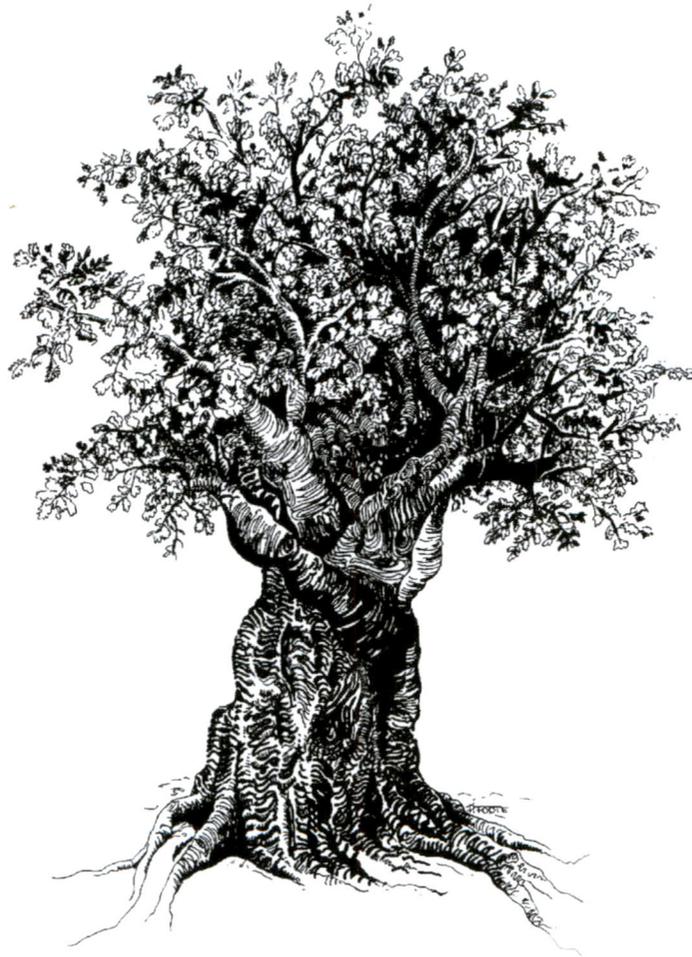


*PART TWO*

*Martha Ann's Children*





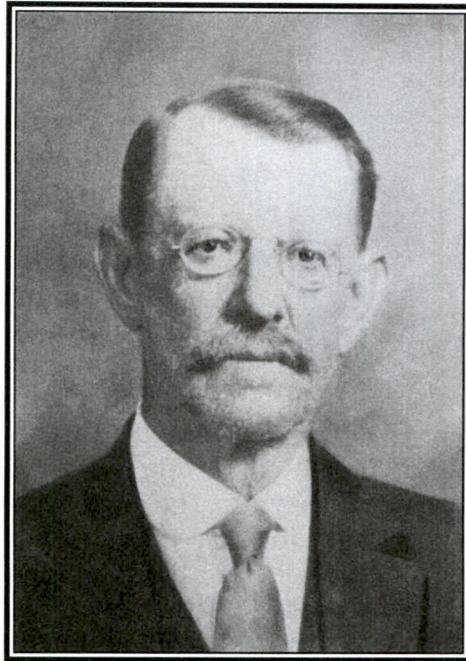
***First William Jasper and Martha Ann Harris Family Reunion***

1917—Reunion was held in the hall of the Provo 6<sup>th</sup> Ward Chapel. Martha Ann seated first on the far left. William Jasper deceased as of 1909. (Courtesy Carol Hafjen Jones) The following life sketches of the eleven children were given 2 August 2001 at the William Jasper and Martha Ann Harris family reunion held at “This is the Place Heritage Park,” Salt Lake City.

## Chapter Sixteen



### *WILLIAM JASPER HARRIS JR.*



*William Jasper Harris Jr.*

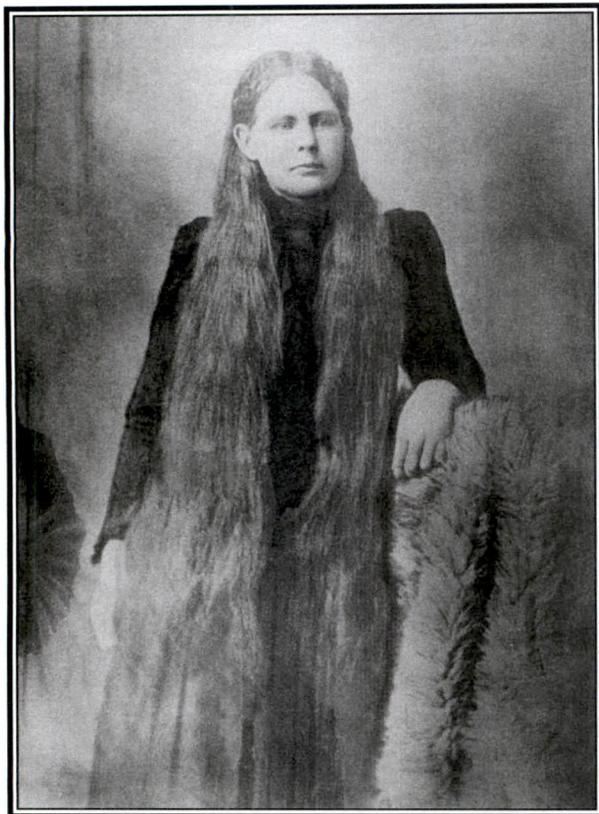
*By M. Afton Harris Felt with information from LaVerne Harris Paulson and Lizzie Freckleton Hassle. Family photos courtesy of Afton.*

**William Jasper Harris Jr.** (hereafter referred to as William) lived in Salt Lake City until he was 11 years old, when the family moved to Provo, Utah. He missed the association with the children of his Uncle Joseph F. Smith. They were his close friends, as were all of his cousins that lived in Salt Lake.

There was a lot to do when they moved to Provo into a two-room house on Second South and Third West. William's parents had 11 children. In a large family it is necessary for everyone to help, so all the children were

given chores. They worked together planting the garden, weeding, and watering. There was a cow to milk morning and evening, chickens to be fed, and eggs to be gathered. William Jasper Harris Sr. and his sons built onto the home as the family soon outgrew the two-room house. This may have been the beginning of the Harris Construction Company since the boys learned building skills while constructing the new home. How nice to have more rooms! As the five sons worked together, strong bonds were formed. The brothers loved to work and be together as was evident while they followed and worked many projects. William's brothers were his best life-long friends.

William was 21 years old when he met 17-



*Jessie Lena Freckleton, ca. 1885*

year-old **Jessie Lena Freckleton** and they were married in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on 28 December 1882. Jessie was born 22 September 1865 in Desert, Utah. She was the daughter of **John Ore** and **Jessie Gardner Freckleton**.

To go from Provo to Salt Lake City was not an easy task in those days. It took two days by horse and buggy or by wagon, but William knew this was the only way they could be married, so they went.

William and Jessie became the parents of 14 children:

**William Ray, Joseph Fielding, John Ernest, Ruby Leona, Delia Jessie, Baby Girl, Wilford LeRoy, Emily, Bessie Irene, Reuel Smith, Ada Fern, Viola Myrtle, Alice Bernice,** and **LeGrande Smith Harris**.

Their first child, William Ray Harris, was born 30 December 1883 in Provo, Utah. When Ray was eight years old, he became very ill and died. His death caused a void in the family, but a great blessing came to them two days after the funeral when Wilford LeRoy Harris was born.

About three years after Ray's death, William and his brothers leased a cattle ranch in Nevada. The ranch was situated 12 miles from the railroad and a mile-and-a-half from the nearest neighbor. During the winters, living on this ranch was lonesome for Jessie and the children. The men would saddle up a horse and call on a neighbor, but the women and their children were left at home.

They all looked forward to summer, as traveling was easier and there were fun times out on the ranch. Each rancher would have a gathering at his place once each summer. The invitations were passed around in relays. The rancher who was giving the party rode to his nearest neighbor; that neighbor, and others, rode and passed the word on until everyone knew. There was no class distinction or favoritism. The whole family was invited and generally all came.

The roads were poor, not much better than cow trails, so the time in starting depended on the distance that needed to be traveled. The mothers with small children rode in the wagon with the bedding and food. The host served a midnight supper that was really a banquet with all the best food available. The meats and vegetables were all from their own herds and gardens. Because they lived so far from the railroad and post office, they received only about two shipments a year of flour, salt, sugar, and other supplies.

On arriving about sundown at the ranch where the party was held, each rancher picked a spot to camp. They served their family an evening meal from their own picnic basket, and then the visiting began. The children played together; the men pitched horseshoes, discussed cattle, horses, and the range; the women talked of cooking, sewing, and rearing children.

After everyone arrived, the music started. It was a special type of music, mostly played be ear. Everyone with an instrument joined in for those wanting to dance. There was singing, laughing, and dancing. All joined in around a big campfire. After the midnight dinner was served, they tucked their little ones in the wagon box to sleep and stayed up most of the night dancing. It is noted that



there were many proposals and acceptances of marriage at these summer parties.

It was here in Nevada that a little baby girl, Emily Harris, was born to Jessie and William. Emily didn't take a breath. It was a difficult birth and Jessie was ill for several weeks. William was deeply concerned over Jessie and telegraphed to Provo for a doctor's advice and medicine, which arrived by mail. Jessie's sister Lizzie helped her follow the directions the doctor sent and Jessie slowly improved. Jessie was in such pain from her breasts being caked with milk that Lizzie gave her some relief by drawing the milk out and spitting it into a basin. Lizzie was happy when they found a little lamb to take on that job, and this greedy little fellow seemed delighted to oblige.

William and Jessie passed through many hard times on the ranch so they chose to move to Eureka, Utah. Jessie was so happy, for they would be near her parents. This was a happy time spending evenings with her family and old friends, with family. Jesse gave birth to a little daughter, Bessie Irene Harris, in Eureka. Medical care was available there, which was a blessing for William and Jessie. They stayed there until Bessie was ten years old.

Opportunity came to William and his brothers and they moved their families to Black Rock Beach on the edge of the Great Salt Lake. The brothers built several rides at the Saltair Resort, the largest, longest and most favorite ride was the Giant Racer. It was like an extended vacation for the children to live on the beach, even if the lake was full of salt. They couldn't swim but they could float and not worry about sinking. Saltair was the place to go for the next 50 years. There were open-air cars on a train and the ride out to the resort was an experience in itself. There were other rides, food for sale, and dancing in a beautiful hall with shining hardwood floors while some of the best orchestras played.

When this job was completed, William and Jessie moved their family to Salt Lake City. This was like a new world that opened up to the children because they had music and



### *Saltair Resort*

You float like a cork in water 22% salt—Saltair Beach, 22 miles from Salt Lake City. William and his brothers helped build the Saltair Resort.

dance lessons and good schools to attend. They had always been away from town or on the desert, now they lived in the city.

Since the experience on the ranch, William wanted to try farming as he had been in construction for many years and wanted a change. He purchased a farm in Benson Ward in Northern Utah. The soil was black and crops could do well there, but the promised water wasn't developed, so he was



### *Topping Beets*

Grace Brockbank and Ellen Pitman topping beets. Ellen became the wife of John E. Harris.



### ***Building Road in Texas***

William worked with his brothers in building roads, bridges, and railroad beds. *(Courtesy of Carol H. Jones.)*

happy to accept an offer his brothers gave him. They asked him to join them in a contract to build roads and bridges in Texas. The



***John E. Harris***

men went to Texas without their families, and also asked William's son John E. Harris to come. John told them he would come and bring his family with him. They traveled by train and felt they were on their way to make their fortune in Texas. [See Appendix A for story on John's ten years serving

as warden of Utah State Prison.]

Before William went to work in Texas, he obtained a home for Jesse and the children at 45 North 900 West in Provo. The men worked hard and long hours, stayed at camp all week, returned to John and Ellen's home on Saturday, and spent Sunday there. The closest LDS church was a long drive on narrow, bumpy roads. Some Sundays when they couldn't get to LDS meetings, they attended services of another church. Their father felt, if they couldn't get the family to the LDS Church, that it was important to be in a church, worshipping on Sunday. The members of these churches challenged the children to repeat the Ten Commandments by memory. When the children couldn't, the congregation let them know they considered them heathens. The children would repeat the Articles of Faith, but the people didn't understand what they were.

This work in Texas, seemingly an economic godsend, proved to be a disaster. The cashier at the bank where the state deposited the funds for the projects, absconded with the money and the Harris brothers ended up with ten cents on the dollar. They came home penniless and discouraged.

William returned home to his wife Jessie and family, grateful that before he left they had purchased a home. He was happy to be with his family again, and after his long absence, they were all rejoicing to have him home. They adored and honored him. As he had a strong testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he expected others to follow, so he mourned when some of them were not true to the things that they had been taught in the home.

The family of William Jasper Harris Jr. was taught the same way he had been taught in the family of his parents, Martha Ann Smith Harris and William Jasper Harris Sr. William Jr. was taught about the First Vision, the organization and principles of the Gospel, how to pray at his mother's knees, and to have family prayer.

William Jr. was proud of his heritage. He bore testimony of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and taught his children about the First Vision, how God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared to his uncle, Joseph Smith Jr., and that he was later martyred for this knowledge. How his grandfather, Hyrum Smith, was also martyred because he would not and could not deny the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His father, William Sr., experienced the Lord's blessings in his life, when he was called on a mission. He retraced the pioneer trails with a handcart, and then with courage faced the long journey across the sea to England. He served well as a missionary, traveled without purse or script, then came home and raised and supported a family.

This is why William Jr. mourned when some of his children chose other paths than those they had been taught. He expressed these feelings in letters he often wrote to his mother. We have copies of some of these letters. Our cousin Reed Harris has the original letters, which he prizes very much.

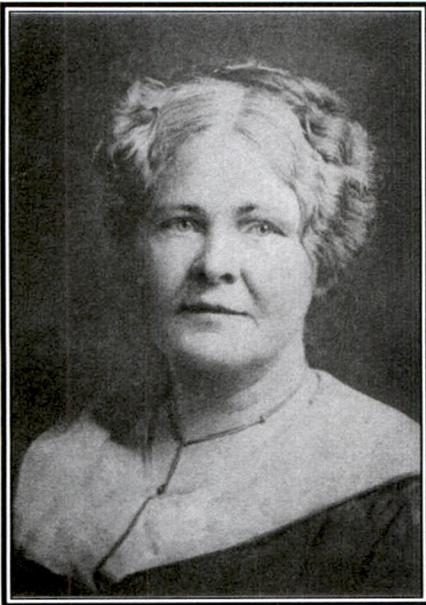


William Jasper Jr. lived only two years after he returned from Texas, he died on 23 August 1926. At his passing, his wife was very comforted because she knew that she had been sealed to him for time and all eternity.

As I prepared this, I realized how proud I have always been to be a member of this Smith family. The heritage that we share is one of greatness—let us count our blessings each day. One of the countless blessings was to be held back to come to earth at this time when the Gospel was restored under the direction of

God the Father and his son Jesus Christ.

I don't think any of us understand the magnitude of these blessings. Perhaps we never will in this life until it is our time to move on to a different sphere. I am grateful for all of the prophets of this dispensation. Each has left us with understanding to guide and direct us. I am grateful for a living prophet today, President Hinckley—let us honor and follow him. We are a blessed people. Let us treasure our heritage and hold fast to the faith of our fathers.



***Jessie Lena Freckleton Harris***

Above left: wife of William Jasper Harris Jr., ca 1925.

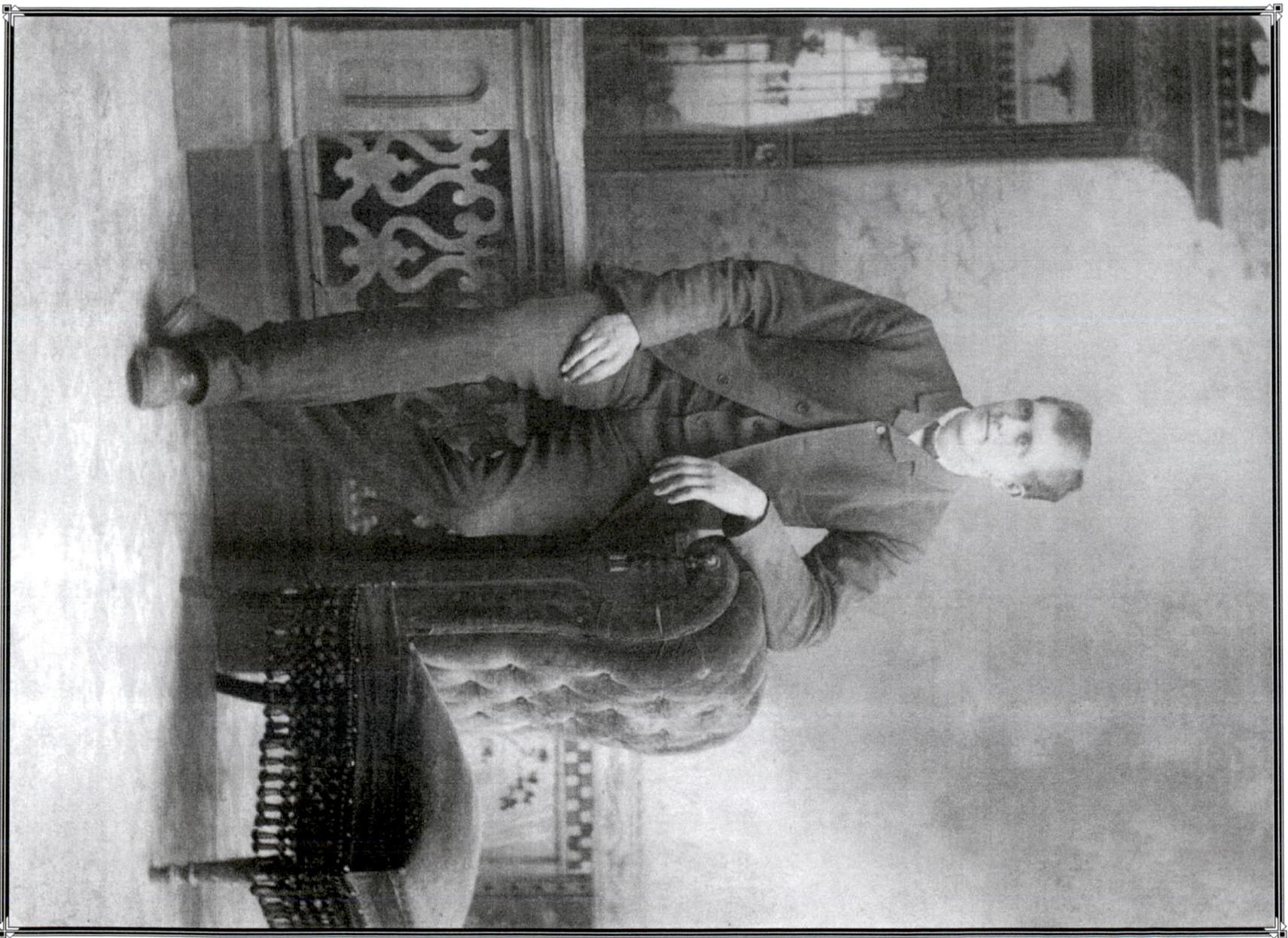
***Children of William Jr. and  
Jessie Freckleton Harris***

Above right: Ada Harris Duffin,  
Ellen Pitman Harris, and Alice  
Harris and William Storrs.

Left: Ruby Harris Checketts

Right: Reuel Harris.





*Joseph Albert Harris-ca. 1878*

## Chapter Seventeen



### *JOSEPH ALBERT HARRIS*

*By Marjorie R. Tribe. All photos courtesy of Marjorie, except as noted.*

**Joseph Albert Harris** was born in Salt Lake on 19 August 1861, the second child of eleven born to **William Jasper Harris Sr.** and **Martha Ann Smith Harris.**

My mother, Zella, wrote this about her father Joseph Albert Harris:

My father was tall and handsome and blond. He was kind but firm and I loved him very much. I always felt that he and my mother really loved each other. My father was a merchant, being president of the Provo East Co-op for 20 years—a merchant store. He was very honest and loved by all who knew him. Aunt Mary's husband Walter Corbett worked for him.

We were always taught the gospel, sent to Sunday School, and taken to Church by our loving parents. I remember many of the phrases used by my father as he led in family prayer: "Bless the authorities of the church, bless the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, Raise up those bowed down and comfort the sick and the afflicted and those who are called to mourn." With these early teachings and the heart of such wonderful parents, it laid a religious foundation.

Joseph Albert and **Joanna Patten** were married 13 September 1878 in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah. They were both 18 years old. Joanna was four months older than Joseph Albert. Later they married in the Salt Lake Temple.



*Joanna Patten Harris, 1883*



I never knew my grandfather Joseph Albert Harris. He died three years before I was born. I knew my grandmother Joanna Patten Harris very well. I had a difficult time thinking Grandmother Harris ever had a husband. But I did have four uncles and one aunt—Uncle Bert, Uncle Frank, Uncle “Sterl,” Uncle Alva, and Aunt Emily. A baby died soon after birth and later a two-year-old daughter died.

My mother, Zella Harris, was the sixth child of Joseph Albert Harris and Joanna Patten Harris. Zella’s paternal grandmother is Martha Ann Smith Harris and her grandfather is William Jasper Harris Sr., my great-grandparents.

[The children in order: **Joseph Albert “Bert” Jr.**; **Joanna**, died one week old; **Ernest Franklin “Frank,” Sterling “Sterl” Patten**; **Maudie**, died two years old; **Zella**; **Emily**; and **Alva Robert**.]



*Sterling Patten  
Harris*

*(Courtesy Virginia  
Harris)*



*Zella Harris*



*Emily Harris*



*Joseph Albert Jr. and Ernest Franklin Harris  
Joseph Albert Sr. and Joanna, parents, 1883.*

*Alva Robert  
Harris*





*Eureka School, ca. 1885*

Marajorie: When I was six years old our family moved to Eureka, Utah, in the Tintic District. At this time the mining craze was on and many families moved there seeking their fortunes. My father opened a mercantile store in Eureka and the family later moved to Mammoth. Zella Harris is located in the back row, light coat. Joanna Patten Harris and young son are in the front row, far right.





**Joseph Albert Jr. and Mary Jane Harris Family**

Standing, L-R: Reed Simmons, Albert Wallace, Mary Jane, Joseph Albert Jr., and Elmo Leroy Harris.  
 Kneeling: Lawrence Wayne, Donetta, Myrle Joanna, Mary Regina "Jean," and Kenneth Earl Harris.

My mother, Zella Harris, attended the Brigham Young Academy for a teaching degree—a two-year study. The second year she stayed with her grandmother Martha Ann Smith Harris and worked for her board and room. She wrote, "I didn't have time to prepare my lessons, but I struggled on." Zella's first year, her mother sold their cow to pay for her tuition. I have a letter written by Joseph Albert thanking Martha Ann for letting his daughter Zella stay with her. Joseph Albert's penmanship is very beautiful. At that time, he was working in Joliet, Illinois. Joliet was a railroad center, so I assume he was working on the railroad.



**Zina Harris, ca. 1890**

*Mrs Harris  
 Joliet Ill  
 10/15/00*

*I am so glad that my daughter  
 Zella is at your house, under  
 your care, but I am very sorry  
 I cannot send her any money  
 at this writing but I think  
 I can send her some soon.  
 I am very sorry to have to  
 impose on you like this.  
 It feels like snow here today  
 and makes me think of the cold  
 winter, weather we had last winter  
 with the many heartaches that we  
 all had to put up with, those were  
 the saddest days of my life,  
 all alone, and so far from loved  
 ones at home, but I supposed  
 all these things are brought about  
 to try our faith, I hope these few  
 lines will find you all usually well  
 as it finds us, and give my love to  
 all, and a goodly share for your self.  
 I remain your loving and affectionate son  
 Jos. A. Harris*

Letter to Martha Ann Harris from Joseph A. Harris, son.  
 Transcription right.

MAS Harris	Joliet, Ill 10/15/00
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I am glad that my daughter Zella is at your house, under your care, but I am very sorry I cannot send her any money at this writing but I think I can send her some soon, I am very sorry to have to impose on you like this.

It feels like snow here today and makes me think of the cold winter, weather we had last winter, with the many heartaches, that we all had to put up with, those were the saddest days of my life, all alone, and so far from loved ones at home, but I supposed all these things are brought about to try out faith, I hope these few lines will find you all usually well as it finds us, and give my love to all, and a goodly share for your self.

I remain your loving and affectionate son. Jos. A. Harris

about the Dead as I feel they  
 are all right and are out of  
 this world of sin and sorrow  
 will soon  
 Joanna Harris

I have been trying hard to  
 get the information for you  
 will send you all if I make  
 it out soon having a little  
 weather now quite a bit of  
 snow and I guess we will  
 need it most summer.  
 we are all well which I think is  
 a great blessing as there is talk  
 of sickness a round here  
 I am very glad you have the  
 summer and summer

Apr 25 1917  
 Melissa & William Dida  
 Charles & Joseph Dida about 1909  
 Anna Burn Mar 6 1854  
 No body I could try and get just  
 when Melissa died and also  
 they and I know I know I  
 have been working on this  
 and so far I have been unable  
 to find any thing definite as  
 but these help and give  
 you are better when in Gila  
 get her to come and see us  
 as you hope we will see  
 each other very soon now  
 with love and God bless  
 you all. I come from think  
 we had better look after the  
 living some and not bother

all date 4/26/1926  
 Dear sister and brother  
 I received your letter a few days  
 ago. I am always glad to hear  
 from you.  
 I am writing you have had letter  
 from Edith and they had to  
 take in mother back to the  
 hospital as they were all  
 were out. She is very good just  
 dying by which seems to me.  
 Dear brother you could of finished  
 that about and I will send it  
 back we got the books back  
 last fall and they had we  
 could go on with the work  
 of the Dida in December 1909  
 mother Dida 1914



Joseph Albert died 28 May 1911 in Provo, Utah. I had been told that Grandfather (Joseph Albert) died early at 50 years in the state mental hospital at Provo, Utah. This concerned me. I wanted to know what kind of mental problem he had. I even thought of going to the hospital to see if they would tell me or let me see his records. Instead I decided to try and find out from family members. I had kept in touch with Naomi Startup Biggs so I asked what she knew. Naomi wrote to me on Christmas of 1993 that she had learned about his death. Joseph Albert had been in Texas to visit his brothers Hyrum and Frank and their families. On the way back, he was still on the train when someone robbed him

of all his money. He was hit a severe blow to his head. When he arrived at the Provo depot, he was put in a strait jacket and taken to the Utah State Mental Hospital. He didn't recognize any of his family when he arrived. Joseph Albert Harris lived only two months in the hospital.

Grandma Joanna lived 37 years without her dear husband and died when she was 89 years old. She lived with her children. When Uncle Alva's first wife died, Grandma helped with his four children. Most of the time she was with her daughter Emily Griswell.

We have a great inheritance from our noble ancestors. May we all live to be worthy of them.

No	Names 1875-99	Baptized	Baptized	Witness
224	David G. Thomas	Thos Fanner	Novbr 11 1876	J. P. R. G.
225	Mary Davies	"	" " "	J. P. R. G.
226	William J. Harris	"	June 17 1877	J. S. Jones
227	Martha E. Harris	"	" " "	John G.
228	Wm J. Harris junr	J. S. Jones	October 15 1876	J. S. Jones
229	Joseph A. Harris	Thos. Fanner	June 17 1877	James S.
230	Hyrum V. Harris	"	" " "	Robt. C. H.
231	Mary E. Harris	"	" " "	R. C. H.
232	Franklin H. Harris	"	" " "	James E.
233	Benedicta Steamant	"	" " "	James E.
234	Helene Patten	Thos Fanner	July 28 1877	Mich. John

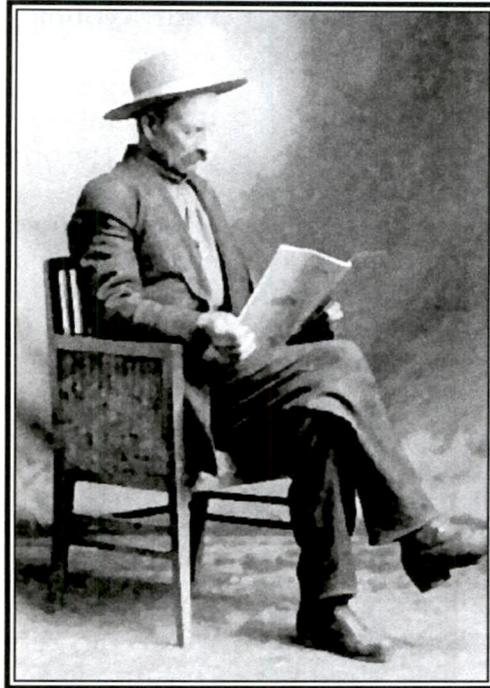
#### Baptismal Record

A page photocopied from a baptismal record book with some of the Harris Family listed.  
(Courtesy of Family History Library)

## Chapter Eighteen



### *HYRUM SMITH HARRIS*



*Hyrum Smith Harris*

*By Mary Harris Hafen; submitted to DUP by Julina Ann Harris Snow, daughter of Hyrum Smith Harris. Photos of Hyrum and Delia Harris courtesy of Laurie Snow Turner.*

**H**yrum Smith Harris was born to **William Jasper** and **Martha Ann Smith Harris** 15 August 1863 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Five of the eleven children were born in Salt Lake City, after which Hyrum with his parents and family moved to Provo, Utah. Their home was a humble, two-room adobe house with a little shanty on the south side. The house faced north. Although they had very little money and enjoyed few of the conveniences common at that time, they were a happy family because of the love and consideration they had for each other and the

joy they gained through working together in peace and harmony.

Occasionally William and Martha's children were able to earn some money on their own which they turned over to their mother who used it in providing for whatever was needed most. New shoes were few and far between in those days. And when it came Hyrum's turn for his pair of new shoes, he said, "No, Mother, let Frank have the shoes this time because he likes to court the girls and go to dances and he needs to look nice." So Frank got the shoes. This demonstrated Hyrum's consideration and generous nature, which was manifest in his feelings toward others throughout all of his life.

Hyrum was a very intelligent boy and extremely adept at learning. Anxious to



exercise this gift, he started school at the Brigham Young Academy in Provo. No sooner had he become absorbed in his schoolwork when inadequate finances forced him to quit and go to work in the Woolen Mills factory in Provo.

At the age of 17, Hyrum was called to serve a mission in the Sandwich Islands, now known as the Hawaiian Islands. Hyrum's uncle, Joseph F. Smith with his wife Julina, and his cousin Robert B.T. Taylor, received calls at the same time and they all traveled together to their field of labor.

At this time the islands were still in their primeval beauty. The grass was so thick and green that it was just like walking on a carpet. The air was so fresh and clean that elders could wear their white linen clothes every day. Being a lover of beauty, Hyrum immediately became attached to this tropical paradise and the natives inhabiting it. The mission home was situated near the ocean where the missionaries enjoyed the fresh ocean breezes and bathing on the sandy beaches. Here, amid all this beauty, the missionary work was being faithfully carried on.

The first task of the missionaries was to overcome the language barrier. The only tangible tools given them were books. Hyrum felt however, that he could learn the language more rapidly and accurately by being out among the natives as they fished and lived. So every morning he would leave the mission home and mingle with the natives until evening when he would return to the mission home to spend the night.

In a short time, Hyrum had learned the language well and was sent to Molokai, the island of the leper colony, which was an assignment most missionaries hesitated to accept because of their fear of contamination from the lepers. But Hyrum kept himself so clean that he felt no fear. He held meetings and readily shook hands with them. Because of this, the lepers grew to love and trust him. When they decided they would build a chapel, they entrusted all the money they had saved to Hyrum and asked him to buy the needed materials. Hyrum took this money down to

the ocean and scrubbed it with soap and water to free it from contamination.

In those days the natives lived in grass huts and the women wove mats on which they slept. They wove their own clothing, beautiful samples of which Hyrum brought home with him on his return to the states. Hyrum brought home a beautiful quilt presented to him by the native Saints.

While on the islands, Hyrum was stricken with typhoid fever. A wonderful stately woman, of a royal family that had been dethroned, took care of him. She employed the members who aided her and helped in getting Hyrum's blood to circulate. Under her tender care, his health was restored. Hyrum loved the native people and he especially enjoyed their music. It was something different. It had about it a weirdness, sort of a lament. He thought about in Alma where Hagoth launched his ships filled with men, women, and children into the ocean, never to come back. It was Hyrum's thoughts that the natives were descendants of these people and that their songs expressed a deep longing that they could return to the land of their fathers.

Hyrum was on the islands nearly four years. When he went he was a mere boy, but when he returned, he was a fine man. Hyrum gave his report in the Provo Tabernacle at a stake meeting in the Hawaiian language and brother Brigham Johnson interpreted for him.

At the age of 12, a young girl named **Delia Twede** came to Springville to work for her sister Thora, who was the wife of the artist **John Hafen**. [Their son Joseph married Mary Harris, daughter of Franklin Hill Harris, who is the son of Martha Ann Smith Harris. See Appendix A for John Hafen] Thora had just given birth to a baby. Delia as a young girl learned the finishing process for photography and made prints of John Hafen's paintings of the Latter-day Saints. These prints were sold throughout the entire state. Famous Utah artist, John Hafen, painted some of the murals in the Salt Lake Temple. Making prints at that time was not as simple as it is now, however. Delia had to wash the prints in the ditch. Sometimes the



water was clear and nice, but one time she had some very valuable prints of thoroughbred animals, which she was processing for a man in Salt Lake City. When she was washing them, a big wave came and washed the prints downstream, destroying all of them.

After learning the photography finishing business, Delia went to Salt Lake City to work and earned what she felt was the enormous amount of one dollar per day. She didn't even mind having to walk 14 blocks each way to and from work.

While Delia was in Salt Lake City, she met Hyrum Smith Harris. After a pleasing courtship, Hyrum and Delia were married in the Manti Temple on 9 April 1900. They settled in Salt Lake City where Hyrum obtained a job operating one of the first electric streetcars in the city. These first cars had no enclosures for the operator and he had to stand right in the front of his car where he was exposed to all kinds of weather.

From Salt Lake, Hyrum and Delia moved to Provo. On 14 March 1901, their first baby girl was born—a beautiful baby with a lot of dark hair and brown eyes like her mother. They gave her the name of **Mercy Rachel Harris**. They worshiped their sweet baby for four months; then sadness came to them. The baby took ill and died. Delia grieved untold. Delia suffered from bed fever, at that time a very serious disease. They did not know how to treat it as we do now. It was a medical miracle she lived. Her father took her to Patriarch John Smith, who gave her a blessing, and said, "Through thine affliction through which you have passed, the Lord has been mindful of thee and your life has been preserved. Thy health shall return, even as it was in thy youth. It is thy privilege to live to a good old age. It is, therefore necessary that you study the laws of nature and be prudent in thy daily talk and conversation."

When Delia's health returned, her friends commented, "Delia, you look just like you did before you were married." Delia lived 89 years, which shown fulfillment of that promise. At this time there was a great depression and with no industries like there are today available, so Hyrum and Delia

moved to Mammoth, Utah, where Hyrum worked seven days a week in the mine operating a burley machine which would drill into solid quartz. Hyrum liked mining and studied geology in his spare time.

One day Hyrum came home from work and said, "Delia, I had a very unusual experience today. I thought my ladders and platform were all safe and in good shape and as I was standing there it seemed as if a voice said to me, 'Move.' I moved off the platform and just then, a big rock fell where the platform was and took it down." After awhile they put Hyrum to work sorting ore, which was a very particular job, but he was very careful, as was his nature.

Before long a number of families moved to Mammoth, and since the men worked all day, seven days a week, nothing had been done to organize church services. As Delia watched the children running wild every Sunday, she realized something had to be done about it. So Delia, and others got a room that had been used as a saloon. It needed cleaning badly. Delia and two other women got some little boy to help clear out the liquor bottles. They got soap and water and scrubbed everything until it was sweet and clean. Finally, now they had a place to hold Sunday School. Since there were no men available, they could not have the sacrament, but they had their songs and religious stories and guidance. Occasionally the shoemaker, John Hawking, was able to come and help them so they could have the sacrament. When so many fine people started to move into Mammoth it soon became necessary to find a larger and better place, which they did. They had to scrub and clean it just as they had the first one. Before long the people were organized into a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Franklin Hill Harris, Hyrum's younger brother, was chosen as a counselor. As the branch grew, Primary, Mutual, and Relief Society were organized. Delia was kept busy as Primary president. The young boys acted as secretaries, and kept clean the one-room church they were finally able to build.

The years the Harrises lived in Mammoth



were some of the happiest periods of their lives. Everyone was like one large family, working and uniting together. There were no rich and no poor—everyone was equal and helped in all of the organizations of the Church.

When Delia's sister Doris Hart died, and left three children, Delia took the seven-year-old boy, **William Hart**, into their home. He was raised and cared for and loved by Hyrum and Delia until he was a grown man. They were like parents to him.

One day a gambler came to town. He had a little daughter named **Jeanie**. She had a dog. Although he had never met Delia, he must have heard what a fine woman she was because he asked her if she would take care of Jeanie. So Delia cared for Jeanie and they soon developed a strong affection for each other. Then one day, Jeanie's father came and without explanation asked Delia to get Jeanie all dressed up. Then he took the child to the saloon, put her on a table, and had her perform in front of all the drunks and unsavory men assembled there. When Delia heard of this, she was very disgusted and angry with Jeanie's father and promptly told him so. As a result, he took Jeanie to another place to stay. Jeanie's affection for Delia was demonstrated when every morning very early, Jeanie would come running to Delia's home with her hair uncombed and her little shoes untied. After this had gone on for a while, Jeanie's father came sheepishly asking Delia to take Jeanie again. At the prospect of Jeanie's returning, little Will Hart complained that she got into all his toys, so Delia told him he could have a box to keep all of his treasures in where Jeanie could not get at, and he was thrilled. These incidences show Delia's wonderful ability with children and people and the understanding and love she had for them.

After leaving Mammoth, Hyrum and Delia and Hyrum's brother Frank and his wife Josephine went to Versailles, Missouri, where they worked on contracting work. Then Hyrum and Delia went to Little Blue, about 18 miles from Kansas City, where the notorious Jessie James and his band of outlaws were.

One Sunday, Delia decided to visit the Josephite Church in Independence, Missouri. The people there seemed like nice, intelligent people. At first Delia thought she was among friends. Then as the meeting progressed, Delia found it impossible to remain only as an observer because of what was being said. She had a very interesting experience defending her own faith to that congregation. Delia also had the opportunity of serving as a midwife while in that part of the country and had some interesting experiences in that connection.

Delia came back to Springville, Utah. Hyrum finished his work in Missouri and joined her there. Then they both went to New Mexico with Frank and Josephine Harris to work on building the Hondo Reservoir.

Hyrum was always very thoughtful of the other fellow, no matter who he might be. One day while they were in New Mexico, Frank and Hyrum were riding along in a little Ford and they passed a little old Mexican, who was walking along the side of the road. Hyrum said, "Let's stop and pick him up," but Frank didn't want to. Finally, at Hyrum's insistence, they turned around and invited the Mexican to ride with them. He was so thrilled and thanked them heartily, since he would have had to walk seven miles in the hot sun.

Another time when the four had been traveling to New Mexico on the train, they had packed a large, very elegant basket lunch with fried chicken and all the trimmings, intending to last them almost the complete trip. Then the train was stalled when there was a washout on the track. While they were waiting for the train to be repaired, everyone became very hungry, so Hyrum shared his lunch with them. But instead of handing each one a sandwich, he passed the basket around and said, "Help yourselves to anything and everything you like." When the basket came back, there was hardly anything left.

From New Mexico they went to Bovina, Texas, clear across the panhandle of Texas. Here they worked on the railroad. When the camp was divided, Hyrum and Delia were



## *Harris Construction Company*

*(All photos of construction company courtesy Carol H. Jones.)*

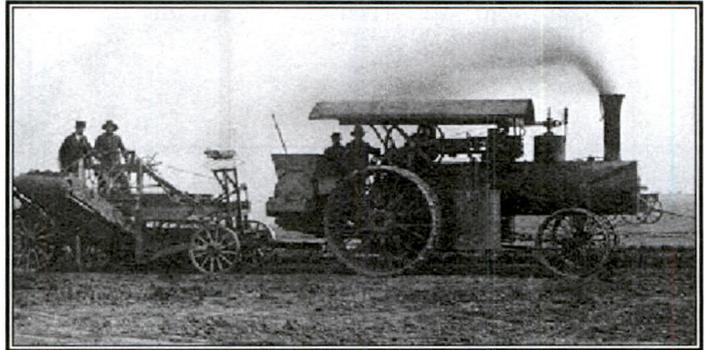


### *Construction Crew*

Frank Harris is second from left on the back row. Hyrum Harris is perched on the wheel right front.

### *Steam Tractor and Grader*

Awesome!



### *Hart-Par Tractor*

*Bovina, Texas*

### *Road Tamper*

It required a team of eight horses to pull it.



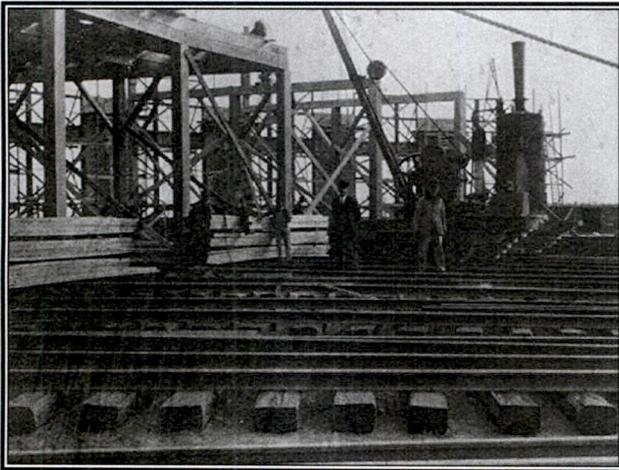
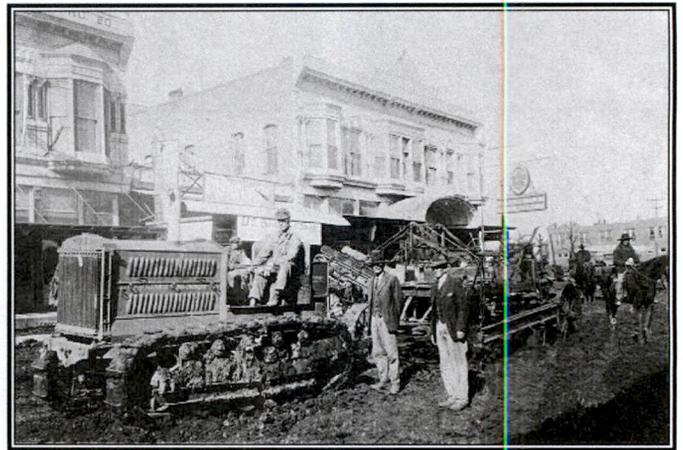


### *Frisco, Texas*

The Harris Construction Company put on a big show to attract people to settle in Frisco. They built the road to the area.

### *Mexia, Texas*

The Harris Construction Company used a Holt Caterpillar and Western Elevating Grader to build the roads in Mexia.

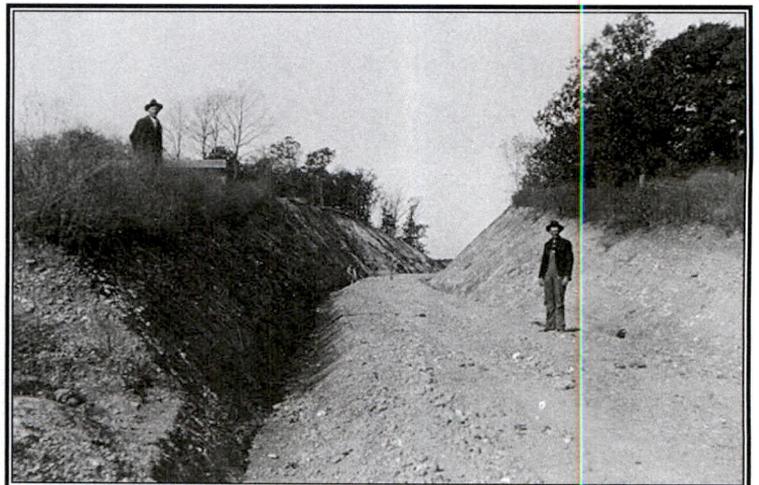


### *Sibley, Missouri*

The company built the railroad beds and railroad tracks in Sibley. They used mostly horse-drawn equipment to build the bed and the equipment shown to build the tracks.

### *Sibley, Missouri*

The beginning of a railroad bed cut through the hilltop. Franklin Hill Harris on the left and Joseph Albert Harris standing on the right.





sent to Whitdeer, along with about 15 other men. They made camp right in the middle of the prairie. There was no civilization in sight anyway you looked, except for the white wagon tops which could be seen slowly moving along the trail way off in the distance. There was a little cookhouse in which Delia prepared the food, and all day she stayed there working alone with no protection. One day, she turned around and there was a man standing at the door. He was a stranger whom she had never seen before. Had he foul play in his mind, she would have been helpless in defending her herself against his strength. Then she heard a growl from a dog, which Delia had never seen before. The man asked if the dog was fierce. Delia said, "Yes, and he doesn't like strangers." Then she gave the man a few cookies and said, "You'd better go now." He took one look at the dog and left. As soon as he had gone, Delia looked around for the dog, and it was nowhere to be seen. That was a marvelous experience. The Lord moves in a very mysterious way.

The camp was now just like a little village with a commissary, houses, tents. One day the little village was caught in a tornado. Delia was with Josephine's three children in a tent, and the ridgepole fell and struck her on the back as she dove to the floor of the tent along with the children to protect them. Everything was floored by the tornado except for the big iron cooking range. The supper had been prepared. One minute all had been comparatively calm; then the tor-

nado descended! In its fury, pieces of windmill were flying so fast that if anyone had been hit with just a corner, they would have been killed. Frank and Josephine were worried for fear something had happened to their loved ones. On the way back to camp, they met Delia and the other women and children in a wagon. The minute they saw Delia's face, they knew everything was all right.

Their next move was to Post City, Texas. While there, they were happy to have **Julina Ann Harris** come to them to be their daughter.

By this time, the two couples had saved considerable money so they bought a large ranch with sheep and cattle about 15 miles from Friona, Texas. At first, Delia was very much afraid of the cowboys, especially since she had to be left alone much of the time with money in the house. But soon to her surprise, she found out that they were very fine men, with the finest code of morals to be found anywhere. They were honest, respectful of women and charitable. They opened their doors to welcome any travelers passing through to come in, fix themselves a meal, use any of the facilities the cowboys might have, and then go on their way. In spite of all the advantages, Delia still didn't like living at this ranch, and neither did Josephine, but neither one wanted to leave without the other. Hyrum and Frank had both always



*Tornado, Bovina, Texas*

The above shows where the cookhouse stood.



*Post City, Texas*

(Both photos courtesy of Carol H. Jones)



been interested in mining. So when a lawyer came from Mexico and offered to trade good mining property in Mexico, they accepted. An English syndicate had agreed to come in and develop. It appeared as Hyrum and Frank had a very good thing. Then the Mexican government confiscated all mining properties in Mexico. The two brothers were left without anything to bargain. However, Delia had no regrets, as that was the time Pancho Villa was on the rampage and their ranch became a refuge for many of the Mormons who were fleeing Mexico. This gave them work.

So without much money, but a lot of experience, Hyrum and Delia and Julina Ann returned to their welcome little home in Springville. They had been renting it out and found it well cared for with thriving fruit trees and a nice garden. Hyrum's greatest pleasure was to take fruit and vegetables to their loved ones in Provo. Not being mercenary minded, it never entered his mind naturally that he might sell anything. He always gave it away. When the men were putting the railroad alongside of their property, they would sit along the ditch bank and eat lunch. When Hyrum saw this, he invited them to come and sit in the shade of his trees and help themselves to the delicious sweet fruit. The foreman helped repay this kindness in small part by seeing to it that Delia always had plenty of firewood.

Although Hyrum was not consistent in attending church, he was always ready to defend his religion. In those days the bishop would unexpectedly call someone out of the audience to pray and preach with no advanced warning whatever. This was one reason why Hyrum did not want to go because he did not want to waste people's time by getting up and blundering and fumbling around for words. Finally, when the bishop promised he would never call on Hyrum until he told the bishop he was ready, then Hyrum attended the meetings more often. Just as every human who has ever lived, Hyrum had faults, but he was kind, honest, industrious, appreciative of any kindnesses done him, and he did his

best to make his home comfortable for his loved ones. He always treated people as he would like to be treated. Hyrum worked for several years in a watch or lookout tower for the railroad at South Springville. This was very nerve-wracking. He had to be so alert at all times.

Hyrum became very ill a year before he died. At the time of his death, he was 61 years old. Some of his old missionary companions spoke at his funeral and a beautiful Hawaiian lady sang a number of Hawaiian songs as they were at the grave in the cemetery. She sang, "Farewell to Thee [Aloha Oe]" in Hawaiian. Delia and all present had never heard anything so beautiful.

After Hyrum's death, Delia and Julina moved to Salt Lake City. Julina entered business school. Delia worked with the orphans. When Julina Ann married **Alton R. Snow**, Delia's feet had become so bad from being on them so much that she was forced to return to her house. She invited Alton and Julina to come and live with her, and turned her home over to them. They built a room for Delia to sleep and rest in, but she ate and lived with the family until her death, which happened 19 August 1959 at her home in Springville, Utah. Hyrum and Delia had a full happy life together, being of help to anyone in any way. Delia was beautiful to look at, and admired and respected by all who knew her.

By Nadine Searcy, granddaughter:

I never had the privilege of knowing my grandfather Hyrum Smith Harris. He died many years before I was born, but I've always had a great curiosity to learn more about him.

It was in Post City, Texas that Hyrum and Delia were overjoyed to have little Julina Ann Harris come to them. This is a fact that was never spoken of in later years. We, her children, have been trying to discover more about her birth, her coming to them, and her subsequent adoption. (If any of you have any information in that regard, we would be most grateful.)

After they lost the mining property, and without much money, Hyrum, Delia, and Julina returned to Utah in 1918 to make



their home in Springville, Utah. Hyrum enjoyed taking care of their fruit trees and garden. It was a great pleasure for him to take fruits and vegetables to his loved ones in Provo, as he had worried over the years about his mother and her financial struggles.

Julina, my mother, was a beautiful seamstress. She told me about going to Provo often as a young woman to visit Grandmother Martha Ann and showing her some of the clothes and other items she had sewn. Grandma was so proud of her that she bought more pieces of fabric for Julina to continue with her sewing.

Throughout his life, Hyrum was kind, honest, industrious, considerate, generous, and deeply appreciative of any kindness done for him. He always treated peo-

ple as he would like to be treated.

Hyrum became ill from consumption a year before his death. He died in Springville on 24 February 1924 at 61 years of age. Some of his old missionary companions spoke at his funeral. A beautiful Hawaiian woman sang a number of Hawaiian songs. As they were leaving the church, she sang "Aloha Oe (Farewell to Thee)."

Later that same year, 28 November 1924, Julina was sealed to her parents. Hyrum's brother Franklin stood in Hyrum's place.

Delia Twede Harris died peacefully in her sleep in 19 August 1959 in her 89th year. Hyrum and Delia had a total of 80 descendants through Julina. Seventy-three at home are still living.



*Delia Twede Harris Reading to Julina*

*You may have tangible wealth untold.  
Caskets of jewel and coffers of gold,  
Richer than I, you never can be—  
I had a mother who read to me.*



*Walter Sutton and Mary Emily Harris Corbett*

*Walter Harris Corbett*

Walter-30 years, Walter-2 years, first son, Mary-22 years

## Chapter Nineteen



### MARY EMILY HARRIS CORBETT

#### *A Brief Overview*

*by Mary Elizabeth Corbett Taylor*

Today I'd like to tell you a story. It's a true story—full of twists and turns, happiness and heartaches, joys and sorrows, and ultimately, a happy ending. The principle characters, in the story are my grandparents. I remember my Grandmother Corbett—I can see her in my mind's eye getting off the First Avenue bus in Salt Lake City—slowly crossing the street. The year is 1946. She is eighty years old and has been a widow for the past thirty-four years. She is in Salt Lake to do Temple work and she has taken the time to come to visit the family of her son, Don. Don is my father and at the time is with the U.S. Army stationed in Germany, the war in Europe having recently ended. Grandma Corbett's back is bent over and she walks slowly. She has blue-blue eyes...but, back to the story.

"Grandma Corbett" is Mary Emily Harris Corbett. She lived in and about Provo, Utah, nearly all of her life. Her mother was Martha Ann Smith—daughter of Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith, and sister to President Joseph F. Smith. Martha Ann Smith and her husband, William Jasper Harris, were parents of eleven children. My grandmother, Mary Emily, was their oldest daughter. She had three older brothers, William, Joseph, and Hyrum. She was born in Salt Lake City on the 23rd of October 1865. At the time, her father was a commissioned officer in the

Utah Militia, which had organized for the purpose of fighting the marauding Indians in the territory. Her mother, Martha Ann, was not happy with this assignment, but William J. was not involved in any skirmish resulting in an injury, so he returned to her and their four children safe and sound. His experiences in the Black Hawk War were prized by him and continued to be a highlight to the end of his days.

Mary was the light of the family's eyes. She had light brown hair and very blue eyes that shone with every smile or laugh she gave forth. The next child of Martha and Williams was another boy, Franklin, so Mary would be nearly five years old before another little sister would come into the family. Lucy was born, and then John, and then four other little sisters came, to Mary's delight—Mercy, Zina, Martha Artimissa, and Sarah. Even though she was older than these younger girls, she loved them dearly and depended on them and their families all her life. She said they took the place of her dear mother, Martha Ann Smith Harris, after she died.

When Mary was three years old, her parents were called by Brigham Young to move to Provo, to participate in the building-up of the Kingdom there. At the time Provo was starting to become a little wild in nature. Good families were asked to move there to help it and Utah County become more set-



tled and staid. William's mother, Emily Hill Harris Smoot, and her husband, Abram O. Smoot were called to move to Provo. Also, Joseph F. Smith and his wife Sarah, and Wilford Woodruff and his family had received calls to move to Provo. So, William Jasper and Martha Ann had a built-in family and friends in Provo, which helped them from missing the family and friends they were leaving behind in Salt Lake City.

Mary liked her new surroundings. She followed after her brothers and helped them with their chores and, like many other a little sister, ran errands for them. Mary had a mischievous streak which came forth at times. Her brothers taught her to milk the cows and do other chores. As she grew older, they taught her to ride horses sidesaddle. Mary loved to go to church. She received a lovely book as a prize for attending 300 straight Sundays. She was a member of the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, and was a member of the choir for five years.

As Mary grew older, her big brothers took her to parties and taught her how to dance. It was wonderful being a teen-age girl with four tall, handsome brothers to take care of her. She attended Brigham Young Academy for a time and learned to write, speak, and express herself very nicely. She wrote long letters to her loved ones throughout her life. Five exceptional letters were sealed in boxes under the cornerstones of various Church buildings in Provo to be brought forth after periods of from 30 to 50 years, and given to her posterity. In these letters, she recounted much of her life story, expressed her love for her husband and children and parents and siblings, wrote of her heartaches and trials, and of her undeviating testimony of the Gospel, and her love for the Savior. From these letters, we get to know her, and appreciate her and Grandfather Corbett and their diligence in raising their family in the Church.

When Mary was nineteen years old, she met a tall, dark, handsome, newcomer to Provo, by the name of **Walter Sutton Corbett**. He had come to visit his mother, **Elizabeth Sutton Miller**, who had lived in

Provo for many years, a faithful member of the Church. Four months later, Walter was baptized. Mary and Walter had gone to a few Church meetings together and to some dances. Then they had a misunderstanding and stopped seeing each other. Martha Ann wisely decided to send Mary to Salt Lake City to visit Joseph F. and his family. Mary would help with the housework and earn a little money. Her Uncle Joseph liked having her there. He liked the way she ironed his shirts. "Let Mary iron them—I like the way she irons them." Mary talked to her Uncle Joseph very openly about what was going on in her life. He knew she had a beau in Provo and that all was not going smoothly.

Then she received a note from her young man apologizing for any offense. It was a dear letter that thrilled her, and she prepared to go home. In the meantime Walter Corbett looked forward to her coming and planned to propose marriage to her. When that time came, Mary accepted wholeheartedly. They were very much in love. In November 1894, the young couple traveled to the LDS Temple in Logan, Utah. They were married November 12. Walter also received his endowments that day. Mary had received her endowments in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City the previous April. Another young couple went to Logan with them and they chaperoned each other all the way, plus they stayed overnight with relatives in the various stages of their travel.

Walter blended in with Mary's family. He got along well with her brothers and sisters. They often visited at the Hams home. Mary was the only daughter married at this time, and only two of her older brothers, William Jasper, Jr., and Joseph Albert were married. Walter and Mary's wedding portrait wouldn't be taken until their oldest son, **Walter Hams Corbett**, was nearly two years old. She put on her wedding dress and the little family went to Daniels Photography Studio and had their picture taken. By the time Mary was 26 years of age, she had borne five children, three of who were living. She loved her babies. There were two lullabies that she sang to them:



*“Oh, my darling you, I see you—hiding behind  
the chair.*

*Oh, my darling you, I see you—hiding behind  
the chair.”*

*and*

*“Three men went a-hunting—to see what they  
could find.*

*They ran across a porcupine and him they left  
behind.*

*One said, “A porcupine!” The other said, “Nay!”  
The other said, “A pin-cushion with the pins  
stuck in the wrong way!”*

*Oh, three men went a-hunting—to see what  
they could find.*

*They ran across a billy goat and him they left  
behind.*

*One said, “A billy goat! The other said, “Nay!”  
The other said, “An old man with his beard  
turning gray!”*

Whether these lullabies were from Mary’s mother, or Walter’s mother, it is not known. But they were their family’s songs.

Mary Emily Harris and Walter Sutton Corbett would have twelve children, but unlike her mother, Martha Ann Smith Harris, whose children all grew to maturity—all eleven of them—Mary was faced with heartache after heartache. Of her twelve children, only six grew to maturity and only five had families. Two years after the birth of Walter Harris Corbett, they had another little boy whom they named **Joseph Smith Corbett**. He lived only three days. Then **William Moroni Corbett** was born and after William came little **Hyrum Smith Corbett** who lived six days before he passed away. Sorrow again. Her first girl, **Mary Elizabeth Corbett** came next, then another little son, **Franklin Nephi Corbett**. He took sick when he was two-and-a-half and passed away. Another daughter was born, **Martha Corbett**, then a son, **John Alvin Corbett**. A third daughter, **Lucy Jane Corbett** was followed by another boy, **Pearson Harris Corbett**.

Then multiple tragedies came to the family of Walter and Mazy Corbett. When darling blond, blue eyed Lucy was two, she tried to follow her big brothers across a railroad track. A train was coming. Her mother and

some neighbors ran to try to reach her, but she couldn’t hear their calls and she didn’t see the train. The cowcatcher hit her and cut off her little fingers on both hands—little Lucy was killed by the train. What terrible days followed. But Mary said she put her trust in the Lord and came through the ordeal. A little over a year later, her oldest daughter was visiting with her grandparents, William J. and Martha Ann Harris, in Provo. Several of the grandchildren had been with Grandma Harris in the buggy, but when Mary Elizabeth went to get down from the seat, she slipped and cut her shin on the iron buggy step. This cut became infected, and, notwithstanding the tender care Grandmother and Grandfather Harris and the doctors gave her, in three weeks the infection took her life. Mary barely arrived from Robinson, Utah, where she and Walter were living at the time. She took the train and her father, William Jasper Harris, met her at the station. She said she could tell from his countenance that her little girl was not going to live. Another little daughter taken from her! Again, she had faith to withstand the sorrow.

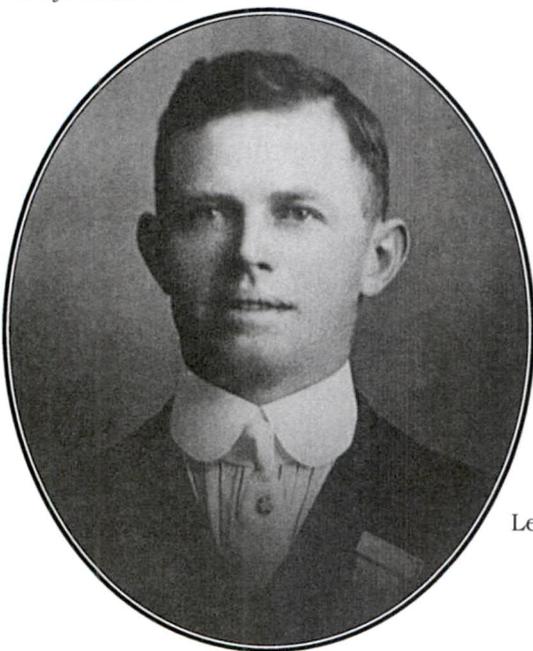
Six months after Mary Elizabeth, or “Mamie,” as they called her, passed away, Mary and Walter had another little son, **Don Cecil Corbett**. They were hoping for a girl, but he was a big boy instead. And just a year after Don’s birth, her last daughter, Martha took sick with a “stomach inflammation” (now known as appendicitis). She was taken to the hospital where the doctors and nurses cared for her while her parents, her Grandmother Harris, her big brothers, Walter and William, as well as the Elders from the Church prayed for her life. Yet, within two weeks she, too, was “taken away to a better life” as her mother wrote. All three of her girls died before they turned twelve years of age. This last death caused Mary to be very bitter. In the hospital when her last little girl passed away she questioned, “How could the Lord do this to me? How could he take my last daughter from me?” She said she rebelled against the Lord. The nurse helped her to a downstairs office to console



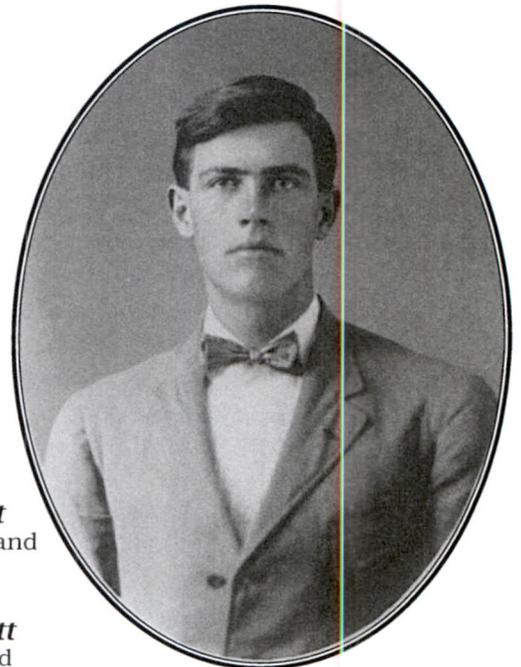
**First Four Children of Walter and Mary Corbett**  
About 1894. Walter H. and William M. in back. Franklin N. and Mary Elizabeth in front with Tige the dog. Little sons born between Walter and William, and William and Mary, deceased.



**Martha, Lucy Jane, and Alvin, ca. 1900**



**Walter Harris Corbett**  
Left: oldest child of Walter and  
Mary Corbett



**William Moroni Corbett**  
Right: 3<sup>rd</sup> son and 3<sup>rd</sup> child



*John Alvin Corbett*  
6<sup>th</sup> son, 8<sup>th</sup> child  
Army-WWI

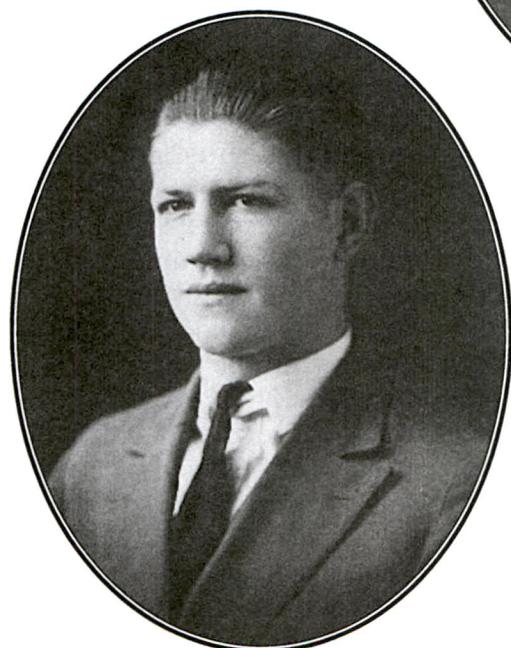


*Pearson Harris Corbett*  
7<sup>th</sup> son, 10<sup>th</sup> child



*George LeRoy Corbett*  
9<sup>th</sup> son, 12<sup>th</sup> child

*Walter Colvin Corbett*  
(Son of Walter Harris Corbett)  
(Grandson Mary raised)



*Don Cecil Corbett*  
8<sup>th</sup> son, 11<sup>th</sup> child





her. Her son, Willie, was with her. Then Mary had a special experience. She had a vision. In this vision, she saw a bright light and in the light she saw the Eye of the Lord. Years later, in writing of this experience Mary said, “There at that time, I knew in an instant what was meant for I remembered what my patriarchal blessing said, given to me in my 18th year by my Uncle John Smith, Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at that time. He told me in my blessing that ‘the eye of the Lord had been over me from my birth.’ So this came to me quickly as the beautiful Eye of my Lord appeared, it came to comfort and calm my breaking heart.”

Mary and Walter had lost three baby sons, and three little daughters. Also, of great importance to know is that two of her young sisters, Lucy and Mercy, also died during this five-year period. Poor Martha Ann Smith Harris grieved for the loss of her own two daughters, while trying to strengthen and comfort Mary in the loss of her three daughters. Mary and Walter’s last son was born in 1905, **George LeRoy Corbett**. For twenty years Mary had had babies. Six had gone to their heavenly home and six remained with them on earth.

Before going to Utah, Walter Sutton Corbett had gone to school in St. Louis to study accounting and clerking. He also learned to teach penmanship. For some years, he traveled in and around Provo selling cookers, and other items. Then he got a job in Robinson, Utah, clerking in the store there. At this same time Mary had a job “canvassing”—or going door-to-door selling patterns for women’s clothes. Any bit of money that any family member could bring into the household was a blessing. Mary was called into the Primary where she served for fourteen years. Then they were able to buy a small farm—fifteen acres—in Pleasant View. Their oldest son Walter had gotten married, and William was working in the mines in Tintic, so the young boys of the family, Alvin, Pearson, Don, and George, were the farm hands taking care of the chores of farm life. Mary was soon called to be the Primary

President in her new ward, the Pleasant View Ward in the Sharon Stake. She was president for five years, and then was called to be president of the Pleasant View Ward Relief Society. She held this position for two years before her health started to fail, due, she said, “to my tired, worn-out condition.” When her health and strength returned, she and Walter served on the Old Folks Committee for eight years.

In 1912, when the younger Corbett boys were 15, 12, 9, and 7 respectively, their father passed away at age 55. Mary was inconsolable at the death of her husband, and left after the funeral to stay with her dear mother, Martha Ann Smith Harris. Mary was Martha’s oldest daughter and they were like one in feeling, in hard work and in their knowledge of, and belief in, the Restored Gospel. But after losing six of her children and now her husband, Mary needed her mother’s arms around her, and her comfort. How the little boys coped during these hard lonesome days is beyond our ability to understand. Willie came home for a while. Dear, faithful William. He was such a hard worker. Since he was fourteen he had worked in the mines. He was financially solvent and would, from here on, help provide for his mother and little brothers. He did not like working on the farm, however, and remained away in Eureka and Tintic, virtually running the farm from there, and sending what money he could home to the family in Pleasant View.

After the death of her husband, Mary continued to do her church work, especially temple work. She was a member of the ward Genealogical Committee and made many trips to Salt Lake City to attend the temple. She faithfully searched genealogical records finding relatives whose temple work had not yet been done. Mary loved to go visiting. She had extended family in Provo and Salt Lake City that she would drop by to see whenever she could. She was a great talker, and had many fine things to say. She taught her grandchildren to not swear, or even use “by-words”—substitute words for profanity, such as “darn, heck, golly, gee.” She was



good-natured and admonished her family to be cheerful, and to not be vain or carried away with pride. She saw the good in everybody. She loved her sons—thought they were near perfection—and loved talking about them. She loved the Lord and wanted her posterity to love Him, and be faithful and prayerful.

Five years after the death of her husband, Mary lost her oldest son, Walter. He had been widowed with three children, had remarried and his death came two months after his new wife gave birth to little twin daughters. Mary was blessed to be able to take in and raise as her own, her son Walter's oldest son, **Walter Colvin Corbett**. So after her husband died, Mary raised five boys by herself. All of her sons grew to be tall and well built, like her brothers. Of these five, three graduated from BYU. Don and younger brother, George, were noted athletes there. Two, Pearson and Don, served missions for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Pearson went to the Eastern States Mission, and Don was called to the German/Austrian Mission. These two brothers were published authors. Pearson wrote three books, *Arthritis and I*, *Jacob Hamblin, Peacemaker*, and *Hyrum Smith, Patriarch*. Don wrote *Mary Fielding Smith, Daughter of Britain*. Pearson and Don had an abiding love of Church history and wrote about their great-grandparents with understanding and affection. Don also wrote the history of his grandparents, William Jasper and Martha Ann Smith Harris, *Stalwarts of the Kingdom*, and *The Corbett Family History*.

Mary and Walter's oldest son, Walter Ham Corbett, married **Irene Colvin**. The couple had three children before Irene lost her life in the tragedy of the Titanic disaster. Walter then married **Annie Dean** and they were the parents of three girls—one of whom died in infancy. William never married. (John) Alvin married **Mary Scott** and they had four children, three daughters and a son. Pearson married **Gladys Brimhall**. They had a son and two daughters. Don married **Marion Kimball**. They had four daughters and one son. George married

**Carlea Bylund** and they had two sons. As these children have grown and married, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren are privileged to claim the illustrious heritage that Mary Emily Harris and Walter Sutton Corbett passed on to them.

Mary was twenty-seven when she wrote the first letters to be sealed for 30 years. She had three living children. Walter also wrote to his posterity at this time. The second set of letters was written in 1930 when Mary was 65. A third set of letters was written at the end of the year 1930. These invaluable letters to us, her posterity, set our hearts and minds in tune with hers. How can we help being anything but what she desired for us to become. In the letters, she poured out her heart to us and gave strong advice about how to be happy in this life and how to keep the commandments so that we would be happy in the life to come.

Walter Sutton and Mary Emily Harris Corbett were the "transition" generation. They bridged the time between "pioneer" and "modern-day." They grew up with horse and buggy—they later enjoyed trains and automobiles. They grew up by candlelight and kerosene lamps—they later had electric lights and appliances. They grew up with home brews and medicines—they later were attended to in antiseptic hospitals. They grew up growing their own food and sewing their own clothing—they later had co-ops, grocery stores, and department stores. They moved along with the changing times. The questions of "Why this way?" or "Why that way?" did not seem to plague them. They seemed to have felt that all things really would work together for their good. Therefore, they accepted the blessings they received with gratitude and humility, and they struggled through the tough times as best they could. Mary remarked that the last half of her life was happier than the first half. That was about as far as she would go in a reflective evaluation of her hard life.

For the last twenty years of her life, Mary was very lonely. She said she missed having a daughter whose home she could visit and who could care for her and give her comfort



**Mary Emily Harris Corbett**  
Salt Lake City, April 1934, age 69

and love. She visited often in her sister Artie's home. They were lovely to her and included her in all their family comings and goings. Thanksgiving would find her at Artie's. When she passed away November 25, 1947, at age 82, it was a few days before Thanksgiving Day. When Artie's family gathered for Thanksgiving dinner, they remarked about "what a wonderful Thanksgiving day Aunt Mary was having" on the other side of the veil. Visiting! —Her favorite pastime. Certainly her blue eyes would be shining with happiness. Mary—Grandma Corbett—passed away in her sleep just as she had wished to do—like her mother had done. This was a great blessing of love from Heavenly Father to her, she being one of His most noble daughters. This story about her is written with loving reverence and gratitude. mct.



**Mary Emily Harris Corbett**  
On her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday

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Sources:

Letters from Mary E. H. Corbett  
The Corbett Family History  
Funeral Service of M.E.H.C.  
Harris and Corbett Family Group Sheets  
Personal knowledge of subject.  
All photos courtesy of Don C. Corbett  
Family Foundation.

## Chapter Twenty



### *FRANKLIN HILL “FRANK” HARRIS*



*Franklin Hill Harris and Josephine Robinson Harris Family, 1906*  
L-R: Franklin Hyrum, Josephine holding Carl J., Richard P., and Franklin Hill Harris holding Mary Harris.

*By David J. Harris, grandson. All family photos courtesy of Carol Hafen Jones, unless otherwise noted.*

**F**ranklin Hill Harris didn't speak until he was three-years old. This rather concerned the family. One day while riding in a carriage pulled by the family team of horses, it became time to stop. Suddenly the passengers heard a tiny voice yell out: "Whoa, Jeremiah!" Frank had uttered his first spoken words! Jeremiah the horse stopped, and after that, Frank's vocabulary was off and running. [Frank liked to do a lot of thinking before he said anything.]

A streak of brilliance at the age of three seemed to run in Frank's family. His son Richard learned to read by perusing the daily newspaper while being coached by his schoolteacher mom. Frank showed off his three-year-old son's reading skills by sitting him on a stool in the tent. Then little Richard read the newspaper to the construction workers, some of who were illiterate.

Franklin Hill Harris worked in the mines in Eureka as a drill operator. It is reported that he discovered an ore body worth one million dollars. Of course, he didn't get that money because he was working for someone else. Frank married a young schoolteacher



**Richard P. Harris**

Son of Franklin and Josephine. Richard loved to read. Photo taken in Texas about 1905. (Courtesy David J. Harris)

from Payson, Utah named **Josephine Robinson**. Their children are **Franklin Hyrum, Richard, Mary, Carl, and Lenora**.

Josephine's brother wrote to her and said, "There's money to be made in the railroad business along the Mexican border." Frank decided he didn't want to be a miner the rest of his life, so he investigated this new venture and did very well. When he sent for his wife and family, he found it took 17 railroad cars to transport his equipment. Frank and his brother Hyrum Smith Harris, two sons of Martha Ann, ran the Harris Construction Company. They traveled to various states—Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Missouri—constructing railroads, roads, reservoirs, or anything that involved

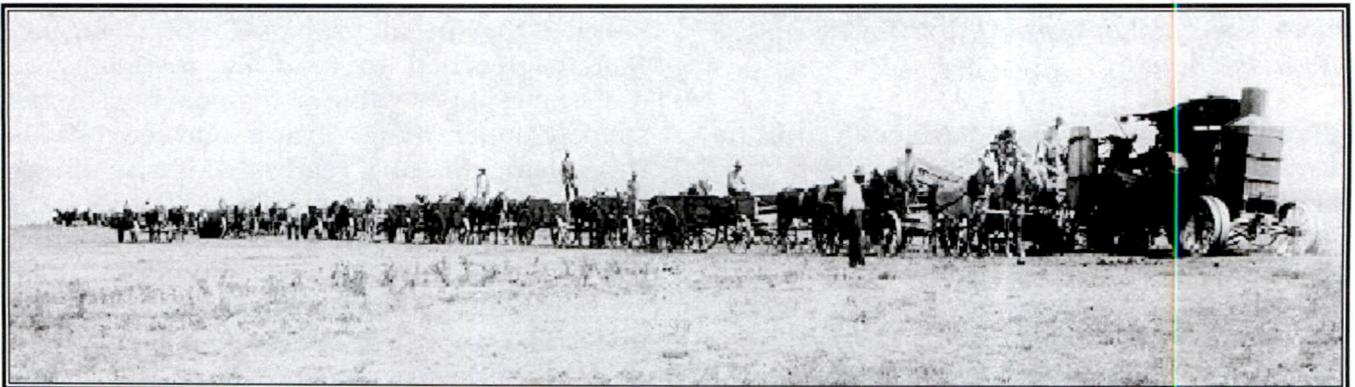
moving earth. They lived with their families in tents Josephine was a very good companion to Frank and followed and helped him wherever he went.

Frank had moved to a job over in Missouri. A construction company promised that he could use or rent their steam shovel. It came time for the steam shovel to be rented, and the owners said, "Well, it's busy right now so you can't use it. Come back later." When he returned later, he was told, "Well, we're still using it." Frank figured they weren't going to let him use it and he would go broke. But Frank wasn't that kind of man to be put off. He went to Kansas City and rented a steam shovel and started on the job. He was getting along quite well, until one morning. One of the men he employed came to his tent and reported, "There's a group of men tearing up the track. They all have guns on their sides."

Frank said, "Well, just a minute and I'll come out." He knelt down and prayed that he would be blessed. Frank saw the men destroying his work and said, "Now, stop this! This is my job. You don't belong here. Now get off!"

One of the men concurred, "This is not right what we're doing. We need to leave." He put down his crowbar and the other men followed suit. They all left, and Frank finished this job and earned the money that was rightfully his.

Frank lived in the early days of the Old



**Harris Brothers Construction Company**

It took 17 railroad cars to transport the equipment including a Hart-Parr tractor and grading outfit.



West. His son Richard P. Harris spoke of his parents Josephine and Frank Harris thus:

I've heard Mama say a number of times the only protection Papa had was that it was known everywhere he never carried a gun. So nobody could shoot him and claim that he drew a gun first because nobody would believe them. Papa didn't carry a gun and everybody knew it. (DJ & RB Harris 11)

One job in Oro Grande, New Mexico, involved two prominent citizens in the town. Frank was hired to dig a little reservoir with a dam across the draw to catch water for one of the men's cattle. These two men had been having trouble getting along; it was rumored that at one time one of the men had shot the other in the arm. The man Frank was not working for sent him a registered letter threatening to kill Frank and the man who employed him to build the reservoir if they went ahead with their plans.

One day Frank and the man he worked for were riding in the front seat of the Harris' Ford with Frank's little daughter, Lenora, in back. They came around a bend in the road and ahead of them was a buggy with the man who had sent the letter and the man's wife. Lenora said, "They have guns!" The man had a rifle and his wife a double-barrel shotgun. The man with Frank said, "Let me get my gun! Let me get my gun!" So Frank just swung the wheel around and opened up the gas, turned around, bounced over the brush and got back in the road. They bounced so hard that Lenora was almost scalped from her head hitting the bows on top of the Ford.

The man and his wife jumped back into their buggy and whipped the horse all the way into town behind the Ford. When they arrived in town Frank drove right up to the telephone office and jumped out to call the sheriff. He took Lenora and got behind the switchboard while his employer hid behind the door with his six-shooter under his shirt, stuck inside his belt. Frank didn't even know he had the gun with him.

The couple drove up in the buggy outside and jumped out. The door was partly ajar

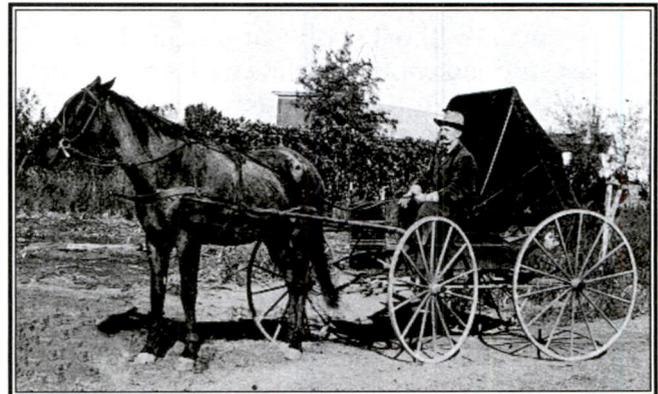
and the man behind the door laid his six-shooter between the crack of the door and the frame. When his adversary got fairly close, he just put a bullet right between his eyes and the wife kept on coming with her gun. The man who shot her husband said, "If you don't stop right there, I'll kill you, too!"

A few years earlier, while Joseph F. Smith was in the First Presidency of the Church, he had called Frank and Josephine one day and said, "I have a baby girl for you." So Lenora was adopted into their family. Frank and Josephine felt that Lenora saving Frank's life by noticing the gun, revealed one of the purposes for her being sent to their family. (DJ & RB Harris 75; Richard P. Harris oral history)



*Lenora Harris*

The Harris Construction Company owned a very fine horse named Cleve. A Mexican horse thief absconded with this old faithful horse. Cleve was last seen entering a train with one of Pancho Villa's officers.



*Cleve, the Company Horse*

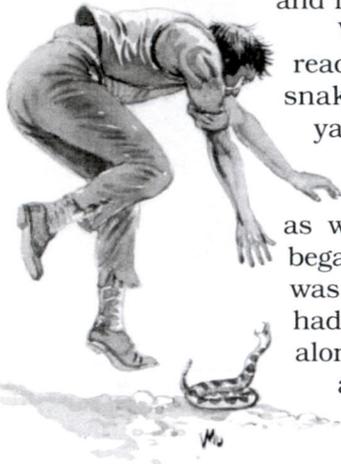


Richard P. Harris tells how his father Frank championed the missionaries who were sent to Amarillo without purse or script:

The elders went all around town and they couldn't find a place to stay or anything to eat. They got pretty hungry. It was late in the year and it was not



very warm. They had no bed, no supper, and no dinner. So they went down the railroad track a little ways. They crawled under a culvert to sleep for the night. While there, one of the Elders woke up and felt something crawling up the inside of his pant leg. He grabbed for it. It was a snake and it bit him!



Well, his companion reached up, grabbed the snake by the tail, and yanked it out. I don't know what kind it was. You can guess as well as I can. His leg began to swell up and he was in terrible pain. They had some consecrated oil along and his companion administered to him.

The swelling went down. They stayed under the culvert until morning and then went back up to town to try again to see if they could get somebody to take them in and give them a bite to eat or a place to stay.

They went to the stores all up and down the street and nobody would give them a thing. Finally, one of the storekeepers said, "Well, tell you what you might do. That railroad contractor [Frank Harris] just moved in down the track here a ways, you might go down there. They might give you a bite."

Well, they went down there to the railroad contractor's camp. They got a bite to eat all right, and then Papa said, "Come with me." They went back up town and Papa went to those storekeepers and said, "I've got the contract for fixing up this railroad. I'll be spending thousands of dollars for supplies and groceries and feed. But if you can't treat my friends better than that, my money is going to go somewhere else!" After that, things were better for the missionaries. (DJ & RB Harris 24)

Robert E. Harris relates another oral tradition that his father, Carl J. Harris, told him:

The Harris Construction Company had a government contract for \$50,000 [a very large sum of money in those days] in Texas to finish building a road. At the termination

of this difficult project, the government deposited the money in the bank over the weekend. When the Harris brothers came Monday morning to withdraw the money, it was discovered to their horror, that one of the bank officials had absconded with the money and fled into Mexico. This bankrupted the Harris Construction Company, and they never recovered financially.



*Carl J. Harris*

Years later, Frank heard a report of a town in Mexico where this fugitive was hiding. Frank borrowed a 22-colt pistol from his son, Carl J. Harris, and set off for Mexico to confront this man who had caused so much grief. When Frank found the crook, he saw an alcoholic derelict who had squandered the entire fortune in a dissipated life of alcohol and revelry. The man was so pathetic that Frank figured the thief wasn't even worth shooting. Life had wrecked its vengeance on the man for his evil deed. So Frank went quietly home.

Frank's children had a mine in Nevada where family members lived at times and mined gold, silver, and uranium. Frank's daughter-in-law, Norma Butler Harris, strapped a gun on her hip so she could keep the rattlesnakes at bay.

"Aunt Josie" followed "Uncle Frank" to New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Missouri, Utah, and wherever he went for construction work—often living in a tent with their five children. The following story from William Jasper Harris Jr.'s daughter-in-law, Ellen Pitman Harris, illustrates Aunt Josie's magnanimity:

We returned to Provo and moved into Grandma Harris' home. I dreamed of having a washing machine. Aunt Josie Harris came to my rescue. She would wash on Monday and have her sons load her Maytag wringer washer on their truck and deliver it to me. I would wash on Tuesday and again on the next Monday and the boys would pick it up and deliver it back to her. How I loved her! This went on for several months. Your Grandpa went to work at the dairy



and they needed someone to do their laundry. I asked for the job and with the money I made I was able to buy a Maytag washer. I was blessed by Aunt Josie's generosity.

Franklin Hill Harris's wife, Josephine Robinson Harris, told the following story to her granddaughter Lorna Harris Daniels:

We lived at Mammoth, Utah, at the time of the birth of our son Richard Parkes Harris. Annie Bea Curtis had been staying with us looking for the time of the birth. Her mother had been ill, so she went to visit her, checking with me beforehand. I told her that the baby was a week off. While Annie Bea was gone, the time came for the baby to be born. There were no doctors around at that time, so a midwife helped with the birth.

The baby was born 6 November 1900. He was yellow, about the color of saffron, and he had a crippled foot, sometimes called a "club foot." He looked like he had jaundice. The midwife couldn't do much, so they had to go a long distance to get a doctor. When the doctor arrived, he said there wasn't much he could do, but he would give us a prescription. My husband Franklin went into town and had the prescription filled. We put it in the cupboard and did not use it.

A week later, Franklin was in town and happened to run into the doctor who had attended me, and he asked how I was. Franklin said that I was fine and the baby was getting along all right. The doctor asked, "The baby? Is he still alive?" it seems that the doctor had not given Richard 24 hours to live. During that time we had applied to the Grand Doctor with all the faith and prayers we had to heal our little baby.



*Josephine Harris and Two Sons -1901*  
Richard Parkes and Franklin Hyrum Harris

We did not know what to do about the crippled foot. We asked several people what they thought we should do to straighten the foot. They suggested that we straighten it and bind it. We did, but it did not help any.

The following spring we attended April conference. At that time we stayed with Uncle Joseph F. Smith and his family. He was then a counselor to the president of



*Young Uncle Joseph*  
C. R. © 1870. Salt Lake City.  
**Uncle Joseph F. Smith**



the Church. Uncle Joseph looked at the baby and his crippled foot. He said that it would have to be operated on. We returned home to Mammoth, and Franklin went rail-roading in Texas, saying he would try to send enough money to pay for the operation. Franklin did not make the money necessary for the operation because he had to purchase so much new machinery.

I reasoned, "Next spring Richard would be one-year-and-five months, then we would have the operation done if it was right." I hated to think of that foot all cut up. Surely the Lord could heal it without the operation. I fasted for three days, asking the Lord what we should do.

At the end of three days, I had a dream where I was walking across rocky, dry desert. Uncle Joseph F. came up behind me and put his arms around me, gathering me under his umbrella. I woke up with a start.

The answer to my dream seemed to be, "Rely on the priesthood." I had been relying on the priesthood. How could I rely on it more?

I had been staying in Payson, Utah, with my mother while Franklin was gone. I happened to see the stake president in town one day and told him about the baby and the crippled foot. He told me to come to stake conference early and wait in the vestibule and he and the visiting authorities would administer to the baby.

The morning of stake conference I went to the tabernacle early and waited for the General Authorities and the stake president. Soon the stake president came in and looked at the baby. He said that the foot would have to be operated on, and that Dr. Richards in Salt Lake would be the best doctor to do the work. He was a good doctor and a good member of the Church. Next Apostle Reed Smoot came in and looked at the foot also. He said that it would have to be operated on and he knew a Dr. Richards in Salt Lake who would be the one to operate. Then Apostle Matthew Cowley came in and looked at the baby. He repeated the same thing in almost the exact words that the other apostle and stake president had used.

At first I had felt that I should rely on the priesthood. I wanted them to adminis-

ter to the baby and rely on the Lord to heal it. Then the thought came, "What could be relying more on the priesthood than to have a stake president and two of the Lord's apostles tell me the same thing?"

When April Conference came, we went to Salt Lake and stayed with Uncle Joseph F. Smith. He said that the baby's foot would have to be operated on, and he would call Dr. Richards to perform the surgery. There it was again—the counselor to the president of the Church telling me the same thing that the stake president and two apostles had! That was truly relying on the priesthood.

I had heard the story where a child had a crippled leg healed, but it had happened away from the center of the Church and it was impossible for them to obtain a doctor. The doctors had taken years of training to help in just such cases. The doctor could do the cutting and the Lord could do the healing. I finally consented to the operation. What could be relying on the priesthood more than to obey the four head authorities who had told me the same thing. I realized I should have faith in their decision.

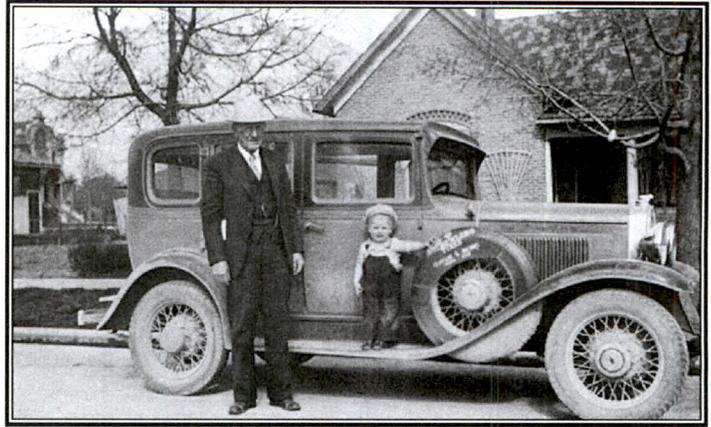
We stayed at Joseph F.'s home and made the arrangements for Dr. Richards to do the operating. At that time, I only had \$25.00. The doctor said that the least he could do that kind of an operation for was \$75.00. The code of the doctors demanded that they charge at least that much for the surgery. After the operation I gave the doctor the \$25.00, and told him we should pay the rest when we could get it. The doctor wrote a receipt for \$75.00 and marked it "Paid in Full." He said that he had to take the \$25.00 to pay for the equipment and medicine, but that was all he would take. He did the operation with no payment for himself.

We stayed on a few days after the operation at Joseph F.'s home. The doctor told us to watch the foot and if anything went wrong to call him immediately. Uncle Joseph F. had been called away. That evening the baby became quite fretful and soon pink began to come through the cast. We were quite worried and sent for the doctor. Joseph Fielding Smith was there and others of the boys were also. Aunt Julina



suggested that they administer to the baby. The baby was so fretful and would not be still long enough for them to administer, so we all knelt down and Joseph Fielding Smith led in prayer. In a few minutes the doctor arrived. He examined the foot and said that an artery had been broken. He said that if he had arrived twenty minutes later there would have been no need for a doctor.

The doctor said that we should have a special shoe made up, so we bought a special pair in Salt Lake and returned home. After several months the shoes became worn and the brace broke. We could not get him another pair because we were so far away from everything. We were in El Paso, Texas. Richard had to put his weight and pressure on the foot a little too soon, so the foot is a little flat, but it has never seemed to be much of a disadvantage. (DJ & RB Harris 114-5)



**Franklin Hill Harris and 1931 Chevrolet**

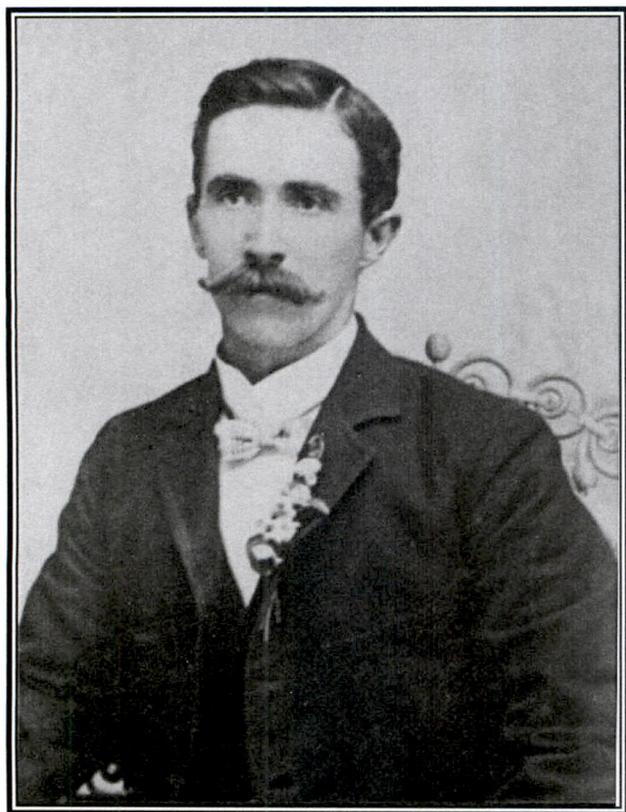
Grandson David J. Harris is standing on the running board.  
(Courtesy David J. Harris)

*Note: Franklin's son Richard P. Harris tape recorded six hours of history of his father's family. This is found in the book Harris Heritage as referenced in the Bibliography at the end.*

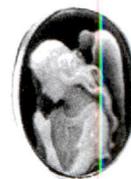


**Franklin Hill and Josephine Robinson Harris Descendants**

Front row, L-R: Leland Harris, Antoine Harris, Raymond Hafen, Steven Hafen, Suzanne Harris, Carol Hafen, and Marjorie Harris. Middle row: Robert Harris, Esther Hafen, Carl J. Harris, Lenora H. Randall, Franklin Hyrum Harris, Josephine Robinson Harris, Richard P. Harris, Mary H. Hafen, Margaret Hafen, and Lowry Harris. Back row: Irene Hafen, Norma B. Harris, Joe Hafen Jr., Marion P. Harris, Virginia Harris, Norma Hafen, David Harris, Anna J. Harris, Lorna Harris, Joe Hafen Sr., Mark Hafen, and Louise Hafen.



*Jonathan Simmons Jr.*



*Children of Jonathan and Lucy Smith Harris Simmons*  
June 1903—Edna Mae (4) and Arthur (2)