

## MONTTELL SEELY

Montell was born 5 February 1934 in Castle Dale, Utah, to Karl A. and Cora Guymon Seely. He was fourth of six children: Betty Jane, Guy Karl, James W., Thomas, and Dorothy Diane. His paternal grandparents, Justus W. and Anna Eliza Reynolds Seely, were among the first settlers in Castle Dale. His maternal grandparents, E. Montell and Minerva Mackelprang Guymon, were early settlers in nearby Huntington.

Montell went to school at Castle Dale Elementary, and South Emery High in Ferron, where he was an all-around athlete, FFA president, and studentbody president.

Following graduation in 1952, he went to BYU for one year, then to USU in Logan for a year. He served an LDS mission in the Central Atlantic States (Virginia and North Carolina) in 1954-56. His brother, Jim, was serving a mission in Brazil during that same time.

After returning home, he settled into the farming business, purchased the family farm which had been homesteaded by his grandfather Seely, and commenced to buy sheep and permit.

Matrimony was "gentle on his mind," but had to take a back seat to the farm and sheep business until he was age 27--whereupon he woke up one morning with the realization that he was not getting any younger. In 1961 he went back to BYU with his sister, Dorothy, who was a freshman that year. He and Dorothy were members of the first BYU Ballroom Dance Team, directed by Ben DeHoyos.

Meanwhile, up in Idaho, Kathryn Pincock, a daughter of Mark L. and Lakee Smith Pincock, was born 15 March 1941 in Rexburg, Idaho, the third of four children: M. Glade, Ruth LaFee, and Lucinda. Her grandparents were George Albert Pincock and Lucinda Elizabeth Bingham; James Albert "Bert" Smith and Jessie Stoddard Walters.

Kathryn attended schools in Caldwell, Idaho, and two years at Ricks College before enrolling at BYU in 1961.

Montell and Kathryn met on a blind date at a dance in Provo. They danced into each other's hearts and have continued to dance their way through life--though not always on a smooth surface.

They were married 27 August 1963 in the Idaho Falls LDS Temple. Both graduated from the "Y" in May 1965, Montell with a degree in Animal Science; and Kathryn, in English.

The Seelys have lived in Orangeville and Castle Dale most of their married life. Montell is engaged in farming and raising cattle and sheep. From 1970-75, they lived in Provo and Orem while Montell earned his Master's degree in Animal Science at BYU. He also worked in the Counseling Center at Provo High School.

Seven children, six daughters and one son, have blessed their home: Valerie, born 23 March 1965, married Brant James; they live in Pendleton, Oregon, with their two children. Karla, born 4 November 1967, married Thane Thalman; they live in Ogden with their daughter, Fawn, born 10 May 1969, lives in Logan with her husband, Tim Miller, and their baby son, Leanne, born 28 December 1971. Lives at home and works at the County Attorney's Office. Mark Justus, born 26 September 1974, is a freshman at College of Eastern Utah in Price. Monetle, born 30 March 1978, died at age six months 27 September 1978 as the result of an accident. Janelle, born 13

November 1981, is a 5th grade student at Castle Dale Elementary. She enjoys jogging, cooking, and sewing. Two Lamanite students have also stayed with the Seely Family; Eugene Charley, 1964-68; and Caroline Bedonie, 1982-84.

Montell wrote and helped to produce the CASTLE VALLEY PAGEANT, an outdoor production which had its debut performance in August 1978 and has been produced annually since that time.

Montell was chairman of the committees that produced two 800-page books: EMERY COUNTY 1880-1980, published in 1981; and THE SEELY FAMILY HISTORY, in 1988. Montell and Kathryn helped Verla Moss produce the PINCOCK HISTORY; and in 1993 they will publish Volume II of THE SEELY FAMILY HISTORY.

They enjoy collecting and compiling history, working with the Pageant, and publishing a family newsletter called "LEGACY OF LOVE." They like to travel to places of their heritage, and they especially like family camping. Four grandchildren have joined the family group, and additional grandchildren are anxiously awaited.

The Seelys enjoy activity in the Church. Montell has been a Bishop's Counselor and High Councilman. Currently, he is the Ward Family History Consultant, and Stake Historical Clerk. Kathryn has worked as teacher and counselor in Mutual and Primary; as Relief Society President; and as Stake Relief Society Secretary. She is now Janell's Merrie Miss teacher in Primary.



Janelle  
Seely

15 year old  
modern  
day pioneer

## Montell Seely finishes pioneer walk ahead of the rest of the wagontrain

Montell Seely started a month later and was on foot, but he, two of his children and their handcart beat the sesquicentennial Mormon Trail Wagon Train to Salt Lake City by two weeks.

The Seely party reached Salt Lake Valley last Tuesday morning - ending a 1,032 mile journey from Omaha, Neb.

"It's overwhelming. I can hardly comprehend the experience," Seely, 63 of Castle Dale, told reporters upon reaching Temple Square. "It was a family project. We knew we would make it. Once we made the commitment, even if we had to walk on a broken leg, we knew we would finish."

Dressed in pioneer clothes, Seely and his children

LeAnne, 25; Mark, 22; and Janelle, 15 - began their trek May 24, almost five weeks after the wagon train's April 21 departure.

LeAnne followed in the family's van most of the way, but had to leave for California before the trip ended. Seely's wife, Kathryn, then met the family on the trail and drove the van to Salt Lake City.

The Seelys did not start the trip with the wagons in April because the children were in school.

The family traced the same route taken by the wagons. But while the wagon train averages about 15 miles a day, the Seelys managed 25 and rested only one day. The family overtook the wagon train two weeks ago in Wyoming.

The wagon train plans to reach Salt Lake City on July 22.

Instead of joining the wagons for the final leg of the trip, Seely and his children pressed on because of family obligations in Utah. They also wanted to set a Mormon Trail speed record.

Pioneer journals indicate that 1850s Mormon missionaries sent by Brigham Young took 48 days to pull handcarts from Salt Lake City to Winter Quarters near Omaha. The Seelys took 46 days.

"We had plenty to eat, water, modern shoes," commented Janelle Seely. "It's beyond words what they (the pioneers) did."

The Seelys' journey actually started last summer, when the family pulled the handcart from Nauvoo, Ill., to Omaha.

# Late-Starting Trekkers Beat Wagons to S.L.

BY BRANDON GRIGGS  
and PEGGY FLETCHER STACK  
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

He started a month later and he was on foot, but 63-year-old Montell Seely and his handcart beat the sesquicentennial Mormon Trail Wagon Train to Salt Lake City by two weeks.

Seely, two of his children and the family's wooden handcart reached the Salt Lake Valley on Tuesday morning — ending a gratifying if grueling journey that began 1,032 miles ago in Omaha, Neb.

“It’s overwhelming. I can hardly comprehend the experience,” the emotional Castle Dale man told reporters upon reaching Temple Square. “It was a family project. We knew we would make it. Once we made the commitment, even if we had to walk on a broken leg, we knew we would finish.”

Dressed in pioneer clothes, Seely and his children — LeAnne, 25, Mark, 22, and Janelle, 15 — began their trek May 24.

■ More news from the pioneer trail A-2

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## Family Completes Trek In Just 46 Days

■ Continued from A-1

pull handcarts from Salt Lake City to Winter Quarters near Omaha. The Seelys made the trip in 46 days.

“We had plenty to eat, water, modern shoes,” said Janelle Seely. “It’s beyond words what they [the pioneers] did.”

The Seelys’ journey actually started last summer, when the family pulled their handcart from Nauvoo, Ill., across Iowa to Omaha. The combined treks make the Seelys the first modern-day pioneers to pull a handcart the entire 1,300-mile length of the Mormon Trail.

“The wagon train plans to reach Wyoming.

The wagon train took 48 days to

of joining the wagons for the final leg of the trip, Seely and his children pressed on because of family obligations in Utah. They also wanted to set a Mormon Trail speed record.

Pioneer journals say 1850s Mormon missionaries sent by Brigham Young took 48 days to

“When we pulled to the top of Big Mountain, we looked out at the [Salt Lake] valley and had identical reactions to those we had read in pioneer journals.”

Montell Seely said. “It was not pretend. It was real. Tears started streaming down my face and I looked over and Janelle was crying, too. We couldn’t help it.”

“Was it worth it? Yes, they say.

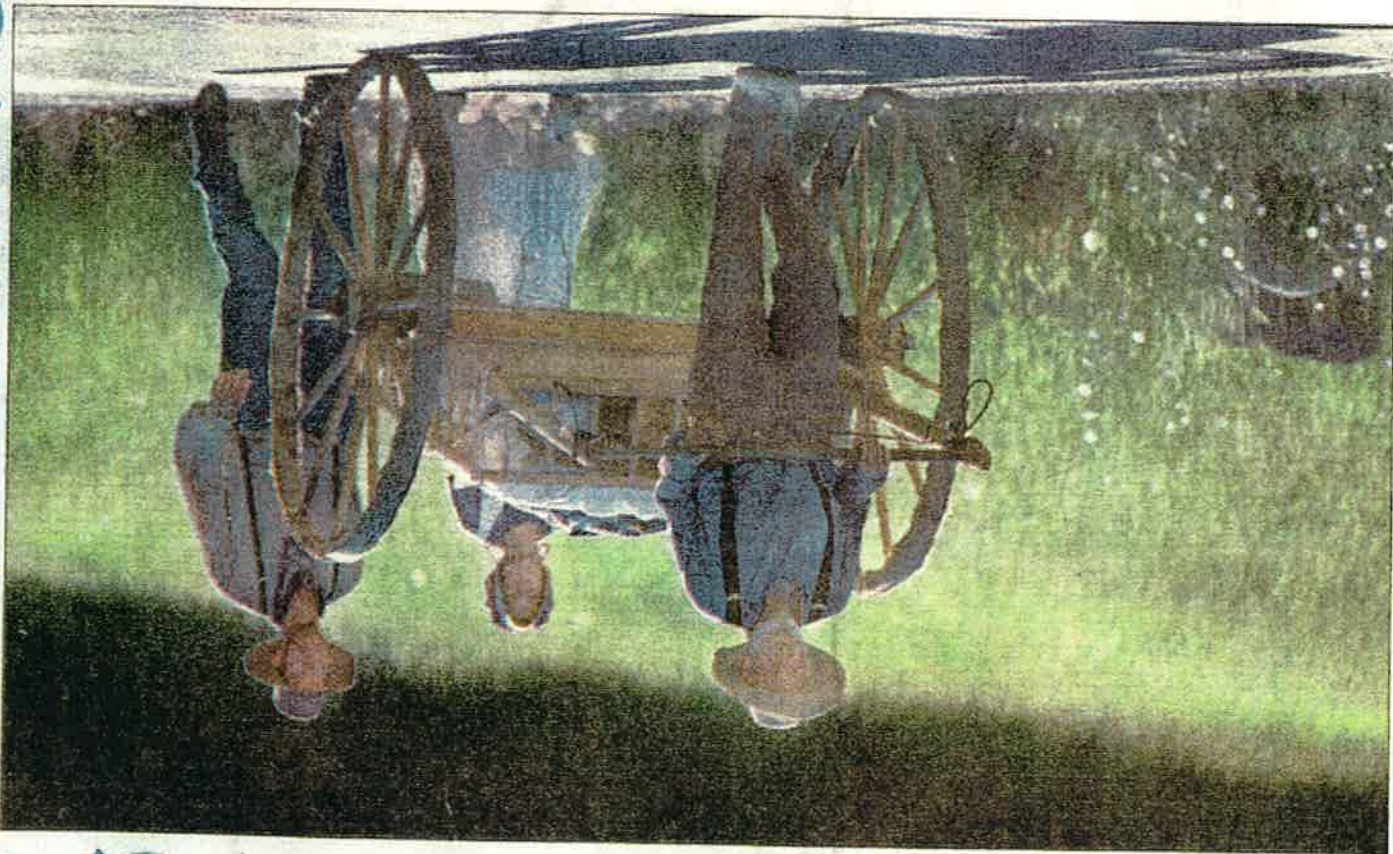
Trail.

Montell Seely & family, from Castle Dale, complete Mormon Trek.

## LAST OUT — FIRST HOME

Montell Seely, daughter Janelle and son Mark hike down Emigration Canyon on Tuesday, ending their 46-day trek.

Steve Griffin/The Salt Lake Tribune



Sept. 15, 2009

As they walked along, pulling the handcart through the hills, sometimes monotonous terrain of the Nebraska prairie, Jennell discovered that she could read as she walked. She was reading aloud for the benefit of Mark and Dad. They discovered a very interesting story within the pages of Handcart to Zion, by LeRoy and Kim Hagen. (They regarded this book as their "Handcarting Bible.")

The chapter, Handcart Companies of 1857, begins on p. 143. There the Hagens describe how Brigham Young and his counselors made plans to promote handcart travel after the disaster of the Willie and Martin companies in 1856.

When Mark and Morrell heard Jennell reading pp. 144-147, they all were excited. Could they make their journey in just 48 days, as the missionaries had done?

At their next rest stop, they did some figuring. If they could travel 25-28 miles per day, they would arrive in SL on the 48<sup>th</sup> day!

1--Montell Seely -- An Oral History Legacy

2--Covered Wagon

The history I'm sharing today is about a very unique man. A 19th century pioneer. This is his covered wagon that he built.

3--Handcart

This is his handcart, or one of the ones he made. He pulled a handcart and led his family from Winter Quartersto the Salt Lake Valley, only he passed the rest of the company and arrive 2 weeks before everyone else.

4--Montell and Mark with horses and covered wagon--sepia

It has often been said that Montell Seely was a 19th century pioneer born 100 years too late. And sometimes it seemed that he had actually been scheduled to be born in 1834, but something went wrong (or he wanted to wait for Kathryn).

5--Montell and Mark--same as above--colored

He was born in 1934 instead. And he brought his pioneering spirit, skills and know how to the 20th and the 21st centuries

6-- Montell and Mark walking -- sepia

It wouldn't be too hard to believe he was a time traveler who actually did live in the 19th century And was suddenly thrust into the 20th century.

7--Montell and Mark--Colored

Where he learned how to adapt and live comfortably, but didn't want to lose all of the ways from his old life and times.

8-- Montell with horse drawn hay wagon--sepia

When you met him and saw how much of the 19th century he pulled into his work, home, and life, it was easy to agree, "Yeah, I think he was born 100 years too late.

9-- Montell and hay wagon--colored

He, of course knew how to live and enjoy all the modern marvels of his day, but he liked the challenge of doing things the way his ancestors had done them. The details of living in this age of time, seemed far too simple and sometimes boring, and he thrived on challenge.

.10-- Montell's Ancestors

Montell was a descendent of the original settlers of Castle Valley or Emery County. He seemed very close to his ancestors. He knew all about them and how they lived and he felt that theirs was a unique story among Utah settlers. He really longed to have their story of sacrifice, courage, determination and tenacity told so it could be appreciated by everyone. He made his dream come true: He was the author, founder, producer of the Castle Valley Pageant and performed in it every year from 1978 to 2008.

11--San Pete County

The call to settle Castle Valley was directed to the people who had settled San Pete

Valley—Manti, Mt. Pleasant, Moroni, Fairview, Ephraim, etc.) Emery Co. and San Pete Co. share a mountain range known as the Colorado Plateau. We just call it “The Mountain.” On the West side of it, where San Pete is located, there is plenty of rain and lots of water running off the mountain and into the valley. It is green and beautiful.

12-- An Old Seely House--In the late 1870s, the towns were established and brick homes were built and life was comfortable.

13--Emery County-- But on the east side, the mountain creates a rain shadow, and there is barren hills and a desert valley. It was the last piece of Utah to be settled. The Indians only passed through; some of it was the very last part of the United States to be surveyed, and even the early explorers of the area wrote on their maps that it could never be inhabited.

14--When Montell’s Uncle Orange and Grandfather Justus Wellington Seely brought their families into Castle Valley, his Aunt Hannah remarked, “Damn the man who would bring a woman to such a god forsaken place!” The soil consists of gravel and clay—hard as a rock when dry and soggy and sticky when wet. This gives you a glimpse into the story to drove Montell to want to share it.

15-- Montell’s backyard: you can see that settlers here did work hard and make the desert blossom as a rose in some parts. I think, largely because he seemed to be so close to his ancestors, he wanted to own the land they owned and hold the permits they held, raise his sheep in their same fields and and walk in their footsteps He bought his grandfather’s original homestead and his property on East Mountain where he ran sheep. This is his grandfather’s 160 original acres that is Montell’s farm now. We are looking down into his fields from his porch. He moved those historic structures onto his property to preserve them.

16-- Thomas, Jim, Montell as kids

He learned the sheep business from his father and grandfather. Here he is standing on the right with his older brother Jim next to him, and younger brother Thomas. They are helping with the family sheep.

Tell story of Montell being talked into going up into the mountains to live so they wouldn’t have to go to school. walked and hiked most of the day to get to the shepherd’s camp where they planned on stealing food from the shepherders while they were with their sheep. That is how they were going to live. When it began to get dark they got scared and realized there would be consequences--their parents were going to kill them. Montell was 6 years old. He was very tired and wanted to spend the night and head home in the morning. No one would listen to him so they made the journey back home in the dark.

I believe this is the last time in his life he ever followed a crowd. He was NOT a follower.

17--Young Man--Story of Gale--Making Gale his friend so others wouldn’t pick on him. Someone nominated him for student body president. He campaigned against himself and was still elected. *“The reason I got elected student body president started clear back when I befriended Gale as a freshman. That’s whyi was elected. I befriended him, and I would stick up for all the other underdog type kids.”*



18— Photo of him as a young married man

He had his own sheep business when he was in his twenties, but He decided when he was 29 that he needed a wife, and although he was assertive and spoke his mind, he was shy of girls, he says. So he went to BYU to find a wife and took classes as a camouflage. While he was taking the Animal Science classes on of the professors approached him and admitted that he was a cattle man and didn't know much about starting a sheep business, so he wondered if Montell would write the lab manual for sheep science. Montell wrote the manual while taking the classes. Many years later that professor said he was still using that lab manual.

19--Wedding picture

He tried out and made the Ballroom Dance team, met Kathryn, married her, and graduated with a bachelor degree while "posing as a student." And later went back to the Y and got his masters degree. They married just after they graduated with their bachelor degrees. And in case I forget to mention it, he went on later to get his masters degree.

20--Kathryn in pioneer costume standing next to handcart

Kathryn is here with us today along with her daughter LeeAnne. When he knew he wanted to marry Kathryn, he put her through some rigorous tests. He knew that living on a farm in Castle Dale was nothing like living on a farm in Idaho, where she came from. He was really afraid to marry someone who would later say, "Damn the man who would bring a woman to such a godforsaken place!" So he took her to Castle Dale in March when he knew the wind would be blowing. He brought her in on back roads to show her there were still bumpy dirt roads around there. And he had her help him with building fences, and branding and castrating calves-- for which his mother scolded him severely. He wanted me to know that he never again asked her to help him do those things.

But Kathryn passed the tests and made Castle Dale her home. Here she is dressed as a pioneer standing next to the handcart with rawhide wrapped wheels.

21--Kathryn: And what a companion she has been for him. She said in our interview that he thought he needed a girl who could farm, but he needed an English major to help him with all the writing he has done. Kathryn is one of those amazing women who put all their efforts into helping her husband fulfill his dreams. She provided the encouragement and support that allowed him to soar, and then she is content to step back and let him receive all the glory and praise, because she truly believes he deserves it.

22--Montell at home

We had tried several times to get an oral history appointment with him and he seemed to indicate that maybe someday. My oral history project this time is getting the oldest voices and Montell was only 72, but when I saw him last year, I told him I really wanted to get his oral history. I knew I was asking at a bad time because pageant practice had just started up, but much to my surprise, He said, "Why don't you come Sunday afternoon." I was there with my video camera, my laptop recorder and my

photographer husband who wanted to take some photos of him. He spent three hours talking with us and then had to excuse himself to get to his pageant practice.

He invited me to come again the following week, which I did. We spent another three hours and he again had to leave. I expressed how much I had enjoyed listening to his life stories and how much I had learned from him. There were still some things I wanted to hear about, like his treks across country and such, so he suggested that we wait for a few weeks until the pageant was over and then he had a handcart trek to do with a group of people, but the week after that would work.

23- Montell at Pageant Site: I was stunned--shocked to hear that he was killed on his pioneer reenactment trek one week before our scheduled interview. I had learned to love and admire this man. He was very much a legend in his own time. Everyone had heard about Montell. I knew lots about Montell before I met him years ago. I googled his name in quotes to see if others outside of our area knew him. I got 1,680 websites that spoke of him. They mentioned his pageant, honors he received, speeches he had given, boards and committees he served on, kindnesses he had offered, his pioneer spirit, causes he fought for, and his death.

24--Inside his home, it feels like you step back into time. People who had been in his home had told me that he built a house around a log cabin. He actually decided to build a bedroom there and make it look like a cabin. He has collected 19th century equipment and memorabilia through the years (his past life). He also has what he refers to as his "Supply Yard" outside in a covered area.

25---Hat wall

-He is also a collector of hats--many of which are his. I think this is symbolic of how many "hats" he wore in his lifetime.

26--- Family Handcart photo: There have been and are many great historians that have studied history and taught it to people, but Montell lived history and brought it to the people and helped them experience it for themselves. Besides the pageant, he led many handcart treks and other history tours

I have lots of childhood stories about him that I would like to tell. But don't have time. I do want to mention the experience when he was working on the foundation of a mobile home and it slipped and crushed him. Kathryn said she could tell his dancing days were over. He had to learn to walk again, and he did.

He led handcart trek in 1996 from Nauvoo Illinois to Omaha Nebraska--close to Winter Quarters.

27--

1st Family Trek

In the sesquicentennial year, Kathryn says they took at least twenty groups on hand cart/wagon pioneer treks.His great love for history enhanced the lives of people in his town, county, state and I'm sure he touched a lot of people throughout the nation and the world, But we don't have time to't go into that.

The first handcart trek the family went on. Over 100 people went with them.

28--Reporter and Montell

In 1997, he couldn't go with the main group which left in April from Omaha, NE. He had to wait for two of his children to graduate from the College of Eastern Utah and his daughter in Jr. High to finish her school year, so they started 30 days later than the main group. They made their way alone over the trail with one daughter driving a support van. Montell was 63 years old that year and walked every step of the way. They got a little bored while walking and so Janell, the young daughter read to them from Handcart to Zion, a book that told of the handcart history. They read that one group had made the trek in 48 days. Mark, Montell's son, asked his dad if he thought they could do it. They figured they would have to walk 25 miles a day to make it. So they toughened themselves up for a few days and began to accomplish 25 miles a day. They caught up to the wagon and handcart train visited with them for a bit and passed them up, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley 46 days – making a new record for a handcart trek.

29—He built this water wheel on his property—just because he wanted to. He restored a 100 year old grist mill—not in Emery County, but one he passed by one day—just because he wanted to.

30—Pageant Site

Telling the world about the unique experiences of settling Castle Valley had been his dream. He wanted a pageant. It worked out first as a stake presentation and then invited the whole county, then the state and the world. We have had people from other countries attend this pageant. His pageant was adopted the LDS church and the church took it over. It is the only one where real animals are used. This is the pageant site--it overlooks the valley. Montell wrote it has produced, directed it and acted in it for 30 years.

31--Horses on the ridge

The pageant site is a permanent site, not one to which props are brought in each year. These have actual dugouts and actual buildings, a real ditch to run water in for the water fight that turns into a friendly mud fight. It is all built the way the pioneer settlers built—per Montell's insistence. He had a great deal of help with his project. This dugout was built by Wayne Wilberg, whom you see with his wife, Elaine.

32--Mud Fight--He wrote about the fights over water in Emery County and turned it into good natured mud fight

33--A rock building they built on the pageant site

He fought hard to get to put a wooden rail on these steps --code says it has to be metal, etc. But authenticity and preservation of the real past is very important to him. Because of Montell, the stake center in Castle Dale is being restored instead of torn down and building all new--the more cost effective way. Montell believed firmly that authenticity is all important in showing and teaching people about history. Authenticity is what brings the time warp feeling, so can experience the past.

**You know, I think maybe the word that sums up Montell is Authentic. He was truly an authentic person**

34--The raw hide wrapped handcart

**Here you see the authenticity of his raw hide wrapped handcart. This is the one he crossed the plains and mountains with. This is handcart that was broken to pieces when a truck crashed into the reactivation group he was leading a year ago and killed him.**

35—Pall bearers with pine box

**To honor his pioneer spirit. He was buried in a pioneer type pine box made with pioneer skills-- with a beautiful spray of sagebrush and wildflowers on its top.**

36--Covered wagon with casket in it

**This is the covered wagon that took his body to the cemetery With his friend as wagon master and his son riding along.**

37--Ben's portrait of Montell

**-Montell's love for the people and the pioneer spirit has been passed on to thousands of people young and old, many of them knew him personally, others have just been inspired by his legend. He brought the past into the present and the future and taught us to learn and gain strength from those have gone before us paving the way and building the bridges that have made our lives easier, ...and sometimes kind of boring.**

**-One thing I know for sure, after doing this oral history interview is that Montell Seely was NOT born 100 years too late, but he left us way too soon.**

## Emery County Historical Society History

Vernell Rowley, President

Project: Geologic Signs on the San Rafael Swell 1992

Trail Signs for Spanish Trail and Gunnison Trail

Longwalk Quarry

Pioneer Craft Fair

Pioneer Tools demonstrated like Ice Tongs, Hay Saw, Draw Knife, Pulley whittled from a tree

Dr. Lee Stokes—beginning the Dinosaur Quarry

Dr. Dorman—history of coal mining doctors

Shirl McArthur history of coal mining

Centennial State—County History Books—Sylvia/Geary

Covered Wagon treks

The only originals I know were Eva Conover, Roxy Nelson, May Arnold from Huntington and Maudy Moffitt from Huntington, Maude Davis Jones from Elmo Maudy Moffitt asked Sylvia to be secretary in 1979. There was a gap when the society kind of went dormant. Then picked up again.

Laura Keifford

Sylvia Nelson

Vernell Rowley

Dixie Swasey

~~JoAnne Behling~~

~~Sam Singleton~~

~~JoAnn Taylor~~

~~Bert Oman~~

~~Mike Williams~~

Joyce Staley

Mr Pelham

Lo Ann Behling

Jo Ann Taylor

Sam Singleton

Bert Oman

Mike Williams

Joyce Staley

EMERY COUNTY ARCHIVES 2008 ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
MONTPELL SEELY

June 15, 2008

1<sup>st</sup> Interview by Dottie Grimes

Montell's wife Kathryn and his daughter LeeAnn were present.  
Ben Grimes was taking photographs.

(Tape begins with conversation in progress

Montell: The frame house they built on the farm, it is still standing. It isn't in very good shape, but it's still standing.

Dottie: I hate it when they tear them down, even if they are falling down. They should just leave them alone.

Montell: Right.

Dottie: Now Justus Wellington and Orange Seely were brothers. And they came over from Mt. Pleasant?

Montell: Yes.

D: Now who were their parents?

M: Justus Wellington the first and Clarrisa Jane.

D: Did they ever come over here.

M: No, the parents never did.

D: Did they have a daughter named Elizabeth?

Kathryn: No. Ellis. Ellis.

M: Now how did you get Elizabeth?

D: My daughter in law just moved over to Mt. Pleasant, and passed this house and she was really drawn to it, and so she showed her husband, but my son, and he said it was really beautiful, and so he went looking around, because it didn't look like anyone lived there, and he found the name of Seely on the house. She is related to the Seelys but doesn't know who she comes through. She thought it was Elizabeth and that she was a sister to Orange.

EMERY COUNTY ARCHIVES 2008 ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
MONTELL SEELY

M: No, they didn't have a sister named Elizabeth.

D: So she might be wrong there.

K: But Justus the first did have a sister name Elizabeth.

This is a picture of the old cabin that is still over at the farm.

D: Oh, how cute!

K: And this is the first courthouse in the county and it is about to fall down over here on the . . . ?

D: Oh! We should do something about things like that.

K: Oh yes! Definitely.

M: Orange was called to be the leader when the settlers came over here. I should explain this. He was called by the Quorum of the Twelve. He was not called by Brigham Young. Of course everyone wants to think their ancestors were called by Brigham Young, but Brigham Young didn't call anyone personally to come because he wrote the letter to Knute Peterson to call people to come over here on August 22, 1877, and Brigham passed away seven days later on August 29, 1877. So he didn't personally call any of them to come over here.

D: Right.

M: So the Quorum of the Twelve was in charge of the Church at that time, because back then, it was some time before they called the First Presidency. So anyway, Orange was called to be leader to come over here, and in our family we've passed on an additional story. He twisted the arm of his little brother Justus Wellington and said I've got to go over to Castle Valley, and you've got to go help me. (laugh)

D: Sounds like it would be true. So Justus is a younger brother.

M: Yes. He was born in 1850 in one of the cabins that made the wall of the old fort in Salt Lake. It is now in Pioneer Park. They used the log cabins one right after the other to form portions of the wall for the fort. So my grandfather was born in one of those cabins that made the wall.

Now the reason he is my grandfather that came here, whereas most people it is

**EMERY COUNTY ARCHIVES 2008 ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**  
**MONTELL SEELY**

their great grandparents. But I have closer connections for this reason. My grandfather was one of the younger children of his family, and my father was the 10<sup>th</sup> child in his family, and he didn't get married until he was 35 years old. So all of our family. . . Well my older cousins are more like aunts to me.

D: Right. I'm the same. My mother was a real after thought in her family, and so her brothers and sisters are all much older than her, and so my cousins are all much older than me. Wayne Wilberg is my first cousin.

M: Oh, really?

K: Oh, my goodness.

D: Yes. Wayne and Janet Taylor are the only ones left in the Wilberg family. That's how it is in most of my cousins' families. All of my cousins are in their eighties. My grandfather actually was part of the Hole in the Rock group when he was a child.

M: Oh! What was his name?

D: Samuel James Rowley. His father was Samuel Rowley.

M: Oh, yeah. Kathryn's great grandfather was part of that, and my grandmother, Minerva McElprang was just a child when she came through also.

K: My great grandfather was the leader of that. (She shows a picture)

D: Now who is that?

K: Silas Sanford Smith the leader of the expedition was my great grandfather.

LeeAnn: (daughter) Now are we related to the Rowleys? I hear Carrie talk about her Rowley cousins all the time. So are the Rowleys related to the Guymons or are they from the other side of the family.

M: I think the other side.

Now, do you know the story of how the McElprangs and the Rowleys ended up here from the Bluff?

D: I think I've heard the story, but I'm not sure. I would love it if you would tell me.



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MONTTELL SELLY

M: Well they became real close friends while they were on the Hole in the Rock Expedition, and of course while they lived in Bluff, their friendship took off. And finally they were released from their mission, and so those two families were on their way to Parowan or Cedar City, but they had friends that had settled in Huntington. So the Rowleys said to the McElprangs, why don't we take a drive up to Huntington to visit these friends of ours. So those two families went to Huntington and probably spent the day and visited and probably had dinner with the people there in Huntington, and through the conversation, the folks said well there is plenty of land here and plenty of water here, why don't you settle here? And the Rowleys said, "Well that's a good idea." So they never did make it back to Cedar City.

D: I have wondered. Yeah. I knew they had left the mission, but I didn't know how they ended up here. So thank you!

B: Well, the Bluff people were told they were free to go, right?

M: Yes. And as a side point that you don't need to record. So Kathryn's Smith family went to Manasseh Colorado, and my McElprang family came to Huntington, and then finally I came along and finally Kathryn came along. They left Colorado and moved to Idaho, and then Katrine and I went to BYU and there we met.

K: And we'd been married a good 10 years, I think when I finally woke up and said, "I've been hearing about this Hole in the Rock thing a lot longer than I've been married! So our kids have got it double. So they're Hole in the Rockers twice.

D: So how did you two meet? You were both at BYU?

M: I needed to find a wife, and so I figured BYU would be the best place. So that was my sole purpose to go to BYU was to find a wife, and so I took a few classes to camouflage it.

K: While he was there he got mixed up with the Ballroom dancers that was just getting started.

M: Gary Magnuson and I grew up together and we talked about going to BYU, and so the two of us moved there and found an apartment, but we needed another roommate. Gary knew that a friend of his named Eldon was going to go to college that year, and so he thought about him. One day we were at a stoplight watching all the traffic go by and he saw this green Volkswagen with no hubcaps pass, and he knew that Eldon had a green Volkswagen with no hubcaps, so we followed that car, and it was Eldon. He had just

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finished registering for school in Logan, and Gary said why didn't he cancel that and come to BYU and room with us. And so he did. Then along, oh through the winter months, Eldon had started dating a girl Juanita Bush from out in Vernal and they decided to get engaged. Well in the meantime Kathryn was Juanita's roommate. And Juanita decided to get us lined up on blind dates. She got Gary lined up with Kathryn and me lined up with another girl from Vernal. And we all went to a dance called The Arizona Stomp. It was the most popular dance on campus put on by the Arizona Club. It was ideal to do what we called the swing. Which was a one-two-three, a one-two-three a one-two. (He demonstrated it.) So we changed partners, and Kathryn was from Idaho and had never seen that step, so I took her off to the side and showed her and counted it in her ear. She picked it up real fast, so we got out on the floor and danced. So that was nice. And then we danced with our own partners for a while, and after a few minutes, Kathryn said to Gary, "Let's trade another dance with Montell and his partner. (laugh) So we traded another dance, and after the dance we went back to their apartment playing a piano number. I sat across the room and she turned around on the piano bench. There was a group of us just visiting. Then I noticed her beautiful blue eyes. And I said to her, in front of all those people, which is clear out of character for me, "You have the most beautiful blue eyes!" So a month or two went by; she dated Gary a couple more times, and then this girl that had been my date asked him to a Girls Choice dance. So Gary asked me, "Do you mind if I go with this girl to this Girls Choice?" This was my opportunity, so I said, "I don't mind that if you will give me the go ahead to date Kathryn. So it wasn't too long before we got engaged.

K: Now you probably know him. His sister is Shauna Minchey. He was raised up in Cleveland.

D: So what year was this when you went to BYU?

K: 1963 was when we met and the year we married.

D: So did you kind of fall in love with him right off because of his dancing?

K: That was part of it because my folks were dancers, so I remember writing home about what a good dancer he was.

D: Or was it the blue eye thing?

K: It's all blue eyes. We met in January, and by the time school got out we were engaged and through the summer, and then got married the end of August.

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M: I should mention another thing about going back to college. Since I've been farming all those years, the natural thing for me to major in would be agriculture, and so I majored in animal science. I took various classes, and I took sheep science. I had been in the sheep business, in fact I had been running my own sheep business for about 10 years. I actually knew more about the sheep business than the teacher did. He was raised on a cattle ranch, so what he knew about the sheep business, he learned in a book. Part of this class called for a lab time as part of this class, but there was no lab manual for the class. He asked me to write the lab manual. So I wrote the lab manual and took the class at the same time.

D: (laugh) So you wrote taught the class and took the class.

Ben: (laugh) I bet you got a good grade!

D: So did you take more than a semester at BYU or was that enough education since you were teaching them anyway?

M: I actually took a full course and got a BS degree

K: In 1965.

D: Oh, so you married and stayed in Provo during the school year, anyway?

M: I still was running my farm on weekends.

K: We stayed in Provo one semester, and then he was through with classwork and I had some correspondence courses to finish and so I did that and we came back to graduate.

M: Prior to when we actually met, I was walking home from campus and came down past what was called Social Hall. There was a notice on the bulletin board—an advertisement for Ballroom Dance Team tryouts. Since I was always interested in dancing—I loved dancing. I thought I'd just get a partner from the side and go out and dance. So I did that, I see some girl that looked like she knew how to dance and walk out on the floor and dance with her. Then they called for one of these Latin dances.

LeAnn: Samba, Mamba, Cha Cha, Bosinova, Rumba. . .

M: Maybe it wasn't Latin.

Anyway the name has slipped my mind, I'd never danced before, but it's slow, slow, quick, quick slow.

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D: Was it the Tango?

M: Tango! Yeah. Anyway, she taught me the basic steps, so we went out and just did the basic step. The next day they posted the names of the people that made it, and my name was on the list. Nobody was more surprised than me.

D: Did you travel with the company?

K: No, but they had some nice costumes and did some nice program numbers right there on campus.

M: We'd dance at the ballgames—half time, and various stakes would invite us out to do floor show numbers when they had their Gold and Green Balls.

D: Was this before you met Kathryn?

K: He was on that team when I met him.

D: Wow! So you must pick up dance very easily. Did the community have a lot of dances when you were young? Is that where you learned to dance?

M: Right. And dancing. . . this was long before TV. TV was not even thought of, at least not in Emery County. Every Saturday night someplace in Emery County. Sometimes it would be church sponsored and sometimes community sponsored.

K: And there were school dances.

M: Oh yeah. After every game there'd be a school dance, and back then it was a real dance. It wasn't this line dancing.

D: They're sure getting back to that now—ballroom dancing.

So were you just in it for one year, or longer?

K: It was at least two years. You came to BYU in '61, and so in '62 and '63 you were part of the Ballroom team.

D: Let me just check this computer and see what is going on.

Okay, lets go back to your childhood. Because I want to know what you did when you were young and what your family was like.

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M: Okay, as I explained I was five years old when we moved from the house downtown to the brick house that we called the Cobble House (sp?) and so that's really where I was raised and grew up. I had access to the creek bottom and all the foot hills. I had a brother named Jim who is three years older than me, and another brother Guy who was three years older than Jim, and a sister Jane who was three years older than Guy, and a brother that's three years younger than I, and a sister Dorothy. She was actually 10 years younger than I. Jim and I were near the same age. My mother was very lenient, and rarely knew where I was, just let us play. I point that out to give you an idea of what a free spirit—free life I had. Jim and I would go exploring, and during the Spring, this was before the Joe's Valley reservoir was built, so in the spring there would always be high water—that was the term for it--high water. So we'd gather up logs and boards and baling wire, and build us a raft, and the raft would be maybe the size of this rug, maybe 6' x8' – just little kids.

D: Did you know how to swim?

M: We had learned to swim. We never took swimming lesson, but back then they didn't have regular swimming pools, so they didn't give children swimming lessons. We just learned on our own how to swim, so we could swim. So we'd just float down the river and run into property lines. Back then, they'd build fences across the river, property lines, and we'd run into barbed wire and get tangled up and have to either maneuver the wire up over the raft or underneath and finally get free of the barbed wire fence and go on down the river.

D: A regular Huckleberry Finn.

M: Yeah, it was a Huckleberry Finn life. We'd each have a pole so we could push ourselves away from the bank. When we'd get down to the other end of town, the raft would be broken up and ripped apart and wouldn't be able to hold us. I remember one raft the river came straight into some dead fall. Our raft went straight in and just tipped upside down, and we went right under. We surfaced down the creek a ways and swam out.

D: No big deal.

M: No big deal. (laugh) We just walked out.

D: I had a similar childhood, and so did he (pointing to Ben). I remember saying to my Mom one day, why did you let us go to the reservoir? We'd take a picnic lunch up there and walk around the edge. She said, "I had no idea you went up to the reservoir!"

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M: And then another thing I thoroughly enjoyed doing was to take my little red wagon and a shovel and pick, out on the foothills. The ridges were flat enough that I didn't need a road. But that was no fun, so I'd go down on the side hill where I'd have to dig and make myself a road.

D: Now that sounds like Montell Seely, doesn't it?

M: So I had road all over the foothills where I'd go. There was one place where there was a little gully in the side hill where I could fix a bridge, so I'd drag poles and boards and make a bridge, a perfect job.

L: Tell how you ran away.

M: Oh yeah--oh my, yes! I'm glad you thought of that. (all laugh)

It was in October when we lived up here. I turned six in February. My brother Jim--he's two years older--and I were playing up here in the orchard. Val Dean Oveson Val Anderson--Val Dean was a year older than Jim. Val Anderson was two years older. Those two fellows came along and said to us, "We're going to run away to the mountains so we don't have to go to school." Well, they convinced Jim and I that we wanted to run away with them. They had such a great pitch. See the plan was that we would go up here to mountains where we knew there were sheep camps. We figured we'd build us a hideout and then in the daytime, we knew that the sheepherders were out of their camp. We'd sneak into their camp and steal food and that's how we were going to live.

So we headed up the road. We walked up to Orangeville--we walked up to Ghost Road and then on up through the fields headed for Straight Canyon. And just before we got to Straight Canyon, Cyrus Wilberg who had a mine --Wilberg Mine in Straight Canyon at the time asked where we were going. It was only natural that he would know us --we were those Seely kids. We probably just said, "We're going up to the sheep camp." So he didn't give it a lot of thought. We walked on up. Of course this is long before Joe's Valley Reservoir was built. We stopped there at a spring and put our feet in the water. We were getting kind of tired and footsore. Then we put our shoes and socks back on and walked up the switchbacks on to what is called the White Dugway to the Meadows south of Grassy Lake. Val Dean Oveson 's father was a government trapper on the Meadows. Val Dean knew where his line camp would be, and I guess Val Dean knew his dad wouldn't be there on this particular day. So we went to his line camp, and of course, by now, this was late afternoon and we hadn't had anything to eat. So we found a can of pork and beans, and they opened it with a pocket knife. So we ate that can of pork and beans and talked about our great adventure and made plans. Well then it started getting sundown, and as the sun went down the shadows from the trees got longer and

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longer, then after sundown all these dark things out in the trees became wild bear, mountain lions, or spooks. So these other people started getting scared and wanted to go home! (everybody laughs)

They said, "Our parents are going to kill us! We've got to go home!" I said, "No, I don't want to go home. That's a long walk back. Let's just stay here for the night and go home in the morning." But they wouldn't listen to me; I was just a little boy. They said, "No, we've got to home tonight. Our parents are going to kill us." (everybody laughs)

So here we are after dark, here we are--we left Grassy Lake area and we head out in the dark. We made our way down the switchbacks down into Joe's Valley, and right there in the mouth of the canyon was a ranger station. I begged them to stop at the ranger station and sleep for the night, but they wouldn't listen to me. "No, our parents are going to kill us. We've got to go home." So we continued down Straight Canyon and after a short time, here came a car from someplace, and of course that car stopped and picked us up. We were riding in the back seat. You've been through Straight Canyon and know how windy the road is. It wasn't very long until I got car sick; I could tell I was going to throw up, so I hurried and rolled down the window and sprayed that car with pork and beans. (everyone laughs)

Well just as we got about to the mouth of Straight Canyon, here came another set of headlights, so both cars stopped. It was my dad with Perry Oveson. We got in the pickup with my dad. There was me and Jim and Val Dean and Val Anderson and Perry Oveson crammed into the cab of that pickup. It's a good thing the seat belt law wasn't in effect. (all laugh)

K: Now was your dad ready to give you a . . .

M: My dad didn't say anything. He didn't scold us or anything.

D: What about the Oveson dad?

M: The Oveson dad tore into Val Dean. He was pretty torn apart, and I'm sure Val Anderson really got it. But my mother and dad didn't scold us or say a thing. So that was my adventure so I didn't have to go to school. 'Course, I'd never been to school; I didn't know what it was like. (all laugh)

D: You know, I've heard back in those days, "Word traveled back to your parents faster than a boy could ride his bike across town." Everyone was interconnected.

M: Can you imagine a little boy, six years old, walking to Grassy Lake and back? And those older boys didn't have to coax me along at all or ever say, "come on." I stayed up with them.

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D: That's amazing. That is such a cute story.  
So once you started school how was it?

M: I loved school! I enjoyed school to the utmost!

D: Who were some of your school teachers?

M: Miss Jensen was first grade

K: Eve Jensen.

M: Then Mrs. Frandsen. Did you ever know an attorney Frandsen in Price? Anyway the lady he married was my teacher. I remember them courting while she was teaching us. I remember him walking up the sidewalk.

K: Duane Frandsen!

M: Yes, Duane Frandsen. So all the Frandsens in Price were kin to him.

D: Where was the school?

M: It is the museum and city hall now. That was the elementary, and the swimming pool was the auditorium.

I'll have to tell you one story about the third grade. This is when they taught kids how to read. Mrs. Frandsen divided the kids into two groups. She would say, "Let's get in a circle and read." It didn't take me long to figure out that she had divided us into the smart readers and the dumb readers, and I was in the dumb readers. I didn't want to be in the dumb readers, although that's where I belonged with my reading skills. I didn't like that. It wasn't the kids in the group. They were my friends and I played with all of them, but I didn't want to be in the dumb readers group. Now she didn't identify them like that. She identified them as Group 1 and Group 2. But I was smart enough to know I wanted to be in the other group, so one day I sat down in the other group. The kids said to me, "You're not in this group." And I said, "Well, I'm going to be in it today."

D: (laugh) You're pretty assertive, aren't you?

M: Then Mrs. Frandsen came sat down by us and said, "Monte," That was the name I went by then. She said, "Monte, I think you are in the other group." I said, "Well I want to be in this group today." And she didn't have the heart to kick me out so she let me stay



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there. And boy I really concentrated. I looked at my book and really tried to sound out the words and I really worked and I really struggled to read so that I could qualify to be in that group.

D: Oh, that is so neat!

K: Was she your teacher when you were the king?

M: Yes, that was the same year. We had this little pantomime that we were doing. I don't remember any details, but she had two chairs sitting up in the front for the King and the Queen and she selected me to be the king. So I was sitting there in the chair and I looked down and I had holes in both knees in my pants. Of course, that was typical. Most of the time I went to school with holes in the knees of my pants.

D: Probably most of the kids did too.

M: Most of the kids did too. But anyway, as I sat there, I was the king and looked down and saw holes in my knees. I was so embarrassed because I was the king and had holes in my knees. I tried to cover them (demonstrate how he tried to hide his holes).

D: (laugh) What other stories can you tell us about your youth?

M: I'll tell you another story. This is when I was in seventh or eighth grade. You know Mark H. Williams? Well his father Mark Williams was the teacher and he was the principle of the school. So he was the teacher of the seventh and eighth grade. Well I wasn't mischievous, but I always wanted action, so I was always getting in trouble. Back then, your punishment for getting in trouble was staying in for recess. . . It got closing time and the bell would ring and dismiss school. I got to thinking that if I go and turn the clock ahead, the bell would ring and we'd get out of here. So when Mr. Williams was not in the room, I walked up there and turned the clock about 10 minutes ahead, and pretty soon the bell rang, and dismissed school.

D: (laughing) Did the other kids see you do this?

M: Yes, the other kids saw me, but Mr. Williams wasn't there. You know Eunita Grange? Her father was Will Guymon, and he was the teacher of fifth and sixth grade, and he instinctively knew the bell had rung too early. And so he came with his (tape skip), and he called us on account. He said, "Who was it that tampered with the timer?" By then all the kids in my class knew it was me, but they were all faithful. No one would squeal on me. Well Mr. Williams looked around, and he knew who had been staying in at that time

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period, and he finally knew who it was. So he asked me, "Now, Monte, tell me the truth, was it you?" And I said, "Yes, it was." And he said, "What do you think your punishment should be?" Well, finally he said, "What I'm going to do is multiply 10 minutes times all the students, and you have to stay in for that long." Boy, I lost out on that deal!" (laugh)

D: (laugh) It didn't turn out like you planned.

M: Well that remind me of another story. I should tell you that later on in the years, Mr. Williams would come down to Tracy's frequently after he retired. That was where he would spend time and visit. One day he was in there I came in, and he said, "Montell, do you remember the year you turned that clock ahead and had to stay in?" He was rubbing it in. (laugh) Anyway he and I were good friends. Even though he had to discipline me, I never get angry at him. He wasn't a mean mouthed person, he was friendly. So we were on good terms all this time. Someway or another, I had done something wrong, so my punishment for that offense, he wouldn't let me play on the basketball team when we went to Orangeville to play their school.

L: So this was when you were in the sixth grade or seventh?

M: Probably seventh.

L: So your elementary school went from first grade to eighth, and high school went from ninth through the twelfth.

M: Right. There was no junior high school back at that time. Anyway I was in seventh or eighth grade, and we went to Orangeville to play their school team, but he wouldn't let me play.

K: And that was their rivalry.

M: That was punishment that was worse than staying in from recess--not letting me play basketball, because I loved sports. That was my life. He knew that not letting me play on the basketball team would be real punishment. So here we were in Orangeville playing the game. All the kids were there, and it was one of these real hot, competitive games, and Orangeville was ahead by about four points, and finally all the girls came over to Mr. Williams and said, "Please let Monte play! Please let Monte play!" And they started to chant . (laugh) "We want Monte!" (laugh) And Mr. Williams was a good player and played other sports, so he had this competitive spirit about him, and of course, he wanted our school to win the game. So even though he had made the rule, with all of the girls pressure, and his own feeling--instinct to win, he finally let me play. So I got in there

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with only a few minutes left. Boy I got that ball, and I dribbled around through all their players and went in for a lay up and made a basket. They took the ball out and brought it down and shot a few times and missed. Then finally I got the ball, and they rushed down to the court, and I dribbled around and made another basket. That tied up the game, and then only had a minute or so left, and they shot the ball and missed, and I finally got the ball again and made another basket and won the game!

That reminds me of when we played horseshoes. Mr. Williams was a professional horseshoe player, and he had several sets of horseshoes, and he taught us boys how to play horseshoes. And he set up a regular tournament, and being of a competitive nature, I practiced, and practiced. The other boys would practice also. We became so good, that it was very seldom that the two of us would throw four shoes and there wouldn't be one at least one ringer every time. Anyway, I was competing for the championship against Delon Rosenberg--now that's Crystal Rosenberg's son. He had a set of horseshoes out in his back corral. And he actually won the championship, and so I got second place. But the point is, we were so good, as students, we'd make a ringer about every time.

D: Because you had a teacher that cared. Do you still play horseshoes?

K: He still loves to pitch horseshoes.

D: (Computer skip) Well, go ahead.

M: In 1947 it was the centennial year for the pioneers coming into the Salt Lake Valley. There were plans in S.L. for a big celebration.

D: (Trouble with computer) I'm sorry I'm not a technical person. . . Okay, we're going now. So there was a big celebration in Salt Lake.

Kathryn: So I did that, and my dad prayed me to BYU. He didn't want me go to those gentile schools. H thought I should get to BYU. They are the ones who offered me a scholarship. So that's why I was there and he was there to get his wife. (looking at Montell--laugh)

Dottie: So what did you think when you woke up that morning in Castle Dale, oh, you were in Ferron? What do you think when you left out the window that morning?

Kathryn: It was different from what I expected. I had heard of Castle Dale. I was picturing a mountain town, with trees.

Dottie: I know what it was. He didn't want to you to say, "Damn the man who would bring a woman to such a godforsaken place!"

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Montell: That's right.

Kathryn: All the people were so welcoming. Mostly I just noticed at everybody knew him--called him by name and was interested to meet me.

Dottie: Is that when you changed your name and went by Montell instead of Monte?

M: No that was the first year I went to South Emery High. I wanted to go by Montell, and so I told my friends to call me Montell. And then I signed all my school papers Montell.

Maybe I should tell you this one story that happen in the first few days at South Emery. I was brand new at school of course, and I looked down across the school grounds one day-- at that time the school was located where the elementary school is now--and I saw two kids, one kid had a stick in his hand and was poking the other kid. I could tell that the one kid didn't have very good coordination because when he would be poked with a stick, he would try to run away and stumble over his feet. I had mixed feelings about this: I didn't like to see it--one kid tormenting the other kid, but I was a new kid at school. But it bothered me so much that I walked across the school grounds and said, "What is going on?" The bully answered, "It's none of your business."

I turned to the other kid and said is he picking on you? And he shrugged or something like that. They were both from Ferron, so you know the other part of the story is they had been picking on this kid all the years he was growing up. I can't remember everything that was said, but that boy who was being picked on, his name was Gale. I walked over and put my arm around at him and said, "Come on Gale, let's go." We walked away from that other boy. From then on Gale and I were bosom buddies. He had the mental capacity of about a first grader. He could just barely write his name the way a six year old would write his name. They didn't have special education back then, so the teachers just passed him on to the next grade. He sat in the back of the room. And so anyway, the reputation soon got around the school that Gale was Montell's buddy--don't pick on Gale. So if I was in the vicinity, nobody picked on Gale. In some of the classes Gale and I would this is sit at the back together and play Tic Tac Toe and Four Square. Do you know that game? You connect dots. He was really good at that. Some of the teachers let us play those games in the back of the class.

One time some boys from Emery were picking on Gale when I came into the classroom. When I came in, I said, "Leave him alone." He said, "You and who are going to make me?" His buddies walked up behind him and that caused my buddies to walk up behind me. It was a pretty tight wad. Then a teacher walked in, and I was relieved. I thought there for a while that it was going to be...

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K: The Jets and the Sharks. (laugh).

M: (laugh) So from freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior, Gale and I were buddies.

There is kind of a sequel to this story. It's going to sound quite boastful, but I'll tell it anyway. In the spring of my junior year, now that's when they have student body elections or elect student body officers. And here I was a junior and it was spring, and that's the busy time of the year for farmers. So I had been out of school for about a week to get in a crop of oats or grain or something. Right during this time they were making the nominations for officers. So the following Monday when I came back to school, somebody said something about me being student body president, and I said, "No, I'm not running for anything." And then I walked into the building there were several posters that had my name on it for student body president. I distinctly remember one that had Montell spell down the side of the poster with the M standing for something and then the old, you know how they did putting a word next to the letter that tells about that person. I thought, "who's putting up these posters?" I didn't know anything about it. The hard part about this is that my best friend Delon Rosenberg was running against me. He was my best buddy. He was studious and a straight A student--scholarly. He was my best buddy and I didn't want to run against him. So as the campaign went on, I didn't do any campaigning for myself. I told everybody to vote for Delon because he would make a good president, and that's who I was going to vote for. And then a teacher heard I was campaigning for him, and he took me aside and talked to me. He scolded me. He said if there is a group of students who nominated you and are campaigning for you, you need to be faithful to them and vote for yourself and not for Delon. Well that put me in a dilemma. I seriously knew that Delon was the best one for the job because I was not a scholar; I went to school to play basketball. I had a kind of joke where I'd say, "The only reason they had school work was to give the other kids something to do between basketball seasons. (laugh) But after elections were over, I got elected the student body president. I never gave a campaign speech. And the reason I got elected goes clear back to when I became buddies with Gale. That's why I was elected. I befriended him, and I would stick up for all the underdog type kids.

D: I bet. That is so neat.

K: Tell about the school bus story.

M: Oh, okay. In Clawson, there's a long lane that comes way from the west to the highway. Clear up to the end of that lane there was a log cabin and these Brady kids moved up there, and they were just as poor as church mice. There was three of them. They would come down that lane, and the school bus would pick them up. Well the first couple of times they got on the school bus, none of the kids would give them a seat, and

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they had to walk clear to the back of the bus to get a seat. Well, I thought, "That's a dirty shame--nobody would slide over and give them a seat." So I started going from my house to Glen Stokes(?) was the bus driver, that was two blocks south of the courthouse, so I would walk down there and get on the bus and sit on the front row, and wouldn't let anybody sit with me. Then we'd get to Clawson and I'd give these kids my seat, and I'd go back and make somebody slide over.

D: Oh! Wow! No wonder you fell in love with him! What a guy!

K: He's pretty thoughtful.

M: Well, you've heard enough stories.

D: Well, can I come back and get your adult history, because you've done a lot of things.

M: Sure.

D: Okay, I would really like to do that.

We need to take pictures of all of this in your house. This is a rock wall! How did you do that?

K: That's a whole story in itself.

D: See, I've got to come back and get all these stories.

K: He built that all by himself while Mark was on his mission. He went down by the Swinging Bridge and found big flat pieces like that. It's just amazing. These big things weigh about 800 lbs. each. He devised a system to bring them in on a piano dolly and hoist them up with a come along.

B: I would like to take some pictures of Montell.

K: I'm sorry Sue couldn't come with you.

D: She wasn't even at church today, so she must be out of town.

B: No I think she had to work last night and go back in today. I saw her car there.

M: (speaking of his father's accident) . . . He sat down and passed out. They sent for the doctor. He was over to the saloon. He came and he tried to push the thumb back in and couldn't, so the only solution was to amputate. Back then, that was the solution to

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everything. If they would have used a little common sense, and taken him to Provo, somebody could have repaired it. But back then in pioneer times. . . He amputated his thumb

D: Who was the doctor back then?

M: We don't know the name of the doctor and its probably a good thing. (laugh)

But anyway, Dad got blood poisoning, and his hand swelled up and his arm swelled up, and for a time they were afraid they'd to amputate his arm, but he finally got over the blood poisoning, and they didn't amputate his arm. But atrophy set in, so his hand looked like that. So for the rest of his life, he couldn't flex his fingers and he couldn't flex his wrist.

D: He kind of had a claw.

M: And so as a result of that accident, he couldn't use his right hand to throw a lariat. So he would throw the lariat left handed. Roping calves and what not, they take dallies around the horn of the saddle. My dad had to fasten it solid around the saddle horn, because he couldn't take dallies around the saddle horn. So he'd have the lariat solid around the saddle horn and then he'd throw the lariat with his right hand. Well he had a little group of brood mares. They'd run in Simbad all winter and in the summer, he'd bring them home, and he'd catch us three two year old horses for me and my brother to break. We was 12 and 13 and 14 and here we were breaking horses, but he was there with us showing us what to do all along. Well he had roped one of these wild horses, and somehow, he didn't get his horse turned to face straight away of the wild horse when it hit the end of the lariat . He was still sideways, and the pull was to the side. That pulled his horse off balance and it went over on the side. And then here's the wild horse out here with the lariat stretched tight, and his horse was trying to get on its feet, and one of the front horse of his saddle horse came down and crashed him on his head, and he was unconscious. So they called the ambulance, and it came and we loaded daddy into the ambulance, and took him over to the old Carbon Hospital which was over by the CEU campus.

D: I remember that. It was only here for a couple of years after we moved here. Now what year was this?

M: 1946. So anyway, that night he never regained consciousness. They x-rayed his head, and when mother called us the next morning to tell us that he had passed away, she said that his head looked like an eggshell, with breaks everywhere. Mother was so positive about the experience that it helped us children to accept his passing.

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Now lets see, how did we get onto that story?

D: Because I asked you when your dad died. And you were 12?.

M: I was 12 years old. So after that me and my two older brothers, along with hired men, run the farm.

K: He loved the farm. He just had an instinctive love for the farm.

M: And it was always there. My older brothers--Daddy would have to say to them, three or four times, "It's time to get ready to go to the farm." But the first time he said that, I would be dressed and ready to go because I enjoyed it so much.

D: So you actually did farm work before tractors--used horses and did you just do piles of hay?

M: Yes. Loose hay. We cut it with a horse drawn mowing machine, and even at age 12 I could harness the team and hitch them up to a mowing machine and go and cut a field of hay. So anyway you cut it with a horse drawn mowing machine and rake it with a rake and then pile it by hand, and sometimes we'd stack it over at the farm. We did it all by hand.

D: Wow. So after your dad died, how did your mother do?

M: We got along pretty well. It was fortunate that my dad had taken out an insurance policy with New York life with a double indemnity. Do you know what that means? If he was killed in an accident, then they would pay double. So since he was killed in this accident, the insurance paid double. So financially we were in good shape with that insurance.

D: How many brothers and sisters were there?

M: Four boys and two girls.

D: How old was the youngest?

M: Dorothy was just two years old, and my sister Jane was 18? 19?

D: So why did it take you so long to decide you wanted to get married? Were you too busy with the family farm?



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M: (laugh) Well, I was busy with the farm, and sheep. I had my own sheep operation. I bought part of the family farm.

D: So you've always kind of had a business head.

M: Yeah. Well, I was very shy with girls, that was a contributing factor. And I knew how difficult it was to live on a farm, so I was gun shy of getting married and having the girl trying to live on the farm and be unhappy, and then I'd be unhappy if she wasn't content to stick with the farm, and she was always nagging wanting a different life style. So all of these factors entered into the picture. But when I was 29, I realized I've got to get married.

D: So Kathryn, what did you think about taking on farm life?

M: Her father had been a farmer in Idaho, so she was somewhat raised on a farm. It wasn't an Emery County Farm, though.

Ben: Yeah, there's a difference.

K: Well, I knew what farm life was like and I wasn't afraid of it.

D: When did you get real interested in history?

M: You know I think I just had this instinct to be interested in history and the pioneers all my life.

D: Yeah, Ben's always kind of liked that old way of life too. He used to think it would have been born in the 1800s.

M: Have you really?

B: I used to think that. I'm not sure anymore.

M: Well, just to give you an example. You know in the old days, they used to have a Primary float in the parade with all the kids. One year, I thought, "I don't want to be on the wagon with all of the other kids. I want to make my own entry in the parade. So I built myself a handcart. I got some buggy wheels, and axle, and then I got two poles and laid them across the axle and used some baling wire and wired them to the axle and got some boards and made some pulls put some sides two it, and I built myself a handcart. Then I convinced my sister Jane to dress in pioneer dress and help me pull the handcart.

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And my little sister Dorothy, we dressed her in pioneer costume and she rode in it. 'Course we put some blankets in it and looked like pioneers, and we pulled that in the parade. . . so that indicated that I had this pioneer instinct.

D: Yeah, rather than build a go cart or something, you built a handcart.

K: Would you like to have some cake with us? LeAnn made it.

D: Oh, yum!

M: Okay, you asked Kathryn about her feelings about being a farmer's wife. I was so concerned about getting a companion who would be willing to be a farmer's wife here in Emery County, I purposely planned to bring her down on a windy day. And to show her how remote Castle Dale is, so I didn't come through Price on Highway 10, I went down to Wellington and came in on a dirt road through Elmo and Lawrence and Castle Dale. I wanted her to have this experience of coming in on this dirt road.

D: That's amazing to me that you would realize, having been raised here, that it might be different for her to live here. I don't think most men would have thought of that.

M: You're probably right. And it was dark when we came. My mother was living over in Ferron, at the time. She had remarried and was living in Ferron, so we drove to her house, because that is where Kathryn stayed. The next morning I drove over to Ferron to get her. I told mother we were going to go out and build some fence. So I wanted her to have this experience working with me.

D: This was a test. Did you know it was a test? (to Kathryn)

K: Yes.

M: I told her ahead of time. It was preplanned so she would know what she was getting into.

Mother felt so sorry for Kathryn that I was going to take her out in this terrible wind to go build fence that she gave her a bandana to go over her head. . .

K: And gave me a long sleeved shirt and a pair of gloves.

M: So we worked until about noon, and then I had a few calves in the corral that needed to be castrated and branded. I had them over in Orangeville over in the old stock corral, where President Law lives. So I had these calves in the corral, and I built a fire and put the branding iron in it. So I had these calves that were pretty good size by then. So I

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caught one and threw it down and showed Kathryn how to kneel on its neck with one knee and its rib cage with the other knee and pull the front leg around. And this one had its three legs tied. I said, "Now when I put this brand on it, its going to kick and fight, but you can't let it move because if it moves, the brand slides back and forth, and that makes a smudge brand." My brand is an S brand. You can see it up there--(on the wall). So I cautioned her and said, "You can't let it go. Hold on no matter what." So I put this hot brand on it, and of course you know all this smoke is swirling around and she is gasping, choking and coughing. I said, "Hold on. Don't let it go! Hold on!" Then I castrated it and she had to witness that. We did three of them.

I don't know how it was. . .some way or another somebody told my mother that we were branding and castrating calves. She got into the car and came over to the corral. We were all done when she got there, but she got me off to the side, and she gave me one of the worst scoldings. . .

D: (laughing) "This is no way to court a girl!" huh?

M: Yeah. That was no way to treat a girl. She thought it was horrible.  
So Kathryn what were your feelings?

K: Well, I was just a college girl, in love. He said, "It's not too late to back out." But I had so many stars in my eyes. It was too late.

M: But I have to say that, in all these years, I have never asked her again to help me brand or castrate calves!

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2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Montell and Kathryn Seely  
June 23, 2008

Interviewed by Dottie Grimes

Okay, you went to work for Charlie Redd.

Dottie: Okay Charlie Redd.

Kathryn: He's a legendary figure. . .

Dottie: Cowboy and Rancher on the La Sal Mountains.

M: Right

Okay, after the first year at BYU, I decided to go to Utah State, but I got tired of going to college there so I quit that, and I came. . .

Interruption with equipment

D: Okay we're ready. You went to work for Charlie Redd.

M: Yes it was 1954. Anyway I need to explain what brought this about. In order to do that I need to explain that a couple of years after my father had been killed in the accident, she married Leland Boline from Ferron and they were long time acquaintances. Leland had worked for my dad herding sheep for him. So since Leland was experienced in farming and sheep, my mother turned the sheep operation over to him. We still owned it, but she let him be the boss and the manager of our sheep business. So I came home from college and was trying to help him run the operation. I'd go out and farm and see what I could do around the yard. Well one day a wool buyer came and we had a stack of sheep pelts. This was back in the day when periodically a wool buyer would go around on his circuit and buy sheep pelts. Leland and Mother were not home when the wool buyer came, and I knew it was customary to sell the pelts. So I dickered with him and made him pay a few cents more than what he had offered, because I'm a petty good dickerer. And I had listened when my dad would be selling the pelts, and I knew that you were supposed to dicker over the price, so he raised the price a few cents, and I sold the pelts to him and he wrote out a check for them. So that evening when she and Leland returned, I said, "Sy Slickem. . ." That's what they used to call him because he was known as a slick talker. (laugh) So I said, "I sold the pelts to Sy Slickem and here's the check." Well this really made Leland mad because here I was this young upstart, cocky, college kid, so Leland thinks I'm trying to take over and run the outfit, but I had no intention of doing that. I was just trying to be helpful. Well unbeknownst to me, they had a long argument that

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night. So the next morning I was getting on with my day and Mother came outside and she said, "Leland is really mad that you sold the pelts, and he and I had a bad argument last night, and I've decided that there isn't enough room in this house for you and Leland. One of you has got to go." (everyone laughs)

D: Oh gee, how fun . . .

K: That seemed to happen a lot with second marriages.

M: Well it didn't really bother me, I said, "Well okay. That'll be fine. I'll go." Don't get the wrong impression. Mother wasn't kicking me out, she was just suggesting that I go someplace else. (laugh)

K: Go find a *good* job.

M: And I had been thinking about working for Charlie Redd, so I said, "That'll be fine. I'll go get a job working for Charlie Redd."

K: (Showing a photograph from Charlie Redd's book) This is probably what La Sal looked like in those days.

M: That's the general store. (laugh) He had gas pumps out in . . .

K: I'll let you take that for a while and copy some pictures.

M: So I put some clothes in a pillowcase and walked down to Castle Dale and put out my thumb to hitchhike.

D: In a pillowcase. That's interesting. Was that fairly common to carry you stuff in pillowcases as sacks?

K: It must have been because my older brother that's his age went to college that way.

D: Oh. What was Charlie's place called Redd Ranches?

M: Yeah.

K: LaSal Livestock.

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M: Anyway, have you ever been to LaSal?

D: I haven't.

M: Okay after you go from Moab to Monticello, about half way, there's a side road, and about 10 miles from the highway on this graveled road, is the town of LaSal. It was gravel then, but it's paved now. I walked that 10 miles to LaSal. (laugh)

D: Oh gee!

M: As I walked in, here was this fellow filling up his car with gas in front of this general store. I walked over to him and said, "I'm looking for Charlie Redd." He said, "I'm Charlie Redd, what can I do for you?" I said, "I'd like to get a job working for you." He said, "What's your name; where are you from?" I said, "I'm Montell Seely from Castle Dale." He said, "Anybody by the name of Seely from Castle Dale has a job here."

D: Wow!

M: See my dad was a relatively popular sheep man, and they must have known each other. My grandfather ran sheep, and so they probably all knew each other through the Wool Growers Association. So anyway, I got a job just that slick. Then he pointed to a bobtail truck over by a grainery and asked if I knew how to drive it. I said, "Yes." He said, "Go over and get in it and bring it over here and fill it with gas, and then I'll have some directions for you, and he had written the name of a fellow over in Monticello, and he had written directions for me how to get to his ranch. He was combining wheat. So I headed down the road. Well, I put my clothes in the bunk house and headed down the road. I got to the grain field which was north east of Monticello, and the fellow had broke down, and . . . so we worked on the combine all the rest of the day. I stayed at that fellow's place on the back porch on a little cot, and the next day we finally got the combine going, and he combined a load of grain for me, and I headed back to LaSal. By the time I got back to La Sal, it was dark, and all the lights were out at the place where Charlie lived, so I just went into the bunk house where I'd put my clothes sack, and all there was, was a mattress, with no blankets, so all I could do was lie down on the cot and go to sleep. I woke up early the next morning and there was some lights on in the milk barn. I went over there, and here was this fellow milking the cows. So I introduced myself, Montell Seely and he introduced himself, he said, "I'm Chas Petersen."

Now does Chas Petersen mean anything to you?

D: No.

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M: Well, here Chas Petersen was running a milk operation. He got tired of doing that and said, "this is not the life for me." So he quit that went back to school at Utah State. He majored in history and whatever else. He became a history professor and taught at CEU for a while and eventually became State Historian.

D: Oh, that's where I've heard his name. I knew I had heard his name, but I thought maybe I had his history in my files. But yeah. His name is all over the State History Department. Wow.

M: So anyway, here's Chas Petersen running a milk barn when I met him and we struck up a friendship and we still send each other Christmas Cards every year.

K: He's about 10 years older than you are, because he was a young married man with young children.

M: And I was just a young kid out of high school.

K: He's a real colorful character—really fun to talk to.

M: So anyway I worked for Charlie all through that summer, and then along in October, my mother wrote to me and said that Bishop Bott wanted to interview me for a mission. The reason I hesitated was because my brother Jim was already on a mission, and my mother had been a widow. She was married, of course, but they didn't want to call me, because they didn't think my mother could support two missionaries. She knew I wanted to go, and finally she decided, "I think I can support two missionaries." So the bishop told her to write to me and tell me to come home first chance he gets. So I hitchhiked home from LaSal and was interviewed by the Bishop and also by President Eldon G. Luke—he's the father of the Luke family in Orangeville. I can't remember the series of events, but El Ray L. Christiansen was going to speak at a stake conference at Monticello, and so arrangements were made for me to go to Monticello. This was in the days when you had to be interviewed by a general authority. And then the paperwork went through and Mother wrote me a letter and said, "You have received your call, and so you need to come home and get ready to go." So I handed in my quitting papers to Charlie. And the foreman tried to talk me out of it. This foreman liked me because I was a hard working kid and because I would do anything he asked.

D: I bet. You could fix machinery. . .

M: He wanted me to stay. But I said, "Nah, I'm going on a mission."

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K: Did he tell you to come back after your mission?

M: Yes. So I put my clothes in the clothes sack and one of the hired men gave me a ride to the highway this time. By then I had learned that the Trailways bus would stop and pick up people if they were standing at there at that junction. I knew about what time he would be there, so I stood there and waved to him, and he stopped and picked me up. So I rode the bus from there up to Price, but it was after dark by the time I got to Price. So I walked out of Price and stuck out my thumb and some people from Cleveland picked me up and took me to the Cleveland junction. So then I started walking and thought, "Well, I'll just walk the rest of the way home, because here it was 10 or 11:00 at night. Then a car passed me and went up the road, and back then there weren't that many cars. It turned around and came back, and they stopped and picked me up. It turned out to be Perry and Adeline Wakefield, and I don't remember the other couple. . . Jensen probably. They recognized me. I played basketball in high school and I played against North Emery, so they thought they better go back and pick me up.

D: How nice! What a blessing!

M: So when I told them that I was on my way home to accept my mission call, then they were really happy that they Spirit had told them to come back and pick me up. They commented that they had been to Price to see the movie, "The Magnificent Obsession."

D: Oh! No wonder they stopped and picked you up.

M: They brought me all the way home (They lived in Huntington; Montell lived 12 miles away in the next town).

K: Gas didn't cost as much then as it does now.

D: Yeah, but still late at night, that movie had to have been a good affect.

M: Through the years whenever I saw Adeline, she would remember the night they picked me up and got me on my mission.

D: Oh, that's neat.

M: So anyway, I went into the Mission Home and at that time it was where the Beehive House or the Lion House. . . ?



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K: Well, no. It was on that same block.

D: I think I know where it was because my brothers went there. It used to be an old high school.

M: And it faced east?

K: Did you have any thoughts when you opened up your mission call and found out where you were going?

M: No, I didn't think anything about it at the time. It just said, North Central Atlantic States Mission, which was North Carolina and Virginia. I didn't have experience enough in missionary work to realize that it was a blessing. I don't think I could have learned a foreign language.

K: His brother Jim and Lon Rosenberg were both in Brazil speaking Portuguese.

M: Now there is just one interesting thing while I was in the mission home. We had a lecture from a doctor about how important it was that we were in good health before we went on a mission because if we had ailments and needed to be in a hospital, it was expensive for the Church because they paid all the expenses at that time. So this caused me to reflect back to the time I had gone into Fort Douglas for a pre-induction physical. This was back in the time when a man turned 18, he had to have a pre-induction physical, so I went to Fort Douglas at the appointed time, and a young physician—a resident took my pulse and it was in the 50s, and then he put his stethoscope on my back and on my chest, and he had a questioning look on his face, and here is this line of fellows waiting for their exam, and he said to me, "Go into that office and wait. So I waited and he and another doctor came and they did a thorough examination with a stethoscope, and they decided that I was 4F and sent me home. So I was a 4F. Do you know understand what that means?"

D: Yes I do, and were you disappointed? Did that bother you?

M: Yes because I thought, "I'm not fit to be a soldier."

K: And he was patriotic and wanted to go. . .

D: Yeah. And what year was that?

M: About 1953. So anyway here was this doctor really cautioning us against going into the mission field with health problems. And I should explain back then they didn't have

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you take all these medical exams prior to your mission the way they do now. So anyway that made me worry because here I was categorized as a 4F and wanting to go on a mission. So I just started to walk up South Temple assuming I would find a doctor's office, and sure enough I found a doctor's office. I walked in and told the receptionist my sad story that I was going on a mission and had a heart murmur and I wanted a physical exam. She notified the doctor and he squeeze me in. He listened to my heart and he shook his head and said, "You don't have a heart murmur. What you have is a heart so strong that when it pumps the blood out, it makes a noise." Then he used this illustration, when water comes out of a hose at first it makes a noise, that is what your heart is doing.

D: Yeah. Ben had that similar experience. I think he was just giving blood, and he was told his heart rate was too slow and he had an irregular heart beat. When he went to the heart specialist, he told him that he had an athletic heart.

M: Yeah!

D: So that was a blessing. It got you out of the army but onto your mission.

M: Oh yeah. I didn't have to go through all that stuff that happens in the Army. Plus I figure if I had ever gone into the Army they'd have put me right into the fighting and because I am so reckless and don't use caution, I would have been the first one to get killed. So I didn't go, and a blessing that I could go on my mission. So anyway I didn't worry anymore about going on a mission.

D: Don't you just love how the Lord works out the little details of our lives?

K: And while you were in the mission home, your grandmother came. . .

M: My grandmother Minerva Guymon came with me to the temple. Edwin Montell Guymon and Minerva McElprang Guymon. And I was the first one born after he passed away and so I was named after him. I've always been appreciative of having his name.

D: That's neat. She looks like a wonderful lady. You can just see that goodness in her.

K: She was a good grandma.

M: She was working in the Salt Lake Temple at the time we were there. Back then they took the whole group of missionaries through the temple for their first endowments. Nowadays they expect the missionary to go to the temple with his family, but back then

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they took the whole group of them. . .

D: Interesting.

M: So I was in the Mission Home for about two weeks and then I got on the train to go to North Carolina and served for two years.

K: Nobody was flying back then.

D: So how was it back in Virginia and North Carolina?

M: I really enjoyed it. Particularly because the last nine months I was assigned to go the Cherokee Indian Reservation. I was a Branch President there. Our instructions back then was to fellowship the Indians more than going from house to house. If we could get a meeting set up, that was okay, but we were given the leeway do things to fellowship. So we set up a baseball team with the Indians there on the Reservation. My companion was an athlete that had played baseball and basketball, so we were a natural pair. So we played baseball and basketball with the Indians and we were in a league. We'd go to other communities Cherokee, North Carolina. We lived in one of the cabins that the chief of the tribe had that he would rent out to tourists. So he rented it out to us, and part of our pay was to milk his cows. So every morning we'd get in his old pick up truck and drive to milk the cows.

K: There is a picture with he and his companion on a horse.

And Bryce Wilson was in that same mission.

M: Oh yeah. In fact Bryce was my first missionary trainer. Bryce was from Hatch over by Panguitch.

K: So they met on their mission but when Bryce came to live in Huntington, why it was just a small world.

M: Okay so then I came home from my mission. Shortly after that, Leland decided not to be the manager for our sheep operation, so we did it for a few years, and then Mother decided to sell the whole business: the sheep and the lease permits. But I didn't want to sell the business. So it was decided I would buy 500 head of sheep and 500 head permit, and the family would sell the remaining part. We had about 2000.

D: Did Guy not want any?

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M: No. Guy did not want any. The permit that I ended up with was called Lake Mountain which is just north of Ferron Reservoir. To get there we'd trail our sheep from Paradise Ranch up through Rock Canyon, down through Dragon country which is the south end of Joe's Valley Reservoir, and then up around wagon road bridge, down through Bear Creek, up around Buck Ridge, down through McEwen Creek, up on McEwen Bench and then up to Lake Mountain allotment.

K: If Dottie's heard of two of those names before that's probably all she's heard of.

D: I think I've heard about . . . most of them. I interviewed Ray Wareham, and he talked about Dragon country it wasn't named after a Dragon, but because they were draggin' something.

M: Probably they would hook onto a dead tree or something to take their wagons down steep slopes. Yeah.

So the first year I was in the sheep business all on my own, I had lent out my sheep in Paradise.

D: Where is Paradise?

M: you know where Clawson is? About five more miles east of Clawson. You go down through Molen Reef, then the area opens up to a beautiful little valley.

D: That's where Owen Price told me he was raised.

M: Mother had purchased Paradise Ranch just a few years prior to this. So that's why I was running my sheep down there on the ranch.

D: So how long did it take to trail your sheep up to Lake Mountain?

M: Four days. And to cut expenses, I didn't hire anybody else to help me.

D: That sounds like you. "I can do this." (laugh)

M: I had taken my pickup and my camp and food up to the top of Horn Mountain. I had a friend follow me up there and bring me back. So my truck and my camp was up there. So the morning I left Paradise Ranch I had my horse and my bedroll and a couple cans of soup. I trailed my sheep up and got to the bottom of Rock Canyon Trail. It's the canyon that goes due west of Clawson. There's a cattle trail through there now. In fact that was the main trail.

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D: Yeah. I've heard of Rock Canyon.

M: I don't know why they didn't build a road through there. They could have done — as easier than building the road through Straight Canyon. Well I camped at the base of the trail, and during the night, something spooked my horse, and it broke off the limb of the tree it was tied to, and I didn't know about it until morning. So my sheep were going up the trail. They were familiar with the trail. They knew where they were supposed to go, and I back tracked trailing my horse for several miles. It would go off through the Cedar Trees where ever and I would track it until well after sunup, and I thought I can't leave my sheep. They'll get up on top of the mountain and scatter, and my horse might have wandered clear back to the ranch by now. So I thought my only choice was to forget the horse and go on by foot, so I just took my bedroll and a can of soup—I hid my bedroll behind some rocks with my saddle, so someone wouldn't come along and see them and think they were finders keepers. So I just walked along on the trail behind my sheep. Now that reminds me of another story.

The winter before I had put my sheep down in Sinbad. This was before I-70 went through there, so the allotment we had was on the south side of where I-70 is now. We had Dale Jeffs herding the sheep for us, and I was running in partners with two men from over to Ephriam, that had purchased the winter permit, except for the 500 head that I purchased. Well they were over in Ephriam, and I was over here, so I was the one that took food and supplies out to Dale. Well this one day I went out there to take supplies to him, and he was just beside himself! What had happened was he herded the sheep down in what we refer to as the Bucks, which is down toward the Creek Desert where the road to Hanksville crosses that big desert. Well it was in the springtime and green plants had just started to grow, and green was up about like this. . . well, what was green was loco weed. And so the sheep spent that day on this loco weed, and they just settled down like they had been turned into an alfalfa field, Dale said. "I thought I was in Seventh Heaven," he said. The next day the sheep had gotten locoed, and he said there were sheep going in all directions. They had lost all flocking instinct. It just made them loco, and so they'd walk into a wash or walk into a tree, and he could not get them gathered up because they had lost their flocking instinct. He had ridden his horse all day long until it was just about worn out, trying to keep the sheep together. He was just a nervous wreck. "The whole herd had just gone crazy and I don't know what to do."

So I beat it back home and called my partners in Ephriam and told them and they brought a bunch of sheep hauling trucks from Ephriam and a bunch of panels, and we went down there and built a corral, and the group of us went out and gathered sheep, and as soon as we gathered a few, we'd put them in this corral.

I ended up taking 500 old ewes, and 300 of that 500 were just barely good enough to put on the desert, and 200 I kept home. Sheep have to have good teeth to eat the

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browse and the tough grass. When sheep get old their teeth fall out. Their gummers. (laugh).

And so the 200 head of sheep I kept home, and the other 300 that I put out on the desert, they all got locoed. I probably found about 150 of those 300. The same with these other guys. They just lost sheep.

D: Did they ever recover? Get it out of their system?

M: Eventually, if you could find them and get them home and put them on good feed. Anyway then spring came, they started having lambs, well everyone of those 150 head had a deformed lamb. Their feet were turned back like this; they had a deformed mouth; their face was deformed—kind of monkey-looking.

D: So did you know that would happen?

M: We didn't know what would happen. So anyway, out of that group that I put on the desert, I didn't get anything out of it. The only lambs I ended up with were from the old ewes that I kept at home.

D: All the gummers, huh?

M: All the gummers. So every time one of these gummers would have twins, I'd have another sheep that had a deformed lamb—it would be born dead or I'd just cut its throat and skin it and put its skin on the good lamb and adopt the lamb onto the mother. So I, the first year I was in the sheep business, I had less than when I started. Anyway I had the 200 head, and the 150 to put on the mountain, so I bought 150 to make up the 500 to fill the permit. So anyway, back to the...

D: You're walking.

M: I was walking, trailing the sheep. So I brought up the stragglers, and by the time I got the stragglers up there, the herd was scattered far and wide, and I spent hours getting them all gather up and back into one bunch. I finally got to where I left my truck, and so I had some food there, and so I stopped and built a fire and fried some mutton chops and had something to eat. And then I thought I better drive back down the trail and see if I missed some. When I got back down there just about where the trail tops out, and there was 10 head. The others were way up on the mountain, and so I thought, "Well, what was the best way..." So I finally decided the best way was to catch these 10 and put them in the truck. If I tried to trail this 10 head up to where the herd was, the herd would have run off. So I had some bailing twine, so I got that and put it in my pockets, and got this 10

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head into some brush, and being young, fast and stout, I figured I'd hop over the brush and catch them. So I'd dive into the brush, find one, drag it away from the other, tie its legs, and dive in and catch another by its legs.

D: How smart!

M: And I caught all 10 of them, and loaded them into my truck and hauled them up to the herd.

D: How do you keep them together on the mountain?

M: Sheep have a flocking instinct. They will stay together, most of the time, but like this 10. They got out by themselves and got their stomachs full and laid down in the shade and the others left them.

D: But you said they scattered on top.

M: Well that's what the herder does during the day, turns them back into a bunch.

So anyway the next night I got over to the point of Wagon Wheel Ridge. Have you heard of Mary's Lake?

D: Uh-huh.

M: Well, Wagon Wheel Ridge is the ridge above Mary's Lake, so I got over there the second time and got a good night's sleep and had some food.

D: So did you go for those days without food? Walking?

M: Yeah. So then the next day, I herded the sheep down to Bear Creek. Now Bear Creek is just a small creek, but this year their was a lot of runoff, so the water was running swift. It wasn't such a big stream that the sheep couldn't cross, but it was running so swift, that the sheep were afraid of it. So I bunched up the sheep down next to the stream, and then I reached in and grabbed a ewe and dragged her across the river, 'course the river was only about knee deep. She was struggling and fighting all the way, and I got her across and then one or two sheep followed her and then they quit. So I tried it again. I should explain this is the system to get sheep across the creek. You get one across and then the others would follow, but the nature of the creek this particular year, the sheep wouldn't follow. So I would try it again. Drag another one across the creek and then a few would follow, and then they'd quit. I'd go over to the other side and bunch up the sheep next to the creek and drag a sheep across and they'd stop. I did this four, five or six

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times, but the sheep would not start crossing. I sat down, soaking wet, tired, exhausted and just beside myself. I sat there and started thinking about my daddy and I started to ball.

K: If Daddy were here he'd know what to do.

D: Oh.

M: I cried my heart out. I wish Daddy were here.

D: Oh, and all by yourself and not eating for days. . .

M: Well, you probably know that the nature of crying is once you've cried out your problems, you feel better. So I cried out my emotions and took stock of the situation and then I thought, "The only way I'm going to get these sheep across this creek is to build a bridge." Of course I didn't have any lumber, but on this creek bottom, there were a bunch of pine trees that were about this big around and tall. So I walked up the mountain to my truck and got my axe and shovel. So I selected six. . . I believe it was seven of these pines, course I couldn't get them so big that I couldn't drag them. So I chopped them down.

D: Already tired. . . chopping with an axe. . . gee.

M: So I dragged these poles over and found a narrow spot on the creek where the poles would read the width of the creek, and put them as close together as I could get them, and then I cut the leafy branches, and willows and put a layer of that over the poles, and then I had my coat, and I filled my coat with needles and leaves, and then I took my shovel and covered it all with dirt. It was an A-1 bridge.

D: I bet! I wouldn't expect anything less.

M: The thing of it was I thoroughly enjoyed building that bridge, because it was just one of those projects that I enjoyed doing.

K: And you practiced building bridges as a boy out here. . .

D: So your spirits were lifted.

M: My spirits were lifted and now I was making progress, and I knew that once I got the bridge built, the sheep would cross. So I was in good spirits. Well, of course, it took me the rest of the day, and the sheep were scattered on the side of the hill. The sun went down and it got dark, and so I had to wait until the next morning, but I had to gather the



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sheep back into a bunch. So anyway, I got them gathered up, and it was a moonlight night, and sheep would lay down and be quiet on a moonlight night. So I spent the night, night herding. I'd sit above them, and I could tell where they were by the bells. So I built a fire and would lay down by the fire, and dose off; wake up and gather the sheep and lie down. Finally morning came, and I gathered all the sheep and pushed them right down to where the bridge was. I caught an old ewe, and I had some twine string in my pocket. I took her across the bridge, and tied her to a tree, and she stood over there blating for the lambs. And one old black faced ewe started across the bridge blating and I stood back and prayed—talking to her, “Oh, Sweetheart, you're the most beautiful sheep in the world, just keep agoing,” whispering to her. She'd take one foot after another, sniffing the bridge, she got to the other end, and then she bolted and ran. That's the nature of sheep. Then the others followed.

So I got them across the creek, and we went up the trail on the point of Buck Ridge around the trail, down the slope to McEwen Creek. Oh, during the heat of the day, the sheep don't want to travel, so you just as well quit and let them lay down and shade up. So while they were shaded up, I walked down to McEwen Creek. It was not quite as bad as Bear Creek, but almost. So I thought “Well rather than have another bad experience, I might as well just build another bridge—in the heat of the day. So I cut a bunch of old pine logs and poles and built a second bridge—across McEwen Creek. Then I went back and as soon as it turned cool, I roused out the sheep and trailed them on around. . . by the time I got to the tail end of the sheep down there to McEwen Creek, the others had crossed the bridge and were already on the other side. So it was fortunate that I had that other bridge already built.

So then they climbed up the side onto McEwen Flat, and we started up the flat to where the allotment boundary was. Well I got to hungry. Keep in mind that I'd been doing this all on foot—no horse. So I had filled my pockets with what food I could, and I had put two extra mutton chops—had them wrapped up in waxed paper, so that's what I had for supper that night—cold mutton chop. Now most people would think “cold mutton chop with all that grease!” It really turns them off. Not me. I could eat a cold mutton chop. . .

D: You remember how wonderful it tasted. (laugh)

M: Anyway, it got dark, and I was not up to the allotment yet, so I just had to bed the sheep for the night, and I didn't have any bedroll, so I went over into a little patch of quakes and built a fire. I selected a deer trail where there was no vegetation, and I built a long fire and heated the ground. Then after it was well heated, the fire burned out and it was just hot coals. I scraped the hot coals off to the side, and laid down on that warm ground and dozed off to sleep. Then the moon came up along about midnight, and the sheep were wanting to move again. So I thought rather than trying to keep the sheep right

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here, they'll go right straight onto the flat, follow deer trails up to the allotment fence, so I just as well follow them. So I trailed them and we got up to the boundary line fence, and by this time it was sunup, so I opened the gate. It was between our allotment and a cattle allotment. I opened the gate and put the sheep through it, and they headed up the slope. I knew that the fellow from Ephraim that I run with, would have his sheep there, so I walked up the side hill until I heard his sheep. I found him and told him where my sheep were. He was expecting them. He said, "That's fine. I'll pick them up and your work will be over." So I thanked him and turned around and headed back to my truck.

You see, by now I hadn't taken off my clothes for four nights and four days. I hadn't taken off my socks or shoes and had been through the water, and I could feel I had blisters. On the way back to my truck my feet got to hurting so bad that I decided to stop and take my shoes off and rest my feet. When I took my socks off, it pulled the blisters off. Well it was a real big relief to get my shoes and socks off and get my feet out.

D: Oh, but then what are you going to do?

M: Well, it came time to put my shoes back on, and my feet had swollen, so I put my socks back on, but I couldn't get my shoes back on. Never again will I do that until I'm home. Well, I just had to grit my teeth and force myself to get my shoes back on. Oh, it was painful. It was worse than before. But I limped along and eventually made it back to my truck and made it home. I took a bath and it was the most refreshing bath I ever took in my life!

D: Yeah! You probably didn't want to get out—your poor feet.

M: So that was my introduction to being a sheep business all on my own. But I still wanted to be a sheep man. I enjoyed being a sheep man.

D: So did the other guy stay up there all summer and herd the sheep?

M: Yes. All I had to do was go back in the fall and separate them and trail them home.

D: Did you ever find your horse?

M: Yes. When I got home. It had gotten lodged in somebody's pasture Rock Flat up by the rest area. It still had its halter on.

D: I have had heard of Rock Canyon; it's right by Bruce Funk's place, isn't it?

M: Yeah, to get there you go right by Bruce's place and up that road.

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Okay, what should we go to next?

I guess the next episode is when I went down under the ledge.

D: You told me a little bit about when you went down under the ledge and were there for 30 days without talking to anyone.

M: Okay, so then it was after that experience that I decided to go back to BYU and find a wife. And then Katherine and I got married.. What would be the next major episode?

K: Right after we got married, would be buying the farm.

M: Okay. The whole farm that my grandfather had homesteaded—I always dreamed about buying the farm. Right after my mission, I approached my mother about buying the farm, and she told me no--that she wanted to pass the farm to my brother Thomas. He was born with dyslexia. He had problems in school. He was an excellent mechanic, but he had trouble reading. So my mother thought that because of his disability, he should be the one to get the farm. So I was resigned to that, but then Thomas married a girl from California and so he ended up down in California working for a railroad and decided that he didn't want to come back and be a farmer. So my mother finally decided that I could buy it. I entered into a contract with the rest of the family--my other brothers and sisters to buy the farm, and also the land on East Mountain. I assume you know where East Mountain is.

D: Yes, and I know where Menco's land and Lavar Jensens land is. (They bought it from Montell.)

M: Okay. Have you been up there?

D: Yes.

M: Oh, well good. That makes it easier to explain where it is.

My father and his brother Hyrum had purchased a bunch of private land that north of where Menco's and Jensen's land is. My dad ended up with 1600 acres that was passed on when he died. Mother was to get half, and the children would get the other half, or 1/12 of the 1600 acres. Menco's land and Lavar Jensens' land was the 300 acre tract, and I had bought it separately from Les Crawford in Ferron. So that piece of land was not part of my family's land.

D: Now how did you afford to buy that land when you were first married?

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K: It was used for grazing. . .

M: I took out a loan from the FHA to buy it. Now I don't know if the dollar figures would be significant to you, but it is to me because it shows the trend of inflation. When my dad bought the land, it was in 1924, he paid \$1.20 an acre. When I came along and was interested in it, it was selling for \$4.00 to 5.00 an acre. By the way, did Ray Wareham talk about the land he owned on East Mountain?

D: I'm not sure. I didn't interview him; I had one of my helpers interview him.

M: Okay. He owned the land on East Mountain that my uncle had, and he paid \$4.00 an acre and turned around and sold it for \$5.00 an acre. So then by the time I came along wanting to buy this Les Crawford property, I bought it for \$15.00 an acre and got all the mineral rights. And then a year or two after that, my brothers and sisters decided they would sell me their part. I told them I paid Les Crawford \$15.00 an acre, so I could pay you \$15.00 but I would have your mineral rights. Well they decided they wanted to keep the mineral rights, so we had to decide what would be fair without the mineral rights. So we settled on \$10.00 an acre. I don't know if that was fair or not, but that's what we decided on.

D: So how much property did you end up with up there?

M: I owned the 1600 and the 300, so I owned 1900 acres.

D: And was it range land?

M: It all looks like Menco's property and where Lavar's cabin is.

D: That is beautiful!

M: It's all like that. It is beautiful.

D: So then did you take your sheep up there?

M: Oh boy, that is another story. (laugh)

My dad bought that property up there because it was sheep land in 1924, but by the time I bought it, they had changed it to a cow allotment, and they wouldn't let people run sheep up there. Well, we could run sheep on private land, but there weren't any fences. A sheep man could run in a certain area, because he's there—stays with the sheep. Cow men just let their cows go. You know that. So sheep and cattle can't run in the same

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area. If sheep have to stay in a designated area on private range, but cattle run everywhere, and if they trespass on private ground because there is no fence, then what are you going to do? I thought I could force the issue and make the cow men help me build a fence. They could pay half and I would pay half. But the cowmen didn't want to build a fence on Forest Service land. They didn't own the property. Now if it had been down here in the valley, if they was land owners here and I was land owner there, then we'd both put up half the money and we'd build a fence. But up there they said, "No we don't want to build a fence on Forest land." Well the Forest Service didn't want to put up money to build a fence. I even tried to say, "Look, you buy the supplies, I'll put up the fence." The Forest Service wouldn't do it. So I had my sheep up there, and this is after Kathryn and I had just got married. I was trying to force the Forest Service and cowmen to build a fence. She'd never run into a bull like this.

K: I think I had one little baby by this time. Valerie was a baby.

M: Well the cowmen I was dealing with was Byron Johansen, that was Kirk Johansen's father, and Kirk was still just in highschool. And Wayne Willberg and his father Warren.

D: And he's my cousin—Warren was my uncle, and he was bull headed, to say the least. (laugh)

M: And these were the key players.

D: Wow. You really took on some hard headed cattlemen.

M: I did! Yeah. So they put their cows up there and I was up there with my sheep, and I rode over to Byron's camp and said, "You'd better keep those cows off my land." He tried to be nice, but he said, "You know that's impossible. I'll do what I can."

So I said I'm going to build a corral and whatever cattle come onto my land, I'll lock them up. So I built a corral. Each day, I'd round up the cows that were on my land and lock them up in this corral, and then I came to town and notified the sheriff. His name was Bert Leamaster. He was the sheriff. So he notified the Forest Service, and he notified the permittees that I had their cattle locked up in my corral, and the day was set for them to come with him and the Forest Service. Well they all arrived. Here were two Forest Service, the sheriff and the cattlemen on this side and here on the other side was this snot nosed kid. (laugh) We argued and argued and argued, and then this Leamaster, he pulled a fast one on me. He said, "You are unlawful to locking up these cows unless you have a disinterested party witness that these cows were grazing on your land. I said, "Well what about you people. Why can't you witness that they are on my land." He said that it had to be a disinterested party. So I said I'd go get someone to be a witness. He

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asked when I locked them up. And I said told them, and he said they couldn't be locked up longer than 24 hours. So I had a bout three hours, and I drove as fast as I dared, and I got down here to farm land and spotted Jack Curtis in his farm and so I hurried over and told him my dilemma. I asked him to come and be my witness, and he didn't want to get into the middle of anything that dealt with the Wilbergs. (laugh)

So he wouldn't go with me. So then I saw another fellow. He was from Price, and he was driving up to Joe's Valley, and he said he'd go with me.

Now I can't remember what they pulled on me next, but I finally just decided to give up on that one. I brought my sheep home.

K: The sheriff came to see me, and tried to get me to talk some sense into him.

D: What did you say?

K: Well, I was very inexperienced, but I help my own and told him that it was his decision; he's working on it, and I was with him.

M: So I put cows up there with the rest of them.

D: How did you and Wayne ever get to be friends? Because I know he worked on the pageant with you.

M: Yeah. Here's another little side story; after I decided to pull my sheep off and put cattle up there. I went to Wayne and apologized to him.

D: Oh, aren't you sweet?

M: He was still hot under the collar and he took his fist and put it right there in front of my face, and he said, "If you ever pull another trick like that, I'll scatter your head all over that mountain."

K: He said that to you when you apologized?

D: It sounds like Uncle Warren. I don't know Wayne that well, but I know the stories of Warren were something else. And Carl Wilberg, for that matter, I've read newspaper articles about him and his temper.

M: Well, I don't hold a grudge, and this was in the 60s, and so by 1978 when we started the pageant, it had all blown over, and I became good friends with Wayne.

K: He was an actor in the pageant that first year.

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D: He told me that he had built one of the dugouts up there. They eventually got active, didn't they?

M: Yeah. Well, I stopped trying to herd sheep up on East Mountain and just run cattle.. Here's a part of the story I need to explain. I would not do that today, because friendship is more important. But back then, I was just a young, ambitious fellow that wanted to get into the sheep business. Byron and Wayne were both older than me. They were not my contemporaries, and they were just standing in the way of accomplishing my dream. But now I would not do that type of thing.

D: Well that is very astute of you to realize the problem and why you felt like that.

K: So then you got the opportunity to buy back the sheep.

M: When Mother and the family sold the other part of the sheep and permit. The other permit was on what we call Clay Bench. Let's see now if you're familiar with the road that goes from here to Ephraim up the switchbacks, and at the top of the switchbacks, there's a road that turns to Grassy Lake, then it goes on over to Woods Creek and the Bear Canyon, Black Canyon, and goes on to the permit on Clay Bench. It was a perfect sheep allotment, and these two fellows from Ephraim purchased it: Sherman and Odell Mortensen. They were brothers. They bought it from my family, and then years passed, and Odell Mortensen died and his widow put his half of the permit up for sale, along with land over in Ephraim and all the holdings that went with it, and the sheep. So I wanted to get ahold of that. It was going to be sold, and it was a sale that was going to be handled by the judge. It wasn't a sheriff's sale, or an estate sale that would have been handled by an auctioneer. It was going to be sold by a judge in a courtroom. So I had an idea about how much money it would cost for that whole set up, and I had gone to the FHA to see if I could borrow the money and I got the assurance that I could borrow that much money. So on the day of the sale, I went and sat in the courtroom. The judge sat there all stern, and here was I, a little country boy, but I was determined to bid on that sheep operation.

K: And the guys from over there that were interested in it were all veterans.

M: Yeah. There were six of them from San Pete County that wanted Odell Mortensen's set up. Three of them had grouped together and the other three had grouped together. And the reason they did this is that this man wanted the sheep, this man wanted the farm, this man wanted a piece of the property. So they were all going to join and buy it and each one would take their part. So there were these three they had that set up, and then the

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three over here and they had the same deal.

K: And then there was you.

M: There was me—to bid against those guys. They were all veteran sheep men with lots of experience and lots of backing. . . So here we were just starting bidding. It went up. . . I don't remember where it started. It got up to \$60,000 and then \$65,000, and one of the groups dropped out. So then I was bidding against the other group. Then I started raising it only a thousand dollars at a whack. It went back and forth 66, 67, 68, 69, 70 and then I bid 71,000, and there was no bid from the other group. He called a second time, and there was not a bid. Then I raised my hand and said, "I just want to make sure that there's no slip up—that I'm the last one to bid, and it's \$71,000." He said, "Yes, you have the bid. Is there another bid?" And then he said it was sold for \$71,000. You have to understand back then \$71,000 was a humongous bid. I was so determined to buy those sheep and that permit.

K: That was his family's sheep and permit, and he hadn't been in a position to buy them all when they were selling.

D: So they were worth a lot to you.

M: They were. And it was fortunate that these other guys were bidding on the real value of the property and the sheep permit. I was bidding on the sentimental value. So they had the business sense to know when the bidding got too high. And it's a good thing they did. If they were bidding for sentimental and I was bidding for sentimental, who knows how high it would have gone. (laugh)

So I ended up getting the permit and the sheep. One portion of the land I sold to another fellow, so that helped.

K: He made a nice profit. But getting Odell's sheep made you partners with Sherm. I'm getting around to you going back for your master's degree.

M: Well I got in and had to run with Sherman Mortensen, and at first he was just as nice as he could be—congenial and an excellent personality, but after a year or two, he became the adversary. He'd skin me out of something if he could.

K: He'd say that hay that was stacked on Odell's farm was actually his, and he had to get it out of there. Things like that.

M: There was a granary on the farm full of corn when I bought it, and then he said "That's my corn, and so he went up and loaded it up."



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D: So what did you do about him?

M: There was an actual series of things like this until I was at loggerheads with each other, and it got so bad that I couldn't sleep at night. So I finally decided to lease my sheep to some other fellows that I knew and lease my sheep and get away from it for a while. So that's when I took Kathryn and we went back to BYU so I could work on my master's degree.

D: Good idea.

K: We had three little kids by then.

M: I didn't need a Masters Degree for anything. I just needed to get away from the sheep business. But maybe I did need a masters degree, because when you work on a masters degree, you have to learn how to do research. A masters degree is different than a bachelors degree. You have to dig in depth to all of these books, and the reason I needed to learn how to research was for family history.

D: And for the county history.

M: And county history. Although I didn't know it at the time, that was what I was going for.

D: So how did you talk her into going with you back to school? What was the advantage of getting a masters degree?

M: There was no advantage.

K: Getting us away from Sherm and his wife and the way they were treating us.

And he had said for some time, "We ought to go back to Provo and get a masters degree." And I thought it was just a pipe dream, that would probably never happen, but then he got serious!

D: Where did you live up there.

K: We bought a mobile home up there in a place called The Lamplighter.

D: How did you live? Did you have enough money saved?

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M: I worked at part time jobs.

K: He was resourceful. He could always keep money coming in, even when he was in school.

D: So what did you do for your thesis?

M: Oh the title I put here is, "Investigation of the Feeding Juniper To Steers."  
Do you know what Juniper is?

D: Yeah.

M: They're Cedar trees—they are really Juniper. So I would go out and harvest by hand, leaves and mix a portion of it with grain, or I'd grind it up and mix it with grain, and decide how much I could force steers to eat this juniper. It has plenty of nutrition and carbohydrates, but it is so bitter that cows don't like it. Animals will eat juniper in the winter time when they are starv'ing, but they won't fatten up on it. So I was trying to see if we could use juniper as a fattening feed for steers.

This was suggested to me by my professor. He said here's a subject that hasn't been researched, take it.

D: Perfect because there is so much Juniper around here.

M: Yeah, if you could figure out how to harvest it and make feed out of it, it would be a profitable thing. I never could figure it out and I don't think anybody else has.

K: But his research was very interesting.

M: But another thing here is that I learned to write by doing a research thesis. And that gave me the preparation to write history and the pageant.

D: So how many years were you gone?

M: Five years.

D: Five years? Wow!

K: It didn't take all that time to get the masters degree, but that was the sheep lease was for five years.

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M: We just decided to take 5 years off, with the exception that I was still commuting down here to run my farm and cows and putting them up on East Mountain. So I was going to school, running home on weekends to take care of the farm and cows.

D: Did you like Provo?

K: Yes, very much. We loved Provo. That is where we met and going back there was really fun. We made a lot of life long friends up there. We could have stayed there forever, except the farm was calling us back here.

D: When did you move back here?

M: 1975. Kathryn mentioned that we had purchased a mobile home, and that was in the Lamplighter. Actually we sold that, for a time we were qualified to live in graduate student housing, and that housing was dirt cheap for graduate students.

K: \$60.00 a month. They were big wonderful farm homes out on the BYU farm. They've been torn down now, but they were wonderful homes!

M: Big, spacious, lots of bedrooms—they were these old homes that the Church had purchased to expand BYU. So then we lived in those until I graduated and we didn't qualify for that housing. We bought another mobile home out in the Village Green Mobile Home Park, which is just off the freeway out in Orem. So then we decided we'd come back here, and I hired a trailer mover to move our mobile home down to here. It's the one sitting next door. I knew I wanted it to sit down on the ground, rather than be up higher like mobile homes are. I had excavated a trench to be a crawl space under the trailer, and then I had taken the three axles out from under the trailer, and put railroad ties across the crawl space and I was in the process of pouring cement to rest on these railroad ties. I was lying on my right side, like this, with my arm up here, working on boring under the hydraulic jacks, and they shifted, and the trailer came down on top of me.

D: Did anyone see you?

K: I was inside and a hanging light in the kitchen on the chain and it was just like this. Our piano was inside. See all of our furniture had come down in the mobile home. That piano is built in such a way that it doesn't have front legs. So when the boom happened, the piano went over onto the piano bench. And I had a baby at the time. It was Mark, and he was in the bedroom in the back, and he started crying. So when I heard the boom, I knew something was really wrong, but I didn't think he was under there. I didn't even

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think about that until the hired man came and told me I needed to come and help him. Montell was under the trailer!

D: How long were you trapped there?

M: An eternity. Let me just tell you a side note here. It happened on June the 5<sup>th</sup>, that was the anniversary date of when it just happened. It happened on June the 5<sup>th</sup>, 1975, so on June the 5<sup>th</sup> 2008, I wrote what had happened—a description of it. So I can give you a copy of it if you want to.

K: That was his description of what happened to him. He wasn't with me, so I'm giving you a description of what happened from where I was.

M: So anyway Kathryn and the hired man came around to the side of the trailer I was on, and if I had been down in the crawl space, I would have been okay, but I was on the bank side. The only thing that stopped the trailer was the railroad ties, and it squished me into a space about that wide—sideways.

D: Ah!! Every bone in your body broken?

M: It broke my pelvic bones in five places, and squeeze my chest and squished all the stuff in my stomach out of my stomach lit you'd squeeze a tube of tooth paste. My hand was up like this so I could push this face away from nose so I could breathe. This arm was up here so it squished my hand, so that this arm came out of the socket. And it ruptured my bladder.

K: We didn't know anything about that.

M: We didn't know anything at the time. So Kathryn came and the hired man came, and I said there is a handyman jack up there under the trailer. Get it and jack up the trailer. Kathryn said, "Should I call the ambulance?"

D: You said no!?

M: I said, "No, just lift up this trailer so I can crawl out of here." Well, as you know, mobile homes are not to built to be lifted on except for certain places where there is a brace. So Wally put the handyman jack just on the side and lifted it which just pushed the siding and the . . . but it did lift the trailer some, which took a lot of pressure off. While I was under there, I thought, "I wonder how much pain a person has to go through before they pass out." And then I thought of Joseph Smith when he was in jail, and he was at

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low point in his life, and he was told. . .”this experience shall be for they good . . . the Savior has suffered more than this.”

By lifting the trailer as much as he did, it made the left arm free, and the hydraulic jack was within reach, and so I pushed it above my head. My back was to the outside. I said, “Here take this and put this under a brace and then jack it up. He did and it lifted some more. By then some of the neighbors knew there was a problem, and so Berdell Lake came over, and he was a coal miner, so he had a lot of experience with this kind of thing. So they lifted it up—jacked it up as much as they could with the hydraulic jack. That lifted it some more, but then they ran out of room to do it, so Berdell said, “Let’s just dig the dirt away. I had tried to move, and still couldn’t move. Kathryn said, “Should I call the ambulance?” I said, “No, don’t call the ambulance. I just need to get this moved so I could crawl out.” Well then when they had lifted it as high as they could, I wiggled a little bit and then I felt the breaks, and then I said to Kathryn, “Call the ambulance.”

K: See we lost a lot of time because we didn’t have a phone hooked up yet. So we sent a neighbor girl off to where there was a phone and they could call the ambulance. But it just had to come from Castle Dale. Ruben Brasher and ? were on the ambulance and the ambulance was a new service in 1975.

M: So they came with their siren a-going and blinker lights. They always have to “Shwwshh.”

K: Make a big deal out of it.

M: They couldn’t just come quietly, they had to wake up the whole town so they’d know that Montell had an accident. (laugh—everybody)

Anyway they dug the dirt out from under me, and got a-hold of my clothing and pulled me out. I was on this side, and tried to roll onto my back, but it was too painful, so I said, “I’m going to stay right here.” So they had this stretcher that’s in two halves, and put that under there and finally got me fastened and loaded in the ambulance, and turned on the siren! So I told them they didn’t have to speed, we had plenty of time, “Turn that thing off!” So they turned it off. Dr. Greciak was the doctor in the old hospital, and he said I needed X-rays. He told me I had to turn on my back. I had to grit my teeth and turn on my back. The girl that wheeled me down told me I had get over on the x-ray table. I told her I couldn’t do that. I was all broken up. She was impatient and didn’t have any sympathy.

D: I bet I ran into the same person over there! Very rude and unprofessional.

M: Yeah, so she told me to slide over there—slide over! So I finally gritted my teeth and

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inched my way across, all this time my pelvic bone is broken in five places. Now surely they could think of a way to take x-rays without making you move like that.

D: Yeah, I broke my pelvic bone in three places, and I couldn't tell you how they did it, I was pretty out of it. I was injured in a car accident that killed my father. In those days they made me lie down for six weeks. Were you laid up for that long? Oh, never mind. You were broken in lots of places.

M: Oh, while I was still under the trailer, when I had enough movement, I could feel this arm was out of the socket, I put this hand up there, and slid it back into the socket.

D: Ahh. You did it yourself!

M: Oh, that was a relief when it slipped back into socket.

D: Were your ribs broken?

M: No, it didn't break my ribs, there must have been enough flexibility that they didn't break. But anyway, Dr. Greciack knew that there was something wrong – and there was all this urine that was now in my body cavity, and he said, "I can't take care of you in this hospital."

D: He knew his limits.

M: I didn't want to go to Provo.

D: I hope you went with lights and sirens! (laugh)

M: So they shipped me off to Provo in the middle of the night and they took me right into the operating room. I guess Dr. Grecik had called ahead and told them what was coming.

K: He had two teams of doctors working on him.

M: So I remember in the operation room, we were getting ready for this operation. I said, "Shouldn't we have prayer before we start this operation?" He said, "That's a good idea. You pray." So I started, but then I couldn't formulate words. They had given me a shot, but I didn't know it, but the doctor knew what he was doing. If I said the prayer, he would know exactly when I was out. When I woke up I was in the recovery room. My sister who lived in Provo at the time, she was there to greet me when I woke up.

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K: I had five kids by then. Valerie was 10 years and Mark was 10 months old and we had three in between them. So I had to get the kids all farmed out.

D: I was going to ask you where you were at this time and what were you having to do to get ready to go up.

K: I left them at first, until we found out that he was going to be in the hospital for sometime, and there were some people offered us a mobile home that was still in that park, that we had left.

M: Some people that were in the ward had taken leave during the summer, and so their mobile home was just going to sit there, so they let us. . .

K: So eventually I took the kids up there, but at this time to get up there for his surgery, I had just farmed them out to various places and gone up there, and then I had to come down here and gather them all together and get their stuff and go up there for the summer. It was quite an ordeal. I can remember somebody said, "Oh my goodness, you are going to have so much growth through all of this." I thought, I didn't want to grow! But we were so fortunate that it didn't come right down on his heart and crush his heart, or his head. He didn't have spinal column injury or hip injury—nothing on his leg.

D: He could have been dead.

M: In fact just the other day Kathryn saw, on the news, a fellow who was lowering a mobile home and it crushed and killed him.

K: He was from Duschene, but working in Provo County, and he was 48.

M: So anyway, I was really felt blessed that my life was preserved. If that trailer had come down even an inch further. . . .

So anyway there I was in the hospital. All they did was put a sling on the bed, and fasten it up there. They didn't put me in a cast, just in this sling. I couldn't roll over anyway, so all I did was to lay on my back.

K: He did have a therapist come in and exercise his legs. His legs were about that big. I thought, "His dancing days are over."

M: Prior to this, I'd go out and jog two or three miles every day. That was part of my high school days. I was the distance runner. So I enjoyed jogging. Everyday I'd jog. After laying in this bed and not using my legs for about 25 days, they came in and said it was

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time to go to therapy. A male nurse brought this gurney about the size of a bed. He wheeled me down the hall to therapy. There was a walkway that was about 12 feet long. He said, "I just want you to walk to the end of that walkway. When I stood up and first put weight on my legs, I had a feeling that there were two hundred pound bags of feet pushing down on each shoulder. It was the weirdest feeling—all this weight pushing me down. I didn't have any strength in my legs, so then I started shuffling along, holding as much weight as I could with my arms on the handrails. Before I got to the end, I could feel my face had turned white and I was sweating and started to get dizzy. I said, "you'd better get me back on that gurney before I pass out." So he turned me around, and I just had to grit my teeth to make it back to the gurney.

D: So were you flat on your back, or could you sit up?

M: I could raise the hospital bed and sit up.

K: Didn't they have that mechanism that you could grab and pull yourself up?

M: Yeah, I could grab it and pull myself up.

K: So he could keep his upper body strong.

D: I didn't have to stay in the hospital. I had a hospital bed at home, and I had some physical therapy come to the house, but I could stand up on one leg for a minute to get into a wheel chair and to the bathroom. I didn't have to learn to walk again. That sounds awful.

M: Yeah. It was.

K: And you know how they are in therapy. They are so firm with you. . .

M: So after that, each day I would turn and get out of bed and just stand there, and each day I would do some exercises on my own. So I'd go down to therapy and make the distance on the walk way without passing out. I think it was about the 30<sup>th</sup> day that the doctor let me go home from the hospital.

K: We still needed a place for him to be so he could get back to therapy. So we had these friends in the ward that had a big home, and they were empty nesters. They said, "Let's get you a hospital bed." They put it right in the living room. "I'll cook for you." The nice little lady said. And it was just ideal because it was right next to the mobile home park, so the kids could get over there and see him and talk to them and have exchanges with him.



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M: Anyway midway through the summer again, I got so I could get out and walk two or three blocks around the neighborhood. And then we felt like we could come home again.

K: The accident was on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June and we came home on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August.

M: The interesting fact is that I gained full strength back, so that I did that walk from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters, pulling a handcart which was 300 miles. And then I did the walk from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake pulling a handcart.

D: I didn't know you did a handcart! I thought you did a covered wagon! You walked all that way pulling a handcart! And you beat everybody, right? By quite a ways?!

M: We walked and pulled a handcart every step of the way from Nauvoo to Salt Lake.

K: He and Mark and Jamell. LeeAnn was driving their support vehicle.

I had had surgery, so I couldn't go with them. I met them in Wyoming the second year and drove their vehicle for a time until they got to Salt Lake.

D: You did it twice?

M: You see in 1996, we went from Nauvoo to Council Bluffs Iowa. That was the 300 miles. And then the next year we went from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake.

D: See I need to hear all about this. How was it?

M: K: It was wonderful.

Well, see I did learn how to walk again!

Let's go back instead of jumping ahead. We went back to Castle Dale.

D: Did you still have Sherman to deal with?

M: Well, by this time, Sherman was sort of getting out of the picture, so for only one or two years, after I got my sheep back, he had mellowed quite a bit. He had started turning things over to his family—his sons, and so mainly I was working with his sons. And shortly after, he died.

D: And were you making some money on your leased sheep?

M: Yeah, they were paying us a lease fee, so that helped with living expenses up there.

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K: It took a couple of years for him to be fully operational though, after this accident. There was a time after he took the sheep back where he was still on crutches and herd the sheep. See this picture up here. He's been on that road herding sheep on crutches. That's not me, but it could be.

D: So what about your trailer? Did anybody fix your trailer while you were gone?

M: Yeah. Do you know Don Jorgensen? He and I have always been good buddies, and so he came up and did the rest of the repair work on the mobile home. He hooked up the electricity and water line.

D: If you were gone in '70 and came back in '75, did you see a lot of changes when you came back?

K: Yes, the power plant was built while we were gone. The mobile home park up here was new. And right away we got called into ward leadership. I was called into the Relief Society Presidency and had to go meet all the new people in the new mobile home park. He got into the bishopric. Probably the next thing you want to tell about is the bishopric.

M: Lets see, who was the first bishop?

K: Tom Johnson.

M: Well, you probably don't know Tom Johnson, but he lives up here and Chuck Halen was second counselor. And when you have bishopric meetings, there is so much time that you sit and wait. If the bishop is interviewing or anyway, I found myself sitting and waiting, and I thought, "This is a waste of time. I've got to do something." And so that's when I got serious about writing in a journal. Let me go and get one.

K: He didn't want to write in a bound journal. That was too formal for him. If he made a mistake, he wanted to just rip it out and start over.

M: Kathleen was telling you about my aversion to a journal. I was intimidated by the nice clean white sheets of a journal. But these spiral notebooks didn't intimidate me, and I started keeping notes of meetings and what was said, and at times when I'd sit an wait, I'd write down experiences since the last meeting. So that is what I do now.

K: Since 1976.

D: Wow. Do you know how valuable they are? You are going to want to leave those with

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the archives, eventually. Your kids will scatter them and one will take one. . . (laugh). They'll always be perfectly preserved in the archives.

M: I know about 10 years ago, I took a couple of boxes up to family history, and they photo copied them.

D: We can do that too.

K: Do you know that was in 1992?

M: So you have the capacity to copy them and give back the originals?

D: Yes. That is what we do with pictures. You know, nobody wants to part with their pictures, so we just borrow them and scan them, and give them back because they are very valuable to the history of the community.

M: This says Wednesday June 4, 2008. The price of gas is now \$4.04 here in Castle Dale. About once a week the gas stations raise the price a few cents. . . Machines called and said it would cost about \$200 to fix the hydraulic ram. I told her to call and tell them to go ahead. I was hoping to get it done for \$100, but that is par for the course for me. We got a letter from the IRS telling us that we will get a check from the government. They are calling it a stimulus check. Every person in the country will receive a check from \$600 to \$1200. I will take \$200 from that and pay for the repair.

I was tending the water on . . . wheat planting when a hailstorm swooped down off from East Mountain. I was caught by surprise and had to run for my car, even so I was soaked. It was a hard storm. The hailstones stung my ear as they hit. When I got home, the power was off. The storm had knocked out a transformer somewhere, so I could not do anything. We have become dependent on electrical power.

D: Isn't that the truth? You write really well, and good things to write down!  
What time of day do you usually write?

K: He writes first thing in the morning and in the evening when its too dark to be tending water.

M: After a hard day of work, I'll still sit down and write.

D: Do you ever watch television?

M: Occasionally. We're not big television watchers. We do like some programs.

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K: We love watching Dancing with the Stars. That's our kind of thing.

D: So you got back into the sheep business and you still had your cattle business, and you got back into the full swing of it all. Do you still do that?

M: I decided to get out of the sheep business, but I still have cattle. And the reason for the decision to quit the sheep business—several factors: I was always having to lock horns with the Forest Service people because of all the rules and regulations they impose on people that run livestock. And then the coyotes, and the bear, cougars—you can't kill them, until they come in and kill sheep, and then you have to have proof that they'd been killed, and then you could call a government trapper and he'll come and try to get the animal, but they won't compensate you for what you've lost, so that was always a real pain.

D: Do you have a lot of damage from the bear and the coyote?

M: Oh yeah. You always lose lots of lambs. This one experience—I had a cougar that came into my herd one night and the next morning when I got up, there were 12 dead lambs, and they were 60 and 70 lb. lambs. Just getting ready for the market and each of them had two fang marks here on the forehead. So the cougar had just grabbed them like that, and killed them, dropped them and went to the next one. There were 12 of them in the quaking aspens just in that one area.

Oh and then two other factors: It got so you couldn't hire men to herd sheep because they could make more money going on welfare or getting unemployment, so you couldn't hire people to herd sheep. And the other factor was the price of wool. You can't sell wool and earn enough money to pay the cost to shear the sheep. So having wool on sheep is now a liability. So after all these factors, I decided to get out and just stick with cattle.

D: So is that how you made your living all along is farming and ranching?

M: Yeah. I had worked—you know during the summer time I had worked on construction, like road construction that were here in Emery County where I could work here and do my farm work. Like I worked on Joe's Valley Reservoir when it was being built. When they put the natural gas line from Price to Ferron. That was the very first natural gas that was put in, and I operated a backhoe on that project. I made good money on that one, and thoroughly enjoyed it. I learned how to really run a backhoe.

D: What year was that?

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K: '65. If it's a year I had a baby, I can always remember it.

M: And then I took a contract to build 2 ½ miles of fence for the Forest Service up on Gentry Mountain. I did it on a contract basis and got the bid. I had to go up there and take my tractor, my post hole digger, post pounder. I didn't want to hire anybody to help me, so I took my bedroll and grub box and just went up and camped up on Gentry Mountain for . . . I don't know two or three weeks.

K: You need to tell her that was the summer before we got married.

M: Anyway I made big money on that job because I had a good contract and did all the work alone, and being up there by myself, there was nothing else to do, I might as well work until the sun went down.

D: Its beautiful up there!

M: It is. I made big profit, and that is the money we got married on. I should have added another little part in that story. While I was at BYU I was having a foot race with my roommate from a house where we had been visiting back to our apartment. We had to come down this street and turn a corner down this street. We were just two college kids goofing off. As we turned the corner, my feet slipped out from under me and I put this hand down to catch my weight and I sprained my wrist. I actually broke it.

D: (laugh) Yeah. Don't call the doctor.

M: I soaked it in cold water and then warm water to make it feel better. Pretty soon the pain eased off, so I just went on with life. Until a month or two and then I had another friend up there whose father was a doctor. He took me out to his place and he x-rayed my wrist and he said there's a bone right there that's broken, but since its been two months, it probably won't do any good to put it in a cast, but I'll do it anyway. So he put it in a cast just past my wrist. So I went through the school year and finished and went to BYU clinic and they x-rayed it, and they said it still wasn't healed up, but the cast wasn't helping any, so they took the cast off.

So I came home for summer and that's when I got this job on Gentry building fence.

D: With a broken wrist. (laugh) You don't do anything the easy way. You've got to have some kind of handicap to make it more of a challenge.

M: So I built that fence with a broken wrist. At the end of the day my wrist would just

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throb. But I thought it would heal up. It didn't ever heal up, so I suppose it is still broken, but the ends are rounded off, so I can't bend my wrist as far as the other one, but it doesn't hurt.

M: If you want you can just scan through this (journal).

D: This is really great! And your handwriting is beautiful

M: Thankyou.

D: I would love to borrow a group of them and copy them and then get them back to you and take some more.

M: Okay. We'll have to scan them before and make sure what's in there is suitable.

D: I'm sure it's suitable. It's history.

M: I probably should tell you one experience that happened. During the time that Utah Power and Light Company sent representatives here to acquire the water for the power plants, before they ever made any commitments to build the power plants here, they sent representatives into the area to talk to the irrigation company people about the prospects of buying enough water for the power plants.

Well, it occurred to me, that we should not sell our water to them. We should tell them, "Yes we will be happy to have you come, and we will lease our water to you. We will guarantee to supply you enough water to run these power plants on a lease basis, but we will not sell our water." So I became the advocate for that principle. Well the first few meetings we had with the power company people, they said, "Okay, it sounds like we can work a deal like that." But as the thing evolved, the power company said, that they wouldn't lease our water, but they would buy our shares. Well I was still campaigning among the farmers—"Don't yield. Don't give in; it's just a bluff. Don't yield." Until finally it got down to the hard negotiating and the UP&L representative said to Eugene Johansen who was president of the company at the time, he said, "We have enough water up in Kemmerer, Wyoming that we can build another power plant up there if you people won't sell your water." So he backed away from supporting me in my quest and took that position, "We've got to sell our shares." He also got a call from the Governor. I don't remember who the governor was. It might have been Rampton.

K: Or Matheson.

M: It was in the 60s. The governor said, "Drop this idea of leasing water. We can't afford to lose the power plant from Utah and go to Wyoming. We've got to have that power

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plant.”

D: And did the county want the power plants to come in?

K: Oh yes, they were saying we have to sacrifice our water to bring industry in.

M: Oh yeah. They were talking this great sacrifice. “We will sacrifice. We need to do this sacrifice for the sake of our children. We need to bring more industry into this area, and we’ve got to have that power plant. Well after this UP & L man said “We don’t need your water. We have enough water in Kemmerer.” I figured this was just a bluff. But I didn’t have any proof. So I decided to go Cheyenne which was the state capitol, and I knew in the State Capitol they would have the records.

D: You are so smart!

M: So I planned my trip so I would arrive in Cheyenne at 8:00 a.m. I had Kathryn make me a big bag of sandwiches and apples. I determined how many hour drive it would be, and I left in the middle of the night, and I drove through the night so I would be there at 8 a.m. I ate sandwiches and apples to stay awake.

I went to the State Engineer’s office and told him what I wanted and what was going on in Emery County. I told him I want to know if what he said was true: If UP&L had the water. So he took me by the hand and helped me. . . this was unusual. I just walked in and the State Engineer dropped whatever else he had and helped me do the research. Well, the bottom line was we found that they didn’t have the water. Now, there was water available from the Green River and they could file on additional water out of the Green River, but they would have to build about a 20 mile pipeline from Green River to Kemmerer Wyoming before they could get the water over there! So they could say that they had the water and not be telling a bald faced lie, but that was not the whole story. They didn’t have water waiting. They had to do lots of stuff in order to get water to build a power plant. So I came home with all this information and met with Eugene. He told me “I see you point, but it’s too late. It’s too far down the road. The power company’s coming in and the people are selling their water. And even though you’re right, we’ve got to go with selling the water to the power company.” Well I said, “You might have to, but I don’t.” Because of my campaign for lease and not give into them, everybody interpreted that as I’m opposed to progress. I was really black balled in the county because of my campaign for lease and not give into it.

D: Oh.

M: Let’s see, there was one fellow, five years older than me. He was a young farmer here

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in Castle Dale. Well, I might as well tell you who it is. It is Monroe Magnuson.

D: Oh! Yeah!

M: You probably didn't know him, but you know Ina Lee.

D: Yes, and I know Jill.

M: Jill? Yeah. Okay. So anyway. . . see Monroe and I are first cousins. His mother and mine were sisters. He and his family lived right up the block here, and so since he was five years older than me, he would offer to come to work for my dad, doing chores and things, and so he was more like a big brother. And so through the years we became very close friends. And I'd go help him this way and that way. He had a little farm up on the bench and I'd help him haul hay. And after he married Ina Lee, he had a farm, and I got married had a little farm, and we would help each other and trade equipment and help each other brand calves.

And the first year I went to college, I had a pickup and he had a sedan, and so we traded vehicles so he used my truck and I took his sedan. So that shows what kind of relationship we had.

D: And what a nice guy he was.

M: And what a nice guy he was. So then when this issue of the water surfaced. He took the position to sell our shares, and I took the position to hold out for lease, and so we were at loggerheads. And you could feel the tension if we both ended up at the same place.

K: And in the meetings.

M: And these irrigation meetings it would be intense feelings. And then in the fall of the year.

K: 1970 We went to Provo to go to school. We went in late August and in October Monroe had his accident.

M: Okay he ran cattle up on Horn Mountain and they bring their cattle down Rock Canyon and they had a corral for when they'd bring them off the mountain. Well the men were out there to the cattle corral and Monroe and his son Brent, which is Monroe Jr. He was only four years old at the time, was on the back of the horse, and they went over the little hill to gather more cows and they didn't come back, until finally the men realized that something must be wrong, so they rode over there and saw Monroe's horse standing



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MONTELL SELBY

there. Monroe was lying in a pile of rocks and Brent, who was four years old, was standing there crying. Well, no one really knows what happened, but that was the situation they found. Obviously Monroe has gone off of the horse, bucked off or something and hit his head on the rock and is knocked unconscious. They took him up to Salt Lake to the hospital. He was in a coma and so they put him in a care center. He was in the coma for nine months! So here I am having these conflicting feelings: Here's my good friend, my cousin, my bosom buddy lying in this care center unconscious, and what am I going to do about it. Well I stewed and fussed and fretted over the situation month after month, thinking, "He'll get better and I'll make things right." And the months passed and I would think, "Well I haven't really done anything bad to him. I haven't said anything bad about him or cross words or bad-mouthed him. I haven't done anything to apologize for." Except that I knew there were these ill feelings. Well I finally said, "I've got to go see him." Of course I knew he was in a coma. I finally went to Salt Lake and to the Care Center where he was, and it was in Murray. I walked in the door, and I got cold feet. I just felt intimidated--how do you talk to someone who's in a coma? They can't respond to you? I thought, "I've come this far; I've made this much attempt; this is good enough; I'll turn and leave." Then I thought, "No you can't do that. You've got to go through with this." So I asked the receptionist which room he was in, and she told me. I walked down the hallway, I got to the door, and I still had this same feeling—"you've come far enough; you've done your part; you can leave." "No you can't." So I stepped into the room, and no one else was there, and I was relieved that no one else was there. He was lying in bed; he had tubes hooked up to him; I could see that he was in a coma. His hands were just laying there, and I walked over to him and picked up one of his hands, and said, "Monroe, it's me, Montell." Then I got choked up and said, "I just want to tell you that I'm sorry;" (teary voice) And I felt like he made an attempt to squeeze my hand, as if to say to me that he was sorry too. I stayed there for a few minutes and expressed my appreciation for him and all that he had done for me. (tears) And then I said, "I'm sorry. We'll make things right. I'll see you later." And it was only about two weeks after that that he passed away. So I am so thankful that I went in and talked to him before he died.

D: Oh, that is sad. I know it was hard for Ina Lee, she had to take care of the farm and go up every week to see him. Jill told me he was in a coma for nine months. She wasn't that old either.

K: That was hard. Things like that when everything is hanging in the balance.

D: So everyone went ahead and sold their water?

M: They all figured out how much they could do without.

I should mention too. Over the years after the honeymoon with Utah Power and

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MONTELL SEELY

Light was over. At first they were all sweet and nice, they would donate to this and that and were giving this and that.

K: They were like they were the savior to this area.

M: But that situation changed to where UP&L became mercenary, and when this relationship shifted, then different ones came to me and said, "Montell, we should have listened to you." Over the years, except Monroe who passed away. . . Oh, I should have mentioned that he was a member of the irrigation board, anyway all of the others came to me at different times and said, "We should have listened to you."

D: They would have had a little bit of control.

M: Yeah.

D: Didn't they get pretty crooked? I know they went to court and . . .

M: They really done dirt to the Huntington Clevealand Irrigation Company. You probably hear stories about them. They really gouged them.

K: So even over there, they've said, "Boy I wish that we had listened to you."

D: Yeah. They have made a big impact on the county.  
So when did you decide to do that pageant.

M: Along about 1977. The church had sent out information that we should create a ward activity committee and a stake activity committee, and I happened to be in the bishopric at the time. And the recommendation was that the 1<sup>st</sup> counselor would be over the ward activity committee, so we followed the direction and organized a committee and had a cultural art specialist and physical facility specialist and a chairman. A couple from California had moved into our ward. He had employment out to the plant as an electrician. His wife had a beautiful voice and had been a performer.

D: What were their names? Driggs, Ken and Carol Driggs. She had a beautiful soprano voice and had been in lots of performances and had directed ward productions, so we called her to be the cultural arts specialist. One day she met me in the foyer and said, "Brother Seely, I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing in my calling." And I said, "I don't either, but what this area needs is a pageant." Because we had been going to the Manti Pageant and every time I'd drive over the mountain, I'd think, "We need a pageant over here." So that's what I said to her, and she said, "If somebody will write the script,

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MONTELL SEELY

I'll direct it." So we got a little pageant committee together and tried to get somebody to write the script.

K: Professional people like school teachers.

M: I remember we talked to Eugene and Grace Johansen and Varylynn Peacock, and each one of these individuals turned us down with a reason they could not do it, like we're too busy, or that's out of my line, or I'm not interested. So we had a bishop meeting with Bishop Johnson and recorded our failure to find somebody to write the script. Bishop Johnson looked at me and said, "Well Brother Seely, it looks like your dream is going to die unless you write the script yourself."

D: Oh, good way to put it.

M: Well I was not a script writer. I didn't know how to do that sort of thing. Writing the script is different from writing historically. I didn't know the first thing about writing dialogue. But fortunately I had been to college and learned to write a thesis and how to do research. Looking back that was the best benefit for doing that thesis was learning how to write, so I could write the script for the pageant. I don't know if that's how the Lord designed it, or not.

D: I would suspect.

K: He knew the stories, and they knew he knew the stories, and he had me backing him up with grammar and things like that.

M: So I knew the story in my family where the baby is born on the way to Emery County. I knew that story, we'd talk about it at every family reunion. And in the little blue book there's the account of Joe and Tilda and their baby dying. And I knew the story of Newt and his wife Ellen and he came over and built the dugout and brought Ellen the next year, and pointed to the dugout and said, "This is your new home." And she sat on the wagon seat and started to cry and said, "Has it now come to this that I have to live underground?" And I knew the story about Orange Seely and his wife Hannah and how she had said, "Damn the man who would bring a woman to such a god forsaken country." So I the three families around those events. And I wanted a water fight because in Emery County men fought over water. And I wanted the story where they go to repair the dam, because down on Paradise Ranch, every time there was a flash flood, we'd have to go repair the dam. I had been nose to nose debating over water rights. I've never been in a fist fight, but I knew there was fighting over water, so I put in some scenes about that because it was going to be a historical pageant. Then Sister Driggs said, "This is all good

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MONTPELL SELLY

material, but there is no romance.”

D: I read in your book about that, “I don’t know how to write romance.”

M: Sister Driggs was persistent, when she wanted something, she got it! (laugh)

So I said, “Alright, I’ll try to write it.” And I tried to write the Hollywood version of two girls and one boy or two boys and one girls and nothing would gel. But then I read one sentence in the little blue book on Emery County. “John Roy Jensen left his sweetheart in Fountain Green and came here and filed on his homestead, and went back in the spring and got her. And that was the sentence that opened up my mind to receive the inspiration for the Abe and Neva scene.

D: Did you know Kathleen Truman when she was here?

M: Yes.

D: Well I mentioned to her that I had read in your book that you had to write some romance in it and it was something he had to do, and I said, “He must not be a very romantic guy and forced to write this romance scene. It must have been hard for him.” Kathleen said, “Well, he’s got to have some romance somewhere in him because he did a really good job with that!”

M: (laugh) Well, thank you. It was just the inspiration of the Lord helping me, not only with that scene but with all of the scenes.

D: Well, it’s a wonderful pageant. I think it is much better than Mantti’s.

M: We hear that a lot. (laugh)

Well it’s quarter to six and I’ve got another pageant meeting.

D: Well, we’ll have to make another appointment because I’ve got to hear about the trek across the country.

M: Let’s schedule for August after the pageant is over.

\*Montell died a week before our final interview appointment. He was killed during a reenactment of a pioneer trek from San Pete County to Emery County on August 12, 2008.

October 25, 2007

Dear Children:

Today, I've mailed [eighteen] letters to our grandchildren. They should arrive within the next few days. When, through the US Postal Service, you receive duplicate letters coming to your home, you'll recognize that I'm sending a letter to EACH of our grandchildren. I plan to send many letters to our grandchildren, and I want each one to have his own collection! That's why each one will receive a copy, *even though some of the children are not yet old enough to read*. I will appreciate it if you will get a 3-ring binder for each child (very inexpensive at DI—about \$1 each), so that they can keep track of their collection of letters.

These letters will include the stories that you were told in your youth, plus a lot more. I'm hoping that I can stick with this project, until I have written most of my life history.

As you know, I have an intense love for my ancestors—but I don't stop there; I also have an intense love for my posterity. I know that you have heard me explain the Malachi 4:5-6 scripture before, but bear with me while I repeat it. When it says, "turn the heart of the children to the fathers," that is speaking to me, saying, to turn my heart to my ancestors. When it says, "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," that is also speaking to me, saying to turn my heart, as a father, to my posterity. In other words, I as a child turn my heart to my ancestors. And I as a father turn my heart to my posterity.

Most of the time, when you hear the scripture referred to in a talk, the speaker will make it sound like we as children should turn our hearts to our deceased "fathers" and our deceased fathers should turn their hearts to us. I don't think that is the correct interpretation. I think the scripture is speaking to each of us while we are living—and that I as a child turn my heart to my ancestors and I as a father turn my heart to my posterity.

These letters will be just one way for me to turn my heart to my posterity.

Love, Dad

October 25, 2007

Dear **Ridge**,

I often have a yearning to convey to YOU, and all my posterity, a piece of information, such as an experience, or an article I've read, or a story from my childhood. I'll think to myself, "I'd like my grandchildren to know about that!" So I've decided to send letters to you.

I'll begin with a brief introductory statement. I'm Montell Seely, born February 5, 1934, to Karl Antone Seely and Cora Guymon Seely, in Castle Dale, Utah, population about 1000.

I attended the Castle Dale Elementary School through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and then I rode the bus to Ferron for 4 years of high school at South Emery High. (There was no Junior High or middle school, plus--I did not go to Kindergarten or pre-school.)

After high school I attended BYU in Provo one year (1952-3); then 2 quarters at Utah State in Logan (1953-4). Then I went on a mission to the Central Atlantic States (North Carolina and Virginia-1954-6).

After my mission I came home and began buying my own farm operation (sheep, cattle, and farm land). Then, at age 27 (1961) I went back to BYU to find a wife. It took awhile, but in January 1963 I met Kathryn Pincock, and after an 8-month courtship, we were married in the Idaho Falls Temple August 27, 1963. Right after our marriage we both went back to BYU to finish our BS degrees; we graduated in 1965, with my degree in Animal Science and Kathryn's in English.

We made our home here in Castle Dale, where we owned our own house (the Talboe house). This has always been our home base, but we have had short stints elsewhere.

Seven children were born to us: Valerie, 1965; Karla, 1967; Fawn, 1969; LeAnne, 1971; Mark, 1974; Monette, 1978; and Janell, 1981.

In addition to raising our children, my goal was to be a farmer--just a plain and simple farmer. Included with the farm I had a herd of sheep and a small herd of cattle. At the present time I am 73 years old, and Kathryn is 66. We are both in good shape, "for the shape we're in." I mean, we have good health considering our age. I'm still farming full time, and Kathryn is still "Englishing" full

time. [She works at the computer-- typing, writing, editing, and compiling.] We currently have 18 grandchildren--9 boys and 9 girls; here's a list of their names and years of birth:

Brandon James, 1990  
KariEile Thalman, 1990  
Emilie James, 1992  
Koty Miller, 1992  
Hunter Miller, 1994  
Edison Thalman, 1994  
Ryan James, 1995  
Audrey Thalman, 1997  
Cassidy Miller, 1997  
Hannah Seely, 1999  
**Ridge Miller, 2000**  
Jonathan Seely, 2000  
Peyton Thalman, 2001  
Matthew Seely, 2003  
Jannika Beagley, 2003  
Luke Seely, 2005  
Kirsten Beagley, 2005  
Brooke Miller, 2006

I'm going to send this letter, plus many future letters--to each one. I'm hoping your parents will help you put your letters into a 3-ring binder, so you will have this collection--and you will be able to read them in the future. In these letters I'll sometimes tell a story; sometimes write an essay; and now and again deliver a lecture.

As I said, I was born in Castle Dale--at home. The house is now gone (torn down in 1965, in the name of progress). But it was a tall, two-story frame house, built around 1900. (In 1903 it was operated as the **Barton Hotel**.) It had multiple bedrooms, which, at one time, had served as classrooms of the Emery Stake Academy. Originally, it did not have an indoor bathroom, but while my parents lived there, they hired Uncle Kofford, a family friend, to install a toilet and sink. Up until that time, we used the outhouse. I still have a mental picture (and "mental aroma") of the outhouse. It was located north of the house, on the path leading to the corral, next to the wood pile.

The house was heated with wood/coal burning stoves; a kitchen range in the kitchen; a fireplace in the living room; and a smaller stove in the master bedroom.

The address was 90 West Main Street, so it was near the center of town. Today (2007) the Emery Medical

Center parking lot is located where the house used to be; the Medical Center itself sits where our corral was. We moved out of that house in October, 1939, when I was 5 years old. That moving date is significant because it tells me how old I was when I had certain experiences while we lived in the **Barton house**.

Today I'll share some short stories with you, about my friend Bud Wimber. Bud was always a good friend, and I liked him very much. He lived through the block (in the brick house just north of the white frame Crystal Rosenberg home on the corner). A common fence separated our corrals.

Well, one day I walked around to Bud's front door and knocked. Birdie, his mother, came to the door. I asked if Bud could play. She said, "He isn't home," so I said okay--and left.

I need to explain right here that I was a live-wire, go-get-'em, rambunctious little boy. I was always dirty and unkempt from my play projects. Thinking back, I probably looked like a street urchin most of the time. Birdie always kept Bud clean, and neatly dressed. He never played in the dirt. He never got his hands dirty.

Anyway, after Birdie had told me Bud was not at home, I decided to cut through their yard and climb over the fence into our corral, rather than walk back around the block. As I was walking along the north side of their house, I looked through a basement window, and there was Bud playing a game or looking at a book, or something. I kept on going and thought to myself, "He was home alright; Birdie just didn't want him playing with me." As you read this, keep in mind that I was 5 years old. So now I ask you, "How would that make you feel?" Well, I'll tell you how it made me feel. **I felt sorry for Bud that he couldn't play with me.** The poor kid. He was the loser. That's right, I felt sorry for him, that his mother wouldn't let him play with me. I didn't feel hurt for myself--or offended. I suppose I was naive or maybe just simple-minded, but Birdie's actions didn't hurt my feelings. I just felt sorry for Bud.

On another occasion, Bud came over to our yard, and we were loading supplies into the truck because we were going up to the sheep herd. Bud wanted to go with us--and I wanted him to

go--so we were all excited and making plans. I don't know how it happened, but Bud's mother showed up. Thinking back, my mother must have called Birdie and told her that Bud wanted to go with us. Well, she came over, and Bud begged and pleaded with her to let him go. But her answer was NO!

Bud and I were up on top of the load of supplies, and he wouldn't get down. He was crying and begging and wouldn't get off. She finally got so mad at him that she climbed up on the side of the truck and got ahold of him and pulled. He was grabbing onto things and crying--and she was pulling him off and cussing. My dad walked around to the other side of the truck and was trying to keep from laughing.

Well, Birdie won the pulling contest, and she took Bud toward home--spatin' him on the rear end as she went. After they were gone, my dad sure had a good laugh at that circus. I felt sorry for Bud.

I remember another episode where Bud was the central figure:

In the early hours--even before daylight, Daddy had gone to Wallace Ryan's house and asked him to open up his store (Castle Dale Co-op) because Daddy needed some supplies for the sheep camp--and we were on our way and had to get an early start.

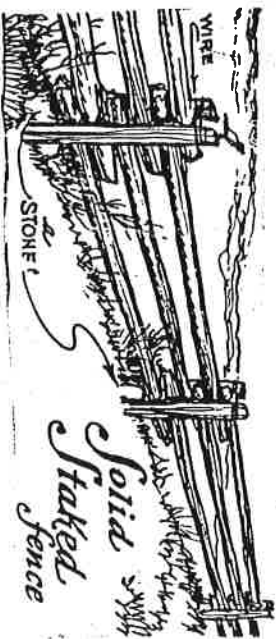
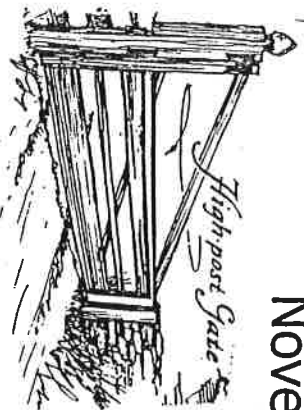
Well, sometime later that day, Wimbers' barn burned down. Ervin Wimber, Bud's father, ran the service station; he was not a farmer, but back in that day, everyone had a corral and a milk cow and a few pigs--and a barn, whether he was a farmer or not. Naturally, the whole town showed up when the barn was ablaze, and naturally everyone was speculating how the fire started. One speculation was that it was those Seely boys--Monte and Jimmie. Well, Wallace Ryan came to our defense and told the people that it couldn't have been those boys--because "they went with Karl to the mountain before daylight this morning." My opinion is--Probably Bud had started the fire--accidentally, of course--by playing with matches, which he was forbidden to have, but had sneaked from their place in the kitchen.

I'll close for now, but more stories will be forthcoming.

Love, Grandpa Montell

# GRANDPA MONTELL SEELY'S Newsletter to

November 10, 2007



Eggs Traded for Candy. When my brother Jimmie and I would want a piece of candy, we'd go hunting around our corral and stack yard looking for a nest of eggs. Why did we want eggs? Because, back in the olden days, eggs could be traded at the stores for candy! (We had a few chickens that ran free in the yard, and they'd have nests here and there.) One time we found a nest way back under the granary. The floor joists of the granary sat up on rocks, in order to keep the wooden joists up out of the dirt so they wouldn't rot. Well, this left a crawl space underneath the granary, between the joists. It wasn't high enough to allow for crawling on your hands and knees—you had to slither along on your belly, moving yourself along with your elbows. Well, this nest was way under there. But we wanted those eggs, so I slithered along until I got to the nest.

[Side note and warning: This next part is added fiction. You see, when our children [mine and Kathryn's] were small, I used to tell them bedtime stories that I made up—you know, **imagined**. I'd take a simple memory of my youth, and add some drama to it—just to make it more interesting to my children—your parents. The two little boys in my stories were named Jasper and Bealow (pronounced "Bee-A'-Low"). Jasper was my brother Jim, and Bealow was the nickname that my mother called me. I have no idea why or how she came to call me Bealow. These stories, that I told at bedtime, came to be known as "The Jasper and Bealow Stories"—and this one about the eggs is one of them.]

Well, there were five (5) eggs, so Bealow put one in each hind pocket. He

couldn't put eggs in his front pockets—they'd get smashed as he crawled back out. So one in each hind pocket and one in each hand—but he didn't want to leave the 5<sup>th</sup> egg there. It represented a few more pieces of penny candy. So he finally decided to put it in his mouth. He didn't give any thought to the germs that were on the egg. He had to stretch his mouth as wide as it would go, in order to push the egg in.

Then he began to inch his way back out. When he was nearly out, he said to Jasper, "Pull me out." So Jasper took hold of Bealow's one foot and pulled. When Jasper stopped pulling, Bealow assumed that he was out—and he was so excited to show Jasper his find that he quickly raised his head. But Bealow wasn't all the way out yet, and he bumped his head on the edge of the granary, and in so doing he chomped down on the egg!

That wouldn't have been so bad, but it was a rotten egg. You probably have never had any experience with a rotten egg, so I'll have to try to help you get the picture. A rotten egg has the most gosh-awful taste you can imagine, AND it stinks as bad as a skunk spray. When Bealow chomped down on that rotten egg, it was sickening! He dropped the two eggs in his hands and went to spittin' an' gaggin' an' spewing it out—rotten gunk and egg shells. And Jasper went to laughing. Bealow headed for the water trough and tried to wash out his mouth, but he just couldn't get rid of the taste or the smell.

Jasper was still laughin', so Bealow pulled an egg out of his hind pocket and threw it at him. His aim was good, and the egg hit Jasper in the back of his head and



splattered—it too was rotten. So then Bealow started to laugh.

Well, then Jasper picked up the two eggs Bealow had dropped at his feet, and slung one at Bealow. It missed him by inches, but hit a post at his side and splattered, and Bealow got some of the rotten egg on his shirt. So Bealow pulled out the other egg from his hind pocket and let it fly. It missed, but hit the granary and splattered. It too was rotten. Jasper was fixin' ta throw the other one, so Bealow took off running and went out the corral gate as the egg hit the gate post. He didn't stop. He just made himself scarce and didn't go around people for the rest of the day. They didn't get any candy that day!  
[End of story.]

Rotten Eggs Float. Then on other days Jasper and Bealow would find a few eggs and walk over to the Huntington Brothers Store and trade their eggs in for some penny candy. Mr. Huntington would always take their eggs and go into the back room and put them into a pan of water. If an egg floated, he "wouldn't give 'em nothin'" for it. If the egg would float, it was probably rotten.

I can't remember how many pieces of penny candy per egg we'd get, but it was well worth it to hunt up some eggs. One type of candy that I remember featured little black licorice pieces—that were in the form of a little black baby, and they were called "nigger babies." That kind of a label wouldn't be allowed today, with all the nationwide talk we hear of equal rights, racism, and all. But back then no one thought anything of it. As for me, I had never seen a black person—and I wasn't racist. I had never even heard of that word.

Saving the Tea Kettle. About a mile outside of town was a place called the town dump—it was out "around the bend," by the stock corral, where the road takes off to go down to Buckhorn Wash. Well, that was a favorite place where Jimmie and I would often go exploring for treasures. We could spend hours searching through the "town dump" for items of fascination—and we found plenty. Two little boys in treasure "heaven"—that's what we were..

Well, on this one day, I found an old tea kettle. You may not be familiar with a tea kettle. It is a container that has a pouring spout and a handle, and the "cook" keeps it full of water—and settin' on the back of the coal stove—so that there is a ready supply of hot water. Back in the old days, before water heaters were common, every kitchen had a tea kettle, or maybe even two of them. Back then a tea kettle was always made out of cast iron, so it was heavy—about like a Dutch oven, which is popular nowadays for outdoor cooking with charcoal briquettes. So, I saw this really nice tea kettle. On the outside it looked to be in mint condition. (That means, it looked really good!). So I picked it up and carried it all the way home. It was heavy, but I wanted to please my mother with something—it looked to be a lot nicer than the one she had on our stove at home. So I carried that heavy thing all the way home—carried it in my right hand until my arm was sore, and then switched it to my left, and then back to my right. I presented it to my Mom with pride—that I had carried it all the way from the dump.

My mother was duly impressed, and she took the tea kettle to the sink and washed it off. Then she washed out the inside—and then filled it with water and sat it on the stove. Jimmie and I stood looking with satisfaction at my prize. But then a wet spot appeared on the stove. It was just a tiny wet spot, but sad—my tea kettle had a tiny, tiny pinhole leak. Mother said, "Never mind. I can still use it. Thank you for bringing it."

So there you have it! I was 5 years old, and the instinct to save stuff (salvage—use items that others had thrown away) was already there in my nature. It was in my blood! Did my nature to save junk come from heredity? Or, from environment? I began to collect junk (antiques) at age 5.

Asking for Permission. One time I was playing over on the public square, when two older boys came along, and we played together for awhile. Then they suggested that we go and play down under the county bridge. This was a metal truss bridge, which had a long span and crossed Cottonwood Creek on Highway 10. "Under the bridge" was a popular

place to play, and it was also a place for teenagers to go and smoke and drink beer. And sometimes burns and hitch hikers "resided" there. Jimmie and I had been there plenty of times, and I wasn't afraid to go there. If perchance someone else were already there, we'd just go elsewhere.

But when these two older boys said for us to go there, I instinctively had misgivings. I didn't want to go there with them. I had a feeling that if I went with them, they'd make me the "goat" of their pranks and jokes--so I didn't want to go. But they kept eggin' me on, and I couldn't think of a good excuse not to--until the idea came to me that I'd have to ask my mother. Actually, I didn't have to ask her; she didn't put any restrictions or limitations on me. She was the best mother a little boy ever had. I was a free spirit. She let me roam as I saw fit. But I didn't want to go with these two boys, and that was the only excuse I could think of. So they walked with me to our house. At the front door I said, "I'll go in and ask my mother." I was hoping they would wait outside, so I could whisper to my mother to tell me No--but they followed me in.

Now what? There was no chance to tell her that I didn't REALLY want to go, and she almost never told me No. I didn't think she would tell me No this time. There was nothing I could do now, but ask her for permission to go down under the County Bridge with these boys. As I asked her, I tried to make my eyes convey to her that I wanted her to tell me No. When you are 5 years old, you don't have very much skill in handling such difficult situations.

She paused for a short time before answering, and I was holding my breath--and thinking, "Please say No!" Well, she must have realized something was amiss--because it was not the customary thing for me to do--to come home and ask permission to go. She must have sensed that, because she said No! Inwardly, I gave a big sigh of relief. But I turned to the boys and shrugged a 'sorry'--and they left. After they were out of sight, I went on another expedition of my own.

I learned a Lesson from Old Nick. My brother Jimmie, two years older, and I would often go on exploring expeditions down on the

creek bottom, out to the town dump, and all around and through Castle Dale.

Sometimes we'd go exploring at night, for you see my mother was very lenient. In all my years, Mother never gave me a curfew. Castle Dale was a quiet, peaceful small town, with no shootings, no kidnappings, and no crimes, so there was no danger for us to go exploring after dark.

Well, this one night we were snooping around behind the business buildings (on the south side of Main Street). Remember, I was 5 years old and Jimmie was 7; it was dark, but we had no fear of being out "exploring" at night. We often went on nighttime adventures. We were nearing the back door of the Saloon/pool hall. The back door was open, emitting some light, and we could hear through the screen door the loud talking and laughter of the men inside--some playing pool, some gambling, and some sitting at the bar drinking. Then we heard the screen door creak open, and old Nick came staggering out onto the back porch. He was "soused to the gills." That means he was drunk as a skunk. Poor ol' Nick was "the town drunk"; he was drunk most of the time. Nowadays he'd be categorized as an alcoholic; back then he was just the town drunk--a harmless, pathetic man. When I'd see him on the street or asleep under a tree somewhere, I'd feel sorry for him.

Anyway, as Nick came staggering out onto the back porch, Jimmie and I crouched back into the weeds and shadow of the building. He couldn't see us, even though we were close enough to smell the liquor. Ol' Nick attempted to go down the two steps to ground level, but lost his balance and went sprawling in the dirt and rolled onto his back. There he was--lying there motionless, with the sweat on his face glistening in the moonlight, and his eyes rolled back so the whites were showing. I thought he was dead, and Jimmie must have been thinking the same, 'cause we silently sneaked away. I vowed right then and there that I would never--ever--take up drinking. I was not going to be a drunk!

P.S. Old Nick wasn't really dead, 'cause we saw him around town after that. I never did thank him for the lesson he taught me, which was to never start drinking.

*Louie, Brandpa Martell*

This is an extra letter - aside from our more formal newsletters. In this one I want to share with you an interesting comment that was made in our Sunday school class on Sunday, October 28, 2007.

The lesson was on kindness. The teacher quoted Ben Simbley, and how he has urged us to be more kind to each other. The teacher also invited class members to share their comments. After about three responses, Jim Nelson spoke up and said, "I saw Montel Seely get hit right in the face with a basketball, when he was a senior in high school, and I didn't see a fist right afterwards. The person who hit him with the ball wasn't very kind."

The teacher acknowledged his comment and the discussion went on. I pondered whether or not to explain to the class more of the details of that incident - but I didn't. However, I want to explain it to you because there is a lesson in it.

In the fall of 1951, the beginning of my senior year, a new boy, by the name of Frank Hoeb, came to our school. He was "tall, dark and handsome." (Every girl had a crush on him.) He carried himself with great confidence; was a natural athlete, and an excellent basketball player. Coach Phillip Nelson selected him to be on our basketball team. In one of our practice sessions Coach Nelson divided our team into two squads, and we had a scrimmage game. I don't know how it was that Jim Nelson saw it because he was a junior and not on the team. In fact, it strikes me as highly unusual that Jim has remembered this incident after all these years; from 56 years ago. He was not involved in anyway; there was no fist fight to make it memorable. What caused Jim to

Remember it after all these years? What a mystery.

Anyway, "here's the rest of the story." I was guarding Frank, and I guarded him closely, which was my style. I played point guard on our team, and I was always assigned to guard the opponents' high-scoring player. I stuck on Frank like glue; he didn't like it, and became angry at me. I could tell that he was irritated, but I didn't back off. Guarding the opponent was the "meat" of the game. He knew that.

Well, the ball went out of bounds under their basket. Frank took the ball to throw it in bounds, so I stood in front of him - three feet back as the rules say - with my arms outstretched, so as to make it more difficult for him to throw the ball in bounds. When your opponent has the ball under their basket this is standard procedure. Frank was so mad by this time that he took the ball with both hands and slammed it into my face! It was intentional, and every one knew it. The ball bounced off my face, and there was a scramble for it and the game went on.

I did not retaliate. I just let it go. I don't have any memory of discussing it with anyone at the time. In the days that followed, Frank went out of his way to be extra friendly with me. He never did apologize as such, but I could tell that he was sorry. I don't have any memory of discussing the incident with anyone in all these years - not even Kathryn - so I was surprised when Jim mentioned it. The moral of the story is: If a man hits you on one cheek, turn the other: Matt 5:39; Luke, 6:29.

Love,

Grandpa Monte

November 20, 2007

Dear Betty,

Send another side story for you.

On my way home from a business trip, as I would  
have, I drove up ahead, a man and woman with hiking.

They each had a back pack and bedroll. My first thought  
was, "I wish I could help them, but I'm going to take the  
next exit and go on hi-way 10 to Castle Dale, and they  
should stay on hi-way 6 going East. It won't be helpful  
for them to get stranded in Castle Dale, so I won't stop."

My second thought was, "they are probably tired and  
discouraged, and feeling like they don't have a friend in  
this world. I can't help them with a ride, but I can stop  
and wait for a minute, and give them a word of moral  
support and friendship, and let them know I care," so  
I pulled over. They appeared to be in their 40's.

We waited and I explained that I live in Castle Dale,  
a small town, 30 miles south, and it was out of their  
way. They explained that they had been living in Post  
and Oregon; that he had lost his job; that a friend  
in Altamora, Colorado, had offered him a job and wanted  
him to start yesterday; that they had been hitch hiking  
seven time weeks; that they felt an urgency to reach  
Altamora before this job was gone.

I explained that they would have a better location  
if they were standing on the other side of Price - the exit  
side rather than the entrance side, and I offered to take  
them that far. They accepted.

When we reached the other location, I got out and we  
visited some more, because I didn't want to just leave  
them standing there alone and friendless; however, as  
they as I was there no one was going to stop, so it was  
not that I did them good.

When I drove I take some food stuffs with me, so  
I can tell them what food I had. When I take a deposit

remember it after all these years? That's a mystery.

"Anyway, here's the rest of the story." I was guarding Frank, and I guarded him closely, which was my style. I played paint guard on our team, and I was always assigned to guard the opponents' high-scoring player. I stuck on Frank like glue; he didn't like it, and became angry at me. I could tell that he was irritated, but I didn't back off. Guarding the opponent was the "man of the game." He knew that.

Well, the ball went out of bounds under their basket. Frank took the ball to throw it in bounds, so I stood in front of him - three feet back as the rules say - with my arms outstretched, so as to make it more difficult for him to throw the ball in bounds. When your opponent has the ball under their basket this is standard procedure. Frank was so mad by this time that he took the ball with both hands and slammed it into my face; it bounced off my face, and every one knew it. The ball bounced off my face, and there was a scramble for it and the game went on.

I did not retaliate. I just let it go. I don't have any memory of discussing it with anyone at the time. In the days that followed, Frank went out of his way to be extra friendly with me. He never did apologize as such, but I could tell that he was sorry. I don't have any memory of discussing the incident with anyone in all these years - not even Kathryn - so I was surprised when Jim mentioned it. The moral of the story is: If a man hits you on one cheek, turn the other: Matt 5:39; Luke, 6:29.

Love,

Grandpa Monte

April 4, 2008

Dear Children and Grandchildren:

Enclosed are four stories. I was prompted to write the first three because of their connection to Cliff Brown. The fourth one was in the same time frame and type as the third story.

I need to explain a couple of items: My dad, Grandpa Karl, had a crippled right hand—but as a little boy, I didn't pay any attention to it. I didn't think of him as having a crippled hand. Now, as I think back, I am amazed at all that he did in spite of it. He never commented on it, or referred to it, or complained (~~out-loud~~) about it.

I don't know why my mother did not have an accurate account of how Daddy's hand became crippled—but she didn't. She would explain to us that he roped a wild mule, and the rope got wrapped around his thumb some way and pulled it out of the socket, and the doctor couldn't push it back in—so his thumb was cut off. That's the way she always told the story.

Daddy was 19 years old when the accident happened. He was in his 20s when he and Cliff Brown were living in a tent day in and day out—herding sheep together; and he was 34 when he and Mother got married. I suspect that by then the accident was 15 years in the past—and Mother was a woman and wouldn't understand how it could happen—so he probably just brushed it off and said something like, "Oh, I just got tangled up with a wild mule." Hence, Mother ended up with an incorrect version. It wasn't her fault. She didn't intentionally lead us astray. And Daddy didn't intentionally withhold facts from Mother.

So when Cliff Brown came to our house—late in his life—and told me the facts, as Daddy had explained the details to him, I was thankful to have the correct account of what had happened. [Side note: I told this account to my brothers and sisters, but they were so steeped in the other version that they did not want to hear this version.] For me, it is the correct and factual account. Cliff would NOT have hatched up a story and then made a special trip to my house to tell me a false story.

In the story where I say that I was 8 years old, you might wonder—how does he know that he was 8 years old? I use four events as a gauge to help me determine how old I was when certain things happened:

1. I was born on February 5, 1934.
2. We moved from the Barton House down in town, up to the Talboe House in October 1939, when I was 5 years old.
3. Daddy leased the sheep business to Ezra Huntsman in 1944, when I was 10 years old. So, if an event happened while Daddy was running the sheep, I was 10 or under.
4. Daddy died in 1946, when I was 12 years old.

I love you each, individually, and I would like to have a letter from YOU. I'd like to know what is happening in your young life, and what you like best about my stories.

Love,  
Grandpa Seely

**THE CLIFF BROWN CAMP WAGON**  
**GRANDPA KARL'S CRIPPLED HAND**  
**RIDING A HORSE FROM HUNTINGTON TO CASTLE DALE**  
by Montell Seely, March 2008

I am prompted to write down these stories because Kathryn and I just returned home from Huntington, where we attended the funeral service of Lucy Salazar Brown, wife of the late Cliff Brown.

Lucy married Cliff Brown, from Huntington, when she was 37 years old—and Cliff was 45 of so. It was a second marriage for both of them. They had one child together, a daughter named Joyce.

My friendship with Cliff Brown goes back to when I was a little boy—as he was a close friend of my father. And then, after he married Lucy, our friendship continued through the years.

Have you paid any attention to the camp wagon that I have partially restored? It's parked out in the "Myrtle shed," (so called because I salvaged its roof from the Myrtle Larsen place). Well, Cliff and Lucy gave that camp wagon to me; that is, they gave me "what was left of it" after it had sat out in their cow pasture for 20 years. The cows had "trashed" it by using it as a "rubbing post." It was originally built to sit on an iron-tired running gear. But Cliff had put the box on a rubber-tired running gear—actually, an old car body frame. It was in bad, sad shape—and only someone like me would see that it could be salvaged. I was happy to get it. I put four good tires on it and tied the loose parts together with baling wire, and towed it home from Huntington. Then I rebuilt the front wall, and put in a new floor, and put on new bows and a canvas top—so it would be like the original camp wagons. Sometimes I call it "the chuck wagon." It's a keepsake now.

Next story: About two months before Cliff died, he had Lucy, his wife, bring him over here to our house in Castle Dale. Cliff had cancer, and he knew the end was coming. He felt an urgency to tell me the account of how Daddy got his hand crippled. The sole purpose of his visit was to tell me that story. It was the only time that he and Lucy ever came to our house.

Cliff explained that during the recent months he had been thinking often of his lifelong friend, Karl Seely, my father. He started herding sheep for Daddy when he (Cliff) was 15 years old, and worked for him for many years, so they spent many days living together in a tent. Naturally, they had many conversations in the evening as they ate "suppers of mutton chops and sourdough wimmicks." Cliff said to me, "I loved your dad like he was my own father."

Then he said, "I'd like to tell you how your father got his crippled hand, as he told the account to me. He and Gunnar Ihler were camped out on the Wedge. Karl had an unbroke mule tied to a tree with a hackamore. (A hackamore is similar to a halter, except that it has a slipknot around the animal's nose, so when the lead rope pulls tight, it tightens down on the animal's jaws and nose.)

"Karl was going to gentle this mule and break it to be a pack mule. He walked up to it and reached out his hand to pet it—as he had done a thousand times before. The mule was "on the fight," and it grabbed Karl's thumb in its teeth. Naturally, Karl jerked his hand back, and the mule jerked back at the same moment, and this caused the lead rope to pull through the slipknot and tighten down on the mule's nose and jaw, and then it couldn't release Karl's thumb. The mule was tied to a tree, and it hung back as far as the lead rope would allow. (An animal does this for a short time, and then it lunges forward.) The mule lunged forward and knocked Karl down, but the lead rope loosened. The mule released his thumb, and he crawled out of the way.

"Gunnar came and helped Karl up. He took off his glove to inspect his damaged thumb. It was bad, so he would have to go to town. He shoved his hand back into his glove, then wrapped his hand in a towel as padding for the long ride. Gunnar helped him climb onto his horse, and he headed for Castle Dale, which was about a 20-mile ride. After about 3 hours, he finally reached his father's home, the Wink Seely house in Castle Dale. He asked his father to take care of his horse. He walked into the kitchen and sat down, laid his injured hand on the kitchen table and passed out. He had the grit to make that long ride, but when he sat down and relaxed, he passed out." [That is Cliff's version of the story. The following are tidbits that I have learned from other people.]

Grandpa Wink went to look for the doctor, and found him at the saloon, half-drunk. He came and examined the injured thumb. It had been pulled out of the second joint. The doctor tried to push it back in the joint, but could not do so. This was tried without the benefit of any anesthesia. It was decided that the thumb would have to be amputated. The doctor got his tools and performed the amputation, and then Karl's hand



was bandaged up. But, infection set in, followed by blood poisoning. His hand and arm swelled up way big. Karl was 19 years old at the time of this ordeal.

Hilma Jeffs (his first cousin once removed) told me that she was hired to nurse Karl at this time. She said he would place his swollen hand and arm in a large pan, and the pan was filled with hot water—as hot as he could stand. Hilma's job was to add hot water as needed.

[Some years ago I was in Mount Pleasant, visiting with Edwin MG Seely in the home of John H. Seely, an uncle to Karl. Edwin was on a project to go through all the papers of his grandfather John H. In the process, he came across a letter from Wink Seely. The letter said that it was feared that they would have to amputate Karl's arm.] Well, I don't know how the blood poisoning was healed, but it did eventually go away, and his arm was not amputated. However, atrophy set in. His fingers and his wrist became rigid. His fingers were in a semi-closed position. He could not open and close his fingers. He could not flex his wrist. His hand and wrist were this way for the rest of his life.

That's not the end of the story, but I'm going to leave it and go back to the Cliff Brown family for another childhood story. Actually, this story is more connected to Cliff's father, John Brown. I, at about age 8, had gone with my dad over to John Brown's farm, north of Huntington. Daddy and John discussed something about a grown horse and a 2-year-old horse. It was finally decided that I would be assigned to ride the one horse to Castle Dale, and the other horse would follow. So the horse was saddled and bridled, and I got on it. Daddy told me to stop at Grandmother Minerva Guymon's house there on the south side of Huntington, and she would feed me some lunch, after which I would continue riding the horse to Castle Dale. He also assured me that the young horse would follow me.

So I headed down the road, and went to Grandma Guymon's house. I put the two horses in the corral and fed and watered them, and then walked into the house. I had been there many times, so I knew what to do. I had stayed with Grandma Guymon and Uncle Hal and Uncle Terry and Uncle Grant on several occasions; so I was very familiar with the corral and her house. I knocked, but no one answered. So I went on in and called, "Grandma! . . . Is anyone home?" There was no answer. I went through the kitchen, into the living room, and then I saw Uncle Terry lying on the couch. Now, Uncle Terry had taken up drinking whiskey and such, and he was lying there half-drunk.

I said, "Hello, is Grandma home?" He recognized me and said, "No." Then he closed his eyes and continued to lie there. Being a little boy, I didn't know how to react or what to do. There was a chair just inside the door, so I sat down on it and waited. I remember thinking that Uncle Terry should get up and be hospitable to me. I mean, he knew me; I had stayed at their home several times. But he didn't get up. He went back to sleep—so when it was evident that he wasn't going to get up, I decided that I might as well leave, so I did. I led my horse out of the corral, and the colt followed. Then I got on and headed for Castle Dale, and after about three hours, I arrived home. There is no moral to this story, unless it is that I was capable at age 8 to handle an assignment like this. Obviously, my dad knew I could do it—and I didn't think of it as anything but routine; I rode a horse every day.

Now I'm reminded of another assignment that I had to deliver a saddle horse. This one happened in the same time frame, when I was 8 or 9 years old—maybe even 10. Daddy had made some kind of a horse trade with a man by the name of Joe Meeks, from Price. And the arrangement was made that on a given day Joe would start riding his horse from Price, and I was assigned to ride our horse from here, and when we met, we'd make the trade—and then turn around and return home. So Daddy and I saddled up our horse, and I got on it. Daddy gave me my instructions, and I headed out. It must have been an uneventful ride because I don't remember anything about it until I got to Poison Spring Bench—roughly halfway to Price. I rode to the edge of the bench, and I could see a man on a saddlehorse coming on a jog-trot toward the tow of the bench. I decided to wait on top and let him ride up to me. We greeted each other. I knew who he was, and he knew that I was Monte Seely, Karl Seely's son.

We each unsaddled our horse and then put our saddle and bridle on the one we would ride home. Then we said goodbye and headed home. Just in case you're thinking, Why didn't they do this horse delivery stuff in a horse trailer? The answer is, There were no horse trailers back in those days; they had not been invented. If you wanted a horse delivered some place, you rode it or led it.

## I Decided to go to BYU

April 30, 2008

Dear Family:

Recently the Thalman family used one of their Family Home Evening lessons in which each one wrote me a separate letter, each one asking me a series of questions. I appreciate questions and feel complimented that they would devote a Family Home Evening lesson to the subject. Over a period of time, I'm going to try to answer each question. I'll begin with one asked by KariEllie. It is currently on her mind to select a college, so she asked me why I chose to go to BYU. Edison also asked me what I majored in and what degree I earned. I imagine all of you older grandchildren are thinking about your college plans, so you'll be especially interested in the following stories.

In May, 1952, when I graduated from High School, and my fellow graduates were discussing their future plans, I simply said, "I'm going to be a farmer, and I don't need to go to college for that!" Mother had recently purchased the Paradise Ranch, about 10 miles south of Castle Dale. During that summer of 1952, I lived in the two-room ranch house on the property. We were "restoring" the fields and planting new alfalfa. That summer I was there alone most of the time, and there was nothing to do but work, so I worked long hours. Except on Saturdays:

Around noon each Saturday I'd get on my little "putt putt" Case tractor and head for Ferron, about five miles up the creek. In the old days, there had been a wagon road that sorta followed Ferron Creek, but it was abandoned now, except for when I drove over it with my tractor. It was rough going in most places, but with a tractor, it was passable.

You see, I loved to play baseball, so I joined up with the Ferron City team, and we played other teams in Emery County and Carbon County. When it was a home game, all I had to do was drive to Ferron in time for the game. But when we traveled, then I'd have to get to Ferron in time to catch a ride with another team member.

I played center field and was our lead-off batter. I could hit the ball. Very rarely did I ever strike out. I might hit a fly ball or get thrown out at first base, but I very seldom struck out. I was not a home-run hitter, just a good dependable hitter.

Anyway, I loved playing baseball. I remember one game in Helper. It was the first time we had played them on their field, and they had a full-fledged baseball stadium WITH GRASS! It was the first time I had ever played on grass! Wow! I felt like I was playing in the big leagues. I played center field as usual and caught several routine fly balls, but there was one special catch that I shan't ever forget. It was a short fly ball. I ran as fast as I could to get under it. It was coming down fast, and I kept my eye on it. At the last moment, as I ran, I stretched my arm forward and low to the ground. My mitt was just inches above the ground, and everyone thought I had missed the ball. But I knew that it was in my mitt as I lifted my hand. Then our team whooped and cheered and shouted.

Well, we lost the game, but for me, being able to play on grass on a real ball diamond and make that one catch—the victory was mine.

Okay, now I'll get back to my account of going to college. It wasn't so much that I decided whether to go to BYU or to some other school. It was whether I would go to college at all. I had never thought of myself as a book-learned person. And I didn't feel bad about it. I knew I wanted to be a farmer, and I already had the skills and know-how for that. By the time I was 18 years old, I had learned how to run a farm operation all by myself.

One day I had the water set on a new field that I had planted. The water was running in little trickle-streamlets in each furrow. I began to daydream, and I created a metaphor: The field was life. The

furrows represented my classmates and me. The water in each represented the accomplishments of our lives. The water in some furrows of the alfalfa field was way down the field ahead of others, while the water in other furrows had not flowed very far. I wondered, “Which is my furrow? Where will I be in the scheme of things? Will I have any accomplishments to my credit?” My attention changed, and I started watching a dirt clod about the size of a soft ball. As the water washed past it, little bits would get soft and break off and erode away. Then my metaphor changed, and that clod of dirt was me, and the water was life, and when my life came to an end, would I have anything to show for having lived? Or would I be like that clod and be eroded away to nothingness? And then I had the feeling that, if I were to have some accomplishments, I needed a college education, and so I made up my mind, on the spot, to go to college.

Soon after making that decision, I decided to attend BYU and major in physical education—with the plan to become a coach. Sports was my second love, after farming. Here’s another sports story: As a member of our high school track team, I competed in the pole vault, discus, 880 (half mile), and the 880 portion of the medley relay. When I was a sophomore, my brother Jim was a senior, and we both ran the 880. (Now they call it the 800-meter. We called it the 880 because 880 yards make a half mile.) Jim and I were good runners, and we’d always win at the local track meets. I loved to read the sports page after a track meet, and it would say “Seely of South Emery 1<sup>st</sup>, Seely of South Emery 2<sup>nd</sup>.” BYU always hosted what was called the BYU Invitational Track and Field Meet. My high school coach, Phillip Nelson, was a BYU grad, and a track star, and a personal friend of Clarence Robinson, the track coach at BYU, so we always attended the BYU Invitational. As a junior and senior, I won the Gold medal in the 880 both years. Since I was going to be a coach, then BYU was the natural choice for me.

You need to know that I did not have a father to counsel me. (He died when I was 12 years old.) And my mother was preoccupied with other problems; her time and concerns were consumed by her second husband, Leland (which is another story). So Mother did not counsel me. I did things entirely on my own. I would come and go of my own choosing. I was my own boss. I don’t want to give you the impression that my mother was negligent. She was a wonderful mother—the best mother that an adventuresome little boy ever had. She was the perfect mother for a boy like me.

So two weeks before school was to start, in the fall of 1952, I walked from the Talboe house down to the east end of Castle Dale, and stuck out my thumb. I hitchhiked to Provo. I probably had announced to Mother what my intention was. We owned a car, but I didn’t ask to use it for driving to Provo, nor did I invite her to go with me. I simply hitchhiked when I had places to go.

I finally arrived in Provo on 300 South, which was State Street. (This was long before the freeway was built.) I walked up to the campus. I climbed the steep steps on 400 East. When at the top, I asked a passerby where I was supposed to go to get registered. He said that the Registrar’s office was in the Maeser Building, and he pointed it out to me—there on the brow of the hill. Up until that moment, I didn’t know there was such a thing as a Registrar’s office.

I walked into the Maeser Building and into the said office. The lady behind the counter gave me some papers to fill out. I sat in a chair and did so, then handed the papers back to her. I must have paid a registration fee, but I don’t remember that part. I had a checking account and was accustomed to writing out checks to pay my expenses. With that, I was registered. It was just that simple!

Standing at another counter within hearing distance was a young man who was talking to a lady who was giving him a list of addresses where he could check to rent a sleeping room. I knew that I’d need a place to stay also, so I sidled over and asked if I could tag along as he checked on the different places. He smiled and said, “Sure.”

My new friend was Lloyd Whetten, from Gilbert, Arizona. He was a returned missionary—and kindhearted and genuine. He sorta took me under his wing. Neither of us had a car, so we walked from

place to place. At the third address we found suitable quarters. It was an upstairs room, L-shaped with a single cot and small writing table in each wing of the L. We rented it, each paying half. The landlady was an older lady in her 60s, named Mrs. Richardson. I wrote her out a check for my deposit. It was only a sleeping room, but she said we could have a hot plate to warm up a can of soup.

Now that I was registered and had a place to live, I bade farewell to Lloyd and walked down to 300 South and out to the east end of Provo, by the cemetery, and thumbed a ride. It was dark by the time I reached home, but I did that whole operation all on my own—in one day, without a car.

Back then, it wasn't difficult for kids with not-great grades to get into BYU. I knew BYU was a good school, and I was happy to be going there. My mother got her teaching certificate there when it was BY Academy, but I don't remember if that history had any effect on my decision to attend there. I do remember that the distance between Castle Dale and Provo in those days was a drawback. Even with a car, it took about three hours to drive to Provo. Mother didn't go there often, and I would have had to hitchhike to come home for a visit, so I remember telling her that I probably wouldn't come home until Thanksgiving time. (When my own children were deciding on where to go to college, I advised them to choose a place close to home to make visiting easier. Snow College was very good for that because it was easy for us to visit there when we made a temple trip, and it was relatively easy for them to drive over the mountain or to catch a ride with other Emery County kids for a weekend visit.)

Now I'll add in some more of the story. In two weeks class would start. In those two weeks I wrapped up my work at the ranch. Mother wanted to buy me a new suitcase, but I said, "Naw, I'll just use a clothes sack." Well, she didn't want me to go off to college with a clothes sack, so she insisted that I use the black leather suitcase that she and Daddy had always used when they went on a business trip. So I said, "Okay."

On the appointed day, I packed my stuff in that suitcase, and Mother took me to Provo. She dropped me off at a house that looked like the Richardson place. It was a gray house with several tall trees in the yard, and the front door faced west. You see, I was not trained in street addresses—since Castle Dale did not have street addresses (in those days). I went by landmarks. So I thought I was at the right house. A pretty college coed answered the door, and with a lovely smile she bade me to come in. The room was not Mrs. Richardson's front room at all, and it was full of lovely, sophisticated college girls. Imagine me, a shy, bungling, awkward farm boy in a situation like that!

Then I knew I was in the wrong place, and I was flustered, and I turned red as a beet. I stuttered and stammered out, "I can't live here!"

The girls laughed, and one of them teased, "Oh yes, you can." The girl who had let me in teased and took my sleeve and pulled me on in and began to shut the door.

I said, "I've gotta go," and turned and went out—to a chorus of laughter.

Well, I walked over to the next block west, and I found the right house. I memorized the address and vividly remember it to this day: 590 North 400 East. I will never forget it again.

I moved in. Lloyd was there. He had not returned home, but stayed in Provo and found a job. We became the best of friends. Upon his suggestion, we bought a car together.

I majored in Physical Education and signed up for as many PE classes as I could. But I also had to take Freshman English. My teacher was Robert K. Thomas. In that era, the Y was growing in numbers faster than buildings could be built, so the Church bought some army surplus barracks and converted them into classrooms, and Brother Thomas taught English in one of these. He made us write a theme every week. We had to turn our theme in on Friday, and we'd get it back on Monday. He'd use a red ink pen as he corrected each one. Mine would have so many corrections and notations, there was more red ink than black, and up in the corner would be a big red "D." He'd have me come into his office, and he'd tutor me on how to write a theme; how to spell; how to use proper grammar; how to write proper

sentences. He took a liking to me because I was a farm boy from Emery County. He himself had been raised in a coal camp in Sunnyside, Carbon County.

All through high school I had avoided writing. I did not enjoy writing. I was a lazy student. I faked my way through high school because I was on all the athletic teams. I had a saying, "The only reason for class work is to give the other kids something to do between basketball games."

I expect that I was the dumbest student in Professor Thomas' class. I got a D on every theme—except the last one! Finally, he said to me, "Montell, select a topic that is common knowledge to you, and that will make your writing easier." So I wrote a theme and entitled it, "How to Mouth Sheep." You can tell how old a sheep is by counting its teeth, and I described the technique.

Professor Thomas gave me a B on this last theme, with a notation, "Your content was excellent; keep working on your spelling and grammar." (I'm still working on my spelling and grammar.) So, what do you think about that? Brother Thomas would be plumb shocked and dumbfounded if he could see all the writing that I do now—keep a daily journal; newsletters; Pageant; books. If he could see the things that I have written, he wouldn't believe it. I give him credit for getting me started.

Next, Lloyd developed tuberculosis and had to quit school and go to a sanitarium in Arizona. He bought my interest in the car and drove it home. I was sad to see him go. I still keep in touch with him through our Christmas letter. He was cured, and then married—and has lived a normal life. He was a Christlike person and had a large impact on my life.

I'll wrap up this chapter by telling you that I thoroughly enjoyed that year at BYU. I took many PE classes, and majored in PE. But I decided that I did not want to be a coach. I could not tolerate having to sit on the sideline while my team was getting beat. I could tell that I did not have the right temperament to be a coach. I could see that I would not enjoy that kind of stress, so I did not pursue that course to become a coach.

I would stick with farming.

In telling you what motivated me to go to college, I inadvertently made farming sound like a mundane, mediocre, secondary occupation. So now I need to remedy that concept. FARMING IS THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD. There is not an occupation in this world that is more critical to the survival of the human race than producing food, so don't look down your nose at the farmers. And the next time you eat, thank the farmers for putting food on your table.

In my college career, I attended BYU for a year (1952-53), then Utah State Agricultural College (now Utah State University) for a year (1953-54). Then I went on a mission (1954-56) and ran my sheep herd for several years before going back to BYU (1961) to find a wife (that's another story) and get a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science (1965). After Kathryn and I had been married for several years, I went back to BYU again (1970), for a Master's degree in Animal Science (1972). Those are the general facts of my college career. The details will come, in later stories on down the road.

With all my love,

*Edwin Montell Seely*

Edwin Montell Seely

P.S. Another question Edison asked me was, "What is your middle name?" My full name is printed and signed above. I never used the name Edwin much at all. As a young child I was known as Monte, and when I started riding the bus to Ferron to go to South Emery (9<sup>th</sup> grade), I changed over and became known as Montell. Some very official documents require me to use my full name, but mostly, even on my checking and savings accounts, I am known as Montell Seely.



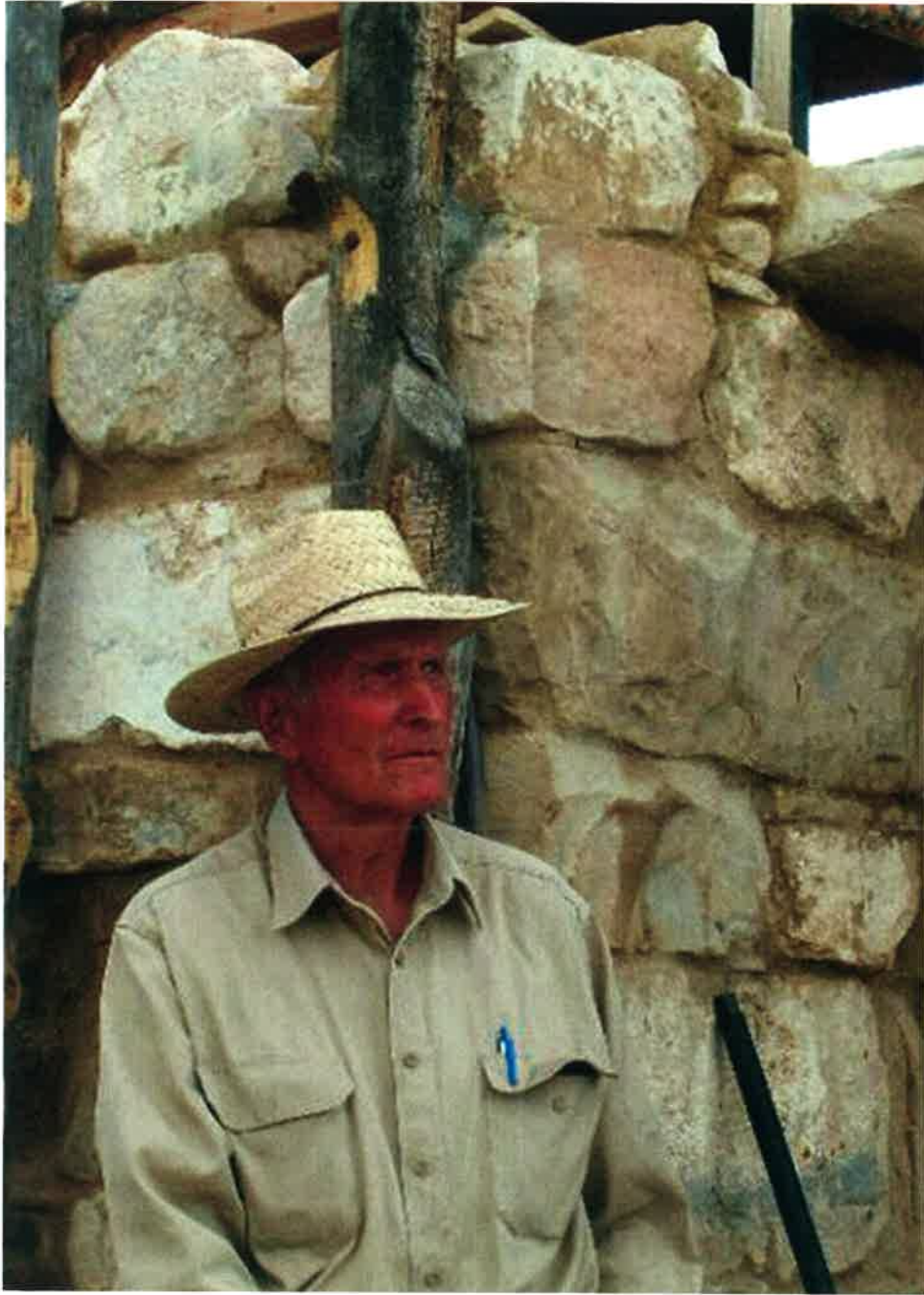


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