

LIFE HISTORY OF CYNTHIA DURFEY EARL

In my opinion a history should portray a word picture of a person, enough in detail that their posterity in years to come might visualize them, their depth of character, their contribution to the world and people around them, their courage to live up to their conviction and ambition, their disposition and many other characteristics that clearly describe a person so that their qualities and example will live after them.

That isn't so easy to do on a personal status writing one's own history, has to be from self analysis and they are not expected so I prefer combing of the two.

I, Cynthia Durfey was born on a blustery cold day March 30, 1892 in Beaver Dam, Box Elder County. Mother always said I was blown in on the March wind. Years later Mother described that fateful day to me. I was her third child, she laughingly said she new I would be stubborn and useful, because I refused to enter this cold dreary world, she was in labor 5 days. Mrs. Jimet from Brigham was the mid wife, she gave up and Uncle Henry Bowen almost killed the horse getting Dr. Armsby from Logan. It was very seldom that a Dr. spent his precious time delivering babies in those days that was a woman's job, Mother came through the terrible ordeal all right, and I was to stubborn to die, then or sense. I was christened Cynthia after my grandmother, my fathers mother, I am afraid I lack a lot of the courage of my grandmother. She walked all the way across the plane and pushed a handcart most of the way.

My childhood was happy and gay. Early in life we were taught to share, work as well as play as most big families do. There were 2 older than me and 4 younger (one died at birth) 10in all. My father's first wife (she was my mother's sister) died leaving 3 children. Mother added their 3 to her 9 making 12 in all. There was no half brother or sister, we were one big happy family, father was a good provider, we didn't have too many luxuries, but all of the necessities. We were all taught to work. When I was young my main job, was babies - babies. There was always one that couldn't walk. Everywhere I went one went in my arms or little wagon or baby buggy. One time I put my sister Iva, she could just sit alone, under the tub. Oh! I propped it up with a rock so she would have air. I gave her a pan of quesberries to play with, while I went to the orchard for apples. Talking about quesberries we had a long row of bushes and every forenoon while they were baring, we would pick them by the buckets full and set in the shade on the East of the house all after noon and pick them over. And mother would bottle them in 2qt. bottles, then in the fall it would be the same with blue plums. Mother and Aunt Nell Bowen would drive to Brigham in the white top buggy and get strawberries and bring them home in big crocks. We kids could eat the mashed ones in the bottom.

Then there was the peddler wagon that came every Monday, how we kids would hunt for eggs the hens would lay in the hay in the straw and in the willows back of the barn, stick candy would be our reward. Father killed pigs in the fall cured it in brine and smoked it and buried it in the wheat bin. In the winter he would kill a beef hang it in the screen porch to freeze and we would saw it as we needed it.

I can't remember when religion wasn't very important in our home. Father was a member of the High Council in Bear Lake Stake. Then when the Bear River Stake was organized the wards were divided and he was made Bishop of the Beaver Dam Ward, a position he held for 16 years. Being a Bishop's daughter isn't always easy, so much is expected, so many judgments are passed by friend and foes alike, "Just watch the Bishop's daughter." He was released from being Bishop and ordained a Patriarch, the first one in the Bear River Stake.

My Father made it a point to Baptize us on our 8th birthday regardless of the weather, he always said, if you were following God's plan, all would be well, and it was. He cut a hole in the ice in the Bear River in February and baptized two of my brothers and the ice was on the edge of the river bank when it was my turn in March, that way our records were easy kept.

When ever we were ill, we were sure Father's blessing would heal us. I remember when my sister just younger than I was so ill the Dr. said she didn't have a chance, she was smothering with pneumonia. I can see it yet I was 6 years old and it was in the afternoon and Father told we children to kneel down he took her in his arms walking the floor with her trying to calm her smothering as he walked he prayed, slowly she quieted and went to sleep. I remember so vividly asking my Mother, if that was a miracle and she said yes, it was God's miracle, some times I think we try too often in this day and age, to protect young children from sorrow fearing that it may have a disturbing effect on them.

I remember one time, I was sent to take my brother's lunch to him, down to the river bottom farm, I had to cross the railroad track as I did most every morning behind the cows to the pasture. In those days, there were trenchant men always walking the tracks, for that was the shortest way. My brother said to me, when you are afraid just pray and the Lord wont let any thing happen to you. I believed him thoroughly and the fear left me. How wonderful to have child like faith.

I had a happy adolescent life, plenty of friends with both boys and girls. I felt privileged to be brought up in a happy home. If my father or mother ever disagreed it was behind closed door. Obedience was a must in our home and came naturally, Father wouldn't allow quarreling among we children, and Mothers mild sweet manner and gentle voice rendered contention impossible, Oh that I could be as gentle and lady like as my Mother.

The evenings were a delightful time in our home, when evening work was done we would all gather around father while he read (he was a wonderful reader) to us, mostly from the lives of the prophets stopping occasionally to weave in bits of his own and grandfathers lives as they personally had known those great men. I remember best his reading the lives of Parley P. Pratt, and Wilford Woodruff. Then I remember "Added Upon" and the effect it had upon me even as a child. On these quiet nights as he read, the most audible sound would be the clicking of Mother's knitting needles as she knit

our stockings, her hands were never idle.

My father was a firm believer in Education. In 1908 2 of my brothers and 1 sister went to the Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah. In 1909 I Cynthia went on to graduate from Keesters College of Dress Making. In 1910 4 of us attended the B.Y.C. One girl trained as a nurse, the other three graduated from High School, Father died depriving the others of college. One brother sent the other boy on a mission. We were all married in the temple. I, Cynthia, married Leo Earl 29 Sept., 1915. To this union, 5 children were born, one died at birth, all were married in the Temple.

Our son, Sherman, and our three sons in law have all been in Bishoprics in their respective wards. They all live in their own homes, our grandchildren number 16 and 3 great grandchildren. Our hearts were almost broken when we lost Ora Mae our third girl, she died giving birth to her fourth child. She was a gem, her reward is sure. She had so much faith, I feel like she is looking down on her children trying to guide them.

As I look back over the years of my life, and count my blessings, I am grateful to my Heavenly Father for his many blessings. Over the years of my life I have worked in most of the organizations of the church, Relief Society, Sunday School, Primary, Religion Class, and Primary Stake Board. But I think the most rewarding thing I ever did was to teach a group of boys from their first class in Primary on up through their tenderfoot and trail builders. These seven boys have fanned out, and really made a place for themselves in the world. There is a Doctor, scout executives, and businessmen all making good on their own. I am very proud of them all. Hours of their and my life was spent at my place taking their tests, earning their awards, eating and playing. I feel like they are a blessing to me because they came at a time when I didn't have any children of my own, and it looked as though I never would. Thanks to the Lord that he heard our prayers. We give thanks every day for our wonderful family and what they stand for.