



Claudius Lee Hamblin



Mary Easton Hamblin

Mary Lorene Bradshaw's parents
Shannon's grandparents

Biographical Sketch: Claudius Lee Hamblin.

Robert L. Hamblin, 7-28-06

Claudius Lee Hamblin was born 3 Dec 1884 in Minersville, Beaver County, Utah, the son of Wallace Hamblin and Ida Minerva Rollins. Dad never talked, as I recall, about his growing up years in Minersville. But we do know few facts that shed light on his life there.

Growing up in Minersville

With his parents, Wallace and Ida Minerva Rollins, he spent his first twelve years on the farm that his grandmother, Mary Ann Corbridge, bought in Minersville, two or three years after Oscar died. He was the second son of his mother and father, and, like second son's generally, he was "the good one." He did everything he could to please his parents, especially his mother. He learned to work the farm at an early age, because Wallace and his twin brother William, whose family also lived on the farm, often became "hired hands.." Because their own farm was productive enough to provide for their families, they had to work for others to scratch out a living. So taking care of the farm became their children's job. On that little farm, Dad learned to be a very hard worker--a virtue that blessed him his whole life. He learned to ride horses, milk cows, care for chickens, and plant, irrigate, and reap crops--mostly hay, wheat, and garden vegetables.

Although they had a school in Minersville, Dad was so busy on the farm he only received a third-grade education. While living in St. Louis, I received one short letter from Dad; it reflected that level of education. Because he was such a good worker, his mother, Ida Minerva Rollins, evidently needed his helpful hands all year around. She kept him home from school, starting at age nine. Even so, as an adult Dad was a good reader, which means his mother likely continued teaching him to read after he left school. In his sixties, he taught very effectively from the Church books that he read, and in his old age, he spent a lot of time reading books.

Lorene told me that Grandpa Hamblin, chewed tobacco, a habit he picked up when he was eight years old. She also told me that our Dad started chewing tobacco at the same age, which indicates he identified closely with his father, Wallace. Lorene said that Wallace loved the gospel of Jesus Christ and Christ's restored Church, but their chewing habit, as long as it lasted, kept Wallace from being called to and serving in any Church positions of note, that is until Dad moved our family to

Portland, Oregon. Even so, the habit it made it so Dad could endure very difficult, dirty working conditions like shearing sheep and working as a boiler maker. He finally decided to quit in 1947, after I went on my mission to Samoa. It was at that point that Lee Hamblin's distinguished career in Church service began. So his is a story of redemption.

In the fall of 1987, when he was almost twelve years old, Dad's family moved in covered wagons with seven other families from Minersville, Utah, to Lyman, Wyoming. He talked about that the trip to me as a wonderful adventure, because he rode horseback the entire way. With others he had the responsibility of driving or herding all of the livestock--at least 150 cattle, 100 pigs, and a herd of sheep. Thus, in Minersville Lee Hamblin learned the skills of a rancher, including those of a cowboy--riding and shooting. However, these skills did not endure. Growing up I never once saw him ride a horse. He had a pump-action, twelve gauge shot gun, with which as a five and six-year old, I saw him shoot sage hens on hunts east of Lyman, but that was the only time growing up that I ever saw him use that gun. Also I remember as a seven-year-old, the winter after we moved from the farm to town in Lyman, he and some friends hunted elk near Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He got an elk which we enjoyed eating the rest of the winter. (People in those days did not have a freezer or a refrigerator, so meat was kept outside, hanging frozen in a shed.)

On the trip north and east from Minersville to Lyman, Dad told me that when they arrived near the mouth of Provo, Canyon, he and a friend were sent on their horses to buy some watermelons at a farm they passed. They filled four "seamless gunny sacks" will melons. Each tied the tops of two of the sacks together and tossed them over the backs of their saddles, before taking them to camp. With a broad smile on his face, Dad said they were the best watermelons he had ever eaten.

Life in Lyman

The first order of business for my Grandfather Wallace Hamblin, was to built a house on the 160 acre homestead he acquired, next to his brother's, on the bench above the Black Fork river below Lyman. The two brothers, identical twins, were very close, and therefore wanted adjoining farms. They drew lots for homesteads, and they accepted less desirable land near the bottom of the irrigation system in order to be near to each other. On the original plat, the more desirable homestead to the west (irrigation water came from the west) was recorded for Wallace and the less desirable homestead to the east were not the ones they ultimately farmed. Wallace gave the more desirable homestead to

that he drawn to William and took the one to the east for himself. William was born first and was evidently the dominant twin. Wallace, like Dad, took pleasure in pleasing others in the family, so when he found out William wanted his homestead he evidently traded. Another aside. It is interesting that Wallace outlived William by almost 34 years. Wallace died of heart failure, which was then called dropsy, on 30 September 1937; William died on 23 December 1903, just seven years after the twin brothers had immigrated with their families to Lyman.

After arriving in the late fall, Dad likely helped his father cut logs for the three-room house that they built the following warm months. That first winter the family shared a rented house with another family in Lone Tree, located in the foothills of the Uinta Mountains to the south of Lyman. Lone tree was just ten miles from a virgin forest where ponderosa and lodge-pole pine trees grew abundantly. The men and boys, even twelve-year-olds like my Dad, started cutting and hauling the logs that first winter.

The walls of the three room log house on the homestead is still standing, but the roof caved in perhaps fifty years ago. It was used for many years by the present owners as a shelter for their cows and horses from the cold, ever-present winds from the west that characterize Wyoming winters. The inside of the house, when I was growing up as a child there with my parents and my youngest sister, was covered a canvas-like material that was painted with kalsomine, a rather inferior water based paint. But the present standing walls are chinked with six-inch pieces of pine, which were hand carved, fitted carefully, for looks as well as to keep out the wind. The chinking on the outside was traditional, troweled cement and plaster. The relatively flat roof was covered with about a foot of bluish-green clay that did not leak. The inside of the roof was also finished with the canvass-like material, but how it was fastened is a mystery to me. However, I remember the inside of the house being clean and draft free. The kitchen was heated by a coal-burn kitchen stove that had a reservoir for warm water. The living room-dining room also had a coal stove, but the bedroom was not heated. There was no inside running water. In fact, we hand-carried potable water from a spring below the cliff adjacent to the Black Fork River, about 300 yards away up and down a steep, hand-dug trail, the remnants of which are still visible. The outside toilet was about 15 yards behind the house, not far from an irrigation ditch that passed through the property. Grandpa Hamblin, my Dad, and others who helped him, built a pioneer house that seems terribly primitive, but looking back it was an ingenious

work of care and consideration. My grandfather really loved his wife, Ida Minerva Hamblin, and it shows in the comfortable house that he and her boys built for her. I was born in that house and had the privilege living in it until the family moved to Lyman when I was five years old, in the spring of 1932. From those years of my life, I have happy memories of living in that house and on the farm.

When I lived on the farm, Dad and Mother had a herd of about a dozen milk cows, plus calves and yearlings, some of which they slaughtered for meat and sale. Most of these cattle, a few pigs, and a few sheep came from livestock they inherited when Dad and Mom purchased the ranch from Wallace and Ida. They used some of the land to pasture their cows, grew and harvested lucern hay and wheat to feed them. They also planted an acre or so of potatoes and had a garden that covered about a half acre. Dad and Mom also had a flock of turkeys which they raised to slaughter and peddle for Thanksgiving, and they kept two large coops of chicken, some for laying eggs and some for slaughter and sale. Dad had Mom and the girls help with the farming chores--bringing the cows in from the fields, milking the cows, feeding the animals, tending the potatoes and the garden. Planting and harvesting the other crops was men's work.

In addition, to helping with the chores, women cooked the food, cereal in the morning, a generous dinner at noon of meat, potatoes, gravy and vegetables, and a supper at night of homemade bread and milk with raw onions and cheese. This was a pattern of life that I experienced on the farm that Dad evidently recreated from what he experienced with his Dad and Mom.

Mining Coal near Kemmerer

When Lee Hamblin was about nineteen years of age, he left home and started working in the coal mines, near Kemmerer, Wyoming, which was about 30 miles north of Lyman on a dirt road. Young men from Lyman often worked in the coal mines to put away enough money to get married and start a family of their own. They roomed and boarded with other families from Lyman, whose husbands and father's also worked in the mines, usually digging coal. It ultimately worked out that way for Dad, but until he married my mother in 1909, after paying his board and room, he handed the rest of his checks over to his mother. Rollins Hamblin, Lee's next younger brother, was his mother's favorite, and during this time Lee's earnings supported Rollins on a mission to Australia. The agreement was that when he returned Rollins would support Dad on a mission. That never happened.

While working in the mines, Dad met a beautiful young woman at Church named Mary Easton, the daughter of William Easton, who was the mine Inspector. Dad was a little over six feet tall, thin, and very handsome. He also had a wonderful singing voice, a talent greatly appreciated in the Easton family. Mary fell in love with Lee and Lee, love with Mary. On 11 Nov 1909, they were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

Starting a Family

From the beginning, Mother and Dad's Mother, Ida Minerva Hamblin, did not get along. Lorene told me one reason was that Ida wanted Dad to marry someone else. Dad did have some feeling for this other woman because her first name was Lorene, which name he gave his oldest daughter. The second reason was that after the marriage, Ida caused a big fuss, insisting that Dad continue turning his pay check over to her. Mother put her foot down, and said absolutely not. Dad was evidently conflicted, but, thankfully, he sided with his new wife rather than his mother. However, until we left Lyman in May, 1942 (to live and work in Portland, Oregon) I remember Mother periodically crying to Dad over something mean that Grandmother Hamblin had said to her.

Insert paragraphs about the birth of their daughters and from Lorene's account.

In about 1918, Wallace Hamblin obtained a job working for the Union Pacific Railroad, as a mechanic in the Roundhouse in Green River. He and Ida asked Dad to purchase the ranch, so they could buy a house in Green River. After some dickering they settled on a cash price of \$1,150.00--that was for the house, the farm buildings, the land, the farm machinery, and the livestock. The main negotiations were over the livestock. Ida said that Rollin needed the livestock, which she wanted to give to him. Again, mother put her foot down; no livestock, no deal. They finally settled for what now seems to be that ridiculously low price. Dad paid them the cash, and immediately he moved his family and belongings by horse and wagon from Kemmerer to the ranch.

I was born in that log house, and spent my first five years living in it. Recall, the house had no water, and electricity was not available, even in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Lyman owned its own generating plant, which provided electricity for the town, but electricity for the surrounding farms was not available until a generation plant was built for Rural Electrification, part of the New Deal of President Roosevelt that began in the middle 1930's. So on the farm we had just coal oil lamps until I was about two years old, when Dad brought home our first gasoline lamp, which

provided wonderfully bright light. With electricity, it became feasible to have indoor plumbing on farms, with water pumped from wells and sewage disposed in septic tanks.

Dad's Life on the Ranch

On the ranch Dad began to show genuine initiative and some talent as a businessman. His work year developed into a pattern, where he worked at different jobs during the year.

Dad had learned how to shear sheep as a young man, and he became very good at it. Instead of planting crops on the farm, he left home in early March and traveled to California to start sheering sheep with a crew of local men, hired by a man who owned the sheering equipment and negotiated the work. As the weather warmed the crew worked their way north, shearing sheep as they went, until they finally finished in Wyoming about June 1st. I don't know how much money Dad made sheering sheep in those early days on the farm, but when I was eight years old he routinely made 14 or 15 dollars a day, depending upon the number of sheep he sheared. The going wage for unskilled laborers varied from one to three dollars per day at that time, that is, if one could find work. He and his best friend, "Charl" Phillips, were faster than any of the other shearers. The two of them competed with one another, sometimes winning and sometimes losing.

When it came time to plant the crops on the farm, Dad sent money home to Mother to hire a man to do that work, and to irrigate daily for an hour or two. Mom and Margaret planted and tended the garden, the animals, and milked the cows. During the winter and spring months they sold the milk to the creamery in Lyman that made Cheddar cheese.

With the money he earned from shearing sheep, he bought a Model A flat bed truck, which he used to peddle what they grew on the ranch to families, who lived in mining towns around Rock Springs, Wyoming.. He sold butter, cottage cheese, produce from the garden, eggs, and butchered beef, veal, mutton, pork, chicken, and turkey meat. By 1927, they had a very thriving business.

In my years, Dad also sent money to Mom in the late spring to buy hatchling chickens, enough for two coops, and 300 or so hatchling turkeys which they penned beyond the trees to the east of our house. I remember that brooding these hatchlings worried Mom because they required so much care to keep them from dying during their first two or three weeks with us. The chickens were raised every year for eggs and slaughter, and the turkeys were slaughtered at thanksgiving time. I also remember a machine they used to separate the fat and the milk so they could churn butter and make

cottage cheese from the skim milk. It was housed in a little enclosed shed positioned under a cottonwood tree about ten feet north east of that corner of the house. An irrigation ditch, with a fun pool of water to play in, ran by its west side.

I remember Margaret milking the cows and otherwise helping Mom. She was sickly, however, and never worked hard like Lorene. Even so, after Lorene married Margaret did her best to keep up with Mom. I had just turned five years old when we left the farm, so they did not ask much of me, in the way of work before then. My main duty on the farm was to carry water from the spring in one gallon lard buckets two or three times a day.

Dad never as I recall hunted for deer or elk in the Uinta Mountains. That may have been because the pioneers had over-hunted that area until they decimated the herds. Dad told me that after moving to the ranch, he had trapped fur animals, mostly coyotes, in the winter. He skinned them, stretched and dried their hides, then collected a bounty from the Federal Government on the coyotes and sold the hides commercially. The steel traps snapped shut when an animal, drawn by the smell of bait, stepped on a hidden lever. For bait, he caught suckers in the Blacks Fork River with a net and let them rot, enough so coyotes and other animals could easily smell them at a distance. Dad mainly trapped coyotes, but he mentioned catching wild cats, three or four wolves when a pack once went through the area, as well as mink and muskrats. Dad, like many other frontiersmen went from one thing to do to another during the year in order to earn money during the harsh winters. The price of furs were low enough that he stopped trapping when the Government no longer paid a bounty.

Dad and Mom were very loving parents. They loved nursery rhymes, which they recited, sang, and acted out with me. My first love for singing and for books came from nursery rhymes. I found my self as a father of young children doing the same thing. I enjoyed that great family tradition.

The last two years on the farm for Christmas they also bought me small boxes of barely usable children's carpenter tools. These were a very thoughtful, appreciated gifts, because they allowed me to spend many happy hours trying to build things out of the scrap lumber that was plentiful on the ranch. Building projects, of one kind or another, became an important avocation for me later in life.

What I remember most about life on the farm was that Dad and Mom had wonderful parties almost every Sunday for Margaret and as many as twenty friends from high school. Mom was a very good cook and she, with Margaret's help, prepared wonderful chicken dinners, with all the fixings.

Then, the young people usually made either home-made ice cream or candy for dessert. The ice cream, was made with fresh eggs, real cream, sugar, and real vanilla, so it was delicious. They also made great fudge, divinity, and taffy. I especially remember them having fun pulling the taffy outside in the cold. Those were very happy times for Margaret who was well accepted by everyone and the focus of attention.

Usually in the Summer, Dad and Mother had day parties for aunts, uncles, and cousins--at least one for each side of the family, maybe thirty people altogether at one time. Dad was closest to his brother Marcene, but the families of Rollin, Robert, and Clark also frequented these parties. Mom was closest to her sister, Janet, but the families of Peter, Viola, and Andrew were frequent visitors. Mother often cooked and served a chicken-dumpling dish that was to die far. I remember it fondly, and even now long to taste it again. She served fresh and cooked vegetables from the garden, and made delectable hot-cross buns, which she served with home-made butter and jams. Mom also made fresh rhubarb pie, as well as other pies from fruit (apricots ,peaches, and pears) that she bottled each year. She also baked marvelous cakes. Baking was a tradition in her family; her grandmother Hood had a bakeries in the several towns in Scotland where they lived.

After feasting, the adults sat around the living room and told funny stories on one another. The stories were so good that all of the cousins stopped playing and sat quietly to hear them. Sometimes the story was on one of us children. I remember Mom and Dad telling a story on me. When about three, I disappeared one late afternoon. Mom and Margaret frantically looked up and down the river fearing I had drowned. Dad was on the other side of the valley, about a mile away helping a neighbor roof his house, and he saw how frantic Mom and Margaret were. However, his eyes were good enough to see that the cows were coming in towards the barn to be milked and to spot me with my light blond hair driving them in. Dad and Mom were really proud of me that I took that initiative at such a young age. But I remember what really amused the adults was that, not knowing better, I also brought in all of the calves, the yearlings, and the dried-up cows. I enjoyed the attention because all their stories ended with joyous laughter. Those were happy gatherings.

Lorene told me that Dad had kept wine and whiskey in the house until the Prohibition amendment to Constitution was passed in 1918. At that juncture, Dad threw it all out because it was now against the law. After the Prohibition amendment was repealed in 1933, I remember going on

several week-long sheep shearing trips with Dad. After shearing sheep ten or so hours a day, I remember he and Charl Phillips always went to a nearby cafe and had a glass of beer, but I never saw or heard of him drinking more. Likely because his uncles in the Rollins line were notorious alcoholics in Lyman, his mother had effectively taught him to never have more than one drink. At that time I knew nothing about alcoholics or his uncles, but had been taught the word of wisdom in Church. I remember I was shocked not only by his after-work glass of beer but also about his chewing tobacco.

The Move to Lyman and the Mountains

Early in 1932, the height of the Depression, all of the coal mines around Rock Springs closed, which meant that Dad lost all the customers for his peddling business. The price of farm crops had plummeted, so Dad just deserted the farm. Fortunately, however, he obtained a contract with the Union Pacific Railroad to be one of their agents for cutting ties on their land in the Uinta Mountains and hauling them about 30 miles to a train stop in Leroy, just north of Highway 30, about half way between Lyman and Evanston. Consequently, in June, just after I turned five years old, we moved from the ranch to Lyman where we lived in a rented house.

Dad's contract was a great, good fortune that blessed the entire family. He was able to provide relatively good jobs for his brother Marcene, a carpenter who was out of work in Murray, Utah. Mel Bradshaw, Lorene's husband, who was also out of work as a carpenter in Salt Lake City, joined Dad's trucking crew. A year later Clyde Johnson, who had married Margaret and had been laid off from his railroad job in Green River, also joined the trucking crew. The contract with the Railroad lasted just a year, but Dad fortunately got a second contract with a mining company to cut and haul mining props, which lasted several years. When Marcene's sons and I each reached eight years of age, we were also hired for 25 cents a day to help with the loading and unloading the mining props.

In June, 1932, with a new Ford flat-bed truck that Dad purchased with his sheep-shearing money, he moved all of the furniture from the farm house into a nice rented house in Lyman. We then left for the mountains where we lived in a log cabin with a dirt floor that had been built and deserted by some unknown trapper. It was located by a brook of clear, clean water that all of us kids played in and enjoyed. Uncle Marcene and aunt Duella had three children--Ivan, five years older than me; Geraldine, three years older; and Dale, my age. Lorene and Mel had two children by then--Merrill,

age 4, Dick, age 2. I had been alone on the farm, so I was ecstatic to have playmates. I also fell in love with the pine forest--hiking and swimming with my friends. What adventure!

During the rest of the year Mom, Margaret, and I stayed in Lyman in our rented house, which had luxuries of electricity, a pipe for running water in the kitchen, but no inside toilet. Dad bought us a radio, so we could listen to broadcasts every week night of marvelous dramas--such the Lone Ranger and Dick Tracey. Lyman also had the Paramount Theater which showed a new movie every Saturday evening. The price was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. Mom arranged for the three of us to clean the theater each week for tickets for all the members of our family. I suddenly also had plenty of friends to play with. Evenings, all of the neighborhood children gathered, often at our house because there were so many outbuildings, to play hide and seek, kick the can, and other such games. During the day children my age played cops and robbers or cowboys and Indians.

It was also always a wonderful time when Dad came home, from the mountains or when he found other work to do during the winter. He was always entertained us with recent jokes that his friend and sheep shearing partner, Charl Phillips, told him. He also loved to listen to comedians who performed on the radio or to see and hear them in movies. May West was a racy comedian that had a dry sense of humor that tickled him. A favorite line while lying on her back was: "I am not prone to talk." Her shows would probably be rated P.G. now, but in those tame times she made quite a stir. And Dad would laugh and laugh over her one-liners. I also remember about this time how cute Dad was with little children--especially those who were just learning to talk. He would bounce them on his knee, act out nursery rhymes with them, and would burst out chuckling when they said something cute. At that time in Dad's world little children were fun friends.

The second year in the Uinta mountains Dad built a one room house for us to live in that could be hauled from one location to another. He used 4 inch tongue and groove fir flooring, for the floor and siding, which he unthinkingly hung with the groove up. When it rained, the inside walls wept a little, even through the gray oil-based outside paint. (Dad had never been trained as a carpenter. I made similar mistakes when, much later, I did carpentry projects that I had not been trained to do.) Anyway, though it was small, we enjoyed this new, clean cabin.

In the ensuing years, by mid-June we were always in the mountains, located wherever Dad's cutters were. At first he delivered three loads a day to Leroy, than bought another truck so he could

double the number of delivered loads. The last truck load left about 4 P.M. and returned in the dark. Trucks were not built as well in those days as they are now, and I remember a lot of necessary repairs--especially the replacement of broken leaves in the rear springs. All but 10 miles of the hauling was over dirt roads, and spring leaves were broken springs at least once a week.

It was a happy time for all of us, in part because we enjoyed being with close relatives whom we loved and who loved us in return. All of us were also very happy for the work that paid better than average. I have always admired my Dad for his ingenuity in providing work for four families during those dark years of the Depression. It was the biggest economic achievement of his life.

Three or four times a summer, the four families took off Friday afternoon for three days of camping out at wonderful fishing locations. The most memorable were our hiking into Red Castle, a red protruding rock structure and adjoining lake at the foot of Gilbert's peak, and China Lake, which got its name for its great depth. Most of the women enjoyed each other at camp and we children always fished with the men and some of the younger women. However, I think we enjoyed the hikes and playing with each other more than the fishing. We seldom caught anything. Even so, we developed a taste for fresh rainbow and cutthroat trout fried with bacon. The food was always wonderful and the air, crisp and clean in the high, deep green Uintas. I often think back on those times; no boy I have known ever had such paradisaical summers.

When I was old enough to work, I also enjoyed using a pickaxe working on the top of the mining props helping to load them in the mountains and to unload them at LeRoy. Although we mostly road silently without talking, we enjoyed spending the time together. I liked being old enough to work with the men and being paid for it, a generous 25 cents a day. That doesn't seem like much now but one summer I saved enough to buy a Schwinn bicycle, and another, enough to buy a single shot .22 caliber Winchester rifle. As I recall, each cost me about 25 dollars. My bike and 22 rifle made my time in Lyman much more enjoyable than it would have been otherwise. I used them a lot.

About 1938 Dad's work in the mountains hauling mine props ended. He sold his trucks and bought a used black Ford pickup. For the next two or three years, I cannot remember exactly what he did, other than sheering sheep. However, he found work year around, enough to support our family. That year, I got a job in Frank Hall's grocery store--first stocking shelves then as an apprentice butcher. As a twelve and thirteen year-old I was made twelve and a half cents an hour or

a dollar for an eight hour day. By that time, the going wage for a man was three times that much, three dollars per day or 37.5 cents per hour, but such work was still very scarce.

The Move to Portland Oregon

June 1942, several months after the start of World War II, when Dad finished shearing sheep, he suggested we take a trip to Portland, Oregon, to visit Clyde and Margaret. They had moved there a few months earlier, and Clyde had readily found work in the shipyards. Finding work was really why Dad wanted to go to Portland, although it was not his expressed reason. Both he and I found jobs at Gunnerson Brothers Shipyards (as boiler maker helpers) at 95 cents per hour. Toward the end of the summer both of us were promoted to journeymen, with our own crew to supervise. Our wage was increased to 1.25 dollars per hour. That was almost as much money for eight-hour days as Dad had been making shearing sheep. I quit in order to go to Jefferson High School full time, and found a part time job near school at Franks Chevrolet lubricating cars for 95 cents an hour. So our money problems were solved. Mom returned to Lyman and sold all of our furniture for a small fraction of what it was worth.

Dad's Growth in the Gospel

Dad had been relatively inactive in the Church in Lyman, but in Portland he became fully active, attending all of the meetings in the Irvington Ward. As I recall, he never missed a meeting. He also paid a full tithe, became a home teacher, and as a Seventy he attended the High Priest Group and was soon called to be the secretary. He had not given up chewing tobacco, but the Bishop wisely ignored that in order to make an enjoyable place for him in the Ward.

After graduating from high school early, at age 17, and attending two years of college, I decided to go on a mission. And in September, 1946, I received a call to serve in the Samoan Islands for 30 months. At my farewell Mom and Dad talked, as well as our Stake President. Mom gave a sweet talk, but Dad stood up, choked, then with great difficulty, said, "This is out of my line," and sat down. He was so humble that he was unable to speak. I entered the Mission Home in Salt Lake City the first week of November, and after serving what seemed to me to be a wonderful, life-changing mission, returned home about June 1, 1949. I later found out he was not thrilled that I had been called to labor in the Samoan Islands because of the primitive living conditions, but I was thrilled with my call.

Unexpected Changes in Dad

Upon coming home, I learned a number of things about Dad. First, Mom told me that it had been very difficult for Dad and her to scrape together the \$25.00 they sent me to support me on my mission each month. She said many times members of the Ward had approached them asking if they might help with the money. Dad always told them, No, that he wanted to support me on my mission by himself. Then and now, his doing this touched me deeply. Looking back, other missions at that time average cost was 90 to 100 dollars per month. Dad could not have afforded to send me anywhere else. I loved my mission and never even thought of going home until I received a call from President Golden Hale that I was to catch a boat in two days to San Francisco.

Then Mom showed me the charcoal blue, glen-plaid wool suit that I had sent home just before leaving Oakland for Samoa. It had been purchased four and a half years earlier from my part-time job-earnings at Oregon State College. The coat was size 40 and the pants had a 34 inch waist which Mom let out as much as she could, so Dad could squeeze into them. He had worn the suit during the 30 months of my mission, on Sundays to Church and also as a stake missionary. It was thread bare, shiny in some places, but without a hole.

I had saved \$150.00 from the money Dad sent me. Not knowing the situation at home, I had planned to buy me a new suit but decided, instead, to buy one for Dad. That first Saturday home we caught a bus down town and found a nice suit for him for \$65.00. (It was like a 500 dollar suit on sale now.) He chose a light brown double breasted model out of a fine herring bone material. Mom re-sowed the blue suit to its original size and for three weeks I alternated wearing it and my white suit to work and to Church. On my first try to find employment I obtained a job at Maier and Franks Department Store, selling summer furniture. Two weeks later, I bought a light brown shark-skin suit at the same store where we had purchased Dad's.

I was impressed, very touched, with Dad and Mom's sacrifice in supporting my mission. However, the biggest, most wonderful surprise was Dad, himself, who had made great progress in living the gospel when I was away. He was a changed man.

1. He had quit chewing tobacco at age 64 years, a habit he had nourished since he was eight. (Later a Church member in Tucson, who had also kicked the chewing habit, told me I would never know just how difficult that addiction was for Dad to break.) Dad said to , "Robert, I decided that

if you loved the Lord enough to spend 30 months serving him in Samoa, I loved the Lord enough to give up my tobacco.” That sentence made my whole mission a stupendous success. But that was not all; it was just the beginning of Dad’s personal growth in the Church.

2. Recall, Dad was so humble that he could not talk at my missionary farewell, that he said but one sentence, “This is out of my line,” and sat down. That first Sunday, to my great surprise, I found out that this rough-hewn, uneducated frontiersman was teaching the twelve and thirteen year old class in Sunday School. In addition, the richest and fanciest sister in the ward (who was just coming back into activity) assisted him by sitting with the children to keep discipline. She was the wife of the manager of Maier and Franks, Portland’s leading department store, housed in a magnificent eleven story building which covered a whole block. She was a college graduate and Dad, at best, had three years of schooling. It seemed to me that she should have been the teacher and Dad should have been helping with discipline. As I talked with her, I must have looked skeptical because she assured me, bubbling with enthusiasm, that Dad had been giving excellent lessons which kept her and these young teens interested. I surmised that Dad had to be teaching under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To me that was marvelous miracle, which greatly increased my already-strong testimony that the Lord can work wonders in empowering his faithful servants. I felt and still feel so grateful that the Lord had taken my Dad, whom I loved and who love me, in hand. But that was not all.

3. Mom told me that Dad had also been called on a stake mission. They used the Anderson Plan, as it was called, a set of 12 lessons for investigators developed by an elder in the Portland Mission. An insurance salesman, Dad’s missionary companion, told me that when Dad taught investigators, they accepted what he said because of his deep conviction and sincerity. The two had just finished their two year mission, and they had taught and baptized four families, twenty souls in all. Although my mission was fruitful in other ways, I had taught and baptized just one. Dad and his companion were had again called on a two-year stake mission, and this time they baptized twenty two souls. Again all of the people they taught and baptized were members of families.

Dad’s teaching abilities had evidently been magnified by gracious gifts of the Spirit, so that he taught the gospel with the power and authority of God. It was as though my Dad had become a new man while I was on my mission and had flourished in the Gospel beyond all expectation.

4. On July 20, 1950, I had married Mary June Adams in the Manti Temple. Before traveling

to Michigan to begin my Ph.D. studies in September, 1952, June and I, with our nine-month old daughter, Carol, visited Mom and Dad in Portland. By then the Irvington Ward had become the Portland Sixth Ward and my Bishop, Vedare Mumford, had become the President of the Colombia River Stake, one of two New Stakes in the area.

President Mumford had asked Dad and Mom to be the custodians of the Columbia River Stake Center, where the Sixth Ward had recently relocated. They were excited about this full-time work which they considered a Church calling, albeit a paid one. I was amazed at the beauty of the grounds, which were ablaze with flowers and graced by well-tended shrubs as well as a beautiful, weed-free, manicured lawn. Dad had never taken any interest in our yard, which at best looked so-so because he and Mom had left its planting and care to me. However, Dad had been a successful farmer, and when he was given the responsibility of the grounds, he demonstrated a marvelous green thumb, which escaped me until I was in my late sixties in Spring City, Utah. Everyone was very pleased with what he had accomplished with the grounds, with the cleanliness of the building inside, and with his habit of always being there to be of service--to open classrooms, et cetera--whenever the building was in use. He often spent 12 hours a day, six days a week at work.

After five years Mom and Dad retired on their social security, together with the proceeds from selling the home they had purchased while I was on my mission. They had decided to leave Portland to do temple work in Salt Lake City. The members of the three Wards housed in the Stake Center gave them a farewell. More than 500 members attended to show their appreciation. I have ever heard of or seen such a crowd showing up at a farewell for a released Bishopric or even a Stake Presidency. They had accepted the humblest of callings and turned it in to one of great respect because of their devotion to the work, as well as their loving kindness and thoughtfulness to everyone. I learned a great lesson from this.

More about Mom and Dad in Salt Lake City

Mom had lived for years with undiagnosed late-onset diabetes before the move to Salt Lake City. Although undetected by the time of the move, the disease had wrecked havoc with her health, so she was unable to do as much temple work as she wanted. But she really took care of herself (eating properly and taking her prescriptions as directed) and her quality of life was reasonably good until a few days before she became bloated from kidney failure and died in May, 1964.

Dad worked in the Salt Lake Temple--not as an ordinance worker, rather doing vicarious work for the dead--usually about ten hours per day, five days per week except when the Temple was shut down for renovations in August and for two-week vacations during Christmas. Typically, he would get up at 5 A.M., ride the bus to the Temple by 6 A.M., do Temple work until about 4 P.M., then arrive home by 5 P.M. He did two or three endowments for the dead, two sets of twelve cards for initiatory, and in between did one or two sessions for sealings. He also worked receiving at the veil. Dad was always a hard worker. He had always taken satisfaction in accomplishing more in his worldly occupations than others did and this attitude carried over to his labors in the Temple.

Dad loved to travel and when the Temple closed for three weeks, summers, and he often took sight-seeing trips. I remember he went on tours to Hawaii, to Book of Mormon places in Central America, and to Church History sights in the Eastern U.S. The tour to Hawaii was not Church-sponsored, and he met a rich widow who wanted to marry him, but he wanted none of that. She smoked. He also drove back and forth two or three times with me and the kids to St. Louis, where he stayed with us for two weeks. By that time his hearing was so bad he had a difficult time talking with the kids, which meant they did not learn to enjoy him as I did when I was their age.

Dad's Final Years

Dad had been diagnosed at about age 70, with a slow developing cancer of the prostate, which much later spread to other organs, including his brain. The brain cancer resulted in erratic behavior, such as his sleeping during endowment sessions in the Temple. Sometimes at home he also awakened in the middle of the night, got dressed, and caught a bus for the Temple long before it opened. Dad was living with Lorene and Mel, and they sometimes discover Dad's absence, got dressed, and drove around until they found him. Finally, in 1967, after serving for twelve years, he was told he could no longer do temple work due to his sleeping during endowment sessions. Lorene and Mel were never in good health and, finally in that year they became so ill themselves that they could no longer care for Dad, in part because of this and in part because of his erratic behaviors.

My wife, June, had five children to care for, most of them young, and she felt they were all she could handle. I also sensed her responsibilities with the children, our house, and at Church were pushing her to the edge of her coping abilities, even with the help I gave her, which was considerable. So, after talking it over, Lorene and I decided to put Dad into a good nursing home, where he could

receive proper professional care. The bills were paid monthly by his Social Security check and the rest by me. His health slowly worsened until his heart failed on 9 May 1969.

Mel and Lorene visited him often, as did his brother, Marcene, and his family who lived in Murray, Utah, as well as we and other family members when in Utah. But Dad was very lonely. The nursing home was a fine facility--comparable to the hospitals of that time in cleanliness, food and appearance--but Dad nevertheless resented being there. And because he openly resented it, Lorene also felt very guilty about putting him there.

By May, 1982, these concerns about Dad again weighed heavily on Lorene. She expressed them again me, while I was visiting in Utah from Tucson. I listened, then tried to console her by explaining that Dad was not responsible, that his erratic behavior was the result of brain malfunctions caused by cancer, and that he needed 24-7 professional medical care. However, she was not buying this and other seemingly reasonable assurances. Lorene also mourned to me again about putting Mom in the hospital against her wishes a few days before she died. Mom's younger sister, Viola, had created a considerable fuss, threatening to call the police if Mom weren't hospitalized immediately. Lorene acceded to her wishes against Mom's and her own wishes, and now she was feeling terrible about it.

I then suggest we kneel and pray. My prayer quickly outlined what had happened during Dad's last years and how Lorene worried about his being put in a nursing home against his wishes. I asked the Lord to comfort her about Dad's erratic behaviors and about her part in putting Dad in the nursing home and Mom in the hospital against their wishes. Both of us were comforted by an abundance of the Spirit during the prayer. Later, Lorene told me she felt her concerns had been resolved at that time. However, a few days after our talk and prayer she had a dream wherein she saw two men dressed white. One was instructing the other, saying that Lorene felt guilty about the way she had put Mom and Dad in the hospital and nursing home against their wishes. Then he told the second man to go to where Dad and Mom were laboring, tell them about these concerns, and ask them how they felt. Lorene then saw the second man, evidently after he had traveled far, approach Mom and Dad. He told them of Lorene's worries and asked them how they really felt. They said, "Tell Lorene we are very busy and very happy here, that we have nothing but love in our hearts for her. We do not resent her, but are grateful for the loving care she gave us over the years."

In this dream, the messenger evidently played these scenes with sound for Lorene to hear in answer to our prayer, to comfort her and to let her know that all was well. With considerable satisfaction and relief, she recalled the dream for me when I next visited from Tucson, about a month later. I was greatly interested and, also, very surprised how much this dream comforted me, that Dad and Mom were together, and that the two of them were happily doing the Lord's work.

Again both of us thought that was that. However, in early September, that same year, 1982, June and I took the family for a vacation to Kino Bay, Mexico, on the Sea of Cortez, 150 miles or so South of Tucson. Beside the two of us, there were four married couples, several grand-children, as well as Kristin, our youngest, and a boy friend. We rented two large condominiums, one for the women and another for the men.

About four o'clock in the morning of the second day, Sunday, I had a dream in which Dad appeared to me, looking slim, in his early thirties, much as he looked in his wedding picture at age 26 years. He had a very bright countenance, a very happy look on his face, and was dressed in white. A beautiful white-glazed-ceramic tree of life was cradled in his right arm. He smiled and said simply: "Robert, I have Mexican gifts for you." Then, the dream ended, and I awakened. Contemplating the meaning of the dream, I was first inspired that his Mexican gifts to me was the information that was conveyed through his appearance to me in that nation.

Then I began thinking about the substance of the dream. Why was Dad holding a white-glazed-ceramic tree of life? Why was he dressed in white? And why did he look as though he were young again, in his prime, slim, with a bright countenance?

Almost immediately several thoughts came to mind, each of which were confirmed as being true by surges of the Spirit. Dad had been exalted, as suggested by three things. 1) He was cradling a tree of life which symbolizes the love of God (1 Nephi 11:25), as well as eternal life (Gen 3:22). 2) He was dressed in the white, the apparel of exalted beings (Rev. 6:11; 7:9). 3) His exaltation was also evidenced by his bright, happy countenance. He also looked glorious, slim, in the prime of life, as though he had shed his mortal persona, that of an enfeebled, overweight old man, age 85 years.

Surges of the Spirit also confirmed that his exaltation resulted from: 1) his valiant missionary work, 2) his magnifying his calling as custodian of the Columbia River Stake Center, and 3) his prodigious Temple work for the dead--almost ten hours a day, every day the Temple was open for

almost twelve years. I wondered how many tens of thousands of spirits Dad had given the opportunity of escaping spirit prison and of entering paradise.

In the Doctrine and Covenants (76:50,69) we are told that those who inherit the Celestial Kingdom and who “come forth in the resurrection of the just” are “just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant...” As revealed (in D&C 129), all heavenly messengers are either 1) resurrected beings, angels with bodies of flesh and bones (v. 2) or 2) spirits of just men made perfect, who are not as yet resurrected but who inherit the same glory (v. 3). It evidently took 13 years of serving the Lord and otherwise progressing before Dad could be fully cleansed through the atonement and, hence, could become a just man made perfect. Then, Dad was apparently allowed to appear in a comforting dream, because of Lorene’s and, apparently, my worries and earnest prayer.

Parenthetically, I never worried about Mom’s exaltation. Her father began calling her his angel daughter when she was very young, for she behaved so well, so lovingly and kindly to everyone. She also lovingly served others in righteousness all the days of her life. I just assumed she also received her exaltation as Dad’s eternal mate, when he did.

Later Developments

After marrying Chamisa Howard on March 25, 2000, I discovered she had very unusual spiritual gifts, which to my surprise I recognized the first time we went to Evanston and Lyman to decorate the graves of ancestors the week before Memorial Day in May, 2000. We were living in Halladay, wanting to get to know me better she asked to make the trip. It was a beautiful sunny Spring day in both Evanston and Lyman and the drive was most enjoyable to Evanston, to the remnants of Almy where mother was born just north and east of Evanston, to Lyman, and to the log house my grandfather built on his homestead farm. She was fascinated with all of these locations.

Chamisa told me that she first became aware of her Spiritual gift to see through the veil, when she attended the funeral of her grandfather who had been the bishop of the North Hollywood Ward, in California. As a six year old, she had seen 20 or so old people whom she had never seen before and who were dressed in pioneer clothes. Much later she surmised they were spirits of dead ancestors who wanted to attend her grandfather’s funeral.

The first event occurred when we were decorating Grandfather and Grandmother Easton’s graves in Evanston, when she was greeted by a man’s Scottish brogue: “Welcome to the family.” In

Lyman, after we decorated Mom and Dad's graves and Grandmother and Grandfather Hamblin's graves, she laid down on her back on the green grass in the warm sun and suggested that I decorate the other graves while she staid behind. I returned about 20 minutes later, after decorating Lelah Hamblin's grave and Great Grandfather James Henry Rollins and Great Grandmother Evelyn Walker's graves. Chamisa was just getting up onto her feet.

She told me Mom and Dad had appeared to her, both dressed in white. Both welcomed her to the family and Dad proceeded to give her a message for me, using a gold pocket watch that was set to five p.m. He told her that I had promised Jesus Christ to write a systematic book on his moral teachings and that I had better get to work because I did not have much time left to accomplish the task. (I understood he referred to the Beatitude Book which I completed, January 18, 2007.) She said Dad appeared as a tall, handsome man with a full head of black hair in his early 30's and was dressed in a white coat that was tapered to the waist, had gold buttons, and a Nehru collar. It seemed to be patterned after a military dress uniform that was popular about the time Dad was born, except it was white not blue or some other color.

When Merrill Bradshaw died, the Sunday after his funeral, Chamisa had the following vision while sitting on a couch in our reading room in Halladay. Merrill was appearing before a Quorum of Seventy of which Dad was a new made member. Mother and Renee were among the many onlookers. Chamisa was given to know that it was a great honor for Merrill to appear before this Quorum, for theirs was the responsibility to judge which of three heavens or degrees in the Celestial Kingdom that the person in question was worthy to inherit. (Chamisa was not well versed about the Lord's revelations to Joseph Smith, but this observation is consistent with the Doctrine and Covenants 131:1-5, which lent authenticity to her vision.) The vision ended before she found out what the judgement for Merrill was. She did say that Dad was among those of the Quorum who had been given the responsibility to surmise whether or not the candidate was worthy to inherit the highest heaven or degree in the Celestial Kingdom. Note that whereas it took Dad about 13 years before he was exalted, Merrill evidently received that blessing, becoming a spirit of a just man made perfect through Christ's atonement, within a few days after his passing.

During our 4 ½ year marriage Chamisa and I traveled to Wyoming every year to decorate graves, and she always rested at Mom and Dad's grave sites while I finished decorating the other

family graves. One time she reported that Dad told her that he was planning to gather the family. I am not altogether certain what that means, but I assumed he was planning to gather ancestors, and perhaps their children, into one location in Paradise. The following year, I think it was May, 2004, Chamisa reported that Dad and Mom appeared with about 300 other people--presumably the spirits of that many ancestors and their children who had made it into Paradise because they had done their temple ordinances or that those ordinances had been done for them and had been accepted by them.

I have given this much detail about Dad, the kind of life he lived until he and the family moved to Portland, Oregon, and then the major life-changes he made afterwards. I want to emphasize that Dad was always a good man, kind and considerate of other people. He always loved and was always loved by his wife and his children. In those early years, he had good friends outside of the family, particularly Charl Phillips. His best friends, however, were his parents, his brothers, sisters, parents in law, brothers in law, and sisters in law, whom Mom and he dined and entertained in our home. The younger siblings and siblings in law also stayed in our home during their high school years--uncle Bob, aunt Lucille, uncle Andrew, aunt Beatrice, and uncle Thomas. And during the peak years of the Depression he gathered the families of Marcene Hamblin, Mel and Lorene Hamblin Bradshaw, and Clyde and Margaret Hamblin into the Uinta Mountains to provide needed work for the men loading, hauling, and unloading railroad ties and mining props. I cannot emphasize how great those blessings were to our extended family. Mom and Dad were dearly loved by all of them.

However, Dad's is not just a life story of hard work and family service, but also of coming to Christ with great devotion and faith, repentance, personal growth under the influence of the Spirit, and devoted Christian service to his family and to God's other precious children, and ultimately, spectacular personal redemption and exaltation. Shannon Holmgren, Dad's only living grandchild, upon hearing of Dad's exaltation, observed that higher education evidently did not impede his becoming a member of a Quorum of Seventy hereafter. Depending upon our foreordained missions here upon the earth, higher secular education may not be a requirement. Paul wrote: "*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*" (NIV Ephesians 2:10) Because of Dad's humility and willingness to devote himself to the Lord's work, Christ Jesus was apparently able to turn him into the masterpiece for doing the good that he was foreordained to do here and hereafter.

I only wish my children knew him like I did, when he joked around, showed his great love for babies and little children, and could understand what they were saying. His ten years as a boiler maker enduring the awful noise of chipping guns deprived him of his hearing and, therefore, the ability to enjoy children as he did when I was growing up.