

Elizabeth Susan Burnett – Part Two .

Taken from “History of George Brunt an Elizabeth Susan Burnett Brunt Family” by Mary Jane Fritzen in 1978

Farmington, Utah 1880

George’s account of the trip.... We were on the water for six weeks and it was a month by the time we reached Farmington. We landed in San Francisco, where we took an old-fashioned train to Farmington, UT. Here we were met by my uncle, James Burnett.

Eliza said, “After we had been traveling a week on train, we landed in Farmington, Utah where mother’s, Uncle James and family lived. We lived with them until we went down to mother’s Aust Betsy who came from England and married a man by the name of Alexander Hill.”

George said, “For the first ear we stayed with my grandfather, and other relatives, and then the Steed family while my mother worked wherever she could to get work to make a living for the family. Mr. Steed has been a missionary in New Zealand where my mother was acquainted with him, and they owned a large farm southeast of Farmington. Then we moved into a one-room house in which we, children, had the measles severely and my sister Annie died at this time. This was thought to be in 1882.

It was a sunny day when a tall, dark, handsome and lonesome stranger arrived at the Farmington Ward in the spring of 1880. Outside the church meeting, Elizabeth wept with joy as she and her husband embraced a separation of about one year. But there were sad times to follow.

George Brunt is listed as head of his family in the census records of Farmington, Davis County, Utah of July 8,9, 1880. Elizabeth,

his wife and their four children, Eliza, William, George and Annie were listed. A comment stated that George and Annie had measles that day. George, the father, is a blacksmith while Elizabeth kept house. Eliza is occupied at home being 10 and having attended school in New Zealand. There were other close relatives near. The census also lists the family of James Burnett and his wife, Fanny, who were Elizabeth's uncle and aunt.

Her father, William Burnett, and mother, Mary Ann, also resided there as did her brother William J. with his wife, Maria and their children and a cousin James Burnett with his family. Only Kate, who had married George Sellars, remained of her immediate family in New Zealand.

From George's history, we learn more about the skills of his father: "When coming to Utah father: "When coming to Utah father stopped over on one of the islands and worked in a sugar factory and learned a great deal about sugar. The second winter we were in Utah we spent in Spanish Fork. He had been working all summer in Pleasant Valley, which is now Helper, Utah. Eccles and Spencer were some big lumbermen and they had twenty-one saw mills (steam) in operation. During the year they closed one mill at a time and my father would overhaul them and put them in shape. This was the reason of being in this valley.

We wintered in Spanish Fork and he got a job running a sorghum or molasses mill, and knowing a little about cane sugar, he made some of the first brown sugar that was made in Utah.

During the first year, my father, being an engineer found it very easy to get work, so when we were living in Farmington to the head of Kay's Creek, down on the old Weber River Valley where the Hobbs' sawmill was located, and at this place my brother, Joe, was born."

Eliza's comments: "Later we moved to Cottonwood where Father worked at the smelters. He always had work because he was a good mechanic and a good worker unless he let drink get the best of him. When I was not at school, I always took Father's dinner to him. On pay day, Father always put his pay check in his dinner pail because he was afraid to trust himself.

Maude Elizabeth Brunt was born May 16, 1881 at Mill Creek. It was while Father was working in Cottonwood that he worked on another invention, that of perpetual motion. He thought he had it worked out successfully, but he did not have the money to promote it, so he gave up the idea. Father was very affectionate and I never remember him punishing any of us. Mother always did the correcting.....

Under difficult circumstances another baby, Joseph, was born on August 28, 2883 at Kaysville. Eliza tells the circumstances: "Father had prospects of a job at a sawmill. He liked that kind of work and decided to take the job. He couldn't take us at this time because he was not sure of a place for us to stay. He said he would send for us, when he found a place, but the weeks went by and we never heard from him. He was to send mother some money to live on too. When he went away, he made some arrangements with George Hill to let us have some flour and bacon. The flour was full of smut and the bacon was so rusty we could not eat it.

We were in dire need of money, but Mother thought sure, we would get some money soon. I walked to the post office everyday for a letter that never came. It was six miles there and six miles back, and it would take us all to make the trip.

“One Sunday, Jim Burnett came to see mother. When he found our how destitute we were, he loaned mother some money to tide her over.”

After the baby, Joe, was born, Eliza remembers, “we tried to take care of mother, but when father walked into the house a few days later, it was as if a heavy weight had been lifted from our shoulders. Father said he had come home for he was afraid something had happened to us. He had sent a letter with his address on it, but he had never received an answer.

When Joe was six weeks old, we moved to Salt Lake where father had work...”

Extreme as these circumstances may seem to us today, they were not so uncommon during those days. With so many moves, Elizabeth realized how important it was to find a secure home where she could rear her children and teach them to work.

George writes, “It was at Spanish Fork that we got the idea or Mother did) of getting a farm so that the children would have an opportunity to make a living. There was a great deal of talk and excitement about the Green River country in Wyoming which was being settled at that time. That year we moved to Salt Lake City in 1884 and got acquainted with someone who knew of Idaho and its many opportunities. The early records of the Salt Lake City 20th ward say the family was removed October 27, 1885 to “any ward.”

George: “We started early in the spring to get finances, an old wagon, horses and provisions to start. This was in 1885. We started from Salt Lake City in October, traveling to Malad up through the Marsh Valley, then to McCammon and from

McCammon to Pocatello, which was just an Indian Reservation then. We traveled in the Portneuf River bed as there were no bridges and not very good roads. During our travel a rain storm came up and it was very cold and rainy and hard for us to travel. As we stopped along this stretch we were practically short on cooking provisions and it was here we first came in contact with James F Steele, who later became stake president. We happened to camp where he did, and he had been up looking over the country in Idaho and told us of the great opportunities there were around Eagle rock and thought it would be a great deal better for us to go to Eagle Rock instead of Goose Creek. As we were out of food and could make no fire as it was raining and wet. He took out of his basket a couple of loaves of bread and gave to us. I was only nine years old, but I remember well how wonderful lit was. So we went along from this point til we came to the road that turned off to Goose Creek (just north of Pocatello). My mother hesitated. We stopped there and she made it a matter of prayer which way we should go, and she decided that we should go to Eagle Rock.”

Eliza remembers it a little differently. She remembers how cold her father’s hands wereso cold he fumbled a long time trying to harness the horses and some boys came along and helped. When we got the harness on the horses and started out again. We stopped the first people traveling along the road and asked them if they would sell us a loaf of bread. They replied, “why sure, but if you are on your way to Eagle Rock, I would advise you not to go there unless you have plenty of money for flour. Flour is selling at \$6 a hundred lbs and everything else is just as high. This didn’t exactly cheer us up but after awhile the sun came out, and we stopped and dried our bedding and had some breakfast.

That night, we camped with some folks who were going to Sand Creek. 'They were very friendly and invited us to ride along with them to Sand Creek. Sand Creek was very near to Eagle Rock and we were glad to travel with them.

Idaho

George and Elizabeth Brunt with their family of five children left for Idaho in October 1885. George tells us there were but few farms settled in the area, but his parents consulted an agent and arranged to buy a farm at a low price. It was across the road from where the Lincoln Sugar Factory now stands. He tells us that they moved into a little adobe house on the banks of Sand Creek. With their plow and four horses they plowed 40 acres along the line of the road south of Lincoln. The winter was very difficult. George said "it took hay to feed our stock, and all the hay that we had was some hay that we had cut on the hills east of Iona...and that soon disappeared. My father hauled straw from Menan, but our finances soon gone and father had to go to work.

The job that he got was cutting ice in Eagle Rock and storing it in sawdust for the saloons and the different uses for ice in the summer time. This was very hard since it was not in his line of work.

From Eliza's account we learn that the family moved in the summer into town thinking that their father could better find work there, but he did not succeed. "Father left for Butte, Montana to try and get work as he heard that there was plenty of work there. In a few days we did receive a letter from father. He told us that he had a job, but has not been feeling very well. We did not hear from him again for several weeks. Then a letter came from the nurse in the hospital at Butte. She said he had sent a letter had been sent informing her of father's illness and of his confinement

in the hospital. Communication was very slow and difficult at that time, and mother had never received the letter and did not know about father's illness until she received the letter from the nurse.

When father died, the nurse had taken a letter from father's pocket with mother's address on it. She had taken the trouble to write to mother. As soon as mother received this letter, she wrote to the nurse to find out the details. The nurse was very kind and wrote and sent mother what money father had. Mother sent the nurse some money as asked her to put a marker on his grave.

(We -Annette & Les- checked the cemetery records at one time and they did not find his name. They said he was probably buried in a pauper's grave.)

Before this though, a baby girl was born on March 28, 1886 and was named Violet Grace Brunt. Now Elizabeth was left to provide for her six children. Eliza, the oldest, was then 16. William was almost 14, but small for his age. George was 10, Maude was 5, Joseph 3, and Violet just 5 months old.

See part 3 – Idaho Falls