

Parleys Third Ward Family History Newsletter

Winter/Spring 2021

James and Natalie McCullough

“When our hearts turn to our ancestors, something changes inside us. We feel part of something greater than ourselves. Our inborn yearnings for family connections are fulfilled when we are linked to our ancestors...”

Physical objects connect us backward to ancestors and forward to progeny.

Last February we spent a wonderful hour connecting by video with neighbors who showed us that we are really never alone. Our lives, and most of our homes are brimming with memories, with physical or tangible reminders of loved ones who have impacted us and passed on. We all have our own physical objects depicting an era, event or memory we hope will continue to connect us to our posterity and loved ones. Clothing, jewelry, books, photos, hobbies, kitchen ware, instruments... We invite you to notice these family treasures and connectors in your home and **write their stories.**

They don't have to be in chronological order, but try to include dates, full names and places, along with their relationship to you and why the object matters- or how it connects you to your larger family story.

Here are some responses to the call for your stories.

Please accept apologies for my technical traumas if I could not copy and paste your particular photo.
The devil is not yet bound.

Brett Okland

MY GRANDFATHER GAVE ME HIS PERSONAL SCRIPTURES WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER. I HAVE KEPT THOSE SCRIPTURES NEARBY SINCE THEN. THEY REMIND ME OF MY GRANDPARENTS AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO LEARNING THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST AND APPLYING THEM IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES. I WILL SOMEDAY PASS THOSE SCRIPTURES AND/OR MY OWN DOWN TO MY CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN.

BONNIE PARKIN *My spark was to remember a quilt my grandmother made from satin fabric for [my oldest son] Jeff when he was blessed, and we used it for every one of our sons' blessings. Her stitches were perfect and not everyone got one of her quilts. Sweet memories.*



Lily Okland

My grandmother gave me a Norwegian bunad several years ago. A bunad is a native dress that is designed specifically for the area in which my great-great-grandfather was born and raised. It is special to me because not only did it come from my grandmother, but it represents the rich culture of Stord Norway where my ancestors come from. These dresses are worn in Norway for special occasions, such as weddings and their Independence Day May 17th. On May 17th every year, each Norwegian city has big events and parades. The women and girls wear their traditional bunads representing where they came from. *I intend to keep this treasure preserved throughout my lifetime, so that I can give it to one of my children and continue the legacy for years to come.*



KRISTEN OKLAND

Thank you for challenging us to think carefully about our connections to our ancestors. Right away, after watching your recording, I was longing to feel that connection. How quickly I forget the amazing people they all were. I have many stories and written collections in my family. But what drew me in was the idea of gathering. *I wanted to gather all my stories and objects, and meaningful items into one place.*

In my basement I have an *old cedar chest*. My grandfather gave it to me when my grandmother died. But, I was young and his feelings were tender after her passing, and so I didn't really ask for the story. The outside of the chest is charred on the back. But the inside is untouched and still smells of fresh cedar. Since my boys were little, I have used it to store toy cars, a useful and practical place for things that got played with often. And I've been grateful for that sturdy chest.

Once again, your family memories lesson got me thinking about the story of that chest. My grandpa is gone now, too, so I called my mother. She said the chest was given to her mother by her parents when she got married. It was a very nice but common wedding gift in that time; a hope chest, made of cedar to protect its contents from insects and dust. My mom said it sat at the end of my grandparents bed. It was filled with a variety of valuable things; some of worth and some of merely sentimental value, like the letters my grandfather wrote to his young wife while he served in World War II and notes and pictures drawn by her children.



When my mom was about 15, there was a fire in their house. The fire was extinguished and no one was hurt. That is where the cedar chest sustained its outward scars. Miraculously, the inward contents of the chest were all protected.

Sometimes I feel like that cedar chest. Life can be hard, challenges are real and sometimes mortality leaves me feeling just a little shabby. But we have a barrier of protection in our faith and our belief that what matters most to us is not temporal but spiritual and eternal.

And those beliefs, like that cedar chest, protect my heart, protect my family and leave me feeling like I live a very abundant life. On the inside, I know I'm happy and safe.

I have removed the toys and decided to use that hope chest as an actual gathering place for my hope. It's going to be a work in progress, but it is the new home for our family histories and photographs, and the things that truly matter to us. Thank you for your encouragement! I am so happy about it!

LIZZIE CONDE

I am the oldest grandchild on both my Jardine and Nebeker side, and would like to think I've had a special relationship with my grandparents. I have a few special treasures from my grandmothers.

My grandma June was the most elegant and gracious host. The back of her house on 16th Avenue was entirely windows and looked out on the city. She always used her best china and fine silver. One of my earliest memories is eating tomato soup out of a gold rimmed china bowl at her kitchen table. When I registered for my china and silver as a newlywed, I unknowingly picked the same silver she owned. As a young couple, we could only afford two place settings. When she downsized from her 16th Ave home to Park Lane, she gave me six place settings of her silver. When I use the silver for my own family and gatherings, I think of my grandmother and the beauty and love with which she gathered those she loved.



My grandma Win was the Deseret News food editor for 30 years, and her grandchildren considered her a famous cook because her picture was on the back of Mormon Country Cooking. I have wonderful memories learning to cook with my grandma. She taught me how to smell a pineapple to tell if it was ripe, how to measure a cup of flour - sifted or stirred and measured, to turn down the

heat when making candy, and the best flour to buy. I have recipes with hand written notes from my grandma, and I associate every holiday with her food. A fixture on her counter was an old-fashioned food scale. That food scale now sits in my kitchen and is a reminder of all the things I learned in my grandma's kitchen.

BRIAN TODD

Attached is a photo of my mothers rolling pin that I remember her making rolls with all of my life. It passed down to Ruth and me and has now passed down to my daughter Jen, who lives in Dallas. It has become more meaningful to me in the last three months, as I have taken up baking and actually learned how to make her rolls!



Robin Ririe Larson

The Power of a Physical Item in Remembering Ancestors: Copies of 'Plaza Suite'

My Grandparents, Joseph Stanley Russon and Allein Robertson Russon have been gone for 30 plus years now, yet I remember them vividly. They were larger than life for me. They lived only 1/2 block from my childhood home so we visited regularly, especially on Sunday evenings as we would walk to their house and eat waffles on TV trays in front of their "huge" color TV. We would eat and watch "The Wonderful World of Color," a Walt Disney show. It was a privilege because our family only had black and white TV's. We also loved being waited on by Grandpa and loved that he would share something from his candy stash at the end of the evening before our parents would pick us up.

One thing I always looked at as we arrived were the photographs in the hall of our thespian grandparents. They actually met at the U of U in the Babcock players. Since I am the first grandchild on both sides of the family I saw my Grandpa Russon perform in several plays, usually a comedic role in shows at Pioneer Theatre and the Lagoon Opera House, or his vaudeville act he did with his partner. Grandma was a professor and

Grandpa a jeweler but in his spare time he loved to act. (How did he manage when he was a bishop?)

I have several physical things that remind me of them, but my most favorite are the matching scripts of Neil Simon's 'Plaza Suite'. Stan and Allein were in demand throughout their lives for their play readings. These copies contain two of the dramatic readings that they often did. I think that I only saw them do a performance together once or twice, but when I read through the script, each book highlighted with the male or female parts,

I can see in my mind's eye the stage couple, my wonderful grandparents as they perform. They were so animated and funny, it all comes back to me. Grandpa was on the MIA board at a time when the youth would do roadshows or plays. They loved to act, and it is because of them that we have continued the Christmas tradition of a family talent show that they began so many years ago. They were talented and affectionate and good examples of sharing talents. I loved them dearly.

Diana Hart

When I look at the badge given to my dad at the time of his retirement, I remember what an outstandingly brave policeman he was.

Dad wanted to help people and make the world a safer place.

I remember Dad getting knifed in the back while holding back a mob who were trying to injure people. I remember him arresting a dangerous criminal one day. *The criminal was on one side of a wooden fence with drawn gun and Dad with his gun drawn was on the other side. The criminal tried to shoot Dad through the fence several times but his gun would not engage.*

Dad arrested the criminal and got him off the streets.

To this day, my dad is a hero to me because of his many acts of heroism.

I love to see that badge of courage



Master Stone Mason

Edward Lloyd Parry, my 2nd great grandfather, was a pioneer stonemason, one of a long line of masons in his family. He was born in Wales and emigrated to Utah in 1853. He worked on the Salt Lake, St. George, and Manti Temples.

One time on the roof of the St. George Temple, Edward noticed a young workman placing an inferior stone on the wall. He discussed this situation with the young man.

The man said, "Well, what does it matter. There is no stress on that stone, and it will be covered with plaster. Who will know the difference?"

"My boy," said Edward, "three persons will know the difference."

"And who would that be?"

"You will know; I will know; and the Lord will know. My boy, replace the stone." The stone was replaced.

A story my uncle told about Edward happened while he was working on the St. George Temple. He'd been up all night as his wife was delivering a baby. It was not uncommon in those days to use alcohol as a stimulant, and he drank to help him stay awake (the Word of Wisdom wasn't a big deal at the time). His stake president saw him drunk and excommunicated him on the spot, so Edward sat out in his front yard and watched people moving about in the community.

A little while later President Brigham Young rode by, stopped and said, "Brother Edward, why aren't you working on the temple?"

When Edward explained what had happened that morning, President Young revoked the excommunication and told him to get back to work!



Engraving on a piece of oolite

Hearst Mansion in California are a few of many that were built with Parry oolite.

Engraving on a piece of oolite

My uncle also had stories about hiding the prophet (either John Taylor or Wilford Woodruff) who was visiting at the Parry home in Manti when the government was looking

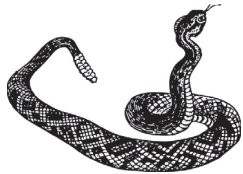
Edward owned the oolite limestone quarry northeast of Ephraim. This stone was used to build the Manti Temple. The quarry was only recently sold by the family. Rock from that quarry was used for many buildings in addition to the Manti Temple. The Park Building at the University of Utah, the Kearns Mansion, homes and government buildings throughout the state, and



for the polygamists.

We don't have any of EL Parry's tools in our possession, but as his descendants, we've been able to handle them--with gloves on, of course--at the Church History Museum.

Fortunately, we do not have an artifact for this ancestor. My 2nd great grandmother, Elizabeth Caldwell, was 12 years old when her family crossed the plains with the Willie Handcart Company. Her mother was a widow and crossed the plains with four children. In Elizabeth's memoirs, she included a comment about the "ceaseless walking, walking, walking." Because they traveled late in the season, they had to walk through snow, and all the toes on her right foot had to be amputated.



One day before the snow fell, while they were walking across the plains, she and her younger sister Agnes wandered away from the main group. As they made their way back to the company, they found themselves in the middle of a big group of rattlesnakes sunning themselves on a big flat area. The girls prayed and were able to tiptoe around and through the snakes and get back to camp safely.

Does this story sound familiar? It was one of the miracles included in the movie *Seventeen Miracles*.

Some legacies do not come with artifacts. Such is the case of five generations of women in my family.

Just before we left on our mission to Russia, my mom casually mentioned that ***Dave and I were the fifth generation to serve a couples mission, all down through the women.***

My great-great-grandmother Mary Elizabeth Davis and her husband, James, were called to settle in southern Utah in the early days of the Church. They were involved in making the descent through the Hole in the Rock, got flooded out several times, and became friends with the local Indians. Some of their experiences were chronicled in Gerald Lund's fictional book *Undaunted* as the Davies family.

Her daughter, Emily Davis Wallentine, served in California--twice--with her husband, Robert.

Her daughter, Emily Wallentine Brewer, my grandmother, also served in California with my grandfather, Stan, but it was a different mission than her mother served in.

My mother, Maralyn Brewer Johnson, served several missions with my father, Frank. They oversaw Humanitarian Aid service to fifteen former Soviet countries, and then came home and served a mission as guides at the Humanitarian Center in Salt Lake, able to give a unique perspective about some of where and how the donations would be used. For their next mission they were asked to be liaisons for the Church during the Olympics. They also did a short mission at the Nauvoo Pageant and where they were in charge of the Primary kids who weren't at rehearsal.

No one made a big deal about this. There were no expectations, and it wasn't discussed. It just happened that we have five generations who have served at least one mission as a couple. What a legacy they gave us!

If you missed the recording of ward members sharing their stories, here is the link:

<https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/OnMNCOY5M5iN0M6JuENH4v?domain=youtu.be>