

The following is copied from History and Sketches in lives
of

John L. Butler and Bertha M. Thurber his wife
started Jan Feb 1936, Eden, Idaho

The summer after their mother's death (April 21, 1913) John and Horace got the agency for iceless refrigerators, and were in Montana (at Butte & Missoula) selling them part of the time, returned home in the fall. Taylor was running our place while John was away. That fall after the brothers returned home they took their families for a fishing trip to the Magic Dam. ~~John~~ camped out one or two nights, had fun fishing and eating the fish. On our way journey back home we were going over some bad roads, John was on a high seat in the wagon, driving and holding a gun, the wagon struck a deep chuck hole, throwing him off his balance and he fell forward to the ground, the point of the gun striking him in the stomach. The horses began running and tho he was hurt he held to the lines and stopped the team. Horace soon arrived, as his outfit was not far from us. We were soon on our way agin feeling thankful that the gun had not discharged and that no great injury had happened from the accident.

John's health began failing and it soon became evident that there was something very seriously wrong, he could not accomplish his work and suffered internal pain. He finally consulted the Drs. Higgs (Ayer & Dee) of Soldier and took treatments of them for awhile. They did not seem to understand his trouble, and sent him, or recommended that he go to Salt Lake and consult Dr. Ralph Richards, a specialist in bladder trouble. He left his home and family to go to Salt Lake on Dec. 2, 1914. After thoro examination and a few days treatment in the Salt Lake Clinic, Dr. Richards told him he would have to undergo a serious operation of the bladder, said he had seen a few such operations performed but would not undertake this one but said he must go to the Mayo's in Rochester, Minn. as that was the very best place he knew of, and a life as valuable as his should have the very best. John was sadly discouraged with conditions that faced him. His sister Sadie Richards & husband did all for him that they could while there in Salt Lake. The examinations and treatments he had had just seemed to make his suffering worse. He took the train for Rochester, Minn. Was entirely alone especially while in Rochester.

Travelling on the train he was engrossed in his thots and suffering so much that he did not pay any attention to those around him. Finally, after several hours of this, the thot came to him that he was sick, he was going among strangers and would be dependent upon others to help him and the thing for him to do was to be friendly and make friends with those he met. He finally looked up and around and soon those ~~near~~ ^{other} him began showing interest and sympathy. He soon met some/people who were taking a lady (their sister) to the Mayo's. They were a great help to him and did all they could for him while at the Mayos, as they were there for quite a while.

At the Clinic he was examined and cared for but they seemed to hesitate about an operation which was probably the only thing to be done. His suffering continued to increase, and he concluded they should do something more, and had a talk with some of the doctors. They expressed their doubt as to the success of an operation, advised him to go home, which he knew would be impossible then, as he could not possibly survive very long in his condition. They said only

only about 35% of cases like his lived thru the operation, and $\frac{1}{2}$ of those did not ~~xxxxxxx~~ recover. He told them he wanted them to go ahead and operate, that he would take the chance, there was nothing else to be done, and no better place for him to have it done. So it was decided to go ahead and do what was necessary for him. They gave him a cystoscopic examination to determine the exact trouble but did not operate for another week, Jan 8, 1915. His suffering was so intense before the time of the operation, that it seemed he could hardly endure the pain and terrible spasms that came frequently. The nurses were very kind and did all they could to relieve him. The morning of the operation he was taken to the operating room, there were many doctors grouped around and elevated in order to see the operation as it would be an unusual case. As John started taking the anesthetic he heard Dr. Braasch, the operating doctor, begin to give a lecture saying that this had been a very interesting case and one that was not very common---John would have liked to have heard more but said he was soon unconscious, and when he woke up in his hospital bed his nurse, Mr. Byrnes, an Intern, was caring for him. His condition was very serious for three days. He was too weak to move, but received the very best of care and when the crisis was over he gained strength very rapidly. In the operation they had removed a tumor (Pap aloma) from near the neck of the bladder which was about the size of an egg. The incision was about eight inches long reaching from his navel to his pelvis bone. His bladder healed in fine shape, also the incision that was made. On the eighth day the Dr. said he was ten days ahead of his case. I think he had to leave this hospital on the 8th day on account of the crowded condition. So many sick people came to be cared for, and as soon as one was well enough to move they went to another place to stay & would come to the Clinic to have the necessary dressings made. John could scarcely stand up to dress himself. He now weighed 174 lbs., instead of 190 or 200 as was his usual weight. He had some difficulty in getting around and helping himself so much. Then was the time he ^{associated} needed a companion to care for him, as nurses & doctors were so busy with others. He had many friends who helped him a lot. He arrived home and was reunited with us as his family on Feb. 2, 1915, having been gone 2 months.

(The above copied from pages 34-37 by Edith B. Whitehead. I recall mother saying they had wondered whether the accident when the gun point struck him in the stomach had had anything to do with the tumor. Our parents never told us this tumor was cancerous. Brna told me that father had told her mother, Aunt Zettie. The winter of 1927-28, father was again having trouble, and went to Salt Lake again to the Clinic. He was advised he could have surgery there, as new techniques had been developed, to remove the tumor, and it would not be as trying an ordeal as the surgery he had had 22 years before. But he neither had the money nor the desire to undergo surgery again, and he lived 10 more years, blood poisoning from a cut on his thumb finally taking his life. In 1965, Jack told me how father happened to tell him of his experience at Mayo's, and how he had managed to still keep going 10 years after another tumor had developed. I hope he can find time to write some of his experiences with father when they worked closely together on the farm at Eden.)