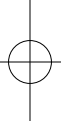




Foreword

by Zina Petersen



One thing I liked about Boyd Petersen when I met him was that he never asked me what it was like to grow up with Hugh Nibley as a father. But now, after eighteen years of marriage, I find myself answering that initially unasked question for a reading audience at his behest. I never could come up with a satisfying answer because . . . well, as opposed to what? Having had no other circumstance and not necessarily a choice in the matter, I can say I don't know what it was *not* like to grow up with Hugh Nibley as a father, but the flip side is enormous: where to start? In the first chapter of this tome, Boyd has already debunked most of the juiciest folk legends and rumors about Daddy, so I could try to paint a new picture. Would you believe that Hugh Nibley was a meddling, prying, intrusive father with an iron fist, obsessed with meticulously groomed landscaping and cat shows? No, me neither.

But off-the-cuff memory is neither tidy nor trustworthy; I've lived in the same house with the writing of this book and know what care has gone into verifying and documenting its history. It would be an insult to both my husband and my father to casually write a slipshod version of my own autobiography as a foreword. Instead, here are a dozen or so vignettes that *are* accurate, if undocumented. They come in no particular order and offer a glimpse, if not a good look, at the possible response to the impossible question.

Vignette #1. Thanksgiving table spread, blessing finished, food circulating clockwise until everyone has a helping of everything. Daddy says in a louder-than-conversational voice, "There are two kinds of people in this world . . ." He looks around at all of us and catches my eye. "Zina?" he prompts. I swallow a mouthful of food and pick up the game: "Those who divide people into two kinds of people in the world . . ." He smiles, "And those who sell yams!" he finishes. A good one.

Vignette #2. Spring sometime in the early seventies. Martha and I, about eight and six, are walking with Daddy past BYU's tennis courts on our way to the Richards P.E.