

HISTORIES OF MARY GENEVA MORRIS MURRAY

Documenting This American Family (DocFam) Editor's Note: Mary Geneva Morris Murray's histories were self-authored about 1984. Light reformatting has occurred in this DocFam version; however, text is copied verbatim from the original transcription. No corrections are made to spelling, punctuation or syntax, to preserve the original author's unique personality and voice.

"I was born September 23, 1901 in Brigham City, Box Elder County, Utah, the seventh child of John D. and Elizabeth Morgan Morris. Our home was located one-half block south of the beautiful Stake Tabernacle on Main Street; it was stucco covered home. Father and Mother had been spending the summers in Rockland, Idaho trying to obtain a farm on which to make a living, but Mother's health became so bad it was thought sensible to move to Brigham. Unfortunately, for all concerned, my mother, who had been plagued with kidney disorders developed what was then called Brights Disease. She suffered intense pain and when I was eight days old, she died, leaving my father with six children to care for---Anna, who would be eighteen years old on October 26; David John, 16; Mabel, 13; Harry Leon, 8; and Thomas Melvin, 5. And of course me--an eight day old daughter. A son, Lloyd F., who was born on November 4, 1890 had passed away on January 28, 1897.

In Mothers' last hours of life, I was told, she kept calling for her only sister, Mary Alice Baker, who lived in Mendon, Cache County, Utah. Communication and transportation being what it was in those days, was terribly hard to get word to Aunt Mary and for her to get to Brigham City which was some twenty miles away. She had to wait for evening train which, to her disappointment, got her there too late to see her sister before the grim reaper had called, but the kindly old Doctor sensed that Mother had a message for Mary and she was growing weaker by the minute, so he had a neighbor to into her bedroom and pretend to be Mary. She took her hand and said faintly, "Mary, take my baby and be good to her. You can name her anything you like but put Mary with it." Then, like a candle in a light breeze she was gone,. She was buried on October 1, 1901 by the side of her son Lloyd in the Brigham City Cemetery. My Father's brother and his wife had a baby girl a few days earlier and they were very insistant that Father allow them to take me and rear the two of us as twins. But Father would never consider it as he knew it was contrary to Mothers' wishes. I am glad for this decision as I would not have been brought up as a Latter-day Saint for my Uncle and Aunt were devout Jehovah Witnesses. I will be eternally grateful for this turn of events in my life.

After Aunt Mary arrived home in Mendon, Utah with her small bundle she found that in order to try and save the so much needed mother, the baby had been sorely neglected and it was quite a problem to know how to handled the crisis what arose and knowing as I do now her proficiency as a nurse, I am sure that one with less experience and knowledge world not have brought me through. "Mother" as I have always lovingly called her, had lost a golden haired little girl earlier, whom she called "Florence Geneva", and so she decided to name me "Mary Geneva".

She was by no means footloose and fancy free, as she had married a man in her youth by the name of Joseph Baker, who was fifteen years her senior, whose wife had died and left him with seven children. My two mothers and my grandmother Morgan had embraced the "Latter-day Saints" religion in Merthur Tidfille, South Wales, after grandmother had lost her husband, Thomas Morgan and eight of her ten children. They were able to make the voyage to America and as grandmother had a brother, John Roberts, who had preceeded her in a similar venture and was living in this area, they came to Logan, Cache County, to try to make a home for themselves. After marrying Uncle Joe, she then had twelve children of her own.

1 | Histories of Mary Geneva Morris Murray. Copy of original manuscripts in possession of Donald Rodrigus, Alameda, California USA. 20160730g

I was told by my father, who later spend some 16 years in our home after I married, that my own mother had a beautiful soprano voice and she and my grandmothers brother, John Roberts, who lived in Willard, just south of Brigham City, san duets together and there were few funerals in that area that they didn't perform this service. Grandmother Morgan had met and married an older man by the name of Jonas Mathias who was neither good to her nor to my mother who as a young girl was forced to live under the same roof. In fact, it was his cruelty that caused mother to leave home and go to a friends house to stay to the night, and father, coming in from Rockland, Idaho, where he was farming, and learning of this, took mother up to the Justice of the Peace, and they were married. They were planning a temple marriage but Father couldn't leave her to such a plight so he married her and took her back to Idaho to live.

Grandmother Morgan was still living at my own mother's death, but was past the age of helping to raise the motherless children. Anna helped at other peoples homes for pay and gave her wages to Mabel to help with the raising of the children. Father went back to the farm in Rockland to try and help with the finances but there was mothers doctor bills and burial expenses and that was about all he was able to accumulate. Father was a very good living man bud didn't seem to have the art of making money. They must have been pretty self-sufficient for their ages as with what help they obtained from neighbors and friends they seemed to manage until Melvin and Harry, the two youngest, went to Rockland to stay with my father's brother and his wife, Uncle Sam and Aunt Alta Morris. Anna and Mabel both married good men who helped greatly with their schooling. Anna and George especially, opened their home and their means to see that these two boys did not want for anything they could possibly give them. Dave married very young and went to Rockland to farm.

As for me, if my own mother couldn't have lived to raise me, I could not have been brought up in a home where more love and kindness were showered on me. The youngest of their children was six years old when I came to live with them. When she was fourteen she passed away with scarlet fever on Thanksgiving morning of 1909. Their son Richard was filling a mission for the Church in California. He came home for the funeral but returned to finish an honorable and successful mission. One of my fondest memories of my childhood was sitting on my mothers lap when my feet almost reached the floor and sing duets of some of the well-known hymns such as "Love at Home", "Do What is Right:, The Lord is my Shepherd" and others as "Red Wing" and "Old Black Joe".

I had very little difficulty in school as I had so many at home who were willing and anxious to help me with anything that seemed to give me any problem. They were all blessed with good minds and although Alma and May were the only two who attended college, Alice and Ann graduated from dressmaking school and they were all apt students. May took a very active part in dramatics as Mendon was known for producing many fine melodramas. She helped her with her lines, giving her cues. I will always thing that this impression was responsible for my interest in dramatics as in later life I took several parts in dramas in Mendon and Wellsville, which I really enjoyed doing.

I went to public school in Mendon. We started at six years of age in the beginners grade and went through the eighth grade in a three room school house. The summer after I graduated from 8th grade, Alice passed away leaving two boys which mother took to rear bringing her total number of children to 22. After graduating from the eighth grade I went to Wellsville Junior High School for the ninth grade and on to South Cache High School where I graduated in May of 1920. Up until now I had gone by the name of Geneva Baker, but H. R. Adams was the principal of the South Cache High School and he had gone out with one of the Baker girls and knew the circumstances. He suggested I register in my right name as anything I did in a legal way would have to be done by Morris and that would include my high school certificate, which I did. I was very interested in school and hoped to complete the course of study for the

Brigham Young Junior College in one year. At that time you would be issued a certificate to teach school after your graduation. I had aspirations of teaching until I accumulated enough money to go to law school. I have always been interested in civic affairs as is shown in my participation in politics in later life. This dream, however, was never realized.

When I was in school I met Luther Murray. He was very much involved with his interest in Clara Poppleton and I was too occupied with trying to get ahead in school, as I was trying to make enough credits to finish a Junior College course, which was a six-year course in five. Anyway, we didn't discover each other really until just before school began in my senior year. I was crossing the street going home from a friend's when he came riding along the street on a horse. He had taken a herd of sheep his father had sold from Wellsville to meet the new owner, out north of Mendon and was returning home. We simply spoke and each went on our way never thinking of what this casual meeting would mean in our future lives. The following Sunday evening he called at our home and asked if he might take me to church. His brother Seymour was keeping company with a friend of mine, Olive Jenson and from that night on each Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday, the four of us spent our evening together. Luther and his three half-brothers were in the process of buying the family farm and were fortunate to have a very nice Studebaker automobile, which made our courtship. This was in July of 1919 and in October, Luther dissolved partnership with his half-brothers and went to Ogden with his nephew, William Brenchley, to work for Perry Flour Mill. He stayed there until his father recommended that he join a partnership with his brothers Parley and David in buying a farm in Thatcher, just west of Tremonton in Box Elder County.

This Luther did and although this venture proved unsuccessful, this meant he needed a wife to help him. I have never been sorry that he was able to persuade me that he loved and needed me, so on November 3, 1920 we were married in the Logan Temple. I must describe this day as it was one of the most confusing days of my life. First off, our means of transportation was our feet and Luther's mother was going to the temple with us so I was to spend the night before at their home. We were to walk two and one-half blocks to the old interurban station to catch the car to Logan which left at 7:30 a.m. so this necessitated getting up early so grandma set the alarm clock but forgot to pull out the control. When she woke up there was barely time to put on our clothes and Luther, carrying his mother's cases containing their temple clothes and I with mine, we took off as fast as we could without any breakfast, arriving barely in time for the car's departure. When we got to Logan we had an uphill walk of about six blocks, suit cases and all. The ceremony, of course, being new to me I was naturally worried and we finished in time to hurry down the hill to catch the 2:30 p.m. bus to Wellsville with still nothing to eat. We walked back up to the Murray home where Luther had a sandwich but I was too upset to eat. We then took off for the depot to catch the 4:30 p.m. car for Mendon where I expected a chicken dinner to be waiting as that was the original plan; but instead, Ferris had been hunting ducks and by the time the ducks had been taken care of there was no time to dress and prepare chicken so we had a good dinner but the roast duck was a disappointment to me. Anyway, Luther enjoyed it. I might say here that mother wasn't very well and wasn't up to such an ordeal and to this day I am surprised (she) survived it. A very few minutes before the car pulled in for Mendon, Grandma Murray came steaming in with a parcel for Luther which proved to be his pajamas he had forgotten.

ALTERNATE HISTORY OF MARY GENEVA MORRIS MURRAY

Documenting this American Family (DocFam)Editor's note: Another version of Mary Geneva Morris Murray's history was self-written by her in the third-person about 1988. The original manuscript's syntax, punctuation and spelling are reproduced without editing to preserve the author's personality and voice.

Mary Geneva Morris was born September 23, 1901, in Brigham City, Box Elder County, Utah to Eliabeth Morgan and John Devonold Morris. She was the last of their seven children. Those that preceded here were Anna, David, Mable, Lloyd, Harry Leon, and Thomas Melvin. Lloyd died of membranous croup when he was but seven years old. Her mother was very frail and was plagued with a kidney infection that took her life when the baby was but eight days old. She asked that her sister Mary Alice Baker who lived in Mendon, Cache County Utah to take her baby and that she be named Mary along with any other name she chose. Mary had lost a little girl whose name was Geneva, hence the name Mary Geneva.

She was well cared for in the Baker family and was called Geneva Baker until her senior year in High School when the principal who was acquainted with the circumstances advised her to take her legal name.

Learning came easy for her and at one time she had aspirations of becoming a Corporate Lawyer but as so often happens she met a young man who convinced her that marrying him was more important than being a lawyer but he later admitted that she would have made a good lawyer. As he put it, she had never lost a case in their long life together. His name was Luther Parker Murray and he was the son of William A. and Sara Jane Parker Murray, who lived in the neighboring town of Wellsville. They were married on November 3, 1920, in the Logan L.D.S. Temple.

Her mother had a beautiful soprano voice as most Welch people do and some of it trickled down to her daughter. Geneva loved to sing and she and Luther sang at many functions. One which meant a lot to both of them was Luthers fathers and mothers fiftieth wedding anniversary. Geneva sang for well over 50 years in the ward choir as well as other functions. She was very active in the organization of the church, especially the young ladies Mutual Improvement Association where she labored for over 35 years.

Luther was a farmer and they later bought a part of the family farm. When her father needed a home in his retiring years, it was their privilege to take him into their home for over 16 years. This filled a need for both as he was a built-in baby sitter and grandpa.

They were blessed with five children, Beth, Luther Lee, Keith, John Derlin, and Janice. A distinct sadness came into their life when on the 19th day of September 1980 their youngest son John Derlin was killed on his way home from work. He left a lovely wife and four darling children 3 girls and 1 boy who was with his father and is still suffering ill affects from the accident. Although Barbara has remarried she has stayed close to the family and is still a part of all their functions.

Geneva and Luther were privileged to live together for nearly sixty-five years. Luther passed away on June 5, 1985 in the logan Regional Hospital of a heart condition and was buried June 8th in the Wellsville cemetery.

Geneva suffered congenital heart failure on July 7th of that same year and it was impossible for her to stay alone in their big 5 bedroom home so she move to a Retirement Center in Logan Utah where she is

presently living. She is very comfortable and where she can summon help should she need it day or night. Many other services are available too. All seems to be working out for the best.