



ELEANOR CROWTHER PAINTER 1924-

Harrisville was still a small farming town when Eleanor Crowther Painter was born on 28 April 1924. She was the sixth child of Ellen Groberg and Albert Lawrence Crowther. Annie Maxfield, a neighbor, friend and midwife, assisted with Eleanor's delivery. Like many of the neighborhood children, Eleanor called Annie Maxfield, "Grandma," and enjoyed walking through the fields to take flowers to her.

enough to remember
Harrisville after his parents, David Crowther and Annie Louisa Josephine Hultgren, immigrated from England and Sweden. Eleanor's mother, Ellen, grew up in Farr West, where her parents, John Groberg and Johanna Larsson, settled after emigrating from Sweden.

Eleanor had three sisters, Eva (Dabb), Jennie (Dabb) and Elva (Hawkley), and three brothers, Lawrence, who died in 1918 when he was 8 years old, Chester, and Kenneth, who was known as Pete. They were raised in a yellow brick house (930 N. Harrisville Road) approximately a block east from Albert's childhood home. Eleanor grew up in a loving, happy family surrounded by brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles. Her cousins, Lois and Florence Crowther, were almost like sisters. They lived nearby and spent many hours with her family, especially after the death of their mother, Laverne.

Marjorie Shurtleff was Eleanor and Florence's first grade teacher when they started school in Harrisville. The two-story yellow brick school had a central hall with two classrooms on each floor. As they walked to and from school, Eleanor, Elva, Florence, Lois and Pete laughed and talked and played games with their friends. They carried metal lunch pails the contents of which usually consisted of a sandwich of ham baloney, cheese or other meat, with perhaps a cookie or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for dessert. The dirt playground behind the school included a set of swings, a basketball hoop, and a teeter totter. The boys played marbles while the girls played jacks and jumped rope. They all played tag, hopscotch, or ball games. After school on Tuesdays, most of the children walked next door to the L.D.S Church building to attend primary.

Eleanor was baptized and confirmed a member of the LDS Church on May 1, 1932, a day celebrated as May Day in Sweden and in Eleanor's home. On that day each year, Eleanor's mother sang a Swedish May Day song, and the children gathered flower bouquets for friends.

When Eleanor was about nine years old, the Harrisville primary children took a trip to Salt Lake City to visit Brigham Young's home, the Temple grounds, and the LDS Church Office Building. The highlight of the trip for Eleanor was meeting LDS President, Heber J. Grant, who stood in the main hall to greet them. She remembers that he was tall, slender, and

friendly, and he seemed happy to meet them. He shook hands with each child. She was thrilled to shake the hand of the prophet.

The Harrisville School was growing crowded, so Eleanor and her classmates finished sixth grade in Harrisville, and the remaining six years attending Weber High School located between 10th and 12th Streets on Washington Boulevard. Although Elva was two grades ahead of Eleanor, they started at Weber High School the same year. Kenneth, two years younger than Eleanor, was sent to Plain City for seventh and eighth grades. In January 1942, the Harrisville School was closed, and a new school opened for children grades 1 through 9 (Wahlquist School). The old Harrisville School was boarded up, and was later bought by the LDS Church, and torn down in 1955.

Eleanor participated in many activities at Weber High School including the Pep Club and a school play. When she graduated from seminary in 1941, the exercises were held in the old Ogden Tabernacle. May 1942 she graduated from high school in a class of 229 students.

Eleanor was the first of her friends to ride in an airplane. Darwin Costley, her Sunday School teacher, was in Civilian Aeronautics training. He offered an airplane ride to the first student in his class to memorize the Articles of Faith and the names of all the books in the LDS scriptures, among other things. Eleanor finished first and won the prize. Other honors she received included a first place recognition in the Utah State Fair and honorable mention in the Chicago World's Fair for a little boy's outfit she entered that she sewed in 4-H.

Five months before Eleanor graduated from high school, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered World War II. Eleanor and her friend, Lucille Chugg, worked that summer at the Clearfield Arsenal. Leaving a job in a vital industry was difficult, but in the fall, both were released to attend Weber College. Eleanor received a scholastic scholarship. She and Lucille joined a sorority, attended socials, and competed on the swim team.

As the war progressed, however, the need for workers to support the war effort became increasingly urgent. Advertising campaigns urged every able bodied person to enter the work force. Wanting to contribute and do their part, when school ended that spring, Eleanor and Lucille took jobs at the Army Supply Depot. Working at the depot triggered feelings of nostalgia since homes and farms of their long time friends and members of the Harrisville community had been removed to make way for construction of the depot. Many of the displaced families moved to Idaho or Washington to find replacement farms.

Eleanor and Lucille drove fork lifts in Warehouses 9A and 10A. Eleanor's dad worked in the same area. They often worked with Italian and German Prisoners of War (POW). They eventually supervised POW crews as they dipped a wide variety of parts and materials in sealing wax before packing and shipped them to units of the armed forces throughout the world.

Eleanor first met Virgil Painter while she was visiting her cousin, Velma Groberg, in Farr West the summer after she completed sixth grade. He was riding by on his horse. When he saw the girls in the yard, he stopped to visit. Eleanor thought he was cute, but paid no

particular attention to him. During the following six years, they saw one another at school, and while attending games, dances, and parties with the same group of friends. They dated a few times. After high school, Virgil went to California to work for several months. Upon returning home, he and Eleanor often double dated with Virgil's best friend, Roland Brown, who was dating Eleanor's cousin, Florence Crowther. Roland and Florence soon married. Virgil and Eleanor were engaged on 1 May 1943.

Later that year, Virgil joined the Navy and was sent to Farragut, Idaho, for boot camp. He was the middle weight boxing champion at Farragut. As soon as he finished basic training, Virgil came home on leave, and he and Eleanor were married in the Salt Lake L.D.S Temple, 14 February 1944. A week later, Virgil reported to the naval base at Bremerton, Washington, and was assigned to the "USS Steamer Bay," a baby air craft carrier that transported planes and troops. For the next eighteen months, Virgil's ship served in the Pacific with the 5th and 7th fleets. Virgil's position during combat was a gunner. When they were not in combat, he trained as one of the ship's barbers.

While Virgil was at sea, Eleanor lived with her parents and worked at the supply depot. She and Lucille, who lived near by, rode to and from work with Eleanor's dad. Twice when Virgil's ship returned to the west coast for outfitting and a new assignment, Eleanor was able to take the train to California to join him for a couple of weeks.

When Virgil was released from the Navy, Eleanor and Virgil moved to Salt Lake City, where Virgil attended barber school. Due to the severe housing shortage following the war, they lived with Eleanor's cousin, Maud Groberg Neeley, until Virgil finished his training. Shortly before their first child, Trudy, was born on 20 May 1946, they moved back to Ogden. For the next few years, Virgil worked as a barber, renting space in several beauty salons until he bought the Superior Beauty School and Salon. Virgil was a skilled manager and barber. His business did well and he subsequently opened other beauty salons.

In the next twelve years, Eleanor and Virgil had six more children, LeAnn (1947), Larry (1950), Ava (1952), Kirt (1953), Frank (1956) and Lenore (1958). They enjoyed spending time outdoors with their family and with friends. They often went camping, golfing, and snow and water skiing. Eleanor liked to sew and garden. She was an excellent cook, and each year she preserved a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

After buying several small homes in the Ogden area, they built a home at 901 N. Harrisville Road, across the street from Eleanor's parents. When Virgil's father died in 1957, they bought the Painter farm in Farr West. They lived in Farr West a couple of years, before they decided that running the farm, managing the beauty business, and raising seven children was too demanding. When Eleanor's father died in 1961, they sold the farm, bought property from Eleanor's mother, and built a house next door to her in Harrisville [938 North Harrisville Road]. Years later when Eleanor's mother, Ellen, was no longer able to live alone, she lived with them.

After their children were grown, Eleanor became a licensed beautician and helped manage their business. She did all of the bookwork and the payroll. In June 1976, at the age of 53,

Virgil had a stroke; his left side though useable was numb. Three months later, their son Larry was killed in an automobile accident in Idaho. The following year Trudy died on New Year's Eve, 1977, after a three day illness. Ellen died in April of 1978, a few weeks before Lenore's wedding. On New Year's Day, 1982, Virgil had another stroke that paralyzed his left side. Eleanor cared for him full time during his remaining years. He died on Christmas Eve, 1986. Eleanor lost another son, Kirt, who died on 27 March 2000, from surgical complications following a heart attack.

In 2012, Eleanor continues to live at 938 N. Harrisville Road. Over the years, she has served in many callings in the LDS Church. She began teaching a Sunday School class while still a teenager. While her children were growing up, Eleanor taught primary for 25 years. She was a Relief Society counselor, secretary and visiting teacher. She also did Spanish extraction and was Ward Historian. She has diligently researched and collected many volumes of family history for the Crowther, Painter, Groberg, and Caldwell families and their ancestors. In 2008, she and LeAnn traveled to Scotland, England and Wales to visit many of the sites where ancestors had lived whose research she had done.

Eleanor belongs to the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, and has held many DUP leadership positions over the years. Friends continue to be an important part in Eleanor's life. Over the last fifty years, Eleanor has met twice a month with a group of childhood friends and classmates, including Lucille Chugg Nebeker, Shirley Harris Layton and her Crowther cousins, Florence Brown and Lois Stratford.

In addition to being an excellent cook and seamstress, Eleanor has crocheted many lovely shawls, blankets, and other gifts for family and friends. She remains a warm and loving friend and mother, who always encourages and nurtures others, particularly her children, her 24 grandchildren and her 36 great-grandchildren, all of whom greatly love and admire her.

SOURCE:

Painter, Eleanor Crowther. Personal interview.

Wheeler, LeAnn Painter. "Eleanor Crowther Painter." 2012. Unpublished manuscript.

Brown, Florence Crowther	Groberg, Johanna Larsson
Brown, Roland	Groberg, John
Chugg, Lucille	Groberg, Velma
Costley, Darwin	Hultgren, Annie Louisa Josephine
Crowther, Albert Lawrence Crowther	Larsson, Johanna
Crowther, Annie Louisa Josephine Hultgren	Layton, Shirley Harris
Crowther, Chester	Maxfield, Annie
Crowther, David	Nebeker, Lucille Chugg
Crowther, Ellen Groberg	Neeley, Maud Groberg
Crowther, Elva	Painter LeAnn
Crowther, Eva	Painter, Ava
Crowther, Florence	Painter, Frank
Crowther, Jennie	Painter, Kirt
Crowther, Kenneth (Pete)	Painter, Larry
Crowther, Laverne	Painter, Lenore
Crowther, Lawrence	Painter, Trudy
Crowther, Lois	Painter, Virgil
Grant, Heber J.	Shurtleff, Marjorie
Groberg, Ellen	Stratford, Loris Crowther