

My Brother John by KT Butler

Brother John was 14 years old when I was born on 10 May, 1890, and as a small boy I remember his advice and example was always good. John was so busy in those years that I wasn't around him very much. He had been sent on a mission early in the year 1898. Father was sick in bed at the time. John left without purse or script. Horace gave him all the cash he had in his pocket at that time and if I remember right it was 25¢. Father passed away 30 Dec., 1898. Horace was the sole support of the family at this time; a boy of 15 years. John never came home until March after father died.

I remember John coming home in his swallow-tail coat, duffy hat, and black mustache. He wasn't home long when he took ill with typhoid fever and before he was entirely well he went to Bingham to work. This was during the Cleveland depression and jobs were hard to get. I remember John telling how he waited in line day after day wishing he would be picked from the many men for a job. Finally, from a long line of men the boss came out and chose John for a job; the only man hired that day.

John and Bertha had been writing letters while he was on his mission. After he came home they were engaged. That fall John came back to Kimberly and he and Jim Gilbert took a contract to run a tunnel on Beaver Creek west of Kimberly. They packed supplies in for the winter and built a cabin. While they were working on the cabin, John said to Jim, "Help me build a cabin and I will get married and we will have a cook." It was agreed. So John went to Kimberly to post a letter to Bertha to tell her of his plans. Without waiting for an answer he went back to Beaver Creek where they built the cabin. When the cabin was finished he walked to Kimberly where he hired a livery team and went to get married. They were married in the Manti Temple on 15 November, 1899. Horace then took them back to Beaver Creek with pack horses. I remember Bertha telling about unpacking the supplies they had taken in and among them she found a chamber, a gift from her new husband.

They stayed in there all winter, snowbound from the outside world. They didn't see another person but themselves and Jim Gilbert or get any mail until that spring. During this winter Bertha helped with the sharpening of the steel by blowing the bellows and tempering the steel. She became very expert at the job which was a real achievement. They were full of dreams and plans for the future and they talked of getting on a farm where they could have fresh eggs and milk.

In the spring of 1900, John and Bertha went to Kimberly where John went to work at the Anna Laura Mine and was soon boss timberman. Bertha went to Richfield the next winter to stay with her mother as she was expecting a baby. The baby was born Jan 7th and was named Lazell Smith. They lost him as an infant in Richfield.

By the summer of 1902, John had become engaged in the butcher business and I spent that summer there helping him. They had their beef running there on the mountains. My job was to help look after the cattle. We run into critters every other day and butchered one every day. The cattle were wild and the timber was thick and it was a difficult job. Occasionally we butchered a hog which was skinned and all of it was sold for fresh meat. J. Grant was born 2 September, 1902.

During these years Horace had also been working at the mine and Olive was there some. She cooked for Horace and his friends that had formed a club there. She also taught school part of the time.

John and Bertha were still dreaming of getting a farm and in the fall of 1902, John went to Cardston, Canada, after selling his butcher shop. There he bought a piece of land on a contract and put a down payment on it. That winter he again worked at the Anna Laura mine with the intentions of moving to Canada in the spring. That winter his down payment and contract on the land was returned to him. Still having the land fever, the next spring John bought a wagon and team and made preparations to go to Idaho. The plans included the whole family. Horace was to stay with his job to support the family while John found land enough for all.

I will never forget how proud I was of that team. The plans were that I was to go Idaho with John so I quit school before it was out and using the beautiful brown, ball-faced, stocking-legged horses, I hauled wood from the west hills and chopped it for mother, enough to last her for the summer. Prince and Bally were the horses names. On Friday, 27 March 1903, John and I bid farewell to friends and loved ones and started for Idaho. There was no graveled roads then between Richfield and Salt Lake City and part of the way the roads were hub deep with mud. When we pulled into Salt Lake City this was my first glimpse of the city. While there we saw the first automobile owned in Salt Lake City. It pulled up to the curb and caused a traffic jam of horse drawn drays and vehicles.

When leaving the city we met other travelers, Lee and Ralph Fairbanks, the Nebeker boys, and a nam named Peterson and two sons. They joined our party when we were leaving the city. These Fairbanks boys were pranksters, good boxers, and comedians. From the time they joined us we didn't have a dull moment for they were the life of the trip. One night we camped in a log camp house between Tremonton and Snowville. There was a well where we could water our horses for 25¢ a team and draw the water by hand from the 125 ft well. We paid 10¢ each for the privilege of staying in the cabin. The

Fairbanks boys thought we had been held up so to even the score the next morning Lee Fairbanks said he was going fishing. We all laughed for the only water was the deep well. He got out his fishing rod and for bait he used a fat bread crumb. He cast out in the yard where there were some big fat dominic hens looking for something to eat. One especially fat one soon found the crumb on the fish hook and Lee Fairbanks came leading her right into the cabin on the fish hook where he made record time of getting her into a dutch oven with her feathers in the fireplace.

On the 7th of April we crossed the Idaho line. On this day Carrie and Erin were married. I was very elated to think I was in Idaho. The next night we camped at Albion. We turned our horses in the corral at the livery barn and the next morning there was an argument over the charges. So Lee Fairbanks went for his boxing gloves. He gave one pair to the livery man and put a pair on himself and the argument was soon settled our way. The next night we camped at the mouth of Goose Creek where the town of Burley now stands. I remember John looking at the beautiful land where the sage brush grew almost as high as our covered wagon and saying that if he thought water could ever be obtained for that land that is where he would stay and make his home.

We went on to the Milner Dam and got there just in time to see them start construction on the dam. We worked there freighting between Kimima and Milner for a short time. While there Jim Gilbert, who had preceeded John to Idaho, wrote him a letter from where he had settled in Bruneau Valley. I can see John now reading the letter and laughing at the way the letter was worded. It said, "There are plenty of water and there are plenty of land."

We went on down to what is now Twin Falls. The town was then being surveyed. We saw Twin Falls and Shoshone Falls and marveled at the immense amount of water, also Blue Lakes. The new orchard was just in bloom, it being late spring. We saw lots of dead sheep on the desert that had died because of the heavy winter and late spring.

We ferried across the river just above Shoshone Falls. My hat blew off and went over the falls. It was a thrill to cross the river on the ferry, especially just above the falls. We went on down the river to Hagerman, spending our first night and a day at Sand Springs Ranch and rested up our horses. While there I saw my first sturgeon. At Hagerman we saw them building the siphon that takes the water across Snake River to irrigate the King Hill project. John and some other men looked over the King Hill country. Here we parted with some fellow travelers. The Fairbanks boys and the Nebekers had stayed at Milner.

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We went on down the north side of the river to Glenns Ferry. At a bend in the river a short distance from Glenns Ferry we saw some cowboys driving 1500 head of cattle across the river on their way to Camas Prairie. The cow would get their calves on the down side of the river so they could break the current for them. It was a marvelous sight to see them swim the river. We crossed Snake River again on a ferry boat and went on to the little town of Bruneau. Just before we got there we saw a tornado hit the town, uprooting trees and blowing over houses. On our way to Bruneau we camped on the desert and turned our horses out to graze without their hobbles. The horses decided to leave. I took after them with a bridle and had an awful time catching up with them. It was dark by the time I had a bridle on old Prince. I got on Prince but had no idea which way it was back to camp. I rode for a long time. I decided camp was lost. I got up on a high hill so I could look around. From the top of the hill I could see a light and rode in the direction of it. After a long tiresome ride I made it back to camp. I don't know who was the most relieved, John or I. When he discovered I was lost he had built an immense brush fire to guide me back to camp.

The next morning another home seeker who had seen our fire came into camp. He was a sorry sight, chattering with fright and with a dog torn to ribbons by a cougar. He told us the story of how this cougar had come into his camp and attacked his dog. He had tried to beat it off with his shot gun but had not dared to shoot for fear of killing his dog. He was so excited he let the cougar get away.

We found Jim Gilbert a few miles up the river from Bruneau building his homestead shack by a spring. We stayed there a few days looking over the land and prospects of diverting water to irrigate the land. John decided he didn't have money enough to do the job. While there I and another boy were sent to Molly Wilsons ranch to get a cow to break for milking. Molly Wilson had inherited this ranch along with horses and cattle by the thousands from her father. She ran the ranch by herself and was a famous exhibition rider. She was called the Horse Queen of Idaho or Buck Skin Molly.

While riding after this cow, she dove into the river and was swimming easy like. I thought she was wading and spurred my horse in after her, only to find the cow was swimming. Not knowing enough to give my horse his head I turned him over in the water a time or two and got an awful ducking. This was my first experience of swimming a river with a horse. Here again I lost my hat and it was some time before I got another.