

## BIOGRAPHY OF CAMILLE DEE ROBERTS CARTER

May 2012

Camille was born 5 May 1955 (5-5-55) in Salt Lake City, Utah. When she was born, I thought I was the happiest woman in the world. She had black hair and dark skin and was so pretty. Both her mother and father were blond and everyone asked where she got her dark coloring? Her Grandmother Flora Salm Butts had dark skin and dark hair. I couldn't have been more thrilled. She was a good baby. Her Aunt Norma came over several times a day to show me how to bath her and take care of her. I will always be grateful for that.

She had beautiful long dark brown hair that was naturally curly. Once when she was about six, she decided to have a haircut. We allowed this to happen and when she went to church the next day, one older lady just shook her head. Camille burst into tears, and she never had it cut again.

Mary Wright, who was a temple worker and deeply spiritual, told me that the only reason I agreed to have that big family was if I could have Camille first. I really believe that was true because she was such a help to me when all the other children came along. She was and still is a wonderful sister to Tessie Ann, as well as all the other children. She was just a born helper. She was obedient and never gave me a minute's trouble. We were really good friends. Once she won a speech contest put on by the church in Reno, Nevada. She got first place. It was all about how she took care of all those kids while her mother and father went to Oakland California to the temple and left her in charge.

When we first moved to Quincy, she wanted to go swimming in the river. I took her along with Tessie Ann and the twins to the park. The river flowed through the park. The twins were in a playpen. Tessie Ann went off to play on the swing set. After about an hour of watching her at the riverside, I decided to go home. I started off to put the twins in the car and then the play pen and then Tessie Ann. I heard a voice in my mind say,

"Go back and get Camille first!!"

I ignored it because she was having so much fun. I heard the voice again.

"Go back and get Camille first!"

I turned to go back and found her struggling for air in the river. She was drowning! She just looked at me. She did not make any sound, but she was terrified. I immediately jumped into the river and sure enough she had fallen into a hole in the river which was over her head. It was almost over mine. I knew it was only by the power of some higher power who was watching over us that I was able to save her life.

The style back in the late 60's and early 70's was short skirts. Everyone at school and some in the church as well wore those short skirts. Camille had beautiful legs. She wanted to wear those short skirts. We told her to pray about it. She made the decision to keep her pretty legs covered up. We were so proud of her.

She was always a very hard worker. She had a paper route when she was just eight years old. After that she worked at the convalescent hospital helping old people. At college, she cleaned bathrooms at night to earn money to live. Her tuition was paid for by a government grant. She bought all her own clothes after she was twelve years old.

I honestly thought she was sanctified. I couldn't see anything wrong with her. This made Dad upset.

"She is not sanctified!!" Of course, she hadn't been through her trials yet.

I thought all the other children were going to be like her. Boy, was I wrong!!!

Having all those children was an emotional strain on my husband. He was a hard worker and deeply religious, and when the children were all small, he was pretty good, but when they all turned teen agers at the same time, he basically moved out. I didn't blame him. I wished I could have moved out too. That was when I learned to swear. We had six teen agers at the same time plus half a dozen foster kids who dropped in because their "parents couldn't understand them."

I said, "Well, you are welcome to stay, but if you think things are going to be better here, you are going to get a big surprise!"

Sure enough, in about six weeks, they would say, "Well, I think I will go back home."

Camille was a big emotional support to me during this time. I cried a lot. My marriage was falling apart, I was trying to raise these smart-mouth obnoxious kids. Half my time was spent at football games, basketball games, or wrestling matches. The other half was spent in the principal's office or in the Bishop's office.

My neighbors would say when they saw Dad chasing the kids down the street throwing bottles at them,

"Don't call the police, call the Mormon Bishop!"

Sure enough, the Bishop would come over and put their arm around Crawford's shoulder and go for a walk, and things would settle down for a week or two. Crawford tried very hard. He would never miss a home teaching assignment for fifty years except once when he was in the hospital. Every church assignment he took very seriously and taught his children to do the same.

There was one of Dad's missionary contacts who really took an interest in our family. He was great with the children and was interested in me. His name was Luther Clendenon. I asked Camille who she liked better, her Dad or Luther? She answered right away,

"I love Dad, Mama. Don't even think it!"

Camille was always there for me.

She was in tune with nature. She would go every day up the hill to say her prayers and study her scriptures. Once, a little squirrel came and perched upon her shoulder while she was there. Often she would conduct family night and of course she did a wonderful job. Sometimes after she would say

prayers, she would look up and smile. Once I asked her why she did this? She replied that she just wanted to show Heavenly Father that she loved him.

She had boyfriends. The first was Linden Packer. Once he took her on a date and then tried to park up on a mountain road. He told her to he was not going to take her home unless she kissed him. She came home and told us. The next morning her father went to Seminary and cornered Linden down the basement and told him he had better never try that again with his daughter or Linden would have to deal with him!!"

Linden had to have a hernia operation. This meant that he could not keep the date he had made with Camille, so Camille went with Kelly Halcomb. That made Linden so mad that he got out of bed and went to the dance anyway.

Once she didn't get a date to the Junior Prom. She was depressed, so her brother, Jonathan, asked her for a date. He bought her some flowers, took her to dinner, then they went to a show. He was only fifteen. She felt much better.

Then there was Van Whipple. He wanted to get serious but she was just not ready for that. There was another returned missionary at college. He dropped her, and that made her very sad. but then she met Vincent Carter, and he was the one. Once when he kissed her he said,

"No more kissing, unless it is over the alter in the temple!!" I knew then that he was the right one for her.

When she was called on a mission, she didn't know if she should go. She decided to go see the patriarch for a blessing. The Patriarch told her that she must make this decision herself. He could not tell her what to do.

She did go to Idaho for eighteen months. She was a very successful missionary. She worked very hard and she was able to convert forty people. Her mission president was really proud of her as were we. She came home about a month early because our house burned down and we lost our baby girl in the fire.

I was an emotional wreck. A year later, I was still crying every day. Camille and Tessie came home for Christmas. Both of them told me that they had learned at college that people who are mentally ill do much better if they run every day. Both girls took me out to run, one on one side, one on the other. They made me promise that I would continue this running when they left to go back to college. I kept the promise, and soon I was running half marathons. I went back to college and got my teaching credential. Camille had a big part in this.

I have had a number of people say to me, "How did you raise such a good family?"

I don't think it was anything specifically Dad and I did. Believe me, we had plenty of problems, but I really feel that it was just because we were given very special spirits to raise. I feel a great deal of gratitude for this experience.