

Orson Spencer Thomson

Born April 28, 1855

Brighton, Sussex County, England



Martha Ann Poll

Born June 5, 1857

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., Utah



A HISTORY OF ORSEN SPENCER THOMSON A PIONEER OF 1862

Written by his daughter
Ruby Summers - February 1940

Orsen Spencer Thomson, born April 28, 1855, at Brighton, Sussex County, England, is the second son of John Prior and Sarah Simmons Thomson, who were born March 26, 1824 at Heathfield, Sussex County, England and August 17, 1828, at Warburton, England, respectively.

John Prior Thomson's father, John Thomson was born October 16, 1794 at Heathfield, England and his mother Jane Prior, May 18, 1800.

Sarah Simmons' father, James Simmons, was born February 14, 1795, in Warburton, England. Her mother, Ann Harriet Kemp, was born August 30, 1790, at the same place.

Orsen Spencer was a child of seven years when he left England on the ship Manchester, with his parents, Grandparents, and Uncle James, and an Aunt Lois Thomson, a brother Christopher John Thomson, and a sister, Edna Agnes Thomson. While on the ship, little Orsen was standing at the deck railing, when the ship gave a lurch. He would have been thrown into the ocean if a passenger had not caught him. After six weeks on the ocean they arrived in New York City.

In a few days they left by train for St. Joe, Missouri, from there they went on a steam vessel up the Missouri River to Florence, Nebraska, where they stayed for several weeks preparing an outfit to cross the plains. They left Florence in an independent train in the John Brown's Company, which consisted of ox team and wagons. The Aunt died and was buried at Elkhorn Springs, Nebraska.

The party arrived in Salt Lake City, October 2, 1862 and went to live at the home of John Needham and family who resided on State Street. Later father's parents moved to Main Street between second and third south, then to second south between Main and State street, near the home of Heber J. Grant and as children they played marbles together. Father's Grandparents bought a home on third east and sixth south st., where they lived until they died. John Thomson died June 20, 1876, and his wife, Jane died in 1878. My Grandfather Thomson worked for William Jennings, grinding bark to tan leather. After finishing this work he worked in a molasses mill for Fred Mitchell and received a barrel of molasses for pay. He then worked at the Salt Lake Theater as a tailor-remodeling costumes for the actors. He opened a Tailor shop of his own while there. He and Grandmother bought a home on third south and eighth east and were the parents of eight children. Grandfather died July 10th, 1896 and Grandmother died May 16, 1910.

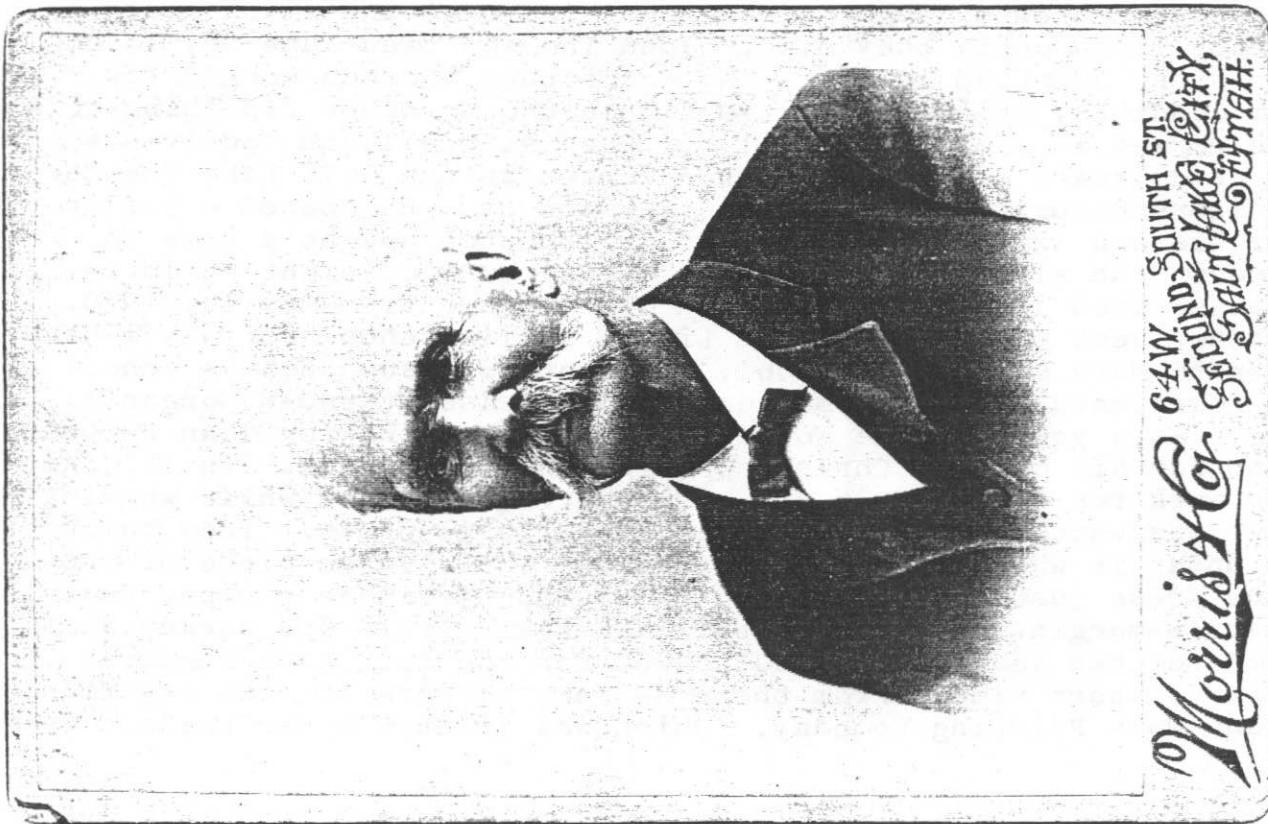
Father went to Ellen Kay and Lizzie Well's school for six months and then to Mary Bullock's School. He went to Joseph Horn's school in the Fourteenth Ward for one year, and he also attended Morgan's College. As a young boy he worked at harness making for John Ketchum, and then for his brother Christopher at the same trade. In 1873 he went to work for the Deseret News as an errand boy and while working there he was watching some men clean a hydraulic press. They built a fire under it which caused it to explode and a large piece of iron from the press just missed hitting him. Thus again he escaped death by a narrow margin. He went to the Salt Lake Herald and worked as a pressman for ten years. He also worked for the Salt Lake Democrat paper for a short time. From there he went to work for the Ackerman, Pratt and Walk Printing Company. Which was located under the old Opera



REMOVED TO
322 SOUTH MAIN ST.,
SALT LAKE CITY.

Sarah Simmon's.

SARAH SIMMONS THOMSON



64 W. 64 W. 64 W.
SOUTH ST. S. D. S. D.
CITY. CITY. CITY.

Morris & Co.

JOHN PRIOR THOMSON

A History of Orsen Spencer Thomson (continued)

House on Second South and West Temple Streets. Later he bought out Pratt and Walk and was a partner with John Ackerman for a long time. Then he took over the business and called it the American Printery, which was located in the Post Office place. He and my three brothers operated it for some time.

Father was ordained a deacon in the Tenth Ward where Adam Spears was Bishop. He took an active part in the Quorum, helping to furnish lights and fuel for the Ward and keeping the Chapel clean. He assisted in putting on Ward Dramatics and taking part in them.

He met my mother, Martha Ann Poll, who was born in the Tenth Ward. They were married April 13, 1877, by Adam Spears. Six months later they were married in the Endowment House. My Mother's parents, William F. and Charlotte Irene Long Poll, came to this country in 1853, from England. After their marriage, Father and Mother rented one room in the home of Brother Fredrick Poll on Fourth South and Tenth East. Later they moved to their Third South and Eighth East home where their first child was born on Father's twenty-third birthday, April 28, 1878. Father bought a lot on 517 South 11th East and built a cottage on it. During the seventeen years they lived there two girls and four boys were born. Alice Sarah, Orsen LeRoy, Alvin Poll, William Fredrick, myself, (Ruby) and Raymond Charles.

Father sold this home and moved the family to Second Avenue and Fourth East. The avenue is now called Garfield Avenue. They lived there five years and the youngest child, Nettie Rose was born there. They then bought a home at 340 Curtis St. now called Coatsville Avenue, where he now resides. A baby boy was left here on their doorstep. December 13, 1910, they adopted

Ruby T. Summers

ORSON & MARTHA THOMSON

him and gave him the name of Norman John Thomson.

Continued by Madge S. Newton - Granddaughter

Grandpa Orson and Grandma Martha lived happily for nearly five years after Norman's arrival when Grandma suffered a stroke which left her paralyzed and an invalid for nearly three years. Their son William F. left in September of 1910 for a mission for the Church in Holland. Their older children were getting married. Grandma had her stroke not long after my mother Ruby married my Father. She passed away November 18, 1917. This left Grandpa a widower with a seven year old "Ted the Tuff" to care for. He had help which was gladly offered by loving daughters, and his sister Eveline and William Gibbs his youngest sister and brother-in-law.



Orsen Spencer Thomson (continued)



SALT LAKE CITY,
Utah.
Morris & Co.

MARHTA ANN POLL



REMOVED TO
322 SOUTH MAIN ST.,
SALT LAKE CITY,

Orson Spencer Thomson.

ORSON SPENCER THOMSON

ORSON SPENCER THOMSON (continued)

Grandpa was a lover of good literature and music. In the early 1930's he was known to have the largest private library west of the Mississippi River. He also had a outstanding radio-phonograph with classical records and comical records. His family would gather to listen to these and they were enjoyed by all.

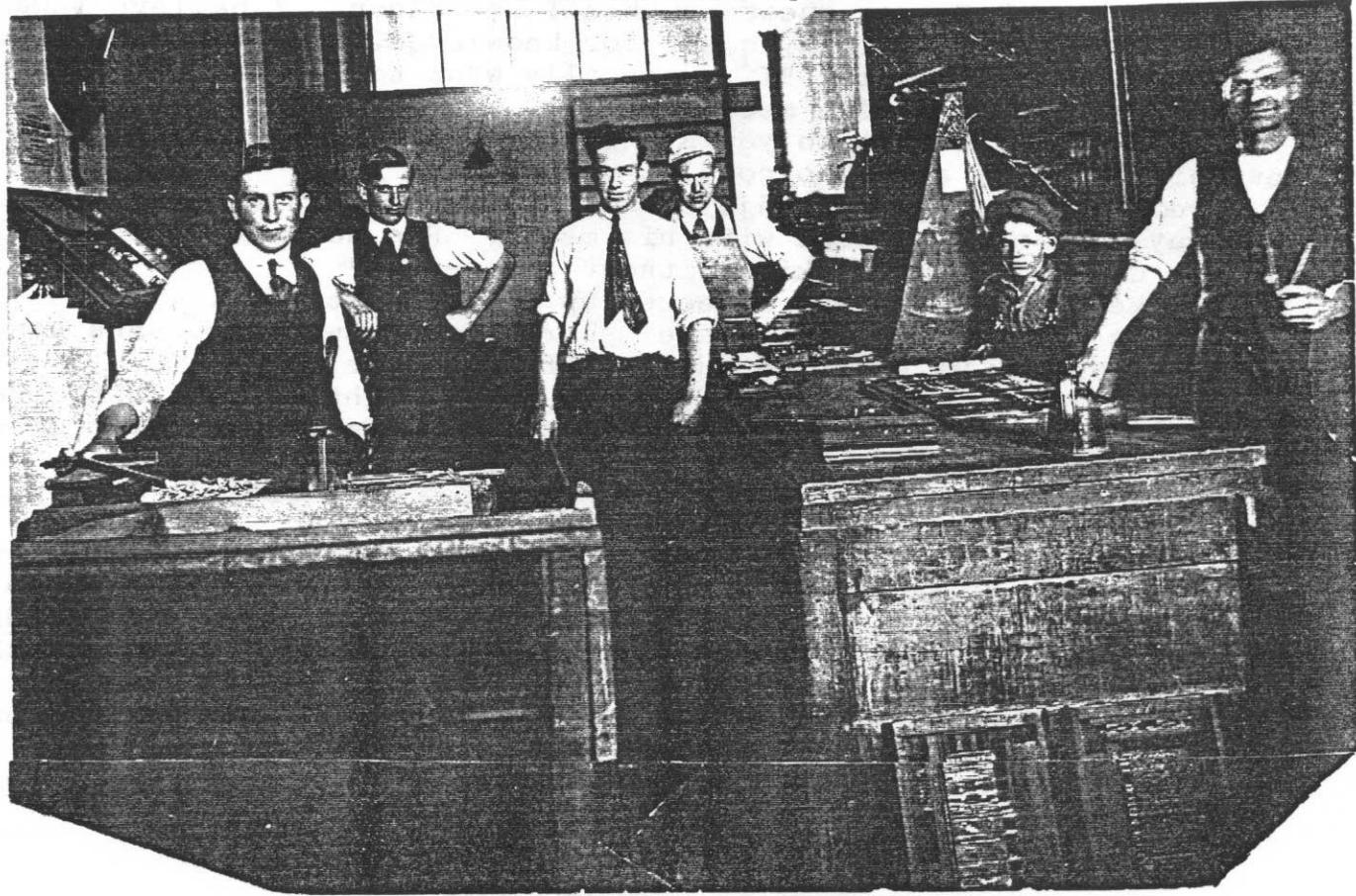
In 1933 Grandfather had a serious accident. He was delivering printing to Z.C.M.I. and the elevator door had been left open and the cage moved. He stepped into the empty space and fell to the basement floor. This accident left Grandpa a partial invalid. He gave up working at the printing shop. He left it for his boys to run.

When we were very young I remembered that Grandpa greatest joy was teasing his grandchildren. Most of them had a great fear of him as he would threaten to cut off their ears - if that failed to bring them from their hiding places he would threaten to cut off the mothers ears.

My first recollection of Gramps was when I was about three years old. Grandpa had come to visit us wearing his white shoes, hat and white suit (his traditional summer clothing). He brought me a amber neckless. He also had a bag of delicious candies. He took a piece from the bag to hand to me. I promptly explained to him that it wasn't mannerly to hand the person a candy - that he should let them choose their own. He threw back his head and laughed and from that time on he called me "Spit Fire". I loved him very much and was never frightened of him.

AMERICAN PRINTERY - June 12, 1917

Raymond Charles Thomson left front - William (Bill) rear with white hat and apron.



Orson Spencer Thomson (continued)

He came to our house often and enjoyed Mom's special dinners she would prepare for Ted and Gramps. He always had books tucked under his arms. Books that would help with our education. He would tell me of the time he walked across the plains. I understood it was a hand-cart company. He walked barefoot when the weather was warm. When the weather was cold he would wrap his feet in worn wool pieces. The cart was approximately 5' X 5' with two staves to pull it.

Grandfather told me of a time when he and his sister Agnes were left alone while his father, John Prior and Sarah S. Thomson went to town for supplies. The parents warned them to be careful of the Indians. It wasn't long after the parent's rig was out of sight that Agnes noticed two Indians near the barn and grainary. Quickly Agnes and Orson lifted the trap door and hid themselves in the cellar or potatoe pit. The children prayed, asking for protection for themselves and for their parents. Soon they heard the Indians near the cabin also they began to hear a soft moaning sound. The moaning sound frightened the children. There was excited sounds coming from the Indians and Orson heard them ride quickly away, but still the mournful sound whispered throughout the cabin and cellar. The two children remained in their secluded hideout until they heard their parents calling them anxiously. Sarah explained to them that the moaning sound was being caused by the wind as it blew in a open jar that was placed under the window to hold it open so the fresh air would cool the room. Orson and Agnes remember this as a direct answer to their prayers. They knew that the Indians were as frightened as they were by the sound that filled the cabin on that quiet summer day. This is one of the experiences that Grandfather had as a young pioneer. He told us this one day, and I have always remembered it as it made my faith and love for our pioneer ancestors grow.

I used to ask Gramps questions when I was older. I believe I was trying to impress him in my quest for knowledge. Gramps knew what I was about-then he said, "If you really want to know "read" - don't try to get your knowledge second hand.

Gramps always put it to you straight, this way it made you know how things really are - no coddling.

I remember that gramps enjoyed his food even in his later years. He always had nippy cheese with his meals. His comment was "A Meal without Cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze."

He liked his kisses and squeezes up to his last days.

Grandpa had married Lydia Jane Osborn in the twenties. She was greatly loved by us all. We called her Aunt Jane.

Grandpa was active with is favorite hobby right to the last. He read constantly. His head would move back and forth with each line, we felt this condition was caused by the elevator accident.

Gramps died at the age of 88. He suffered very severly with pains in his legs - blood clots from not enough exercise.

Gramps knew that I wanted a new baby in my family. I used to visit Aunt Jane and Gramps and scrub the kitchen walls or house clean in other areas. His first question always showed interest in my condition. A few months after gramps departure from this life my six year wish came true and the following spring I was blessed with the arrival of my first son. I always felt that Gramps intervened and got them busy over there so that my prayers were answered.

ORSON SPENCER THOMSON (continued)

We were blessed as a family to have this great man with all his knowledge and abilities as a forebearer. Because of him and his guidance and love of our mother, I feel that no greater blessing or talent could have been bestowed on us. I know the wonder and feel the gratitude of the words "Having Been Born of Goodly Parents."

May we live up to these examples and fulfill their expectation for us and our families I pray sincerely, "Spit Fire "



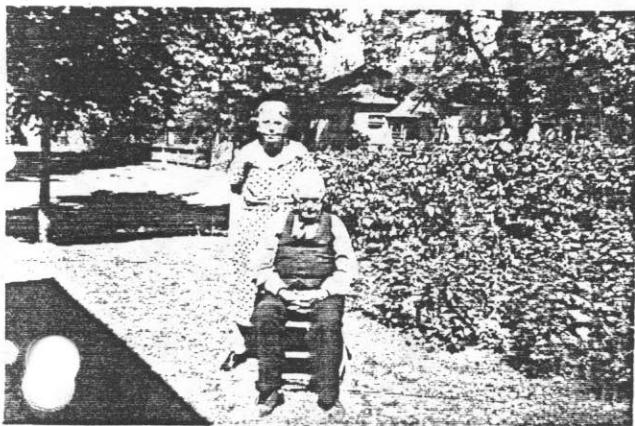
Grandpa Orson and
Aunt Eveline
9/7/40



Grandpa Orson



Grandpa Orson and
Aunt Jane
Spring of 1943

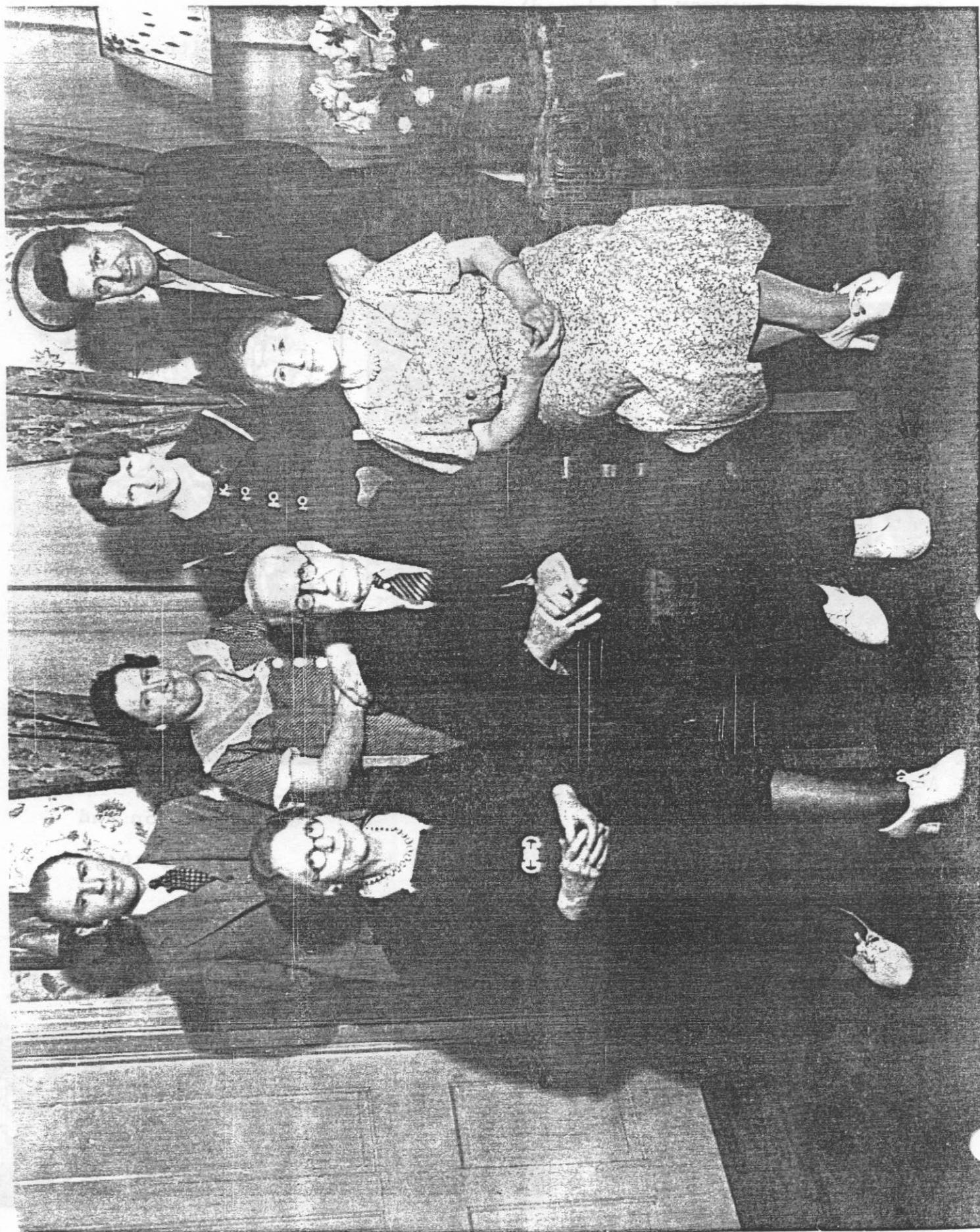


Grandpa Orson and
Aunt Jane about
1940 Sept.



Aunt Lottie, Uncle Ray, Aunt Jane and
Ruby and Ted

APRIL 28, 1935



FRONT ROW: ANNIE JANE, GRANDPA ORSON AND LOTIE BACK ROW: TED, RUBY, NETTIE AND ALV

FRONT

ORSON SPENCER THOMSON (continued)



ABOVE: A sight very familiar to Grampa Orson's family. Grampa engaging in his favorite hobby or pass-time.
LEFT: Lydia Jane Osborn Thomson. Orson's second wife and later years companion. Our beloved Aunt Jane.

