

The Relief Society Magazine: Family History Stories Waiting to Be Discovered

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The Relief Society *Bulletin* was published in 1914 and was followed by the *Relief Society Magazine* that ran from 1915 to 1970. Join me on a journey of discovery in finding the family history treasures among the pages of the *Relief Society Magazine*!

MY DISCOVERY

Several stacks of the *Relief Society Magazine* were discovered at my parents' home after my mother passed away. I spent some time browsing through several issues and discovered the treasure of family history stories just waiting to be found.



BREIF HISTORY

- 1872 Women's Exponent
- 1914 Relief Society Bulletin
- 1915-1970 Relief Society Magazine
- Founding Editor was Susa Young Gates
- Subscribers:
 - 1930 – 26,509
 - 1967 – 260,000
- Replaced by *Ensign*

FAMILY HISTORY STORIES FOUND IN THE MAGAZINE

Numerous examples of family history related stories will be shared during the lecture. Some of those examples are included in this syllabus. In the “Bond Family” example, on William Bond’s page in Family Tree there is no mention of T. Edward Bond. Following the clues in this Query may result in more family records!

BOND FAMILY.

Does any one know William Bond, who came to Utah in 1855 or 1856? Any of his family who may be living would confer a favor and receive most valuable genealogical help by writing to, T. Edward Bond, 501 Market Street, San Francisco, California.



ELIZABETH WELKER COLLECTS SAMPLES OF ANTIQUE AND MODERN LACE

ELIZABETH Welker, Salt Lake City, Utah, has collected samples of lace representing fourteen different countries and many eras of history. Included are examples of Swedish hardanger, which Sister Welker made when she was fifteen years old; filet lace, in which the design is made on a foundation of net; point Venise lace, made entirely with needle and thread, and still considered the loveliest of all lace; rosepoint, used largely in making trousseaus; and the heavier gros point. Also in this beautiful collection are samples of the rare French insertion, and the less expensive bobbin lace.

Sister Welker lives in Emigration Ward in Park Stake, and the ward Relief Society has been privileged many times to exhibit this unusual collection and to explain to visitors the samples of historic lace, as well as types of lace still being handmade today, such as tatting, crocheting, and netting. Sister Welker has been a Relief Society member for more than fifty years, and a class leader for thirty years. From 1934 to 1937, she was president of the Relief Society of the German-Austrian Mission, and from 1951 to 1956 she was president of the Emigration Ward Relief Society.

Elizabeth Welker collected antique sample lace and also learned to make different styles of lace. Her story was found by browsing through the online pages of the magazine. Several more articles about Elizabeth were found by following up with a search for her name. On her page in Family Tree there is no mention of her lace collection or the special Relief Society events held to show her unique collection of lace to the community.

Elizabeth's photo (bottom-right) and her written testimony were found after searching for her name:

The Way
By Elizabeth H. Welker

THE parents of a child will make any sacrifice to give that child the best life has to offer. But, which is the best? Wealth? A college education? Undoubtedly through childhood and the early years are school is the best place for children. But what is best for them during the upper teens—when life seems so big ahead of them—when they cannot tell which way to go or which way they want to go? They are swayed first this way, then that. Which is the way? Parents of Latter-day Saint children, will you listen to those who have found the way? Let them tell you as they told us recently, in a Testimony Meeting in Berlin. These are young people speaking, they range in age from nineteen up through the early twenties, but they have found the way. They are Missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, laboring in the German-Austrian Mission. Here are testimonies of some of them sent to us by their Mission Mother:

Sister Welker writes:

"So many times my heart has thrilled at the testimonies of our Elders. There has always been one remark, that the world could not tell the difference between us and them.

"There is work to be done in all of the Missions, and the young people need the Mission. I have tried to catch the spirit of this message. While it comes from Germany, it is the spirit of all the Missions.

"Here are the testimonies of some of them:

"I did not care about coming on a Mission. I thought a Missionary had to sacrifice a great deal, but I have learned

that the more you sacrifice the more you gain."

"I have learned more about real life values in these two years of Missionary life than I learned in four years of college. The President of the Church gave me the greatest gift through this work when he called me out on this Mission. I had my 'Sheepskin' from college but I was not happy. I was selfish. I had no joy in what I did. Today I have learned to make sacrifices and it has brought me real happiness."

"Money does not make people happy. I learned that much at home. You have to be satisfied within to be happy. I have learned that, in the mission field, I have learned to be happy."

"Humility is the greatest thing a Missionary can have and my expense account is the test of my humility. When my expense account runs high I find I am not nearly so humble as when it runs low. Spending a lot of money does not bring a Missionary happiness, it is when he spends the least, when he is humble, that he is the happiest. Christ promised if we would live His Plan, we would know His miracles. I have learned to know."

"I have never had so much satisfaction in my life as I have had since coming on this mission, after two years of college. I have thought it does not make so much difference whether I came from a monkey or not, it is whether I go from here as a monkey or a man, that counts. I hope that I can always feel as I feel now."

"If you want to lose your faith, just try being selfish. I had had three years of selfishness and my faith was about to come I turned it down. I got away from the Church and my grades began to slide down. It was not so easy to get back. I cannot tell you how happy I can now be to be back at work in the Church. I am so happy today that I have never been so happy before."

"I see that life has greater possibilities than I had ever dreamed before."

"This is the most practical and realistic life that I have ever known. I have been in college for four years. I have learned more on this Mission than I would have learned in four years of college, if I had really studied."

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"I have learned that our message needs no fine language, just the plain of Truth, for it is the Truth."

"I have learned not to look for great miracles but to accept the small blessings that come my way, they are miracles and they have filled my heart with joy."

"I wanted to be industriously honest with myself and I said I did not know this Gospel was true, but soon learned that I want to describe anyone but myself. I think I have always known that it is true."

"In this world there are no absolutes, I thought I did not have a testimony. I wanted an absolute. I know today that this Gospel is true. I have learned that you have to live for a testimony before you get it."

"Before my Mission my religion consisted of trying to see the other fellow's point of view and trying to give him a penny deal, but I have learned that there is much more to true religion than that."

"I have learned that it does not matter what I do against Truth. Truth comes from God and will prevail. I have seen that this Gospel is true and that it will prevail."

"I wanted to make others as happy as the Missionaries had made my own dear Mother, that is why I came on a Mission. I know that my Redeemer lives, my heart is full of joy."

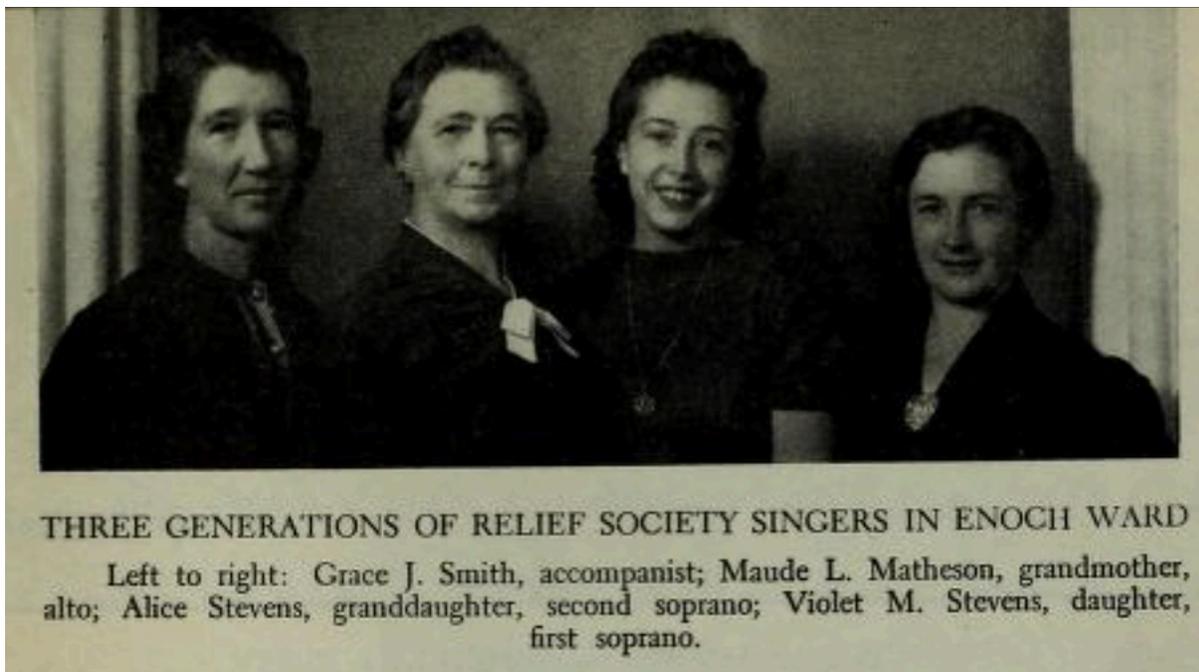
"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform. My Father died here in the Mission Field. I couldn't help but wonder why? Though it was a very sad thing, I know now that it was all right. When Brother Gerr did a few weeks ago, I couldn't help but wonder again, why? But the change that has come over our hearts since his death is astounding. Perhaps Brother Gerr did his work in that way."

"Our own has said, 'The strongest part of the Mormon system is its Missionary work, but I have learned that it is the "Spirit" that makes the successful Missionary. A Missionary has to be humble.'"

These young people have found the way, true they may lose it again, but surely the chances are not so great as if they had not found it at all. And yet they are not in the Mission Field to save themselves, alone, their first work is to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to others. Truly, "He that doeth it unto the least of these my brethren hath done it unto me."



RELIEF SOCIETY PRESIDENTS OF THE EUROPEAN MISSIONS
Hannah M. Urtenbach, French Mission; Susan Groesbeck Kelly, Swiss-German Mission; Eliza S. Petersen, Danish Mission; Hermanna F. Lyon, Netherlands Mission; Amy Brown Lyman, European Mission; Ramona Wilcox Cannon, British Mission; Virginia Bean Larson, Swedish Mission; Martha Sharp Toronto, Czechoslovak Mission; Bertha W. Pirmin, Palestine-Syrian Mission; Edith P. Barkman, South African Mission; and Elizabeth Hope Welker, German-Austrian Mission.



THREE GENERATIONS OF RELIEF SOCIETY SINGERS IN ENOCH WARD

Left to right: Grace J. Smith, accompanist; Maude L. Matheson, grandmother, alto; Alice Stevens, granddaughter, second soprano; Violet M. Stevens, daughter, first soprano.

1940 June issue – “Three Generations of Relief Society Singers in Enoch Ward”. Is this story and photo included on their pages in the Family Tree?

Prize-Winning Story
Annual Relief Society Short Story Contest
First Prize Story

One Wild Rose
Dorothy Clapp Robinson



DOROTHY CLAPP ROBINSON

GWEN met her mother's eyes with forced unconcern, but her fingers were cramped. "I don't need you any longer, Mother. Really, I am all right. I do appreciate your staying with the children while I was at church."
"Donny isn't asleep yet. I could stay"
"I'll speak to him." Gwen hoped her mouth was not actually as tight as it felt. To relieve her hands she began gathering the Sunday papers. "I can't lean on you and Dad forever. You have been so kind."
"Kind!" With a sigh Mrs. Owens reached for her handbag.

Gwen swallowed, trying to dislodge the hardness in her throat. She knew she was not deceiving her mother. She knew her loss was her parents' loss. She knew her every moment of loneliness and her every heartache were echoed in their hearts; but tonight she must be alone.

After her mother's car had passed from sight, Gwen stood motionless in the driveway. For long minutes she waited. "Why," she whispered, "oh, Donald, why?"
A petulant cry came from the house. "Muv-ver." Gwen went quickly to the room where her children slept.

"I wanted you." Donny was sitting upright, his chubby fist beating restlessly on the pillow. "Why did not you come?"
Gwen sat on the bed beside him. "S-s-sh. Must not wake baby sister."
Donny glanced at his sister's crib. "She is dead as the world," he announced scornfully.
The baby was sleeping "dead as the world." Dark curls clung damply about her gamin face. Her rosebud mouth was irresistible, but even as Gwen bent to kiss it, she drew back abruptly.
"You don't like her," Donny accused.
"Lie down and go to sleep." She hadn't intended her tone to be so

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Dorothy was featured in the 1954 January issue as the first-place short story winner. This is a perfect example of a family history story that could be included on Dorothy's page in Family Tree.



C. NELSON WHITE

C. Nelson White

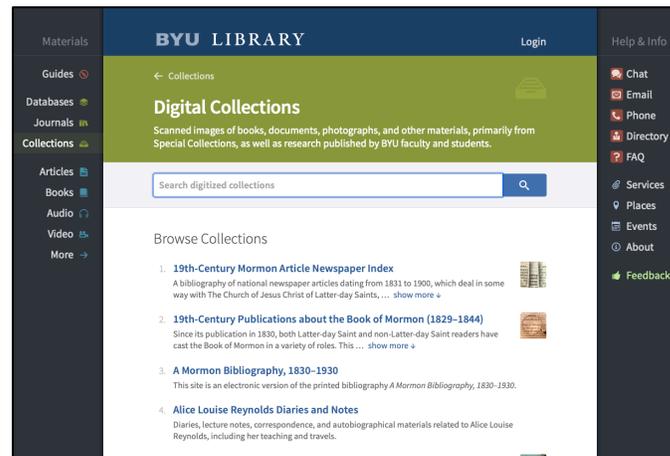
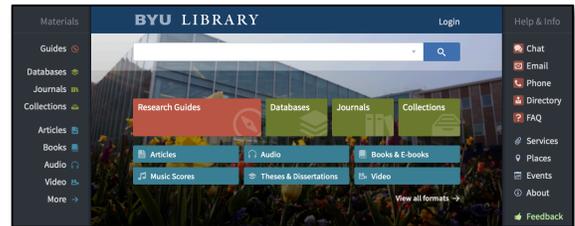
We are introducing to our readers, in this issue, Mr. C. Nelson White, who is the illustrator of *The Children's Friend*, the official organ of the Primary Association. Few things delight children more than a picture book or magazine that is well illustrated, consequently the man who can enter children's lives with interesting colorful pictures has an open sesame to their love. It is a great pleasure to introduce Mr. White to the members of our organization and to publish from him an article that has to do with making pictures for children.

Mr. C. Nelson White was born in Odder, Denmark, July 21, 1893. Although his father was of the working class, he gave his son a good education which included a college course. Neither the parents nor the boy knew that he was gifted as an illustrator until he was 13 years of age, when an old house painter came to live in a little cottage at the back of his father's home. In order to qualify, this painter had been required to go to Switzerland and other countries and make sketches. The moment the boy saw

The April 1926 issue featured C. Nelson White, the new Children's Friend illustrator. He was born in Denmark 21 July 1893. His story of becoming an illustrator would be a great addition to his page in Family Tree! There are hundreds more stories about our ancestors in the magazine waiting to found!

SEARCHING THE MAGAZINE ONLINE

1. Use the BYU Library online at Lib.byu.edu
2. Click on “Collections”
3. Select “Digital Collections”
4. Scroll down until you find the option for the “Relief Society Magazine Index”



80. Relief Society Magazine Index

This index includes the major standard categories of material: lessons, articles, fiction, poetry, plays, recipes, notes from the field (ward and ... [show more](#) ↓



5. Search by name using surname, first name. Example: Sabin, Zara.
6. Use the Advanced Search
7. Search for men's names too! Yes, there are interesting stories about the men too!
8. Browse the Categories to understand how the magazine was both indexed and categorized
9. When you find something of interest by browsing, follow up by doing a search for the name of interest. You may discover more than one article or poem that was written by or about the same person.
10. The scanned issues are saved on the Internet Archive website. The search on the BYU website will link to the issue that matches your search. Therefore, you can also choose to do your searches on the Internet Archive website at <https://archive.org> in addition to BYU's search, or in place of the BYU search
11. Magazine at Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/reliefsocietymagazine>

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