

PARENTS

Like Nephi I was born of goodly parents. My mother, Hessie Mae Lee, was born and reared in Alabama. She lost her mother when she was 14. This left her with no female relatives, neither sister, grandmother, nor aunt. As a result she became very independent. At 17 she began teaching school. It was her good fortune while she was "living around" to contact Mormon families and missionaries. As soon as she was 21 and didn't need the consent of her bitterly opposing father she was baptized in Mississippi where she was teaching. She immediately began preparations to come to Utah which she did in April 1911 in time for April Conference. She said to me as she talked of this event, "I walked into the Tabernacle and there stood the Prophet of the Lord."

She chose Emery as her first teaching District in Utah since it offered her \$65.00 a month as opposed to \$60.00 offered by the Ogden District. In Emery she met my father, Peter Victor Leroy Bunderson, known all his life as Roy. He was the eldest son of the President of the school board and called "that little red headed Swede" by Mother at first.

Roy was a farmer, a very successful one, who gave all his children a great love for Mother Earth and a firm belief that work was a great blessing. He often counseled us to do our very best and assured us excellence was expected of us. He often told us to do more than was expected and that there was always room at the top, only the bottom was crowded. He was born in Mayfield, Utah but came to Emery as a small child. Surely they were meant for each other. Rural Alabama and rural Utah meeting in that day was not accidental. Mother was a beautiful southern belle—brown eyes, lovely skin, and long luxurious black hair which she could sit on when it was down—quite a contrast to a town full of blond Scandinavians who interpreted her Southern accent as a speech defect. She never became accustomed to the cold weather nor the dry barren desert, but because of her love for the Gospel and her strong Testimony it was Zion.

MY FATHER

My father, Peter Victor Leroy Bunderson, was born 19 August, 1896 in Mayfield, Sanpete County, Utah. He was the eldest child of Peter Victor Bunderson always called P.V. and Sena Neilsen Bunderson. His father was born in Sweden and his mother in Denmark. His grandparents on both sides were converts to the Church. The Peter of course came from being the first son -the Victor was given to all male members of the family because of an incident in the life of his grandfather, John Victor Bunderson. While he was serving the King of Sweden as a young man he and his group fought with such valor that the King pronounced them "the Victors". In spite of all that long name he was known to all simply as Roy. In fact until I started to school we children also called him Roy as Mother, the hired help, and all we associated with did. We called our grandparents Pa and Ma as did the other family members. Our life up to that point didn't include many people outside of those mentioned and those we saw briefly as we attended Sacrament Meeting with Mother.

In 1889 when he was about three his parents with he and his younger sister were called to pioneer across the mountain in what came to be called Emery in Emery County where seven more children were born. When Dad was nine his father was called to serve a mission in Sweden. There were five children in the family at this time. The call made Dad the head of the family as there were no grandparents or uncles closer than Mayfield. Grandmother often told what a responsible son he was. As I grew up I often noticed how his parents and even his married sisters and brothers relied on him for help and advice. I think this must have been partly a result of this early experience.

When Dad was a young man Dad had the reputation of always being the first one to "step" as it was called in those days the new teachers when they came to town in the fall. But when beautiful Miss Lee from Alabama came to town with her long black hair and southern accent he lost all interest in this pursuit. When Mother was told about his reputation by some of the teachers who had been there previously she emphatically stated she wasn't interested in that little "red headed Swede". But she loved to tell about how attentive, kind, and considerate he was when her teacher room mates all left for home for the Christmas holidays and left her alone. He brought something different each night and along with his family provided so many hours of companionship and fun that she had no time to be lonely. This was so typical of Dad. He loved people and loved to surprise them with little extras and jokes. They were married 11 June 1913.

Dad was much more affectionate and playful than Mother. He called me "sister peroot", Vic, sliver, "Alice", "baby" as she was the baby girl for eight years, then when the sixth and last child was a girl he called her the "caboose". I recall when Vic, Alice, and I were pre-schoolers he'd tease us about using his pocket knife on our drop seat underwear if we didn't get them fastened properly. We loved to run and squeal as he chased us.

Dad was a very successful farmer and stockman. He really knew how to make things grow. He raised record breaking crops both in quantity and yield per acre. He gave us all a love and appreciation for Mother Earth and her beauties. He often called our attention to the birds and their song, wild flowers, rocks, trees, etc. His three sons all had a desire to be farmers. He also loved good horses and always broke and trained his own and was considered an expert at it. I remember very vividly watching him work with several vicious horses and hearing grandmother beg him not too.

We lived on the ranch about three miles from town. We usually had hired help, but Dad always had time to see that a horse was saddled for us and we followed him on the farm machinery and hay wagons. Later of course we learned to drive the derrick horse, tromp the hay, milk the cows, and do the other chores, both girls and boys. Uncle Alvin, Dad's brother next to him, was his right hand man during all of our growing up years. His other brothers Uncle Oran and Uncle Joe also worked for him as did Dick Hall whom Dad sent money to in Alabama because he wanted to come to Utah along with his sister Jessie and their parents couldn't bring all of them to Utah at once. The Halls were distant cousins of Mother's and the only relatives who were members of the Church. Other men I especially remember were Edgar Sorenson, "Rassie Albertson, and of course Legrand Beal.

In addition to Dad's affectionate and playful nature the character traits that stand out in my mind are his love and compassion for people and his honesty in dealing with them. He also loved to work-too much so.

He loved to read, especially the daily paper, Shakespeare, and the Bible. He always had a short poem or special thought he had torn from his reading and folded in his pocket to share with us. We found them in all of his pockets when he died.

The two precepts he taught us that I remember best were to always do our best and be willing to do more than was expected on any job or assignment. He also reminded us there would always be room at the top wherever we were, it was only the bottom that was crowded.

Dad wasn't what we would call active in the Church especially by today's standards. He and Mother were married in the Temple and he was a Seventy almost as long as I can remember. He was a Ward Teacher as they were called then and had a unique way of doing his Teaching. He did it the Sunday morning of Report Day which usually meant he mostly visited the men of the family. I remember Bishop Arthur Anderson coming to our home and asking him to be the Scout-master. He was very persuasive as were we children as we thought he would be the best, but for some reason I still don't understand he didn't accept the calling. We were always impressed with the importance of paying tithing-it was to be paid regardless of our circumstances, also Fast Offering and other donations. He was a liberal contributor to Church projects. We attended our Meetings

and were taught to say our prayers. I'm sure this was taught in his home as I remember kneeling around the big dining room table at grandmother's when we visited there over night and having grandfather lead us in prayer. I never heard Dad use profanity. In fact he often corrected our pronunciation and grammar. I especially remember him teasingly calling me "Miss Soda I".

Dad was a good provider. He fed his hay and grain to livestock-pigs, chickens, some times sheep, and always his Herefords. He usually butchered the fat stuff himself and delivered them to meat markets and restaurants in Price. He hired some one to do the pigs-usually Raphael Sorenson; who liked the job as it gave him cash to take his entire family to the weekly movie in our town. I'm sure it often represented the only cash they had during the week. In the early years that he did this it meant 60 miles each way over dirt roads. He always went on Thursdays and stayed over night at Aunt Minnie Fitzgerald's who was the Mormon Papa married. When cars and roads improved the trip took less than a day and then as the boys left for school and mission the trips ceased. He always brought boxes of groceries home to us, his parents, and married sister, Aunt Lucinda Williams-especially those things that weren't available in our little country store. As he made a list of the things they had ordered the "Gaboose" always gave him her list which only she and Dad could read. Many of my friends had their first taste of such things as grapefruit, celery, and corn flakes at my home.

Grandfather Bunderson was 13 when he came with his parents to Zion from Sweden and settled in Mayfield. Since they were pioneers he didn't go to school much after his arrival in America, but he learned to read English and became an avid reader and in time a well educated man who spoke with no trace of an accent which was quite unusual and not true of Grandmother Bunderson. Grandfather believed money spent on books, the Deseret News and education was well spent no matter what the sacrifice. All but 2 of his children spent some time at the Academy at Castle Dale 25 miles away, and three of them went to college and became teachers. Dad cherished his educational experiences at the Academy and often talked about them.. I remember him talking about Latin and trying to explain gender as it applied to the German language to me, and the cultural events. He also talked about his teachers.

Because he was the oldest these experiences were much too brief to suit him. He had no desire to be a professional man, his love was for the soil but he felt education was for everyone. As a result college was always talked of as a goal for all of us. In fact Grace, who didn't like school as well as the rest of us always maintained part of the reason was because when she was growing up that was all the rest of us ever talked about. We all loved to read and since she was nearly 5 years younger than Mack who was next to her this preoccupation with reading and school made life on the ranch pretty dull to her, I guess, though I think none of us were aware of this.

In spite of this we three girls, Grace, Alice and I all became teachers-Alice and Grace both starting out as first grade teachers and I an English and Speech teacher in high school. Mack became a lawyer, Vic a Range management Consultant to the United Nations after graduating and some post-graduate work at the A C as it was called then, now U S U at Logan. Rex also received good training at the A C and is now a successful farmer and stockman. He also served a mission in the Southern States. Just as Mack was thinking of a mission and hoping it would be to England World War II began and he and Vic both served in the Air Force until the end of the War. Rex, on his way home from his mission was visiting Vic who was with the Soil Conservation Service in or near El Paso, Texas, when Pearl Harbor was bombed, December 8, 1941. All 3 boys volunteered and much to Rex's disappointment he was turned down because of eye problems.

The War really took its toll on Dad. Of course hired help was no longer available and food production was very important, so Dad and Rex struggled to produce all they could. Dad had developed heart problems over the years-I'm sure from tension and over work. There was another side to his personality which was a real contrast to his affectionate and fun loving side. He had a driving need to get things done-up at five-all chores done and water tended before breakfast-dinner any time between 12 and 4 and supper when it was too late and dark to do anything else. He was the first farmer in our area to have lights on his tractors. The boys got off the school bus and rode them for hours after school. I remember once after I was married and LaVar and I had gone over home to visit. At that time Mack was the only one home except Grace. About ten o'clock we asked about him and Dad remembered he was out to Moore on the tractor and should have been picked up earlier. This didn't surprise me, but it surely shocked LaVar, who immediately went after Mack.

When the 3 boys were all going to school in Ferron and riding the bus they lived part of the time alone at the ranch. Dad usually had 2 to 3,000 laying hens and the boys took care of these along with other chores before catching the bus each morning. Dad divided his time with them and Mother and Grace, and Alice in town. I was going to high school in Ephraim-working for my board at the J,N,Hansen home. Mother didn't like this arrangement at all and we were soon all moved back at the ranch on a full time basis. Dad never rested. Mother said he drove his teams in his sleep. When his heart began acting up the Doctor told him to slow down, but he didn't relax much until he had a rather serious heart attack. This slowed him down and he began to feel better. But when the War came he began to speed up again and he and Rex produced good crops in unbelievable quantities for 2 men. This was his undoing-while hauling second crop hay in August of 1945 we think he had a heart attack and fell from the truck. Alice, who was following the truck saw him fall-he was unconscious when she reached him and remained so until his death 2 September 1945.

Worry about Vic and Mack and the War in general, I'm sure contributed along with the hard work, to his death. Because of his heart condition he was more comfortable sitting up than lying down and he spent hours in front of the radio listening to the news when he should have been resting.