

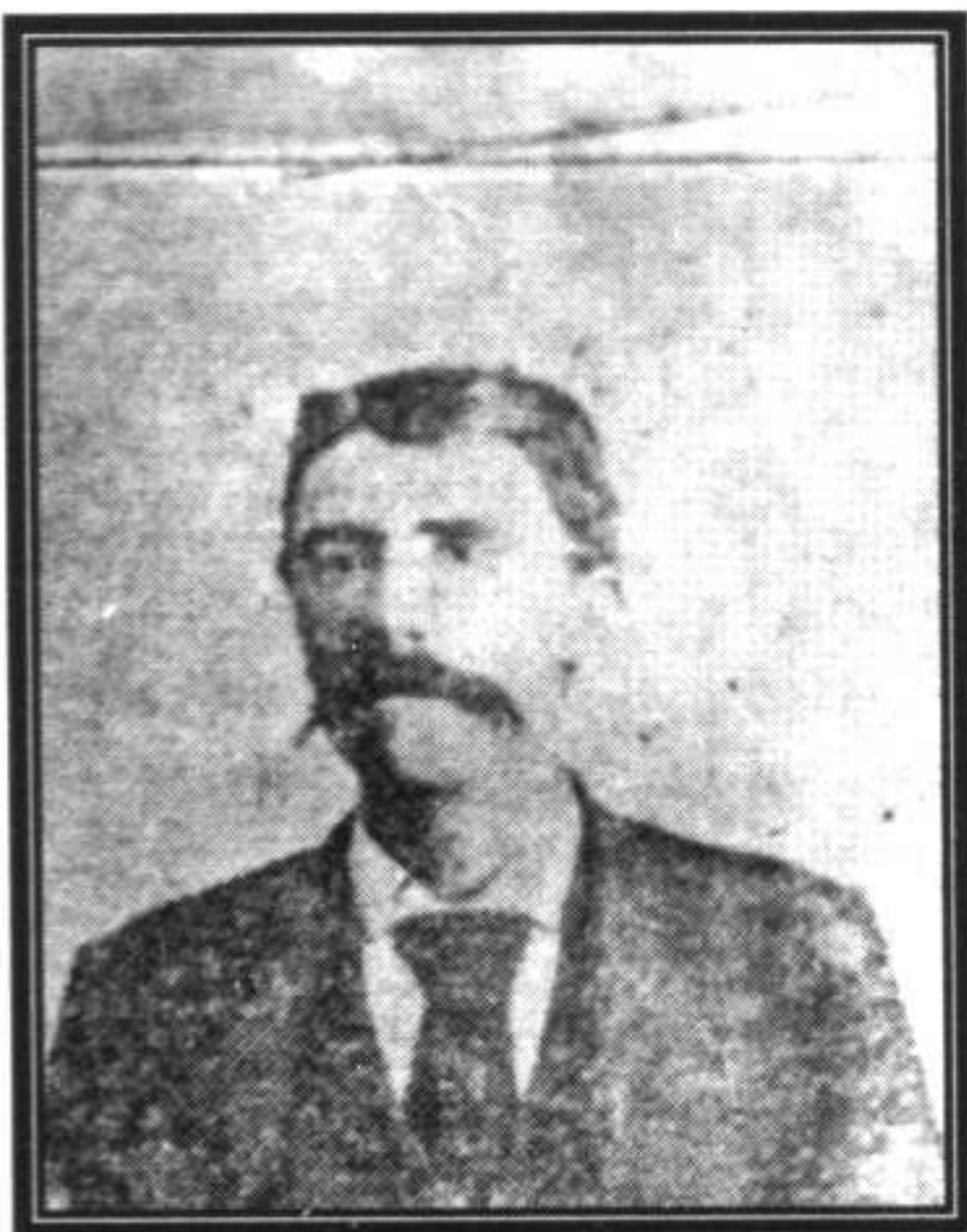
a trail-blazer and a missionary to the Indians. This meant that he was gone from home much of the time. Through all the hardships of pioneer life and the many moves to settle yet another frontier community, Rizpah was a tower of strength. She was his partner and helpmeet, assuming, in his absences from home, the full responsibility for the care and support of their large family. Time after time, she willingly sacrificed the relative comfort of her home in an established community to follow Andrew as he was called to lead the way into yet another new area. The price of pioneering was high. Eight of their fifteen children died in infancy from things like the measles and pre-maturity, and Rizpah had to see their little bodies buried in tiny graves along the way. (Paraphrased from *A Turning of Hearts* by Frank and Helen Bay Gibbons.)

- 1896 Sept. 6—Edward Noble Gibbons is born
- 1896, Aug 29—Joshua Gibbons sustained as President of the YMMIA
- 1897, Sep. 5—Joshua is released as the President of the YMMIA.

### Nancy's Faith and Answer to Her Prayers

[J. Smith, Son] My earliest recollections of our home was with Mother as a comparatively young woman waiting anxiously the return of my Father who then was employed by John T. Lesueur in managing his sheep interests. Father would leave in the fall and drive these sheep over the trail into the desert surrounding and near by Mesa and Phoenix. I've often heard Father refer to Superstition Mountain. It seems that he used to herd sheep around that particular mountain a great deal. So it was very common for mother to be a widow for five, six, or seven months a year. Then when Father returned in the spring he would be gone weeks at a time with the sheep on the mountains [near St. Johns].<sup>16</sup>

[Eileen Kump, Granddaughter] One Sunday afternoon Nancy Noble Gibbons, young wife and mother, sat in the back room of her house. Her husband and sweetheart, Joshua, had left for sheep camp just a few days before and now she had heard he was in serious danger; the Indians on the Fort Apache Reservation were giving trouble. Joshua's traveling would take him very near, perhaps even through, the



JOSHUA, ABOUT 35  
YEARS OF AGE

*J. S. Gibbons*

1893				1894			
July 1	Burial			July 28	Wool	9	100
July 31	Wool	58		Oct 13	Wool	13	120
July 31		60		Dec 20	Camp	17	1120
Sept 6	Wool	66		1903 Apr 1	Wool	19	1880
25	Wool	67		May 25	Wool	27	1860
Oct 6	Wool	68		June 1	Wool	29	1170
Nov 7	Wool	73		July 2	Wool	32	1820
16	Wool	75		Dec 20	Wool	41	210
Dec 12	Wool	82		Jan 1	Wool	57	60
				July 5		61	940
				Aug 21		66	20
				Sept 17	Wool	67	60
				Nov 26	Wool	75	1220
				Dec 16	Wool	75	50
							23420

JOSHUA AND NANCY'S TITHING RECORD FOR 1893  
NOTE THE VARIETY OF THINGS CONSIDERED AS TITHING



reservation. Nancy was worried, and she got upon her knees and asked the Lord to protect Joshua. A voice spoke to her and said: "Your husband is all right. His work is not finished."<sup>17</sup>

[Andrew H., Son] The little lady whose passing we are remembering today was in close and real contact with her Father in Heaven and on occasion he revealed things to her for her guidance and peace of mind. During the first few years of her married life father worked with sheep and was away from her for long periods of time. On one occasion he was gone for a long time and she became very anxious for fear that something might have happened to him. But one day after she had prayed for help a voice informed her that all was well with him. Not too long after that he came home.<sup>18</sup>

[ASG's Seven Children—1897]

[JSG Tithing Certificate—1897]

- 1898 Feb. 17—Andrew H. is born St Johns, AZ.
- 1898—Nancy suffers with asthma from this time on throughout her life.

[Evaline Gibbons Palmer, niece] When I was just a small girl Uncle Josh used to come to our place often and in talking to Mother one day he said, "Eva and Ed are off chicks", because all of the others had black or brown eyes and we had blue eyes. I piped up and said, "If we are odd chicks, so are Smith and Noble", Uncle Josh's first two boys. That kinda cemented our love.<sup>19</sup>



**ABOUT 1897—THE SEVEN LIVING CHILDREN OF ANDREW AND RIZPAH GIBBONS: Back Row, l to r: William Hoover, Richard, Joshua Smith, Lee Roy; Front Row, l to r: Eliza G. Holgate, Andrew Vinson, Martha G. Carter**

### **The Dedication of the St. Johns Stake Academy Building**

- 1899—Dedication of the St. Johns Academy Building, which was used for the high school for church members for St. Johns and for the surrounding communities

### ***The St. Johns Stake Academy***

[David K. Udall, Stake President] In no other phase of our ministry did we put forth greater effort than we did in establishing and maintaining our Church school—the St. Johns Stake Academy. While I was in England on my mission I had solemnly vowed if the Lord blessed me with children they should have all the educational advantages I could possibly give them. The memory of my vow urged me on in this undertaking.

Back in the year 1899 we first opened the St. Johns Stake Academy, with Elder John W. Brown as principal. He deserves great credit for his wholesome and forceful work. Pearl tells me that there were fifty of Brother Brown's students (now teachers themselves) in attendance at a Teacher's Institute in Phoenix in 1906. Three of our daughters were in this group. We had other strong principals in the school: Brother Cropper, F. A. Hinckley, Robert H. Sainsbury, W. D. Rencher, and M. O. Poulson. Brother Poulson was our outstanding

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 9

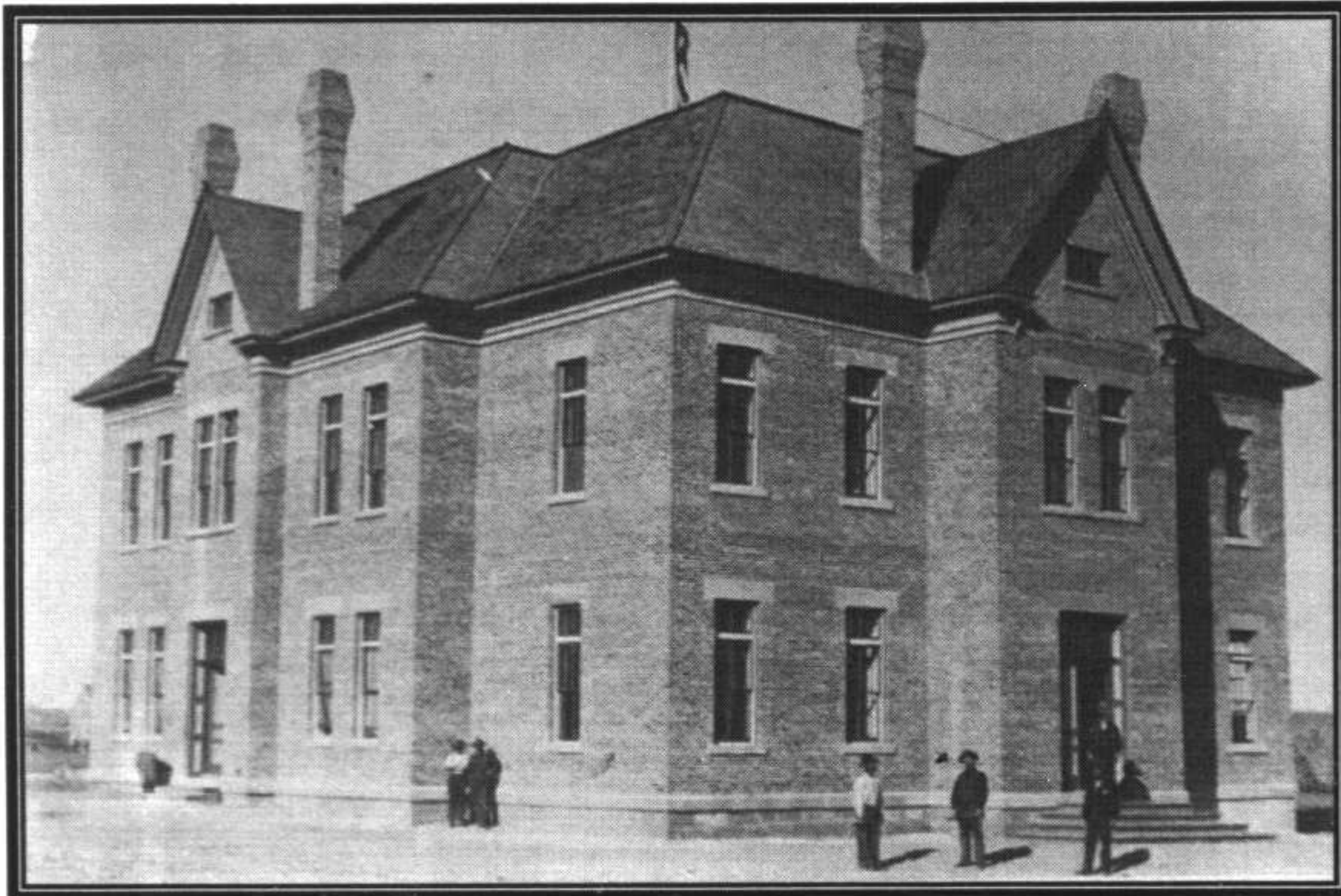
<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 24



athletic leader who put our athletic teams to the forefront in the state of Arizona.

For the first few years the school was conducted in the upper rooms of the Tithing Office in St. Johns. Then we were advised to erect a Stake Academy building. For ten years individuals and wards donated labor, materials and some cash. We schemed and economized in the work. Bricklayers received but \$3 per day, a man and team \$3, common labor \$2 to \$2.50. The workmen were paid in "chips and whetstones," often perishable tithing. Bricks were made and delivered for \$10 per thousand. The building cost \$14,000. At last it was completed, a Herculean task, accomplished only through the patriotic zeal of parents who were determined to give their children education beyond the grades. We looked upon this project with religious conviction.



**THE ST. JOHNS STAKE ACADEMY BUILDING COMPLETED IN  
1899 AT GREAT SACRIFICE**

The academy building was dedicated December 16, 1900, by Apostle Joseph F. Smith. It was a time of great rejoicing. From that time until the academy was discontinued, it was in use Sundays and weekdays and many evenings. It was our school, our chapel, and our amusement hall. How proud we were of the talent, culture and refinement of our young people in social dances, in operas and plays. The musical ability of St. Johns was known far and wide in our state. The academy had been worth all we put into it, at a time, too, when public calls were so many and our means so limited.

Every year we received some money from the educational fund of the Church, but even then the students paid a rather high tuition and we wonder how we managed to finance the education of our boys and girls. There was one time in the late nineties that we were not able to keep the school in operation. This is one of the miracles wrought on the principle of "Where there is a will, there is a way," and "An ounce of desire is worth a pocketful of money."

For several years we conducted a dormitory, buying Brother John T. Lesueur's two-story home for the purpose. We later sold it and it later passed into the hands of Bishop E. I. Whiting. This dormitory furnished a home at nominal cost for the boys and girls from other towns.

The academy building was remodeled and largely incorporated into the St. Johns Ward building when the new chapel was constructed.

In the spring of 1921 our stake was saddened by the new policy of the Church in closing all stake academies and letting the high school education of its communities be provided by state funds. This was a shock to our membership. We had come to look upon the school as a fixed institution; we loved it dearly for we had built and nurtured it, through years of cooperation and sacrifice. The building was a marvelous building to us, and we had been very happy in having our children taught the Gospel within its walls.<sup>1</sup>

- 1900—Joshua is called on a six-month MIA mission to Summit County, Utah at Coalville.
- 1900, March 29—The murder of Gus Gibbons, nephew to Joshua

<sup>1</sup> Udall, David K., *Arizona Pioneer Mormon*, David K. Udall, pp. 152-155



[Andrew H, son] Father Gibbons was a good looking man of average height, slight build, no fat anywhere, and was a little stooped. He was about five feet seven inches tall, had dark brown eyes and his children remember him with lots of grey-white hair because his dark hair had turned to white before his marriage. He wore a mustache and during the last year of his life when he had shaved it off he did not look natural to his children, to his wife, or to anyone who knew him.<sup>2</sup>

[Louisa, daughter] It was because of his terrible sick headaches that his hair turned grey [at so young an age].<sup>3</sup>

### **Joshua Serves a Six-month MIA Mission to Coalville, Summit County, Wyoming**

[Nancy, Wife]

In the year 1900 Josh was called by Bishop Anderson of St. Johns to go on a six months mutual [MIA] mission to Summit County. In those days one man

from each stake would go to some other stake in the church. He was always very humble

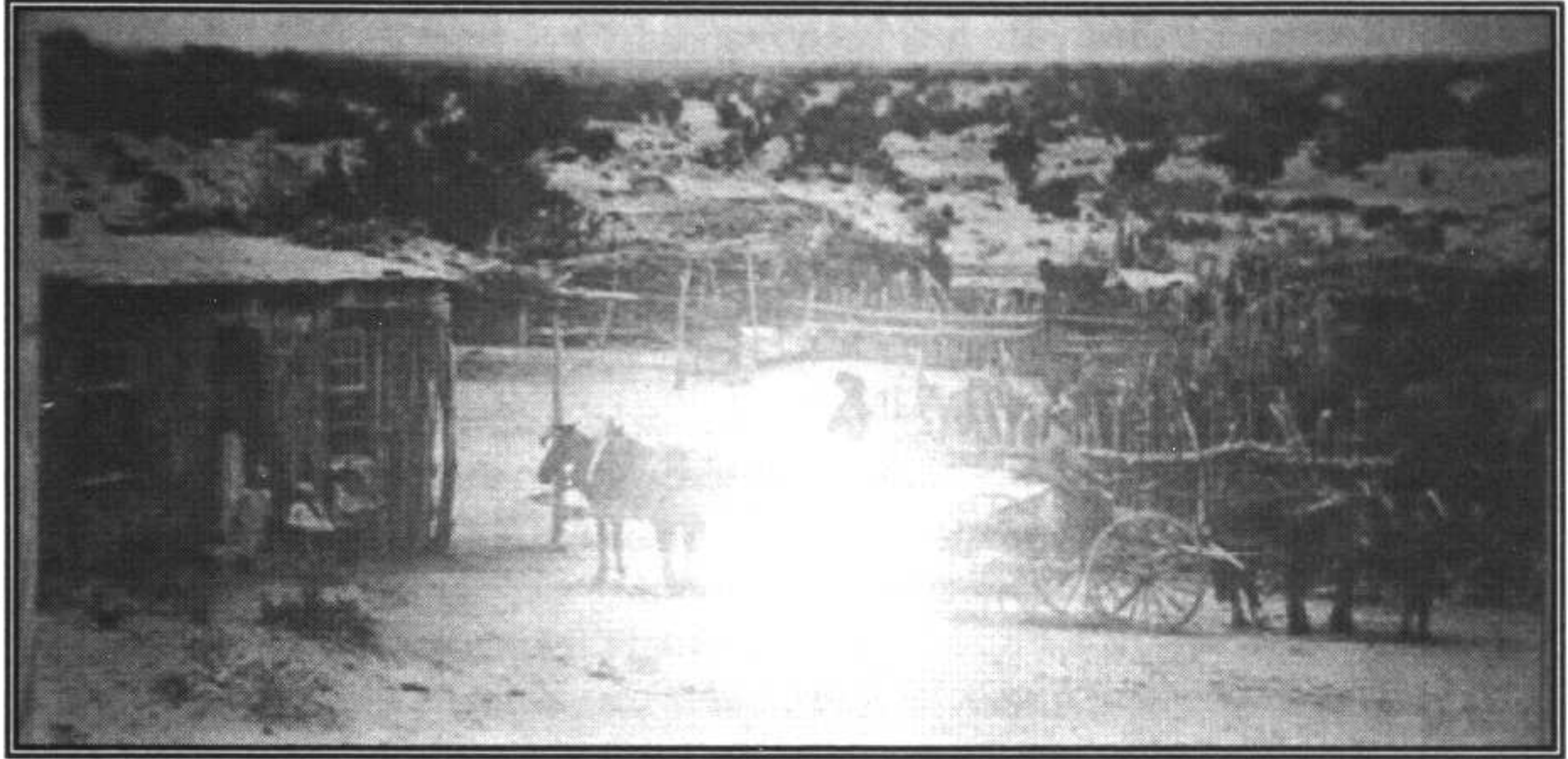
and self conscious. Said he couldn't go because he didn't have any money. Bishop said, 'Bro. Gibbons, if you will go it won't cost you a penny.' We had four children, all boys, H the youngest was two years old. At the farewell there was about \$100.00 given. He bought a suit of clothes and used the rest for transportation. I moved back into St. Johns, nine miles, where we had our own home.

Coalville, as I remember, was his headquarters. He went from town to town just helping them with their mutual work. Before he left he used to have terrible sick headaches. While on this mission he fasted three days of each week that the Lord might help him to do the right thing. He never had a sick stomach or stomach trouble after that.

One time while on this mission he said to the people: "I'm not here to sit in your parlors, read the paper, eat and so on. I'm here to do what good I can do. If any of you have young people and would like me to go to your home with you and talk to them I would be glad to do it." Years later when a member of the St. Johns stake went to Norway on a mission, when a certain elder learned that he was from St. Johns stake he asked him if he knew Josh Gibbons. When he said, "Yes", the Elder said, "Tell him for me that when he was in Summit County on his mission he was the one who started me on the right road. First, ask him if he remembers the widow's son he went to visit".

Through his fasting and prayer finally the mutual rooms were just filled. The authorities sent for him, after his mission was over and he had gone home, to come to Salt Lake and give them some pointers.<sup>4</sup>

[Jayne, Daughter] I've heard mother tell of his missionary work and how he fasted three or four



**Mail to and from St. Johns was taken 50 miles to Navajo to the train, a two-day wagon trip. This shows the mail station at the half-way point.**

<sup>2</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the authors, 1973, Andrew H Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons, Jr., p. 22

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 32

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 48



days out of the week and what a fine work he did.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Murder of Gus Gibbons, Joshua's Nephew, by Outlaws**

One of the most shocking crimes to take place in the Little Colorado River was the killing of Gus Gibbons and Frank LeSueur. [Gus, Andrew Augustus Gibbons, was the son of William Hoover Gibbons and Evaline Augusta Lamb. William Hoover was the second oldest son of Andrew S. Gibbons. Gus Gibbons was the nephew of Joshua, so his death profoundly affected Joshua and all of the other Gibbons Families in St. Johns, as well as everyone in the community and the Little Colorado area. He was 26 years old when he died. He had been married for 4 weeks when he left for his mission to Great Britain for three years. Four months from the day when he returned from his mission he was killed by outlaws.] Following is an account taken from the diary of Richard Gibbons [brother of William and uncle to Gus], under date March 27, 1900.<sup>6</sup>

*Tuesday, 27th. Weather windy-we lay abed quite late, not being in a hurry to get to work. While I was thinking about getting up, someone yelled, "Dick", outside and when I went to the door, it was Bro. Crosby hunting some men to help arrest five desperados who were camped down at the County bridge. At eight o'clock we were on our way. There were eight of us in the posse: Will Harris, Gus Gibbons, Frank LeSueur, Antonio Armijo, Frank Ruiz, Ben Crosby, Murry from Springerville, and myself.*

*When we got to the County bridge, we met one of Sheriff Bealer's men and he gave us the directions the outlaws had taken. We saw a wounded horse by the roadside and were told that Bealer's men and the outlaws had exchanged about 50 shots and it was thought that one of the outlaws was wounded. We took the trail and found that they were heading straight towards Cedro or the G Bar Ranch. The sheriff had left word for us to come as quickly as possible for he intended to follow the outlaws and get them if it took all summer. We followed the trail across the Cariso, over the ridge through a narrow pass, down into the Zuni Wash and out on the other side, and then the trail took an Easterly course up the wash, just mentioned. I made the suggestion that four of us follow the trail and four of us strike for the Cedro and head off the renegades there and to lend assistance to Sheriff Bealer's men. Gus, Frank, and the two Mexican boys continued on the trail, while I and the other three headed for Cedro. We arrived there at 11:00 a.m., but found no sign of the outlaws or Bealer's men, so we turned around hastily and cut a sign along the road as we hurried to meet the boys who were still on the trail. The party I was with was composed of George Seath, a cowman from the Coyote, Ben Crosby, Will Harris, and myself. When we reached the place where we were to meet the boys, they were not there. We learned from a sheepherder that the outlaws had turned off at right angles from the course they had been taking and had gone South towards Pine Springs and that the boys were close upon them. Our horses were too played out to follow any farther, so we went home thinking that the boys would be all right as Sheriff Bealer was still on the trail. We got into St. Johns about dusk, and found that Bealer and his posse had returned at 10:00 a.m. and the four boys were still out on the trail.*

*Wednesday, 28th. J. T. LeSueur called while I was still in bed this morning, wanting to know what to do about the four boys as they had not returned yet. I told him that someone should go out and see what was the matter and that I would go for one, so I got my breakfast and made ready to go. Pearl Gibbons, Gus' wife, was staying with us during his absence and I tried to make her think that the boys were alright, that their horses had given completely out and they had to lay **out** all night, but although I tried my best, I could not reconcile her. We got off about eight o'clock; Sheriff Bealer, Will Gibbons, Will Sherwood, and myself, and two Mexicans were to follow later. The two Wills were to go by the G Bar Ranch as far as the Zuni Wash and then they were to come to Dick Greer's windmill and report what they had seen; the two Mexicans were to come by another route and meet us at the same place, while Bealer and I were to take the straight route through. We arrived on the brink of the large cove in which Dick Greer's ranch was*

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>6</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns Arizona Stake President, 1982, pp. 238-241



located. I took my spyglass and tried to locate the windmill, but I was unable to do so. I turned the glass on the route that the two wills were supposed to cover and sure enough, they were on their way to the meeting place. We got on our horses and galloped to the trail of the outlaws, over which the boys were coming. This was near the center of the Rincon (cove) only that it was a little closer towards the road.

When we met Will Gibbons and Will Sherwood, they told us they had met Antonio Armijo and Frank Ruiz returning from Cedro, where they had spent the night. The Mexican boys had said they followed the trail of the outlaws until they were near Dick Greer's windmill and that they had stopped for a consultation on what course to pursue. Antonio and Frank had wanted to follow the trail farther and Ruiz and Gus had wanted to return home or else go to Cedro.

They discussed the matter pro and con and finally, Antonio decided to go to Cedro with Ruiz, but Frank LeSueur persuaded Gus to follow the trail as far as Joe Carn's ranch and then to spend the night there at Ojo Benito. When the boys had finished reporting this, we glanced back the way Bealer and I had come and saw the two Mexicans coming. We took the trail of the outlaws and followed it toward a narrow ridge that extended out from the tableland and had a deep gorge on each side of it. When we were about a half mile away from it the ground over which we were traveling was of a red clay formation and was all cut up by ruts and little washes and all of them ran toward the main wash. The country faced the Northeast and when we came to where we could see the different objects in the badlands, I saw an object on the steep hillside that startled me. It looked like the body of a man, but I would not admit it to myself. It was still too far away to be able to identify it and while I was thinking about it, I saw another object that looked like a quilt that had been thrown away by the outlaws and had been rolled up by the wind and lodged in the wash where it now lay, but as we drew nearer, I saw that it was the body of a man and upon closer inspection, I recognized it as the body of my nephew, Gus Gibbons. It was laying in the bottom of a little draw with the head downhill and face upward with three ghastly bullet holes through his head. One of them had entered his mouth and had come out of the back of his neck; one had went in at the left ear and had come out below the mouth, breaking the lower jaw and disfiguring the face awfully. In addition to these, he had several wounds in the body that we did not examine at the time. We well knew what the other object was that we had noticed laying on the hillside. The sight was horrifying to the senses. To see the two boys laying there, that I had known since they were in the cradle and had watched grow up and were just in the pink of manhood, and for them to be ambushed and shot down like dogs, without even a chance to fight for their lives, made me sick. It was murder in its worst form and there is not another crime beneath the roof of heaven that can stain the soul of man with a more infernal hue than an assassination such as this. They had out villained villainy.

As soon as we had time to recover from the shock, we took steps to take care of the bodies. Will Gibbons, brother to Gus, and I stayed with the bodies while the rest returned to St. Johns and Will Sherwood was to come back later with a team. They started out at 1:30 p. m. Will and I sat and talked for awhile until the boys were out of sight and then we got up and went about half a mile along the foot of the mesa until we found a place where we could climb the mesa. After we reached the top, we cut out around to see if we could find the trail left by the outlaws after they had left the scene of the killing. We found it and followed it back until we found the spot where they had lain in wait for the unsuspecting boys to come within point blank range. They had left a saddle put away nicely under a tree and a blanket folded near and stuck in the top of a small cedar. We found empty shells at different points where each outlaw had been lying when the killing took place. As we approached the spot where Frank lay, we found where two more of the outlaws had been laying in ambush about twenty feet away from the rest. There were two empty shells laying on the ground and were doubtless the ones that killed Frank LeSueur. The boys had been afoot and to all appearances, Frank had been ahead and each was leading his horse.

Frank had evidently fell at the first volley, but Gus must have only had a body wound for he had turned and ran for some distance. It would have been impossible for him to have lived a moment after any one of the gaping wounds in his head had been made. Frank had been shot through the neck and right between the eyes, and one leg, the right one, had been broken by a shot. He lay face downward with his head pillowed on his arm and his legs were partly doubled under him. While we were thinking what would be best to do with the bodies, we heard a noise which sounded like a man shouting. Thinking that



*the outlaws might still be lurking in the neighborhood, we led our horses to the foot of the mesa and ran to the shelter of a neighboring hill where we could see if anyone was approaching and yet not be exposed ourselves. I had the feeling of death upon me, for had the outlaws been returning to the scene of their crime, they would have had Will and I as much at their mercy as the boys that were lying there now, had been yesterday. We were in a position where we could defend ourselves after we reached the hill and I felt considerably better. After sitting there awhile, some crows flew over the crest of the mesa and started to make some noises similar to those that had frightened us a few moments before.*

*We returned and carried Frank LeSueur down to the level and put him on Will's horse as it was the gentlest of the two, and took him to where Gus was laying. We put him on the same horse and carried them out to the badlands two miles beyond to a point where a wagon could reach us without any difficulty. The boys had been robbed of everything in their pockets and even their hats were missing. We built a fire on the mesa where Dick Greer's ranch road goes up out of the Rincon, and prepared ourselves for our dreary night watch. We were both very uneasy, I guess because of the horror we felt over what had occurred and although there was not real danger, our imaginations led us clear to the extreme in fancying what could occur before we were safely back in St. Johns. At 10:30, the boys returned with the wagon. Will Sherwood was accompanied by Seth Russell, Warren Mallory, and J. P. Patterson. We hailed them with joy, for the prospects of spending the whole night here was not attractive in the least to us. They brought us some water and a good lunch and we ate with great relish. At 12:00 p.m. we started for St. Johns...*

*Thursday, 29th...at daylight we reached town and the bodies were laid out in the Jarvis Gallery...I was called upon to appear before the coroner's jury at the Jarvis Gallery. Their verdict was that the boys had met their deaths at the hands of criminals described as the ones that we had been trailing. While this was going on, there was an effort being made to gather another posse and to follow the desperados and bring them to justice...*

The posse never was able to capture the murderers.



**MARKERS AT THE SPOT WHERE OUTLAWS  
MURDERED GUS GIBBONS AND FRANK LESEUER**



**OLD JAIL AND COURT HOUSE  
AT ST. JOHNS**

- 1901, Oct. 4—Nancy and Nansen Bates were born in St Johns, AZ. Nancy died within a few minutes after birth.

### **Birth of the Twins, Nancy and Nansen Bates**

[Nancy, mother] Nansen Bates and Nancy, twins, were born October 4, 1901. Nancy died within a few minutes after birth. Bates weighed two pounds dressed. He was a seven-month child and had convulsions for two months. He was ill most of the time during his childhood. [This excerpt is taken from Nancy's handwritten tribute to Bates in 1932. It will be shown on a photocopy of that note under the year 1932 in Chapter 7.]



- 1903 July 3—Neallo Knight is born in St Johns, AZ.
- 1904—Joshua is serving as a Sunday School teacher.
- 1904—Driest year of record in Northern Arizona causes many sheep and cattle operations to fail.
- 1904-15—Joshua takes up farming instead of sheep herding, because of the drought.

[G. Lester Holgate, Nephew] Uncle Dick and Josh were in the sheep business. I think they made money with them until the drought came. Then they had a big loss.

Uncle Josh took up farming. He didn't have machinery like they have now. He plowed with a walking plow. One spring I helped him. He would plow a furrow. I would drop corn, then he would cover it with the plow.<sup>7</sup>

[Andrew H., Son] Father, as I remember from what I heard people say, was an expert with sheep. He had a lot of patience. If anything requires a lot of patience it is handling sheep. I remember hearing him and Mother talk and they decided that if he was going to raise a family of boys that a sheep camp was not the place to do it and therefore he probably got the idea of becoming a farmer.<sup>8</sup>

[J. Smith, son] He later began farming. Father rented a place down at the Meadows. I remember he had great fields of grain and I remember we boys used to go out to the corral at night when he was milking the cows, each of us with a cup, and he would strip our cups full of milk and we would drink.

From the Meadows Father moved into St. Johns and after a short time went out to the Malpies Ranch to work for his brother Richard, "Dick". Here Father did all the farming on the ranch and assisted in running the cattle. It was here that I became pretty well acquainted with Father in his farming and cattle career.

He was a hard working man. He began about daylight in the morning and worked till after dark at night. Father used to assist Mother a great deal around the home and in addition spent some time assisting us boys in milking the cows. I recall that one summer we had forty head of range cows that we were milking. My complete day was consumed in milking the cows, turning them out to graze, getting them back and milking the cows again. It was customary for Father to assist in milking the cows at night and in the morning.

Later in our life Father purchased from Annie Jensen a place a mile below St. Johns and we were close to and could attend school and church at St. Johns. We were all happy to get this place. While here Father purchased for me my first pony, a little mare by the name of Pet.<sup>9</sup>

- 1905, Feb. 18—Arizona (Zona) Gibbons is born at St Johns.
- 1905, Mar. 18—Joshua appointed to be a member of the St. Johns Board of Education
- 1905, Spring—Salado Dam fails at its first filling, because its flood gate could not be opened.
- 1905—The US Forest Service sets up grazing restriction regulations, limiting cattle and sheep grazing



**HEADSTONE FOR NANCY (TWIN TO BATES) SHE DIED A FEW MINUTES AFTER BIRTH**

### **The Salado Dam upstream of St. Johns Fails, Causing a Disastrous Flood**

The big Salado Dam, six miles above St. Johns with a 17,260 acre foot capacity was the first of the really big irrigation projects on the Little Colorado. By pioneer standards it was a very ambitious under-

<sup>7</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by authors: Andrew H. Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., p. 24

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 41

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 37



taking. The plan was to take the water out on the eastside and bring under cultivation the large plain that lies between St. Johns and the McIntosh Hills.

Substituting natural shrewdness for engineering know-how, the pioneers surveyed their land, built their towns and constructed their dams. In an effort to insure against a washout at Salado, a special sluice gate was incorporated into the dam. When opened, it would augment the capacity of the spillway in cases of emergency. Built by a local blacksmith, the sluice gate was a masterpiece of pioneer workmanship. It was composed of a series of iron slats stacked edge to edge over the opening of the sluice-way. These slats were fastened together by loops of chain, the plan being to lift them up, one by one, as the emergency demanded.

Starting just before the turn of the century, this area was held in the grip of a severe drought, which reached its peak in 1903 and 1904. When it finally broke in 1905, the resulting floods soon filled the reservoir to its capacity. With the water still rising it was evident that the dam was in grave danger. When the zero hour arrived the decision was made to pull the sluice gate, but water pressure on the gate was so great that the chains broke before moving even the first slat. The plans, the hopes, the dreams, and four years of back breaking work for the whole community went down the river.

When the Salado Dam went out the release of its impounded water not only swept away the Zion Dam, twenty miles downstream, but the Woodruff Dam in Navajo County as well.

With the breaking of the three biggest dams, Bluewater, Ramah (for the second time), and the Salado, it was such a devastating blow to the area that the church authorities decided that the faithful people of the St. Johns Stake had suffered enough. Apostle Francis M. Lyman was sent to release all the people of the St. Johns Stake from their call as colonizers. With that release he promised them that the blessings of the Lord would go with those who chose to leave; for those who chose to stay not only would the blessings of the Lord be with them, but that they would prosper here to the same extent that they could have any place on the face of the earth.<sup>10</sup>



**PART OF THE HAVOC CAUSED BY THE WASHOUT OF THE SALADO DAM—1905**

<sup>10</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns Arizona Stake President, 1982, p. 63



St John May 4/05  
 L R Gibbon

now heard Dear brother no doubt fear  
 of the reservoir going out. There has  
 been no estimate made of the damage  
 done but there was no human life  
 loss and very little stock if any.  
 I was watching all the dam when it  
 started in connection with W O Gibbon  
 Ed Greer an Pros forer. The leak was  
 between the dirt and the bluff class  
 if not right at the bottom of the  
 dam. We commenced to see rainy water  
 about 8 o'clock in the morning but  
 could <sup>not</sup> tell where it was coming from  
 until about 9.30 A M ~~then~~ <sup>2<sup>nd</sup></sup> 2 hours  
 later it was a past all hope and  
 we all started for town and by 3.30  
 P.M. there was two streams flowing over  
 the hill (1 in front and the other  
 behind the Court house) into the  
 town they were both quite small



There was a solid body of water from town to the M. Cemetery. There was a large stream went through Hualgato but I am informed the Kearns Canal and John White were. The stream that came over the hill run around Rutter's Al Davis home and it came up to D.O. house it ran the ditch full along the north side of my lot but did not get on the lot. W. H. Peterson and P. J. the were practically untouched.

I don't know how many houses were washed away up the river. In town on the W. side of the river there was three by the bridge the Duran string and 1/2 of the St. Hunter string. Mrs. Perez's house was very badly damaged there a few others slightly damaged. Jesus Peralta and Cardenas lumber houses have the foundations partly gone but other were unhurt. Jesus' barn was carried away all the lobby house including R. D. Green are gone East of the river.



The field ditch down as far as the mill<sup>is</sup> about washed away and from there on down is full of mud. The ditch is like making a new one as far as the cut by the Padrae Pond. Trees washed away Luccarn covered up with mud hills and hollows made in land are two common to try to describe. Where the dam was there is a sort of culvert and spills and a cut made to show where it once stood.

The river channel has been changed in a good many places but I will only tell you the one here by town being that the field bridge it is gone down and all down to its rack where the Co. bridge stood its width is nearly double the largest part of the stream going east of the bridge the little cypress trees that stood on the east now stand on the west the channel runs through the Old Padrae's vineyard leaving the Luccarn on the East bank.



There is more I could tell you but  
 I guess this will try your patience  
 It is one of the bluest communities  
 I have ever seen there is hardly a  
 smile to be seen

The family is quite well I think  
 yours is too Mittie said ~~of the~~ <sup>you</sup> was  
 going to write today also

Hoping you will get time to write  
 once and a while and be successful  
 in your business

from your Bro

Josh.



[Zona, daughter] I was the oldest girl and Daddy paid a great deal of attention to me as I was the seventh child and the only girl [at that time]. However another girl came to our home when I was two.<sup>1</sup>

[Louisa, daughter] He was very devoted to Zona, his first girl after five sons, and he often said that he better never catch anyone mistreating her.<sup>2</sup>

- 1906, Feb. 17—Nancy and her counselors, Anna L. Anderson and Margaret Jarvis, were released from being the Relief Society Presidency for the St. Johns Ward
- 1906, Feb. 18 – 1911, Oct. 21—Joshua serving at the Superintendent of Religion Classes
- 1906, Sept. 16—Nancy called to be the St. Johns Stake Relief Society Secretary

[Genevieve Gibbons Anderson, Niece] When Uncle Joshua would come to our house on an errand mother would give him a glass of lemonade or root beer. He would walk through the house and comment on her fine house keeping. I remember going to play at the home of Uncle Joshua and Aunt Nancy. We always had a hilarious time. But never remember being chastised by either Uncle or Aunt. They must have had a world of patience. They always had good vegetables. We would cut tomatoes to fill a big milk pan, and then cover them with thick cream. I have never seen tomatoes served that way since, but they were delicious.<sup>3</sup>

### The Amenities and Facts of Life

[Andrew H, son] I remember also that my eyes became very bad and one time two of the apostles came down to conference and Father had them administer to me. They said that if he would pay my way to Salt Lake I could get free treatment in the L.D.S. Hospital. So it was decided to send me with Mr. and Mrs. Heaps who lived in town and who were going back to conference and they agreed to take me. The folks bought me a suit of clothes and in making final preparations Father was telling me about spending money. As he stood by the stove he said, "Now when you're on the train and you want to buy an orange or two or three or four oranges it's all right, but," he said, "be careful of your money."

I remember little of the trip but I remember that in the hospital I had never known there was such a thing as indoor plumbing and when I had to go I had quite a time looking out of all the windows for the little house out in back—and never found it. I began to cry and the nurse discovered what was the matter and showed me modern plumbing. That was once my dad slipped up, he forgot to tell me about such things. Perhaps because it wasn't too familiar to him either.

Another experience I had on a trip with Father: It seemed there was some man who came to town lecturing on sex and such things and Mother and Father were talking about it, and Father felt that he ought to go, and Mother couldn't, being not well enough, so he decided to take me. Well, I remember it was quite a long and dreary meeting and the things that the man talked about were generally aimed at married folks. Of course there was something about instructing children about sex and so on the way home Father, feeling that perhaps he hadn't done all that he should in instructing us boys, in the mile and some we had to walk, endeavored to make up for that. He was trying to tell me some things that I should know and we were both embarrassed, I am sure. We didn't have a common vocabulary; the vocabulary I had learned about some of the parts of the body and some other things were not the ones used in society and Father was trying to meet me on a common ground that although we tried we didn't reach. But I've always appreciated the fact that he tried to tell me some things.<sup>4</sup>

- 1907, Feb 24—Rizpah Jayne is born at St Johns.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the authors, 1973, Andrew H Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons, Jr., p. 35

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 32

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 25-26



- 1907—Eliza Noble (Nancy's half-sister) and her husband, Charles Henry Pearce, spend a few days with Josh and Nancy on their way to live in Roosevelt, Utah
- 1907 (about)—Purchase of the Jensen Place
- 1907-1908—Leslie Noble, a brother-in-law, lives with Joshua and Nancy while attending the St. Johns Academy

[Jayne, daughter] First, I remember Dad as a kind man. He was soft spoken and because I was the baby I was the apple of his eyes. I was good and spoiled, too. Almost every time he came in and sat down he whistled a little tune. That meant that I was to come and sit on his lap. However, if it was Mother he wanted instead of me, he just kept on whistling and I went away.<sup>5</sup>

[Evaline G. Palmer, niece] When Jayne was born I worked for them and enjoyed it very much. A more loving and devoted man I had never seen. He was my Sunday School teacher for years. He was always there and prepared. By his teachings I learned and appreciated the gospel more. . . He was always considerate of everyone else, many times to the extent he injured himself. A wonderful man, a devoted father, husband and uncle.<sup>6</sup>

[Leslie Noble, Nancy's brother] As we lived in Alpine and they at St. Johns, I did not see much of him very often until I went to St. Johns to attend the Academy. It was then that I first really became acquainted with him.

They had a large family at that time, 1907 and 1908 I believe. I was treated as one of the family and no father could ever have been better to his own son than Josh was to me. I remember myself as being somewhat irresponsible and many times ungrateful for the kind care and help they gave me while I lived at their home.

But never once do I remember Uncle Josh getting angry or being unduly impatient with me. He just tried to help me at all times and now as I look back upon the year that I spent in their home I realize how much influence for good he had upon my life. He was one of the best men I have ever known.

He never asked anything, neither would he accept anything for the months and months I spent in their home. Next to my own father, no man was ever kinder or more concerned for my welfare than he. I will always love and respect him for it.<sup>7</sup>

### **Home on the Jensen Place**

[J. Smith, Son] Later in our life Father purchased from Annie Jensen a place a mile below St. Johns and we were close to and could attend school and church at St. Johns. We were all happy to get this place.<sup>8</sup>

[Zona, Daughter] My story begins on a small ranch located on the banks of the Little Colorado River about one mile north and east of St. Johns, Arizona. The house was on the banks of the Little Colorado River between the river and an irrigation ditch. It was an ideal place for children to play. It was surrounded by many different types of fruit trees and along the banks of the irrigation ditch were long rows of Lombardy Poplar trees.

I was born on Saturday, the eighteenth day of February, 1905, at St. Johns, Arizona to Joshua Smith Gibbons and Nancy Louisa Noble. These are my brothers and sisters who were older than me: Joshua Smith, Edward Noble, Andrew H., Nansen Bates, Nancy and Neallo Knight, then me. The baby girl, named Nancy, died soon after birth, so I was the oldest daughter with five brothers. I was the apple of my father's eye and he carried me about with him a great deal. Two years later, on the second of February, 1908, on Sunday, my sister Rispah Jayne was born and how proud I was to have a baby sister.

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4 Ibid., p. 44

5 Ibid., p. 32

6 Ibid., p. 24

7 Ibid., p. 27

8 Ibid., p. 37



The home we lived in on the ranch consisted of two rooms. The living room was also the bedroom and kitchen. The attic, where the boys slept, was reached by a ladder on the outside of the house. One of my earliest recollections was of hearing my father stand and whistle for the boys to get up. He had the loudest whistle I have ever heard. He accomplished this by putting two fingers in his mouth. The house was surrounded by apple trees, which made it very nice.<sup>9</sup>

[Andrew H, son] I remember he bought 50 acres and a brick house with attic and cellar below town. He borrowed the money to pay for it and brought it home. How wonderful it was to think there was that much money in the world. When they were counting out the money he discovered that Mr. Heap had given him more than he should have and so he walked back across town to take it back to him.<sup>10</sup>

Father was noted for some things. He was a most excellent whistler. He used this talent as a means of calling us boys. If we were a long way away his whistle was piercing and used in a way that if we heard it there was no doubt as to what it meant. He also would come into the house, sit on a chair, and start to whistle and Mother would come and sit on his lap. He would kiss her and they'd talk a little and then go back to work.<sup>11</sup>

I am reminded of some trips I took with Father. One of the first was when he took me out after wood. The pioneers who settled St. Johns used only wood as fuel, they of course began by taking all the cedar trees around close and by the time we got down to the wood hauling stage we had to take quite a trip to get good fire wood. I remember I was quite young. We went way back in the hills and when we got there Father would take the team and with a chain he'd pull over the trees he wanted, trim them up, and when he got enough he would load them. My most conspicuous memory is of the first night in the hills, my first memory of ever camping out. We sat around the campfire and soon I heard the coyotes begin to howl and then I became so frightened that I began to cry. And I remember Father took me in his arms and comforted me and finally we went to bed and everything was about right again with the world.<sup>12</sup>

I remember that once Noble, the brother just older than I, got into trouble. He was accused by Eddy Whiting who ran a store and Ice Cream Parlor, and Eddy kicked Noble real hard several times. I saw him and was just hunting a good rock to throw at him when other people took things in hand. When Father heard about it he didn't condone Noble in what he was accused of but he said Whiting was out of line in trying to beat him up that way. Eventually Eddy came down to the house. Noble was there and they talked about it and I remember how calm and collected Father was and when everything was ironed out apparently no one had any hard feelings.<sup>13</sup>

- 1908 (About)—Nancy goes to Winslow for an operation, which does not solve her problems.

[Eileen, Granddaughter] Yes, Nancy knew her mind. She was strict and sure—yet soft-hearted, a forceful combination. She tied a disobedient child to the bedpost with a piece of string he easily could have broken. He didn't budge.

From the time her first son was born in 1894 until after her last daughter came to her, a widow of five months, Nancy could never walk around or stand for more than a short while. She sat to do most of her work, and her children remember seeing her sitting in a straight chair, scrubbing her clothes sideways. They remember pulling her in a little wagon down to the garden—always a good garden—to pull weeds, and watching her slide up and down the rows, working and supervising. They remember the way she rode the old mare bare back to do her visiting. A. H. remembers that one day when Nancy and Joshua

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9 Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 25

10 Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the authors, 1973, Andrew H Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons, Jr., p. 41

11 Ibid., p. 40

12 Ibid., p. 43

13 Ibid., p. 42



had been married about fifteen years, his father said to a visitor: "You have just seen my wife stand on her feet longer than she has stood for a number of years."<sup>14</sup>

[Andrew H, Son] Another trip that we took was from St. Johns to Winslow—about 135 miles, quite a trip with a wagon. Father heard there was a doctor there who thought he could help Mother so he took her to Winslow for an operation and they took me along, the only one of the children to go. I remember little about the trip except that after Mother was operated on I was sitting out in front of the hospital thinking about different things and the nurse asked me to spray the trees that were by her window. She said it would make it cooler, and thus I had my first experience with water that came out of a tap. At home we had to do most of the hauling of our water, even drinking water.

We left mother at the hospital for a time, and started back home. There had been a wreck the night before. A passenger train had been coming along at quite a speed and a bridge had been burned out and they didn't know it and the engine had jumped the wash, plowed into the opposite bank and three people had been killed, 33 injured. Father took me over to look at the wreck and tell me some things about it. I remember seeing this big engine half buried in the dirt, something that I never forgot, and he told me the engineer and fireman had both been killed, that they usually were killed in a wreck. Even then, I remember appreciating the fact that he would take time to talk to me about it and to let me see it.<sup>15</sup>

Mother meant every word of her interpretation of the law of tithing. Tithing meant a full one tenth, and be it hay, a calf, chickens, a dozen eggs or money, the tithing should be paid. One of my proudest moments was when she sent me to the bishop two weeks after I had been baptized to give me the experience of paying tithing.

Mother tolerated no use of swear words around the place at all and one day when we were breaking two laws at once, eating green apples and using forbidden swear words, Mother happened to overhear such attractive cuss words as "damn" and "hell" and others equally bad. "Gosh damn, that's a fine one." We were so happy in our vocabulary development that we did not see Mother until she had overheard our conversation. For a long time I had the taste of strong lye soap in my mouth.

In the northern section of St. Johns the folks had a very nice garden. Always lots of good vegetables and a large orchard. Milk we had from Jersey cows, and the bread Mother used to bake along with homemade preserves was one of the most delicious meals a hungry kid could ever want. Imagine all the homemade bread and milk I wanted, plus some more bread and butter—butter I had helped to churn.

As a very small youngster I remember family prayer morning and night was a regular thing, as was the blessing on the food, and I remember how we each took our turn. A great responsibility and at the age of three a wonderful opportunity.<sup>16</sup>

Another one of my early trials in school was clothing. Mother, being a partial invalid, never was able to take too good care of our clothes. We usually had a shirt and overalls for school and a Sunday shirt with a pair of pants. I used to have to do most of the dishes and as a result the bib of my overalls more often than not became splashed with dishwater. It worried me a good deal to go to school with these signs of my servitude so plainly evident. For Sunday Mother seldom took the trouble to iron the whole shirt. She ironed the front and the sleeves. That, coupled with the fact that mother was never an expert seamstress, may give you some idea that we were not the best-dressed boys in town.<sup>17</sup>

Every time Mother would be quite ill it seemed to me that Father and I were the ones who were there together. I suppose that the reason was: when I woke up in the night hearing Mother cry and moan I always was so worried that I got up to see what could be done about it. Usually it ended up with me going for help if we needed it. I remember one night when she had a gathering in her head and the pain almost drove her frantic and finally it seemed the gathering broke and her head rolled back and she apparently stopped breathing. Her eyes looked so funny that I thought of course she was dead and Father

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14 Ibid., p. 14

15 Ibid., p. 43

16 Ibid., p. 76

17 Ibid., p. 76



sat there saying, "Nancy, Nancy, speak to me," I asked if I should go for help, he said yes, so I ran for Uncle Roy.

He had been so excited and troubled that after I got Uncle Roy he said he was sorry because there wasn't much he could do. After while Mother felt better and the next morning she was a lot different. She really scared us. I know a lot of times I got out of bed in the middle of the night to see if there was something I could do and so Father would send me to get help.<sup>18</sup>

- 1909, Apr 5—Joshua Gibbons gives the lesson in the High Priest Class
- 1909—Live in a home on the banks of the Little Colorado River 1 mile north of town. Bought the home from Sr. Annie Jensen for \$300 sometime between 1905 and 1909.
- 1909—All of the Gibbons children have the measles, a humorous incident.

### Life on the Jensen Place

[Zona, Daughter] The first thing I remember about my Dad was seeing him put two fingers in his mouth and whistle the loudest of anyone I have ever heard. We lived a mile from town on our ranch on the bank of the Little Colorado River. It was an old house with an attic reached by a ladder from the outside of the house. It was standing by this ladder that I have heard him whistle so loudly, waking the boys in the attic for the day's work.<sup>19</sup>

I do not remember very much before four years of age, except that we always had lots of fun in the ditch and the river. It was early in my life when I noticed that my Mother was not able to walk around like the others, so at an early age I learned many ways of helping her. It was sometime during this fourth year that Bates, Neallo, myself and Jayne came down with the red measles. This is the first time I remember in detail things about the family. We were pretty sick kids; but Bates was the sickest one. There was one big bed in the front room with all four of us in it—the girls at one end and the boys at the other end. We were really ill until we began to feel better. Then one day Neallo said, "My gosh Ma, this bed is just full of feet." It was really laughable; every time I think about it now I still laugh. I can still remember how many feet there were. The oldest of the four children, Bates, was a twin who at birth only weighed two and one-half pounds wrapped in cotton. So when we were finally well enough to go outside for a few minutes, Bates grumbled and growled and fussed about going out. Then when it was time to come back in he was even worse.

When about four Dad had taken me some place with him. When we returned I jumped off the wagon and onto a large nail. I was really laid up for a few days, but not idle. Mother was making apple butter and it fell to my lot to sit most of the time and stir this apple butter by means of a paddle fastened onto a long handle. Although this seemed a hard task for me then, the apple butter was wonderful to eat during the winter.

At Christmas time Dad always played Santa Claus. He rang the sleigh bells and crossed the wooden bridge, so we could hear him plainly. For weeks before we were told if we were not good Santa would not come, so it constantly kept us on our toes doing our best.

By this time all of us children helped Mother with the garden. She had to sit and weed along the rows. We always had one of the best and earliest gardens in the country. Mother was an excellent gardener. A lot of our living depended on this garden. The weeding of the garden was made much more pleasant by Mother's stories. She was a great reader and her supply of stories was unlimited. How we all loved and enjoyed her good stories. All of the grandchildren who knew her did too. Mother had been a school teacher before her marriage and she had always loved children. She was very good in handling them; she was good in discipline, only speaking once. I remember that I disobeyed her once and she tied me to the bedpost with a piece of sewing thread and I knew better than to break it. For two hours I sat there before she said, "You can go now." . . .

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 45

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 34



We had a big swing in between two tall poplar trees. We children all enjoyed it very much and my older brothers used to swing us in it really high. We had a real good time. Smith and Noble would bring down young ladies and swing them. The girls would scream and laugh because the boys would swing them so high by using a rope. Jayne and I thought that was the funniest thing we had ever heard. They really did like it.

I recall the happy times we children had sitting in the Mulberry trees eating the berries by the hour. I can't imagine how I was able to eat those berries with all the tiny bugs in them.<sup>20</sup>

[Andrew H, Son] Father was an expert with a shovel, a skill that not many people have ever found cause to brag about. His boss once commented that in one day's work he could probably shovel half again as much dirt as any one of the men on the job and when other people doubted, Father told them how it was so. He explained to me how to load a shovel and how to get it off the shovel with the least amount of effort.

Also, Father did a lot of irrigating. In fact, irrigation was very much a part of the early western settlements. Father became recognized among his acquaintances as one of the best hands to get the most out of a stream of water. I know that at a time when a dollar and a half or even two dollars was high wages Father could command almost the incomprehensible sum of three dollars a day just for irrigating. He was able to plan ahead and regulate the water so that it would cover the most territory. I remember that on the place we bought below St. Johns from Jensen for \$300.00, irrigation was very important and Father was able to work it out so that we could irrigate our field of alfalfa with very little manual labor. He had it planned so that we could take out a dam and irrigate all of one field and then another field almost as easily.

Irrigation meant of course that you took the water when your turn came and used it to the very last minute. If your turn came at night you got up at night and irrigated. In the town of St. Johns a water share lasted for 20 minutes, or 40 minutes for two shares, and so forth. I remember of getting up in the middle of the night to take care of the water turn many times. Also, I remember some discussions and battles and so forth that came with this water business. There was onetime when a member of the bishopric had a discussion over water and there came a dispute and then a fight and the member of the bishopric got the other fellow down in the ditch and gave him a thorough soaking. The next day when they came to Sacrament Meeting we boys were outside the door and when the member of the bishopric went into the building we all called and asked him if he was going to confirm the man he baptized yesterday.<sup>21</sup>

- 1909, Apr. 5—Joshua teaching the High Priest's Group
- 1909, July 12—Committee for the 24<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration includes: Joseph Richey, Joshua S. Gibbons, Henry Overson and Charlotte Sherwood.
- 1909, September 13—Joshua visits the Alpine and other ward Sunday Schools as one of the Stake Officers. He is apparently the Stake Sunday School Superintendent

[Edna B. Gibbons, daughter-in-law] I did not have the privilege of being closely acquainted with Father Gibbons, so I do not remember too much. He died a year and four months before Smith and I were married. The summer of 1909 I spent with my sister and brother-in-law, May and Dudley Hamblin, in Dry Valley west of Nutrioso, Ariz. One Saturday evening the Supt. of St. Johns' Stake Sunday School, Marinus Christensen and Father Gibbons came to Nutrioso to visit the Sunday School. They spent the night at the ranch where I was. After the evening meal someone asked Father Gibbons to sing. I will

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20 Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, pp. 25-26

21 Gibbons, Andrew H, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by authors: Andrew H. Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., p. 40



never forget that he sang very beautifully—A Poor Wayfaring Man Of Grief—I was so impressed that I memorized and sang the song many times as I walked through the pines that summer.<sup>22</sup>

### **Joshua and Edward Alvah's Political Views**

[LeGrande, Brother-in-law] When I was just a small boy the question of politics played an important part in the everyday affairs of our home. Early in the history of St. Johns there were many Mexicans who in the main were Republicans, as I recall it, and Uncle Josh was a Republican. My father was a Democrat, and I may say a very ardent one. I remember that Uncle Josh and Father got into a rather heated argument one afternoon on the subject of who should be elected to office. There was a large number of Mexicans in St. Johns, running for different county offices. On the Democratic side the whites, as they were called, in contrast to the Mexicans who were also running for office mostly on the Republican ticket and it seems that Uncle Josh had taken the position that some of the Mexicans would make better county officers than some of the white people. Father took offense and they had quite a heated affair. In fact, I think they parted with rather ill feelings toward each other, but it lasted only a short time and they got together again and shook hands and both agreed that probably they had been a little radical in some of the statements that they made.

It was about this time that the question of woman suffrage was up for consideration. They engaged in many discussions, there was no difference of opinion on this point. They were both favorable to the action.<sup>23</sup>

- 1909, Nov. 28—Edward Alvah Noble, Nancy's father, dies at St. Johns in Nancy's home

### **The Passing of Edward Alvah Noble, Nancy's Father, in her home**

[LeGrande Noble, Nancy's brother] Well, Father took ill in 1909. He died in November, so his illness lasted between 15 and 30 days. Finally Mother decided that he should be taken to St. Johns for better medical care. So they prepared a bed in the wagon and Armeda drove the team. Mother sat by Father on the way there and they drove straight through from Alpine to St. Johns in one day, a distance of 60 miles. I stayed home on the ranch alone but a neighbor came over and spent the night with me. When we arrived we were greeted by Uncle Josh and Nancy and were informed that Father was in a serious condition. I stayed down to their place. . . . After Father had been in St. Johns for some time it became apparent that this illness was not of a temporary nature. (It soon became evident that his illness was critical.) Smith Gibbons was sent to come get me and the next day we rode from Alpine to St. Johns in one day. . . . I had been there for two or three days when Uncle Joshua Gibbons came down to the field where we were hauling hay. He said that I had better come up to the house because Father was worse. I did and when I got there I found that Elder Rudger Clawson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles and Brother Roberts had been asked to come administer to Father. When Elder Clawson put his hands on Father's head to seal the anointing he told him, among other things, that he had gained exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. He said that the Lord was fully satisfied with Father's work and that his mission was finished. After the brethren had gone Father turned to Mother and said, "Jane, did you hear what he said?" Mother said, "Yes, I did." Father said, "I can't believe that it is true." Immediately after the prayer had been offered Father was relieved of the pain and said he felt better. At this late date it appears to me that he had a severe attack of appendicitis and when his appendix broke he was relieved of his pain. I returned to the ranch in Alpine and it wasn't very long until Uncle Joshua came and said that Father was dead. That event in my life marked a closer relationship between me and Uncle Josh than we had ever had before. He sort of stepped in and assumed the roll of a father to me and upon many occasions

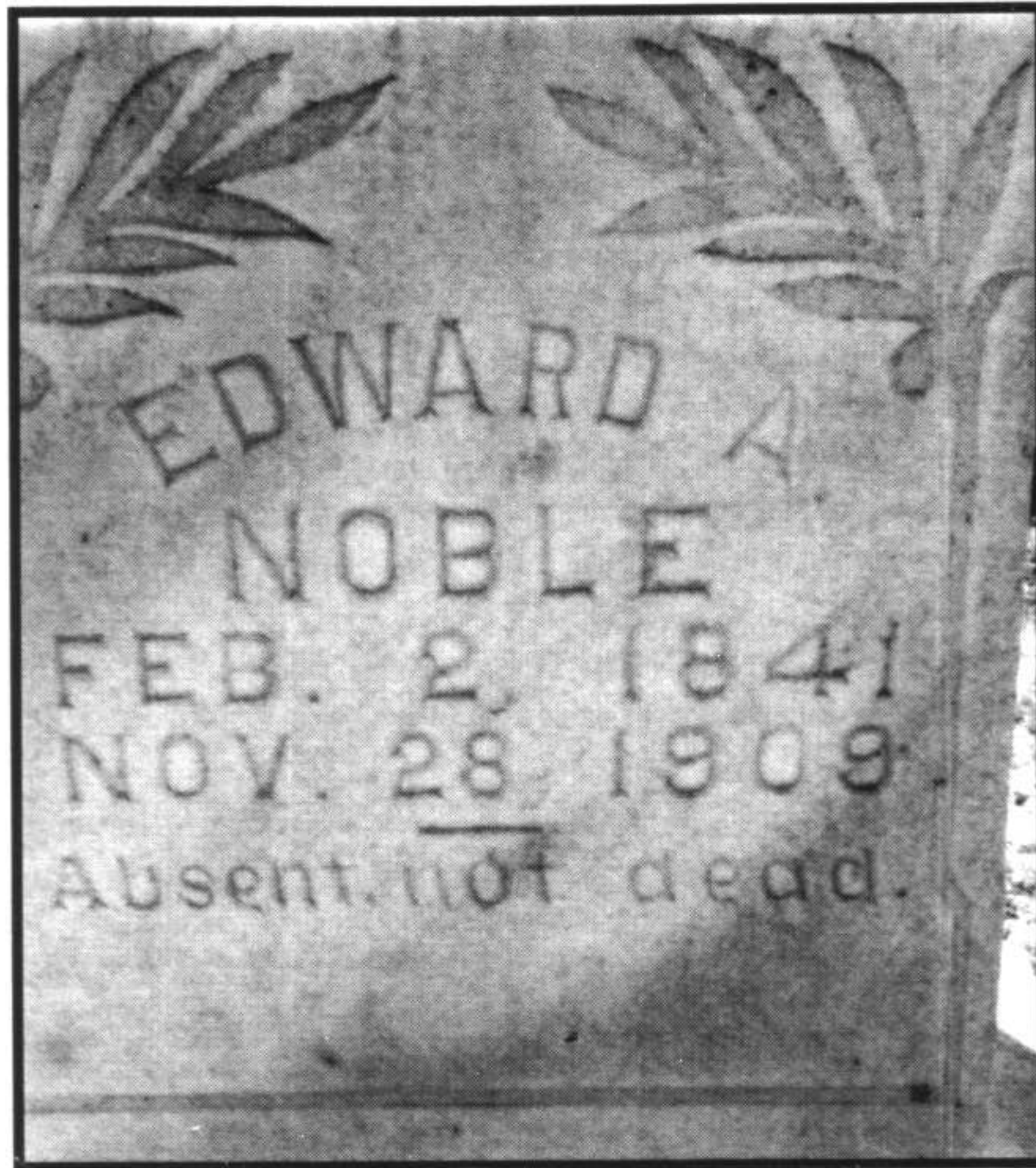
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22 Ibid., p. 26

23 Ibid., pp. 30-31



he gave me advice relative to attitudes and habits in life that I shall long remember.<sup>24</sup> [N. L. Nelson says Edward's death was the due to internal injuries resulting from heavy lifting on the farm.]



**EDWARD ALVAH NOBLE  
HEADSTONE AT THE ST. JOHNS CEMETERY**  
(Edward died at St. Johns and the problems of  
transporting a non-embalmed body 60 miles by team  
and wagon resulted in his burial at St. Johns rather  
than Alpine.)

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24 Flammer, Gordon H., Editor, *Histories of Edward Alvah Noble, His Wives Ann Jane Peel and Fanny Young, and Nine of Their Children*, The Edward Alvah Noble Family Organization, 2000, pp. 31-32



## Chapter Six

### LATER MARRIED LIFE OF JOSHUA AND NANCY 1910 — 1917

- 1910—Joshua raises grain in Alpine, while living in St. Johns, to help his recently widowed mother-in-law.
- 1910-1912—The planning and construction of the Lyman Dam for storage of irrigation water.
- 1910—St. Johns Water Works is incorporated for a modern water system to the community.
- 1910, Nov. 12—Triplets: Josephine, Josie, Joseph are born at St. Johns. Josie is stillborn and Joseph dies shortly after the birth. 1910, Dec. 6—Josephine dies.

#### Providing Water for Irrigation and Culinary Use

Whereas the building of the Salado Dam [1904] and the first Lyman Dam [1910-1912] were accomplished by years of sacrifice and hardship, during which the cost of construction was drawn, literally, from the individual grocery budgets of the people in the community, the building of the second Lyman Dam [1915-1917] was a blessing in disguise. It was a loan from the State of Arizona, most of which was used to pay the workers. The construction work at the dam furnished the City of St. Johns with their first big-time payroll and projected the community into the first period of real prosperity it had ever known. . .

With the payroll at the dam as a shot in the arm, the little business district along Commercial Street began to grow. Those establishments that were already there began to respond to this cash flow stimulus and as enterprising people began to see the need, other businesses began to crop up. The net result was an almost storybook version of a small town business district.

Our intent here is to capture what we can of the period from 1900 to the start of World War II. It was during that time that St. Johns kicked off the image of a poverty-stricken pioneer settlement. It began to flex its muscles and carve for itself a place among the more fortunate towns of the area. It was during this period that St. Johns really became the St. Johns that we all know and love and it is to this period that we refer when we speak of *the good old days*.

Like a runner who had trained with lead shoes on, once it freed itself from the shackles of its past, St. Johns was out in front. In 1910 the St. Johns Water Works was incorporated, soon to serve every house in town with a modern water hookup. Then came the first moving picture theater in the area. The town was soon to have two banks, while other towns of the county had none. These were only a few of the many firsts that were achieved by this enterprising community.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns Arizona Stake President, 1982, pp. 137-138



## The Births and Deaths of the Triplets

[Zona] When I was five years old Mother had triplets. I remember getting up in the morning and seeing two of the babies laying on a little desk we had there. They were dead. The other baby lived three weeks. I can still see that picture in my mind. There were two girls and a boy—Josie, Josephine and Joseph.<sup>2</sup> They were seven-month babies. The twins, Bates and Nancy were also seven-month babies. Mother couldn't carry the children through full time.

When I was five years old my father took me to his other ranch seven miles south west of St. Johns [Salado]. I stayed in the tent all day and watched things while father was in the field working. How long the days seemed to me—there all by myself. He taught me how to cook beans and the other things that were necessary. To pay me for trying to follow his instructions he let me hold some newly hatched baby chicks in my lap on the way home. I remember him as such a wonderful man, always mild, kind and so loving to me. I had the privilege of enjoying a very close companionship with him until he passed away when I was 12 years old. How precious his memory is to me and how I love it.<sup>3</sup>

[Evaline Palmer, Niece] When the triplets were born I went down. One day [Uncle Josh] put him arms around me and said, "Well, three little spirits have come and gone to a better home." 12 November 1910.<sup>4</sup>

[Ione G. Mineer, Niece] I know that Uncle Josh had a hard life and a big family. He was a hard worker. Later, when they lived down in the field, the triplets were born and my sister Eva and I took turns and worked to help them. I was there the night Uncle Josh died. I remember that just before his death the Elders administered to him.<sup>5</sup>

[Andrew H] I still remember the night the triplets were born. We were living in a small three-room house, which consisted mostly of a kitchen and two bedrooms, one of which was a mere attic with bare rafters. It was here that we boys slept. I was awakened by the commotion in the downstairs room. I crept to the back end where some fallen plaster had made possible a view of the room beneath. One of the infants was in the process of being born at that time. There seemed to be a whole room full of people so I did not look long, but the commotion, most of which was my Mother moaning and crying, kept me awake so I got up and dressed and went down. No, not downstairs but down the ladder that led to our boudoir. As I looked through the door of the bedroom I saw the doctor swinging one of the babies by its legs. It was a good bit of a shock to me to see a mere infant handled in such a way. I thought a good



**HEADSTONES FOR THE TRIPLETS. JOSIE DIED SHORTLY AFTER BIRTH AND JOSEPH. NEVER DID START BREATHING.**

<sup>2</sup> On the family group sheet in my possession one of the triplets is named Jose instead of Josie but is listed as a female. Both Zona and H specifically state that there were two girls and a boy, with the one girl named Josie and not Jose. The headstone above gives the name as Jose also, but Jose is a boy's name.

<sup>3</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 26

<sup>4</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 25

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25



many things about that doctor and wondered at the laxity of my father at permitting such a thing.

However, at length things quieted down and I returned to my trundle bed. The next morning I was amazed to find myself with two new sisters and one brother, but only one of which was still living. The boy, who happened to be the one I had seen the doctor swinging, had never got started to breathe and the little girl lived a mere hour before she died. I thought it was quite odd that the three should have been labeled Josie, Joseph, and the one living, Josephine. But even Josephine didn't live long, just 18 days. I remember that Mother was still in bed when I came down one morning to find them weeping and the little girl dead.

It was generally conceded that there would be no more babies. Mother was a good deal of an invalid after the triplets, and I for one hoped that there would be no more sickness for her. The folks now had 11 children to their credit, which was more than most anyone I knew; and I felt that even if it was a record it was a very near perfect one.

But the end was not yet. For the next ten years Dad was mainly concerned with trying to regain for Mother the health she had lost since her marriage. It seemed that there was a constant procession of doctors after that. I remember Dad and I taking Mother 135 miles to a hospital and a doctor that was supposed to do wonders. It was my first visit to a hospital and I well remember the little building on the sun-baked desert in Arizona. But when Mother returned there was little if any improvement. I wondered later if the 135 miles riding in a buggy didn't undo most of the benefit that might have come from the treatment. So the search for doctors went on. There was correspondence all the time with doctors from various sections of the country.<sup>6</sup>

- 1910-1911—Hazel Noble lives with Joshua and Nancy while attending the St. Johns Academy

## Home Life

[Zona] I used to go with Father to fix fences many times and we enjoyed each other's company very much. When I was about five we went to Alpine, 65 miles away to put up grain [presumably this was to help his mother-in-law run the farm after her husband's death].<sup>7</sup>

[Andrew H] I remember the mornings in winter when we'd wake to the cold, which was so severe we'd all hate to get up. It seemed to me then that Father might call the other boys and they'd wait so long eventually he'd call me because he'd know I'd get up and start the fires.<sup>8</sup>

[Nancy] At one time when I saw a certain party turn his eight or ten cows in our grain, which was ready to cut. Josh went down and turned them out and went on his way to his harvesting. The man bvturnd them right back in. Josh went right on and didn't do more. I walked the floor for fear something would happen. That night I said, "Josh, how could you do it?" He replied, "Nancy, It doesn't pay to see too much."

One man said of him, "I'll have to admit that there isn't a spark of selfishness in your make up."<sup>9</sup>

[Andrew H] Each time I go to see Mother now she seems to be sinking lower and lower, seems to be starving to death by inches almost, and each time that I look at her I think of all the things she has done, the suffering and hardships she has endured throughout her life to do things for us. She was always very strict with us, but somehow when we needed help or something like that she was always our source of inspiration and hope, and our home life was built very much around her. When we lived in that old place in the field, as we called it, below St. Johns, we had two rooms in the house and an attic; and it seems to me that some of the happiest times we had in our lives were in the evening when we would sit around the fireplace and have her read to us, and tell us stories. She used to read something emotional and stop and wipe her eyes and go on. She had a good deal of ill health and spent a lot of time in bed. Every time she had a baby usually there was a long drawn-out illness, but somehow she kept going and slid around from chair to chair to do all her work.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 74-75

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 45

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 48



...When we made bread we really made it. Mother had a pan that held about seven gallons or something like that, maybe not that big, but anyway she could make about 14 loaves of bread at once. We'd buy a sack of flour and usually by the time we'd mix two batches there wasn't enough of that flour left to count. And I always got to mix it. And I had to do a lot of cooking, although we didn't have much to cook; our meals were mostly mush and beans and stuff like that.

We had lumpy dick once in a while. We'd put a little water in the flour and there would be lumps in it, and we'd stir this into the hot water and make a kind of a cereal. Then we'd take the milk and put nutmeg in it and pour that over, and that would be our Sunday night supper.

Course we ate a terrifically lot of beans, they were our staff of life. In fact it was about all we could afford, and when we were doing heavy work we had to have that regularly. We used rabbits a lot when we could kill them—wild rabbits, of course.

We used to keep a bunch of cows to milk. None of them would give enough milk to hardly pay for calling them out of the pasture, but then they were all we had. Bread and milk was a part of our lives. Fact when Mother made salt-rising bread and we had some good milk to go with it, there was just nothing better in the world. When we had vegetables, of course, that was a happy time. We invariably raised a garden and when the spring started Mother never stopped saying, "Get the garden in" till we had it in. We had lots of tomatoes and things like that; then she used to make these preserves. She didn't have much sugar so in order to get the necessary sweetness so they'd keep why she'd boil them for hours and hours. She'd take that big pan we had and put it on the stove and put me up there with a long-handled spoon and I'd have to stir it for hours and hours and hours and hours while it boiled, so it wouldn't burn and when it got to poppin' on my hands she'd put a sock over my hand to protect it. Then she'd take the preserves and pour them into five-gallon cans and put sealing wax on top of them. And I never have liked preserves before nor since, at least tomato preserves, because we got so much of it.

But Mother could cook beans in a way that no other person could quite equal, even to this day. The way she could cook beans, I think it's one of the most wonderful dishes in the world. I remember once we were out on the other side of the valley, we had taken a wagon out and gathered some rocks and brought them back. She had chili gravy and some beans for us and, my goodness, I thought that was one of the best things I have ever eaten. . .

Our folks, while they considered education important, always felt that it ranked second to doing the needed work on the farm. So it was not uncommon for us to start school a month or too late. I used to hear that there was a law requiring children to be in attendance, and I frequently wished that it might have been enforced.<sup>10</sup>

[Andrew H] Christmas was always a practical day with us and very seldom did we get any toys, our gifts usually being clothing and some candy and nuts. We celebrated New Years the same way except that on Christmas Eve we would hang up our stockings and on New Years we'd set out our shoes. I remember once we wanted to see Santa Clause and, as we lived out of town, Father was the only one who could impersonate him. He wore no costume except a mask and some boots, so he didn't fool anybody except himself, and I felt very keenly disappointed.<sup>11</sup>

On one occasion we were coming from the field with a promise that we might have the afternoon off for what Father termed a good job, we had finished. But we came to a wagon stuck in the mud and it was literally mired down so that it took all of us all afternoon to get our neighbors on the way again. My brother and I complained somewhat bitterly about our afternoon, but somehow Father didn't pay too much attention. In the light of later lessons I learned that the fact that someone needed help, was to him—and he thought to us—the most important thing at the time. And because we were able to help he thought that alone was enough reward for the work we had done.<sup>12</sup>

- 1910 (About)—Joshua files on a homestead at Salado about 7 miles south of St. Johns.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 76-78

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 79

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 45



## Joshua files on a homestead at Salado under the Lyman Dam Project

[J. Smith] While here [on the Annie Jensen Place] father became interested in the Lyman project. Sometime shortly thereafter he filed on a desert entry, 160 acres, in Salado which is six miles south of St. Johns.<sup>13</sup>

[Andrew H] For the next years our life was centered around farming. That was how we made our living. I don't know whether at heart Father was a farmer or not, but as soon as the Lyman Dam was completed I know he filed on the place at Salado that we farmed for several years. [Actually he filed on the place about two years before the dam was completed.] He said he'd had his eye on it for a long time and it was probably the most level of all the sections under that dam. Reports are that several men came in the next few days to file on that same land so his [sound] judgement showed there in choosing a good piece of land.<sup>14</sup>

[Rhoda Ann Gibbons Davis, niece] Uncle Josh bought a farm in Salado [actually he filed for a homestead], a very small place south of St. Johns, and lived there for quite some time. He did more farming than working for wages.

He was a religious man and honored the Priesthood which he held. Wherever he lived he was a good neighbor. In Salado he was a neighbor to some people who weren't members of the Church. The families were good friends.

One of his traits that was most outstanding to me was his great love for children, and he had a big family of his own. He never passed children without speaking to them and patting them on the head.

Our families were always rather close and he once told me that he didn't have a child who didn't think the sun shone on me all the time. I've always appreciated this.

He thought a lot of my oldest daughter, Nina, who died of scarlet fever at the age of 7. He made a fuss over her every time he was around her and told me that when she was old enough to drink milk she would have to be theirs part of the time. Whenever he came to visit he would always play with her.<sup>15</sup>

[Zona] Part of the time each summer Dad would move the whole family up to Salado. The first year I started school [1911] we lived there until the winter. It was a very small town and it was quite a long ways to school walking in the cold. I was glad to have some older brothers to go with. The school was half Mexican and half white children. It was a one-room school with a rather old man teaching it. The Mexican children and white children did not seem to get along too well together, so Mr. Shreeve divided the school ground in half. Each one had their side and the dividing line was patrolled very carefully by each group. A great deal of swearing and name-calling was indulged in. To this day the only part of the language I remember are a few swear words in Spanish. But I still like the Spanish people and my Dad liked them very much. It was not a hard year and we children enjoyed it a lot. I do not think I learned very much because the teacher had very little time to give to each grade.<sup>16</sup>

[Jayne] One time we were in Salado camping in two tents. Mother had one of her miscarriages and Dad put her in a buggy and to town we went. He made the horses go so fast one became exhausted and he traded horses with someone who was working in the field south of town and we got on in before Mother lost too much blood. . . .



THE OLD ST. JOHNS ASSEMBLY HALL

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 41

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 23

<sup>16</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 27



One Christmas when they were homesteading at Salado, he took Zona and me up to the Christmas doings. The mud was so sticky and the wheels of the buggy would get real big, then Dad would make the horses run and the mud would fly every which way off the wheels.

On Christmas Day after we'd received our Rag Dolls, the only kind we ever got, I heard Mother tell Sr. McCray that if Dad hadn't taken us up there she would never have had our Christmas ready. Then, for the first time, I began to doubt the existence of Santa.<sup>17</sup>

[Andrew H] Father had a great deal of trouble with his eyes. From what I remember him telling us he was troubled with them most of his life. At times they would become ulcerated. I know that several times when he was at home he had these bad spells. During that time he would stay in a dark room practically all the time. The only remedy I remember him using was a solution of salt water that he would put in a small syringe and wash through his eyes. I don't know how much it affected his sight. I know he had to have glasses to read with, although for most of his work I believe he didn't wear glasses. I think that he said he probably inherited his eye weakness from his parents. Now, I rather think it might have been a lack of the right foods which caused this infection. I do know that inheritance was mentioned in my own case of eye trouble and that later diet helped to improve my condition a lot.<sup>18</sup>

#### ~~~~~ Joshua S. Gibbons, Justice of the Peace, and the Charles Maxwell Murder Case<sup>19</sup>

- 1910—Joshua elected as the Justice of the Peace for Apache County
- 1910, December 31—Initial preliminary hearing of the Charles Maxwell murder case which appeared before Joshua S. Gibbons, Justice of the Peace. Charles Maxwell is accused of the murder of James C. Greer. The preliminary hearing continued on through 28 January 1911.

At this time an event occurred which was to involve Joshua Gibbons as Justice of the Peace and which would be the cause of great misunderstanding and anger toward him. On Saturday December 30, 1910 Charles Collier Maxwell shot James C. Greer at Eager, Arizona. According to witnesses testimony there was bad blood between them having to do with Maxwell's sheep business. Greer was from a family of cattle men. Maxwell had been drinking and upon meeting Greer on the street shot and killed him. It was not a gunfight. He was shot totally unexpectedly by Maxwell's rifle. The community and surrounding area were outraged at the murder. The Greers were a prominent family in the county and were prosperous cattle ranchers. Both Greer and Maxwell were Mormons. From the testimony initially presented to the Court of the Justice of the Peace it appeared certain that Maxwell had murdered Greer with intent. This is borne out by the Coroner's Jury report, which says,

We the Coroners Jury summoned and sworn to examine into the facts concerning the death of James C. Greer at Eager, Apache Co., Ariz. on the afternoon of Dec. 30, 1910 find and do hereby certify as follows: That James C. Greer on the afternoon of Dec. 30, 1910 at the town of Eager, Apache Co., Arizona, came to his death at the hands of one Chas. Maxwell, who shot and killed the said James C. Greer with a 30-30 rifle and that said killing was by criminal means and that the said Chas. Maxwell is guilty thereof.

Eager, Arizona, Dec. 30, 1910

Jurors

[ signed by 10 men]

<sup>17</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., pp. 33-34

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42

<sup>19</sup> Court records of Justice of the Peace Court, District Court and Superior Courts of Arizona



The Justice Court, presided over by Justice of the Peace Joshua S. Gibbons, listened to witnesses from January 11-14, 1911 at which time Joshua as Justice of the Peace finds Charles Maxwell guilty and orders him held to answer charges before a grand jury. He sets bail for Maxwell at \$25,000. Some of the people in the communities in the area were incensed at the murder and vented their anger at Justice Gibbons for granting bail to Maxwell at all. In fact, there was a move to have Joshua disfellowshipped from the Church. This was a source of great sorrow for Joshua, as will be evident from the memories of his children about the affair, as given later in this history. Joshua said that he granted Maxwell bail so he could provide for his family.

Charles Maxwell on January 14, 1911 filed a challenge to the panel of Grand Jurors. His challenge listed irregularities in the selection of the jury and that none met the qualifications of a jury member. He and his attorney, doubtless, felt he could not receive a fair trial in the area because of the intense feelings of the community and surrounding area. He was later tried in a District Court and finally in a Superior Court. He had also indicated that his witnesses were not available at this time of the initial trial to plead in his behalf.

Following is a brief chronological outline of the Charles Collier Maxwell Murder case:

### THE TERRITORY/STATE OF ARIZONA VS. CHARLES COLLIER MAXWELL

#### Justice Court Proceedings

#### 1910

- Sat 30 Dec Charles Collier Maxwell shoots James C. Greer at Eagar, Arizona with 30-30 rifle. Duane Hamblin make citizen's arrest on Charles Maxwell, and Henry Thompson, deputy sheriff arrests Charles Maxwell.
- Sun 31 Dec Complaint made by F. W. Nelson before *J. S. Gibbons, Justice of the Peace*, St. Johns Precinct.
- Coroner inquest convenes at 2:30 PM. The coroners jury certify that Charles Maxwell killed James C. Greer. The coroner jury consisted of: John. L. Hulsey, L.[?] J.[?] Pritchard, J. E. Averett, N. Gonzales, Romor Trammill. J. M. Berry. J. F. Thompson, G. C. Grimes, Elisha Averett, John Tyler.
- J. S. Gibbons* issues warrant of arrest for Charles Maxwell.
- Charles Maxwell placed under arrest by sheriff Peralta.
- J. S. Gibbons* initiates Justice Court examination at 8:30 PM at Springerville.
- "Complaint read to Deft. Defendant asked time to obtain an Attorney. Court gave Defendant until Jan 9, 1911 at 9 AM to obtain an Attorney."

#### 1911

- Tue 9 Jan "On motion of Dist. Atty. court was adjourned until Jan. 11, 9 A.M."
- Thu 11 Jan Justice court "At 9 A.M. Jan 11 case was called. Witnesses, Hubert Merrill, Geo. Winsor, Guy Rencer and Frank Slade were present." Dist. Atty. F. W. Nelson and J. D. Yates representing the Territory in Justice Court charge Charles Maxwell with killing James C. Greer. "J. E. Jones represented the Defendant."
- "Dr. Bouldin and Hubert Merrill were examined in behalf of the Territory of Arizona."
- Justice Court subpoenas Bert J. Colter to appear on 14 Jan as witness against Charles Maxwell.
- Fri 12 Jan Justice Court reconvened at 9-30 A.M.
- Justice Court subpoenas Spencer Burk, Duane Hamblin, O. P. Greer, and E. R. Dewitt to appear on 12 Jan as witness against Charles Maxwell. "Frank Slade, Geo.



Winsor, Duane Hamblin and Spencer Burk were examined in behalf of the Territory of Ariz."

Sat 13 Jan "Case called at 9-30 A M." "O. P. Greer, Stansil Greer, E. R. Dewitt, and Bert Colter were examined in behalf of the Territory of Ariz."

Sun 14 Jan Justice Court subpoenas L. J. Brown Jr., Andrew Maxwell, and Henry Thompson to appear on 14 Jan as witnesses for Charles Maxwell.

"O. P. Greer and Stansil Greer were recalled. L. J. Brown Jr., Andrew Maxwell, Henry Thompson, and Bert Colter were examined in behalf of the Defendant."

Sun 14 Jan *Justice of the Peace J. S. Gibbons finds Charles Maxwell guilty and orders Charles Maxwell to be held to answer charges before grand jury. Justice Gibbons also sets bail at \$25,000 and orders Charles Maxwell "committed to the Sheriff of the Co. of Apache until he gives such bail."*

Sat 27 Jan B. B. Crosby, John P. Rothlisberger, Bartholt L. Wahl, C. E. Wiltbank, and Benjamin Brown Sr. post bail of \$25,000.

Sun 28 Jan *Justice Gibbons approves bail.*

Deputy District Attorney T. F. Barth motions for arrest and commitment of Charles Maxwell, because of insufficient bail.

### District Court Proceedings

Thu 6 Dec 1911 District Court grand jury subpoenas Hubert Merrill, Frank Slade, E. R. Dewitt, Duane Hamblin, O. P. Greer, Stansell Greer, Guy Rencher, Bert J. Colter, and George Winsor to appear on 14 Dec as witnesses against Charles Maxwell.

Thu 13 Dec District Court subpoenas Will Harris, Spencer Burk, and David Chavez as witnesses against Charles Maxwell to appear on 14 Dec.

Fri 14 Dec District Court grand jury subpoenas George A. Winsor to appear on 14 Dec as witnesses against Charles Maxwell. District Court subpoenas Henry Thompson, Bert Colter, C. E. Wiltbank, Ren Brown, Guy Rencher, Charles Crosby, Mrs. Nettie Greenwood, and W. E. Wiltbank to appear on 16 Dec as witnesses for Charles Maxwell.

Sat 15 Dec Charles Maxwell's attorney in District Court challenges the panel of grand jurors.

District Court subpoenas Hubert Merrill, George Winsor, and Frank Slade to appear on 16 Dec as witnesses against Charles Maxwell.

Grand Jury makes indictment against Charles Maxwell for murder of James C. Greer after examining testimony of Hubert Merrill, George Winsor, Frank Slade, Duane Hamblin, T. J. Bouldin, and E. R. DeWitt.

Sun 16 Dec J. E. Jones and T. G. Norris (attorneys for Charles Maxwell) motion District Court for continuance.

### Motion for Continuance of Court Proceedings

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE  
TERRITORY OF ARIZONA, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF APACHE

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THE TERRITORY OF ARIZONA, )  
Plaintiff, )  
Vs.  
CHARLES C. MAXWELL )  
Defendant )



Charles C. Maxwell, being duly sworn, deposes and says, that he is the defendant in the above-entitled action: that he cannot safely proceed to trial of the action at this term of the court because of the absence of important testimony material to his defense. That Guy Wrencher is a material witness without whose testimony the defendant cannot safely proceed to trial; that said witness is a resident of Clifton, Greenlee County, Arizona. That defendant has just been indicted and has had no opportunity to procure the attendance of said witness at this term. That if the case is postponed to a subsequent term of court at this place, defendant will be able to obtain the testimony of said witness for use at the trial. That if present he would testify that he was with the defendant at the time of the alleged offense and had been for several hours previous thereto of the day on which it occurred. That he was an eye witness of the alleged offense: that the defendant, at the time of the killing, had the gun then held by him under or across his right arm and not elevated or presented by sight or aim at the deceased in any manner whatever: that shortly previous to the alleged offense said witness and others took the gun which caused the death of deceased away from the defendant, and extracted the shells therefrom, and then returned it, and thereafter defendant inserted a shell in the magazine and threw it into the barrel, leaving the gun cocked: that at the time the shot was fired the deceased had neither of his hands on the lock or trigger of said gun.

That this defendant is informed and believes, and, upon information and belief, alleges the fact to be, that there is a witness now living at Springerville, Apache County, Arizona, who was an eye witness to the alleged offense: that if this case is postponed defendant will be able to procure the presence of said witness to attend the trial; that if present said witness will swear that at the time the shot was fired defendant had his right arm around the gun about the lock, the gun resting in the hollow or bend of the elbow, with the right hand upon or near his stomach or breast, that the left hand was extended toward the shoulder of the deceased.

That Frank Maxwell, a brother of this defendant is a resident of Mogollon, New Mexico, and is a material witness in behalf of this defendant. That if present said witness will testify that about 15 years ago this defendant received a severe blow on the top of the head inflicted by a steel or iron instrument; that from that blow the skull of this defendant was fractured and that he lay unconscious from six to ten hours and after regaining consciousness was unable for some time to leave his bed. That the physician attending him discovered a fracture of the skull; the indentation extended to and affected the inner wall by a depression which depression extended to and affected the brain. That ever since defendant's recovery he has been subject to severe pains and distress from said wound; that under any excitement he is likely to and often does experience lapses of memory and knowledge of then present occurrences or transactions. That he does not know of any other witness by whom he could prove said facts.

That the name of the physician attending this defendant at the time, is Dr. W. C. Field, as affiant is informed and believes he can procure the attendance of said physician at the trial of this case if it is postponed. That if said physician is present, he will testify to the facts above stated; that he attended this defendant while suffering from said wound; that he found the skull fractured and indented, and that from the influence of the wound the brain was affected; and that as a result the defendant is and has been liable or subject to mental lapses and destruction of memory and all consciousness of occurrences during such lapses caused by said wound. That such lapses of memory because of the wound are likely to occur upon occasions of excitement or other agitation of the brain. That defendant knows of no other witness by whom he can prove the facts set forth which he can establish by the witness as referred to, and that he cannot safely proceed to trial without said testimony.

That this continuance is not sought for the purpose of delay only, but that justice may be done.

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/s/ Charles C. Maxwell

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December, 1911.

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/s/ Gilbert E. Greer, Clerk District Court



## Superior Court Proceedings

1912

Mon. 10 Jun	Superior Court subpoenas Dr. T. J. Bouldin, Hubert Merrill, George Winsor, Frank Slade, Duane Hamblin. O. P. Greer, Stancel Greer, and Spencer Burk to appear on 27 Jun as witnesses against Charles Maxwell.
Mon. 17 Jun	Joe Pearce serves subpoenas Dr. T. J. Bouldin, Hubert Merrill, George Winsor, Frank Slade, Duane Hamblin. O. P. Greer, Stancel Greer, and Spencer Burk to appear on 27 Jun 1911.
Wed 19 Jun	Superior Court subpoenas Henry Thompson, Burt Colter, C. E. Wiltbank, Lorenzo Brown, Charles Crosby, W. E. Wiltbank and Mrs. Nettie Greenwood to appear on 27 Jun as witness for Charles Maxwell.
Fri 21 Jun	Deputy Sheriff Teodoro Gonzales serves subpoenas upon C. E. Wiltbank, Mr. Nettie Greenwood, W. E. Wiltbank, Lorenzo Brown, and Burt Colter.
Fri 28 Jun	Superior Court summons 65 electors to appear on 5 Jul to select trial jurors.
Fri 5 Jul	Electors appear before Superior Court. Jury selection begins.
Sat 6 Jul	Superior Court selects trial jury. Charles Maxwell stands trial in the Superior Court of Apache County before F. W. Perkins, Judge of the Superior Court of Coconino County.
Sat 13 Jul	<i>Jury finds defendant not guilty.</i>

An earnest search has been made to locate the records of the District and Superior Courts for this case, without success. It would indeed be interesting to know more about these trials in order to know why he was declared innocent when he was initially felt to be so definitely guilty of murder. It is likely that his appeal for continuation of the case brought witnesses who convinced the jury that he was not competent of first degree murder. One other interesting story was related to me by a grandson of Charles Maxwell. He states that some time after the acquittal Charley went to church and the people treated him so badly that he never again attended church.

## Community Reaction and Joshua's Deep Sorrow and Hurt

[Zona] My Dad was elected Justice of the Peace when I was five. One day a man named Charlie Maxwell shot a man named James Greer. James Greer was from Springerville and came from a prominent family. Since Dad was the Justice of the Peace, he handled the preliminary part of the case. After the hearing he permitted Maxwell to go free on bail. This caused an uproar among some of the people in St. Johns and a petition was circulated to have Dad disfellowshipped from the Church. Even the Bishop signed it. Someone brought the paper to let Mother read the names of the signers.

One of the general authorities of the Church came to St. Johns for stake conference about this time and some of the brethren put this petition about Dad before him. The general authority said, "You leave that alone. That is a matter for the law." So they did. When the murder trial was finally held, they brought in a judge from Flagstaff, which is about 90 miles away. He said that Dad had made a good decision because the shooting was accidental. He said that he had never known a more fair judgment than the one Dad had made. But it was many, many years before some of these people forgave and forgot. I think it almost broke my Dad's heart. He was such an honest and good man.<sup>20</sup>

[J. Smith] Father seemed always to have a sense of right and justice. He was a prophet and patriarch to his family. They all respected his judgement and the things he said.

How well I recall that due to his civic and official responsibilities he was condemned by many members of the Church, many being leaders and holding high positions. Father always appreciated the fact that men could be misunderstood and while it broke his heart, he never openly condemned the men

<sup>20</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996., p. 31



who in reality put a knife in his back. I shall never forget sitting by him in the stake conference after he set Maxwell free on bail. At that time he held the position of President of the M. I. A. of the Stake. When the stake officers were voted on, some people voted against him. To look into his tired, worn, hurt face and see the crushing effect that this had upon him when he had done that which he believed was his duty to do in justice, and which later proved him to be right, was a heart rending affair.<sup>21</sup>

[Jayne] After the Maxwell case, Dad didn't hold many church jobs and one of the authorities picked him out of a list of names for head of Religion Classes which they used to hold each morning before school. I think maybe that's when he got his new suit.<sup>22</sup>

[Ione Gibbons Mineer, Niece] He was Justice of the Peace and let Charley Maxwell, who was in for murder, out on bond [1911]. Uncle Josh let him out until the trial so he could support his big family. Some of the prominent members of the church signed and carried a petition to cut Uncle Josh off the church. Uncle Josh asked to see the petition. He told my husband, Allie, and I in our home who the signers were. And a lawyer, Yeats, said, "We have went through the law books trying to find some way to do something to Gibbons for letting a murderer out on bond and we can't. So how in Hell do a few people like that think they can do anything?" Well, God protects his own. So Uncle Josh was right and Charley was acquitted of the murder when the trial came up. Uncle Josh was always kind and considerate of the other fellow. He liked to tease us kids and he did a lot. He was always willing and so was Aunt Nancy to help any one anywhere they could, in sickness and sorrow. She had a hard time after Uncle Josh died and she had to get out and make a living. They both had lots of friends.<sup>23</sup>

[LeGrande Noble, Nancy's brother] "I know of no man, that it has been my experience to associate with, that was more outstanding in character and in quality, in honesty, integrity and those qualities that mean more in life, than Uncle Josh. His life was beyond reproach in every way as far as I knew him, and while I was not familiar with some of the trials that came to him I feel that certainly Joshua's children, his grandchildren and great grandchildren should always remember and never forget how he stood faced with opposition and criticism that would crush a lot of people. But he had the courage to do what he thought was right, and that eventually turned out to be right.

I remember many nights, while living in their home attending school in St. Johns, that Uncle Josh and Nancy would talk by the hour concerning this problem and other problems of making a living. Because at that time, when one depended almost altogether on the soil for a livelihood, it was not an easy task. I'm sure that everyone who knew Uncle Josh and Nancy and their wonderful family can look back with pride at the sacrifices and the determination that they had to push forward and make the most out of life and to give their children the best in life."<sup>24</sup>

[Louisa, daughter] While he was Justice of the Peace there was a shooting and he had to play a big part in this. As a result of it some people in St. Johns tried to disfellowship him from the church. Mother said that this was the time in his life when he started to decline. It broke his heart and he was never the same again. All who knew him and understood him loved him dearly.<sup>25</sup>

- 1911—The family move from the Jensen Place into St. Johns so kids can go to school easier

### **Family moves into St. Johns from the Jensen Place during the school year**

[Zona] When I was six years old we moved from our ranch below St. Johns into St. Johns so we could go to school without having to wade through snow in the wintertime. We lived two blocks from the grade school house, one block from the high school and a block from the church house. So we were close to everything. There was a large bell in the church house which rang each Sunday. I always liked the

<sup>21</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 38

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 32



sound of a bell. I had been born in the same house we moved to when I was six. It had once been a schoolhouse in St. Johns, when there were very few people there. It was our home until I was married at age 19. It has since been torn down.

Our ranch by the Little Colorado River was about a mile and a half from our home in town and during the summer time we took the cows back and forth to the pasture at the ranch each day. The cow part of the job was not bad, but the mosquitoes in the swampy pasture were terrible. We had an apple orchard at the ranch but almost every summer the Mexicans stole most of the fruit. We also had a few fruit trees up town, but they were not as good to eat as those on the ranch. We seldom were able to salvage any of the ranch apples unless we picked them green. This increased our eating ourselves "full of green apples" tendency. It was an acre lot and a five-room house [the home in St. Johns]: three bedrooms at the back and two large rooms in front—the front room and the kitchen. It was made of adobes, as were all of the older houses in town. All of the houses in the Mexican part of town were adobe houses. The

town was about equally white and Mexican.<sup>26</sup>

- 1911-1912—Joshua serves in the Arizona Territorial Legislature before Arizona became a state in 1912.

#### **Joshua Returns Home from Serving in the Arizona Territorial Legislature**

[Joshua was elected to serve in the Arizona Territorial Legislature along with his brother, Bill. He was apparently elected before the Maxwell incident, because it is very unlikely he would have been after it.]



**THE ST. JOHNS THE JOSHUA GIBBONS FAMILY SAW IN 1911**

[Evaline Gibbons Palmer, Niece] He [Uncle Josh] and my dad [William] went down to the legislature together. Both had mustaches. So many people asked which was the oldest and of course my Dad was two years older. So Uncle Josh decided to get a shave. My Dad heard about it. They went to different places. Dad kept watch until Uncle Josh came out, then he came out and they came face to face. Uncle Josh said, "Damn you, Bill." Then they laughed and walked down the street, arm in arm, mustache-less.<sup>27</sup>

[Jayne] I remember when he cut off his mustache. Mother called us and asked if we wouldn't like to meet our Uncle Edwin. I can see Dad yet, as he stood there, his mouth quivering to keep from laughing and I was the first to realize it was my daddy. And that mustache! I remember that when he drank milk some always got on it and he'd bring up his lower lip to get it off.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996,, p. 29

<sup>27</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 24

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 33

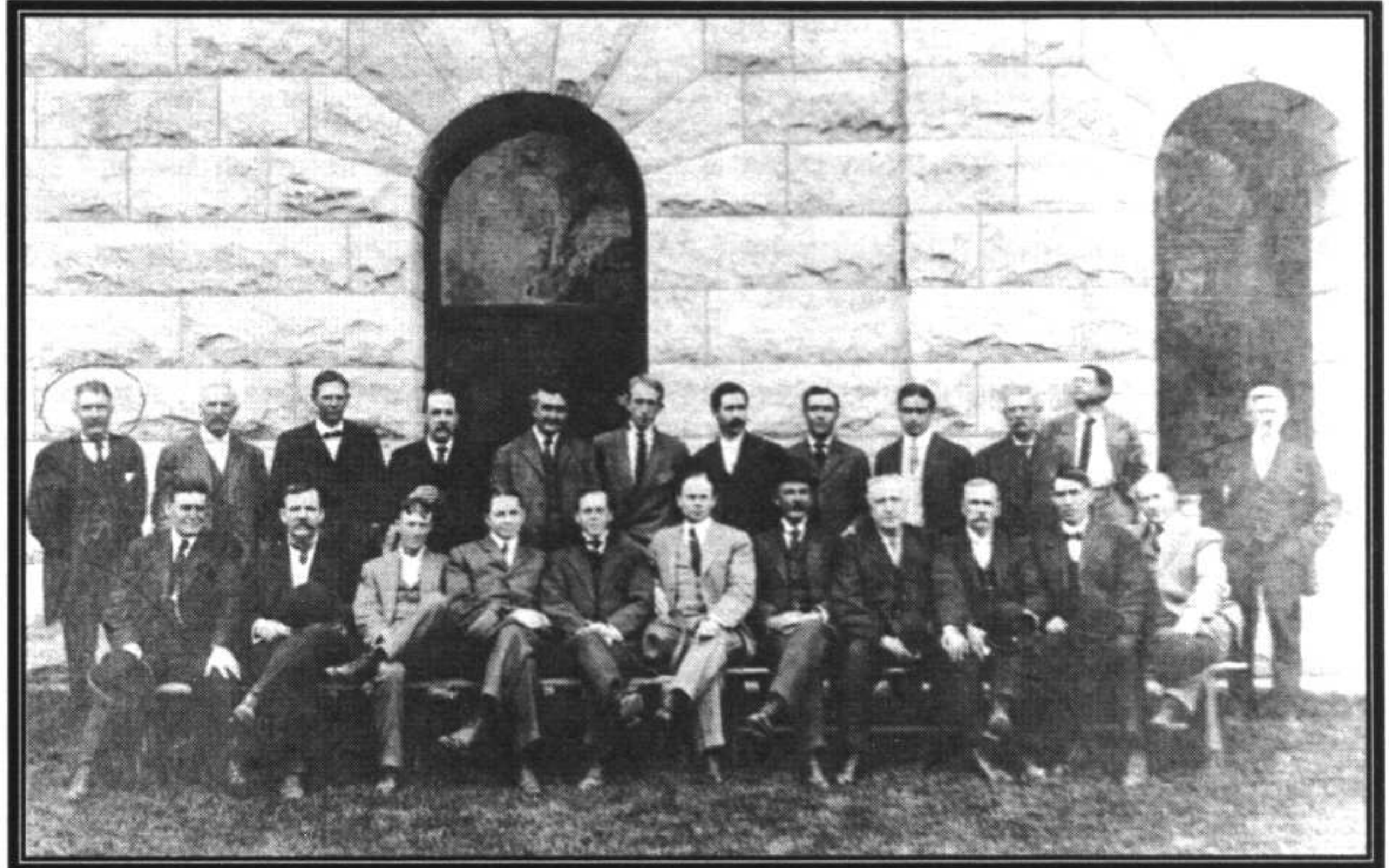


[Andrew H] Father was a handsome man. The fact that his hair was completely gray while he was still a young man detracted slightly, but his features were fine and regular. Most of his life he wore a mustache, I remember that Will Gibbons, Andrew, Dick, all brothers of Father—each wore a beard or mustache for a long time. To show how much a part of Father appearance his mustache was, one time he had been away to the legislature and we anxiously awaited his return. Finally I saw a team and buggy coming up the lane to the house and supposed that of course it was Father. I ran as fast as I could to meet him and when I came close I decided that I was mistaken, the man wasn't Father at all, so I turned around and walked shamefacedly back toward the house. Then the man spoke to me and it was Father after all. But the Mustache was gone.<sup>29</sup>

- 1911—The St. Johns Water Works Co. completes a pipeline from the McIntosh Spring to St. Johns.

### Culinary Water Piped into St. Johns

The river water, although everyone was using it, was hardly fit for human consumption and it was responsible for the typhoid and diphtheria epidemics that plagued the settlement. When Hall found a fresh water spring in the hills, he claimed it by building a house over



**JOSHUA S. GIBBONS SERVED IN THE ARIZONA TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE PRIOR TO 1912, AT WHICH TIME ARIZONA GAINED STATEHOOD (Joshua is at the far left on the back row)**

it and then started hauling water to sell in town for 5 cents a bucket. When little children ran out to meet him, he always let them drink free. This spring was undoubtedly McIntosh Spring, which is located in the McIntosh Hills, three and a half miles east of town. It is a matter of record that from the early 1880's until the St. Johns Water Works Company [which was organized in 1910] completed a pipeline from the spring in 1911, the McIntosh water was hauled by tank wagon and sold door to door.<sup>30</sup>

### Back Home on the Jensen Place and in the St. Johns Home

[Zona] Mother was very sickly and sometimes was unable to walk. She could not even stand up long enough to sweep the floor. A lot of the responsibility fell on me since I was the oldest girl in the family. There was one girl older than I, but she died at birth. I was also the seventh member in the family of 12. I remember learning to mix bread and do other household chores when I was so small I had to stand on a big box. We lived very frugally and had little in our home. We did not have any of the comforts of life. We carried our water for years from our spring outside, some 20 feet away. In the wintertime we suffered from the cold. In our two-room home down on the ranch we only had the fireplace to warm the

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 39

<sup>30</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns, Arizona Stake President, 1982, p. 292



two rooms, so you can imagine how cold it would be. It was sometimes bitter cold. It was almost that bad in our St. Johns home, except that we did have a little heater in one room of the house and then the kitchen range was in the other part. The other three rooms were unheated.

In our younger days, I can never remember having fancy foods. Our primary food was pinto beans, and occasionally potatoes.<sup>31</sup>

- 1910-12—Joshua serves as construction foreman for a stretch of the Salado Canal.

### **Joshua is Foreman for Construction of the Salado Canal**

[J. Smith] He also acquired some other horses, one of which I shall always remember—an old mare by the name of Frands. She was as balky as they made them and I recall how much trouble Father had in trying to get this mare to pull, and how impatient he would become with her when she would run away with the harness or saddle at the first opportunity. On this particular ranch we raised alfalfa, corn, beans, cane, potatoes and many other commodities. It was here that we had all the milk we wanted, all the cheese, all the butter; a luxury to us. While here father became interested in the Lyman project. Sometime shortly thereafter he filed on a desert entry, 160 acres, in Salado which is six miles south of St. Johns.

We lived in a tent and a little shanty and began our farming operation on this 160 acres. Prior thereto Father had spent much time in aiding the construction on the Lyman Project. Jake Holgate and I spent one entire winter on this ditch going around the foothill below the Lyman Dam. We had a number of Italians employed who were supposed to be expert powder men and we worked ten hours a day on that construction work. Father was foreman for a time, then he and the boys were employed at the ranch, fencing the homestead in Salado, and also taking care of the work in the field, the place a mile below town.<sup>32</sup>

Irrigation business went even further than that. The contracts that Father took to deepen the canal and the Lyman Reservoir project, was turned partly to buy a water right so that when the dam was completed he would have ample water to take care of the land he had filed on under the Lyman project. Many, many days on this old place in Salado were spent in trying to properly irrigate and care for the sandy soil.<sup>33</sup>

- 1911-1914 (approximately)—LeGrande Noble lived with the Gibbons while attending the St. Johns Academy

### **LeGrande Noble Living with Joshua and Nancy while attending the St. Johns Academy**

[LeGrande Noble, Nancy's Brother] Smith and I and some of the other boys worked on the Lyman Canal. We camped at Salado and I took our four horses along with Leslie and went down to work on this canal. Uncle Josh had Smith and one or two other of his boys with four or eight horses also working on this canal. Uncle Josh was general supervisor and as such naturally was vitally concerned with the way the work progressed. I remember his constant encouragement, his constant urging us to be prompt in the hour of starting, to be honest in our labors and above all to show that we were working for a cause that called for our best efforts. I remember, also, after the canal was completed, at least that part that ran through Salado, that there was a special project to take the canal out of Salado to the south bench near St. Johns. Uncle Josh accepted employment where he used one horse to pull a slip scraper and we were using picks and shovels to dig that canal deep enough to get the water through. Seems we worked ten hours a day on that job. I remember most vividly the difficulty of getting up early in the morning

<sup>31</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, pp. 30-31

<sup>32</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., pp. 37-38

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41



when it was cold, sometimes, it seemed to me, before daylight. We worked every day for many, many weeks and Uncle Josh performed a labor with other men employed there, with this one horse, taking that dirt out of that canal in order for the water to pass through.

One Sunday morning our horses got away and went to St. Johns, a distance of about seven or eight miles. We went down to get them. It was late when we got there and we suggested to Uncle Josh who was at home for Church that maybe we could stay down there that night and go back early Monday morning in time to work. He said, "No. You can't do that and the reason that you can't do it is that I haven't got the feed here for them. You've got to take them back up there. I've only two or three cows here and that's the source of our milk supply and we can't afford to keep those horses here. We took them back that night."<sup>34</sup>

One other incident stands out as a memory in my life. I shall never forget the milk they had from Jersey cows and the bread that Nancy used to bake along with homemade jelly. To me that was one of the most delicious meals that a hungry boy could ever have. All the bread and milk that he wanted plus bread with butter to put on it.

Uncle Josh and his boys would cut the cane and the corn for feed and stack it out in the yard back of the corral. Many nights coons would come in and take the corn, much to the concern of the whole family. Many times we would run out and chase the coons out of the yard. I don't recall that we ever caught one.

I remember while I stayed at their home that family prayer morning and night was a regular thing, as was a blessing on the food, rotating responsibility to those of the family to participate in this program was the thing in this home. I recall one night that Ben Stanford from Alpine had come down and was staying with the Gibbons all night. Ben, as everyone knew was not religiously inclined. He used tobacco and did not in general pay much attention to the Church. He attended religious services very little. We were asked by Uncle Josh to kneel in family prayer and Uncle Josh called on Ben Stanford to pray. Well, I don't think Ben Stanford had ever thought about praying before and I remember well that he made one or two opening statements and then turned and said, "Brother Gibbons I just can't do it." Embarrassment followed.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 29



Whenever Sunday morning came along I was requested along with the rest of the boys to go to Priesthood meeting and take care of our responsibilities. At various times we were called upon to pass the sacrament. Keep in mind that I stayed in this good home about three years while I was going through High School.<sup>35</sup>

[Jayne] I guess Dad didn't often get a suit for when he finally got one and he came home from Sunday School, Priesthood or wherever he'd been he would tell Mom, "I stopped several times on the way up and looked at myself and wondered if it was really me."<sup>36</sup>

- 1912—The Lyman Dam is completed. It was capable of storing a two-year supply of irrigation water. It cost \$250,000 and had a storage capacity of 32,964-acre feet of water, capable of irrigating 15,000 acres. (*History of the Dam to be given later.*)
- 1912-1915—The family lives on the homestead at Salado for the summer to farm it.

### **The Salado Farm after Completion of the Lyman Dam**

The Lyman Dam was completed in 1912 and now adequate irrigation water was available for the homestead property at Salado. The homestead was on excellent land and the future looked bright indeed for the Gibbons family.

[J. Smith] The Lyman Dam completed and irrigation begun, we started in earnest to farm the Salado place. It was a natural soil for beans, onions, and crops such as that. Alfalfa was only grown a year or two and then it would strike the bad earth and die.<sup>37</sup>

[Andrew H] We used to haul wood for winter and sell it for money. Sometimes we'd get a job cleaning ditch or related jobs like that. Usually people wanted a man and a team and Father did quite a bit of contracting. He contracted to build separate pieces of canal, about two miles altogether. Of course that took a great deal of work for men and horses; because if you move all the dirt out of a big canal with a scraper you've got a big job on your hands.

I remember several horses Father bought or traded for. One time he got two horses that were very high-lifed. We would have enjoyed them a great deal, I suppose, but one time they ran away with Smith and the wagon and we were all very scared.

I remember after that Father took me out to the wagon and showed me as I hooked them up and unhooked them, how to handle a team that might run away. He showed me about the neck yolk and how to tie the lines around the wheel so the team couldn't run away. If you wound the lines around the hub right and the wagon started rolling it tightened the lines and held the horses. We had a great many different kinds of horses. These high-lifed horses he traded for a couple of horses that were locoed. While they were very good to pull they were very stupid and all we could do was hook them up, start them on the road, and hope they kept going. You couldn't whip them up or anything like that. Sometimes they'd start to drink and keep walking out in the water until it was too deep and they'd actually go in over their heads. But at least they were safer than the other horses. One of the trials Father suffered from was balky horses. Horses that wouldn't pull would send him into quite a rage.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 30

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38



One time he went to Eager and bought a bunch of cows for about 20 or 25 dollars each. Bringing them back he left us boys to drive the wagon. I was the oldest and there were a couple of younger brothers with me. We got busy down in the wagon and not watching where we were going. When we came to our senses the horses had run off the road. Two of the wheels of the wagon were down in a deep wash, the wagon was almost to tip over and we were very much frightened. We ran back up the road to meet Father, crying at the top of our voices. He came hurrying, looked the matter over without getting excited or scolding anybody. Another wagon came along soon. They hooked on the side of our wagon and got us out without further trouble. Father was noted for his patience and his wisdom.<sup>38</sup>

[Zona] We were taught very young to help in the home. Until I reached the age of about seven my brother, A. H., was Mother's helper, so he was naturally very glad when I could help. I cannot remember when I first learned to mix bread, but I do remember I had to stand on a box to reach the table to do it.

That same year the whole family moved to the farm at Salado. It was a good summer. We worked in the garden a lot and had such a nice one. We had to haul Mother down to the garden in a small express wagon. As this was only a temporary dwelling we lived in tents. We didn't have a broom up there at Salado, so we used cedar boughs to sweep the floors and they did a fine job. This particular summer we had a lot of chickens and they roosted under the tents. We finally had to move out of the tents and spray for mites with sheep dip. We also had to dip each chicken. We had to move all of our beds out under the trees and that was a nice time. Mother used to tell us stories and then we would sing a song. The one that Mother liked most was "Count Your Many Blessings". To this very day that song is a precious memory of my dear Mother. In spite of the fact that she had twelve children and had bad health, she still counted her blessings. She was a most wonderful person and was especially a woman of faith. She was ill most of the time and yet she never complained. She had to sit in a chair to do her work, even the washing, until H was old enough to do it. Then I came along.<sup>39</sup>

Back to our farm in Salado. We lived in two tents above the west fence about 100 yards east of a large irrigation ditch. Below this Mother had her very good vegetable garden. This one summer we raised some of the largest onions and squash I have ever seen. We had to cross the canal to get to the pasture where we kept the horses and cows. One evening I asked to ride the pony to the pasture. I was told that I could if I would take the milk buckets down. The only problem was that the horse was a very easily frightened animal and would run away easily. I managed to get on the horse all right and they handed the buckets to me. In the process we rattled the buckets and the horse was off like a shot. I managed to stay on the horse with the buckets. As she went through the canal I got drenched, but she stopped when she got to the pasture gate and I slid off safe and sound. After that wild ride I felt that I was a pretty good rider.

This summer a funny thing happened. Noble cut his leg, on the calf, badly and it didn't seem to heal very well. He was laid up in bed. Mother sent down to St. Johns and got the sickle, smeared it with grease and put it under his bed. He was able to get around the next morning and it healed up perfectly. Another instance I would like to mention happened later. A little friend of mine came to stay for a few days and she stepped on a nail. She cried all of the time and after a couple of days Mother asked me to show her where the nail was. So she took the nail out [of the board], greased it and put it under the bed. Isabelle soon quit crying and began playing. It never gave her any more trouble.

- Between 1912 and 1915, sometime—Incident of the mule falling into one of the sink holes and an answer to prayer.

[Zona] I will tell a story which occurred while we were in Salado. There were sinkholes about two miles east of home. We would go down off the hill and through the pasture gate to them. They were like large cisterns of water, covered mostly by a thin shale roof with a hole in it. One day my brother, H,

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp 41-42

<sup>39</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, pp. 26-27



drove the mules and horses down to the sink to have a drink of water. One of the mules fell into the sinkhole. It struggled to get out, but because there was no wall under the shale roof he could not get out. Well, H was panic stricken. We did not have many animals and we needed each of them badly. He was beside himself, so he kneeled down and asked the Lord to help him. Then he got on his horse and started to ride full speed to the ranch to get a rope to pull the mule out. When he came back, the mule was on his way home. How it ever got out of the hole is something we will never know, but it did. It was a real faith-promoting experience in our family.<sup>40</sup>

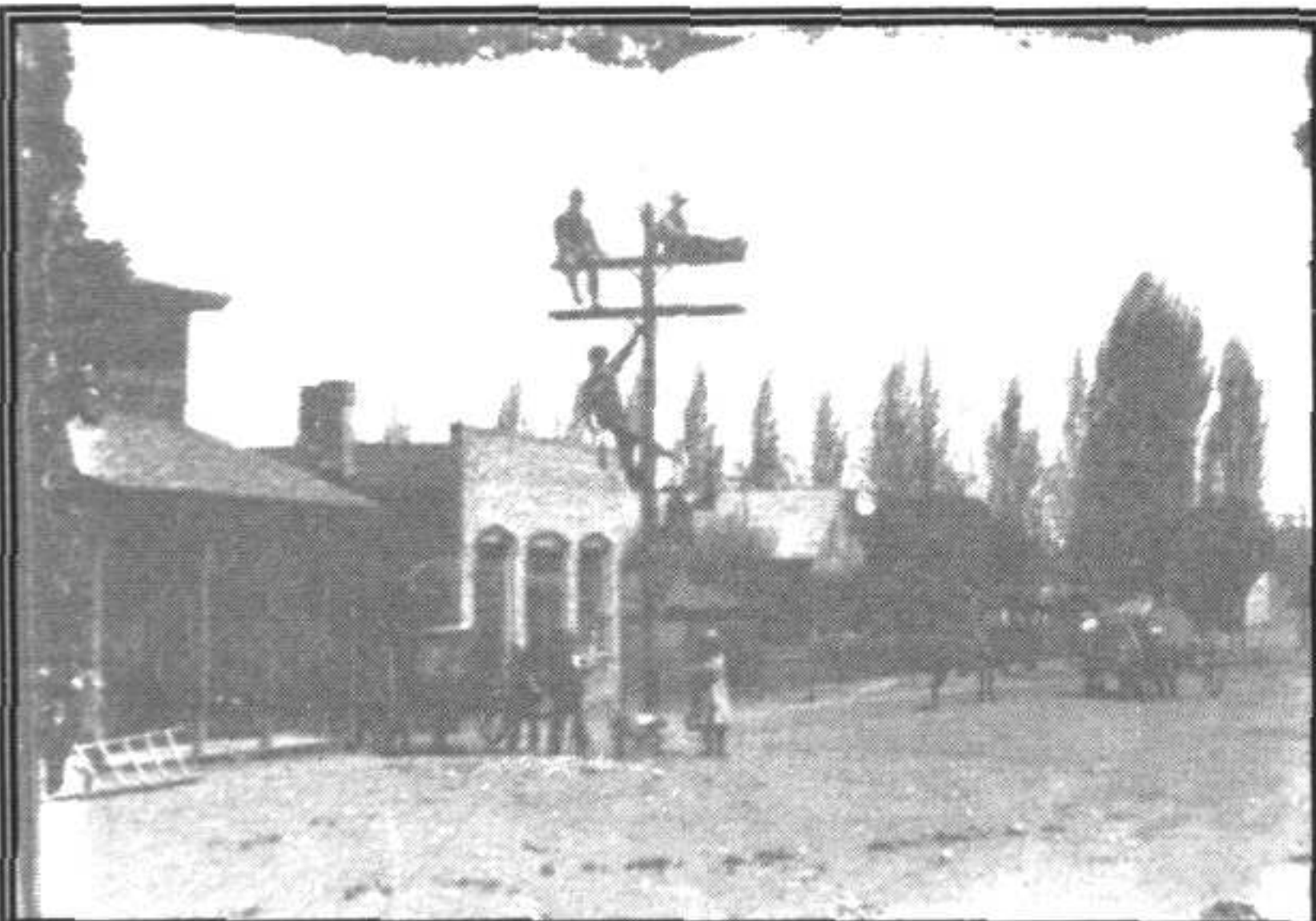
- 1912—St Johns is losing its poverty-stricken pioneer image.
- 1912—Model T Ford Agency set up in St. Johns. Richard Gibbons, Joshua's brother, buys one.
- 1912—The Telephone comes to St. Johns

### St. Johns begins to lose its Pioneering Image

It was in 1912 that St. Johns began to kick off its pioneer image. Later that year, two enterprising young men, Bill Parks and Fred Johnson, who were the local representatives of the Denver Company, took a sub-dealership to sell Model "T" Fords in the St. Johns area. Thus, 1912 became an important milepost in the history of St. Johns. It signaled the beginning of the end for the horse and buggy, as the automobile began its eventual takeover in the transportation field.

During that first year Parks and Johnson placed two new Model "T" Fords in St. Johns, one each for two customers, George Wilhelm and Richard Gibbons [Joshua's brother]. In those days, a person didn't buy an automobile and step in and drive it away. Of necessity, the new owner took a course in driving and then, hopefully, he could step in and drive it away. The length of this instructional period depended on the prospective driver.

Uncle Dick [Richard] Gibbons was a wealthy man, by the standards of the times, so the buying of an automobile didn't bother him; but being a man, it was the driving course that took a little extra effort. He *soloed* and was bringing the new Ford home to his family. He proudly nosed it into the little garage that had been built for it. At that point, he momentarily forgot the main point of his training. *Do not panic*. Missing the brake pedal, he froze on the controls. Calling "Whoa!" in a loud voice, he took it on through the back wall of the building. Regaining his composure, he cut a large circle and parked what was left of his new car in what was left of his new garage. This was the first recorded auto accident in the St. Johns area.<sup>41</sup>



**PHONES COME TO ST JOHNS IN 1912, but the Gibbons home could not afford one.**

### Joshua and Nancy's Relations with the Mexicans and the Indians

[Jayne] And you should see how the Mexican people loved him. He spoke their language like a native. Evidently he was very good to them for I remember many of them coming to our house to see him. That was a time we were sure not to throw rocks at them.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-28

<sup>41</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns, Arizona Stake President, 1982, p. 135



Many, many times I have gone over to Mexican town for Chili seed and when they found out I was Josh Gibbons' girl they would never charge a cent.<sup>42</sup>

[Zona] The Indians and Mexicans loved him very much. Each year several Indians came to St. Johns for work and they always camped in our yard. They were good to help. One evening Dad asked them to sing and dance for some company. He could not get them to stop until about 11 o'clock at night. That was very, very late in those times.<sup>43</sup>

While I was growing up during these years we were all required to work hard to help Mother in the garden and around the house. Indians came each year to help with the harvesting. There were two of them who came back every year, named Prescott and Emo. They camped in our yard and always ate parched corn and other food that we gave them. In the fall we husked all of the corn and put it into a corn bin from which we fed the hogs all winter. The Indians always helped with all aspects of the harvest.<sup>44</sup>

Father was a wonderful man; so kind and gentle to everyone. I can never remember being punished and the boys can't remember either. He just had a way that made us want to do his bidding. The town we lived in was half-Mexican and these people loved Dad very much. He spoke their language as fluently as they did. He understood them and treated them as equals. He dearly loved Spanish food and all his life he ate it with relish and his children the same.

There was an Indian reservation—in fact there were two reservations close by. One of them was southwest of St. Johns and the other was northeast. People from the northeast used to come up and help with the farm work. They loved to camp in our yard and they often came up in the evenings and sang songs and danced. You had to pay them to get them out of the house. They wanted to stay all night too. But we had a good time anyway. I don't know whether Dad paid them for helping him or whether he gave them some grain. They came after Dad died and helped Mother all of the time until Mother moved away. I remember, with lots of appreciation, their goodness to us as a family. They helped us children harvest the corn fodder and the cane.<sup>45</sup>

[Andrew H] The Mexicans for the most part were always favorites with Father. They liked him because he was always friendly with them, speaking their language as well as they did themselves. He would always take time to talk to them. He had Mexicans working for him from time to time but if they got out of line he didn't hesitate to chastise them. We had a pony, a young mare that was stolen and one time some men told us they had seen some Mexicans with her going through town. Father got on a horse and went after them and he eventually brought the pony back. He said that when he got there he stopped the Mexicans and told them he was going to take the horse and one of them rode around and showed him that he was wearing a gun and Father said, "O.K." and told the Mexican he better not use it. He brought the horse back.

The first time I remember the Indians coming they were there one night when Father and Mother had gone to town. I didn't know anything about Indians. I had been studying them in school of course and heard about Indian massacres and Indian wars and all that. I was literally scared to death although the Indians were very friendly and tried to talk to us and all that, but I was more than relieved when Father and Mother came home. The Indians stayed at our place quite a bit and often worked for us. We could get a pretty good day's work out of them for a dollar a day. They used to eat with us sometimes. I remember we would eat a dish of mush, then some bread and beans. A time or two the Indians ate that way and then they took things into their own hands and just dumped the beans and the mush and everything in together and went ahead and ate it. Some of these Indians were so friendly with Father that

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<sup>42</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 33

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>44</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 32

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 29



after he died they came to town to work and would do things for Mother but would refuse to take any money for it.

My brother and I thought that we could work the Indians, too. We hired a couple of them and in order to keep them working my brother would work as fast as he could with them and then when he got tired I would change with him and work as fast as I could. We kept the Indians working one day but the next day they were gone. We weren't fair like Father was.<sup>46</sup>

- 1913, July—Zona is baptized in the Salado Canal on their ranch at Salado.
- 1913, July—Zona is baptized in the Salado Canal on their ranch at Salado.
- 1913—Joshua is serving as a Stake Home Missionary
- 1913 and 1914—Dry years.



**JOSHUA AND NANCY GIBBONS—Actually this is a picture of Joshua taken about 1913-15. The picture of Nancy was taken much later and the above picture is a composite of the two individual pictures.**

[Zona] I was eight years old in February, but I was not baptized until the following July, as we were on the ranch at Salado. We had to have permission to be baptized. I was baptized in the irrigation ditch.<sup>47</sup>

While we lived in Salado during the summer we missed Primary in St. Johns most of the time. But one day we returned to St. Johns for some reason and found out it was Primary day and that they were having a party. So Jayne and I decided to dress up and go to the church. When we got to the gate some of the girls met us and said, "You can't come here to our party." I ran home weeping; but Jayne doubled up her fists and went to the party. I greatly admired her courage and ability to do things.<sup>48</sup>

[Jayne] I remember once Dad had pneumonia and spit blood for so long and we supplied little white squares of

cloth for him to spit in. Also how quiet we were supposed to be and how we spent so much time at the barn across the street. . . .

<sup>46</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., pp. 42-43

<sup>47</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 30

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 28



I remember when we went from the little cabin over the ditch bank and Dad baptized Zona. And when I was baptized down at the old mill, Dad took me and when no one else would be first he said, "Why Babe will! She's not afraid." And in I went.<sup>49</sup>

[Zona] Father was a little stooped in his walk and I can still see him walking to the barn and back. I went with him a lot of the time. We also had another ranch southwest of town [Salado] and Dad often went up there for a week to work. On one occasion he took me with him and the days were so long as I was required to stay at the tent and cook the meals for him. I would stand by the hour and watch him in the field cultivating and irrigating.

Mother often baked salt rising bread and I was given the privilege of going to meet Dad, as he returned from the field, with a big piece of this bread and butter. It was his favorite food.<sup>50</sup>

[Jayne] I remember his picking onions, enormous ones, at Salado and sending them to the fair where he got first prize. He seemed to have a green thumb. He knew when to give certain vegetables a lot of water and when none should be given. Mother seemed to get her knowledge from him, for she was always quoting him.<sup>51</sup>

Joshua often took the children with him to put up grain or fix fences, or to trample hay in the wagon. One day daughter Arizona was holding the reins and dropped one. When the horses moved and she tried to stop them with one rein, the wagon tipped over spilling hay. She still remembers how tender and sweet her father was on that occasion, and at other times when many fathers would have been less patient.<sup>52</sup>

- 1914-15—Grain is planted and harvested at Alpine by Joshua and the family.
- 1914-16—Joshua Smith Gibbons Jr. serves in the Central States Mission (Kansas and Missouri).

[Zona] We made a trip up to Alpine to plant grain. I can't remember exactly the year this was, but Noble, Mother, Neallo, Bates and I went with Dad to Alpine. It was a beautiful place and it took us two days by team and wagon to get there from St. Johns. I can remember laying in the bed [of the wagon] looking up at stars. Oh what a beautiful universe we live in and how thankful we should be for it. Even in those days I just felt overwhelmed with love and gratitude for the wonderful world we live in and all the blessings our Father in Heaven gives us. But anyway, that was a nice time. It was so cool and beautiful up there. St. Johns is kind of a dry and barren place where the wind blows a lot of the time. We went up there to plant grain. I can't remember going up there to harvest, but I am sure we did. I used to go up to Alpine every year and spend a week with Grandma Noble. She lived in Alpine, which is in a valley originally called Bush Valley. It was surrounded on three sides with high mountains covered by timber. All of us kids had a chance to go up there and visit. It was a beautiful place to go. I can't remember who named Alpine, but my Grandfather Noble was the first bishop of Alpine. Grandma lived in a small three-room log house, with a little milk house on the side. Grandma was a very bright, cute and small. She was 93 years old when she died. Grandfather Noble was a small man, too. Alpine was 65 miles south of St. Johns. I always loved those visits and had such a wonderful time. I think when we traveled by wagon we had a better chance to enjoy the things about us.

I do not remember how old I was when Mother and the older boys, Noble and A. H., went to Alpine to put in grain. We lived in a ranch house some distance from Alpine part of the time with Aunt Armeda on their farm and then later on the Burke Brothers' farm. It was a thrill for us to sleep out under the stars. When we returned Dad met us at the Church Square and he looked very old and bent to me. This

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<sup>49</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 34

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>52</sup> Gibbons, Francis Marion and Gibbons, Helen Bay, *A Turning of Hearts—William Davidson Gibbons Family History*, William Davidson Gibbons Family Organization, 1981, p. 762



must have happened when I was about nine, just before Neallo died. Dad had told Mother three members of the family would die, but he did not know which ones they would be.<sup>53</sup>

[Zona] We did not have good clothes and when I went to school, the children poked fun at me a lot. I felt left out and I was afraid of people. But the four of us brothers and sisters enjoyed each other, Bates, Neallo, Jayne and I. We had good times when we were there alone and no one needed to be there with us. We played stick horses all of the time and we played house. Bates would be one father and Neallo would be another father. We would go on trips with bottles as horses. We would harness up the bottles.<sup>54</sup>

[Eileen, Granddaughter] Nancy's devotion to him was as great as her devotion to motherhood. As a tiny, but telling example she used to watch for Joshua coming in from the field. She usually managed to have ready a loaf of hot salt rising bread, his favorite food. She would break off a big piece, smother it in butter, and the children would run to greet their father with the tasty greeting.<sup>55</sup>

- 1915, Apr. 16—The Lyman Dam washes out when a record runoff fills the lake.
- 1915—Joshua loses the Salado homestead due to the breaking of the Lyman Dam.
- 1915, Apr.—The flood from the Lyman Dam washout severely damages the Gibbons home 1 mile north of town, so the family moves into St. Johns.
- 1915, 21 Sept.—The Lyman Water Company formed to rebuild the Lyman Dam

### **The Salado Homestead and the Breaking of the Lyman Dam**

The people at St. Johns also began to lay plans for a bigger and better dam [than the Salado Dam]. However, it was late in the decade when work on it actually began. They chose a site upstream from the Salado [dam site], about twelve miles from town. They received Church approval of the project and a \$5,000.00 grant toward its construction.

In appreciation of Apostle Lyman's help with the plans and his recommendation that the Church accept and approve them, the project was named Lyman in his honor.

In 1909 a group of capitalists from Denver, Colorado became interested in the Hunt Valley as the possible site for a large reservoir project. President D. K. Udall, who had holdings in the valley at that time, persuaded them to look over the Lyman Project with an eye to joining forces with the Mormons. A deal was made and the Lyman Irrigation Company and the Lyman Land Company were organized. The Denver people furnished their part in cash for a three-fifths share of the stock and the St. Johns people contributed labor for the remaining two-fifths.

The total cost of the project was \$250,000.00 and the surveyed capacity of the Lyman Lake was 32,964 acre feet, almost double that of the ill-fated Salado. The aim of the project was to irrigate 15,000 acres of the high ground west of St. Johns. The contract was let and work was begun, but the contractor never quite got organized. When it became apparent to him that he wasn't going to make it, he backed out, throwing the financial responsibility onto his three bondsmen, M. Garcia, Fred T. Colter and Jacob Hamblin Jr. Hamblin had had considerable experience as a dirt mover and considered it a good contract. He talked the others into letting him finish the job for the bid price. He finished it in the required time, and at a profit.

The dam was completed in 1912. The next two years were dry, but in 1915 a record runoff filled the lake. A soft spot developed under the dam; some say there was a small spring under the dam at the time the construction started.

Gordon Parks, a boy who was on guard at the Lyman one night in April, 1915, had crossed over to the

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<sup>53</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 30

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-31

<sup>55</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 14



north end on his rounds of inspection, when he heard the roar of flooding water. In the dim light he could see the flood cutting through the base at the south end of the dam. He knew that if he were trapped on the wrong side of the river he would be unable to warn anyone. With the base of the dam going fast, while the top still held, momentarily at least, an arch was formed over the top of the fast growing jet of water. Parks raced back over the failing dam to dispatch a warning to the sleeping town twelve miles downstream.

It was too late to warn the people who were living along the river just below the dam, for the flood was already upon them.

The following is John A. Hamblin's eyewitness account of the flood as it reached St. Johns, as stated in his book, *Heritage*:

*...It was the night of the Junior Prom. All the high school students and a lot of the town's people were there. I took my date home, and had just gotten back to our house when someone drove into the front yard and fired a couple of shots in the air. "The Lyman Dam has broken," he yelled, "Everybody get dressed and run for the high ground on the hill." Father was awake immediately, and I can only imagine the thoughts that poured through his mind. He told us not to be afraid, that our house was on high ground and perfectly safe.*

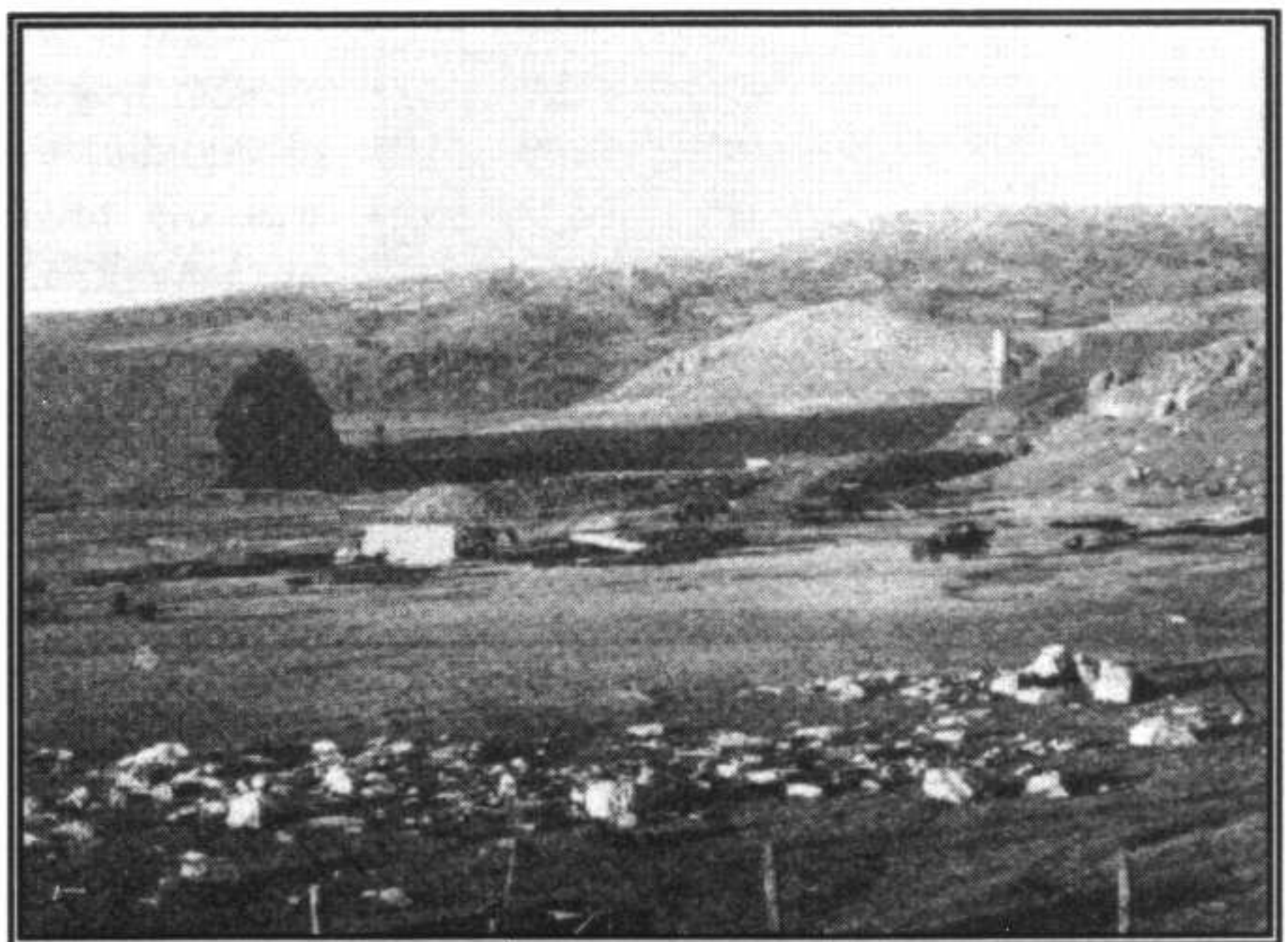
*The dam was twelve miles away and someone there had been able to reach the telephone in time to call St. Johns and give the alarm. I was still dressed and ran down to the river. The water wasn't out of its banks, but we heard a terrible roar and as we ran up the side of a little hill by the river, the crest of the flood came like a tidal wave.*

*It was just getting light and some people were unable to get free. Our neighbors, the Palmers, met disaster. Mrs. Palmer taught school right under the dam and their house was close-by. Mr. and Mrs. Palmer came to the dance that night, leaving their three children at home with a baby sitter. The flood drowned the children and the sitter and two of the victims were never found, though we searched for their bodies for days. In all, eight people lost their lives that night. The power of the water swept everything before it. At Holbrook, 68 miles downstream, it was reported that dogs, horses, cattle and some wild animals were seen tumbling along in the first rush of the water.*

*I cannot forget the gloom and depression that settled over the town for quite a while after that. Everyone seemed to be in shock, unable to realize what had happened, or accept the enormity of the disaster. Toil, sweat, tears and dreams went with that flood, swept away by the waters of the Little Colorado the night the dam washed out.*

There is no way of assessing the property damage except to say that it was a disaster. All the homes that were adjacent to the river were swept away. Some of the adobe houses a little farther back lost one whole side wall, leaving the interior of the rooms, furniture still in place, exposed to public view. Much of the valuable bottom land along the river was either washed away or buried under a heavy layer of mud and rubble. Again, as it had happened when the Salado Dam went out, the Zion and Woodruff Dams were swept away.

Over the years St. Johns had survived some staggering blows, but nothing compared to this. A few gave up and moved away, but the majority stayed on. It is a credit to them that they closed ranks and



**A PICTURE SHOWING THE WASHED OUT SECTION OF THE LYMAN DAM AND ROCK DEBRIS IN THE FOREGROUND.**



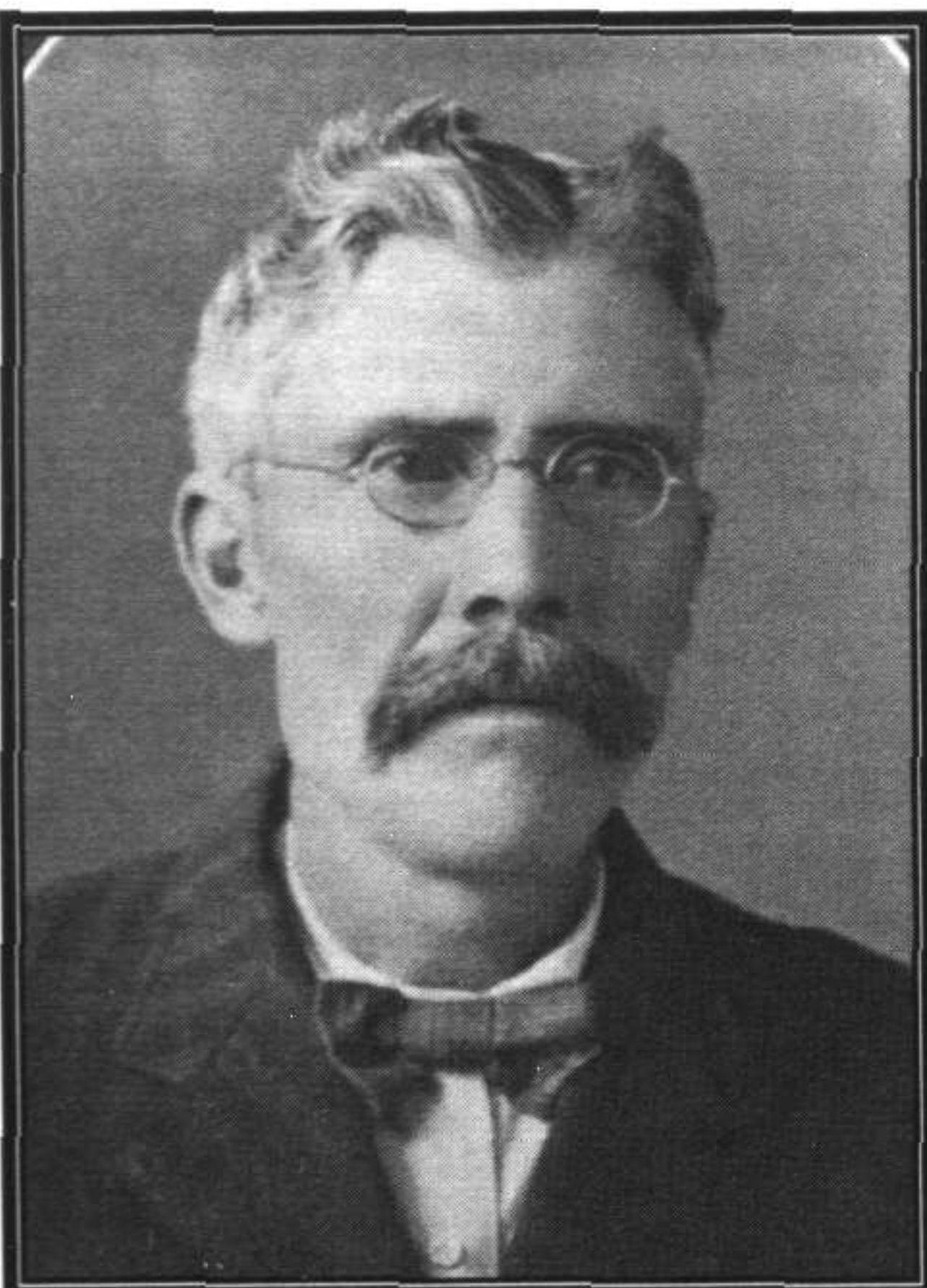
carried on.

On September 21, 1915 a new organization, the Lyman Water Company, was formed. William A. Saunders, Elijah R. Dewitt, and Jesse H. Sherman were elected as the principle officers. Thus started the long and painful ordeal of building another dam. There were no other suitable sites on the river, so it was decided to build on the same location.

. . . It was just five and a half years from the time the Lyman Water Company was organized until the final inspection report on the [replacement] dam was made. During construction every precaution had been taken to insure against a repeat of the 1915 disaster.<sup>56</sup>

[Zona] While we were at Salado a terrible thing happened. The dam, which supplied irrigation water for the farm and the whole valley, broke and did so much damage. Our home one-mile below St. Johns [the old Jensen Place] was very badly damaged, so we moved into St. Johns where I lived until I was married. After we moved to St. Johns, we did not spend much time at Salado. They had the misfortune of having a dam break twice within my lifetime. The first time I cannot remember, as I was too young. [Actually the Salado Dam broke in the spring of 1905.] But the second time I well remember waking up in the morning and seeing the bottom of our field and clear across the valley for several miles as just a lake of water. There were several people who lost their lives in that flood. Dad had worked on the dam a lot. He tried to tell everyone it was going to break. He tried to warn them, but they did not listen to him. Consequently, there were a number who lost their lives along with a great deal of property damage.<sup>57</sup>

When the dam broke and left the Salado Ranch without water, we moved into St. Johns to stay. He looked very unhappy the morning after it had broken. It was a great loss to our family.<sup>58</sup>



**JOSHUA SMITH GIBBONS  
IN HIS LATER YEARS**

- 1915-17—Joshua works as the janitor at the St. Johns Stake Academy.
- 1915—Joshua serving as President of the Stake YMMIA

### **The Family**

[J. Smith] While farming this place Father felt I had developed sufficiently and, before I had completed my high school, arranged for me to go on a mission. No one will know what Father and Mother went through in order to give me that opportunity. All I know is that they decided to send me and it was while I was gone that Neallo died. Then another tragedy happened which is probably the outstanding [economic] tragedy in Father's life in many respects. That was the breaking of the Lyman Dam. This meant his investment, all the time and money that he had spent in building up his place in Salado was gone. The only way to reclaim this place was to rebuild the dam, which in reality was built a few years later at a terrific expense. Father never himself again obtained any interest in this property.<sup>59</sup>

[J. Smith] Upon my return from my mission we went to Alpine. They called on Father to speak. He said,

<sup>56</sup> Wilhelm, C. LeRoy and Mabel R., *A History of the St. Johns Arizona Stake*, St. Johns, Arizona Stake President, 1982, pp. 67-71

<sup>57</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, pp. 28

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 38



"Bros. and Sisters, I have sent my boy on a mission and he has just returned to me. I'd like to relinquish my time in order to hear from him, because I feel and I know that the glorification of man on this earth is not what he attains or the riches he may acquire, but for the family he raises."

So it was with Father throughout his life. He lived not for himself but for his family. He was prematurely old. He had had a hard life. Father was on the firing lines. He was a pioneer, he was an honest and sincere soul. He gave his life, his love, his ambitions, his all for his wife and his family. God bless him.<sup>60</sup>

[Jayne] I remember Mother occasionally giving Dad the dickens, but I never remember his raising his voice back to her.<sup>61</sup>

### **Joshua working as the Janitor at the St. Johns Academy**

With the Salado homestead lost because of the Lyman Dam breaking and the Old Jensen Place ruined by the flood, Joshua managed to get a job as janitor at the St. Johns Academy. His farming days were over for the remainder of his life.

[Edna B. Gibbons, Daughter-in-law] During the years I attended the St. Johns Stake Academy I often saw Father Gibbons who was janitor at the time. He was always kind and courteous and helpful to all. If we carelessly left a coat or books in a room that was later locked Father patiently left his work to help us find lost articles. When I first saw him his hair was white and his shoulders a little stooped but his face always looked kind, I remember only a smile there. After our marriage Father's youngest brother, LeRoy took the place of father to us and our family. He was very close to us and visited in our home many times. I loved him as a father. Nearly all who knew the family say Uncle Roy and Father Gibbons were very much alike in character, humility, faith, courage, tolerance—in fact all fine qualities to make a good honorable man.<sup>62</sup>

- 1915, Nov. 29—Neallo dies at St Johns of diphtheria.

### **Neallo's Death**

[Mother Nancy] Dear Neallo was rather small for his age. Had large brown eyes, dark unruly hair. When he was very young I read the *Dog of Flanders* and liked the story so well we decided to name our baby boy Neallo, after the hero of that story and our boy truly resembled that hero very much.

We never knew where or how he contracted the dread disease of diphtheria. There was no anti-toxin in town and by the time it could be obtained it was too late.

People were so frightened of us for fear of the disease that no one offered to make the burial clothes. The best we could do was to wrap him in a snow-white sheet and lay him away that way. The tears start when ever we think of it, in spite of the fact we know some one on the other side will see to it that he has the proper kind of clothing "over there".

At the time of his death we did not understand much about when the work could be done for the dead. Bates was on a mission to Germany. He wrote he dreamed of seeing Neallo and he was unhappy. We immediately inquired and found he was old enough to be endowed. We lost no time in getting it done. He did it on his sealing date to Lola.

We all bless his memory and are trying to live so we will be with him over there where we hope there will be no vacant seat.

In memory of Neallo Knight Gibbons—Born July 2, 1903 at St. Johns, Arizona; Died 28 November 1915 of diphtheria at the age of twelve; Baptized July 2, 1911; Endowed 4 June 1926 with

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<sup>60</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 38

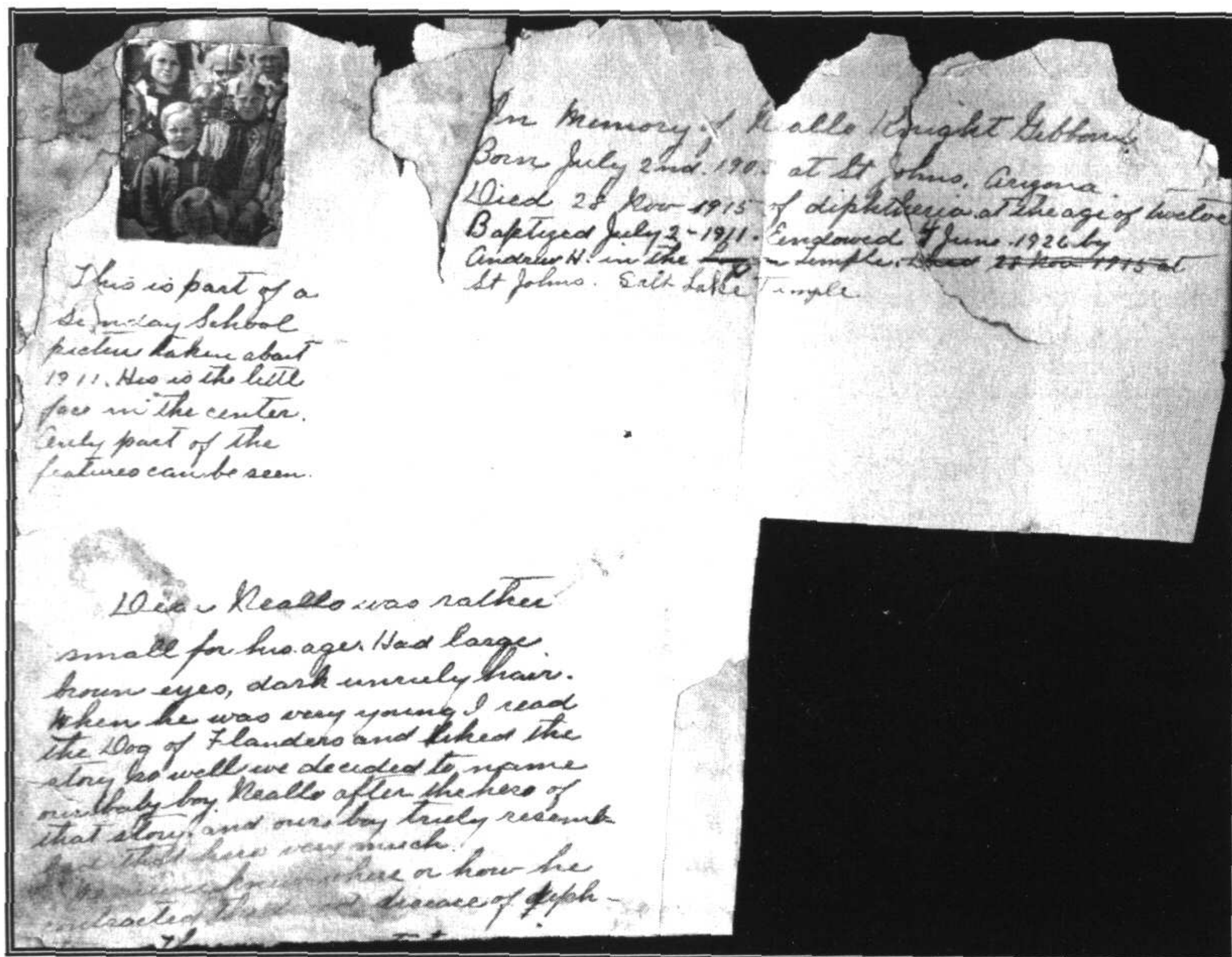
<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 26



Andrew H. Gibbons as proxy in the Salt Lake Temple.<sup>1</sup>

[Following are two pages of hand written notes which Mother Nancy wrote about her son Neallo who had died of Diphtheria. These notes reveal the tender and loving feelings of a bereft mother. They are priceless.]



<sup>1</sup> Editor's files



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We all bless his memory and are trying to live worthily to be with him over there where we hope they will be.

no for





NEALLO GIBBONS

[Thomas R. Greer was Neallo's teacher when he died. He wrote and dedicated a poem to Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Gibbons in honor of their little Neallo, "Whom they sent to my school."]



### ONE LITTLE SEAT IS VACANT

Thomas R. Greer, Neallo's Teacher<sup>2</sup>

1. There is one little seat that is vacant,  
There is one little place unfilled;  
There is one little smile that is missing,  
There is one little hand that is stilled.~~~  
2. There are two bright eyes that will never  
Light up with a look of joy;  
And in earthly life I can never say  
"Well done" to the little boy.~~~  
3. And I his teacher am left behind  
With his loved ones to mourn his loss;  
For the patient spirit has flown away  
From a world so full of dross.~~~  
4. When he came to me that morning  
With a look sad and sweet;  
I could see he did not feel just right,  
For he came on weary feet~~~  
5. And I said to him, "My laddie,  
I fear you are not quite well;  
He answered, "I hurt myself at play,  
Somehow I slipped and fell."~~~  
6. And as I watched him try to work,  
I called him again that day;  
And told him he'd better not try to work,  
But to run along home and play.~~~

7. But he anxiously said, "My record.  
I'm afraid I shall get behind."  
But I said, "I will see to that for you,  
Of that you need never mind."~~~  
8. And that is the last time in earthly life  
On his sweet face I shall look;  
No more shall his cheerful face glance up  
From the lesson in his book.~~~  
9. And his record the Master now makes up,  
And can only be read on high;  
For spirits like his the Master needs  
For His kingdom in the sky.~~~  
10. And another teacher shall guide his steps,  
Whose methods are better than mine;  
And instead of jumbled human thoughts,  
He will learn of Truths Divine.~~~  
11. And one little seat is vacant,  
And one little place unfilled;  
And one little smile is missing,  
And one little hand is stilled.~~~  
12. And I miss him, yes, I miss him,  
For he's gone from my school room nest;  
But I hope to see him once again  
In that Land of Peace and Rest.~~~



[Zona] When I was ten years old my brother, Neallo, two years older than me, died from diphtheria. Where he could have contracted it we did not know. But by the time we received the anti-toxin it was too late to help him. The rest of us were vaccinated and escaped the disease. He was the only one in St. Johns to have diphtheria. He went to school one day and the schoolteacher noticed that he was not feeling at all well. So he told him he had better go home. After he came home the doctor came down and diagnosed it as diphtheria. I don't remember how many days he lived; but it was a very bad time. During this time only two people ever came near, a nurse called Pearl Udall and Dr. Bouldon. They changed

<sup>2</sup> Editor's files



clothes in the back yard and came into the house then changed again when they were outside again. How much we enjoyed having them come. I can imagine how much they must have meant to Mother and Dad. They would come twice a day to take care of Neallo. Not a person in town ever came near us. We were quarantined for five weeks. If anyone brought anything to us, they would yell from the front gate, which was about 100 yards away. Then they would run like crazy.<sup>3</sup>

[Zona] Dad and mother took turns staying up nights with Neallo. We children slept in a bedroom next to the sick room. At this time there was no vaccine in town so they had to send for some. Well, they lined us, bottoms up, and gave us a big shot in the seat. We went around with sore seats for a good many days. The needle seemed so large. During the days we would march around the lot and play soldier among other things to break the monotony. Time went so slow. Oh, for some time now. It seemed about two weeks that Neallo was so ill but it may not have been.

After Neallo was buried and none of us were coming down with diphtheria we decided to fumigate the house with sulfur. At the last they fumigated us, too. I remember we went in, held our noses as long as we could possibly stand it, then ran out again, doing this several times.<sup>4</sup>

[Jayne] When Neallo had diphtheria almost every morning Mother would have Father get us all around a shovel of coals and a steaming teakettle. Then he'd pour sulfur over the coals and we'd breathe the fumes. It was supposed to kill the germs we might have inhaled but it's a wonder it didn't kill us. We'd have trouble breathing for quite a while after, I can tell you. At that time H was doing janitor work and every day he'd come down and see what we needed. He'd sit at the gate until we informed him of our wants.

[Zona] I remember well the night he died. The only ones allowed to go near him were Father and Mother. They took turns taking care of him at night. One night I heard Mother tell Father that Neallo seemed a lot better. It was her turn, so she stayed up with him. The night Neallo died I heard him call Mother and tell her he wanted a drink of water. His throat was so bad that he couldn't eat or swallow or anything. Anyway she gave it to him and he drank it. Then he just died—he fell back in her arms. It happened so fast that she didn't even have time to call Father. I shall never forget the cry she gave as she called Father.<sup>5</sup>

They spent the rest of the night laying him out. No one ever came near to bring any clothes to dress him in or lay him away in. They put a clean pair of underwear on him and laid him out by a window and then in the morning we children passed by the window to see him. When it came time to take him up to the cemetery, H, who wasn't staying at home at that time, came down with a team and wagon. He was staying with someone else so he could take care of things outside the home at the time such as getting medicines, etc. They had made a pine box coffin for Neallo. H didn't bring any clothes to dress him in or anything. Mother found a pair of pink underwear and put them on him. They wrapped him in a clean sheet and put him in the coffin – she and Father. It was a time of great sorrow for all of us. H took him to the cemetery, several men followed a ways behind the wagon and buried him. They had wrapped him in a sheet and placed him in the box with no help except that of the greatest helper of all, Our Father In Heaven, and knowing my Father and Mother I am sure He gave them the strength and the courage to do this thing which had to be done. This incident, along with others in their lives, helps me to realize the true worth and the bigness of my Father and Mother. My Father was a tower of strength to Mother, as she was not a well woman.

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<sup>3</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1966, p. 30

<sup>4</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H, Lola H., Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel, Published by authors: Andrew H. Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., pp. 35-36

<sup>5</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1966, p. 30



Neallo's birthday was on the second of July and he died in December. He was a rather small for his age, not quite of average size. He had brown eyes and a swarthy skin. He was dark in complexion like his father. He was a loving, wonderful brother. How much we missed him in our play is hard to even tell.<sup>6</sup>

[Andrew H] Another time we had lost a horse which we needed very much for our farm work and when we had searched everywhere we could think of Mother prayed again for help. The next morning she told me of a dream she had had. It seems she had crossed a river that ran through our field, had gone through another field and through some willows and then had climbed through a fence and as she started across this field the horse which had been lying down got up and came toward her. This was exactly the route I followed when I found the horse the next morning.<sup>7</sup> Joshua as Justice of the Peace and the Burning of the Old Alpine Meeting House



NEALLO GIBBONS HEADSTONE—ST. JOHNS

### Joshua as Justice of the Peace and the Burning of the Old Alpine Meeting House

[LeGrande Noble, Nancy's Brother] One final comment. It has to do with the old meeting house in Alpine which was burned down after the 4th of July celebration because three boys in that town went over and touched a match to a lot of brush that had been put in the fireplace in order to prepare a supper. The old log meeting house was erected when Alpine was first settled, a one room building with a fire place in the north end. We went in and touched a match to the decorations that had been taken down and put in the fireplace. It burned for just a minute and then exploded just like gasoline. The chapel burned to the ground.

At that time Uncle Josh was the Justice of the peace and Alpine was included in the St. Johns precinct. [LeGrande called Joshua Uncle Josh, even though he was actually his brother-in-law] The day after this happened, Uncle Josh was in town and of course the thought uppermost in the minds of the boys, and I think of some men and women, was just how severe should we be on those kids for doing something that they had no business doing. Well, I remember that Josh came to me and asked me what I thought should be done about that. I declined to make any comment.

The final result was that nothing was done, although whether this was right or wrong I'm not saying he was completely right. But again it illustrates one point—that in his life he set an example that boys could follow with absolute confidence. I say again that as a father and an uncle in a home, I consider Uncle Josh to have been one of the finest men that I have ever known. He was not only an uncle to me, having married a wonderful sister of mine, but after Father's death he was a father to me. The fact that I look back now and acknowledge his leadership in helping me to do at least some of the things in life that I should have done, is evidence in itself of the respect and the honor that I have for him today.<sup>8</sup>

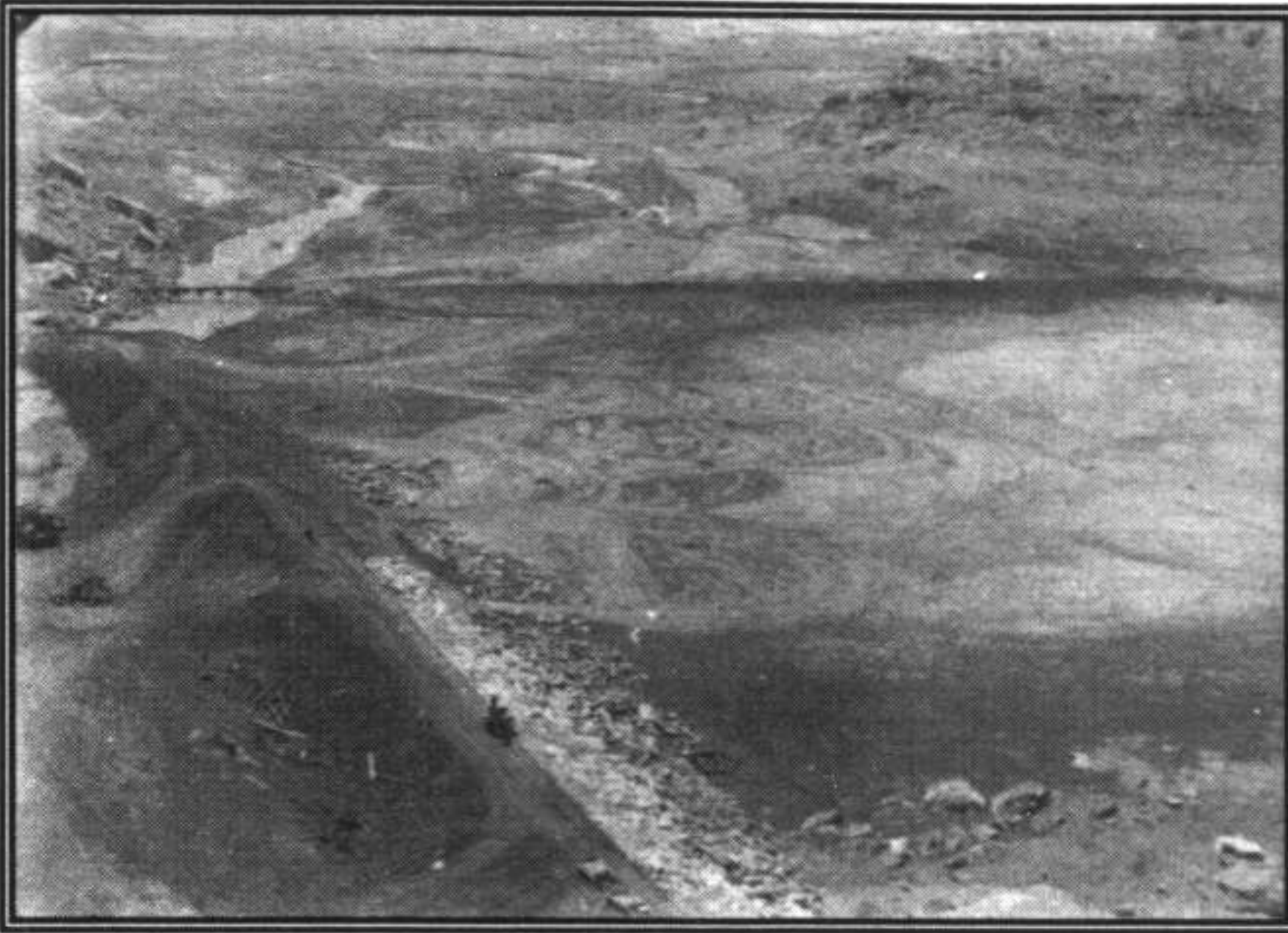
- 1917—Joshua working on the Lyman Dam
- 1917—Joshua's prophecy about Louisa's birth.
- 1917, Feb. 13—Joshua Smith Gibbons dies at St. Johns of Bright's Disease at age 55.

<sup>6</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H, Lola H., Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel, Published by authors: Andrew H. Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., p. 36

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 31





### REBUILDING OF THE LYMAN DAM

#### Joshua's Death

[Nancy, Wife] Joshua had told me he would not live long. He said he felt sure he could do more for his family on the other side. One day he promised me I should have one more baby girl. Joshua was working at the dam when he took sick and had to be brought home. One afternoon he told me all about the debts we owed and those who owed us.

His last words were: "Nancy, prepare for the worst." Then just before breathing his last said audibly, "In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen." Since that time whenever I hear the song, "Prayer Is The Souls Sincere Desire", I always think of his last words. He was buried on my Mother's birthday, February 15, 1917."<sup>9</sup>

[Following are excerpts from a letter from Joshua's brother, LeRoy, to another brother, Richard. In it he describes the last few days, hours and minutes of Joshua's life.]

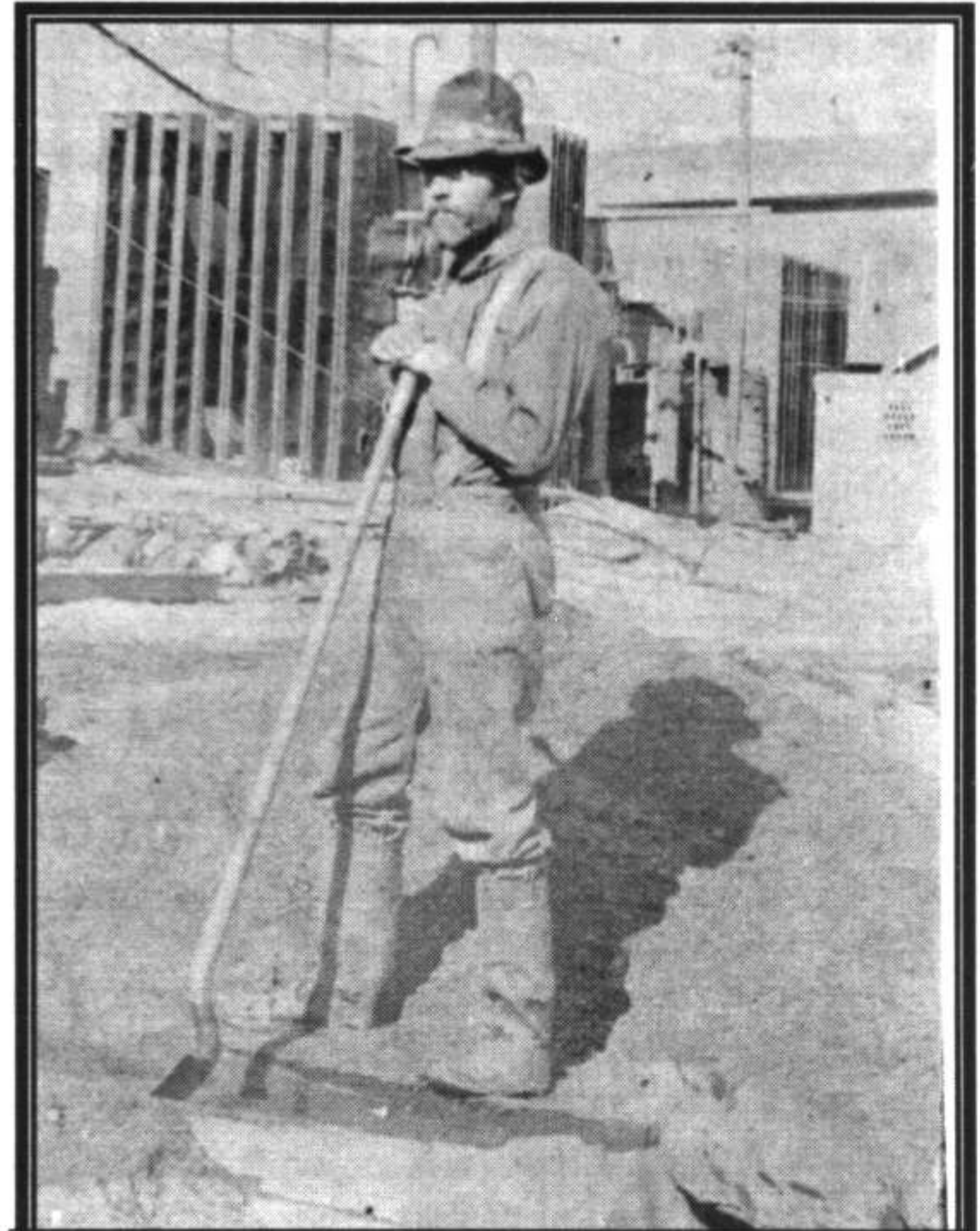
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St. Johns, Arizona  
Feb. 19, 1917

Dear Brother [Richard Gibbons]:

. . . I read your letter to Andy and learned of your kindness to Nancy, which will speak for you, in your absence, of your love and devotion to our brother. When I am forced to pause and think that Josh is no more, I am too sad to speak, write, or do anything else. When he came down from the dam sick, he was bloated and his face was swollen, showing that something was seriously wrong and should have had a doctor. But he would not permit a doctor till his pain became racking the day before he died.

His water stopped about noon the day before he died. It was no doubt Bright's Disease that was working on him all the time, but his passage of water seemed normal until the day mentioned. I administered to him with one or two others and to me it seemed his faith would or should restore him as he wanted to remain with his family and direct them for a while yet,



**JOSHUA WORKING ON THE LYMAN DAM—He became ill while working on the Dam, came home and died shortly thereafter.**

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49



however he was fearful from the first day he came from the dam as he made his will anew and came to me and asked if I would act as administrator. He gave out each day that he was better. The evening before the last he pulled me to him and pressed a kiss upon my cheek and said, "Next to my wife and children you are the nearest and dearest to me".

I came to his bedside about two hours before the end, with his family [present], excepting H and Noble, who were on their way from the dam. Andrew, Bill and others watched his breath shorten under the grip of death which I knew (and directed Andy to go to the phone before it closed and wire you) and over which we had no control until the last quiver and the straightening of his body told us the end had come. As soon as the chords and nerves had ceased to twitch, his countenance assumed a smile and forgiveness to all in this world who may have caused him troubles, of which his life has been so full. He was conscious to the very last and two or three times from a half hour till ten minutes before the last I heard him say, "Raise me up" or "Let me down", as he wanted to be moved and to help me pass the time. Two or three minutes before [the end] two or three nearest him could hear him say, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen."

Your brother, L. R. Gibbons<sup>10</sup>

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[J. Smith] I shall never forget just after father had died but a few moments that Mother talked to me and said, "Now, Son, Father told me that he had to die, that he had to go on, it was his calling, I knew he was going to die, and one of the things that he told me was that he HAD to go because he could do more for his family there than he could do here. He mentioned you boys. Now, Son, live so that your father can reach you and give you the needs to help you over the rough spots in life, if necessary."<sup>11</sup>

[Eileen, Granddaughter] The years when Joshua lived were lonely, too, because he was gone so much of the time with the sheep and other work. The times when they were able to live on a farm and be together were the happiest of Nancy's life.

Joshua knew of his own impending death, as he had known of other forthcoming events during his life, and he knew that others of the family would be taken, as they were. . . . Nancy, too, felt her sweetheart's time was very short.

"It was found he had a bad case of Bright's Disease and then pneumonia set in." He could not last long under these conditions. He died about 10 PM on February 13, 1917, 41 years ago, one week from today [the day of Nancy's funeral] and with a prayer on his lips. His last words were, "Nancy, prepare for the worst." Than just before breathing his last he said audibly, "In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."<sup>12</sup>

[Zona] On the thirteenth of February just five days before I was twelve, my father passed away. Neallo was the first one of the three of our family Dad had told Mother would be called home. Neallo was the first one and Dad was the second. Dad had Bright's Disease, but it was held down pretty well. However, he had had pneumonia twice before so his lungs were weak. The doctor had told him, "If you ever get pneumonia again it will kill you." Working on the Lyman Dam, which supplied irrigation water to the entire area, he was around the cement and wind and dust and he again took pneumonia. His resistance was so low that he only lived two days. Mother, at the time, was pregnant with the twelfth member of the family (Louisa). Mother was almost a complete invalid when she was pregnant. Just five days before my birthday they asked us to go over to the neighbor's to play. Some time later they came after us. They informed us that our father had passed away. I shall never forget the scene, my dear sick Mother, sitting beside his still form, weeping. He died on the thirteenth of February and two days later they had his funeral. Mother was too ill to even attend, so the children went all alone. It was a most sad occasion for us all.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-47

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 6

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 15



I do not remember anything much about the funeral except that one speaker said that he had not heard of Brother Gibbons killing anybody. My second oldest brother leaned over to me and said, "I wish I had a brick." [This was undoubtedly a carry over from the Charlie Maxwell Affair, some six years earlier, from someone who had a difficult time forgetting his ill feelings back then.]

We could, of course, observe Mother's sorrow at her loss of her beloved husband. But our observations must have not nearly indicated the true depths of her anguish, for the simple reason that she did not want us to suffer additionally because of her own pain. She tried so hard to comfort all of us children in our loss and to hide her own feelings. Her own situation was greatly aggravated by her poor health. How can I ever repay her for her sweetness and priceless example?<sup>13</sup>

[Rhoda Ann Gibbons Davis, Niece] At this time Joshua was working on the Lyman Dam. He caught cold, falling ill. I didn't know he was sick until Bro. McCray, a neighbor, asked me if I knew that Josh Gibbons was awfully sick. The cold had turned to Pneumonia.

When I found this out I went to see him. It was on a Sunday. Winter weather was still with us, snow on the ground when I made my way over to see him. As soon as I went in he asked me where Nina was, why I hadn't brought her with me. There was measles in town at that time and I told him this was the reason why. He said jokingly, "I haven't got the measles." He went unconscious that day. He died the following day. (I'm 82 now and it hard for me to remember lots of things.)<sup>14</sup>

## Tributes

[Genevieve Gibbons, Niece]: Uncle Josh was a medium sized man, but walked a little bent. I believe he suffered from a bad stomach, ulcers perhaps. He never spoke loud or harsh to any one. He was a kindly man. He always took time to notice and speak to us children, but I do not remember of him laughing or playing with us. I thought he seemed a little sad. I have learned since that he wasn't well.<sup>15</sup>

[Pauline Gibbons Anderson, Niece] Yes, I remember dear lovable Uncle Josh. So soft and kind of speech. The last I remember he and H came to my wedding, Aug. 30, 1916, just before we were leaving for Salt Lake and then on to Chicago. Here is a paragraph from a letter written to me in Chicago from my father [LeRoy, Josh's brother]:

"We have been made sad by the death of Uncle Josh. He was a very dear brother to me. I knew him perhaps as no other person besides his own family. He often was misunderstood. He was a man of true manhood and sometimes made enemies during his life because he was not a 'Limber Jim'. He said and did what he believed was right no matter if he incurred the displeasure of others. When I know that he was that true, that he would have sacrificed his life for me, if it should be required, I cannot help but feel sad to lose one so true."

I know Uncle Josh came in every day for several weeks before and after when one of my sisters was born and my father was away. He always came in from his farm two or three miles away. For years we lived next to Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy so we were very close cousins, we older ones.<sup>16</sup>

[Andrew H] Father seemed to be a great favorite with his nieces and nephews. Uncle Bill's girls, I remember, who were at our home just before his casket was closed said over and over, "What will we ever do without him?"

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<sup>13</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31

<sup>14</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H, Lola H., Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel, Published by authors: Andrew H. Gibbons Jr. revision 1996 and now entitled, Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., p. 23

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 38

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 26



As I look back through the light of a life time of experience I do not remember of ever hearing him quarrel or have words with more than two people. So many people seemed to enjoy chatting with him and passing the time of day.

And so it was my wonderful privilege to live nearly twenty years with a man who was in reality a great personality. He was great not because of his world's goods, for somehow we never managed to quite keep even with the world as a family at home. But here was a man who gave freely and endlessly of life's essentials—not on occasion when he felt just right, but always—ever and ever—he took time to give to all he met a friendly word, a welcoming smile that somehow never seemed to lose its luster. In fact, I think that when James wrote in the bible that “Pure religion and undefiled is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the sins of the world,” he was referring to people like Father. And in conclusion, as I look at the lives of us his children who are left to carry on and honor his name, I ask that God bless us that we may try with more effort each day to exemplify the life he GAVE for us.<sup>17</sup>

[Zona] Dad was so good hearted that he would sign a note with anyone who asked him to.<sup>18</sup>

[Louisa] Mama felt that Dad used to come and visit her and she would always tell me he was there and it was a real comfort. Also, he was a prophet to his family. He told her she was going to have both the twins and the triplets [before hand]. Before I was born she almost lost me and he said, “Be careful, Nancy, we must have this baby girl.”<sup>19</sup>

[Hazel Noble Boyack, Nancy's sister] The period I stayed with Nancy [while attending the St. Johns Academy] was mostly after the passing of Joshua. I did stay a short time at their home when they lived in the field south of St. Johns, Arizona. Josh, as he was called, was a hard working man. No day was too long if it meant he could bring in a little extra for the support of his large family. No task too hard. As I remember the family was in quite difficult circumstances, financially.

One day he took time out to go up and repair the fence around the yard where Mother, Pearl and I lived. Pearl was teaching Home Economics at the St. John's Academy. After the job was finished he remarked how good it made one feel to do something for someone else. “There was a real sense of satisfaction”, he said.

One day Bro. Sainsbury, who was a principal of the Academy brought some freight from Holbrook for the family. Josh insisted on paying the cost of the freight to the last penny. He brought out some postage stamps so that the bill could be paid in full.

I remember the sorrowful moments of this wonderful family, when Joshua was Judge, or Justice of the Peace. [She tells the story the same as others have.]

I remember also when he was a Representative to the State Legislature in Arizona. Nancy had a justifiable pride in her good husband.

Josh was a good father and a good husband. He had a fine mind. I remember his ability at speaking Spanish. I used to envy his knowledge of the language.

Nancy's ill health was quite a trial and sorrow to him. As it is to all husbands, I'm sure. He would sit by her bed and try to cheer her up. They were always sweethearts. Nancy's love for her husband ran very deep in her heart. Her courage and fortitude at his passing is to me a classic. I may be off the subject but it seems to me her efforts in behalf of his family and hers, her devotion to the work of genealogy, will be the means of exalting both of them.<sup>20</sup>

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We continue our tribute to Joshua Smith Gibbons Sr. with the following descriptive phrases and words taken from the tributes of some who knew and loved him:

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 38

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 31

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 27



## *Joshua Smith Gibbons*

“Patient, kind, considerate, honest, soft-spoken, serious, serious, humble, wise, true, good-hearted, stooped, white-haired, be-whiskered, water hauling, trusting, hard working, lovable one.”

“A handyman, farmer, gardener, irrigation expert, contractor, sheep-herder, teacher, legislator, judge, justice of the peace, janitor, Republican, tease.”

“An M.I.A. missionary, Neighbor, lover of children, host in a home where there was always room for others, and sometimes misunderstood....”

“A handsome man with a fine mind, a fluent speaker of the Spanish and Indian languages, a courageous, tolerant, honorable, wonderful man.”

“A prophet to his wife and family, man of faith, devoted father who entered heaven with prayer.”<sup>21</sup>

[Lee Roy Gibbons] A tribute to Joshua Smith Gibbons by his younger brother:

To the memory of my brother, Joshua S. Gibbons, dedicated to his wife and their children  
February 14, 1917.

The evening before his death he said to me, “Outside of my wife and children, no person on earth is nearer or dearer to me than you.” As a token that his sentiment was from his heart, he pulled me to him and pressed a kiss on my cheek. Feeling that through my emotion I had failed to make known to him that outside of my wife and children, he, to me, was also the next nearest and dearest also impresses me to write these lines. I was then made to know as I had been made to know many times in life, he would sacrifice, if need be, his life for me. Knowing such devotion to me, his brother, I am certain no man could be more devoted to his wife and children.

Knowing him as no other person knew him outside yourselves, if I were asked to name some of the best men I had known, Joshua S. Gibbons, your husband and father and my brother, would be one of the first named.

It was hard for him to give up life here with you, to cease on earth to help and advise you in temporal and spiritual affairs, and only became reconciled to his departure in the thought and belief that he would be permitted to take part through that medium which God would designate to inspire and influence you with suggestions of a clearer foresight into the future as to matters both temporally and spiritually, than perhaps he could do here.

So I would like you to keep these lines open as a help and reminder to heed the influences of a higher order than that of earth, and seek the key that will give you inspiration from heaven, where your earthly father as well as your heavenly father is seeking to give you aid.

My intimacy with him makes it possible to sympathize with you to a greater extent than I could otherwise do, and to feel to a degree the loneliness and grief that will come to you because of his departure. But so thankful am I, as you are, that our mourning is so full of inspiration and hopefulness made possible by the knowledge of such a life of devotion to duty and trust through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lovingly Your Brother and Uncle, L.R. Gibbons<sup>22</sup>

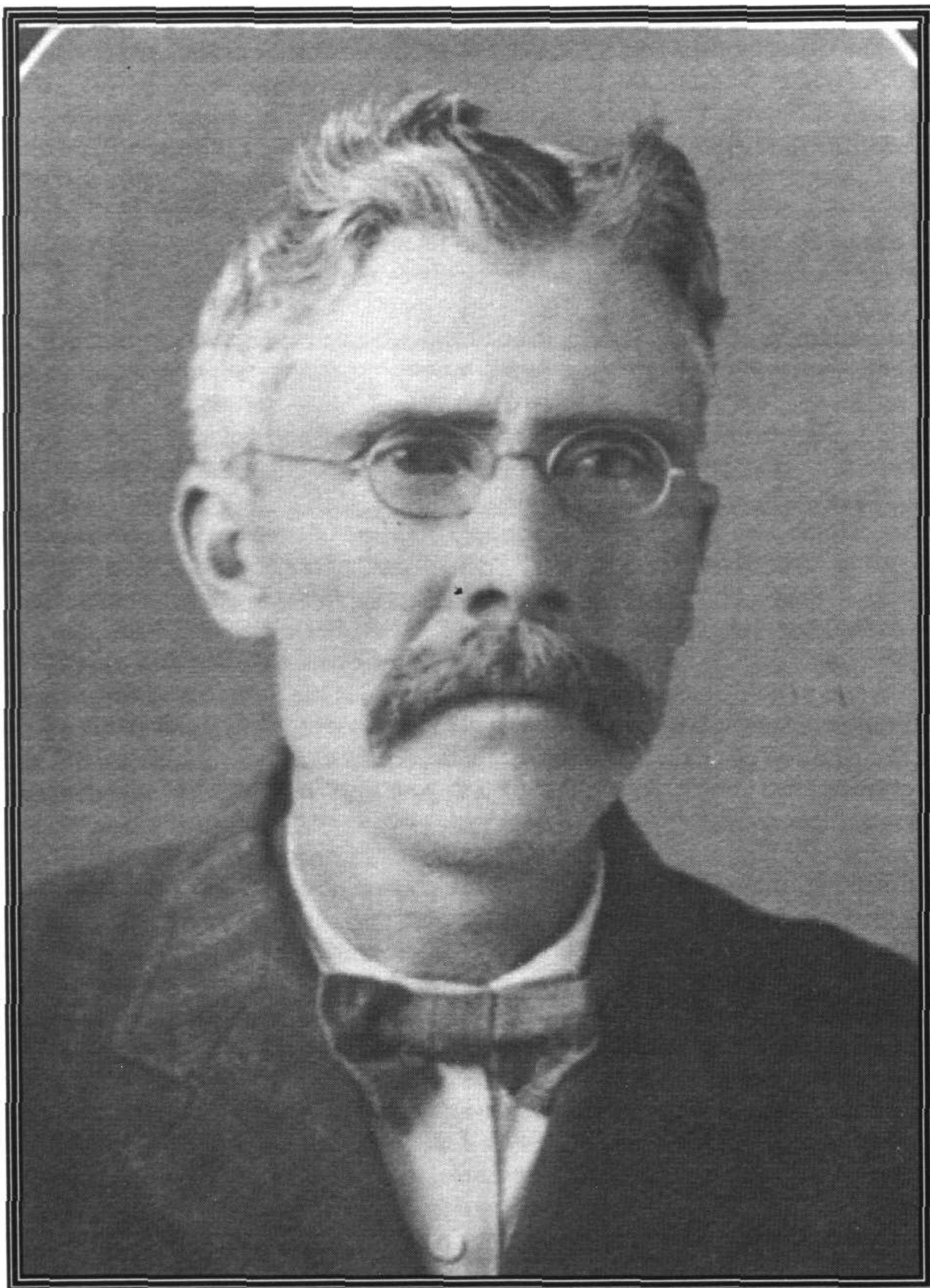
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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 21

<sup>22</sup> Gibbons, Francis Marion and Gibbons, Helen Bay, *A Turning of Hearts—William Davidson Gibbons Family History*, William Davidson Gibbons Family Organization, 1981, pp. 766-767





**JOSHUA SMITH GIBBONS**



## Chapter Seven

### NANCY L. GIBBONS EARLY WIDOWHOOD YEARS 1917 — 1928

- 1917—Nancy and the family after Joshua's death
- 1917, July 29—Joshie Louisa is born at St Johns.

#### Nancy and the Family After Joshua's Death

[Louisa] While he was alive they [Mother and Father] talked business affairs over together. After he was gone Mother had to learn to stand up for her rights.

[Zona] Mother also had bad attacks of asthma and I can remember many times when she called me in the middle of the night to go and get someone to administer to her. One night we went out and couldn't find anyone to administer to her, so Bates and I knelt down and prayed, and the Lord helped her. That was a real testimony to me of prayer. Mother had to be very careful. I can never remember her walking across the floor without having to sit down. She couldn't clean house because she was allergic to dust. She was a wonderful example to me of integrity, a hard worker, of faith and dedication to getting things done regardless of health.

From Father's death until Louisa was born in July Mother was really in a bad way. The Catholic ladies, mostly Mexican, brought Mother a lovely layette for the new baby and what a wonderful help that was during a time when we were having a very hard struggle.<sup>1</sup>

[J. Smith] And so mother began that life. Well, I shall never forget the night that my baby sister was born, some months after Father had passed on. As I stood in the orchard near the home where this baby was being born, and listened to her cries of agony and the prayers upon her lips that God would bless her, and thank Him for the fact that while He was taking her husband He was giving her a child, it touched my heart to the very core.<sup>2</sup>

[Andrew H] But just about ten years after the triplets another baby came. In February of 1917 Father died, and just about five months later another little girl came into the family, creating somewhat of a problem for this widow. I felt a good deal of sympathy for Mother as I watched her walking the floor restlessly in the early evening. I'd got so used to seeing Father around about that time to comfort and cheer her that I couldn't help feeling a good deal of sympathy for this woman past 45 that was to have a

<sup>1</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31

<sup>2</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 6



baby all alone. Despite the fact that Mother had three grown boys I couldn't help feeling Mother was very much alone. But everything came out all right. As far as the birth process went, all was OK.<sup>3</sup>

[Zona] In the winter of 1917 after Louisa was born, every pipe in St. Johns water supply system was frozen. The priesthood organized themselves so they would go out to the spring about 15 miles away and bring drinking water. We would buy a gallon or two of water to drink. The rest of the water we needed to use for cooking, washing, etc. we had to melt from snow. That took a great deal of time. We managed to live through it. It was such a bitter winter we couldn't keep warm. We only had a fireplace in our living room and our kitchen stove. I tell you right now that we were cold that whole winter long. Our house was cold anyway. But we lived through it and we didn't seem to mind it too much. The one that seemed to get along the best was Louisa.

In this same year there were many things to do in the garden, so by my twelfth year I had a very busy time. The three weeks after Louisa was born a lady came in and helped Mother and even cared for Louisa as much as she could. Mother could sit up after three weeks and it was three months before she could do any kind of work. It was a busy hard time; but I would do it all over again for my wonderful, precious Mother. She was always such a wonderful pal to me and after I was married she helped me a great deal. She was always so understanding and sweet.<sup>4</sup>

Between the time that I was 12 and 16 my brothers had a great deal to do, so they taught me how to milk the cows. So sometime in that thirteenth or fourteenth year I learned to milk the cows and it now fell my lot to take care of the cows. We had pigs, chickens, cows and horses. It fell my lot to care for all of the animals except for the horses. Of course Bates went down to field. He would take the cows down to the field and bring them back in the evening.<sup>5</sup>

- 1918-19—Andrew H. Gibbons serving in the US Army in Europe.
- 1918, June 7—Joshua Smith Gibbons Jr. marries Edna Belle Butler in Salt Lake City.
- 1918, Nov. 11—The armistice ending World War I is signed and the war is over.

[Zona] When H left to go to the war, all the men in St. Johns who were going were honored. Every time one or more of them left we had a band play, wished them well and had a parade down main street. Some of them didn't come back. What a celebration we had when the armistice was signed. Everybody went wild, just like we did when peace was declared after the Second World War. During the war we had very little white flour and our main source of bread was corn meal. In fact, our main diet was greens, corn bread and beans. My Dad raised pinto beans on the Salado Place where they did well. It was a poor man's diet but a very good one.<sup>6</sup>

- 1919-23—Nancy elected, and serves, as Apache County School Superintendent for four-year term.

### **Nancy is Elected to serve as the Apache County School Superintendent for four years**

[Zona] [After Dad's death] we were left with a lot of debt and Mother almost an invalid. But the Lord had said that he would never ask anything save he would prepare a way that we might accomplish the thing he had asked us to do. Father died in the spring and in the two years following, Mother had a very hard struggle with finances. Some men and women came to her and asked her if she would run for County School Superintendent. She had been a schoolteacher before she married Father. They realized that she had a lot of obligations because Smith was on a mission and H was gone in the Army during

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 75

<sup>4</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31

<sup>5</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 32

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 31



World War I. So she had to manage things without either of them to help her. She was elected by the people and she did a very good job of it. She was superintendent for four years and by the end of her term for the first time the county school was out of debt. Our family was out of debt too. At this time I would get up in the morning, hook up the buggy and take her to work. Then I would go back in the evening after school was out and bring her home. This worked very well. Eventually she had an operation which greatly improved her health.<sup>7</sup>

[Louisa] Mama served as County School Superintendent for one term. When Daddy died he left her heavily in debt. You know \$4000 back at that time was a huge debt. So Mama paid off this debt, every single cent that Dad owed. Nobody helped her, she did it on her own. Plus in the meantime, she helped her kids—Jayne went to college. She sent two of her sons on missions [Andrew H and Bates] and they had every opportunity. She tried to tell me when I wanted to get married that I was making a big mistake, that I should get a good education and be able to take care of myself. But I didn't figure she knew what she was talking about. But when you are married, you are married for a long time. So you had better prepare yourself before you do get married.<sup>8</sup>

[Zona] Very often Mother would take me with her when she had to visit the out-lying schools and sometimes my girl friend would go with us and we had a lot of fun. When I was growing up Mother was unable to wash, so I would get up at 4 AM in the morning and do the washing for her before I went to school. To this day it has been a hard thing for me to get my kids up to go to school when they have been up late the night before and are tired, because I can remember how hard it was for me to get out of a nice warm bed and touch my feet on the ice cold floor. It was just torture, that's all there was to it. . . .

It was a busy time as I was going to school and carrying most of the work, doing the chores and many other necessary things. H was in the army and the only brother left at home to help was Bates. He didn't have very good health but he was a good worker. Mother said many times that she didn't know what she would have done with out him. He worked very hard but was cranky and hard to get along with. We appreciated his help.<sup>9</sup>

[Andrew H] Perhaps the most impressive of all the examples of how close Mother was to our Father in Heaven came while I was home [on furlough from the army.] One day as Mother and I were returning from sacrament meeting she asked me if I would go on a mission. I promptly said, "No." But within an hour I came to find her to try to justify my statement. I



**CAR OWNERS, OR DEALERS, SHOWING OFF THEIR CARS ON MAIN STREET—Nancy's family saw it all, but never could afford one.**

<sup>7</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31

<sup>8</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 64

<sup>9</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31



told her that I was in the army and that I had shortly before enlisted for two and a half more years and that it would not be a part of Uncle Sam's policy to release soldiers for missions. She answered me with these words, "If I can get you out of the army will you go?" I assured her that I would because I knew that she couldn't get me out.

After I returned to Frisco I was walking along the street one night with two other soldiers going to a dance when we passed a group of people on the street corner. As I saw the young fellow standing there preaching to the group a thrill came through me such as I had not experienced for a long time. I walked on nearly a block before I got myself in hand and then I stopped and said, "Fellows, those are Mormon missionaries back there. I am going back and listen to them. You go on to the dance." What a thrill talking to those boys gave me, and it suddenly became my greatest ambition to stand on a street corner and proclaim the gospel.

In July I received a telegram from a congressman telling me that congress had passed a bill to reduce the size of the army and that if I applied to my commanding officer I would be discharged. I later learned that this was because of the request my mother had made to this congressman. I talked to the top sergeant, gave him the telegram and he said he would take care of it. Later on when the list of names to be discharged was published mine was not on it, so I boldly walked into the sergeant's office, hunted up the telegram and took it into the captain so that I would be discharged along with the others. Two months later I left for my mission.<sup>10</sup>

Still another incident; at the age of twelve I went with my brother, who was just older than I, to get a patriarchal blessing. As life became busier for us these blessings faded into the background. Some seven or eight years later I came home from the army on furlough. Somehow the talk of these blessings came up and I am afraid I wasn't too impressed with some of the promises in those blessings. Mother and I talked to the idea that maybe it might be a good thing for me to get another one before I went back to camp but in the short time I was home this too slipped away. But just a day or two before I was due to leave mother once more had a dream. She said father had visited her and said: "Don't let H forget to have that blessing."

And herein comes the remarkable thing about this blessing. I got it from another patriarch and about seven or eight years later and, with one exception, the words were the same in both blessings. The one exception was that I would visit the nations of the earth. I had just returned from visiting five European countries as part of the armed forces.<sup>11</sup>

### Edward Noble Gibbons' Marriage and Death

- 1920, May 11—Noble marries Jane Porterfield at Breen, LaPlata County, CO.
- 1920, Dec. 29—Noble dies.

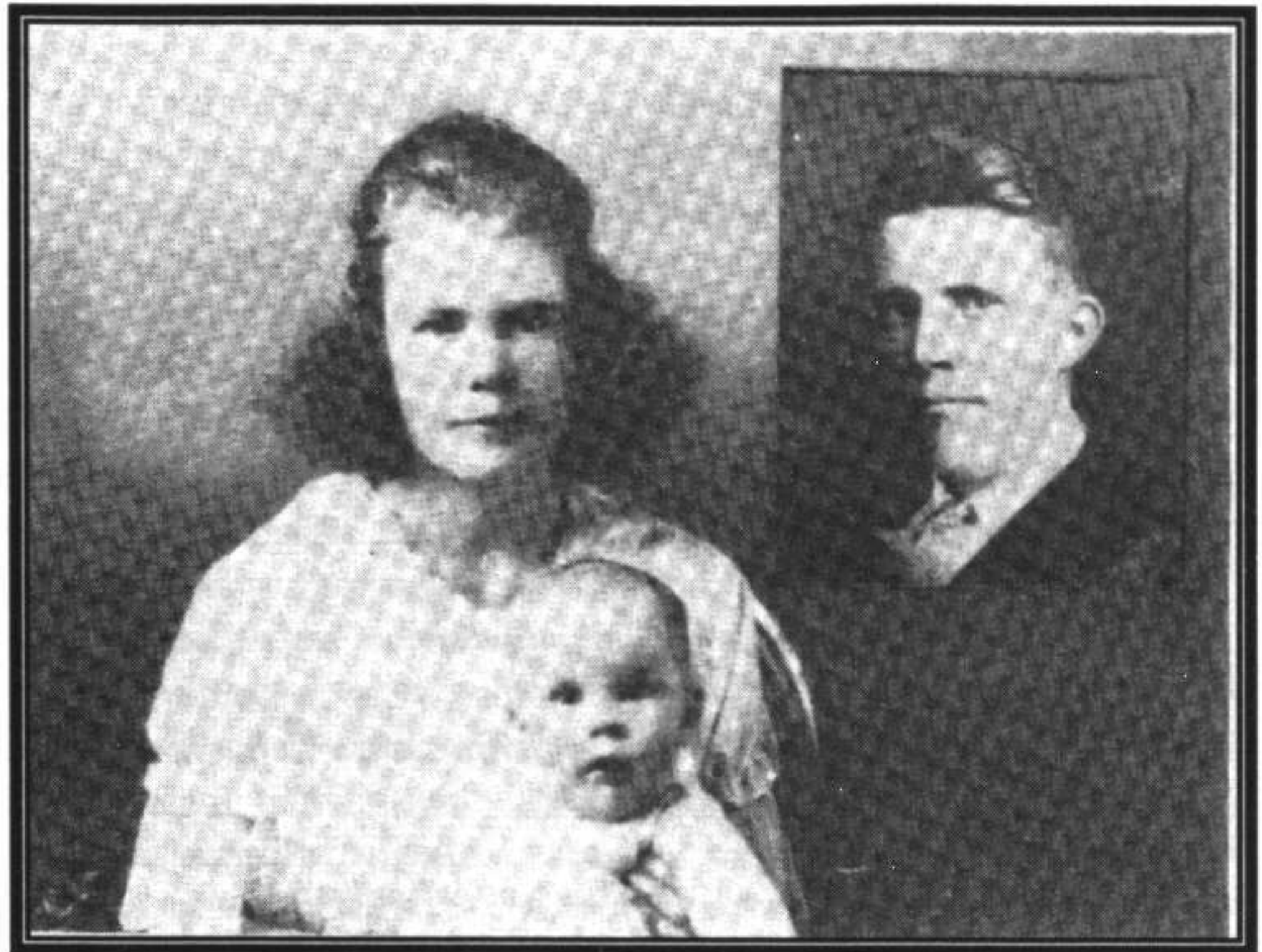
[Zona] In 1919 or 1920 Noble went to Colorado. I can't remember if it was to get work or what. There he met and married Jane Porterfield. They came back to St. Johns. They were married on the eleventh of May and on the twenty-ninth of December he passed away. I don't really know what caused his death, except that he was unconscious for three days and just passed peacefully away. After he had been gone about three or four months, Jane had a baby girl. She was named Nobeleen. Jane lived with us for about six weeks after the baby was born and then she returned to Colorado where she had come from. It was a busy, busy time as I was going to school, carrying most the work at home, doing the chores and the many other necessary things.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 79

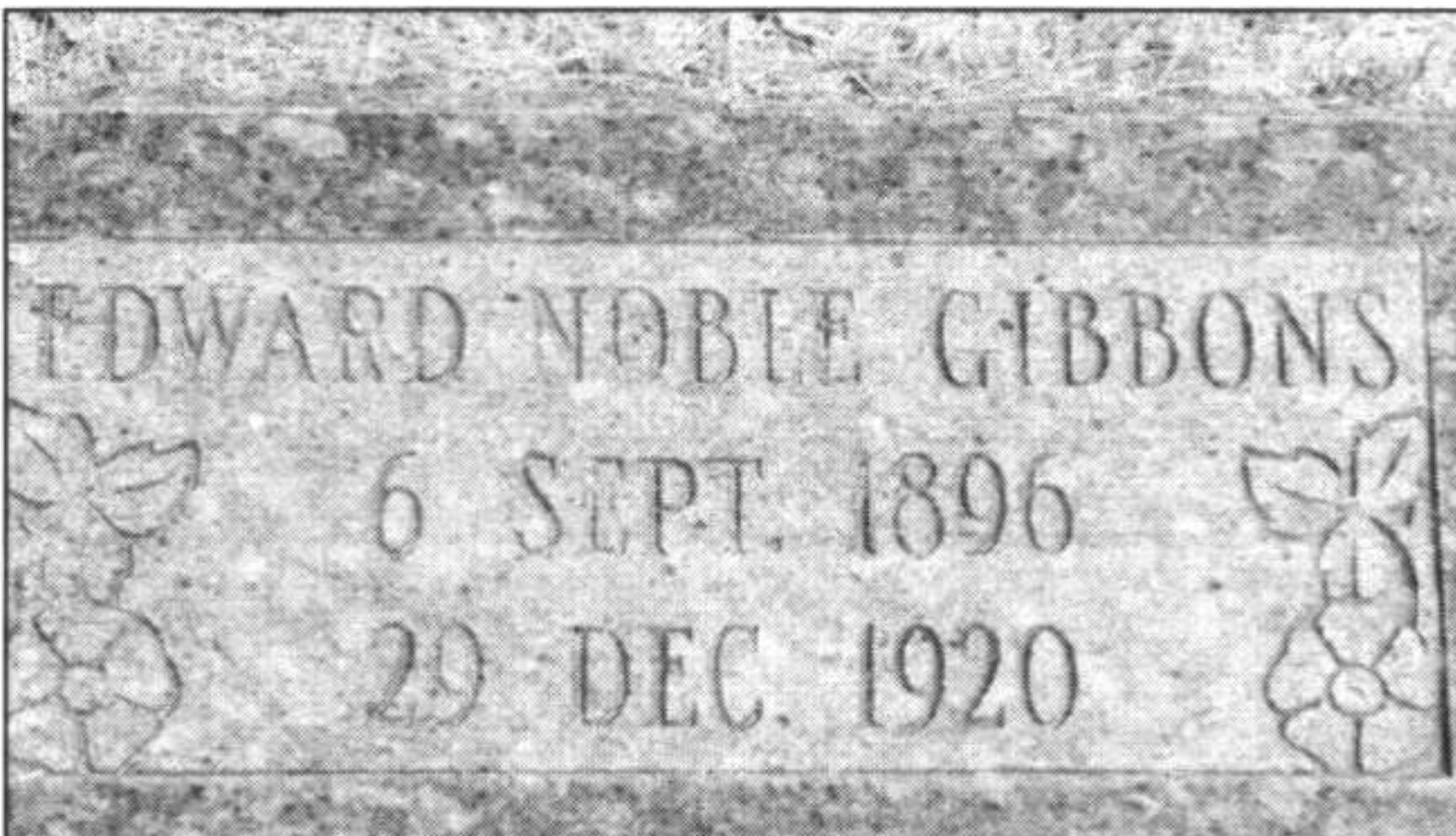
<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5

<sup>12</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 31





**EDWARD NOBLE AND JANE PORTERFIELD GIBBONS  
AND THEIR DAUGHTER NOBELEEN—1921**



**EDWARD NOBLE GIBBONS HEADSTONE AT THE  
ST. JOHNS CEMETERY**

#### **Noble's Daughter Nobeleen's Memories of her Parents and of her Life**

[Nobeleen, Granddaughter] After my Father, Edward Noble Gibbons and my Mother, Jane Juliet Porterfield, were married, they had scrimped and saved enough money to go to the temple. They were in desperate need of a stove so they counseled with Mother Gibbons and she suggested maybe they could save it up again later, because they were in dire need of a stove. Soon Mother was pregnant with me. One thing led to another. My Father took pneumonia and that coupled with his bad heart, caused him to die shortly.

Mother was left a pregnant widow at 18 years of age. She left St Johns [Arizona], and Mother Gibbons watchful loving care, when I was six weeks old. She took me to her hometown in Telluride, Colorado.

I know that Grandmother Gibbons never missed a day praying for us. My baby sitters were varied and many times inadequate. I would be plump and happy with good care and skinny and sickly when I was neglected. I had pneumonia three times. I would not have survived without Grandmother's and Mother's prayers. I was three years old when Mother met and married a widower, Noel Cade, with three children. They said I climbed up on his knee and ask[ed] "Is you my new Daddy?" With four children and only 20 years old, she stayed home (thank goodness). I needed my Mother.

I know that my Grandmother and Mother's prayers followed and guided me through our many moves to follow my stepfather's occupation of Mill man. We lived in Tucson, Arizona during the depression. Mother and Dad (I will call him this, because he was the only Dad I ever knew, and he was good to me.) baked bread and pastries for a living. Her St Johns learning kept them from "going on relief." I will always remember selling bread after school. I had to hurry home because it sold better if it was hot. In the "good ole days" Mother got up about four in the morning, exhausted, half awake, to



start the sponge for the days bread. She accidentally tipped the pot of hot, scalding water over on her legs. I'll never erase the sounds of her agony and suffering.

Grandmother's and Mother's prayers were again answered and my Dad found a job in Randsburg, California. There was no LDS Church there either. My quest for spiritual food sent me to one and then the other of the two churches in town. They were anxious to accept my membership, but I wouldn't let them baptize me, because I wanted to be a Mormon.

Grandmother Gibbons never forgot us, she knew what it was like to be widowed. She never forgot me, to tell me how much she loved me and how much she loved the Lord. Her prayers were always with us. When I started my freshman year in high school [1934] it was arranged for me to stay with Grandmother Gibbons in Mesa, Arizona. It was a double blessing, I got to really know what a great, fantastic person she was, and to know her was to love her. I was also baptized, at last I was a Mormon.

I was thirteen years old, those restless, unpredictable teenage years, but I learned how close she lived to the Lord and how much she loved him. I gained enough love and spiritual food to tide me over two more years on the desert. I knew I wanted to be an LDS girl, wife and mother. How wonderful it was to partake the sacrament and feel the spirit of the temple and Grandmother. Their prayers were answered again. We moved to Grass Valley, California when I was in the middle of my junior year in high school. THERE WAS A WARD THERE!!! My days of spiritual starvation were over. I was active, involved.<sup>13</sup>

- 1921—The Church turns all of its Academies over to the State School System
- 1921-23—Andrew H Gibbons serves a two year mission in the Northern States Mission.

[Zona] While I was growing up, about 15 and 16, I was sick in bed a lot of the time. I wasn't able to participate in the activities of the young people and didn't have the privilege of going to dances and having a good time. I could go to school part of the time; but I couldn't go up or down stairs, etc. So I finally had an operation in St. Johns, which did not do me any good. After this operation I laid in bed most of the time for a couple of months. Then we had a stake conference; Melvin J. Ballard came as the general authority. Mother asked him to give me a blessing. I will never forget the feeling when he put his hands on my head. There was just a warm feeling from my head right down to my feet. He asked Mother before giving the prayer, "Sister Gibbons, have you done all that you can do for her?" Mother said, "Yes, I think I have." He blessed me that I would have good health and later when I had this operation in Gallup that prayer was answered. Mother didn't feel she could afford an operation like that, so she hesitated about having it. But afterwards I had perfect health. So we were better off in the long run.<sup>14</sup>

[Eileen Kump, Granddaughter] Nancy had some firm notions about levity and love, and as a result one day her daughter Zona lost a beau. You see, Will Burke had been coming to the house quite regularly to see Zona. That was all very good and well, but just at that particular time the bigger boys were putting new shingles on the house. One of them made the remark that it was Nancy, Zona's mother, Will was coming to see and that was why she was having the roof put on. No one knows what Nancy said to Will, but she sure stopped off his calling short.<sup>15</sup>

- 1922—Nancy's hysterectomy at Gallup, NM. Her health improves considerably. Louisa was four.
- 1922-1924—Nancy teaches religion classes at St Johns Academy, like seminary today.

<sup>13</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 101

<sup>14</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 33

<sup>15</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 13



[Louisa] I want to go back to when I was a little girl in St. Johns. Mama had her operation when I was four and it made her so she could walk. She couldn't walk before that because of her health. I can remember her in the garden, before her operation, working on her hands and knees. . . . I've never seen anyone who could raise a garden like mama. I can remember she would give me bunches of onions after she had fixed them and I would take them to the motel and I sell them to get us a little bit of money. I remember [when I was four] when she went to Gallup and had a hysterectomy. The reason she wouldn't go for this sooner was because she wasn't going to go before the Heavenly Father to say that she wasn't going to face her duty here upon the earth and have children. That's why she suffered all these years doing her work in a chair and couldn't walk across the floor because she wanted to have her family—because she didn't want her Heavenly Father to be ashamed of her when she passed to the other side. And that's why she came to every one of us girls every two years, or year and a half, to remind us that it was time to have another baby. She would make a trip to tell us that.

She read the scriptures faithfully. Even when she was tired, she'd lay on the couch and I'd rub her feet. She used to love to have me rub her feet. I rubbed her poor old deformed feet. Her toes were stacked upon each other. I think it was arthritis.<sup>16</sup>

- 1923—Andrew H returns from his mission to the Northern States

[Andrew H] Another example of the far-sightedness of this woman will be brought out in the following story. When I was released from my mission I felt that I should devote myself to Mother for her support as long as she needed me, and I told he so. But she said, "No, dear boy, you must not sacrifice yourself thus. My life is almost lived (that was 36 years before her death) but you have your whole life before you. You must go back to school and prepare yourself for the work you will have to do in life."<sup>17</sup>

- 1924 Aug. 30—Zona marries Hans Flammer at St Johns.
- 1924 to 1926—Nancy teaches two academic years in Alpine. Louisa was 7-8. Summer school at State Teachers College, Flagstaff.

[Louisa] Mom was in public office from the time I was two to six years of age, and then she did not win reelection as Apache County School Superintendent. So she taught school in Alpine for two years, 1924-1926.<sup>18</sup>

I was baptized in Alpine on October the third and I remember coming out of that cold water. We wore fleece lined long johns in Alpine and we lived in a not very nice place there, either. I remember that one of the kids gave Mama five pounds of chocolates for Christmas, and those chocolates lasted us a whole year because we were only allowed one about every two or three days. Mama could make wonderful lumpy dick. She'd put the frying pan down over the fire and put some milk in it. Then she'd put in sugar and cinnamon. Next she'd take this flour and whip it into that milk with a fork until it was as light as a feather. We had lumpy dick all the time with cream over it. Oh, that was the best stuff I have ever tasted. Louis Tenney, Aunt Armeda's boy, would come over and he'd always say, "Aunt Nancy will you please make me some lumpy dick?" It didn't make a bit of difference what Mama was doing, she would stop and make him some lumpy dick. While we lived in Alpine I remember us seeing Grandma Noble a lot too. She lived down off the hill from the church house.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 61

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 5

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 67

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 62



- 1925 to 1927—Bates serves in the German Mission.
- 1925, Nov. 22—Andrew H Gibbons marries Lola Heaton at Safford, Graham County, AZ.

### Nansen Bates Gibbons serves a Mission in Germany

[Zona] After H came home from the Northern States Mission, Bates was called on a mission to Germany. When Mother said, "Now Son we must have \$600 to get you to Germany and I can't afford that. We'll write and tell them to call you some place else." He said, "I want to tell you something. If I can't go where I am called, I won't go." So Mother thought she would trust in the Lord and when the time came she had the money. She always said, "I don't really know where I got it. But I did." She had a great deal of trust in the Lord and He answered her prayers all of the time.<sup>20</sup>

[Eileen, granddaughter] A few years after Nancy's husband died, leaving her with \$4,000.00 in debts, seven living children and the memory of four in the grave, with another child on the way, few possessions, and in poor health, her son Bates was called to go to a mission to Germany. Nancy was told that it would take \$600, plus clothes and other needs, to put him over there and get him started. She had \$200.00 in Zion's Savings Bank. There was no way that she could see to raise \$400.00 more. She expressed her fears to her son, telling him she didn't see how they could raise the money for him to go so far. "If I can't go where they want me to go," said Bates, "I won't go at all." When the time came for him to leave, Nancy had \$600.00. She could not understand then—or for 30 years



**BATES SERVING ON HIS MISSION IN GERMANY WITH OTHER MISSIONARIES**



**NANSEN BATES GIBBONS, MISSIONARY**

<sup>20</sup> Flammer, Gordon H., *This is not our Home, We are just Passing Through—The Life Stories of Hans Flammer and Arizona Gibbons Flammer*, 1996, p. 32



thereafter—where the money came from.<sup>21</sup>

- 1926, June 7—Andrew H and Lola are sealed in the Salt Lake Temple and do Neallo's endowments then.
- 1926 to 1928—Nancy teaches two academic years at Eager. Louisa 9-10.

[Andrew H] When I was preparing for mission [1921] Mother came to breakfast one morning and informed us that she had had a dream to the effect that Neallo, one of her sons who had died at age 12, was in trouble. As she cast about for the reason, it came to her that the work had not been done for him in the temple. I had the privilege of being proxy for Neallo in getting his endowments [in the Salt Lake temple on 7 June 1926]—the day I was sealed to Lola.<sup>22</sup>

[Louisa] During the two years we lived in Eager Mother taught under Smith. He was the principal of the elementary school. I remember that we were not to call him Smith. We were to call him Mr. Gibbons—that was the policy.

The two years Mother taught in Eagar, we lived in Hulda Adair's house one year and in Love's place, a one-room house, across the street from the school house the next.<sup>23</sup>

At Christmas time Mother sent off for a gift for me. She brought the package home and I wanted to see what was in it. She said, "Oh no, you can't see in it before Christmas." She hid it, but I found it and I opened it. It was my Christmas. I played with it every day. I'll never forget Christmas morning, the show I had to put on to make her think that I was surprised; because she had gotten me just what I wanted. A girl at school had a large peanut, and inside it was a little baby doll. I wanted that worse than anything else in the world, that and a little set of dishes. That's what she sacrificed to get me.

When I had my tonsils out, at nine years of age, Mother would get up during the night when my throat was hurting. She'd heat some water over the coal oil lamp, so I could sip on it to help take the pain out of my throat.

She insisted on my having saxophone lessons. I remember going to Round Valley and playing in the band concert. Betsy Day stole the saxophone mouthpiece, so I could not play it any more.<sup>24</sup>

While we were in Eager, we lived near Smith and Edna. They lived in the best house in Eager at that time. In fact, they were one of the few families with a bathroom in the house. I remember going over to their house occasionally and eating home made cheese, home made bread and home made butter. I've never eaten anything better than that. Smith liked to have all of the relatives come over to his house on special holidays. Once he came over to Linden and carried off some of Jayne's and Zona's kids to Eager. So we'd all end up over there for Christmas.<sup>25</sup>

- 1927, Aug. 18—Jayne marries Austin (Aut) Frost at Flagstaff, Coconino County, AZ.

When I was 11 Mother and her mother [Grandma Ann Jane Noble] went to Mesa [presumably just] for the winter, but she didn't leave Mesa for many years.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., p. 9

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 79-80

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 70

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 61-62

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 63

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 70



## Chapter Eight

### NANCY LOUISA NOBLE GIBBONS LATE WIDOWHOOD YEARS 1929 — 1958

#### THE MESA YEARS

- 1929, Jan. 4—Nancy, Louisa and Ann Jane Noble arrive in Mesa.
- 1929 to 1952—Nancy lives in Mesa. David K. Udall, her former St. Johns Stake President and now Arizona Temple President hires her to work in the linen department for \$36 per month. She is a most dedicated genealogist and temple worker.
- 1929—Nancy and her Mother each buy 1 lot, 50' x 60', near the temple for \$100 each.
- 1929-30—Nancy and Louisa live for two years in a 12' x 14' tent.

#### **Nancy's Handwritten Story of the Early Mesa Years**

On the following four pages is part of Nancy's story written in her own hand. The part previous to the first page given here was lost, unfortunately. The defeat she speaks of on the first line occurred when she ran for re-election for the office of Apache County School Superintendent. She was defeated by a Mexican lady. She is saying that a better happening than her defeat could not have come to her at that time. Etc. It certainly changed the direction of her life into matters of eternal import.

[Following is a letter written by a Saint, if there ever was one. Read it several times right now and then read it on occasion as time goes on. When I think of the welcome this wonderful woman received when she graduated from this mortal experience I am absolutely overcome with gratitude to have come through such a noble and celestial woman. To have this letter in her own handwriting is to have in our possession a priceless legacy. As you read this letter live it—do not just read it. Following the handwritten letter is a transcription of the letter above. It was written in the summer of 1934.]

After the four pages of her hand written story is a typed transcription of her letter. It certainly is not needed, because her handwriting is very legible.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from a book by Andrew H. and Lola Heaton Gibbons collecting information on Joshua and Nancy and duplicated in 1973. It was the primary predecessor of reference 5 in the Bibliography Section.



defeat could not have come to me at that time. The longer the time goes on the more grateful I am.

Mother and I decided to come to Mesa to work in the Temple for the winter. I had heard so much about this climate I would rather have gone some where else but Mother insisted so we came.

We arrived here Jan. 4 - 1929. We rented a room at Lotties and stayed there about four months.

I was told Bro. Burnham was selling lots 50 x 60 feet for 100<sup>00</sup>. Mother and I each bot one. I sent for a tent. 12 x 14. boarded it up. and put screen around it. We lived in the tent for about two years.

One day Louisa and I were in town and we saw an advertisement of a two roomed house for sale for \$100<sup>00</sup>. We went to see it. Told the owner we would take it. The Lightning Delivery Co moved it for us. It wasn't so comfortable being only a shell of a house but it was so much better than the tent and we were glad to get it.



After living in the house for two years I felt I should have to have it repaired.

I called my neighbor - Frank Elmer in to see what he would do the work for.

He told me by using the lumber in the house and making adobes for the walls a new one could be built as cheap as the old one could be repaired.

I gladly gave him the job and within five months the house was almost finished. I am so proud of it and I don't owe a dollar on it. It is so near the Temple too.

But to go back to the true brother and I came.

There had been very little done on Mother's line the Peel and Trumbull and we decided to take those two lines first. and it has been marvelous how the Lord has opened up the way for us to get the names.

It is true we have tried to do our part by writing to England and the two great libraries in London and getting what they had there on their card index. Then we wrote the Russell Bros. and succeeded in getting a genealogy of a Wm. Peal. His descendants



came to America and settled in Philadelphia. From them came some of the most famous artists of America. Charles Wilson Peale, and his son Rembrandt.

That is the only printed genealogy we have found but we have been able to keep names on hand all the time of some of our ancestors. These would include of course, the Noble, <sup>and</sup> Beamans. In addition to these there has been about 600 womens names of the Gibbons line. All told since we came here five and a half years ago the work has been done for about 5000 of our ancestors. Can you wonder now that I am so grateful that I was beaten in the election.

I did not know there could be so much joy and satisfaction in this world when I have been left alone. as I have found in this Temple work. It comes the nearest of being pure joy of anything I have found. I wonder what I ever could have done that I should be counted worthy to have this privilege.



My Patriarchal Blessing tells me that the genealogies of my ancestors will be at my command and that they are looking forward with great eagerness for the work that we can do for them.

So we shall find compiled records in time but I know the ones we have worked for belong to our line and we are on the right track. How I wish more of the family might help.

Brother has been very good to help with the men's names. She will get a great reward for what she has done.

The same year I came I applied for work and was given a position in the linen room and also do some office work too.

The salary is not so much but it is sufficient to provide the necessities and help some with the work of getting the men's names done.

But that salary in connection with what I can do in the Temple by keeping the work going is worth more to me than any salary could be if money alone were considered.



## Transcription of the Letter Above

. . . [A greater blessing than that defeat—running for her second four-year term as the Apache County School Superintendent] could not have come to me at that time. The longer the time goes on the more grateful I am.

Mother and I decided to come to Mesa to work in the Temple for the winter. I had heard so much about this climate I would rather have gone somewhere else but Mother insisted, so we came. We arrived here Jan. 4, 1929. We rented a room at Lottie's and stayed there about four months.

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It is true we have tried to do our part by writing to England and the two great libraries in London and getting what they had there on their card index. Then we wrote the Munsell Brothers and succeeded in getting a genealogy of a Wm. Peal. His descendants came to America and settled in Philadelphia. From them came some of the most famous artists of America—Charles Wilson Peale and his son Rembrandt.

That is the only printed genealogy we have found but we have been able to keep names on hand all the time of some of our ancestors. These would include, of course, the Nobles and Beamans. In addition to these there have been about 600 womens' names of the Gibbons' line. All told since we came here five and a half years ago the work has been done for about 5000 of our ancestors. Can you wonder now that I am so grateful that I was beaten in the election.

I did not know there could be so much joy and satisfaction in this world since I have been left alone as I have found in this Temple work. It comes the nearest of being pure joy of anything I have found. I wonder what I ever could have done that I should be counted worthy to have this privilege.

My Patriarchal Blessing tells me that the genealogies of my ancestors will be at my command and that they are looking forward with great eagerness for the work that we can do for them.

So we shall find compiled records in time, but I know the ones we have worked for belong to our line and we are on the right track. *How I wish more of the family might help.* [Italics added]

Mother has been very good to help with the men's names. [Presumably by paying brethren to go through the temple for them] She will get a great reward for what she has done.

The same year I came I applied for work and was given a position in the Linen Room and also do some office work too.

The salary is not so much, but it is sufficient to provide the necessities and help some with the work of getting the men's names done. [She paid 25 cents for a man to take a name through for her.]

But the salary in connection with what I can do in the Temple by keeping the work going is worth more to me than any salary could be if money alone were considered.



### More on the Early Mesa Years

[Eileen Kump, Granddaughter] Eight Thousand people, and more—no one knows how many more—if they accept the gospel of Jesus Christ, will rise up and call Nancy Noble Gibbons blessed. After the debts left at her husband's death had been paid, two sons had been sent on missions [a third son had gone on his mission before his father's passing], and only the youngest daughter remained at home, Nancy's interest turned abruptly from her school teaching, her work as superintendent of schools, to the temples of God. The story of her devotion along this line is incredible. Not only was she a researcher, but she worked in the temple, and she did everything she could to see that her names were done!

At the temple, she took care of the linen room. Her day began about four A.M. All the household duties were done and she was at the temple by 7. All morning she rented clothing, ironed and pressed, mended white hose and cleaned white shoes. Her afternoons she spent in the temple office filing names doing clerical work. By 6 PM she was back in the linen room renting out clothes for the evening sessions. When the last session went up, Nancy hurriedly got her name, went through the temple with the last session, and was back down in time to help check in the rented clothing. She was seldom in bed before midnight.

Every spare moment Nancy had she searched for names. Her small salary from the temple went for family group sheets, binders, and all the other necessities for successful genealogical work. It worried her to think that the men's names were not getting done, and to remedy the situation she took in washing and ironing for widowers who would do names for her. She also paid to have many of them done, using money from her own small salary pocket. Nancy was often asked why she didn't take it a little easier, and she would always say, "When I leave this world and go to the other side, I don't want anyone saying, 'Why did you leave me out?'" Pushed by the desire that no one on the other side be forgotten, she wrote names on family group sheets all hours of the night by the lantern of her tent. If it was cold, she wrapped herself in blankets and wrote some more. No one must be overlooked. She slept such a little.

When Nancy had first come to Mesa, her health was better than it had been for years, but soon it failed again. People who observed her untiring work saw it coming. Nancy suffered especially with asthma and this hindrance stayed with her until recently. While a temple worker, a black widow spider and scorpion bites poisoned her system and the latter sent her to bed for many weeks.<sup>2</sup>

[Louisa] We came to Mesa from St. Johns in January of 1929, when I was 11. Grandma Noble and Mama and I got off the bus in Mesa about twelve o'clock at night. Mama had a cousin, Lottie King, who lived here. There was a policeman and Mama asked him if he knew where Lottie King lived. He took us directly to her place and we stayed with her for several months. When we arrived here in January the weather was, of course, ideal. Mama went to the Temple and David K. Udall was the president of the Temple at that time. [David K. Udall had been Nancy and Joshua's Stake President in St. Johns for many years.] She asked for work and he gave her a job at \$36 a month to take care of the linen room. So Mama started working in the Temple. She began work each day very early and ended late. She took very few breaks at that time, because she had to press all the clothing, clean all the shoes, take the clothing in and out and everything. That was her job. Between times, when she was waiting for people to come down from the session, she would go through the Temple for herself [her own female names]. . .

In the meantime Mama [and Grandma Noble] bought two lots from Brother Burnham just south of the temple on Leseuer Street for \$100 each. We lived in a tent on these lots for two years. Zona and Hans and their two kids lived in a tent next to us for most of the two years.

At that time there was a lot of farmland and open land near the temple. A small ditch ran by our place and after dark we would take a bath in a wash tub out there by the ditch. One night a strong

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2 Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., pp. 15-16



windstorm came up and about blew the tents down. So Frank Elmer and his wife, Dezzie, and Mama and I, and Hans and Zona all came out in our nightclothes. Hans and Zona were in their garments, and Frank and Dezzie were in their garments too. We were all holding the tents down until the storm passed. When it was over everyone looked at how they were clothed there in the dark and ran back into their tents with embarrassment.<sup>3</sup>

On Saturdays we went down town. Mom bought groceries and we carried them home on our backs. Sometimes Frank Elmer took us in his car.

Grandma Noble stayed with us for a while. One hot day, when she and Mom were down town, they decided they wanted a root beer. So they spotted a place, went in, sat down and ordered. Then they looked around and discovered they were in a pool hall. Grandma said, "Nancy, don't you ever breathe a word of this to anyone." This caused some smiles. They left the root beer on the bar and immediately departed the place.<sup>4</sup>

- 1930-31—Bates is teaching the fifth grade at the Alma School in Mesa



**BATES AND FRIENDS**



**BATES TEACHING THE FIFTH GRADE AT ALMA SCHOOL IN MESA—1931**

- 1931—Nancy buys a shell of a house and lives in it for two years.
- 1931, June 16-19—Reunion at Alpine honoring Grandma Noble by her descendants.
- 1931—Nancy has her first permanent when Louisa was 14.

[Louisa] One day Mom and I were walking downtown in Mesa and I spotted a sign in the window which said, "Two room House for Sale \$100.00". Mom bought it and had it moved onto one of our lots. The Lightning Moving Company moved it there for \$25. It had no insulation, big cracks between the boards, and when it was cold we wrapped up in quilts. We made quilts every summer, besides our clothes. We had no refrigerator, heating or cooling.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-58

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 68

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 68



No better parents can be found than were Father and Mother. They gave us childhood, every opportunity that conditions permitted. Our home was a very happy one. We all worked, we all played when recreation time came. Our parents set us the best of example in all things.



### The Old Home

The "Old Homestead" is holy ground to us now that we have grown up—married and have families of our own. It is a great privilege to again set foot on that hallowed spot. Father has been gone thirty-two years. Little Mother is still living at the age of almost ninety. I am grateful indeed for the privilege of being born of such "Goodly Parents."

**What does this tell you about Nancy—her love and devotion to her parents and to the homestead where she was raised?**

[Louisa] We had a Noble reunion at Alpine for Grandma Noble at Alpine in 1931. We got Brother Brenay to take Zona, Hans, Gordon and Phil and grandma and me up there in his old truck through Black Canyon and Rice on those narrow dirt roads. Some of us had to ride in the back of the truck. Of course, on those dirt roads the dust just rolled onto us in the back of the truck. We got so dirty. Everyone camped at the old Noble Ranch. Uncle Leslie and Aunt Zella lived on the ranch then. I remember the men against the women would play games to see who did the dishes. It was so cold in Alpine that even in July we had to have a fire in the fireplace. Then we cooked a lot of good food outside, too. I recall our trip home in this old truck. When we got to Mesa my hair was as stiff as a board from all the dust. I told Mama that I wanted to take a shower and wash my hair. It was about two or three o'clock in the morning. Mama said, "I don't want you to do that." I threw a fit because she wouldn't let



me wash my hair. I couldn't stand my hair because it was so stiff. Even when I was a little kid I couldn't stand to be dirty. At that time we took a bath once a week, whether we needed it or not.<sup>6</sup>

[Louisa] Mama read the scriptures faithfully. When she was tired, she'd lay on the couch and I'd rub her feet. She used to love to have me rub her feet. Her poor old feet were so deformed. Her toes were stacked on top of each other. I think it was arthritis<sup>7</sup>

- 1932, July 15—Bates dies unmarried at Eager, Apache County, AZ.

### The Death of Bates Gibbons

Letter from Nancy to "H" and Lola, 7-22-1932<sup>8</sup>

Eager, [AZ]

Dear H and Lola,

Your registered letter reached me this morning. Bless you dear hearts. I just must go to see you but don't you see I could not use the money you sent for you are making such an effort.

I should have written before but there has been such a crowd and everything has been so upset I just did not get down to it!

Bates took very much worse about a week before he died. His liver and spleen were so enlarged the bowels were crowded into about a six or eight inch space. The heart too was so crowded he could hardly breathe.

Had you decided to come we could not have kept [his body]. We put ice all around it but within a few hours, or perhaps before he died, gangrene had set in on both sides. Oh! H, he had suffered so much it was such a relief to see him easy.. At the last he just stopped breathing without a struggle.

When he was set apart as a Seventy by Apostle Lyman he said he should go on missions to his ancestors and language would be a gift to him. Note that both missions and languages are in the plural.

Yes, the reunion over there would be a happy one and Bates could never have been well again so I am not grieving. Of course we shall miss him but I am sure all is for the best.

You will hear from me again soon as to what I can do. My things, or the most of them, are at Snowflake so I shall have to go there first.

Will write soon.

Oceans of love

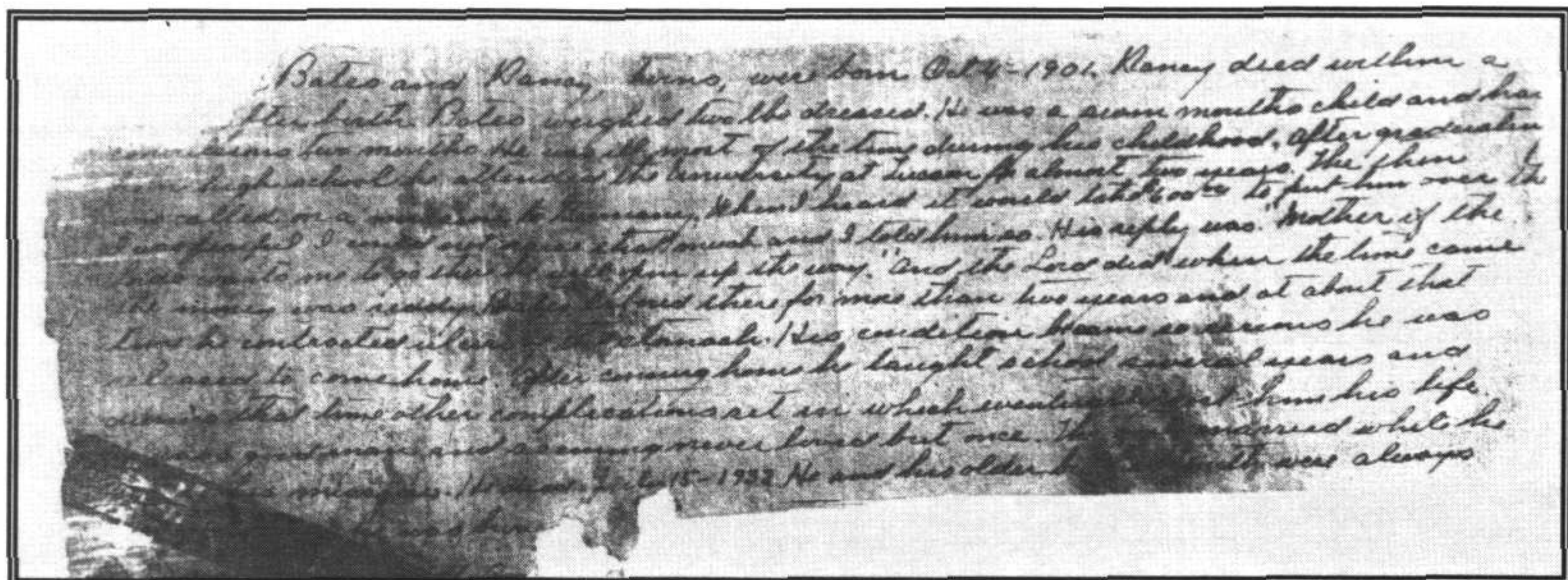
- Mother (Nancy Louisa Noble Gibbons)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-63

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 61

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 99





[A transcription of Nancy's hand written story above of Bates' life.] Nansen Bates and Nancy, twins, were born October 4, 1901. Nancy died within a few minutes after birth. Bates weighed two pounds dressed. He was a seven-month child and had convulsions for two months. He was ill most of the time during his childhood. After graduation from high school he attended the University at Tucson for almost two years. He then was called on a mission to Germany. When I heard that it would take \$600 to put him over there, I was fearful I could not raise that much and I told him so. His reply was, "Mother, if the Lord wants me to go there He will open up the way." And the Lord did. When the time came the money was ready. Bates labored there for more than two years and at about that time he contracted ulcers of the stomach. His condition became so serious he was released to come home. After coming home he taught school several years and during that time other complications set in, which eventually cost him his life. He was a good man and seemingly never loved but once. The girl married while he was on his mission. He died July 15, 1932. He and his older brother, Smith, were always together. He was buried at the Eager Cemetery.

- 1933—Nancy has a neighbor build an adobe house on one of her lots.

[Eileen Kump, granddaughter] Nancy and Louisa lived in the house about two years, but it was a mere shell of a house and needed repairs badly. A neighbor built houses and when Nancy asked him how much he would charge to repair her home, he told her it would be as cheap to build a new one of adobe. By using the lumber out of the old house and adobe, he contracted to do the house inexpensively and that is how Nancy came to own her little home in Mesa.<sup>9</sup>

[Louisa] After we lived in this house for about two years Mama wanted to get it fixed up, so she talked to Frank Elmer, a neighbor. And he says, "It's not worth fixing. I can build you a house using this lumber out of this house and making doobies [adobes] and I can make you a house for eight hundred dollars." So Mama told him to hop to it. We did it and that was our home at 249 So Lesueur Street, where Mama lived until she went to Zona's in 1952. We lived in a tent again while he built the house, as I recall. He built us a nice little two-bedroom house. It was plastered on the inside and outside. We had a kitchen, a dining room, a living room, two bedrooms and a bath. . .

We had a small basement too; and every time Myrtle Bailey and Nancy Ragsdale irrigated, the basement flooded and got a whole bunch of water in it. After Marion and I were married, we lived in the house for a long time. After Mama died we owned the house and I guess that was the happiest time we spent. We lived in the eleventh ward for 13 years. The kids were ashamed of that house when they got to

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 16



be teenagers. I guess it wasn't that good looking, but I loved the house. Oh! The sacrifices that Mama made to build it.<sup>10</sup>

[Arlene Saline, Niece] She had, as I recall, a small house. There was a living room and just a little partition and a little room that was designed to be a dining room. Then a small kitchen right back of that. Then when you went from the dining room there was little arch and you went into a little hallway and there was a bedroom at each end of the hallway and a bathroom in the middle between the two bedrooms. One time I can recall my mother and dad went somewhere and I spent the night with Aunt Nancy. You could hear her breathing all over that little house because it was such an effort for her to breathe. I also vividly remember the piles of genealogy stacked in that little dining room. There were piles and piles on the floor, the table was covered. And I can remember my mother telling me what a wonderful work Aunt Nancy was doing in genealogy.<sup>11</sup>

[Gordon Flammer, grandson] When the log cabin we were living in on Aut Frost's ranch in Linden burned down and left us totally destitute, Grandma bought 40 acres of land adjoining the Frost ranch to the south for \$100 and gave it to Dad and Mother, for a belated wedding present I have heard. Considering what she was living on at this time, there is simply no way to explain how she was able to do it. Talk about the widow's mite! Grandma Gibbons was that widow many times throughout her life.

### **Nancy's Genealogical and Temple Work—Another Crown of her Life**

[Louisa] I was staying up there at the temple all of the time. They let me. And then when I was 17 [1934] they let me go through the temple. So I went through the temple with her and did endowment work to help her.<sup>12</sup>

After Mom's day at the Temple she would come home, wrap up in a quilt and do family group sheets to send in for endowment work.<sup>13</sup>

She wept a great deal and mourned when she did not hear from her kids. Mom was never fancy and was often considered plain Jane. She made her own garments, dresses, slips, white cotton stockings. She had a bald spot on her head and struggled with her hair, but it became easier when she was able to get perms. . .<sup>14</sup>

While she worked at the temple she was doing genealogy, too. We went to the library all the time to find names, and I helped her. We were working on the Beaman, the Peel, and the Entwistle lines—all of these lines were on her side of the family. She extracted every name she could find and she did the temple work for them. When she submitted a male name, and it was approved, she hired old Brother Black, at 25 cents a name, to do the men's names in the temple for her. She did the women's names. She also washed and ironed Brother Black's temple clothes, too, to help get the men's names done.

When she got home from the temple she'd lay down for a little bit, and then the genealogical urge in her was so strong that she'd get up and wrap herself in a blanket because that house was cold. Then she'd sit there at the table and write names she had gotten out of the books onto a family group sheet. Her efforts helped over [8,000] people in the spirit world. So she was averaging very few hours of sleep a night.

The temple is where Mama was bitten by a black widow spider. She was in the hospital for 14 days and her leg was just black. I will never forget how much pus and stuff they drained out of that leg. Another time she was stung by a scorpion and that put her back in the hospital. In our little house we killed 27 scorpions on one bedroom wall. We had to carefully look for scorpions everywhere—in our shoes, in our clothes, on the wall. We got to where everything we picked up we would shake out to be sure to get the scorpions out of it. We had to paint that one room where we had killed all of the scorpions

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10 Ibid., p. 58

11 Ibid., pp. 104-105

12 Ibid., pp. 62-63

13 Ibid., p. 67

14 Ibid., pp. 67-68





**ORDINANCE WORKERS AT THE ARIZONA TEMPLE DURING THE 1930'S.**

**It was not possible to identify Nancy on the picture.**

on the wall.<sup>15</sup>

Following is a letter from A. H to others of the Noble Family asking for help to support Nancy in her genealogy and temple work.

Logan, Utah  
10 September 1934

To the Noble Family in General:

Believe it or not? Mother [Nancy] and Grandmother [Ann Jane Noble], within the last 5 1/2 years have done ordinance work for about five thousand of our ancestors. That is, they have either done it or paid for having it done. In addition to that, a great deal of their time and money has been spent gathering genealogy, while the rest of us, many who are more able, but realize less of the importance of the work, have done little or nothing to help. I make the last statement judging others by myself. I have done only about sixty names within the last fifteen months and very, very few before that.

When we consider the fact that Grandmother has done her part out of her pension of \$30 or \$40 a month and mother out of her wages of \$36 a month we can realize that these two have made some real sacrifices.

This one reason and others have made me decide to assume the responsibility for the men's names on the Noble and related lines. But I'm not going to do like mother; I'm going to holler for help for I have only part time work and its slow business where one keeps pecking away at a long record.

But to come to the point. HOW MANY NAMES DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU CAN ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR EACH MONTH? I can contract them for fifty cents a name for any number and I can get a lot of names done for nothing by friends of mine who come to the

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 58-59



temple and have no records of their own. The temple here opens on the seventeenth and I have set my aim at a hundred names, personally, for the coming winter. If each of us who has a regular income can do a few it will take a vast responsibility from Mother's shoulders and bring a great deal of satisfaction to those who contribute.

You can send contributions to mother in care of the Mesa Temple and we'll keep you informed on how the work is progressing.

Love and best wishes, A. H Gibbons<sup>16</sup>

- 1935, Dec. 18—Louisa marries Marion Harris in Mesa, Maricopa County, AZ.

[Gordon Flammer, grandson] As a child I remember Grandma Gibbons coming to visit us for a few days on several occasions while we lived in Linden. She was living in Mesa at that time. I do not recall any other person during the entirety of my life who could tell stories as movingly as she could. I will never forget her telling Phil and Reg and I the story of "When Hannah Was Eight Years Old." As she told it the tears would stream down her cheeks. The story itself is very touching, but with her telling it mixed with all of those tender tears, it has remained the most impressive and touching story of my memory. Then she related to us the entire stories of the books, "Freckles" and "The Girl of the Limberlost." I have heard thousands of stories during my life, but the stories she told us have remained more clearly in my memory than any others, at least from my childhood. Another book she related to us in its entirety was "When a Man's a Man." I still remember that story too, but not as well as the Freckles books. She was a master storyteller. She didn't just tell stories, she lived them while she told them and those who listened to her lived them, too.

She was a remarkable person. I am inspired by the stories of people who have lived above all the adversities life could dish out to them. Few have been the women in the history of the world who lived through, and overcame, more trials and tribulations than she did. But best of all, she grew and developed spiritually with each mountain she had to conquer. She became more meek, humble and trusting with each one. Her faith in God, and her eternal perspective of life, caused her to accept each new adversity as another of those clouds and mists of life, which would pass away, on the road to the peace and joy of celestial life hereafter.

[Louisa] Well then, I'll go on from when we moved down here. I graduated from high school down here and then I got married. I met Marion Harris when I was 14, when I was visiting Zona and Jayne in Linden. I went to the dance with Herman Smith. Mama wasn't with me then, I was by myself. That's where I met Marion. Then off and on later I thought about him once in a while. I said to myself, when I was 14, that I was going to marry him someday. Then when I was 17 he moved in by Mama and I right there on Leseuer Street. We had this little old wood stove and we had to cut wood. One day, as I was cutting wood, I saw him walk into the house where his grandpa lived. I ran into the house like a streak of lightning and said, "Oh Mama, there's that Marion Harris from Linden." It was an all a one-sided love affair at this time because he didn't care a hoop or hair about me, but I thought he was pretty nice.<sup>17</sup>

[Louisa] 1936 was when the welfare program came out for a year's storage, and I want to tell you something. Mama obeyed it to the letter of the law on her meager income. She started storing stuff in quart jars, and anything she could, and putting it all down in the basement.

[Gordon] Did she have retirement or anything to help her?

[Louisa] No. Mama was very frugal and saved her money. I don't know how Mama did it. Because her kids didn't help her that much.

And she wouldn't run her refrigerator because it cost money. A few times Smith and Edna came down and stocked her refrigerator with a lot of good food. She would think about the refrigerator running

16 Ibid., p. 92

17 Ibid., pp. 63-64



all of the time, so she'd give the food away and shut off the refrigerator. That's when they first came out with Oleo' Margarine and it had coloring. The bread she'd make—nobody could make bread and cook beans like Mama could. When the bread was first made it was so good, but before long the it got sticky because of the heat. We couldn't have a [home] cooler because Mama couldn't stand the cool air.

Mama was a friend to everybody. The Indians who lived at Lehi [a suburb of Mesa] knew Mama, and they'd come by with their teams and wagons selling iron wood. She'd always invite them in and give them something to eat. Then she'd buy a little wood from them to give them a bit of money; and then they'd be on their way. Even after Mama had gone up to Utah to live with your mother, they would come to the back door wanting to know where she was. She took such good care of them.

Then there was an old lady who lived near us. She was Sister Ferguson. She was from Europe somewhere and she talked brokenly. She had her hair done up in a tight bun right here on her head. She came to see Mama every day. Each time she'd come Mama would say, "Sister Ferguson, are you hungry?" And she'd say, "No, I not hungry, but I eat if you fix me something to eat." So Mama would feed her.

I've seen Mama with asthma so bad, when I was a kid, that her mouth and the tips of her fingers would be blue. I'd get word to Smith to come down. They'd come down and put her in the hospital to get over it. Dr. Kent, who lived nearby us, tried to get her to go to the hospital, and she wouldn't, because she didn't have the money. Jayne and Aut discovered that when an attack of asthma was starting a little whisky helped ease it. This relaxed her asthma attacks somewhat from then on. They gave it to her when she had a bad attack, and she didn't have to go to the hospital any more. A Brother Richey, who Mother had known in St. Johns, lived close by. He was a patriarch and he gave Mama a blessing and promised her that she would be able to lie down and breathe and sleep. The whiskey seemed to be an answer to this blessing. [They had a very difficult time convincing her that the whiskey was medicine and did not constitute breaking the Word of Wisdom.]

I guess it was about this time that I graduated from high school. I wanted so bad to wear what the other kids did. Mama was very old fashioned. She expected me to keep my body covered, and that was black stockings and the whole bit. She didn't want me to wear slacks or wear pants or anything like that. She wanted me to be in dresses. I was a rebellious teenager at that time, and I didn't go along with what Mama wanted me to do, and I gave her a hard time. Maybe that is why I've got paid back so much with some of my kids, because I gave her such a hard time. But she loved me so much and I slept with her until we got this little two-bedroom house. Then I had my bedroom and she had hers. We made quilts every summer and I did all of the sewing for my school clothes. We'd get up at four o'clock on Saturday morning. By the time she went to the temple we had all the floors mopped and the house cleaned. That was Mama. We went to bed at sundown. I hated that, I swore I'd never do that. Now I go to bed at eight o'clock sometimes. Mama was a firm believer in getting up and getting her work done.<sup>18</sup>

- 1936, Dec. 25—Christmas at J. Smith Gibbons home in Eager with the Frosts and Flammers present.

## Two Letters written by Nancy in 1937

Monday, 10 January 1937

Dearest Ones All, [A. H and Lola]

It's about time I was getting busy to let you know I am still here and am sure I will be for a long time to come. I received the parcels and thanks to all of you for them. The dish towels came just in time. Bless your dear hearts, I believe I have some idea at least of the struggle you are making to pay for your home and the repairs you had to make and still keep on living. The making of a living alone is a big problem. The way you two work together I'm sure you will succeed tho.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 59-61



Am hoping the coming year will bring you many blessings, chief among them are health, happiness and a desire to do right.

I had a nice time during the holidays. I left here Tues. before Christmas and had to stay in Globe all night to take the bus at seven A.M. that goes to Springerville. Stayed with Jane and Aut at Show Low Wednesday night and then went to Zona's. Smith and Edna came for me Friday. The two families came late Friday night to Eagar to spend Christmas [together at Smith's Home]. We surely had a nice time. Smith and Edna spend a lot on Christmas. Smith gave Edna a set of electrical appliances for the kitchen including about everything that is needed. She gave him an electric razor. But none of them got a nicer present than I. That nice Mattress. It surely is great to sleep on. Thanks to all of you.

The girls went back Sunday afternoon. Monday morning Marion phoned over telling them the baby [Ladonna] was so very sick and they feared she would not live until they could get there. Both of them went over as soon as they could and the baby died shortly after they got there. She had a temperature of 106. Poor little dear, she has suffered so much and I think it is a good thing because she did not gain in flesh. Dear Louisa is only a shadow. There isn't a particle of color in her face. She has been under such a strain and could never leave a day or night. They buried her close to Zona's baby at Linden.

Mother [Ann Jane Peel Noble] came home with me and she seems to be contented and happy here. She is quite well for being 86 years old in Feb. She can easily walk to town and back and her mind is remarkably bright for being so old. I received a card from Jane Cade, Noble's wife, and she was moving and I was glad to know where. I want to keep track of her. She says Nobleen is doing so well and I am very glad. Am enjoying the temple work and am getting ever so many women endowed. Am hurrying to get names off to the Index Bureau before I run out. I love you all more than I can tell you. May the choicest blessings be with you.

Mother Gibbons<sup>19</sup> [Nancy Gibbons]

~~~~~

Monday nite 13 Nov. 1937

Dear Ones All [A. H and Lola], [just excerpts]

Am so busy with the temple work and am getting such a lot done too. Have been getting work ready for some of my neighbors and they are helping me with endowments. There are five of the Porter sisters here and at least once a day they take names for me and some days more than one apiece, I think. Am hoping to get all the female names done this year that I have had on hand for a long time.

I hope and pray for your success my dear boy and you will succeed if you live as you should. Am sure you are paying your tithing and fast offering and other things too. I don't think there was ever a time in the world that we need to live nearer the Lord than we do now. Don't you think so? And if ever we needed to be prayerful surely it is now. If we live as we should we will have a claim on the blessings promised. It seems so hard for me to keep myself on the right track. Little things worry and upset me more than ever, I fear.

LeGrande wrote Mother he was coming to spend Christmas with her. He hasn't been back for three years. They expect a baby soon. Mother is coming to stay with me after Christmas and I will be glad. Edna and Zona wrote and wanted me to go up there for the holidays but I hardly think I will. It has been storming the last few days and I don't like snow any more. That country seems one for snow.

Did you get your bottles all filled Lola? I lacked three dozen of getting mine and the girls' bottles filled. Wish I had saved Zona's last letter to send to you. They have a fine pig to kill and I think they are quite well fixed for winter. They are trying to get a year's supply of flour on hand.

Please don't send anything for Christmas. I know you love me and that is all I ask. I am not sending any thing this year, only some cards. Have been promising to send some figs and am



sending a small box. If cold weather would entirely clear up the eczema I would surely go away. I can't complain about it though because it is well enough that I can work in the temple, but I have to wash the affected parts twice a day with a solution of the creso dip and it is gradually getting better. I am not discouraged.

Jayne [Frost] is so taken up with Show Low I doubt if she will want to go back to Linden to live. Did I tell you that Hans and Zona had moved quite near the school house? Am so happy you have your own milk and eggs. Do you have a cellar for your winter vegetables? Glad you have a home of your own.

Mother Gibbons<sup>1</sup>

- 1939—Nancy goes to Los Angeles to do genealogy work in a library there.

[Eileen, Granddaughter] In 1939 Nancy went to the Los Angeles library to collect names. She made many trips to Logan. In reality she consecrated herself to the salvation of the dead. Long after she was herself unable to research, she talked about it and thought about it and asked her children to do it.

In her love and obsession for temple work, Nancy did not neglect other essential parts of being

a good Latter-day Saint. Of her busy years as a temple worker as well as a researcher, her daughter writes: "Whenever Mother laid down to rest she always had some church work, reading it. She would not waste time, and she studied the gospel constantly. She taught the gospel to others by her knowledge and by her deeds. She always shared what she had."

Not only did Nancy study, for many years reading the Book of Mormon each year, but she was devoted in her attendance at meetings. She went when her health was so bad she had to sit down and rest several times between her home and the chapel.

She always paid her tithing, and credited her obedience to this commandment for her ability to pay heavy debts and for the fact that her children always had food to eat and shelter over their heads. She prayed for help in everything she ever did, and told many experiences in almost every area of life in which her prayers were answered.<sup>2</sup>

[Louisa] We went to Los Angeles, Calif. to the library with James LeSueur. We were terrified of the big city and just went to the Huntington Library and then to our apartment. Finally one day we decided to go see the ocean and we did, but it was a very stormy day.<sup>3</sup>



**NANCY NOBLE GIBBONS, ABOUT 1940**  
Can you read her basic attitudes from her face?

1 *ibid.*, pp. 83-84

2 *Ibid.*, p. 16

3 *Ibid.*, p. 67



- 1940—Noble Family reunion at Alpine honoring Ann Jane Peel Noble—Mother and Grandmother.



**THE EDWARD ALVAH NOBLE FAMILY REUNION HELD AT ALPINE—1941  
Ann Jane Noble is front and center, Nancy is behind her to her immediate left.**

[Louisa] Mama and I spent a lot of time and did a lot of things together. When I married and left, it just about killed her. She missed me so much. When Wayne was born like he was, she loved him so much. Anyway we left with him and went back up to Linden and she wouldn't wash his little hand prints off the window, because she couldn't stand to see those little hand prints disappear. In between, of course, we saw Mama a lot. When they came down to move Mama to Utah, I remember going into her house where we went through her things. I guess we got rid of things we shouldn't have, because the neighbors complained that we were burning up a lot of her stuff that was really valuable.<sup>4</sup>



**ANN JANE PEEL NOBLE WITH HER FIVE  
LIVING CHILDREN BEHIND HER  
L to R: Armeda, LeGrande, Addy, Nancy, Leslie**

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 63-64





**NANCY'S MESA ADOBE HOME BUILT IN ABT 1934**



**NANCY AND HER THREE DAUGHTERS AT  
HER MESA HOME ABOUT 1940  
L to R: Jayne, Nancy, Louisa, Zona**

was baptized. For some reason Mom and Dad sent me to Mesa to be baptized in the Temple there and I stayed with Grandma. She and I slept together as Aunt Louisa was there too. That must have been late 1941 or early 1942.

The word was "always, always watch for scorpions" which seemed to be everywhere. To this day I am always alert to bugs, etc., in the house. One night I came down with a terrible earache and she nursed me with heat packs and rubbing. She was very good to be around. If she was ever harsh I cannot remember. She would not, however, stand for disobedience and her punishment was a thump on the head with a thimble or a smart pull of the hair at the nape of the neck. Very effective I might add. There was a wonderful fig tree in her yard with fruit beyond description, delicious.

When we lived in Snowflake, AZ, and Logan, I remember her lying on the couch and if we rubbed her head she would tell the most wonderful stories. She obviously was a great reader and remembered things very well. It was worth much to have her tell us a story. I suspicion that I must have ragged her a little much on this point for when she lived with us off and on most anything that was disturbing to her no matter who did it, it was my fault. When I complained to mother she taught me respect and understanding for people, which was a lesson I am and will be eternally grateful—if only I could remember just how she did it. At any rate there was never any resentment toward Grandma and all I saw was a courageous and exemplary example of womanhood.<sup>5</sup>

1942 [Arlene Saline, niece] We always had a big porch on the front of our house. We used to always sleep out there in the summer time. It seems to me that mostly when Aunt Nancy visited us it was during the summer. I'm sure that other people have told you that she had asthma very bad and when she came she would always ask my brother Paul and I to go down into the meadow and gather "hops" for her. These hops grew wild along the stream bank up into the willows. We even had some that grew in front of our house that Mother had planted and would grow up on strings by the porch. But anyway, the hops seemed to relieve her asthma and help her and she would make this strong hot tea and drink it and she'd always give us some and we thought it was absolutely terrible. But it seemed to help her.

Her health was very poor. Usually every afternoon she would lay down on the bed—either out on the porch or one of the beds in one of the bedrooms. And often as a little girl I would lay down with her.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 88-89



And she would tell me stories. I can remember especially the afternoon that she told me the story of "Freckles". She told me the whole story and it took quite a while. We must have laid there on that bed at least two hours. And she told me this wonderful story of "Freckles". At that time I was too young to read but I never did forget that story. And as soon as I got old enough that was one of the first books that I read. And that created a love of reading in me especially for Gene Stratton Porter books. I read all of them over and over again and I passed that love on to my daughters because they were so wonderful. That came from Aunt Nancy.<sup>6</sup>

### **Part of One of Nancy's Patriarchal Blessings**

[Eileen G. Kump, granddaughter] Sixteen years ago [1942] a patriarch and a very dear friend of Mother Gibbons, W. C. Wrencher, spoke to Mother Gibbons one day and told her that he had a special blessing<sup>7</sup> for her, and I'd like to read some of the sentences from it in closing:

*"I place the seal of the holy priesthood upon you, that you may have better health and strength. [And Nancy did have better health and strength during her last years].*

*"You will have wisdom and the gifts of prophecy and discernment. You will increase in knowledge and intelligence. And while in the temple doing vicarious work for your departed kindred you will have miraculous manifestations for you will have communication with those who have passed beyond the veil."*

*"Your last days henceforth will be your best days for you will get nearer to your Heavenly Father and no woman in the church will surpass you in faith and spiritual development, and you will finally go to your rest in peace and exaltation and will pass into the Celestial Paradise to await a glorious resurrection. Angels will minister unto you among other manifestations, and you will have comfort after comfort given you from the unseen world, for the veil between you and your Heavenly Father will be very thin."*

*"Under Prophecy I give you these promises and impress this Holy Seal of the Priesthood upon you, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."<sup>8</sup>*

- 1945, Dec 17—Ann Jane Peel Noble, Nancy's Mother, passes away in Mesa, AZ and is buried in Alpine, AZ.

### **Tribute to Nancy's Mother, Ann Jane Peel Noble**

[Silas L. Fish, Son in law, husband to Pearl Emeline] *Ann Jane Peel Noble was my mother-in-law, but she was not the proverbial mother-in-law. She welcomed me into the family, and was my staunch friend ever after. When she came into my home, she brought love, understanding, peace, and a soulful atmosphere which blesses, inspires, encourages, and brings a bit of heaven into one's heart and life.*

*She was always a ministering angel, a courageous soul who brought hope and dispelled fear; who inspired the weak to be strong, the fearful to dare, the discouraged to try again. She brought service to those who needed help, and gladness to heavy hearts.*

*She was always unassuming, never obtrusive nor meddlesome. She always knew the right word to say, and the kindest deed to perform, and how to do it. She entered a house like sunshine,*

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 104

<sup>7</sup> A patriarch was permitted to get several patriarchal blessings in those days, if they so desired

<sup>8</sup> Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., pp. 16-17



*and entered peoples' hearts with love. She knew when to be serious, and when to smile. She could laugh and joke, and all who were around her found her as quick witted as the best, and never hesitating for a retort. If one tried to tease her, he had to be good, or she completely turned the tables on him, and he was glad to retreat.*

*She was one of those rare souls whose presence blesses every occasion. When faith was needed, her presence inspired faith. When service was needed she led out unassumingly but efficiently. When gayety and mirth was the occasion, everyone was gayer if she was present.*

*She was a true and understanding friend, a good and accommodating neighbor, a faithful believer in the omnipotence and love of God. She cultivated those Christian virtues of love, charity, forgiveness, service, and worship, which made her life a blessing to the world. She was a beacon on a hill, lighting the way to all who would seek good in the world, an example to all of her associates, a blessing to her loved ones.*

*Words fail, but the heart sings out with love, appreciation, thankfulness, that her life touched ours and blessed us so richly.<sup>1</sup>*

### Nancy's Later Years in Mesa

[J. Smith] It was my privilege the last few years that Momie was in Mesa to visit her often. My duties and responsibilities took me to Mesa and Phoenix a good deal and I used to drop in to see her on each occasion. Mother used to say as she had said many times before, "Son, why don't you get more interested in genealogical work and temple work? Do you know that the Lord has got millions of children that have passed on before who are entitled to the opportunities and blessings of the priesthood and the church? If you haven't got enough time to make research and do these things, contribute a few cents, a few pennies to help get this work done." I, knowing that I was too busy to do anything like that, paid little attention. It didn't concern me particularly. Oh yes, it did; I was particularly interested in what Momie was doing, I knew she was doing work for thousands of people, and getting it done. That's the way it went.

So as time passed and I went to see Momie she always checked up with me. "How are you getting along my boy? With your work? I love you. Father's proud of you. I'm proud of you, Son. Someday you're going to get interested in this work, then when you do, maybe you'll get a thrill in your life that you never got before."<sup>2</sup>

[Arlene Saline, niece] I can also remember when we would go to Mesa. She lived just one block north of my Aunt Matty Fish who was my mother's sister. In fact several of my mother's sisters lived side by side. Aunt Nancy Gibbons lived not even a full block in the direction of the temple and we would always go down and visit her. I can remember her love for us and how wonderfully she always treated us.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Flammer, Gordon H., *Histories of Edward Alvah Noble, His Wives Ann Jane Peel and Fanny Young and Nine of Their Children*, The Edward Alvah Noble Family Organization, 2000, pp. 37-38

2 Gibbons, Andrew H and Gibbons, Lola H., *Joshua Smith Gibbons, Nancy Louisa Noble, Edward Alvah Noble, Ann Jane Peel*, Published by the Authors, 1973, Revised by Andrew H. Gibbons Jr., 1996 and now entitled, *Nancy Louisa Noble and Joshua Smith Gibbons Family Circle*, Published by Andrew H Gibbons Jr., pp. 6-7

3 Ibid., pp. 104-105



- 1946—A Reunion of the Nancy Noble Gibbons Family, at Logan, Utah

**NANCY NOBLE GIBBONS FAMILY REUNION AT LOGAN—1946**  
Nancy and her five living children are seated on the second row from the front



**NANCY AND HER FIVE LIVING CHILDREN, 1946**

### **Nancy's Last Years in Zona's Home in Logan**

- 1952—Nancy moves to Logan to live with Zona because she can no longer live alone.

### **Nancy's deteriorating health of body and mind**

[J. Smith] When Momie came up here [to Logan]; we moved her up here to be close to Arizona & H, because she was getting to the point where she couldn't take care of herself anymore. Poor little soul was lonesome because she loved her [Mesa] home. She loved