

Reminiscences in the Life of Leo & Cynthia Durfey Earl

Written by: C. Leo Earl
Typed by: Connie E. Sorensen, Daughter

July 1979

I now find myself where I always feared and dreaded to be, growing old alone; but I have no regrets for I have some very pleasant and profitable memories. I was born of goodly parents and raised in a wonderful family, My history in part has been written. I had a normal boyhood. I was fortunate in that I always gravitated up. I was there when the apple fell and I had sense enough to pick it up.

I want to say more about my marriage for I am sure it was made in heaven. It had to have been for it has been so wonderful. As a boy I had many lovely girl friends but only on that I really loved. I fell in love with Cynthia through Hubert Bowens description of her. She had everything, looks and talents galore. She was very popular. I had a lot of competition but I never gave up. I courted in all the ways I knew with little success until I was called on a mission and my stock went up. I would liked to have married her before going but she said no. She was a student at Brigham Young College in Logan and she loved it. She was at my farewell. I put her on the 10:40 train in Collinston, kissed her goodbye and I left the next morning March 6, 1913 for my mission to Australia. When school was out she went to Heber City to be with her sister Anne. Being the new girl in a small town she was very popular. While there she met Storm McDonald. He followed her back to Logan in the fall to attend U.S.A.C. My letters got further and further apart and finally stopped. When I returned home she was wearing Storms diamond.

As my mission moved along I became president of the South Australia conference. All of the Elders that had gone out with me had returned home. I was kept longer for a good reason I was to find out later. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.. Elder Clair Lewis, a fine young missionary and former Loganite, died of a ruptured appendix and I was asked by the mission President to accompany the body home.* I arrived in Logan on May 30, 1915 where I again saw Cynthia for a few minutes. The funeral was scheduled for the next day. Elder Titensor, the Elder who accompanied us home, was very shy and retiring. It was up to me to occupy most of the funeral time. Again the Lord answered my prayers and I made a sufficiently good impression upon my future father-in-law for him to brag to his friends that I was the young man who came courting his daughter. Cynthia was there and told a friend later that she had made a mistake in not writing to me longer. I went with the folks in a model "T" ford to Salt Lake City to report my mission. We stayed with Dad's cousin Henry Robinson in Farmington. Their family decided to come home with the folks and there was not room for me so I caught the old Inter-urban to Brigham City which was the end of the line, and was taken from there to Deweyville where they were holding the funeral of Pearl Saunders Wood. I met Ezra Hess, who asked me if I would like a ride home. When we reached his car Cynthia was in the back seat. It was a long way around but with the help of the Lord and his Angels the way was prepared. I always felt she was looking for me but she denied it. The next morning I brought her to Logan. We courted all summer seeing each other every other week-end. I would come to Logan on the steam train on saturday and return sunday evening. On one occasion she made the remark that Hazel Knowles her close and trusted friend wanted to get married. I said "Why don't we make it a double wedding" and she said "Why not"!! We had another problem. We waited until the last day to secure our marriage license and when we got to the courthouse it was closed. The clerks mother was being buried. We caught the train to Brigham City and went to the courthouse there. When we asked the clerk for a license he said "A dog license?" There were 39 couples to be married that day in the Salt Lake temple and in the confusion they pinned our licence to the wrong wedding certificate so we were delayed again until the lost license could be found but we finally made it. We were married on September 15th 1915 in the Salt Lake temple thus starting a honeymoon that lasted 62 years and 46 days.

We had a wonderful life but we also had some problems losing our first born son and our youngest daughter. We didn't miss the son so much never having had him around and we were so grateful mothers life was spared. But we never got over missing Ora Mae. Mom looked for her always up to the very end. Ora Mae died at age 32 of a cerebral hemorage following the birth of her fourth child.

Cynthia never had real robust health. She had a major operation each year for five years. With the help of good doctors and the Lords blessings she was able to enjoy a good long life of 84 years 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ months. We traveled together seeing the beauties of this land; from New York to Hawaii from

Mexico to Canada and all points between. We spent one winter in Hawaii with Connie & Grant who were serving their second mission for the church in that beautiful land, one winter in Arizona, one trip to old Mexico, three to Canada, three east to pick up new automobiles. One of the best times was when we stayed in the Hotel New House for sixty days while I worked with the State Legislature. Mother shopped and drew the plans for our new home putting everything to scale; while others cooked her meals and made her bed - which was quite a treat. In 1965, after our Golden wedding and becoming great-grandparents, together we returned to beautiful Australia where I had filled my mission 52 years before. Our grandson Jay, then serving on a mission there met us at the plane. I guess this was the real highlight of all our trips. We traveled with a B.Y.U. tour.

Cynthia was a beautiful virgin of the highest order, a priceless companion, a kind loving mother, a good cook, a good housekeeper. Her homes was her castle, she loved it. I was always proud of it and her. She loved flowers, knew how to arrange them and used them always to beautify her home and gave them to others. She was beautiful and intelligent, always dressed in modern clothes of her own making. Given a needle, thread, a piece of cloth and scissors she could work miracles. She remodeled most every piece of her clothing with the one exception of her mink stole which was one of the prize possessions of her life. Her father described her as "straight as an injun arrow, with too much stinking pride". She was a slip of a girl weighing only 104 pounds when we were married.

One of the high lights of her life was when she got dinner for President and Sister David O. McKay, when he came to dedicate the newly remodeled Fielding Ward chapel while I was serving as Bishop. President McKay complimented her on the dinner and asked and copied her roll recipe for his beloved Emma Rae.

We had 62 years and 46 days of happy married life together. She suffered a stroke on our 62nd wedding anniversary and after a few days at home was transferred to Sunshine Terrace Nursing home. My prayers were twice answered, I was able to care for her to the end and the end came soon. Connie was with me when her lovely spirit took flight at 6:30 p.m. on November 14, 1977. She just went to sleep. A beautiful granite stone now marks her last resting place purchased by every member of her large and loving family.

She was a loyal American. A devout Mormon. We never had much money but somehow it was always enough. It was never yours or mine but always ours. She was respected by all and loved by many. She was put on a pedestal and never fell off.