

Don Carlos Walker History

by his son, Don L. Walker

My father, Don Carlos Walker, was born May 21, 1883, at Taylor, Navajo County, Arizona. He was the second son of William Albert Walker and Lottie Brimhall.

He was blessed by his grandfather, Noah Brimhall, May 30, 1803.

He was baptized July 29, 1891, by Elder John Standifer and confirmed July 30, 1892, by Elder M. E. Willis. Though I have not been able to ascertain who ordained him a deacon, it was in all probability Bishop M. E. Willis at Taylor, Arizona. He was ordained a priest by James M. Slade January 3, 1909, at Redmesa, La Plata County, Colorado. He was ordained an elder by William Devenport September 12, 1909, at Redmesa. He was ordained a seventy by Roger Clawson December 9, 1934, at Kirtland, San Juan County, New Mexico. He was ordained a high priest by Clement Hilton in 1957. He was married to Susan Pearl Wheeler December 20, 1904, in Fruitland, San Juan County, New Mexico, by Bishop Luther Burnham.

Don Carlos became his father's right-hand man early in life. His older brother William Albert Jr. was afflicted with inflammatory rheumatism and was invalid. Thus the responsibilities that generally fall to the oldest son of the family became the duties of my father.

Early in life, my father learned to ride a horse and look after his father's horses and cattle which ranged on the Walker ranch at Clay Springs, some 15 miles from Taylor, Arizona. This was his job. His father operated a blacksmith shop at Ft. Apache, and his mother taught school at Taylor, Arizona.

Before this became his official job, he related how he used to wait with great anticipation for his father to come home and take him hunting up in the White Mountains west of Clay Springs. He related one occasion when he was about six years old when his father, together with Joe Hancock and his son, took a trip up in the mountains to hunt their winter's meat. They arrived at the ranch house late in the afternoon, and it was agreed upon that William and my father would take their guns and go out to kill some camp meat while the Hancocks set up camp in preparation for a week's stay. Their choice spot to hunt that evening was a large round hill just west of the ranch house. As they climbed the hill, they suddenly spied a huge black bear, standing on his hind legs, eating berries from a bush. The bear was not aware of their presence and was about 300 feet above them. Quickly, William drew my father behind a bush and whispered the following instructions: "Now Carl, I am going to shoot that bear, and he may come rolling right down the hill at us, but if he does, I will have another bullet in my gum and shoot him again. Now I want you to put your arms around my leg and hang on, and don't you dare turn loose and start running." The shot was fired, and sure enough, the bear came rolling right down to their feet. Grandfather shot him again, and that was his finish. My Father declared that that was the hardest order to keep that his father ever gave him.

In the spring of 1896 the family decided to move to Fruitland, San Juan County, New Mexico. It was thought that moving to a more moderate climate would be more suitable to their son Willie's health. Two wagons were outfitted to carry all the household goods, and the family and the horses and cattle were organized into one herd to be driven by my father, who by this time had become quite a cowboy. He related the following incidence of this daring trip:

Everything went along fine until they left Holbrook. Then the road went along parallel with the railroad, and every time a train came along, the engineer would let go with a loud blast of his whistle, and the horses and cattle would stampede in every direction. For some 100 miles my father battled this kind of situation, and many times he would arrive in camp several hours after dark. This, however, was not as bad as when

they set out across the Indian reservation north of Gallup. Here the road was only a dim trail, and the Navajo Indians were not the best of friends with the white men. Frequently, my father would find himself all alone with the herd, when a group of Indians would ride up, size up the herd, and slowly ride away as though reluctant to leave without disposing of the boy and driving off the herd. My father said that a prayer was in his heart constantly for the Lord to protect him and help him accomplish the journey safely.

Grandfather William Walker purchased a farm and built a blacksmith shop on it, and my father became the bellows boy. Day after day, when his father had blacksmith work to do, Father served at the bellows.

He and Johnny Burnham were the only deacons in the branch in Fruitland, and they became very close friends. They used to operate the ferry on the San Juan River. It was large enough to carry one wagon, which they would load and make the horses swim. He said at times, when the river ran high in the spring, it was quite a problem to get the horses across without drowning them.

My Father stated that his first ward-teaching companion was Brother William Hendrikson, and that during the time that he traveled with this good brother he learned to have a deep respect and love for him.

There was, however, a period in my father's life when he was a teenager that he strayed away from the teachings of his parents and took up the habit of smoking. This happened about the time the family sold their home in Fruitland and moved to the Jewett Valley, where my grandfather homesteaded an 80-acre tract of land. He also homesteaded another tract of land out in the meadows country about eight miles north of Jewett. The land was situated in an area where there was plenty of grass for summer pasture. Besides supplying a good pasture, there was a lot of good limestone on the place, and my grandfather, understanding the method of burning the stone and making lime, built several limestone kilns on the place and sold lime to the merchants of Farmington, New Mexico.

My father and his brother Ezra spent a lot of time out on this grazing land, caring for a small herd of cattle and burning lime, and having a lot of time on their hands, they strayed down the tobacco road.

Then my father met my mother and fell so deeply in love with her that the old cigarette could not compete with her and was cast aside. This was how my father told it:

The Wheeler farm took up an area that lay between the Harry Baldwin farm and the John Stock farm, and adjoining the Stock farm lay my grandfather's farm. During that time when my father was burdened down with tobacco problems, he felt he was not welcome in the Church, so oft times he could be found sitting out under a tree, smoking. There was a trail that lead through the Stock and Walker farms and wended its way through several other farms en route to the church house. Often in the summertime my mother would be seen accompanying her younger brothers and sisters down this path to the church house, and my father began joining up with them. The younger Wheeler bunch resented my father's attentions, and one day in unison they all yelled out, "We don't want him going to church with us; he smokes." This wild outburst embarrassed my mother to no end, and she reprimanded them severely. This, of course, pleased my father, and he ventured to ask my mother for a date. She accepted the date but assured him that there would be no more unless he quit smoking. With this kind of an ultimatum, he readily made his choice and never took up the habit again.

They were married December 20, 1904, in Fruitland by Bishop Luther Burnham. They were living in a tent pitched under a weeping willow tree when I joined the family April 22, 1906. Shortly after this event my father built a small house on 40 acres of land he had homesteaded, and in this little house my brother Leo was born May 31, 1908. Shortly after Leo was born, my mother was stricken down with inflammatory rheumatism, and for six months she suffered greatly. Her will to live and raise her two sons won out, but she was left with twisted and knurled hands and enlarged joints in her arms and legs that caused untold misery and pain.

The ditch that supplied water for my father's farm was known as the Coolidge Ditch, and those first settlers who built it had so much trouble with wash over that they could not maintain it through a crop season and in consequence lost their crops. My father became discouraged and sold the place for \$200, a team of horses, and a new wagon and moved to a three-room rock house on my grandfather's farm and then took on the job of hauling freight from Gallup to my grandfather Wheeler's store in Jewett.

My parents were interested in the Mutual Improvement program of the Church, and my father was appointed as president of the MIA, and my mother was president of the YWMIA. Whenever they had a dance or some other program at the church, they would tuck my brother Leo and me in bed together, and as soon as we were asleep, they would slip out the door and be on their way to their church duties, coming home once in a while to check on us.

I loved that old rock house and the huge fireplace that was built in the front room. Many were the hours I spent laying on the sheepskin rug in front of that old fireplace, marveling at the different shapes and forms of smoke curling up its chimney.

One night an MIA dance was in the making, and my grandmother Wheeler was a little worried over us being left alone and agreed to us going to her house and spending the night. It was well that she did, for the old house caught fire and burned to the ground. All we had left was the clothes that were on our backs, and if we had not been to Grandma's, we too would have been burned to death.

A fellow by the name of Harry Baldwin owned the Hogback Trading Post and a farm west of my grandfather's place, and he made a deal for my father to move out to my grandfather Walker's place and care for a herd of range cattle for him. We moved into another rock house, about the same in size as the one that burned down.

Our first year out there was one of mixed joys and near catastrophes, with my brother Leo and little sister Irene (born August 18, 1910). We had great times jumping down banks, playing in the sand, and all the other things so interesting to children. One day we were occupied in running and jumping off a bank when we were startled at the sight of a flash flood coming down the big wash in which we were playing. My first thought was to run and tell Mother about it, so off I went, with Leo running to follow me. Our little toddler sister was supposed to come running after us, but she didn't. As I burst into the house to break the news to my mother, her first thought was, "Where is Irene?" I turned, expecting to see her coming up the path, but she was nowhere to be seen. Hurriedly, I sped down the path, looking everywhere and calling her name, but she was nowhere to be seen. Fervently I offered up a prayer in my heart—*Please, Lord, don't let her be drowned*—and hurried down the stream, calling her name. It looked impossible for such a little tot to survive that vast wall of water, but suddenly I came to a wide spot in the wash and the water spread out where it was only about a foot deep, and there she was, my sweet little sister struggling to reach the shore with just her face showing above the water. I had her out of there in a flash, and as I wiped the muddy water from her face and found that she was all right, I tenderly kissed her sweet little cheek and handed her to my mother.

The following year the project out at the camp, as it was called, took on a different look. Besides the cattle to tend, my grandfather Wheeler let my parents take about ten head of cows out to milk. My mother, like her mother, was an expert cheese maker, and with the milk we got, she made cheese. A cheese house was built, and before long she was filling the shelves with cheese, which was readily sold in the town of Farmington. Besides the cows, we took on about 200 head of sheep, and it became my duty to herd them. In this ever increasing domain of my grandfather Wheeler's, everyone that was physically able worked, and although I was a little young, I was pretty fleet on foot and had good lungs, which were about all a fellow needed to be a sheep herder.

This was a rather responsible job, an everyday job except for on Sunday, when we would hitch up the team to a wagon and bright and early head out for Jewett to attend Sunday school and sacrament meeting.

This was a trip of eight miles, and it took about two hours to get there, barring any mishaps along the way. It was a rough, dusty road, and it always took about 30 minutes for my mother to get us presentable, with the help of the ditch of water nearby. The old road was so rough that at some places I preferred to walk rather than ride. We always killed three birds with one stone. We loaded up the cheese to deliver to my grandfather's store, where we would trade it for groceries to take home. My father never had the chance to go to church during the summer months; It was his task to stay home and herd the sheep.

This year, 1911, the floods swept over San Juan County, New Mexico, with great fury and left Jewett Valley buried in about a foot of mud. For the greater part, most of the homes in both Jewett and Fruitland were flooded. My grandparents, the Wheelers and Walkers, were lucky because their homes were built on high ground.

This was the year when my father became interested in Redmesa, Colorado, in earnest. Prior to this time he had filed on 80 acres, where he built a log cabin, and it was here that Irene was born. How my Father succeeded in accomplishing all that he did for the next two years, I will never figure out. It was necessary for him to spend a few months each year on his homestead for the period of five years in order to prove up on his land. My uncles, Walter and Ezra Walker, and grandparents were in the process of moving to Redmesa. My father gave his parents a 20-acre tract of land, and although they lived a couple of years with Ezra, they eventually built themselves a home on the land my father gave them. When fall rolled around that year all of the stock was moved to Jewett, where there was plenty of pasture and feed for the winter, and my father spent the winter digging coal in a nearby mine and selling it to the settlers along the river. Besides mining, he tried his hand at trapping for coyote and bobcat, which fur was in big demand.

The following year was a repetition of the same thing. We made cheese. My Father herded cattle. And I herded sheep. The only reason we could deal in cattle and sheep the way we were doing was because the vast amount of land surrounding us was public domain, and everyone in the country that had stock took advantage of this free range. My father's big job was to guard his cattle against cattle thieves, and I had to guard against coyotes.

The following year my father engaged in burning lime, since there became quite a market for it. We didn't need the milk cows of my grandfather's. My parents acquired several head of their own, and my mother kept on with her cheese making since it was by this little business she had acquired the milk cows in the first place.

This was a sad year for our family. My brother Leo became ill with acute appendicitis, and it became necessary to load him in the wagon, which was loaded with lime, and take him to the hospital in Farmington. I shall never forget that day. My father and mother sat in a spring seat and took turns holding Leo, who suffered greatly. Irene and I sat down on a canvas which served as a cover over the lime, but the dust that seeped up through that canvas almost suffocated us. We were too late getting there, and Leo died the next day (September 6, 1914). This was a terrible loss, especially for me. I loved this little brother of mine and missed his companionship very much. Since we were planning on moving to Redmesa, we buried Leo there.

Redmesa was a nice little community, practically all LDS, and for the greater part, they were all striving to live the Gospel. I recall that at that time there were only two men in the community who broke the Word of Wisdom, but their free-heartedness made up for this bad habit. There wasn't anything they wouldn't do for a neighbor who was in need.

The people of Redmesa were handicapped in one way. The La Plata Mountains failed to supply enough water to take care of their crops through the whole growing season. So my family found it necessary for my father to go to Durango and work in the coal mines, lumber mills, and smelter to earn the extra money to support the family.

The first World War began, and all the young men were drafted into the army. Those who were left found plenty of work. I recall that I was paid \$4 a day to work in the hay fields.

It was and always has been my father's greatest ambition to go into the sheep business, and at the close of the war all of the Redmesa residents decided that the sheep business was the real thing to get into. And why not, everyone else in the neighborhood thought the same thing, even the bishop and his councilors and all the top leaders. In all this excitement, there was one person who bitterly opposed it, and that was my mother. I recall some very bitter quarrels between my mother and father over the subject. My mother finally gave in and saw her home, the cows, and all—everything—being placed in a mortgage at the Durango Trust Company to get money to buy the sheep.

The Walkers thought they had discovered a bargain. They could buy Navajo sheep from a Navajo trader for \$3.50 a head, and so they bought a thousand head. My father purchased half of them, but they bought them in the fall, and that winter was one of the worst winters that ever hit the country. It snowed three feet at Thanksgiving time, and it never melted off for four months. My father, caught without the proper shelter and with insufficient feed, lost half of his herd despite the tons and tons of hay he bought at \$30 a ton, loose in the stack. And to all who might read this account, let this be a lesson to you. Sheep will survive a severe winter a lot better out in the timber where they can get out of the wind and where they can browse on sage brush and have a little shelled corn each morning than if they were standing knee deep in alfalfa hay.

That winter was tragic. I never got so tired of a job in my life as this one, skinning those dead sheep to salvage a portion of our losses. I was taken out of school to herd sheep. And although my father learned the hard way how to manage sheep, he could never overcome that first terrible loss and finally lost everything they had to mortgage. If it was any satisfaction, I might say that the same thing happened to all of those who borrowed money to buy sheep. Some of the men of the community took bankruptcy, but my father did not. Although he lost all, he paid his debt, and in the years to come he was one of the few men whose credit was sound in Redmesa and could borrow money. Of course my mother saw to it that his borrowing was limited.

There came another time after I was married that the sheep business looked good and my father thought I should borrow money on my property and buy sheep. But memories were very distasteful of childhood sheep experiences, and I declined his advice, to which he retorted, "Well, if I had it to do over again, I would buy every sheep I could get my hands on." There wasn't any doubt that my father had the sheep bug and would never get over it. After Mother died and he married again, he got some more sheep, the Suffolk breed, and realized in a small way the fulfillment of his dream.

Although the Durango Trust Company took over my father's farm, he was allowed to remain on it and pay rent. However, the loss of his livestock made it impossible to operate, so he decided to move his few belongings to Durango, Colorado, and work in the coal mines until he could get enough to start anew. By this time, my parents had added the following children to their family: Merle Lamar, born November 15, 1912; LaVerne Leland, born September 1, 1915; Junelle, born March 29, 1918; Joseph Edward, born July 23, 1920; and Edgar Ronald, born April 2, 1923.

In 1923 my father and mother had returned to the farm and were thinking strongly of going to the temple and having their family sealed to them. For three years they had been trying to gather the necessary means to make the trip, and each time some insurmountable obstacle seemed to block their way. This time Brother Hammond, one of the stake presidency, approached my father and said, "Brother Walker, if you will pray earnestly and make up your mind that you are going and nothing will stop you, you will get to the temple this year."

It seemed that all the powers of Satan were determined that this promise would not be fulfilled. Every time that my father thought he was going to get the necessary money for the trip, something would happen

that it didn't materialize. Members of the family became ill. Mother had to undergo an operation. But notwithstanding all of this, my parents kept faith in that promise, and just two days before the time set to make the trip, the money was made available, and a happy family went on their way, rejoicing.

While working at the mines in Durango, my father bought a young team of horses and hired Oscar Wilden to drive them and deliver coal to Durango. They were a fine team of horses, and Oscar took great pride in driving them and saw that they were well cared for.

One day one of the young fellows who was working in the mine who thought he was quite a bronco buster (Clyde Zufelt was his name) climbed up on old Buster with the harness on and let out a wild whoop and yelled, "Ride em, cowboy!" Old Buster, which I had ridden several times and never showed any signs of wanting to buck, decided to rise to the occasion and politely sent Clyde flying through the air. Clyde, getting on his feet, was furious, and with everybody hooraying him, he walked to his tent, got out his saddle, chaps, and spurs, and said, "I'll show that old devil he can't do that to me again." But to no avail. Buster did it again. For the third time, Clyde decided he would ride that horse, even if he had to pull leather (which was a disgrace to any would-be bronco buster). This time it was quite a struggle, and it looked like old Buster was going to pop Clyde's head off before he finally went sailing through the air for the third time. Needless to say, old Buster became the meanest bronc in La Plata County.

In the year of 1924 there was quite a lot of excitement about the prospects of oil. My father owned a dry farm out on what was called the dry farm area, and he was sure that he would be able to cash in and make a pile of money, but about all anyone realized out of the big boom was a few dollar's lease money and a job cutting wood for the drilling rigs, which were powered with steam. My father and I cut wood for the Lidecker Drilling Company. We were paid \$2 a cord, and we cut four cords a day. This made quite a pay check for my father, as my wages were his to spend, and they acquired considerable stock to replenish the farm.

In 1925 I was called on a mission. My sweetheart Pearl and I had made our plans to get married that year when along came the call. Whether this was planned by the bishop, who had a brother-in-law whom he was in hopes would finish his mission and come home and marry Pearl, I don't know, but it didn't change our plans. We decided to go ahead and get married, and I would fill my mission. This put my parents in another bind, and it became necessary for them to go to Durango that fall, and my father worked in the mines to get the money to fill my mission. They stayed there that winter and then returned to the farm the next spring.

My Father got the job of delivering the mail from Hesperus, Colorado, to Redmesa, Colorado, for the period of time I was gone. When I returned, my parents were all in the notion to move to Boise, Idaho, where my aunt Clara Lewis and her family lived, so in the spring of 1928 they took off for Idaho.

One year was all it took, and then they were back. Of course the old farm had been sold to the Sawyer family, and this was a sad day for my mother. To her, it was like a bird returning in the spring to the old nest where she had raised her family only to find it occupied by others. They rented a house and two acres from Leo S. Taylor, who had moved to Provo, Utah, and that spring decided to go into the chicken business. They made a deal for some land on the river bottom north of the old Ball place and built a small lumber house on it, where they moved the following year.

Here my brother Merle began acquiring some cattle along with my father. Also, my brother LaVerne had a hand in it. Here they lived until 1934, when I moved to Waterflow, New Mexico, and times got so hard that they had to seek other ways of earning a living. My brother LaVerne had died with acute appendicitis. Also another brother, Joseph Edward, had died in his infancy.

My brother Merle wanted to trade me some cattle for my home in Redmesa. I agreed to trade at a reduced price if he would promise to let my parents live there the remainder of their lives. Here is where my parents moved and lived until my mother died October 22, 1935, of cerebral hemorrhage.

My father's home was a humble home with few of the modern devices to make it attractive and comfortable. Yet my mother's fame as a cook and housekeeper placed her in a position to be asked to entertain stake and General Authorities at stake conference time. Many was the time that we children sat and with wonderment listened to the leading Authorities tell of their experiences. Our home was also a favored spot for the elders of the Western States Mission. We first became acquainted with them while we lived in Durango, which was part of the Western States Mission. On occasion, they would attend the Young Stake conference when it was held in Redmesa, and invariably they would expect to be invited home for dinner, and at night they all expected to stay at our home.

I recall one occasion on a Saturday night. In those days stake conference lasted two days—Saturday and Sunday. Two of the elders were invited to our home, and my mother bedded them down for the night. It seems that two more elders arrived in town after the conference, and not being invited anywhere else to spend the night, they came to our home late, after everyone else had been tucked away for the night. The door was locked, so going around to the west side to the bedroom, where they always slept, they aroused the two elders and gained access through the window. The bed was a double bed, not a king size. They all settled down like sardines. The old slats gave way, and crash, they went to the floor. There was a great deal of muffled laughter, and my parents were convinced that no one was seriously hurt so didn't check what had happened. In the morning, lo and behold, four elders walked out of the room where there were only supposed to be two. A check revealed the poor old bed on the floor with the two bed rails still in place, as if to prevent the occupants from going any further. They asked my mother if she would mind to leave the bed just like it was so that they could sleep in it again that night. Their request was granted, and they had a great time.

My parents were quite active in the MIA, working both in the ward and stake.

After my mother died, father was left with two small children, Edgar and Lea Mae (born April 26, 1925). He was like a ship lost at sea, and for the next two years he traveled back and forth, visiting his married children. He finally became interested in Aunt Veda, my deceased Uncle Roy Wheeler's widow, and they were married May 7, 1937. Their problems with their four teenage children caused them so much trouble that they separated. My father took his two children to Naturita, Colorado, and engaged in the mining of vanadium ore. World War II was in the offing, and Edgar, wanting to get into the air force, persuaded my father to vouch for his age, and he got into the air force. As for Lea Mae, she fell in love with Doyle Zufelt and married him.

My father, in his loneliness, went out in what was known as Sylvia's Pocket and staked a mining claim and began working it. One day one of the truck drivers who hauled ore called at my father's mine and found him very ill. He loaded him in the truck and took him to Uncle Jesse Walker's store in Naturita, Colorado. Here he was taken care of until he regained his strength. About this time, word was received that Aunt Veda's house had burned down, and my father gathered up his things and went back to Redmesa to help Aunt Veda build another house. The original home was located on a one-acre lot down on the townsite of Redmesa. Aunt Veda owned a 150-acre farm about a mile north of the townsite, and here they build a new home, nothing very elaborate, mostly of material they salvaged from the lot. But it became a home to them, and they lived here happily, with a welcome for all their children who came to visit them from time to time.

They decided to go into the dairy business, since the demand for milk became great, and with the land on the river and the farm, they had quite a spread to work with. This lasted for several years, and then the new regulations for refrigerating milk became so expensive that several of the small dairies in the area could not meet the requirements and went out of business, and father's was one of them.

About this time I was appointed as one of the seven presidents of the 172nd Quorum of Seventy. The seventies were required to keep one missionary in the field. When the time came to choose another member of the quorum to fill a mission, I suggested my father, and the quorum accepted. When my father was ap-

proached with the proposition, he said he would be glad to go if he could take Aunt Veda. When the subject of extra finances were mentioned, my father replied, "Oh, that will be no problem. If the seventies will support me, we have enough money to support my wife." So the arrangements were made. I doubt that there was ever anything that happened to my father in his life that did him as much good as being called to serve in the Southwest Indian Mission under President Buchanan. They did an excellent job. Following are some of their experiences which they related.

They were stationed at Crystal Springs, where the church had built a small chapel, and the Indians learned to have a great deal of faith in my father's administrations. Many of the sick were restored to their health, and their faith waxed strong.

Along in the summer, it became very dry and the water holes began to dry up, and they were in stressed circumstances for water for their stock. Instead of the Indians calling in the medicine man to pray for rain as they had heretofore done, they asked my father if he and his wife would go up in the mountain where they held their prayers and do the praying for them. My father agreed, but as the time drew near he was jaunted with the fear that maybe God would not hear his prayers. He said that the day before that, he and Aunt Veda spent most of their time on their knees pleading with the Lord to answer their prayers.

As they neared the selected spot, they found a host of Indians there waiting for them. They had brought along a lot of food to eat after the prayer was offered. Because there were no clouds in sight, surely it wouldn't rain today. As my father removed his hat, he observed a small cloud forming in the sky a few miles in the distance. He proceeded with his prayer. When he had finished, he saw that the small cloud had come considerably closer, and he pointed it out to the Indians and remarked that if they lingered long enough to eat their feast they would probably get wet. "Oh, we don't mind," replied the Indians. "We like to feel the rain on our faces." And so it rained, and everyone got wet, and they returned to their homes singing praises to their God.

But it was not always like that. My father and Aunt Veda found an Indian family whom they took a great deal of time and effort to bring into the Church. They seemed to be model converts for about six months, and then a Catholic Father came into the community and began giving away huge gifts of food and clothing. The family quit coming to church. When my Father sought them out to learn why they quit coming, the old fellow replied, "Oh, sometimes me be Mormon, sometime me be Catholic, just whichever one has the most gifts to give me." I think this disgusted my father more than anything that happened while he was on this mission.

Navajo Indians are a peculiar race of people. When they accepted my parents into the tribe, they expected them to remain with them the remainder of their lives. So when my parents received word that they were being transferred to another area to work, the Indian children resented it. When they got into their pick-up to leave, the children began throwing rocks at them.

The last part of their mission was spent among the Walapi Indians who lived at Peach Springs in Arizona. On one occasion when they were giving a lesson on the flannel board in the back of their pick-up to a family, an old man who was blind was intently listening to the lesson, which was on the *Book of Mormon*. When they had finished, the old man stood up and declared that what had been said was true and he was sure the *Book of Mormon* was the history of his people because it agreed with the history that had been told to him by his ancestors.

My Father became very ill, and Aunt Veda went out among the Walapis and located two ordained elders among them to come and administer to my father. The one who offered the prayer worded it thus: "Our Father in heaven, we lay our hands upon Brother Walker's head. We know that the prophets of old healed the sick, and we ask you now to heal Brother Walker. Help us to heal Brother Walker that he may fill

his mission among us and return to his home in peace and safety, and we do this by the power of the priesthood which we hold, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

My Father stated that never before in his life did he overcome an illness so rapidly.

There was an Indian among the Walipis whom they called Samuel the Prophet (his name was Charley McGee), and one time he was gathering cattle at Peach Springs, and in roping a cow his bridle got caught in the rope and he was thrown from his horse and seriously injured. Before he would agree to be taken to the hospital at Kingman, he insisted that my father administer to him. He soon recovered from his injury and was back on the job again.

One day my parents were to go with two other elders and visit some Indians who were working at some lime kilns. On their way they were stopped by an Indian lady and asked to come and administer to her baby, who was very ill. They did so, and almost immediately the baby was up playing in her crib. They promised to drop by on their way back in several hours and see how the baby was getting along. As they approached the house they saw it out in the yard, playing with the other children. The father of this child was a drunkard and asked for the elders to come and teach him the Gospel. In a short time, after being briefed on the Word of Wisdom, he asked to be baptized. He served as a deacon and quit drinking. One night he was discovered kneeling behind a barrel, praying for others of his tribe who drank. Before long his attitude and habits had taken on a drastic change for the better, and at a branch conference President Buchanan ordained him an elder.

My parents were deeply impressed with the great faith that the Indians had in the administrations of the elders, and when they were released and returned to their home, their lives had been greatly enriched by their experiences.

My Father had one ambition remaining in life, and that was to buy 50 head of Suffolk Sheep, so they did just that. It is doubtful that my father ever enjoyed raising livestock like he did these Suffolk sheep. He was with them constantly. When fall rolled around and I went with my pickup to haul his lambs to market and they brought the highest price, it was then that he informed me that I ought to go into the sheep business. But the sheep bug had died in me several years ago, and I didn't want any more sheep.

The time rolled around when my father became too old and feeble to care for the sheep. He was afflicted with a rupture which required operation. He tore the incision loose again while tending his sheep and had to have a second operation. He then suffered prostate gland trouble and had to undergo another operation. This developed into a cancerous condition, and my father thereafter was kept alive with drugs. Aunt Veda stood by his side and cared for his every need. At times she became so weary that she would bring him to some of my father's children to take care of him while she got some rest. My father made his children look bad in the eyes of those not familiar with his case. Every time Aunt Veda left him with one of his children, he would begin to moan for Aunt Veda's return. He was sure each time that she had deserted him.

There was only one time that I am aware of when my father got so angry at Aunt Veda that he was glad to see her go. He had broken out with a bad case of hives and his stomach and arms itched him so badly that he had almost scratched off all the hide on them. Aunt Veda was beside herself. She couldn't get him to stop scratching himself. Every time she turned her back he would start scratching. Finally in desperation, she tied him to the bed posts in spread eagle fashion, then sent for me to come take my turn caring for him. When I entered the room, he looked up at me with a pleading look and said, "Son, please take these ropes off me. That woman has me hog tied." I told Aunt Veda that she could go get her needed rest and I would take care of him while she was gone, which she did. I removed the ropes, and sitting down by his bedside, I began to listen to him relate all the many adventures they had enjoyed together. For several hours he talked with such enthusiasm that he forgot to scratch, and by that time the terrible itching had subsided. That night, with my cot beside his bed, he drifted away in a deep and peaceful sleep. Three days we visited together, and on the

third day he got up out of his bed and for the first time inquired where Aunt Veda was. I told him she had gone to Durango to get him some more medicine. Along in the evening she returned and was happily surprised to see him so much better. As far as my father was concerned, he had forgotten about the ropes.

Several times I was called upon to come help out with my father. The only regrettable thing about it all was that my Father grew so forgetful that when I went to see him, he was very upset because I had stayed away so long, even though it had only been two or three days since I had visited him last.

There finally came a day when I received a telephone call from Aunt Veda telling me that my father was very ill and would have to be taken to the hospital. When I arrived there, I could tell that his time had come. We had quite a time loading him in the back seat of my Oldsmobile, and he suffered terribly during the 25-mile ride to the hospital. When we got there, they sent out three of the hospital attendants with a loading cart to move him, and they almost dropped him before they got him loaded. He had contracted pneumonia and at the age of 88 was unable to overcome it. He passed away the third day (January 27, 1972). For several years he had suffered greatly, and through the hand of death he was finally brought relief from all his pain. He was buried in the Redmesa Cemetery beside my mother and three sons, Leo, LaVerne, and Joseph Edward.