

Childhood History of Floyd "E" Duncan

I was born on the 23 October 1911, in Meadow, Millard County, Utah. The first of six children to Elmer "J" Duncan and Ethel Edna Stott. The following is a personal history of my childhood as told to one of my four daughters: Dayle Duncan White on May 12, 1980.

Some of my earliest memories center around Holidays. When we were little we hanged stockings for Christmas. We always had a nice one. I remember receiving a tricycle for Christmas when I was 3 or 4. It was high. I could hardly reach the peddles. I would ride it around the table in the kitchen which had a linoleum floor. When I went into the living room which had a rag carpet (over two inches of straw,) tacked around the edges, I could hardly peddle. Dad always knew where I was when he could hear the wheels and then when they stopped. We went to Fillmore in the buggy once for a celebration. The folks bought me a balloon. On the way home, just as we were starting home, the balloon popped. I bawled and coaxed but no soap - I didn't get another balloon. When in my first year of school there was a patriotic program in church. We were carrying flags, marching up the isle. I let my flag down, hitting a bench and broke the handle. That shook me. I felt so bad and embarrassed that I had broken my flag that I rolled it up and chucked it under the bench. I cried. Some young women came up from the audience and consoled me, taking my flag to fix and returned it to me after the meeting.

We always had dogs. Kind of a strange breed, mostly short legged. One called Dot. She had two or three batches of pups. One of the pups was a male called old tip. I spent some time with the dogs. Finances were common knowledge to me. Everyone was always in debt. Money was always owed for land or water. It seemed that the challenge of life was to someday be "out of debt". When I was about three I remember Mom asking Dad for money for something, and he explained that what money we had must go to Uncle Lon on his mission. Once in awhile Dad would say "when we get the hay up" we'll take one day and go to warm springs. This was a real treat. We would go down in late afternoon on the hay rack with a team and have a swim and picnic. We would come back late. Usually we would fall asleep upon the way home and then have to wake up to do the chores.

When I was young mother wanted flower beds in the lawn in diamond shapes. One night dad had water on the Lawn and accidently washed away the flower beds Mom cried that night and most of the next morning. I felt pretty bad myself because I had done most of the work. We would hunt for food and we always used what we shot. I remember the first open season for Deer. Dad was the only one that got a Deer. He shared with the hunting party so we had hardly any left for ourselves. I tried to sing when I was a kid. Mom sang in the choir. Dad couldn't sing. Mom would help me but Dad would always say I was flat, so I quit trying. To this day, I don't know anything about music.

Dad expected me to do chores. He was stern (quick tempered). He could spout off. Mom would persuade me to do things by saying that Dad would get after me. Once I had a wagon with a load of manure, I cramped the wagon and hung the team up. Dada romped on me. I said "Who the hell is driving this team anyway? After that things eased. If I wasn't working, Dad

would think of something for me to do. He would tell me, "If you can't do right you can fend for yourself". That always concerned me because I loved my family and couldn't imagine life away from them and also because I didn't know if my Dad was really serious. When I was a teenage I was husky and could do a mans work. I would work or trade work loading wagons. If we traded, we could load twenty or more wagons in a day. I was working, "forking off" for Rule Stott. About mid afternoon Dad rode in on a quarter horse (he was water master at that time). He forked a load off for me while I rested. When I got home that night I sat on the edge of the wood platform attached to our house, laid back and went to sleep. Dad let me sleep, doing the chores himself.

I played with Vaun Bennett and Gerald Edwards. I also played with the Bushnells a little, Zola, Olean, Charley, Florence, Grace and Nolan. I chummed with Lloyd Adams quite a bit. I called him "Tobe". He and I were coming home from Fillmore in a buggy, and I remember him singing "Old Hogens Goat". It went something like this:

Old Hogens Goat was feeling fine
He chewed three shirts right off the line
A speeding train was passing by
Old Hogens Goat was going to die

He gave a blat
A shriek of pain
Coughed up the shirts
And flagged the train.

Audrey Bennett and her cousin, Ila were the bells of the town. If you could get them to even smile at you, boy your were in 7th heaven. I went with Ila a little bit. She is related to me as well as Edna. In second grade a kid sat two or three benches in front (Percy Gull., he had heart problems and died young, always big for his age). I had a zip gun (made of clothes pin and spring) and would shoot paper wads. This day I fit a pin on to see how close I could shoot to Percy without hitting him. Actually hit his ear. I don't know if he ever knew who did it. In the fifth grade Aunt Ada was the teacher. We sat two on a seat. I sat with my cousin Alf. I took a short pencil and put it under Alf, as he sat down. He jumped up, hollered and cried and told me he'd get even after class. He forgot about it however.

In my teens I would make "Home Brew" (malt beer) and take to some of the dances. I came home late after one such dance, four sheets to the wind, stepped up on the porch, and as I did so it appeared to raise slow motion and smacked me in the face. This happened a couple of times. Mom came out and saw what shape I was in. She said "that's a fine things. I hope you get so damn sick you die". That was the only time the porch ever smacked me in the face. I tried smoking a time or two but it wasn't my thing. Maybe because it was mostly cigars.

Church...I was kind of a "reprobate". After I was ordained a priest I king of fell away. Those were kind of wasted years. I still went to M.I.A. though. I was involved in the three act plays generally the villain. Dad was superintendent of the Sunday School for years. I was a

spasmodic attender at Primary. I took religion class on Thursday and enjoyed that. Jess Bennett, the bishop was teaching the Aaronic priesthood class. Roll was being called and Vance Sorenson answered "what will you have". He received a lecture but did it several times again. I did attend and graduate from seminary. I liked the class but couldn't quite seem to do the workbook. I would borrow somebodies and copy the answers.

When I was just a little brat I dug a rabbit pit, put a lid over it and had lots of rabbits. I was a pretty good marble player too. I could play "Knuckle Boston" pretty good and would win my share of marbles. I bought my first gun from Ralph Wood. It cost \$15.00. I worked for the money. The gun was a 22 caliber rifle. I was about fourteen. The gun is in better shape now than it was then. Dad lent it out after I left. Now the carriage is worn so you hand feed the bullets. When I got the gun a person could buy a box of 50, 22 shells for 15¢. I would hunt squirrels and badgers in the spring. I would go out to the south pasture and sit on one badger mound and shoot squirrels enough to use a whole box of shells without moving off the mound. I had a scabbard on my saddle and carried the gun all the time so I could shoot if I got the chance. I would go pine nut hunting once in a while.

I wore a mustache for years from the time I was about 18 til 30. When I was 17 or 18 I worked a the Clearfield Cannery. My first trip to Salt Lake was about at the age of 13 or 14. I enjoyed High School for the most part and did graduate, going onto L.D.S. business college. Meadow had an older boys baseball team. Dad felt we never had time for such things. I remember world was 1. Four or five me joined the army. There was a lot of Patriotism. The influenza epidemic happened at that same time and a lot of the people were sick and about one-half of the Indian reservation died. As a teenager during the winter months, especially during Christmas vacation time we would race horses down the center lane and folks would bet a little. We would ice skate on the slew at the Bushnell Brothers pasture. In wetter years the slew water would spread about and freeze over a wide area. It would make about a one-half mile pond. We had clamp on skates and lots of the folks would join in the fun.