

Home Is Where The Art Is

The Autobiography of William Arthur George



William Arthur Kemp 1923

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The Autobiography of William Arthur Kemp

Gwendolyn K. Frei
Karma K. Wasden

Editors

In Appreciation

In the winter and spring of 1983, Daniel K. Frei and his family held Family Home Evenings with his grandparents, Arthur and Wilma Kemp, interviewing Art about his life. Dan made tapes of the sessions. The questions were, of course, those that interested the family. We thank Daniel for allowing us to transcribe and edit these tapes for the delight and instruction of our family, and allowing us to get to know our father and grandfather better.

We have endeavored to retain our father's pattern and style of speech. Please understand he was not speaking for publication, but in a casual and intimate manner. As an instance of his style: the word *creek* can be pronounced "kreek" or "krik" and as he used the later pronunciation, we have spelled it "crick" to help you "hear" the words as he spoke them.

We thank our sisters, Carol and Ellen for their remembrances, help, and encouragement. We thank everyone for sending photos and information. We thank our proof readers: Gracia Jones, Dawn Wasden, and Jack Wasden. Your efforts have helped us give the best possible account of our Daddy's life story.

We give our greatest thanks to our parents, William Arthur Kemp and Wilma Lorine Higbee Kemp, for their loving and joyful view of life and for the teachings and testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which they instilled in us.



Kemp



W
A
F



Chester
Arthur
KEMP



Willard
Walter John
KEMP



William
Button
KEMP



Elizabeth
BILLHAM



William
CARTER



Sophonra
Ellen
Lenora
Hart
TURNBOW



Adaline
CARTER



William
Arthur
KEMP



Wilma
Lorine
HIGBEE



Aaron
NELSON

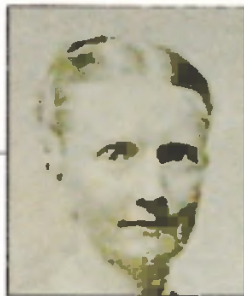
Mary
STANDIFORTH



William
NELSON



Selena
Ellen
NELSON



Mary
Alice
THOMPSON

Robert
THOMPSON

Alice
HULME



IAN H. B
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Arthur
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STATE OF UTAH
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY
84114

NORMAN H. BANGERTER
GOVERNOR

September 6, 1989

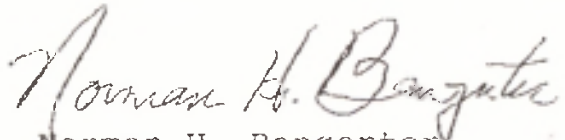
Arthur and Wilma Kemp
2456 Vineyard Drive
Santa Clara, UT 84765

Dear Arthur and Wilma,

Congratulations on your 60th wedding anniversary! I can think of no greater tribute to anyone than a successful marriage. In this day and age it is becoming increasingly important to have examples such as you to prove to all that the oldest institution known to man is very much in style. There can be no wealth greater than the rich love and memories you must share. Couples like you are the foundation of society, and I express my deepest admiration and respect for you.

May your anniversary celebration bring together those whom you love, and may you enjoy good health and continued happiness.

Sincerely,


Norman H. Bangarter
Governor

NHB/rw

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	Tobler	
	Wasden	
	Cameron	
	Bowler	

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Nanny holding Daddy (Age 4)

Chapter 1

Childhood...

I was born in St George, Utah on the sixth month, sixteenth day of 1907 at my Grandmother and Grandfather Kemp's old place, 696 East Highway 91 [Now known as St. George Boulevard]. Grandmother was a midwife. My mother was Selena Ellen Nelson, and my father was Chester Arthur Kemp. They were both born, raised, and married in St. George.

My father's parents were Adeline Carter and Willard Walter John Kemp. My mother's parents were Mary Alice Thompson and William Nelson.

I have one sister, Jessie, two years older than I am, and one brother, Walter, eight years younger than I am. All of us were born here in St. George.

I've lived all my life in St. George except the time we spent in Las Vegas. We went to Vegas in 1953, were there twenty years, then came back to Santa Clara in 1973.

My parents' home was 720 East and Highway 91 [St. George Boulevard]. My father built houses, but he wasn't in the building business when he first started out. He did two or three things; he was a butcher, and he worked for his brothers-in-law who had a market. It was located on Tabernacle Street between Main Street and First East. They established a market there, and he worked for them until I was about eight or ten years old. Then he started out doing a little mason work. Then he took a contract to build a home for a Mr. Seegmiller out in the Washington fields. That was his first building job.

He just learned building by himself by watching other guys. After he'd been in it for a few years, then he took a correspondence course from the American Correspondence School. He studied at night and worked in the day time. He studied the course for about two years. Then he went out on his own. He was the first man in St. George to contract a home for a certain amount of money. Up till then they just did it by labor, you know.

I don't remember helping him until I was about ten or twelve years old. He had a contract over in Washington enlarging the old Red Rock School House. They had a gymnasium put on the back, and that's when I started helping him. I didn't get any wages. My Dad told me that I stuck my feet under his dinner table three times a day, and slept in a bed, and lived under his roof, and that's all the wages I needed.

This certificate is not valid until it has been entered in Ward Record or Minutes. Record in Ward Record, Line No. _____	Ward Clerk
WARD <u>St. George</u> STAKE NO. <u>111</u>	
CERTIFICATE OF BLESSING	
THIS CERTIFIES THAT <u>Chester Arthur Kemp</u>	
SON OF <u>Willard Walter John Kemp</u> AND <u>Adeline Carter</u>	
BORN <u>16th June</u> 19 <u>07</u> AT <u>St. George, Utah</u>	
WAS BLESSED <u>17th June</u> 19 <u>07</u> BY <u>Walter J. Seegmiller</u>	
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.	
BISHOP	CLERK

Blessing Certificate



C. A. Kemp's first job

One of the first things I can remember is when my sister Jessie and I were playing out in the back yard. We had a little lean-to that my folks used for a kitchen, and we were playing with a rake. My sister stuck the rake over the edge of the porch, and it was swinging back and forth. I walked under it and stepped up on the porch just as the rake fell. It lit right across the top of my head with the tines down and cut four holes in the top of my head, and I bled like a stuck pig. That's about the first recollection I can remember.

There were a bunch of Indians who lived a few blocks south of where we lived; they were at about 700 East and 400 South. The Indians used to congregate in the winter time and spend the cold months there in a big camp and celebrate the Christmas holidays.

I guess there would be a couple hundred Indians: Paiutes from Cedar City, and Shivwits from west of Santa Clara, and Navajos. There would be quite a bunch of them. They'd have the Pow-Wows and the dances. The townspeople would go out there and gamble with them and dance.

There are a couple of experiences with the Indians that stick in my mind. We used to shoot jackrabbits and cottontails and sell them to the Indians. They'd give us ten cents for a cottontail and twenty-five cents for a jackrabbit.

I remember I used to have a slingshot and would throw rocks or marbles with it. One time there was a bunch of the Indians—I guess you could say were quarreling back and forth. They were about a third of the block away from us. I was about six or seven at this time. I put a rock in the slingshot and hit one of the Indians right in the head and dropped him. I thought he was dead, so I ran and hid in the barn. I hid there all afternoon. The Indians didn't do anything about it. They didn't know what happened to the little feller. But I sure dropped him. I guess it didn't hurt him much.

The first recollection of my mother is when I was four years old, and she took me down to the old Jim Booth Photography Shop, which was on the corner of Main and Diagonal, and we had our picture taken. I was just four years old, and I remember that very distinctly. Mr. Booth had his big cameras set up and a big black cloth over the top of it. He had Mother sitting down and me standing by her. Then he'd flip this

cloth over and look through the camera. Then he'd come out with a bulb in his hand, and he said, "Now watch the little birdie come out of here." Of course, I stood and watched, and he took the picture. We have that picture now, enlarged. That would be my first recollection of my mother.

There's another incident that happened when I was two years old, although I don't remember it. However, I was told about it often.

My parents were planting a row of pomegranates in the early spring, and it was muddy outside. My sister Jessie and I went out, but they sent us back to the house because we would get too muddy. My dad used to tan hides, buckskin hides and stuff like that, and he had a sack of arsenic, powdered arsenic, and he had put it on top of the door frame. There was a hole above the frame, and he'd put this sack up there. When we went back in the house, I slammed the door and the sack fell down on the floor and broke open. It was a yellow powder and we were sitting there in it. I was licking my fingers--sticking them in there and licking it off. Mother thought something was amiss because it was so quiet. So she came to see what we were doing.

She hollered for Dad, and said, "Dad, what's this yellow powder that's in the sack?"

He said, "Oh me! That's arsenic. Are they eating it?"



Nelly Kemp age 26
Arthur Kemp Age 4