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Histories written by granddaughters Jeanne Amott Wright and Joan Amott October 2002

REMEMBERING GRANDMOTHER AMOTT

By granddaughter Jeanne Amott Wright - October 13, 2002

I have nothing but fond memories of my Grandmother (Mary Ellen Duncan) Amott. She was a lady of very little means. She really struggled all of her life. Her father died in a snow accident. He was bringing wood down the canyon in Bountiful, Utah, and was caught in a snow slide and buried. His wife was pregnant so she went home to live with her parents and the children were farmed out like servants to keep their room and board.

My Grandmother and Grandfather went to Canada to make a fortune. That turned out to be a disaster. She lost a son, Harrold, there. Her husband was killed when he fell off the roof of the Garfield School where he was working. She was left a widow with five children. She lost all of her children except my Dad, Eugene, and his sister, Leone, before she passed away. Harrold died as a child, Wesley was murdered, Maxine was killed in a terrible sledding accident and Ralph, Leone, and Eugene died of polycystic kidney disease.

Grandmother Amott was a wonderful grandmother to us children.

Sleepovers

Joan, Bob and myself always went to Grandmother Amott's house for sleepovers. Dad and Mom would go to a party and we would stay with Grandma over night. She had one game that we would play. It was called Pollyanna. Often times my Grandmother would have Fanny (a friend), Aunt Susie (her sister), and Aunt Etta (Jonette), another sister, over to play cards at the same time.

My Grandmother would put boiling water in vinegar bottles and put the bottles at the bottom of the bed to warm the bed. We would sleep in an unheated room. All three of us would be in one bed. I would put my feet at the bottom of the bed and touch the hot bottles and then quickly pull them away as the bottles were so hot. I often wondered if the bottles broke would I be scalded.

The next morning my Grandmother would get up early and light the kitchen stove. We would hop out of bed and run into the kitchen and stand by the warm stove. It felt so good. We would get dressed there. My Grandmother then would fix bacon and eggs for us. The breakfast was delicious. Dad would then come and bring us home. I loved to go to my Grandmothers for this outing. Her home was so cozy and clean and everything in its place.

My Grandmothers House

The only home I remember my Grandmother living in was 1024 Bryan Avenue. It was a bungalow. It had a nice big porch that went across the entire front of the house. We would round the

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corner of 10th East and see my Grandmother sitting on the front porch in a rocking chair. Next door to my Grandmother lived Kora and her husband and on the other side were two sisters, Ber-

nice and Clara.

Grandmother Amott's home was as neat as a pin. Everything had a place. There was one little drawer in the kitchen that had some pencils and paper in it for us. She had a green icebox down in the basement. On hot summer days we would go down to the basement and rub our hands on the cool ice. There was a radiator in the living room that had a grate on it where the hear came up from the furnace. I would love to stand there and stay warm.

The back yard was small but we had some fun family parties there. In the summer time we would play croquet and always have homemade ice cream. Grandma made wonderful potato salad and a salad made with fresh tomatoes and lettuce. I loved the summer picnics at her home. On Memorial Day we would decorate the graves and then go back to Grandmas for a picnic. I loved it because it was a happy time.

Grandma had a little sewing basket at the end of the hall. The basket was on a table and there was a little metal chair next to the table.

Grandma had the most interesting kitchen floor. She would dab all sorts of different colors of paint on the floor. It was very attractive, I thought. Grandma made do with what she had. She kept herself as neat as a pin also.

Grandma Amott had less than any of her sisters. Aunt Susie was married to a banker and Aunt Etta was married to a pharmacist. Grandma Amott took in boarders going to college. Many outstanding men in S.L.C. lived with here while they went to school.

Grandma loved her home. It was a terrible thing when they moved her to a dingy apartment on South Temple. She was never happy and lived only a few years after the move. I only remember going to her apartment once for dinner. There was no place to sit down.

I do not think I ever remember my Grandmother complaining about the apartment but you knew she was not happy. It was kept meticulous but no fun.

As I said before, my Grandmother had very little in the way of money. For our birthdays she would give each of us children $1.00. That was like giving each of us $50.00. She really had to sacrifice to give us this gift.

Grandma was a fantastic knitter. She tried to teach me to knit but it was hopeless. She had a lot of patience, but I was a poor student. Grandma knit herself two dresses. One dress was maroon. It was two-piece and the top was like an over-blouse. It had a belt that tied at the waist. The other dress was navy blue and was exactly the same style as the maroon dress With the extra material she made

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Joan a maroon skirt with suspenders and she made me a navy blue skirt with blue suspenders. Those skirts never wore out. The boys would flip the suspenders as I sat at my desk. Instead of learning my multiplication tables I spent my time in the 3rd grade trying to stretch the skirt out to the edge of the seats so the skirt was not so tight. The skirt would just flip back into place. I was so glad when the skirts were no longer able to fit.

My Grandmother only showed disappointment in me once that I can remember. She was taking care of Bob, Joan and myself for a week while Mom and Dad were away. We had received Easter ducks. They came with us. Their names were Peep Peep and Quack Quack. By the end of the week my Grandmother had her limit with the ducks. They were doing do-do all over the cement and on the lawn. Grandma was constantly hosing the cement slab and the grass. I guess I was defending the ducks and Grandma said to me "Who do you love the most - the ducks or me?" I said I loved the ducks. I spend that afternoon sitting on the stool at the end of the hall by the sewing basket.

(Saturday October 12, 2002) This weekend Joan and I went to Bountiful to visit with Dale Clark. His mother was Grandma's sister, Susie. Dale said he

had nothing but admiration for "Aunt Nell". He said that those four girls were raised in poverty after their father died, but they had presence about them. They never acted poor. Linda, one sister I did not know, moved to Idaho. My Grandmother, Mary Ellen (Nell), was the domestic one. She could make a meal out of anything. Susie was the intellectual one. She was always reading and entering contests and winning them. She wrote to authors of the books they had written and they wrote back. Aunt Jonette was the sister with style. Her feet never touched the floor. They were very different sisters but seemed to have a lot of fun together.

Grandma Amott took the Readers Digest and she was always learning the new words and spelling. She had a little radio in the corner of the living room and we would sit and listen to the news together.

Grandma was Democrat and I thought that was terrible.

As I got older I spent less and less time with my Grandma Amott. I regret this very much. She was old and lonely and I could have visited her. Nothing is as selfish as a young adult.

Grandma knit a dress for a story book doll. The doll is long gone but I still have the dress. Grandma lost her husband, her two sons, and a daughter before I knew her. She never talked about these sad time. The loss of Maxine (her daughter - age 15) jsut about killed Grandma with grief.

Grandma was a real Grandma. I really hope I have some of her characteristics.

REMEMBERING GRANDMA AMOTT

By granddaughter Joan Amott - October, 2002

Grandma (Mary Ellen Duncan Amott) lived at 1024 Bryan Avenue, Salt Lake City, in a yellow brick home with a big front porch. In the back yard she had a little shed that one could park one car. She did not use it as a garage because she did not have a car.

We, as children, spent many happy weekends at her home. Mom and Dad would be invited to a party and we would spend the night with Grandma.

In her kitchen, in the early days, she had a wood stove. There was a space between the stove and the wall that was so warm.

In the kitchen there were crayons, jacks, coloring books, yo-yos, colered pencils and paper, and glue for us to use. We could not take those things home, but we enjoyed using them at her house.

At night we slept on the sleeping porch. There was no heat so she would pile the covers on and put hot water bottles at the bottom of the bed. We did not mind the cold; in fact it was a lot of fun to sleep on the porch. In the morning Grandma would cook huge breakfasts on the old wood stove: pancakes, bacon biscuits, gravy, toast, fruit, so much food it always made me sick at my stomach, but I never told Grandma.

In the summer we would sit on the front porch steps and put on plays. We would sing and dance. Clara and her sister from next door would come over. We had quite a time.

In the evening Grandma had several games that we enjoyed playing together: Pollyanna, Chinese Chekcers, and several card games. She always let us win the games.

Grandma loved ice cream and tomatoes. She had a tomato and cucumber patch in her back yard. On a hot summer night we would walk over to Garden Gate, get a quart of ice cream, and come home, set around the table and enjoy the treat together. In the summer sometimes she would make ice cream. We would all take turns churning the handle. It was such a treat and we all wanted to lick the dasher.

Once in a while we would go downtown on the bus to see a "picture show". I remember she took us to "Sun Valley Serenade" with Sonja Heine. After that I wanted to be an ice skater.

In the basement of Granda's home she had a record player. We used to go down and listen to the record "Mr. Gallager and Mr. Sheen". She also had a big trunk downstairs. In the trunk she had the costumers she had made for her daughter Maxine who was killed in a sleigh-riding accident. On Halloween she let me wear a beautiful pink, ball gown to the Halloween party at school. I was the belle of the ball.

Grandma had very little money and so the kitchen floor would sometimes show wear. She would daub it with different colors of paint to make it look new. I thought it was very pretty.

Thanksgiving was a big holiday at her home. The night before the big day we would go to her house and pull out the pinfeathers from the turkey. It would take all evening. After dinner on Thanksgiving we would have a family program and play card games. Sometimes Aunt Etta and her son, Keith, and wife Margaret would join us. Grandma set a lovely table in the dining room. It was a very special day!

Sometimes Grandma would go to Farmington, UT to visit her sister, Susie, and her husband Amsie Clark. We would go up and pick her up on Sunday Afternoon. I lvoed the trip to Farmington. Aunt Susie lived by Lagoon and we could walk down to the pasture and see the rides as we gazed over the fence. Aunt Susie served unpasturized milk - ug! It came right from the cow. Uncle Amsie had a big garden and would always get tomatoes, corn and cucumbers from his garden.

Grandfather Amott's sister, Aunt Louise, used to come and take us for a ride. She was so funny. She had depression, but when she was high she kept us in stitches. She would wet her handkerchief in cold water and drop it on her head. We would all roll over laughing.

Grandmother died when she was in her 80's. I was so surprised because she looked and acted younger. She always colored her hair, so that helped. Her last few years were spend in a little apartment. She hated that home because she was very lonely.

Grandma died of cancer. After it was discovered she only lived three or four months. She was a lovely lady, one who left us with wonderful memories.