

## BIOGRAPHY

IDUMA SLAGOWSKI written by Marlene Flint

Iduma's father was born in Airdrie, Scotland. He worked in the coal mines as a lad. His parents and family were converted to the L.D.S. church. The desire to join the Saints in Utah brought them to the U.S.A. They located in Payson, Utah. Here William Graham met and courted his future wife, Edith. Edith was born in Payson, she had a large family. She was well educated and attended Brigham Young Academy. They went by wagon to Salt Lake City and were married in the L.D.S. Temple.

A couple of years into their marriage William was having trouble finding work, so he decided to try his luck in the mines in Spring Valley, Wyoming. That led him to the Cumberland mines and they settled in a small mining town called Elkol. It's a little South of Kemmerer, Wyo.

Iduma was born Dec. 4, 1911 in her parents home. She is the next to the youngest child in her family. She was named Iduma after an acquaintance of her mother.

Iduma remembers her father taking her down into the coal mine when they lived in Elkol. Of the experience she said "He wore a carbine lamp on his head, because it was so dark, I thought it was so dark." She also remembers having a cow they called 'Rag Picker' because after her mother had hung out the laundry it would come to the lines and pick off the clothes and chew them to rags. Shortly after her visit to the mine the family moved to a ranch near Mountain View, she was 4 or 5 years old at the time.

The family lived in a small home that had only 4 rooms. Also a small room where the milk separator was kept and a porch. They had no bath or electricity. It was located about 3½ miles South of Mtn. View. No one has lived there for about 25 or 30 years and Iduma suspects the road is no longer passable.

Iduma was especially close to her 2 brothers who were closest her age when she was a child. She doesn't remember much about the older children because of the age difference. She grew close to them after she was grown. Due to the fact that there was no such thing as television, she and her brothers made their own fun. They played out of doors. Her brothers used to love to get her in the middle, hold both her hands and run her down the hill faster than she could run on her own. She squealed and they laughed. She enjoyed roaming the feilds. When Iduma was 11 years old she started taking piano lessons. "I enjoyed it emmensely" she says. She had few things to call her own but didn't seem to mind because nobody else did either, and they always had plenty to eat. Her family had a battery operated radio and a wind up phonograph. They enjoyed listening to the music.

Her parents were active members of the church and they attended regularly. Her mother was a teacher. Her father has been Sunday School Pres. and a councilor to the Branch Pres.. They had a one room meeting house. They divided it with curtains to hold separate classes. It was where the present L.D.S. church sits today. It was heated in the winter by a coal stove. It was her father's job when he was in the Sunday School Pres. to come early and build the fire to warm the building.

Iduma attended school in Mtn. View. She got there by horse or by school bus. The building was 2 stories high. Everyone attended

in the same building. Some of her children also attended in the same building. They have since torn it down, it sat where the Elementary School sits today. She graduated from High School. "I didn't go to college. At the time girls didn't go to college much, they went to Summer School then they would teach school. But I got married I never did teach.

While in school Iduma was a good student and can't remember not liking it. School was a place where you could get together with friends. She played for the boys and the girls glee clubs, what we would call chorus now. After she returned home for the day she practiced the piano. Her mother would have supper ready. After supper they would sit around the table in the warmth of the stove, play cards or dominoes. Her parents especially enjoyed dominoes.

William purchased a white topped buggy, they thought it quite a luxury. When Iduma was a teenager her father bought a Model T Ford, that ended the rides in the white topped buggy. Later he bought a Model A.

Earl Slagowski also grew up in Mtn. View. He was  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years older than Iduma so they didn't go to school together when they were young. She only knew him slightly. They started dating after he got out of the Army. Dates took the young folks to dances. At that time when you went to a dance you danced with allot of different people when you got there, not just the guy or girl you came with. The girls thought they had to dance every single dance or they weren't popular enough and would end up old maids. The dances were held in the W.O.W. hall. It was on a corner of 3rd street in town. It is no longer there. They also attended the movies when they were in town. They were silent at the time.

Iduma was 17 when she got married. She says "It wasn't particularly young at that time. Allot of girls got married at that age, we thought we were really grown up. Probably thought I knew more then than I do now." A friend of hers gave her a wedding shower, she was given household items, cooking utinsels, and stuff like that.

Earl had left Mtn. View to find work which he did on the Rail Road in Ogden, Utah. He and Iduma had communicated by letter since her family had no telephone. Iduma went to Carter, Wyo. to board the train. She traveled alone to Ogden to meet Earl, who was waiting at the Train Station for her. She thought the trip was "quite a lark" because she had traveled so little.

They rented and apartment in Ogden but didn't stay there long. Earl got job in Bingham at Utah Copper Mine. They lived in Bingham for about a year. Iduma had never done much shopping while she was growing up, she says her father always did the shopping for her mother. The oddest thing about doing her own shopping was being asked to spell her name wherever she went - SLAGOWSKI - how do you spell it? She still has to spell it for people. The depression started, her husband was cut to a lower paying job. Iduma reports being "spoiled and homesick", so they returned to Mtn. View.

Earl went into partnership with Joe Angwin whom he later bought out. The couple moved into 2 rooms in the back of the garage Earl would run. It was located in the empty parking lot next to the Uinta Co. Bank in Mtn. View. She says "It wasn't real nifty, just some place to live, that was better than paying rent." They had one child at the time. Before they moved out they had 4 or 5 more and had added 2 more rooms.

Iduma's first child was born in her mothers home. She was given chloroform for the pain. The next 6 were born in her own home, with some she was given ether, others she had without any pain killer. The Doctor would come to your home and help with the delivery. Iduma also had a woman come in to help. A midwife in today's terms. She says it wasn't nearly as expensive as today's Doctors.

The Depression didn't effect Iduma's family much. She remembers gas rationing, but not having much and going without was what she was already used to.

Iduma's last daughter was the first baby girl to be born at the Memorial Hospital in Evanston and was showered with lots of gifts by the local businesses in town.

Sex was quite a "hush up affair" and Iduma's mother didn't teach her as much as girls learn today. She learned about morning sickness and labor pains when she had her own children. She reports being so sick, it lasted all day every day. She was glad to have the babies, after they came.

Because Earl needed electricity to pump gas they bought a small generator. They also had electric lights as a result. Quite a number of people had generators so it got pretty noisy at night. Electricity formally came to town when Iduma was around 30 yrs. old. Next came indoor plumbing. She had water in the house but it had drained through a hose out onto the grass before. They bought a television and a washer and dryer. She can't remember them being terribly expensive or else she says "we couldn't have afforded it".

The most exciting thing for Iduma was when after 12 years of marriage she and Earl got their first NEW car. This event

prompted a Honeymoon trip. They went to Seattle where Earl had served in the Army. They traveled down the coast to San Francisco. Iduma had never seen the ocean and it was quite a treat for her. They traveled through the Giant Redwoods and saw Sea Lions swim along the shore. She didn't swim in the ocean because she has never learned how to swim. She regrets that and thinks every one should know how for their own safety.

When Iduma's children were small she was a busy mom. She cooked a large breakfast every day. They had the biggest meal at noon because her husband worked so close to home. Washing and baking took allot of her time. She did most of her shopping in Evanston, it took at least an hour to get there. They also went to the Doctor and the Dentist in Evanston. Salt Lake was 4 or 5 hours away. The cars were slow, only 30 miles and hour and the roads were not as nice. She sometimes shopped in Rock Springs for things like Prom Dresses.

Earl was a successful Mechanic, he had to be with so many children. Earl was a Committee Man and saw the Post Master job coming available, they decided it would be a good move for their large family. The Postal Inspector interviewed Iduma, she took a Civil Service Exam. that took all day. And she became acting Post Master. The job was for the government and she was appointed by the President. Up to this time Iduma had never worked outside of her home. Her children had even picked up the mail for her. She said it was all so new, interesting, exciting, and scary. Had she known what she was getting herself into she's sure she would have been more sacared. She was bonded for several thousand dollars because the job required handling so much money.

She started in 1953. Mailing a letter cost 3¢. At the time

the Post Office was one small room in the grocery store, across the street from the Bank. She was able to hire anyone she wanted to. Later they had to take a Civil Service Exam. and she had to hire one of the 3 highest scorers. If a person was already employed at by the Post Office they had first chance.

Iduma had one more son after she started working. She worked through the pregnancy and took a couple weeks off after the birth. When she returned she took him to work with her in a small basket. She was able to do this because it was such a small Post Office and they were not very busy.

The First Grade class from the Elementary made a visit to the Post Office every year. They were shown around and told how things worked. After their visits they would write letters to thank Iduma for the visit and tell her what they liked the best. One small girl wrote "I really liked the Post Office but the thing I liked best was the baby."

The weirdest things that came through the mail to Mtn. View were the things the Biology class would soon be dissecting. Iduma thought the cutest thing was the baby chicks every spring that the farmers ordered.

During the years that Iduma worked at the Post Office she saw allot of changes. They built a new Post Office by the home she lives in now. It was up graded from a small 3rd class Post Office to a large 2nd class. Class is determined by how large it is and how much revenue it generates. The growth made the job more demanding with added reports and more supervision. Meters began to be used. Meters are machines that businesses use to print stamps on letters instead of having to lick each of them. The business pays the Post Office the amount of stamps it needs and

the Post Master sets the machine. Permits became another pain for Iduma. They were used by businesses to mail their advertisements at a cheaper rate. They had to meet a quota and all be identical pieces.

Iduma helped choose the sight for the existing Post Office by the town hall. She retired during it's construction and has never worked in it. Iduma worked at the Post Office for 32½ years. She says "I really enjoyed my work."

Counting the son that Iduma had after she started working, she has nine children, all living. Of them "Nine seems like an awfully lot now but at the time I didn't think it was too many. They are a great comfort to me. I appreciate all of them."

The flood that hit Mtn. View in June of 1964 was a real surprise to Iduma. She woke early in the morning to a dripping sound. When she looked out she was surrounded by water, about 2 feet of it! In the street it was up to your knees. It flooded all over town. Because their house has a high foundation the water never got into their home. However it did get into a storeroom at the back of their home and ruined allot of their things. Her daughter lost a large doll, the food in the freezer was ruined, and a saxophone. It was quite a scary experience. In spite of the scare the kids made the best of it by floating down the streets in anything they could call a boat. It was the only flood they have had and Iduma feels that now we have the Stateline and Meeks Cabin Dams there won't be any more. The town has also built up the river banks to handle spring time high waters better.

She also remembers a fire that destroyed a nice store, the Post Office that was in the store. The owner also had a garage and some other buildings, they were all lost.

Earl died in 1972 after a 5 year fight with cancer. He had Kemo-therapy and a few operations and eventually needed Morphine shots which Iduma gave him for the pain. He died in Salt Lake City, Utah after another surgery. Even though he wasn't expected to live and had been so ill, his death was still somewhat of a shock to Iduma.

Earl had been active in the church though he wasn't baptized until they had been married for several years. He served as Sunday School Pres., Ward High Priests Leader, was a Stake Missionary, and Stake High Priests Quorum.

Iduma started her church service at age 13 when she started playing the piano for meetings. She has taught Primary, MiaMaids, served 6 years as M.I.A. President, she taught the Gospel Doctrine class for years. Right now her only job is Visiting teaching. She enjoyed teaching but overall liked playing piano best.

Iduma saw the changes in Mtn. View over the years as gradual. Just a little old town where you knew every body. Until the Oil Boom that hit Evanston a few years ago. That made what she called a drastic change. New businesses, lots of new homes and lots of people she no longer knows.

Iduma has collected dolls through the years. At first she kept them in boxes in the top of a closet. Then her daughter bought her a display case. After they were out so more people saw them she started getting dolls as gifts. She has one from Finland one from Germany, Mexico and Hawaii. She has 4 from Canada. One is a Southern Belle another her Nanny. She has 2 from Arizona, some story book dolls like Cinderella and Snow White. A Cabbage Patch and a Barbie because they were popular. One is hand made by

a daughter-in-law, and another is from Scotland.

Iduma traveled to Scotland and toured the city that her father was born in. She was accompanied by one of her daughters.

She has a small collection of teddy bears that she keeps just because she thinks they are cute.

The one thing she hasn't collected but would like to have is a train with lots of tunnels. She wants a big one. She likes to ride trains. She has traveled to Portland, Oregon and into Canada by train and says it was beautiful.

Iduma enjoys hand sewing and crocheting. She likes doing Counted Cross Stich. She is just finishing a hand made quilt for one of her daughters.

Typical days start with sleeping in now. She likes doing her housework in the mornings. For lunch one of her daughters usually takes her to the Drive Inn her son owns to eat. Sometimes they drive in the country. When she gets home she does some handwork, by evening she watches T.V. and crochets. She says she would cook more if they didn't have the Drive Inn. Sometimes she bakes if she feels like it. She cooks Sunday dinner because that's the day that they are all home. She said "You can just put down 'I'm a lady of leisure' period." That's how she planned her retirement.

Since she retired she has traveled alot. She has been to stay with her children in California, Oregon, Canada, Salt Lake and Ogden. In California she went to Disneyland in the rain. She says they were walking in water up to their ankles. "I have never been so cold in my life!", the actual seeing things was fun for her and she liked Small World best. She usually drives to Ogden herself. She would like a trip to the South if she could pick a new place to go.

Iduma is a very patient person. She thinks her nature is somewhat patient but feels that she has had to work at it too.

She would like her grandchildren to follow this advice. "Try to be as good of person as they can be. Try hard to overcome their weaknesses and do better as you go along. We all make mistakes but we can profit from them if we try hard. Try to overcome selfishness and everything that you feel you can improve on. Of course one of my greatest desires is to have them strong in the L.D.S. church."

Iduma would like to be remembered like this, "I would like most to have my children feel that I have done the things that I have mentioned above. And of course have them love me. And remember my strengths and feel that I have at least overcome some of my weaknesses. A person is never perfect but you can kind of work at things and do better as you go along."

## BIOGRAPHY OF IDUMA SLAGOWSKI

Born Dec. 4, 1911 in Elkol, Wyoming

Married Earl Slagowski Dec. 22, 1928

Mother of nine children:

Doris Elaine

Peggy Ann

David Earl

William Harold

Edith Kay

Dixie Rae

Jeannine

Sheila Diane

Kirk Lamar

Served as Post Master in Mtn. View for 32½ years.