

MARTHA FOREMASTER

(Typed by Georgene Cahoon Evans, Historian, Washington City Historical Society in February 1998. Submitted by Janice Schmutz Nisson. Source: Handwritten autobiography by Martha Foremaster. Punctuation and subtitles added to typed copy for readability.)

1, MARTHA FOREMASTER (SCHMUTZ) was born to DAVID JOSEPH FOREMASTER and MARY STRATTON. I was born September 28, 1897 in the red rock house that Grandpa Foremaster built before he left on a mission to Germany.

Family

Grandpa was born in Prussia Territory and came to America when he had 2 children. It was the custom that all men serve in the Navy; and not wanting to, he left his native country to come to America. They had twin daughters. One was buried in the Ocean, and the other was Aunt Mary Maudsley, who lived on a ranch up by Central after she was married. After she was left a widow, she lived in the house where Julie Bringhurst lived. (It was there that I bought my first sewing machine.)

Early Life and Death of Father Grandma, Ma and Mama

I was too small to remember when we lived in a home later owned by Wilford and Louse Goff. This home was across the street from Judge Cox.

I had a sister, Mary Jane, older than I. At this time my father, brothers, Uncle Albert and Uncle Ephraim ran cattle out on the Arizona Strip. They worked for James Andrus, Tony Ivins and other cattle men - taking part cattle and part pay. This way they acquired a tart of cattle for themselves. It was while we lived here that my father was out riding. His horse stepped in a gopher hole. This threw him and hurt him. He lived six weeks after, not knowing Mother was carrying another baby.

We then had moved back with our Grandmother Stratton in the old yellow home where Albert Stratton has his new home. It was seven months after Papa's death that my brother, David, was born (August 18, 1899). After Papa died, Mama moved back with Grandma. Also living there was Great-Grandma Pugsley, so we had a Grandma, and a Ma, and a Mama.

To make a living for the family, they took in boarders. After my father died, Uncle Albert wanted to adopt me, but Mama wouldn't consent to this, but I spent a lot of time over there. They had 4 girls. His first wife was a sister to my grandmother. She died in childbirth. His second wife was Ida Wilbanks from Eager, Arizona. They had 4 girls.

Growing Years, School and Friends

At the age of six I started school. It was in the old Woodward School. I had a hard time to leave home and go to school. Emma McFarlane was my first teacher: As my Uncle Norman had a case

on her, he would take me to school and as long as he stayed, I would. When he went home, I would go home. Mama got awful tired of this, so one day she put a Mother Hubbard dress on me and a sun bonnet and sent me down in the lot to hoe. (This was where Clinton Fuller has his house.) We had a garden and a lucerne patch. One day I looked up and all the boarders was standing out looking at me. This was too much, so I was ready to go back to school.

Before I was five the boarders gave me a small dinner set, a stove, a red dress and shoes. I would stay home a few days then go over to Uncle Albert's and live with them a few days, then back home. I would take these things with me. I don't remember who I went to school with, but I do know that all the kids down Temple Street would get out at night and play steal sticks or sheepy-sheepy run. There were no cars at that time nor any lights. We burned coal oil lamps and it became my job to keep the lamp clean. We had no tap water, so we got up early and filled barrels, covered with gunny sacks. We wet them to keep things cool.

The kids I played with, and I guess they were the ones I went to school with, were the Pymms, Uncle Eph's, the McAllisters, Harmans, Gates and farther down was Aunt Josephine Savage, a sister of my fathers.

I don't think my grandparents came across the plains with the pioneers. As to the records they would stop in different places, build a home and farm, stay a few years, then move farther on. They had eleven children and raised 6. My father was born in Salt Lake City. Aunt Josephine was born in St. George. When they got to Salt Lake City Brigham Young called them to come to St. George.

When they got to St. George they took up a homestead in the south part of the city. There were several lots went with them. Mama traded hers to Jim Pectol for a horse for David. There are many homes there now.

Friends & School

Later, some of my playmates were Polly Nelson, Ruth Snow, Gwen Gardner, Eleanor Seegmiller, Verda Bastian, Laura Snow, Alice Squires. I can't remember all their married names. The only living ones are Laura Snow (She married David Woodbury. He has been dead 12 dears, and she lives alone.); Alice married a Hi, then a Stucki, then Wilford's cousin, Eldon Schmutz. They are all dead. Laura, Olive, Inez and I are the only ones living that I know of.

We had 8 grades in Woodward School, the elementary school; then went to the stake academy. Some of my teachers were Lena Nelson, George Brooks, John Tummy, Ann Snow Esplin, Mattie McArthur, W. O. Bentley. We went two years. Some of my school friends in the 8 grades was Vernon Church, Vernon Worthen, King Booth, Ann Picket Hall, Marion Lauritzen, Clio McArthur Sullivan, Clara Savage Abbott (a cousin), Rex snow, Rena McQuire, Louise Thurston and myself.

More About Family

I forgot to say my grandfather Foremaster was a mason. He worked on the tabernacle in the day time and at nights on his house trying to finish it enough for his family to live in before he went on

his mission back to Germany. His name is Fuhrmeister, but when they came here they changed it to Foremaster. Grandfather also built the old winery in Toquerville. Christy Schmutz often told the Foremasters he carried the hod (That was the mud to lay up the bricks.)

When grandfather was on his mission, he met a woman that later came to St. George. Her name was Caroline Peters Smith. She had been married before and her three sons (which grandfather adopted); they also had 2 sons - one died, the other is Joseph Foremaster, who lives in Las Vegas and comes to our Foremaster reunions). I'm not sure on this. When the officers were after men with more than 2 wives, grandfather left my grandmother, Sophia Lindau, and left for Mexico. He got as far as Fredonia (means "free lambing") and passed away July 4, 1892. He, his wife, and baby all buried there. I have been to his grave. Beside him is his wife and son.

Back to School

Getting back to myself, we were having a dance in the Stake Academy. I was asked to join a group by Frank Judd. I joined this crowd. The next day 2 of my other friends came and told me I could choose my own friends. From then on, I belonged to another crowd - Julie and Josephine Price. Julia and I became very chummy. I would sleep at her place and she would come and sleep with me. There were also Vera Candy, Iona Terry, Evadeen Higgens, Addie Andrus, Clio McArthur Sullivan, Marion Platt, Mary Lund, Bernice Gates. I forget the others.

The Boarders Mama Marries a Second Time

Getting back to moving in with Grandma Stratton taking boarders. A Mr. William Marshall and Fabian boys came to board. William Marshall came from Kansas City to California for his health, as he had asthma. Getting no relief; he came to St. George and was one of our first boarders.

It was almost five years after my father died he came that my mother and he were married. Across the street from my grandmother was an old man by the name of Tommy Hunt. He had a lot with foundation on it for a home. Papa Marshall bought his lot, and being a mason, he built a home. He made the brick and laid them up. Mama's health was not good, so when he went to different towns to work, he would take her and also one of us kids. I remember going to Enterprize on one of his trips. He made and burnt brick out there, Cedar city, Hurricane and Washington Fields and below town. He would lay the adobes up and leave (these were red clay like adobes) tunnels in them, about 4, then hired wood hauled and keep these burning for about 4 or 6 weeks. The brick came out light and dark red. There are several of these homes still standing.

They had 5 children so that made 8 in our family. My sister, Mary Jane, who lives in Ogden, myself, my brother David (who passed away in February), their oldest Lois Grace (who married and moved back east and died several years ago of cancer), my brother William Ashley (who lives in Orem and here in the winter), Mildred (who married Ken Judd and passed away a few years ago), Norman (who lives in Pleasant Grove, Utah) and my sister Nellie (who lives in Henderson, Nevada). My mother passed away when she was 64. She had cancer. Her mother lived 20 years after Papa Marshall passed away, before my mother. They died after my marriage.

Boy Friends - Dating

Some of the boys I went out with were Robert Worthen, Bill Hunt, Pratt Miles, Casey Jones, Claud Whitehead. Mama was really disgusted with the boys I went with and expected me in by 11 o'clock. She always stayed up until then.

Rachel Atkin lived in the block above us. We were very close to each other. Wilford and Alfred Bleak lived close together and were very good chums. Rachel got going with Alfred, so Wilford and I started to go together. We had many good times together. They both played on the basketball teams. They played with the different schools. Cedar City was a mean team to play with. If they played close to home, we went to the ball games.

One time when they went to Beaver, I was down to my sister's place. She had a new baby and I went down to wash after school. When I got back, the kids told me the ball boys had got back and Wilford had got his front teeth knocked out. Of course, I felt bad. That night my cousin, Joe Foremaster, who lived across the street, came over and asked me if I would like to go down and see Wilford. He would take me. Well, we went down, up to the front door and knocked as big as could be. Who should open it but Grandpa and Grandma Schmutz. I looked for Joe and he had jumped around the corner. There I stood. But then Wilford came to the door with a handkerchief up to his mouth. Grandpa and Grandma went up the street to Polly's.

One time Rachel and I went down to the Schmutz's, got behind a tree and whistled as loud as we could. Schmutz's had all the relatives live there. When they were in school and every one of them came out until we asked for Wilford. Then we went up to Bleaks and got Alfred for Rachel.

Marriage

It was in February that Dad and I started to go together, and we were married November 10 that fall in 1915. We went to the temple in a white top buggy. It was a little stormy. They say a stormy wedding day makes a story life. It has had its ups and downs, good and bad, but a good life anyway.

There were no big weddings at that time and no fancy dresses like they have now. I had a white skirt and blouse to go through the temple with. Then I had sent to Sears and Roebucks for a navy blue dress. Mama had dinner for Wilford's and my family. Then that evening all the relatives were invited.

I guess we started our friends to the idea of getting married. Shortly after we got married, Rachel and Alfred, Aggie McAllister and a Samuel - I forgot his first name - _____. Then third was Vilate Cottam and Antone Prince (her husband passed away), Caddie Riding and Don Ashworth (he played on the ball team with Wilford), Clio McArthur and Victor Sullivan (he also played on ball team). Marion Lauritzen also played on the team. I don't know who he married, but the woman Caddie had lived with her after Id died was Marion's daughter.

The day after we were married, we put our things in a wagon and went to the field. The old farm house has burnt down, but it was made of lumber. It had 3 rooms - a kitchen, middle room and one bedroom. A porch ran around the house until you came to the cellar. It was behind the kitchen. It was made of dirt. They stored apples and other fruit in it. On the south they made a small kitchen to cook in the summer.

My sister got married 3 years before I did, so at the time I got married, Mama sold what cattle she had. Uncle Albert and Uncle Eph had taken care of them. she decided it was time to give each one of us (Minnie, myself and David) our share from our Dad's cattle. It wasn't much. Minnie and I got \$2,000 and she bought a farm in the fields for David. He ran this farm for a long time until he got crippled, then sold it to Woodrow Staehli. We bought this half block from William Baker for \$1,000, then sold the east two lots to Israel and Susie Wade for \$500. Our west lot was clay, but we took these two because there was water to it. Later on, the city took the water. (They paid for it.) and now we pay for our irrigation water.

We built a small brick home with a cellar under it, then a lumber one on the south. It was up a ways from the ground. It had 2 windows in the south and east. We had a cook stove, a box with a curtain around it for dishes (the top was a work table). We also had a wardrobe. This kitchen was so hot in the summer we could hardly put our feet on the floor and we froze in the winter. How we ever lived in it I don't know, and as our family grew, we built a lumber room on the back. This also had seven windows with wooden shutters. The step going down to this bedroom was Our shoe box.

We bought a brass bed and a dresser, had a small stove in front room and many nights Dad and I had a bit to eat in there.

Our Children Born

David, our oldest, was born up to Mama's about 9:30 a.m. Don was born in the old McGregor clinic at about 11:30 at night. Old Dr. Frank Woodbury was our Dr. Doctor bills were \$15, a nurse \$5 and they kept us in the hospital for 2 weeks. My first bill at this hospital was \$17.50, a far cry to what the young women have to pay now days. Janice was born about 6:30 in the morning in this little dump, Dick in the hospital around midnight, Bill in the old house around midnight and Clair was born at noon in the hospital. It is called the Miracle Manor and used for sick people.

The New Home

It was while I was in the hospital Dad started our home. He made the cement brick in our yard. We had a big shade tree, and he and Art. Paxman made the brick, then they had a adobe yard east of town. It was clay ground and lots of people made their adobes there. He hauled the black rock from the Black Hill, dug the basement with a pick and scraper. It was hard work. Robert Worthen laid up the brick and Wilford laid up the adobes. Our walls were brick and adobe all through the house. It seemed so good to have a bathtub instead of a Number 3 wash tub. We have had 52 years in this house. We have made a few minor changes. When we moved in we didn't finish our front rooms. There were 2 rooms with glass doors. We have now taken the wall out and made one large room. Still at 86 and 83 we are still living in the same home. Many close neighbors now, when we only had about 8 families when we moved here.

I now have been in a club with a very nice bunch of girls. This has gone on for 30 years. We have it every other 2 weeks, have a program or play rook. One gives the program and one is hostess. We have 2 parties when our husbands are invited. Four girls have died and there are 10 widows in our club.

(Signed: Martha F. Schmutz)

Added - What Life Was Like

I will try and tell of things we had to do that the young folks know nothing about. I'm glad I had that experience, but would hate to do it now.

Taking Baths and Washing Clothes

We never had coolers or refrigerators, no electric stoves, electric lights, no electric irons. We heated the sad irons on the stove, would iron a while, then take them back on the stove to heat. They hauled wood from the mountains - had to cut it, carry it into a wood box. To heat water, we had a reservoir on the back of this stove, take water out to fill a No. 3 tub to bathe in. Usually bathed the little ones first, add more hot water to bathe the others. Also used this hot water to wash clothes. Before this, we had a No. 3 tub setting on rocks in the yard and kept a fire under this. We would boil the clothes and had a stomper (kinda like a vacuum) and punch the clothes. After boiling we had three No. 3 tubs. Would put the clothes in and scrub them on the wash board. These tubs stood on a bench south Or back of the house. We had clear water to rinse them in, had balls of bluing, this we put in a cloth bag and put a little of this bluing in. It kinda took a little of the yellow out. Hung them on a line in the yard.

We had no store soap but saved the rinds and grease from the hogs we killed. Putting lye in this and cooking to a certain stage, then we let it set until cool, turned it out on boards and cut it into bars. This soap we used for washing and also to wash our hair. They did have a castile soap to wash the body with but had a strong odor.

Rag Bees and Carpets

Another thing, when our clothes wore out, we would have a rag bee, inviting all the neighbors in, we tore the clothes in strips 1 or 1-1/2 inches wide, sewed different colors together, then wind them in a ball. Several women had looms that would make carpet trips about a yard in width. After that we would sew them together and make them the length or width of the room After the farmers threshed their grain, they would let people get enough straw to put on their floors, then the carpets were stretched over the straw and tacked down. Every spring the carpets were taken up, put on the lines where we hung our clothes. They took brooms and beat the dirt and dust out. New straw was put down and the carpets were tacked down again. I had one of these in our first little house with a piece of linoleum under the stove.

Clothes

Another thing I hated, Mama would take black wool yarn and knit our stockings. Oh, how they would itch. Then in the winter time, we had red flannel nightgowns. When I got older, we had black cotton stockings - no pant suits - just dresses. In the summer time we wore just panties and a cotton dress. When I got married, I had 3 pair of stockings (2 black and 1 white with a silk sheen). there were no bras. We had a shirt waist, no sleeves, opened down the front with buttons and lace around the top with either blue or pink ribbon run through. We made our babies dresses long with tucks over the shoulders and lace on the bottom - also long petticoats with lace on them, a flannel one also - well, I can't remember what they were called. They were made of white flannel with a band around the waist, long so we could fold them up and bring them up over the fist and pin them with a safety pin - also a belly band made of wool and shaped to fit the body, and a flannel shirt. No wonder lots of babies died. The diapers were made of flour sack or unbleached cloth. We would wash this cloth and hang on the line to bleach. About six months old, these were shortened. We dressed boys and girls the same until the boys were older we put rompers on them. then we put little pants or overalls on them.

I remember one dress I had that Mama made. It was a skirt made out of cream-colored Cashmere wool with a black stripe, ankle-length, split up the side about 1 foot, with an orange-gold satin petticoat and a blouse. This was a pretty outfit.