

# **VIGDIS JONSSON**

-by Virginia Hall

## **Gold & Silver**

Jon Sigurdsson was a wealthy man who had a chest full of gold and silver in his home in Westmann Island, Iceland. He was a fisherman married to Sigríð Eiríksdóttir. They were the parents of two daughters, one who died in infancy and our paternal grandmother, Vigdis Jonsson. Jon Sigurdsson died while still very young and Sigríð married again. Two children were born from this marriage, Ellen and Jon. Ellen never married but Jon had a family who were visited by Edna and Diane in 1963 in Iceland.

Our Grandmother, Vigdis, grew up first as the daughter of a wealthy Father, but after he died, their fortune disappeared. Soon after her mother died and Vigdis was left to fend for herself.

## **Arni Neilson taken by TB**

The father of her first child, Arni Neilson, died of TB, when the baby was 6 months old. Her name was Johannah. Vigdis married Arni Arnason on October 26, 1866 in the Westmann Islands and the three children were born to them: Ingveld (Eenie), Arni and Hildur (Tildie).

## **Arni Arnason taken by the Sea**

In 1874, Arni left for a fishing trip asking Vigdis to bring him a hot drink when the boat returned. The people went down to the Village to welcome their men, but by the time that Vigdis arrived with the hot drink, the people were standing in small groups, whispering to each other. They finally told her that Arni had been washed overboard by a huge wave.

It was the law back then that children would be taken from a mother with no means of support. Her tears were of no avail and her children were forcibly taken from her, separated and placed in different homes. She was

allowed to keep Tildie, the baby, and worked early and late to keep her from starving.

Magnus Bjarnasson was baptized in Iceland in 1853. He was baptized May 27 and Einar baptized Loftur Jonsson and Grandma Vigdis on August 8, 1874. The same Einar Eiriksson baptized Grandpa Jon Eyvindsson 27 days later on September 4.

Vigdis remained in Iceland until 1880 when she and Tildie, age 6, sailed on the ship, Nevada, on June 6 to settle on the Bench in Spanish Fork, Utah. Jon Eyvindsson and Vigdis had known each other in Iceland and Jon baptized her oldest daughter, Johanna S. Arnadottir on May 18, 1881. Jon wrote to Vigdis and told her that if she could send money for passage, he would bring Eenie to Utah with him when he completed his mission.

### **\$15 Short**

Vigdis was so happy because she knew that Eenie wasn't very strong and she was very unhappy in her foster home. Vigdis made rag rugs, knit stockings (selling each for 25 cents) but when it was time to send the money to Iceland it was \$15.00 short. She fasted and prayed and was impressed to go up town to the Co-op Store. When the manager asked what he could do to help her, she poured out her heart to him. He and the clerks in the store gave her enough money and she was able to mail it to Iceland the same day.

### **Paralyzed for 18 months**

On July 6, 1881, under the care of Jon Eyvindsson, Eenie set sail for America – for Zion. Vigdis and Jon Eyvindsson were married in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on October 18, 1881. Their only child, our father, John Evan Evanson, was born on October 18, 1883. While living in Utah, Vigdis got very ill. She was paralyzed and had to lay in bed for 18 months. The doctors were unable to help her.

In a town some distance away, a man lay sleeping in his home. He was awakened by a very loud noise, like the banging of a door. He got up and tried to locate the cause. Being unsuccessful, he went back to bed. He was awakened twice more by the same noise, and the third time he saw a person all arrayed in white, standing in the doorway. This personage told him about our ailing grandmother and asked him to take the bark of a certain tree to her so that she could be healed. He did this and Grandma Vigdis was healed.

### **Faith without a doubt**

Grandma had great faith and knew without a doubt that the Church was true. She also had a strong testimony. She died in Raymond, Alberta, Canada on October 28, 1925 at the age of 80.