

Life History of Maggie Comish Whitehead

FEATURING

Maggie Comish (Whitehead) Jamison

HISTORY OF MAGGIE COMISH (WHITEHEAD) JAMISON

An Audio Recording Interview

Narrated by her son Delmar Jamison 5 September 1986

Delmar: Where were you born?

Mom: I was born about 1 1/2 miles north of Franklin, Idaho the on Pete Whitehead ranch. When I was fifteen days old my mother died and that is where she died in this house. When she died I went to live with my Grandmother Comish. I was born the 5th Dec.5,1900. My mother died Dec. 15 and was buried on the 20th Dec. My mother had three children. Her name was Margaret Emma, but she went by Greta; Phyllis and myself. Greta was not quite three years old when mother died, she would of been three in Feb. So Grandma Comish had us three girls. Aunt Jennie was going to school and going with Will Robinson.



Delmar: Were they living in Cove, Utah?

Mom: Yes, they were living in Cove. They went to church there also. Aunt Jennie quit school and helped take care of us three girls and the next year she finished her schooling.

Delmar: Lets talk about your first few years after your mother died.

Mom: Grandma Comish had three sons Uncle Billie and Myron had a house, they were old bachelors. Uncle Newell went to college and Aunt Jennie, all were still unmarried.

Delmar: Did Nephi live close by there?

Mom: He was Uncle Joe's boy. he was just a cousin to me. When my mother died, Dad about lost his mind. He felt so bad losing her and leaving 3 babies. It was really hard on him. I was a little over 3 years of age when he went on his mission to the Southern States and we stayed with Grandma until I was seven. Dad came back from his mission and met Martha Ella Morrison and they were married in the Salt Lake Temple in Dec. She was teaching school so we didn't go out there to live with them until the spring and Greta and Phyllis was going to school in Cove. Then we all three went to live with Dad. Grandma Comish and Aunt Jennie were really my mother's.

I have so many wonderful memories of Grandma Comish and the many wonderful things she did for us. She had other grandchildren that lived real close. Uncle Joe's and George's family but, she had us three girls to care for. Uncle John Larson went on a mission and Aunt Hattie and her daughter Angela was there for one winter. Grandma was just like a mother to us. We all loved her and Aunt Jennie.

When we went out to the farm to live, my step mother had six children. Vanona was the oldest and was 8 years younger than me. She was born in October and I would of been 8 in Dec. They had 2 boys, Golden and Joseph, then Elma, DeEsta and Adele. While we lived out there little DeEsta was drowned when she was 20 months old. It just broke all our hearts.

Delmar: Did she fall into an irrigation ditch?

Mom: Yes, the ditch that went by the place that carried water of to different farmers. Dad used it all the time too but, that morning there was no water in the ditch, nothing but a little puddle. She fell down into

the ditch and there was just enough water washed against the bank and that is the way she drowned.

Joe had been married and he was about 21 when he died. He had a appendix operations, but he also had a bad heart and that was the cause of his death. Elma, Adele and Vanona were still living when Golden was killed in an accident coming from work one day. He was 13 years old. He was driving a team of horses pulling a wagon and they wasn't hooked up very good and the neck yolk came off and he was clinging on to the lines and it pulled him forward and out of the wagon. When they found him the wheels of the wagon was on his chest. That was the way he was killed.

Delmar: When you were young you had some serious illness and your health was bad and you about lost your life. And this was when you were living at the same ranch. Tell us about this.

Mom: This all happened after my step mother died. She died in October and it was a year from them in February when the flu was so bad. I got the flu and I nearly died. In fact I was in the hospital for a long time. They had to operate on me and I lost a rib when they put a tube in my side to drain the puss out. I had a rough time getting over it. Then one of my lungs collapsed and it took me over a year before my lung got well I then had an appendix operation and before Dad would let them operate on me, he made them examine me good and it was then they found out I had been healed. I was healed through the power of priesthood, I know.

Delmar: Were they living in the home in town?

Mom: No, they were living in the home on the ranch when Golden was killed. When Dad married Jesse we were living in town in the home where Phyllis lives now.

Delmar: How old were you when you went to California to work?

Mom: I went to Salt Lake first after Dad married Jesse. Oh, I was 20 something like that. I can't remember how old I was . I was an old maid. He married Jesse and after he married her I decided to go down to Salt Lake and visit Dad's sister, Aunt Net and Uncle Harry Bennington. While I was down there, I got me a job and I did house work for awhile and while I was there I met a lady, Mrs. Nibley and she was moving to California and she wanted me to go with her. So we phoned Dad and got his permission. She took two girls with her, Daphine Brodhead and myself. One of her friends was living down there, Mrs. Wooley, so when we got down there she took Lorraine Miller with her.

Delmar: So you spent sometime out in California with Lorraine and Daphine?

Mom: I and Daphine went out with Mrs. Nibley. Lorraine Miller, she was the richest, she went out with Mrs. Wooley and they didn't live to far apart. Our day off was Tuesday, and we would always go to mutual together. It wasn't long until we had boy friends and we had good times together. Daphine be came serious with one and she didn't come back home, but married a Sebie Walker. Lorraine and I came back together. I think the reason I came back was because Reed had come home from his mission.

Delmar: I take it you had met him before he left for his mission?

Mom: Oh Yes!!

Delmar: Where did you meet him?

Mom: We used to go to dances together in Preston. That's where you would meet all your boy friends.

Delmar: When I was went to the dances in Preston, it was called the Persiana. Is that where you would go?

Mom: I am not sure, but they had a building and they had dances every week. That is where you had a chance to meet the boys.

Delmar: When you were courting, I'm sure it was before automobiles, I suppose you were using a buggy?

Mom: Well part of the time, but when we were first married we had a horse and buggy. We lived about a 1/2

mile on Grandpa Jamison's farm in Preston. When we were first married Reed bought all brand new furniture and fixed all 3 rooms up real nice, course he charged it all and it took us a long time to pay it off.

Delmar: Now they had two separate homes on the farm?

Mom: Oh! Yes

Delmar: Did they have a new home on the farm they lived on?

Mom: Oh! Yes They lived down on the farm while they built the new house in Preston. So when we were married they papered it real nice and we lived therefor over a year. Grandpa Jamison traded places, and we moved to Lava Hot Springs. It was then that the family nearly lost everything and then we moved back to Franklin.

Delmar: Now I was born in Preston, that was before we moved to Lava?

Mom: You was born at Grandma Jamison's house located in the Preston Sixth Ward just south of Preston.

Delmar: That home was on the south side of Preston?

Mom: Yes, It was just below the mill, about 2 blocks there in the Sixth Ward. There was 80 acres of farm land there. We had a few cows and nice furniture, it was a beautiful home. We really enjoyed it and lived there for over a year.

Delmar: After you moved to Lava Hot Springs, how long were you there?

Mom: Reed and I was there about a year and, but the rest of the family stayed a little bit longer, but then they lost everything. We all came back broke. We went in debt for cows and things and it took us several years to pay the cows off we had bought up there in Lava. That's when our troubles started.

Delmar: So this was actually before the depression started?

Mom: Yes

Delmar: After you came and moved back to Franklin, did you lived out on the ranch ?

Mom: Yes, We lived out on Dad's ranch for a little over a year then Reed got a job at a service station. There was a little three room house in the back of the post office and this is where we lived when Rey was born. We lived there for about a year.

Delmar: Was there only one service station in Franklin?

Mom: Yes, there was only one station.

Delmar: Well I've seen literature and books and things Dad had around and it said Blue Bell.

Mom: I don't know what they called that service station. He would of done pretty good if every body would of paid him, however he had checks out on gas bills that people never paid him.

Delmar: At the home I remember a raspberry patch and was an old junker of a car there, could you tell about that?

Mom: That's where you used to play and you loved the raspberries you picked.

Delmar: After that you moved right next door to where your living now, didn't you?

Mom: Yes, we moved up here it was Gibson's place, but, that is where the Kirkbride's live now. There was a downstairs and bedrooms upstairs. We had 3 rooms, the living room, and a bedroom. There was a little room that should have been a bathroom, but they didn't have the fixtures, so it was kind of a pantry.

Delmar: At that time were we living right next door (Kirkbride's home}.

Mom: Lorraine was born there and I guess we must of lived there about two years.

Delmar: We were living there when I started school. I remember that.

Mom: I thought we had moved to Cove at that time. You road old peanuts up and he wouldn't go, he was balky or something.

Delmar: I guess I associated it with being with Roy Doney in the same grade in school.

Delmar: Dad went into business hauling milk about this time before you moved to Cove, is this right?

Mom: I think it was after we moved to Cove. (Lorraine says Dad was hauling milk when she was born)??

Delmar: Dad a few cows and when we moved out to Cove, he got into the dairy business pretty good.

Mom: At this time we were living in the Gibson house. He worked in the sugar factory in the winter time the pea factory in the summer time. He worked at whatever he could fine. Hauling coal for the mill. We were living in the Gibson home (now Kirkbride's) when Lorraine was born.

Delmar: While we were living in Cove, Terry was born and Rey died of diphtheria, is this right?

Mom: Yes, Rey, was almost 4 years old when he died. Rey died August 13, 1932 .Delmar was about 2 1/2 years older then Rey and Lorraine was about 2 1/2 years younger.

Delmar: I was sometimes late for school in the winter times and I ended up riding with Dad's hired man while Dad would be picking up milk in a bob sleigh. There were times when the roads were so bad he would leave his truck in town.

Mom: Yes, He often picked up the milk in a bob sleigh.

Delmar: I remember we weren't very far from where Phyllis and Dee lived out in Cove.

Mom: They lived about a half mile from us.

Delmar: In the winter time we rode up there in the sleigh more than once and there were these deep ruts in the snow. That was the only way we had of getting home.

Mom: We had lots of fun up there. We had most of our Christmas's up there. Santa would come. Do you remember?

Delmar: I enjoyed it up there in the summer. They had some nice chokecherry trees by a little creek that ran by their home.

Mom: They also had a lot of raspberries too. It was a nice place.

Delmar: They had a nice spring out in their field as I remember.

Mom: Yes, they had their water piped right into the house.. We had spring water piped to our front porch, but, we didn't have it in the house yet.

Delmar: While we were living out there, I remember them wiring the house for electric lights. We had one switch to turn it on.

Mom: We had to buy a refrigerator or some electric appliance in order to get the lights. I think it cost us 2 or 3 hundred dollars. At that time the wages was so low it took everything you could do to get it.

Delmar: I remember this old General Electric refrigerator that had the big coils up on top.

Mom: We still have that out in the shed. Dad took all the selves out and put mink feed in it and it still runs. He says some day it will be an antique.(after mother's death, Terry got it). and indeed it was an antique.

Delmar: After you had to move from there, I know Dad had been trucking cattle and horses, and hauling milk along with farming. It sounds like he tried everything to support his family.

Mom: About this time we were going into the depression. We moved into town into a house that had two rooms down and three upstairs. In the back was where Elma and Ben lived.

Delmar: We were there for several years and work was really hard to find work during the depression.

Mom: We only paid \$8.00 a month for rent at this place.

Delmar: I remember that I got fifty cents a day for riding the derrick horse and for doing other work. Some men were only getting \$2.00 - \$2.50 a day for pitching hay all day from early morning until late in the day.

Mom: We had a few cows when we lived there and Dad did a little trucking and worked at the pea factory and sugar factory. He also hauled peas from the fields to the vinery. I also worked in the pea factory for awhile. After the harvest that year we took a trip with our friends, Denny Lowe's. It had been the first trip we has since getting married. We went to Yellowstone Park and on to Macky, Idaho and up the Salmon River. We had to spear the fish. We got two of the biggest salmon. We left all three of you kids with Phyllis. It really was a fun trip. While at Yellowstone we had two cabins real close together with little stoves in them. We saw a lot of animals including several big black bears.

Mom: One trip to Bear Lake with Phyllis some got sunburned real bad. I didn't burn, but Phyllis and Reed and all the kids all burned and blistered.

Delmar: One summer Dad worked over in Malad helping to build a highway. About that time I was in high school and you bought this home you are presently living in, is this right?

Mom: Terry was about 6 years old, but Margaret was born before we moved to this house.

Delmar: Dad was now working in Ogden and we had the care of the cows. I think everything that could go wrong did when Dad was gone. We had cows die and a horse who got brain fever and died. It was really a hard time. About this time World War II had started.

Mom: I don't know. We worked at nearly everything we could. Lorraine was only 9 years old and I left her with Margaret to watch. Margaret was only 18 months old. We were just coming out of the depression when we bought this house and the farm. This house was all to pieces. When Dad said he was going to buy it. I came up to looked at it and the back part of the house, you could look up through the roof and see the sky.

Delmar: There was a log home that had been built first and a two room house had been moved in the front of it, forming a T. It really needed to be shingled.

Mom: At that time it should of been torn down and rebuilt, but we didn't have the money, so we just fixed this one up. We ended up fixing some bedrooms upstairs and a stairway.

Mom: Grandpa Jamison came and fixed the kitchen in the back part and later we got plumbing in. Gaylen was here one day and he said: "Grandma you've spoiled your house when you remodeled it." It used to have a pipe you could slide down from the upstairs. Gaylen said "You have ruined your house."

Delmar: A number of years later we tore of the log part and put on an addition and remodeled, so it is quite different now. You also had nice garden and it was soon after I came back from the service that you started the mink business.

Delmar: Mother, lets go back to some of your activity in the church.

Mom: I used to teach primary. Their was one group of girls I just loved. I taught them about 3 years. They were cute girls. There were 7 or 8 and they could come up to my house after school and work on there books. I always had a big bowl of apples for them. We could take a lunch and go up into the canyon as an activity.

Delmar: After these girls went into mutual you continued teaching primary for a few years.

Mom: Yes, I taught them one year in mutual. They requested that I do that. I had never taught a class in anything until after Rey died. But they got me started in primary. The girls were Larks, then Bluebirds and Seagulls. They wanted me to teach them each year.

Delmar: After Primary I know you were working in Relief Society when Rita Doney was the President. You were her secretary wasn't you?

Mom: Yes, I was secretary for 7 years. Rita for 3 years and then with Elma when she was president. After that I was secretary in the Primary for 7 years.

Delmar: You and Dad did temple work for several years before he got sick.

Mom: Yes, He was High Priest Group Leader for 13 years and we did go to the temple a lot, I really like doing temple work.

Delmar: I think with arthritis and other health problems you and dad along with old age you enjoyed some trips to Lava too.

Mom: Yes, That's what I really miss is going up there. We used to go every week. When Dad had the mink, he could come in so tired and we'd do to Lava. We used to call it Family Home Evening . We could go every Monday.

Delmar: Did that kind of rejuvenated the both of you?

Mom: Yes, We had got a new car an Oldsmobile and it was real nice going to Lava.

Delmar: Now at the present time, I'm looking at the relatives that is still living, your sisters:

Mom: Greta passed away about 10 years ago. Phyllis is still alive, she is about 87, I think, Vanona is still alive. She does a lot of temple work. Elma and Adele. are still alive.

Delmar: Your children, Margaret lives the closet in Logan, Terry in Bountiful, and Delmar in Idaho Falls.

Mom: Lorraine lives in Arizona. She came out and spent a couple weeks with me . I went over to Bear Lake with them. It was a good trip over there. All of her children was there. David lives in Oregon, Gaylen in Colorado and the others are presently living in Arizona.

Delmar: Is there any stories you can think of either in your youth or just in recent years you would like to share with?

Mom: I don't know if I've has any or not.

Delmar: I'm sure you have humorous or faith promoting or otherwise.

Mom: The most faith promoting one I had was when I had the flu and it turned into pneumonia. I had puss in my lungs and I was in the hospital for a long time. At that time the hospitals were not like they are today, they were just a dwelling home a nurse Smith run it. They had to operate on me and take a rib out so they could put a tube in to drain it. At the time it was a miracle I lived. I know it was the power of the priesthood that saved me. I was in the hospital nearly six weeks. When I was released I weighed about 78 pounds. I looked so bad they would let me walk a ways and then they would pick me up in a car, Since then my health has been pretty good until these later years.

Mom: About our mink. Dad built a big long shed and he did enjoy working with the mink. He had a mink coat made for me. I was very proud of it. I also had several mink collars.. He enjoyed the mink and had so many different colors and kinds.

Delmar: What things give you the most pleasure now?

Mom: Visiting with my family children and grandchildren. Hearing from my grandsons that are on missions. Right now I have one that is out now, Kevin is in Japan.

Delmar: You have had as many as five out at one time.

Mom: I have had six. Lorraine had 3 sons go, and you have had 7 children and Margaret had two that filled mission calls. I am real proud of my family and especially hearing from them while on there missions.

Delmar: The last few years you spent some of your winters in Arizona.

Mom: Yes, I went down to Lorraine last year. I spent all winter with her. I really enjoyed it. Terry came up

and got me and took me to the airplane and I went to Arizona. Lorraine was there to met me and I stayed with them for two months.

Following is a poem written by Cheryl Hobbs to Maggie at the time of Reed's death:

*"When a special memory makes the pain of losing him grow stronger.
When the empty spot beside you makes the night seem so much longer.
When a rainy day or and old love song makes you want to cry.
When you catch yourself still saying "We", When what you mean is "I".
Then think of all the years you had and how he shared your life;
or think of all the happy times you had as man and wife.
Then remember even though he's gone, your'e not so far apart.
He's still right where he's always been, locked tightly in your heart."*

(Maggie passed away September 19th 1991 in Logan, Utah. She was placed to rest next to Reed at the Franklin, Idaho Cemetery.)