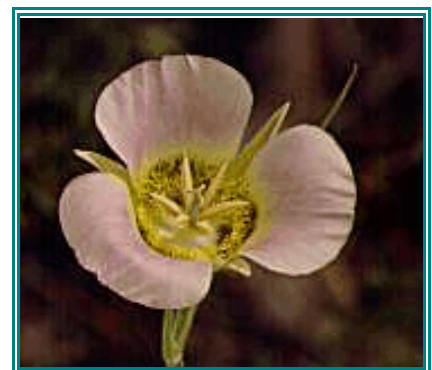


Grandpa Jensen Visited Vernal

Grandpa came to Vernal again when we lived in the Ashton place. Dad and grandpa planned some outings in the area. I was allowed to go, but Dick was sick again. He had the measles, so didn't get to go. The trip I remember took us into a large cave. For light we wore carbide lamps. They smelled bad. Rotten eggs smell better than wet carbide. The light wasn't great compared to modern battery powered lights, but it was good enough. The cave scared me though. Enormously. I was a little tiny kid, and it was dark and damp in this cave, way back there inside where we had trekked for several hours at least - by my reckoning. More like 5 or 10 minutes in reality.

In one room there was an extraordinary sight I'd never imagined existed anywhere in the world. There was a huge fat icicle that hung from the ceiling of the cave down to the floor. White, hard and cold, and enormous. It stood in a room where the wind blew loudly and coldly, the reason for the icicle being formed, and in the floor of the cave there was a large hole. I feared one of us would fall into that black hole and be lost forever. Through this hole, we heard the roar of a subterranean river that flowed angrily and noisily through its space going to wherever it went. Frightening. A monstrous icicle out in the middle of the desert in the middle of summer, standing in a cave that roared and echoed to the point that I felt near-panic, wanting to get out of there. My lamp was flickering and fluttering and I was afraid to tell dad I was afraid. What a sad situation.

When we got out of the cave, it rained a brief desert rain. So we climbed into a small sandstone cave and waited for it to stop. After the rain stopped, grandpa pulled some sego lilies - "mariposa", a beautiful name- and showed me how to eat them. He said that the pioneers had used these as part of their emergency diet while waiting for crops to mature. Today it would be illegal to eat sego lilies because they are the state flower, but I suppose we'd try them again. I'm always thrilled to see sego lilies. They remind me of grandpa.



Foods

Commercially prepared foods were rare in our house. Too expensive. So we made fun of them, secretly wishing we had them. Mom made spaghetti sometimes but it was an unusual dinner. Later mom did buy Franco American spaghetti in the can and we loved it. It actually wasn't as good in taste as home-prepared spaghetti but the convenience and comparable price carried the day, plus it was a novelty to eat something out of a can. This was probably one of those food that helped persuade American's to go to convenient prepared foods. I loved it.



Figure 2 <http://theimaginaryworld.com/newsad63.jpg>

The only other pasta that mom made was noodles, as in chicken noodle soup. She sometimes made her own noodles which is a big project. The fancy pastas like angel hair, fettuccine, and so on were unknown. City folks maybe used them, in fact probably did, but these unusual pastas didn't enter my diet until after I left Boston in 1960.

Commercial puddings were rare items in our diet, and home-made puddings not at all. Jello brand puddings were mom's choice, hence our choice, but Royal puddings were trying to crowd into the pudding world. The twins, Roy and Al, were the key item in Royal's attempt to horn in, counting on the persuasive power of kids on mothers to carry the day. The kiddie market has been around for a long time.



Figure 3
<http://theimaginaryworld.com/newsad15.jpg>

Betty Crocker Cake Mixes

In the late 1940's Betty Crocker managed to create cake mixes in a box that had a reasonable shelf life, and cooked reasonably well. They were a sensation. Just open a box, pour the powder into a bowl, add some water and an egg, mix and put in a pan and bake. What a switch from the laborious process of measuring out every ingredient and getting the batter just right.

Kids were also treated better when moms baked cakes from Betty Crocker. Because they didn't fall as easily when cooking. This was a particular problem with coal stove ovens. The heat was uneven, so cakes baked unevenly and had to be oh so carefully turned half way through the baking time so the other end could cook. Any jarring of the cake, even with the oven door shut, could cause it to fall. The cake mixes didn't seem as likely to fall this way.



Figure 4

http://www.old-time.com/commercials/stunning_upset.html

Ceramics

In the late 1940's, mom and dad, perhaps mostly dad, got involved in ceramics. They went to Salt Lake City to take classes, as I recall, and purchased what must have been a good size kiln for a private party in those days, along with all of the things required to actually make a business out of ceramics. They had some success but not enough to live on.

Separate from the business success was the impact on me of being in a home where ceramics were as normal as drinking water. The stuff was just sitting around the house and I was allowed to take clay and make things. So I did. And bless mom's wrinkled heart, I have a shoebox in the garage today, 2002, with half a dozen of the primitive things I made. Considering that I was only 7 or 8 years old and that I worked without the benefit of any direct tutelage, the things are not half bad. Several cobbled up, lumpy dinosaurs and a couple of nature scenes are in that box that mom preserved for all these years for "me". Actually, for her grandkids I suspect.

I was particularly interested in the dinosaurs that swam, the plesiosaurus, the dinicthys, and elasmosaurus. This is pretty crude I suppose but I was only 8 years

old. I built him on a pedestal so that he can stand up, and painted the glaze on myself. He actually does capture the essence of a plesiosaur. The joint in the neck shows that it was tough to join the neck and body.

Another specimen that survived is a triceratops. With a flat head. At least I got three horns on his shield. I obviously belonged to the school the believed dinosaurs should be the color of whatever glaze you had the most of. He looks a bit better from the front where you can see he's trying to smile.



Figure 5 Plesiosaurus by me age 8



Figure 6 Triceratops

I branched out in other areas after watching the ladies being taught "how to do ceramics." They learned a technique that I really liked, slab construction is what it's called. Sounds easy but it is as complicated as any technique. You roll clay out in slabs, cut out squares, and assemble them into boxes. Then you make a lid out of another flat slab that fits evenly over the top of the box. I decorated the top with various things and added flanges the right distance from the edge to hold the lid in place.

Pretty sophisticated construction I'd say, though the execution left a bit to be desired. The point was that I was in there trying and having fun, learning more than I realized at the time.

The corner joints were open at the top but I managed to get the sides and ends and top and bottom to be nearly identical, which is not an easy thing for a kid left to his own devices. The glaze either didn't match the body or the thing was cooled too quickly as you can tell from the crazing. I like that effect. The lid was a garden, including a rose blossom, rose bush, a yellow chicken and two black things that I don't know what they are.



Figure 7 Slab box with lid with flowers on top



Figure 8 Slab box lid with yellow chicken and pink rose

The third dinosaur that survived is a brown brontosaurus. This guy obviously gave me a hard time shown, again, by the "joint" in the neck where it joins the body. There should be no joint but I didn't know how to form the neck out of the body in such a way that it would allow me to work with it. The idea of letting a piece lay to dry a bit never occurred to me.

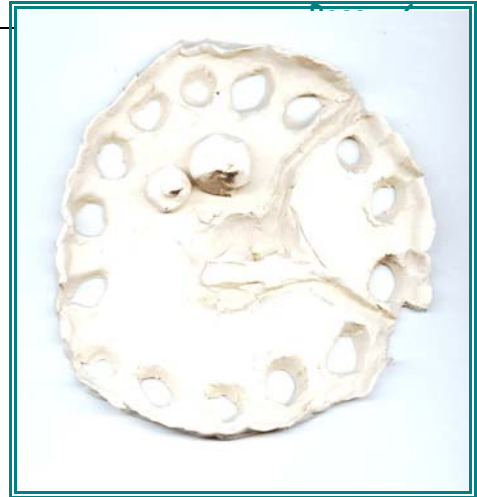


Figure 10 Campsite

The last item to show you is the piece de resistance though it skillfully escaped glaze: It is difficult to see in this image made on a scanner so use your imagination please. This little piece has a teepee, the tallest spike in front of which sits a camp fire, almost the same height so that I could model a teardrop shaped flame. A lake is excavated

with two rivers gouged in, one filling and the other emptying the lake. I unders



Figure 9 Brown Brontosaurus

tood that the Great Salt Lake was salty because there was no outlet so I made sure this little lake did not get salty. There is a sort of fence or border around the base but the meaning of the set of holes around the border is not known to me, the artist. Artistic license I suppose, by a kid who got carried away with an idea to decorate the edge I suppose.

The ceramic business was undertaken with usual absolute, whole-hearted, single-minded, full-scale commitment of a James Alvin Jensen project. Nothing

necessary to advance the cause was omitted. Consequently, he ended up using a spray gun to apply glazes to the pieces he made, a vastly superior way to apply glaze. I know because I've experimented with ceramics in my home over the last year and it is very easy for glazes to dry while being applied by a brush in which case they turn to a sort of lumpy paste. By a novice. Dad understood that the way to avoid this problem was to avoid brushes completely. He got a compressor -may actually have had the thing around the house already but I don't remember it- with a spray gun and applied glazes by spraying them on a wheel. That I now know is named a "banding wheel" since it is used to apply ribbons or bands of glaze uniformly by hand by placing the piece on the free-turning table, holding a brush in one place on the piece, and spinning the wheel.

I am amused today, once more, to see the incredible intensity and "environmental" anxiety associated with the use of lead glazes. I admit that lead is a problem and should be dealt with judiciously. But the risk is minor if rudimentary precautions are followed. Dad advised us to not breathe the mist, but as long as we were in a room where there was some ventilation, he didn't worry too much - nor did he even wear any sort of mask while he was spraying the stuff. He just didn't breathe the mist coming out of the spray gun. But today you would believe that even one inhalation of the mist would make you a raving idiot! Thanks to the -I get really irritated with single issue, uneducated, unrealistic, immature, inexperienced people, particularly those who pretend to have God's Truth^[1]- low grade morons whose IQ is smaller than their shoe size- in the media and congress -really the same undifferentiated mass although they are hired by different businesses. Today we all sit around thinking that lead based glazes are the cause of (1) bad teeth, (2) stupidity [perhaps these salivating morons are proof, who knows] (3) the general poor health of society at large, and (4) the conflict with China. That is crap. But that's another diatribe that I will forego for the nonce for you and for me.

After getting oriented to the medium and acquiring sufficient supplies to

¹These are the same idiots who destroyed the manufacturers who used asbestos in all its forms. What idiocy. To develop mesothelioma, one must smoke 2 packs of unfiltered Camels a day for 25 years in an enclosed space, i.e. a submarine. Exposure to friable asbestos from the bandages on hot water pipes in school will emphatically NOT induce the disease. But don't confuse the politicking, evangelizing people who are more intent on getting personal exposure in the media with the facts. Their minds are made up.

undertake the enterprise, dad and mom offered ceramics lessons to locals who envisioned their works in museums, or on dining room table. Whatever the case, mom and dad had classes on weekends as I remember it, with several long tables set up in the living room or outside on the lawn where women, usually women, sat with rapt attention, listening to the explanations while staring at the mass of unshaped clay in front of them. The whole armamentarium of tools was present, sponges, rolling pins, wooden sculpting tools and so on. Women attacked the clay with determination and the results of their work were fired in the large kiln. They obviously had to come back for another go, applying glazes to the bisque, effortlessly separated them from a spare rupee or two. As many lessons as were required to complete the project were offered.

Glazes were a puzzle. I understood crayons. You mix two colors to get another color, but not so with glazes. They really looked like paste made out of odd colored starch or flour, and when fired they turn into totally different colors. Gold glaze, however, glaze made from real gold, was the most startling of them all. The glaze in the small -perhaps two tablespoons- bottle was black, dense dark heavy black. Dad painted it carefully with brushes on the borders of dishes, producing black lines. But when the pieces were fired, that black was transformed into true gold. Wonderful trick. It was the darling of those women.

The kiln sat in the enclosed back porch, above the well though no one knew that. It was made of the fluffy brick material that resisted and contained the intense heat of a cone 6 firing. It was constructed in sections that were laid on top of each other to accommodate larger loads, or taller pieces. There were two types of sections, one was simply a 4 inch thick ring that added height to the load, and the other had the heating elements. The additional elements were ganged into the main controller so that it could control the temperature of the entire kiln. The notion of increasing the size of the kiln through such a simple mechanism startled me. It seemed to me that something that was capable of such intense heat as to melt dirt should be complicated

Dad and mom were always scheming how to raise a buck and they hit upon the idea of dad taking some finished pieces on a trip down through the state to market them, primarily as tourist gifts it seems to me. He'd apply the name of the town where they were purchased and mail them back down. When the day came to make this trip, it turned out that Dickie was sick again. So he couldn't go with us. This is the same thing that happened earlier when Grandpa Jensen visited us in Vernal and we went out in the desert to explore.

Ceramics Selling Trip to Southern Utah

Dad and mom decided that dad would make a sales trip down through the state to sell their ceramics. He took me with him as company. Dick was sick, again, so couldn't go. Dad loaded up the sample cases to show potential customers his work. The pieces had been carefully prepared, fired and glazed. I think it was Leo's two door car that dad borrowed to make this trip for some reason. If it wasn't Leo's it was someone else's who lived in SLC. The first day on the trip the generator went out and we had to delay somewhere while it was repaired, another painful expense. I was bothered that he had to spend the money but understood that there was no choice.

On the way down, we stopped at Grandpa's place for a weekend. The night that we arrived, he wasn't home. He was next door at the church where there was some sort of social that we could hear. We didn't have clothes to participate in festivities -thank god- so we waited until he returned. He did not know when we were coming to visit so he stayed at the party until the last dog was hung.

He lived in a basement that didn't have a house on it. This basement was in town. I don't think we went out to the homestead. Since Dad's shed was out behind the basement, it obviously had been moved, probably to keep his things intact. He took me out to look around at his stuff. Actually, I imagine he went to look at his stuff and I got to watch him "watch". He did one neat scientific demonstration for me. In one of his buckets of specimens there were several chunks of special rock. They were full of holes, and he said they would float. That was hard to believe. I had never seen such a thing, so he filled a bucket with water and told me to drop the rock in. I did, and it floated. It was some sort of porous lava.

We went to church the next morning, and I was nervous going to my Sunday school class with kids I didn't know. They weren't mean. But they weren't nice either. I was glad to go back to grandpa's home. The old church still stands, abandoned when I looked at it in July 2002 when I took mom down to take photographs. I spent an hour and a half driving around the area, taking photos and talking about things with mom. It wasn't until the next day in Naples that I became suspicious. Sure enough, I didn't have any film in the camera.

Another town we stopped in was named something like Midvale. Dad had friends there that we stayed with. I don't know whether we were headed south or returning when we stopped there. Wherever it was, the family insisted that we go

with them that evening to a local park where there was some sort of a ceremony or program for the edification of the community. The program lasted long enough that it was dark when we finished. It was chilly by the time the program got well underway under over head lights. I sat there on a hard cold wooden folding chair, shivering and wishing I was asleep in a warm bed instead of sitting out there, but there was no choice. As I sat there, I watched the dark sky and the stars and wondered again about them. I saw a shooting star, a rarity because I was usually confined to a bedroom -not necessarily asleep- but the time they appeared otherwise. So the cold chilly evening was a success after all.

Big Rock Candy Mountain

Located down south in Sevier County was the Big Rock Candy Mountain. Burl Ives had been singing about this place for a year or so. It was burned in my memory as a wonderful place, lemonade springs and cigarette trees. What a mysterious place. As we drove south, dad said that we were going to go past the Big Rock Candy Mountain, did I want to stop and see it. mentioned that there was a place of this name. Of course. We stopped.

The mountain is an unusual sandy one, oddly shaped by wind and weather. It shows in this image as the whitish mountain on the other side of the lake. At the foot of the mountain someone had carefully laid out a trail around a variety of natural objects that were named for the things in the famous song. Dad had to cough up some change for me to get in there. The trails were of lemon-colored sand which persuaded me of the authenticity of the place. There were little streams, ponds, odd plants, things labeled with names that Burl sang about. I was entranced. Perhaps it was nothing at all, but to this little impressionable farm kid it was wonderful.



Figure 11 Big Rock Candy Mountain
<http://utahreach.usu.edu/sevier/visitor/pics/cndymtn.gif>

Bryce Canyon

Dad had already visited Bryce Canyon and either wanted to see it again or show it to me, or both. Whatever the agreement in his mind was, we made the trip off the highway to Bryce Canyon. Even to a little kid it was impressive.

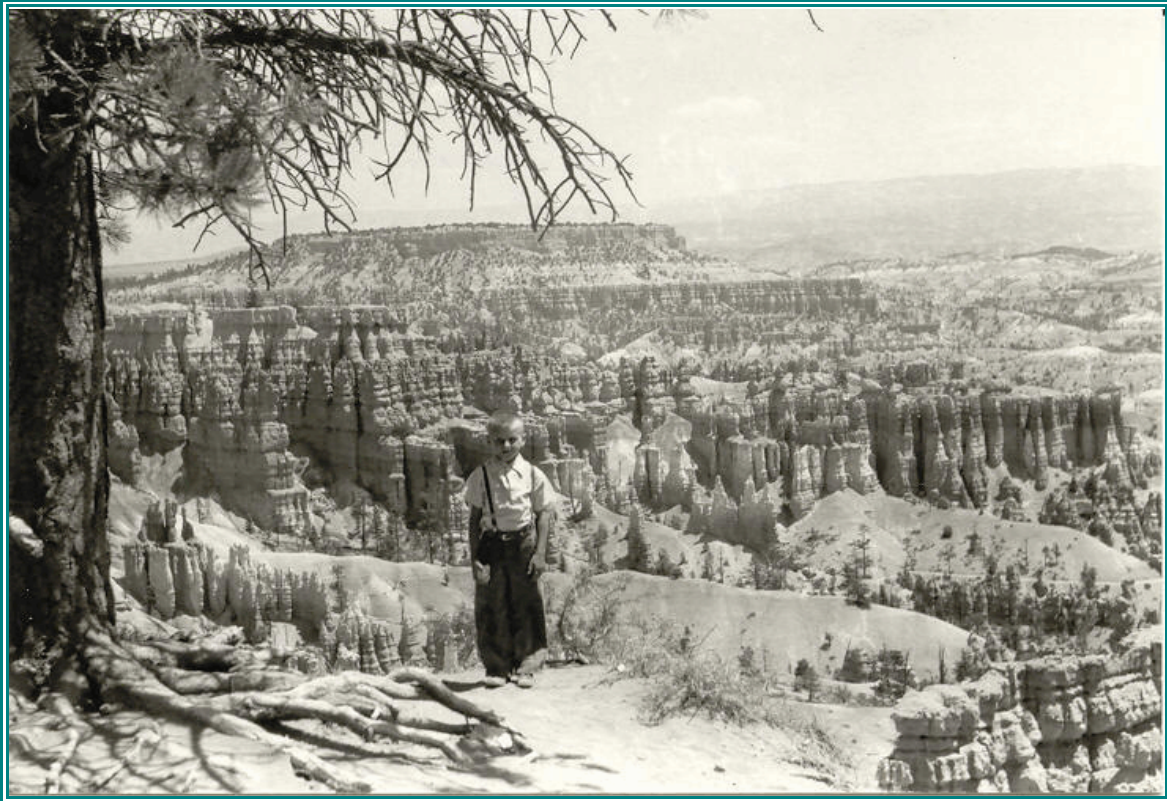


Figure 12 Bryce Canyon

Too bad this isn't in color. You'd see that these spires and formations are differing shades of orange, some browner, some more yellow, but all of them impressive. Paiute legend explains that these individual spires of stone are "legend people" turned to stone by Coyote, a bad actor in general in southwest Indian culture.

I remember being nervous about dad's instruction to me to stand on this ledge. To move back a little bit. It was pretty close to the edge as you can see, and a long ways down, so I didn't like the idea of standing any closer than I had to. After the photo session we climbed down into the bottoms, a fascinating climb. Looking up from the bottom of the valley to the tall "hoodoos" as they are called, was as impressive as looking down on them from this vantage point.

Zion's Canyon

I like this picture. A lot. It is the only one I know of where he's holding me. Like he cared for me. Neat, huh. He probably did but I sure had a hard time telling. We were on our way somewhere else - I don't know the order of the canyons and St. George so don't worry too much about it if I'm wrong.

This picture was taken somewhere in the middle of Zion's, the nation's first national park formed in 1919, a year after dad was born. The road -dad called it "Carmel Highway" and indeed it is- was carved through a mountain and every so often in the long tunnels windows had been cut into the walls with widened areas to park. That allowed people to see the opposing cliffs. These windows probably had the advantage of serving as means for the highway construction crews to get the product of the drilling out of the tunnel. We pulled over into a rest area made for the

purpose so we could take in the view which was breathtaking. Those cliffs soar upward hundreds of feet and we were hundreds of feet above the floor.

This exposure was a guess by dad. He didn't have a light meter for many years so relied on his sense of the amount of light and the characteristics of the Plus-X film he shot. He had incompatible light values. The background was brilliantly lit by the sun, but our faces were in darkness, being lit by



Figure 13 Zion's National Monument

whatever light reflected on them from inside of the tunnel. This print is a compromise where the background was burned out and the faces were not completely lighted but I like it. I have a pair of photos where the background is properly lighted but the faces are totally black and the other is properly exposed to show the faces but there is no background at all. This print has a nice suggestive quality outlining us. My dad with his arm around me. Ha. He liked me after all.

St. George and the Pomegranates

This title is obviously a play on the well-known phrase, "St. George and the Dragon". There was no dragon in St. George. But there were pomegranates. St. George was a sleepy little community tucked away in the south, surrounded by mountains and having little intercourse with the world at large, close to Arizona. It wasn't much different than Vernal where I lived, just that its weather was always warm and nice where Vernal's got bitter and nasty in the long winters.

This was my first exposure to pomegranates. What odd fruits. To start with, the leathery skin was

totally foreign. Not smooth and shiny like apples and pears, not fuzzy like apricots and peaches, not fibrous like corn, not stringy like bananas, not oily and soft like citrus, nor hard like walnuts. Then when you opened it, there were hundreds of little shiny kernels that squirted in your eye when you tried to take them out, filled with hard seeds. To compound the wonder of the fruit, these little kernels were organized in tidy rows, and then groups which were separated from other groups by embossed bitter-tasting membranes,

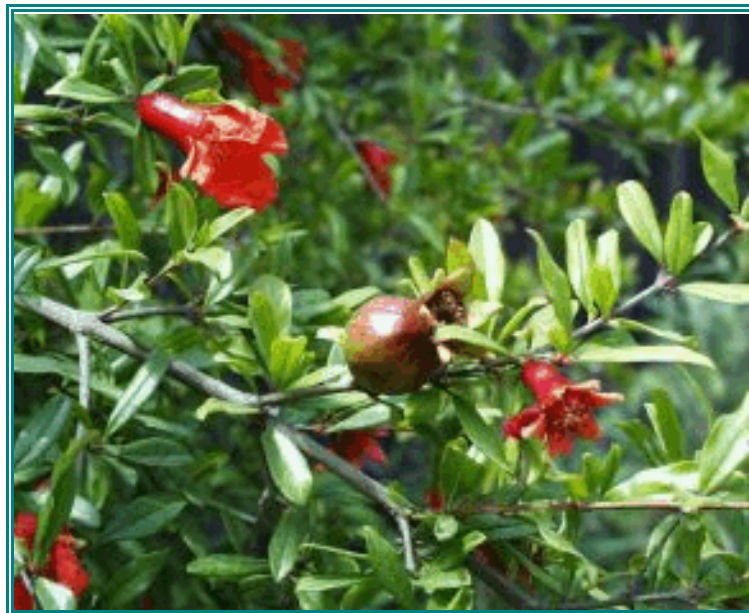


Figure 14 Pomegranate blossoms & fruit
www.dancinghummingbird.com/joyw/garden799/

the kernels of one chamber being attached to one rough spot in the membrane. Never had seen anything like that. The taste was sweet any foreign. The seeds you could eat or spit out.

The other abnormal feature of the fruit was how it matured. It was not like apples and pears and peaches that where all of the fruit on a tree came into flower and matured at the same time. No, pomegranate was like citrus fruit, a fact I had just learned in school, so was particularly fascinated to see it in real life. There were unopened buds, young flowers, small maturing fruit and completely ripe fruit on the tree at the same time. Unheard of. Disorderly really, but somehow they did just fine so who was I to complain.

That is all I remember about St. George. The Pomegranates.

We carried a water bag on the car so we could have cool water to drink. With the increase in the average income of this country and the comparative cheapness of soda pop, these things have been consigned to museums and memories -except for a few hard core off-roaders who apparently have resurrected them.

These bags were made of a thick fabric like gunny sacking but were tightly woven so water won't leak through. However, water moistens the fibers. When this bag is hung on the car over the front bumper, the movement of air across the bag evaporates the water in the fabric. That cools the water inside of the bag considerably so we had cool water.

We turned our selves around and moseyed up the road toward SLC and then Vernal. There were several remarkable events on the trip home was the result of my own curiosity. In spite of dad's warning not to do it, I liked to kneel in the seat and stick my head out the window while the car was moving. It would take my breath away so I couldn't breathe. I'd just gasp so I'd pull back in to catch my breath and do it again. Plus the days were hot so the blast of air cooled me off. While doing this, a bug entered my eye. It hurt badly so dad stopped the car to get it out. I manipulated the lid and used the corner of a handkerchief to finally get it out.

This trip was the only time I remember where he played word games with

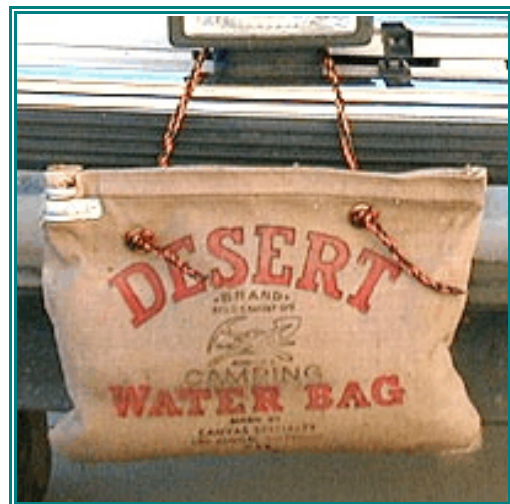


Figure 15

<http://www.suvone.com/waterbag1.jpg>

me. He told me three riddles that I still remember.

- (1) "As a man was walking down the street with me, he pointed to another man across the street and said, "Bothers and sisters have I none, but that man's father is my father's son." What is his relationship to me?

[Answer: his own son]

- (2) "As I was going to St. Ives, I met a man with seven wives,
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven cast,
Each cat had seven kits,
Kits, Cats, Sacks and Wives,
How many were going to St. Ives?"

[Answer: One - "I".]

- (3) Railroad crossing without any cars,
How do you spell it without any "r"s?

[Answer: I-T]

I loved that part of the trip, the mind games, the engagement with me in intellectual exercises he had never done before - and didn't do again.

As we drove, we kept seeing wet spots on the road way up in front of us. Yet as we drove we never passed over any water. It puzzled me. I asked about these odd things and dad explained that they were "mirages", a new concept to me., and a word I love He said they were caused by the heat from the sun as it reflected back off the blacktop. I didn't really understand that but I did understand that this was an artifact of nature that had a good explanation that I would probably understand someday.

We arrived back to Vernal with the car intact and a few orders I suppose. I don't remember whether or not the trip was a success from a business point of view. It was from a personal point of view however.

Trashing the Lycoming

James A. Jensen Provo, Utah written 2/12/91

The phone rings. "Meet me at the airport. We're goin' up to scout deer along the edge of Diamond Mountain. Harold, Ross, 'n Grant are already up there waitin' for us." and with that my brother-in-law Leo hooked me on another wild aerial adventure.

It was the last day of a poor deer season. Not everyone in the Merrell family had killed a deer. Flying along the edge of the Diamond Mountain plateau looking for deer sounded like a fun thing to do. No blood and guts up to our elbows; no hard sweaty drag uphill; no stumbling over loose rocks; no skinned knuckles dragging what seemed like a one ton deer through thick brush. We would stay up in the air and let others do all the hard work. We would have all the fun.

Leo was now legally qualified to take passengers up so we lifted off from the Vernal airport without having to outwit the authorities. It was a dull takeoff. I should have made it more interesting for Leo by secretly hiring someone to run out at the last minute and fake trying to flag us down.

The highway over the mountain to Flaming Gorge reservoir crossed Big Brush Creek north of Vernal, then switched back and forth over the face of the mountain before finally swinging west to the edge of Kabel Hollow. This "Hollow" was a box canyon the rest of the way up the mountain.

Vertical sandstone walls enclosed it up to a half mile from the summit. There it doglegged in a sharp turn to the left. The steep highway followed, creeping up along its east side to cut away from the dogleg half a mile from the summit.

We were flying in the same two place Lycoming monoplane that ran out of gas just as Leo Landed at the airport after my first illegal flight with him. It didn't



have a very powerful motor but finally lifted us high enough to skim in over the top of the Diamond Mountain Plateau.

Leo, again flying from the rear cockpit, began a pattern of half-mile diameter, overlapping circles, with the center of these circles moving along the edge of the plateau. This pattern put us in over the plateau then back out over the gorge, then back in over the plateau, etc.

At first it was a thrilling sensation to have the ground rise up so rapidly, as we flew back over the plateau, that it looked like the planes wheels would be torn off by the tree tops, then as the plane swung around and back out over the gorge, the mountain instantly dropped straight away from us. This created the illusion that we were moving up and down, confusing my stupid stomach.

The advantage of this circular pattern was that one wingtip was always pointed at the ground, allowing us to see everything below by simply looking through a window. In level flight you can not see what is directly below the plane. Swinging around on one wingtip we could scan every quaky pocket for deer and also for our hunters. We weren't sure where they would be so we were literally hunting for man and beast.

I began to salivate, a sure sign my equilibrium was spinning in wild confusion with my stomach soon to follow. We were on a crazy merry-go-round, every time we swung left my stomach wanted to go right; every time we swung right my stomach tried to go left. After a half hour my insides were in full rebellion, frantically demanding access to the exit. I sat grimly with my mouth clamped shut vainly trying to exert brain power over the inevitable.

I was so involved in straining to prevent my gullet from overpowering me that I failed to notice a sudden drastic change in our altitude. We had flown into a sharp down-draft which instantly sucked us down a hundred feet below our circular flight pattern, putting us below the top of the plateau. Goodby deer; goodby Harold, Ross, and Grant.

Instinctively grabbing both sides of my seat I realized we were now in a Class A Hazard situation, one in which the pilot is no longer in charge of where, when, or how, we might land. A situation which would soon turn the organized arrangement of fabric, engine, wheels, and wings--enclosing our tender bodies--into a useless pile of junk with us in the middle of the pile. And that is exactly what happened.

I was concerned because such an unscheduled ending could easily take all the fun out of our scouting project. We were supposed to stay up in the air, easy money, no sweat, have fun-- all of which were now cancelled forever. Even praying would be of no help.

As we flew along sweating out the thought of an untimely demise, my stupid

stomach was actually very happy with the thought of getting down out of the air as soon as possible, though I didn't like the prospect of leaving an empty stall in the hangar at the airport. Nonetheless that possibility was easy to comprehend when looking up a hundred or more feet to the edge of the plateau--which we are supposed to be above but which we are flying below in the wrong direction. We were in fact, ON A TERMINAL TRIP INTO A BOX CANYON.

There are few situations more disturbing than being in an airplane flying the wrong direction into a box canyon. It's very depressing. To make matters worse I realized the motor was laboring mightily just to keep the plane climbing enough to stay above the rocks below as the bottom of the box canyon was also climbing. It was the temporary nature of the trip that was so distressing, with fate alone deciding how, when, and where we would run out of air between us and the canyon floor.

We were less than a mile from the Dogleg where, one way or another, our flight would surely end. It would it be a slow, messy affair, or would it be quick and painless, leaving something big enough to be boxed up and carried in solemn procession up a hill and into the sunset. Never before having gone through the preliminaries of facing death I was unsure of how much detail one should expect to review before the final door slammed.

As the plane labored on Leo said nothing but I knew enough to read the gages in front of me. I could see the motor RPM' were almost down to "stall" and at the same time our airspeed was also almost down to "stall". In fact both gages were almost down to KILL and the bottom of the hollow continued to rise up to meet us.

Flying past ponderosa pines, with half of their height above and very near to us, was a most unnerving experience. Leo would dip gracefully to the left, then to the right, to miss the trees as I looked out into the middle of each one as we passed. In one I saw a startled squirrel choke on a nut, not being accustomed, suppose, to seeing airplanes fly by on his eye level. I knew if Leo let our airspeed drop below "stall" we would certainly smash up against one of the walls, leaving an oil smudge dribbling down the sandstone--which would irritate the U.S. Forest Service no end. My estate would be cited for littering and the USFS would no doubt insist that my survivors go up with soap, rags, and clean up the untidy mess.

Also, if Leo let the engine RPMs drop below "stall" we would just as surely end up plastered against the sandstone, etc, etc and again the USFS would be irked, etc. I experienced a peculiar kind of thrill, you might say a "once in a lifetime thrill" as we flew along KNOWING WE WERE GOING TO CRASH, and maybe be blown to Kingdom Come by a giant fireball. I remembered pictures of the burning Hindenburg and burning people

staggering out of it, which didn't comfort me a bit.

One odd thing about this experience, for me, was sittin' there saying to myself, "I'm Jim Jensen, sitting here in this lame pigeon, flyin' along up this box canyon with not enough power to fly up over one wall or the other, and with not enough room between the walls to turn around so there's going to be a plane crash", or; "I'm Jim Jensen and I've always tried to be as good sort of guy but I'm sittin' here in this flying egg-crate and it's going to smash into the mountain which we're flying toward", or; "I'm Jim Jensen and I'll soon be in a plane crash, and as the hero always says in the movies, 'I'm too young to die.' Maybe it's all a dream. Yeah, that's it, a dream".

I reach out hopefully and brush my hand over the instruments which are telling me we are about to lose flying speed--which is generally followed by a crashing sound. The instruments are real so it's not a dream. It's real, too real. My auxiliary sweat system kicks in. I've heard that when you are about to die you think about all the bad things you have done in your life. I considered this momentarily, but the distance to the dog leg was too near to give me enough time to even try an abbreviated version of my sins so I sat there with my toes clinched in my shoes. There wasn't anything I could do to alter my fate. Then I thought of something comforting, there might be a reward of sorts for our achievement.

Noone has ever flown up the bottom of Kabell Hollow in a plane before. We were engaged in doing an historic "first," so we might go down in history when we go down on the rocks ahead. Some day there could be a bronze plaque bolted to the impact boulder reading: "One day long ago two dummies flew into this rock" (how noble). Leo was an excellent pilot. He kept his cool, skimming, along, wingtips slicing needles off the big ponderosa. I thought could hear the wheels knocking birds off the tall quakies below us. Had Leo have been a clumsy pilot, or prone to panic, would have stalled us out to plummet down, discoloring a few boulders in the canyon below. He didn't panic, but with professional skill kept our "climb" just barely over "stall" so we could get as far as possible up the holler before becoming intimately involved with the brush and rocks somewhere up there. The fact that I'm here to relate this tale is proof that our landing, though not a three point touchdown, at least was not fatal to me.

In spite of Leo getting the utmost "climb" out of the engine, when we reached the dogleg where the canyon turned sharply to the left, the plane lacked enough airspeed to maintain steerageway, so instead of turning left to go on up the canyon Leo had to let the Lycoming fly straight into the mountain at 5 MPH. I was still thinking, 'it can't happen to me' when a lot noise occurred and the neat arrangement around me changed.

If we had of been a hundred feet higher we would have ski up a smooth slope,

ending up on top of the plateau, where we could have calmly deplaned and ordered a hamburger and fries. But it didn't end that way. For although there were no huge clumps of bushes; no quakies or cedars ahead of us, no boulders or strong piece of cliff for us to smash into--or even a thick cow to soak up some of the impact, we did suffer an uncommonly quick, jarring stop--betrayed by primitive human technology.

We crashed smack dab into the middle of a big pole corral built around a spring to keep cattle from wallering it out. Just before we crashed Leo wisely cut the ignition. No panic, just cut the switch, knowing the peril of fire. I'm still grateful to him for that act. He no doubt saved our lives because I was in no condition, or position, to scramble out of a pile of burning wreckage soaked in aviation gasoline. He had to pry me out of my seat; tear a hole in the wreckage and drag me free of a possible fire (remember, this is going to be a 55 MPH quick stop).

As we crashed I ducked my head. My left elbow hit the compass ramming my folded arm into the instrument panel all the way up to my armpit, tearing the sleeve of my new wool shirt. My shins hit something hard and I got a goose-egg on my forehead but I was conscious. The wind was knocked out of me but my stomach was so happy to be down out of the air it was as calm as a summer morning. Leo's seat belt ripped loose throwing him up on top of me, and before all the splintered wood reached the ground he kept repeating, "Jim, are you hurt?", "Jim are you alright?" I sounded real bad because all I could do is groan and gasp. The fuel tank had ruptured and aviation gas was anxiously trickling over everything. It ran down onto my arm stuck in the instrument panel, then down my side, my leg, and into my shoe. Thanks Leo wherever you are, I salute your cool head for the simple act of turning off a switch before we crashed (he went to his reward ten years ago, God rest his soul). The structure of the cabin was too smashed up for us to recognize the door, let alone open it and get out. Leo said with determined conviction: "we gotta get out'a here, man, we gotta get out'a here".

He wasn't a large person but he was strong and tough. He tried to move me but my body was cramped in a bent-over position with my right arm stuck in the instrument panel. This cinched my seat belt too tight around my middle. He couldn't pull my arm out of the instrument panel, and couldn't get a hand under me to unsnap my belt release, so without any ceremony, or tools, he proceeded to take the plane apart from the inside.

Straddling my seat, with both hands on the back of my seat, putting a great strain against the smashed dash with both legs, he caved the dash in and away from my arm, Getting my arm free allowed him to heave my upper body back far enough to unfasten my seat belt. Then making two great heaves with both legs pushing one way, and his shoulders heaving up, he shoved some twisted tubing and part of the smashed doorframe

aside and after stomping some snagged metal down, grabbed my head and one arm and dragged me out through the hole. I weighed 200 pounds, all dead weight and with the wind knocked out of me I couldn't help him.

Leo liked to brag about his exploits but he never said anything about how he got me out of the plane that time. It was a genuine emergency and he was very earnest about it. Then getting me in a better position with his arms around my chest, from behind, he dug his heels deep into the ground and dragged me a safe distance from the wreckage. There we both flopped. Boy, oh boy, did that hard, steady ground feel wonderful. My stomach loved it. Good old terra firma, oh marvelous, steady rocks and bushes. After awhile I began to get my wind back so I could look around and see what had happened.

The plane and corral were a pitiful mess. The plane looked like a chunk of blue biscuit dough that had been flung into a big beaver lodge, then blown up with a stick of dynamite.

We sat there looking at the smashup for a long time until our nerves settled down. The plane was really totaled out. It baked in the sun there for several years before the Forest Service made its owner clean it up. He didn't make Leo pay for it because the plane's maintenance records would have revealed a serious violation; it was five months overdue for a major overhaul. The CAA would have nailed the owner's hide to the hangar wall. But back to our intrepid flyers:

Finally there was nothing for us to do but go home, so we began working our way down to the road below. At that time the spring was about 100 yards above the road through a lot of rocks and brush.

It being the last day of deer season we knew someone would soon come along and we could catch a ride down the mountain. We headed downhill. A car of hunter approached us. We stood there looking dumb. The car stopped and we climbed in. I think they picked us up out of curiosity. We had no red coats, no guns, no hats and not even hunting knives dangling from our belts. We offered no explanations but just sat there with silly grins on our faces. When we got down to Windy Point curiosity got the best of one hunter:

"I don't like to be nosey, but just what th' hell have you guys been doin'?" This overpowering curiosity tickled Leo.

"Flyin'"

"Oh, where?"

Leo jerked a thumb skyward.

"Then where's your plane?"

Leo grinned even wider.

"Up on the side of the mountain" he answered. Then again,
"Oh, I didn't know you could land up there", the hunter said in amazement.
Leo grinned even wider: "We did".