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A biography of Wilford Woodruff Clark told through other people called "Springdale's Patriarch", written by John R. Clark.

A PAUSE FOR PAMELIA : Two Tributes from 1976

[PHOTO of middle-aged Pamelia Dunn Clark HERE]

The following was written by John Russell Clark in 1976, ten years after publishing his original Springdale's Patriarch, having researched the life of the grandmother who had died just before he (John) was born:

"The declining years for Father Wilford W. Clark began in October 1933 with the death of his beloved Pamelia. 'Aunt Millie'—as she was known to many—was a most significant lady: mother of eleven, near-mother to dozens, Relief Society minister to hundreds, midwife for the delivery of nearly one thousand babies, and devoted companion to her husband of many callings. Hers would be a biography of significance equal to that of Wilford's.

"Those who knew Pamelia referred to her in every way as being 'ladylike.' She had been reared in a household where proper manners, resourcefulness, farming chores, and music appreciation were high priorities. Pamelia Dunn had met Wilford Woodruff Clark in their late teen years, imprinting her influence upon his life so that when he attended Brigham Young Academy in Provo, his thoughts were frequently of her.

"After their marriage in the Logan Temple on July 22, 1885, Wilford and Pamelia settled in Georgetown. Three children were born to the couple before Wilford was sent on a two-year mission to the Southern States, mainly to North Carolina. During his absence, Pamelia managed her children's needs with the support of her extended Clark family. Following Wilford's return, church service continued to be of great importance to both of them.

"In 1893, Pamelia helped move the family to Montpellier so Wilford could serve as bishop. Shortly after this move, he ran for and won a seat in the Idaho State Senate, and thereafter their lives became even busier. They had a welcoming home in Montpelier, where Pamelia presided over the Relief Society for a time. She was called to assist with numerous baby deliveries, and their home became a citadel of comfort for church members and neighbors.

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"Pamelia was blessed with good health, and was a loving but firm disciplinarian. On one occasion, her husband mentioned to one of the visiting General Authorities that, due to his church callings, farming commitments, and legislative duties, he had spent only one full evening at home during the past year. This necessitated Pamelia's being a superb household manager.

"When the family moved back to Georgetown after Bishop Clark's release from 19 years of service, Pamelia augmented the family's income by selling dairy products, especially ice cream. She continued to be a midwife until her later years, and it was said that she helped deliver over 1,000 babies.
[mentioned? delivered nearly 1,000 babies.]]
[HERE to stop JRC and switch to LeOra?]

[maybe separate essays with photo of Pamelia's spoons]

Concurrent with John's writing was a second tribute, "I Remember Mama", lovingly written by Pamelia's daughter, (or John's aunt) LeOra Clark Larsen and summarized here:

"My first recollection of Mama was when she no longer had the radiant beauty of youth, for the advent of my birth took place in her 45th year. But I was to know a more radiant beauty—a beauty that came from her soul.

"Long before my (1907) introduction into the family, way back in the summer of 1889, Mama's handsome husband departed for a mission to the Southern States, leaving her to care for their three children and to assist with his financial and spiritual support for two years.

"Then, in 1893, she and her four children accompanied him to Montpelier to officiate in the many duties of a Bishop's wife. She distinguished herself not only in caring for their fast-increasing family, but in maintaining an open house to accommodate Church officials, friends and strangers. In this role, Mama served with dignity for 19 years, along with ministering in various Relief Society callings in the newly organized Montpelier Stake.

"Mama's table provided a banquet on weekends when the General Authorities traveled to Montpelier, where they were put up in great style. They were escorted to Star Valley (Wyoming) for conferences, thence back to Mama's bounteous table for more good meals before returning to Salt Lake. I remember Mama's baskets of food, covered with snow-white napkins, that were distributed each Sunday morning to the needy, delivered by my brothers on their way to Sunday assignments.

"I remember Mama best from about 1913 onward (when I was six), after the family moved back to the big farm in Georgetown where the eight boys could find constructive occupation and be kept busy, for idleness had no place in their lives. It was there that the real test of hard work began, for farm life was not easy. They had left a beautiful home with comparative comfort and conveniences not known to many—one luxury being a real honest-to-goodness bathtub claimed to be the first in Bear Lake! Mama was up to the challenge, for she had come to Bear Lake with pioneer parents who had first settled in Bloomington, then Bennington, and later in Three Mile Creek where the family secured a large acreage of land.

"I remember Mama's childhood home constructed of logs, which included a cold cellar below, where the milk, cheese and butter were stored. Her Dunn parents lived industriously—a quality which they passed on to their great family. Grandmother Julia taught me to darn socks, and I could understand then how Mama had learned to make the needles fly, for the holes in the socks had to be filled with precision-like stitches, not merely with a wad of yarn.

"And Mama's hands -- so strong and yet so gentle! I remember being fascinated by those hands as they

literally flew through their many tasks—hands that were as adept at smoothing the brow of a feverish child as they were manipulating the great blocks of ice in her ice cream factory. Hands that could delicately pluck the finest down feathers from a goose just as proficiently as they could hoist the heavy goose—the down feathers to be fashioned into soft, downy pillows for the comfort of many. Hands that could form perfect molds of butter, lined up on the kitchen table as she readied them for market. (It often bothered me that she gave away the buttermilk, free of charge, when it tasted as good as the butter!)

"Behind her sparkling dark eyes and steady brow was a keen, alert mind and an eye for business. This led to her forming an ice cream factory from which hundreds of gallons of a variety of flavors were shipped to market each year; thus, the family income was supplemented.

"Sometimes, right in the middle of the busiest day, three rings would sound on the old-fashioned telephone, indicating a call of distress from a worried mother of a sick child or other needy person, and Mama would quickly attend to that call.

"I remember Mama's dinner parties -- not the fancy, frilly kind with sterling silver, expensive linens, china and candles, but the abundant table laden with good, solid nutritious food, for she still maintained the open house for which she was famous. Our guests' arrival was my cue to get out the fresh tablecloth; and Mama, after cordialities, would dash to the garden, make the rounds of the pea patch and the potato plot and, on her return, her nimble fingers would pluck a head of lettuce and a few plump radishes, then be back in a flash to have a delicious meal prepared by the time the guests were settled in comfort!

"I remember Mama's Thanksgiving feasts with not only the traditional turkey, but a plump goose, the usual stuffing, and all the trimmings: plum pudding, fruit cake, and mince pie. Even before Thanksgiving arrived, there would have been hundreds of pounds of turkeys— butchered, plucked and dressed for the holiday gatherings of community and clubs—the task being accomplished with lightning speed by my Mama's hands. And with the remuneration Mama received from this difficult task, her children were bound to have a joyous Christmas—and so we did!

"As a teenager, I noticed Mama's hands were becoming calloused, worn and old, and I wondered if my Mama had ever had pretty hands like those of the beautiful women I had seen in my picture books...

"And then it happened! Rummaging through a drawer filled with pictures, I came across a photo of a handsome couple with the man seated in a chair and a beautiful, young maiden standing by his side. One of her delicate hands was resting affectionately behind his shoulder, the other nestled at her side, over the silken folds of her wedding gown. That dress, though beautiful, was no match for the delicate, shapely hand that caressed it. There was my beautiful, young, radiant mother with lovely, young, fragile hands. I remember Mama's modest reaction as I cried out in delight!

Thus, I came to know Mama's true purpose in life: devotion to humanity with, first and foremost, her dedication to husband and children regardless of the nature of the demand. So, the power and strength of Mama's hands became a legend to me —not only as a measure of the hard work she accomplished, but of her spirituality as she clasped them together while we knelt around the table each morning in family prayer... and as she ministered to the needs of the sick, the needy and the downtrodden. ... The memory of Mama's hands served to remind me of her abiding faith... And as she lay in final repose and I saw those hands—weather-beaten, worn and old from her earthly toil—the wonder of the Resurrection was unfolded before me, and I knew that the magnificent spirit which she had developed—modest, graceful and beautiful—would be reunited with a perfect body, and once again she would clasp the hands of her loved ones with her own dainty, fragile, delicate hands. [Summarize more of this??]

-LeOra, 1976]

Pamelia's youngest son, LeGrand, remembered his mother's final years this way:

"Pamelia always had good health, continuing her practice of midwifery until her later years when a creeping paralysis gradually worsened (over five or six years) until her final illness. She first knew something was wrong when she had difficulty crocheting; then pain came to both arms.

"In 1933, during her last year of life, Pamelia traveled by train to the Chicago home of Russell and Ruby Clark, where she saw her granddaughter Beverly for the first and last time. Upon her return, symptoms of Parkinson's disease required the daily presence of a nurse. Finally she weakened, almost paralyzed and barely able to speak. Two or three days before her death, she whispered to Father, 'Isn't there something that can be done?' But nothing could be done. She lapsed into a coma and quietly passed on in her seventy-first year."

- LeGrand and Rhoda Clark, 1964.

Although he had never known her personally, grandson John concluded,

"Pamelia Dunn Clark was the epitome of Christian benevolence, a frontier farm wife, and matriarch to a large family which frequently included many children who were not her own. Her life was marked by service, strength, and compassion, and she is remembered by many as the true cornerstone of her family and community.

Her passing from this life on October 12, 1933, ended 48 years of her earthly sojourn with a man whose tribulations and triumphs were to go on for another 23 years. --

[JRC -- then lead into final chapter of WWC life...]

ENDING of W.W. CLARK's LIFE - Part 1

The years to follow were well-known to many of his posterity: the many missions of Father Clark; his calling to be the Patriarch to the Montpelier Stake, his visits to his children and their families, his love of travel and of reading, his vigor to ride a bullrake in stacking hay, and his identity with his black stallion, Diamond.

FINAL ENDING of W.W. CLARK's LIFE - Part 2

I last saw Grandpa Clark after he had moved to Salt Lake City to be closer to medical care in his fading years.

His large number of grandchildren came to know Grandpa Clark in many contexts: deep concentration while reading or writing letters, enjoyment in playing checkers or skill with shuffleboard, puttering with repairs and sharpening tools in the barn, saying the alphabet backwards faster than most can do forwards, and preparing to die:

"When I last saw Grandpa, he was deathly sick. He did not complain, but said that he did not know why the Lord did not let him pass away. But he had an answer: he had never known what suffering was and this probably was part of the things he ought to experience in this state of existence."
(Chad W. Clark, 1961.)

[Edward I. Rich, MD, comment on old page 43]

[Amasa L. Clark comment on old page 43]

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