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# About Family

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Magazine

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## Who's Your Daddy?

The Etymology of Names  
in Western Culture

## Everything's Relative

Family Stories That Will  
Make You Laugh

## Heraldry and Arms

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More. . .

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**It's a bird. . .  
It's a plane. . .  
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# Who's Your Daddy?

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**N**ames may not be as straightforward as we think. Consider for a moment several dominant cultures such as Eastern, Middle-Eastern, and African. Each of these cultures has a diverse naming construct ranging from fairly simple to extremely complicated. For example, in China and other Asian countries, the naming construct generally follows the simple order of family name, given name, as in Wong Fei Hong. Wong would be the family name and Fei Hong the given name. However, the Arabic naming construct is more complicated. Individuals are addressed as a chain of names instead of the common two. An example of this is Osama bin Laden. An expanded form of this name is Usamah bin Muhammad bin Awad bin Laden. For us, whose names descend from Western culture, our constructs are neither as simple as the Eastern construct nor as complicated as the Arabic. In this article we will

discuss the basic Western naming construct, which has three parts: the given name, the middle name, and the family name. At the end of the article we will give an example by taking the name Alesha May Lovell and analyzing it according to this construct.

## The Given Name

A given name is a name given to a person after birth. Given names are usually not inherited as opposed to family names. Given names are also referred to as first names or forenames or Christian names. It is difficult to pinpoint the origin of given names. Souriete writes, "It is therefore impossible to do more than guess at how the earliest given names were chosen. Most names appear to have some sort of original meaning, usually descriptive, rather than being simply a pleasing collection of sounds." But as history has progressed, we have been able to identify some ways given

names were chosen.

One way given names were chosen was by description. These descriptive names developed from adjectives and nouns. For example, Irish names such as Conan and Aed derive from nouns meaning "wolf" and "fire." Names that derive from adjectives are Fial and Finn meaning "modest, honorable, generous" and "fair, bright, white." Other names that derive from nouns are Peter meaning "rock," Lily meaning "Flower," and Stephanos meaning "crown."

Another way given names were chosen was by naming children after religious figures. Souriete writes, "With the rise of Christianity, Christians were encouraged to name their children after saints and martyrs of the church." We recognize many of these names today such as Mary, Patrick, Michael, Benedict, Martha, Catherine, and Nicholas. Perl and Wiggins state, "Many of these names have been

among the most popular baby names in the United States for particular periods during the last century.” Many of these names also stem from religious texts such as The Bible and The Koran. Luke, Benjamin, Joseph, and Muhammad are a few examples.

A more recent way given names have been chosen is by popular opinion; though this was also practiced during the Middle Ages. Souriete writes, “By the [M]iddle [A]ges, the Christian influence on naming practices was pervasive. Each culture had its pool of names, which were a combination of native names and early

ture, useful for minor purposes such as pacifying relations who want their names to live on, or perhaps genuinely acting as tokens of respect to namesakes.” Rhonda McClure shares how her daughter’s middle name was chosen: When my husband and I were naming our youngest daughter, we had just lost my grandfather. Because both of us were close to him, it seemed natural to us to give his surname as my daughter’s middle name. While my grandfather had one son, the son had all daughters, thus the surname was ending with that generation. While my daughter will never have his surname

occupied or influenced by the Romans. Other areas of the world were slower to begin using surnames, but they were coming into regular use by the time of the Middle Ages, first by the nobility, then by the gentry. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Ireland was one of the first countries to adopt hereditary surnames, and Irish surnames are found as early as the tenth century.

In Europe, by the 13th Century (when approximately one third of the male population had the name of William, Richard, or John), of necessity the majority of people had acquired a last name. However, these surnames were not largely inherited as they are today until about 1500 AD. Instead, they almost always differed from father to son, and were derived from four main identifiers; occupation, location, description, and ancestry.

“In Europe by the thirteenth century, approximately one-third of the male population had the name of William, Richard, or John.”

Christian names that had been in the language pool long enough to be considered native.” Typically there were a few very popular names in these pools that became common. We also have name pools today. Although the pools are much larger now than they were back then, we have a list of popular names that are most common in our culture. Today you can logon to any number of web sites and see the top 100 baby names of any particular year. Choosing names based on popular opinion continues to be a dominant practice in selecting given names.

### The Middle Name

Middle names are a bit of a modern invention. It is a common misconception that middle names have always been given to children. According to Dunkling, “Middle names constitute what is almost a separate nomencla-

as hers, the name has carried on one more generation and it has helped her feel closer to someone she never did get to meet. This story reflects common reasons middle names are chosen. Names are not only identifying words, they carry with them deep emotional significance and connotative meaning; thus, middle names are more likely to be chosen based simply on close family ties and tradition than anything else.

### The Family Name

For the purpose of census taking, the Emperor Fu Xi of China and his administration instigated the practice of using family names in 2852 B.C. E. They were the first to use family names, but as Suzanne McVetty explains, the rest of the world followed gradually: Surnames were commonly used two thousand years ago in areas

#### Occupation

One of the most familiar ways to make a distinction between which of the many Johns was being discussed was by referring to his occupation or his status. According to Campbell, the number one most common name in the United States is Smith, which is an excellent example of an occupational surname. In the medieval times, a smith was a metal worker, so a man might be called John the Smith.

Many other medieval terms influenced last names; some of the definitions are still well known today, such as Baker, Taylor, Cook, and Miller. Campbell explains the meaning of other surnames that have a not-so-familiar job attached to them; like Clark (a cleric or scholar), Turner (a worker of the lathe), Ward (a watchman), and Cooper (a barrel maker). Still other surnames have changed over time, for example: William the Forester turned into William Foster, and Richard the Bailiff into Richard Bailey.

#### Location

A second way to differentiate between Johns was by location or by a geographic setting. Powell states, “Such

local names denoted some of the earliest instances of surnames in France, and were quickly introduced into England by the Norman nobility who chose names based on the locations of their ancestral estates.” An example of this might be John Scott, who moved from Scotland.

Other locality names had more to do with the surrounding geography where the person lived. Many such names are common today, such as Moore (a bog), Lee (a clearing or meadow), Wood or Woods, Perry (a pear tree), and Hill (Campbell). Campbell asserts that these types of location surnames make up about 13% of the 100 most common names in the United States today.

*Description*

Another way family names were chosen is by descriptions. Descriptive surnames eventually began to take hold of families and were passed down from father to son. These were names like White (skin texture), Brown (hair), Armstrong, Small (of stature), Young, Wallace (welsh), and Scott (scotch). Strong and Goodman are examples of these forms of description from English families. Often it can be difficult to find the true origin or meaning of a name simply by looking at it, as names are changed over time through spelling and pronunciation.

*Ancestry*

One of the most mysterious puzzles in genealogy is the use of patronymic surnames. The patronymic name implies the name of a father or grandfather by the use of a prefix or a suffix. Patronymic names originate from English and Scandinavian roots, usually ending or beginning with a term like the Gaelic “Mac,” the Norman “Fitz,” or the Irish “O” which denotes “son of.” These names are often encountered in Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Danish, Icelandic, and Welsh genealogy research; although patronymics also exist in Slavic, Dutch, Romanian, Armenian, and Arabic languages. With

this method of identification, cultures were able to establish a heritage reminding the owner of the name from which line he descended. Specifically, in Ireland, “Mac” means “son of,” while “O” means “grandson of.”

**Case Study**

As a case study, let us discuss an average American name, Alesha May Lovell, and see how the parts are each determined individually, and the meanings and history behind the names are used. Here we use some given meanings from certain websites, but be aware that this may differ among different sources, as explained earlier. The first name, Alesha, is a modification of a moderately popular name in the last one hundred years, Alicia. On the surface, the choice of name comes from her older sister, Andrea, who

the Name” then defines “Adelaide” (and its subsequent variations) as “a noble sort (or type).” Was all this in the minds of Alesha’s parents as they were naming their daughter? Probably not, but the history and meaning of the name not only shows the progression of first names through times and cultures, but also the variation based on personal preferences, such as the unique spelling.

Let us next look at the middle name, May. This name was originally given to the girl as a form of a namesake; She was named similarly to her grandmother, June Price. Alesha’s parents thought that this was a clever theme for Alesha’s middle name, using the months of the year. When looking at “Behind the Name,” we find out more about the origin of the name, and the month, of May (“May”). The

“Locality names such as Lee, Wood and woods, and Hill make up 13% of the 100 most common names in the United States today.”

asked that the new baby be named with an “A” at the beginning and ending of her name. Her parents then chose the spelling based on ease of spelling. However, where did this name originate?

According to a website called “Behind the Name,” “Alicia” is a Spanish and English form of “Alice” (“Alesha”). The chain of origin does not stop there. The name “Alice” is ultimately a Latin variant of “Adalheidis.” As we can see, this name looks very little like the original “Alesha” but much like the Germanic “Adelaide,” which is the root name for “Adalheidis” and its progenitors. “Behind

the Name” website explains that the name of the month May “derives from Maia, which is the name of a Roman goddess.” Looking deeper, we find that in mythology, Maia was the oldest and most beautiful of Atlas’ seven daughters, “the Pleiades” (the namesake of the star constellation). She was a mistress of Zeus, and the mother of Hermes. This interesting connection to ancient mythology is very subtle, but impacts the meaning of the name May.

Finally, we will discuss the surname of our hypothetical name: Lovell. One historian and family history expert, Edith Haroldsen Lovell, explains the beginnings of the Lovell

name: The name ‘Lovell,’ it is written, derived from ‘loup’ and ‘lupel,’ French words meaning ‘wolf.’ William the Wolf (Loup) was a noted fighter in French provincial battles of the 11th century. His son, Robert Little Wolf (Lupel), landed in England in 1066 with William the Conqueror. Some sources claim that Robert’s hot temper was also a reason for the name ‘wolf.’

So how do we make ‘loup’ and ‘lupel’ sound like Lovell? The French word ‘louve’ means ‘she-wolf.’ In nature the female of the species is the fiercest in protecting progeny and lair. In human terms, this translates into active loyalty and allegiance to family and principles, traits that Lovells can be proud to claim.

This shows not only the history of the Lovell surname, but also the emotion and pride that comes as part of almost any surname in today’s society. This natural affection for one’s own surname as an evidence of family pride is common among all cultures. Now, combining the meanings of Alesha May Lovell’s different names, we realize that her name is a mixture of German, Roman, and French terms, and the basic meaning is “a noble kind of person, with traits like the Roman goddess Maia, who has a female wolf-like loyalty towards family and principles.” This meaning, although not originally intended by her parents, is a good standard for this girl as she grows older.

In conclusion, names are not always as straightforward as we might think. As we dig deeper and deeper into the history behind our names, we can see a pattern of naming based on such influences as description and attributes, geography/location, occupation, and ancestry. Furthermore, becoming familiar with these patterns helps us to appreciate our own heritage and history. It can also provide us with a deep sense of belonging—of who we are—and can give a whole new meaning to the phrase, “Who’s Your Daddy?”

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# Passover And Family Plates



**M**y mother and I love the Passover season. It is a wonderful time to bring our families and friends together, share good food and celebrate our Jewish heritage. This Seder plate will continue to be

By Faith Sieler

passed on for generations in my family, reminding us of the special traditions and symbolism of the Passover. Essential to this holiday, the Seder plate, upon which symbolic foods and a cup of salt water are placed, helps us to commemorate



the past and teaches us to have grateful hearts for the many sacrifices of our ancestors and the goodness of God. Each year this antique Seder plate brings a smile to my mother's face, as she lovingly takes my great grandmothers heirloom from the china cabinet, where it is displayed throughout the year, and prepares it for the Passover meal.

My great grandmother Sarah Glickman Epstein emigrated from Poland to the United States as a young girl in early 1900's. Of Jewish descent, she was raised in an observant Jewish family where her rich cultural and religious heritages were important aspects of family and community life.

When she married my great grandfather Joseph Epstein, they continued having Jewish holiday celebrations in their home, including the Passover Seder [sáyðər], or Pesach in Hebrew. The silver Seder plate in my family is valuable not only as a cherished heirloom but as a special part of an annual holiday tradition that commemorates the Jewish people and their ancient legacy.

This beautiful Seder plate my grandmother Marilyn inherited after her mother Sarah passed away. She remembers using the plate each year at Passover time when she was growing up. Several years ago when my parents became interested in having their own Passover meal, my grandma gave the plate to my mother saying, "Use it in good health!"

Passover is based on the biblical story found in the book of Exodus, and is celebrated for eight days in the spring during the month of April. As one of the most well known Jewish holidays, it is a time to remember the Israelites delivery from Egyptian slavery and bondage. The name "Passover" describes the tenth plague, when the angel of death passed over the doors marked with lamb's blood; sparing the lives of the firstborn.

A significant part of the Passover holiday is the traditional Passover feast

or Passover Seder. This special family meal takes place during the first two nights of Passover. The Seder plate is central to the Passover Seder displaying the symbolic foods as the ceremonial meal progresses.

Each specific food is placed on an assigned, labeled area of the plate and then set at the head of the table. The Passover Seder is presented using a Haggadah, a book which retells the Passover story, blessings, and other information to be told in a certain order. Following is a list of the foods, explained in the order they are eaten during the meal and what they represent.

#### Karpas: Vegetable

A vegetable, usually parsley, is dipped in salt water and eaten. The salt water represents the tears shed by the Jews in times of slavery.

#### Maror: Bitter Herbs

Horseradish or lettuce is eaten after a blessing to symbolize the bitterness of Egyptian slavery.

#### Charoset: Apples, nuts, and spices

This mixture is representative of the mortar the Jews used for building while enslaved. It is sweet to remind of the goodness and kindness of God. Charoset is also eaten in combination with the maror, bitter herbs.

#### Zeroa: Lamb Shankbone

The shank bone represents the biblical sacrifices of a Passover lamb during the Passover time, as well as the blood of the lamb that marked the doors of the children of Israel.

#### Beitzah: Roasted Egg

A roasted egg is a symbol of mourning for the destruction of the second temple. It is also representative of springtime and new birth.

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Photo: Cara Dickerson

During the beginning turmoil of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Hyrum Smith and his brother, Joseph, were brutally persecuted. Hyrum was awaiting trials and in hiding during the time that Mary was pregnant with her first son, Joseph Fielding Smith.

# *Family* By Cara Dickerson *Heirlooms* *That Rock On*



divided among the surviving family members. Among these possessions were, of course, personal belongings of Joseph F. Smith.

My family, the family of David Smith Jensen, received two heirlooms that have been passed down from Joseph F. Smith to us, today. One of the heirlooms we received is an old, wooden, rocking chair. This by Joseph F. Smith and given to his daughter. The bottom of the chair has the name “Mamie” and the date it was made written on it. “Mamie” was my dad’s great aunt’s nickname. This chair sits in our dining area room, not collecting dust, but as a reminder of the great service and love Joseph F. Smith gave to those around him, but especially to his family.

We also inherited a dark wood

Victorian record player. This is probably one of the favorites. It is still very beautiful. It may not be unique to its time period but it is a great family possession. It has wooden needles that need to be replaced every so often when they wear down. There are two small doors that contain the “speakers.” When these doors are opened the sound is projected, it seems, throughout the entire home. Even with the doors closed, one is still able to hear the music quite well. It has a crank on the side that is used to turn the records. The more the crank is turned, the faster the music plays. The record player stays in the corner of our living room, showing us the greatness of not only the items we have inherited, but also the great attributes we have inherited as well.

When Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were taken to Carthage Jail, Joseph was only five years old. Little Joseph F. grew and at the age of thirteen his own mother passed away leaving him and his sister as orphans. Joseph grew up with a fortified strength due to the circumstances he had experienced and the independence he learned throughout his life.

These events were difficult, but many more like them continued to occur through Joseph Fielding Smith’s life. On the 5 of May 1866, Joseph married Julina Lambson. They had thirteen children, one of which was Mary Sophronia Smith. She later married Alfred Peterson. They had a daughter named Mary. This Mary is my father’s great aunt. She recently passed away and her possessions were





Photo: Cara Dickerson

Along with these two heirlooms, we also have a few original photographs of Joseph F. in different settings. One is a picture of him when he was in the presidency of the church. The three men sit in arm chairs, not smiling, but showing their regality. Another is of Joseph F. and his sons. I love this one because the strength of the family is definitely seen in the faces, passed down from father to son. One that my family truly cherishes is of Joseph F. and his whole family. He sits with his wife in the middle surrounded by their children and grandchildren. They all

sit among each other with a look of serious righteousness. This particular picture has been framed and put on our wall in the living room reminding us of the love and strength that should be in our family.

All of these heirlooms have brought insight into our own family. We cherish these items for the person that they represent. Joseph F. Smith was a great leader, but more so a terrific example of what we should all be striving to be. These heirlooms are treasures to our family and give us the knowledge of the greatness that runs through our own veins.

### Tips to Preserve Heirlooms

Use rubbermaid type boxes with lids, instead of old fruit boxes which easily collapse and accumulate too much dust, moisture, and insects.

  
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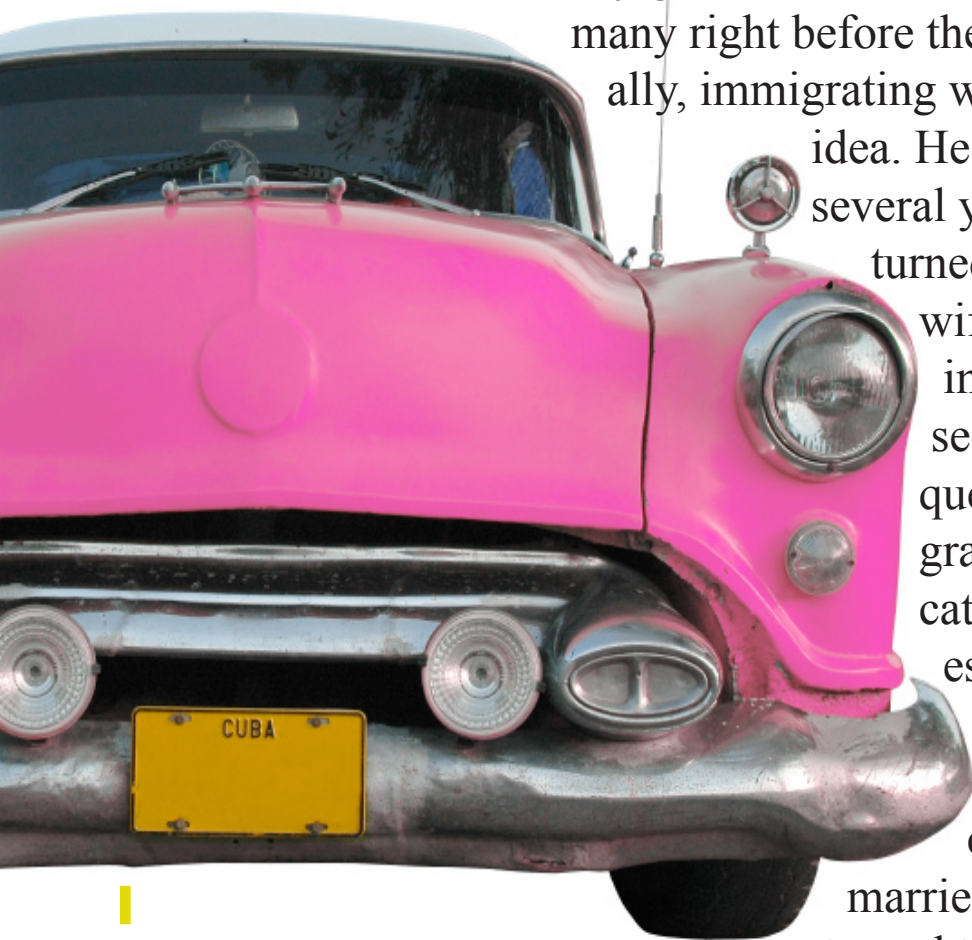
Conservation OnLine @ <http://sul2.stanford.edu/> - produced by the Preservation Department of Stanford University Libraries

See, especially their “Conservation/Preservation Information for the General Public”

# Driving “Lessons”

by Ryan Hagge

My grandma Amanda immigrated from Germany right before the start of WWII. Actually, immigrating was my grandfather's idea. He had come to America several years earlier, but he returned to Germany to find a wife. Amanda was willing, though it must have seemed an awkward request at the time. My grandfather had started a cattle ranch with his oldest brother in northern California, and didn't have a lot of time to court a wife. Grandpa married Grandma and then returned to America without her.



She came after him, making him promise to get the home ready for a woman. Coming from a long line of dairy farmers, Grandma Amanda knew a lot about cows, cooking, and housekeeping, but she did not know much about cars.

In fact, forty-five years after her immigration, she still struggled with the concept of "park." One day, while I was hauling hay bales from my dad's alfalfa field, I noticed my grandma driving towards me in her eighty-eight Oldsmobile. She drove this car all over the ranch, often taking it to places where I wouldn't dare go in a four wheel drive pickup. I had a feeling she wanted to talk to me, so I stopped in the yard (this way she would have to stop on a road and would be less likely to get stuck). She stopped the car about thirty feet away from me, and hopped out in just her stockings.

No sooner did her feet hit the dirt road when the car began to roll backwards. At first I was not surprised; my grandma had a habit of leaving the car in neutral when she had a lot to do. However, the car was accelerating, and it was not on a hill that I could see. I stepped off of the Harrowbed to the sound of my grandma screaming for help. I turned my head, but could offer only an outburst of laughter in response to the help she was requesting. My sixty-five year old grandma was chasing her car down barefooted, with skirt in hand.

Now, sixty five year olds don't usually run after anything, but this event inspired a sprint that I shall never forget. As she ran, she kept repeating a German phrase, *oh, schwine rei*, which is a German way of saying "what a mess." The car was following a circular path; my grandma had left the steering wheel turned sharply when she got out. As she neared lap three, I finally recovered enough from my laughter to come trotting up next to her. She was panting, and had a wild look in her eye. She looked desper

ate for help. I put my arm around her shoulder and told her to wait. The car was gradually widening its path, and soon it ran into some thick snag grass and stopped dead in its tracks. I stepped into the driver seat and put the vehicle in park. My grandma followed close behind. She was sweaty and tired, but she had enough sense to realize that if my dad found out about this incident, she might not be driving for awhile. Thus, she implored me, "you cannot tell your father." I still was unable to wipe the smile from my face, but I swore I would not tell my father.

Years have passed since that priceless experience, and I was faithful to my word while my grandma still lived. However, at the family gathering after her funeral, many stories were shared which were unknown to my dad. Most of them involved some aspect of my grandma's driving. One of those stories involved a new family Olympic event I fondly named, "the barefooted car relay race." It remains a family favorite.

## Fast Facts

During WWII, Jewish immigrants were fleeing persecution, so they came to this country intending to stay permanently. For that reason, they generally brought their entire families with them. Jewish immigrants were predominantly peddlers and merchants. The first few Jewish families, mostly Reform Jews from Germany, arrived by about 1850. During the 1880s the first Orthodox Jews began to arrive from Eastern Europe. Jews first met in private homes for Orthodox and Reform religious services, and synagogues and social organizations were founded around the turn of the century. Jews were excluded from most jobs - including jobs in the steel mills.

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# People Eating Animals

by Emily Poteet

Growing up can be difficult. Learning that Santa Claus is really your parents is a hard concept to swallow. Certainly, it answers the oft-pondered questions as to why the neighbor kids always get better gifts, but it doesn't make life any easier.

Another tricky concept to swallow is recognizing that people eat animals. A few years ago, while playing with his favorite toy giraffe, my three-year old nephew looked up at his mom in the mini-van and said, "Mom, do we eat animals?"

For the next few minutes, Lisa tried explaining as delicately as she could that meat comes from animals, so yes, people do eat animals. Ethan was not content with his mother's response. In fact, he was as angry and heart-broken as a three-year old could be.

"What? We don't eat animals! I don't eat animals," he protested. Later he said, "We don't eat animals. We eat food. I've told you a lot of times: I don't eat animals."

To calm Ethan, Lisa explained to him that people only eat farm animals. Furthermore, animals are good for our bodies. That was the wrong thing to say. With disgust on his face, Ethan said, "Pigs are muddy. That's disgusting."

For the next several weeks, during each meal, Ethan asked if they were eating animals. "Are Cheerios an animal?" "Are tacos an animal?"

Now, at age six, Ethan still loves animals—both to eat and to learn about. If it was that difficult for him to swallow animal-eating, heaven knows what the discovery of Santa Claus will be.

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**"Snow White was poisoned by an apple, Jack found a giant in his beanstalk, and look what happened to Alice when she ate the mushroom! And you wonder why I won't eat fruit and vegetables!"**







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## Beet Teeth

by Jodi Gudmunson

It was the spring of 2006, before my dad left to go to Utah to start his new job. It was only Dad, Mom, Sarah, and Heidi living at home in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

"Sarah, Heidi, dinner," Mom called. Sarah came bounding down the stairs followed closely by Heidi. "Can you tell Dad it's time for dinner?" asked Mom as she set the last dish of food on the table. "Sure," Sarah said as she started down the hall toward Dad's office.

When everyone was together and the prayer had been said Heidi suddenly realized that there was something on the table that she didn't recognize. "What are those?" She asked pointing at the purple colored slimy things sitting in a bowl on the table. "They're beets," came the nonchalant reply from Mom as she passed the bowl across the table to Sarah.

"Yeew gross, do we have to eat them?" whined Sarah even as she took the bowl from mom.

"Yes."

"How many do we have to eat?"

"Three."

"Three," Sarah responded in dejection as she started helping herself to three very small beets until mom looked over and saw what she was doing.

"Three normal size ones. Do you want me to dish it for you?"

This question always left dread in the hearer's mind since mom would put more on your plate than what you would yourself.

"No, I can do it," came the quick, but discouraged, response as Sarah refilled her plate with "normal" sized beets. After passing the beet bowl around Heidi, Sarah, and Dad

looked at each other in dejection at the prospect of eating those purple things. Mom, on the other hand, had started eating the beets, trying to set an example for everyone else.

"Mom, your teeth are purple," Sarah suddenly said laughing.

"I want to see," Heidi said turning and grabbing mom's arm to get mom to look at her. Mom's reply was to tell Heidi to eat her beets, but while she talked Heidi could clearly see her purple teeth. Smiling at each other Heidi and Sarah quickly took a bite of their beets chewing them as fast as they could and then swallowing.

"Are my teeth purple?" asked Sarah showing them to Heidi.

"Uh huh, are mine?"

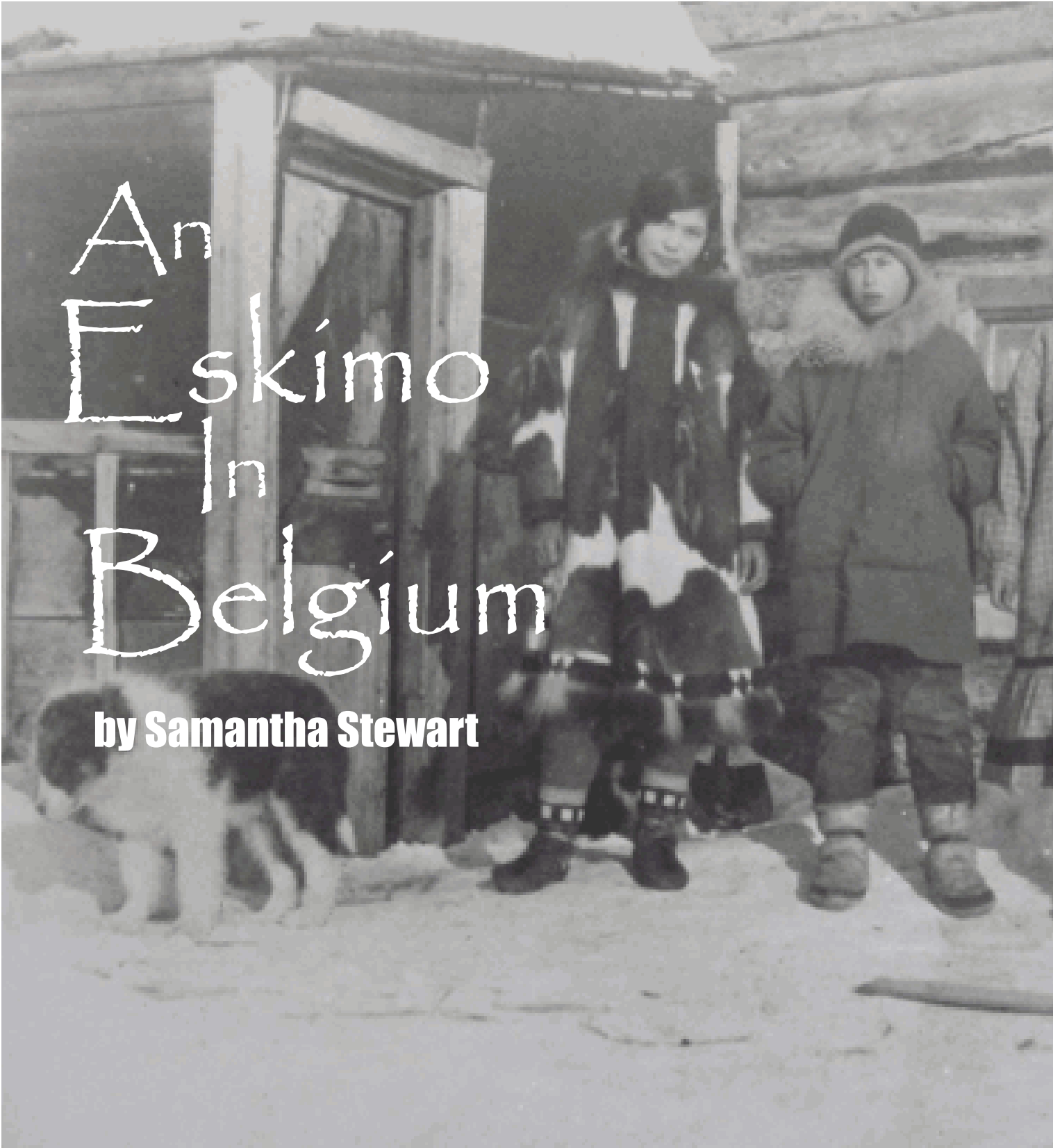
"Yes," Sarah replied laughing.

"I'm going to look in the mirror," Sarah announced jumping up from the table and hurried out of the room. "Me too," Heidi said quickly as she went running after Sarah into the bathroom. They looked into the big mirror to see two girls with purple teeth smiling back at them. Laughing and joking they came back into the kitchen and sat down again. While they had been gone dad had put two of his beets back into the bowl.

"Dad, you put your beets back." Sarah complained while pointing at the bowl of beets.

"What? No I didn't. I ate them," Dad said with a smile and a fake surprised look on his face.

"Nuhuh," Heidi said automatically siding with Sarah. "I ate them while you were in the bathroom." No one believed that response, especially since he followed it with a big laugh and a smirk.



An  
Eskimo  
In  
Belgium

by Samantha Stewart



My great grandmother has gone down in our family history as “Grandma Pauline.” Her Eskimo name was Puniyuk, and she was born to an Inupiaq woman and a Croatian gold miner in the Northern Alaska village of Kiana. Her son and daughter-in-law (my grandparents) joined the church in Seattle, Washington several years after they were married. A devout drinker, my Grandma Pauline thought they were crazy. When she was presented with her first grandchild, she was appalled. Three generations of marrying whites had finally caught up with the family; Michael Schuerch was as Aryan-looking as they come. She gave him his Eskimo name—Udluyak, which means, “rotten fish” because of his white complexion, blonde hair, and blue eyes.

This Michael Schuerch grew up strong in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and developed a kind and virtuous character, which, along with his tall stature and good looks, made him very popular in the village of Kiana. Grandma Pauline had many other grandchildren by then, and though others looked much more native, Michael was her favorite. She cried when he accepted his mission call to Liege, Belgium, and cried even harder when he announced after being back home for six months that he felt he should return. He followed this prompting and ended up marrying a sister he had served with in the mission field over there. Grandma Pauline’s dream of marrying him back into the tribe to a native girl was crushed. This was not a good start to her relationship with her new granddaughter-in-law.

Michael wished to show Grandma Pauline why he loved Belgium and Myriam, his wife, so much, so he paid to fly her over to visit. By this time, he was a young successful doctor with four children and a calling in the district presidency. He was known for his gentle and kind disposition, so everyone was excited to meet his sweet

old Grandma Pauline, as they surmised she would be just like him. When Grandma Pauline saw Michael in the Brussels airport, she threw herself into his arms and cried, “Save me Michael, this place is full of savages! No one speaks English!” Michael gently reminded Grandma Pauline that there was once a time when she didn’t speak English either. “Yes,” she replied solemnly, “and I was a savage.”

Myriam, Michael’s wife, knew English, but she was too embarrassed of her accent to try to speak to this rude old woman, so Grandma Pauline decided that Myriam was dense. She railed and ranted at her for not being Eskimo, for not scrubbing the floor to the proper shine, and for not speaking English. Myriam and Michael bore this as gracefully as they could, and tried to please their sweet ancestor, but nothing seemed to work. The longer Grandma Pauline was in Belgium, the more she believed it was a heathen cast-off of a civilization run by crazy savages. She scoffed at the art galleries and refused any food but what she cooked herself.

One day she told Myriam that she was going to give her a chance to prove her cultural worthiness. They went to the market and bought some fish. This particular fish is safe to eat raw from the clean rivers in Northern Alaska, but must be cooked when it is fished from the polluted Muese River in Belgium. Grandma Pauline sliced the fish up and presented it to Myriam, telling her she could prove herself by eating the fish. Trusting the old woman, Myriam ate some before Grandma Pauline sniffed it furtively then shouted, “You stupid girl! Don’t eat that fish! Can’t you smell a bad fish when it’s right under your nose?” Grandma Pauline mocked her granddaughter-in-law all the way to the hospital.

Her good-natured grandson was rumored to have jumped for joy after he put his sweet old grandmother on the homebound plane.

# The Story of James McDonald

by Stacey Cashmore



The story of my ancestor James McDonald was the main family history story I knew growing up, but I knew very little details. It wasn't until I moved to Nauvoo, Illinois for my first semester of college that I really learned his story. Living in Nauvoo brought special significance to certain aspects of his story.

## The Story of James McDonald

I knew that he was from Ireland and had died while crossing the American plains during the 1850's. James was a flax dresser in Ireland, and made a meager living. He and his family were one of the first in his town to join the Mormon church in 1841. The church meetings were held in their small house in Crawfordsburn, Ireland. In 1844, they sold their possessions to go to America.

In class I learned about the "Maid of Iowa," Joseph Smith's steamboat that brought church members like James and his family from New Orleans to Nauvoo. James assisted in the construction of the Nauvoo temple, and he and his family were forced from their home in 1846 because of religious persecution. To earn money to cross the plains, James

worked on a farm in Missouri amongst slaves. At nights, he would join with the slaves in playing music, performing comic Irish songs and dances for them. He died from cholera near the Platte River in Nebraska, leaving his wife and eight children to continue on to Utah without him. I read from journals about the intense sadness his wife Sarah felt the night after James died. She longed to die and be with him again, but she knew that her children needed her. During those few months in Nauvoo, the story of James McDonald and his family came alive to me, and I felt as if I knew them and was close to them.

Over two years later, I traveled to the United Kingdom, including Ireland, with a school group. For a week, I took in all the sights of Ireland and wished I could call it my home.

On that Sunday, our group learned that it was too far to walk to the nearest church building, so we held our own meeting. The 35 of us met in a room of the hostel we were staying at. As we were singing hymns, I came to the realization of the importance of that experience. I was in Ireland, the beloved home of James and his family, with a small group of church members holding our own meeting and feeling separated from the world. I could not hold back the tears that began streaming down my face, and I continued to cry throughout the whole meeting. It impacted me like few experiences ever have before. I am a member of my religion because of the testimony and sacrifices of the McDonald's, and that small church meeting in Ireland is my heritage to which I owe everything.

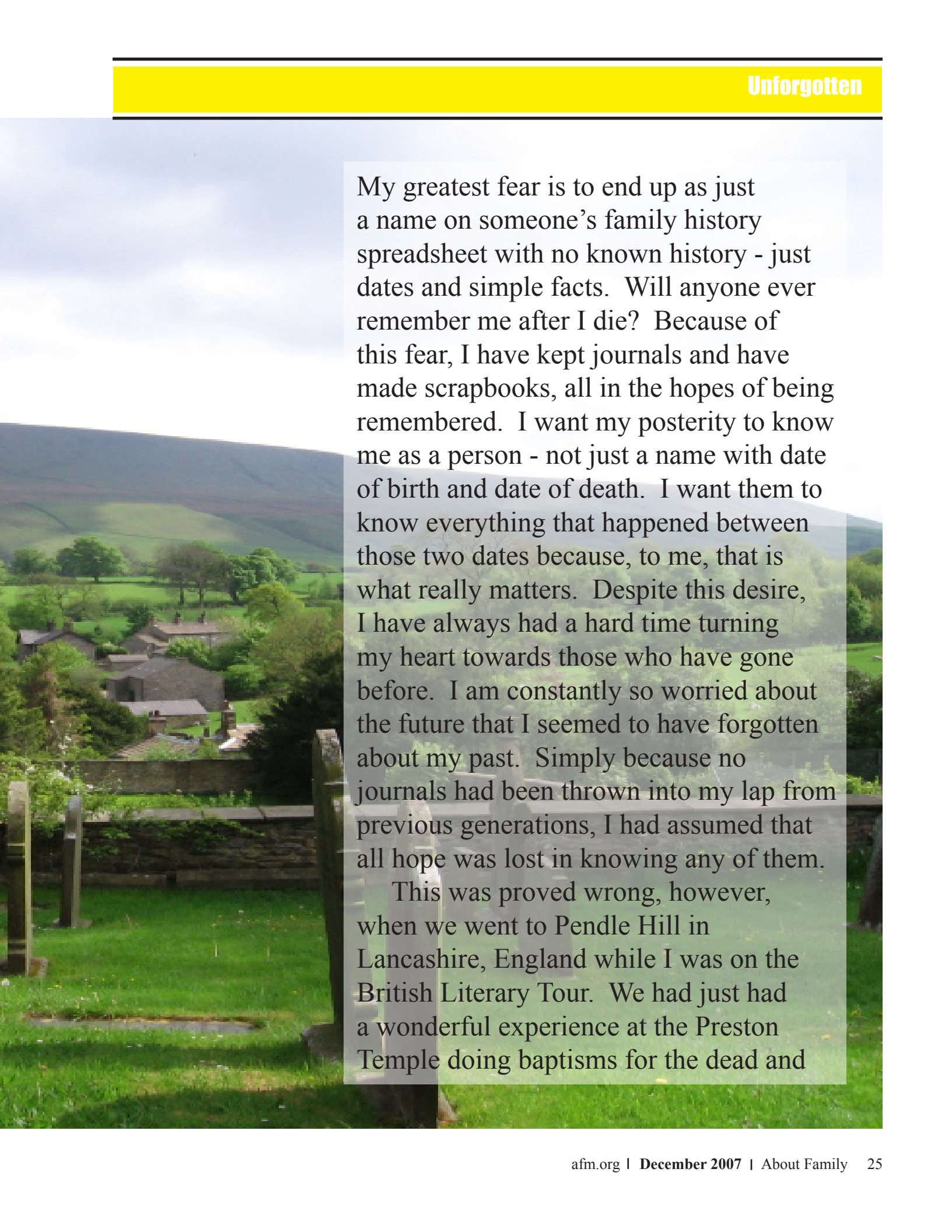
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My greatest fear is to end up as just a name on someone's family history spreadsheet with no known history - just dates and simple facts. Will anyone ever remember me after I die? Because of this fear, I have kept journals and have made scrapbooks, all in the hopes of being remembered. I want my posterity to know me as a person - not just a name with date of birth and date of death. I want them to know everything that happened between those two dates because, to me, that is what really matters. Despite this desire, I have always had a hard time turning my heart towards those who have gone before. I am constantly so worried about the future that I seemed to have forgotten about my past. Simply because no journals had been thrown into my lap from previous generations, I had assumed that all hope was lost in knowing any of them.

This was proved wrong, however, when we went to Pendle Hill in Lancashire, England while I was on the British Literary Tour. We had just had a wonderful experience at the Preston Temple doing baptisms for the dead and



our leaders told us we were going to visit some church historic sites. What kind of church history was there in England, I didn't know for sure exactly, but I was about to find out. We went to Vauxhall Chapel, a small church that Joseph Fielding's brother, James once ministered in. James had allowed the missionaries to hold meetings in his chapel several times, and many eagerly joined the church thereafter.

After we had sufficient time to explore the quaint farm-like surroundings, we started to walk back down the road back towards our bus that was waiting. It was a beautiful sunny day, so I lagged behind the group, not in too much of a hurry to cram myself back into a bus. I crossed over a small creek and butterflies danced together in the light breeze. It all seemed too picturesque to be real. Not only was everything so beautiful, but I felt something strange. It wasn't just the feeling of the spirit, but it was something more than that. And it wasn't just an appreciation for church history, either. As I pondered what

this warm, yet urgent, feeling was, I found a small bench to sit on along the path through the field. I watched an older English gentleman whistle along, his small puppy in front of him; I looked through the trees back at the church we had just walked from. I saw the sun starting to set, casting a beautiful golden glow on the hillside, and I began to wonder—could this be the Spirit of Elijah? I felt tears press behind my eyes and I felt a sudden urge to know those dates and places I had always ignored on my family history sheets. Where was it my ancestors were from exactly? I knew some were from England, but I didn't know where. Could it be that they were from here? I tried to imagine them in my mind. If my ancestors did come from this place, what might they have looked like? I imagined them being excited to learn the gospel, and I imagined them now being impatient to see the rest of their posterity baptized. I saw them eager to be unforgotten.

Weeks later when I returned from my trip back to my apartment at BYU-Idaho, I quickly opened up

my PAF(Personal Ancestral File), desperately searching for something that would confirm my suspicions. As I looked through the names, I discovered Elizabeth Pendleton: born in Lancashire, England in 1844 and died in Carey, Idaho, in 1930. Her mother, Jane Norcross, was more than likely in the wave of enthusiastic people wanting to be baptized when the missionaries came in 1837. While a lot is still unknown about their lives and their conversion, I strongly believe that I felt them urging me on in their hometown by the church that they first worshipped in.

The Spirit of Elijah is real, and it is strong. I now feel a deeper connection with my ancestors than I ever have before. The circle is being completed—I now have not only turned my heart towards my children but my heart has been turned to my ancestors. Even though a journal has not been tossed into my lap, I feel like I know my family better now than ever before because of my experience.



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# “I Will Remember” by Tamasyn Brewer

Family vacations have always been a unifying experience for my family and me. When I was little (and my younger brother and two younger sisters were even smaller) our vacations were primarily camping trips. We would sit around a fire in the great outdoors, talking, singing, and telling stories. Afterwards, we would climb into our tent and sleep on the ground. Then when I was about fourteen years old we discovered a fantastic invention: hotels. This “modern” convenience changed our lives. Now we could sleep on (relatively) comfortable beds in lovely, air-conditioned rooms, which came equipped with both toilets and showers. It was amazing; it changed the face of our travel. Our first forays into hotel travel included trips to Disneyland and Mt. Rushmore, but my mother—the official tour operator—saw other opportunities.

In June of 2002, my entire family and I (my mom, dad, siblings, Aunt Quana, and my mom’s parents) went to Nauvoo, Illinois, for the Nauvoo Temple open house. While there, we found out that the Nauvoo Records Office, which is run by LDS missionaries, could tell us the exact location of the land our family owned before they were forced to flee Nauvoo. Not only were we able to walk where the Prophet Joseph had walked, we were able to stand on the very land our ancestors had owned and worked. This was a heady experience.

So in 2005 we set out to recreate the experience with another trip, this time to New York, to complete our pilgrimage of church history sites. In Nauvoo we had been surprised at the wealth of information that was available to us. This time, we were going to be prepared. We had specific records we were looking for and we knew exactly where we needed to look

for them.

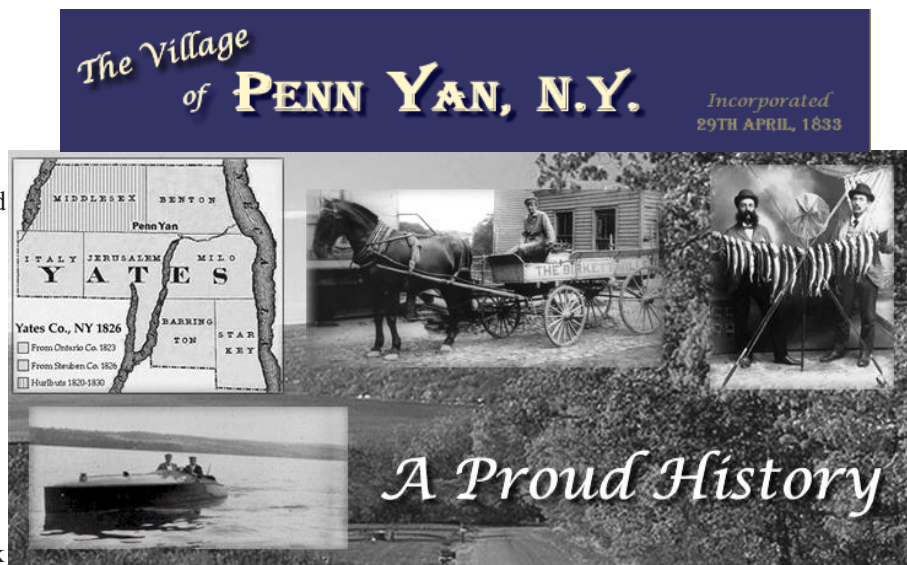
This trip, which lasted a full two and a half weeks, would turn out to be our most ambitious undertaking yet. The trip was not without its hardships: my dad came down with the flu and was pretty much out of it the entire trip; my grandfather, who is in his seventies, was having a very hard time keeping up with the rigorous schedule in the pitiless, unceasing humidity that engulfs the entire east coast; and as for myself, I had second-degree sunburns on my legs from an ill-advised fourth of July float down the river right before we left (my mom, a nurse, would say later, “We probably should have taken you to the hospital, but then we would have missed our flight”), and I spent the entire trip smearing lidocaine-laced aloe vera all over them and wearing miniskirts so that not even clothing was touching the burns. These problems, however, could not dampen our spirits.

We flew from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Cleveland, Ohio, where we rented two vans and drove to Kirtland, which is really just a suburb at the edge of Cleveland. There we visited the Kirtland Temple (which is much

bigger than you would think from the pictures) where tours are operated by the Reorganized Church, or the Community of Christ. On the bluff above the temple the LDS Church has restored some of the original buildings of the city of Kirtland, which include the Whitney home and the N. K. Whitney store, where the School of the Prophets met in the upper rooms.

From there we drove to New York (stopping at Niagara Falls and other minor church history stops on the way), where we visited Palmyra and all that that entails: the Sacred Grove, the Hill Cumorah, and the new Palmyra temple. We had tickets to the famous Hill Cumorah Pageant, but the real show was the demonstrators at the gates: one man was dressed up as Satan and carried a sign that said, “Former member, now saved.” This incongruence seemed to complicate his message, as far as I was concerned.

Just a few miles from Palmyra is the small town of Penn Yan, New York, which was incorporated in 1833 by an equal part of settlers from New York and Pennsylvania. There was a town brawl over deciding what the name of the village should be, but



eventually they settled on Penn Yan—a nod to both sides. Afterwards, they all went to one of the five saloons in town and got drunk in merry celebration (or, as my mother said, “they went out and disgraced themselves”).

It was here that one branch of the Brewer family settled sometime in 1859. The parents, John T. Brewer and Louisa Hurford Brewer, were converted to the Church in England and came to New York to live near Louisa’s family that had immigrated some years before. She died after one year and the oldest daughter, Diana, died four months later. After what seemed like hours of combing the graveyard in Penn Yan (which seemed much larger than the small town required, due to the age of the settlement), we found their graves. We also found the old family homestead, which is now a cornfield. The real coup of the trip, however, was the discovery of the complete record of



the Brewers’ children: James, William, Diana, Eliza, Ellen, Elizabeth, Luanna, and Charles. Their work has subsequently been completed. In 1871, John T. Brewer moved west to join the Saints in Utah. But the story continues; we are still looking for his parents. It looks like our next big trip will be to England.

As I said, our vacations have always been unifying. It is those shared experiences that have brought us close together and helped us find out who we are. To me, incorporating family history into our trips is just an extension of that: now we are able to find that connection not only with ourselves but with past generations.

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# Easy as 1, 2, 3!

by Racheal Hagge

Is family history over your head? Try indexing. It's not only new, but easy.

Designed to fit your needs, indexing allows you to extract historical records to help people find their ancestors in just 30 minutes. This project began with microfilms being digitized. Those digitized images are posted via internet for volunteers to work on. Volunteers help extract these historical documents, and a searchable index is available free of charge through [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org).

Here's how to get started:

1. Go to [www.familysearchindexing.org](http://www.familysearchindexing.org).
2. Click "Install Now" for indexing program.

3. Click "Volunteer" to set up your own account.
4. The software is set up to give you a tutorial of the program. It will take you step-by-step.
5. Then start indexing!

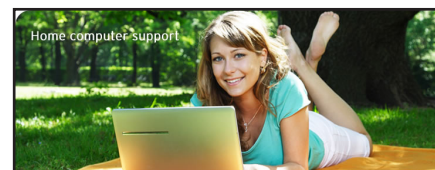
Once you have started, indexing will become addicting. Each batch has approximately 50 names, but you will have one week to finish the batch. If you can not finish the batch in one sitting, then the program is designed to save as your record. So there is no need to worry. You can always come back.

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# How to Simply Start Your Own PAF

by Chelsea Haight

A Personal Ancestral File, or PAF, is an easy way to keep your genealogy organized, and it is really easy to set up on your personal computer.

1. Go to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org), and click on the blue tab “Order/Download products.” There are several options, and you want to choose “Software Downloads,” and then “Personal Ancestral File 5.2.18.0.”
2. On the next screen, click the blue download button on the left, which will take you to the License Agreement; click “Continue.” The next screen asks you for Registration Information (it only requires your name and email address); enter the information and then hit “Submit.”
3. Next choose a desired program to download (PAF 5.2). Press “Download,” save the file to your desktop (if you press “Save,” it will automatically go to the desktop), and once the file is downloaded double-click on the PAF5EnglishSetup icon to begin the installation.
4. A window will pop up and ask you which language you want your PAF file to use; select a language. Then the InstallShield Wizard will begin; click on “Next.” A License Agreement will appear; click “Next” again. It will prompt you to choose a destination for the file, and it should automatically be set to your C drive.
5. When you click “Next,” a window will appear with three options. Make sure all three options are selected, and then click “Next.” Once the file is through downloading, a WordPerfect file will appear called “Getting Started,” which will give you the instructions you need to begin your PAF file.

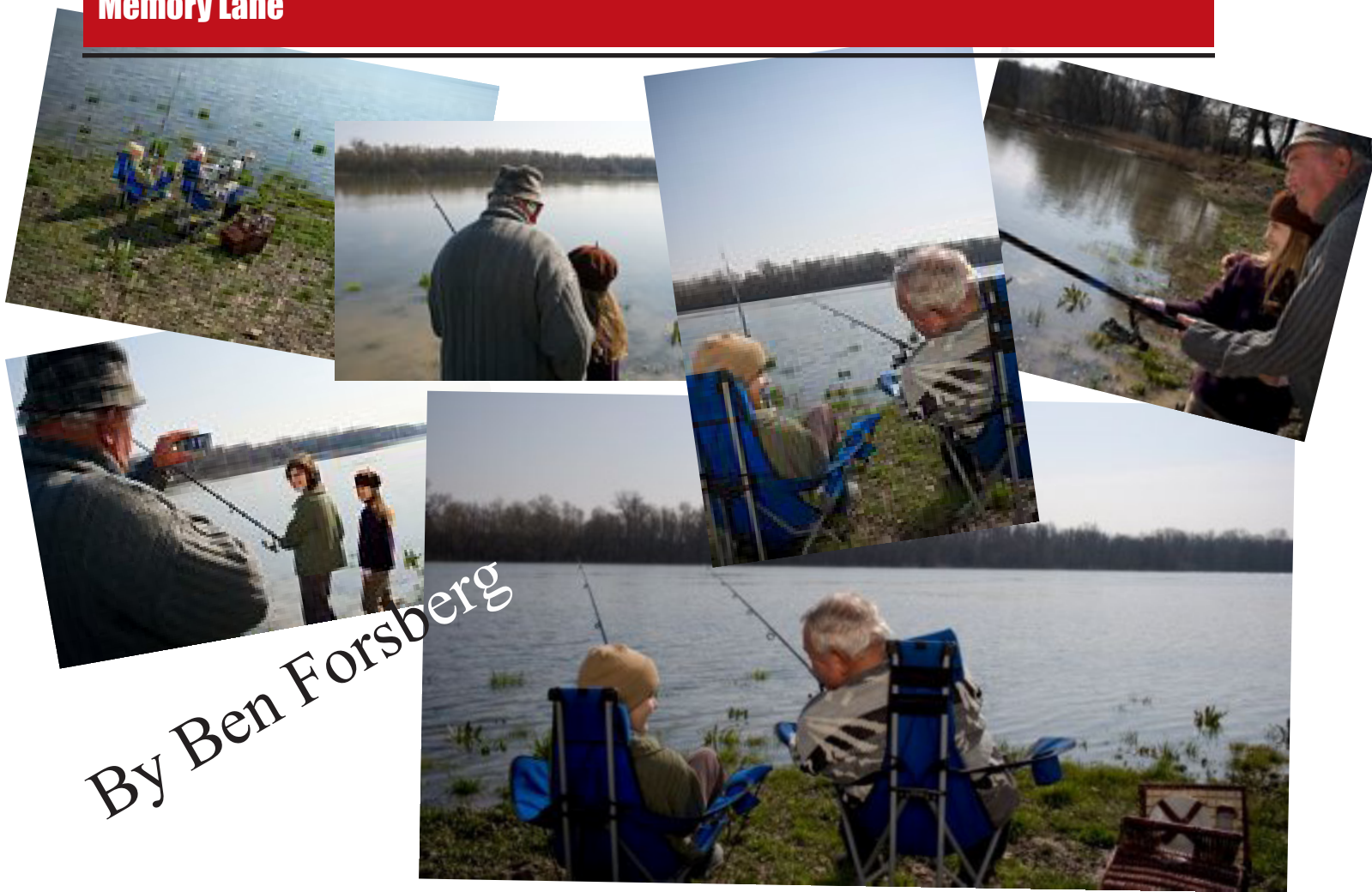
Now you are ready to start entering information in your PAF file.

1. A PAF5 icon should now be on your desktop; double-click on that. Click the “New” button to create a new file. The program will prompt you to save the file, so pick a destination on your computer, name your file, and hit “Save.”
2. The program will ask you “Would you like the Enter key to always move to the next field?” I usually say no, because I like to use the Tab button to move to another field, but you can say yes if you think you will use the Enter key a lot.
3. The next thing you need to do is enter your Preferences. You can do this now or later, but right now you should at least enter your name under the “Prepared by” tab. This will print your name on anything you print from your file. You can change the other preferences later.
4. When you are done, your empty PAF file will be on the screen. Double-click on the blue highlighted box. This is the first person in your file—you. Enter all the information you know, including your full name (women should use their maiden name), sex, birth date and place, and blessing date and place. Obviously you aren’t dead yet, so you can leave that blank, but further down you can enter your baptism date and place, and endowment date and place if you have been endowed.
5. When you are done, click “Save,” and move on to the next person. If you are married, enter your spouse’s information, but if you are not married, you will move on to your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. In just a few minutes, you

can put in all the information for your immediate family.

6. Once you enter the information for both spouses, a box will appear for their marriage information. Here you enter their marriage date and place, and if they were married in the temple, the sealing date and temple.
7. After you put your parents’ information in the file, a small area will appear to the right of their names. When you click on the arrow next to your father’s name, he will be moved to the primary position and be highlighted blue. He will become the primary person, so you can put in information about his parents and children. You will automatically appear as his child, and now you can add your siblings. If you put the children in out of order, that’s okay because you can right-click on the child area and click on “Order Children,” which will order the children by age.
8. Once you have entered all the information in your PAF file that you know, you can start searching for your deceased ancestors at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).





By Ben Forsberg

# Grandpa Wendell

Sometimes, people can affect you in ways you don't realize until much later. So it is with my Grandpa Wendell.





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Grandpa was a character. If he wasn't pretending not to know he was passing gas for the benefit of his grandkids, he was cracking jokes or telling stories. There probably wasn't a soul in the world with a bad feeling toward him, or didn't love him.

He passed away in April 2001 at the ripe old age of ninety-one. He led a full life, to be sure, and the attendance of family and friends at his funeral reflected that. He died in his sleep after a morning of selling brooms for the Lyon's Club, and that's the way I'd like to go (but maybe not after selling brooms).

Of all my memories of him, there is only one in which I

“ Grandpa was a character. If he wasn't pretending not to know he was passing gas . . . , he was cracking jokes.

was able to spend a full day alone with him. It must have been around 1989, when I was ten. Things worked out that none of my cousins were available to play. Grandpa was available, so long as I was willing to go fishing. I wasn't a big fan of fishing, but it was time alone with grandpa, so how could I say no?

I couldn't tell you where we went, aside from the fact that we stood on the banks of a winding river all morning. The grass was dull yellow and brittle. The sun was too hot and there wasn't a lot of talking. The one time I remember catching a fish, Grandpa commented on how small it was, so I threw it back into the river. He quietly told me he had been joking. That may not be the only fish we caught that day, but it's the only one I remember, and I also remember feeling stupid and ashamed because I ruined Grandpa's fishing trip. I didn't want to be around

him for the rest of the day. Fortunately, we left to go to a family reunion, and I didn't have to see him or talk to him.

I don't remember ever talking to Grandpa about what happened. Though I felt bad at the time, I started to feel better almost right away. Grandpa was so kind all the time that it was impossible for me to think he would be frustrated with or mad at me for any length of time, and so I just assumed all was well. There aren't very many people around that make me feel that at ease and loved. Besides that, we only saw him a couple days out of any given year, if that.

Despite the little actual time I had to interact with him, grandpa Wendell

has had a profound impact on what kind of person I wanted to be, and have hopefully become. When I finally have grandchildren, I want them to think I'm a sturdy rock like Grandpa was. I want them to never think I disliked them or was frustrated with them. I don't think I could pull off the whole I-didn't-realize-I-was-passing-gas routine—I'd be laughing louder than the kids—but I'll have other things, things that are uniquely me to pass on. And hopefully, when I'm dead and gone, there will be no doubt in the minds of my grandchildren that I was a man worthy of their love and praise, even if I never received any in life. That's the kind of man Grandpa Wendell was, and the only kind of man I could ever dream to be.”

A

By Karilyn Turner

# Grandmother's Example



*I owe my grandmother so much for the lesson in family dedication.*

I will be the first to admit that I don't walk into situations thinking about what I'm going to be learning from them. But I do learn, whether it is learning what to do or what not to do. Thinking back on many situations I realize I have learned from several encounters. One of these encounters had been happening all my life and without realizing I have learned an important

lesson on service from my paternal grandmother.

My grandmother, Nola Turner, has been dead for three years now. For five or six years before her death I was a few inches taller than her; I doubt she ever hit five feet tall during her lifetime. I only remember her with steel grey hair, a stark contrast to the pure white hair of my grandfather.



“My grandmother treasured her family and the time they spent together.

”

Whenever I think about her now I can come up with ways in which she taught me to be a better, well-rounded person, but I never looked for her guidance when she was alive. As a child, being around Grandma Turner was a series of awkward moments strung together by very enjoyable moments. Those moments were never awkward due to my grandmother's personality; rather, it was my fault. Since my father's parents lived in Wyoming and I lived over fourteen hours away I only saw them once a year during summer vacation. Of course, it was always fun playing the Grandma's basement, where it was dark and full of boxes of toys and child treasures.

As the years passed by I began to observe my grandmother with more interest. I noticed how my grandmother always served breakfast, lunch, and dinner to whomever was visiting. She never ate until everyone else had been seen to. I asked my father about it once and he told me that it was how her relationship with my grandfather went. She always took care of him and did whatever she could so that his time was better spent in suitable pursuits. I still thought it odd, but when I thought it over—particularly after her death—I realized that her silent actions had taught me an example of serving loved ones. My grandmother lived as a partner to her husband and she had her role and he had his. That was the behavior they had grown up learning. What stood out most was that she never complained about it; she did her work with a smile and a good attitude.

I learned more about creating

red around my grandmother's house each year. Every year I took special note of all the decorations in her house—from wall hangings to porcelain dolls to plastic figures. Most of these items had been given to her by children, or had some special memory between my grandmother and one of her children. The decorations I remember best were the ones given to my grandmother by my father after he came home from two years in Japan. My grandmother treasured her family and the time they spent together. Family mattered so much to her and, having realized how much family mattered to her from her actions of service, I strive to make my family more of a priority in my own life.

Perhaps the most telling moment of how dedicated my grandmother was to her family was after her death. When her children were figuring out the “who gets what” my father asked to have any family history documents and any pictures my grandmother had collected over the years. My family ended up with several boxes of pictures and over five boxes of family history documents—from family trees to journals. The family history she began has become the project of my family, and through this “gift” my grandmother bestowed on my family she had brought us closer to more family through this unique form of service. She has brought me closer to ancestors I did not even know existed a few years ago. I owe my grandmother so much for the lesson in family dedication.

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# Through Their Eyes



By Sharolyn Peterson

During this last summer I interviewed my grandparents about their childhood. I spent the better part of an hour with my grandma and grandpa Peterson and learned a lot about what they went through and their memories from when they were little. My grandpa is 80 years old and my grandma is 78 years old. Grandpa still works a bit on his farm with cows and horses, and does the easier jobs. My Uncle Kevin comes to help him. Grandma is very petite. She is about 5'6" and weighs just less than 100 pounds. I went to their house in Rigby, Idaho to interview them and we just sat around their table and I just let them talk, interjecting a comment here and there. It was really nice.

My favorite memory that my grandma told me about was when

my Aunt Phyllis was dating two guys at once, one of them being my Uncle Von, who was Grandpa's brother. Grandma told of a time that they were having dinner where both Von and the other guy, Jim, came to eat. Where they were sitting there was a space in between the two men, and my grandma's little brother Jerry asked, "Who is going to sit in between?" My Grandma laughed as she remembered this. It was interesting to see that even back then, girls and boys still endured problems in the dating scene.

I loved the process of interviewing my grandparents. They talked about how they met and some of the funny moments that they shared together. I realized that I really did get my weird sense of humor from my grandpa and thus my dad. I learned of their trials that they went through, but they didn't

complain about them, but taught how it changed them. They talked about the adult figures that helped them in their lives as they grew up and realized that their role models were not different from the role models I have. Just like them I look up to my parents and teachers and even my siblings.

When I interviewed them, I tape recorded them so I could transcribe it later. I ended up transcribing their interview over Thanksgiving break. I helped me to remember all the things that I have to be thankful for. The life that they had is something I can look at to see how they handled their problems and thus help me to know that I can get through the problems that I go through.

Just the time spent interviewing was time that I will cherish because it was just me and the two of them. It is a memory I took the time to make and I will always cherish it. The process of interviewing them helped me understand where they come from and thus I understood where I came from. My grandparents are a part of me. The things they went through are things I am going through now. All of the awkward moments that I have are the same, even if just in feeling, as the awkward moments they had, especially when they were first dating. It is a memory that others will be able to read to help them understand who their grandparents or great-grandparents were. It builds family ties.

## QUICK TIP:

When interviewing grandparents, bring along a tape recorder or video camera to capture their personalities and to provide more accurate retelling.

# Getting to Know GRANDPA

BY ALLISON PARK

My grandpa loved going on cruises and often went with some of his fellow senior-citizen friends. He always liked to take someone along with him as a cabin-mate. I was available, and in September 2005, we were on a plane to Vancouver, British Columbia where we would catch our cruise to Alaska. We had a day together in Vancouver to explore the city. We walked around and saw the docks, did a little shopping, and ate at a restaurant that wasn't very good.

In all honesty, I was homesick. My grandpa had always intimidated me. I don't know what it was; I guess he could seem gruff at times. What I realized that day was how totally different we were. He was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii and grew up in a relatively poor family. He was a simple man, but a hard worker and content with life. He was interested in the way things worked and loved Hawaiian slack-key and Mariachi music. He was handy with his hands. And here I was, an artsy academic type who loved everything cultured. I wondered as I lay in bed that first night in Vancouver how we would ever find anything to talk about, or how I would ever be able to be truly comfortable around him.

The next day looked much brighter. My grandpa put on his usual outfit, a Hawaiian shirt under a sweatshirt, with a blue hat. As we waited at the check-in line, my grandpa started striking up conversations with strangers. Who

knew anyone in my family was like this? Both my parents are reserved and shy. My grandpa was friendly and warm—someone others instantly liked. Already, I was seeing a side of him I hadn't known before.

We met up with our cruise party, got settled in and left port not long after. My grandpa showed me the ropes of cruise life. Every morning my grandpa and I walked around the deck for exercise, then went to the Windjammer Café to have breakfast. Every day, my grandpa served himself two sausages which he put in the bottom of his bowl, then poured on some oatmeal and then sprinkled some golden raisins on top. Every night we would go to the dining room for a five-course dinner with our group. Sometimes we would go to the card room afterwards to play a rousing (you'd be surprised) game of Phase Ten.

The cruise included stops in Canada and Alaska before stopping in San Francisco. Once we were docked my grandpa and I rode a cable car and then a bus up to Coit Tower. When we arrived, he took me down a long stairway on the hill in search of a restaurant where he and my grandma had eaten as newlyweds. My grandma had written to me in a book of remembrance that she liked my grandpa

because he was “natural, easy to get along with, a gentleman, interested in showing [her] a good time, clean, and used good language.” Those were all qualities I got to know while I was on the cruise with him.

When the cruise ended I was disappointed. I had so enjoyed my time with my grandpa and his friends. After this, I saw him completely differently than that first night in Vancouver. Instead of intimidation, I felt love. Before the cruise, he had been an example to me, but now our relationship had become more personal. I treasured my relationship with him like never before.

Little did I know that I would never have another opportunity to spend that kind of quality time with him. Shortly after returning from the trip, I left for a year and half to live in France. During my time abroad I received a phone call from my parents. At age ninety, my grandpa had passed away in his sleep. I was sad to know that I would never see him again, but I realized how fortunate I was to spend that time with him, to get to know him, to come to love him. It meant that the news my parents shared hit me much harder than it would have before, but I would rather feel more pain at losing him than not know him.



Allison Park with her grandfather, Dexter Smith in San Francisco.

# Bonga and I

By  
*Shannon Hamilton*

Looking across at my grandmother (we called her Bonga), I never would have thought that any of these stories were real. Sitting on her goose down couch which enveloped me like quicksand, I tried to envision this frail elderly mouse as the lion she said she once was—I just couldn't see it. I loved my grandmother as every granddaughter should, but I had never felt especially close to her. This was the grandmother that made me eat all my vegetables, considered fruit a dessert, and demanded proper manners and posture at every meal. As a headstrong kid, we never saw eye to eye.

I remember I was annoyed as I sat down. It was a beautiful fall day and I was stuck here at Bonga's small apartment for an assignment while my friends were out joyriding. We had all turned fifteen and had just gotten our driver's licenses. But here I was instead, putting together a scrapbook of Bonga's pictures, which were not few in number and a handful of stories that told the story behind a selected picture.

I was amazed at some of the pictures I had found; Bonga had led quite an adventurous life. I slid a picture across the coffee table until it laid within her reach as she rocked back and forth in her recliner. She picked up the photograph and stared at it for a long time. "This was taken in Japan," she laughed as she remembered.

"Grandpa and I were invited, along with his army unit, to the Emperor's Imperial Duck Farm for dinner. I remember . . . I was so concerned over what to wear." Her laugh sounded like a delicate teacup being struck by



a spoon.

"But why do you have a net slung over your shoulder?" I asked. The picture was of Bonga from behind, she was wearing her sable coat, high heels, and a pillbox hat. In the photo, she was surrounded by shrubs as if she were walking through a marsh. Her laughter traveled to her eyes. "Well, nobody told me that it was custom that you catch your own dinner." I couldn't help laughing along with her.

"That's amazing," I replied, "I can't really imagine you doing something like that, Bonga. It doesn't seem like you." Bonga lowered the picture to her lap and stared straight into my eyes; I fidgeted in my seat. "You're more like me than you know," she said in a cool voice. I didn't dare doubt her. She gestured toward the disorganized scrapbook and I quickly laid it in her lap. "Let me tell you some stories," she continued.

That afternoon passed in a blur. A lifetime of daring adventures was condensed into a single day; harrowing accounts as an army nurse, acting in New York, parties, galas, and living

abroad in places like Japan, Sweden, and Germany. She had been daring, fearless, and fun; all things I considered myself to be. We were more alike than I thought. One year later, Bonga passed away in her sleep. I often look at that scrapbook as something of a treasure, connecting only what seemed to be two very different lives.

# Grandmas, DADS, AND DOG SLEDDING



Mr. Stephensen with a sled dog in the mountains of Wyoming

By  
Jed  
Stephensen

trapping and hunting experiences in Alaska. I wanted to immortalize my dad's experiences. "So how did you get into dog sledding, Dad?" I asked. This has always puzzled me because my dad grew up in South America. I would have thought he dreamed of Tarzan and Crocodile Dundee.

He said that when he was growing up in South America his mother would read to him books about dogs. "We had no TV, no radio, so that is what we did—we read." His mother was a great advocate of this pastime: "She read a series of books. I think there were three of them. The first one was called, "Silver Chief: Dog of the North," my dad recalled. Also, in his childhood he grew up with lots of dogs. After these experiences, the rest was history. He fell in love with dog sledding and life in the North.

As I reflected on my conversation with my dad it fascinated me to think how much of an influence not only my dad had on me but also my grandma. She loved dogs and so she read to my dad books about dogs. He took it a step further and read books to me specifically about dog sledding and living in the North. It is now the December of 2007 and I am preparing to go dog sledding yet again in the mountains of Wyoming this Christmas. Next summer, I'm going to go live and dog sled on a glacier in Alaska and hopefully stay up there for a couple of years.

Isn't it funny that all this started with a mother who read to her son books about dogs?

When I was a kid, my dad would sit us three boys down and read us a book before we went to bed. He generally chose books about the Yukon and the arctic regions of the world. On one particular occasion he read us the book *Dog Song* by Gary Paulsen, about an Alaskan boy who had many outdoor adventures with his dog sled team in Alaska. After he read us the book, he would tell us his trapping and hunting stories from when he had lived in Alaska.

However, the one thing my dad did not do in Alaska was dog sled. Dog sledding was his big dream that he would one day accomplish. As he told us his stories and dreams, he slowly brainwashed me into wanting to be a dog musher when I was a grown-up. While I grew up I dreamed of the day

when I would be able to dog mush with my dad. Last winter that dream finally came true.

In the Christmas of 2006-2007 my dad and I drove to Togwotee Mountain Lodge, Wyoming and dog sledded with a musher named Billy Snodgrass. He owned a dog sled tour business that took guests on rides twice a day. For ten days my dad and I dog sledded together while taking guests on dog sled rides twice a day. We stayed in a rustic old cabin with 170 dogs surrounding us.

Every day we fixed broken sleds, shoveled poop, changed out the straw in the dog houses, chopped up elk meat with an axe, and dog sledded for five to six hours a day. On the second night I decided to tape record a long conversation with my dad about his

# Do You Have A Story?



## Let us Know!

Our stories in Memory Lane are true and come from the lives of our readers. If you have a story about a grandparent, or an interesting family history story to share, we would love to hear it! Just write your memory down and send it in to [afm.org](http://afm.org).