

## LEONARD FORD HARRIS

It was a cold November day in Spanish Fork, Utah, when Ellen realized that it would not be long before she would need some help, for as the pains began, she knew this time was the time and quickly sent word to her mother that she was to come.

She was somewhat frightened, for her little son Ernest Pitman, who had been born just 20 months before, had died when he was just 15 days old. Now the memory of this was again strong on her mind. She so wanted this child. Her arms had longed for a baby ~~and~~ What a joy it was to have this beautiful little son arrive and to hear the music of his strong lungs as he cried out. A son, a son! And his name would be Leonard Ford Harris. How proud his parents were to have another little boy. A man needs a son, and now John had one. 21 November 1912 was an exciting day at this home.

He followed his father around. He learned much from him as he worked on the farm with the animals. These years that his father was farming were happy ones for him. They spent many hours together. He had an inquisitive nature and was interested in what made things work. He had a father who was willing to show him and explain things to him. ~~Ne~~ He enjoyed the animals, noticing that much of the time the milking was left for his mother Ellen to do. He was anxious and quick to learn, and soon his little hands were strong enough to help with the milking. He loved the cool milk and was able to have all he wanted.

The family moved to a farm in Cache Valley. A baby sister was born in Cornish, Utah, to John and Ellen. A wonderful discovery for him to enjoy and love this little girl, Mary Fern. He being just 2½ years old, she was like a real, live doll to him.

It wasn't long before this little family left Cornish and moved to Moore, Idaho, where his father decided to purchase a small farm. Again they settled down and everyone worked hard to clear the land and care for the cows and to plant and grow the crops in this cold country. Things looked promising and they began to feel that this was home. His father was the bishop and both LaVern and Leonard were in school and the home was small, but they were comfortable.

On the night of March 27, 1920, his father and sister had gone to a church activity. The younger children were all in bed asleep, and the house was peaceful and quiet. His mother had been very ill with the smallpox, and now labor pains began.



She must have help, but who to turn to? Her thoughts turned to him, her only hope. She went to his bedroom, called and woke him up, and told him to run to the Pattons for help. The first reaction was of fear of the dark and the cold. It soon turned to fear of his mother's life. You quickly grabbed a coat and ran over the snow the distance to their house and returned with them. How relieved and grateful she was. A baby sister was born that night who was named Lola Mae.

The family was soon to move to Texas. Life was different from what he had experienced before. Having come from dairy country and having all the milk and eggs right on their own place, it was hard adjustment to not have these things. Leonard almost starved for want of milk. One day his mother saw a cow in a field and went home and got a bucket and sent Leonard with it to buy some milk. How excited they all were to know they could again have the milk and butter they had so missed. The anticipation was high as they watched Leonard coming all smiles and carrying a bucket. They could hardly wait for Mother to pour it into their cups, ~~then~~ Their happy faces changed quickly as each put their cups to their lips. The milk was sour! So sour butter could be churned, but not so they could drink it.

His mother was a bit unhappy and wondered why they would give her son sour milk. She called by their house and was told this is the way people in this country liked their milk, and if she didn't like it she didn't need to send for any more. The only answer was to purchase a cow for the family, and a search was made and a milk cow found.

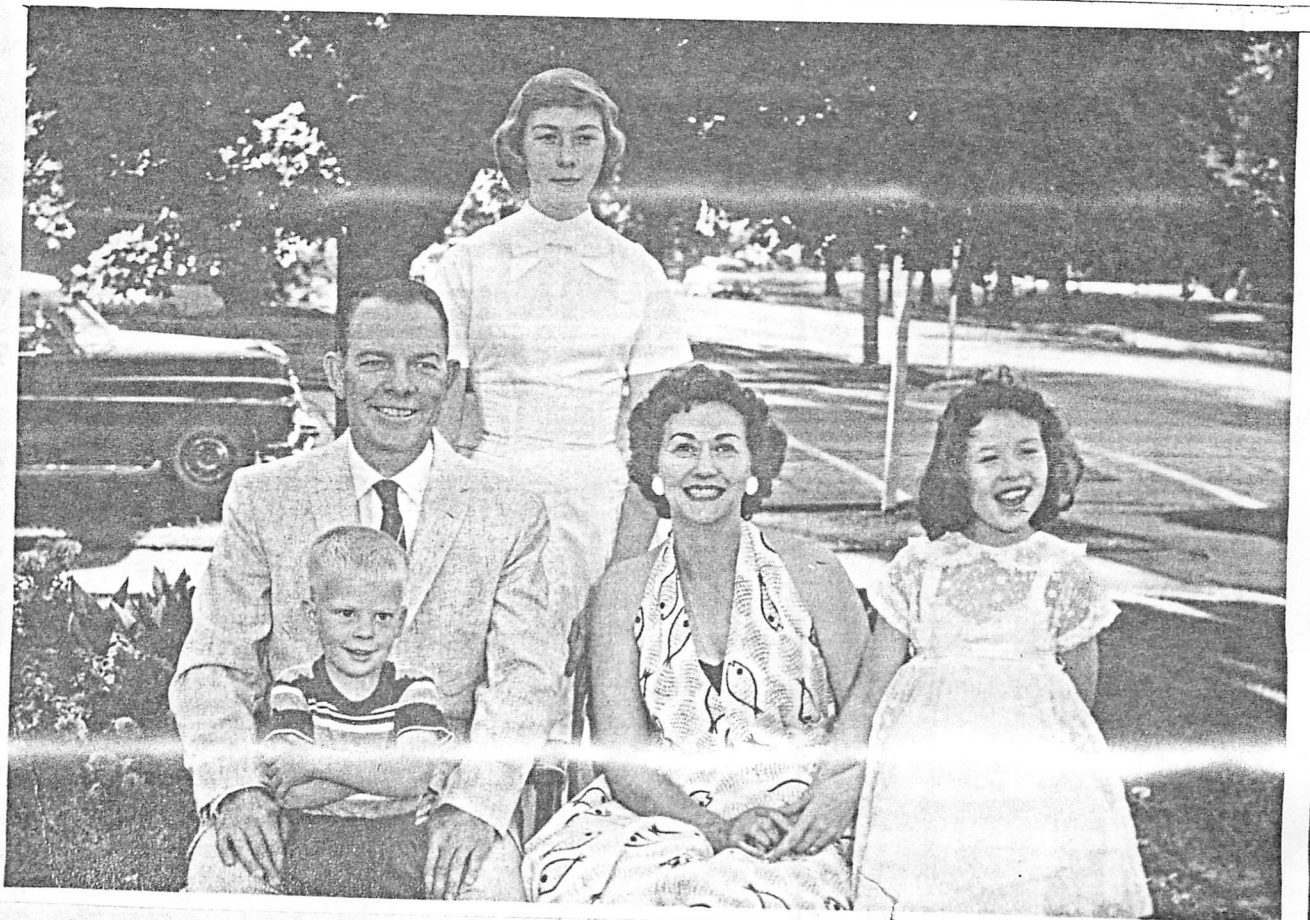
John was gone so much of the time he decided that LaVerne being the oldest, could be in charge of the cow and that she and Leonard could do the milking. It was hard for him to understand how this smart little daughter of his who could do almost anything could not learn to milk a cow and to care for it. The answer was his son Leonard, who took over the care and the milking. So happy was he to again have good, sweet milk to drink. (LaVerne was smarter than her father realized. She had seen her mother and Aunt Alice left with so many cows to milk she decided she would never learn how. And she didn't.)

While in Texas, Leonard had another little sister, named Martha Afton, born 1 February 1923, and his Aunt Alice came from Utah to take care of his mother at this time. School was hard and these children with different accents were often made fun of.

After the bridge was built and payment was to be made, it was discovered that someone had made off with the money and the Harris family were all left without funds. There was nothing for all of them to do but pack up and return to their homes in Idaho and Utah.



Leonard and Beth Kay Harris  
Kay Ellen, Rex and Martha Marie





Leonard



Kay Ellen and Martha Marie Leonard Harrie



The family returned to Moore, Idaho, to find their farm in a mess. All the cattle had wandered away for lack of a caretaker and the house was in shambles. Little of the lovely things they had left were still there and heart was gone at trying to start it all up again. Then the little family returned to Utah and settled in Provo, moving into the old Harris home on the corner of 3rd West and 2nd South.

Here Leonard went to school at Franklin School. When a home of their own was purchased, although only a block away, it put the children in a different school district and they needed to transfer to Maeser School. Leonard came home refusing to go there, for the stories he was being told of the principal were so frightening. He was convinced that he must go, and when he got there and learned to know this man, he found he admired him and there was no reason to fear. When he went to the Provo High School he took many prizes for his wood work. He made tables, cedar chests, lamps, and became a real craftsman. He played football for Provo High School and the family took pride in watching him play. He had many friends and they would often come to the house to call him. The custom of the day was to stand at the door and call until someone answered, so it was common to have a boy at the back door calling, "Skunchmire, Skunchmire" until Leonard came to the door. He took a part of an old man named Skunchmire in a school play and to his friends the name held.

He loved to fish and hunt and these were those rare moments that he could have some time with his father. Deer hunting was a looked forward to event and much planning and preparation went into it. He was a good shot and usually came out of the mountains with his deer. On one hunt his friends had gone down on horses to see if they could herd some deer up to where Leonard was. As he heard the noise behind him, he thought it was his friends on the horses, and turned around to find himself face to face with a big bear. Fear was in both of them, and luckily for Leonard, his gun was all cocked and ready to shoot. The big bear rug in his home today is a reminder of this day in the mountains.

As a young man in the Depression he worked and earned enough money to purchase a bicycle which he enjoyed and prized very much. One day, much to his disappointment, the bike was stolen. Months later it was recovered--rusted and very beat up.

The Tuesday night movies were a fun time, for they had a program where they drew lucky tickets from a hat and gave away prizes. Leonard was usually one of the lucky ones to have his number called to receive a prize. On special nights they would have girls come up and model hats and the audience would clap for the girl who was the prettiest in the hats. Laverne would be the one to win the hat.



After graduation from high school, Leonard went to Idaho and worked for a cousin at a fruit stand. After a time of hard work and not being able to save any money, he returned to Provo to work at the foundry that was at 5th West and Center Street. Mother would walk down each day before noon and leave his lunch just outside the door. If she couldn't leave home to take it, one of the younger girls was sent on the errand.

At a dance a beautiful strawberry blonde, Beth Kay, caught his fancy and then caught his heart. The nights found him traveling to Eureka to visit her. She was born 11 February 1919 in Tremonton, Utah. They were married on 13 October 1939, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

It was still the Depression and jobs were hard to find and wages low. They were living in the basement apartment of Leonard's parents' home and decided to go into the doughnut business. They both worked hard and spent long hours baking and then delivering doughnuts to the restaurants and stores in Provo each day. They had a little bank that all the pennies they got were saved in. When there were enough they would purchase something they had been dreaming about. The first purchase was a little radio. These were hard but happy years. They purchased a lot and built their own home on 6th West between 4th and 5th North. Beth found her time in working could bring in more money if she got another job. She went to work for Provo City and was fortunate to have a mother close by who took loving care of little Kay Ellen. It was special for both their little daughter and Beth's mother. Great love was between them.

After Beth's father's death, her mother moved to Provo and married Mr. Brimhall and was very happy and so pleased to be near her daughter and be able to tend Kay Ellen. She would dress her up cute and take her to Primary. Kay Ellen was always thrilled to be called by her grandmother a Primary Girl.

Another little daughter came to the family, Martha Marie, named after her Grandmother Kay who would soon become very ill and pass away.

The year Beth was carrying Martha they had a fun vacation to Yellowstone Park and were able to fish and boat there. Rex joined the family and Leonard was excited for a son and had all the plans of what they would do together. <sup>50</sup> They remodeled their home and added an upstairs to it. With three children more room was needed.

Leonard had gone to the Geneva Steel Plant to work when it opened in the Orem area and was industrious and was resourceful on the needs and developed better ways to do things. It wasn't too long before he was a superintendent there. He invented a big furnace and was honored.



In about 1959 they built a beautiful home in the Oak Hills area. Both put much of themselves into it and they were excited over it. They would be able to entertain and share this beautiful home with others.

Leonard worked at Geneva Steel for many years and worked up to the superintendent level. He decided to take an early retirement and worked on a little shopping center that he had built on Columbia Lane in Provo. It seemed that there was always enlarging and remodeling that had to be done. His health was not good, but he didn't know how to relax unless he had a fishing pole in his hand. He and Beth purchased a trailer house and with their truck were able to take trips and visit grandchildren *and fishing*.

Beth has a real talent for writing and has published books and has been able to really excell. Her handiwork in crewel pictures and in needlepoint will leave a rich heritage for her children and grandchildren. They will have some heirloom pieces to treasure because of the talent she possesses.

#### CHILDREN OF LEONARD AND BETH HARRIS

Kay Ellen Harris married Charles Thompson in the Salt Lake Temple, and they are the parents of four children.

Rex Leonard Harris married Claudette Seeley in the Salt Lake Temple, and they are the parents of two sons.

Martha Marie Harris married Douglas Martin in the Salt Lake Temple, and they are the parents of two children.