

Bernard & Louise Knapp
Family History

Thelma Knapp Johnson
Life Sketches

FROM THE FILES OF BERNARD ELDEN KNAPP

original

**Life History
of
Thelma Knapp Johnson**

compiled by daughter, Shirley Grimmett

From Mother's Journal

I was born March 12, 1919 at Hibbard, Idaho, 3 miles from Rexburg, Idaho. My parents were Justin Willis Knapp and Mabel Fidelia Hale Knapp. My father was born the 5th of Oct. 1886 in Richmond, Utah. My mother was born March 20, 1889 at Swan Lake, Idaho, in her Grandfather Hendrick's home. My parents were married Aug. 17, 1910 by Elder Anthony Lund in the Salt Lake Temple.

My oldest sister was born May 11, 1911. On Dec. 20th of the next summer my little sister Justie was born much too soon. She lived about 45 minutes. They called her Justie. My brother Warren was born November 23, 1913. In the summer after Warren was born, or was 1 year old, they had a terrible experience. They lost sight of Warren for a few minutes and found him in the canal floating under water. They worked and prayed very hard to save him. After the doctor said he was gone my mother would not give up, and he lived. In the morning of Dec. 17, 1915, Marie Elisabeth was born. Her mission here on earth was short. She contracted whooping cough, and after suffering for two weeks, the afternoon of Feb. 3, she passed away and was buried Feb. 7, 1916. My sister Marjorie, (who incidently gave me this journal, along with her daughters Susan, M'Jean and Myrna) was born Feb. 14, 1917. In the fall of 1918 my Grandfather Knapp had a stroke. He died Nov. 21, 1918. His funeral was held grave side since there was a flu epidemic, and public meetings were not permitted.

I was born March 12, 1919. My eyes were light. I was small, 5 lb., and not so strong. I also had a tooth when I was born.

My father had hay fever. It was getting worse each summer. They had dairy stock, with so much hay to handle, and irrigating to do.

March 21, 1921 Anna was born. It seems that whooping cough was once again in our family. My sister Marjorie and I had it. Anna was just a month old when it struck her. They had another awful 8 weeks. Three times they thought she was going, also Marjorie and I were bad, but the weeks passed and we were well again.

April 12, 1923 Alma was born. He had some kind of thyroid trouble when he was 4 days old, and Dr. Rigby wanted to take him to Salt Lake to try some treatment because there was no one in the west that could help him, and he would die without help. My parents decided against letting the doctor take him. They called in their Bishop and gave him a special blessing and with special care, the next day when the doctor and his nurse came to get the baby, they couldn't believe the change in him. With special prayers and tender care he improved.

My mother had "milk-leg" and it was several weeks before she could take care of the children. Her sister Finnie was there helping them.

I was 4 years old when I first ran away. Anna, 2 years old, was with me. I guess they were really worried because of the river and sloughs and canals on our place. We were found at Grandma's.

In Oct. of 1923 we left the place with Bunker the hired man, and started for Alexander where a power plant was being built, hoping my father could get work where he could get away from hay fever. When we reached Lava it was cold and stormy. We stayed over night. I can remember the old hotel, and it seemed like hundreds of stairs, and my first recollection of Vienna sausages. We were advised the roads were bad, and loaded as we were, we would surely break down, so we turned back and went to Smithfield, and my Dad worked in the sugar factory. Later they went to Alexander to work. After that we went to the pea canning factory in Smithfield, the largest in the country at that time. I can remember going with my older brother Warren or sometimes my older sister Claudia, and we would take Dad's lunch to him. That was so exciting to me. I've thought of those young recollections many times as I went through Logan in later years. I also remember how fun it was to have neighbors living so close. We would go out doors in the morning sun in our nighties before breakfast sometimes. The world seemed very exciting to me then, except I remember while we lived there I was awfully sick, I don't know what I had.

I guess my father was no better, so he and Warren went to the timber in Island Park, and he seemed better there, so he moved to Ashton, that was the nearest school to his work. A school was established in the tie company camp. My Father worked for the Targhee Tie Company. My Father built a log cabin 2-room house with help from neighbors. It had a large porch on front and a dirt cellar beneath the kitchen floor. It was, in my memory, so warm and cozy, and smelled of home-made bread and wonderful things to eat. There was a commissary in the camp where we bought our groceries. We went to school in a one-room school house. Eight grades were taught in the school I understand the teacher was rather young and she got along quite well with some of the bigger boys. Her name was Miss Judd. The school house was also used as a church house. The Saints with the help of the proper authorities formed a branch in Island Park, and Brother Sam South was the Sunday School Superintendent. Brother Pond was an official too, but I don't recall what. The grown ups had a lot of fun at that time of our lives. There were quite a few weddings, and they gave them some very nice wedding parties. My mother would usually write a song for the occasion. They had all kinds of activity games, dances, and etc. In the winter we were snowed in and so they had to find their own entertainment.

I shall never forget the ride when we were moving to Island Park. There were two sleighs, and on one was a cover like a sheep camp, and it was so cold. They had a small stove in the sleigh, and they burned some sage brush, and I loved that smell, it was so snug and warm. When we arrived the women in camp had a fire in our new home with a hot meal for us. What a wonderful memory for a little 5-year-old, and her sisters to remember.

I remember when I turned 6 and started to school it was very difficult for me. I would leave the class room and go a ways into the woods and sit with a stick and doodle in the sandy ground. I was sure I was going to get into trouble, but I didn't like school from the very start. After my oldest sister Claudia graduated from the 8th grade we moved to Ashton so she could enter High School, and Dad and Warren stayed in Island Park, and came down on special occasions. This must have been very difficult for our parents, but they got used to it. I guess because they had a lot to do through the years because of his hay fever. My mother must have felt frustrated to not have him by her side when things would

She moved
lived
with Aunt
Finns

go wrong. I don't remember of her complaining, but I do remember of her being very weary and lonesome, even with all of us kids around. I have found love letters that she would write in a poem structure telling how she missed him, and how lonely it was without him. She was a very special mother. There has never been finer. My father was special too.

When I was seven years old we moved to Goshen in Bingham County. My father went to work for Wilford Christensen on his farm. We lived in several places in Goshen, rather small places for the size of our family, and Claudia went to Firth High School, and when Warren graduated from 8th grade, he too went to Firth High. Claudia met Arch Hess and they became engaged. My little brother Bernard was born in Goshen. My mother had a very difficult time, and Bernard wasn't well for quite a few years. He was certainly welcomed by his brothers and sisters. He has always been such an obedient child while growing up, and he followed through with that all his life.

Arch and Claudia were married May 29, 1929 and Bernard was born 14 November 1929.

The folks were active in the ward. My father was ward clerk for sometime and then he served as 2nd Counselor to Bishop Raphael Larsen for some time. We moved to Rexburg when I was 16 years old. I loved Rexburg. Since I was born in Hibbard about three miles from the town of Rexburg, it was back to by birth place. I made many friends there. My sister Anna was my best friend. She and I had made many friends in Rexburg, and in the summers we went to Island Park. We would invite our friends to come up there and spend two weeks with us. There were too many to go all at once, so half went the first two weeks and the other half went the second two weeks. Very fun and great memories. We went with the log haulers to Black Mountain to get a load of logs, took a lunch, and enjoyed the day, came back to camp with the logs on a wagon and team of horses. The driver, unbeknown to me at the time, would be my future husband and the father of my three children.

The year was summer 1937. My father by this time was working for my sister Marj, and her husband Barney. The Souths sawmill and Lumber Co. was owned by Sam South and Sons. Brother South was getting quite elderly and forgetful so he left the running of the mill and lumber yard to the boys to take care of, and he would go into the timber and get small poles for sale. He seemed quite content doing that, so the boys divided up the work and hired who they needed to help with their part of the business. Ren South took care of getting the poles to the mill and Barney ran the sawmill, and Charlie ran the lumber yard, and moving the lumber to the lumber yard in Idaho Falls. So Ren South hired his cousin Elmer Snowball, known by everyone as "Snub," who later became my husband, and Barney married my sister so that made our children doubly related.

My father ran the saw at the sawmill most of the time. I can't remember why Charlie was running the saw one summer and was training on off-bearer, and he worked several days with this young fellow teaching him what to do and what not to do, for safeties sake. They stopped for lunch and then went back to work and the new off-bearer did the very thing that Charlie had been drilling him not to do. He turned with a slab under his arm, and the end of the slab touched the saw and it cut the end of it off, and in so doing it hit Charlie in the stomach and caused internal bleeding. They flew him to the hospital, but it was too late. It took his life, so my father did the sawing. Ren sold out his share to Barney, and they also bought Charlie's share.

*this is out of chronological
order
happened in the 40's
or fifties*

On Sept. 6, 1937 Elmer Snowball and I were married, and when the snow came that winter we moved along with the rest of the crew. Everyone pitched in until everyone was loaded up with their belongings, and moved to Idaho Falls. Elmer and I spent a few days there, then we left for Utah, a small community called Randolph in Rich County, where we stayed with his folks for three weeks until we were able to rent a house across the street from his folks place. He left me there for three days with his folks who were total strangers to me. I was young enough that I was homesick and very shy. They did what they could to make me comfortable, anyway Mr. Snowball tried the hardest. I met Elmer's 8-year-old son by a previous marriage. Just about every one in town were related to each other. It was during the depression, and jobs were hard to get. Elmer and his Dad would haul wood and poles and try to trade them or sell them.

I never did feel good about living in Randolph. Mrs. Snowball was an excellent housekeeper, and eventually some of her ideas would rub off on me. I learned quite a few things from her.

In April 22, 1939, my daughter Shirley Ann was born! She wasn't well at all. She was a premature baby, and the Relief Society women came in and would turn her from one side to the other side every half hour to keep her heart pumping. The doctor gave her some whisky to stimulate her heart. They called her a blue baby. She had a problem choking until she was a year old, then she seemed able to handle it okay. My mother came and brought Bernie with her. She stayed a month and helped me. Sometimes she and Elmer would rush out on the screened-in porch with Shirley by the heels trying to get air in her lungs. She would be black as could be. Every time she would nurse she would upchuck. I was so scared. I'd try and get my Mom to take her home with her. Oh, I hated to see Bernie and my mother leave. I almost wanted to go with them. I didn't know when I would see them again, and it wasn't until Shirley was 2 years old and I had little Danny. He was 14 months younger than Shirley.

President Roosevelt started a program where they trained men to do certain jobs, and the government paid them to do the work, and it was a blessing, besides the men getting the training. (WPA)

We moved to Sage, Wyo. when Shirley was three, and Danny was 2 years old, and Elmer worked on the section (railroad), at Sage Junction. There were about 5 or 6 families there. We lived in a big old house, in part of it, and a cousin of my husband lived in the other part of the house. I made friends with the ladies in Sage, and we would visit every day. There was no electricity there and you carried water from a well. We used coal in our stoves. It would get 40 below 0 in the winter. We had a hard time keeping warm. That was a happy time for me, for 6 months Elmer was a tea-totaler (didn't drink), but all good things come to an end. We moved back to Randolph for a short time. My brother Alma was working up above Evanston for Ren South in the Uintah Mts. He came to visit us and soon after that we moved to Evanston, Wyo.

I didn't mention while we were in Sage the children had scarletina and I had diptheria. All I could swallow was ice cold milk. I was very sick, but the children had their shots and no one else caught it from me. I read the report that came back from Cheyenne, Wyo., after the doctor took a throat culture and sent it in. I have no idea how I got it and from whom. We moved close to a girlfriend of mine that used to live in Randolph, but there were bedbugs in the house, so we moved, and we then moved to the Uintah Mts. in Utah to work for Ren South and Gene Jones (Elmer's cousins). They built a new cabin for us. It was a nice cabin, but the timber was green, and it sweat, so the sugar was lumpy, and

Gene married Ren's oldest daughter, Glenna

things would mold easy. Everything was wet. Elmer put a rope around one of the ceiling beams, and the kids thought that great to have a swing in the house. It was kind of fun to live up there, but when it was time for snow everyone moved back to Evanston where the children entered school. Shirley turned 5 years old after we moved back down in the valley. We moved into an apartment building in a small apartment. It was my first experience with natural gas. Skaggs grocery store's back door was a short distance from our back door. The next spring Elmer went sheering sheep, and I stayed there with the children. Elmer's cousin and I became friends when we lived in Randolph. We lived close to each other. She and her husband moved to Evanston. He worked for the railroad.

We decided to move to Shelley, Idaho. My oldest sister's husband said Elmer could find work in the potato cellars there, so we went to Shelley. I was expecting a baby, so in the spring Dee was born in a maternity home, Eaton's Maternity home, a 7 lb. 8 oz. healthy boy. I was worried as I had had a time to keep from loosing him, so was mighty happy that he was strong and well. *R n Gator involved*

We moved to Idaho Falls, and Shirley started school there. She had the prettiest long hair. She was so small. I really worried about her walking to school. I would go upstairs, (we lived in a basement), when it was time for her to come home from school, and watch until I could see her coming. I would go down the road to meet her. She had two cousins in her classroom, and a South's daughter's girl, also who Shirley knew. I started her taking dancing lessons, and we became friends with a family that enrolled their girl in the same dancing class (Barringtons). We stayed friends to the whole family for many years. They both passed away rather young. I would make their girl's costumes as she usually had the same as Shirley, but her mother didn't sew. *Porothy?*
The two girls performed in various activities throughout that area.

I forgot to mention that while we were living in the Evanston area Shirley and Dan had the measles and were very sick. The doctor told us to keep the room dark to protect their eyes. Also my husband's brother, Ralph, and his wife became ill so they had an appointment with the doctor, and both had stayed home from work, and were waiting until their appointment at 2 p.m. Unbeknownst to them what was making them sick was a clogged up chimney which was letting natural gas back into the room. Their room was filling up with the gas. When Ralph's son came in at noon to check on them, he found them both dead. That was a sad experience.

(This is the end of mother's journal entries. The following is a short history she wrote for a TOPS Program):

My parents were married Aug. 17, 1910. There were nine children born to this union. My sister Marie lived 45 minutes. She was too small, and too early, to live. A sister Beth died at 6 mo. old of whooping cough. The rest of the nine children are still living. I had a happy childhood. I felt so secure as a child. Our family played together, worked together, and were very active in our Church. We were poor, but we always had clean clothes and plenty to eat. We just didn't have some of the extra things some of our friends had. We had the most wonderful parents. They lived a good exemplary life.

I was born at Hibbard, just out of Rexburg. I have three brothers and three sisters.

My father had a farm at Hibbard, but due to his acute hayfever he sold his farm, and went to work up at Island Park in the pines. His hay fever was a lot better

there. We moved to Ashton, and my two sisters and brother went to school there, and my Dad went up to Island Park to work, and built us a house so we could join him. At Christmas time he had the house built, and he came down to spend Christmas, and to move us up to Island Park, 4 miles east of Pond's Lodge, which of course wasn't there at that time. My Dad put a sheep camp with a wood stove, on a sleigh, and my uncle helped to load our belongings on another sleigh, and we started on our journey. I was 4 years old. I can still remember bits and pieces of that trip. I was so snug and warm, the stove kept us warm. I remember animals making noises at night. I can remember excitement, the smell of the firewood. The second day at noon, we reached the railroad ranch. The snow was very deep. We reached our new home after dark the second day. A neighbor had been keeping the fire going so the house was warm, and the neighbors had a warm meal prepared when we arrived.

They had a school house in camp, so my two sisters, and one brother, went to school. The teacher had all eight grades to teach. After my older sister and brother were old enough to go to high school my parents decided to move back down in the valley, so we left the home we all loved so much and moved into the Shelley-Firth area.

My father was still troubled with hay fever in the summertime. Sometimes he would have to leave the family and find work in the Island Park area. We later moved to Rexburg. I loved it there, but not as much as Island Park. We were in Rexburg two years, then we moved back up to Island Park. My father worked at a sawmill. This is where I met my husband. We married in September, and stayed in Island Park until work closed down on Dec. 30 because of snow. Then we moved to a little town in Utah where he was raised. His name was Elmer Snowball, but they called him Snub. Mostly he was called Snowball. My daughter Shirley was born two years later, then in 13 months my son Danny was born. These were difficult times. Work was hard to get. In 1944 we came back to Idaho. My son Dee was born in 1945. When he was two years old, we went back to Island Park. We worked at the mill, and hauling logs. My two older children went to school at Mack's Inn.

When my daughter was 9 years old I got my first driver's license, and I remember my weight was 98 lb. In 1953 I weighed 105 lbs., and stayed there for a number of years. I finally crept up to 110 lbs., and I stayed there until a couple of years before I married my present husband in 1962. After we were married a week, we learned that we were going to have his two children to raise. They were 10 and 11 years old. Well, I started baking bread, and cakes, and all these goodies. I guess I was trying to impress them or something, anyway, I wasn't used to eating three times a day, or big meals while I was single, and it wasn't long until I was putting on weight. I finally reached 155 lbs. I felt so bad, so I went on the grapefruit diet, and lost down to 129, and then I sort of quit trying. Then one day a friend called, and said they were starting a new tops club in town, and would I go with her. So, I said yes, and talked my step-daughter into going with me. Well, I finally hit my goal of 118 lbs., and I was a Kops for 4 years. Then I left Tops club, and it wasn't too long until gradually over a few years I had gained all of my weight back, plus 5 lbs. Ann Charlton, and her friendliness, was what gave me the courage to come back to Tops. In a year and several months, I had reached my goal. I must keep it off because of blood pressure, pride in myself, and just feeling much better, so I need each and every one of you to help me. I tried, and could not do it alone.

I have gotten ahead of my story somewhat. The year after my first marriage, my father was called by the church authorities to be the work director on the new

temple that was being built in Idaho Falls. That was a very responsible job. My Dad loved it. He met so many people in his line of work that became fast friends. When the Temple was finished he became the first custodian. That was a big job, keeping it clean, but my father loved the Temple, and he loved the work he was doing. My Mother also went to the Temple to work, and she worked there many years until the doctor stopped her from working.

My sister (Marj) and I married cousins. Her husband was the owner of the sawmill in Island Park. So, when my father's hay fever would get bad, he would go up and help her on weekends, and that would get him through the week. Finally, because of health my father had to retire, but he still went up to Island Park to help my sister at the mill since she was a widow by then, and she and her young boys ran the South's sawmill and lumber yard. There is a time in my mother's life that she wrote about that I would like to share with you. It took place the year I was married, 1937:

(by Mabel Knapp) [Dec. 30th, all but one load had been taken out to Ponds where the trucks would replace the sleighs, and we would move to the valley. The work of another day was done, and those who had battled the snow and wind to get the last of the lumber, wood, and household goods moved out before the roads were blocked, had laid their tired bodies down to rest. But to me sleep did not come at once, so I wrapped my coat about me and stepped out into the night, that my soul might be filled once more with the beauty of the world about us. I stand in awe of the majestic splendor and in worshipful silence I wonder how near or how far is God. Surely, "The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His Handiwork." Snow had fallen during the day, but in the evening the clouds had gone in hiding and the stars were shining. The curtain of darkness had rolled down, and night in her Glory, reigned there in the midst of the stately pines. By the side of the snow-hushed mill, lay the little camp, a tiny bit of the work of man amid the handiwork of God. To the north and east, were mountains; walls of this land of snow, to the south and west a blanket of white stretches out to the timber line, and there where the roads and the railroads meet, three pines stand straight and tall like three sentinels on guard. As I turned back into the house it seemed like bells should ring the passing of another year.]

My mother became ill, and her doctor sent her here to Pocatello in 1968 to have a kidney removed. She never complained. I know she was somewhat afraid. She wanted to be home with Dad, so as soon as she was able, she went back to Idaho Falls, and home. But, she didn't mend. After two months we found out she had cancer, and that was the reason she wasn't getting better after her operation. She and Dad had been together for 59 years. My father's health had been failing also. My mother stayed in the hospital for several months, and we knew the end was very close. The doctor told the family several days. My father was at home.

On Friday night, June 13, my husband and I had come from the hospital where we visited my mother. He had been told the news, and he seemed to be summing up their life, and he spoke to us of the good life they had had, with few disappointments (I knew I was one, because I had strayed away from their teaching). I felt sad about that as he talked. We had to leave, so we told him we should be back to see him the following Sunday, which was Father's Day (June 15).

I had a pretty card of a deer, which Dad loved, and put some money in it. My brother, Bernie, was in Lava that morning, and he called, and asked if he could ride with us to Idaho Falls to see the folks. We were glad to have him join us

the front door was open - the screen door was latched

front so off to Idaho Falls we went. We were having a hard time deciding whether to go see Dad first, or Mom first. We decided to go see Dad. When we arrived the screen door was open. We called to him several times, and no answer, so we went to the back of the house and the door was locked. So, we broke the lock on the screen and went in, and there lay my father on the kitchen floor. He had been eating his breakfast, and had had a heart attack. *(stick)* slipped from his chair to the floor.

My sister and brother broke the news to my mom. She had been worrying so, what was going to happen to him when she left him. She knew sometimes he was mixed up where he was. He was 82 years old. So, her first words were "I'm glad," then afterwards she cried, and was saddened.

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Ever since I can remember, Dad was always hurrying my mother up. She had all the children to get ready, or always the last minute things to see to, and Dad would say, "come on Mabel, we'll be late." Everyone talked and laughed about Dad saying, come on Mabel, we'll be late. We went to the funeral home on Thursday night the 18th of June. We had all been to the hospital except one sister who (Ann) had flown in from Seattle. Mom asked if she had gotten here yet. We didn't know she was stranded at the airport waiting for a ride, so we left Mom there with my husband, and a granddaughter. I know my Dad must have whispered to Mom, and said, "come on Mabel, we are going to be late." We had only been to the funeral home 20 minutes when a phone call came saying Mom had passed away. So, we were able to have their funerals together, and laid them to rest side by side at Rexburg. Wasn't that wonderful they could go together?

Thanks for your help.

(Mom's youngest brother, Bernie, wrote and asked her to write down some remembrances she had from Island Park during her childhood. She made the following notes to answer that request.)

Summertime - I remember when the big kids were playing run-sheep-run, or hiding-go-seek, and I was probably 5 years old, and was playing with Ruth South's little sister. We would sing tra la la bumbera, and we would bend over and show our bottoms. I think we finally got our bottoms spanked. It was fun to be out doors, and all the kids having fun.

I remember the folks bought Ann and I some nice black rubber boots, and when it would rain we would run through the puddles all over camp. After the rain stopped it smelled so good, and it was a happy time. I remember I didn't like school ever. I skipped school once, and went behind the school house and sat on a log. I think they had quite a few hunting for me. I had a stick and was drawing in the sandy ground, and really enjoying it, and I guess I got scolded. I was always running away. Poor Marj spent a lot of her childhood going after me, and dragging me home.

Then I remember one summer there was a young man that came to our house. I can't remember why he was walking out in the woods, but he had a hat or cap, and he had it full of wild strawberries, and he asked Mom if he could borrow a bowl and milk and sugar to put on his strawberries, and she obliged.

I think we had a root cellar, but I'm not sure about that, in the middle of the kitchen floor with a trap door.

I remember the ties, how neat they were placed out by the railroad track, and it seems Warren made igloos or maybe someone else. I don't remember much at that time about what Dad and Warren did. (I was 5 or 6 years old.)

I remember being in awe of Aunt Lella and Theola and Zelma and Claudia. Claudia had eyes for Barney. Zelma told me a few years ago that she loved being at our house, and practically lived there.

I remember the trip to Island Park in a camp wagon or sleigh, and it was so cozy. There was a stove in the wagon, and beds, or a bed, but the smell of sagebrush burning in that stove was like a wonderful fairy tale to me. It always seemed so wondrous and warm, while I was a little girl, and safe with Mom and Dad. But yet, I had that awful curiosity about me that always got me into trouble running off to see how the rest of the world lived, always greener on the other side of the fence, and that stayed with me all my life until I met Ken. It could have stopped with Elmer if he hadn't been a drinker, and been more of a family man all the time instead of part time, I'm sure.

Logging - Don't remember much when I lived there the first time. The second time, Elmer and Ren did the logging, and the girls from Rexburg that were friends of Ann's and mine came and we all rode up with Elmer and spent the day or two in the timber on Black Mt. I think we did have a lot of fun up there. I went up with Elmer several times after that. Ann would go sometimes. I rode down to Rexburg several times with Oddy Kent or Charlie South when they went to Idaho Falls with a load of logs or lumber. I always dreaded Bear Gulch.

Sleighs - The dog races were talked about so much by everyone. Tud Kent I think was one of the first runners and winners. I remember some fellow over at Island Park giving some of us rides on the dog sleighs, and that was probably a sleigh we were in that took us into the park. Maybe not, I'm not sure, but we would have sleighs and warm quilts. I don't remember much about cabin building, maybe the one you (Bernie) and Dad slept in and Al, up by the mill, or was Al up there? I'm not sure. Did they pull that cabin up there from the camp site, it kinda seems like it. *they dig*

Woodpiles - That was something to dig down to a large pile of wood, in the winter time.

Roads - I shall never forget the road from Ponds to the camp site. I think we knew every rock, and then the washboard road on the flat. The road up Black Mt. was scary, sometimes it was fun walking the roads up there. I'm getting so homesick talking about those times. The Rexburg girls and Ann and I walked the road to Ponds on the 4th of July for firecrackers, and one of the girls, Ruth Powell, made us go back into the woods and hide every time a car was coming, because her Mom taught her to never get in a car with a stranger, but on the way home we voted her down, and not one car stopped, and every little Jack-pine looked like a bear until you got right up to it. The next morning Mr. (What's the man's name that had the sheep), came over to camp, (us girls slept outside that night), and he said bear tracks were on that road to Ponds the night before and got into his sheep. Boy, that was a scary thought.

Playing in Snow - I guess I was a panty waist, I couldn't stand the cold. I never lasted very long in the snow, but I did play for a while, and remember if you got under those pine trees how you got your neck full of snow.

(The following obituary was written by Dee, and was read at Mom's funeral in Coeur d'Alene by Wally Krahn, and at her funeral in Pocatello by her brother Bernie).

On March 12, 1919, Justin Knapp and his wife Mabel Fidelia Hale Knapp were blessed with the birth of a little 5 lb. girl who had one tooth already in her mouth. Thelma was small and somewhat frail and suffered the usual childhood diseases. The family was poor in worldly things, but seemed to make up for that with an abundance of love. Thelma was number 6 of what was to be a family of 9 children.

In her journal, Thelma remembers a time when she was four years old. Her father had gone to Island Park, Idaho to work in the timber because he suffered less from hay fever there. After building a cabin for his family, he brought them there to live. In Thelma's words:

"My Dad put a sheep camp with a wood stove on a sleigh and my uncle helped to load our belongings on another sleigh and we started on our journey. I was four years old. I can still remember bits and pieces of that trip. I was so snug and warm--the stove kept us warm. I remember animals making noises at night--I can remember excitement--the smell of the firewood. ...We reached our new home after dark the second day. A neighbor had been keeping the fire going so the house was cozy and warm. The neighbors had a warm meal prepared when we arrived."

A & Ruby Smith's closest neighbors

That house lived as a "Fairy tale" cottage in Thelma's memories. In her journal, she describes it as being "so warm and cozy--full of smells of home-made bread and wonderful things to eat."

Thelma had a very happy and wonderful childhood. She recalls in her journal, a time when the family lived in Rexburg and spent summers in Island Park. She and her sister Anna were best friends. They would invite school friends from Rexburg to come to Island Park and stay with them for a couple of weeks. It was very fun and she had great memories of those times.

In the summer of 1937 she met Elmer Snowball whom she married on September 6th of that year. Their first child came April 22, 1939--a little girl whom they named Shirley Ann. Thelma's journal says:

"She (Shirley) wasn't well at all, she was a premature baby. The doctor gave her some whiskey to stimulate her heart. She had a problem of choking until she was a year old. Sometimes my mother or Elmer would rush out on the screened porch with Shirley by the heels trying to get air into her lungs. She would be black as could be."

Thelma's second child, Dan Frank, was born June 5, 1940. Her journal tells of a happy time when this little boy was two years old. She and Elmer had moved to Sage Junction, Wyoming. They had no electricity and carried their water from a well. The winter temperatures would dip to 40 below and it was hard to keep warm, but they had good friends, their children, and each other.

In the winter of 1944-45 the family moved to Shelley, Idaho so that Elmer could find work in the potato processing houses. In the spring, Dee Jess was born. After a difficult pregnancy, Thelma was relieved to have a good sized and healthy boy.

they were called "spud houses"

It was not long until the family moved to Idaho Falls where Shirley started school. Thelma had become adept at sewing and enjoyed making costumes for Shirley and her little tap-dancing friend, Shirlene. Later, Elmer's mother had a stroke, so the family moved to Randolph, Utah to live with and take care of her. Mrs. Snowball couldn't have expected better care and love from her own daughter than what she received from Thelma.

Note: Shirley Ann was the 1st girl born into the Snowball family for at least 2 generations - Elmer had no sisters

The family moved a lot as Elmer looked for work in building, farm work, or shearing sheep. The children made friends wherever they went but seemed to be closer to each other because of the moving and the love from their parents. One summer the family lived at Antelope Flat in Island Park where Elmer tended cows. Thelma spent a lot of time picking and canning huckleberries. For the children, this summer was right out of a wonderful dream.

Dee remembers moving a horse to rodeo keeper

In 1949 Thelma moved with her husband and children to Aberdeen, Idaho. There they lived several years in a migrant worker camp while Elmer worked at various jobs. Each fall the family would work together picking potatoes in the fields. Wherever they lived, Thelma made the house pleasant and homey by making special decorations such as curtains or table cloths.

Not all memories were happy ones. In 1953 the marriage ended in divorce. That was a sad and hard time for all of them. After many difficult years, Thelma met and married Kenneth Johnson in 1962. Shortly after that, Kenneth's two children, Michael and Diane came to live with them.

One of the nicest things that happened to Thelma and Ken was that they were able to buy their own home in a lovely, quiet Pocatello neighborhood. It helped to give them both the stability in their lives that they had longed for. Thelma would spend hours fixing and decorating things just the way she wanted them while Ken would do the same thing with the yard and garage which became a shop for his television repair business. Thelma and Kenneth spent many happy years enjoying that home.

they joined AA and stopped smoking. It became a big part of their social life.

Thelma was able to buy herself a nice sewing machine and busied herself making many clothes for her grandchildren. She also began making stuffed animals and later took up making and clothing beautiful porcelain dolls.

Thelma helped with Ken's business, taking phone calls and setting appointments while Ken was busy doing the repairs. She joined the TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) organization and made many good friends there.

The hardest thing for a mother to endure is the loss of one of her children. In June of 1963, her boy Danny was killed in a rodeo accident. Thank heaven for the stability that had come into her life, for without it she may never have been able to bear that loss.

Thelma and Ken both loved animals. They had two adorable pet monkeys and later two dogs which they took very good care of. Thelma also loved to watch the birds and the cats in the back yard. In her later years, she would spend hours quietly watching them from her window.

(1200 lbs)

All of his & Thelma's children were boys. Shewers = celebrity

Both Thelma and Ken had smoked since they were young people.

They decided that if they gave each other mutual support they could overcome that habit. Where many have failed they triumphed in 1966. Thelma had had a bad cough for most of her adult life. Although she was accustomed to it, it gradually grew worse. In 1977 she was diagnosed as having emphysema.

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In 1980 Thelma had started to become active in her ward in Pocatello and in 1983 she went to the Idaho Falls Temple to receive her endowments. She moved to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to live with her daughter Shirley shortly after that. In December of that year she had the privilege of being sealed to her family by her brother Alma in the Idaho Falls Temple.

She loved her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and enjoyed very much going to their activities and especially watching them waterski on Lake Coeur d'Alene. She became involved in the Better Breathers organization in Coeur d'Alene and made many friends there. She felt so blessed for having Dr. George Gumprecht as her respiratory doctor. He was an immense help to her. His kind treatment added additional enjoyable years to her life which she never could otherwise have had. In spite of her health problems, Thelma never became bitter. She had a great attitude and made many friends in her ward and community.

Thelma had a special reverence toward her mother. No one could have received more love and respect than her mother did from her. Although she will be missed by her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers and sisters and friends, we trust that the reunion with loved ones in the Spirit World is one of such joy that we can hardly imagine. January 7, 1988 she moved on to that reunion, leaving us saddened, yet glad to have been touched by her life and her love.

(by Shirley)

There are several things I would like to add to Mother's history before I conclude.

To begin with, I'd like to say that it is quite an impossible task to remember everything about another person, even someone as close as your mother, but you just hope you can mention the things that your loved one would like to be remembered for by her posterity.

One of the things I think Mom would like mentioned is that she was a good housekeeper. She kind of prided herself on that attribute, and rightly so. I can remember living in some pretty humble circumstances, and yet Mom always had a little yellow box of doilies that she would open, and then place doilies here and there to add femininity and homeyness. Those doilies were the thread of continuity from house to house and apartment to apartment that gave us a feeling of being "at home" no matter where we were. Mom liked pretty things, and would try to have flowers or nick knacks setting on the doilies which adorned our tables and dressers. As Dee said in her obituary, she really enjoyed being able to fix up her home in Pocatello.

Dee also alluded to the fact that Mom liked to sew which reminded me of a characteristic of hers that I always admired. And that was that she was cheerful. She and I were talking one day about someone who was depressed, and she smiled and said, "It's hard for me to be depressed, because all I need to do is go into the sewing room and open ^{up} a drawer of material, and I'm happy." She found happiness in the most simple and natural things, like the smell of pine trees, sunlight making rainbows on her walls as it shone on the prisms in her window, birds chirping, kittens playing, anyone playing anything on the piano, or violin, or accordion. Mom always loved the Church hymns and the "Sons of the Pioneers," a western singing group. That seems like very different types of music, and they were, but Mom would get a tear in her eye over either one, because they were so special to her. I also want to mention that the sewing machine Mom used and enjoyed so much was bought with the money she inherited when her parents died.

An incentive to stop smoking was putting aside the cigarette money and using it to buy materials she wanted - she was very happy over that.

Mom might not want me to tell this, but the truth is that she just loved to spend money. For most of her life she hadn't any money at all. Just barely making ends meet was the best she had ever had until she and Ken started to prosper little by little with his TV business. Ken was very generous with Mom financially, and would give her a food allowance each week, as well as some money for herself. It was such a thrill for her to actually have some spending money of her very own. She would buy yards and yards of material, and lace, and patterns, and fur for stuffed animals. She must have had 4 or 5 garbage barrels of fur when she moved to Coeur d'Alene. She shopped in the very nicest clothing stores in Pocatello, (Blocks was her favorite,) where she bought nice dresses and shoes and coats. She spent lots of money on Christmas and birthdays for her kids and grandkids buying fabric and doodads to make teddy bears, stuffed dolphins, musical toys, whatever. Grandma's package was always the biggest part of our Christmas. She spent months planning, buying, and making all the gifts. It was a great joy to her to be able to do this.

Mother had great faith in the power of prayer. At Dee's missionary farewell she was sitting on the stand absolutely awash in fear over having to give a talk. Finally, in desperation she bowed her head and said a silent prayer. Her faith was so secure that she was immediately calm and peaceful, and able to continue with the meeting, and gave her talk beautifully. That was an everyday, common experience for Mother. Not having to give talks, but having immediate responses to her prayers. Many times during the years that she lived with me she would tell me of a prayer being answered in a miraculous way. Mother, I would say, do you realize that you have spiritual experiences on a regular basis that other people only hear or read about? She just never doubted that the Lord was near, and He was.

I think I should say a word or two about Mother's illness, because she always wanted to share the lessons she had so dearly learned with others who might be struggling with the same kinds of problems. She would want her grandchildren and posterity down through the years to learn from her mistakes. Mom started smoking in her early twenties, and was a slave to that habit for most of her adult life, and ultimately lost her life because of it. She struggled with lung disease and its debilitating affects until she was finally in a wheelchair, and so starved for breath that normal bodily functions, such as going to the bathroom, would exhaust her for hours. She maintained her dignity throughout, and was incredibly brave, but her great wish was that none of her family ever have to give up life because of smoking, or any other addicting habit.

A month or so before Mother died she had a dream that was significant to her, and to me. As I walked into her room one morning she was just waking up. She said, "Oh, Sis, I just had the most wonderful dream."

"What did you dream?" I asked.

"I dreamt that Mom came and put her arms around me and hugged me, and I could feel her cheek against mine."

A few weeks later she had another dream. This time she said that she and some friends were driving to Idaho Falls in her car. As they approached town they were trying to decide whether to go to her parents house first, or to another place they had talked about. Finally it was decided they'd go to Mom's parents home. When they got there, Mother, said she told them she was so happy to be home with her parents, that they could take her car and go on without her.

After those two dreams Mother started telling me things that she wanted me to do when she died, and where this and that was, and what to do about this and that. I think we both knew that the time was near, and it was. When she died, Dee and I, and my husband Clive, and a friend of mine, who was also a favorite of Mothers, were with her. She had been in a coma for several days, and left life quietly and peacefully.

Mom was always very proud of her mother's ability to write poems and little stories and essays. A few months before she died she wrote a poem of her own, the first and the last that she had ever attempted. Perhaps Mom would like her story to be concluded with that poem, which incidentally, I think her Mother would also be very proud of.

Where Did She Wander

Where is the girl I used to know?
The carefree one, of so long ago.
Where did she wander, and why is it so?
The carefree girl of so long ago.
The path not chosen was smoother, you know,
No thistles, no thorns, no tumble weeds blow.
Where did she wander and why is it so?
The carefree one, from so long ago.
Can the tug of the womb, lullabies soft and low,
A Mother's prayers in the twilight glow,
The Heavenly Spirit that did there grow,
Spark the retreat she yearns for so?
Why did she wander, and why was it so?
That little lost girl, from so long ago.

2nd copy

Fidelia

On March 12, 1919, Justin Knapp and his wife Mabel Fedilia Hale Knapp were blessed with the birth of a little 5lb. girl who had one tooth already in her mouth. Thelma was small and somewhat frail and suffered the usual childhood diseases. The family was poor in worldly things but seemed to make up for that with an abundance of love. Thelma was number 6 of what was to be a family of 9 children.

In her journal, Thelma remembers a time when she was four years old. Her father had gone to Island Park, Idaho to work in the timber because he suffered less from hay fever there. After building a cabin for his family, he brought them there to live. In Thelma's words:

"My dad put a sheep camp with a wood stove on a sleigh and my uncle helped to load our belongings on another sleigh and we started on our journey. I was four years old. I can still remember bits and pieces of that trip. I was so snug and warm--the stove kept us warm. I remember animals making noises at night--I can remember excitement--the smell of the firewood. ...We reached our new home after dark the second day. A neighbor had been keeping the fire going so the house was cozy and warm. The neighbors had a warm meal prepared when we arrived."

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Thelma's second child, Dan Frank, was born June 5, 1940. Her journal tells of a happy time when this little boy was two years old. She and Elmer had moved to Sage Junction, Wyoming.

*This may have been
read at her
funeral as her
life sketch
a copy sent to
M. Veer 03/11/2001*

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