



128 North 9th West, No. 1 home.



839 Fayette Ave., No. 2 home.



Joseph

Walter

Heritage and Early Years

2

Joe was sent to his parents as an answer to their fasting and prayer. As a result he always had an extra affinity toward his mother and a close understanding with his father. He loved and respected them and was a true son to them all the days of their lives.

Walt, Joe's brother, shared many memories with me of his childhood that are undoubtedly some of the same memories Joe cherished. Walt was born in 1908 and, as explained in the following quote, was adopted into the family through miraculous circumstances.

Mother had been married about one year and had as yet no children of her own. One day she went to visit a friend. On the way she met an elderly lady whom she knew only as an acquaintance. The lady mentioned that her daughter was going to a clinic. Mother casually thought that probably the girl was studying to be a mid-wife. Then the lady mentioned that they were living at "Freigut Strausse Number 10." The conversation was short and mother continued on her way to visit her friend. But it happened that her friend wasn't home.



Helene Elizabeth Lucas Carl Alois Nemelka

When mother was going to return home, the spirit kept repeating to her, "Freigut Strausse Number 10." It became so strong she decided she better go there although she didn't know these people very well. When she knocked on their door, no one answered. She returned and knocked again. This time she was admitted by a young woman who was pregnant and living in a very bare room. Mother talked awhile and then the mother, whom she had met on the street previously, came home. Mother gave her some money to get some cake rolls, which she did, and they sat down for an afternoon

snack. Then the story came out that the young woman had run away from her drunkard husband because he wasn't good to her, and she was soon to have her baby and felt bad about it. The mother said, "Perhaps the Lord will take it away."

Mother said, "Don't you want the baby?"

"No."

"Then give it to me."

The mother cried, "Freda, the love of God!" Immediately the most peaceful wonderful feeling fell around them and they began to cry.

Mother told father and he decided it was all right. He gave the girl some money that night. Two days later the baby was born at the clinic, a boy weighing 4 pounds and having a veil over his face. After staying ten days at the clinic, mother took the woman and the baby home for two weeks. Then the woman left, leaving them the baby. The mother of the boy named him Walter John.

One year later, mother brought the boy to America and raised him along with four of her own children who were born later. The boy turned out to be a wonderful, fine man.

Carl, Elizabeth, and Walter came over to the U.S.A. and to Salt Lake City before Joe was born. Joe was born in a small house on 128 North Ninth West, over by the Utah State fairgrounds.

The family then moved to Cannon Ward on Fayette Avenue and lived there until Joe's father, Carl Alois Nemelka, returned from serving a mission in Czechoslovakia and Germany.

Carl Alois served his mission from 1914 to 1915, just before the war, and had to leave the country in a hurry when the war started. He brought home a phonograph



Grandpa Carl's Mission Farewell

record with him, but we don't know where the record is now. Walt thinks that the Cannon Ward may have it in their possession.

Grandpa Carl and his brothers were all well educated men. Some of the brothers were dentists. Carl's brother Adolf was also quite wealthy. All of the brothers died around the age of fifty or thereabouts. Carl once went to South America to see his brother, and while there he taught school. The Nemelkas owned some coal mines in South America and that's why he had gone. While there, Carl would go into the jungles of Brazil and shoot the monkeys. Walt said that he hadn't thought that

his father had the “guts” to do such a thing. Carl could also speak seven languages; he sometimes said words to Walt, often rattling off sentences in different languages.

Carl’s father, Adolf Nemelka, had the dream of becoming a lawyer. He went to college and graduated, but Adolf’s father wanted one son to be a tailor, so Adolf was forced to be a tailor. He had 12 to 15 men employed in his store. Adolf was a wealthy man until sickness and the dishonesty of others made him poor and with no credit. He had a large family but wasn’t very religious.

Carl’s mother, Johanna Pauline, was very religious and was also a very charitable woman. She was always a friend to the poor and to the sick. She was against Carl’s marriage because he married a non-Catholic and became very bitter after Carl and Elizabeth joined the L.D.S. church. Adolf and Johanna Pauline had nine children.

At the end of his mission, Joe traveled to Czechoslovakia and had the opportunity of visiting many of his relatives in their homeland (the Nemelka family was quite wealthy there). Joe told Walt that when the Nemelkas cooked, it looked like they were cooking for a restaurant. Joe’s cousins, Betty, Hugo, Walter, and Robert, all treated him with kindness, picking him up in their big Buick and taking him places. While Joe was in Czechoslovakia, he tried to do some genealogy research, but the family was not very cooperative; though his Uncle Hugo (Carl Alois’ brother) did promise him some of their grandfather’s papers. I don’t know if he ever sent any or not.

Uncle Adolf Winkler, a dentist in Chemnitz, Germany, cleaned Joe’s teeth for him and fed him good meals, but the family would not go to church with him. They were all staunch Catholics. Uncle Adolf and Aunt Johanna (Carl Alois’ sister) did go with Joe to hear him speak once and they seemed to enjoy his talk.

None of Grandpa Carl Nemelka's people came over here to America, but Joe sent CARE packages to Johanna Winkler (Carl's sister) during the war because she had sent a letter to Grandpa Carl stating that they were hungry and in need of food. She was living in Dresden, Germany—the same place she lived when Joe visited her at the close of his mission. After a while, Johanna wrote that she didn't want food, she just wanted cigarettes and coffee so that she could sell them on the black market. Joe wasn't about to purchase those two items, nor was he going to send them to her so that she could resell them. I don't know what he wrote back but he didn't send any more CARE packages to her, and we lost contact with her and the family.

Before her marriage, Elizabeth Lucas, Joe's mother, and her sister were sitting in a beer garden in Munich one evening and Elizabeth happened to look across the space and saw a little Jew sitting on the opposite side. She turned to her sister and asked her if she saw that little man sitting across the room. When her sister replied that she did, Elizabeth declared that she was going to marry that little Jew—and she did! He never would admit to being a Jew, but apparently he surely did look like one at the time.

Elizabeth was instrumental in helping to bring her family over to the United States. Carl's family were all Catholic but hers were Lutheran. A missionary by the name of Rich converted the two of them. The missionary resided here in Salt Lake City and became an attorney.

Carl and Elizabeth were married in Rosswein, Saxony. Their children who lived to adulthood are Walt, Joseph, Nephi, Esther, and Mary. In April of 1907, Elizabeth was expecting her first baby, but she and Carl lived out in the middle of a field, away from neighbors. One day, when Elizabeth was alone, she started to have labor pains, so she laid down upon the bed. Her little girl



Walter, Joseph, Nephi, Esther,
Grandma Elizabeth's birthday, 21 March 1959.

was born, but when the midwife got to her the baby was dead. For many years Elizabeth thought that the baby had been stillborn. However, one day while sitting in the Salt Lake Temple, she was very sadly and seriously thinking of the little baby that hadn't lived. She thought carefully about that birth, and then she went to see one of the General Authorities of the church and told him that the Holy Ghost had instructed her to see him. She was certain that when the baby had been born she had heard a movement. She didn't tell me if it was a sound that the baby had made or if it was a movement, but when she explained that to the apostle, he said that the baby had lived long enough to breathe the "Breath of Life," so they could have her sealed to them. They gave the baby the name of Helen. She was sealed to her parents March 17, 1966, after Elizabeth Nemelka had passed away in 1962. Joe took care of that sealing, and I am sure that Esther helped too.

When Carl first came to Salt Lake City, he worked for the Utah Light and Traction Company up at the car



Lucas's home in Steinpleis, Zwickau, Saxony



1254 S. Redwood Road
No. 3 home

barn which is now Trolley Square. He worked the night shift from 1909 to 1914. He also raised vegetables and sold them to various cafes. Elizabeth worked for Franklin's Cafe for quite a while which is the same cafe where my mother, Mary Ethel Cotterell, worked before she was married.

During the time that Elizabeth was first looking for work, she found Joe kneeling beside his bed one evening asking the Lord to help his mother find work. Joe was only six or seven years old at the time, but through the sincere, child-like faith shown by his prayer, his mother was able to find temporary work at the Cafe.

Franz Lucas, Elizabeth's father, was a carpenter by trade. He brought his family to Salt Lake City and lived on Fayette Avenue also. They used to have big parties in the back yard, and all the Germans would come to the party. They had lots of vegetables to eat and lots of food, especially dumplings with croutons in the middle of them and served with dill sauce—a white sauce with fresh, finely-chopped dill mixed in. They had a large place with several fruit trees, and Walt and Joe would eat all the fruit they could. When Franz Lucas died, Walt tried to look into the coffin to see him, but Walt was such a little boy that, even standing on his tip toes, he could only see the tip of Grandpa Lucas' nose. Franz Lucas, being a very skilled carpenter and cabinet maker, built his own coffins and stored them in the basement. I guess he probably built the coffin he was buried in.

Franz Lucas' mother was a hired girl for a wealthy farmer in Steinpleis Saxony and had a child (Franz) by the farmer's son. We have no record as to whether the son was forced to marry another woman or whether he was a "rascal." Franz' mother married another man, Karl Schwalbe, who was a real father to Franz. Franz was a renown carpenter, a clerk and recorder in the Town

Parish, and also a City Councilman and City Treasurer. He owned a restaurant and wanted to be a school teacher, but his foster father forced him to be a cabinet maker.

Anna Pauline Lucas, Elizabeth's mother, was quite a heavy woman, and kids didn't dare talk back to her because she would immediately smack the child across the mouth. Anna Pauline had a real appetite, which appetite Joe seemed to think he inherited. She was a good woman, outstanding in helping those in need along with the sick and the suffering. Cheerfulness was her outstanding characteristic, and it brought joy and relief to many. Franz and Anna Pauline had thirteen children.

Anna Pauline was good at plucking geese. When Joe's family lived on Redwood Road, she would go out to help her daughter, Elizabeth, pick the feathers off the geese and make all kinds of feather beds. When my sons, Carl and Larry, were little, they slept under a feather bed given to them by Grandma Nemelka because she didn't want them to get cold sleeping out on the back porch. Carl would make Larry go first to the bed and warm it, and then he would go to bed too.

Grandpa Carl and Elizabeth moved to 1254 South Redwood Road. They had a pretty good sized yard and had a little garden on the side of the house. Joe said that when his dad would get upset and angry, he would pick up a two-by-four and hit one of them across the legs with the board. He would hit them with whatever he could find. When I first heard about this, it really amazed me because Grandpa Carl was such a little slender man—not the type to use physical force to get attention.

In order to make money to survive and support his family, Carl would get his boys, Walt, Joe, and Nephi, up early in the morning at 5:00 a.m. and make them all work in the garden. Every Saturday they had to go out into the garden, water and weed the sugar beets, and



Joe, Walt, and the sugar beets.



Nephi, Joe, Esther, Mary.

then take them out to Brighton (out by the Utah Power & Light terminal) west of Poplar Grove, put them on the scale to weigh them, and put them in the boxcar. They did make a little bit of money with their sugar beets. He kept his three sons busy; they also had chickens and cows. Walt remembered that an old couple lived next to the old Poplar Grove Ward on Ninth South and Carl would take milk over to them. Once he even killed one of his calves and gave the meat to different people in the ward. Many a time all my widowed mother and three sisters had to eat while I was in California going to school was the food Joe took to them from his father's garden.

Every Saturday morning was work time. They had to clear all of the weeds out of the ditch before they could turn the water into it, and, of course, Joe, Walt, and Nephi did all the work. Carl used to go to market to buy vegetables and go peddling. Once Walt took Grandpa Lucas' horse out to work with them, but he forgot something, so he tried to ride the horse back home. He had taken the harness off, so the horse was very hard to control. When he got down to Fremont Avenue, instead of staying on the pavement, the horse made a turn and fell. Poor Walt nearly got killed—he had all his large teeth in front knocked out. Once Walt dared Joe to ride the donkey. When Joe got on the animal, Walt twisted its tail and it threw Joe off. Joe had a broken arm as a result. Joe told me that the doctor didn't set it correctly and, as a result, his right arm was always crooked—he couldn't extend it all the way out straight. Joe was also playing one day with his mother's sewing machine and ran the needle down into his finger nail. He always carried that scar, too.

As I already mentioned, the family raised chickens at the house on Redwood Road and had to sell the eggs by the case. They always sold to the Utah Cafe on Main

Street. They had to drive the eggs in a wagon drawn by a horse. I wonder how many eggs were broken by the time they arrived at Main Street. When I stayed with Elizabeth Nemelka in September of 1934, trolley street car tracks ran down the middle of most of the streets, so I imagine that trying to drive a wagon full of eggs down those streets would be rather bumpy. Many of the streets were not paved until years later.

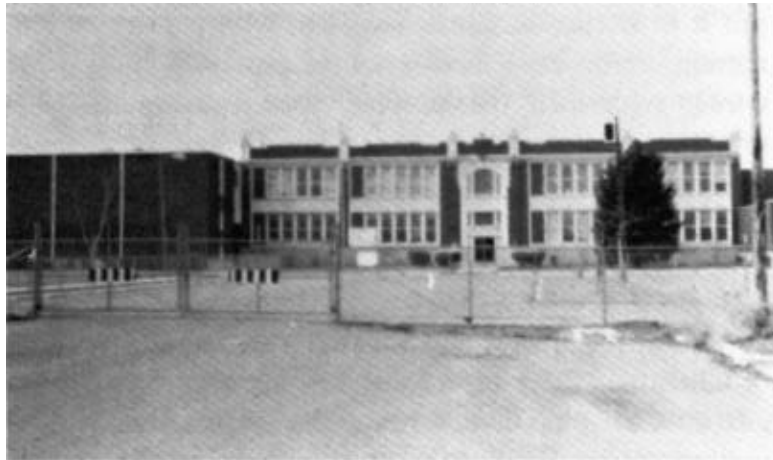
Elizabeth Nemelka was a good cook, and she loved her whipping cream. She always had a big dish of it by her plate. Around Christmas time, they had lots of plum cake, strudel, and stolen. She made plenty of stolen— they practically lived on that for days. They also always had a goose for Christmas. Elizabeth made pumpkin and put it in bottles at Christmas time with a piece of cinnamon stick. They had a lot of pumpkin during the winter with their meals. They would always get one orange at Christmas, and Joe said he always ate his slowly so it would last a long time.

Santa Claus came to their house on Christmas Eve. The children would go into another room, and what Christmas presents they received they received then. However, Joe always had our Christmas on the morning of Christmas Day; he would very seldom let us open a gift on Christmas Eve. I never did understand why he was so adamant about that.

Carl and Elizabeth had two little girls in between Nephi and Esther that died at a very young age. When the one little girl died, a brother in the ward told Walt to go home and check on his little sister. Walt told him that she was home in bed. When Walt did go home, she had already died. Walt arrived just in time to see the undertaker come to get the little body and put it in a suitcase. Walt thought that was a horrible place to put his little sister.



Edison School



Jordan Jr. High

When the children were baptized at the age of eight, they were taken to the tabernacle. Walt said he went in a surrey (a four-wheel carriage). They all went into the tabernacle after tying the horse and surrey outside. Walt said that after they got in the tabernacle, they dunked him. I suppose that was the way he felt about it at the time.



West High School

Joe and Walt learned to swim in the old surplus canal, they called it “the old flume.” They also had mumps one summer when they lived on Redwood Road.

On Halloween, sometimes the boys would take apart the wagons that were left parked on Indiana Avenue, and pull them up with ropes to the top of Huber’s old store. They also tipped over outhouses. Their Halloween tricks were mild, to say the least.

My mother’s half brother, Algie Harrison, lived in a small house on Eighth South. Since my uncle was drunk quite often, Joe and his friends would throw rocks against the house. My uncle would rush out of the house angry and yelling. Of course, Joe didn’t know who he was then. I didn’t meet Joe until long after Uncle Algie died.

Joe’s friends and brothers would often go out by the old mill in their old Buick to take shots at the ducks. The ducks would come in from the lake in two groups, and the fellows would separate and shoot at them. Joe didn’t go with them; he could hardly stand to fish, let alone shoot.



Joe, age 16, first pair of long trousers.

When Joe was six years old, his mother tried to enroll him in the old Edison School in the first grade. When the principal asked him to tell her his name, Joe was too shy to speak; so the principal told his mother to take him home because he was too slow and to bring him back the next year. She waited another year and took him back when he was seven. The same thing happened, Joe just stood and looked at the principal, so he had to go home for another year. He didn't start in the first grade until he was eight years old; but by then he was too sharp for his grade, so he received a special promotion. When he finally graduated from the 6th grade, he was given an award for being the brightest pupil in the school. He went through Jordan Jr. High and enrolled at the old LDS High School. However, he couldn't afford to stay in school—his father needed his help in taking care of the



Joseph Nephi Nemelka, January 1929.

D&RG Depot. As a result, he couldn't play in sports, something he truly loved to do.

Joe quit school, but he transferred over to West High School in hopes that he could stay there and participate in sports. Unfortunately, he still had to help his father so he just dropped out of school. He liked basketball and baseball, and he played basketball until he was forty years old. He was, incidentally, very good. I remember he played ball in the old Deseret Gym, and as he played I had to look down from the balcony upon his bald head. I felt that, as the father of five children, he was a little old to be playing ball, so he stopped. After he stopped playing, he started to put on weight.

Joe's mother made a lot of whole wheat bread. When Grandpa Carl made Joe's lunch, he would cut the slices quite thick and spread them with peanut butter. Joe

said they would be so dry that they would stick to the top of his mouth. The highlight of his day, was when his friend, Edgar Barron would bring his lunch to school. Edgar's sandwiches were made with delicious white bread. Joe would beg Edgar to trade him sandwiches, and sometimes Edgar would. Joe always asked Edgar to go to school with him—he wanted to improve his chances of getting a white bread sandwich.

I remember Joe telling me that when he was ordained a Deacon in the old Poplar Grove Ward, one of the duties of the deacons was to go out to the back of the church and clean out the outhouses. Joe always had to take that job because the Bishop couldn't trust any other deacon to clean them as thoroughly as Joe did. Joe would always hide from the Bishop because he hated the job so much. As a teacher, Joe was made a counselor in the teacher's quorum presidency. When he became a priest, he was given his first pair of long trousers and wore a straw hat.

Joe's sister, Mary, tells of the time in the winter when Joe was heating ice to thaw it out for the animals to drink. Mary got too close to one of the buckets of boiling water, fell in, and was severely burned. Joe immediately put her in a trough of ice water, and that saved her life. I wonder how he knew to do that?

Joe always helped his mother take care of the babies, and many a time he would go out and milk the cow and fill Esther's bottle with the fresh milk from the cow. He honored his mother. He would comfort her when she and Carl had an argument, and he always supported her in whatever she wanted to do. He drove her around in his car, taking her to visit her friends, driving her around the ward when she took food to people who were poorer than she, and never once criticized or scolded her. He did these things for many years, even after we were married.

An invalid mother, who had fulfilled two stake missions in her later life, who had completed hundreds of endowments in the Salt Lake Temple, and who had been active in the Ward Relief Society visiting many families monthly for as many years as she had been in the church, was finally confined to her room with four walls, her personal belongings, chairs, and bed. She couldn't visit any more or attend her church meetings. You can imagine her feelings of depression and sorrow. All of his adult life, Joe visited his mother regularly to tend to her needs and desires. If she wanted to be driven someplace or had an errand to be done, "Josef did it for her—not her other sons, but "Josef." They decided that she needed the strength and help from the Lord, so every Thursday for as many as ten years, Joe would go to her room, close the door, wash his hands, prepare one slice of bread, and get a glass of water. He would kneel and say the prayer for the bread, pass the bread to his mother, partake of it himself, then do the same with the water. Joe would also always bring the latest news of the ward, relatives, and old folks to his mother when she was ill for so long. In this manner he brought joy and satisfaction to his mother whom he loved dearly.

Mary feels that Joe was a special Bishop to widows. When he would visit her in Sacramento, California, he always opened the scriptures to her and Ruth Keisig Adams (a cousin). Joe told them to be more interested in the scriptures and encouraged them to learn to study more.

Joe traveled to California to the funeral of Mary's husband and gave a beautiful, inspiring talk. The following are just a few quotes at Mary's request:

"For behold, this is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and Eternal Life of

man.” These words of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, were meant for every human being who has lived, who now lives, and who will live on this earth. The mission of Jesus Christ is to save each person who has been given the privilege by our Father in Heaven to enter mortal life. . . . Brother Chipman’s life here is ended but whatever the angels have recorded, good or bad, the records are done. . . . These services are for us who are left behind, who must yet experience this same death. . . . I remember Jim as he came into our home in his youth and courted my baby sister, but oh, the joy in my heart to know that she shall meet him again when the Lord so wills. His family and he shall go on together as a family unit.

You saw a loving brother and father place upon Jim’s head a cap which is part of the Holy Priesthood. Within James Junior Chipman lies the power of the Priesthood. That Priesthood is so wonderful that we have been told that every son of God can hold it if he so wills, and in each man lies that Priesthood. He has the right to bless his family and, as the Lord gives him that permission, he will have the right as a spirit to come back and bless his family. Mary is sealed to “Chip” and in just a few more years, it isn’t too long, they shall meet together and rejoice and praise God for the blessings that He has given and then they will understand.

In 1958, Joe’s mother, Elizabeth, was inspired to express the following thoughts along with her morning prayer. She would first sing the last two verses of the song “Prayer is the Soul’s Sincere Desire,” then she would kneel down, face the Salt Lake Temple, and say her prayer. She spoke in German.

7. No prayer is made on earth alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the Father's throne
For sinners intercedes.

8. O Thou by whom we come to God
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod
Lord, teach us how to pray.

Father, bless the leaders of all nations, and show them that without Thy Godly Guidance and inspiration, no nation can be guided and ruled in righteousness. Bless all righteous people that they may repent and live more righteous, that Thy Holy Priesthood may build up Thy Kingdom and prepare for the coming of Thy Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

Grandma Elizabeth had a most beautiful alto voice, and she enjoyed singing in the ward choir. Like his mother, Joe, too, sang in the choir. He also liked to sing in the tub when he took a bath.

Joe had wonderful parents who set a great example for him. They always encouraged their children to remain strong in the church and have a strong family. Just prior to his death, Joe's father, Carl, left this "Farewell Message" to his loved ones. This was written on October 10, 1950, six months before his death on April 6, 1951.

I feel that the time is here soon that I will be called to leave this sphere of action to go in the spirit world to finish my mission, preaching the gospel to my ancestors.

The Lord has blessed me wonderfully with a good wife and we have both tried to live the Gospel

and Teach it to our children by precept and example.

We have been found worthy to go in the House of the Lord to receive the greatest blessing of being sealed for time and all eternity, also to have our children sealed to us, with the promise of great joy in the days of the Lord.

All this by Power of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood and on condition of our faithfulness.

We were also privileged to do thousands of endowments for ancestors and hope and pray that our posterity will continue this work. I am sure that I will be able to gather genealogy in the spirit world for my fathers way back and bring many names. What a glorious privilege!

Our greatest desire is that we are all united as a family in heaven.

We have prayed and fasted much for our posterity and know the Lord will accept it.

Trials and tribulations we must have for experience, but chastisements are not necessary if we love the Lord and keep His commandments. We don't want to be forced in line.

It is a pleasure to love the Lord and keep His commandments, I found that out.

“And now I bid unto all farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the eternal Judge of both quick and dead.” (Book of Mormon. Moroni

10:34)

That this may be all our lot, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, Amen.

Your loving Father,
Carl A. Nemelka

Joe's sister, Mary, said, "Grandpa Carl Nemelka put in his journal that he wanted his family to stay close. Joe was one to whom we all could go for advice and help. Joe tried to keep us together."

It was mentioned at Grandpa Carl's funeral that he had performed approximately 4,000 endowments. He also was an ordinance worker in the baptistry and did a lot of research and temple work for old people, older than he, who couldn't do the work for themselves.



Joe's sister, Mary