

**The following is a conversation with Stella Davis Hays
(in her 80's)**

By James M. Hays her son



The below is taken from a recorder-tape of a visit conversation with Mother and Dad (Dee Lora and Stella Hays) at their home in Salt Lake City, in the early 1950s...this was from a taped conversation with James Monroe Hays and his wife Naomi Hays

I elected to leave out most of the leading questions asked by Jim and Naomi as the Answers are self explanatory

Stella:

"You know, when I was a child, father bought a little place two and one half miles outside of Paris with two room house on it, a log house, off John Norton, and one hundred and sixty acres of ground. I do not know just what deal he made because father would never go in debt, but he must have gone in debt then, but in getting started== well the first father done was to partition the bedroom off so there would be two bedrooms, and then the boys, in the winter had their beds in the living room, or the kitchen ... living room ...and everything, and one of these little rooms was for us girls, the other was father's and mothers. Then he built a lean to on it added two more rooms at the back. But in the summer the boys would sleep up in the loft in the hay

Father got those two rooms fixed on the back and then we were quite comfortable, you know...but father was always building and trying to fix up. And the way we would have our chicken coops built of logs, you know everything was

logs then, and when he wanted them cleaned why how we would play house cleaning and how we would clean those chicken coops, we'd scrub them and we'd even put up curtains."

It was soon after coming up from San Juan

"Yes, but what I started to say, in the fall we'd take and you know after they'd cut the grain with a binder, oh, it wasn't a binder, sometimes they'd mow it, there was always a little left along the fence, and you know, we used to go and take the heads off that, and I've seen father thrash it out with a flail. He'd thrash that out before he'd go in debt...that's the way he'd get stuff, That was for the chicken feed >> I guess he got the grain to eat somewhere else, but that was what we would do, and he got so he shouldn't even bother to thresh it out, he'd let them scratch it out so the chickens would get it

"I remember time and again going for days and having nothing to eat but boiled wheat. But we were happy, we had a good time. Then we would go around and pick the wool off the fences, there used to be a lot of sheep roaming around the places and anywhere there were fences we'd go and pull the wool off the fences and when we got enough, then we'd pick it, then mother would make quilts of it. And I remember mother making us petticoats of it, she had a little cloth, we could buy what we called calico, they call it percale now, and we could buy that for four cents a yard, and she would get some of that because, and I remember, she could not afford woolen cloth.. ? why, she would quilt it just like we'd make the quilts and she'd make out petticoats out of that, and that wool made it nice and warm. Well, we had a good time, you know, they were happy days, those times."<

"And when Rob started to come to see Em, of course I was just a little kid, and Frank Brown used to be crazy over Em and he'd come to see her every chance he got and sometimes he'd go out with her and Rob would bribe me to tell him when Frank Brown had been there. I remember he gave me a dime once, because I told him we had been picking chokecherries, we'd gone up the canyon to pick chokecherries, he said "Where did you go?? I said, Way up above Brown's. He said who went? I told him and Frank carried me on his shoulders, I remember so plain Frank carried me up the hill on his shoulders to pick choke cherries. And that was the fruit we'd have when we wanted fruit, you know, we'd go and pick service=cherries, and wild currants and chokecherries, and we walked and watched for them to get any fruit at all, and he gave me a dime."

I didn't finish telling about what I done with the dime. The next time he Rob came out there he got talking to me and he said, what did you do with the dime? And I said, Oh I gave that to mother to buy coal-oil with, so we could have a light when you came

"When night came, you see, we couldn't afford coal-oil, and we had a great big box-stove, it was about as long as from here to that couch [about five feet) and it stood about that high (about 30") Well the boys could just saw off a piece of log and put in there and we would open the door. And you know they were some of the happiest memories I have, setting on a big braided mat in front of that light, watching the fire flicker, and the folks singing hymns, every night we would sing songs and sing hymns, and they would tell us some experience about crossing the plains, or father would get started telling about the Indians, or something that had happened in San Juan, because there was no light to read by, and they would tell us about England or something and you know, we had the happiest childhood, even if we did have to eat wheat.

"The first year we lived pretty close. And then, Ted worked for somebody and got a cow and then he had to work about all winter to get hay to feed it. And that is just the way it worked out. And we got by... Father got a new sheep somewhere and I remember one of them had three little black lambs, and we used to have to feed those lambs, and in those days they didn't have a nipple or anything, and we'd get a bottle and until they were big enough we'd stick our hand down in the milk and put our finger in their mouth and they'd draw the milk up our finger and that's the way we had to feed them."

Mother used to grind wheat in a coffee mill, that was the only way we had of making flour, mother would grind it several times and it would get quite fine and she would make bread from it.

....They had so many thrilling experiences and as I say, when we'd set on the mat and hear father tell different things like that and tell how he in England got the money to come over, he'd tell us things like that and then he'd tell us something that happened on the boat. AND MOTHER USED TO TELL US ABOUT, LET ME SEE, ALL THE ATHAY'S CHILDREN'S CLOTHES GOT BURNED I FORGOT HOW IT WAS, THE ATHAY FAMILY CAME OVER ON THE SAME BOAT AND ALL THEIR CLOTHES GOT DESTROYED. It WAS IN A STORM OR SOMETHING, I FORGOT HOW IT WAS.

Stella continues....

"Mother often said you could trust the Indians more than the whites. Most of the Indians were peaceful and gave no trouble, but there were always a few renegade Indians that caused trouble. She feared the cowboys more than the Indians, some of them used to pick-off the Indians like rabbits."

Father (when trouble with the Indians arose) always felt safer in his own home. One night mother led the band of Indians in the house, she heard them, and they were on the warpath, and it was dark, and they had a long bowery to shade the house from the hot sun, mother walked out and went to the end of this bowery and father had not heard them coming but she heard them. She left father and the children in the house and walked out and met these Indians at the bowery

and led them in. They looked at her so surprised that they forgot what they had come there for, and she walked right in front of them and brought them in, and had them set down and she started to feed them and they looked at her, and asked if she wasn't afraid of them. She said No, I'm not afraid of you. I haven't hurt you and I do not think you will hurt me. And they didn't. And then they told her to stay in their own yard, to stay close to their own home and they wouldn't be bothered. And they went away. But two or three other times, there were other people that killed Indians. I think ours was the only family that escaped without having someone killed by the Indians. They used to have a lot of experiences

One night, you see father run and Indian trading post, and one night a bunch of Indians came there and they were strange Indians to father too. And Oh it was raining hard, and father unlocked the wool house door, see he used to buy the wood from the Indians and sell it and he had this wool house to fill up with wool and he unlocked the wool house door for them to sleep in there where it was warm and get out of the storm, but it started leaking in there and he didn't know that the door from the wool house to the store was unlocked and I guess he isn't worried much, he didn't look to see anyway, but it was unlocked. And the Indians found out that the door was unlocked so they went into the store where they would be warmer.

The next morning when father went to unlock the front door the Indians were all in there and oh they laughed at it. But there wasn't as much as a cracker taken, not one thing, and they had little children and all but they hadn't molested one thing. Father had trusted them and they would not break a trust. That's why father always said: The Indians are far more honest than a white person. He says: you could not have trusted a white family in there like that. And there were always some friendly Indians to tip them off (when there was trouble or trouble brewing).

Uncle Orson broke his leg and it was broken so bad that even the bone stuck out, so there is no doubt about it not being broken, and I don't remember an Indian coming in then...but father didn't know what to do, mother tried to do what she could, Dear, my memory is getting so poor I can't remember those things. But anyway father administered to him and Orson has told about the pain he was in and all that, and father administered to him and he tried to pull the leg in shape, you know, down so the bone would be straight. And the next morning, Orson slept all night, and the next morning he got up and his leg was all right and it had never bothered him after.

Son James M. Hays : "I recall, vividly, a conversation I had with mother, then in her declining years when the four walls of her abode was the reaches of the world for her, physically (and financially). The conversation turned to her recollections of the older people she had known in the past years, she recalled many things, but what impressed me most was her gratitude for the "blessings" she had in modern conveniences....The indoor toilet, gas for cooking and oil for heat, well sealed windows and doors, electric lights, ect., ect., but the poignant statements, to my mind, were such statements as these....."

Stella: "I often think of the elderly before me, setting in a kitchen corner where it was warm and not in a necessarily congested lane of traffic, often near a window if the window was not too drafty. With nothing to do, eyes bleary and hearing impaired. Not neglected, but in the hustle and bustle of others in doing their chores and needs, not having time to spend at great length with them....almost alone...And I think of what I have, and the older people have today.... I have a radio on or at

Hand's reach all day and night, with many stations available at the turn of the dial. Music and interesting talk are on them constantly, and when I tire, I turn them off.

Television gives me, in my own home and chair stories, plays and news never even dreamed of by my father and mother or any that ever lived before. And if I want I can play my records on the phonograph.

I can pick up the telephone and talk and visit with people that, if I were of an older generation, I would see only once or maybe twice a year. Or never. And distant people, perhaps it would be years after their death before we would even hear about it, and sometimes not at all...But, now with the phone and the daily newspaper, we know of things like that very soon....And when they needed, or wanted to go anywhere for visiting, or to the store, or church they must get the horses and sometimes they were in the barn or at hand but most often they were out in the fields at great distance and hard to catch,.....The men, if they were capable, might throw on a saddle and go, but we

Women could not, so if we were to go it meant harnessing the horses and hitching them to the wagon or buggy, in any kind of weather if we were to go. And then long hours of bumpy riding, tying , feeding and watering the horses and then the long trip home...And now the car is right at the door and has a heater and air conditioner, windows and comfortable and easy to start and goes fast and even has a radio in it.

Then ...Now there are buses and airplanes for long trips...Oh they are wonderful. ...I wonder how many older people remember the old times and know how lucky we are today!"

Re: James Monroe Hays ...". Yes mother was grateful for these things and for her other blessings. Her heritage and her posterity."

How many of us take time to be thankful for the many conveniences and blessings we enjoy in this time? This has been a wonderful reminder to me to be thankful to God for all that we have.



50th Wedding Anniversary Picture of Dee L. and Stella Davis Hays
September 18th 1951



D.L Hays Family 1950's
L to R: Donna, D.L., Jim, Mary, Stella, Jesse (behind Stella) Cora, Jean, Ted, & Ethel