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Brief Life Sketch of Dorothy Smith Clark

Jan 31st 1975

In the pioneer community of Snowflake, Ariz. April 26, 1911 I made my debut as the second child in the family of Hyrum and June A. Bushman Smith. Grandmother Emma Larson Smith, born of Swedish handcart pioneers, was the licensed midwife who attended me and chose my name. Grandfather Jesse N. Smith, one of the town's founders was an accountant by trade and for many years president of the Snowflake Stake.

My father, eldest of his mother's nine children, and a stake patriarch from age twenty-seven taught school in the Snowflake Stake Academy. Mother, one of eleven children having trained in Logan, was one of the first kindergarten teachers in the area. She also taught piano and was active in dramas.

Grandfather John Bushman, a long-time Bishop, was also an Arizona Pioneer who helped settle Joseph City, a farmer and stockraiser. Grandmother Lois Angeline Smith, a noted singer, was the cultured daughter of Dr. John Smith, an Alabama convert.

My parents decided on Canada as a place to raise their family after changing their careers to study chiropractic (in Iowa and Illinois.) Their decision to go north was influenced partly by missionaries and cousins from the Canadian southwest.

Lethbridge, the business hub center of southern Alberta, became my beloved prairie home and the birthplace of the last four in my parents family of seven. Latter-Day-Saints were in a minority in the

city of many churches and though I was usually the lone Mormon in my school classes, I had many fine friends both in and out of the church.

During the nine years my father served as a Bishop (after my tenth year) our home became increasingly a festive place, for mother loved to entertain and there was plenty of excuses as she too, was a busy leader and teacher of youth in and stake organizations.

Childhood activities included backyard were swing & trapezes, swinging, high tree climbing, playing house, acrobatics, creative dancing, games and kite-flying with my brothers.

A most exciting adventure for a ten-year-old was my three-day train trip to Chicago and my six-month stay there to care for baby sister Lois during my mother's post-graduate and [...]

Private lessons in music piano were started at age nine and art instruction at eleven or twelve, after state fair prizes in drawing & painting were won as a sixth-grader.

A happy experience in connection with music studies was traveling with an entertainment troupe to surrounding towns where I performed at age 11 in both music and dance.

Teen hobbies and activities were related to all the sports as well as to the creative arts. Hiking, swimming, canoeing, softball, basketball, high jump, tennis, ice-skating, plus horse-back riding during several summer vacations at a cousin's ranch near the U.S. border. Painting and redecorating our home was a fun project I especially relished as my mother's helper. Mother's creative talents were

much in demand, and I recall many groups coming to our home to learn all the popular crafts of the day.

When a six-month's mission was made possible for father by mother's taking over his office work, I left school at 16 to care for the home and younger children. Art studies by correspondence were provided and I helped illustrate two High School yearbooks and sold original Christmas cards.

My first-remembered visits with close kin came at age seventeen when I accompanied mother and her three youngest children on an extended trip to the southwest, spending Christmas with Grandmother Smith in the Arizona home where I was born. The personal contacts made that winter and spring developed into rich and lasting relationships - memories for which I will ever be grateful for.

In Dec. of my 18th year came an answer to a prayer for financial help as well as an unexpected opportunity to "cash-in" on my parent's monetary investments in my future. At Mother's suggestion, I bravely answered a "male-help-only" ad that had appeared for a week in the local newspaper. I got the job and was promptly put to work. I learned a lesson in preparedness when I was retained to work the rest of the day and was afraid to remove my coat because I hadn't bothered to wear my belt. I thoroughly enjoyed my (one-man?) job as a sign-writer and copy-checker in the advertising department of the city's largest store, T. Eaton, Co., and was glad to be able to help in the support of my elder brother Marv. on his E. Can. Mission"

Besides the many involvements my brothers and I had in ward activities, were many pleasant evenings in our home at jazz "jam" sessions with friends playing piano with guitars, banjos and ukeleles added. I even enjoyed serenading myself with uke or a guitar accompaniment.

The coulees, a hilly canyon leading down to the river bed west of town was a favorite picnic grounds with big old cottonwoods, while the artificial lake near our home, and on the east of town,

provided swimming, boating, and along with two city rinks, ice-skating in winter.

By Sept 1930 we had moved to Salt Lake City where we could have the advantage of University Training in an LDS environment without leaving home. Here we had the pleasure of meeting again many relatives and old friends, among them, our former Can. neighbors, the Hugh B. Browns.

I was able to continue art and music studies in Utah as well as attend the University (during 1932-32).

It was in Capitol Hill ward where I met my future husband Ellsworth M. Clark where we were both active during MIA drama and dance activities. While he was in Colorado on a short-term mission, I kept busy in my decorator's job at the S.H. Kress store, doing temple work, and in activities of a girls' Canadian Club. This employment, incidentally came at a very opportune time, providing financial aid to my parents family and helping with my own marriage preparations.

Following our Temple marriage I learned to love my Idaho homes where valuable experiences awaited the next eleven years. Adjustments were necessary at times when some of our homes lacked running water, refrigeration, or even electricity. At least I could better appreciate some of the trials of my pioneer forbears.

Our first child, Norman, was born in Salt Lake City when we visited Ellsworth's folks in late May 1935. Robert, Renee, Dorothy Jean and Charles were born in Victor, Parker and St. Anthony Ida.

The summer of 1936 we vacationed at Cumorah Farm, near Palmyra, N.Y. with my parents. Lois, who had been with us for her senior high school year, returned with us. It was thrilling to see the first pageant presented at the Hill, which was co-authored by my brother Oliver, an Eastern States missionary. I was able to help with publicity posters. Our 15 mos Norman was used in a covered wagon sequence of a pioneer panorama presented one evening at the Hill.

A visit to New York City and Wash. D.C. was arranged for us when mother offered to care for our baby.

In May of 1945 we moved into our large home in S.L.C. Here in the next ten years Mary Anne, John, Richard and David joined our family. Their daddy was home very little due to his extra work as a floral designer and his responsibilities as ward clerk.

But, because I have always been happier at home than in public, I never seemed to mind the long hours of child-rearing. Besides, all our babies had perfect dispositions and grew up with very few illnesses or accidents. I couldn't have asked for a more challenging or rewarding career.

College training and missionary service have come into most of our children's lives and all, to date, have married in the Temple. David, the youngest, now serves in the Korea, Seoul mission.

Church positions through the years have included work in music departments, teaching, and executive experiences in Primary and MIA, publicity (poster) work for all auxiliaries, visiting teaching for R. Soc., ward and stake genealogy committee work, and most challenging of all offering our home to help on the Church's Indian Student Placement Program. The rewards for foster parenting were multiplied when our Navajo son, Cody Black, filled a mission in the Southwest, and later married a fine Navajo church member. Most of his 12 younger brothers and sisters are now Latter-Day-Saints and one of these has also been a missionary.

We cared for a second Navajo teenager for one year, and served as Stake Lamanite assistants for two years. A surprise coronary attack slowed me down briefly in Nov. 1972 at age 61.

We were fortunate to have, for several alternate years, the gentle, stabilizing influence of our "Grandfather" Hyrum Smith in our home. This was especially valuable in the absence of our busy father. Its worth can never fully be measured.

At the beginning of 1975 we are returning to unfinished tasks of completing family records and histories, helping in family research and entertaining ourselves with gardening, painting, reading and writing hobbies. A flight to New Zealand & Calif. in 1974 to visit Robert, Renee, and families was a thrilling event, climaxing a busy life with few vacations.

Besides the Gospel's influence, the three great blessings in my life have been these: Parents who exemplified lasting values and understood our needs, a devoted and cooperative husband, and obedient and responsible offspring.

Seeing our children achieve in their various activities at home, in the church and in their chosen vocations is a source of continuing satisfaction, bringing more riches than we ever dreamed possible.

1987 Apr - Our posterity now numbers 57 gr 5 gr gr - missionary returned or now serving - 5.

1983 & 84 we prepared several pages of pictures for Ells & my lives to distrib to all of our families. JB reunion - Jos city 69, Gr Canhon, Lehi SLC. JNS - SLC, Snowfl.

Can. Hatfield cousins, Az - Vera, Mary, Virginia, George, & Ch J

1985 Sept trip [...]