

MY BROTHER FRANCIS LELAND (JIM) SEELY

I find it easy to write of my brother Jim. For so many years we have called him Jim, and I am not sure why, unless it dates back to our association with Uncle Amos Neff. The Neff house was on our block in Salt Lake City or the south area called East Mill Creek where four of us children were born. -- A wire fence separated our lot from the Neff lot.

I was only four or five years old when I remember Uncle "Ane" standing in their yard shouting and laughing, teasing my brother Jim just to see ME get angry, for he would shout "Hello, Jim, James, Gerome, Geromiter, a hard case in a horses tail". Then I would stomp my foot and scream back, "Don't you call him that !!" Then Uncle Ame would laugh harder than ever.

In spite of his teasing there were times when I thought Uncle Amos was fun and I can remember how very shocked and frightened I was to go running with my cousins to the big porch with the cement pillars on the front of the Neff house and find Uncle Ame had been shot to death by a "horse trader", and was lying on the steps.

To get back to my story of my brother. He was closest in age to me being three years older (born June 2, 1903) and he was not only brother but my friend and protector. When the older 'kids' on the block would say to me "Your too young to tag along", Jim would take me by the hand and include me in the activities. Mother curtailed my going a bit when Jim and our older brother Elwyn were carrying me across the creek and let me fall in. They then built a bon-fire to dry my clothes and burned up one of my shoes.

It was Jim who consoled me when I stood too close to their Billy goat who was tied to a tree and the goat ate my bread and jam sandwich. He took the blame too, when the goat got loose, went down into the outside cellar and ate the labels off some of mothers canned goods, and chewed up her "jelley cloth".

I remember watching Elwyn and Jim picking up the fruit which had fallen on the ground in fathers orchard, then feeding all the spoiled part to a pig.

Our fathers main work was postal clerk, a travelling one for a section of town. He drove a horse and buggy, carrying the money for receipts for the day in a brown case, (satchel). One day Jim and I found a pile of coins under the buggy and happily were sharing the money with each other. Jim was sorting the piles because he was seven and knew money. The big coins (nickles) went to me, the little ones (dimes- less value !) went into his pile. Our plans were halted when a worried father came looking for his spilled Post Office money.

Jim always had time to help us younger children squeeze strawberries into a bottle, add water, a bit of sugar and store it under the bridge in the creek for future sampling. He was nine years old when father moved us to a ranch in Rosette, Box Elder County, Utah. It was a different way of life for us all. When a wooden watering trough in the cattle yard was discovered, my brothers rushed into the house to tell us they had found a little canoe ! Then a porcupine in the tree was a "new kind of monkey". So many wonderful things to discover on a ranch. A horse for everyone to ride was great, the cows to be milked was something else again ! But what ever the work to be done, Jim was conscientious in it. Dad could always rely on him to get a job done. Will say now that in his youth, and in his entire life Jim gave of his time, talent and his possessions to people. His love, understanding and concern was always special to me.

On the ranch my brothers teased me about going into the "cat" business. I had a number of adult cat pets and their kittens were a delight to me. When tragedy struck and I "went out of the cat business" because the dogs killed all my kittens, it was Jim who helped me bury the animals and listened patiently while I cried.

Looking back I would say a virtue he had was patience and the ability to listen. Not that he didn't "stick up for himself at times". His sense of humor delighted everyone. For instance he stood our Mother calling him "Franty" (short for Francis), until his friends started to tease him about "sissy Franty", then one day he confronted

Mother and told her " no way was she to clll him Franty again". Taking the sting out of it he said he loved her but he was a big boy now.

He did love his parents and he honored them. He sacrificed some college to stay home and help Dad on the ranch.

One thing I will always remember was when Mother lay so seriously ill in the hospital (and passed away at that time) he was a comfort to Dad. I remember Dad, Jim and I one afternoon, being alone in Dad and Mother's home and we three knelt to-gether in a prayer for Mothers welfare. When we arose Jim took Mother's little flower watering can and watered all of Mothers house plants, saying, just - "She loves these plants".

To return to the story of our growing up years on the ranch. We were a close family, and a religious one. Our father being a Bishop almost the whole time we were growing up. had its good points and sometimes difficult ones, especially when we were put under the publics eagle eye as the Bishop's kids. We felt like saying "So what? We are kids like the rest of you. "

Summers on the ranch were busy ones with crops to plant and harvest. Some fun days for the boys to ride their horses a few miles above our ranch into the canyon fishing. Jim learned to shoot a gun and hunted rabbits for fun, and sage hens (in season) for eating. Trapped ground squirrels for a few cents bounty,, Had the thrill of getting his first coyote, then telling me the coyotes were really too pretty to kill and he didn't think it fun to kill them just for the furs, however the sheepmen said the coyotes would kill their lambs.

Park Valley or the section of it that was called Rosette was known for the heavy snows and blizzards in the winter. The men folk were kept busy finding shelter for the livestock or digging the animals out of the snow drifts. Drifts would block the doors of our house and there were big ones to climb over to reach the out door toilet. There was no electricity in the valley during those years and no inside plumbing. Water heated in the reservoir on the wood and coal burning cook stove and carried to a tin tub in a secluded part of the kitchen was the order of our bath. The secluded area becoming so by chairs placed around the tub and various pieces of clothing draped over them. The 'victim' bathed while the rest of family retired to the parlor, or went about their business and didn't 'look'.

As teenagers the first ford or 'Liggy ' came into our lives. Such wonders- and fun. It took precedence over the team and buggy in the summer and sleigh in the winter.

One summer lightening struck a haystak on the ranch, burning all of our stacks of hay, barns, sheds some machinery and livestock. This was a bad experience for us all, though we were grateful no one was hurt nor was our house which was of brick and with a tin roof damaged, except for smoke.

As we grew up Jim kept a sharp eye on my boy friends. Some boys told me that he had, in no uncertain terms told them to stay away from me, they were not "good enough". He took me to his High School dances in Brigham City and I met a number of his friends and had fun. One fellow he approved of was Kenneth Carter- they were like brothers, and they became brother-in-laws when I married K. C. and they have always had a deep affection for each other. When Ken came courting me he and Jim would get into a lively and long conversation with each other. Sometimes I don't think they really noticed when I began to feel quite left out and just got up and took myself to bed !

They used to hunt deer to-gether and were often not too successful and Ken's Dad would suggest they get a box of chocolates and go "deer hunting" !

Jim and his girl friend and Ken and I would go car riding in the old "Lizzie-ford". With chocolate wafers, pineapple, crackers and cheese we had a picnic. Great fun. We liked to dance and Jim was determined to learn to dance the "charleston". For long periods at a time he would cling to the bottom post of the stair-way in our parents home and try to work his feet back and forth in the intricate steps.

In Rosette we sometimes had a school teacher boarding with us, housing was difficult to find for the teachers and Mother had a kind heart. We all really enjoyed having them with us, and Jim married a charming one named Grace Thompson. They lived in the 'second' house on the ranch and when I got married Jim and Ken bought the ranch together and we lived in the brick house so we were neighbors. Our parents then settled in Brigham City.

As years moved along we had children, we enjoyed theirs and they were good to ours. This association continued after Jim and Grace moved to Brigham City.

Francis Leland was born in Salt Lake City in the area called East Mill Creek, on 23 East between 33rd south and 34th south. The house was fairly large of white painted adobe, situated on a large lot facing the east mountains, with fields of pasture land, trees, scrub oak, etc in the valley and rocks on the ridges between our house and the mountains. Our relatives the Neffs and Stillmans ran sheep herds on these hills and the pastures, this land belonging to them. Now in the year 1977 the whole area is covered with houses. Some yards featuring the huge rocks that originally covered the hill side.

Jim was born in this home with a doctor and midwife assisting. His parents were Arta Mc Lain and Alfaretta Neff Seely. He was named Francis after his grandmother Frances Maria Neff with the male spelling of 'is' instead of 'es'. His brothers and sisters were Arta Elwyn, the oldest child, Verna May, Leola and Grant Mc Lain followed his (Jims) birth, he being the second child.

He was married at 23 years of age on June 23, 1926 to Grace Emily Thompson. They are the parents of seven children: Katheryn Joyce; Glen Mc Lain; John Leland; Gwendolyn; Karen; James Edward and Richard Kent.

Our father and Mother liked Grace very much and promoted the romance between the two.

Their (Jim & Grace) homes were first a nice frame home on the ranch in Rosette. When they moved to Brigham they lived in two different houses one in Brigham City third Ward. They eventually bought land and a house on seventh south and Main, and Jim being a talented carpenter, did much of the labor in constructing a motel, restaurant and service station. Their last home is a lovely one in the east section of Brigham City.

Jim has held positions of leadership in the church and in city administration. Especially does the town of Brigham City owe him gratitude in the area of water development and administration. The people of Brigham City do love and respect him as do many in surrounding towns where he did business with them, one being the supplying oil to their homes and places of work.

If my brother has a fault it is generosity and trust in people to the extent they have taken, in some cases, advantage of his kindness. The much good he has done for people is not generally known. Widows have found their heating supply tanks filled with oil and never a bill delivered. This is but a sample of his service to people.

He has always paid an honest tithing and he said, "perhaps his family was a bit short on material things at times, they were never actually hungry and they never would be- if they were honest with the Lord." A number of faith promoting stories he has told as the result of an honest tithing being paid.

He has been blessed with a 'green thumb' and many lovely flower gardens have blossomed under his care. Roses he loved best of all, sometime when he is "called home" I hope the gold lined streets he so richly deserves will be bordered with beds of roses.