



SARAH JANE “JENNIE” JUDD WHITMER

January 31, 1884 - Spring of 1967



Historical Profile

Sarah Jane was born on 31 January 1884, in Pima, Arizona to Don Carlos Judd (32 years old) and Mary Ellen Lewis (25 years old). Her older siblings, sisters Ella (9), Clara (7), Edna (5), and Diana (2) welcomed her into the family as the fifth child. 10 more children would be born to her parents and she would take part in helping to raise the younger siblings.

In 1886, when only 2 years old, Jennie became a big sister to a baby brother Don. The following year brought life and death to her family. Her sister Ida was born and in May of 1887 her sister Diana and brother Don both passed away three days apart. Two years later the family experienced another shock of death when the oldest daughter Ella passed away. That same year they received twin boys Orsa and Arza into the family. Jennie was 5 years old at this time.

In 1892 she welcomed her younger brother Claud in the family and then in 1894 her little sister Bertha. A year later in 1895 she received another younger brother Richard.

As in May of 1887, May of 1897 brought tragedy to the Whitmer family. Claud (5) and Bertha (3) both

passed away 11 days apart. To ease the blow, they also received a new brother into the family, Earnest. 2 years later in 1899 her little sister Cubah was born.

Jennie attended school in Pima and grew up in the peaceful atmosphere of the small Mormon community. At the age of 17, while engaged to one of the young men of the community, she convinced her parents that she needed to get a job to earn enough money for the necessary things that a young lady desires for her wedding, and she was given permission to go to Globe to earn the money. The first Sunday evening she was in Globe a young returned missionary was to give his report, and she attended the meeting and met the young man who eventually took her as his bride. Angus Van Meter Whitmer and Jennie were married on 7 November 1902. 33 years later Angus and Jennie were sealed in the Mesa Arizona Temple on 29 May, 1934.

Shortly after the couple was married they were forced into bankruptcy when the mine they were dependent on closed. At this time they moved to Pima. Their first child, Angus Don, was born 28 February 1903. That same year brought news of Orville and Wilbur

Wright successfully designing and flying the world's first human piloted aircraft. Within a few short decades the invention of the modern airplane would completely revolutionize life, travel, and war for the people of Jennie's day.

On 23 October 1904 another son was born to Angus and Jennie by the name of Ralph. Again in 1906 a son Leland Claude was born but died a short time later of whooping cough on August 8, 1906

In 1907 an awful accident first brought Angus and Jennie to the Alpine Valley. It was no accident that they chose to return and make Alpine their home. They were in Globe when they received word of a family fatality in Alpine. Arza Judd, Jennie's eighteen year-old brother, was dragged to death by his saddle horse. The Whitmers left immediately for the funeral in Alpine. In spite of their sorrow, they fell in love with the 'Alps of Arizona.' It reminded Angus of his boyhood home in the green hills of West Virginia. Jennie's parents, Don Carlos and Mary Ellen Lewis Judd, had recently settled in Alpine. They encouraged the young couple to file for a homestead on 160 acres of fertile farmland, meandering meadows, and forested hills in the Alpine Valley. They made many treacherous trips to and from the Gila Valley while building on their homestead. This became the 'home place' for the Whitmer clan.

In December of 1907, that same year of the move to Alpine, another son, Cecil was born to them. 1909 brought the birth of another son Harold, and then another son, Chuck, in 1910. Then in 1912, 6 months after the sinking of the Titanic in the North Atlantic Ocean, Genevieve, a daughter was born to Angus and Jennie.

Jennie wrote of their life in Alpine, "I see all kinds of animals at the Whitmer homestead including milk cows and range cattle, horses, pigs, chicken, ducks, geese, rabbits, etc. I see a giant garden with long rows

of peas, cabbage, beans, beets, lettuce, carrots, etc. Nearby is a potato patch and a corn field. I see summer sun flowers and smell newly mown meadow hay. I see threshing crews swarming in lines of wagons, waiting to feed bundles of grain into the hungry threshing machine. I see children sliding down mountainous straw-stacks in fabulous summer fun for kids. I see silver streaks of jagged lightning and hear thunderclaps so loud that hands quickly cover exposed ears. I see bushel baskets of ripe red apples and pretty plump peaches that Grandpa trucked in from New Mexico and Colorado. I hear heavy summer storms and see whirling winter winds blowing blizzards and stacking snow into ever deepening drifts."

Two years later, when Jennie was 29 years old, Europe descended into World War I. During that time she would bear 3 more children Ethel in 1914, Ray V in 1915, and Afton in 1917. Tragically Ray would pass away on May 3, 1917 due to pneumonia. One of Jennie's brothers died of spinal meningitis, during WWI, while on a ship going overseas to France.

The following year a flu pandemic swept the world killing more than 650,000 Americans. Blessedly, the Whitmer family was untouched and all survived. Another son, Lawrence was even born on 10 November 1918.

In 1921 and 1922 Angus and Jennie welcomed another daughter and son into the family. Mary was born on 20 January 1921, and Vaughn was born on 23 October 1922. This brought their household to 13. Three years later twins would bring that number to 15. On 7 July 1925 Fern and Faye would join the family. Another set of twins, Blanche and Bertha, would be born in 1928 but would not survive birth. They would be the last children born to Angus and Jennie.

According to David Keith Whitmer the Whitmer children were born, "in the lusty rugged and amazingly beautiful White Mountains of Alpine,

Arizona where the mountains reach 8,000 feet in the sky of Neverland. Alpine is now a resort but in the early 1900s it was a very small place where farmers raised their cattle, vegetables and did whatever it took to feed their families. The Whitmer children knew the Blue well, a place where the cattle grazed in the winter. All the children were raised riding horses. It was a place where everyone had to work and work hard. Seventeen children were born here. Four died.

Describing the home in which they grew up, Jennie's youngest daughter Fern said, "It wasn't fancy, mix and match furniture but it was real homey. We mopped our floors in milk to give them a shine. We had lots of Indian rugs we put all over the living room floor. We had to shake them every morning before we went to school. The dining room was long with a glass cupboard between the dining room and kitchen. We had a large pantry where I made bread, cakes, cookies, and pies. We had four bedrooms, back porch with a spring well at one end. Large front porch. The fireplace was nice in winters."

Much changed in society during these years with the advent of air travel and radio communications which brought music and news from outside their small town.

Beginning in 1930 Jennie guided her family through the Great Depression as Angus worked to provide for their needs. She was 45 at the time. Halfway through this decade her sister Edna died 1,500 miles away in Port Angeles, Washington.

At the end of that decade WWII began and two of Jennie's sons went off to war. Von joined up with the military in the Army Air Corp (now Air Force) in China, Burma and India. Lawrence was in the National Guard before the war started and was sent off to war before ever being able to come home.

Jennie was a worker in the ward Sunday School, a teacher in the Primary and an MIA Teacher as well as a Visiting Teacher in the Relief Society, in the various

wards where she resided. She served as Primary President, President of the Young Ladies, and was in the Relief Society Presidency in her later years.

The living children that Angus and Jennie raised were Don, Ralph, Cecil, Harold, Rex, Genevieve, Ethel, Afton, Lawrence, Mary, Vaughn, Faye and Fern. Four of their children died at birth or at a young age including Ray, Leland, Blanche, and Bertha.

Jennie's youngest living daughter Fern wrote, "My earliest memory of my mother was her canning all summer long with our help. [She] canned 100 quarts of peas, beans, corn, fruit, chili sauce, chow chow. Big dinners [were] also called lunch. Breakfasts consisted of wheat cereal, two large pans of biscuits, eggs, pork chops, steak, you name it. Supper was bread and milk and garden vegetables. I remember Mother sang as she worked and whistled tunes. I remember kneeling at her knee for my evening prayers. She was an excellent cook and was known for her chocolate cakes. Mother was a Number One mother and homemaker. She sewed for us and when she got behind Dad would hire a Sister Jepson to sew for her. He paid her with grain, potatoes, fruit and eggs. Mother baked nine loaves of bread every other day."

Age 61 when the war ended, Jennie didn't really see an end to conflict for several decades. The Korean War (1950), the Vietnam War (1955), The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), JFK Assassination (1963), and the Civil Rights Movement (1964) all happened in the latter years of her life. In 1955, when Jennie was 71 years old, her dear husband Angus Van Meter Whitmer passed away at the age of 76. She would live another 12 years as a widow until 1967.

During her final decade she experienced the death of her sisters Clara (1957) and Cubah (1961), and her brother Earnest (1961), before she finally followed them into eternity, passing away in 1967 in Safford, California.

They lived in Alpine, Arizona for the bulk of their marriage and had 17 children. They were always busy-farming, gardening, sewing, baking; she was known for her baking-the best chocolate cake around. They never had a lot of money but they always had plenty to eat and stayed too busy to notice the rest. She and her husband were together more than 50 years and after her husband passed away in 1955 in Stafford, Arizona, she stayed busy making quilts for all of her grandchildren. She had 52 along with 61 great-grandchildren. She died on 30 April, 1967 at the age of 83.

Obituary:

Sarah Jane Judd (Jennie), daughter of Don Carlos and Mary Lewis Judd, was born January 31, 1881 in Pima, Arizona. She was the fifth child in the family of 13 children. She attended school in Pima, and grew up in the peaceful atmosphere of the small Mormon community. At the age of 17, engaged to one of the young men of the community, she convinced her parents that she needed to get a job to earn enough money, or the necessary things that a young lady desires for her wedding, and she was given permission to go to Globe to earn the money. The first Sunday evening she was in Globe, a young returned missionary was to give his report, and she attended the meeting and met the young man who took her for his bride. They, Jennie and Angus Vanmeter Whitmer were united in marriage on November 7, 1902.

Due to the dependency on the mines for their livelihood, when the mines closed, Mr. Whitmer was forced into bankruptcy shortly after the couple were married. Mr. Whitmer moved his wife to Pima.

Their first child was born February 28, 1904, a son, Angus Don. The second son was born 18 months later, Ralph Judd, and within 18 more months the third son, Leland was born, but lived only a short time. About this time Jennie's parents moved to Alpine,

and the Whitmers went up there for a visit, liked the country and bought a place nearby. The first child to be born in Alpine was Cecil Paul. Harold H. followed within 18 months, followed by Rex R. about 1 and a half years later. Their first daughter, Genevieve, brought the number of children to 7. From that time on another child arrived about every 18 months or two years, making the number 15 in all.

She was a worker in the ward Sunday School, a teacher in the Primary and an MIA teacher as well as a Visiting Teacher in the Relief Society, in the various wards where she has resided. She served as Primary President, President of the Young Ladies, and was in the Relief Society Presidency, and following her husband's death, she served as a Mt. Graham Stake Missionary until ill health forced her to resign from the call.

In 1945 due to failing eyesight of Mr. Whitmer, he and Jennie moved to Safford where they bought a small home on North 8th Avenue, and where they were residing at the time of his death November 3, 1957: They had enjoyed a few years beyond their Golden Anniversary which had been observed a few years before his passing.

After her husband's death Jennie busied herself with making each of her many grandchildren a quilt. She belonged to a little quilting club called the Aunt Dinah's, and with their help finished a quilt for each one.

Her life was a most rewarding one, for she saw many wonderful things in effect during her lifetime. During her last months of life she has been cared for by her daughter, Mary Montierth, who was most attentive and considerate of her mother's failing health. She passed away quietly Sunday, April 30, 1967 in the Mt. View Nursing Home where she had been for the past year.

She is survived by thirteen children, eight sons and five daughters; 52 grandchildren, and 61 great grandchildren. Two children and five grandchildren have preceded her in death.

Grandma Jennie Whitmer

Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer, Taped Oral History

Interviewed by David Keith Whitmer, grandson

THE BARN FIRE

Grandpa took two of the boys on the range to feed the cattle. The wind was blowing that day. He wouldn't let Rex go and he was mad. He had gotten a BB gun for Christmas. He shot up all these caps, and decided to take Afton and Lawrence. They went over by the creek which is right by the barn. They looked up and saw the bird's nest. They put some match heads in the BB guns and shot the matches in the nest which was over the door. It caught fire. Well, they had buckets trying to put out the fire.

Pretty soon Rex came running down to the house and said, "Mama, the barn's on fire." I said, "What on earth! How'd it get on fire?" He said, "I don't know." Well, we had seven or eight calves shut up in there. The first thing we did was turn the calves out. We had three or four horses. Some of the kids went to get the neighbors to come. We were sick. There were seven sets of harnesses. We had two or three saddles, corn fodder and shelled corn, a corn sheller, and a big bin of wheat. You know during the war time we had to turn our wheat over to the government, and they had already checked that wheat. We had to turn the wheat into flour. All that went up and the framing machine. There was nothing on earth we could do but turn the horses and calves out. Rex was sick for two or three days after that, he ran a fever. What I was thankful for was that the little kids weren't in there too.

Dad had always wanted a barn like that to keep his calves and horses, places for the saddles and harnesses. We had grain in there too. Just everything went! We even had a hen in there sitting on her eggs. She went too.

Everyone went looking for Rex way up in the pasture and the hills, and the reservoir looking for him. And then I really was scared. I tell you I thought he had jumped in the ashes and got burned up too. About that time Dad and the boys got there; they seen the fire from where they was. They knew it was home, Ralph had seen it and told them. Don had gone to Holbrook. He said when he got there he could see the smoke. He heard in Springerville that a barn had burned up in Alpine. Right then he thought, that was Dad's barn. We had the biggest barn in town. The next day here come Don. We had to stay up with that fire all night long. Dad didn't. He was sick a bed. He vomited and everything else. He was so scared one of the kids was in there. And when we couldn't find Rex we was just sure he was burned to death. You know how we would have boxes on the runners and where the sticks we took off the runners and Harold was laying as flat as he could and he cried and cried in there. He wasn't very big either. Everyone come to help. One of the boys Genevieve was seeing came, and all night long we tried to keep that fire down. We had to take shovels and pound it out.

CECIL SHOT

That reminds me of when Grandpa was Game Warden, and he was gone one Sunday. Our baby was supposed to be blessed that day. I didn't feel very well. I had something on cooking. I went out to get some chips and in came Harold running. Said Cecil had shot himself. "What on earth do you mean?" I asked. That was up to the barn before it burned down. I dropped my chips. He said, "Well, he can't walk." I took off for the barn. Harold had beat me up there and he was trying to help Cecil walk. It was Harold that had shot Cecil. Harold had told me Cecil had shot himself. We had a lot of rabbits and they were trying to catch them, and he shot the rabbits.

Now comes the crucial part. Cecil had laid down his gun and said, "Now don't touch that gun; it's loaded."

Well, Harold had to see if it was loaded, and shot Cecil. We was three years trying to get that bullet out. We took him to Springerville every day for a long time. A long time later, maybe a year, that year I was Primary President. The kids came down to the church house to get me and told me Cecil had got the bullet out of his leg. The old doctor probed and probed and it was right down there on the top of his leg and between his knee and ankle. We put out a lot of money, no telling how much, having that leg operated on.

BIGGEST DEER

Once when Dad was Game Warden, Harold went out and shot the biggest deer we ever saw. He was afraid someone would tell because it wasn't the season. It hung on his living room wall for years. Many came to see it.

MAKING SOAP

We had to make soap. We even saved the grease off the deer. We stripped the entrails and we made soap out of it. It was real brown soap. You would boil the soap and box it. You could tell it was done when the flakes come off it. We put it in the loft and saved it that way. We used the same soap for everything. We always had a rule. When you did the breakfast dishes you had to wash the chimneys on the lamps. Didn't they hate it! The old lamps would smoke. Then we'd cut the wick off.

MY BROTHER DIED

My brother Arza was killed in Alpine. He was bucked off his horse. It took three or four days before we could get there. They packed him in snow trying to keep him. But they didn't think they should keep him any longer; and my mother felt he was following her all around the house. My father came and picked up me and the kids from Globe. We got there after the funeral.

OUR OLD BUCKSKIN MARE

We had to live on the farm to keep it. We were coming around the White River. When we went to the river the bridge was out, They had a ferry. We took the boxes off the wagons and all that we had. We swam the horses across, six. The old buckskin mare wouldn't swim. Mom and Dad took off their shoes and rolled their trousers up and went out as far as they could. The horse seemed to sense what they wanted. They lassoed her so she wouldn't drown. We had to take two or three trips to get across.

COW EATING THE SHAWL

Mother gave me a cow. Dad wanted to bring her up to the Blue. Dad was already there and he sent word for me to come. The cow wasn't doing well at all. The creek was high and trees laid all around there. I had a woolen scarf I thought the world of. I took it off my neck and hung it on one of the trees. We gave the cow time to rest up. When we went back, the scarf was gone. Dad said she "et it," there was slobber there and everything. The next morning we couldn't get her to budge. She got up on her knees and died, taking my scarf with her. She hadn't been well since she had her calf.

GRANDMA'S BEAUS

I didn't marry the first fellow I went with. I had lots of flames before I met Dad. One outstanding boy was Roneck McBride. I had a wedding stick to marry him. While I was down there in Globe I met Elder Whitmer and married him. When I was going with Ro, I had a very good friend, Josie Merrill. We insisted the boys go to church with us one day, so that people would know that we did have some boyfriends. We all crossed our hearts and hoped to die if we didn't go. I was supposed to meet them at Josie's house. When I got there, Ro was waiting for me. He didn't dare to come to our house very often. He didn't get a very good welcome. I was all dressed up in a frilly green dress with a big wide ruffle

on the bottom. It was a fancy dress and I had a green parasol. I said, "Well, I'll go to church." There was an irrigation ditch in front of the church house and it had a foot bridge, and two or three others were crowding on the bridge. It must have had a loose board. And, of course, I stepped on it, and no one held it down on the other side. I went over in the ditch—parasol, pretty dress and all. They had to drag me out of there, and I came up and my parasol was still down there. There it was, just enough water to make it muddy. I couldn't go to church and had to go back to Josie's where she gave me some clothes to wear home. When my mother saw me she told Ro she thought I'd had enough mischief for one day. He went on home that day.

MASQUERADE BALL

Another time I was going with Roneck McBride we had a masquerade ball. A lady fixed a costume, a nurse or something for Josie and me. We told the boys if they could tell who we were they could take us home. Well, the woman who examined me (taking off mask) on coming in, was Ro's mother. His mother told me I'd better watch out because Ro was sure awful mad because I wouldn't let him take me to the ball. After all I said, "The madder he gets, the better I like it," I remember telling her. She said, "You imp, you." Not a one of the boys or girls recognized us until we all went home together. We danced, and had the best time in the whole world. That broke Ro and me up and he started seeing Susie Merrill, Josie's older sister, old enough to be his mother. We made up, and decided to get married. That was why I was in Globe, to get a job before we got married, when I met Dad.

FORTUNE TELLER

We had an old man hired to work for us in Central. He had our belongings in the wagon. That was another time we had to go prove our land in Alpine. When we went across the river at Clifton, the water went up to the wagon bed. We went to stay with my cousin, Laura.

We couldn't figure a way to get there with the terrible storm. We saw a store window where someone was getting hypnotized. We went that night, and you could write a question on a piece of paper. So I asked her if my mother would go to Winslow for her operation, and if so, would it be a success? The woman said she wouldn't go to Winslow and she wouldn't have the operation. Dad asked her which way to go home. He gave her some options. They told us to go neither way. Not by Globe or the Blue but another route. We did. And that lady was true because we couldn't have gotten across the river either way.

A RUPTURE

One night when my grandma, Mary Ellen Lewis Judd, got up, her rupture (hernia) came up again. She found a sharp point on the table to push it back in but she pushed it too hard and got really sick. We couldn't get the doctor. Finally, a doctor said there was nothing in the world to save her. Her intestines had burst and there was nothing they could do. I have one but I keep mine taped. Poor old grandma. She laid there kinda unconscious a day and a half and then died. She died in St. Johns and is buried in Alpine.

A SCARY EXPERIENCE

When Rex was a baby he had yellow jaundice so bad and enlargement of the heart, so we went to Thatcher and rented a place. Grandpa went to Globe with his fruit. One night when Rex was a baby, and we were alone, we could hear them fighting where they was irrigating. We was scared to go to bed. We sat out on the porch with our gun. Along 10:30 one guy tried to get away from the rest of them, and he come running right where we were. It was a moonlit night and he saw us on the step. I had the gun. Don spoke up and told him "If you comes another step. we'll shoot ya." Then we sat there the biggest part of the night. I was a good shot in them days.

OUR FIRST GRANDCHILD

One of the most important things that happened in our life was when we had our first grandchild. It was Don and Conda who had the babe. They were living in Tacoma, Washington. We couldn't come. Sent her a letter and told them how tickled we were. We bought her a little walker. We couldn't hardly hold ourselves, we wanted to see her so bad.

GRANDPA'S MISSION

The latter part of Dad's mission he spent in West Virginia where his dad was from. Dad hoped if he was around his own relatives that would be the most wonderful thing in the world because they were so against his father, Ben, so much that he had to get out of West Virginia to live. But they weren't much better when he went back. Dad found some wonderful friends though.

He and his companion were going to hold a meeting around one of their relatives. He got a warning just before the meeting daring him to try to go through the exercises of the meeting that night, or they were going to kill him. They all got full of whiskey, and on their way up to where they were going to kill him they got in a fight among themselves. Grandpa always did say the Lord had a hand in it. The relatives were awfully nice and invited him to stay with them as long as they didn't talk religion to them. The note said:

Mr. A. B. Whitmore

We hereby notify you to leave this country at-once. If you do not get away on short notice you will be subject to a severe case of WHITE CAPING There are a nuff decent people in this country to do you up Brown. By short notice we mean now. You must make arrangements to start at-once, or you will be hunted down like any other beast of prey and treated accordingly.

Lost City and Mathias White Cap Association

Remember this is the first and last notice you will get. (Original spelling.)

SOME OF OUR SON'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Our oldest son, Don, went on a mission. It was a great achievement for the whole family. I do know that the Lord was with us all the while he was on a mission. We profited by his mission as much as himself because we were able to keep him there and not go in debt. While he was there our twins were born. He had a very dear friend, a member of the church he was staying with at that time and he told the news to her about it. He sent the twins some clothes made with her own hands and he was proud and so were we. I kept them for a long time. I do know the whole family profited.

Two of our sons, Lawrence and Von, was in the Army. That was an awful ordeal to go through, not like having a son on a mission. We didn't feel like we were doing a lot of good. They had an awful lot of hardships.

GRANDMA JUDD

For the grandchildren's sake I would like to repeat a poem Grandmother Judd taught them for a school party:

Do you know what's in my pocket
Such a lot of things and holes
And all there is you shall be told
Everything that's in my pocket
When and where and how I got it.
First of all a beauty shell,
I picked it up
And here's a knife and
Here's a string
And once I had an iron ring but
Through a hole I lost it one day
And this is what I always say
A hole is the worstest thing in a pocket
Have it mended while you got it

ADMINISTERING THE SICK

I just wanted to make a little notation about Dad. He was ordained a Seventy in Salt Lake City when he first went on his mission. He was a faithful member until his death. I wanted to mention too that we never had any sickness in our home in our life but what Dad's first thought was to administer to them. He always had a lot of faith. Everybody always thought he had a lot of power in his prayer and that he had a lot of faith.

INDIANS

We saw some old Indian ladies in their garden. Dad said "Let's stop and get a melon." I said "All right" so we stopped. In order to get over to the garden they had to wade over across the river. The old lady waded over the river but when she came back, she wouldn't come across until Dad turned his back so he couldn't see her legs.

CHICKENS

We made a trip to Globe, and we had to camp out. Some of the Indians had come and turned out all our chickens in the back end of the wagon. We had an awful time getting them back in.

BEAUTY COURSES

There was one eventful time in our lives when Genevieve went to California with Pearl Tenney's sister in-law. Ethel had been a beauty operator all her life. Genevieve and Ethel found a place where they could work their way through school. Both of them were in Los Angeles taking the beauty course. It has been a very profitable proportion.

CORSETS

Some of the kids want me to tell about the brick building in Thatcher on the Main Street. The mutual

were putting on a play. It was the first time I had a corset on. By the end of the show, I had my corset and shoes in my arms.

CONCLUSION BY ONE OF THE CHILDREN

Then Mary talked about life growing up in their big family and how they never went without. How they always had a thousand pounds of flour, sugar, lard and so forth and would always order it up for the next year ahead, like a year's supply. How Dad always had to have meat and vegetables on the table. They talked about the big reunion around 1954 with nearly all the kids and grandkids up in the Graham Mountains. Afton was the master of ceremonies and everyone had a part in the program. We talked and ate and it was a wonderful time. We didn't know Dad was as bad as he was. He died that November before they had their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They got word that Cecil's son, Paul, had been killed. So we all went to the funeral and saw most everyone there. But the anniversary celebration just wasn't what it should have been although Mom and Dad were thrilled.

Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer

Patriarchal Blessing

August 23, 1936

A Patriarchal Blessing given by Patriarch Orson Wilkins upon the head of Jennie Judd Whitmer, Daughter of Don C. Judd and Mary Ellen Lewis, born January 31, 1884, Pima, Arizona.

Sister Whitmer by the authority of the Holy Priesthood and in the name of the Lord our Redeemer I place my hands upon your head and give you a Patriarchal Blessing and in doing so I pray that the Lord may reveal unto me his mind and will concerning you and some of the blessings he has for you.

You my dear sister are one of the choice daughters of Abraham and the blood of Ephraim is in your veins and you were reserved in the heavens above even in the Spirit World. When the gospel has been restored in its fullness and though you are afflicted Sister Whitmer, you are a blessed mother in Israel and through your affliction have faith in the Lord and trust in him and he will give you hope, faith and courage and you will feel the heavenly influence of your Father in Heaven and he will be near you and His Holy Angels will watch over you. And you will know His mind and will concerning you and He will give you the strength of body and mind to overcome every evil and Satan will have no power to destroy you, and will see and understand the hand of the Lord in your affliction and when you are well you'll rejoice and praise the Lord and know that he is watching over you.

Your departed father and mother are concerned about you and they will have an influence with the great Eternal Father for your good. And even Jesus of Nazareth our Redeemer will bless you. If you have any sins or faults, they will be wiped out of the Books of Remembrance and your soul will become as pure and white as the driven snow. And you will be a blessing and a savior to your family and you will be healed from your affliction and will know and understand that the Lord has done his part. Now dear sister be humble and prayerful, seek the Lord daily and he will bless you with every blessing that is for your good. The Lord has blessed you with some of his choicest children and you have been a wise mother and there will be no end to your posterity. They will be as numerous as the seed of Abraham and you will become a Queen and Princess over them.

If there are any of your boys and girls that are wayward and indifferent, because of their love for you and your teachings, they will become strong in the teachings of the Kingdom of God. And you have had and will be a strength and blessing to your husband. And you with him will grow and

increase in power and influence in the earth and in eternity. The Lord loves you and the angels in heaven rejoice over you and as a Patriarch, I seal these blessings upon you with every other blessing that is for your good and if you are faithful and true the Lord will hold no blessing from you that you desire in righteousness.

Now dear Sister when you are well go forth in the discharge of your duty to your family and to the children of men. You must do all the good you can to others as well as your family.

I seal upon you the blessings of eternal life in the Celestial Kingdom of our God and this I do by the authority of the Holy Priesthood and the name of the Holy Priesthood and the name of the Lord our Redeemer. AMEN

Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer

Oral History

Interviewed by Cheryl Munn at the age of 11 in Safford, Arizona

Sarah Jane Judd, daughter of Mary Ellen Lewis and Don Carlos Judd, born January 31, 1884, in Smithville, Graham County, Arizona. Later it was changed to Pima. Sarah was born in a town where there were more Indians than white people. The town consisted of Indians and Mormon immigrants.

The Mormon immigrants were called by the Church authorities to come to Arizona to colonize it. They arrived in the early spring of about 1882. When the family of Don Carlos Judd and Mary Ellen Lewis with their two young daughters by the names of Ella May and Clara Maude, reached the United Order (the people) they pooled their possessions. They proceeded to share, work, have hospitality, and things. They could tell things wouldn't work out for the Judd family together with Don's father in-

law, Samuel Lewis and Alford Baker, Don's brother in-law along with other families. They traveled to another place.

They arrived in a small town, Smithville, later changed to Pima in the shadows of the beautiful towering Graham Mountains. They all proceeded to take up claims of land, settle down and farm. The first thing my father did was make an adobe house. He built two large adobe rooms. The very next improvement was, he dug the first Pima Community Well. Not long after the arrival of the Judd family, my sister, Edna Adelia Judd was born, being the first Mormon baby girl born in Pima. The first Mormon boy was Pearl McBride. Among the first improvements my Father made was he planted an orchard and grape vineyards. As soon as the orchard and vineyard started bearing fruit, my parents, being very liberal, gave freely of their orchard and grape vineyards to the widow and poor class of people.

In the winter of 1884 on January 31st a baby girl was born to Mr. and Mrs. Judd, Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer.

Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer

Stories from Cousin Laura Lewis McBride

GRANDMA JUDD

I do lots of thinking after I go to bed. Last night it ran like this. I remember when Jennie was a small girl who would have to go to town for Mother so if I happened to be at their home I followed her. On our way we would stop at her Grandmother Judd's and she would always give us a treat, molasses candy, a slice of pie or cake. It surely tasted good. This grandmother was Uncle Don Judd's mother. She had a four room lumber home and she kept it

so clean and pretty. Now that was all I knew about Grandma Judd until a few years before Jennie died when she and Angus lived in Safford. She told me this, that Uncle Don Carlos Judd's father, Hyrum Judd, left his wife, went to old Mexico and married a young girl and raised another family. I couldn't hardly believe it but Jennie told it for the truth. I'm not sure if he ever came back to the valley again or not. I heard he didn't.

FAIRY TALES

It seems like all I remember most in this Judd family is Jennie. We were together so much at school, at church and Cousin Jennie was always the one to suggest and give orders. We would get out in the granary, sit in the warm door which faced south and she would read while I listened. Yes, it was mostly fairy tales. One went like this, "Who killed Cock Robin? I said, the Sparrow, with my bow and arrow, I killed Cock Robin." I loved fairy tales. Then we would shake off our shoes and stockings and crawl back into the sonoran wheat and see how long we could take the itch. Yes, itch. It was awful but it was fun to be the winner.

GUM CHEWING

I have got to tell this one to Jennie. The Judds lived in the east of Pima and we lived down on the farm. She got tired of the small school close to where the Judds lived so she quit and joined a big school where I went to school. We had a good teacher but it was against the rule to chew gum in school. I knew better than to chew it and again it always gave me the stomach ache. So it was no temptation to me. Jennie and I sat together in a double wide desk and one day I was amazed to see my cousin chewing as fast as she was studying, when all of a sudden the teacher spied her gum chewing. Well, the next thing I heard was an invitation to come up and take the

medicine. Poor Jennie, I felt sorry for her. She was told to spit out that gum and come to the front. She was told to stand on one foot for 30 minutes. That was a job and every student in the room was to whistle, sing, clap their hands. Boys had to wear the Dunce Cap for such a punishment but not girls. Well, Cousin Jennie paid her debt, came back to her desk crying, til school dismissed for noon. Jennie was never seen in that school again. She went back to her small school close to her home for the rest of the season. I surely did miss her.

A DANGEROUS EXPERIENCE

I wish to tell you of an experience I once had with the Devil or one of his emissaries. As nearly as I figure it out, it happened in the year 1901 in the spring. I was staying at the home of my Aunt Lula Layton attending the Old Latter Day-Saint Academy in Thatcher, Arizona. I was working at my aunt's to pay for my room and board.

At this time my dear cousin, Jennie Judd, was going to this Academy but I don't know where she was boarding but this certain evening she was with me at Aunt Lula's home. Jennie had a great desire to show me some tricks she had seen played and told me all about it, and if I wanted to see a table dance, she could show me how. To me that was an impossibility, but I was game to see it done. If she was so smart, let her try it. In my life I have said many times. "I don't believe it" and found out later I was wrong. Some of my teachers have called me down for using that phrase just because I didn't believe it is no sign it isn't true. I was dumb.

In those days there was so much Spiritualism being practiced among people in the Gila Valley, the Ouija Board and Mediums, with the help of people who would give up their minds to the leaders of these

fascinations of this kind of entertainment. They could call up spirits from the realms not from above but from below and some people declared they were getting messages from somewhere in outer space.

Now Cousin Jennie had been away from home working that past summer. She had watched this kind of entertainment, saw the results, and knew just how it was done. She wanted to try it out on us girls. There was Nettie Pace, Janie Foster, and Nettie lived just across the fence. Anyway there had to be four of us to complete the circle so now we were all ready for the great ordeal. Jennie was the instructor. She told us just what to do. She said to hold hands right and left. "Don't let go." To grip hands tight, not letting them slip or it wouldn't work. So we did exactly as we were told. We must concentrate on this one thing in our heads and keep thinking on that one thing, the Medium or spirit, we did really concentrate. But it was hard for me to do but I really tried. Now a strange feeling began to come over me. I can't describe it but our hands were clenched. We couldn't move, and Jennie kept up a soft chant about something I couldn't understand. But it brought results. Jennie was so happy about what she was able to do, she had so much faith and it was working fine. Pretty soon a table leg raised, then went down with a thump, then another tried it. A pause, then another til all four table legs had tried it. Then it seemed they were all four legs dancing. I got panic stricken, lost my grip but we couldn't let loose of hands. What should we do?? It was then Jennie got worried too, that darned table cutting up capers was too much for me.

I don't think Aunt Lula realized what was going on. She was busy in another room with closed doors. When she heard us crying she could see we needed help of some kind but she didn't know what it was all about. We showed her how we couldn't get our hands off the table nor let loose of each other's hands, and that table just kept raising up one leg then the other.

Even Jennie was helpless. Uncle Oscar was away on his mission. Who could Aunt Lula call?

Uncle Winfred Moody lived just across the street so she ran for him and although it was late he ran over to see what he could do to help. He rushed to the door, saw the table legs thump on the floor again, and he said, "What is going on here?" At that instant our hands relaxed and were free again. I could even scratch my itchy nose. My whole body relaxed as did the rest of the girls. What a relief!!

Right there Uncle Winfred gave us a good lesson on "The Power of the Adversary." Then told us if we didn't want to be entertained by the devil to not invite him in. For that was just what we had done. Uncle Winfred Moody holds the Priesthood of God and when the Priesthood of God steps in, Lucifer bows out. It was an experience I shall never forget. I am sure Cousin Jennie Judd never will try it again.

NURSING HOME

Grace McBride, Laura's sister, told her this story. She said she was sitting by her patient's bed holding her up when she heard barefeet tapping. They soon came by her and on down the hall hurrying and as she went she turned her head and saw it was her cousin, Jennie. She laid her patient down and rushed down the hall, knocked on the night nurses door, and it only took a second for that nurse to be out of the door, worried. Grace told her about Jennie and she ran after Jennie who had passed around the corner. By the time she was caught, she was clear to the end of the next hall. Soon here came the nurse with Jennie on her arm both as happy as two kids and Jennie was taken into her room, and asked if she wanted to go to bed. She climbed in and the nurse tucked her in bed, told her good night, came out and closed and locked the door.

A few weeks later my husband and I went to Safford to see Jennie. It was a Sunday after the Sacrament Meeting. We asked to see Mrs. Whitmer, and were taken to another room where we found Jennie lying across a bed, sound asleep. The nurse tried to awaken her but she wouldn't move. She looked so sweet. It being Sunday she had on a pretty dress with her hair curled so lovely. Well, we waited an hour, it was time for visitors to leave and the nurse tried again to awaken her but no luck. So I took Jennie's hand, kissed her, whispered my love to her, turned and left the room. That was the last time I ever saw my beloved Cousin Jennie. I do believe they had given Jennie too much dope.

FUNERAL

I didn't go to Cousin Jennie's funeral as I was on crutches and it was so hard to climb stairs. We drove to the Pima Cemetery where their plot of ground lay and drove up close where we could hear the dedicatory prayer given. Cousin Mary came over and we visited with her, and I think that was the last time I ever saw Cousin Mary Whitmer Montierth. And today cousins, Angus Van Meter Whitmer and his sweet wife, Sarah Jane Judd Whitmer, lie in the Pima Cemetery with one of their babies, waiting for the day of judgment. They have a beautiful place to rest with the beautiful old Mount Graham for a monument.

