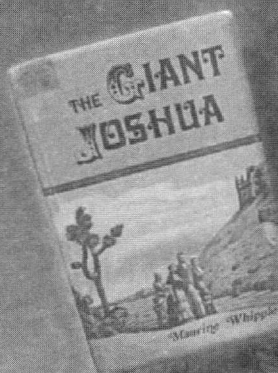


JUANITA BROOKS

Lecture Series
St. George, Utah



The 25th Annual Lecture



Maurine Whipple & Her Joshua

by Veda Tebbs Hale
Panquitch, UT

A Publication of Dixie State College of Utah
St. George, Utah

THE JUANITA BROOKS LECTURE SERIES

presents

The 25th Annual Lecture

Maurine Whipple and Her Joshua

by Veda Tebbs Hale

St. George Tabernacle

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Juanita Brooks was a professor at [then] Dixie College for many years and became a well-known author.

She is recognized, by scholarly consent, to be one of Utah's and Mormondom's most eminent historians. Her total honesty, unwavering courage, and perceptive interpretation of fact set more stringent standards of scholarship for her fellow historians to emulate. Dr. Obert C. and Grace Tanner had been life-long friends of Mrs. Brooks and it was their wish to perpetuate her name through this lecture series. Dixie State College and the Brooks family express their thanks to the Tanner family.

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Veda Tebbs Hale grew up in Panquitch, Utah. She graduated from BYU in 1957. She and her husband, Glen B. Hale, then went to Japan where Glen worked for a company which had a military contract. They lived in California and in northern Utah until retiring and moving to St. George in 1990.

Maurine Whipple was still alive and, with the urging of Eugene England, Marilyn Brown and others, Veda took on the task of writing Maurine Whipple's biography. Since then, Veda and Glen have moved back to Panquitch and built a log cabin on the Tebbs family ranch. Veda then started to paint seriously, which was her first love. In 2004, they opened an art gallery on Main Street in Panquitch.

Maurine Whipple and Her Joshua

By Veda Tebbs Hale

Maurine Whipple's book, *THE GIANT JOSHUA*, offered Mormon faith, courage and hard-guttedness to a frightened country as it entered the Second World War in 1941. It did this by showing a determined people with a goal to be called "Saints" trying to live the Golden Rule, or what Maurine called, "The Grand Idea — love your neighbor as yourself." But it also depicted those people as "human beings by birth and only Saints by adoption." Though many in the nation appreciated the book and the example of faith and courage, for the most part, the contemporary Mormons had a hard time with it. Mormons still do. "Maurine, it couldn't have been that bad!" "Those are my people. They were Saints. How dare you make them so human." So it went. And then there was the polygamy: "Why stir up something that the spirit no longer verifies?" "It happened," Maurine would say.

The book did depict how a committed group could win; but it, also, told the truth, which is that individuals in the group sometimes do not. Clory MacIntyre, the beloved heroine in the book, was one of them. Some readers, then and now, so strongly identify with this appealing character that they can't tolerate that she had such a difficult life. They can't see the broader perspective. Maurine wrote, in beautiful poetic prose, how there is a transcending wonder that takes the losers, such as her heroine, Clory, and in the end catapults him or her out of worldly defeat and into universal salvation. "The Great Smile" ...Maurine and Clory's testimony!

Maurine introduced this comfort symbol early in the book, after letting young Clory remember her older brother, Will, a boy of ten who had been so hungry on the trek west that he

had eaten wild parsnip roots and died. A quote from page 83: "At such times she would sit very still, hands clasped in her lap, not moving, and close her eyes and hold her breath and wait for the Great Smile to come, the Door to creep open... and something so real and live and vast that it fitted all the splintered fragments back into place...." Soon after this point in the story, Maurine moved the reader's attention back to the group. She wrote a scene of the tired St. George colonizers around a campfire; young, frivolous Clory, newly married as a third wife, had been sent to her wagon bed by her older husband, Abijah. Excluded, she could still hear the conversation, as the group's authority, Erastus Snow, encouraged the new pioneers to remember and recite the Mormon people's history — the sufferings, the injustices, the miracles, the examples of faith, the charisma and saintliness of the leaders. The book goes on to be a story of how a people who give themselves to their faith and act on good intentions with the goal of brotherhood in mind finally succeed.

Wisely, the book doesn't take on the whole Mormon story. It tells of the struggle of pioneers sent by Brigham Young to settle St. George. This small group's story is set into the whole panorama of a new Zion being built in a virgin land, a land isolated from the old sinful world. These people had to find a way to tame a fickle river, misnamed "The Virgin." And only after a critical mass of faith and courage is finally poured into inadequate human schemes that inspiration comes for what to do. Not a dam, but a spillway, a way for the river to safely throw its tantrums and still serve. And that spillway that could take the defeats of these people was more than a church. It was testimony, which meant a spiritual assurance that could handle a build-up of difficulties and spill them harmlessly back into the stream of life. People need assurance. They did in 1862, 1941 and they do today. The book treats the sincerity of those first people who responded to the Mormon gospel message with respect and awe. It captures the collective pride and faith of a people feeling themselves blessed and chosen.

A testimony to those first responders to the Mormon gospel was a precious possession. Their children and grandchildren inherited the consequences of their conviction but not necessarily the conviction itself.

Clory had been a child of eight when her zealous father tore her away from an unbelieving mother and went to follow the Mormons. He died on the way, as did his two little boys. Clory is left with the missionary who converted her father. When she is 16, and with the urging of Brigham Young, she married this man. His name was Abijah MacIntyre, and he was a viral, handsome man with a strong testimony and two wives already. One was a difficult, domineering woman, well able to withstand the difficulties of the frontier, the other a kind but colorless survivor from a terrible handcart crossing of the plains.

A young girl marrying an older man was not an unusual thing in those days. A strong, capable husband was a woman's ticket to survival, both physically and spiritually. Clory had been flirting with the military men stationed in Salt Lake City, and Brigham deemed it wise to save her from possible mistakes. He reasoned she would be safe in a place like Southern Utah where physical survival was first and foremost. This might have made for a happy enough life, but Abijah had a son, Freedom, a year younger than Clory. Clory and Freedom had grown up as brother and sister, but after Clory married his father, Freedom matured enough to realize he wanted Clory for his own wife. However, she was pregnant by then with his father's child. Clory suffers great heartache as she struggles with her feelings for Freedom and watches him struggle with his for her.

She gives birth to an adorable little girl she calls "Kissy." Here there is another awareness of the "Great Smile" brought on because of the joy that came from seeing her first child. "And then one of those rare, stupendous moments when the old world bent his hoary head. She held her breath and waited, and all her being flowed into a vast acceptance, and in the

acceptance there was victory. The thing she had tried to put into words for Free, the certain, living thing for which there were no words. If you lay still, unmoving, hardly breathing, the rim of the darkness might lift a little, a very little, and you might see the Smile, so easily startled, so soon gone. But you had glimpsed those aeons of triumphing laughter behind the closing rim, the warmth of the Smile was forever in your heart...." (p. 229)

Freedom, called Free, becomes reckless and is killed in an Indian raid. Clory blames herself, has a miscarriage, and nearly dies. At this low point in her life, at Free's gravesite, she has another moment of experiencing the "Great Smile." "Very still she held for that light to creep over the rim of the world, for the knowledge of laughter behind all the tears....as if she were watching the flight of something more buoyant than humanity." (p. 348)

After his burial, Clory changes into her old gray dress and climbs the red rocks behind the settlement to try to find some peace. There she meets Erastus Snow, and the two weary souls talk. Clory fears she isn't like the others, because she does not understand what they mean by "testimony" and does not think she has one. More spiritual insight comes for her as a "...wave of joy broke, and the dazzling spray flooded her with love, faith, divine goodness. She was suddenly conscious of receding veils, the solid earth of maturity under her feet. Sorrow might come again, but it would find a tougher surface." (p. 352) The book did not offer the usual sugar coating for this life. It offered — still offers — assurance that there is something beyond even the greatest tragedies.

The child, Kissy, brings Clory and Abijah close and Abijah finds some peace in the love he has for Clory, a love that usually makes him confused and ashamed of his needs. Clory has two more children, little boys. Abijah is called to serve an England mission. Hard times come. Sickness hits with a vengeance and death takes many little ones, including one of first wife, Bathsheba's, and all three of Clory's. Particularly here,

the reader's emotions are diverted from the glory of the whole to the pain of the individual. It is difficult to believe that in real life pioneers had to endure such heavy losses. But all one needs do is look at almost any family group sheet of the times to know her losses were not uncommon.

Abijah returns and the community continues trying to tame the river, which keeps defeating them by flooding and taking out their dams. Much of the focus of the story is on female hearts trying to cope and believe it is possible to share one man who, himself, is struggling with carnality and often coming up vain and prideful and self-righteous. True, the man used as an example, Clory's husband, Abijah, does fall short some of the time, but he isn't a villain. Just as often, he shows himself a good, kind, self-sacrificing, long-suffering, steadfast, hard-working man. Eventually, because of his faithfulness and leadership abilities, he wins from the Church a new prestigious assignment as president of a new temple. But this reward comes with a dreadful decision to make. He can only take one wife, because by now the United States government is determined to defeat the Church and polygamy. In keeping with the goal of kingdom building, he chooses a new, young wife and leaves behind the long-suffering, miscarriage prone Clory, and the beyond child-bearing-aged, first wife, Bathsheba. Third wife, Willie, having died by now. Clory's hands are sore and ruined by from the alkali water and from tanning leather and making leather gloves. Oh, the unfairness! But so it was true to the time. Fact: older, inner-circle Mormon men usually acquired material assets and could continue adding women and children to the earthly Zion, as well as to their personal heavenly kingdom. They could do this long after their first wives were too old to be much help. Populate, claim the land, build and obey — that was the mantra of the day. Fact: both of Maurine's grandfathers had done just that.

The book ends as the now forty-year old Clory deals with facts as they were. Abijah at 64 was still virile, still handsome,

still determined to continue kingdom building and determined to do so. Pride and dignity don't let Clory tell him that she is again pregnant for fear it will just be another miscarriage. He leaves with his new wife. Clory does carry the child to term only to have the watchdogs of the town frighten her and the baby born where she has no help, and she dies a slow death. But on her deathbed, all is well. She experiences again whatever the words "Great Smile" represents. She wrote: "And suddenly with the shock of a thousand exploding light-balls, she recognized the Great Smile at last. That which she had searched for all her life had been right there in her heart all the time. She, Clorinda MacIntyre, had a testimony!" (p. 633) It seems Maurine left it so a strict Mormon could interpret it to mean all they did by "testimony." Or, as she told me, one could take it to mean that Clory had assurance of heaven and a loving God, something that all would have at the end.

As was said, the reading public at large responded to the message. The book was chosen to be included in the libraries of the armed forces. Readers also accepted *THE GIANT JOSHUA* as an honest peek into a Mormon world that had been largely unknown, and they saw a sincere experiment with brotherhood and assumed the Mormon people were still holding to many of the same values. Often they then wanted to know more about this new Church. And more than one reader welcomed missionaries.

But couldn't all that have been accomplished without such a sad ending? Maurine would say, "I just followed my characters where circumstances as I knew them to have been led them." If you knew her family's history, particularly that of her maternal grandmother and her sister wives, you would know you were reading a thinly disguised version of reality, at least her family's reality. The women she knew had had it tough, perhaps even worse than depicted in fiction. But they had, for the most part, grown spiritually and remained true to the Church. Maurine knew that and, in her book, had Brigham Young muse on page 439, that he was "not sorry he

had given her [Clory] over to adversity. Spirits like hers were what would keep the Dixie Mission on its feet long after a man's stout strength succumbed...."

Brigham Young. We love Brother Brigham in the book, forgive him for so much and know it was out of necessity and for the people's own good that he asked so much. And we love the spiritual strength and growth celebrated. We admire Clory as she is able to think... "The past lay with God. She held out her arms to the future." (p. 460)

But now let me tell you Maurine's story, which is the story of the special circumstances that were needed to bring the book about. It is also the story of paradox. How could unpopular Maurine create Clory, one of the most beloved heroines in literature? Maurine Whipple was born 20 January 1903 in St. George, Utah, about the same time as Margaret Mitchell was born into a southern family in Atlanta, Georgia. They were granddaughters of the people they were destined to write about. Margaret Mitchell's characters in *GONE WITH THE WIND* lived through the changing times of the last half of the eighteen hundreds, when the great moral dilemma of slavery was being addressed. Maurine Whipple's people lived through the same time period, but instead of struggling with an old social structure, they were experimenting with a new structure and one that contained a new moral dilemma — polygamy.

Maurine's father, Charlie, was a complicated man, not at all convinced it was all right that a society had allowed him to be left in poverty with a second-wife mother while his father took a younger wife to Mexico. If it was all right then to have more than one woman, then why not now? So he, too, had other women. Maurine's mother, Anna, daughter of a left-behind third wife, was delicate, sickly and gentle, confused but desiring to follow the acceptable Church line. Music, her religion, and obedience to a father trusted with high Church callings were her legacy. Charlie treated his wife like an ignorant child. Maurine hated it. She loved her mother but wished she were stronger, hated her father and wished he were more

sensitive. The oldest of six children, she was the ally of her mother, the only one who dared stand up to her father. She shouldered early the feeling that she had to be the mainstay for the family. Smart, she could miss school to help at home. In fact, she missed most of her twelfth year to care for her mother and new brother, George. She could do that and still make good grades. But she felt different. Missing out on that critical childhood time to shoulder adult responsibility left her scared and forever bonded to the brother she had cared for, a baby with health issues needing much tending and one who grew up to become an alcoholic and impossible to help. Part of the reason we have no more fiction from Maurine is because of her dedication to this brother, a dedication that went way beyond good sense. However, one has to admire the strength of a sister's love.

Never popular with the other kids or even with teachers, she often made herself a shadow in the room while the old folks, especially the women, discussed the past. Her own mother's mother, Cornelia Lenzi McAllister, was alive until Maurine was seventeen, and this original pioneer was close by, living north of the temple in a room with the mementos of her life pinned to the walls. The child Maurine spent many hours listening to the stories associated with each scrap of the past. Some of the eight sister wives were still alive, too. Maurine knew their stories, the good and the bad about their shared husband, her grandfather, John Daniel Thomas McAllister. She had even, as a young child, experienced the wonderful times when this revered man had visited his left-behind families and gathered them to sing the old songs. Annie and sister Grace had voices that blended beautifully and they often sang in public. Maurine's brothers and younger sister were also musical, but not Maurine. A McAllister who couldn't sing? How unfortunate. But oh how Maurine loved to dance! And she so seldom had the chance with an exciting partner. Mostly she claimed she was a wallflower or danced with a brother. No one thought that there might be a writing talent given as a

compensation. She would have gladly traded that to be able to sing and to be popular.

On the Whipple side, Charlie's mother died when Maurine was seven. Still the connection to Pine Valley and the rough existence experienced by those pioneers was often recounted to her. The old people sensed something special in this little girl. "Oh, you don't want to go play with the kids," she was sometimes told. "Stay here and listen to the talk." She usually did and absorbed lore, dialects, heartaches and triumphs, when a part of her was thinking all she really wanted was to be like the other kids, to be popular, able to sing and get married and have a family. It hadn't happened when high school was over, so off she went to college, to the University of Utah — her father's choice, for by now he was living openly his rebellion to the Church.

College was a continuance of the longing to be popular, a time of hard work with academic success but no social success. From afar she admired the privileged class and often resented the fact that her people had had to go to St. George and miss the culture that the northern Saints enjoyed. One college leader, a young man planning to be a doctor and from a prominent Church family, particularly occupied her distant admiration, but he was so far above her she never dared hope for anything.

One summer she helped a young doctor in St. George fight for her brother's life, as he nearly died of a ruptured appendix. This experience started an infatuation with doctors. She would have gladly become this doctor's second wife, had such a thing still been possible.

Her first teaching job after graduating was in Monroe, Utah, where she was given a class of unruly boys. Socially immature, she fell hopelessly in love with one of the town's popular young men. He married someone else and opened a clothing store just a block from her St. George home, thus reminding her of her loss whenever she was home. She wanted so much

to be married and have children. She felt that she failed miserably in her teaching assignment and didn't get a contract for the next year.

The economic depression hit the country. Her father had his lady friends, her mother felt powerless and humiliated, her brothers sometimes turned to drink, Maurine didn't have a man or a job. It was a hard time. Charlie's savings were lost in a bank closure, his lumber business suffered, the picture show he managed and had part ownership in failed. Maurine felt she had to help and the best way was to make a go of teaching. She could not teach in Utah because of the bad evaluation, so in 1932 she went to Georgetown, Idaho. She didn't get hired to go back there either, so she challenged the Utah Education Board and won a job in Heber City. But she was not hired back there again. It seemed she just could not fit in and be what the principal thought a teacher should be like. She came back to St. George and had a successful year at Virgin, Utah in a three-teacher school. Here she could do things her way. But she brooded about her spinsterhood and was unhappy. She spent much time by the river that was to become a protagonist in her book. Life was passing her by, and she had little control. Her last attempt at teaching was in a rough mining town near Price, Utah, a place called Latruda, which is now a ghost town. Here she was raped, quit her job, had an abortion and nearly resorted to suicide.

Her school-teaching failures seemed to be more because of her conflicts with principals than with the children. From all the evidence, the students liked her. She probably was too familiar with the young people and did not have the kind of room discipline that was expected. Besides, she always seemed to have reason to challenge the principal's authority. If she wanted to have a girl's athletic program and was told there was no space, she took it upon herself to work out a way. She loved drama and dance and had developed a way of giving dancing lessons outside of school that brought a little extra money. This ability of hers to create her own dancing school

was about the only success she knew, and she turned to it after giving up teaching in the public schools. At one time, she went to California to learn more about dance and recreation. There was at the time emphasis on community recreation programs, some being funded by Roosevelt's New Deal. Maurine worked for these programs as much as she could. Often she had so little money that she claimed she often went hungry. Her pride kept her from asking her father for help as long as she could possibly hold out.

One summer in Salt Lake City, she was working for one of the government recreation programs and met a grade school classmate who had moved away in seventh grade but was still tied to St. George and her own pioneer ancestors. Her name was Lillian McQuarrie. Lillian had a huge desire to write a great Mormon novel and had devoted much effort to research and trying to learn to write. She knew how to get and fascinate a man, too, and her history was, to say the least, interesting and unusual, not at all one of which the good sisters in St. George would approve. Lillian was between husbands and the two women became good friends. It was Lillian who Maurine turned to when she was truly destitute before and after the abortion.

Early in their friendship, Lillian recognized that Maurine had a writing talent. The friendship of these two is an amazing story. Lillian could possibly be given the credit for *THE GIANT JOSHUA* ever being born. Her lack of jealousy that it was Maurine and not her to win the literary prize is admirable. Without Lillian's encouragement it is unlikely Maurine's talent would have ever bloomed.

In 1936, Lillian had married for the second time and was living in California. She was fighting with her husband, a man beaten down by the Depression, discouraged, unwell, broke, and, as if that weren't enough, having an affair with Lillian's teen-aged daughter by her first husband. Lillian didn't know that at the time, but she wasn't talking to her husband when she went into labor to have a baby. She begged Maurine to

be with her during the delivery, and while the two waited for the labor to progress, Lillian made Maurine promise that she would go to the Rocky Mountain Writer's Conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado before Maurine did what she was threatening, which was to end her own life. Lillian had been to this conference several times and the experience had been important to her.

Maurine was sure she had nothing to live for. She had been living in Cedar City, developing her own dancing and recreation classes. There yet another rejection had recently happened. This time it was more than a romantic rejection; she felt it was a blocking of any chance she had to teach at the college or to be involved in the production of an Easter pageant this man wrote and was in charge of seeing performed in Zion Canyon. Maurine wanted very much to be involved in this undertaking and felt her dance and drama experience would be useful. From the few letters from this period, one can see that she was emotionally unstable, had just been through another terrible romantic loss, and what man could deal with such a needy woman? Certainly a man trying to bring to fruition his own dream of an Easter pageant did not need that challenge. Interestingly, in one letter he seems to have read a piece she had written about the building of the Boulder Dam and had been surprised that it was so good. After she wrote him a scathing letter, he used his praise of this piece to try to give her hope, but he still could not tolerate her being involved with his project and told her she very much needed to get a hold on her self pity and do something about it. Maurine then went to San Francisco to see if she could revive something of the affair she had had the summer before with the very admired man she had known as unreachable in college. She had met him in California when he was ill, vulnerable and trying to get through medical school. Even though it was only to have been for the summer, she could not let go and was going for a last ditch effort to at least be friends. Now she had been firmly rejected again, so much so that the

man threatened to bring in a lawyer to make sure she had no claim on him. She was insulted and so hurt that she didn't want to live. She was destitute for money besides. Her fatal flaw was that she never realized that her terrible tales of injustice, sickness, and poverty would never win a man romantically. Lillian undoubtedly tried to make her understand, but could never get her to understand. Once Maurine had tried to follow Lillian's advice. She dyed her hair blond, bought a red dress and followed the trap Lillian laid out for her to win a man living in Maurine's rooming house. Maurine did not love him but married him anyway. She was so disgusted with herself, she could not stand the marriage for more than six months. To her, sex without love was intolerable. Besides, the man could not quit lamenting that his first wife had left him and taken his two children.

But then, in 1937, there they were, two destitute women at an all time low, one desiring to give birth to the great Mormon novel and instead giving birth to a human baby, the other desiring a real family and child and, though not knowing it, about to give birth to a great literary child.

Before Lillian's baby came, Maurine finally promised that, before she killed herself, she would try to use the writing talent that Lillian insisted she had. She somehow got home, borrowed money, and went to the writing conference. She had written a novella, *Beaver Dam Wash*, about a fat man who had the dream that oil would be discovered in an out-of-the-way desert settlement. It was praised by the dignitaries of the conference. They thought it very unusual for a first novel not to be autobiographical and this one was not.

One of the men, a noted novelist, John Peal Bishop, one night listened to her personal tale of woe and, instead of being put off, as most men were, responded, "Wow! What swell suffering! Great literature comes from suffering like that!" An asset? Well, that was a different way to look at her unhappy life. One can only imagine how her head must have been reeling. Bishop and another novelist, Ford Mad-

dox Ford, encouraged her to send her work to Houghton Mifflin publishing company. She did so and the editor, Ferris Greenslet, also liked it, but he asked her to write several more chapters to make it the length of a regular novel. Maurine then told him about another story she had been mulling over ever since she could remember. He was interested. So instead of making "Beaver Dam Wash" novel length, she wrote the outline of *THE GIANT JOSHUA* and two chapters, as Greenslet suggested, and sent them to him. Greenslet, who could well have been the most influential editor in the country, recognized he had another talent as big as Willa Cather, who was one of the talents he had helped promote. He suggested she enter the new work in the competition for the Houghton Mifflin Fellowship, which would, if won, give her \$1,000 up front to finish the book. She won, went to Boston to accept it and was swept from a nobody and all-time failure to the darling of the literary elite. Surprisingly, she handled it quite well, but then it was time to produce. Greenslet could never have guessed that he would be sorely tried and only his great genius in handling authors would save the company the embarrassment of a mistake. He gladly continued in his delicate job of handling this unusual woman, because, as he coaxed the work out of her, he knew it was good, even great. It took three years, instead of the one expected, much fatherly advice, bending of the company rules, and even lending her money personally and arranging for her to stay at Yaddo, an artist colony in New York, to finally get the book finished. But it is unlikely that even his great expertise would have been enough had it not been for a St. George native of her father's generation, Dr. Joseph Walker, who was a prominent doctor in Hollywood, California, a man disaffected with the Church, but still deeply connected to his pioneer people. It was he, one of her own, whose medical help, enthusiasm and validation finally helped her finish.

Maurine didn't write like most people. She would say she had to get into a state where her characters could speak

through her. She liked the research part and spent much time doing it, only getting down to writing when circumstances were right and her characters were ready. She had no place to work except a drafty north bedroom in her parents' home. Here, before things at home became intolerable, she wrote the first few chapters. She got newspaper-sized scrap paper from the local paper, hung sheets around the room for each character, then collected whatever went with that character — looks, habits, speech peculiarities, whatever helped define the person. She wrote in long hand, then had to find someone to type the pages. Later she just sent the large newspaper-sized pages to Greenslet to have typed. Some of the sheets from the first of the book are preserved at BYU and thus give proof that it was indeed her and not Juanita Brooks who wrote the book. Juanita read the work as it was being written, was also in awe of Maurine's way with words and did give her much needed historical information. Sometimes there was a conflict as Juanita tried to insist on strict historical accuracy and Maurine's "true enough" won out.

So we ask, as most every appreciative reader does, why don't we have more from Maurine Whipple? What happened to her? I could say, "you don't really want to know. Just go on thinking she was this rare, unusual talent that was rejected by her own, that she wrapped herself in mystery and hid herself away." Partly true. Certainly she had a rare and unusual talent. It was housed in a very delicate human being, both emotionally and physically. She had terrible allergies and was often sick with respiratory ailments of one kind or another, and she had a great need to be accepted and to be loved by a superior man, which didn't happen. She also never resolved her love-hate relationship with her father and had no financial security so she could devote herself to writing unencumbered. The book did not bring her much money. It was a fellowship winner and didn't carry a good contract, plus the fact that she got advance royalties just to finish it. She had no money sense and usually spent much time on writing that which

would not bring her much money, such as the travel book she wrote about Utah.

There was another heartbreak that perhaps was the big reason she never was able to produce anything else as good as her first book. After her novel came out and was a national sensation, Maurine met another doctor, Tom Spies, a man on the forefront of vitamin therapy. He was a bachelor near her own age who, so people thought, needed her as much as she needed him. He was certainly a superior man, very much in demand during the war, as the country needed to combat the threat that the Germans might have discovered a vitamin regimen that would make their soldiers superior physically and he might find the answer for our own soldiers. He was rich, cultured, and his mother liked Maurine. Oh, it was too perfect. She went to Atlanta, where he had a clinic, and at first it did seem it would work. They would live in a gracious southern mansion, she would have her work, he his. Hopefully, she was not too old to have a child. But her plans for them must have been too much for him. He was just too busy, too many lectures to give, too much research to look after, and his own health was not good either. He ended it and, as the finality sank in, Maurine was left truly a broken human being. At the same time, she came to realize that the editor, Ferris Greenslet, wasn't going to pamper her any more, that in fact he had only done so to get the book out of her so the company could make money. Just another disappointment by a man and with it the terrible realization that she was not really accepted for herself alone, but just what she could produce in writing. She became angry and determined that not just anybody was going to get the rest of the book out of her. Her characters still had much to tell and she had it all plotted out in a long synopsis, one that Ferris Greenslet had convinced her held too much for one book. She didn't know it then but it was as it had been for Margaret Mitchell. Both women had poured their whole souls into one long 650-page book, *GONE WITH THE WIND* for Margaret, *THE GIANT JOSHUA* for Maurine. Some have

speculated that Maurine didn't write any more great works because of being largely rejected by her own, the Mormon elite. It is true, the Church's spokesman in literature, John A. Witsoe, labeled *THE GIANT JOSHUA* as "lurid" and many loyal Mormons interpreted that to mean that they should not read it. Local people were so close to the difficulties of the past that they could not stand to have their own made to look anything but heroic and every historical inaccuracy was noted. Some felt slighted that their people were not represented, some angry because their's were without their permission.

The sequel would have taken her characters full circle, the granddaughter of Clory going out into the world, becoming a success and then realizing that her own people had the answers to a happy life, so she chose to come home to use her great singing talent to benefit her own. It would have made staunch Mormons feel good about themselves and more ready to claim her.

Maurine always thought she had time to finish. For the rest of her life, it was something she held out as her reason to be valued by important people and the promise of more caused many to try to help her. Some strange coincidences also made it hard to write her plans. Her outline called for Clory's granddaughter to go to New York and develop a successful singing career. Actually, a girl from St. George, Fawn Pickett, did go to New York and study dancing. Maurine stayed with her sometimes when she went east. But then she felt Fawn and her family would think she was writing about Fawn, even though her plans for her character had been written years before. The same thing applied when in real life Maurine's cousin, Alta Ray Whipple, also went east and became a famous contralto, performing all over the world.

All I can say about the rest of Maurine's 87 years is that it was one sad, disappointing situation after another. She felt she needed money before she could settle into writing as she had before, so she turned to writing magazine articles. It was tough going, but she did get enough published by the big

magazines of the day — *LOOK*, *LIFE*, and *COLLIER'S* — to keep her trying for more. *LOOK* commissioned her soon after the release of *THE GIANT JOHSUA* to help with a picture article about the Mormons, one that helped the Mormon image immensely. She wrote a long article for *COLLIER'S* about the Arizona Strip, which led to her spending much time on a factual book that never got published and also a novel about a true situation where a local sheriff chased some wool thieves into the Strip, was caught, handcuffed to a cedar tree and escaped by working himself up and over the top of the tree. It was also turned down for publication.

She wrote another novel after the war ended, but it emphasized too much the stupidity of war at a time when the nation was basking in glory, and it was not published either. Desperate for money, she turned to article writing again and wrote one about the Montazuma Treasure Hunt near Kanab, which *COLLIER'S* did publish. That was followed by one about the drowned town of St. Thomas that came above water when Lake Mead was low, also published by *COLLIER'S*. Then for that magazine she worked on an article at the time of the polygamous raid in Short Creek, Arizona in 1953 and likely had influence with other national reporters to see the raid from the point of view of the people imprisoned. Certainly she gained the respect of the polygamists, which later paid off.

She worked on the sequel off and on, but was a perfectionist and it came too slow for the people backing her. Actually, she completed much of it only to have her home burglarized in the 1970s and the manuscript stolen.

There were other men, some at the *COLLIER'S* office in Los Angeles, with whom she desired a romantic relationship, but, as before, it did not happen. Usually, other reporters and editors were awed by *THE GIANT JOSHUA* and did not want to do anything that might abort another great piece of literature, but they just weren't prepared to give her what she needed to produce one. It was her father who finally helped provide some measure of stability when he helped her get a little

home of her own in St. George. She had her dogs, her yard and a few good friends. When she saw unfairness, she usually couldn't keep quiet and often became embroiled in local matters. During the sesquicentennial in 1976, she wrote an Easter pageant and wanted the community to produce it at Snow Canyon. One remembers that she was denied participation in 1937 on an Easter pageant performed in Zion Canyon and likely never healed from that heartache. Her pageant was a good pageant. She finished it and had it copyrighted, and it almost came to be produced, but she proved hard to work with, was often late doing what she promised, and was distracted because of ill health and because she was trying to help her brother George, who was by this time beyond help with his alcoholism. Before one dismisses her as a dismal example of the misuse of talent, one should remember that brother-sister relationship and have some degree of admiration for her loyalty. It is wise to remember how she had stayed out of school when she was twelve to help tend him. She understood how he had come back from the war having had a terrible experience in which he was one of the few in a unit left alive. During the 1950s and 60s, when she should have been furthering her writing career, she was exploring a revolutionary cure for alcoholics. She spent time at a hospital developed by Charles Shadel near Seattle, Washington, which used an aversion treatment that was supposed to make a person so sick when drinking that he or she would quit. She was sure it was the all-time answer and the world would like to know all about it and the creator of the program. She wrote Charley Shadel's biography, was getting ready to be the one who would announce to the world this much sought-after cure and also the fact that an enzyme had been found to be missing in alcoholics and that by providing it, as one did insulin for diabetics, the person would be able to live a normal life. Both turned out to be false hopes. Much writing effort was wasted. It was all for nothing. George gave up and died of his addiction.

There was real ill health for Maurine, too: female problems, bad knees, bladder operations, back problems, and many bouts of pneumonia and sinus infections. She thinks the sinus problems came from so much standing on her head in the old Dodge swimming pool when she was a girl. In her sixties, she did find a doctor who helped her with her allergies and claimed it "saved her life."

Most of the time she was broke and terribly lonely. Her family necessarily had to step back, because she was so much of an interruption. She always had to be solving their problems. Her sister, Florence, died of cancer in her sixties, and Maurine lamented that it should have been her. She and her father were finally the only members of the family alive, and they still had a difficult time being around each other. She became friends with a woman who was making it her business to help older or disabled people and getting paid for it by the government. Maurine liked this woman and her girls and they moved in with her. Soon she signed over her home in return for care for the rest of her life. The woman used the home to get a larger one in LaVerkin, which Maurine hated. Then the woman got married and left and everything Maurine had was lost. It was then that her literary offspring, *JOSHUA*, came to the rescue and the movie rights were sold for \$50,000 to a group that included Sterling VonWagonen. At about the same time, a kind woman, Carol Jensen, the first wife in a six-wife polygamous household and an admirer of Maurine and *THE GIANT JOSHUA*, became Maurine's legal guardian. It was as if the cavalry had arrived at the last moment. Maurine lived the last six years of her life with dignity and love. She could hardly have had a more kind and thoughtful guardian. Carol, a nurse, treated Maurine as a loving daughter would and included Maurine in family gatherings. When Maurine's money ran out and she could no longer stay at the assisted-living home, The Meadows, Carol worked out the details for her to be in the St. George Care Center in a private room. She visited her every day and watched over her to see that she was

treated like a queen. I knew Maurine for the last two of those years and was encouraged by Marilyn Brown and BYU literary colleagues to write her biography. I was allowed into the BYU archive to her uncataloged papers, did my best to organize them, and for fifteen years worked to complete the biography. A contract has been signed with University of Utah Press and I have been told it will be in their 2008 fall catalogue.

What makes Maurine Whipple's biography valuable? Besides giving some idea of why there was only one book from her, it helps us understand this area of Utah in the first half of the 20th century when many residents had to deal with the residue of polygamy. Also, it is a good study of a first girl child in a troubled family who misses her crucial pre-teen years to care for a mother and baby and who never reconciles issues with her father. And finally, for a woman, it is a good example of how NOT to win a man, and how important it is to have creativity, to have love and some relief from physical want. In spite of often wanting to scream at Maurine that "If only you would finish the sequel...", I did come to love and appreciate her for being a survivor, and I came to see that she did have many of the good qualities of her beloved Clory. When she died in January 1992, I was with her. I saw to it that her fingernails were clean, as Clory had asked for on her deathbed. I expect that she slipped away and was welcomed by "The Great Smile," of which she so eloquently wrote. Because of her, we have a valuable picture of St. George pioneers, and we have beautifully-worded touchstones, when we, ourselves, need assurance of something like "A Great Smile." I expect that Maurine and Clory will still affect many hearts as they laugh down through the centuries to come.

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