

LIFE SKETCH of VILO REDD

given at her funeral by Melanie Lewis

Vilo Redd was born 7 January 1901 in New Harmony, Washington, Utah. Her brothers and sisters were Will, Grace, then triplet girls-Belle, Myrtle and Verena-two of the triplets died soon after birth, and the third triplet died a month later. Then Grace died the next month. All are buried in the small cemetery at New Harmony. Lura came next, then Fern, Jessie, Paul and Lyman. Vilo came next the eleventh child. Then Pauline, Mary and Kay.

One of Aunt Vilo's earliest memories was sitting in a high chair while her mother and neighbors prepared peaches for drying. Her brother Lyman kept sneaking her pieces to eat. When she was four their family moved to Raymond, Alberta, Canada. Her father built a large two-story home of cement blocks he bought from John W. Taylor, who had a home site across the street from them. Their home was a gathering place for parties, dances, and "showers" for new brides-to-be. They had a large library and were always encouraged to seek education.

Raymond was a small farming community with mostly Mormon families. Their family washing was done on a washboard, they had a cistern in the basement to collect rain water from the roof, mostly for shampooing hair. Every scrap of fat was saved to make their soap. School was let out for "beet vacations", so that everyone could help with the thinning of sugar beets. One time some boys put a water snake in Aunt Vilo's straw hat - she never forgot.

An especially exciting time for Vilo was going on the train to Lethbridge with Lyman and Gwennie for dental appointments. The train ride was three hours each way and they took sandwiches and cookies for lunch.

When Aunt Vilo was about six, she was watching her brother, Paul, chop wood. She was standing near the chopping block and Paul told her to move, but she must not have moved far enough because he accidentally almost completely severed her left index finger. Being so far away from doctors, her mother splinted it so that it couldn't move. She dressed it with "sticky gum," which is gum from the pine tree before it had hardened. Grandma Redd used that for everything and had brought a large can from Southern Utah. It literally stuck the finger back to the hand and it healed without infection, although that finger was about an inch shorter than the other index finger.

Vilo's father died a day before her tenth birthday. She remembers well the morning he died, as his condition grew worse, all the children were awakened to go in and see him for the last time. The funeral was held on a bitterly cold day, but nevertheless was the biggest funeral held in the town to that time. He had been a

counselor in the stake presidency and was well known and loved by all in the surrounding area. Her oldest brother, Will, returned home from pre-med studies in Salt Lake to come home and take over the family and farm.

About that time, Aunt Vilo recalls the oldest girls in primary were learning to crochet, but she wasn't quite old enough. She asked her mother to teach her, so Grandma Redd unravelled a baby jacket and used the yarn to teach Vilo. She progressed rapidly and finished many projects before the older girls had finished theirs. Crocheting, knitting, tatting and other handiwork were always something Vilo enjoyed. She crocheted a lovely dress and bonnet for my sister Kathy when Kathy was about three years old. Nena still remembers taking Kathy downtown one time with the dress on. She said she felt like a celebrity because so many people stopped her to say what a beautiful dress Kathy was wearing. After my mother died, Aunt Vilo crocheted many snowflakes to decorate a tree for the festival of trees in her honor. It was a beautiful tree. Many people have benefited by the sweaters, snow leggings, collars, and comforters that Vilo has made.

Vilo was always one to offer her services no matter how unpleasant the task. When she was around thirteen, Aunt Fern's husband, George Laycock, had planted about eight or ten acres of potatoes for sale. It was October and cold and stormy. When the ground dried out enough to dig them, sack them and store them, George came to town to find someone to sew the sacks after they were filled. The woman who promised to do it was ill. He called everyone he thought might be a possibility, but to no avail. Aunt Vilo told him she would like to try to do the job for him. It was a very tough job and she nearly froze her hands because she could not sew with gloves on. She said she trudged up and down, up and down the ploughed field. They finished up at ten o'clock at night- she said never in all her life was she so tired.

After graduating from high school in 1920, World War One was on and she was offered a teaching job in a small Norwegian community in Eastern Alberta. She taught for six months and decided teaching was not for her. She applied to the LDS Hospital's nursing school and was accepted. She left Raymond at the same time as Visiting General Authorities for their stake conference were leaving to return to Salt Lake City. Her Uncle Orrin Snow introduced her to John A. Widtsoe, a member of the Quorum of 12, who took her under his wing on the trip to Salt Lake. Her three years of training were strenuous- ten hours a day, six and one half days a week, plus classes and studying. They were up at five thirty AM with devotional at six fifteen, then breakfast.

She remembers the first hypodermic injection she gave- to a teenage boy recovering from an appendectomy. He was in a lot of pain and asked for something. In those days, nurses had to buy their own syringes and needles, and due to cost, many needles were used long after they should have been discarded. The charge nurse let Aunt Vilo borrow her needle which was so old it had no point. Vilo had to push hard,

but it finally pierced the skin. She vowed she would never use such needles on her own patients. After graduation she spent a month learning to give ether anaesthetics, then left for a job in the twenty-bed Cedar City hospital -to some of her most memorable and exciting experiences. She was superintendent of the hospital, head nurse, anaesthetist, x-ray technician, admission clerk and what-have-you. There were two doctors on the staff. She worked from seven AM to seven PM and then took call from seven PM to seven AM - which meant to come in on all emergencies. They were the only hospital from Provo to Las Vegas, so received many car accidents and emergencies from out-lying areas.

She found many relatives in this area. Dr. MacFarland, one of the staff doctors, used to tease her about being related to half the county. He quit teasing her when he found out she was related to his sister-in-law. Many times the doctors were called out to do emergency surgery and Aunt Vilo would go with them to do the anaesthesia. One time during the depression years, a group of six children in the farming community of New Castle needed their tonsils out. Dr. Bergstrom offered to do it, if Aunt Vilo would volunteer her anaesthetic services - she readily agreed. They set up an operating room in the school house, each child in turn was separated from their tonsils, rolled in a blanket and laid on a bench to recover. They stayed overnight, checked each patient in the morning, then returned to Cedar City.

Many family members visited her in Cedar and she would always take a few days off to show them around -New Harmony, the pretty canyons, and other places. The doctors wanted her to learn gas anaesthesia. She was accepted to a four-month school in Cleveland. While there she traveled with some fellow students to Niagara Falls and New York.

After seven years in Cedar City, she decided to make a change. Vilo knew almost every man, woman and child in Cedar City and Iron County. Someone came up with the idea for a community farewell party. They had a large barbecue with games and visiting. At the end, everyone lined up to shake hands and say goodbye. Her cousin Scott Matheson gave her a kiss goodbye which made her blush. Some of the other men followed suit, which did not please her too much.

Looking back on her stay in Cedar City, Aunt Vilo said this was the choice position of her career. No other gave the experience, interest or satisfaction. One of the nurses who worked with Vilo in Cedar City, Aileen Noble Mills, is here today.

She then worked in Idaho Falls, Lehi, Ogden, finally settling in Salt Lake during World War Two. She worked for thirty five years at the Medical Arts building, making many good friends, still performing anesthetics, as well as other nursing duties.

Vilo and Lura built a home next to our family home, 3844 South 4 East Salt Lake

City, and for many years nurtured and helped our family. When I was young, I slept over with Aunt Vilo almost every night. She always fixed me a large glass of cocoa every morning, brought me treats regularly from work and protected me from my brother, Wayne.

I well remember large gatherings at their home at conference time and on Christmas morning for breakfast. Aunt Vilo felt that this was her home. She worked hard to build the ward library. I always remember her making flannel-board figures and all kinds of visual aids for the stories that were to be told. One time when she was helping with a stake musical, they needed flags from different countries but could not find any to buy. Aunt Vilo made these flags herself. Just a few months ago I used these same flags for a Blue and Gold banquet in Bountiful. Everyone wanted to know who would go to all that work.

In her journal, Aunt Vilo talks about the good group of friends she had here and those she had family home evening with. How much she enjoyed it and what good women they were!

Aunt Vilo lived with us almost from the time our daughter Katie was born. I thank my husband, Randy, who was really a champion for Aunt Vilo. Often he said, "I think it is really food for our family to have Vilo with us." Julie used to say "Thanks so much for letting Vilo live with us." Katie, being so young and fun, was the apple of her eye. Every time she came home from visiting Aunt Mary in California, it was Katie she wanted to see and Katie's love she wanted to have. One of Aunt Vilo's current visiting teachers was very good to her, always treating her with concern, respect and love.

As I and my cousin Barbara MacPhee were reading through Aunt Vilo's history, we were talking about how valuable a history like this is. We learn that, although everything might not turn out as we anticipated, and though troubles come our way, those who have come before have accepted what life had to offer, kept the faith, turned to the Lord and done their best.

I hope my children and all of us will remember Aunt Vilo for the good and kind person she was. I love her dearly and know she is happy to be reunited with her parents and many brothers and sisters. Amen.

We cousins in Alberta loved Aunt Vilo very much too. We looked forward to her visits, which were always wonderful. We miss her.

Vilo died 29 May 1988