

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER, JOHN LOWE BUTLER , BY GLADYS BUTLER LARSEN

One of my first memories of Father was on Camas Prairie. He was coming home, driving up the lane on a cold winter evening, on a load of wood. He had been to the mountains, I believe ^{with} south of us, to secure our winter's supply. He was wearing a his big fur coat, made from the skin of a horse, and worn for many years. The snow was blowing, and I am sure he was cold and tired, but he cared for his team before coming into the house. He loved his horses and always had a fine team to drive on our white top buggy. In the spring I recall walking behind him as he plowed, driving a bay team. I always admired him so much, - so tall and handsome and strong. One day he took me with him in our single buggy to Fairfield or Soldier, talking with me and giving me all his attention on that long ride. He loved the beauties of nature and called our attention to the trees, wild flowers, and birds, etc.

He loved the mountains and we had trips and picnics - but as with the other older children, the trip that stands out in my mind is the one to Magic Dam. Helen Thurber was with us and we picked elderberries until we were sick from eating so many. Uncle H Horace also drove a team and wagon with his family. Father falling off the wagon and onto his gun is vivid in my memory. We were so frightened ~~aby~~ but thankful that the gun ~~isn't~~ fire.

Riding in our first car was an event. I was either in the car or heard about it so vividly, that I can still see Father driving off the road between the bridges of the river, and driving around some before getting back on the road.

Father desired so much to give his children every opportunity to learn and grow. He purchased an organ, while we were on the Prairie, hoping, I believe, that Mother would learn to play it. He arranged for me to take lessons from Elva Olson, and I rode horseback to her home for the lessons. Before we left the Prairie, I was organist for the Primary. After we moved to Acequia he purchased a fine piano. We had lessons from Miss Elva Cooley and later I took a year of lessons from a teacher in Rupert. Grant had a beautiful voice and was given some vocal lessons. Edith and I were hopefully given a few vocal lesson, but that was ~~rather hopeless~~ ^{didn't take}, but Father tried. As teenagers, we had such fun singing and playing ~~the~~ around the piano. Dad loved that and encouraged us in every way. He would ask me to play "Woodland Echoes" and say that that made it all worth it. He told me ~~once~~ after we had the store in Acequia that paying for that piano was one of the hardest bills he had to pay. I think that he had just made the last payment, and times had begun to be hard for him.

I have always admired Father for the honor and care he gave his Mother and also his Father's second wife, Aunt Sarah. He provided a comfortable home just across the road from our home for his Mother and his younger brothers and sisters. Aunt Sarah lived in a house in Manard. He loved his brothers and sisters and they in turn loved him dearly. A few years ago I told Uncle Taylor that he reminded me so much of my Father. He answered, "That is a compliment, but I will never be the man your Father was."

When I was 13 or 14 years old, Father arranged for Grant and me to go to Salt Lake City to visit Aunt Sadie and our Richard Cousins. That was an eventful trip and we were so excited to have that long train ride. He said as we were getting ready to depart, ~~But~~ "Put your arms around Aunt Sadie and tell her that I love her very much."

Father was always concerned for our safety. One summer day when we lived on the farm at Acequia, I drove the horse and buggy, took some other girls, probably Edith and Alice Anderson to a Bee Hive activity at the home of LaPriel Owens. We were learning out door cookery, burying a pot of beans in a fire hole in the yard. It was late when we started home, and dark by the time we reached Acequia. We drove thru town and across the railroad track. On the other side where the roads divided, we could see a man standing right in the middle of the road. We were very frightened and whipped up the horse to get by him. He reached out and grabbed the horse by the bridle. I thought I would die of fright. Then he laughed- and it was Father, worried about our being out so late.

In Twin Falls when I was sixteen, I had been working away from home doing housework for people and dating some. In the fall I was working at Wright" Store on Saturdays. One Sat. morning as I was leaving home, I told my folks they didn't need to come after me as I had a date. What a smart aleck teenager I was! When the store closed at 9:00 P.M., My date was there, and also my Father. He went to the show with us, tho didn't sit in the same place, and after the show took me home with the horse and buggy. I felt angry and humiliated. Later when I had a teen age daughter to give me concern, I could understand so well his feelings. How thankful I am that he was concerned about me and where I was and my companions,

My memories of Father will be different from those of the younger children. As I was a child and growing up, he was a strong and vital man/strong in his confidence in himself and his ability. The illness that took him to the Mayo Clinic was the exception to this. That time was one of worry to all of us. What a happy day it was when he came home. Later when business reverses came, he lost his self image and felt like a failure and a beaten man, But so many memories I have of him, he was a leader in the ward and community, and looked up to by those around. In Acequia he was on the School Board, a County Commissioner, and then Bishop. In Twin Falls he was a High Councilman. Wherever he was, he was known to be honest and a man of his word. At his funeral services, it was mentioned by more than one that he was completely honest, that his word was as good as his bond. I learned a lesson in honesty from him that I have never forgotten. When I came home from my first year of teaching, my bank account was in a mess, and I had over drawn my account. He was very stern with me and told me how dishonest that was. He said he had never written a check without having funds to cover it. That was a lesson I needed.

He denied himself that we might have enjoyment and the things we needed. On one Fourth of July in Hollister, he sent all of the family to Twin Falls to the celebration, he staying home alone. Another time he took all of the family to the mountains for a week's outing. He came back and took us home. He must have longed to camp in those

mountains for he loved mountains. Two different times he sent Mother to Salt Lake to meet us and enjoy a visit, once attending the State Fair. She had the new clothes she needed, but he spent as little on himself as possible. I have his last pair of glasses, patched and taped together, mute evidence of his self denial.

Although Father didn't have a good education, he was interested in all that went on, and had a good memory. How I loved to sit at the table after dinner and hear him tell stories of his younger days and tales others had told him. After he had radio he always listened to the 10:00 O'clock news before going to bed, so he was well informed and understood the events of the world. That was in addition to the reading he did. When I was away from home and needed to understand some current economic problem, I would think, "If only I could have Father to explain that to me." He was not a good writer, but I could always expect a letter for my birthday. He was always so loving to me and tried to build my ego. He would often tell me how proud he was of me and how much he loved me. One time when I was at school at Albion, Uarda Black returned from a weekend at Twin Falls and told me that someone had told her that I was one of the finest persons he knew. Of course I was curious. Then she said, "Your Father!"

He could also put me in my place when I needed it. About the second year I had been away teaching, I came home indoctrinated with ideas of worldly things, of Socialism, and other far out ideas. He listened to me awhile then said, "My little girl, forget all this trash, and get down on your knees and pray to your Heavenly Father." Another time when I was home, I was feeling rather superior because I was learning to be tolerant. When the question of smoking came up, I said I couldn't see so much wrong with it, I knew a lot of fine men who smoked. He took me aside and really read me the riot act. He said he had several sons he was trying to raise and he didn't want me to put any such ideas in their heads.

I worked in the Acequia Store for, I guess, two summers. He was so good to people, and also being the Bishop, he let people charge merchandise when they needed help. When we moved to Twin Falls, hundreds of dollars were on the books. As I was leaving for school at Albion Normal School, he gave me a list of these people and the amount they owed, and told me if I could collect any of it, I could use it for my school expenses. I wrote many letters but never even received one answer.

This is something that Aunt Jane told me. She said John was tall, broad shouldered and had big feet. She said he was 6 ft. 2½ in., tho I have always thought 6 ft. 3 in. One time while working in the mine he got hit on the head and always had headaches after that. He liked to play jokes and was always pulling some prank. When Jane was three ~~she fell into a deep wash~~ while living in Jericho, she was playing in the meadow where there was a swift creek. She fell into a deep wash and John got down in there and pulled her out. She had heard Father say that he first saw mother at her father's Albert King Thurber's, funeral, and she was such a sad looking little girl. One of Father's jokes- Jane & Taylor were playing "Run, Sheep Run" with some other children one evening. It got late and the curfew rang, but they kept on playing. Then a big man

loomed out of the darkness. They thought it was the Town Marshall, and they were so scared that they ran home as fast as they could and hid under the bed. But it was their big brother John, having a good laugh.