

Remembering Grandparents

One of the voids in my youth was not having relationships with any of my four grand parents. I was born on 12 January 1939. My maternal grand father, Gomer Morgan Richards, died on 20 October 1940. My paternal grand mother, Nellie Quibell Pusey, died on 28 April 1941. My maternal grand mother, Sarah Butler Richards, died on 4 July 1942. I do remember the long train trip with my mother, Dorothy, to attend the funeral of her mother. My paternal grand father, John Sidney Pusey, died on 22 December 1949. Therefore, three of my four grand parents were gone before I was three and a half, right in the middle of World War II. I was ten when my Grandpa Pusey passed away, but I was living in Washington, D.C. and we never made a trip to Salt Lake City in those early post-World War II years. So, my knowledge of my grand parents is extremely limited to a few stories passed on by my parents, who didn't talk very much about their parents.

My mother, Dorothy Richards Pusey, related the following stories about her mom and dad, Gomer and Sarah Richards.

Gomer Richards had one of the very first automobiles in Utah, one of the first ten in the state, as I recall the story. He loved to do his own maintenance and/or take things apart to see how they worked. He would lay out a tarp in the back yard and neatly arrange the pieces as he disassembled various parts on the car. As the story goes, more than once he had parts left over after he thought the reassembly was complete. It sounds like Gomer was the ultimate tinkerer.

Dorothy liked to reminisce about their family automobile adventures to visit relatives in Richfield, about 160 miles south of Salt Lake City. With very few cars in the entire state, the roads were still just horse and buggy and wagon trails. They never made the trip to Richfield without having a flat tire and often they had more than one along the way. The kids loved it because they could go exploring or have a picnic while dad repaired the flat. Usually it was not just a matter of putting on the spare tire. Gomer had to dismount the tire from the rim, patch the inner tube, remount the tire and pump it up by hand. It was a time consuming process.

When Sarah Butler Richards was pregnant, she carried her babies way inside, so it was not obvious to the other children that a

baby was coming. Since it was the custom in the Richards home, at least, to not talk about such things, Dorothy told the story that one evening some of the children were moved out of their bedroom, in the family home on the avenues in Salt Lake City, so a lady (the midwife) could stay over night. No other explanation was given, but the next morning they had a new baby sister, Franzetta.

When Sarah was considerably older, she developed a medical condition for which her doctor prescribed a special beer to give her some relief. Being a devout believer in the Word of Wisdom, Sarah very much disliked this medicinal use of an alcoholic beverage, but used it out of necessity. As a young boy, I remember a wooden crate of empty beer bottles in our garage. Since no one I knew in our family drank beer, my mom, Dorothy, explained that the beer bottles were from a visit to Washington, D.C. by Grandma Richards before I was born. I don't think we got rid of those empty beer bottles until we moved in 1955.

I have no recollection of any stories about my Grandpa and Grandma Pusey.

I do look forward to the day when I can build a relationship with each of my grand parents, and that will have to start with my being introduced to them by my parents, I would suppose.

John Richards Pusey