in Garland where John teaches Junior High School. Sheri and her husband Danny Winona and little daughter, Melissa and Danny's brother Johnny live in St. George

where Danny is an electrician. Kileen and her husband Garry Phelps, whose first wife had died leaving him with 3 young daughters, Jan, Paula, and Angela. are happily married and recently moved to Citrus Heights, California where Garry teaches Seminary. They have a son now, Keith. Fred has fulfilled his mission to California and is in his third year of college at Logan, Utah. Paul is still at home working at a furniture store and Ellie is a Junior at Cottonwood High School.

My father passed away on 23 April, 1966 shortly after we moved to Castle Dale. He would have liked it there. It was the land of a little town he was used to.

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Sister Valoy Cox,

Bishop Gilbert P. Searle

July 12, 1994

I was born in Tooele, Tooele, Utah the 1 October 1922 to Asa Lyman Searle and Eleanor Amanda Peasnall. Graduated from Tooele High School May 1941 and from Utah State Agriculture College June 1948 in Civil Engineering. Married Gertrude Joyce Bell on Friday the 13th of September 1946 in the Salt Lake Temple.

I served in the U.S. Army from March 1943 to Jan 1946. During this period I spent 9 months at Washington State University in Civil Engineering. I was in the European Area and served under General Patten in the 11th Armored Division.

After graduating from USAC. I went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation and transferred to the Soil Conservation Service in February 1949. My wife, family and I lived in Colorado for six years and then were transferred to Utah in December 1954 where we spent about 13 years before being transferred to Ferron, Utah to work on the Ferron Watershed Project as the Project Engineer.

My family and I moved to Castle Dale, Utah in June 1946. Joyce and I have six children Eileen, Kathleen, Frederick, Sheri Ann, Paul, and Eleanor. I spent most of my time in Ferron. We as a family have been active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints during our married life. I've served in Branch Presidencies, Bishoprics, Sunday School President and Teacher, Ward Clerk, always a home teacher, and many other callings.

I was called to be Bishop of the Castle Dale Ward by Elder Mark E. Peterson, on the 16th of April 1967 and served in this calling until I was transferred to Salt Lake City in June 1968. John Jorgensen and Craig Johansen served with me in the Bishopric. The Stake President challenged us to increase our budget to pay bills on time and to start repairs on the church building and we did this by having Ward dinners once a month. They were well attended and enjoyed by the Ward. We had the blessing of one Baby and the Funerals of 13 members and I performed one marriage. We started having a temple excursion once or twice a month. I was also asked to train someone to be the Bishop when I had to leave as the Stake President knew I was only going to be there a short time.

My family and I have many happy memories of our 2 years in Castle Dale area and in working with the members of the Ward in furthering the work of our Father in Heaven. We have many friends still in the area.

I hope this is what you want. If there are any questions please let me know. Thanks for remembering me. My address is 1986 Bowling Ave., Salt Lake City, Utah 84119. Phone (801) 969-0633

Sincerely,

