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Lost on a Mountain

Suzanne Taggart

suzanne.taggart7@gmail.com

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Duane George Chadwick
North Logan, Utah
November 26, 2018

Lost on a Mountain

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: I was five or six years old, I wasn't in school yet so must have been six. Dad took me up in the mountains on a team and wagon which is 30 miles up in the mountains, to get our winters wood. He cut down trees and then dragged them down the hill side one at a time with a team. Then he'd roll them on the wagon and we'd bring them home. It was a three-day trip. A day up there, a day to load and a day to come back and we stayed at a place called "corrals" where there was a fenced place where the can horses could be kept overnight. And (cleared his throat) the next morning, after we'd slept there the first night, my dad said, "Son, it's dangerous up there on the hill. We've got rolling logs up there and horses pulling logs that roll around and it's too dangerous for you. You should stay here and I'll be back at noon". And I

said, "Okay". So, I stayed there and I played on the logs and I got tired of that and I did everything I could think of and got tired of everything and I was lonesome. I was in a strange land and the mountain was covered with trees and I couldn't see anything. But I did remember which trail dad left on. He went up a trail that was made by bringing logs down. In my young mind, I thought, "All I need to do is just go up that trail and it will lead me to dad." And so, I disobeyed. He'd told me to stay down there and I went out looking for him. I went up the trail a ways and pretty soon the trail split! Somebody had hauled in logs from one side and somebody else had hauled them down from the other side. I didn't know which trail to take. I'd take one and then they would split again and they'd split again. The whole mountain was cob-webbed with trails of logs that had been hauled out. And I kept going and calling and calling. I'd get an echo coming back from the other side of the canyon. It was in a deep canyon that we'd come up. I was up on a high hillside by this time and I knew I was lost and I knelt down by a large pine tree and said a prayer, asking for help to find my way back to the campground. When my prayer was finished, I stood up and looked around and got a distinct impression to leave all trails behind and go down in a dark foreboding direction that had no trails. I went down until I came to a creek at the bottom of the canyon. As I approached the creek, I saw a man standing on the other side of it. I waded through the creek and I approached the man. I ask him if he could help me find the "corrals". He said, "Yes, I can do that. Continue going the direction you are headed and climb the canyon wall until you come to a road. Then go uphill on the road and it's about a quarter of a mile away." With great relief I thanked him and went on my way. To this very day, I feel I was especially blessed to find a man who could help me find my way back to the campground where my father was. He was grateful to see me arrive.

Texture: It was later in the day when grandpa told this story. He was very exhausted and quite relaxed in a big maroon chair. His voice was very quiet and he told the story very slowly, while pausing quite a bit trying to express himself clearly and concisely. He paused quite often as he was telling this story.

Suzanne Olya Taggart
Utah State University
ENGL 2210
Lynne McNeill
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