

Thoughts on my Father, Franklin D. Williams

August 6, 1994



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Written by David Charles Williams

Franklin "D." Williams was born to David Edward and Margaret Reece Williams on January 26, 1888. He was the ninth child. Uncle Heber was the youngest. He had four sisters and five brothers. He lived four miles west of Beaver in Greenville, Utah.

His Father was a farmer and livestock man. His Mother was a wife and mother. She had worked in coal mines when she was a young girl and carried coal out of the mines on her head. She also carried water into the mines for the workers. They raised produce for the mining and railroad towns during those early years.

Frisco was a big mining town west of Milford that was where the Horn Silver Mine was located and millions of dollars were taken from that mine.

Dad mentioned that Grandpa Williams lost an eye from a stick of wood, and a year later the other eye went blind in sympathy. He would get on his hands and knees between the rows and pull weeds with the sense of touch he could feel the difference between the plants and the weeds. He lived 15 wonderful years after going completely blind.

My dad, F.D.W., was a hard worker. He took over his mothers farm flock of sheep at age 12. he had full responsibility for them, and learned the livestock business.

He was called on a mission at the age of 17 and left his sweetheart, Leah Hannah Marshall behind. He went to Wales, his Mothers and Fathers homeland to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He told me that Dan Jones a Welch sea captain converted his Mother and Father in Wales. Dan Jones was with the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. in the Carthage Jail, and was told by the Prophet that he would go to Wales and fulfill a mission for the church and convert many. He left the jail, went to Nauvoo, and then the Prophet Joseph Smith and his Brother, Hyrum Smith were

killed by the mobs. Dan Jones went on his mission to Wales and converted over 2,000 people, 2 of which were my fathers parents.

Dads mission was cut short because his Brother, Griff Williams was in the same mission and he died of a ruptured appendix. The mission president, Charles W. Penrose asked him to accompany his brothers' body home, and see that Aunt Mary got her husbands remains home safe so that he would have a proper burial. The famous story of the tall stranger emerges from the travel home to Utah: The boat docked at Montreal, Canada, and the train leaving for Chicago was ready to leave. Dad did not yet have time to process the paperwork through customs. Dad was very worried until a large man came up to him and said, "Young man, I perceive that you have a problem, tell me about it." Dad related to him that his brothers body was not processed through customs yet, and the train was ready to leave for Chicago. The large man said, "Get on your train, and I will take care of it." So dad gave him the papers and got on the train. Dad said he must have been one of the three Nephites or John the Beloved because when he got to Chicago, the casket was on the dock ready to go to Salt Lake City. Dad traveled to Salt Lake where he met Leah Marshall there, got married in the Salt Lake Temple, and both travelled to Thomas, Idaho for the funeral of his Brother, Griff Williams. (I took this information from dads' missionary diary.)

He then returned to Minersville, UT, where he made a home, started a family, and raised an abundant livestock and/or sheep business.

He owned and operated a shearing corral up by Cave Mountain; and would shear not only his own sheep, but many herds of sheep that came in from the west desert. Herds such as Jimmy Robinson's, Tibb's, Sevey's, and others. Dad would hire 13 to 15 sheep shearers, and pay them so much per head. The more they could shear in a day the more they would make. Our close neighbor Obra Myers was one

of the top shearers. Mother would take #2 wash tubs of food to the shearing corral to feed the herders, swampers, trompers, and the shearers. It was fun to play on the 500 lb. wool sacks as they were stacked.

Father Franklin D. Williams and Leah Marshall had a wonderful family, and they settled in Minersville, Utah. They were blessed with the following children.

(Please rise with your posterity so that others get to know you!!):

- 1.) VIOLA, married Emil Nowers
- 2.) MAX, married Margaret Wright
- 3.) SPENCE, married Wilma Clothier
- 4.) MARGARET, married Leland W. Dalton
- 5.) NAOMI, died of the flu
- 6.) DELOS, drowned when young
- 7.) JOHN, married Reva Puffer.
- 8.) RENEE, married James Alma Eyre

Dad experienced a lot of tragedy in his life and had to endure many hardships. As was mentioned a daughter, Naomi died with the flu, Delos a son drowned in a watering trough, and his beloved wife Leah died in the 1918 Flu which left him a widower with 6 children. To compensate the work load of the house, and the considerable time working with the sheep herds, dad hired different house keepers to clean the house.

When John was four years old, he had pneumonia. Dad took him to the L.D.S. Hospital in Salt Lake City, where he met my mother, Lucy Pearl Pocock, who was the Superintendent of Nurses at that time. (Anna Rae will tell you about these events, so I won't duplicate the story.)

Lucy Pearl Pocock and Franklin D. Williams were married in the Salt Lake Temple on July 14, 1927. They went to Minersville and began a new family. Their union produced the following children:

- 1.) FRANKLIN JR. (deceased), married Nina Riddle and had one little girl Lisa Michelle. They were later divorced. Frank married Ida Andrews-no children-passed away Dec.26,1967 at the age of 37.
- 2.) ANNA RAE, married Max R. Carter, children: Michael, Carrie, Kayleen, and Catherine
- 3.) CHARLENE, married Donald Rex Heslington, children- 3 boys: Donald, Gary, and David.
- 4.) RUSSELL, was a stillborn child
- 5.) DAVID CHARLES, married Janet Bunker, children: Paul David, Janalee, Charles Ferren, and Mariann.

Dad lost two grown sons; Max and Spence. Max was killed in the Bald Hills while going around the sheep. Lightening struck Max and the horse he was riding. Max left a wife, Margaret, and two living children, Jimmy and Ann. A year later Margaret died of heart failure. Jimmy went to live with his Aunt Margaret and Uncle Bill Dalton. Ann went to California to live with her Aunt Teresa. Spence was working a mining claim north of Milford, UT. He had set some dynamite to go off at a certain time. When it didn't go off, he went to go check on it and the dynamite exploded. He died in the Milford Hospital later that day. Spence left a wife Wilma, and two children Raymond and Barbara Kaye. They went with their mother to live in California. She remarried a man by the name of Gus Mulineaux.

I remember when a horse died, dad said, " Thank goodness it was livestock and not my children." He loved his children and family so much. I have asked several family members about what they remembered about dad, and they would always say he loved his family.

Renee said, (quote,) "Papa was a good provider for his family, he loved us all and would do anything he could to care for us. He not only cared for his family, but if any one was in need, papa would always help them out." (unquote)

Viola said, (quote), "My dad was loved by people all over this state. His

leadership was recognized by many in the state legislature, in the wool growers, and any where dad would go. He had people who loved him, and a few didn't like him because they were jealous of him and his accomplishments." (unquote)

I remember when dad was in the wool growers organization. He would stand for the right and encourage others to do the same. When I was 12 and Charlene was 16, we were asked to sing at the wool growers convention in the Hotel Utah in S.L.C, UT.

One of the most memorable experiences I had with dad was when I was on my 12th birthday. Dad gave me a pony, but I didn't know it was for me. I came home to see a horse in the corral and I thought it was a stray, so I opened the gate and turned it out on the street. That night at supper, Dad said, "Tomorrow is your birthday; I have a present for you out in the corral". I said, "It wouldn't be that strawberry roan horse would it?" He said, "Yes, but how did you know?" I said, "Dad, I thought it was a stray, so I turned it loose." He said, "Well, don't worry about it; that horse will make it back to Beaver, and then we'll go get it." Sure enough the next day, we got call from the previous owner, and Dad told him that I had thought it was a stray. The previous owner said that he'll put the horse in his corral for him. We went to Beaver the next day and dad said, "I want you to get acquainted with this horse, so you can ride her home to Minersville, 18 miles away. Those 18 miles went by fast. I got to know "Old Roanie", we were the best of pals after that.

My dad had great respect for women, especially his wives. He demanded that the children respected them, and he wouldn't put up with any talk back to them. I know that from first hand experience!

Dad served two terms in the State Legislature and was recognized as a strong Republican from southern Utah. Dad said that when he was serving in the

legislature many of the law-makers felt Utah stopped at Provo, and anything below wasn't important. Dad instituted bills that supported growth in southern Utah. One item I remember was the large bridge between La Verkin & Hurricane. A bill was proposed by Father that people wouldn't have to go way down by the hot spring near the narrows of the Virgin River to cross over the river, but to build it where it lays today. It would save people time in travel, be much safer, and connect cities closer together. It was voted on and was passed!

Although Dad represented Millard County and Beaver County best, cities of Nephi, Fillmore, Beaver, Cedar City, and St. George was better known to the northern senators and people due to dad's genius in the legislature.

Not only did Dad serve in the Legislature, but also served in many leadership and influential capacities. He was a commissioner for Beaver County, Mayor of Minersville, UT, and served on the Beaver Stake High Council. He taught the gospel doctrine class, and the high priest group. He was president of the Yellow Mountain Irrigation Company when they bought water rights and land for \$225,000 from the Boston Land Company. His influence helped form the grazing district for the Bureau of Land Management. He went to Washington D.C. to talk to the Dept. of Interior of the U.S. Cabinet about the land. His wisdom and integrity was sought after by many, and he was always willing to serve. One of dad's favorite scriptures was: "When ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

His love for us at Christmas time will always be remembered by his children. The home evenings we had on Christmas Eve were so much fun. Having all the family gathered at our home in Minersville, Santa Claus would come and deliver a gift for each member of the family. Refreshments, mothers' famous homemade fruit cake and raisin-filled cookies, were then served.

Dad was loved by many people probably more than we realize. He spoke at 1,112 funeral services during his short 64 years of mortality. Sister Cassie Robb from the Paragonah Ward was the last person he gave a sermon to. I was there, and I listened to him preach the gospel and give the family a comforting message through the scriptures. I sang a vocal solo at that funeral and was proud to be on the same program as my father. The funeral was taped, and I later received in the mail a transcribed copy of this service. It is in Mom and Dad's Book of Remembrance, which is in Charlene's possession.

Dad loved family reunions and would never consider missing one. We are meeting today on the traditional Williams Reese Reunion Day -- The first Saturday of August. One year it would be in Minersville; the next year, it would be in Thomas, Idaho. Many a time, I would remember leaving Minersville at 8 or 9 in the morning and arriving at Uncle Johnny's, Neal Williams' or Homer Carters' place about midnight. We were very well received and cordially welcomed with food to eat and beds to sleep in. The Idaho people really loved Uncle Frank (Dad). Some of their comments when asked about dad are: 1.) Uncle Frank would always sing "Home, Home on the Range." 2.) Uncle Frank loved everyone especially the babies. He would often stop a Indian squaw on the street and ask if he could kiss her baby. One time, Viola said one of those little babies had a face like a glazed doughnut, but that didn't matter, he had great compassion for the Lords' little ones. 3.) His Welch ancestry prompted his love for people. Reunions meant togetherness, united in purpose, oneness, and a feeling of love for each other.

This reunion this day is in honor of Franklin D. Williams and his wives, Leah and Lucy. We are celebrating this unity of purpose that ties this family together. May we all share this day with love for one another, and remember this day as a beginning of our family unity. I pray that we will continue to have these reunions so

our posterity will be able to carry on this sweet feeling, I feel today! I would like to close by sharing a poem that reflects my feeling about dad.

I Follow a Noble Father

*I follow a noble father, his honor is mine to bear.
He gave me a name that was free from shame,
A name he was proud to bear.
He lived in the morning sunlight and marched
In the ranks of light.
He was always true to the best he knew and
The shield that he wore was bright.*

*I follow a noble father, and never a day goes by
But I feel that he looks down on me
To carry his standards high.
He stood to the sternest trials, as a brave man can;
Though the way be long, I must never wrong
The name of so good a man.*

*I follow a noble father, not known to the printed page,
Nor written down in the worlds renown
As a prince of his little age.
But never abstain attached to him, and never he
Stooped to shame;
He was bold and brave, and to me he gave
The pride of an honest name.*

*I follow a noble father, and him I must keep in mind.
Though his form is gone, I must carry on
The name that he left behind.
It was mine on the day he gave it;
It shone as a monarch's crown; and as fair to see
As it came to me
It must be when I lay it down.*

I pray that I may never dishonor his name in any way, and we as a family will make the personal commitments to do the same. I leave this witness with you in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

