

MADELEI WILLIAMS THOMPSON

As I have stated in other histories, I was born in Price and grew up in Castle Dale. Simpler life. Simpler times. My friends and I walked on unpaved roads and grassy weed grown sidewalks.

Our first school experience consisted of 9 boys and 5 girls: Lloyd Blackman, Vance Grange, Fred Gregersen, Ronald Huntsman, Lee Jeffs, Kenn Kofford, Phillip Moffitt, Junior Nichols, Art Olsen, Carol Ann Cox, Donna Marie Jeffs, Shauna McClenahan, Judith Peterson and Madelei Williams. We went to kindergarten for a few weeks in the summer and then onto Castle Dale Elementary for first through seventh grades. We then attended South Emery Junior High in Ferron. By the time our class was in the middle of junior high, we had learned some very exciting news. There was going to be a new high school built that would bring North Emery High and South Emery High together! Our class would be the first junior class to occupy the high school. It was a lot of fun to be a part of opening a brand new school.

I really enjoyed high school, especially speech and drama. I enjoyed the school dances and remember our Junior Prom well. I enjoyed working with Mr. Singleton, Shauna McClenahan and Vance Grange on the yearbook and paper staffs. Putting a yearbook and monthly newspapers together was a new experience which we all enjoyed.

After graduation, Shauna McClenahan and I decided to move to Provo and begin college at BYU. This was, indeed, quite a shocking experience for me. Classes of 20 at ECHS to classes of 150 at BYU at times. That first summer, Shauna decided to enroll at Snow College. I stayed at BYU and ran into Carol Ann Cox from Castle Dale, who was also at BYU. She happened to be looking for a roommate. I was very happy to invite her to live with me. It turns out we were the perfect match. We had so much fun together. That tight friendship remains solid and precious to me even today. Carol Ann and I remained as roommates for 2 years. It was a great 2 years.

At the end of the first semester I met our milkman, David Thompson. I always collected the money, but I wasn't so good at getting it paid.

So one day, I came home from school late and Carol Ann had cornered a cute guy in our stairwell and she wouldn't let him go until I came home to pay him for the bill. When I arrived, I apologized profusely, but he didn't seem to care much. The next day he found me in the library studying and, would you guess it? We got married in January of 1968. However, Dave insisted on paying our bills.. Why, I wonder?

After I left school at BYU, I worked as a secretary in many different places. This helped Dave get through school at SUU and be ready to teach school in the junior high in Ferron, Utah. He was the PE teacher, coach of most of the athletic teams, and a shop teacher. I always tell him all he ever did was play around all day and have fun. Which he says is pretty much true. My most interesting secretarial job was being a secretary to a juvenile court judge and a probation officer.

Eventually, we had 4 children, who have not only brought me great joy, but a great sense of contentment. My children are: Eden, who is a psychiatrist, Lara, who teaches computers and PE, Gentry, who was working on his PhD in Drama at BYU when he passed away, and Megan who teaches English. They will always be my greatest joy in life.

After I had worked as a secretary for 6 years, I had finally gotten my degree in education and was hired as a kindergarten teacher at Ferron Elementary. I taught elementary classes for 18 years, until my son passed away. I have never been back. It was the greatest hurt in my life.

My husband, Dave, and I have not traveled a great deal in our lives. But, there is one place we did go with Megan, our youngest daughter, that I will never forget. While teaching at Emery High, she won a scholarship to travel to Washington DC to a workshop all about the Holocaust and the Jews. This was a subject that she was required to teach everyday.

We visited the Federal Reserve Building where they were printing money behind glass walls. It was very interesting, but I could see no weakness in the whole system for anyone to enrich their pockets, no large holes to be seen. Considering the armed guards at the door, I advise you to go get a job.

The most fascinating building we visited was the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. It is unbelievable! It is huge and was filled with everything

that has ever had anything to do with our national history—even down to Dorothy's red glass slippers. It was amazing! I wish I had a week just to tour that building. I hope I get to go again.

The Holocaust Memorial Museum was another building that we decided to go with our daughter on tour. They had armed guards outside the building and very tight security everywhere we went on the grounds. As I close, I must tell you about one thing that I found in the Holocaust building that makes me think deeply about the world we live in.

As you round a corner in the building, there is a very interesting display. At first, the meaning of it is not clear. When you finally understand, you really don't want to know.

It is a huge glass box. It goes up to the ceiling and sits on the floor. It is about 3 and ½ feet wide.

It is filled with dusty, scuffed, used shoes from top to bottom. There are men's shoes, women's shoes, children's shoes and baby-sized shoes. I was seeing the shoes that were left behind by the Jewish people as they were picked up from the train that carried them to the concentration camps and the gas chambers. They were picked up from the ground, where the Jewish people walked on and on to the gas chambers. And after the Jews were dead, the shoes were gathered up. It is a site that makes you very sad, and you hope that this sort of thing never, never happens again.

