

MY STORY

By Olive Butler Smith

(As dictated to her daughter Frances Smith Christensen – September 1966)

I was born in Richfield, Utah, January 26, 1885. My parents were John Lowe Butler II and Nancy Francetta Smith. I was the sixth child of a family of ten children, six girls and four boys. John Lowe III, Francetty, Sarah (Sadie), Caroline (Carrie), Horace Calvin, Olive, Jane, Eva, Kenion Taylor and Leland Thomas.

The first ten years of my life we lived in Richfield during the winter school months and during the summer on a cattle, sheep and horse ranch at the mouth of the Sevier canyon located between Joseph and Elsinore, Utah.

During the early part of his marriage, my father had prospered quite well in southern Utah around Parowan and Panguitch, as his brothers grew up, he took them into partnership. Their holdings included a sawmill, a shingle mill, cattle and sheep. This enabled them to employ men both winter and summer; the sawmill in the winter and sheep and cattle in the summer. James was in charge of the ranch in Panguitch, Tom in charge of the sheep and cattle and my father in charge of the lumber and shingle mill. Of course their efforts were combined when needed.

One of the things they did as "Butler brothers" was to ship in purebred stock of draft horses and riding horses. They built up a band of purebred Morgan horses that were considered the finest band of horses in southern Utah, and some would say - in the west. So long as the brothers worked together as a company, they did very well financially and amassed holdings considered to be worth a fortune. After Tom had gone on three missions and died on his way home, they separated their holdings.

My father was not the kind to talk of how much he did to help people, but I picked up bits of information throughout my life that showed me how much he did help people. My father had many, many other wonderful characteristics.

I can remember when he would come home with supplies of food such as large bags of rice, molasses, beans, salt pork, bacon, cracked wheat, sugar, flour and other foods. He would take part of these supplies out to the sheep men and the cowboys. Father and mother were in the habit of butchering a beef and seeing to it that the widows and needy were remembered with a portion of it. He would leave a good supply at the ranch for our family which would last for many months.

He had chuck wagons and sheep wagons equipped with beds and stoves. He did shoe repairing for himself as well as for his men; also, his own blacksmithing and upkeep of his wagons and equipment. We were never in want for the necessities of life (however, when I was very small, I thought we were poor because we did not have a big, beautiful glass bay window). I'll never forget the blue-eyed blonde haired doll I got for Christmas. It was so pretty.

In talking to a woman of 80 years, she told me she remembered when her father had the co-op store in Parowan, he said that "John Butler was the most generous man he knew." One person said about father, "He was honest to a fault. He gave too much away."

When the first temple in Utah was opened in St. George, Jim and John and all of their sisters and their husbands made a special party of it and all went to the temple to be sealed. They had their picture taken at this time as a group. Tom was not married and did not go with them, so for the picture, they took a stamp picture and put it in the family picture to make it complete. They were diligent temple workers and later made many trips by team and wagon to the Manti and Salt Lake City temples. They would stop in Richfield from their homes in Parowan and

Panguitch with their horses and sheep wagons. Every year for many years, mother would have the house all cleaned up and we would look forward to them coming. Some of our family would join them.

I wore red wool flannel petticoats which were considered a luxury. Mother and the girls never thought of working in the fields, or for anyone else. Father felt it was enough to keep up their religious training, schooling and the art of homemaking. All of the girls learned to ride a horse and to drive a team of horses such as modern girls drive cars. We all learned cooking, breadmaking, sewing, spinning and dyeing wool, and carding it into a roll.

We would make bats for quilts, then make the quilts as well as make yarn for wool socks. Mother and the older girls would knit the socks. They also did candle making. We would tear and sew rags together, then hire a weaver to weave them into carpets.

One of the interesting things I remember was when mother and daughters house-cleaned they would whitewash the walls and put clean carpeting down with clean straw for padding which would have more spring than modern carpet. It would be from wall to wall, and each year this would be taken up and a new padding put down. The Nottingham lace curtains were washed, stretched and re-hung with a beautiful decoration on the hook that held the draped curtains back. It was a large room with several windows. Mother made use of her front room, unlike some people that would not allow children in the front room. She allowed children in her front room at various times.

Our living room was divided into three parts, the fireplace in the middle of the end of the room. On one side was a storage space to put large chunks of pine logs and above that shelves to the ceiling. On the other side was a pioneer secretary painted the color of sagebrush. We made a semi-circle of chairs around the fireplace and I would sit on a three-legged stool and loved to listen to their stories which included the days of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young coming across the plains. Our family brought 11 across the plains and none died. This included some cousins.

When I was about 10 years old, Father invested all of his holdings into a "Dream Mine" and lost it. Leaving the family destitute, with the oldest son, John Lowe, on a mission and the next boy, Horace Calvin, only 16 years old with a low paying job (\$25.00 a month). The mine ran about \$2000 to the ton and was a very promising investment, but this a different story and I will go into this more in detail later. As a result of this reversal in our financial situation, I started to work at about age 12 and worked in various homes where there was illness or the lady of the house had a baby and needed help.

When I was about 11 years of age and the family was at the Butler Beck Mine, I was very ill and was supposed to stay quiet and not exercise. My father was not well either so after we read all the books we had at the mine, he taught me to play cribbage. This is a difficult game but I learned it and enjoyed it very much. Father also fixed up a good place by the fishing hole. He took the bark off a log for me to sit on where they could watch me from the house. The other children didn't bother or tease me so I would sit quietly there and catch fish for my breakfast. Father was very upset over me but tried very hard to not let me know it. At first, they felt I should not go to the mountains but the doctor felt it would be better to be away from people. As I remember, I tried to use the egg beater and cried because I couldn't.

Thinking back now, I may have had a slight stroke as I had blood clots and dragged my right foot and my left hand was not right. They also thinned my blood with quinine. Mother would take a piece of dough and flatten it out and put a measured amount of quinine in the center of the dough. She would fold it up and if one slight bit was left on the outside, it was really bitter. I shall never forget it. Father and mother put their hands on my head and prayed for me every day for a month. By the end of the month, I was well. There were two other girls in Richfield that had the same thing, Hilda Oberg and a Clark girl. They both died.

When I was 12, I made my first money working for Sister Farnsworth doing housework and cooking. I learned quite a bit about cooking for my age. I could already bake bread which I had learned from mother. I worked there for about two weeks and also helped her can fruit. I got a quarter and a big water bucket full of tomatoes and plums to take home. I couldn't go to school at this time because I was needed to work and help care for father, who was ill.

During the summer months, brother Horace had a summer job at the mine for \$25.00 a month as watchman. The family moved there each summer to be with him. We took care of cows for other people and made butter and cheese and sold some of the products.

When I was 13 years old, while at the mine, father took very ill. I was sent home with him to care for him until mother could bring the family down. She felt father could get better care at home. He called me his little nurse, but I guess I wasn't a very good one at first because I burned the bottom of his feet with a mustard plaster. I remember feeling a little sad that I didn't have many friends that came to see me. I was usually away for the summer and was so busy taking care of father when we got home, I didn't have time to play or visit with friends.

When mother got home, it was decided that I would take father to Manti to the temple to see if he could get better; he had so much faith. He had dropsy or kidney trouble and arthritis.

At this time, my brother John was on a mission. Father was broke and the family destitute. My Aunt Adaline Butler Tuttle was a temple worker there. Father was so poorly and I was so frail that I'll never forget how I choked to keep from crying, so deeply I felt my responsibility. Father needed assistance in getting on the train and pillows to support him while traveling on the train. It was my first trip on the train and I shall never forget how kind Brother Horn was to me. Brother Horn was a high official in the stake and seemed to sense our problem so he sat by us and gave me aid. He would also point out the interesting places through the train window as we traveled and told us where many early pioneer spots of interest were located, such as, Indian wars, accidents and other things that made the trip more interesting. It took our minds away from our problems.

We stayed with Aunt Adaline for about two weeks. We held family prayer daily and took many trips to the temple. Many neighbors were kind enough to furnish transportation to the temple, as father was unable to walk. We stayed until after Thanksgiving and our money was nearly gone. We paid a neighbor 10 cents to drive us to train to return home. Father bought the ticket and had a nickel left which he used to buy a newspaper. He loved to read. When we went to get on the train, we could not find the ticket. This was a very upsetting experience since the train had to pull out without us. He finally discovered the ticket mixed up with his newspaper in his pocket. There was nothing we could do but walk back to Aunt Adaline's until the next train the next day. Aunt Adaline offered to walk slow with him if I wanted to walk on ahead. She stopped at several friends houses along the way to visit but really it was for him to rest. I was walking on ahead, looking down at the ground feeling ever so sad when I saw a dime laying on the gravel road. I picked it up and was so happy to be able to run back and tell them I had the money to pay for the neighbor to take us back to the train station the next day.

Before Christmas, during the fall, father's feet were so swollen from the dropsy, he had to wear his overshoes instead of his shoes when he would take walks. He made his last walking trip on the day the tabernacle burned. I remember being with him as he stood and watched it burn. He was wearing the cape that President Joseph Smith had blessed for his father's family to use during illnesses. He had inherited this cape from his father. This was also the first time other people, including his own brother, knew he was ill.

Father gradually grew worse. Uncle Jim came down when he heard he was in bed. The backup of water in his system had gotten so bad, his eyes bulged and he could not close them. Jim wept when he saw him. Father was so ill at this time. He asked mother if she had enough money for a can of peaches. Mother had a dime and sent me to Spriggs store to get it. I was so

embarrassed when Jess Bean, the clerk, told me it was 15 cents that I turned to walk out. The manager called me back and said to let me have it for the dime.

I was lonesome for friends as I was not in school. A friend from Joseph wanted to come and spend Christmas with me but we couldn't let her come since it took all the money we could scrape together for medicine for father. His condition had worsened by Christmas and he was completely bedridden. I would sleep the early evening hours as it was hard for me to stay up late, then mother would take over. Mother had injured her shoulder by chopping on a big knot. The pain from this bothered her the rest of her life.

This was the most difficult time I ever remember for financial difficulties. Most people were not aware of our circumstances since it was too difficult for mother and myself to let anyone know. John was on a mission and Horace was working at the Butler Beck mine trying to do the work that would enable us to hold on to it.

We had always had candy and very nice things at Christmas. This Christmas we had no sugar to make candy and money for toys. Jane and I talked it over and decided we would just have to do something. We dug around in cupboards and found a few marbles, a top and a broken harmonica. Someone brought down a log with some pine limbs on it. We used these limbs to fashion a Christmas tree. Found some bright paper and cut straw in little pieces. Then strung bits of paper and straw to decorate it. We took some blueing and painted the top. We found a broken pocket knife for KT (Kenion Taylor). We also found a broken doll head and fixed a body and made a doll for Eva. So - Christmas morning, they were awakened with a cow bell to get up and see what Santa had brought them.

During father's illness, Lee was less than 2 year old. He would sleep at the foot of father's bed and would take his meals with him frequently. He had a little red hobnailed mug that he drank his milk from and would often give his "Poppa" a drink of water from his mug. Close to the end, when Lee gave him a drink, it gurgled in his throat and Momma said he was too sick to drink so I had little Lee give him a drink from the mug with a spoon. Lee insisted on this because he said it would make his Poppa better. The tears rolled down father's cheeks so that we knew that he knew what was going on. By this time, he was unable to speak.

We did everything we could to help him and spent our last \$5 for medicine in hopes it would help save him. Brother Gledhill came. John T. Butler, son of Jim, was very sweet and kind by relieving me for a half a night towards the end. The bishop sent a load of wood as the fire had to be kept going all night. Brother Ogden came and said he would not last long so he would go to fetch Horace and try to catch him before he left for the mountains from the last ranch, to snow shoe to the mine.

Mother came to me before 6:00am and said, "Father is suffering so much, I can't stand it any longer. You go watch him while I go into the bedroom and pray for the Lord to take him." When she came back, she told me to go wake the children to tell them their Poppa was dying and to come and kiss him goodbye. All of the children were sound asleep and to awaken them with such a startling message set them all crying. Of course, this upset me and I started crying with them. We all went in and kissed him goodbye and he died a few minutes later while we were all there beside him.

The first thing in the morning, mother sent me to the post office to see if the \$5 had already gone out in the mail but it was gone. We had no money and no food in the house and Horace hadn't returned yet. This was December 30, 1898 that father passed away. Mother sent me to a neighbor for bread. The neighbor didn't have any bread so she made graham muffins and sent them over and we had muffins and milk.

While I was at the post office, Zetty came. She said she knew father had died as she had felt his presence go through her room about the time that he passed away. She was "expecting"

but insisted that her husband, John, bring her right over. Mother sent me over to tell Uncle Jim, Joe Thurber, and Will Ogden.

Horace got home that night. Brother Will Ogden was able to reach him before he left for the mine. Father was laid out in the living room with a sheet over him. Horace did not come into the kitchen where we were, but through the front door. It was such a shock for him to see father that he stayed in a dark corner weeping bitterly. This is where I found him. He was such a sweet person with a lovely disposition and loved his father very much. I never remembered him ever being irritable. He also had the name of being very honest in his dealings. Even though he was only 16 years old, he had high hopes of having the mine furnish us with not only the necessities but plenty of luxuries. He arrived home to find his father gone and a large family to take care of with only 15 cents in his pocket. This was a very hard moment for Horace. He just hadn't realized that father was sick enough to die.

Emma Christensen and others brought in food. Sister Thurber brought in some coats and helped us get ready for the funeral. Sadie and Carrie came from Salt Lake City where they were working. Brother Horn was also good to us. He had a hearse buggy and didn't charge to take father's body to the cemetery in Richfield where he was buried. Poppa's greatest grief was to leave his family destitute and for his girls to go to work.

I worked for Zetty and other women in Richfield. Carrie went to work for a woman in Richfield. Horace had to go back to the mine where he made \$25.00 per month. We lived on this and sent money to John. John was released in the spring and sent home to help the family. This is when the family picture has taken. We were always sorry we had not had this done when father was alive.

One of the things that really affected my life was the conversations with my father during this time spent nursing him. He had a desire that his children live a clean life. He had the feeling that I would have a hard time, especially with John away from home. He knew that I had been working some and would have to go to work and would encounter a lot of temptations. He cautioned me to be prayerful and to withstand these temptations. So I made up my mind that I would keep the word of wisdom, pay my tithing, and to keep myself morally clean. This really had an affect on me as I was able to do this and was protected many times through my prayerfulness and the thoughtfulness and guidance of my brothers and sisters.

When I was 14, I went to Salt Lake City and took over the cooking, including bread making, all housework, ironing, but no washing for \$2.50 per week, working for Mrs. Woodruff. She was an apostate, so I never got to go to Sunday School, Mutual, or any of the church activities. She was good to me until her baby was born. Then she did not treat me very well. She also did not treat her own mother very well. I worked for her for six months and did all cooking except Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners.

At 15, I went to work for Mrs. Judge McCarty in Richfield. They had two little boys and were easy to cook for. They had plain meals and canned fruit. I did the washing, ironing, housework and cooking for \$3.00 per week. I got some clothes to wear and she gave me some things to make over for Jane and Eva. My life began to look a little brighter. Judge McCarty wanted to help a girl that was an orphan, so he hired her, but he also wanted to see me get more schooling, so he kept me there to help me with my schooling. His help enabled me to skip the last half of the seventh grade, which I hadn't been able to finish, and go on to the eighth grade. I passed with good credits.

While I was at McCarty's. Birdie Hessie, Judge's sister, came to visit. She was a very good LDS and told me her father was reconverted back into the church by my father. Judge McCarty's father had left the church because of some dishonesty and feelings in the United Order. My father used to stop and see them on the way home from the mine.

He was a very intelligent man, but his wife and son, Billy, (the Judge) never came back to the church. He used to say, "if only Billy would come back into the church, I would be the happiest man in the world." So the Judge and his wife were not members and Mother did not want to have them take me to raise as she thought they had done so much already to help us.

On the 4th of July at McCarty's, we all went to the program where he was to take part. After the program, I was with Norman McCarty which really made the other girls, especially the older ones, jealous. At this time Orson (Christensen) dropped Josie as he had his feelings hurt because she was paying too much attention to Norman, and gave his attention to me. He had a buggy and took me around which really made me a big shot. We picked up Orson's cousin, Becky Christensen and this got me started going with Orson. No one would date me and I looked upon him as a brother and felt we should break it off and let him go back to Josie. I didn't feel mature enough to accept anyone. Also, I was the oldest one at home to help mother. (P.S., Orson and Josie married and had a fine family).

After graduation from the 8th grade in Richfield, Horace and John were working at the Annie Laurie mine in Kimberly. They heard that they needed a school teacher for the summer, as the town had mushroomed and they had 25 students. They would take anyone with an 8th grade education, so I got the job and taught school until fall when the official school teacher came in.

I was 16 at this time and the 25 students ranged from first grade through the eighth grade. The oldest girl was about my age. The Annie Laurie company hired me to teach without being an official teacher. I just had a recommend from the County Superintendent and used whatever books the children had. Later years, I encountered some of the girls, grown up then, tell me how they learned geography from me by going to the sandy shore of the creek nearby where I taught them how to take a stream of water and bring it around to make an isthmus, a straight, a peninsula and a gulf. Actually, we were just playing on the sandy shore of the mountain stream. They had a lot of fun and so did I. They said they never forgot how to answer questions about the isthmus, straight, peninsula and gulf. They could also teach this geography lesson to some of the other children while I taught another class. Some people thought we were wasting time playing in the creek. I also taught arithmetic, history or taught other lessons from whatever books they had.

The school has a log cabin located on a side hill close to a creek. We had a cowbell to call the children. It had one room with a stove and desk in one end for me. They had long wooden benches that went to the wall on one side then an isle down the other side of the room. We had children of the miners, and then he had some highly nervous, explosive children of the "Cousin Jacks, " as they were called. "Cousin Jacks" was the nickname given to the relatives of the miners that came from England. A man would come to America from England, work his way up to a foreman job, then send to England for as many relatives as he could hire. I was told that these families, shifting from one mine to another and living all the time in the higher altitudes, caused some of the children to be more nervous and excitable. Some of them would not talk plain and would stutter. They needed someone who had patience and would talk calmly to them. I was very friendly with them and tried to help.

I worked with one boy who stuttered and got him to speaking much better. I even checked him to see if was tongue tied. Actually, I had to be part time parent, nurse. and teacher. Some of them were like little scared rabbits. It took a lot of patience, love and understanding. I saw to it they had some fun at recess. On the 4th of July, we gathered wild flowers and decorated the dance hall. The men from the mill helped to provide refreshments and we had a good time together socially.

It was quite an experience, but a wonderful opportunity, for an 8th grader to undertake, teaching a group of children with such a variety of ages, interest and intellects. The regular

teacher who came in the fall, complimented me on the way I handled the children under such unusual circumstances.

That same summer in Kimberly, I also taught Sunday school. We had a small branch of the LDS church with I. E. Thurber as the branch president. He was my sister Carrie's husband.

For summer recreation, we rode horseback and rode around the race track. They had regular racing at times with betting. We would always yell for our favorite horse, Brandy, to win. We also had some wonderful dancing. One of Jane's favorite memories was a large smooth rock situated above everything. We called it Solomon's rock. There were some big trees nearby where we had a big swing. The boys would push us in the swings and sometimes get "daring" and wind us up in it. That would give us a big thrill. One of the boys had a guitar and we would all sit on Solomon's rock and sing. This was a real "Swinging and Singing" group.

I stayed at Kimberly that winter and kept house for John & Horace. Bertha was down in the valley with her Mother expecting baby son, Grant. They had lost their first child and didn't want to take any chances with the high altitude. I spent two winters at Kimberly and enjoyed it very much as we had so much fun sleigh riding and dancing.

Somewhere between the end of Olive's story and 1904 (19 years of age) she went to Salt Lake City and attended Brigham Young University during 1904 and 1905. The following remarks are from Jesse L Smith's story; he was living in McGrath Alberta, Canada.

"In the fall of 1906, I went to Salt Lake City and entered night school at the YMCA and was working days. My sister, Minnie and her husband, Frank Bird lived there and I lived with them. Father and Mother came down during this winter and we went back around April or May. While in Salt Lake City during this time, I met Olive. She was living with her sister Sadie, whose husband, Gomer Richards, had served in the Eastern States Mission with my Father, Jesse Lucius Smith. They had a party in February of 1907 at the Richards' home for all returned missionaries and converts from the mission. My father and my and mother, as well as Minnie and Frank, were invited and I went along with them. This was the first time I met Olive.

A few nights later, we went to a dance at Salt Air. At the dance were Olive, her sister, Jane, Fanny Harris, her sister, Angie Donaldson and Ada McGregor and I danced with all of the girls. Later, Frank Bird was going to Nevada to work and wanted to go out a little before he left so he suggested I ask the Butler girl and go some place with him and Minnie. So I called and Sadie said she wasn't there but at Sewing School so I called her on her lunch hour and made a date for the Salt Lake Theater. Before Frank left for Nevada, we all went out to several other things.

After a couple of dates, my mind was made up. This was the girl I wanted to make my wife. We dated every night for three weeks. Right after the April conference, Olive went to Idaho. Her brothers and Mother were there and I went back to Canada. So we had to do all the rest of our courting through the mail.

In the spring of 1907, Father and my brother sold the rest of our holdings in McGrath and moved to Imbler, Oregon. I went to Saskatchewan and took charge of the contracting outfit building the railroad. Later on I left and went to Imbler for a few weeks, then went on through Camas Prairie and on to Salt Lake City where I met Olive. On January 17, 1908. we were married by John R. Wider in the Salt Lake City Temple for time and eternity. Katheryn Dugel accompanied us and started the newlyweds off with good cheer by telling us it was bad luck to be married on Friday, the 17th. I said, "That certainly is a consoling thought to start our married life."

Olive went to Idaho where her mother and brothers lived while I went to Imbler, Oregon to find work and a place to live. The first two years we were married, we worked with Father and Dewey, my brother, in the contracting business, logging for saw mills and building canals and roads.”

[Note: I think Olive did most of the cooking for the men who worked with them. -- *Helen Baker*]