

The following was taken from the L.D.S. Family Record which is owned by Leonard E. Pulsipher, Jr. and was written by Juanita Brooks, his mother

At the time of our marriage my husband was sick with a growth on the side of his neck. We remained in St. George some time under the care of Dr. McGregor. Early in November 1919 he had his second operation and had the growth removed. This he took without ether, the doctor cutting for an hour and a half. In a short time it returned and was even worse than before. Dr. McGregor decided that it was too serious for him to handle.

Accordingly, he left Nov. 19, for Salt Lake city to be treated by the best doctors there. I had decided to stay home and teach school to help pay expenses, but I could not content myself,-- it seemed as if I should be with him. So after two days, I followed.

When he arrived there, he consulted the best doctors in the city and they said they could do nothing for him and held out absolutely no hopes that he could ever recover. They did not seem able to tell even the name of the disease, and knew nothing of its cause or cure.

Then he found a man who said it was a cancerous growth and who thought he could cure it. So we started going to him. He used a salve that contained some strong acid, that burned and killed all the flesh it was put on until it became black and hard. Then he put on another salve that would draw ~~out~~ this dead flesh out in a solid piece. This was terribly painful and he had to take morphine and then it was almost more than he could endure. He had three pieces drawn from the right side of his neck and one from the left, each one from a half inch to an inch and a quarter thick and and nearly as large around as a saucer. This took three months and a terrible three months it was.

We stayed at the home of one of his cousins, Mrs. Perry Earl-- who was very good to us.

At times his pain was so severe that he could not take morphine enough to ease it. We had the Elders come in nearly every evening, and every time they came he was eased. Many times his pain was stopped entirely.

One evening in particular, Dec. 17, 1919, he was suffering until it seemed almost more than human flesh could endure, and I sent for some Elders. Three of the brethren came and while their hands were upon him he became quiet and easy and when they were through he said "Oh, I feel so good,-- I haven't a bit of pain." The brethren soon left, the family went in the other room for supper and I turned out the light so he could rest better. He seemed so easy that I lay down side of him and he was so quiet I thought he must be asleep, so I didn't speak to him. I was nearly worn out myself, being up so much at night, so I fell asleep.

After all the family had gone to bed he woke me and told me of a wonderful manifestation he had-- He said that while the hands of the Elders were upon his head, a feeling of peace and joy came over him and he had such a sense of rest and quiet. Then while the family were in the other room, and our room was dark, & he still awake he saw this vision--

He seemed to be on a crowded street where many people were hurrying two and fro. Then he came to a street that turned to the east. He went out this street and found it quiet and beautiful, paved with a substance like clear ice. At the end of the street was a building so wonderful that he could find no words to express it-- its pure snowy whiteness, the carvings and the flowers and gardens that surrounded it. He seemed to be standing still and a view of the building passed before him,-- first the outside and then the inside. He said he knew it was a holy place from the spirit that prevailed in it, and spent half the night trying to describe its beauties to me,-- the tongue could not find words to express it. But before he had seen all, a little girl opened the door from the next room and came in, and the vision vanished and he was lying in bed wide awake but filled with peace and joy. He has often said since that he would like to see the rest of it and wonders if he ever will. I hope so.

After we had been in Salt Lake about three months the doctor decided that he could do no more for him and sent him home to die. This made eight doctors that had given him up,-- five examined him and pronounced him incurable when we first got there.

But he seemed to have no fear and would only laugh at mine when they said he could not live. He had been promised by the servants of God that he would live and overcome the disease and he knew he would. But before leaving Salt Lake we went to the office of the Presiding Patriarch of the church, and he received another blessing and promise of life. I had a blessing at the same time which I hope to be able to live up to.

We arrived at home Feb. 6, 1920. Stayed at home until the last of March, and he seemed to get no better so we decided to go and work in the temple. We knew of people who had been cured of their afflictions by working in the house of God-- I will record one here.-- Bro. Seegmiller from Sevier Stake was down to the Temple while we were there and was so deaf he could hardly hear when people shouted in his ear. But after staying there a while his hearing was restored and he could hear ordinary talk perfectly. We witnessed that miracle. Also, just before we came there a woman went who was lame. She used a crutch when she went in, and had to be helped up the stairs, but when she came out she threw her crutch away and went without it.

We went to the temple three weeks and Ernest seemed to be getting better. I rubbed his neck with oil several times each day and it began to get smaller. but he was still tried further-- he has always considered this sickness a test to try his faith or to prepare him for some work God has in store for him.

At the end of three weeks he was taken very sick and for the next two months seemed to hang between life and death-- It is like a terrible nightmare to me yet to think of that time. First he had erysipalis until it seemed he could not live. Then just as we began to get the best of that he took nose bleed and it looked for awhile as if he would bleed to death. Then his throat swelled shut until he could not even swallow a drop of water and he was burning up with fever. Truly this was a trying time, but he never complained. His patience has been a source of wonder to many.

We returned home early in June and stayed all summer. At times he would seem to be getting better and then again he would be nearly frantic with pain. But the lump on his neck kept growing, and on the whole he seemed to be getting worse.

Our son was born Sept. 28, 1920 a bright healthy child-- The Lord blessed us in that, for all summer I had been with my husband,-- at his bedside and waiting on him every way that I could. For the three months before the baby was born I was up and walking with my husband every night for one to three hours, as his pain was so bad he could not lie still, yet he was so weak he could hardly walk. So I would go along and try to support him and keep him company.

After the baby was born Ernest became much worse. His pain was so severe he could not sit or lie down, and his mouth and face so badly swollen he could not eat. For ten days he did not lie down 15 minutes at a time, but would walk, walk, walk, and nearly scream with pain. When it would ease a little he would sit across a chair and put his arms on the back of it and lean his head down. That is the nearest thing to rest that he got. He had often said that the Lord would have to provide some way if he was to be permitted to live-- and it truly seemed so.

Just before this time we had heard of a radium treatment in Salt Lake and Dr. McGregor said there was a chance that it might cure him. So when (the) baby was two weeks old, he left for there with his mother, & Lew.

He has been there now over two months and seems to be improving-- I will have to write about his time there after he gets back,-- he writes so little about himself in his letters.

I am staying here, caring for the baby and taking care of things the best I can, waiting for the Lord to allow my husband to come back to me.

Throughout his sickness the people of these two towns have been very good to us and helped us meet our heavy expenses. I will record a list of the donations received on page 75 of this book, that we may not forget the kindness of our friends.

Dec. 22, 1920

Ernest and [his] mother returned from Salt lake tonight-- and how different to what I expected. Instead of being nearly well he is almost helpless, sent home again to die by the best doctors in the west. They have been using the radium on his neck and have used it more than it has ever been used on a human before. It was put on 15 times. Well, his neck is down to normal, the lump gone but a raw sore on each side. He also had it put under his cheek bone, up through his nose-- a very painful operation.

Now he has such severe pains across his back and legs and they are so badly swollen he is not able to walk. He looks as though he has dropsy, but there such hard pains with it.

Jan. 2, 1921

Ernest a little better,-- the swelling has nearly gone from his legs and feet, but his stomach and bowels are still badly bloated. He has had several bad spells when the pain was so bad it seemed as if he could not stand it another hour. Still he will grit it out and rally again.

Holidays has passed quietly for us.-- I wonder what the New Year has in store for us.

Jan. 12, 1921

So many things have happened in the last ten days.-- My husband has left me for a while and his death was a great shock to us all. There was not much change in him up to the morning of the eighth. Some of the brethren came every night to stay with him. On the morning of the eighth when I came in he seemed as well as usual and after joking a little with the men as they left he asked me to come and talk to him as he had not had a right good chat with me for a week. I did, and that half hour with him will always be remembered as one of the most beautiful of my life. He wanted to know if I had ever regretted marrying him and said how much he thought of me and proud that he had a wife and son. He then spoke of how good everyone had been, his folks especially and how much he appreciated it all. He asked for the baby and talked to him a little then asked for something to eat.

I stepped into the other room to get it ready and was gone only a few minutes. His mother came down stairs and went to his bed and found him unconscious and looking as if he was struck with death.

She called me and we sent for some Elders. All day he lay like this looking as if he was dead but still breathing and his pulse beating perfectly normal. He breathed with an effort and his breaths came in gasps at times but his heart never skipped a beat.

If there is anything that I have to regret

Nov. 6, 1921

It has been nearly a year since I have written anything, but I havent had the heart to write. After Ernest left me, I stayed at the ranch and tried to help his parents. Toward spring, I think, there was a vacancy in the Junior high school at Bunkerville which they asked me to fill. I taught seven weeks and received \$120. a month. This I saved, as I wished to go to school. When school closed I went back to the ranch to live until Erns parents went north for the summer. They visited relatives in Idaho and I went on to the National Park. As I couldn't live on the ranch alone, I went back to my parents for the summer.

When it was time for school to begin Pulsiphers had not yet returned, so I came to St. George, and began school with about \$90. My tuition and expenses and those of my sister Aura (we worked together) came to over \$70-- Of this, we paid \$25 and signed a note for the rest.

So here we are, I am living in with five girls, Erma and Stella Bowler, Emma Hunt, Lillian Jones, and Aura. I go to school in the forenoon while Aura looks after the baby and she goes in the afternoon. I work every evening after 4:30 in Mr. Jenkins office.

Baby is 13 months old and is a lovely, big healthy child. I sent two pictures of him to each of his grandparents. I hear from my mother every week but Erns parents never answer my letters.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF JUANITA LEAVITT AND LEONARD ERNEST  
PULSIPHER

I did not know Ernest Pulsipher until about Thanksgiving time of 1919. I was teaching third and fourth grades in Mesquite that year, and he had been on a mission. He was forced to come home before his mission was finished, because the family had sold their full crop of hay to a company that was trying to put a dam in the Virgin River at the Narrows. The company went broke; the Pulsiphers did not get a dime for their year's work, and they had no other resources.

Ernest was eight years older than I; he had lived on the the ranch in Mesquite and I was in Bunkerville. I only knew that the four Pulsipher boys were the nucleus of a base-ball team that could beat any other combination in th Valley so long as they were all on the same side. He was grown and courting before he left for his mission. I did not meet him until he came home.

We began keeping company at Christmas time, and by May we were engaged. He gave me a diamond when school closed, and we planned a September wedding. Only a little while before our engagement he began to complain of a stiff neck. He looked in good health; his color was good; his sense of humor was really something. No one guessed how much pain he was in, I'm sure.

We did not see much of each other during the summer. He was running a big farm and I was at our ranch at Cabin Spring much of the time. He came up to see me once and reported that he was going in to St. George to have his tonsils out. The doctor thought they might be the seat of his trouble. We had planned an early September wedding, but postponed it until after his operation, because he felt so miserable. He wondered if we should not cancel the engagement, let me teach in Bunkerville, and wait to see how things went with him, for he felt that it would not be fair to me.

He made several trips to St. George, but the doctors there could find nothing to explain his pain. It finally localized in a lump on the side of his neck below the ear. In the meantime, the date of our proposed marriage was past.

During September his brother Lew came to Bunkerville to attend the funeral of Warren Hardy's wife, Leila. He saw me at the close of it, and told me that Ernest had got home but was very miserable. He suggested that I ride over and visit him. This I did, riding my horse, and arriving just at dusk. I found Ernest lying on a cot in the living room. He sat up on the edge of it, and I was seated in a big, old-fashioned rocking chair facing him.

After a few minutes, he said to me, "I had a strange experience just before you came in. You must have been within a few rods, but I didn't know you were coming. I thought I saw you sitting right where you are now, holding a white-headed baby boy in your arms, and the impression was that in one year from now this will be yours."

That seemed the answer to our prayers. We decided that it would be right for us to get married. We went together to the doctor-- Dr. D. A. McGregor-- and talked to him, and he encouraged us to go ahead. He would take out the lump on Ernest's neck the day after our marriage and all would be OK.

As soon as he operated, the doctor knew that he had made a mistake. Instead of being in St. George only a day or two, we could not leave for three weeks, and Ernest went immediately to Salt Lake City, where the doctors-- eight of them-- held consultation, and told him that he had a malignancy, that his life-span could not be more than six to nine months. He did not believe them, for his Patriarchal Blessing promised him that he would be a father in Zion and perform a great work upon the earth.

I cannot outline in detail all of our doings from our marriage on

October 19, 1919. We spent some time in the St. George Temple; Ernest went in to Salt Lake City and I was to teach school in Bunkerville, but I could not stay. I joined him in Salt Lake City, where we spent the winter months taking treatments from a so-called "Cancer Specialist," returning in the spring, after he had done all that he could. Then is when we went back to St. George and to the temple, returning to the ranch as the time of my pregnancy was about up.

I had not written down the date of Leila Hardy's funeral, but thought it was about time, so we went over to Bunkerville, where the child could be born in my parent's home, with Father's sister, Aunt Lena, to be the midwife. We arrived in the evening. I saw Warren Hardy pass just as we drove up, and asked him when his wife died, and when he told me, I said, "We are too early. We must go back to the ranch for another couple of weeks." So we stayed over-night and went back, returning to the ranch the next morning.

When we came back, we gave ourselves only one day before the appointed time. The birth was long and complicated, and was made possible only by the administration of my father. Ernest was born just after midnight, Sept. 28.

Just today I have verified the date again. I called Vertie Earl, Leila's sister, and found that she had died in the night of September 25, and was buried on September 27, 1920.

Little Ernest was only two days old when his father went back to the farm, and in two weeks went to Salt Lake City for further treatments. His mother went with him, and as soon as I could get around, I went back to stay at the ranch with Grandpa John David Pulsipher. I took care of the telephone switchboard and did all the cooking and housework.

Ernest, my husband, returned on Christmas Eve; he died January 8, 1921.

Juanita Brooks  
March 15, 1970

1731 South 1400 East  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Jan. 12, 1974

Lynn,

Let me tell the story as it happened:

Ernest and I became engaged in April, but did not set a definite date of marriage at that time, though we did plan to be married in September, at whatever the date would be of the annual fair and rodeo in St. George. This was usually held at the time of the September LDS Conference, and we thought we we could take it all in while we were there.

But that was in April.

After my school closed in Mesquite, I came home to Bunkerville to prepare the things a girl wants to get together for her marriage. Ernest was running the farm; we had no exchange of letters because I went to the Cabin Spring ranch to help with handling the fruit there. We had apricots, peaches, plums to bottle. The apples and pears were late. But we also had string beans that we canned some of, and corn that we dried.

Ernest came up to visit me during the summer only once, and let me know that he had been in so much pain in his neck that he mowed the hay the night before in the moonlight: it would be easier on the team than to work them in the heat. And he said that unless he could get some relief, we must cancel our engagement, or at least postpone the marriage. This we did. I mean, we postponed the marriage.

All that summer Ernest ran the farm, then decided to have his tonsils out. I don't know the date on which this was done, but it was in mid-September some time. As I said before, I had no telephone at the ranch and no mail service, but I came down to stay about the first of September. and some time after that Ernest decided to have his tonsils out.

Later, we were all so shocked at the death of Leila Hardy, who died as a result of having a tooth pulled. She was young, the mother of two children, and lived just a block south of us. I played the piano at her funeral; Lew Pulsipher came to attend the funeral, and made it a point to tell me that Ernest had just got home the night before. He had his tonsils out, and felt real miserable, and Lew encouraged me to go over and see him.

I got on my pony and rode over, arriving just after dark. We had both been praying for guidance as to what to do about this--to marry or not to marry.

When he told me that just just as I came to the gate, he saw me sitting in that high-backed white rocking chair in which I was sitting, holding a white-headed baby in my arms; both of us took that as an answer to our prayers. And it was to be "one year from now."

Because of this we went ahead and were married. You know the story. I didn't write the date down at that time; I didn't know exactly when I became pregnant, but I knew that the child was to be born one year from the day Leila was buried. And he was. Our clock at home said it was about five minutes after midnight, so his date was recorded on the 28. And he was a white-headed boy!

Because I did not know just when I became pregnant, I went over to Bunkerville early, but as soon as I got the date of the funeral, I knew we had come too early. The date he gave me was correct.

Juanita Brooks