

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE OF JEWEL AND LEONA MCGEE

For several years Jewel and I lived with our families in the little town of Fruitland, New Mexico. Jewel being four years older than I, graduating, going away to work and all, we barely knew of each other's existence.

In the year 1935 my parents moved to Ignacio, Colorado, having bought a farm there. This move really concerned me as I did not want to go to school my senior year there. I wanted to stay in Kirtland and graduate with my friends.

Knowing this, Viola and Carlos Stolworthy offered me a job working for them to pay for my room and board, for which I accepted. After graduating Aunt Vi and Uncle Carlos asked me to stay on and continue working for them, paying me \$20 a month, again, I gladly accepted. I worked hard helping to keep a twelve room house clean, most of the rooms were large, then with eight children in the family with lots of washing and ironing to do as well as dishes and etc.

Troy Washburn was also living with the Stolworthys, although he was out to the trading post, most of the time he would bring his laundry with him when he came to town. We washed and ironed it and sent it back out to the trading post with Uncle Carlos.

The Stolworthys were very good to me and were like a second family. I had great respect for Aunt Vi and Uncle Carlos, I truly loved them all.

Aunt Vi told me later that someone had told her I wouldn't be any help to her as I was spoiled and didn't know how to work. Thank goodness that wasn't true. Aunt Vi just laughed about that, she said she was more than happy with me. Then too, I learned a lot from her.

About this same time Jewel was working for Uncle Carlos at the Red Rock Trading Post, and a few months later bought one third interest from him. I'm sure Uncle Carlos must have talked about me to Jewel, telling him I was working for them. Perhaps too, stirring up a little curiosity and interest in me because I received a phone call from Jewel asking for a date to go to the show with him. This was a great surprise because we had never paid any attention to each other before. Needless to say I was excited, somewhat shocked that he would even consider or think of asking me out.

This was the beginning of our romance. With Jewel out to the trading post, having just bought an interest in it and the distance between us, we didn't see each other too often, every two weeks usually. We took a liking to each other and when together had a good time.

We went to the dances, mostly at "Allen's Dance Hall" in Farmington, stopping for refreshments also at Allen's, which was separate from the dance hall. We also went to Allen's Theater to shows. We held hands during the show and Jewel occasionally put his arm around my

shoulder. I remember one time when we were holding hands and he could feel what he thought were callouses on my hand (probably were rough too), he told me it was time to put a “stop to that.” I was embarrassed as I’ve never had nice hands, but he was referring to the work I did for the Stolworthy’s.

Often we would double date with Ralph and Odell Tanner. One time we went together to Trimble Springs just north of Durango, it was sort of a resort and we spent the day there we really had a good time.

Another time, a group of us, mostly Jewel’s friends, got together and went up on the Lukachukia Mountain. We left early that morning (Sunday) with great expectations, to picnic and enjoy the day, however, as we were almost to Red Rock, we met Lloyd Harris, a government worker living at Cove, he told us the watchmen at Red Rock had been shot and the store probably robbed. We were all upset, especially Jewel.

The others in our group went on up the mountain but Jewel had to stay until the police and authorities came to check things over and to move the body. I also stayed with him. It was a gruesome ordeal, of which I will not go into here. The killer was out there somewhere which made everyone a little edgy. Later that afternoon Jewel and I drove on up the mountain and joined our friends but didn’t stay long as he had to get back to the Trading Post. This took place in July 1937.

Jewel and I continued to date. One night he took me home and before taking me to the door, we had been talking, and laughing, when suddenly he asked, “When are you going to come out to Red Rock and live?” I said, “What do you mean?” He grinned and said, “You know what I mean.” I said, “Why you don’t love me, -you have never told me you love me!” I was really shook up! So unexpected! We talked on for quite a long time, going over the pro’s and con’s before I said, “Yes I’ll go out to Red Rock with you.” I loved him too but just didn’t say so before that night, he had to make the first move. I didn’t tell anyone for a while but I had a hard time keeping my thoughts and feelings to myself, I was so excited and in the clouds.

Soon after this, I left the Stolworthy’s and went home to Ignacio, Colorado to make plans for our wedding.

Jewel came to see me and of course while there he asked my dad for permission to marry me. After much discussion he finally did give his permission.

Jewel and I made a trip to Durango to buy an engagement and wedding rings. We went to the Taylor-Raymond Jewelry Store and chose a set. It was hard for me because I didn’t know how much Jewel could spend on rings. Anyway we picked out two or three sets then, he made the choice, paying \$50 for them.

We set our wedding date for Sept. 19, 1937, to be held in my parents' home in Ignacio, Colorado. Just our families were invited, including Aunt Vi and Uncle Carlos Stolworthy.

Our humble home wasn't very fancy but mother and I cleaned and scrubbed, bringing out the best we had to make our home presentable.

Kelly was Jewel's best man and Ardell Washburn was my maid of honor, and as my father was Branch President of the Allison Branch, he had authority to marry us. Before the ceremony my brother Ferrel sang the song, "The Sweetest Story Ever Told." I would like to share the beautiful words with you.

THE SWEETEST STORY EVER TOLD

Oh, answer me a question, love, I pray,
My heart for thee is pining day by day;
Oh, answer me, my dearest, answer true;
Hold me close as you were wont to do.
Whisper once again the story old,
The dearest, sweetest story ever told;
Whisper once again the story old,
The dearest, sweetest story ever told.

Tell me, do you love me?
Tell me softly, sweetly, as of old.
Tell me that you love me,
For that's the sweetest story ever told.
Tell me, do you love me?
Whisper softly, sweetly as of old.
Tell me that you love me,
For that's the sweetest story ever told.

Oh, tell me that your heart to me is true,
Repeat to me the story ever new;
Oh, take my hand in yours and tell me, dear.
Is it joy to thee when I am near?
Whisper o'er to thee when I am near?
Whisper o'er and o'er the story old,
The dearest sweetest story ever told;
Whisper o'er and o'er the story old,
The dearest sweetest story ever told.

Jewel and I were married on a beautiful day September 19, 1937 – Ignacio, Colorado.

After the wedding mother and my sister served a light luncheon of chicken-a-la-king in pastry shells, jello salad, rolls, cake and ice cream also punch.

As this was the time of year when students were returning to college, Jewel's sister Fern and their neighbors and friend Clara Noel needed a ride back to college, so arrangements were made previously for them to ride with us. In those days money and transportation were hard to come by so they were happy to have a ride provided for them. This school, in Ephraim, Utah was on the way we would be traveling on our honeymoon.

After refreshments and goodbye's we loaded up Jewel's car and prepared to leave, but to our dismay the car wouldn't start. Jewel being no mechanic couldn't get it going -after much teasing, laughing and plain "orneriness", my brother Reo put it back together and we left for Zion's and Bryce Canyons including Boulder Dam and Grand Canyon to spend our honeymoon.

I want to add here that my family circumstances were not very good, there just wasn't any money to provide for a beautiful wedding. I didn't have a white wedding dress. I wore a forest green street length dress, with pink embroidered roses on it (a pretty dress), with green swede shoes to match. My Uncle Orin Faucette (mother's brother) gave my mother \$25 to help us pay for my dress. I never had the money or chance to start a "hope chest" to take with me. I had a small cardboard suitcase with all my belongings in it. Jewel was away of this but it was of no consequence to him, although I was embarrassed but unable to do anything about it.

We loved and had each other, and as Red Rock was to be our home, board and room provided, what more could we want or ask for.

Our years together at Red Rock were the happiest in our lives, we loved it there.

We have had seven children three boys and four girls. Jewel Levoy, Patricia Louise, Jeaneen, Barry, Marva, Michael, Debra Sue. Our children have been the joy of our lives. We now have 25 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

There are many wonderful and dear friends of our family and many choice and dear friends over the years. Our lives have had many ups and downs as all families do. Jewel and I have tried to teach our children to do what is right, to live the golden rule, the importance of education and putting the gospel into our lives.

Jewel has been a good father and husband providing well for his family. We have never wanted for the necessities of life, not a lot of luxuries, but we have enjoyed the comforts of a good home with our family.

We have just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary given to us by our dear children (all seven). Our Golden Wedding Anniversary was held in the LDS Cultural Hall, 400 West Apache, Farmington, New Mexico, September 19, 1987.

We were honored by 243 relatives and friends attending. So many came from far away places and everyone so enjoyed renewing friendships, visiting, and mingling together.

My brother Ferrel sang our song again that he sung at our wedding, "The Sweetest Story Every Told", also my nephew, Maurice Christensen's wife sang two love songs in tribute to us. We also heard beautiful organ music, tunes we love, played for us by Gary Erickson. We also received 64 beautiful cards of Gold Wedding Congratulations. All was so wonderful!

“Truly Our Cup Runneth Over”

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