



Clara Jane Rasicot & George Brunt (1903)

### **My Story!**

I first saw the light of day on a ranch in Southeastern Idaho on Battle Creek near Oxford, Idaho. My father, while traveling from Virginia City, Montana to Ogden, Utah, passed through this part of Idaho and thought it would be a fine place for a horse and cattle ranch. And so, accordingly, in 1870 he purchased a large place consisting of about 1100 acres. He brought his horses and cattle here and started in the stock business.

He met my mother, Martha Thomas Taylor, widow of David Taylor, who was teaching school in Clinton. He soon fell in love with her, but mother would not marry out of the Church and father was not a member. He started to study the principles of the Church and in 1874 he and my mother were married. They made their home on this ranch.

Two sons were born to them. The first, Alfred, died with he was about nine months old. Charles Madison was the second. I was the third child born to them and I was born November 19, 1878.

As near as I can remember my first house was built of logs and consisted of three rooms downstairs and one room upstairs. The kitchen, I believe, was built of lumber and was a lean-to built onto the main log structure.

I remember we had quite a number of buildings for stock -- such as sheds, corrals, and barns. We had a few sheep and two of the bucks used to chase us children. One was named, "Dick," who had one horn broken off and the other was named "Harry." One day they chased my brother, Charlie, and got him down against a fence and bunted him on the head. My mother rescued him after the sheep had bunted him two or three times. Another thing I remember was when my brother, Charlie, got his leg broken by falling off a high corral fence and one of the 2 x 4's fell on his leg. A doctor came from Logan to set it.

At this home my brother, Albert C., was born on February 8, 1881 and my sister, Martha Hermine, was born January 23, 1883. In July 1884, my father and our family moved to Eagle Rock, Snake River Valley, Idaho. We sold our ranch at Battle Creek to the Church and brought the stock of horses and cattle with us. My father bought a relinquishment on a homestead on Willow Creek, called St. Leon, owned by a widow woman by the name of Mrs. Hughes. There were 160 acres with a small red adobe house of two rooms and some small out buildings. This farm was situated 3 1/2 miles north east of Eagle Rock on Willow Creek. As I remember we made the move in covered wagons and it took us about a week to travel a little over a hundred miles. Of course, the roads were pretty poor and through Fort Hall the sand was so bad it was difficult for the horses pull the wagons through.

We arrived in July. Soon after getting settled my father hired men and started building a frame home. It consisted of a large living room (20 x 20) and a large bedroom downstairs and one large room upstairs which was later made into two rooms. In the summer time we used the adobe house as a kitchen, but in the winter we used the large room as a parlor, dining room and kitchen. A few years later we bought a two-room house and moved it out. During the first few months, Mrs. Hughes had to spend some time each week with us, in order to prove up on the homestead.

The country was new and the settlers were real pioneers. Most of the farmers were clearing their farms of sagebrush. Our farm had some land under cultivation, but most of it was still in sage brush. In the evenings, we would see burning sage all around us and the smell of it filled the whole atmosphere. I have always liked the smell of sage ever since.

There were a great many ground squirrels, and as they were so destructive to gardens and grain, people had to work to get rid of them. I remember all the children who were large enough to carry a bucket, would form bucket brigades - getting water from the creek or ditches and pouring it down the squirrels holes. When they stuck their heads out, we would grab them by the back of the necks, and as they were usually weak from the water they wouldn't be hard to hold. The boys would then kill the squirrels. I have caught many of them, but was always too chicken-hearted to kill them. Often when we caught young ones, we would keep one for a pet.

One day while I was holding one in my hand, it ran up my sleeve and down my back. My mother had to unbutton my dress to get it out. It didn't frighten me at all then, but after I was grown the same thing would have thrown me into a panic. I was never so brave around mice and the older I got, the more frightened I became of them.

We, children, also used to make collections of toads and frogs. I remember one day of bringing quite a bunch of them in my apron to show my mother. Perhaps, my favorite pastime, and one that I still remember with the greatest of pleasure was hunting for wild flowers from early spring until late fall or until the frost took them.

There were many varieties of flowers when the country was new. Due to cultivation, the wild flowers have been destroyed to a large extent. Another thing we did that was a lot of fun was to collect little rocks. There were many pretty stones of a quartz formation, that we called "glassies" and many bright colored pebbles and occasionally we would find moss agates. We each had a collection that we kept in a bag or box. These diversion were mostly when I was between the ages of six to ten.

The first school I attended was a little log school house and was the summer of the following year after moving to our new house. I was about 6 1/2 years old then. For two or three years the school would begin in the spring and would close before the winter set in, as the people were scattered over quite a distance and it was too far and snowy to get to the school in the winter. We lived only about a half mile from the school house, but the majority of the children lived further away.

I was about 12 or 13 when a new school house was built. We had previously moved the school from the little log building into a vacant residence, the old Saner house. The new building was a white frame one with only one room. We all had new desks and maps and there were never prouder children than we of this little un-graded school. Our first teacher in this school was Ed Symons, a young man from Indiana, and it was he who first instilled in me a real desire for knowledge. He boarded at our home and he had quite a library of good books. He read a few chapters each morning from such books as "Little Men," "Little Women," "Seven Oaks," etc. He, also encouraged us at home to read his books. My parents always had some good reading material and they, also, encouraged us to read

so we formed the "reading habit." When I was 14, we - Bert, Mattie and myself - drove into town to school to the old central school. The name of the town had now been changed from Eagle Rock to Idaho Falls.

After moving to the Snake River Valley two other sons were born - Eugene Preston on July 27, 1885, and Franklin Leo on March 21, 1888. In November of 1889, my oldest brother, Charles, died at the age of 13. My parents took his death very hard. He was a manly boy and father had set great store by him.

Along about 1890, the times had become very hard as the railroad shops had been moved to Pocatello. My father had owned a section of land, but got rid of the 160 acres. However, the land hardly brought enough to pay taxes and interest on borrowed money so father decided to move to Montana and engage in the dairy business. In 1894, we rented our farms and took our horses and cattle and started for a new home. I was sixteen at the time. My mother was rather reluctant to move where there was no church of our faith. However, we started in August of 1894 to go to Stuart, Montana, where my father had been. We made arrangements to buy a herd of dairy cows and equipment. We rented the farm which was located near Gregson Springs, about eight miles from Anaconda.

Father drove the lead wagon, mother the second wagon and the buggy was driven in turns by Eugene, Frank, Mattie or myself. Two of us rode in the buggy and the other two rode our ponies and drove the cows. My brother, Bert, then 14 years old and a hired boy, 16, drove the horses.

The first night we camped at Market Lake, now Roberts, a distance of 18 miles. During the night the band of horses left and returned home. The boys had to return for them the next day. Our second camp was somewhere on Cama Creek. A day or two later, when we reached Blue Creek, we were told that all the streams for a distance of about 20 miles were dry, so father decided to rest til 4:00 in the afternoon, and then drive during the night across the desert. During the afternoon we could see a desert mirage,

We passed by Rattlesnake Point, a rocky hill where there were a lot of rattlesnakes. The boys killed several. We drove until 2:00 am and the two young boys and Mattie changed off driving the buggy and the cows. About 10:30 pm the boys got so sleepy that they went to bed in one of the wagons. Mattie and I drove the buggy and rode the pony. Mattie got so sleepy about midnight and she could no longer ride the pony so father decided to leave the cows, and Mattie got in the buggy with me.

We drove a mare on the buggy. This mare had a colt and the colt got so tired and wanted to suckle its mother all the time. Mattie would have to get out and drive the colt. About 1:30 am Bert came back after getting the horses to water. Bert got in the buggy and drove with me, and Mattie got in the wagon and went to bed. We reached the Birch River about 2:00 am. We rolled our bedding on the ground and all went to bed. The next morning, Bert and the hired boy went back for the cows.

We decided to lay over a week on the Lemhi river as the feed was very good, and father had business in Salmon City. He had to spend three days away from our camp. There were a lot of ripe gooseberries on the banks of the stream and one of my most interesting memories is of my mother making delicious gooseberry dumplings. We had lots of milk and cream, so we ate the dumplings with plenty of thick cream. We caught plenty of fish, too, so altogether we enjoyed our week very much. We camped near the Preston Ranch, which was run by Mrs. Preston, a widow. She had a girl near our ages, and Mattie, Cora and I had a good time together.

The next stop of importance was at Banco, Montana. Here my cousin, Dick Rasicot and his family lived. His step daughter, Lulu, and I were about the same age and had been chums for two or three years when they lived near us in Idaho. We stopped two nights there and then left for our destination. I think we were about a month on the way, including our weeks stop at Lemma and some shorter stops to let the cattle rest. We arrived at Stuart in August.



I spent a year at the Oneida Stake Academy at Preston, Idaho. I had taken partially high school subjects the last year at Stuart and I took up the regular academic course at the Academy. Here I spent a very delightful time. I made many fine friends among the students and enjoyed the fine social activities of the school. I went with several nice boys during the winter. Professor Hickman was the principal of the school and was always a source of inspiration to the students. I sang in the school choir and held the office of class monitor, which is similar to class president now.

I was disappointed at not being able to go back the next year at Stuart where Mr. J. K. Crawford was the teacher. They didn't have a regular high school course, but Mr. Crawford was qualified and willing to teach those who wanted to take high school subjects.

We were now living on the Statan Ranch consisting of 1,000 acres. We were on this place for two years, but we had bought a 160 acre place near Anaconda, Montana.

Bert and I went to live on the place so we would be near enough to go to high school in Anaconda. We didn't get to finish the year out as Bert got sick in February and was sick for a couple of weeks. After he got well we started school again. But soon after that, the horse ran away with the buggy that we used to go to school and so by the time we got the buggy fixed up, it was time for Bert to help on the farm. My school life was pretty well broken into, but I always enjoyed school and study and made the most of the opportunities that I had.

My mother's health wasn't very good at this time, and after we all moved to the new home we had bought, I stayed out of school for a year and helped my mother. The house had five rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs, but needed a lot of fixing up. We painted and papers and kalso-mined. My mother, Bert, Mattie and I did it ourselves. We finally got the house quite comfortable. The house wasn't an old house, but had never been completely finished.

The location was a beautiful one. It was at the mouth of a canyon with a clear, sparkling spring running by the door, and large pine trees came within an half mile of the house. Quakenash and small shrubbery grew all around the buildings. My sister and I had a favorite spot where we used to go and read in the summertime. It was about a quarter of a mile above the house on the little stream. There was a beautiful little pool about 12 feet across, of irregular shape surrounded by quite large rocks of a granite formation. In this pool of crystal clear water grew water plants similar to those which grown in Big Springs, Idaho. The pool was always shaded by evergreens and small shrubbery and on hot days was always cool.

When I think of it now, I can hear the musical tinkle of water running over the rocks. Here Mattie and I would take a favorite novel or book of poems and sit in the shade and read. Nearer the house, we had a large pond, where we raised ducks, and they were always a pretty sight swimming

9.

When we first came to Montana there was no branch organization of our church. We went to Sunday School at Stuart, which was a union Sunday School under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterians. Most of the young people went to this Sunday School regardless of their own creed. Stuart was a small place, but was the social center of the community. Here we had the school, the store, the Post Office, the Church, the railroad station of the B.A. & B. (Butte, Anaconda & Pacific) where quite a number of trains went through daily, and, of course, the saloon.

About two years after we moved to the home near Gregson Springs, one rainy afternoon, about three o'clock, a knock came to the door and I answered it. Two young men started to tell me their story of being two Mormon missionaries formulating the gospel, but before they got through my mother hearing them hurried to the door and said, "You have struck the right place, come in."

I don't know who was happier, my mother or the missionaries, for they had been walking in the rain all day without any dinner. Mother fixed them a good meal and they stayed all night with us. They arranged to have a meeting after Sunday School was over at Stuart and most of the people stayed, although a part of them were quite prejudiced against the Mormons. Some of them could be heard after the meeting making jest remarks about Brigham Young and his wives.

A branch was formed about a year later at Anaconda where we always attended. There were quite a number of Mormon families found in Anaconda and the surrounding country who had been afraid to declare their religion on account of the prejudice. After the branch was formed most of the Mormon families affiliated themselves with the Church and we had a good organization which met for Sunday School and Sacrament Meeting in the Dewey Hall. No primaries of M.I.A.'s were organized at first, but we used to have nice

I never had the opportunity to quite finish my high school, although, I think I had the equivalent of a high school education, getting a little more in some subjects and missing some of the subjects taught now. As I couldn't go on to a higher education, I decided to take a business course, so I attended Sisson's Business College in Anaconda and graduated when I was twenty years old. My first job was taking the place of a girl, Josie McCabe, who worked for McCullum and Cloutier, a big wholesale and retail store of groceries, candy, tobacco, liquor, clothing and hardware. Josie had gone east for part of the summer and was just having a leave of absence, so when she returned I had to give up my job.

I was home about two months and then I went to work for a woman, Mrs. Hopkins, who had a grocery store. I kept the books, wrote the letters and if I had any extra time, I worked in the candy and tobacco department. This store was located not so far from the railroad shops, and we had a good business from the men who worked in the shops. The men stopped in for cigars, candy, etc. The traveling men and shop men used to josh and kid me a lot. They used to ask me to go out with them, but I seldom went with any of them as the majority of them were not the kind of fellow I thought suitable to go with, but I had to keep on the good side of them for business reasons.

One young man who was a carpenter and cabinet-maker did some remodeling at the store, and I got pretty well acquainted with him. He seemed like a pretty nice fellow and when he asked me to go out with him, I started going with him. He was clean of habits, not smoking or drinking, and he belonged to a dancing club that held dances once a week, so I really enjoyed going with him. I hadn't gone with him long when he asked me to marry him (my third proposal). I told him that I didn't love him and wouldn't marry him, but he said he won't take my answer then, but would wait a month before Christmas. I then decided to quit my job and go to Idaho Falls, Idaho, to visit my aunt and cousins, the Hawkes family.

I left without telling this young man and told Mrs. Hopkins not to give him my address, but just to tell him I had gone somewhere in Idaho. She said he called and tried to find out where I was. Thus ended that romance.

I visited about six weeks with the Hawkes and had a good time going to dances and parties with Mame and her crowd. I returned home in January, 1902. I had an application for work at the C. W. & M. Company in Idaho Falls. About the middle of March, I got a wire from the F. F. Wright, the manager, asking me to come at once. I left the next day for Idaho Falls.

I arrived on the midnight train and took a taxi to the Brooks Hotel. The next morning I went to work in the general office of the C. W. & M. Company. After work, the first day I set out to look for a room in a private home. I succeeded in getting a room in a new home, just being finished, with Mr. & Mrs. Fred Pyke on South Water Ave. I ate around at the restaurants for about a week and had a hard time finding any place which served good meals. Mrs. Pyke rented out several rooms, and decided to open a boarding house so I started bordering with her. I enjoyed the food much better.

I stayed at this place about seven months until my Aunt Imogene Hawkes moved to town. She moved to a house where the Methodist church now stands. She kept a few boarders and so I stayed with her as long as I worked at the C. W. & M Company. I enjoyed my work very much and liked those with whom I worked.

I had only been in Idaho Falls about a month when George Brunt, now my husband, asked me to go to a Woodman banquet with him. I started to go steady with him after this and about six or seven months later we became engaged. In November, I took ten days off and went home for a visit. My sister, Mattie, came and spend the holidays with me and we had a good time. I worked until the forepart of March, 1903, and then went home to get ready to get married. Most of our clothes were made in the home then, and our house was a very busy place.





My wedding dress was of white satin made with a train and took about twelve yards of material. I had a veil that came to the bottom of the train, of bridal illusion and had a wreath of orange blossoms. My going away suit was a light brown broad cloth. The jacket was lined with good satin. The jacket was short length, with long stoles in front which were in vogue at that time. My husband later told me he didn't like the long tails in front of it, so had them cut off. The hat, the latest then, sat on my head like a pancake.

We were married at our home in the evening of May 4th. We had the living room decorated with flowers and stood under an umbrella affair of white crepe paper and flowers. My sister, Mattie, was my bridesmaid and my brother, Bert, was the best man. We had about 50 guests and we were married by Bishop Short. We receive many very nice gifts. The next day, we packed our gifts ready to ship and we left on the afternoon train for Salt Lake city, where the following day, May 6th, we went through the temple. We spent a happy week in Salt Lake.

George had rented the Dr. Bean house, which has been occupied by Dr. Shoemaker. When we returned to Idaho Falls about nine in the evening we found Mrs. Shoemaker waiting for us. She had the house looking very nice, and turned over the keys to us and left soon after we got there.

In order to rent the house George had to buy Dr. Shoemaker's furniture, but it was mostly nice so we were quite satisfied and comfortable. The house was situated on Capital Ave, directory south of our grocery store which was on the corner of Eagle Rock Street and Capital Ave.

On the 25th of September, 1903, about 7:00 pm the fire bell rang. I looked out of our back door and saw the flames shooting up from the roof of a store a few doors east of our store. I ran over to the store where

George was working and asked him if he thought it if was apt to reach the and house. He said, "yes," and he and his clerks were carrying goods down to the fire cellar. I ran back and started to pack my best dishes and silverware Miss White came in and helped me. There was soon a big crowd gathered in the streets, all trying to help. A number came in our house and started carrying out the furniture. Soon it was all out. Most of the grocery stock was carried out after the cellar was full, before the building caught on fire. It soon burned to the ground, and if the wind hadn't of gone down, the house would have burned, too. There were nine businesses and houses burned on Eagle Rock Street. It took several days to get the furniture back in place. A few things were broken and missing, but not as much as one would expect.

The next day after the first, George got permission to move a small house we bought out on the street and put the grocery stock in and opened for business. We were then building the brick store on "A" Street. When it was finished, we moved the grocery store there, and ran it until we sold out in 1917.

