

~~THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS~~

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Personal record of the week from June 5 1976 to June 13
written on June 13th a Sunday

June 5 (Saturday) was a warm, sunny day I awoke about
6 a.m. read my ten pages of Scripture in Psalms and
then went into my office to help my Branch clerk Von
Brown compile our monthly finance report. I returned
home at about 8:15 had breakfast and commenced a
few jobs around the house and yard finally Ruth got
me started painting the trim and soffit on our home
(we wanted to paint it a dark brown to help set the
rest of the house apart a bit better) By 11:00 I was
really involved in my work and so was Ruth. About
11:45 Ruth left to do Saturday's shopping but only got
to the end of the lane when she was stopped by
Carl Edwards who informed her that the teton dam had
broken ^{at 11:30} and we were to evacuate. She came home and
mentioned it to me - I was at the time on the roof trying
to finish the soffit and trim I could reach there and I
didn't really want to quit though I was about out of
paint. &

I thought to myself 'what need do we have to worry
anyway, the water will surely not bother us once
it has a chance to spread out' and so I stayed on the
roof painting until I used up all my paint. While painting
I was wrestling with the absurdity of the thing. A brand
new dam breaking and it wasn't even to spill way height
yet. I just couldn't come to believe it really happened
and I couldn't imagine it hitting us. Finally my paint
ran out and I came down from the roof Ruth was
upset by my attitude because we had been listening to

the radio during this time and ^{the report was that the beam} it was sending down at least a 15 foot wave and another behind it. The front wave hadn't reached Teton yet though so I wasn't concerned ~~yet~~. It seemed ~~me~~ to me we were getting to excited, we still had at least an hour ^{It was} it was ^{now} only 12:15 or so. We went inside the house and gathered the kids around us and told them what had happened and we had a word of prayer. I felt quite good after the prayer and then we began to move some of the food upstairs I really didn't know how much I should move; I ended up moving only about half of our soup (dehydrated) the sugar and lifting the wheat to a higher level. I went outside and Boyd and I brought my roto-tiler back to our place and put it in our shed. At the time I remember seeing the lawn mower on the floor of the shed and thinking 'I'd better lift it up to the beach, but I didn't. If I had lifted it it would not have been under the flood.

Finally we gathered a few things and left our home very unprepared for what could have happened. ^{It was 1:30.} After reaching the College campus Bud Johanson came up and we realized that two of the homes on our lane still had their electricity on so we came back to turn them off. On our return we saw Bro Clint Torsen's car and decided to take it back with us. I went in ^{to their home} and got the keys ^{to the car} and their car (their home ended up a half mile away)

(Story of Brad ^{Ruth} & mom working to clean the play area of mud & debris. . . . Mom ^{Ruth} was so tired she told Brad only one more wheelbarrow full & then we'd quit. Brad said. . . . "Oh-mom, we're almost done. Let's do 5 more loads. OK?" Brad is Was 7 year old.)

The local radio station KRXX kept a constant vigil and we knew where the flood waters were at all times the station owner was reporting from the air. Our neighbor was in the air also - he rushed home for more film to record what he saw ~~from~~ and told us of trying to warn ^{some} fishermen ^{on the teter} but they only moved back as many aircraft buzzed them. Later one young man reported how he saw the flood water coming and in the few seconds he told his fishing buddy how he was going to jump just as the waters reached him to get as high as possible - he rode the waters for several miles until he was able to pull himself up into a tree, he had punctured his lungs and ~~was~~ ^{was} in the hospital ^{for several weeks} his buddy was one of the 11 who lost their lives in the flood.

After returning to campus with Bro. Fassen's car I saw my kids on the grass and we hunted down Ruth who was working in the First Aid room on the 2nd floor of Monwearing. Ruth had already began helping others, mostly older people checking their blood pressure with her new sphygmomanometer and stethoscope that she had purchased just the week before. I took the kids and we went back outside. Tammie wanted to stay with our blankets and Ruth's purse while the boys and I went down by the old gym to see if the flood was here yet. David Johnson went with us and as we got to second south in front of the old gym the waters were coming up the street ~~in~~ ^{by} the new post office, it was about 3:15 it had taken ^{over} ~~nearly~~ three hours to get to

the middle of Keokuk after ~~passing~~ at Sugar City. The water was going about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in 6 minutes in Wilford but now it was going less than 5 miles an hour. The boys were unbelieving as were the rest of us. The water did not come in with a wave here but it gradually got deeper and deeper until it backed us all up about 10-20 feet up center street beyond 2nd South. I thought that if it had not filled up over 2nd South our home would be alright but now I knew the water was too high to save our things - why hadn't I moved our file cabinet or all our food. The water came constantly on the move, it seemed the current was everywhere, a cow came by she was dead, rubbish was everywhere, cars, pickups everything was being moved along with the water and the force was very evident, the power was beyond my ~~power to understand~~ ^{understand}. We stood and watched as houses were surrounded and filled nothing could withstand the power, the force, the height. My boys were constantly noting something else a bus down on main street bobbing up and down like a toy. A cow still struggling she was ^{not} quite dead but would be soon. "I said, "my home will surely be under water." Boyd Holdaway said "my home is just through the block" even lower than the houses we were looking at. As the reality came to each of us we were almost ~~to~~ ^{speechless} ~~unable~~ to speak except for ~~to utter~~ words reflecting our disbelief. And we were on the very fringe of ^{the water,} what about the main path. Later I sat on the high school ~~bleachers~~ ^{bleachers} in Sugar City and listened as Verl Bird told of his ^{first hand} ~~view~~ ^{view} of the main stream. He said his father-in-law decided to stay in Sugar City, after all, he had seen the reservoir just a week or so before and it wasn't even half full. 'Surely' he said 'the next week it is

one or two feet - it couldn't be more than that so they sent his family to Reeburg with all their vehicles and they stayed. As they waited they had the presence of mind to be prepared for the worst by selecting the safest place to go if things were really bad. The strongest place was the slippery slide securely fastened to pipe laid in concrete. As the first wave came in they knew they had misjudged the seriousness of this flood and so they went for the slide. The first wave was fully 6' high and as it came Verl said the ground was dry 2 feet in front. It was virtually a wall of water and the force was not believable. ~~even to those present.~~ Another friend was in Idaho Falls as it came through late Sunday night; he said there was a wall of water 15 feet above normal height and ~~the~~ as the water came through the sand bagged ~~the~~ river bed there were no falls where they normally exist. The water was so high the falls vanished and the water was so high it couldn't ~~at~~ ^{even} pass under the Broadway bridge. The bridge began to hold back too much water. "Should it be blasted, will it hold... what should we do..." they asked, finally it was channeled around the bridge until the water receded to the capacity of the river bed and the falls returned.

But all this I didn't know as I watched at 3:15 Saturday afternoon as I stood ~~watching~~ in disbelief with my sons. We ~~were~~ all grateful to be on firm, dry ground safe from the destruction we knew was all about us. I knew as we left that some that in just minutes my own national possession, could be wiped

away and I had not power to change a thing. From that point on I was resolved to my loss. I ~~had~~ wished I had realized the need for greater preparation but I hadn't. As I reached the Mainwaring Center Learning Center still where we had left her and we went back into the building to see how Ruth was doing. She was still busy so we went upstairs to watch the movie "Daddy Obedient the little people". As I watched I kept reflecting on our home and thoughts, "could this really be happening to us". I also remembered hearing that the water was all out of the dam at about 2:15. I figured ~~that~~ that in just 3 or 4 hours we would be able to at least get out to ~~our~~ our home and see the damage. After a while I asked the kids if they would like to see the flood again. We left the movie and as we walked down the hill we met Boyd Carbon our neighbor. He had just seen our homes from the top of the ~~Learning~~ Learning Resource Center through field glasses and he said it looked like the water reached the top of his foundation but he couldn't be sure. He said his house was in the way of ours. He also mentioned that a couple of homes on our lane had been ruined. Taylor's was off its foundation and so was Jansen's. I began to worry more. The damage could be pretty bad. I wanted to go out and see. Boyd and I decided we would try after the water went down.

I took Brad, Taylor and Cory down the hill to see the flood water. Still it was unbelievable. Bradley said he knew how bad a flood was now. All the children wanted to know why a flood came again when Heavenly Father had promised Noah He would not flood the earth again and gave the rainbow to remind us. I tried to tell them that Heavenly Father only promised not to flood the whole earth and that He had not caused this flood anyway. They weren't completely

convinced but they were beginning to find the answer.

I couldn't seem to settle down, I wanted to do something to help but Ruth was very busy so I took the kids and while she worked I watched them and again we went to a movie that was just beginning in the little theater it was "The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes". Again as I watched I couldn't get the thoughts out of my mind but the kids seemed to be alright and they did enjoy the movie. After the movie we went up to the East State Center to check in with the Bishop. The Church was already in motion to see that everyone was accounted for and their needs taken care of. After seeing the Bishop I walked out and stood looking out over the whole valley covered with water. I found my home and could only see that it was still surrounded with water. Nyle Klingler loaned me his field glasses and I looked at our place with them. Carlson's home was in the way but I could see that the mud was still standing and I saw the raspberries. I began to hope then that maybe, just maybe we weren't too bad. It was about 6:30 and Ricks College Cafeteria had a meal prepared for all of us. We were being warned also to be careful of the water. The health authorities were worried about a possible typhoid fever epidemic. We cautioned the children and after dinner Ruth persuaded me to get a place to live in. We were assigned ~~to~~ Apt. 90 Down 3, one of the Women's Doms on Campus and the kids almost thought we were on vacation. Especially when they could see the helicopter landing and taking off out of our bedroom window. We thought that everyone was going to get a typhoid and

The kids stayed with First Aid and Boyd and I went out. We walked in from the Golf Course and didn't even get very muddy. as we approached our home I couldn't believe the water stayed out. We saw logs of every size and length, fences completely gone ^{but} now draped around nearly anything that stayed. One fence had been stopped by our shed and had been dragged by the force of the water halfway through our raspberries. Small log rocks had been deposited on our lawn with gravel being washed down the road and driveway nearly across the lawn. The pole steps to the playground were gone, the fence by our driveway was no more, and yet our young pine trees and pear were unharmed. The garage ~~was~~ had about 2" of mud on the floor - the water line was about 8" in the garage and 8" on the basement windows but as I went inside I found that only about 1-2" of water had entered the basement and half of the Family room carpet was still dry. A few things were on the floor and they were probably hurt (in fact the only items harmed were items belonging to students for storage ~~in the basement~~) but nearly everything was above the water ^{including} all our food and other storage items. I could not believe what I saw. Why were we not affected more. I had decided that I could accept a loss of at least 2 levels and yet we had almost no loss. I went out to the yard and garden. The radishes were all encased, I reached down without thinking not eat a couple of radishes, they were good - they might have been contaminated. I saw a log in the doorway of our shed I looked in, the lawn mower was all covered with mud and the ~~rototiller~~ ^{rototiller} ~~was~~ had nearly been under water ^{except for the} very top had ~~not been~~ covered. A fence had been stopped by the shed so we had full ~~level~~

of rubbish through the raspberries and on the edge of the lawn. Both of our hydrants were bent over by the debris and by the hoses that were tangled throughout the rubbish, at the time I thought that it ~~would~~ take quite some time to clean it all up (It did we ~~had~~ the raspberries cleaned two weeks after the flood thanks to the Carl Heimer family from barley who came to help with thousands of other LDS from stakes as far away as Jerome Idaho & Davis County Utah, and we had all of the rest of the debris, about 20 truck loads hauled away Saturday June 26 by the soil conservation people). Still though I was haunted by the fact that we really hadn't been hurt and others around our very neighborhood had really lost a lot. Why? All day I wondered why.

Boyd and I helped Lee Sadler ~~to~~ muck out his main level. There home is directly across from ours and is a split level like ours and 2 levels were flooded. We told up his practically new carpet and threw it out on the lawn and we saw the water standing in his lower level with mud at least 3^{1/2} inches. The water would have to be pumped. Then we went to John Bagley's home and helped remove carpets. Here it was Sunday and it seemed like a dream. I never had worked on the Sabbath before except of course for chores on the farm. The ox was really in the mire and it was all around. Still I was almost haunted by the thought "why are we not also flooded? why wasn't one of our windows broken? Surely there was enough debris. I almost felt guilty as I told others that we were blessed - no not blessed for any greater worthiness, all around are just as worthy if not more so and they lost their work or well as their homes. And yet I ~~have not been~~ ^{still} able to feel that there is some reason for our being spared the loss that others have felt so keenly. Maybe it is a test for us to see how much sacrifice we will make willingly. Perhaps it is to allow us to help the Lord in other ways. Still after 3 weeks I had not resolved in my mind the

reason for our situation, maybe it will take years before we'll see the true reason. We are presently seeing even more the effects others are feeling. Many really are finding themselves ~~without~~ refugees in their own land and unable to act because of government processes, high sub prohibiting proper sewage, ~~and water arrangements~~ and not enough to keep them busy while they wait. Truly idleness is the greatest handicap they face at this point. When they had to clean-up there was more than enough work to keep them busy in mind and body but now the clean-up is over and the people aren't able to start repairing and or rebuilding and they are becoming discouraged.

Sunday June 6 I also heard with unbelief that the Smith's on our Lane had a live horse in their basement when they got to their home Sunday morning. It was in about 4 or 5 feet of water. I also walked up to Bud Johnson's home it was one of the worst that stayed on its foundation; the front foundation wall had caved in and was only held up by the re-bars, fortunately the top floor ~~was~~ had not fallen in yet but was sagging an inch or two. Bud was able to get the front supported quickly and has laid blocks to replace the foundation. It was a real job to get the old foundation out of his basement and the mess cleaned up but with the help of the many volunteers from other stakes over 17,000 ^{in just 2 stakes} ~~from stakes~~ who paid their own way on buses and brought their own equipment and lunches, he along with hundreds of others were able to clean up homes and yards in just a couple of weeks. The help has lifted spirits wherever they lifted mud and trash. The church really does take care of its own.

The part the church played cannot be told in full

12
but it is necessary that I try.

The first real help was given by Ricks College in providing food, building and apartments for the victims of the flood and the help that ~~has~~ come from elsewhere. The government agencies ~~had~~ were given offices and space the red cross was given the same. The victims ~~where~~ assigned apartments and the food services on campus immediately provided meals and they have asked for nothing in the way of rent or payment from the people afflicted. It was told that the college in the first 3 weeks after the flood spent \$40,000 for food alone.

Sunday at 4:00 p.m. Pres Eyring called a meeting for all faculty and staff. He outlined the fact that Ricks was assuming the role of the Inn-keeper, others were the Good Samaritan but the College was the Inn-keeper and ~~at~~ the job was overwhelming to the regular crew. He told all of us that everyone whose home was effected would be given a week off with pay to clean-up but they needed everyone else and all the volunteers that could help. The task required all we could give, He himself helped in Custodial work the next few days, as the clean-up ~~after~~ behind the muddy victims was unbelievable.

I feel I must tell of the ~~events~~ ^{activity} around the Reaburg 3rd Ward Chapel every morning for so many days (except Sunday). Cars and Buses would begin to arrive at 7:30 each day and would continue to come until a little after 8:30. As they came there would be a representative from each ~~ward~~ stake and ward hit by the flood. Each representative would sign up for ~~so many~~ the number he would need that day and as the buses ~~and~~, pickups and cars would arrive they would be assigned to the various representatives.

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and would follow them to the areas ^{where} they were needed. Some ^{Nearby} ~~Stakes~~ ^{Flood victims} ~~nearby~~ had an arrangement to supply a given number of workers to a specific ward every day. As the volunteers would arrive at the ~~area~~ ^{homes} of the ~~victims~~ ^{flood victims} it was marvelous to see the effect. As these people came they brought a ^{hope} ~~knowledge~~ that the ^{cleanup} ~~jobs~~ could be done. The horrible weariness felt each night was swept away in one breath as new people with ~~more~~ buckets and shovels new strength asked what they could do. The hope they brought was often worth as much as the tremendous work they did. We were always hearing how quickly we were fixing things up compared to people in other disaster areas - the truth is, we were helped. Had we been required to clean up all our mud without any help, after a few days our energy would have given ^{out} ~~up~~ and we would have quit. ~~but when 4-8 when~~ 4-8 men ^{came} ~~came~~ ^{each day} with buckets and shovels and willing hearts ~~you each day~~ it ^{was} impossible to quit and almost before you knew it the work ~~was~~ ^{was} easy - the burden ~~was~~ ^{was} lifted and almost ~~one~~ is thankful to be able to give such willing people work to do. One business owner remarked that he would do anything to be able to hire people who worked as hard as the crew who cleaned out his business, but you can't buy that kind of effort it can only be given.

Now was it worth it - I mean would I or my family choose to have been elsewhere had we known the flood was to come? No, we are glad, almost grateful that we were privileged to be here and had we lost everything we would still not want this phase to not be part of our life. We were able to have time for others - to see the way they worked and labored to restore their own world. Since only our yard was effected most of our time was able to be spent helping and observing others. We saw the heartache, the struggle, the hope, the momentary despair, the willing help, the ^{with which} ~~that~~ others viewed the unbelievable destruction, and we saw people in action and sensed that the only true disaster was with those who gave up - there are a few who did and that still hurts. We learned that we could turn our ~~of~~ backs to all our material possessions if that were necessary and not look back. All can be replaced if need be as long as we never give up. Perhaps it is true that only in a community like ours could people laugh and joke about losing homes and possessions. ~~Because~~ Most of us were able to view the waters and know our things were possibly gone and yet we sensed ~~the~~ ^{their} greatest worth was not under water.

I was grateful for the wise counsel of our Prophet and Elder Parker on June 13, 1976. Some of it as I recorded it was: Elder Parker - "What have you done wrong? nothing!, the text is, how will you face it. 'Steady as she goes', it will take a long time. Pull families together and ward families. Perhaps

This is just a "sitting up." Pres. Kimball "We know¹⁵ you will come out of this alright, many neighbors are helping and strengthening ~~the~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ your children under your arms, allow children to talk about their thoughts (concentrate emphasis this enough). You may have placed too much emphasis on temporal before now it can be spiritual. Sing, dance when I heard the opening song I knew you had the proper Spirit. As we rebuild preserve integrity. Be careful, be considerate, be cheerful, play and rest with children. We love you, your wisdom and judgement will build for the future.

Now a few thoughts from the children

- 1- Cory (4 years old) was frightened by the many men in Army fatigues. Here is a conversation with him.
"Ride me on your shoulders Daddy, ride me on your shoulders"
we see a young man approaching in Army fatigues.
"Daddy do you dare to talk to Army?" "Yes, they are here to help us in fact some have been my students." The young man passes I say "hello" my 4 year old on my shoulders says "hello" too.
- 2- Bradley was the most observant - he drew pictures of almost everything he saw and caught great detail. One of his pictures was printed in "The Friend" magazine. It was a picture of the helicopter that brought the Prophet after we say it land.
- 3- Tammie I'm sure kept most of her feelings inside. Some fears came because of snakes and the care we gave to contamination.

All of the kids were fascinated by a nest of baby mice uncovered by some of the volunteers until one of the men killed them - our kids have tender feelings about animals. After that first Sunday and before the next one Pres. Terron Sondregger was heard to say "The ox is not in the mire next Sunday"

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We moved ^{back} into our home Monday June 7 just
after noon and our power was already restored.
The effort~~ed~~ made by the Utah Power Company was
one of the ^{best} examples to all.

Larry J. Anderson