

CHAPTER 1V

COLLEGE DAYS 1958-1962

After graduating from Leyden High School in Franklin Park, Illinois, Jane attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Gary, Naomi and family were making a move to Utah while Ellen Claire and her husband Marty were living in Arizona in the fall of 1958 when Jane started college. This left Margaret alone as an empty nester in Chicago.

Jane found college both a challenge and a joy. Her social life absorbed more of her time than studying did, but she certainly did well enough. She earned her degree in English with a minor in music. She sang in the A Cappella Choir and she participated in musical productions and assemblies. One of the courses she took in 1960 required an autobiography, which she probably adapted from the one written a few years earlier. Her skills in writing had developed further and the added maturity can also be seen in the following version:



MY STORY by Jane Weaver

On Halloween Day a new baby came to live in the brick house at 6612 Melrose Street in Chicago, Illinois. She had been born just the week before, on October 22, 1940. Her name was Margaret Jane Weaver, and she was the third and last child born to the happy young couple at the left [photo included in original] who had come from Canada fifteen years before to continue their education. They stayed in Chicago and America regained two American-born but Canadian bred, citizens. The girl, Margaret Holmes, was born July 20, 1898 in North Ogden, Utah; and the boy was born Henry Duncan Weaver on May 30, 1896 in Bennington, Idaho. Their parents left the United States just a few short years later to become part of the Mormon colonies farming in southern

Alberta. The two families settled near Raymond and Magrath on farms a short distance apart. There they lived and grew and met and married. And in the manner of the young seeking opportunities and advancement, they came to Chicago and its Art Institute.

They found advancement and opportunity both, as artist and school teacher, bishop and Relief Society president, and as proud parents to first a boy, then a girl, and then--me. I was low man on the totem pole, being two heads shorter than my sister who was two heads shorter than my brother. But I really didn't mind, as long as we were on the same totem pole. We were all even born in the same hospital, Ravenswood, and were delivered by the same doctor, Ariel L. Williams (who now resides in Provo). Gary H. got there first, on November 11, 1930 and Ellen Claire came next, on January 21, 1936. Then there was me.

I was given a name and a blessing by Bishop Weaver on the very next Fast Sunday, and on the very same Fast Sunday eight years later they very same bishop baptized and confirmed me a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

By this time I was more than two heads shorter than my sister (she was kind of sneaky and grew faster than I did), and so I just fit into the corner of the family portrait; which isn't really an advertisement for Pepsodent—it's just a happy family.

At the age of five I, and my mother, both went to Franklin Park Grade School for the first time. I got a chair in the Kindergarten, and she got the teacher's desk in third grade. We went to school together for nine years, until I graduated to high school, and she still remained in third grade. We drove the ten miles to the suburb of Franklin Park every day, constantly improving on our time record and number of trains barely missed by roaring around the barricades.

The teacher I remember best from grade school was my mother, I am sure, if for no other reason than the fact that it was the biggest struggle of my little life to remember to call her "Mrs. Weaver," and at the same time to refrain from smashing the kids that called me "teacher's pet."

Then came the age of skinny arms and legs and neck and clothes that always seemed to be shrinking away from limbs that never ceased to be growing. It was an age also of a deep and abiding hatred for the long knee-socks and knit snuggies that my mother made me wear to school. Every day I would relieve this humiliation by making a beeline for the girls' room upon arrival at school and rolling my socks down and my snuggies up.

By this time I was definitely a tomboy. I would play with nobody else but the boys in my neighborhood, (there were few girls, anyway) and the girlfriends I had at school were all tomboys, too. This tomboy age also gave rise to the broken-arm-every-summer age. I kept this up for five years, the only variation being that I alternated arms each year. Dr. Williams used to kid me by saying that as soon as he put Janie Weaver's arm in a sling he knew that the summer was complete. I usually had been chasing a boy when the broken arm had occurred (either to regain a stolen jump-rope or to pound him for some reason or other), but as I grew older I became a little more subtle about chasing the boys, and became interested in mysterious things like nylons and high-heeled shoes.

In the summer of my 12th year we moved to a comfortable white frame house on the outskirts of Franklin Park, where my mother was still attending third grade. By this time my brother had returned from the Texas-Louisiana Mission and was married and attending dental school, my sister was away for her first year at college, and for the first time in my life I had a bedroom all to myself. It was wonderful, and I even enjoyed helping Mom and Dad take care of the acre of lawn and garden.

With our move out of the city we also transferred from the Logan Square Ward to the West Suburban Ward. My grade school classmates and I graduated to Leyden Community High School and entered the world of school busses, upperclassmen with hot cars, exciting boys and first experiences with real competition for grades. It was also my first experience with having to really stand up for the things I believed in. I and a circle of girlfriends formed a club. We constituted the major portion of the “in” group of girls in the school, but when the club’s activities got a little out of hand I and a few other sensible girls quit. We didn’t want our names in the newspapers with the other girls of the “gang” and we wanted nothing to do with the gang wars then so prevalent in Chicago and the suburbs. So we retained our individual standards (I was the only Mormon) and even in doing so found ourselves still “in” in school circles. High school was the first lesson in my life on the advantages of being an individual, and I am very grateful for it. Nothing seems to strengthen testimonies as much as a little adversity.

At the age of fifteen the biggest faith-promoting experience of my life happened. My father died of cancer. He had been sick for a year, and they finally found the cause of it—too late. He was operated on in August of 1955. Through the blessing of the priesthood he recovered enough to come home to his family in two weeks and died just four months later on December 5, 1955. My father knew he was going to die, although because of the instructions of the doctors no one had told him. He never said one word of complaint and was never anything but cheerful, although the weight that fell so rapidly from his frame was replaced by an unbearable and constantly increasing pain that no drugs could stop. I watched his very close friend, Stake President, John K. Edmunds, enter his room to administer to him and come out again weeping because he knew that my father would not recover. On the night of December 4th Daddy suffered from heart failure several times, each time revived by my brother. When at last he seemed to rest a little better, my exhausted brother and his small family went home, and my mother sent my sister and I to bed. With a start I woke up in what seemed like the middle of the night and after several unsuccessful attempts to sleep I crept downstairs to find my sister weeping and my mother holding my father’s head in her arms, the tears streaming down her face and her eyes looking out the window toward the first rays of the sun. He had died in her arms.

My brother took it very hard, especially since he had not been there, but the next day he came to us and said he had a dream to tell us about. Daddy had come to him and told him not to grieve and to comfort the family, for he had been needed in the Lord’s work and had been taken for the purpose of teaching the spirits in paradise. He showed my brother the work he was doing and the myriads of people waiting for the gospel to be brought to them and for their genealogy work to be done. He recited to him the names of many people who needed to have their work done, and he then left him with a testimony of the importance of genealogy work for the dead and spreading the gospel to the living. My father was buried on December 8, 1955 in Chapel Hills Gardens in Westchester, Illinois.

In 1958 I graduated from Leyden High, left the A-cappella Choir, my Primary class and my job as Sunday School chorister, and came to Brigham Young University. My sister was now married, my brother was a practicing dentist in Granger, Utah, and Mother was still in third grade. In the two years since then nothing has changed except that I’m a junior in college and have 14½ years of school behind me and one summer at Lake Tahoe, Nevada, where I worked as a change-girl in a gambling casino. The climate was wonderful, the scenery better, the environment of the clubs lousy, the salary very good and my Sunday School class of 15 eight-year-olds the most wonderful

in the world. I didn't forget the lesson in individuality I learned in high school—Lake Tahoe was just the title of one of the more recent chapters.



The preceding has been a brief sketch of my life—the life of a Mormon girl raised by good Mormon parents in a non-Mormon atmosphere. Many, many incidents, most of which are unrelated here, of both a good and a bad nature, have made up my life and the kind of person I am and have both torn down and built up my testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ restored by Joseph Smith in the latter days. I feel that at the present time the good in me slightly outweighs the bad, and as a result I have a testimony. I know that the gospel is true and that the Church is Christ's organization set up on the earth to perpetuate this gospel. There are many things I want in life, but I shall feel successful if I can manage to live the gospel in the way I know it should be lived and I should live it. I want no more than this, for this is all. Let the scriptures state it for me: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all else shall be added unto you."

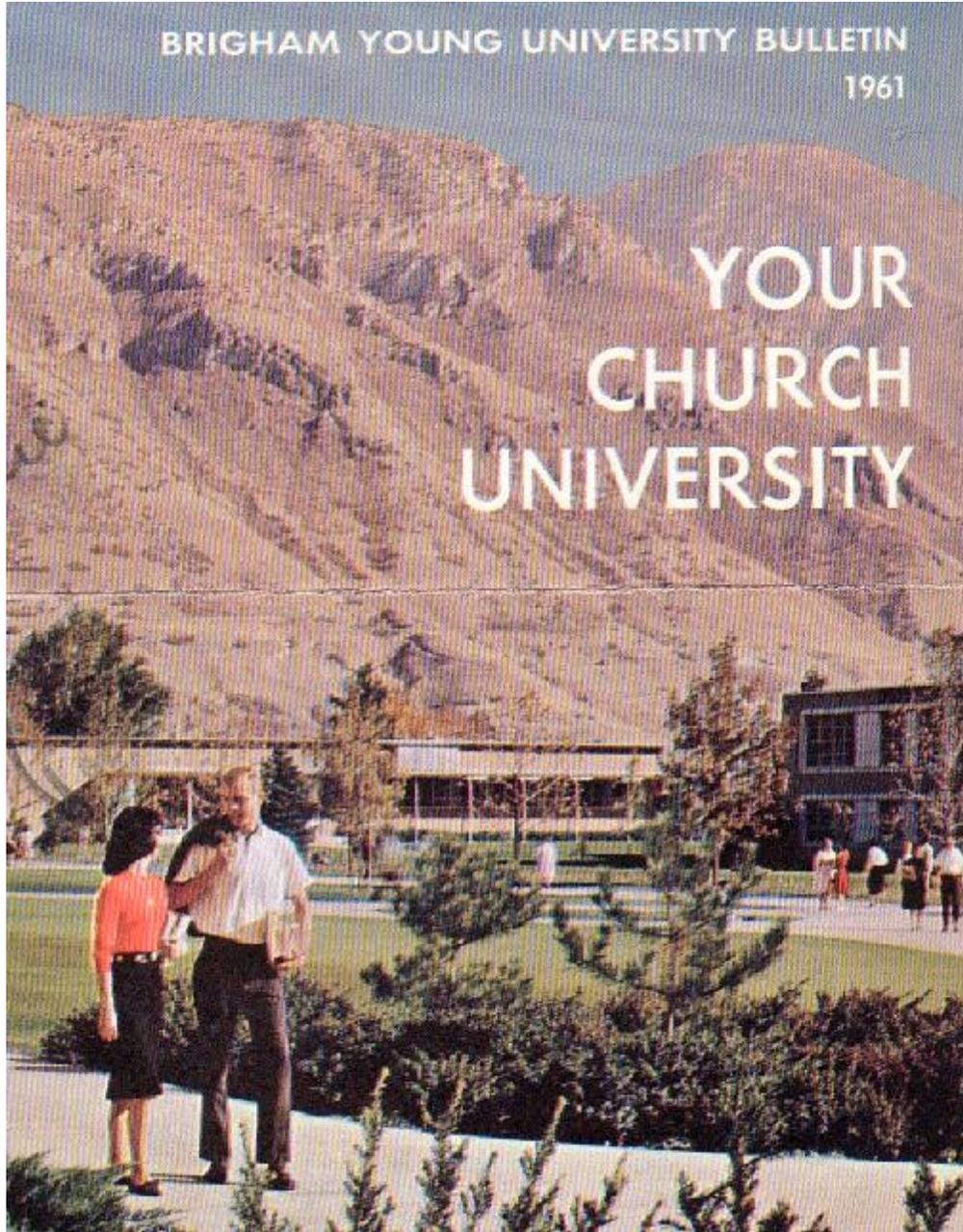
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Jane was invited to join a “social unit”, as the local sororities were called then, on the Brigham Young University campus. She accepted, and became an enthusiastic participant in their many on-campus and off-campus activities. At the installation of new officers of the Nautilus group (below: Jane 2nd from right, rear) in 1960, one of the girls wrote this of Jane:



*Janie Weaver has this year been Vice President.
She hails from Chicago, but is no longer a resident.
She's a tall, dark, handsome and talented miss
Who creates when she sings a feeling of bliss.
Spirit and enthusiasm she has a-plenty
And from what I hear impresses most gentry.
To Janie our sister we all take a bow
To show appreciation right here and now!*

Jane was popular and busy with many activities at the university. In 1961 she appeared on the cover of the Brigham University Bulletin, the class schedule for the year:



Janie was a great letter writer. However, not many of the letters she wrote home from college were preserved. We are grateful that quite a few of her photos were saved:



One of Jane's few extant letters of that era was written to Marty and E.C.

Provo, Utah

May 9, 1961 - Tuesday

Hi Guys—

Thought you might enjoy knowing I'm still alive—almost. Just three weeks of classes left, then finals. I guess I'll make it. Right now I'm in accounting class and I'm bored silly because I haven't read today's chapter and I haven't the vaguest idea what he's talking about. The weather here is fabulous—almost too hot. Sure a miserable time to have 19 hours and most of them in the afternoon! Oh, well.



Last Friday was our assembly. [The social "units" held annual competitions for musical stage productions at B.Y.U.] It went off without a hitch and was really successful. If we don't win Sweepstakes we'll come awfully close. It was a real cute "7 Brides for 7 Brothers" type story of the Klondike gold rush days. I was an Indian princess (I have the longest, darkest hair in Nautilus) and I got to do a solo dance. It was really a blast.

This Friday night is our dinner dance. I'm taking Ron Hadley. How about that. I'm making my dress (it's almost done, thank goodness). That's what's enclosed, in case you are wondering.

Saturday morning Choir and Utah Symphony is putting on Beethoven's 9th. Beryl [Jensen, our Chicago live-in student] is going to be one of the soloists. Sure will be nice to see her again. Haven't been taking voice lessons this year—sure miss it. Next year I'm going to.

Oh, by the way, I'm Vice Pres. of Nautilus next year—will be a lot of work but I'm really looking forward to it.

The house is all ready to move into. I hope to have everything cleaned up and taken care of as much as is possible by the time Mom gets here. [Margaret had built a house in Granger, Utah, so she could be closer to family.] So far I've got a job at Manpower, Inc. (an extra-help service). They will pay about \$1.80 per hour. I'm going in to Kennecott Copper to see about a job there. A friend of mine is working there and told the Personnel Manager about me. He wrote my name down and is waiting for me to come in when I can. Hope to get in there Saturday while I'm in Salt Lake.

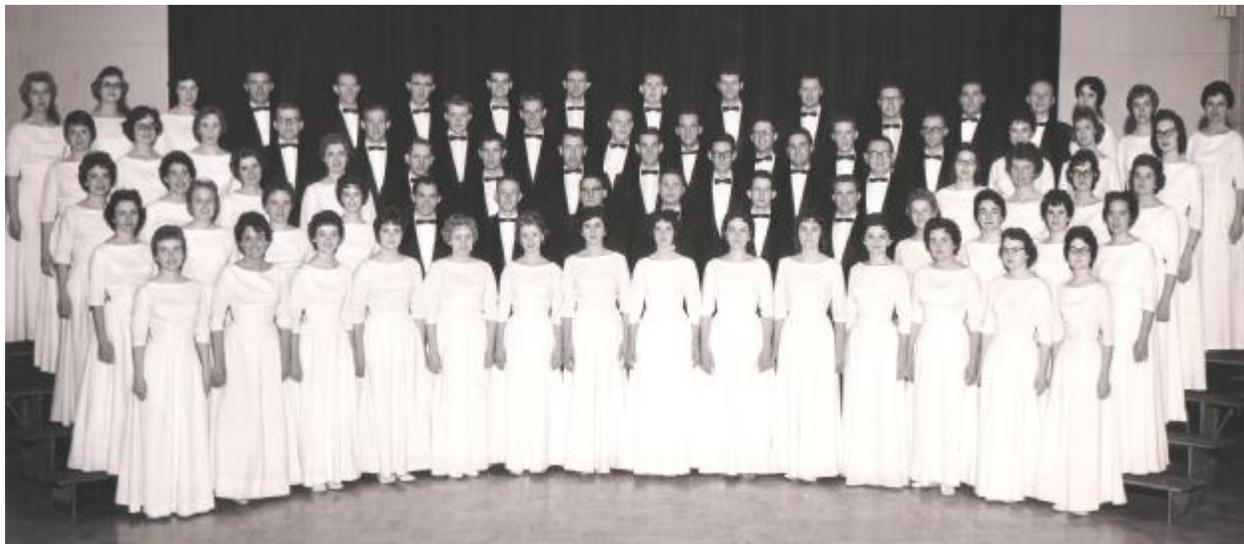
Here's another goodie—I told Dave Morrill to save his Iranian stamps (not to write any more). He's turned into a real party boy—and I've lost interest, so I prefer saving my stamps, too.

My roomie, Sharon, is going on a mission to Sweden on June 26! One of my N. L. sisters is going there too, and at the same time (They lowered the age, you know). Sharon is a sharpie, a Tokalon [social unit] and a great kid. I'm even getting enthusiastic. Wish I were graduating!

Finally got acquainted with Lester Whetten a couple of weeks ago. If I work part-time next year I'll probably work for him. Mom has nothing but nasties to say about the "scheming sneaky Whettens" but I found him very nice. He certainly spoke very highly of you, E.C., and Marty. Son John is B.M.O.C.[Big Man On Campus], I guess—a Bricker [social unit] (I think) and A.M.S. [Associated Men Students] officer. Don't know him personally. Larry has been in Europe studying a couple years—is home now, I think, and is still not married. Bro. Whetten seemed quite disappointed I was only 20! But he sent his love to you, and Mrs. Whetten's too. The bell rang—have to go. Write soon.*

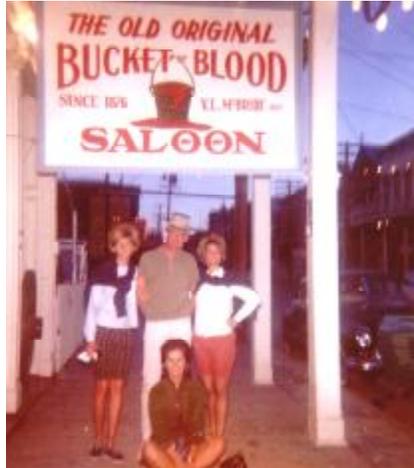
Love, Janie

* [Larry Whetten was a young man E. C. dated in college. It turned out that his mother's sister, Sina Allred, from Raymond, Alberta, Canada, was a missionary with Margaret in the Eastern States Mission in the 1920's **and** the object of the affection of Duncan Weaver very early in his life. She was always an irritant to Margaret!]



A Cappella Choir

During the summer of 1960 Janie went to work in Reno, Nevada. She got a job as a change girl in one of the casinos there. She had a wonderful time and her experiences of life were broadened considerably. Perhaps it was then that she first entertained the notion of serving as a church missionary. Reno photos below:



Some time, possibly during her junior year, Jane ran for Associated Women Students secretary. In an undated clipping from the BYU daily paper she wrote:

“AWS Secretary - Jane Weaver - In a democracy such as ours, the responsibility of the government rests with every citizen. We as college students cannot escape that responsibility. We are responsible for our local government—the government of the Brigham Young University Community with its 10,000 inhabitants.

“Just as misrepresentation and corruption in general can enter in America’s government, so can it reach us here at BYU through our own student government. The only way we can be assured of having good government at BYU is to participate in that government.

“The best means of participation comes in the form of the privilege of voting for student body officials—not only to vote but to vote intelligently. To vote intelligently one must have a knowledge of the candidates and their platforms.

“In seeking the office of AWS secretary, I cannot make explicit promises as to definite reforms I will make, for I believe that wise decisions can only be made as each unique situation arises.

The only promise that I can make is that I will be sensitive to the needs of the women students and do all I am capable of doing to fulfill those needs by serving in this office.”



There is no record of whether or not she won the race for this office. She graduated from college in 1962 and took a job teaching English at Granite Junior High in the Salt Lake area.



In 1963 Jane accepted a position teaching in Alhambra, California. While there, she made the decision to go on a mission. She finished teaching the semester that ended in January of 1964 and was called to the Chilean Mission shortly thereafter.

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