

MEMOIRS OF DAISY MCLAMB TEW

WRITTEN NOVEMBER 1, 1962

SALEMBURG, N. C.

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My parents were Mr. and Mrs. A. B. McLamb, both deceased. My mother was the former Narcissus Jane Draughon. To this union were born six children, two girls and four boys. I am the fourth child and baby girl and was born June 5, 1893. We were all born in Sampson County, Honeycutt township on my father's farm.

Beginning with my life's true story, and going back as far as I can remember with the year 1898, when I was about five years old, or a little older, possibly about five and a half. We were living in a one room house almost due east three or four hundred yards from where my brother Otis now lives, which isn't quite a mile from where I live now, and have lived since 1918. We had a small porch and outside room to the house and we all cooked and ate and slept in the big one room. We had the outside room for company. About this time, or a little later, my father started building us a new home. This was about five or six hundred yards almost due north from where we were living then. I was about six or a little older when we moved to the new house, but I can remember it. Our new house contained four bedrooms, a living room, a hallway, back porch and front porch. We were all very happy to move in the new house. We then moved the old one room house up to the new house and we made it our kitchen. We had a deep well from which we got water.

We were very good farmers when I was growing up, but in those days we had no tobacco, only corn and cotton. We six children were all good cotton pickers. We not only picked our own, but a lot for our neighbors, for which we were paid. When I was about seventeen years old, I picked 353 lbs. one day. My parents were both hard working people. After we moved in our new house, my mother put her weaving loom up in the back of the old kitchen and she made the cloth for our clothes. She also knitted our stockings. I remember the old spinning wheel that she used to fix her thread on to weave the cloth and the cords that she used to bat cotton with to put in her quilts which really fixed it nice. They might even still be at the old home place which my sister Leola and her son and his wife live in today. It would be very interesting for you children of today to see them and how they worked. Mother use to stay up at night and knit or make bats for quilts.

One pleasant thought about my father comes to my memory at this time. When we were very small, he used to go down to Wilmington, N.C. He would go down the river on a raft of logs which he would sell when he got there. He was gone about three weeks and mother would cook him a trunk full of food to last him while he was gone and we kids were very anxious for him to come back to see him, and to see if there was any food left.

Many things were happening while we were growing up. The first school that I went to was known as the old Fann School. We use to walk there and back which was about five miles both ways. We only went six months of the year. The other six were busy on the farm. In my school days I had a lot of different teachers, and it would be hard to count all of them. I went to the old Piney Green School for a while, and also to Benson and Salemberg. I also attended school for a while in Durham. I can't remember how old I was when I went to Salemberg, but I was very

young. The first time I went the professor held me in his lap. I boarded then at the club house with many other girls. We cooked our own meals, and there were four girls to each room, and four rooms to the building. The last time I went, I boarded at Mr. R. N. Butlers in Salemburg. While I was going to school at Salemburg, I started taking music lessons, and my teacher was Mr. Ralph Fisher, who was blind. At this time mother bought me a piano to practice on at home. This piano still remains at the old home place, and while my daddy was getting older and feeble, I use to go over and play for him a great deal. One of his favorite songs was "Silver Threads Among the Gold." My daddy was a singing leader at the Piney Green Baptist church and I used to sing alto in the choir. My brother William Buck use to sing tenor in the choir also.

One of the fasinating things that we kids all looked forward to was the old corn shucking that daddy would have in the Fall, after he got his corn all harvested. He would ask a big crowd of men to help shuck the corn and then they would sing some really old time songs with daddy as the leader. Mother would cook all day to feed the men and we had plenty to eat. When Christmas time was drawing near and we kids got our stockings filled up to the top, this to us really meant a merry, merry Christmas. We would have some parties now and then such as fruit suppers, and candy cookings, and sometimes a square dance which I enjoyed very much.

I am getting up in my teens now and my mother turned out to be a very good seamstress, and she made me some beautiful dresses for myself, and at sixteen I had my first date. It was with Thedia Royal of Salemburg, half brother to Dr. D. M. Royal. I had many dates with different boys before I was married. One of the outstanding ones was Coda Smith from Benson, N. C. He used to ride a bicycle down to see me and at eighteen he wanted us to get married. I weighed 110 lbs. and he weighed 210 lbs. so I decided I was too young to get married, and I didn't like the big difference in our size so I backed out.

In our community when I was a young girl, a beauty contest was held which I was fortunate enough to win. It was held at the Huntley School near where I live at this time. Miss Mollie Honeycutt who was also one of the contestants, baked a cake for the winner. She and I got the most votes, with sixty for her and one hundred fifty three for me. I felt sorry for her and shared the cake with her. Perlle Tew, my future husband and Anson Warren, a friend, worked for me to win. I was about nineteen years old.

My schooling had only been to the seventh grade, but I was good at reading and spelling, but not arithmetic. I spent my last school days out here at the Huntley School. Perlle was also going there and we helped each other out in our work. We received our diplomas at the same time.

Going on with my story, at the age of about fifteen or sixteen years old, I became interested and very serious in Religion. After

studying and praying about it, even when I was working out in the fields, I finally made a serious decision and for many good reasons, I joined the Mormon Church and was baptized at the age of seventeen by Edmond Godwin of Salt Lake City. Some of the things that converted me were: the supreme sacrifice that the first members paid with the loss of their lives, their personal belongings, relatives and friends, for the things they believed in. Also a religion that does practice and teach what the Bible teaches, and one that is so strong it can carry the message to all the world at their own expense. This is a supreme sacrifice that no other church can claim.

At the age of twenty two, just three months short of my birthday, I made another serious decision. At this time my mother was in the Hospital and of course I had to tell someone and when I told my daddy that I was going to be married, he had to cry and so did I. At this time Marvin, my brother and his wife Effie were staying at home with us. Effie and I made my wedding dress. It was a light cream wool, trimmed in white satin. I kept it for many years, but it finally disappeared. On February 9, 1916, Perlle and I were married at my home. On that same afternoon a very bad thunder cloud came up and it rained very hard, but was soon over. Mr. Jones from Salemburg married us, and present were his wife, Mrs. Jones, Effie and Marvin and Frank Gray of Fayetteville, relative of Perlle's. My father had to leave for some reason at this time, so I stayed at home for a few days before I went with Perlle down to the Tew farm where we stayed for about six months. It was a very large family with twenty-one people counting us. Cooking there was sure a problem, and after we moved to ourselves I had to learn all over how to cook for just the two of us. The day I got my old trunk from my home was just like a funeral almost. The first thing that Perlle did after we were married was to fix up the old cotton gin and saw mill. On Jan. 26th, 1917 on a Friday evening he was testing the saw while it was still running, and his hand was drawing with the saw. He was drawn into the saw somehow, and in a split second he jumped over the saw to save his life, but he lost his left arm above the elbow. At this time we were living close to the mill and we had a phone in the house, but before we could get a doctor to him he almost bled to death. His stepfather pulled off his suspenders and corded his arm to prevent him from bleeding too much. This probably saved his life. A few months later, one month before I was twenty four, on May seventh, 1917 a more pleasant event took place in our life and I gave birth to my first child, a seven pound boy. This was a special day for my daddy as it was his fiftieth birthday. Through the passing years of joy and pain, sweat and tears, I was to give birth to twelve children by the time I was forty-three. In our family there are seven girls and five boys. A blessing I am proud to have. At this writing, all children are living.

The years between the birth of B. H. our first child, and the death of my husband were very trying in many ways. We moved into the house that I am now living in 1918. Blondie was walking at that time. It was a busy

time trying to keep house, help Perlle tend the grocery store and also help out a little on my daddy's farm. I had another boy, Pershing less than two years after B. H. and about two years later another boy, Leo. When I had my first girl after the three boys it was a happy day for me. I had wanted a girl, so I wouldn't cut the baby boy's hair until Virgie came and her hair was so pretty, I didn't mind cutting the boy's hair at all. I cooked all day the day before Virgie was born, as it was our last corn shucking. The next A. M. she was born. The next child that was born was Ruby, and the day before she was born I picked cotton at my father's all day. This was Sept. 8, 1924 and was my fifth child. My sixth, William came after that in July, 1926. We were living in a five room house at this time with two porches. The rooms were large however, and we had about five large beds with one in the sitting room and two each in the back bedrooms. By the time the last children came, they were sleeping about three to a bed. In 1928, 1929 and 1930 I gave birth to three more girls just fifteen months apart. They were Willa Dean, Geranium and Lois. On May 27th, 1932 at the height of the depression, Violet was born, just 18 months after Lois. In July, 1934 another son, Jerome was born, number five of the boys. April 1936, I gave birth to Rosalee my seventh girl and the last of my twelve children. In the year 1940 when Rosie was four, I kept house, milked a cow and sent seven children to school at Salemburg each day. At this time Leo was in college at Chapel Hill being the only one of the older children to finish school and go on to college. He did this by working part time and going to school part time. He had to pay his own way as we were not able to help finance him in any way. After the children left for school each morning and after my work was through, I tended the store through the day until the children got back from school. Perlle would then take over at the store and I would go back to the house and take over the housework all over again. I cooked many a large meal in my life and washed many clothes the old fashioned way with an iron pot and home-made lye soap. My father use to come down at night time and help me get the children to bed. He was a kind, and wonderful father and grandfather.

When the youngest of our twelve were still fairly young, Perlle built three more rooms to our house, making it a very nice large house. One room was the bathroom, being the first indoor toilet we had ever had, and the other two were the guest bedroom and living room. He later enclosed the back porch and did some remodeling to the house to make it warmer. We were the first people in the community to have a bathroom and running water. We were also the first to get a refrigerator and other conveniences, as Perlle was quite generous and thoughtful of me in many ways. He was considered one of the best electricians and plumbers in the area, and was well thought of in the community. At one time he was asked by many people to run for Sheriff of Clinton. He held many jobs in his lifetime as he didn't care too much for farming, and though we often lacked a lot of food and clothing for the children when they were growing up, we managed somehow. He was a self-educated man as he didn't get too much formal education, but right before he died he had a good job with the county, and was well

thought of there.

And now for a little personal history about myself, born on June 5th, 1893 and at this writing I am 69 years old, and will be 70 next June 5th, 1963. That number is beginning to seem somewhat sad now and I began to feel it also. All through my life with my twelve children being born, I have never had to go to a hospital. I have really been blessed so far, and I have many blessings to count. My health is declining since the past year though. My hobbies are gardening with my flowers and vegetables. I also like to play my old piano, read good books, but most of all I like to get good letters from the children, which also gives me a pretty good job of writing letters. I also like to cook, and should be very good at it by now. For all the people that I have had business dealing with since my husband died over six years ago, I wish to thank them for their kindness to me and I believe they can all describe me with one word in our dealings and that is "trustworthy". I like to live out of debt. One of my most cherished verses in the Bible is: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

Each Sunday in our church we have a chance to give our testimony and thanks for our blessings, and here is my favorite which I gave in 1960.

For the past two or three weeks I have been reading right much about the wonderful things our church has been doing and I am quite sure now more than ever before that I made the right decision more than 50 years ago. I knew full well what I was doing when I accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I accepted it for keeps. I didn't intend for no one man or woman young or old to interfere with my way of thinking and my way of believing. In this I have succeeded. My husband never did in any way interfere with my way of believing and I gave him the same privilege I took for myself. I also gave my children the same privilege. Several years ago when the building of this chapel was being discussed, another discussion took place one night at home about supper time. Two of the younger girls were talking and discussing the things our church teaches and one said to the other. "I hope they will go ahead and build a Mormon chapel, I think I will join the church and be baptized for I believe what they teach more than anything else that I've heard." The other girl said, "I think I will too." In a short time after that I had the privilege to go to Goldsboro and see four of my children baptized at one time and two months later, a fifth one. This is a blessing and a privilege that no other woman can claim in my neighborhood, and for all of them I am indeed grateful. So today I am happy because I belong to a church that has produced the healthiest people and the most educated people in the USA and one that is so strong it carries the message to all the world free of charge.

What a marvelous work and a wonder. May we always have the full measure of true love and real friendship for each other, and may we live so pure in heart and so humble and honest in all we do that we may have the good blessings of health, peace, joy and happiness. This testimony I bear in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Another opportunity we have in our church is to give short talks and this is one of my favorite talks which I gave sometime in 1961.

A few days ago I was looking through the Improvement Era, our church magazine, reading some of the things in it, and I read an article as follows. "When the Lord gives us a full week's time to do our work in, why not give him the Sabbath day and work for Him." Today I have four special reasons why I am in church. First because I am a member, second because it is my duty, third to make someone a little happier by my presence here, and fourth to fulfill an assignment I promised last Sunday. I would like to tell a true story that happened many years ago before I was grown. We invited a very special friend of mine over at my parents one weekend. It was my old music teacher, Mr. Ralph Fisher. My daddy loved good singing and playing and so did I. The first thing he played was an old favorite of mine, "The end of a Perfect Day." I admired these words so much, and I often wondered what would be a good definition of these words. To me it would be a well planned, well done days work, doing all we can to help ourselves and to also do something good for someone else so when the day is over we can relax and feel the full joy and satisfaction of knowing within ourselves that we have made for ourselves a perfect day. Our time is very important, lets use it wisely. I leave these thoughts with you in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

And now in closing my life story. On April 22, 1956 on a Sunday A.M. at seven o'clock, my husband passed away at Clinton Memorial Hospital. He had been sick for the past few years and had suffered a great deal. He was not one to complain, so he had suffered in silence. At this time the children were all able to be home and by his bed side except two of the younger children. Jerome was in the service overseas, and Violet was in N. Y. C. Jerome landed in N. Y. about one hour after his father died. The family was all able to be here for the funeral. At this time all the children were married except Jerome and Rosie and they were living away from home. I was sure lucky to have Rosie around to help out at this time. We had Perlle's funeral on April 23rd at Piney Green church and he was buried at home in our family cemetery. Through the lonely years since my husband's death, I have found much joy and happiness in the fact that I have been able to work and pass the time away in doing all the good I could for myself and all I could for our family.

And now for my dear deceased parents I want to say God Bless their precious memory which I shall always cherish, and why not, for we can only

have but one father and mother and I am most thankful for mine.

To all twelve of my children, I'd like to leave a comment, or note to you of my own, in my own way. This is just a thought of mine and a little word or two to express my feelings a little.

To you B. H. for reminding me a lot of my daddy, well liked and well spoken of by everyone. You've been a great help to me.

To you Pershing A. for looking a lot like your daddy and being like him in many ways, with some of his good qualities.

To you Leo for reminding me of my mother's people, for being so smart in school that you were exempted from your high school exams at Selemburg in 1938, for being a good provider to your family and help to me.

To you Virgie for being my first born baby girl, weighing in at 9 lbs. and how happy I was and how much I enjoyed curling your pretty hair and making pretty dresses for you, also for your financial help to us.

To you Ruby for being such a wonderful housewife and mother, and a good neighbor, and favorite, I think on your daddy's side, and all the comfort you've been to me.

To you William for being named after two very special persons, my daddy, and a great uncle, William C. Tew. Also you are a very good hand to work.

To you Willa Dean for being so friendly to everyone, and well liked by everyone. You were a favorite of my parents and have some of the good qualities they had.

To you Geranium for being named after my favorite flower although you haven't especially liked your name, you should have seen the beautiful geraniums I had a long time ago. Also for your help to me.

To you Lois Faye for being a little slow but sure, so thoughtful of other people, going all the way and then some to help me and to help some one else.

To you Violet for looking a lot like your mother, so they say, and I agree. For being such a wonderful singer, and hard worker, and a help to me.

To you Jerome for being such a handy man around here to help me when you come, a jack of all trades, like your father. Also for your success as High Councilman in the church. I am proud of that.

To you Rosie, the last one and oh, how happy I was when the Dr. told

me so. I thought a dozen was enough. You are a very precious big baby now and so thoughtful of your mother.

To all my children, grandchildren, and to each one of you that have married my children, I want to say that I just can't find words to express all my joy and happiness that you have given me in so many ways. It has meant so much to me for the past several years especially. I will have to admit though that one of my special gifts of all the lovely things I've received has been my electric blanket given to me four years ago by Rosie. It gives me great comfort on a cold night when sleeping alone. I have been blessed with many fine sons and daughters-in-law, and also 33 grandchildren.

Thanks a million to you all for all the nice gifts you have given me. Stay as good as you are and try to improve yourselves each day you live, and you will succeed.

All my love,
Mother, Mrs. Daisy Tew