



History of Helen Crookston Jensen

Helen Crookston Jensen was born on April 11, 1902 in Blacksmith Fork Hollow. Her parents were David Crookston and Mima Amelia Hartvigsen Crookston. She had three brothers and two sisters: David James, Russell Lowell, Jesse Leroy, Jennie, and Bessie.

David's first wife was Teena Josephine Hartvigsen. They had two daughters: Emma and Teena Josephine. Teena died on Nov. 22, 1889, and four years later David married Mima. Emma and Josephine always called Mima 'Aunt Millie' because she was Teena's sister. David James died shortly after he was born.

The family lived in a two room house, and there was a shanty in back and a cellar underneath. There were two fish ponds stocked with English Brook trout, and there were lots of trees around. David had a good team of horses called Rock and Button, a Collie dog and lots of chickens, geese, and ducks. A cow and a few pigs completed the livestock. They had a good orchard, garden, and pasture. The rest of the land was in alfalfa. There were springs on the hill where watercress grew. They used oil lamps. The plumbing was outside and the culinary water was carried from a spring that was a half-block away. The washing was done on a wash board, and all sewing was done on an old treadle sewing machine.

Helen relates the following: "Mother was a good cook and a good house-keeper. She made clothes for her children, and she churned butter. When father was away, she walked across the hill to Hyrum and to Unsworth's store. She took butter and eggs to exchange for groceries. Butter was 17 cents a pound and eggs were 9 cents a dozen. She walked 6 miles round trip. She made yeast with potato water. Old lady Tellefson had a yeast starter, and if Mima's yeast starter ran out, she would take a little bit of sugar to Tellefson's and would pour the yeast starter in a bucket. We would taste it on the way home."

David rode on the thresher which was pulled by horses. It took a long time to get the harvest done. He also worked in the canyon helping to build the power plant. He worked on the pole line which runs from Logan to Provo and he was a game warden at one time. He was also the marshall of Hyrum City for a couple of terms. He took most any job he could get. He never farmed, but he raised a garden. He also worked in the Lewiston sugar factory.

Helen's half-sister Josephine worked for her room and board in Hyrum so she could go to school. When the other children were old enough to go to school, the family moved to Hyrum across the street from the Second Ward church. This was in 1905, and Helen was 6 years old. The home was a three room frame house, and David built 3 more rooms, doing all of the carpentry work himself. He went to the canyon to get logs for it.

Helen relates the following: "When I was 6 years old, dad and mother went to Logan. Dad borrowed Jess Smith's horse and fancy buggy. As they were coming over the Logan bridge, there were some people there shoveling gravel. It rattled the bridge and frightened the horse. The horse ran a couple of blocks and into a telephone pole. The buggy struck the pole and stayed there, but the horse ran on. My mother's head hit the pole and was split open, and her leg was broken in two places. They took mother to the hospital, and her one eye was right out of the socket. They operated and put it back. She could see out of it alright after that, but there was always a scar on her forehead, and she was always lame. Six weeks she lay flat on her back because her leg was set with a bucket of rocks tied onto it. She even did some sewing by hand while lying there. She finally got up and decided to go to church. There was a small irrigation ditch in front of the home, and there was a sidewalk over the bridge. It had been raining and mother slipped and fell on the bridge. Her leg was broken again. After that she always had a stiff leg and could not bend her knee. She always limped around, but she never missed anything, and she did all of her housework."

Helen was baptized in the creek outside of the Barron Wollen Mills by Bishop Andrew M. Allen. She attended school in the little school house across the street from their home. The 2nd Ward Church now stands there. Annie May Ralph was her teacher. She then went to school in the old Presbyterian Church just north of the Elite Hall. Her third grade teacher was Esther Wilson. Helen attended the Lincoln School from fourth grade to and including the 8th grade. Her teachers were Harry Olsen, Jess Wilson, Jennie Christensen, Ophelia Wright, and Lydia Johnson Wilson. She attended South Cache High School for two years.

When Helen was 13 years old, she went out to Pocatello Valley with Josephine and Joe Unsworth. She stayed with them all summer and helped them with their work and tended their children. One day they took two horses and went across the Pocatello Valley to visit some people. Helen said, "When we went over there, Warren Jensen was working in the field. I was 13 years old then, and Warren was 23 years old. I never thought at that time that he would ever be my husband." Helen got a ride back to Hyrum with Ed Hall and his wife in their wagon. "We camped at the Bear River bridge and stayed there all night. We came home the next day. It took 2 days to travel to Pocatello Valley. I did not know what a car was until I was grown up."

The Hyrum girls dated Wellsville boys. Helen went steady with Earl Wyatt. The only car around belonged to him at that time. Then two other boys from Wellsville bought cars. They were handsome lads. Helen went with Luther Miller and some of the Parker boys for a ride. The young men and women went to dances in the Elite Hall. The springboard floor swayed because there were so many people dancing on it. Helen said, "One night I was at the dance and somebody introduced me to Warren. I danced with him. They were having a party at the home of Rosie Jensen. Her daughter Elva was trying to get a crowd of people to come to the party. It was New Years Eve, and they were going to stay up all night. Warren asked me to go to the party with him. We started dating then."

After Helen went to South Cache High School for just 2 years, she went to work at Roy Jensen's store. In 1918 when she was 16 years old she went to work at Allen Brothers store, Leda Wilson was working there, and she was called to work in the bank. Bp. Allen gave Helen the job. Helen had been working for 10 days at Leo Nielsen's home doing housework. His wife Marvella had a new baby. The Bishop stopped at Nielsen's home and asked Helen, "How would you like to come down to Allen's Store and work for me." Helen said, "I can try it." She went to work there and ended up staying for 46 years. Her pay was 17¢ an hour when she started and she received \$1.00 an hour when she quit working.

Helen was a Sunday School teacher in the Hyrum Second Ward, also the MIA Secretary and a member of the choir.

Every fall after the farm work was done Warren went to California and spent the winters working there. He would come back to Hyrum in the summer to run the farm. The first year he was in California he sent Helen a wrist watch for Christmas. It was so little--a swiss watch. A week later Helen went to a party where they played 'Blind Man's Bluff'. Someone stood in the center of a circle of players. This person was blind, folded and tried to hit someone in the circle with a potato masher. Helen's watch was hit, and this was the first time she had worn it! The crystal was broken and she had to send it back to Warren in California to get it repaired. There was not a watch like it in Logan. The jeweler had never seen a watch so small. Warren had the watch repaired and sent it back to Helen.

Helen also worked one summer in the bean factory for 17¢ an hour filling the cans with bean. She received 25¢ when she started working 15 hours a day. They had 9 hours off to go home and sleep before returning back to work.

Helen's brother Russell Lowell Crookston died on April 28, 1920. He had so many immunizations while serving in World War I that he was never well after that. They think he died of of Leukemia.

Helen married Warren M. Jensen on December 19, 1923 in the Salt Lake LDS Temple. She was 21 years old and Warren was 31 years old. Warren's birthday was on April 10, and Helen's birthday was on April 11. The first year they were married Warren said, "Let's have a big dinner on my birthday and invite my folks to come, and then if there is anything left over, your relatives can come the next day and eat what's left."

On their first wedding anniversary Dec. 19, 1924 Helen came home from work at Allen's store and went to Mutual. She taught a class on the north side of the church building, and suddenly saw a big fire through the window. She said, "It looks like Allen's Store! Mutual was dismissed and we all went down there. There was lots of snow on the ground and it was a cold night. That probably kept the rest of the buildings on the block from getting on fire. It was 19 degrees below zero. Bp. Allen had banked the fire up by putting a lot of coal in the furnace to keep it going all night. There were coal oil tanks in the store and when the furnace overheated they exploded, pouring fuel on the whole fire and the store burned to the ground."

"The Allen's opened a small store (one room) in Rich Eliason's meat market. They sold groceries, dry goods (fabrics), needles, and thread. They cleared up the debris from the old store and started to build a new store. Bp. Allen lived a block and a half from our home. I would run to his home and ride to the store with him each morning. Bread was a nickle a loaf. Most of the women made their own bread."

The offices Helen held in the Hyrum First Ward church after she married Warren were counselor in the MIA, Sunday School teacher, President of the Primary, Visiting Teacher, and a member of the choir. She had a beautiful singing voice and sang alto. She also belonged to the Birthday Club. These ladies would meet at the person's home who was celebrating her birthday. They would have a nice dinner, visit, and play games.

Luana was born at the home of her maternal grandparents, David and Mima Hartvigsen Crookston on September 5, 1925. Reed was born at Aunt Steen Larsen's home. Steen Larsen was a sister of Warren's father. Warren and Helen were renting from her at the time.

When Reed was 2½ years old he got sick. Warren had taken him with over to the farm in Mt. Sterling. They drank the water in Baxter's Spring from an old tin cup. Either the water or some milk sold to them by a neighbor brought on the illness. Reed was not hard to tend. He lay quiet and slept most of the time. Warren got sick soon after and became very ill. It was diagnosed as Typhoid Fever. An old bachelor who liked to drink came to the house to visit Warren. His name was Teddy Johansen. He offered Warren a drink, and Helen chased him out of the house with her broom.

Helen said, "The phone rang while the doctor was examining Warren. A lady who lived over in the hollow was going to have a baby and they phoned for the doctor. The doctor came into the kitchen and said to me, 'I hate to leave you now because your husband is very sick. Should I tell them I can't come?' I said, 'No, that lady needs help, so you had better go.' The doctor said, 'I'm afraid this is it!' 'He did not think there was any chance that Warren would come out of it. Warren could not get his breath. The doctor left and then he came back in 45 minutes. He said, 'Is he still alive?' 'I said, yes! He went into the room and tested Warren and said, 'He's passed the crisis, I think he will be alright,' and he was. The only illness Warren has had during our married life was to go to the hospital with ulcer pains. He was once operated on for a hernia. That's all. We have been blessed."

Helen said, "I remember once when I was a little girl sleigh-riding on a hill by our home. I slid into a tree and my lip split, but that is the only accident I had."

Helen said, "We always went to my mother's home, walking about a mile on Sunday afternoon for dinner. She always had such a good meal which included delicious pies. She made the pies on Saturday because she did not think it was right to make them on the Sabbath day. I remember once Emma and her husband came there, and he brought some eggs and said, "Aunt Millie, will you make me a custard pie?" Mother did make the pie for him on Sunday. She was a good cook and did not have much food ingredients to work with. After Luana was born, we'd walk and wheel the buggy up there when the weather was warm. I remember that Pete Sorenson and his wife got killed on that Sunday. They were out riding in their car and was crossing over the train tracks when the streetcar came by and it their car."

"Mother had a stroke on the night that my sister Bessie married Bill Thomas. A Wedding Reception was held on the lawn at dad and mother's house. They had strung colored lights outside. Mother had worked so hard getting things ready. She passed out right in the middle of the party. This ruined the celebration. They had to put mother to bed right in the room where they had the trousseau on display. Mother was 52 years old then. We had heard that a person usually recovers if they are not over 60 years old. Mother had 3 more strokes during her lifetime. The last one was in her 70th year. She was in bed for a long time. I would go to her home to take care of her for 3 or 4 days, and then Jennie would come and stay 3 or 4 days. Bessie lived in Malad, Idaho and would come often too."

Helen's mother Mima died when she was 72 years old from the 4th stroke she had. Her father David died 1½ years later when he was 86 years old. He had stayed with Jess and Phyllis most of the time. He lay down and said he did not feel good. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage and only suffered about a week. David and Mima are buried in the Logan City Cemetery. David died at Jennie Glenn's (his daughter) home in Wellsville, Utah.

Warren was working at the Hyrum City Power Plant in Blacksmith Fork when Zada was born on July 29, 1940. Dr. Burgess did not get to the home on time. He had already known at 3 p.m. that Helen would soon have her baby. He thought it would be born in the middle of the night, but Zada was born at 9 P.M. just a little after dark. He had taken his wife to the movie in Logan thinking that he had plenty of time. Melinda Liljenquist was with Helen as a midwife. She had brought other babies into the world. She came at 6 P.M. Helen said, "Melinda stayed right with me and delivered the baby. They flashed on the screen in Logan for Dr. Burgess that there was an emergency in Hyrum. He knew what the emergency was and was to our house in 7 minutes. He said, "Who ever would have thought this?" "I said, "I'm not going to pay you, I'm going to pay Melinda. She's the one who's done the work." "Mrs. Burgess came to our house the next day with a dozen gladiolas in a vase."

Helen went on a bus tour to the Northwest. The tour started with a session at the Logan, Utah LDS Temple. They then went to the Idaho Falls, Idaho Temple and on to the Canadian Temple. They went through the Canadian Rockies as far as Lake Louise before returning home. Helen had a wonderful time. The trip lasted 10 days. She went to the Logan Temple often and did many endowments for the dead.

Warren and Helen went on a bus trip with many older people from Cache Valley. On their way to California the bus stopped at the Calico Ghost town so the passengers could rest. Two guys with guns came by and told everyone to put their hands up and give them some money. It was all a gag. Warren spoke up and said, "I haven't any money, but you can have my teeth." A mannequin was sitting on an outdoor toilet with the door open. The loudspeaker attached said, "Hey, Warren Jensen! What are you doing here?" Warren replied, "You tend to your business, and I'll tend to mine." He was the life of the party. Veda Sorenson and Ruby Akin, teachers at Wilson School in Logan were on that trip. They taught Luana and Robert Mortensen's children. The group went to the Rose Parade in Pasadena, California and also to the Lawrence Welk Show where they enjoyed dancing. Warren was a very good dancer and loved to waltz.

Warren did not go out much as he grew older. He did not go to church. He was afraid they would ask him to pray or something. Many new members of the ward thought Helen was a widow.

There was a large garden for Warren and Helen to take care of. They raised lots of raspberries for Luana and her girl friends to pick. They picked over 57 cases, and the last raspberries that they sold brought only 35 ¢ a case. They had to buy the cases and cups and paid the pickers 20 ¢ a case. They made 5¢ on each case. Some people came and wanted to pick the berries, but they brought their kids. The kids tromped the rest of the garden all up. Helen said, "We couldn't let them do that so we quit raising raspberries."

Helen got her arm caught in the wringer of the washing machine in 1945 and it was sore for a long time.

Warren's grandson David Jensen came to show Warren a new motorcycle that he had bought. Warren used to ride a motorcycle when he was a young man. He asked David if he could ride it. He rode it up the hill on which they lived and started it back down. He tried to push on the brake, but it did not have a foot brake. The brake was on the handlebars. The motorcycle got going too fast down the hill. Warren made a U turn to slow down and tipped over. Helen saw him go down with the motorcycle on top of him. "She replied, "Oh, the old fool. I hope that none of the neighbors saw him!"

Warren and Helen celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the home of Robert and Luana Mortensen, a daughter and son-in-law. Family members enjoyed having dinner and visiting together. This was in 1973.

Helen became ill in 1974 and could not get out of bed alone. She was suffering for some time with rheumatoid arthritis. She started to take anti-inflammatory medication and was able to get up again and take care of herself.

On May 21, 1978 Warren became ill. The doctor came and told Helen to take Warren to the hospital. The next day they took X-rays and found that he had a leak in his bowels, and since he could not hold anything on his stomach, he was fed through the veins and given blood transfusions.

On May 29th Bob, his son-in-law, went to the hospital early to see how Warren was feeling. Bob went home to get a razor to shave Warren, and Warren died before Bob came back to the hospital, so no one was with him when he passed away. Warren's sister Francis Eliason died from Cancer on the same day 40 years ago.

By July 1978 Helen had fallen several times because of her rheumatoid arthritis. Dr. James M. Steel performed knee surgery on April 11, 1979. Helen fell in the hospital while trying to walk, but came home on April 21st. Her right knee was operated on July 18th, but it became swollen. When she finally came home, she was given physical therapy by Gordon Olson. The county nurse helped and Helen received 'Meals on Wheels.' In January Helen was still feeling lots of pain, so she was taken to see Dr. Steel again. He took X-rays and found that her knee cap was dislocated and had been for some time. She had to have surgery again on Jan. 23rd. On Feb. 3rd she left the hospital and was admitted to the Mendon Care Center.

On Nov. 20, 1981 Helen was moved from the Mendon Care Center to the Sunshine Terrace in Logan. Her memory was failing. Her home in Hyrum was rented out to help pay expenses for her care. Luana went to the Terrace to feed Helen lunch each afternoon. She remained there over 7 years.

During the Christmas season, on one occasion, Luana began singing 'Silent Night' and Helen started singing with her in perfect pitch. She remembered all the words even though her memory was almost gone. This goes to show how music can be the best therapy one can use on patients with Alzheimers or Dementia.

Before Dec. 1989 Helen could not swallow, i was mostly in a coma state. Reed, Luana, and Zada spent much time with her and felt closer to each other because of this experience. On Dec. 8, Helen had been without food or water for 12 days.

Luana relates this experience. "Mother had several periods of labored breathing today. Tonight Bob and I, Claine and Zada, and Reed were with mother at the Terrace. I suddenly missed my purse. I always had the habit of putting it under the chair where I was sitting. I looked at least twice under my chair, all over the floor, and even under mother's bed. Finally I asked in desperation, "Has anyone seen my purse?" They all got off their chairs and we all looked for my purse. Bob had been standing by mother's bed and said, "I think she's gone!" We all dashed to her bed and saw that she had quit breathing. We called the nurse who came and said that mother was dead. I glanced back toward my chair, and there was my purse in plain sight. There is no way that I could have missed seeing it before. I am convinced that it was dad who came to take mother home, and being the practical joker that he always was, he diverted our attention while she passed away. This was a signal to us that he was there even though we did not see him."

Helen Crookston Jensen died on Dec. 8, 1989 at the age of 87 at Sunshine Terrace in Logan, Utah. Dr. Michael Stones listed as the cause of death Pneumonia. Funeral services were held in the Hyrum, Utah Stake Center on Monday, Dec. 11, 1989, and burial was in the Hyrum City Cemetery.

The Warren and Helen Jensen home at 235 South 100 West in Hyrum, Utah was sold on June 25, 1991 for \$48,000 to Chad and Michelle Summers. The 75 acre dry farm in Mt. Sterling is owned equally by Luana, Reed, and Zada. The old home had been demolished and the new home built April 7, 2005 cost around \$7,000.00 in 1948.

Mother was admonished thru her Patriarchal Blessing to do lots of Temple work. She did not keep track of the names she did endowments for before 1952, but did after that. She kept a record until Oct. 15, 1973. She did the work for 574 (endowments) people, mostly between 1963 and 1973.

Luana J. Mortensen