CHAPTER VIII

STALKED BY A KILLER - 1983 - 1987

In 1983, not long after the sisters' trip to San Diego, Jane was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was a devastating blow. The largest portion of the following chapter has been taken from journal entries of both Jane's and E.C.'s. Also included are some of Amy's journal entries as well as transcriptions of a few more recent conversations with Al Toronto.

Jane's journal:

March 16, 1983

All the empty pages of all the journals I've started over the years will rise up, fluttering and rattling, and accuse me of gross negligence at judgement day! Why am I so poor at this? Longhand is so slow–guess I'm lazy and spoiled by my typewriter.

Is today the beginning of the end? Or the end of the beginning? Or maybe the first day of the rest of my life. I have a lovely view of Timp [Mt. Timpanogos] out my hospital window. And here I sit in bed–waiting for the results of the liver biopsy for the mastectomy to come in the morning.

E.C. [in Midway with the kids] *called and said that Pat Olson, Susan Farrell, Joyce Johnson, Rae Lynn Kohler, Faughn Ashworth had all called. Jean Brown called here. I called Susan Jones. She came down to visit about 4:30 and brought me a book. Great visit! Al came at supper with two scoops of Pralines & Cream ice cream. The Primary sent flowers. Valerie Kelson stopped by and brought a bud vase of pink carnations.*

I'm alternately depressed–stoic–optimistic–or panicked. I repent. How do I get out of this mess? No way out but to go through with it. I'm afraid of surgery but more afraid not to have surgery. Al just left–it's almost 11:30 PM. I'm waiting for the sleeping pill to make me drowsy. Just two weeks ago tonight we were packing for Mazatlan. How our lives have changed in a few brief days! How ironic that a beautiful act of lovemaking led to the awful discovery. When I looked in the bathroom mirror I thought I saw a faint outline of the lump. I told Judy the next morning–then put it out of my mind–but I found myself occasionally checking to see if it were really still there. We got home Tuesday the 8th at 2AM–by 10AM I was in Rowley's office and the worry began. Wednesday we saw Paul Robinson and Thursday was the biopsy. What's been the worst day so far: the physical discomfort and the mental agony. The phone call came at noon: breast cancer. It felt like a death sentence–totally unreal! What to do–radiation or surgery? I taught my class Friday, still bleeding a little but no one knew, so I got along fine. We saw Drs. Cowan and Pledger–more indecision–but we scheduled the surgery for Monday. By Sunday I was horribly depressed. Madeline Nichol's call preaching radiation didn't help, but I got an unexpected reprieve from *surgery when Paul called with unsettling news about my liver and we had a liver scan Monday instead. It revealed no tumor, but damage similar to hepatitis (?) So here I am.*

I've certainly had time to think about this surgery. I'm not sure it's helped. I'm sure the next day or two will probably be blurry–I'm wishing them over–I hate pain! I feel like Scarlet O'Hara, "I'll worry about that tomorrow!" Somehow my life will never quite be the same and I guess that's all right. It's time to reassess priorities–spend time on things that matter. We go around feeling immortal–never thinking about death until something hits you between the eyes. Wow! None of us are going to get out of this alive! I remember praying for more spirituality for both Al and me. I certainly wasn't asking for this! I definitely do not believe the Lord sent this, but I am sure he is interested in how I (we) are handling this–and is near to help (even though I haven't felt particularly close to him lately). I certainly need him now. Help me to have faith, Lord.

Mar. 17, 1983

Surgery: passed it in a daze. Al came, also Mom and Kaye. They brought flowers, tiger lilies and gloxinia.

Mar. 18, 1983

Still very groggy. E. C. brought yellow roses, also flowers from Brent and Audrey Hill, Karen and Paul Smith, Dal and Inez Osborne.

Mom came again with Marion and Vern and Carole. Gary and Nana came too. Al came early, before class, then again late.

Sat. Mar. 19, 1983

I think I may live. Paul brought the good news about the nodes: only 1 with cancer, plus some in the breast, so no radiation! He's pleased, so am I! Blowing snow today, yuk! Karen Smith came to visit–Janice Bishop, Al and kids, Doyle and Arlene Smith. Large hanging plant, golden philodendron, from Irwins and Nanny.

April 1, 1983

I passed an important milestone today–taught my first class since surgery. Al drove me down. I sat during much of class, then we had lunch and I left him at his office to run some Easter bunny errands. I got much too tired. We arrived home to find Pat and Jim Olson delivering dinner. Such good friends! A good day, but exhausting! Al has taken the kids to the movies and I'm enjoying the quiet house.

It's been two weeks since surgery, three since the biopsy. My head is still swimming! I was truly green on St. Patrick's Day (surgery day). Mom said I looked like death not even warmed over! The next few days were more or less a painful fog–only hazy memories of gorgeous flowers, kind and welcome visitors, annoying IV's and vomiting, and sleep. I jotted a few notes on visitors and flowers and I've barely begun to write all my thank you notes! E.C. left on Saturday the 19th. Judy arrived Sunday and stayed till the 28th. What jewels those two women are! On Saturday Will asked Al, crestfallen, "Where's E.C.?" "She had to go home," Daddy said. Will blurted, "But I need a mother and a father!" "But Judy's coming tomorrow," Al said. "OK," said Will, contentedly.

Judy fixed a great "last meal" Sunday night: artichokes, which all dearly loved. Then she stopped up the plumbing by putting them down the disposal! She was mortified! The kitchen was a wreck and Al's attempts just made a bigger mess, so I just teased her about her leaving me in the lurch! Shari helped me find a plumber and it was fixed by noon! It's funny in retrospect! Judy even took Buck [the dog]. Now there's a true friend! Al just couldn't bear to shoot that darn sweet sheep killer! Maybe now we'll have peace with the neighbors! Judy says Buck loves Texas!

Carolyn won the piano contest! Actually she "tied for 2nd place" is how they phrased it, but they split 1st place money and got 1st place trophies and since they didn't call it 1st place they can compete next year! Judy went with the kids all day to the piano clinic. Paul Pollei was very complementary to Carrie in the master class, she said. Al and I went to the finalist competition. She made a few mistakes or she would have won hands down! But I was so proud of her! Even Haydn would have been proud of how she played that concerto!

I'm so tired of this painful arm and breast. Or should I say non-breast. Sometimes I think my body is trying to reject this foreign object, this implant thrust under objecting muscles. It's not much to look at yet, but I don't feel mutilated. Without this mound in place of my breast I probably would feel more like a freak. Strange, when the pain gets moderately severe it feels like a breast impacted from too much milk. I feel tingling in milk ducts that aren't there! Wishful thinking?

The ward had been great–even while E.C. and Judy were here, and even more so since they left. Will has been playing every day, and we've had dinner brought in every night! So many kind gestures from friends and acquaintances–food, cards, letters, flowers. I didn't know so many people cared! I was especially touched by a visit from Roy Kohler and his wife Phyllis (also Monica and Al). I had heard Roy had cancer and he came to give me moral support. He looked good–such a great attitude! He gets chemotherapy monthly! Yuk.

I guess the best thing about all of this has been my sweet husband. I don't know what I would do without him! He's been my rock, my comfort, my best friend. And he truly doesn't care what I look like! I thank God for my blessings!

Notes E.C. tacked on my mirror:

"The Lord is my shepherd – from Aunt E.C.'s favorite Psalm"
"I like you – no matter WHAT
you say
you feel
you think
you do!
Love, E.C."

E.C.'s journal excerpts:

March, 1983:

What a low blow! Jane called to say she had a biopsy of a breast tumor and it was *cancer*! "I felt like it was a death sentence," she said. I wished it had been ME not her. I sincerely did. I feel prepared for such a thing for myself for some reason, but not for her. With 4 young children at home, how unjust and unfortunate! I also feel anger and a sense of loss and deprivation.

She did a remarkably good job of handling it all, taking it in her stride and being reasonable with her fears and disappointments. All I did was answer the phone at her house. She has so many nice friends and a ward that shows lots of love and concern.

Al was very loving and supportive through the whole ordeal. It was beautiful to witness.

I've been calling Janie every day [since returning home]. She is doing well–progressing–but I fear doing too much which will retard her long-term progress. Cindy writes me–a precious child–how she reminds me of Jane!

The Toronto Thanksgiving letter, 1983:

May God, from whom all blessings flow
His richest joys on you bestow

And may His ever-loving care
Be with you always, everywhere.

Dear Ones,

Thanksgiving is a time to count our blessings aloud. We're grateful for family, both immediate and extended; friends, both near and far; health and energy; the ability to work and work to do; laughter, and something to laugh about.

News from the Torontos would not make headlines this year. Al is working hard at building his business and coping with alternate economic reversals and successes. He wishes he had more time for boating, skiing and snowmobiling.

Jane is grateful to be feeling good again after major surgery–back to the normal happy chaos of home, kids, chauffeuring, gardening, etc. She loves singing with the Ralph Woodward Chorale and having a break from teaching at BYU this year.

Carolynn, 14, is an 8th grader this year. She's doing wonderful things with the piano–she performed her Preparatory Solo Recital at BYU this summer and enjoys accompanying in Primary and middle school. Amy, age 10, is our resident artist who wants to be famous, loves 5th grade, and has become a real bookworm. Cindy, our 8-year-old 3rd grader, loves reading and piano and has decided to become a famous author. William, our exuberant 5-year-old, keeps us young. He loves pre-school, learning to write, and helping Dad build a log barn on our 10 acres down the road.

As 1983 comes to a close we feel very blessed. We send the warmest of wishes to all of you at this bountiful time of year for a harvest of joys and an abundance of love. Have a happy holiday season and a wonderful 1984!

From the Torontos, Janie, Al & kids

Thanksgiving 1983

Jane's journal:

March 18, 1984

Yesterday was my 1st anniversary, or "birthday" since cancer surgery. I'm glad to be alive and feeling good! Al and I spent the day yesterday with the Elders' Quorum snowmobiling out at Hill's cabin above Strawberry Reservoir. A blizzardy cold day but very enjoyable in spite of some hairy spots getting in and out! It's seven miles one way! I didn't like driving home in a blizzard and my arm and chest were very sore from hanging on to Al as we rode. I was glad to get home to the kids.

The breast implant has been disappointing. Dr. Pledger replaced it in October, just after our wonderful Lake Powell trip, and all the soreness came back. In less than a month the new implant slipped down where the old one had been. All that for nothing! Even with anti-inflammatory drugs I have soreness, especially in the evenings when I get tired. Next week we're going to try a new type of implant, with Dr. Hirsche, who will give me very strict restrictions, unlike Pledger!*

My cancer checkups have been good. I have much to be thankful for. I heard today Art Godfrey has prostate cancer and they don't know yet if it has spread. My heart goes out to him and Leah. They were one of the first to come and visit me after my surgery.

The ICH lawsuit and IRS audit are both in process, but it will be quite a while before it's all resolved. Al was quite depressed initially, but business has been good and he's quite cheerful. The worst scenario will probably not come to pass, and even if it does, it doesn't really matter. After surviving cancer, nothing else (like mere business matters) seems very scary! I'm so grateful for Al's and the kids' good health, the gospel, education–things that really matter!

* Jane and Al went to Lake Powell every year for about 12 years. They bought into a houseboat with a group of 8 families from Highland, Utah. Some of the Toronto children's favorite "growing up" memories were of the annual trips to Lake Powell.

E.C.'s journal:

> April 9, 1984
>
> "I'm very worried about Jane. It's been a year since her surgery, and now something is wrong with the liver and with the blood tests. No accurate diagnosis yet."

Jane’s journal:

April 17, 1984

It’s been an eventful month. On March 20, I had my year checkup. The liver enzymes were elevated to over 250 (normal is 60) and a liver scan showed the same kind of damage as last year. This insidious tiredness had been creeping up on me! Blood tests were abnormal, but negative for hepatitis. We stopped the tolectin, a rare side effect is hepatitis-type liver damage. Then for a week I really felt awful–could hardly walk, climb stairs, without feeling faint, dizzy, like a wet dishrag! My appetite disappeared and I lost 12 pounds. (I didn’t mind losing the weight, but I’d rather be healthy.) After three weeks of strict diet (no sugar, low fat) I’m feeling a little better. Could this all be due to the tolectin? Subsequent blood tests showed anemia (probably from so many blood tests!) and a positive reaction to “lipoid hepatitis” whatever that is! Tomorrow I go see Dr. Ford, the oncologist-hematologist. He will undoubtedly do a bone marrow study. That’s a nice term for a biopsy. They stab a needle through a bone to get some marrow and check for cancer. I guess they need to be sure cancer isn’t behind all my symptoms. I’ll feel better when it’s over!

Al and Bishop Gertsch gave me a blessing tonight. He promised me that like D&C 88 promises, I would have “marrow in my bones” that the doctors would be inspired, I would be healed and live many years, raise my children and enjoy good health. Now I just need faith! Somehow, I’m not as depressed as I was two weeks ago. I was sicker then and the tests were frustratingly negative. Somehow having a name to this condition helps!

This weekend is Easter. I hope I feel good enough to enjoy it and make it fun for the kids. E.C. and family are coming up for Jo Ellen’s graduation on Friday. It will be great to see them all!

Apr. 25, 1984

Just one week ago we had the bone marrow biopsy done. Friday we got the diagnosis: cancer cells in the marrow. Don’t think I’ve ever been so low. How could this have happened? It seemed unreal, sitting in Al’s office, talking to Dr. Ford. He talked about control, not cure–a remission that might last 3-5 years at the outside. Unchecked, he said this would kill me in 3-6 months. We were totally stunned at such a terrible prognosis. I refuse to believe it. I will get better and I will live to raise my children!

We took the kids to see “Footloose” Friday night as promised. I tried to hide the tears from them.

We decided not to tell anyone till after church so I could sing on Easter Sunday. Al swore the bishop to secrecy. They planned a fast day, to be announced at the meeting’s end.

Easter Sunday went well. The kids were tickled with their baskets and goodies and went off to church looking gorgeous. Will in his first 3-piece suit! E.C. and I came to Sacrament meeting. I sang “No Man is an Island,” very out of breath and weak, but I got through it! I couldn’t look at Al. He was crying. At the end of the program Lyle got up and started talking about the wonderful Toronto family, then instead of just announcing a fast day, he said I had terminal cancer throughout my body! Luckily Amy and Cindy weren’t listening! It was quite a scene after church. (Lyle and Nola came over later. He apologized for his words.) I got the giggles during the closing prayer, leaned over to Al and said, “I’m sure glad Earl Houtz isn’t here!” (Old bonecrusher!)

Monday I had a bone scan plus a dozen more x-rays. No cancer, just a couple of suspicious areas. I’m relieved even though Paul said he didn’t expect to find any. I was too tired to go to the *prayer meeting at 6 PM at the end of the ward fast. Al said Nephi Probst gave a beautiful prayer. People were there we hardly even know, Carrie's friends, too. Such an outpouring of love was just wonderful!*

This afternoon E.C. and I went to the temple. I felt weak, but I enjoyed it immensely. She's going home tomorrow. We hope to be going to Houston soon for consultations at the M. D. Anderson Clinic. B.J. Irwin has kindly offered her home to us. We've made phone calls about the Gerson therapy, the Burton therapy and others. What to do? In the prayer circle the officiator prayed that the Lord would grant that "all those who were not appointed unto death should be raised from their beds of affliction." I felt that was meant just for me. But I want to live. I must live! If I can't have a complete cure, I'll settle for a 20-year remission (so, OK - 15!)

E.C.'s journal:

> April 30, 1984
>
> The cancer has spread to the bone marrow. The verdict is death; the sentence takes place in 4 months or 4 years, and now that is re-confirmed at M. D. Anderson Clinic in Houston. Cancer, the merciless villain! Oh, my Janie–my sister–my closest friend in all the world–I want always to remember how beautiful you were in the temple last week. The snow had fallen on the pansies, just like the snow is falling on the full blossoming of your life. But even in the gloom and darkness of the spring snowstorm the clouds were beautiful, even magnificent as they hung low around the mountains. In the prayer circle, the brother who prayed said, "May all who are not appointed unto death be raised from their beds of affliction." Jane said she felt the prayer was meant just for her. I had the same strong feeling.
>
> May 3, 1984:
>
> Spoke to Jane last night. She's feeling somewhat better after having been extremely depressed since Houston. Grant Bangerter will give her a special blessing tomorrow. Her many friends rallying around her have been very comforting–my friends, too. Yesterday I met a couple whose three children and their grandmother had been killed in a gas explosion. They'd come in for my help with plans for a new house. It put my impending loss in perspective.

Jane's journal:

May 3, 1984

This has been a special evening. Al and I drove down to Alpine where we visited with Grant and Geri Bangerter, and Grant gave me a blessing. Nana called me yesterday to tell me she had asked Grant to include my name in the special prayer the General Authorities have in their temple meeting each Thursday. Geri said both she and Grant fasted today before his meeting. He said Brother Cook offered a beautiful prayer. Grant had so many comforting words for us. He told us Pres. Kimball said, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" I wish I could remember everything he said! He was so positive, so optimistic, so comforting. He said the Lord wants us to turn to Him. We need to have faith that He can do miracles!

The blessing itself was so beautiful. He pled with the Lord to answer all the prayers in my behalf. He promised me I would be restored to health, that my body would be strong and vigorous. He rebuked the disease and blessed me that I would have good health and that my "time would be *lengthened to spend with my husband and children. Lord, all life is in thy hand." I felt so comforted by his beautiful blessing. He said I would have the "desires of my heart." He's such a choice servant of the Lord. It really strengthened my faith. I had felt unworthy to ask for a blessing. It took a lot of faith just to call and ask! And I'm so glad I did! They were so warm and gracious. I feel reassured of the Lord's love for me and acceptance of me, imperfect though I am.*

May 5, 1984

I'm sitting in a hospital bed in Heber waiting for a blood transfusion. They say it will really pep me up, so I might as well feel good while I'm healing! I developed some pains in my lower ribs yesterday so Al took me to se Dr. Ford. We had a good discussion of options, etc. We probably won't go back to Houston. It was great to see B.J. and Will and Judy and Tim, but the M.D. Anderson Hospital was generally pretty depressing! Hordes of people in various stages of cancer treatment–some bald–some looking half dead. (They might as well have had a sign over the door that read "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!") Depressing! Dr. Blumenschein was quite a fireball, recommended oophorectomy plus aggressive chemo as my best chance for a remission (if I survive the treatment)! Tuesday we came home. I was very depressed–on the edge of panic constantly. We felt so bad that we decided to stay overnight in Salt Lake and go to the temple. Tuesday night after dinner and a show Bill and Rusty stopped by our hotel and we had a good visit. They were very comforting to us both. The next morning we went to the Salt Lake temple. It was really special. We hadn't been there in a long time! Al and I stood in the prayer circle, even though I felt very weak. We sat in one of the small sealing rooms off the celestial room for a long time–talking and praying. No real answers came, but we felt much comforted. We got home a little after 3 PM. All the kids ran to meet us, dancing down the driveway! Such dolls! Good to be home! The warm feelings and assurances of Grant's blessing are still with me. He didn't promise me I'd live to be an old lady, but he didn't promise me I wouldn't, either! But I know I will be healed. The rest is in the hands of the Lord.

Jane's letter to E.C.:

Midway, Utah
May 8, 1984, Tuesday

Dearest E.C.,

I'm enjoying the most beautiful day today! I feel great–which is the best part–plus it's sunny and 70 degrees. What more could I ask?! Our trees are finally budding and leafing out–the valley is green and lovely.

This morning Will and I had such fun bird watching! As I put some breakfast dishes in the sink I noticed about 20 big brown "turkeys" wandering around in the marshy place behind thee trampoline, just about 100 feet from the house. We got the binoculars for a closer look. They had long bills with white patches on their faces and long red legs like flamingos. I made a few phone calls, and the fellows at the fish hatchery told em they were sandhill cranes! He said some come every summer to the valley on their migratory journeys. We had such fun watching them! They were feasting on grubs, etc. in the water, apparently. Other birds, ducks, etc. didn't disturb them at all, and they ignored me when I took a picture from the house. But as I stepped further out into the yard *they all flew off! Gorgeous! Maybe they'll come back tomorrow morning. They said a pair nested last summer up in the north fields but they never saw any young. Hope some nest here!*

This transfusion has helped so much! I feel better than I have in over a month! Did I tell you how well "Elijah" went? I sat, but sang through most of it. My solo went well (not perfect, but that's okay) and I was very glad I did it! Couldn't have done it without the transfusion!

Today I feel very blessed and at peace. I'm so thankful for all my blessings! And one of the things I'm <u>the most thankful for</u> is having <u>you</u> for a sister! You are wonderful, marvelous, terrific, and a real source of strength for me. I count on you! And I love you so much for everything you do and are!

If I hurry I can just catch the last mail.

I love you!
Janie

Jane's journal:

May 8, 1984

…I went to Sacrament Meeting on Sunday. It was a good testimony meeting. The Wasatch Chorus, "Elijah" was Sunday night. I sat through most of it, but sang, and I did fine on my solo, thanks to my new blood! No shortness of breath. Clayn Robinson (he sang Elijah) was effusive in praise of my voice. That meant a lot coming from him! (He didn't have to say all those nice things, and he didn't even know I'd been sick!) Everyone, Brad Thompson included, was so kind, and so glad I was there to sing. No one was more glad than me!!!

A phone call from Bill Parker brought me up short–it's easy to forget the cancer when I feel good. We asked him to do some research on Tamoxifen, which he did, and he and Paul are recommending oophorectomy – on Friday. That seems so soon! But if that gives me my best chance, I want to do it. I have to do my part to fulfill Grant's blessing.

May 25, 1984

I've been neglecting my journal–but tonight I can't sleep. We just got home from taking Amy (only) to see "Greystoke," the Tarzan movie–very interesting–and very nice to give her some special attention! Two weeks ago today I had surgery. Both ovaries were removed. Bill and Paul were my surgeons. Judy flew up on Thursday. I had to go in then to get transfusions of platelets so my blood would clot properly. Everything went fine in spite of some vomiting from the Demerol when I awoke. The pain pills spaced me out. I can still hear Judy say, "Jane! Open your eyes!" Such a strange sensation to hear conversation and actually think my responses but be unable to communicate. Nana and Claudia visited on Friday (or rather watched me sleep, doze, throw up-not much visiting)! E.C. called very often. Sweet Judy stayed almost constantly–even spent the night Friday, at the hospital. Every time I stirred she was right at my side–an angel of mercy. Such a friend!

The kids came Sunday bringing Mothers Day gifts–hugs and kisses. They were really sweet. I got to come home Sunday night after more blood. The next few days were a little foggy (pain pills) and Judy went home on Wednesday. The Relief Society helped immensely with food. Ginger came and planted my garden–such wonderful friends!

We've been agonizing over what kind of cancer treatment to follow. Chemo? Gerson? Burton? I had my checkup with Bill on Tuesday. Some microscopic cancer cells were found in the *left ovary. Boo! It depressed me to be reminded of the seriousness of it all. He thinks perhaps Blumenschein's regimen may be our best shot. He seems to have the only "cures" among the establishment! He had me call Dr. Ford and I was so frustrated because he seemed so "wishy-washy"–it's all up to me! Nobody knows what's best! I finally called Paul. We communicate better. He had received reports from Houston and agreed with Bill that Blumenschein at least offered a ray of hope, if the chemo didn't kill me. He assured me Dr. Ford had agreed to follow Houston's protocol if that's our choice.*

So in the meantime we've decided to take the family–all of us–on a cruise! $6,000 worth! We leave next Friday, June 1st and will spend a week in the Caribbean. Then I'll come home and "choose my poison!" Maybe what Bill said is right–if I'm going to survive (or not) whatever the Lord's will–maybe it doesn't matter what method I choose–therefore if he doesn't care what method I choose I won't get an answer to that question! But I can't help but feel my choice of treatment is important and I very definitely had the feeling after Grant's blessing that I would have to go through therapy of some kind! I told Paul about my blessing. He agreed that miracles can indeed happen and he brought up Bruce McConkie's "terminal" cancer case. He suggested that I might have to rely more on spiritual guidance than on medical guidance. And I think he's right. I have become a skeptic, perhaps, about many things, relying on myself instead of the Lord. But now I have no choice. I'm being humbled. So is Al. No doubt this part of it is very good for us. It was so hard for me to call Grant to ask for a blessing. I felt unworthy–unimportant, tho I'm coming to know the Lord loves me, even though I really can't comprehend how, when there are so many millions of people on this earth. Who am I to ask for special favors? I feel like the woman who reached out to touch Jesus' robe. That must have taken great faith. <u>That</u> is what I'm weak in - FAITH! Intellect and knowledge are fine, and I'm sure I revere them too much. I must have faith and hope. Discouragement and depression are tools of Satan. I'll never understand "WHY" I have this "terminal" cancer–stage 4 on the latest diagnostic report–but if I can be an influence for good on others–my family–my friends–my acquaintances–if I can help them be stronger by the way I handle this, then some good can come from this adversity.

I don't want to die. I want to live to love and spoil my grandchildren, to teach, to serve another mission. I have had a fear that if I die now my life will have been almost meaningless–that I would be soon forgotten–even by my family–but I see now that's just negative, negative thinking! I have the potential of <u>profoundly</u> affecting every person I know! That's very sobering! And I firmly resolve to be the best I can be: wife, mother, sister, friend, as long as the Lord allows me to live. As Al and I have said so often, "We're all terminal–it's just a question of when!" When I think of all the people who have fasted and prayed for me I'm overwhelmed. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" as Pres. Kimball said. Grant me a few more (or many) healthy years to raise my children, I pray, Lord.

Caribbean Cruise 1984
Trip Journal Excerpts:

June 5th - The highlight of the day was the Dunn's River Falls. We walked down endless stairs to the beach, then began climbing up. Long lines of people, holding hands, moved slowly through the cascading water, sometimes ankle deep, then waist deep. Beautiful! Climbing the rough rocks was *hard on tender feet–we finally gave up and put our sandals on. They were getting wet anyway. Then it was much easier. I was proud of myself for making it to the top–this cancer patient has a lot of life left!*

June 7th - After dinner Carrie, Cindy and I caught a taxi into town for some shopping. Cozumel is a beautiful island, and the town was very nice–nice shops! We started at the plaza, which was right along the waterfront –lovely! It was fun to practice my Spanish–the girls were impressed that I could speak to everyone. The Mexicans really stared at my beautiful blonde girls. In one tienda a cute boy clerk just couldn't keep his eyes off Cindy. He shyly came up to her, gave her a visor and said, "Here, this is for you, to remember Cozumel." Then the girl clerks giggled. Cindy said "Gracias," and was very impressed. It was quite dark by the time we caught a taxi back to the pier. While we were shopping Al, Amy and Will went to the beach and snorkeled and had a great time. They saw lots of beautiful fish and even some manta rays. What a trip–hate to go home!

E.C.'s journal:

> June 14, 1984
>
> Jane's medical report following their family cruise to the Caribbean was good. Though it's really too early to tell for sure it looks as though the drug Tamoxifen may be giving her a good remission. She gets checked again in three months. Her blood levels of the various components were holding or improving slightly. She says she feels pretty good, and is willing to forego chemotherapy in favor of an alternative therapy, probably the Gerson therapy.
>
> I'm enjoying reading Nibley's Abraham In Egypt. One paradox that struck me as quite timely was the old Egyptian theme of the death-bed being the bed of rejuvenation. So I had to call Jane with that good tidbit!
>
> Sept. 6, 1984: Excerpt, E.C.'s letter to Jane:
> Jane, my overall life is so much happier since you are doing so well–keep it up.

Midway, Utah
Sept. 16, 1984
Dear E.C.

I love getting your letters! They mean a lot–thanks so much. It's nice to have a typewriter that works. It just needed a fairly minor adjustment–I can't believe I let it go so long–it was very frustrating to type anything (letters hanging below the line wouldn't print). Anyway, no more excuse not to type!

The hills outside my kitchen window are dotted with gold and crimson–gorgeous! I love fall–but hate what comes after! We drove up to Cascade Springs last weekend. We've been by it a million times and never stopped. This time we stopped and took the hiking trail. It was about a half-hour walk, not too much climbing, to circle a large area of cascading, meandering streams that were all part of the same spring coming right out of the mountain. Beautiful! It reminded me of the Pedernales Falls in Texas–wide, shallow falls, fun to climb on.

Martha Slaughter spoke in Sacrament Meeting today–she gave a great talk, even though she said afterwards she was scared to death! She really is a sweet lady. She spoke about the Laotian converts in Clovis, and she said some wonderful things about you! She told everyone you were my sister, and how wonderful you were, and how much you worked with, helped and loved the Laotians–and how much they love you! I wanted to stand up and cheer, "that's my sister, yea!"

Cindy really started something this week. On Wednesday her class went on a field trip to the state fair in SLC and she came home so excited–she bought a 60 cent goldfish. She was really worried that I'd make her get rid of it (you can guess what my attitude is about pets in general "no dogs in the house!" etc.) Anyway, we went to the dime store to buy a goldfish bowl, and Amy and Will each had to have a fish, too. When Dad came home he was introduced to Tony, Jennifer and Carrots, and he was fascinated. To make a long story short, 2 fish didn't survive the shock of the goldfish bowl. Amy woke me up at 6 AM, held a dead goldfish under my nose and plaintively sighed, "My fish died." Al remembered there is a tropical fish store close to his office–one visit had him hooked. He came home Friday night with $100 worth of pumps, filters, an aquarium and of course, fish. The kids haven't watched TV all weekend–they just sit and watch the fish! Saturday he came home with 5 more fish! We have added to the family Mark the Shark (a Bela Shark–beautiful), 2 silver dollar fish (Harry and Oscar), 2 transparent ghost cats (Tracy and Stacy), 3 goldfish (all different), (Carrots, Goldie and Tony), a catfish named Tiger, a Siamese fighting fish, Mr. Chen, and a red-bellied newt, named Knute, of course. I almost forgot Jennifer, the guppy. Amy even got up in the night to watch the fish!

I tried to nap this afternoon but gave up after 30 minutes. The darn flies kept buzzing around or dive-bombing me. The next house I build will have a master bedroom without a vaulted ceiling! The price of living in a farming community = flies every fall!

Carrie and I have been practicing "Memory." I wanted to get it recorded before Al and I go to Lake Powell on Wednesday, but I have developed a full-blown case of laryngitis. I have a fairly mild cold (maybe allergies?) That has settled right in my vocal chords! I can hardly talk! Tell Marty we haven't forgotten his request–but we'll record it when we get back! I'm really looking forward to our trip–we had such a great time last year! Hope this year's as good! We'll be leaving Wed. night and will get back the following Tues. night. Claudia and Joe are coming to stay with the kids, so I feel good about that.

I tried on 4 outfits before I found something I could wear to church this morning. Everything is 4 sizes too big. I have 2 or 3 nice suits I wish I could wear! I weigh 112 now–I seem to be staying there. I try to keep a brown rice casserole around to fill up on when I'm hungry. It's good: diced carrots, onion, celery, cooked with brown rice, a Tbs. of organic gravy powder (no salt, good flavor). You would like it! Anyway, I'm going to SL tomorrow to have the radio replaced in the Suburban and I'm going to go shopping!

Susan (Smith) is back working for me again–it's wonderful! My fall project will be updating the kids baby and scrap books and organizing all our files–just as soon as I'm through in the *garden. Our corn is just now coming on–we usually have had frost by now–I'm lucky. And it's so good! We've got tons of potatoes, too. We're also eating carrots, beets, beans, broccoli and tomatoes. Oh yes, there's still a little spinach and cauliflower, too. I tried to make a truce with the weeds–I won't pull if they won't grow any more–but they just keep on growing. I'm ignoring them–and I'll till them all under in a couple of weeks!*

I've been swimming over at the Homestead–it's so nice to do laps in an outdoor pool and watch the clouds on my back! Friday I had the pool all to myself, and it was so nice I took the kids over after school and spent another hour and a half! There is an aerobics class up at town hall on M,W,F mornings. I ought to start going. I feel so good when I exercise! I hope–and pray–I'm doing the right things to lick this cancer. I want to live long enough to raise my kids and go on another mission! (Not asking for much, am I?)

What a rambling letter! Must close now–I can hear the troops congregating at the aquarium again–such fun! John Weaver just called with news of his mission call: Haiti–great! I'm guessing John Duncan won't be far behind him!

I love you so much, and I'm so glad you are my sister! I get so much strength from you–I really count on you! Don't know what I'd do without you!

Love,
Janie

PS: I want Carrie to tell you about "John the Baptist" in her Seminary class. One of the teachers dressed up, ate "honey and locusts"–he actually ate grasshoppers–fried them right in class–some of the kids tried them, too! Got their attention!

Jane's journal:

November 14, 1984, Wednesday

Can't sleep. My heart is full. "My cup runneth over." I finally talked to Dr. Ford today and got the report of last week's bone marrow biopsy. The blood counts were so good. We were expecting good news, but this is really GOOD NEWS! Not one cancer cell seen! And no suspicious cells, either! He said he was surprised. I am doing better than expected! Of course he won't change his tune on the prognosis, but he calls this an excellent remission. I call it a miracle! Do I dare think of "cure" instead of "remission?" I've been almost afraid to hope! Even though Dr. Ford takes the credit, I know the credit belongs to the Lord. HE healed me! I am so grateful! I feel so blessed! Thank you, Lord! It's kind of scary to think my chance or remission was only 60-40. But when Dr. Ford told me these figures I just automatically assumed I'd be in the 60% who got a remission! Whether it's due to the hormone therapy or blessings, or the diet, exercise or visualizations, I'm not about to quit any of it!

Al and I went out to celebrate tonight. I pigged out on Mexican food (and I feel guilty) and went to see "Amadeus," a movie about Mozart. Terrific!

Al made the comment last week that I seem happier and seem to enjoy life more lately. And it's true. It's been a wonderful summer. A glorious fall. We had a great cruise, a wonderful trip to Lake Powell and I feel great! Our garden this year was the most successful yet. How I loved working in it! I'm trying to stick to a schedule of aerobics class 3 times a week and swimming twice. I've done 10 miles of my 50 mile swimming goal! I haven't felt this good since before the mastectomy! I'm enjoying teaching Mother Education in Relief Society. I feel so very blessed. I love life! I love my family!

So many people I haven't heard from in years have called or come to visit over the summer and fall (some when they heard my bad news)–Judy Peterson Larsen, Dave Montgomery, the Shallbetters, Donna Locke Campbell, Lloyd Wright, Dee Tolman, Lloyd Castleton, Ruthie Palmer. It's been delightful to visit with them all. We're going to Clovis, then Texas, over Thanksgiving, in the new Suburban [Chevrolet]. It should be fun, but so much to do this week! I must get to bed. Thank you, Lord. I am truly blessed.

E.C.'s journal:

> Thanksgiving 1984
>
> The best day ever! Never have I had so many wonderful blessings. Never have I been so aware of my favored existence. Jane and all the Torontos are here for this day of feasting and rejoicing. John Duncan came home too, (from BYU), riding along with them. How wonderful he looks! This is a wonderful time of my life. All the children are doing well. Tres is finishing up at Tech. Jo, Kevin and Ryan are well and happy. J.D. is excited about his mission prospects. Dan is involved in good stuff: scouts, music, bikes. Papa has the Colonial Park debt off his back, and me with some time finally to pursue the family history and other projects. And the best gift of all is Janie's remission. I hope and pray it is permanent! We stood around the kitchen island holding hands (John prayed), thanking the Lord for the bounty before us and asking Him to remember the starving Ethiopians. Nanny, of course, was here to add to our festivities.

ANNOUNCING THE FIRST ANNUAL
WEAVER FAMILY LAKE POWELL TRIP JUNE 30- JULY 3, 1985
[Jane put all this together.]
Don't miss the fun! We will have waterskiing, fishing, hiking and sightseeing, windsurfing, canoeing, jet-skiing, swimming and tubing and just plain relaxing!

Depart: Bullfrog Marina - June 30 (Sunday) at 8 am (meet at restaurant)
Return: Bullfrog Marina - July 3 (Wednesday) at sundown

Cost: Approximately $125-150 per adult (less for kids), depending on gas and food consumed. Our 50-houseboat has full kitchen, bath with shower, air conditioning, sun deck and covered deck, beds and 12 (plus room for sleeping bags). It's not fancy–but very comfortable!

Be sure to bring:
all big kids and grownups
little kids who are good swimmers
bathing suit (s)
walking or hiking shoes
sun protection (lotion, hat)
a few casual clothes (jeans, T-shirts, shorts)
PJ's or other sleepwear
lightweight sleeping bag and pillow
light jacket, in case of rain
cooler with drinks for your family
1 batch of goodies (cookies, whatever) to share
money for expenses (gas, boat rental, etc.)

Bring if you have:
extra air mattresses, ski vests
tubes, water toys, family games
We will plan menu and duty roster beforehand, then purchase and bring all food for the group, except your drinks and goodies.
Send $50 to Torontos by June 15 to purchase food. Al & Jane Toronto, P.O. Box 40,
Midway, Utah 84049

What a wonderful trip it turned out to be with the Torontos, Weavers and Shaeffers! We swam, we fished, we ate and we water skied. Of course, there was lots of talking and talking. It was a great time for the three families to get together. E.C.'s favorite memory is the night we all laid out on the top deck and Al and Jane entertained us with guitar and vocal duets. It was glorious!

Our all-time favorite song was "Carmen Carmela." It may have been a Mexican song, but Jane discovered it and it was a frequent request from family members. It was her mother's favorite, and E.C.'s as well. Al said it was one of the most simple and beautiful songs he had ever heard. There were only two chords, E and B7, used alternately. His memory of the words go like this:

Carmen Carmela

Asi qual mueren en occidente, los rayos tibios del astro rey.
Asi muieron mis ilusiones, asi extingiendo se va mi fe.
Chorus:
Carmen Carmela, luz de mis ojos
Si luz no hubiera, habias de ser
Hermoso faro de venturanza
Dulce esperanza, bello placer.
2nd verse:
Parla preciosa de mis amores, que son las flores junto de ti
Yo las contemplo una por una, no hay ninguna que eguale a ti.
Repeat Chorus

Fall, 1985:

Excerpt from a letter E.C. wrote to her son, J.D. Shaeffer: " ... I had a very nice trip to San Diego with Aunt Jane. We went to the Livingston Clinic and she had a lot of blood test, etc. She is not making much progress. She had a hard time walking because of the pain in her hip. But we did have some fun going to the movies, and to the Mormon Battalion Visitors Center..."

Nanny Shaeffer was in California visiting her granddaughter, Becci Slade, at the same time, so we got together with them as well.

On Carolynn's 16th birthday, and Jane's 45th, Jane wrote a birthday letter to her daughter:

To my precious Carolynn on her 16th birthday—
As you turn sweet sixteen today, I wish for you all the happiness the world can offer, and more! You introduced your dad and me to parenthood 16 years ago—and what an introduction! You weren't supposed to be a birthday present, but I'm very glad you were. I've loved sharing birthdays with you ever since. Every year YOU are my favorite birthday present! I hope we have many more birthday shopping trips and other fun birthdays together, but even if we don't, we can have the comfort of knowing that we are sealed together as mother and daughter for all eternity, and death is but a brief separation. (You're stuck with me forever, kid!)

What a baby you were! A beautiful big smile on an angelic face framed with curly strawberry blonde hair. You were petite—almost fragile looking—but boy, could you throw a powerful tantrum! You were a genius, of course, and talked early with perfect pronunciation and *long complex sentences. In short, you were the apple of our eye and the center of our existence. After a while you had to share all that limelight with Amy, then Cindy, then Will, but in compensation you inherited the title "oldest child" with all its positive and negative aspects. Did you know you've been breaking in new parents for 16 years? First it was as a baby, then as a preschooler, then as a child, and now as a teenager. (By the time we go through 4 of you, maybe we'll get it right!) Where have the years gone? It was just yesterday when you were tiny—and we were young.*

You have many hopes and dreams for the future, and I have many hopes and dreams for you, too. Develop your talents. Keep up your music, and it will enrich your life. The piano can bring you much personal satisfaction, as well as bring much joy to others who hear you. Develop your voice. Choral music can provide lots of fun and also be uplifting and spiritually enriching. Develop other talents, too, such as art or drama, or whatever you have interest in and aptitude for. The sky is the limit!

Do your best in school. High school is preparation for college, and college will be one of the greatest experiences of your life. There you can focus on the areas of study you are most interested in and prepare for your life's work. In the next 4 to 8 years you will be exploring the world—and finding yourself. What an adventure!

And while on this adventure, choose your friends carefully—both boys and girls—because they can have a great influence on you. A good friend is one who brings out the best in you. Make sure your friends are "good" friends, and you will be a "good" friend, too. As you begin to date, don't worry about not having as many dates as you would like—most girls feel the same way! Someone said teens should date at least 100 different people before they get engaged—that's a good goal to aim for!

Keep your testimony of the gospel strong. As a child, your dad and I taught you that the gospel was true—and you took our word for it, as children do. As you mature, you will need your own testimony—independent of anyone else's—and this you can achieve through study and prayer. The Lord will answer your prayers—I know that He will.

I hope that you will serve a mission for the Church. In addition to serving our Heavenly Father and His children in the mission field, you will gain much personally—intellectual, social, and spiritual growth. We have a tradition of lady missionaries in our family—your Grandmother Margaret served in the Eastern States Mission—your Grandmother Martha served as mission mother in the Czechoslovakian Mission—and I served in the Chilean Mission. I gained so much more than I gave in the mission field (in addition to meeting your father!). I wish the same wonderful experiences for you.

Choose very carefully the man you will marry. You probably will fall in love many times, but let the spirit of the Lord guide you in making an eternal choice. Even with a temple marriage there are no "happily-ever-afters." There are just two people who must care enough to work together, sacrifice for each other, and treat each other with kindness and love always. If you use your Dad for a model, you can't go wrong. Raising a family has brought me much joy—and I pray that it will bring you joy, also.

My darling Carolynn—I hope you can see through the sentimental musing of your very middle-aged mother (45—yuck!) and know how very much I love you—more than my life. I want—and wish—only the very best for you. I pray the Lord's choicest blessings on you always. Happy Birthday, my darling. All my love, Mom

Over the Christmas holidays the Torontos made a ski trip to Targhee, Wyoming. They had a wonderful time together as a family and Jane, particularly, seemed to enjoy it, in spite of low energy.

Another trip, this time to Disneyland, zapped Jane's physical resources, but she was determined to make as many happy memories for her family as she possibly could.

E.C.'s journal:

Feb. 9, 1986

This morning as I sit by the fire and look outside the world is white with our first deep snow of the winter. There was a light snow in November, but since then it has been a summer of a winter with many days in the 70's–the warmest winter I ever remember in Clovis. I remember one other winter, not quite this warm, when Mother was ill. She came to stay with us and she loved sitting outside in the winter sun. I took her on a regular basis to Dr. Messer's office for checkups and for radiation therapy to Dr. Goodwin's office. She hated the cold hard old table she'd have to lie on for the treatments. But she would come home and we'd get a chair and her sweater and she would comfort herself in the New Mexico sun.

And now we're losing Jane. Only it seems so much more devastating. She's so much younger, which leaves so much more of her work undone. She is not as stoic as Mother was about it, either. It's really a black cloud hanging over our heads–and yesterday more bad news. Besides the bone metastasizes there is now a mass in the abdomen about the size of an orange. Chemotherapy starts Thursday if her blood counts are good enough to handle it.

I want to take her to Hawaii as soon as she is able, for a few days of rest and sunshine. And both she and Al would like for her to go...

Al wrote Jane a letter February 14, 1986. It was to be her last Valentine's Day:

Dear Jane,

You know how I hate giving presents and cards. I thought I'd just write you a short note. I hope you like the little "gee gaw" that comes with it.

I love you, Jane. I remember how enchanted I was when we first fell in love. My stomach was in my throat constantly. All I thought about was you and being with you. Remember the first "I love you," La Ligua, under the table, leg rubbing, the beach, the nose in the ear, the movies, La Pena de los Parra, our encounter with Pres. Beecroft? I can't believe how horny I was–and jealous. I almost lost you over both issues.

Then after our turbulent courtship, we got married. I'll never forget how beautiful you were kneeling across the altar with your reflection going on forever in the mirrors. I was afraid–too chicken to back out and worried that you were not. President Brown's comments about the presence of our folks' spirits and those of our children still haunt me. There has never been a neater ceremony. In fact, I'm always disappointed when we go to someone else's "ho-hum" ceremony and nothing like that happens.

Remember our honeymoon? The sex, the canoe, the Tetons, the storm on the lake, the sunburn, "Palm Springs," the great food at that little lodge, dragging the canoe over the field, the big fish you caught, the bear that followed me, your Mustang? Gads, what a time! I wish we could re-live it all.

Remember Granger? School, the house, the basement apartment, the cat that attacked me at night, first pregnancy, Carrie's long birth, colic, loading bullets in the basement, the B-B gun, "TONONTO" on the basketball [accidentally misspelling his own name], *kayaks, the trip to Los Angeles to get our first new car (red VW fastback)?*

Then came Chicago. First apartment that you picked out, school, Rotary, green VW square back, your grant for Learning Disabilities, the Hiltons, Howard Street, food poisoning (couldn't get my pants off), split my nose open all naked and wet, your broken leg, the little Mexican food joint down the street, trips home to Utah, the wards, sister Hicken for Carrie, Skokie, Carrie learning to walk, Jose the rabbit, turds all over the house, puppies, Amy's birth, the time someone called and told you I was kidnapped, the upstairs bedroom where I constantly "held up the walls " and scared the hell out of you, Carrie's "one shoe, one brue" statement, the old Chevy convertible, the nosy Jewish neighbor? What a time!

Then came Texas. The humidity, the move, Empress, Ben & Cory, our first house, the Pinto, the Volvo, the VW bus, the San Marcos Branch, the remodeling of the garage, the carport addition, the landscaping, Texas Lutheran College, Sharon Wright, the Sayres, the San Marcos River trips, the garden, the bugs, the snakes, Branch president, Judy, David, Tim, trauma, Cindy's birth, fake labor, Myrtle Smith, the gold and jade jewelry I made for you? Does it ever end?

Then the call to BYU! Atkinson's house, Amy's broken arm, Willie's birth (how could we ever be happier?), the Highland house, landscaping, finishing the basement, the VW rabbit, the gold and silver business, Ken and Barry, ICH, the FBI, lots of money, finding land in Midway, building the house, the 56 T-Bird, our first (and last) boat, our trip to Hawaii.

Now we're in Midway–in our dream house.

I get goose bumps all over when I read what I've written. We've had a very interesting and entertaining life so far.

Now we're faced with big problems. It seems as though nothing went wrong for years and years and that we are getting whammed-slammed in the face all at once with a bunch of problems. I am no longer Mr. "Happy-go-lucky." Our bad luck has changed me a lot–and I'm sorry for that. Maybe it's called "maturity."

Your getting cancer is the dirtiest trick, though. My greatest wish is for you to recover so we can give the Tetons and that canoe another run for their money. I hate what this illness is doing to us. I cry in private often for you and your pain. I woulddo <u>anything</u> to make you well. I, like you, am frustrated and emotional. I remember the time when we quipped that all of our problems could be solved with money. How foolish!

If you get well, or if you don't, remember this: we have lived our lives well, we have performed all the necessary ordinances in this life to keep us together forever, and I don't want anyone but you. All of those experiences that I mentioned earlier burn in my heart and remind me of how fantastic you are, and how deeply I love you. No one compares! You are miles above the rest. I am the most blessed man on this earth. Each year of our marriage has been worth an eternity of pain. I wish I could take yours now to give you some relief.

We'll pull through this, Jane. We are being severely tried. We must endure to the end for our sake and our children's sake. The very worst thing in life is to give up. I am ashamed of my defeatist attitude lately. I am ashamed that I have lost my "spark." I am ashamed that I have blamed God for not making you well. I feel like an unworthy slob (paunchy–that is).

You are the <u>only</u> one for me. I pledge my love, devotion and support to you, unconditionally. I love you with all my soul. You <u>are</u> my life.

Lets buckle up, make the most of each day, remember what we have in our love, and endure our current set of problems. (Oh yeah, let's also kick the hell out of your cancer!)

Be my Valentine.
I love you,
Al

In March of 1986 Jane and E.C. made a “get away” trip to Hawaii. They enjoyed a week together there on the north shore of Oahu at the Hyatt resort and golf course. They toured the pineapple fields and attended the Polynesian Cultural Center near the BYU Hawaii campus. Though Jane tired easily, she enjoyed the trip as a respite from her world of cares.

On March 18, 1986 Jane wrote a "Preface" to her journal:

Yesterday, March 17, 1986 was an anniversary of sorts – three years since my mastectomy. How much my life has changed since that momentous St. Patrick's day! I haven't made an entry in my journal for over a year – too many negative, depressing thoughts I haven't wanted to own up to. I've discovered a good way to cope with terminal (I hope not) illness is to ignore, procrastinate, be busy with other things. I've spent (and spend) too much time treading water in a sea of self pity – grieving over my future demise – going to my own funeral. Maybe I can get past all this crap – or at least some of it – if I write it down. Put it in black and white and be done with it. I may burn this when I'm done – I'm not sure I want anyone to read it. It will be my own personal catharsis.

I opened my journal – the beautiful silk-covered one E.C. gave me on my birthday in 1982 – did I really see a puff of dust fly out? I was surprised to discover I already have a chronology of my encounter (encounters) with cancer. A good place to begin, then – put it on the word processor and begin in earnest.

I've had a nagging feeling the last few weeks that I must start writing. Spending a week with E.C. [in Hawaii] *has solidified that feeling, as has my frustration at not being able to have chemo because of low white counts. (Ironic – I was so grateful for being able to avoid chemotherapy for so long – now here I am, definitely between a rock and a hard place. One foot in the grave and the other on slick ice.) Will I sink without a trace? Short term – dumb question. My closets and drawers are so full of 45 years of accumulated stuff that Al and the kids will have plenty of traces to keep them busy sorting for months to come. But long term? What will they remember? Fading photographs. I remember as a teenager waking up in a panic one night when I discovered I couldn't remember Dad's face, his body – I could only picture a picture of him. Scary. Will they remember only a stick mother – one who can't shoot baskets, run a race, is too tired to bike ride, must be hugged carefully? William is only 7 – I've had cancer almost half his life. (Sometimes it feels like half of mine.)*

I guess what I want to say is – I was here. I contributed. My life made a difference to someone. I was loved and I loved. I mattered. Let's put all that in the present tense – and begin at the beginning. [She then typed her handwritten entries from the small silk diary, and added to it.]

March 30, 1986 – Easter Sunday

What a beautiful Easter I have had today! It's been over a year since I have written anything in my journal, and much has happened. And much has changed, too, since I wrote the Preface two weeks ago on March 18.

A brief physical update is probably in order. My fantastic remission began to fail last summer. I noticed my back complaining more than usual as I tried to catch up on gardening after our wonderful Weaver reunion at

Lake Powell. A checkup and bone scan on August 1st revealed new metastases, so Dr. Ford switched me to a new hormone, Megace. The last week in August Al and I went to the Livingston Clinic in San Diego – ready to try a "natural" method – and I started on the program. Slowly I got worse. By October the pain in my hips got so bad I could hardly walk, and even the Livingston people recommended radiation. By January I was having radiation on a fractured, painful rib. We took all the kids to San Diego January 30th during my checkup time. I was very tired and in pain, but the kids especially enjoyed Sea World and Disneyland. By February I was ready to begin chemotherapy, and in just two weeks the goose-egg on my head and the lumps in my neck were all but gone. E.C. took me to Hawaii for a week in March – we had a great time! The only thing that could have made it better would have been for me to feel better! But we took it easy, and I even survived – and enjoyed – a trip to the Cultural Center and the Temple (in spite of swollen, sunburned feet)! I had a couple of transfusion during this period and they helped.

On March 20th I saw Dr. Ford for chemo, and he became concerned about my continuing leg weakness and stiffness, so he scheduled a myleogram the following day – not waiting! I had to spend 24 hours in the hospital and missed Carrie's performance time for the Wasatch Piano Competition. She didn't make the finals, so we went to Salt Lake to look for a prom dress. We found one – I sure came home tired! The myleogram results were okay – no spinal cord compression – but the pathologists argued about the spinal fluid, so Tuesday the 25th I had another spinal, plus a bone scan. We got the bad news the next day, and went to Provo to talk to Dr. Brown at 5:15. Cancer cells were found in the spinal fluid – a type of meningitis carcinoma – which usually is not found until patients are about ready to die and often no treatment is recommended. Dr. Brown was surprised at the results, and back-tracked a little from his black diagnosis, since I'm so young and doing so well. This was definitely the worst news we have heard thus far, but for some reason, I wasn't as devastated as I expected to be. Al was surprised at how calmly I took the news – it surprised me, too. In retrospect, I've noticed my general mood and outlook much brighter in the past few weeks – not so much panic and despair about the future. I think it's a direct blessing from the Lord. I decided to go with the treatment recommended – whole brain radiation for two weeks, plus spinal infusions of methotrexate – and I decided I was going to do well! Dr. Ford gave me my first spinal on Friday, March 28th.

It's been on my mind a lot lately that I would like to ask someone to give me another blessing. Yesterday, when I heard from Veon Price that President Benson was expected at Stake Conference today, along with Elder Adney Kamatsu of the 70s, our scheduled General Authority, the feeling became almost overpowering. I finally got up my courage and called Lyle to ask him if it would out of line to ask President Benson for a blessing. He assured me that it wasn't and he said he would call President Wayne Probst, since they were old friends, and try and set it up and would let me know at the Saturday night meeting. I talked to Wayne after the meeting – he wasn't sure if Pres. Benson could do it – but in any case I would have my blessing right after Stake Conference.

We luckily found seats in the chapel and enjoyed the conference session immensely. Afterwards the whole family went to the Stake President's office, along with Bishop Gertsch and Nola, and Jean and Steve Brown. Soon Pres. Probst arrived and told us Pres. Benson regretted that he was severely limited in time and couldn't perform the blessing (perhaps it's a matter of precedent, now that he is the Prophet). At any rate, he invited Elder Kamatsu to help, and I was thrilled. After introductions Pres. Probst asked who I wanted to give me the blessing. I looked around, then replied, "whoever has the most faith," Someone said, "then that's you, Jane." I said I would be *thrilled to have Elder Kamatsu bless me. I wondered, and still wonder, if Wayne had time before he came in to tell Elder Kamatsu about my medical problems!*

Al anointed me then Elder Kamatsu blessed me. It was marvelous! He blessed me that I would be healed, and he rebuked the disease that was debilitating my body, and he promised me that my body would be cleansed of all disease, according to my faith. I felt the spirit so strongly that I was almost overwhelmed, and tears flowed freely. At that moment I KNEW I was going to be healed. He didn't tell me how long I would live, and I didn't expect it, but I felt much comfort and reassurance, and knew that I was being given more time! Now, if I can just keep the faith! It's not hard to be positive and have faith when you feel good and you can see yourself improving, as I'm doing now. It's the dark days and weeks when you feel awful and can see things getting worse that it's hard to keep the faith. I guess that's what it's all about – learning to be "righteous in the dark," as Elder Maxwell says. I pray I can – and endure to the end. It's been a marvelous Easter Sunday. Christ's resurrection has added meaning for me today – I feel as though I have been born again! I am very grateful.

During her long illness, Jane continued to sing with the highly acclaimed Ralph Woodward Chorale, participating as she was able. It meant weekly drives to Provo for rehearsals, driving the narrow and dangerous canyon road often after dark. But it was the one thing she did only for herself and her "sanity" as she put it. She loved singing with the group and did a number of solo performances with them. The Chorale was very supportive of Jane, especially during this time of crisis in her life and they rallied around her in her struggles.

The Ralph Woodward Chorale

(Jane is the second woman from the right in the back row.)

In May of 1986 Jane completed swimming 50 miles of laps. An article in the paper told the story:

Wasatch Wave Heber City, UT 84032 Thursday May 22, 1986
50 MILE SWIMMER

Jane Toronto, wife of Allen Toronto, recently completed swimming 50 miles at the Wasatch Community Swim Pool on their American Red Cross "Swim and Stay Fit" program. She moved to Midway 4 years ago and really enjoys living there. They have four children, Carolyn, Amy, Cindy and William.

She was born in Chicago and after graduation from BYU and filling an LDS Mission to Chile, she taught high school English and Spanish in Utah and California. She returned to Northwestern University to receive her M.A. in learning disabilities. She has been a faculty member at Texas College and BYU.

She is a member of the Midway 3rd Ward and serves as the Mother Education Teacher. She began swimming following cancer surgery as part of a recovery program and enjoyed it immensely. She also enjoys boating and skiing.

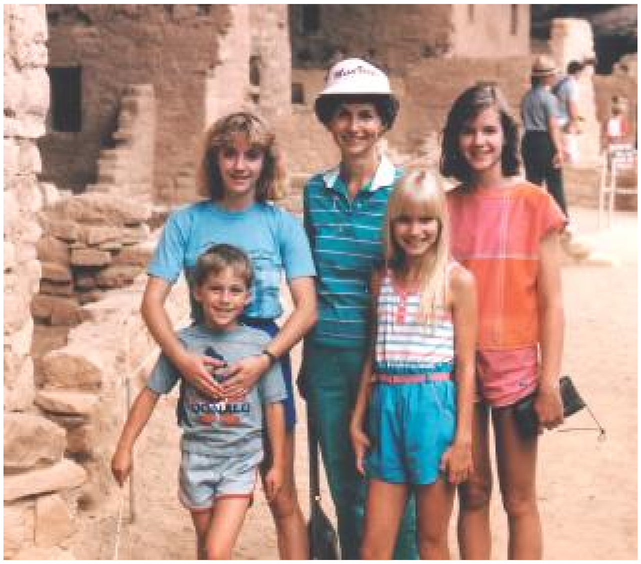
She enjoys music and is a member of the Ralph Woodward Chorale in Provo. She also enjoys writing and gardening.

She plans to swim as often as possible, "because you can go at your own pace, and even during radiation and chemotherapy, I could still do some laps." It is a great program for all age levels.

A note at end of a photocopy of the news clipping, which Jane sent to E.C. read: "I finally did it! Now for the next 50! See you soon, Love,
Janie"

Of course, she never did another 50. Later that summer (1986) she wrote to EC: "Am feeling much better today! Had terrible cramps all yesterday. Called the doctor, and we figured out the pills for shingles were doing it! I'd rather have the shingles! Talk to you soon. Much, much love! Janie"

In July the Toronto family made a trip to Pagosa Springs, Colorado for the 80th Birthday party and family reunion for "Nanny" Shaeffer. On the way they made a stop in Cortez, Colorado to see the Mesa Verde National Park.



This letter from Jane to Marty followed the trip:

Midway, Utah
July 18, 1986
Dear Marty,

I'm experimenting on you. This is the first time I've tried to use the word processor since it went kaflooey and ran out of bits and bytes and had to be reprogrammed. So I'm not quite sure of the new instructions for accessing, printing, etc. So we shall see!

I just spent a delightful day with your wonderful wife—my wonderful sister. In fact, she came up Wednesday, and it's been a delightful 3 days! Today was fun because we played almost all day. We browsed and shopped in Park City boutiques, then met Al's mom and sisters for lunch (we try to get together once a month or so for lunch–today was our day). E.C. is taking Jo out tonight and then leaving early tomorrow. I miss her already! Thanks so much, Marty, for sharing her with us!

I didn't write just to tell you about this visit–I wrote to thank you for being such a wonderful host at Pagosa over the 4th. [We also celebrated Nanny's 80th birthday – Helen Jo Shaeffer]. *The kids haven't stopped talking about all the fun they had! In fact, we all had such a wonderful time–it was great to see everybody! It's really been a long time since we've seen any of the Irwins–and it was so great to see Mart–especially looking so healthy! The whole weekend was really special! Our kids have decided that, although the train ride was great, the real highlight of the trip was our plane ride! Al and I agree! Amy got her pictures developed, and she got a couple of great shots of the camp from the air (I haven't gotten my pictures developed yet). It was an absolutely super family reunion, and we thank you so much for including us!*

By the way, Carrie has got the piano accompaniment to "Memory" sounding pretty good, so we hope to have a tape of it pretty soon to send you! (It's about time!) Well, it's time to feed the masses around here, so I must go. I don't tell you often enough how much I appreciate you, Marty, but I do–we ALL do! Take care.

Love, Janie

Jane's journal:

July 24, 1986 – Thursday

Today is Pioneer Day, and right now the house is quiet. Carrie is working at the Ice Box, and Al took the younger kids and Oren hiking up Snake Creek Canyon. He wanted to see how they would do in preparation for hiking up Timp, plus he wanted to try out Gus's new dog pack to carry the picnic. I was disappointed at first that he didn't want to scale down his hike plan so I could come along, but now I'm glad for some quiet time at the word processor and the chance to catch up on my journal.

I had to quit in the middle of the previous entry because the computer somehow ran out of room, we had to have the whole thing reprogrammed, and it took a couple of weeks to iron out the kinks. Plus Al is using it almost constantly since he started his mail-order book business. So I finally finished the entry this morning. It did me good to think about and remember as much as I could about my blessing and the wonderful feelings it gave me – especially since I went to see Dr.

Tudor in Provo yesterday for a second opinion and consultation. I was more than a little depressed. After he looked through my records he told me I was doing wonderfully well – in the top of the top 10% - in light of the fact that most patients with meningitis carcinoma only live an average of 3 months, and most don't have their spinal fluid clear at all! I told him I was very glad I had never heard the 3 month figure until after I had already passed the 3-month mark in my spinal chemo treatments!

I liked him okay, I guess. I don't know what I expected – the impossible, I guess. I'd love a new diagnosis with the promise of a cure – or at least a good shot at a 20-year total remission. I guess I can have that anyway, if I just have enough faith and the Lord has a mission for me to perform here. I just hate to be reminded by doctors that I have one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel! I came home feeling that I need to do better spiritually if I expect the Lord to bless me – that I need to get my life in order, my projects completed (this journal, the Weaver history, Wally's book, the kids' baby books, etc., genealogy for each of them, letters to family and friends, ad infinitum!) In short, I want to get ready to die, and then trust completely in the Lord and live 20 more years like Ruth Peterson!

I began whole-brain radiation on April 1st. More tattoos – and hair loss to come. Yuk. The treatment was painless – it just sounded like the usual million bees doing their dance inside the magic machine. But a half hour later the headaches began. By the time I was halfway up the canyon I was in total misery and could hardly drive. I made sure I found friends who could drive me for the rest of the treatments. I had daily horrendous headaches – plus blurry vision and constant ear noises. For 2 weeks I got up almost every night to see what car or semi was idling in the driveway! I was on pain pills constantly for the headaches – I've had some mouth sores from the methotrexate – and the side effects continued for two weeks after radiation was over. I never want to do that again! Finally my hair started coming out – it took about three days of trauma. Finally, one night after the kids had gone to bed, Al and I sat down by the TV and he cut off the remaining scraggly strands while I cried. My head was so tender I couldn't tolerate my wigs for a couple of weeks more, but finally all those side effects passed, and the ear noises decreased, and my vision returned to almost normal. After a few spinals on a weekly basis, the fluid tests came back totally clean, with protein and sugar levels nearly normal, so now I have a spinal infusion just every 6 weeks. If I have to have them more frequently, I'll consider having a shunt put in my head and having the procedures done in Provo for convenience. (Sounds gross.)

On Wednesday, Apr 30th, Al and friends took me totally by surprise with a party after dinner. I didn't even have any warning to get spiffed up a little bit! Jean and Steve came, Oren, Ginger, Brent and Audrey, Pat and Jim, Susan Farrell and Nola. Such good friends! They brought fruit platters and goodies, made pina coladas, and a good time was had by all! I think it was Jean's idea – so sweet of them all! Good friends are one of life's choicest blessings! Jean has been visiting me frequently throughout the winter and spring and bringing me little goodies – "Geegaws" as Al would call them.

By May 10th I was feeling good enough to have a big garage sale. I was determined to get through all the cupboards and closets and weed out the junk – and it felt great! I made over $250, plus I had plenty left over to donate to the MIA girls' garage sale the next Saturday!

For Book Club on Friday, May 23rd, I reviewed <u>Dandelion Wine</u> by Ray Bradbury. Everyone seemed to really enjoy it and we had a nice luncheon at Merilyn Urry's house.

May 28th we had a very sad funeral in our ward. Jeff Probst, Kyle and Paula's only son, was killed in a car accident near Lake Powell. Al spoke at the funeral. He really agonized over his talk. He spoke about the stages of grief, etc – and he felt gratified when later a number of people told him how much that talk had helped them. Apostle Marvin Ashton spoke at the funeral too, and that was marvelous.

Saturday, June 7th, we headed for Lake Powell for a few days before the MIA girls would arrive to take over the houseboat. The Browns, Oren, and Ginger and kids also went with us. I didn't enjoy the trip as much as I would have liked to. I couldn't seem to get over the diarrhea that had been plaguing me since a short bout with the flu the month before – and I had lost almost 10 pounds. After treatment by a gastroenterologist (Dickinson) later in June, I'm finally getting back to normal, am feeling better, and have added a couple of pounds. He encouraged me to meet Dr. Tudor.

On July 3rd we left for Pagosa Springs – a combined Shaeffer-Weaver family reunion and birthday bash for Nanny Shaeffer who turned 80 on July 7th. We spent a couple of hours climbing around Mesa Verde on the way down – fun and interesting! We drove into the Shaeffer's camp in the rain and dark, and got lost of course, which Al naturally refused to admit. But we finally got on the right road and at the last turn saw Mart and the kids sitting in the jeep! They heard honking and thought it might be us. It wasn't, but they waited for a few minutes, and here we came! We had a wonderful weekend, and it was great to see everybody. We had all the Shaeffers except John Duncan (on his mission), Jo, Kevin and kids, Nanny, BJ and Will, Becci and Kevin Slade and kids, Beth, Bo and his girlfriend Jeannine, Gary and Nana, Robert, Mark, Claudia, Joe and girls. And of course, our family. The weather was sunny and gorgeous, a little cool, with huge thunderheads and rain in the afternoons. Uncle Marty took us all for airplane rides around the valleys and we buzzed the camp. Such fun! We had Nanny's birthday celebration on the 4th – she was darling. I hope that if I live to be 80 (or even 60) I can be as full of life and interesting to be around! I had rescued an old felt jumper that had been passed around the family for years – Nanny had appliqued the whole front of it - beautiful! I repaired it, mounted it on Aida cloth and cross-stitched a birthday inscription to her and had it framed. She was thrilled with it and I was delighted. On Friday the whole gang rode the Durango-Silverton narrow-gauge railroad through the Animas Canyon. Spectacular! In spite of cinders in the eyes and some rain, we loved it. We came home Sunday. I was super tired and it took me a few days to recover from all the traveling.

The Weavers (Dennis and Susan) [not related] *and Klarys were all sealed in the Logan temple this month – lovely ceremonies, but more long drives! It was gratifying to see some fruits of the labors in Al's temple preparation classes for the past 2 years!*

E.C. drove back to Utah last week to bring Dan to a BYU youth camp. She spent three days in Midway and we had a wonderful visit. I really count on her!

It's time to get out in the sunshine – pull a few weeds and pick some peas. I've been sitting at this computer long enough for one day! The summer is going by fast. How I love summer in Midway!

August 22, 1986 – Friday

Today is Judy Price's birthday. I called her to say "Happy Birthday" – she was thrilled with the cross-stitch I did for her. Such a good friend!

School starts Monday. I haven't felt this way till just this week, but I'm ready to send the kids off! Will is a "walking student" in Mrs. Kohler's 2nd grade. Cindy makes a big jump to the Middle School and 6th grade. She and I went to her orientation today. She is very nervous with the big change. Amy will be in 8th grade and Carrie in 11th. They are growing up so fast!

I had a wonderful experience last night. Marion and Vern [Toronto] invited me as their guest to sing with the Tabernacle Choir in a rehearsal. It was great! Jerry Ottley remembered me from BYU. I re-met Carol Pulley, an old A-Cappella buddy, and the altos around me were so kind and warm. They all complimented me on my "gorgeous voice" and told me I should be singing with them! (So nice to hear.) The music was not hard at all – I'm used to a real challenge with Ralph Woodward. But as Al remarked, the Tab Choir gets more people at their rehearsals than Ralph does at any concert! The Tab Choir is definitely more prestigious – with a long waiting list. Marion is encouraging me to audition. Al says he'd even drive me down every Thursday night! And there is a ready-made carpool. Brad Thompson and another fellow, a new resident of Midway, were introduced as new members. So I'm wondering – should I? Could I? It might kill me or cure me – but I think it would be worth the effort!

I've been tired, but feeling good the last few weeks. The girls shopped my socks off getting ready for school. Everybody needed everything, it seemed! I had a spinal last Friday, which went well. I was a little worried, because I missed a weekly treatment while we went to Lake Powell again and my leg and ankle were sore frequently. But Dr. Ford assured me I was doing well. If the new test results had shown any problems I would have heard from him by now, I'm sure.

We had our Alpine Coins week at Lake Powell the week of August 4. I dreaded it, because everybody had invited somebody who invited somebody and it promised to be a mob scene. For part of the week it really was! Oren went with us and we spent Monday night in Cedar City at the Shakespeare Festival. We saw Midsummer's Night Dream. Everybody, even the kids loved it! When we arrived at the houseboat Tuesday, 20 people were already there, with more to come. A big group left Wednesday, Irene included (because of a fussy baby), and that helped a lot. We had a great time in spite of the crowding, though there certainly wasn't much peace and quiet! After we got home we found out everybody was mad at Dave and Rilla, that's why the group left early – but when we came we "saved the day" and everybody started having fun. Rilla seemed a little unhappy (she and Dave are apparently having problems) but the rest of it went right over our heads! Anyway, the week turned out fine for us, but I still feel I'd rather spend a vacation with my friends and family!

Journal, September 30, 1986 – Tuesday:

We awoke to overcast skies and snow flurries this morning. Boo! Where has the fall gone? Summer was glorious – and over too soon – but it seems like we had a few brief sunny cool days with gorgeous color on the hills, and then boom. Wind, cold, rain and now snow! Maybe winter will relax a bit and fall can creep back for a few more weeks! At least long enough to get the potatoes and carrots dug!

This month has whizzed by – filled with the trivia and urgency of daily living. Sack lunches and homework – eye doctor and orthodontist – weekly chemo shots and nervousness about the new little lump in my neck. I see Dr. Ford Thursday for another spinal (a week late because of the busy *last 2 weeks). He says we are "on a winning horse." And the unseen, unfelt battle rages on within. I'm rooting for the good guys, of course. Hope I'm doing enough mentally, physically and spiritually. I need work in all areas.*

September 18th was Carrie's recital. High school students can't use the Madsen Recital Hall anymore, so we held it in E-400. We had a good audience – all 45 chairs were filled. Weavers came down from Salt Lake, Bill and Rusty and many other friends, even Uncle Joe, plus 2 car-loads of girls from our ward. Beverly generously provided brownies and her gorgeous silver punch bowl and tray. It was a very successful evening. And most importantly of all, Carrie played beautifully – very few mistakes and very musical. Marlene Bachelder, Carrie's teacher, was very pleased, too.

The next day, Friday, we left for Lake Powell and drove all night. Oren came with us. It was so nice to have an uncrowded houseboat! And the girls were great to help with cooking and cleaning up! We spent the whole time at our favorite campsite in Iceberg Canyon. Sunday we held "Sacrament Meeting" on a sunny rock. Al and Oren prepared the Sacrament, Cindy led the music, and the other kids gave talks. Will talked on baptism, Amy on love at home, and Carrie bore a beautiful testimony. Oren talked on the Hole in the Rock expedition, and I sang "The Unknown Grave" with Al on the guitar.

After lunch we piled in the ski boat and headed out to Escalante and Hole in the Rock. We all climbed it – even me – clear to the top. So neat! We saw the steps carved by those pioneers, the post holes, the deep scrapes on the narrow canyon walls. It's amazing that the 26 wagons and more than 200 people all made it safely! We took pictures around the plaque at the top. The view was spectacular! The climb down was very tiring for me – my legs were shaky. We stripped down to our bathing suits and had a refreshing swim before heading back. Wow, that water was cold!

Monday was cloudy but fairly warm (the water felt icy – different than other Septembers) and Tuesday it turned colder and rained most of the way back to Bullfrog. We got back to Midway about one in the morning.

Wednesday the 24th was Will's 8th birthday, but we put him off till Friday, "Circus Day" for his celebration, since I was so busy. He was very good about it. Thursday was Book Club and luncheon here – and Susan and I worked feverishly to get ready for it. It was very successful – we had 25 gals here – I felt good about the day, but tired! Thursday night was Will's first Cub Pack meeting, and he was welcomed into the den. Like Al said on the way home – what a revelation! This is truly a Church for the boys. I think men with mostly daughters are the only ones who ever realize this!

We had Will's family birthday celebration on Friday – presents and his choice for dinner (waffles), then a trip to the Salt Palace to the circus! They really put on a spectacular show. We got our money's worth and enjoyed it, in spite of tired kids bickering on the way home! Saturday afternoon, the 27th, William was baptized by his father at the Stake Center. It was definitely a big occasion for us all. He was confirmed the following day in Fast Meeting by Al, who gave him a very nice blessing.

Ralph Woodward Chorale began again this month. I'm enjoying it. I take my auditory skills test for the Tab. Choir next week – we shall see!

I spent yesterday at the courthouse with Ginger for her divorce hearing. There was lots of waiting around (icy cold building!) and we didn't finish till 1:30! Dick would not even speak to any of us. His lawyer turned out to be Ed Guyon, Al's friend and mentor, so I introduced myself to him. I expected to only exchange pleasantries with him, but he kept me busy talking for an hour while we waited around! (I don't think I was that fascinating – he probably just didn't want to talk to Dick!) But I could tell it made Dick mad. Ginger and I, and especially Al, had a good chuckle over that afterwards! All went well, and Ginger got essentially everything she asked for. It's finally over. Except, of course, for the poison Dick is filling the older kids minds with – that will take time to neutralize. I took Ginger and Alice out to lunch at Pizza Hut to celebrate! All in all, a good day!

E.C.'s journal entries:

Oct. 14, 1986

Janie called last night dejected and afraid. [We had talked every few days, sometimes daily, since the Pagosa reunion]. After a rather good report from Dr. Ford that her current remission was well in place, Dr. Brown, the radiologist, called her to [come to] Provo to show her the bone scan results. He said there is significant deterioration of the right femur, that she had to be very careful not to break that bone or she would be bedridden. He also said that her disease was indeed progressing, slowly, but nevertheless progressively getting worse.

Usually she copes best by ignoring the doom and gloom, but she is finding it more difficult to keep that up. She wants Al to tell her "everything will be all right" but he can't and her health is the largest of just many of his concerns [he was facing bankruptcy at the time].

How I wish I could be more help to her. All I can do is listen. I truly don't have the faith that she will be totally healed. I feel just <u>grateful</u> that I still have her. Her condition has been so bad that we could have lost her well before now. I admire her spunk and her will to keep going no matter what. But it's hard to be so far away. And though she is surrounded by a really great support system of friends and family, she still feels at times isolated by her condition.

Nov. 12, 1986

We're back from Utah - a good trip - saw everyone - stayed with Jo & Kevin and boys. Spent time with Janie. The missionary farewell for Robert [Weaver] was Sunday. All the kids except David and family were there. Two new babies, Claudia's and Michelle's. Everyone looked so beautiful, except for Jane. She's very thin and pale. After I got home I called. She said the doctor had told her Monday that it was only a matter of months. I feel so distressed and depressed. I must keep strong, and pray for the angels to attend her.

Nov. 19, 1986

I'm so worried about Jane. Yesterday when I talked to her, the numbness was spreading. It is a major concern in keeping her ambulatory that it be controlled or minimized. The doctor is afraid

> part of it may be the central nervous system, which I find very scary. She is to go to the doctor today for him to check it out. If I dwell on it, I get panicky.

Back to Jane's journal:

November 19, 1986 – Wednesday

I can't believe how fast this month has whizzed by! I woke up at 5 when Will came in to snuggle after a bad dream and couldn't get back to sleep with my tingling foot, leg, etc. I was nice to snuggle with Will – I don't get much snuggling from the kids anymore – they are getting so big! I wish I had gotten up and written in my journal. By now – noon – I've forgotten a lot of the thoughts I had in the night. But maybe that's good. Things always look better in the morning. (Just as a sidelight – I spent almost the whole morning on this entry, then couldn't get the computer to save or print it! Talk about frustration!)

I've been discouraged a lot lately about my nerve symptoms – tingling and partial numbness in my right foot, toes, ankle, spotty places all along my leg, even up to my abdomen and diaphragm area. This morning 3 fingers on my left hand began tingling. Dr. Bill thinks it's from the chemo – I'm still waiting from Dr. Ford to return my call at 7 PM! Should I ignore it all – or panic? I've found there's a very thin façade of normalcy that covers the panic button – almost any little problem can set it off. Am I really going downhill? Are there no more remissions for me? I can't accept that. This is only temporary. The problem is, by the time I know without a doubt that the end is near, I won't have to time or ability to complete all my projects! So I must do them NOW, regardless of the future. I definitely need more faith!

I heard from the Tab. Choir a couple of weeks ago. I passed all the tests, but right now there are no 1st alto openings. Good news and bad news. I'm disappointed. By the time they have an opening, I may be in no shape to sing! But I am enjoying singing with Ralph again this year – we have a heavy schedule from now till Christmas.

We finally had a change of Bishopric the end of October. Al is now 2nd Counselor to Bishop Steve Brown, with Brent Hill as 1st C. and Oren as Exec. Secretary. They all enjoy working together. I'm the new Ward Music Chairman and choir director. Of course there is no Christmas program planned, so that is all in my lap. Exactly 7 people showed up for choir practice Sunday, the first one since July! Groan.

We took three days the 2nd of November for a quick San Diego trip and checkup at the Livingston Clinic. Al was dragging his feet about going – didn't think they could do any more than was being done – but I wanted to go. I got a new BCG, and some more enthusiasm for sticking to the program! They didn't change the basic program for me at all. I think I enjoyed most of all the sunshine and warmth and gorgeous greenery and flowers – and a couple of lazy hours at the beach. Wonderful!

Rob Weaver's farewell was November 9th. [He had been called to serve in the German mission.] *Al and I sang "The Lord is my Strength," with Carrie accompanying. It was neat – and great to see all the Weavers at the open house following. Michelle and her new baby were there, also Kay, George and family, Claudia and her new baby. Such fun! E.C., Dan and Nanny drove up for the weekend, too!*

We blew a wad and went to the Mannheim Steamroller concert this past weekend. Carrie and Amy went, too. We all loved it – it was fantastic and worth every penny of the $17.50 tickets!

Nuts. I'm tired of waiting for doctors! Guess I'll try Dr. Ford again.

E.C. wrote on November 24, 1986:

> Talked to Jane. They haven't as yet been able to determine the cause of the numbness. Tonight she goes to the Univ. of Utah hospital for a test on a very special scanning machine. It's the only one of its kind between Denver and Los Angeles, so it's scheduled around the clock. She sounded very, very tired and discouraged on the phone. Adding to the stress was the eviction notice they got Saturday. Hope they can postpone the move till after Christmas.
>
> My mind keeps avoiding the pain of dealing with losing Jane. If I make an effort to focus on it, I find I cannot. I find that I feel disappointed in myself for this <u>denial</u> reflex. But I do have confidence that I will be granted the strength to deal with these crises as they arise. I think I'll go home with Jo and Kevin after Thanksgiving.

Toronto Thanksgiving 1986 Holiday letter, (Jane's last):

May God, from whom all blessings flow
His richest joys on you bestow
And may His ever-loving care
Be with you always, everywhere.

Dear Ones,

It's that time of year again–a brilliant autumn has faded from the mountains, and the snow is gently falling. Our hearts are filled with thanksgiving for the blessings of this past year...

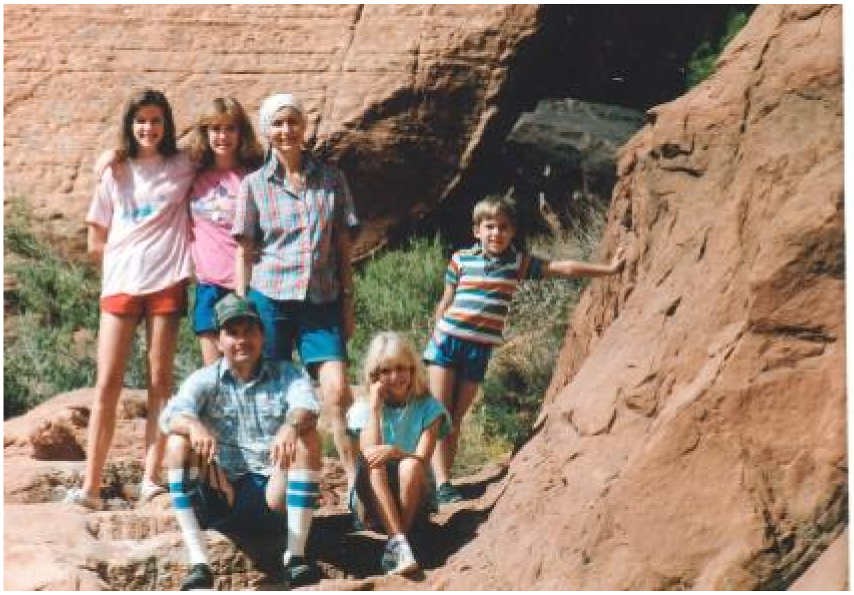
We're grateful for home and family, loved ones and friends both near and far, laughter and tears, the challenges of every precious day. We appreciate more than you know the many loving thoughts, kindnesses and prayers sent our way this past year, and the miracle of good health for Jane once again.

Like you, our days are busy, and the kids are growing up too fast. Highlights of the year include a wonderful trip to Hawaii in March for Jane and her sister E.C., and three great family houseboating trips to Lake Powell! Life is good and we are grateful.

As Thanksgiving approaches we think of you and send our warmest wishes for a bountiful harvest of joy and love. Have a merry Christmas and a wonderful 1987!

Much love from the Torontos, Jane and Al, Carolyn, Amy, Cindy, William

Along with the holiday letter sent to friends and family, Jane included the photo below which represented one of her proudest achievements—climbing to the "Hole in the Rock" site above Lake Powell.



Jane's final journal entry:

November 28, 1986 – Friday

I'm not sure I can type. My fingers are so numb that I can hardly find the right keys, and I'm terribly slow and clumsy! I have strange new symptoms – my tingling in the right foot developed in the whole leg, then my hands, then the left foot and entire leg. Now it even extends up my back and all along my trunk. I could feel the pinpricks Dr. Wirthlin (the neurologist) tested me with, and some sensations of heat and cold, but that is all. I can walk, but very slowly and clumsily. He lined me up with an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan on Tuesday, which was scary but not painful – just took a long time. When I got the results, it was "good news and bad news" – the good news being no brain tumor, but the bad news is they don't know the cause of my symptoms, or whether they will be temporary or permanent. This is too difficult – I'll continue when I can type better.

* * *

The paralysis did not improve. In fact, Jane steadily went downhill. E.C. arrived to care for her on the last day that her mind was not fogged by pain-killers. It was much too brief a time of clarity.

More of E.C.'s journal entries:

> Thanksgiving Day, 1986
>
> A day of pleasure and pain–of comfort and care: Jane is not doing much better, though she and the family went to Weavers for Thanksgiving dinner. She's down to 98 pounds.
>
> Dec. 9, 1986
>
> I arrived [in Midway] last Wednesday, Jane's last *clear* day. [I had been pleading with Jane to let me come, but she kept telling me to wait till she really needed me. When she finally said "please come" I came as fast as I could get there.] The numbness and spasticity in legs and arms has increased, also the pain in her right side became so intense that Al and I took her to the emergency room in Heber. They kept her overnight, then sent her to Utah Valley Hospital next day for a sonogram. They started her on Demerol, but Dr. Brown in Provo has put her on the morphine for pain. Her condition has deteriorated so rapidly that Dr. Brown, on Friday, after discontinuing a final go-round with radiation therapy to the neck area, has said she has about a week to go. Driving home she said, "I hate to ruin everybody's Christmas."
>
> Sunday night, a lot of blood was in her urine [she had a catheter]. It cleared up on Monday. The Weavers came out Sunday evening for a visit. Gary gave Jane a beautiful blessing in which he "sealed her up unto eternal life in the celestial kingdom." He also said that many people were waiting for her. Then he pleaded with the Lord to extend her time in order [for her] to accomplish the things she wanted to do.
>
> I asked him to bless me too, and he did, and prayed that I would enjoy my time with her. That was just what I needed to "lighten up." Monday Jane was mostly alert and we had lots of laughs and I read some lines from a funny book and together we looked at the Gary Larson cartoon calendar.
>
> Judy and Tim arrived from Texas and Jane was so happy to have Judy. So today I left Judy in charge and I went to the temple this morning, then came to Jo's, put on her roast and potatoes then shopped. Got sweat suits for my big boys, Papa and Dan and a sweet little robe for Jane. As I came up the stairs at ZCMI a harpist was playing Christmas carols. I had to go in a corner and weep - the intense beauty of the moment was too much for me.

> Tres [Martin Shaeffer III, working in Albuquerque] called to talk to Jane this morning. John Duncan [serving in the Spokane Washington mission] called her Friday night. I am so grateful for my loving and thoughtful children. Jo Ellen made a beautiful Christmas decoration and took it up to Jane on Sunday. It was actually the focus of some of Jane's hallucinating Sunday night. But it stays right next to her bed on the night stand. My prayer is that the Lord takes her soon.

Amy was writing in her journal during the days when Jane was so ill. She was 13 years old, a vulnerable age for any young woman to lose her mother. She shared several of her entries:

"Awhile back, when Mom was well enough to walk and write and such, she began to make a Family Tree with cross stitching. She wanted to finish it, very badly, but can't now because her hands don't work.. She wants me to finish it for her… I've been working on it very hard, to get it done for Mom. I promised her that I would get it finished by Christmas, and I will!"

Not long after this time Kyle Probst came over to visit Jane. Al recalled that, "He was our church's Stake Patriarch and so Jane asked him for a blessing. In his prayer he gave her a blessing of comfort, and he told her that because of her lifetime of selfless service that she would be saved in the celestial kingdom. That was just astounding to Jane, and very comforting. The thing I remember the most about that evening was that he escorted me out onto the front porch, and it was very cold out there, and he just burst into tears. He said, 'Al, she's going to die, and I didn't have the heart to tell her.' And he just sobbed."

Also during this time Jane decided to write letters to her children. It was a monumental effort, as ill as she was, but her heart was heavy and she wanted to leave them with some parting thoughts. The following letter to Will was edited by Al (the girls' letters were quite similar):

Christmas, 1986
Dear Will,

I've been thinking a lot about you and thinking of things I'd like to share with you. Christmas is an easy time to send people we love a special message of warmth and caring. So I am taking this opportunity to do so.

You have always been very special to me at Christmas, because you were my baby born closest to that time. I remember what a bundle of joy you were that first Christmas all wrapped up in your blankets and smiling at everyone. We were so excited to have a boy at last that we showed you off to everyone.

You are bright, you are kind, you are loving and you are almost always smiling. In all the pictures we have of you, you are wearing a big smile. Life makes you happy and because of that you will, in turn, make life happy for others.

Sometimes we are afraid we might leave people we love or they might leave us, and we get too emotional to say the things we want to say. I would like to say now that <u>I love you</u>. It is hard to imagine that in the not too distant future we may not get to see each other. Because thinking of it hurts us, we don't like to face it. But the thoughts are still there. Just remember that this life is short and we will see each other again for eternity because we are an eternal family.

I want you to know that you are one of the most important things in my life and always will be. As your mother, of course, I have lots of hopes and dreams for your future, just like you do. It's hard for me to think now of this little eight-year-old all grown up into a fine young man.

My hopes are that you finish high school and become a seminary graduate. I would also like you to complete college and go on to graduate school in a field that you have chosen. I would hope that you could make a real contribution in that field.

How you live your personal life is very important. It will determine what makes you happy or sad. The most important thing, Will, is to choose the right wife. It is a little hard to say who the right wife is, but that is a choice only you can make with the help of your Heavenly Father. The kind of girl I hope to see you with will be very pretty, and will just love the dickens out of you. Of course, she will appreciate you for your good qualities and whip you into shape for all of your bad qualities. But of course, you aren't going to have any bad qualities. I hope you will be kind to your wife and children, because the most important work a man can do is with his own family. If you take the time and trouble to place your family first, they, in turn, will love and trust you.

It's really easy for grandmas to give advice, and I hope I live long enough to give lots of grandmotherly advice to your children—and have it well received—ha ha.

There are lots of dreams that mothers have for their boys, and I have special dreams for you too, William. First of all, I want you to fulfill all of the dreams you have for yourself. Be the best kind of a kid you can be. Be the best kind of friend to your friends. Be the best kind of boyfriend to your girlfriends. Do everything you want to do, but do it in the best way and in the right way and the Lord will bless you for it.

When you get older, your friends will come to you for advice because they will see that you live right and they will know that you will give them good advice. You will be an enjoyable person to be around. People will really look up to you and want to be around you. It's kind of hard for you to see this as you are growing up, but it is easy for me to see right now because I know how special you are.

It shouldn't take much thinking on your part to realize that you are special because you have been raised in a family with loving parents who have taught you the gospel of Jesus Christ. The most important thing in our lives, William, is the gospel of Jesus Christ and if you stay active in the Church you will be a force for good in the lives of other people.

I pray that you will remember that your mother wants only the best for you—in any situation and in any condition. If you keep the communication open between you and your Heavenly Father, He will help you choose the right way and you will know which is the right path to follow. There are a lot of different choices out there to be made and there are a lot of opportunities open to you. Every day we are responsible for the decisions that we make, and we must take full responsibility for those decisions.

Each day is a new beginning, Will. The Lord gives us a chance to start over. We can start over when we sin, or when we make any kind of mistake. This is one of the reasons that we came to this earth. The Lord will always be there for us if we ask Him for help.

Going on a mission, Will, is one of the most important things you will ever do in your life. I want you to serve a full-time mission for the Lord. You are serving yourself even more than you are serving the Lord when you are on a mission. And the experiences you have there will be a source of strength to you throughout your life. However you are called to serve in the mission field, don't ever say NO to the Lord. Please don't ever pass up an opportunity to serve a mission.

Let me end by summarizing all of this good motherly advice. Be true to the gospel that you know is right, go on a mission, get married in the temple to some neat girl, go to college and learn a profession, and be the best in anything that you do. Above all, I want you to remember that Mom *loves you. Even if I am not physically with you, let my love burn in your heart and direct you for good the rest of your life. What more could a mother want for her only son.*

May the Lord be with you in everything you do.
I love you, Mom

E.C.'s journal:

Dec. 19, 1986

Jane is still hanging on. Al sent me home Monday and I plan to return the day after Christmas if she remains stable. After nearly losing her last Saturday I felt braced for the final blow, but it has delayed it's punch. Every time the phone rings I start. And though I am sleeping at night, I'm very weary and I'm having strange dreams.

The time that I spent with Jane, about two weeks, was one of the biggest challenges I have ever faced. Trying to keep my equilibrium in order to be of valuable service in the face of overwhelming grief and fear, took a great deal out of me. All my coping skills, including fighting off a cold/flu, were called into focus. How much more difficult it is for Al I can only guess. He was very relieved to have me there to share the burden, but unfortunately, most of the responsibility falls on his shoulders and will continue to do so.

I'm calling twice a day and feel quite uncomfortable being home, away from her. But Al had Judy fly in, and she'll stay until Christmas and I'll go the day after. Jane's mind is never very clear for long. I believe that is a blessing. I would break her heart to fully grasp the reality of the situation. It has been such a privilege for me to spend time with her. She is so loving and quite cheery (the morphine) in spite of all the suffering. But I'm grateful that I could help when she needed me. To "lose" onesself in total dedication to another is a beautiful experience.

And I'm so thankful for my good friends and their support. A thought Chris Walters shared with me I have hung on to: That Christmas time will be ever so much more meaningful if we focus on not only the birth but the resurrection of the Savior, and rejoice in that. Sharing that with others has helped me to reinforce it.

Also, the Lord has provided that my needs be met in many, many ways, from the friends that call to the things I read. It's always just what I need at the moment.

Sunday: Chris Walters consulted her Jung notebook about the collective unconscious that is displayed in dreams and hallucinations regarding some of the things I remembered Jane had said last week. One of the things she said was that she saw hexagrams–that everything was a hexagram. According to Jung, that symbol (in the collective unconscious, or cross-cultural common subconscious elements of the mind or spirit), was that the hexagram represents the union of the seen and the unseen worlds. Also, when Jane "saw" the words "Toronto" and "always" on the Christmas decoration Jo Ellen had made [there were no words on the decoration], that too, has significant symbolism.

Last Saturday, when we almost lost her, she came through the experience with having had a profound decision-making experience. She said that in her dream/unconscious that Al and each of the kids had come to her, giving her "permission" to die so that the decision was entirely in her hands and that she could go *or* stay, and she chose to stay. Earlier in the day she had said "What we need here is a parting of the veil." The following evening she quipped, "I wonder how many nights *this* mini-series is going to last."

Other hallucinations included: drops falling from the ceiling, red dots on everything, other assorted geometrically associated images, needing to go to the bank to open a new account, asking Al if had his banana order in, seeing "Yo-Yo Convention" written on his sweatshirt, and many, many more things, both significant, if we only knew how, and/or funny. She became a perfectly natural comedienne, saying many clever and funny things. She kept us both entertained and frightened.

> Sat. Dec. 20, 1986
>
> Headache all day. I sink to the pits, fasting and grieving. I found out that when you can't eat, you can't sleep, you can't pace the floor any more, you've cried your eyes out and there are no more tears, you can still *pray!*
>
> One of the last things Jane said in her rational mind was that she hated to ruin everybody's Christmas, so perhaps she is trying to hang on till then.
>
> Also, while she was still fully cognizant, she learned that she had been accepted into the Tabernacle Choir–her lifelong ambition realized!

From Amy's journal December 25, 1986:

> The best gift of all out of all of the gifts given this Christmas, was the one that I gave Mother. It was the Family Tree cross-stitch thing. Last night I went over to my Mom's friend, Shari's, house and she helped me frame it and taught me how to frame it, also. And I gave it to my Mother for a Christmas present. I saved it for the last gift to be opened, since I thought it was really special. So when it came time to open it, we all gathered around and I helped her get the wrapping off. I don't think I have ever seen her so happy in my whole life! Her eyes lit up like candles, her face lit up like the moon! It was such a special moment! I wouldn't have traded it for the world! She was so happy! I just couldn't believe it! I am so happy that I agreed to do it for her.

E.C.'s journal, continued:

> January 4, 1987
>
> It has been over four weeks since the doctors gave Jane about a week to live. And they would have been right if we hadn't given her Keflex, the antibiotic, for her infected salivary gland. [She was in such pain with her swollen jaw that we had to do something. It was a Saturday night, we couldn't get her doctor, so Al's friend and dentist prescribed Keflex, in a very strong dose. It cleared up the infection and perhaps other infections we weren't aware of.]

Taped conversation January 7, 2003:

AL: What a conflict that was for you and me when she had that horrible infection in her jaw.

EC: I woke up that morning and I had a dream just as I was waking up in which I saw a large conference table with people seated around it, and at the head of the table sat a skeleton. The words "death presides" came into my mind.

AL: We basically prolonged her life with that Keflex. We were too soft-hearted to let her suffer. And we had to do something.

EC: If we'd known how, we could have done some pain management. There are much better ways to do it nowadays.

AL: The doctor got mad at us and he was right. I remember her face being so swelled up and she was in such pain (and it was a weekend and we couldn't get Dr. Brown, so a dentist friend prescribed

Keflex). It made her live another month. I'd go to bed every night praying that she wouldn't make it through the night. And then I'd wake up and she'd be moaning and pulling on her tubes. It was so bad.

E.C.'s journal of January 4, 1987:

> Jane seemed to enjoy Christmas. I went home for about a week or so and came back to help again. Al took the kids on a ski trip to Targhee for three days. It was good for them to get away. But now that New Year's is over life must go on. Jane remains extremely weak. She is disoriented most of the time. But in spite of the hallucinations and confusion I think she has a concept that she is dying–though not on anyone's timetable but her own. The Lord has not forgotten her.
>
> The children are coping quite well. It is good they have school to occupy their time. Last night we tried Family Night with a candlelight dinner, then old slides of Al and his family. There was one really great picture of Jane and Al singing.
>
> How Jane keeps hanging on is quite beyond me. I have gotten used to the routine and I have developed strength for lifting her. She is very thin and emaciated except for one fat arm. It's very puffy where the lymph system was disturbed by surgery several years ago. Her brain is also disturbed. She does a lot of perseveration (repeating the same thing over and over). Sometimes she realizes that it doesn't make sense, but she just cannot seem to get her thoughts into meaningful communications. There is also skewing of the input. What she hears comes out in strange ways, occasionally deeply symbolic. Today she said, "Get me the scissors so I can cut myself up." When I declined she said, "At least let me cut the strings."
>
> The other night she wanted yellow sheets, yellow towels, yellow everything. My friend, Chris, says the color yellow is the symbol for eternity and transfiguration. She sent a big bouquet of yellow carnations the next day. I explained it to Al who said, "You've been hanging around Chris too much!" When I got a call from Marietta Kelt he handed me the phone and said, "Another of your flaky friends." He was kidding, of course. I am SO grateful for my neat, "flaky" friends, who have been such a support. We got a card today from Linda Kennedy addressed to "The Weaver Girls."

Amy's journal writing seemed to be somewhat therapeutic for her. She continued writing:

> OK, <u>now</u> I feel like talking about Mother. As I said before, it's a miracle she's still here. At the beginning of December and late November, the doctors claimed that she had two weeks, tops, left. They gave her huge amounts of morphine to kill the pain and sent her home so she could die around the love of her family. The morphine is what has made her say those strange things, just nonsense. There is cancer all over her body and maybe the only place there isn't any is her fingertips and the end of her nose. It's in her brain, stomach, bone marrow, bones, bladder, abdomen, etc. Her left lung, or right, I can't remember, is filled with pneumonia. She is still bald – she has a little fuzz, but that's all. The fuzz is white and black, you know, like she's going gray, and it's pitiful to look at. Well, Mom lived through those two weeks that the doctors gave her with flying colors – for a dying cancer patient, that is. The doctors were a little amazed at this and so they gave her some more morphine and sent her home saying that she has two weeks left, again. By then it was the middle of December and near Christmas and she was still around. The two weeks the doctors gave her became 4 and now, Jan. 6th, it's 5 or 6 weeks. But they gave her the same thing again, morphine and two weeks. At the moment we are dwelling or lingering in those two weeks that they gave us (her) for the 3rd time. I wonder if the doctors are right this time. She has a hospital bed in her room now because it's easier to get in and out of. It's pretty neat. But I doubt that she's going anywhere, she can't move. She <u>can</u> turn her head or lift a foot or hand, but that's all. She is so pitiful looking, it's so sad. Ever since the doctors began giving her the morphine her mind has never been the same since. She says the strangest things!

I was in her room keeping an eye on her when I said, “I am going to go get my journal and write in it while I am in here with you. OK?” She said, “What about the blood?” “What?” I asked. “Aren’t you going to donate any blood to your journal?” she asked. “What blood?” I asked. “Your blood,” she responded. I just wanted to go along with her so I said, “You have to be 18 years old to donate blood.” She said, “OK, then, just bring the pan of blood over here on the desk. And don’t forget the pen. And don’t forget to write your name in it, too.” I said, “Um, well, how about I go down and help with dinner, oh, wait, here comes Dad. He’ll know what to do.” Dad was coming down the hall. He came in and said, “What’s going on here?” Mom said, “Amy has a question – she wants to know if she can go help in the kitchen.” The look on his face plainly stated that he didn’t know what was going on. He said, “Well, sure. Why not?” Mom said, “OK, that’s the first question. I have three questions, and the second one is… (she calmly looked over at the yellow flowers beside her bed and said, “Aren’t these flowers pretty?” I almost laughed but then I shut up quick and said, “Yes, Mom, they’re beautiful! I really like them.” “Good,” she said “and the 3rd question is ….. (a long moment of silence)… So, what’s your answer?” She didn’t ask anything! I was totally confused! I couldn’t think of anything to say, so finally Dad jumped in, “The answer is yes, Jane. Now go to sleep.” A second time she wanted me to put my name on all of my wet clothes, with green ink. How weird! Then, a third, she made me look for a key ring, a U shaped key ring, so I could keep all of my keys. (I don’t have any keys.) She got a little mad when I couldn’t find one, if there ever was one! It’s really sad… (especially when she gets angry and swears.)

The main thing I have learned out of all this stuff going on with Mom, the main thing is patience. I used to have no patience whatsoever. Now, I have noticed that I do. I have gained a lot of it in these past few months.

E.C.’s journal writing also may have been therapeutic, but there was really no way to describe the helpless, panicky, overwhelmed feelings she was dealing with:

January 9, 1987

At the Salt Lake airport: will fly to Albuquerque and meet the boys. Dan sings tomorrow night with the all-state choir at Popejoy Hall at UNM.

I feel less heavy leaving Jane now than I did when I went home for Christmas. She has so few rational moments that I don’t believe she’ll miss me that much. Losing her mind like she has--whether it’s the cancer or the morphine, we’re not sure–has minimized the suffering. At least a good part of the mental anguish has gone. [As it turned out I was wrong—she did miss me and scolded me when I got back.]

It’s frustrating for her and for those of us who work with her to know what it is she is trying to communicate. For instance, yesterday she said she wanted the water heater, which we interpreted as meaning the heating pad–good guess. But often we can’t get it. Her speech is clear and distinct and she knows people, but is very childlike in her interactions. She’s mad at Al a good part of the time because he won’t hop every time she speaks, and yesterday she got angry with me over something I couldn’t interpret. She said, “I’m sick of you and Al being right all the time.” Then she called me crazy because when she told me she’d taken 10 pills I corrected her, “just two, Jane.” However most of the time she is sweet and uncomplaining.

When she was very, very weak Monday and Tuesday she made very few demands, but when she began to feel a little better on Wednesday and Thursday she began to be more restless and demanding. Her legs are so weak that she gave way yesterday and went down on the return trip from bath to bed. I had a very difficult time getting her up and into bed. We’ve had a problem with bed sores and not getting a medical patch to stay in place. It’s a mess–the whole thing!

Al is quite remarkable. He remains loving and kind through it all, and still wants to keep her at home. [I felt she should go to the hospital, not for my sake, but for the children’s.] He has gone to work some, but remains attentive and available for all of Jane’s needs. He has taken most of the night duty and some nights have been awful–with Jane awake and hallucinating every 20 minutes. Al is also good with the kids, even better at many aspects of parenting than Jane. The family functions in low-key mostly, and Al is firmly in charge. The kids are quite independent, each with their individual strengths and weaknesses and they are functioning quite well in spite of very trying circumstances. Will is a really neat little guy and his artwork evidences no morbidity. He likes me to snuggle with him every night for a few minutes at bedtime. And I love it too. [The girls showed signs of stress, but each in different ways.] Cindy's ... provocative behavior elicits a lot of negative responses ... and I fear she will have lots of guilt feelings over Jane's death. Amy has her journal. She writes pages every day. It's a great outlet for her. She did an heroic bit of stitching to finish the Toronto family tree Jane started (counted cross stitch), and she finished it for Christmas, got it framed and we hung it in the foyer.

Carrie keeps going with lots of activities. She's a lovely young woman, (very pretty and petite). She has a wonderful musical talent. I'm glad I could remove some of the "mother role" burden she's had to assume. I cautioned Al about letting her assume that role. Her teacher, Marlene Bachelder, and three of Jane's other friends from the Ralph Woodward Chorale came to visit yesterday. Marlene said great things about Carrie and she wrote a beautiful letter to Jane. We both cried when I read it to Jane after the gals left. We have very few tears, by the way, more laughs than tears through it all. The TV has been a help, distracting Jane. She'll laugh at some of the sitcoms and she laughed at the cute penguins on a nature show, but couldn't remember it the next morning.

E.C.'s journal, continued:

One night Jane almost died–and she chose to live–but I am sure she did not truly understand the conditions of her living. The only pleasures she has are tasting a morsel of food she likes and responding to affection ... She has little or no cognition of what is going on in the household. How long she can last is anyone's guess. Five weeks ago today the doctor gave her about a week to live.

I have been grateful to be of service. It has given my life a new dimension and a new perspective and I have been grateful for the time we've had together, though now I'm not sure she'll even miss me, or know I'm not there. [I was wrong. She did miss me and was greatly relieved when I returned.]

I was glad I was able to go to the temple Wednesday when Jean Brown came to care for Jane for a couple of hours...the lovely prayer circle mentioned praying for mercy. It struck me that it was meant just for me, and so I have resumed my prayers without ***my*** agenda, merely asking that the Lord's mercy be extended to Jane and all the family. There really are things worse than death. I also had an intimation that things would get worse before they got better. I pray I have the strength to cope.

January 15, 1987

I have been home for several days, relaxing, working, seeing friends and taking care of library business [at that time I was director of the Clovis Branch Family History Center]. Today I awakened to tears about Jane. I'm longing to be with her again, though I dread going. I must stay here through Sunday to have my library staff meeting and get February outlined. Last night we watched a TV special on Mother Teresa. It was very inspirational and I took notes. She is able to communicate such love!

January 20, 1987

I'm back in Midway after an absence of over a week. Jane is weaker. It doesn't seem possible that she can keep hanging on as she does, as weak as she is. She has cried several times today but can't express what it is that is distressing her. Instead of becoming more capable of dealing with all the challenges, I feel less able to do so.

E.C.'s journal continued:

January 22, 1987

The days are so busy. Jane has required almost constant care since I arrived. She needed something every five minutes, around the clock, until tonight. She is somewhat comatose and has been since about 3 PM. Pam Guymon, the Relief Society president, came to stay a couple of hours while I went to Salt Lake to take care of some unpleasant legal business regarding a judgement connected with the ICH-UCH bankruptcy... But no unhappy experience can compare to the overriding concern about Jane.

Today for the first time she was confused about my presence: looking at me and asking for me at the same time. I tried to get through to her in a clear moment, tried to let her know it was OK to let go. But she has been in the "fight it with everything you've got" modus of operation for four years so it seems unlikely that she'd suddenly become accepting at the last moment, especially since reason seems to have fled.

Since my "tutoring" at the temple I've been praying for mercy for Jane and scarcely anything else.

Friday, January 23, 1987

This is the second day Jane has been quite lethargic, and more so today than yesterday. She did not once insist on getting into the bathroom. She slept from 4 PM yesterday to 10 AM today. And now, at 4 PM she is asleep again. Shari came over to bathe her.

Amy wrote on January 24th:

It's a miracle, Mom is still here! But only half way. The only things she can move are her eyes and lips. And maybe turn her head once or twice. She can not speak any more, at all, and only about a fourth of the time when her eyes are open she sees you. She looks at you, butshe doesn't see you, in a way. It's so sad. Dad says she's going into a coma. Just a matter of days. That's all. She was "as usual" until the 22nd, then she began going in and out of her "coma." Our Aunt E.C. came again. She's still here, and she'll probably stay another week or so.

Before the 22nd she was still saying very strange things. While I was sitting there beside her she would say something like, "I have to go to the store! Hurry! Before I become all lumpy!" Or another time, "I have to put the cheese on the pizza before it's all gone." I remember her once telling me, "We need to kill the rats! Hurry! Before they kill everyone!" She was telling Carrie one day, "Come and listen to the back of my hand for me!" Then she asked me and E.C. if we would "Put the stool by the foot of my bed and light it on fire for me." One night I was sitting on the chair beside her bed and someone began coming down the hall. She began trying to get out of bed and she said, "Hurry, get in my bed and pretend you're me, and I'll be you! Hurry." It seems like she is always in a hurry… She keep saying, "I need some….." and then the sentence ends. She never tells us what she needs. She got mad a few nights ago at Carrie and me because we wouldn't "lower the drawbridge." …She probably knows what she wants but when she tries to say it, it comes out really wrong.

Returning to E.C.'s journal:

Sunday, January 25, 1987

Jane has been comatose since Friday PM. She doesn't speak or move, her breathing is shallow, her pulse rapid.

But devastation came to me this morning: a call from Gene Sare. Nita is dead (my dearest friend and college roommate). She died Friday morning and the funeral is tomorrow. I am grieved not to be there. She went fast at the end (pancreatic cancer). Wish I'd been able to do more for her during her illness. Oh what a treasure of a friend she was! What a truly beautiful, remarkable person–a magnificent human being–one of the best I ever had the privilege of knowing and loving... She was blessed to be taken quickly. I said, "Gene, do you know how lucky you are that she didn't have to linger an invalid like Jane has these two months?" Bless his heart, he was so broken up. His family is close by, their kids, grandkids and his parents as well as Nita's parents. "Her mother is a rock," said Gene. Nita is their only child.

I feel sad and frustrated that Jane's passing is so protracted. I don't understand it. There is much I don't understand. I've had prayers answered about trivial matters, why not this? We've prayed long and hard for four years that Jane's life would be spared, and now when we are praying for the Lord to take her (and feeling guilty about it) she just lays here hour after hour breathing heavily, unable to speak or move. Once in a while she will moan a little and we have gotten a few drops of water down. We know this cannot go on much longer, but oh, how long? Sometimes her eyes are open but she makes no indication she sees us or knows us.

Gary and Nana were here Saturday night. Nana brought dinner. Oren D. stayed and after we fed the kids and sent them off to the movies we kneeled around the table and prayed together. It was a good time for us to share our thoughts and feelings. Al got a lot off his chest. His faith has really been put to the test. We have all been tried, especially Jane. Hers is the greatest test. If her mind had not been gone these last two months, I doubt she could have dealt with the incapacitated state her body has been in.

Later Saturday we watched the BYU-Utah basketball game. It gave us a sense of normalcy, for a short while.

(Written later):
Sunday evening 9:15 PM

Jane died. Al was alone with her, as he wished. I was busy getting Will into bed. When I closed Will's door I met Al in the hall coming from Jane's room. "She's gone," he said. We hugged, then I ran in to see for myself, while he went to tell the girls. When death comes, it is a shock, no matter what the circumstances. Al had his hand on her heart. It had been racing along at 116-120 for almost three days. On Sunday, it went up to 160 then it finally gave up. It just slowed down and quit. The girls came in and wanted to see her. Amy and Cindy were quite frightened and they cried a good deal. Carrie did not. After Al called the mortuary and they came and got Jane, Carrie played the piano for a long time. We let Will sleep on. Al told him in the morning. There were lots of phone calls to make and arrangements to take care of. I felt stunned and exhausted all day Monday. I was almost comatose myself! But I felt relieved for Jane. I had such a strong sense of her release *into joy*–of her singing and dancing in Paradise. Suddenly, what seemed interminable, these last weeks, looked rather short in retrospect

* * *

OBITUARY

The Herald, Provo Utah, Tuesday, January 27, 1987

Margaret Toronto

Midway, Wasatch County – Margaret Jane Weaver Toronto, 46, died Sunday, Jan. 25, 1987 at home.

She was born Oct. 22, 1940 in Chicago, Ill. To Henry Duncan and Margaret Holmes Weaver. She married Allen S. Toronto June 28, 1968 in the Salt Lake Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

She received her BA from BYU in Secondary Education. She taught school for three years. She received her MA from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. in Learning Disabilities. She held part time faculty positions in Special Education at Texas Lutheran College and BYU.

She served an LDS mission to Chile (1964-66). She was active in the LDS Church serving as teacher, Primary President, etc. She trained in vocal music. She sang for five years with Ralph Woodward Chorale and was accepted by the Tabernacle Choir but [was] never able to join.

Survivors include her husband of Midway; three daughters, one son: Carolynn, Amy, Cynthia and William Duncan, all of Midway; one brother, one sister: Gary Weaver, Sandy, and Mrs. Martin (Ellen Claire) Shaeffer, Clovis, NM.

Services will be Thursday noon, at the Midway 3rd Ward Chapel. Friends may call at Olpin Mortuary Wednesday, 6-9 PM or at the church Thursday one hour prior to services.

Burial Midway Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Ralph Woodward Chorale.

* * *

Obituary notices also appeared in the Salt Lake City papers and in the Midway and Heber papers.

Over the almost 4 years of dealing with breast cancer, Jane had several remissions of varying length. She summarized her medical history and treatment, but ended her review in July 1986. It was all downhill after that. She wrote:

Summary of patient history & treatment for M. Jane Toronto:

March 1983: Modified radical mastectomy w/implant, 1 lymph node positive. Elevated liver enzymes, negative liver biopsy day before mastectomy. Labeled stage one, no further treatment. Drs. Paul Robinson and Charles Pledger, American Fork Hospital.

March 1984: Metastasis to bone marrow – stage 4. Bone scan clear, liver enzymes elevated. Began treatment with tamoxifen. Dr. Clyde Ford, Cowan Cancer Clinic, SLC.

April 1984: Consulted with Dr. Blumenschein, M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston. He recommended aggressive chemotherapy, we elected to wait.

May 1984: Oophorectomy, bilateral Drs. Bill Parker and Paul Robinson, American Fork Hospital.
Responded well to tamoxifen – "complete remission" observed by Nov. 1984.

July 1985: Metastases to bone – pelvis, hips, ribs, spine, skull. Discontinued tamoxifen, began megace.

August 1985: Began Livingston-Wheeler Clinic, San Diego, dietary-immunotherapy program along with megace.

November 1985: Hips and pelvis very painful, difficulty walking. Began radiation treatments at Utah Valley (10 treatments). Good results, but mild shingles. Drs. Brown and Blair, Utah Valley Radiation Center.

January 1986: Ribs very painful, fracture discovered, followed by 10 radiation treatments to R rib cage. Drs. Brown and Blair, Utah Valley.

March 1986: Chemo protocol begun: 5FU, methotrexate and cytoxan. In 2 weeks lumps in neck definitely softer, lump on skull smaller. Dr. Clyde Ford, Cowan Clinic.

March 1986: Vaginal bleeding began, with concomitant distension of abdomen, 10-pound weight gain in 2 weeks. Dr. Parker discovered large orange-sized mass in abdominal cavity where R ovary had been. 2-3 weeks more on chemo and bleeding stopped, mass undetectable.

April 1986: Complaints of continuing leg weakness led to Dr. Ford ordering myleogram. No spinal cord compression was found, but cancer cells were found in spinal fluid. Began whole-brain radiation March 31 (10 treatments), at Utah Valley. Dr. Ford began methotrexate in spinal infusions weekly.

June 1986: Improved bone scan June 27, good results with chemotherapy, spinal fluid clear, sugar and protein levels normal. Few side effects at present – tiredness and appetite loss. After flu in late May, diarrhea persisted through June with 10 pound weight loss. I saw Dr. Dickinson, was on flagyl for 1 week, and am essentially normal, except for weight.

Present treatment [July 1986]: 5FU in vein weekly and cytoxan every 3rd day depending on blood counts, and spinal infusion of methotrexate every 6 weeks. Next one August 13th.

[End of summary, but much happened after July. She lived until the following January 1987.]

E.C.'s journal, January 27, 1987:

Tuesday evening Jean and Steve Brown (Steve's the bishop) took Al and I to the temple. After the session we went into a small sealing room and Steve told us about a remarkable experience he'd had on the previous Thursday. He explained that he could count his spiritual experiences on two fingers and that this was one of them. He said he'd had an audible, not visual, witness of Jane, accompanied by a feeling of incredible peace. He said she seemed to be there explaining the passage from life to death and discussing the significance of the temple ceremony especially the wording of the entry into the celestial room–what it meant to her in life, and how she viewed it in death.

Al's version: Steve Brown pulled me off to the side, after she died. He told me he had an experience too sacred to talk about outside the temple. So he took me to the temple with him and afterward we sat in the celestial room and he told me about his experience. He felt that Jane had communicated to him that everything would be OK and not to worry about it.

More of E.C.'s journal entries:

January 28, 1987

Wednesday evening was the viewing at the mortuary. Jane looked astonishingly beautiful–so much better than when she died. Her hairdresser, Carl Probst, called and asked if he could do her wig. He did such a nice job! The big snow which closed westbound traffic down Parley's Canyon kept many Salt Lake people away, but there was a steady stream of people all evening. Just before we left for the viewing a beautiful portrait was delivered. The Olsons, Pat and Jim (Pat is Frank and Mildred Schafer's daughter from Chicago) had taken a photo of Jane and had a portrait painter do it. It was wonderful and everyone loved it.

Marty, Mart and Dan arrived. They'd had to drive through a snowstorm up over Soldier Summit. I was just thrilled to see them, along with Jo and Kevin.

January 29, 1987

Thursday was the funeral. It was a beautiful sunny day–the ground covered with clean, fresh snow–but not a cold day. Hundreds of people came to the viewing before the funeral. Many more than the night before. So many old acquaintances – Harold and Reva Davis, the Shallbetters, all the Bangerters, all the Torontos. Al's mother and sister came Monday night. But the other girls waited till the funeral. The Vetterlis came, Rae Hall, our mother's favorite niece–so many. Carol Holmes Warburton came for the viewing Wednesday evening. She was disappointed because Martha and the Mitchell girls hadn't come.

The funeral was magnificent, if you can say that about a funeral. The church was packed. It was quite a service (see program, Chapter 9) and they made a tape recording of it, too. Gary had a hard time keeping back the tears as he spoke. Jane had wanted him as a speaker. My heart went out to him and I thought he did a beautiful job.

So did Jean Brown, Jane's friend, and of course Grant Bangerter, who many years ago had the same experience Al has had. He was left a widower with four young children. I was so proud of my boys and Marty and my nephews as they bore the precious cargo to that snowy grave. I just wanted to lay down in it with her. I really did.

Before the coffin was closed I was asked to place the veil over Jane's face. This I gladly did, though it was almost too emotional for me. Through divine prompting Marty had prepared me. The night before the funeral as we lay awake talking he said, "Are you going to put the veil on Jane?" "I don't know," I said surprised. "Don't you remember your Aunt Martha putting the veil on your mother?" "No, I don't," and I truly couldn't remember it at all. But I am so glad he prepared me with that question, or I would have fumbled completely.

Bob Toronto, Al's brother gave the family prayer before the funeral, and it was really something–there was hardly a dry eye. His wife, Ellen, was the only Toronto who had come to spend any time with Jane. She had spent the day during the Christmas break so Al and Bob and all the kids could ski while I went home to Clovis.

After the funeral the Relief Society put on another large feed for about 80 people: all the family and close friends. Pam Guymon was the "Mother Superior of the Angels of Mercy" as I view it. What a Relief Society!

And then there was Chari Davis. She is made of pure gold. She came to see Jane every single day, supervising her at-home care (she was a registered nurse). And she did it in such a loving manner. She changed the catheter, she brought the special mattress cover that had a compressor and a timer to alternate the bubbles supporting the patient. She brought the patches for the bed sores. Chari had checked with the doctors or whoever needed to be contacted about any minor problem. All the major problems were solved: verdict, Jane was beyond any medical intervention. But Chari knew what was coming. She knew Jane would just get weaker and weaker until the end. She got so weak she was even beyond pain, and as we could get no water or pills down her, I was grateful her last hours were quite peaceful.

Right after the funeral Amy recorded the following in her journal:

When everyone else got home, my cousins and aunts and uncles and such were all there. I thought it was a little annoying since there are so many. But, finally they all went home and I was exhausted! Dad was telling me that night about after the funeral when he was talking to my uncle, Bob, his brother. He was the one who said the family prayer at the funeral. He said to my Dad, "I'm sure glad I wrote down the prayer and read it instead of just saying it, because I might have said how I really felt. I felt like saying something like, 'Lord, we're really <u>pissed</u>! This sucks!'" And actually, I feel that way a little, too.

Later E.C. added the following to her journal:

Janie and I were sisters and best friends. I filled Mother's role as best I could after her passing in 1965. Jane and I shared our hearts, our vacations and our long-distance phone bills. I had given, at the end, everything I had or knew how to give. It wasn't enough. But though I gave my all, I gained more. In my loss I have been enriched, and I am grateful for the time we had together and the love we shared always. Though all else is gone, the love remains. I have a great sense of her rejoicing with those that have gone beyond, and with Nita, too. The gospel is such a comfort. What a privilege it has been to have had such a wonderful, remarkable, talented, bright, beautiful, delightful ***star*** as my sister in my life. She inspired me. She comforted me. She was my sounding board and my mentor. I felt closer to her than any other. She also kept me from doing at least one very foolish thing in my life.

I enjoyed having all her friends look at me and say, "Wow, I remember when a healthy Jane looked just like you." We sounded alike (even our kids couldn't tell our voices apart on the phone), and we thought alike in a good many ways. Our reactions were very similar and though we were different in some areas, we had a special understanding–a deep and sympathetic knowledge of one another's hopes, fears, loves and heartaches.

On Friday after the funeral all the family went skiing. Judy thought it not proper, but when I told her it was my idea, she said, "In that case, it's OK." It was a great ski day. Everyone went except Amy who had a sore throat. Even Jo Ellen took a personal leave day to be with us. It was a day of great joy and release–and a relief to be away from the sick room and the aftermath of tragedy. I sprained my hand but it was worth it. It made me appreciate Janie's helplessness with her hands so disabled.

January 31, 1987

We start home, driving to Albuquerque with the van and my Lincoln. There's four of us, Papa, Tres, Dan and I. I talk non-stop to each of them as we trade drivers. We got three tickets on the way home. Dan was the only driver who didn't get one. I'm glad to be going home, but hate to leave Al and the kids.

February 1, 1987

I am relieved to be at home. Exhaustion sets in. I'm almost immobilized. But I need to start the thank-you notes.

In May of 1996 Amy discovered the journal that Jane had kept during her last year of life. She wrote: "It was really fascinating to get her point of view on everything that happened towards the end of her life. I remember all the events she mentions and it really took me back to that time in my life. Steve let me cry on him a little. The saddest part of it is how she kept so much hope and had faith that God would heal her. And she thinks somehow she can cheat death while I'm sitting here 8 years later knowing the outcome of the story. But I feel that I know her so much better now than I ever did before, and it's a good but sad feeling. I am really glad she kept a journal."

During Jane's illness the Torontos were experiencing dire financial difficulties. In a conversation in January 2003 Al recalled that:

> We went through a phase with Independent Clearing House making lots of money. In fact, we paid cash for the house over about a six month period. Then it all went to pieces. Then in 1985 and 1986 I had the IRS on my case regarding taxes. I had the FBI looking at my involvement with Ken and Barry. I had an attorney, who was the trustee for the bankruptcy for ICH, suing me for half a million dollars, which of course, was ridiculous. So I had a lawsuit going on while dealing with the IRS and the FBI all at once, during the time Jane was so sick. She was doing all kinds of alternative treatments which our insurance didn't cover, so there were many demands for money, and we were living off assets we were selling. I had some life insurance on Jane, and I figured if I could hang on long enough, and ***if*** she died, which was looking more and more probable, I'd be able to pay off any debts, so I borrowed money against that. Finances were tough right then. The bishop came and offered to help us out a couple of times, and I should have accepted it, in retrospect, but I didn't. I was too proud to take the help. There were times, however, when I didn't know how I was going to get enough money to pay the bills.
>
> Several things happened. When the ICH went upside down, I had a lot of family money in it–my mom, my sisters, E.C. So I mortgaged the house and paid everybody back, and got everybody out without losses and I took the heat for any losses and the lawsuits, too. One thing the bankruptcy attorney wanted was a list of all the family members and everybody who had been in it, and I refused. He actually took me to court to do that, but I refused.
>
> Anyway I had a $2500 a month house payment for a long time. It got to the point where I could no longer make those payments, so I went to my banker and I said, "Here is my last payment." Starting next month I won't be able to make any more payments. You can take the house back, you can foreclose on it, whatever, and I'll cooperate, but I can't continue paying." He was flabbergasted. He said, "Nobody ever comes to us ahead of time and tells us these things. You could string this out

for a couple of years and not pay anything, and then we'd take steps to foreclose." He asked if I tried to sell the house, which I had, but property wasn't moving then. He gave me a second mortgage, worth six months of payments, and he said, "Now let's see if we can sell it." So I prepaid the loans for six more months, the house didn't sell, and I went back to the banker. Though they also tried to sell the house, my banker said, "We will buy the house. Because you came to us ahead of time, and you were trying to work with us, we will just buy it from you–no judgements." So they came up and we did all the paperwork and I sold it to the bank, and they let me rent the house for $500 a month. Unbelievable! "We'd rather have you in it than to have it empty, especially in the winter." This was when Jane was really sick. Because I was up front and honest with them, they bent over backwards to help us.

Then right when things were the worst, the bank was sold and different bankers took over, and when they saw that we were renting that house for $500 they tried to evict us. They brought up an eviction notice. So here we were, and I was in the middle of lawsuits and investigations and we got an eviction notice. I shouldn't have, but I told Jane about it. She was really pretty upset. That was a mistake, telling her. I went down and looked at the eviction laws and then I went to the bank and I said, "I understand your situation and you want us out, but I have four children and I have a dying wife, and there is just no way you can get us out under these conditions in the middle of winter. I will move out of that house when Jane dies. I will pay the $500 a month until that time, which is the deal I had with the other bank, but I'm staying until she dies. I want her to die in her dream house." They didn't like that. But they put up a For Sale sign and let it go at that.

A couple of wonderful things happened during that time. Marty sent me money and Oren loaned me money. But the thing that touched me the most happened when we went down to do one of Jane's brain scans. When we first found out that the cancer had gone into the brain fluid she had to have whole-brain radiation. I was in the bishopric at that time, and Oren Durtschi was our executive secretary and a very close friend. We had a long day at the hospital and we needed a couple of thousand dollars to get the treatment going and I was flat out of money and I didn't know what to do. That night I helped chaperone a roller skating party for church youth and Oren came over to me sitting on the sidelines musing about our problems. (Jane had taken this particular diagnosis remarkably well as I recall.) Oren came over to me and said, "What's wrong?" I told him my problem and said, "I don't know what to do, I need a couple of thousand tomorrow. The next morning there was an envelope inside my front door with $5000 cash in it and a note from Oren saying, "Don't worry about paying this back." I found out later that he had emptied his personal savings account to give that money to Jane. As it turned out I paid him back in about a month. Things had turned around and some money came in. But bless his heart, he loved Jane. But I've never been so touched as I was when Oren did that. The level of sacrifice made it significant. It was one thing to get five grand from Marty–it was appreciated for sure, but poor old Oren, struggling along. It chokes me up every time I think about it.

The other miracle took place later. The thing overhanging the illness and all the other troubles was the fact that I committed to moving out of the house once Jane died. I didn't have a clue as to how I would do this. The day of the funeral, we returned from the funeral and we were eating supper at the house when there was a knock at the door. There was a guy at the door who said, "I see your For Sale sign out there. I'm sorry to bother you, but could I see the house?" He looked inside and saw all the people and he said, "Oh, you've got something going–I can come back another time." I said, "No, please stay. My wife died and we had her funeral today." He said, "Oh, man, I'm so sorry I can't believe it. I'm here from out of town but I can come back in another few weeks" I grabbed him and I almost pinned him to the wall. I said, "Sir, there's nothing more important at this very moment in time than showing you this house." And he came in and looked it over, fell in love with it and bought it. And he couldn't move in till summer, so I rented it from him for $150 per month for six months. He just wanted me to cover the taxes, and in the mean time I built another, smaller home. That was one of the greatest miracles I've ever experienced.

The IRS let me off the hook, too. Do you remember when I came down and talked to your friend, Jim Hart? He recommended that I go back and break all the trusts and pay my back taxes and straighten things out with the IRS, which I did. Because of that I was one of only 12 people who didn't go to jail over tax problems. They even gave me a refund. That was just another of many miracles that happened during that time. I look back on it, and I must conclude that I was compensated for my loss, big time.

One of the strongest revelations I ever had was when I stood there at the cemetery after the funeral and big snowflakes were falling. I had the four little kids there beside me and I looked up at the sky and said, “Father in Heaven, what am I supposed to do now?” I felt just totally lost. Then the thought came into my mind just as clearly as is possible, “Have family prayer, have family Home Evening, stay faithful in the Church.” In addition, I heard, “A lot of people have suffered a lot more than you have. Take your medicine like a man, and I'll take care of you.” That was the message I got at that moment, in what I considered personal revelation. It gave me the strength to move on. And I did. I took care of the kids. With Carrie’s help we managed to keep things going.

One of my life’s most tender moments was with Carrie. She was a senior in high school, and she was given special time off so she could run kids around and so on. They understood she was being the mom of the house. She had won the Sterling Scholar award with her music and had her whole future ahead of her and a full scholarship to Brigham Young University. One night she came in and sat on my lap and she said, “Dad, I’ve decided not to go on to school.” I said, “Really? You’ve got a scholarship and everything.” She said, “No, I’ve decided to stay home and help you raise these children.” Imagine giving up her scholarship! It just broke my heart. I said, “No, honey, you go to school. The Lord will provide. Things will change, you'll see.” She saw how badly she was needed and she decided on her own that she would choose that calling in life rather than seeking higher education–that she would give up school to help me raise the kids. What a daughter!

* * * * *