

## HISTORY OF WILLIAM F.O. BEHRMANN

By his son Henry Behrmann

Incidents in the life of William F.O. Behrmann, born in Skanderborg, Denmark, 20 July 1839. Jens Petersen baptized him a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day-Saints when 24 years of age. Prior to this he had served in the army of Denmark, against Germany. A bullet from the enemy trimmed one eyebrow and another one skinned his thumb.

After he became a Mormon he immigrated to America, (after marrying my Mother in Feb. 1866) arriving in Ephraim, Utah 6 October 1866. He lived in this place until 1874 or 75, when he moved to Fountain Green, Utah. While living in Ephraim, he assisted in fighting the Indians. One experience was related by mother as follows: When brother William was two months old father had been on guard, herding horses and cattle for some time. Some of the horses were contrary and wanted to stray towards the mountains. Father became angry, because two other men, who were to help, did nothing but lay in the shade. An Indian boy was also helping. About mid-day they went to join the other two to eat their lunch. Father looked up and saw the Indians right near them and who soon began firing their guns. Father fired his gun and ran between the contrary horses and the rest of the herd with the Indian boy following. The boy was on a horse and father had a neighbor's mule with a rope dragging so he could catch him in an emergency. This mule became excited and could not be caught. They succeeded in getting most of the herd started towards town, so father told the boy to hurry on with it and he would follow. In the meantime the other two men had arrived in town and as father did not come with the herd they concluded the Indians had killed him. A searching party was soon organized who followed another party, who was already following the Indians on foot. This latter party persuaded father to go with them. It was sometime before the searching party found father very much alive. The town's people kept (what they thought was bad news) from mother, and tried to persuade her to come to their home. She refused, and about sundown, father arrived unhurt.

One year in Ephraim, the grasshoppers destroyed father's crops so he had to seek employment elsewhere. He went to Provo and worked with S.C. Berthlesen at the potter's trade for nine months and later on seven months.

Father went to Arizona leaving the 6 Feb. 1876 and returned when I was 18 months old. I was born 23 Feb. 1876. He took his family by team leaving Fountain Green, our present home, and went to Moroni and stayed two days on account of mother being sick. Her throat was very sore. The journey was continued and we finally came to Lee's Ferry on the Big Colorado River, where we ferried across. The dog we owned would go into the water after sticks, etc., and as we were crossing some one threw a chip into the water and the dog jumped in after it, this frightened the oxen and we came very near capsizing. We camped on the bank of the river overnight and the next day we ascended and descended the Buckskin Mountain. As

we descended one of the wagons almost slipped off the dugway. Shortly after leaving the mountain we came to the great Petrified Forest. I remember father telling of one that measured over five feet in diameter and it seemed to be perfectly in line with two other pieces that seemed to taper naturally as if all belonged to one tree. The three pieces with the gap between measured over three hundred feet.

We lived in Brigham City and Sunset Arizona about three years when we moved to Colorado (San Luis Valley) Mother remembers very little on account of being sick almost all the time. She, however, remembers an incident that happened in a Mexican town. She was driving a team of oxen, some Mexicans rode by and cracked their whips, which frightened the oxen, and they turned around along side of the wagon and stopped.

While we lived in Manassa, Colorado, I was about six and Andrew about eight years old. We were cow herders. We had a black shepherd dog and it was very attentive to us.

One morning my head ached and I had a sore throat. Mother tied a handkerchief around my neck and told me I had better not go, but the thoughts of chasing rabbits made me well enough to go. Rabbit chasing held no charms for me that day for I became very ill, but we dared not come home with the cows before dark. When we arrived home I went to bed and knew scarcely anything for six weeks. Father was working on the thresher and came home every night until I became sick, when they left town with the machine. So mother was left alone with the children, who numbered at this time seven. Others of the family came down with the fever (Typhoid). When I began to improve, people would come in to see the "poor thing", as there was nothing left of me but skin and bones.

On Christmas day brother Niels and I were placed on the floor in front of the fireplace so we could keep warm, while a little sister (Maggie) came to our home. We were so weak that we could not crawl, but Niels was doing his best to get to me to make candy out of me.

Later on we two had lung fever, which seemed to be getting the best of us. Mother tried every remedy she could hear of. One day a sister Blair came in and asked if she could doctor those two boys. Mother said, "sure, if you think you can do them any good." She used hot packs soaked in water and turpentine. This did the work, for we were soon well. Years later this same remedy saved Frank Shawcroft, in Richfield, Colorado.

An Indian visit and birth-mark- a short while before Annie was born, peace was arranged with the Indians in San Pete CO. Utah and the Indians were making it known by visiting the people begging for something to eat. Mother had just given William and Sophia some bread and molasses when two big bucks appeared in the door. She gave them some bread but one refused the bread. He had six pistols strapped to his waist. He saw father's pistol hanging on the bedpost and wanted to

trade for it. He continued teasing for it for a long time, when mother took the children outside, intending to call for help but she was so frightened that she could not speak, nor, did she recover for several hours. She was so afraid her baby would have a black face, that she recalled having heard that the placing of the hands would determine the birth-mark so she placed her hands on her back. When Annie was born she had a black spot on her back which is still there. Mother was extremely Sick for four days and nights before she was born. Her left side became paralyzed and she was so affected for a year.

About the year 1905, father was irrigating the lots and had the ditch full of water and had to bank up to keep from flooding the road. He had a watering trough outside the fence. John Knight, then a full-grown man, drove across the ditch and broke the bank. Father call him down for his carelessness, to which John responded by knocking father down and beat him up so bad that he could not lay down for two days and nights. He cannot recall John hitting him. Mother and Mary were in the house and Mary saw John have father down but did not see him hit father. Hyrum and Heber heard the noise as they were coming from the corral, but when they came to where they could see father they saw John on his way home. When the people in LaJara heard of it they were indignant and could they have gotten evidence they would have sent John over the road.

Mother had a spell of Mountain Fever soon after they arrived in America and it was so severe that it almost obliterated her memory, so much so, that she remembers very little of her folks and home in Denmark. She remembers her father speaking of a poor house. She thinks he was consigned to it sometime in his life. There seems to have been a condition that when a person was sent to the poorhouse in Denmark they were discriminated against so they remained poor, ever after. Mother seems to recall the fact that her father's mother was very cruel to her children. She remembers on only one boy and one girl. The girl was crazy from the effects of the cruel treatment from her mother. The boy was sent to the poorhouse. Her father's father was evidently dead at this time, as she (mother) remembers nothing about him. After a time, mother's father was released from the poorhouse and worked for a man seven years. In time he married a girl by the name of Ola Sophia Petersen and had a family of five boys and three girls. Her (Mothers) parents, husband and self immigrated to America in 1866 after having joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Her brother James was a cripple and worked at the ----- trade and refused to accept the Gospel. Her father and mother died in Utah, firm in the faith.

**UNITED ORDER:** While living in Arizona, the Saints attempted to live the united order and father had to replenish broken dishes as he was a potter by trade.

**FLUE 1919:** Brothers Hyrum and Edgar had a severe experience. Ed's family was all down and no one willing to help. He and Hyrum had to be nurse, chief cook and bottle washer. The "flue" soon got them down and Hyrum became so bad that there was little hope for his recovery. Since then he has felt the effects in a broken

constitution. Sister Mary is in the same condition. Hyrum is troubled with rheumatism. Ed suffers from appendicitis.

**INCIDENTS IN ANDREW'S LIFE:** When he was two or three years old and we were living in Fountain Green, Utah, he had Black Cancer and Scurvy so bad that his teeth all but fell out and his stomach was almost all gone. It seems that the cause was that when he had measles they did not come out, as they should. Mother was broken out with them when I was born (at seven months) and in nine days I was full of measles. Andrew was neglected on account of mother being sick. When we moved to Arizona, the Dyptheria and Scarlet fever broke out in the town. Andrew took Scarlet Fever and it would not break out and he began to swell up until he became so large that mother could scarcely reach around him. Father asked mother to wash him and he would anoint him all over and bless him. She started to pick him up but he fell to the floor in a swoon and remained so sometime. The Elders administered to him and he revived. At night as he lay between father and mother he began moving his left leg up and down as if in pain. Father told him to be quiet but he could not. So father called the Elders at 9 p.m. and they worked with him until 12 midnight. During this time this terrible pain had traveled around his body beginning at his left foot up the left side over the top of his head and down his right side down to his foot. From then on he began to get better.

**INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF BROTHER FRANK:** He married Alene Haynie in a dare game, she seemed to not want any children and when the baby was born it was very small and puny. One day she gave it to a woman who had started home with it when Frank came home. He took the baby and gave them to understand that she was his baby and he was going to keep her. The mother put the baby on the bottle in a short while and would tie her in a chair and go away and leave the poor child alone to cry for hours. Frank and his mother-in-law had to care for the baby. Alene soon decided she must have some nice furniture and as Frank had ten acres of spuds, she persuaded him to allow her the privilege of getting the furniture and the spud crop. She succeeded to the tune of \$400. She soon left Frank and the baby after she peddled the furniture and went with another man.

The people living in the community considered Frank as bad as she and refused to give him work, so he came home to his brothers Hyrum and Ed who gave him work. He is determined to remain in the locality until he has paid all his bills. He has given his wife a divorce and he has the baby who is now (1921) a smart little girl between five and six years and going to school.

**INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF AUNT LENA – MOTHERS SISTER:** She married a man by the name of Mortensen, who came to America first and when she came, she met him on the plains and he took her to his home where he was living illegally with another woman. She objected but could do nothing. She had to work for the three of them. She washed for President Kimball's family and through another woman who was helping President Kimball, he learned of her story and that she was anxious to get away. He went into another room a few minutes and came back and

told her to arrange for a tea party at her home and conditions would shape so she would be free. She said her husband would not be home. He assured her that he would. Accordingly the party was called and as the people began to arrive her husband began to get uneasy. One of them told another to watch him. They soon had to lock the doors and then began to quiz him. He confessed his sin and said he had told his wife if she was not satisfied, she could go. They asked if he still said so "Yes," he said. She was set free but he continued to shadow her and beg her to come back. She soon became acquainted with one Mr. Brown, whom she thought to be a Mormon. He induced her to marry him. Not long after, she learned that he had another wife, so they fled to the plains where they wandered about for six years, bringing children into the world and burying them. She finally persuaded him to send her to Utah with one team and wagon in the company of two freighters. They arrived at Salt Creek and she was sick with child and with effort persuaded one of the men to take her to Fountain Green. She ordered him to stop at the first house, which was the Bishop's who came out and invited her in, but she could not come as her baby was born. She asked for his wife who then came and they soon brought her in the house. Her husband came later and bought her a little house west of Moroni where she lived for some years. She died of dropsy, leaving three boys and one girl. Her husband had gone off to work, presumably and was never heard of since. In her last illness she would sit on the bed and look out of the window watching for his return. The baby girl was given to a woman and her brother, Niels Andersen. Jeppesen took the boys for awhile.

**SCHOOL DAYS:** Frank and Ed learned easy at school and as Frank could easily keep ahead of his class he became discouraged because his teacher (Mary Jensen) Would not allow him to go ahead but kept him back with the rest. Fred Christensen (his next teacher) showed him every courtesy. Erastus Nielsen was county Supt. Of schools. Fred wanted him to allow Frank and Ed 8<sup>th</sup> grade certificates if they should pass the 8<sup>th</sup> grade examination to be given at Sanford. This was denied so they took no exam. Mother says that Frank had a desire to learn the brick mason trade or some other trade but was always refused the opportunity and put at some work he detested.

**FATHER'S LAST ILLNESS:** He had scarcely been sick all his life and had the promise by a patriarch that he could live so long as he desired. He caught cold in the summer of 1914 and soon made up his mind that he wanted to go and told some one that he had sent for his "ticket". No amount of talk could persuade him to the contrary. He was morose and grouchy during his illness, and seemed very childish. Word was sent to all the children who came, except myself, who was in Arizona and William who was in Canada. Just a few days before he died, Brother Frank heard him conversing with his mother and sister. Many people came to his funeral as he had the love and respect of the whole community as a God fearing man. The cause of his sickness was exposure in the way: He was reseeded, by hand, some alfalfa on a rainy day, worked until noon without breakfast and was very wet. Next day he rode horseback to the courthouse in the rain. David Shawcroft should have gone to, but failed. The trip was useless. He ate nothing until night. Next day he was too

weak to get on a horse as also, he was the next day. He finally went to bed and was determined to die. He refused a doctor until it was too late. He asked the folks not to hold him with their faith. Pleurisy was the direct cause of death. He had made special effort with the property so mother would be cared for and comfortable. One night while sitting in a chair he saw a black image enter the room. He was in the act of commanding it to leave when all became light.

**INCIDENT IN BROTHER ED'S BIRTH:** Mother was very poorly and was afraid she would not be equal to the trial. Father was rather slow, made fires, harnessed horses and still in no hurry. Mother drank hot tea, which relieved pain; sent Annie to get help after father went for the mid-wife. Aunt Carry Jensen came, Aunt Stena Jensen would after breakfast. Carry got busy and soon the baby was born. Mother became delirious. After all was over, father came with Sister Haskell. Mother regained strength slowly.