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Lost Brother

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Duane George Chadwick
North Logan, Utah
November 26, 2018

Lost Brother

Personal Experience Narrative

Informant: Duane George Chadwick is my maternal grandfather. He was born in La Grande, Oregon in the year 1925. His parents moved to Weiser, Idaho when he was very young and purchased a farm. Their home did not have running water or electricity until he was 14 years old. Many of his memorable stories happened on and around his family's farm.

Context: My grandfather currently lives in North Logan, Utah. He has always been a great story teller. Often, when he tells his stories, they are told so vividly that I can easily imagine what it was like to live on his family's farm, far away from civilization. He really loves his parents and siblings and has great respect for them. This is obvious, as he tells his stories which are filled with love for his family and the past. They were not wealthy farmers, but their intelligence and hard work made their home life very rich. Many people of all ages, have heard and enjoyed my grandpa's stories. He has told his stories at various church activities, the Lyric Theater, at Utah State University, as well as other venues. His stories kept his audiences captivated as he accompanied his memories with musical renditions on his musical saw, harmonica, guitar, and piano. Now, that he is on the brink of 94 years old, he usually tells his stories to his family. His descendants gather together and enjoy him sharing his memories from his colorful and powerful past.

Text: My little brother was about two and a half or three years old and uh we lived on a farm that had a high bank. There was low ground where the river ran and then there was high ground where the farm was—most of the farm was on the high ground and some on the low. All of a sudden, one rainy day, my little brother was missing and we hunted throughout the house, calling, calling, calling, throughout the barn, throughout the sheds, the garage, the pump house, the granary, all the buildings, no David, he was just gone. And that's kind of traumatic when you are out on a farm and there is a big river there just running under the hill—the hill's really steep—about 60 to 80 feet cut from the top of the farm where it was located down to the river bottom and the lower part of the farm—about 80 feet difference in elevation. And, uh,

some of it was so steep that one false step and you'd fall 30 or 40 feet. I suddenly became aware that I saw our cat at the edge of the steep bank, sitting about a hundred yards away, I went out to see what the cat was looking at and when I got out there, there was my brother and he was down part way, hanging on to a teeny little shrub about the size of a pencil and that was all that was holding him from falling down the mountain. He was crying with tears streaming down his face and that cat was the thing that led us to find that little boy.

Texture: Grandpa had emotion in his voice as he told this story. His delivery was such that he portrayed the emotion that he remembered as he was searching for his young brother. When he described the small 'shrub' that was keeping his brother from falling to his death, his voice seemed almost filled with awe and wonder as well as relief.

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