

MARY ANN SMITH (WESTOVER)

Selected portions of her autobiography with additional comments by Maurine R. Westover.

Mary Ann begins her autobiography as follows:

"I was born at Victor, Idaho, July 12 1896. Here I spent my childhood on my father's ranch, three miles from town. Here I went through the grade schools. I played on the basketball team and we played against the neighboring schools. I also played baseball. In 1910 I went to Rexburg to a county fair where I had met Arnold Westover the year before. I was living in Victor when the train first came there about 1913. We used to go sleigh riding and coasting. We would go on horses up into the mountains to pick huckleberries.

I was married to Arnold Westover, September 19th, 1914 at Rexburg, by Bishop Henry Flamm. Here we made our home, living in the old homestead of Arnold's father. In 1915, June 9, we went to the Salt Lake Temple and were sealed for time and all eternity. Here at Rexburg, our nine children were born. We lost a baby boy, born 27 Oct. 1918. He died May 19, 1919."

The baby boy she mentions losing was named Verle George. Verle was born on his older brother's (Leon's) birthday. Leon, though very young when Verle died, remembers it well.

Family was always important to Mary; she especially loved and honored her husband. She trained her children to work hard and to appreciate what they had.

When her husband, Arnold left for a mission on Nov. 1, 1926, the children proved to be her best helpers. They helped with the large flock of chickens, milking the cows and caring for livestock, as well as building the fire on cold mornings.

In June, 1933, the children were again left with her as her husband went to work in Yellowstone Park.

He had been gone a month when it became necessary for her to take their oldest son to the doctor in Salt Lake City. Leon had some kind of infection in his elbow that was extremely painful. It failed to yield to treatment, but finally began to heal on its own. Mary's brother, Dr. David Smith, was one of the doctors treating the elbow. He took out Leon's tonsils, because at the time tonsils were blamed for many infections. The arm ceased to be painful, but it became permanently stiff. Leon could only bend it part way.

Before long Arnold obtained a good tent from the government, and it became the happy summer home for Mary and the younger children as well as for him.

Leon left for his mission in January, 1936 and returned in May of 1938. When he returned, it was a happy occasion for him and his family. He drove home a new car from Detroit, and it was soon on its way to Yellowstone Park.

Mary loved the trips she was able to take with Arnold. She describes one in 1941 as follows:

“Feb. 1941, I and Arnold left home for a trip through Calif. We went as far as Aberdeen Idaho and stayed all night with Arnold’s brother, Floyd. We then went as far as Boise where we visited the State Capitol. We stopped the first night at Baker, Oregon. Then we went to Portland, Oregon. We enjoyed the ride along the Columbia river. We spent one night and one day there.

We enjoyed the ride through the red woods of California; we measured some of the big trees. In San Francisco we visited the Golden Gate Park and the Cliff House, museum, etc. We enjoyed the thrill of our lives when we first saw the ocean.

We called on my Brother, Mark, in Los Angeles, and we went out to Hollywood. We went down the coast to San Diego where we went out on the ocean in a sight-seeing boat. We went on a ferry to the island of Coronado and returned to drive to Tijuana. We spent a few hours there and then went back to San Diego. We visited some orange groves, and we picked some to take home.

We crossed the desert and stopped all night in Los Vegas. The next morning we went to Boulder Dam. Then we started for home.

We went through St. George and Manti. We drove around the temples. They were beautiful. We stopped over a day with Leon and Maurine at Monroe. Leon was teaching school there. We then went on to Salt Lake where we spent a day visiting relatives and friends.

While on our trip we drove 4,000 miles, we had one flat tire, the car cost \$35.36, lodging \$16.00, eats \$13.30 and \$5.00 for shows. Rooms cost from \$1.25 to \$3.00. Meals were from 25¢ to 75¢.

When we arrived home everything was fine. Zola looked after the children while we were away.”

In December of 1941 the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought great concern to her. Loris was there and reports were most disturbing. It was some time before the letter arrived from Loris that said he was safe.

Before long her family was very much involved in the war effort.

The first big change came when Arnold had opportunity to go to work in the Naval Ship yards at Bremerton, Washington. He left in Feb. 1942, and Mary came with the children when school closed in May.

She and the children assisted in completing the home and in clearing the lot.

Quinn and Leatha arrived there in Sept., and both of them went to work. Mary cared for their children as well as her own.

In the spring of 1943 Mary fell down the back steps and injured her knees. She was in bed for a couple of months. It was hard on her to be down as she was an energetic worker. She was able to continue her hand work, however. She was very skilled in both crocheting and knitting.

Loris came during the summer as she was getting about again. He was on his way to Virginia to take additional training for his job in the navy. Mary accompanied him as far as Salt Lake City as he traveled east. She had a good visit in Salt Lake City and Idaho before returning.

In 1944 her knee became infected and had to be lanced several times. Her feet had begun to give her trouble also. She'd forget these problems when the family attended the Ice Follies.

She became involved with the "Daughters of the Utah Pioneers" as Arnold began working in genealogy. They took many trips to the library in Seattle and Olympia, Wash. to do research.

One by one her sons went into the service—her son-in-law too. Leon, whose arm kept him from the military, served with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). She was very proud of all of them.

As the war was closing, the family made plans to move to Quincy, Wash. Where they could work in construction together. Although her health was not as good for this move as it had been when she came to Bremerton, she still moved with vigor and made many plans.

The many family outings and reunions, came largely because of her efforts. She was never so happy as when planning the special events for the family.

She had now found that Sugar Diabetes was her main health problem. She tried hard to diet and follow the doctor's instructions. Her feet still gave her many problems and when it got too difficult, she'd "rest" as her nimble fingers crocheted.

All of her children received beautiful gifts of her handiwork. She made a lovely table cloth and quilt for each one. She was able to sell lots of her work also.

She was very active in the Relief Society in both the ward and stake. She helped Arnold as he served in the Chamber of Commerce, and she joined the garden Club. She assisted in all of the fund raising activities both in the community and in the Church. People knew they could count on her.

In 1954 she spent 12 days in the Wenatchee Hospital. She had many health problems. The next few years found her in the hospital with increasing frequency. She even required nursing care at home.

She passed away Feb. 14, 1959. Her last concerns were for her family.