

## Preface

My first experiences in genealogy came about 1960 when my older sister Susan spent part of a summer with our Grandmother Mary<sup>1</sup> in Salt Lake City. Susan returned to Idaho Falls with copies of family histories of Grandma's mother<sup>2</sup> that she had typed.<sup>3</sup> I was fascinated with these histories and decided I wanted my own copies. While I had not yet learned how to type, I remember sitting down at a small typewriter and carefully typing these histories, one letter at a time, on heavy, white, shiny paper that cost 5 cents a sheet. I was about seven years old.

Later I started filling out pedigree charts from papers my father had in his files. His sheets had been written with a blue fountain pen in his own very distinctive handwriting. During our family's frequent visits to visit my widowed grandmothers<sup>4</sup>, I hand-copied all of their family group sheets and pedigree charts. They kept their genealogy sheets in long books, each titled "Book of Remembrance." As children of pioneer stock, as they called themselves, they each had mothers and grandmothers who had kept their own genealogy. It is no small factor that each of my great-great grandparents<sup>5</sup> joined the Mormon Church in their own lifetime. Genealogy is a big part of Mormon Doctrine. It's also quite addictive. I'm not certain if I'm so involved because of the former or the latter.<sup>6</sup>

My father's mother had a beautiful portrait of Martha Telle Cannon in her small living room. Great-grandmother Martha appears to have been a very stately and regal woman. As grandchildren, we never snickered that she was a polygamous wife of Apostle George Q. Cannon. We were all very proud. I spent many hours admiring that oil painting.<sup>7</sup> I have no memory of not knowing that Martha's father accidentally shot and killed her mother while they lived in Nauvoo, Illinois. No one seemed to be able to tell me any more except that as a baby Martha was sent to live with relatives. As I got older and noticed that the Telle line was the shortest of all my lines, I started to search for information. My father told me that Martha spent all of her money<sup>8</sup> doing genealogy work and she had never been able to find out very much.<sup>9</sup> In truth, she had written letters to her half-sisters in New York and to her father's relatives in Indiana. She had searched early Pennsylvania histories<sup>10</sup> to seek out names and dates. She had also completed quite a bit of LDS Temple work for her relatives and ancestors, often using her own children as proxies for baptisms.<sup>11</sup> As an adult I learned that she had been a worker in the Salt Lake Temple. After I had been doing research for many years, some of her genealogy letters came into my possession from two of my father's cousins.<sup>12</sup> It is still miraculous to me that I received these letters<sup>13</sup>, without which I could not have done much of this research.

Martha made a small book of her genealogy which she titled "The Espy Family in Pennsylvania." I came across the microfilm of this little handwritten book quite by accident<sup>14</sup> about 1993. Her small, neat, cursive script is very legible. I can only assume this is the sum of Martha's research. Sections appear to be a workbook where she added information as she found it. I thought I was the first in our family to learn the names of Ambrose Telle and Ann Espy, and that came only after several years of research on my part. But during my study of this book, I was very surprised to see that Martha had learned the name of her Telle grandparents. After studying the book, I saw that she had written, "Ambrose Telly, Ann Espy, gd. parents.<sup>15</sup>" She was the quintessential genealogist, giving family names to her own children, such as Lewis, Espy, Collins and Telle.

I have written this book so that hopefully I can stop working on these families. *No, not really.* I have loved every minute of looking for these people. Most of the last thirty years I have lived in Texas, New Jersey, Virginia and even Japan. I have loved planning trips to Salt Lake City and spending countless, quiet days in the massive Salt Lake City Family History Library. I love reading films and looking at census records. I love finding clues. But I have to get on with my life. There are other family lines that need some attention. There are grandchildren to be played with, and very soon, missions my husband and I can serve. I hope the thirty plus of years of research that I have put into this book will aid others in their own genealogy.

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Endnotes:

1. Mary Elizabeth Grover Innes 1888-1980. We called her Grandma Mary.
2. Cecelia Sarah Millard Grover 1862-1945.
3. Using a Xerox machine to copy was not possible in 1960.
4. My father's mother was Ida May Burton Cannon 1894-1983. We called her Nana. Both my grandmothers lived in Salt Lake City. Our family lived in Idaho, at that time at least a five hour car ride away (before freeways.)
5. In fact, I have twelve great-great-great grandparents who joined the Mormon Church in their own lifetimes: Mary Ann Oaks, 1811-1892; her husband John Roylance, 1807-1887; Elizabeth Coleman Walker, 1816-1903; Isabella Walton, 1802-1863; her husband James Burton, 1800-1849; Hannah Greenwood, 1818-1877; her husband Joseph Fielding 1797-1863; Benjamin Freeman Bird, 1778-1862; William Richards 1797-1860; Charles Innes, 1779-1871; Martha Collins, 1793-1881; and her husband David White Rogers 1787-1881. The Rogers were the parents of Amelia Rogers, who married Lewis Telle.
6. Or, considering my heritage, perhaps it was a gene.
7. This portrait currently hangs in the Salt Lake City home of my father's sister, Ida Mae Cannon Smith.
8. Dad also told me that his father, Collins Telle Cannon 1888-1961 did his best to see that his mother spent all the money she had inherited from her husband on herself. He felt strongly that she not "squander" it on her adult children. In quoting his father in this matter, my Dad used to say, "There are no pockets in a shroud." Dad told me Martha drove a Cadillac, as that's the only car my grandfather felt was safe enough for her to drive.
9. Later I realized that he only said that because he didn't know what she had found.
10. In studying the entries she made in her little book, it appears she used some of the same sources I have used, such as William Henry Egle's Pennsylvania Genealogies, written in 1886. I have had to use microfilm or reprints. Certainly she had access to an original volume. But there is no question I have had access to many more sources than she did, such as census records and birth and death records. However, in many instances I wouldn't have known where to look without her letters.
11. Mormon Doctrine teaches that the spirit lives on after death, at some point to be resurrected. Baptism and other ordinances are essential for Eternal Life. These ordinances must be done on this earth, in the person's lifetime or vicariously after death. It is up to the individual as to whether or not he accepts these ordinances done in his behalf.
12. Since his father had over 40 siblings, my Dad had too many cousins to count. My father is the only son of one of the youngest sons of George Q. Cannon, and we lived in Idaho, not Utah, so I have personally known few Cannon relations. As George Q. Cannon's two brothers also had several polygamous families, there are surely thousands of Cannon descendants, and not too infrequently I ran into one, even though I spent 31 years of my adult life outside of Utah.
13. About 1975 I looked at old Temple Index Bureau records that showed a family group sheet where Frances Jane Telly had been sealed to her parents in 1946. I wrote to Salt Lake and received the name of the person who had submitted the work, Lela Allen Bae. I then wrote to Lela, who had not moved in over thirty years. She wrote back and we enjoyed corresponding. Her husband Truman was a descendant of Lewis Telle and had joined the LDS Church when he married Lela. Neither had any idea that Lewis Telle had been a Mormon until I told them. Lela provided a unique family history that included Lewis' birth date. Frances Elaine Stewart, a daughter of Amelia Telle Cannon, learned about Lela the same way I had and contacted her. Lela put us in touch with each other. Frances had some of Martha Telle Cannon's letters gave transcribed copies to me. My Aunt Ida May Smith Cannon put me in contact with her cousin, Howell Q. Cannon in the 1980's. He provided me with many other genealogical letters received by Martha T. Cannon. Lela, Frances and Howell are now deceased.
14. As a Family History Center worker in Houston, one day I demonstrated the surname search feature of the Library catalog and used the Telle name as an example. I was astonished to see Martha's name as an author! I have no knowledge of the history of this book between the death of Martha Telle Cannon in 1928 and its filming by the Family History Library in 1978.
15. She must have learned this information later in her research, though, as in 1895 she had her eleven year old son Radcliffe act as proxy for the baptism of "Mr. Telle." She had her daughter Grace perform the baptism for Ann Espy in 1897. (This information is in the International Genealogical Index.)

The Easter holidays came and went, and the Summer Term began at school. My grandmother and I had already planned to take our summer holiday in Norway and we talked about almost nothing else every evening. She had booked a cabin for each of us on the boat from Newcastle to Oslo at the earliest possible moment after my school broke up, and from Oslo she was going to take me to a place she knew down on the south coast near Arendal where she had spent her own summer holidays as a child nearly eighty years ago. I put one mouse into each trouser-pocket and wandered downstairs in search of a secret spot. The ground floor of the hotel was a maze of public rooms, all of them named in gold letters on the doors.