

The LIFE OF AFTON NOALL RICHARDS ASPER 1911 --1963

The daughter of

Heber Greene Richards and Nora Rebecca Noall

Married to

William Samuel Asper

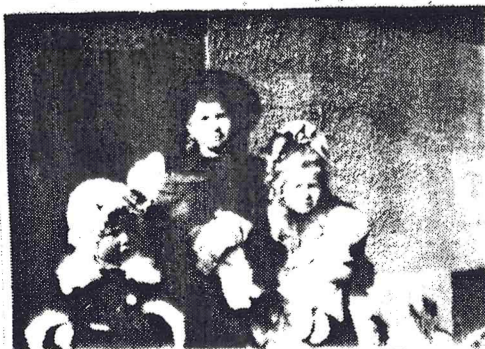
By her sister, Helen R. Gardner

Bountiful, Utah, 1995



Afton, about 1 1/2 years





1918  
Christmas time in Bountiful.  
Vera, Afton, Helen, with dolls.



Helen at Gdms Laker's Paris  
Idaho, Bear Lake. 1919



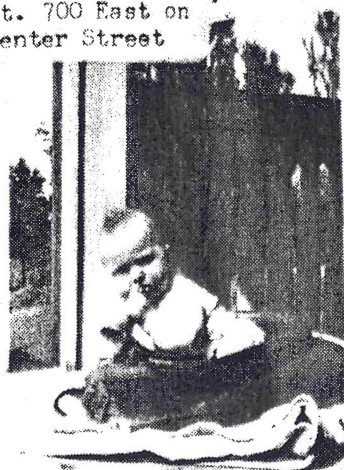
At Bear Lake, Helen 5 yrs.

*Grand Laker at his home, Bear Lake*

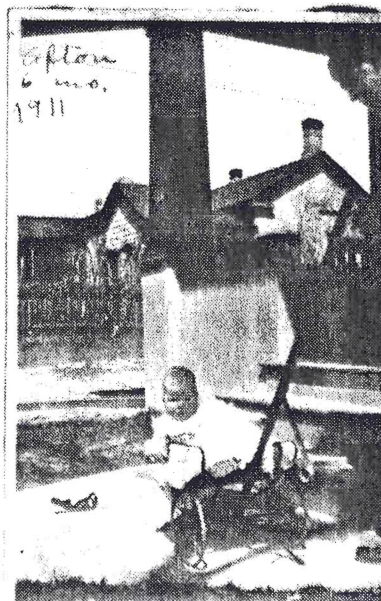


Paris, Idaho  
Annie Bryceson Laker,  
1919. Afton's gt. grandma

Abt. 700 East on  
Center Street



Nora Patricia  
Bountiful, 1920



Afton  
6 mo.  
1911  
1911 Salt Lake-Afton 6 mo.  
Duplex 164 C Street under  
construction

Annie Bryceson Laker



Afton



Front: Vera, Helen.  
Back: Nora holding Patty,  
Afton.  
1921, 166 C Street, Salt Lake



Bountiful 1918



Bountiful 1918--Afton, 7: Vera 2  
Helen, 4. Afton has her arm on the back  
of a cow, petting it.



Bountiful 1917  
Afton and Helen



Afton's birthday, Sept 18, 1918  
at Bountiful. Vera, Afton, Helen



Vera, Arthur, Afton, & Bill,  
Little Dick Asper, 1938  
Helen



Afton and her sisters, 1939



Afton gives a speech at the 50th  
Wedding anniversary of Nora and Heber  
Nov 1960



Bear Lake 1919



Noalls and Tanners, Richards' in Bear Lake, 1919



Helen, & Evalyn Noall with sea shells on table. Bear Lake cabins at Lakota. 1919



On a Mt. top near Bear Lake Snow. 1 July 1920. Tanners Richards', & Noalls.



Vera Bear Lake 1918



Nora's step sisters and bro. Evalyn, Lawrence, Afton, Verna, & Helen, in front 1918.



1916--Bountiful  
Front--Helen, Afton, Grandma Louisa Richards. Nora in back. On a haystack



Afton, Bountiful  
abt. 9 yrs old





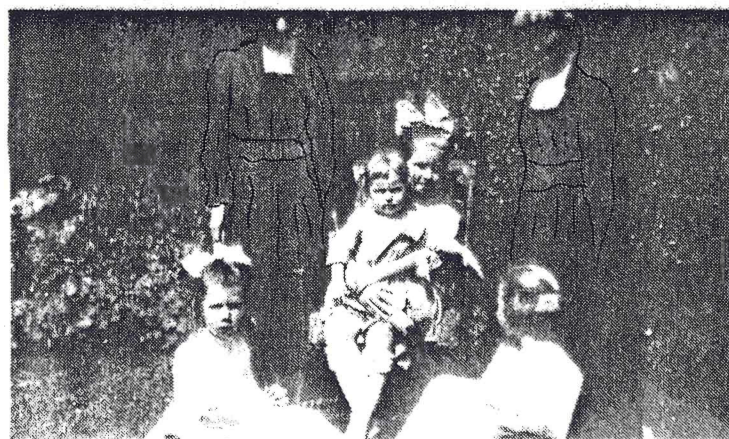
Vera, age 5, Washington  
Park, Chicago



1921  
Washington Park---Chicago  
Helen, Patty, Afton, Vera

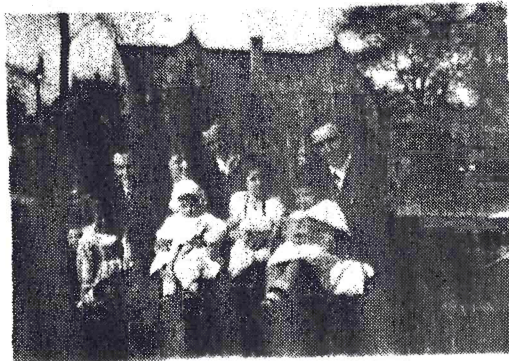


Afton Helen Vera Patty  
Back Yard in Chicago, 1921



1921. Aunt Persis and Grdma. Louisa Richards  
Standing in back. Afton holding Patty.  
Vera in front. Helen in front with head turned.





Midway "Classical" Building in background. (Univ of Chig)  
18 Sept 1921. Elder Labrum holding Vera. Elder  
Garrick back of Helen. Brother Miner back of Afton.  
Nora is holding Patty.

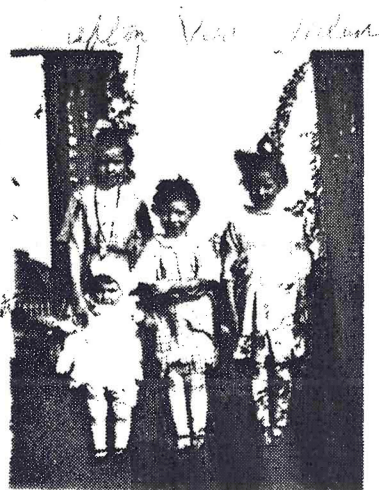
We wore capes  
Mother had made.



Chicago by Lake Michigan 1921  
Afton, Nora holding Patty  
Helen in front, Vera.



Left to right, Helen, Afton,  
Nora holding Patsy, Vera.  
Chicago, back yard. 1921



Chicago, 1921 Washington Park  
Afton, Vera, and Helen  
Patty in front.



Left to right: Afton  
a friend, Nora, Vera,  
Helen with Patsy in front.



Nora, baby Patty, Afton, Heber,  
Helen, Vera on Heber's lap  
Chicago 1921



Patty 1921



Nora, holding Patty, Afton, Heber  
holding Vera. Helen in front. On the  
Univ. of Chicago campus. 18 Sep 1921  
Afton's 10th birthday



Afton Vera Heber

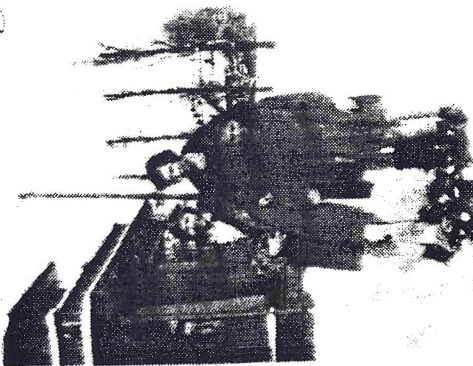


The girls in Washington  
Park in Chicago. Greenhouse  
Fountain, 1921

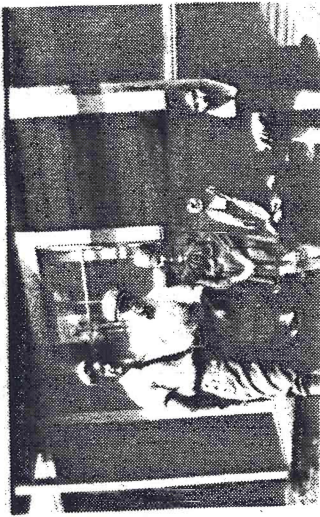


Afton and Patty  
in Chicago, 1921



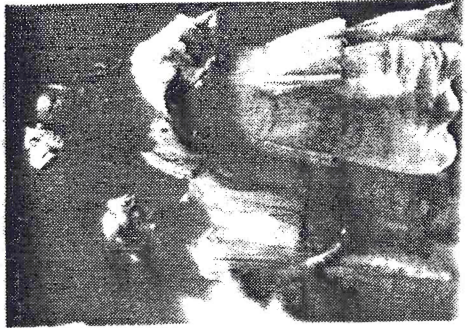


Emma Arms bringing Vera, Patty,  
783, 3rd Ave. 1928

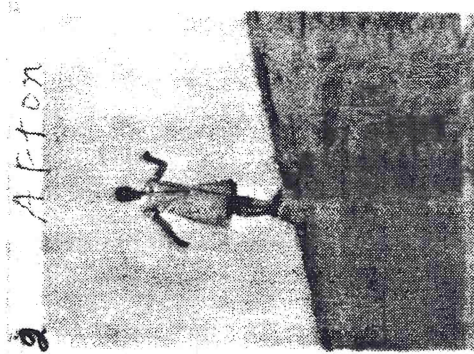


1929 At Tangent, Oregon. Afton, Heber,  
Patty, Nora, Vera

at C Street, Salt Lake City

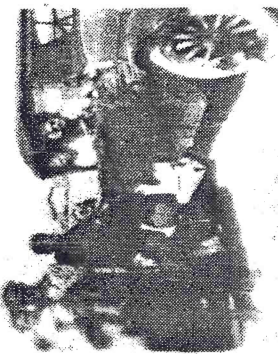


Helen and Afton  
1923



Afton  
Afton wearing leather gloves,  
standing on a sand dune. Drove  
the Reo over the hot desert  
in Nev. & Ariz. 1927.

1927 At Barstow, CA. Reo car.  
Afton in front seat. Nora in back.  
Heber holding DeEtte.  
Vera and Patty by car.





## THE LIFE OF AFTON NOALL RICHARDS ASPER

### PREFACE

In writing a Biography of Afton Richards I had to rely on my memory quite a bit which is not very sharp. I am indebted to Vera Nielsen for help in this. Without Vera's help this would not be a book. Because my own life is linked with my sisters I tended to focus on my own experiences because I could recall them more clearly. I did not attempt to make a full history of Patty's life or DeEtte's or Vera's. It is now simply beyond my ability.

I am also much indebted to Ane and her son Ricky Asper who helped so much with the pictures. Without their knowledge and expertise of photography the illustrations would not be possible.

I thought it would be well to write at least what I could remember of Afton's life while I could. She was an inspiration to me and I loved her as I do all of my sisters.

As I review my life in regards to my family I can see how blessed we were to have good parents and how lacking I was in some personality traits which I still need to develop--those of serving others. I did not show enough appreciation as I wish now I had. I hope I can continue to improve beyond the veil.

-----Helen Richards Gardner-----  
Bountiful, Utah, 1955



## THE LIFE OF AFTON NOALL RICHARDS ASPER

by Helen Richards Gardner, her sister, Sept 1995  
Bountiful, Utah

### Salt Lake and Bountiful

#### Childhood 1911-1920

Our parents, Heber Greene Richards and Nora Rebecca Noall, were married on the 10th of November, 1910, in the Salt Lake Temple and came to live in the double house which Heber had had built at 164-166 C Street in Salt Lake City. Heber was the 4th son of Levi Willard Richards and Louisa Lula Greene and was employed as a teacher in the LDS High School which was situated on the corner of North Temple and Main Street at the place where the Relief Society Building now stands.

#### Afton's Birth

Father and Mother were happy together in their little house at 164 C Street. They lived in one side of their double house and rented the other one which gave them a little needed cash. On the 18th of Sept 1911 they had a little baby girl born to them whom they named Afton Noall Richards. She was a beautiful little baby and a joy to the parents as well as the grandparents---Levi W. and Louisa Richards living next door on the corner at 305 3rd Ave, and also Matthew and Rose Noall living on 4th Ave and A Street. Matthew's first wife, Libby or Elizabeth had died. Nora was the second of Libbie's 3 living children.

Soon Heber's brother, Evan, built him a house just north



of Heber's double house at 168 C Street. It was a bigger home than the double house and made of pink stone and reddish bricks. Evan and his wife, Lillian, had 2 boys, Lynn, and Charles, born to them. Lynn was about Afton's age and Charles about Vera's age 5 years younger. During all their growing up childhood years these boys could play with their little cousins, Heber's children. Evan's house had a little back yard with lawn and flowers, and a place for a sandpile. And the front porch had a porch swing on which the children liked to play.

#### Helen's Birth

On 8 Aug 1914 another daughter was born to Heber and Nora at 164 C Street, Helen. Afton was a cute little toddler of 3 years old with long brown curls and a happy smile. She loved her baby sister. At this time their great Grandma Annie Bryceson Laker the wife of Lashbrook Laker came for a few days visit. She lived in Paris, Idaho, near St. Charles Idaho on Bear Lake. She came to Salt Lake to do some of her Genealogical Research and stayed in the little double house at 164 C Street with Heber's little family. She was originally from London, England, and as a convert to the Church had come to Utah. She was pleased to see "Dear little Afton and sweet baby "elen". Being English she dropped the "h" off "Helen".

#### Move to Bountiful

Father decided he would like to have a little land with room for a cow and an orchard and he bought a piece of land in Bountiful at 7th East and Center Street. There he had an orchard of peaches, and a little vegetable garden and an acre or so of land for lucern which was for hay for the cow. Accordingly he moved his family to Bountiful and made arrangements to buy a cow and a pig and chickens.

Helen was a toddler but can remember when at about 3 yrs she and big sister, Afton, ran around and watched Father as he tended the chickens and fed the pigs. They remembered when Father walked to a neighboring farm and came home leading the cow, named Mary. Mary was put in the new barn and fed some bran. Father warned the children not to come close to Mary because she was not used to children or women and would only let him milk her.

"She'll come after you if you get close. So stay away from her", he warned. And she had horns, too.

One day Afton and I were out in the back yard playing



tag. We forgot about Mary who was eating grass nearby and got too close. Suddenly Afton looked up and yelled,

"Run. Mary is coming". And Mary was coming! Her head was down and she was coming at us fast. Afton grabbed my hand and pulled me along. We ran and ran into the house and slammed the door thinking Mary would come right in. Only then did Afton turn and look and there was Mary calmly eating grass. She had been staked to a short rope and could not have run after us very far.

Afton was an excellent big sister to me. She took care of me and comforted me when I fell down and skinned my knee. Being 3 years older than I she was a very caring person of her little sister.

#### Vera's Birth, 3 Nov. 1916

When I was 2 Vera was born. Now Afton was a big sister to the new little baby and was always mindful of helping out. Afton was five now and could help Mother bring in the diapers from the clothes line, or stay by the baby while Mother went outside to feed the pigs. She was very conscientious.

Afton had brown eyes and brown curls which Mother curled on her fingers every morning with a hair brush. I was very blonde and blue-eyed. Vera was brown-eyed with brown curls.

#### Mother's Busy Day

Mother had a lot of work to do every day. She fed the pigs, shoveled coal or wood into the the stove in the kitchen and thus regulated the stove so she could cook meals on it and fed the chickens, besides taking care of 3 little children. She hand washed the diapers and hung them on the line. There was no washing machine, but Mother did send the dirty clothes to the Laundry. A man returned it in a bag every week and it was labeled, "Wet wash". Mother hung it on the line to dry. But she hand washed all baby things.

When the clothes on the line were dry, she gathered them in and dampened those that needed ironing, just right and rolled them up tight and ironed them the next day. It took about 4 days on the week to do laundry. Some things she starched, also. The iron was heated by setting it on the kitchen coal stove, and was very heavy to move back and forth over the clothes.

Mother had quite a job to keep the kitchen stove going all the time to cook the meals, and heat a little water. She also had to keep the little stove in the front room



going, and one in the bedroom. All had to be hand stoked with coal or wood constantly. There was nothing automatic.

There was no refrigerator, but there was an ice-box to which in the summer the ice-man delivered a huge block of ice to cool off the little cupboard in which we put the food. If we had no icebox we had to use the cool basement. But food preservation was a problem.

We did have an outside cellar which most houses had which were fairly cool. I remember, as Vera does, big shallow, blue enamel pans full of milk sitting on the cellar steps. The cream rose to the top and Mother skimmed it off to make butter in our churn. Sometimes we helped turn the churn.

#### The Farm Animals

If the telephone rang it was usually a neighbor saying, "Your pigs are over in my garden eating my plants." So then Mother had to go and try to chase them out of the neighbor's garden. She was thankful for Afton who would stand and watch the baby while she was gone.

One day Mary was sick. Father had just come home from teaching school and he looked out in the patch of lucerne. There was the cow, Mary. She was eating lucerne.

"Oh! It's in the lucerne", yelled Father. He grabbed the butcher knife out of the kitchen drawer and ran out into the field of lucerne. He plunged the knife into Mary's side. Afton and I were amazed and stood by the kitchen window looking out to see what went on. We saw Mary's bloated sides collapse and then she fell to the ground.

Then Father came in and said, "Well, Nora, I did not get it fast enough. She's bloated. I don't think she'll make it." Pretty soon he went out and came back and said, "She's dead". He went to the phone and called someone.

Afton and I stood with faces glued to the kitchen window and watched as a man came and skinned Mary and took her body away in a wagon. It was a sickening process and Afton got sick to her stomach. Mother told us to go and play with our dolls and not watch any more.

One day after about a week Father came home leading another cow. This one did not chase little girls and Afton and I were able to stand close to her and stroke



her. She was Mable. Father gave us a cup of milk to drink from her which Afton said tasted too much like a cow.

In the fall Father had a pig slaughtered for the winter supply of meat. It was hung in the basement cellar. Afton and I did not like the smell of it at first, but in the winter the pork did taste good on the dinner table.

When Vera was a toddler Afton took her out with us to help feed the chickens. While Afton was throwing wheat to the chickens Vera was finding worms. They were fun to catch, being wiggly and soon she had a whole fist of them. In fact, Vera had carefully put worms on a tiny ledge going around the cellar door. Afton thanked her nicely and told her to throw the worms into the chicken pen. Vera did and the chickens loved them. Afton tried to discourage Vera from doing it again because she did not love them.

One day Mother had taken Vera with her when she went into the hen coop to gather eggs. So Vera learned where the eggs were. Next day unnoticed Vera went out herself and soon Mother looked and there was Vera crawling up the back steps on hands and feet and in each hand she carried an egg. As she banged it on the steps coming up she said delightedly, "See, Eggy, Eggy", so happy that she could bring in the eggs herself. Then Mother had to wash each egg step as well as the eggy child.

#### Sunbonnet Girls

Afton and I each had a sunbonnet to wear outside in the summer. In the field of lucerne we could just see over the lucerne tops and we looked like sunbonnet twins. We loved to run and lie down in the lucerne and make little nests. Father thought this was not a good idea because it matted down the lucerne and made it hard to cut when he needed to harvest it. So we had to quit.

As Vera turned 3 we 3 little girls liked to play in the barn on the hay. We could slide down the big stacks or piles of hay without hurting ourselves. We loved it. Sometimes Grandma (this was Lula Greene Richards) came to visit from Salt Lake and sat out on the little piles of hay with us to look down the hill to the sunset.

#### Father's Busy Day

Father had a busy schedule. He milked the cow, fed the pigs, and took the streetcar into Salt Lake City to get



to school by 9 o'clock. It took about 45 minutes to ride the streetcar from Main and Center in Bountiful to Salt Lake City, Main Street and North Temple. Winter time was a little slower. Then in the evening was the same routine.

#### Bountiful Peaches

Father had the orchard he had always wanted. He had a little section of land with peach trees and a few pear trees. One summer he and Mother bottled 100 quarts of peaches. They put a table out in the orchard to work on and took the ripe peaches right off the tree and Father peeled them (without scalding them) and put them into a pan. Mother did the same. It kept the mess out of the kitchen. The flies enjoyed it and so did we children. We helped by eating a lot of the most delicious Bountiful peaches you can imagine. Mother would not let us eat too many because it would not be good for us. There is nothing so sweet and tasty as a Bountiful peach. That is still true today.

#### Church Attendance and Transportation

Afton and I walked with the family to Church held in the Bountiful Tabernacle every Sunday morning by ten o'clock. Evening Sacrament meeting was from 7 to 9. So it was about 10 at night when the family arrived home. Going home was a mile uphill which was quite a trek for us little girls in wintertime. When the next two babies came along Mother usually pushed a baby buggy with them in it. Once in a while a neighbor came along with a sleighwagon and horses and offered the family a ride. The horses had sleighbells on and the air smelled like horses.

Afton was a nervous child in a way. Mother and Father sometimes liked to take the streetcar into Salt Lake and go to a movie. There were Charlie Chaplin or Harold Lloyd films that were funny. Then they liked to go to Keeleys Restaurant and have ice cream after. They would come home by 11:30 and after a long walk up the hill it would be at least 12 midnight. Helen liked to go, too. But Afton did not. If Grandma Richards (who was about 70 years old) was visiting, she would stay home with Afton and the baby and Helen would go with the parents. Afton did not usually want to see any movies.

At one time Father bought a car--a Dort. It was a four door sedan, open sides. He had it for a short while. Roads were just wagon trails and were bumpy and hard on tires. There were no asphalt streets. It was not unusual to have a flat tire.



We hardly ever made a trip from Bountiful to Salt Lake without a flat. The streets nearly always had a ditch running down the edge for water to irrigate the fields. I must add that our Center Street also had a row of tall poplar trees on each side of the road making it beautiful and distinctive.

Afton was sitting out on the porch steps and the Dort was parked out in the street in front of the house, when she looked up and saw it starting to roll down the street and heading for the ditch. Luckily Father was right there. She screamed. Father looked and then ran after it. He was able to jump in and stop it. When he had bought the car he had hoped it would help with our transportation in the cold, icy weather, but it didn't. It did not have enough power. Mother never drove it and he sold it soon after this incident.

### School

There was no kindergarten program in Bountiful when Afton started school. So she went right into the First Grade at the Stoker school which was situated just south of the Tabernacle. The old red brick building is still standing in 1995, having been renovated and reinforced inside and is currently being used as an office space for adult education in connection with the University of Utah.

Afton walked to school which was about a mile and in the cold winter Mother tried to walk part way with her and sometimes a kind neighbor would pick her up with a horse and buggy. It was a big responsibility for Mother to see that Afton got to school and back safely every day. The winters were sometimes quite cold with lots of snow drifted up over the fences. Some of the big boys took their sleighs and rode them up over fences in a bee line for school.

The little girls did not wear slacks in cold weather. Slacks were unheard of in those days. Afton wore a woolen dress, rather long--mid calf, and leggings on her legs. There were no rubber boots, only rubbers. So leggings on the legs were all the protection there was. They were made of thick heavy cloth like canvas and were black with a line of tiny buttons to be buttoned up with a button hook. Zippers were not invented yet. This was a very tedious job. It was too hard to take them off in school so they were worn all day. It was hoped there would not be any cold wet snow soak through the leggings, but it sometimes did. Afton learned to button her leggings well in the morning and to try to keep the wet snow off.

At school there was a pot-bellied stove in the corner of the room which the teacher kept feeding coal into, or wood. Some of the children who sneezed were allowed to stand near the stove to try to dry off.

School rooms had the smell of manure from the shoes of the children who walked through their barnyards, and of asafetida. Asafetida was supposed to help ward off the flu and colds. But the Richards family did not believe in it. It was a fetid gum resin of certain oriental plants and was packaged up in small bags of cloth about 1 inch square. Some children wore it tied on a string and hung around their necks. Their parents thought it would keep them healthy. Taking baths was not very easy since most people did not have hot water in their taps. The Mothers had to heat hot water in a tea kettle and pour some in a basin for them to wash in. Some mothers in the fall dressed their children in woolen underwear which was then sewed up and was not taken off until spring. That did not improve the smell of the school room any.

#### Tonsils Out

Once Mother phoned Uncle Fonse about the children's sore throats.

"It seems like one gets the sore throat and then another and then another until it's been through the family and then it starts all over.", she explained.

"I know, Nora, that's the way it is all around. There are lots of sore throats in school. That's where they pick it up. Your children need to have their tonsils out. That's where the germs breed. It would help a lot with their illnesses. Do you want me to do it?" he responded.

"You think it is the thing to do, Fonse?"

"It's the only thing, Nora. Let me drop around the next time I'm in Bountiful and take a look. How about next Tuesday?"

"All right, Fonse, we will expect to see you then.", she sighed.

Next Tuesday the three Richards girls were all waiting for Uncle Fonse to visit. "He's going to look in our throats and see our tonsils", said Afton. Helen ran to get Mother's hand mirror and looked in her mouth. I dont have anything in my mouth except my tongue and



## Birthdays

Afton's 7th birthday came. Mother made a birthday cake and invited a few of Afton's school friends to a party.

Mother always had good parties for Afton's birthdays. She bought little penny balloons which she blew up. They were a real novelty to Afton. Mother had a game where each child was given a string and he followed the string to find the end. The string was wound around in the house from room to room until finally the end appeared and on it was a spool. (Just an ordinary empty spool of thread from Mother's sewing). With that spool the child could blow bubbles. (Dip the spool into soapy water and the film stayed in the spool hole and a bubble would be blown from it.) And always there were party hats made from colored crepe paper. Vera's and my birthday parties were as much fun as Afton's with similar activities. Mother was good at planning parties.

When Afton's 8th birthday came along she was ready for baptism. She was anxious.

"Mother, what do I do in the water? How will I breathe? What dress will I wear? How will I get out of the water?" Etc. etc.

Both Father and Mother calmed her fears and explained the process to her. Although Afton did attend Religion Class held right after school on Monday and Primary on Tues. right after school, the lessons did not dwell so much on the mechanics of the baptism as on the fact that we are baptized to have our sins remitted. The teachings are much more helpful now than in that day. Afton was baptized on 2 Nov 1919 in the Bountiful Tabernacle which had a concrete font. I was allowed to go up the steps to the font with Mother and watch as Father put Afton under the water and brought her up. It was a good demonstration for Helen, but Afton had never seen it done.

## The Flu

One day in 1918 Afton woke up with a terrible headache. "My head hurts", she moaned. Mother came and felt her forehead, "Oh, what a fever you have." Mother put a cold washcloth over her forehead. Then I cried, "My head hurts, too".

"Vera seems to have a hot head, too", said Mother.

"What have you children got? Are you all sick?" Mother did her best to make 3 children comfortable. Then she phoned Uncle Fonse Tanner, the doctor.

The phone was hanging on the kitchen wall. Mother picked up the receiver and put it to her ear and turned a little crank on the side of the phone box. Then she said, "Hello, Central? I want to talk to Dr. Alfonzo Tanner in Layton." Central was the title for the girl who ran the switchboard. Central knew everything and could listen in to your calls and tell all the neighborhood gossip if she wanted to. She was always good at helping you if you forgot the exact name of the person you wanted.

"Thank you Ma'am", responded Central, "That will be on the Kaysville exchange. Here's your party, Ma'am".

"Fonse, this is Nora and we've got a sick family here. Fevers, headaches."

"I'll come as soon as I can," he replied "But I have several such cases here also."

It was almost evening before the Dr.'s car drove up the hill. After looking over the situation he said: "It's the flu, Nora. It seems to be in epidemic proportion all over the country. Nothing to do about it. Keep them warm and as comfortable as possible. Sprinkle sulphur powder in the bed. It might help. Hope you dont get it too."

For many days the Richards home looked like a hospital with all children very sick with bad headaches. Afton remembered the sulphur powder which Mother sprinkled on the bed sheets in hopes it would kill the germs. But it did not. She remembered how the blinds were drawn to keep out the bright sun which hurt her eyes. Vera remembers it, too.

"This time is my first recollection of being administered to. I remember the cool comfort of Father's hands on my hot head and the peace that followed the blessing. That is the feeling I have always had since, whenever I have been administered to. I remember, too, that the first solid food I had after that flu sickness was mashed potatoes thinned with milk, served in my hand-painted oval-shaped dish. That was a tasty meal".

As the children started to feel better Mother started to feel worse. Afton was able to get up and do a few things to help Mother. Then Father had to stay home from his school teaching job a few days as he was getting it, too. They even closed some schools so many



children and teachers were absent. The influenza pandemic of 1918 became a documented date in history when many people died of it throughout the world but the Heber Richards family survived.

### Christmas and Dolls

Christmas time was a thrilling time for us three little girls. Father went up the Bountiful canyon and came home with a bushy christmas tree. Mother made and bought a few decorations, mostly made of crepe paper. Some red paper bells were purchased and remained in the family for many years. On Christmas morning each girl found a doll sitting on the branches. That was what we wanted every Christmas-- a doll.

When we were in Chicago one Christmas Santa Claus brought us each a new doll that was remarkable to us. Afton loved her doll, so maybe this is the time to tell about it. The dolls we received in Bountiful were nice but in Chicago they were nicer. As I think back, it may have been because the stores in Chicago had fabulous toys that were not so expensive. Anyway, Afton's doll in Chicago had a china face and hands and feet. So did Vera's and mine and hair that seemed real. We cherished those dolls. And the next year when we had returned to Salt Lake, that Christmas, clever Mrs. Santa Claus had sewed a wardrobe for each of our pretty dolls. We had never seen such a wardrobe, and so neatly sewed. Vera suspects that our Aunt Lillian, (Uncle Evan Richards' wife) who lived next door from us at 168 C Street was the seamstress Santa Claus.

It is too bad we did not get to thinking about who was our benefactor seamstress sooner so we could thank her.

Another dear sweet person who loved to crochet and gave us girls some of her handwork was Aunt Katie (Katherine Hall). She was not a relative but a friend of the family, being a convert to the church from England. She visited often and bought the little girls lovely presents. She never married and thought of Heber's girls as her nieces. It is too bad that we don't realize how such good souls influenced our young lives until after they are gone and we start thinking of the wonderful things they did for us.

Patty's birth 31 Jan 1920

We Richards girls were the happiest girls ever. One morning early we were awakened by a different sound. Something unusual was going on. Some lady was walking in and out of Mother's bedroom and then someone said, "You have a new little sister. Come and see her". This was the 31 January 1920. We girls got up and went in Mother's bedroom and there was a new little baby. She was a sweet thing all bundled up. She was even cuter than the dolls. So now there were 4 little Richards girls.

Afton was 9 years old and could do a lot of things to help out. She could wash the dishes sometimes, and she could help Vera get dressed and all sorts of things. She did them willingly.

Vera remembers: "The baby was so cute that Father started calling her Patty because it seemed to fit her. Father and Mother did not choose a name for her and had a hard time settling on one. At last they decided to name her for Mother and she was christened Nora Richards. But Father kept on calling her Patty so he went to the Ward Clerk and asked him to insert the name Patricia in the record. So she was Nora Patricia Richards, called Patty, until she was a teenager and then Patt."

#### Father's New Position

One day Father came home with news. "Nora, I have been given a chance to accept a position as Professor of English at the University of Utah. It would be an increase in salary which we need. I think I must take it. Dont you?"

"Oh yes, Heber," she exclaimed. "Do take it. That is very good news. When does it start?"

"Right away."

So Father started going on the street car as early as he could in the morning after milking the cow. But when he arrived at Main Street and North Temple in Salt Lake he had to transfere to another car to get up to the University of Utah. That took at least another half hour or more. It was nip and tuck. Then coming home in the evening was much later. He soon decided that in order to hold a job at the University he must move into Salt Lake again.

Mother was glad to hear his decision. Secretly she had



been a little unhappy . Once Afton had heard Mother say to Father,

"Heber, you wanted to live in Bountiful so you could have the farm animals, and the garden, and raise the hay for the cow, but guess who it is that has the farm animals? I am the one who has to chase the pigs out of the neighbor's garden. I am the one who gathers the eggs. I am the one who goes out in the snow to the barn and gives the cow more hay. And I am the one who feeds the chickens with two little toddlers hanging on to my skirts. I am the one left alone here trying to see that the children get up and down the snowy hill to school each winter day. I am the one who is supposed to be enjoying the farm." And Mother laughed heartily. Mother had a way of making rye jokes. Mother and Father both laughed about it. Afton knew Mother was not really complaining but she felt that Father was not the one who was enjoying farm life.

When Patty was about 5 months old Mother suddenly had pains in her stomach. She phoned Uncle Fonse and he came right out in the middle of the night and after examination he said,

"Nora, you have appendicitis. You had better be in the hospital."

Fonse always did his operations in the Dee Hospital in Ogden. Father bundled her up and Uncle Fonse took her in his car to the hospital. Next day he came back with Aunt Persis and Grandma Richards and told the girls that Mother was having an appendix operation. Afton very much felt the responsibility of the situation. She was helpful to show Aunt Persis where we kept things in the kitchen and to do anything she could to help. I did not go to school that day, neither did Afton.

One day soon after that Father came with a car and put all of us children in it and Aunt Persis and Grandma Lula Richards and drove us all to Salt Lake. Luckily there was no flat tire that day. We all arrived at 164 C Street which happened to not be rented at that time. This was where Aunt Persis and Grandma Richards were living, and there were beds fixed up for us 4 little girls.

After a few days Father came again with boxes of household goods from the Bountiful house and then the furniture. Father was good to help unpack many items and helped Aunt Persis get the family settled into 164 C Street. Later it was decided to move to the other side of the double house and they lived in 166 while Grandma and Aunt Persis lived in the 164 side.

Grandma Richards, and Aunt Persis Richards

Grandma and Aunt Persis used to live in the big house just south of Heber's on the corner of C Street and Third Ave. (305 3rd Ave). It was the house that Grandpa Levi Willard Richards had had built where he and Lula raised their family and where Heber had lived until his marriage. But when Levi died in 1914 his two wives, Lula and Persis, decided to sell the big house. It was sold to the brother of Nora Noall, Matthew Frederick Noall who married Claire Wilcox. He used the main floor for his family to live in and converted the upstairs into apartments.

For a few years Grandma and Aunt Persis lived in Heber's double house and then in an apartment house on Main Street above South Temple called the Bodell Apts. Later they lived in an upstairs apartment in the big house, 305 3rd Ave.

Grandma and Aunt Persis were wonderful to us children and told us stories about the Bible and we girls loved it. We all waited patiently for Mother to return from the hospital. We stayed home and waited. Afton was a good help to Aunt Persis. Vera and I tried to be. Aunt Persis tried to keep meals on schedule and was good and motherly in spite of her painful arthritis and allergies. She could not put her hands in water because of eczema. This was a trial for her. But finally Mother was brought home after about 2 weeks.

She had to go right to bed. She usually wore her long brown hair up in a bun on top of her head but being in bed she let it down over her shoulders. When baby Patty saw her she was afraid and cried and held out her hands for Afton.

"Oh, the poor little thing," exclaimed Mother. "She's afraid of me. She doesn't know me with my hair down". Also, it had been at least two weeks that Mother had been gone and Patty had forgotten her. But Patty soon remembered and we were all so happy to have Mother with us again.

Mother recovered all right in time. After a while the house was straightened around after the move from Bountiful and Mother could find where things were. Ever after, if she couldn't find something she would make a joke out of it, like, "Oh it's lost between here and Bountiful in the move".



Afton and I both were enrolled in the Longfellow school on E Street and Third Ave for the spring of 1920. Helen was still in 1st grade and Afton in 4th.

Living in Salt Lake was not like rural Bountiful. The roads had asphalt, there were concrete sidewalks, and now, in 1920, there were autos on the streets. There was a good streetcar system. A person could take a streetcar on E Street and ride downtown to Main and South Temple for 5 cents. However the Richards family usually walked.

#### Chicago as Helen Remembers It

Mother and Father discussed their situation. "Since my move to teaching at the University I need to have a Master's Degree, Nora. I think the best thing is to get right into it, right away."

"So do I, Heber," she responded. "Which university do you think you should go to?"

"I'm thinking of the University of Chicago. This next fall would be the time to do it".

So arrangement were made. Father made arrangements to go ahead of the family and find an apartment for us and then we would come on the train. Just about the time the family was supposed to leave Salt Lake it was discovered that I had been exposed to whooping cough. The city health officer came to our house and put a quarantine on the family. No one could go in or out for several days until it was determined that I did not have the disease. Mother was dismayed.

Mother was busy planning the trip. She sewed each girl a new kimona for night wear. There was a pocket in the sleeve where a toothbrush, and a comb could be carried. The trip would be two whole days and 3 nights on the train. We would sleep in a Pullman sleeping car with upper and lower births. My, how excited we girls were! I wanted an upper birth.

We girls had seen the huge "Choo-choo" trains each time we visited the Tanners in Layton. The train ran across the Layton road and was not more than a block away from the Tanner backyard. When walking uptown to the little store in Layton we children had often waited for the train to pass before crossing the tracks. As the big engine came puffing along belching smoke and steam it was a scary sight. It was so noisy and awesome it shook the ground as it rumbled along. Its big wheels were higher than Afton's head. And just to think that now we

were going to ride on a train was almost too exciting.

Mother went ahead and made all preparations for the trip since I did not seem to be getting sick. Maybe it was a little cold I had, but it did not seem to be whooping cough. I had my 7th birthday party with just my sisters, Grandma and Aunt Persis, and my cousins who lived next door. It was a good birthday party. Uncle Evan Richards, Father's brother, and Aunt Lillian and their children, Lynn and Charles, lived next door to the north. Lynn and Charles played constantly with the girls. They would have been as much exposed to whooping cough as I right from the start.

As soon as the quarantine ban was lifted Mother's trunk and suitcases were packed and our family left on the train. Uncle Matthew Noall took us in his car down to the train station to see us off. What a thrilling experience that was for the girls. Mother said she did not know what she would have done without Afton. Afton was a peacemaker and an excellent Big Sister all the time.

The trip was without any unhappy incident. But two whole days on a train keeping three little girls occupied and a baby happy was a trial. Mother was so relieved to find Heber at the station in Chicago waiting for us. He took us by taxi to our new apartment home, 5622 Ellis Avenue. We girls could remember the address because it rhymed. It was near the University.

#### The Apartment in Chicago

The apartment was across the street from a sizeable stadium in which the University's games took place. None of the family ever went to any of the games but just heard the noise. Bands were playing, people yelling and cheering and lots of commotion. The walls of the stadium were tall and thick and on top were banners floating in the breeze. After a game there was lots of debris on the sidewalk like corsages and banners. We children did not know what all the shouting was about and didn't care. There were not very many cars. Most people used public transportation.

Our apartment house was a very substantial building with thick walls and double windows and doors. We found out why when winter came. Chicago is called the "windy" city and it really is very cold and windy. We children had to walk the length of the stadium block to our school and the wind blew from Lake Michigan and was so stiff it almost picked us up. We fairly floated on the wind as we walked along. One time there was a big wind storm that blew down trees. As we girls were walking



to school we found one laying across our sidewalk--too big for us to climb over without help. So Afton led the way around one end of the tree so we could get to school.

We had a bedroom with a bay window facing the front of the apartment. That room was for our parents and Patty. Then there was a hall and a bathroom and another bedroom which Heber had rented to a single fellow student. He rose early, ate out, and returned late. Then there was a very large kitchen. Besides the kitchen table there was a double bed in it for Afton and Vera, and I chose to sleep on a bed made on top of a trunk. Then there was a front room with a table and a fireplace and a mantel shelf and a mirror (which was the current style).

When making up the beds the first time we found that we did not have quite enough pillows. Father took a pillow case and stuffed some rags or towels in it.

"Who wants the lumpy pillow?", he asked. I didn't hear it quite right and yelled, "I want the monkey pillow". So for our time in Chicago I slept on the lumpy or monkey pillow, and loved it.

Afton was impressed by the wide sidewalk outside and the numerous people who strolled by. There were trees, too, and also squirrels. We girls found out that this was squirrel country. Sometimes when Father stood quite still he could coax a squirrel to come and take an acorn out of his hand.

Afton thought, "No wonder that it talks about squirrels in the reading books in school".

Also, occasionally an organ grinder, that is, a man with a small organ on a strap slung over his shoulder and a monkey sitting on his arm would come by. The man would stop and grind his organ, that is he turned a crank in the side of it, and it played music. Then the monkey would jump down on the sidewalk and do a little dance to the music. The monkey would take off his little cap and pass it around begging for money in it. The little monkey was dressed in a jacket and hat and was well trained. The organ grinder man earned his living this way. When the monkey found that we did not put money in his hat he did not stop many more times right by our apartment. But in this populated area there were often organ grinders roaming the streets.

We had a substantial wicker buggy for Patty to ride in as Mother pushed her down two big blocks to the shopping district. We other children hung onto the sides of the buggy as we crossed the busy streets. The policemen yelled, "Step lively, please", to get us across the

street in time. Traffic moved right along in Chicago. The shopping district had surface street cars and an elevated train which ran on a platform up above the street. There was a Woolworth store there that we children loved to visit, full of toys and small necessities. Helen remembers the celuloid fish she bought to float in the bath tub. It only cost 5 cents. Afton saved her pennies for combs and hair ribbons. (This was before the days of plastic). Vera remembers we bought tortoise shell combs for our hair. Mine was a circle comb. They were very cheap.

Our Chicago apartment was basically dirty as were all walls and homes all over the country which were heated by coal heat. There was no such thing as gas, I believe. The walls always were dirty in the spring from the coal dust of the winter stove. That was the common thing. Evidently, no one thought to clean them when they vacated an apartment.

Mother did not like dirty places and she bought some wallpaper cleaner, which is something like modeling clay which you rub on the wall and it takes the dirt off. After cleaning the walls she let us have what was left over to play with. She found that if we wrote on the kitchen wall with white chalk, it could be easily cleaned off again with a wet cloth. So we were allowed to write on the walls. We drew dolls, and wrote words and then erased them.

Mother did not like the cockroaches of which there were many. The backyard of the apartment was a dirty, unkempt place with junk piles. But sometimes we played there anyway. There were about 5 stories to the apartment house and we were glad we were on the first floor.

I remember one day after school when Mother put Patty in the buggy and we all walked about 3 big blocks to Washington Park. It was a grand place to play with swings, teeters, and sand piles. Also there was a midway which was a big grassy place where children could just run. It had small hills to run up and down.

Washington Park also had statues, ornamental fountains, flower beds, a green-house, etc.

We girls were all swinging and Mother was watching us and Patty was about 1 year and was sitting by the sand, and somehow a swing hit Patty, knocking her down. Afton saw her first. She yelled to Mother who ran and picked up Patty. She had a cut on her forehead which was bleeding profusely quite a bit. Mother took a clean diaper and wrapped around her head.

"Afton, how did school go?"

"I dont know anyone in my class yet. But the girl that sat in front of me was nice and talked to me when we went out to recess. I guess school is all right".

"And how did you get along, Helen?"

"All right, I guess. I dont know what the teacher means when she says we have to write our names. I never learned to do that."

Mother piped up, "I think I will wheel the baby over there in the morning and talk to the teachers and see how the children are fitting in."

"Good idea, Nora", responded Father.

Next morning I noticed Mother walking down the school hall with Patty. She went in the kindergarten room. Later she came in my room just as the teacher was having some of the children stand and do some reading out of their books.

"I am Helen Richards' Mother," announced Mother.

"Oh, yes, she's the new girl that just came in", said the teacher. "Helen, you may stand and read the next paragraph."

I stood and found the right page but I had never heard of a paragraph before. I read a couple of words. Then the teacher had to tell me what the next word was, and the next word, and the next word. Mother was listening intently. Then the teacher turned to Mother.

"Of course it is difficult for a child when she is moved from one school to another. Helen will have to work very hard."

Then the teacher turned to other business and Mother left the room. Later that day Helen's teacher said, "Our 2nd grade class is too large. We will have to divide it. These children will stand" and she read off a list of names, one of which was Helen Richards. "Now you march downstairs to room 2B. and Miss Delahontey will be your teacher. " (To me it was Dela honey).

I went with the others and found a seat in room 2B. Miss Delahontey came in and announced. "You are a bunch of dumbells. Now you take your books home tonight and work on your reading and be able to read the first page tomorrow. And, Helen, you work on your writing"

I sat, dumbfounded. In Bountiful where there was no



kindergarten, she had never been taught in first grade to write or even make her letters. Evidently it was different in Chicago. Most of the children seemed to know something about writing. I was told to take my reading book home and remember to bring it again next day. It was a 2nd grade reader, and the stories were Greek Myths, with the names of the Greek Gods and Goddesses, which were even hard for Mother to read and pronounce. So this was to be my first reading book.

At home Father said that night, "Helen, I want you to go and tell your teacher that where you came from you were not taught to write. So you need to learn from the beginning."

I was too bashful to tell Father I did not dare talk to my teacher. I was scared to talk to strangers. And I never did. But I worked hard on my reading, though I did not understand what the Greek Myths were all about. And Father gave me lessons in writing. Every night he would teach me to write a new letter of the alphabet. So I gradually learned cursive writing by myself after school, practicing by writing on the kitchen wall with chalk. I liked to write, and wrote a little letter to Grandma Richards. In those days the schools did not teach printing but started the children out with cursive writing.

I overheard Mother and Father talking about Vera. "The teacher sent a note home saying she wanted to talk to me about Vera. I'll walk over there tomorrow."

Later the next day Mother said, "Vera's teacher is very fine. When I told her that Vera's problem was just that she is a little awkward and doesn't mean to stumble against another person, and she is naturally a slow child, and she'll have to learn to do things a little faster, she understood."

"Good", said Father. "A child has to have time to grow up. The Richardses are naturally a little slow and clumsy sometimes. But they mean well. Vera is a fine child and will do well in the end."

It turned out that the kindergarten teacher was very interested in Vera and encouraged her. When she left kindergarten at the end of the year she gave Vera a box of plastecine modeling clay to take with her on the train ride home to Utah. She even wrote letters to Vera for several years after the Chicago experience and sent an Easter present that Vera never forgot about and a book that Vera still has.

Riding the Elevated to Church

When the Richards family went to Church on Sunday they rode the streetcar to a certain point near the shore of Lake Michigan and there they climbed a long flight of steps up in the air to a platform where the Elevated Train stopped. People called it the "El". It was not like the noisy Choo-choo train, but ran along by electricity lightly and smoothly and rapidly. As the children climbed aboard the conductor yelled, "Step lively please". The train travelled on the elevated track over the heads of the busy streets below. The children watched out the windows near their seats.

"Look, there's the lady's laundry hanging up in the sky. If it blew off the line it would float down on a car. Wouldn't that be funny?" and they laughed.

"Oh, look at that cat sitting on the windowsill. I hope he doesn't fall. He'd be killed. Look at that flower box, full of white flowers. Nobody could see those except us on the train."

"Look at that man way up there on top of the roof painting a sign. Dont people get dizzy living up here so high? Think of all the stairs they have to climb," Afton remarked. Elevators were not too common.

The train went close to the shore of Lake Michigan. The girls could see some boats out on the Lake. Soon the ride was over. "We get off at the next stop", said Father.

"Step lively please", said the conductor, and the family got off at a station. They had to go down steep steps to the sidewalk below. Afton held my hand and the railing. Father carried Patty, and Mother held onto Vera.

Down on the sidewalk we walked about 2 blocks and came to some kind of a rented hall, such as the Knights of Columbus, where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints meetings were held. As I remember it was the Logan Branch. It was a small branch, maybe about 100 people.

I remember when Patty was 1 year old. When we went to Sunday School Mother was invited to have little Patty stand up in front of the little congregation and sing her "A,B,C," song. Patty was a precocious child and had been singing A,B,C's for a while and some members of the Branch knew she could do it. She was not afraid but stood up and smiled sweetly and gave a good rendition. We were proud of our baby, even though it may not have been a very appropriate Sunday song. She was a cute tittle show-off but she didn't realize it.

Father and Mother made friends of the missionaries and some students who were at the University studying for their advanced degrees without their families. I remember they were from Utah. Once Mother invited three of them to go home with us and have dinner in our humble apartment. There were Elders Labrum and Garrick, and a student, Jim Miner. They were not very young but might have been about the age of Father and Mother. After our dinner we all walked to the University Campus and posed while Father took a picture of us.

For little girls hair ribbons were in style with big bows. Afton was 10 years old now and she liked to wear them. Mother used to dress us up either with a big bow ribbon or a hat on our heads. Those were the days of hats. Children all wore them. When a child was invited to a birthday party her hat was as important as her party dress.

Mother made some of the hats we wore and they were very well done and in fashion though they might be thought of today as peculiar. Mother kept her girls very much in style and well dressed and she became an excellent seamstress. Besides dresses she made us capes and coats. We were as well dressed as anyone. Mother missed her sewing machine that winter in Chicago.

One Sunday we children were with our parents in Washington Park in the sunny afternoon in early May. We ran on the green grass of the Midway, up and down the little hills and around the bushes. Finally we were all tired and sweaty from the exertion and we lay down on the cool grass. It felt so good. Probably we lay there too long. Mother and Father were with us and finally they said, "Come now it's time to go home". And we all did, skipping along on the sidewalk in a happy way while Patty rode in the buggy.

When we got home Afton started coughing. At supper she did not want to eat. Mother felt her head. She had a fever. That night Afton was really sick and the next day Mother called a doctor. Vera and I went to school as usual and at supper time Mother told us Afton had pneumonia. Afton was very sick in bed. Vera and I had to play quietly and not bump Afton's bed because she had a headache. We went alone to school every day and missed Afton. Mother tended Afton at home. In a couple of weeks we were supposed to take the train to go home to Salt Lake. Afton's headache got better and her fever went down but she still had to lie in bed.

Father said, "I dont know, Nora, whether we can take Afton on that long trip yet. She's some better, but



we'll just wait and see". Mother was anxious to get home to Salt Lake and have Fonse's opinion on Afton's condition.

We all remembered Afton in the family prayer each night. Then once the Doctor came and said, "I guess she can travel, but you will need to get a roomette on the train so she can be lying down in a bed all the way." Father agreed.

The next day Mother felt she had so many things to do she did not have time to go to school to talk to Afton's teacher, and we did not have a telephone.

She said, "Helen, you will have to go and talk to Afton's teacher for me and tell her that Afton will not be coming to school any more. She has pneumonia. And bring home her pencil box and anything else in her desk."

I remember how petrified I was to have to talk to a teacher,--something I had never done. And yet, I felt I had an important message to tell. I worried all night about it. But next day I marched right up to Afton's room and to the teacher. All the children were in their seats and quiet and my scared voice said, "Afton Richards wont be coming to school any more. She has-----, well, I cant think what she has but she's sick. It starts with an "n". The teacher nodded and Helen escaped back out of the room. She forgot about the pencil box and was glad to just retreat. It was not for a few years that she found out that pneumonia starts with a "p". And Afton didn't seem to miss her pencil box.

The train ride home was pleasant and Mother was glad Father was with us. Afton was in her bed all day and was comfortable. She could lie there and plan what she wanted to do for her 11th birthday in Sept. Mother and Father took turns walking Patty up and down the aisles for recreation. Little Patty was a toddler and wanted to walk always. So both parents were busy keeping the family happy. Father drew us pictures and told us stories, Vera's plastaceine helped a lot. Father could make animals and have the children guess what they were. The time passed quickly. Finally we arrived in Salt Lake City and were glad to be home. After a while Uncle Fonse pronounced that Afton was all better from her pneumonia. We were all glad. Our Chicago experience was over.

Salt Lake City, 1921--1924

It was good to be in our own house and not have to think

about Chicago wind. We could play out in front of our house on the sidewalk, and next door in Uncle Evan's yard with Lynn and Charles. Afton did not play as much as Vera and I but would sit on the front porch steps and watch us play or bounce a ball. Fatty ran up and down and finally learned not to run out in the street. We all played jump the rope, and jacks, and hop-scotch.

This was before the time of radio and television, but I think we did have a phone. And now we were very much city girls. Salt Lake now had more and more automobiles, and asphalt roads. But the road from Salt Lake to Layton was a two-lane one for many years to come and had many accidents on it.

The Richards family had moved back into 166 C Street. It was decided that Grandma Richards and Aunt Persis would live in the front bedroom upstairs and our family live in the rest of that double house. Then Father rented 164 C Street to someone else.

#### Short Hair

This was about 1922 and it was the time when women were cutting their hair. All through history women had worn long hair, but now came the era of short hair because the curling irons had been invented. The irons had to be heated over the stove and were not very easy to use. They were not electric.

"Heber, what would you think if I cut my hair?" asked Nora.

"Do you want to?"

"It would not be so heavy on my head. Sometimes my head aches from the weight of it, especially in the hot summer. And it would be easier to wash. Short hair is becoming fashionable."

"Well, whatever you want. It is all right with me, Nora".

I remember once about that time when I was sleeping upstairs in the back bedroom, or was it out on the back porch which was screened in. I could not help but overhear what was being said next door at 164 C Street by the people renting that half. It sounded like a teenage girl had just cut her own long hair and her mother was very upset by it.

"How could you do such a thing." cried her mother. "All

the years you have had such lovely hair. How could you ruin your looks like that by cutting your hair. You did not even ask permission. Just wait till your father sees you. Oh, I wish you never had been born." And the mother cried and screamed.

I thought how differently cutting hair had been thought of in the house where I was living. It sounded like that screaming mother did not love her daughter very much. We were allowed to have our hair short or long and there was no trouble about that.

Sometime that year when Mother got around to it she did cut off her heavy hair and it lightened her load a few pounds. She had the cut off hair made into a switch which Vera sometimes borrowed to make herself a bob on her head when she wanted to look grown up. From then on some of us girls had times when we wanted Mother to curl our hair with the curling irons. We tried it but it took too long.

#### School and Church

When fall came Afton went to the 5th grade and I the 3rd and Vera the 1st in the Lowell School on E Street and 3rd Ave. The starting of school was not such a dramatic change as it had been to start in Chicago.

One day Afton was talking about her English class.

"We are learning about nouns, pronouns, and verbs," she announced at the supper table. "A noun is the name of something, And a verb\_\_\_\_"

"Dont tell me what a verb is," retorted Helen who was a little jealous of Afton's superior knowledge. "I know what a verb is."

"What is it then?"

"Well, I'll make one and show you", retorted Helen, thinking fast.

After dinner Helen went to the rag bag and got out some old sheeting and made a verb. Mother had taught Afton and me to use the treadle sewing machine and I had made my first dress at age 9. I now sewed up a verb and displayed it to the family.

"See, this is a verb." I said holding it up. "It is about 2 feet long. It is a big, fat, animal which sits on a low limb of a tree. It has fur on its body and a long tail", And I displayed its tail which was long and



narrow and hung down. The body of the verb was stuffed with cotton and so was its tail. "It sits over a bench where people might sit and it tickles them with its tail and makes them get up and work."

Father laughed heartily and said, "Helen has a Chinese imagination."

Often on a Sunday afternoon Grandma Richards would say, "Who wants to walk down to meeting with me to the Salt Lake Tabernacle ? "

Sometimes we did. We had been to our 20th Ward Sunday School in the morning. Anyone was welcome to go to a meeting in the Tabernacle. We would walk down 3rd Ave. down the very steep hill down to State Street, then over to Main along the edge of the stream which ran down the middle of Main Street east of the temple. The Tabernacle was usually about one-fourth full. I think they passed the sacrament at that meeting which was held every Sunday at 2 pm.

It was an experience for us girls to walk downtown with Grandma. Everybody knew her, it seemed.

She would say, "These are my granddaughters, Afton, Vera, and Helen. Now girls I want you to remember you have met (so and so)."

President Heber J. Grant was one of her friends. He wore a tall black silk hat sometimes. All the general authorities were her friends and knew her. I have forgotten all of them but they were all important people in the Church. Maybe Sister Zina Card was one, and Sister Ellis Shipp was another. She had become a doctor in the late 19th Century. We sang songs out of the Church song book containing several hymns to which Grandma had written the words.

#### Helen's Baptism

When I was 8 years old I was baptized in the font in the basement of the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Temple Square and about 2 years later, Vera was also baptized in the same place. Right now I don't remember where Patty and DeEtte were baptized.

#### Family Activity

Often on Sunday afternoon Uncle Lee and Aunt Mary Jane

Richards walked up to visit us with their 2 children, Horace, and Mary Louise. They lived about 3 blocks east of State Street in an old house which used to belong to the Eldredges, Aunt Mary Jane's parents. Uncle Lee had his art studio with his residence. In later years he rented a studio room in a downtown office building.

The Church told us we should have a year's food stored. I kept saying to Mother. "How about a year's supply?" Father said, "We ought to buy some beans." It seemed I was a little worry wort right from the beginning. I was the one who brought up the subject each time. Also the Church said we should have Home Evenings. So we did. We had these Home Evenings in Chicago, too.

Our Home Evening was when Father said, "I will read you a story", and Mother cooked some divinity candy while he was reading. We girls were taught to do some cross stitch embroidering while listening to the story. We all loved these Home Evenings. Father read to us from Kiplings' "Just So Stories" and other good books. If Patty was not old enough to listen, she just danced around in the middle of the room. That is what she liked to do. She was quiet but so active on her feet that Mother wondered if she had St. Vitus's dance disease. But she didn't.

#### Swimming

Another thing we did was go swimming together. Father liked to take us to Beck's Hot Springs, which was on the way to Bountiful. We rode the streetcar which took us right to the Springs pool. There, there was a shallow pool for children, and a larger one for adults. The hot mineral water bubbled up through a pipe from the earth. It was very relaxing to bathe in it and play. After a good time we had cinnamon rolls out of Mother's sack to eat on the streetcar going home.

Sometimes we went to Wasatch Springs which was a little closer to the city but on the same streetcar track. It had a much nicer building but was not considered quite as sanitary as Becks, but they were both good. Wasatch Springs is now made over into the Children's Museum, but Becks has entirely disappeared.

Sometimes the family went to Saltair. We took the streetcar down to the Saltair station someplace on the western edge of Salt Lake City, and there we boarded the Saltair train. It was a train with many cars and could carry loads of people. The cars were all open with long steps on each side of the car so it could be quickly filled or emptied with passengers. We sat in the breeze as the car moved. The train was electric, I think, and

took us to Saltair, a resort built out over the Lake. There was a huge dance floor that was famous, and a pavillion of picnic tables. There were concessions, and a couple of Roller Coasters. The train fare transportation was not too excessive and we went there often in the summer. We usually carried our picnic with us. We did not spend money on the concessions but usually we did go in the water. There was no real swimming in the Salt Lake. You wouldn't want to swim\_\_\_ just float in it very carefully so you didn't get a drop of salt water in your eye. When we were older we liked to go there and float in the warm moonlight in the summer. In the evening, at sunset time, there would be swarms of little gnats that we found annoying.

### Hikes

Also for family activity we went on hikes. Heber loved to hike and so did Mother. They bought us girls boots and coveralls or knickers for hiking. Often we started from up on top of the hill above C Street and hiked down the road into City Creek Canyon. Then we followed the winding canyon road up to the top of the canyon. We girls, Afton, Vera, and I loved to do this. Father and Mother carried our lunch in knapsacks on their backs. A knapsack was like a modern backpack, (without zippers and made of canvas or leather) and was what soldiers used in World War 1.

As we walked along like soldiers in step we sang, "A veevo, a vivo, a veevo, vivo vum. Kelly get a rat trap, bigger than a cat trap. Kelly get a rat trap, bigger than a drum." This was a song Father knew.

If we heard a car coming around the corner everyone yelled "Creek side!". And we all moved out of the road over to the creek edge so the car would miss us. Cars did not come much and when they did they were slow and noisy so we could hear them.

One time we did a big hike to Black Mountain. It stands behind most of the hills at the north-east part of Salt Lake Valley. and Father had been there before. This time Vera did not go. Father even wondered if I could make it. Afton was sure she could. I was 8 and Afton 11. Mother went, leaving Vera and Patty home with Aunt Persis and Grandma .

We left early about 7 o'clock and went to the top ridge of hills and walked along east, then down behind those mountains and up another mountain. Father said he was following a trail, but Nora wasn't sure she saw a trail. It was dry yellow weeds most of the way.

Finally we came to Black Mountain and started up. We met a couple of shepherds on the way and a few sheep. It was a steep climb and we scrambled on all fours part of the way until we came up to beautiful pine trees on the top slope.

Father was very happy. He had attained his goal. It was chilly there because it still had a little snow on the ground. We melted some snow to drink. We were hungry. Father made a bonfire and Mother took out of her pack a quart bottle of beef stew she had made. She had tin plates. We warmed it and ate it. There is nothing so delicious as beef stew on Black Mountain. I think when I remember that day how heavy Mother's pack must have been with a glass quart bottle of stew in it and tin plates. But she never complained.

Helen was looking for the bears, hoping they were not there. Father kept saying, "They don't want to meet you either. They are in their dens". We never saw any. Afton didn't seem worried about bears but was a good hiker and enjoyed the day. Going home Father carried Helen on his back much of the way, but Afton just plodded along without a murmur.

#### Moving to 783 3rd Ave.

We often spent some time Sunday afternoons walking as a family up and down the avenues looking at houses. Father said,

"Our family is too large to stay in our double house. We need a larger house. Let's look for one we would like to buy".

We girls had fun talking about houses and what kind we liked. There were several empty houses that were possibilities. Some of them were not locked up and we were able to go in and look around. We ran around in the empty rooms, climbed to the upstairs and the attic and down to the basement. They all had basements. Hardly any had a garage. Most of them had bathrooms and plumbing.

Mother's criteria for choosing a house were, "I want a house located on a streetcar line so the girls will have adequate transportation."

Father's idea was, "I want to be a little closer to the University so it is possible to walk to it."

And they both agreed it had to be in their price range.



The family walked up and down 3rd Avenue mainly, because it had a streetcar line on it. There were several houses to look at there. We all seemed to like a certain house at 783 3rd Ave. It was yellow brick and located on the north side of 3rd avenue. It was 10 small blocks or 5 regular city blocks closer to the University than our C Street house was.

One day Father came home from school and announced. "We can buy that house on third avenue near M Street"

"Oh, do you mean 783?", asked Mother "Can we afford it?"

"I think we can. I'm going to drop in at the Real Estate Office on my way home tomorrow and double check it", responded Father.

The papers were finally signed about 1923 or 1924 and the Richards family moved to a new home at 783 3rd Ave. We moved near the end of the school year and we girls had to walk 8 blocks to E Street to school to finish out the year. Afton and I couldn't wait for slow Vera, so Vera had to run to school by herself and was late 7 times in one month.

The next school year Afton attended the Bryant Jr. High and Vera and I the Longfellow School and we became members of the 21st Ward.

Once I had an invitation to a birthday party so Mother bought me a new hat to wear. Mother took a picture of us girls with her little Brownie camera, which was about the first snap shot we have of our house. We are glad for Mother and her camera, so we can see parts of our lives.

Mother and Father both worked to improve the property on the lot. Father had a garage built, since he sensed that the family might need to buy a car, and he also had a swing for the children put in the back yard. Both Mother and Father worked hard to make a lawn grow. They had soil hauled in and tended the new lawn carefully till it was established. Mother planted roses and cosmos and flags. Father repaired the porch, and on Arbor Day he planted 4 fruit trees--one for each daughter. The 2 peach trees fell victim to the peach borer and the apple tree died after some time, but the cherry tree bore good Lambert cherries till we girls were grown. Everyone was happy.

Afton was happy to have a room with her own dresser in it. Patty shared the room with her and she was a good big sister to teach Patty how to keep her clothes neat.

We had a record player that would play records when you wound it up by hand. On Saturday sometimes I would wash my hair and go out in the sun in the weedy back yard to dry it. I took the record player out and played records over and over. Probably the neighbors did not enjoy it. There was no such thing as stereo. It was not that loud. Some of the records were:

"When you're all alone,  
Any old time and you're feeling out of tune;  
Put on your hat, put out the cat,  
Get out and get under the noon".

or "The Hall of the Mountain King" from the Peer Gynt Suite, by Grieg. I would sing, "Let him go, let him go, let him go", to the music and my enthusiastic performance would keep DeEtte laughing.

I was very obsessed with airplanes. Charles Lindberg had just made the first ever solo flight across the Atlantic ocean. To me he seemed a hero. And to all America he became famous. Airplanes were still a great novelty and whenever a big trimotor plane flew over our house in Palo Alto headed for the San Francisco airport I would yell, "It's a trimotor" and run out into the backyard to watch it. Afton would say, "There goes Helen again".

At home, I was noisy, but out in company I was very silent and timid. Afton was more mature and had an even personality. In company she could help with nice conversation, but she was not pushy. At home she was not too noisy but held her own in family conversation. Vera was also of a moderate nature with a good rounded-out personality, always interested in the other person's point of view.

Afton used to say, "Helen makes us all laugh".

I got to reading the Waverly Novels by Sir Walter Scott, and I went around the house loudly spouting bits of language from Queen Elizabeth or some other royal person. Once I gave names to each member of the family from characters out of a book. Father was El Hakim, Afton was Alasco, DeEtte was Fibbo, and I was Your Royal Highness, and so forth. I talked in a lingo of royalty that made everyone laugh. Even Father seemed to enjoy it.

Patty was our little dancer. She was always dancing in the center of the room. She always was very pretty. As a baby and a toddler people would stop on the street as

our family walked along to admire her. "What a beautiful little girl", they would exclaim.

Now she was about in 2nd grade and was interested in reading words and read them off the labels of cans in the cupboard or on the milk bottles. She loved to entertain DeEtte with her dolls.

We girls had fun together, and sometimes we quarreled over whose turn it was to wash the dishes or to dry the dishes, or clean out the bath tub and so forth. We were a normal family. We always had our morning prayer and tried to eat breakfast together. But we did not read scriptures the way the Church teaches us to do now. Father once told us if we would read the Book of Mormon through he would give us a quarter. So I did it, even though I did not understand some of the words. I did it for the quarter when I was 9 years old.

#### Back to Salt Lake --End of Summer, 1928

At the end of the summer we packed up again and climbed into the buzz wagon and made the trip back to Salt Lake. This time we traveled the southern route over the Mohave Desert. Mother thought we should experience all the geography we could. Father's church friend, Benjamin Franklin Cummings was going to go to Needles, to visit his Mother, so he accompanied us for part of the trip in his car.

It was extremely hot. At one point we had a flat tire and Frank Cummings stopped with us and helped to change it, which Father greatly appreciated in the heat. Then we left him at the turn off point to Needles and continued our journey alone.

We hardly saw another car all the way. We had bottles of water but when the engine of the Reo sprang a leak we had to carefully ration our water between us and the Reo.

There were a few gas stations along the road but not enough. And there was no station or garage to fix a leaky radiator. At one of them the attendant there said the best way to take care of a leak in the radiator was to pour a raw egg in it and it would find the leak and be cooked at that point which would clog up the leak. Father did not go along with that theory.

At another gas station Father said, "Do you have any really cold water we can drink? We are all so thirsty and hot." The attendant gave Father some ice water which seemed too wonderful to be true. And Father

drank copiously which was a mistake. Later, Mother told us if you are very hot you should not drink ice water, or only sip a little.

Father became very sick with pains in his stomach. There was no shade anywhere, no other buildings on the horizon, no houses, no trees, nothing but heat and this little gas station shack. Father was too sick to drive. Finally he said,

"We've got to keep going. Afton, you can drive. Take it easy and go slowly but keep us moving."

We made him as much room as possible in the back seat by doubling up and Afton put on her leather gloves and eagerly took the wheel. She did very well and enjoyed it. It was a straight road for a ways and then there were dugways going down into valleys and coming up the other side. Afton was confident and took it all in stride and did not let the heat bother her. When Father got to feeling a little better he sat up by her in the front seat. He gave her instructions as we crawled along.

"Don't ride the clutch. Keep it in low over these big bumps. Now let it go into high. Try to put the clutch down a little sooner when you shift. Be sure and try to keep in the ruts better. It's too hard on the tires".

We scarcely saw another car the whole day. Later he said,

"Now the radiator seems almost empty. Stop the car. I'll give it some more water".

As Father emptied the bottle of water into the radiator Mother said,

"Now that is our last drop of water. There is no more. Surely we are just about to a town".

We were all secretly praying that the radiator could hold enough water till we arrived at some town that was big enough to have a real garage or something to get our leaky radiator fixed. And we did. We were able to find a garage that could help it some, and it looked like we had crossed the hottest part of the desolate desert.

From then on Father let Afton do most of the driving until we reached the towns with more traffic. But still she was his good relief driver. She enjoyed it and learned to handle the buzz wagon well. In fact I well remember the time she really saved the buzz wagon.



We had stopped for a rest stop and the car was parked on a river bank with its nose pointed toward the river. We were all out and walking by the river. Suddenly Afton yelled and ran for the car. It was rolling toward the river. She jumped over the door and landed in the front seat and put her foot on the brake in the nick of time, just as the wheels were entering the river. Father ran to the front of the car. Then he pushed and coached Afton as she put it in reverse, revved up the motor and backed it up. We girls also pushed to make sure it did not slip into the water.

Father remarked, "Afton, you saved the day. What would we do without you".

Mother said: "I always thought I would learn to drive when we had a car, but now we have an alert driver like Afton I won't even think about it any more. I never could have jumped in the way you did."

Father had tried to teach her how to drive in Bountiful but she was too nervous about it. She tried again in Palo Alto and she did drive a little bit but gave it up after she accidentally drove up the front porch steps one day. The clutch was hard for her to master.

#### Afton's High School Graduation

The L.D.S. High School held its graduation ceremonies in the Salt Lake Tabernacle in those days. This was the same High School where Father and Mother had gone, and where Father had been a teacher prior to the University. It was impressive to see Afton walk down the middle carpeted aisle and up the steps to the big podium to receive her diploma. She wore her fashionable rose-colored chiffon dress with a full skirt that was styled to be way longer in the back than in the front and had free-floating panels that waved and fluttered as she walked. They did not use caps and gowns for high school ceremonies as they do now. The girls were in their pretty party dresses. We were proud that Afton was our sister and thought she looked beautiful.

During Afton's high school years she came home one day and said her teacher, Brother Moss, when he met her, said, "I remember your Father and your Mother when we were all students here. You could just tell they were made for each other".

It was reassuring to hear that about our parents. It was always nice to meet teachers who had been friends or students of Father in earlier days. Brother Moss was known to Father and Mother as Jimmy Moss. He was the father of Frank E. Moss, for many years a Utah Senator.

They did not have seminary and institute programs in connection with schools in those days. I graduated from the same L.D.S. High School in 1931 and then the Church closed the High School and started the seminary program so that students all over the world could have religious education in connection with High School. Vera graduated from West High in 1932 which she felt was an injustice to her. Having attended L.D.S. High School for one year, she felt no other could compare with it. After all that was where her older sisters and her parents had attended high school !

#### Palo Alto Again, 1929

Father decided to take the family during the summer months of 1929 back to Palo Alto where he would pursue some summer courses at Stanford. We were all very happy about that.

Accordingly we traveled again as previously to Calif. This time we lived at the home of Church friends, Arthur and Myra Thulin, at 1327 Alma Street, Palo Alto, who wanted to come to Utah for the summer to visit relatives. They were glad to have us take care of their house while they were gone.

Some of Afton's school and church friends, Alice and Marie Isaksen, visited her when they knew she was back and told her about working in the cannery at Mountain View, a small town not far away. They all worked there in the summer to earn a little money and invited Afton to go and apply with them. Father said, "Why not take Helen, too". So Helen and Afton applied for work. They were both accepted and did work for about 6 weeks. Alice was Afton's age and Marie was Helen's age.

#### The Cannery Experience

Afton and I bought the required cannery uniforms, white and blue cotton dresses and caps, and the paring knives and special tools for coring pears. The bus of the Canning Company appeared at our door at six o'clock in the morning. Afton and I hopped in and off we went. The cannery bus was an old truck with 2 long benches put in the back. We sat on the benches. We drove to many homes to pick up workers, and then off down the road to Mountain View. The ride was along streets built through the orchards and it was pleasant in the early morning.

Besides high school girls and a few boys there were some older Spanish ladies. The bus was full when we arrived

at the cannery. The canning factory was a huge, barn-like building, noisy, with machinery grinding and puffing inside. There were long tables with rows of square pans on them and high stools for us to sit on. We punched a time clock and chose a table to sit at.

The first day Afton and I sat side by side, but soon she wanted to sit next to her friends, and I sat next to some younger girls and was happy. Our job was to pick up an apricot, cut it around to get the pit out then put it into the appropriate pan.---one pan for ripe fruit, one for less ripe, one for green, one for rotten. We had to make a quick decision.

There were rows and rows of girls and women sitting on the stools doing this. It was fun at first. Then the floor lady came along.

"Now you must be new at this. You dont cut like that, you do it like this. Be more careful where you slam the fruit. Slam it into the right pan. You've got a lot to learn here." And I wont attempt to put in the expletives she used. She was not a very refined person. Her language was not refined or very nice.

When the floor lady had walked on further the little Spanish girl next to me said, "Dont let it worry you. She's not so great herself. You ought to hear the big boss rake her over the coals."

"Well," I said after about an hour, "I've decided it is not possible to ever do this right. The floor lady has got to find something wrong with what we are doing because that is her job." My little Spanish neighbor laughed and said, "Right, right".

We earned a dollar for every bushel of apricots we cut open. During the eight hours I worked that day I did 4 bushels. Afton did about 6. Neither of us ever did much more per day than that. We heard some of the experienced Spanish women say they had done 10 or 12.

I kind of had fun because I was starting to learn to express myself in public, such as talking to the girls sitting around me. I saw how relaxed they were and unafraid of the criticism of the floor lady.

Afton was enjoying sitting near her High School girl friends. They talked about their boy friends. Afton just listened. She had never had a boy friend or been on a date. But it was fun for her to listen. They talked to the supply boys (the ones who brought us a full bushel of fruit when we were ready for it). They were silly and liked to talk with the girls. But the

girls would get a reprimand from the floor lady if they talked too much.

The whole atmosphere of the cannery was something Afton and I had never known before--- the noise, the messy floor slippery with rotten fruit, wet with steam, --the hissing of the steamers where the canned fruit was being processed,-- the heavy rattle of the contraption which hauled the fruit out of the steamers,--so many distracting noises. To talk, you had to yell to be heard above the din. People using bad English and swearing words was something we girls had never heard.

After 8 hours of it we were stiff in the neck and joints and weary to the bone. The cannery bus drove us home and there was not much talking on the way because all were tired. After a good supper Afton and I fell into bed. Next morning we were stiff and could hardly move, but we got up and did the whole thing again. We gradually became more used to it. But we were glad when the season was over and we quit.

For the rest of the summer I typed cards for Father's research. I was the only one so far who had taken a type class at school and could type a little. The Thulin house had a work shop or sort of a garage where Brother Thulin did his carpentry work and over it was built a kind of an office room. Father and I put a typewriter there and used it as a study room when he was not at Stanford attending a class. He was doing research on the English poet, John Milton.

#### Trip on the Columbia River Highway

Mother said, "We need to see all the country we can so it would be nice to return to Utah by way of the Columbia River Highway. We could come down through Idaho."

"Let's do that", said Father. "I hope the old buzz wagon can do it."

"It made it over the Mohave Desert and it ought to be able to make it up through the redwoods", replied Mother. "Just look at this map, Heber", and she handed him the Western U.S. map. "Wouldn't it be a wonderful trip to wind up on Highway 1 up the coast, along the Pacific Ocean and up almost to Portland? We would be like the Lewis and Clark expedition, discovering what we have purchased here in the United States. Oh, it would be great!"

"Yes, Nora, You are right. Let's plan on doing it".



Once Afton remarked to me, "Mother just loves to travel. It's always her idea to go places."

"Father does, too". I remarked.

Mother said, "I want to see any maps you girls have to see if they are any different from this."

So Mother mapped out the route and as we traveled along we really enjoyed the scenery. The road was windy through the Redwood forests up the coast by the ocean and was much more interesting and not hot the way it had been on the Mohave desert. But little DeEtte did not enjoy traveling this time. Her stomach was car sick much of the time and she could not hold food down. Also some of the rest of us felt squeamish.

Mother was quite disappointed that when we came to the Columbia River it was too foggy to see the river.

Mother was really up on her history of Lewis and Clark and told us as we traveled who they were and where they went. Afton also knew something about that. All in all it was a good trip. Yes, the buzz wagon did have some flat tires and there were other car problems, but that was just part of the trip.

## Back in Salt Lake Again, 1929

After High School Afton went to the University of Utah for about a year. There, she took courses in Social Studies. It made her nervous to try to study. It seemed that she worried about her studying rather than just getting into it and getting it done. She procrastinated. Mother said,

"I don't know who is the most nervous, you or I. I am worrying about your tests and assignments as much as you are."

Mother was always interested in having her girls gain a degree from the University if they could. She tried to encourage them in their studies.

I must have been about eighteen or so when Father said now I should learn to drive. I was not as enthusiastic as Afton had been but listened and learned about how to drive as he taught me because I could see the necessity of learning so I could go places a little quicker than walking or taking the street car. So by 1934 I had learned to drive the Reo. Now I could drive myself up to work in the Library on occasions when I did not walk. I had a job as a Page in the library to earn money for tuition and school expenses. In later years Patt had the same kind of job and so did DeEtte, I think. Vera had some employment in the Registrar's Office of the University. By now Vera, also, was driving.

## House Remodeled

"Heber, when are we going to make the improvements in our house? You know, the ones we have discussed and said we would do--the changing of the stairway so it would be possible for a person to come downstairs and have a way into the kitchen without going through the front room."

"You know, I've been thinking about that, Nora. I think now is the time to make that change. There is a man in the ward, a high priest who is a good carpenter. I think he would be good and do a good job and he needs the work. I'll see what he says," responded Father.

"And if we can afford it I would like to have hardwood floors."

"We will look into that possibility, too. I would also like hardwood floors", responded Father.

So it was that our front room and staircase were changed into a better more convenient arrangement and Mother said it was none too soon because the girls were becoming more social and would be having more dates. What they did not know and never would have suspected was that Father's eyesight and general health were failing. It was fortunate they had it done and all completed when they did.

#### Father's Health

It was about 1934 when Father was having trouble with his eyes. The eye doctor found that he had a tumor on his pituitary gland which was resting on the optic nerve and it grew so rapidly that he lost sight of that eye almost before anything could be done. He was to have an out-patient operation to have the tumor removed. It would be done in the Doctor's office in Salt Lake by burning it off with radium. The morning of his operation Father said,

"Helen, you can drive me to the doctor's office on your way to the library," I agreed. Father was half sedated with medicine as Mother, Father, and I got in the Reo and drove west on Third Ave and south on E Street to South Temple. Just as I was driving down E Street something happened in the workings of the car.

"It wont shift", I yelled to Father.

"Wont it go into any gear?" Mother asked.

I tried it frantically. "No", I responded.

Father said sleepily, "Put on the brake".

I did.

"Now, take off the brake slowly and coast downhill over to the curb and stop it there".

I thought, "Thank goodness we are on a hill. I can do that. It is good Father has enough presence of mind to know what to do."

Then Mother took over. "Imagine that! We stopped right in front of the Drug Store. It is a wonder. I can go in and call a cab to get us down to the doctor's office. Helen, leave the keys in the car. You walk down to First South and catch the street car to get you to work. I will phone a mechanic to come and pick up the car".

The end result of that incident was that the Reo had

concern about trying to get Afton through the University.

Afton's talks with Mother and Father became a little more frequent. On Mutual nights she was a little late coming home sometimes and Mother always stayed up until she was home.

"We were just standing around talking". Afton said. "But I do have a date for this Friday night? It is with \_\_\_\_\_ who lives in the ward."

"Oh that's nice", said Mother. "He's from a good family".

"So, our girls are starting to date?" Father said as he entered the room. "We'll leave the porch light on for you and the door unlocked. We hope you wont be later than about 11 or 11:30."

"No, I've got to be to an 8 o'clock class in the morning".

Helen did not hear any more about that date but it dawned on her that Afton was now that age.

#### Mending Stockings

This was the days of rayon silk stockings, before nylons. When a girl walked to the University, (a mile) and back every day, there was almost always a hole a day in the heel of the stocking, to be mended before it ran. Helen was busy with her daily darning of her stockings when Afton came to talk to Mother.

"Have you tried rubbing your stockings with wax so they dont get holes so fast?" asked Mother. "Yes, I do that, said Helen, "But then it is harder to get the stocking clean. The dirt sticks on the wax."

"Right", said Mother. "Good that you 4 big girls can now take care of your clothes and handwash your lingerie and mend your own stockings. Maybe someday we will have a washing machine but for now we will continue to send our clothes to the laundry."

"Some girls I know have washing machines in their homes," said Afton. "But there is nothing like a good washboard and hand scrubbing except you cant do your silk stockings on a washboard." ( There was no such thing as detergent until about 1939.)

"Oh, goodness no." Said Mother, "It would ruin the stockings."



"Changing the subject", Mother said, "How is your kindergarten going?"

"All right, I guess. But I'm never going to have any little boys of my own 6 years old. They can be so silly," said Afton. Later she remarked, "Last time we were at Mutual there was a new fellow came. The girls in the ward don't know his name. They can't wait till Sunday to find out about him."

#### Afton Meets Bill

On Sunday, after Sunday School a circle of girls, including Afton was standing out on the Church steps and sure enough the new fellow appeared. He was introduced to the girls though there were so many he never would remember their names. Afton didn't say anything but just stood with the rest and listened. His name was Bill Asper. He had just returned from his mission to Washington State, or the Northwest. He had tales to tell of going tracting without purse or script.

"His name is Bill Asper," Afton told Mother that evening. "No one knows much about him. But he seems nice. He is tall and good looking."

"H-mmmmm", thought Mother. "I wonder".

Later, Helen heard Mother say, "You know, Heber, I'll just bet that is Mayme and Alfred's son. They live in this ward at 21 "I" Street. Alfred Asper is the brother of Frank Asper who is the Tabernacle organist. Alfred Asper is my cousin. I don't know all their children. So this Bill must be their son."

"Could be", said Father. "Then Bill must be a fine fellow."

Next time Afton saw this newly returned missionary she had something to ask him. In between all the other remarks of the various interested girls Afton said, "Maybe my Mother is a cousin to your father." Bill pricked up his ears. Later on he said, "Let us go for a walk and talk about it."

That was the beginning of a fine friendship. Now Bill soon bought a Model T ford. It was a little one-seater with a rumble seat. He came and took Afton for a ride so they could talk about their relatives. Afton had had no idea she was related to the Aspers, but they decided a 2nd cousinship was not too much of a relation.

Bill had a good sense of humor. He loved to listen to the radio. (By now, 1931) many people had radio's. There were humorous programs like Fibber McGhee and Molly. They did not yet have radios in cars, I believe. Bill planned to be a businessman and decided to go into the Grocery business.

Afton was busy with her job at the Floral and her school classes. Vera remembers that Afton lent her some high heeled shoes for Sunday. But when Vera wore them to school Afton did not say anything to Vera but she told Mother that she would rather Vera did not wear them to school. Afton was generous and was trying to save Vera's feelings by not telling her directly. In those days the girls would sometimes trade clothes as sisters sometimes do.

Afton was always careful about her personal appearance. She was groomed very well. Maybe that was why it was so hard to get to her studies. She just did not have the time for them.

After many auto rides, and walks, and other dates Bill asked her to marry him, and she accepted. Later she asked him,

"Why did you choose me, out of all that crowd of girls at church?"

He said, "They were all so anxious. You were the best looking anyway. You stood by quietly and listened instead of doing all the talking."

#### Afton's Marriage

Afton Noall Richards and William Samuel Asper were married on 16 May 1932 in the Salt Lake Temple. That was a busy time for Mother. She made Afton's wedding dress and new dresses for the other girls. It was a happy time for us all. There was an informal reception at our home the evening of the ceremony, and all of us sisters stood in a line to greet friends. Each girl had a new long dress but they were not all the same color nor alike.

Afton did not go any more to the University nor did she work at the floral. She was busy taking care of Bill and her new home. They lived in a small apartment on North Temple and about 2nd West which belonged to someone in the Asper family. The Aspers and Noalls owned some kind of a lumber company in that vicinity which had a tall smoke stack attached to it. When it was torn down and demolished in about 1942 or

thereabouts I missed it. It was a landmark of my ancestry I thought.

Anyway, when Afton moved into this small apartment there was a coal stove there on which she had to cook meals. She and I and Mother all thought or said,

"You are starting out married life just as primitive as your grandmother did".

Afton's attitude was, "If my Mother could get dinner on a coal stove I can, too". And she did. But she found out you have to stay home and keep the home fires burning to keep it warm enough to boil potatoes. Stoking a fire all day takes time and attention. Mother knew all about that.

So Afton learned to cook. At first she did not have a phone and could not call home for help.

She and Bill came up to our house once to get something she had left.

"Helen, how would you like to come to our house to dinner next Saturday?"

"Sure, I'd like to. What time." I replied.

"You could walk down about noon and Bill will drive you home after."

So, I did. She told me that Bill's father and Mother were coming to dinner. She had invited me to come down and help her. I understood and thought I would have done the same had it been me. So we both worked at it. She had a roast in the oven. The big problem was in making gravy, and stirring the lumps out. I was a good one to stand and stir a lot. In the end she strained it through a little strainer. Later, I found out that is what most women do. It was a successful dinner.

"Now that is what I call a good dinner", said Alfred at the end of the meal. I can tell that Bill married the right girl when she makes smooth gravy with no lumps in it."

Afton and I were both happy that meal was over. "It is nice you could have your sister come and help with your first big meal," remarked Mayme. "I remember how hard it was for me when I was a new bride. And you always need extra hands to help wash up the dishes." She was so right.

That was the time before detergent was invented. Dishes

had to be hand washed and hand dried. If not, they would be coated with scum. One way to entertain a fellow was to invite him to your parent's home to dinner. Then have him help do the dishes. The girl could wash them and he could wipe them, being sure to polish all the scum off the glasses. If he was frisky he would flip the girl's legs with the towel occasionally and she would squeal. This was what couples did on Sunday afternoon on a date. Then after that they would go out for a walk.

I remember that Afton found out that Bill's father was a big man and needed an extra big chair to be comfortable in. So after a time somewhere she found a suitable big chair which she always had handy for him to sit in when he visited. Some other Aspers were large and so it must have been an inherited trait.

#### Primary Teacher

Another time I helped Afton (if I was any help) was when the Primary class she was teaching went on a hike. She taught a class of 11 year old girls. They had planned on a hike up to Ensign Peak. Since they lived just at the base of Capitol Hill they were right under Ensign Peak. I gladly went along. My assignment was to help keep track of the girls and keep them all together. It was a hard climb, more like a scramble up the hill side. We did not go up any streets or paths, but just went straight up the rocky hillside.

"If there was a path or something to follow it would be easier", I suggested.

"I dont see how that would help", said Afton. " You cant make a path anyway up a steep hillside. A person just has to do his best to climb up".

She was so right. I guess our biggest problem was really to keep up with the girls. They went up with the alacrity of goats. But we made it finally, and sat up there in the wind and sun to eat the sandwiches we had brought. We talked of Brigham Young and how he could know that this was the place. Then finally we came down. That was easy and fast,--too fast. One girl had a skinned knee but other than that the hike was successful and I thought Afton did well as their teacher.

#### The Flu and Pneumonia

About every week end Afton and Bill would drive back up

to our house on Third Ave to pay us a visit. When they had been married about 2 years they came up one time and Afton was coughing. Mother told her to lie down. After dinner Mother asked her if she felt well. She admitted she did not.

"I dont know whether there is anything wrong but I just dont feel very well. I have not felt just right for about a week, but I thought it was not anything and I did not like to make a fuss so I just kept going."

"Well, you know, Afton, now you do not live with a mother so you have to take care of yourself. If you do not feel well, you have to rest. There has been a lot of flu going around. Did you take your temperature?"

"No, I dont have a thermometer."

"Let me take it." Mother got the thermometer. After a while, "Afton, you do have a little temperature. It's a flu temperature."

"I did not think she was as perky as usual" said Bill. "Why didn't you say anything, Dear?"

"I didn't want to be a droopy wife," responded Afton.

"That's what I love is a droopy wife", laughed Bill. He had an infectious laugh and Afton got to laughing, too, but then she coughed a lot.

Mother turned to Bill. "I really think she needs to be in bed, Bill. What do you think?"

"I dont know about these things. Would it be all right if she goes to bed in our apartment.?"

"It would if she could stay put, but it just would not happen. She would have to get up often to stoke the stove. Then she would feel the responsibility of getting food ready. She just would not stay down. I know", said Mother. "Why dont we keep her in bed here, and you can come here and eat your meals and see her?"

"What do you think, Dear?". asked Bill, as Mother went out to leave them alone to talk about it.

After a while Bill came out to say, "I guess you are right. She would feel better staying in bed here. She has too many responsibilities at home. Maybe she will be well in a day or two."

So Afton stayed at our house. That night she had a high temperature. The next morning Mother phoned Bill at his grocery store to say she was going to call the doctor, and with his consent she did. It was late in



the day when the doctor came to the house with his little black bag. This was not Uncle Fonse. He was at some convention and unavailable so Mother had called a Salt Lake doctor. The doctor tested Afton's lungs and heart and said, "It is the flu". There is lots of it around. Just keep her in bed. There is nothing to do.

He packed his bag and was going out the front door when Mother remembered to say,

"Just a minute, doctor. When Afton was a child she had pneumonia. You don't think this could be pneumonia, do you? I was told that when a person has it once it comes again more easily."

The doctor hesitated, and then said, "Let me check again."

He turned and went upstairs again to Afton and rechecked her lungs a little more thoroughly. "H\_\_\_MMMM. She is not getting any air at all in this side--only in the other side though. This is pneumonia. But there is nothing to do except complete bed rest. "

When Bill heard that Afton had pneumonia he was devastated. But he was so thankful to Mother that she had found it out and there was good hope that Afton could recover.

Afton was a bed patient in our house for about a month. It meant a lot of running up and down stairs, because the kitchen was down and the bedroom and bathroom up. Mother became very tired. We big girls were all in school and working at our jobs, but we helped when possible.

Afton did get better, and as she did DeEtte could entertain her a lot and run some errands for her and Mother. Mother said at this time she hardly ever had a minute to herself. Mother was a great soul.

As soon as Uncle Fonse could be contacted Mother phoned him and he came down to visit. After checking her over he said, "She is pretty well over the pneumonia, but she has a heart defect. She will have to be careful all the rest of her life."

"Will I ever be able to have children?" asked Afton.

"We hope so", said Uncle Fonse and patted her on the head. "We certainly hope so. But you will have to be careful all your life and rest a lot if you are going to raise a family. Don't be too anxious."

As time went on Afton did have three children. Uncle Fonse said, "Now you want to live to raise these children. You must rest on the bed every afternoon and be very careful what you do. Your heart is damaged and we hope it can last you out."

So Afton did get better and lead a fairly normal life. She was limited in her activity and could not do anything extra. I remember Uncle Fonse saying, "Someday, medical science will have a way to repair damaged hearts. But that is too far into the future for you."

### The Thanksgiving Dinner

I was starting to date some and Vera dated quite a bit. Vera was soon at the University also. She had skipped a grade in elementary school and was now just one year behind me. So we often did things together at the University. We even had some classes together. We could always feel free to talk over our dating problems with Afton. She was still a good big sister advisor.

One year during November Vera had a date for Thanksgiving Day. Helen wished she had one. A fellow asked her to a dance for Thanksgiving and although Helen did not like him much she accepted just to be having a date.

On that Thanksgiving day Mother was preparing a good family dinner. She was cooking the turkey and Afton and Bill would be present. In fact, Afton came up during the afternoon to help Mother make pies. I talked to her kind of privately. She knew all about dating so I asked her advice.

"I've got a date with this fellow named \_\_\_\_\_ and I've never been with him before. He is not very good looking, but I think he's all right. But now I wish I were not going. It would be more fun to be home with the family and we could play some board games like "Hearts". What do you do when you want to break a date?"

Afton knew how to advise me. "You are in charge of your life. If you don't want to go, just call him up and say you're sick and can't go to the dance. I would not go out with someone if I did not want to".

So, I went to the phone and called him. "Sorry, I can't go with you I'm sick."

"Oh, that's tough. Never mind, honey. I'm coming right up to see you". And he hung up the phone.

"What do I do now?" I asked Afton. She was nonplused. "That has never happened to me", she said.

Of course, Mother had kind of guessed what was going on. "Well, he's not very smart. He didn't even ask if your sickness was catching. But if he really comes, you will just have to lie on the sofa and be sick."

The family was just sitting down to dinner when the doorbell rang. There he was. Mother let him in and he sat by me all evening, while I lay there and watched everyone eating the dinner. Mother invited him to eat but he said he had already had his dinner. He seemed to be nice, but I still didn't like him.

Bill and Afton were sitting there at the table eating, too. Bill knew what was going on. He kept winking at me. Well, when the fellow finally left, Bill began to laugh at me. After I had eaten, it was more funny. Bill had a lot of good chuckles at my expense. For the next 10 or 20 years whenever anyone talked about a Thanksgiving dinner Bill would look at me and laugh. Mother and Father never said a word about it. They thought I had learned my lesson.

#### Afton and Bill move to the Avenues

Bill bought a brick house at 621 4th Ave between about H and I Streets. It was on the north side of the street and was in the 21st ward.

It made a good home and Afton did well to plan its interior decoration. She made her own drapes and did it well. She was an excellent seamstress. Later on she did some beautiful sewing for Louise, making her the little dresses she needed.

She used to lie on the bed and look at magazines of house decor and plan on color schemes and think of appropriate furniture, bedspreads, and drapes, etc. She was a good houseplanner and housekeeper.

Ane remembers that Afton liked to put the colors of blue and green together----her favorite colors. Maybe Afton was a little before her time. In 1945-60 they thought you should never put blue and green together. But now, in 1995, that is exactly what designers do----they use blue with green, and pink with red.

Afton had her first baby, Richard William Asper, born 28 July 1936. She and Bill were very happy. They always were happy together and led a normal, peaceful family life. Bill was a real worker and was hard at it to earn

a good living. He was a grocer owning a little store, and later became a business executive and worked as a credit manager executive. He was well liked and congenial.

### Emigration Canyon

Some of Bill's relatives had a cabin up Emigration Canyon and Bill had the opportunity to use it the summer of 1938.

Maybe he had inherited it. Afton thought it would be good for Father's ailing health. Bill and Afton and baby Dick went, and Father, Mother, Fatt, DeEtte and I. It was more than just a cabin--it was a summer house, with room enough for all us. It was furnished, but we would be cooking on a coal stove. That was the usual thing for summer cabins. But it was comfortable in the summer heat.

Vera was married, but some evenings she and Arthur could come up after his work and sit on the veranda with us and enjoy the cool canyon air. The cabin was located at the top of Emigration Canyon near Pine Crest Lodge--where people came to dinner dances. Pine Crest was noted for its spacious dance floor. Most of the dances were formal. The men wore tuxes and the ladies long dresses. Sometimes we girls went there on our dates. In those days there was no such thing as levis or slacks, and certainly never at dances. Our Mother sewed us each a few long dresses. She was fast and efficient at it.

I was working in the University Library during the summer and I drove the Willis Knight car from the cabin down through the canyon to the Fort Douglas area to the Library to work in the summer.

Sometimes I went to the grocery store to shop for Mother and brought the food up to the cabin after work. That was a pleasant summer and good visits with Afton and Bill. Afton helped Mother with the cooking and tended Dick.

Afton's and Bill's second baby was Alfred Norman Asper, born 13 Mar 1939 and their third baby was Rebecca Louise Asper born 7 July 1943. At that time Vera remembers that Afton asked her if she could phone her if she needed to get to the hospital and could not get Bill in time. Vera said, "Yes" but it did not happen that way. Louise was born without Vera's help and all was well. But Louise was born somewhat earlier than usual and had to stay in the hospital for a while after Afton

was released. But she was normal and everything was fine. This completed their family. All three children were born in Ogden where Uncle Fosse did his operations in the Dee Hospital. Uncle Fosse was her main doctor and took special care of her. She got along without any serious problems.

I had the privilege of tending Dick (Richard) while Afton was in the hospital having Fred. That was an experience for a new aunt. He was an allergic baby and had a difficult time sleeping but would just lie awake for a long time. He was not even fussy much of the time. He was of a calm nature.

On 18 Feb 1938 Vera married Arthur Nielsen and lived in Salt Lake and on the 21 Aug 1939 I married Eldon Gardner and moved to Salinas, California, where we lived for seven years. And on the 12 Apr 1940 Patt married Brandon Brunson and on the 27 Dec 1950 DeEtte married Harold Berg --all marriages in the Salt Lake Temple.

During the years I was not in Salt Lake I missed seeing just exactly what went on from day to day in Afton's life. When sisters marry then the day to day family life changes.

Economy was a little tighter in those days. We practically never made a long distance phone call and Eldon and I did not have a car for many years. We did not easily drive to Utah for a visit. We just wrote letters. That was the trend.

#### Helen and Eldon Move to Salt Lake

In 1946 Eldon left his position in the Salinas Jr. College in Calif. and moved our family to Salt Lake where he was employed as a professor at the University of Utah for three years in the Biology Dept. Then I was able to see and visit more with Afton and her children. We had 3 children by then. We bought a big home at 418 South 13th East and a fourth child was born to us in Salt Lake.

Vera and Arthur were living on M Street near 3rd Ave just north of the back lot of our parents' house at 783. They had 3 children by then, too.

Patt and Brandy had had 2 children but the first one died at birth. They had a house on M Street just south of 3rd Ave. for a while. But soon they moved to Provo.



When we sisters could we met and talked over our experiences and had fun together. I cant think of anything spectacular that I remember about Afton. She was a very good mother, as were we all, we thought. We all liked to meet at Mother's and Father's house to talk over things.

In 1949 Eldon and I moved to Logan where he was employed as a Professor in the Biology Dept. at what is now Utah State University. There we lived at 441 West 1st So. where Eldon's childhood home was. And there 2 more daughters were born to us. Our children liked to play with Afton's, or Vera's, or DeEtte's whenever any could come to Logan. Sometimes some of them did.

I remember at least one time that Dick, Fred, and Louise came to visit us for a few days. They enjoyed going out in the big garden at the back of the house and pulling weeds with Uncle Eldon. And then there was a time when Louise visited us. She fit in well with our five girls and their toys. She and Betty were near the same age. Then there was a time when Betty was in Salt Lake visiting them. As Eldon went to drive her home after a few days she said, "I love to visit Louise's house. Uncle Bill is funny and tells lots of jokes and Aunt Afton always feeds you hot chocolate for breakfast." Our children seemed to have fond memories of their visits.

Afton and Bill were happy to see Richard (Dick) and Janet Poulson marry in the temple in July 1961 and Fred marry Ane Andersen in the temple in 1959.

#### Afton's Last Days

Afton had to spend much of her later years lying down to rest her heart. She liked to read magazines about decorating the interior of houses and furniture arranging and flower arranging and so forth. Louise was about twenty years old then and worked at the Primary Childrens' Hospital and she did what she could to help her Mother at home.

Afton had a lot of inward courage. She and Bill wanted to move to another part of town. He was so busy at his work he did not have the time to do a lot of house looking. So she spent some time each day driving around in her car which was her constant companion and looking at various houses for sale. Sometimes she took Louise with her, and sometimes Louise was the driver. She got to know prices and locations and finally chose a house she liked.

"Come on, Bill", she said one evening, "Take me for a ride. I want to show you something."

"What in the world do you want to show me?" He queried.

So she had him drive to two or three houses that she thought were possibilities to look at. Then, after discussions, and more driving and looking, and after some time passed they ended up buying the house at 2361 Logan Way.

She had to be careful and not do any of the work in moving. Her family or friends or hired helpers did all the work. She had to sit and direct the action.

She was happy with her new house. She could look out the window from her bed and see the city lights because the house was on a slight hill. It was a pretty sight to contemplate. But the move was none too early. About 9 months later her heart gave out and she passed away on 28 Sept 1963.

She had a lot of courage and was brave to the very end. Our Father had passed away in Nov 1962 and she probably went to meet him.

I have asked my grown children what impressions they had about Afton. All of them have said:

She always looked nice. She kept herself well groomed. She used to decorate picnic cakes for the 4th of July when we all went on a picnic to Liberty Park. She dressed nicely and neatly. She was always nice to us. She said she was sorry she could not have more children. She used to drive Grandma Richards to the grocery store every week. When Grandpa died she invited us to her house to dinner. She knew how to sew things very well. Afton used to be interested in other people and their problems.