

The Memoirs of

Bernard Elden Knapp

Letter to
Cherie 2010

original

January 28, 2010

Dear Cherie,

I enjoyed hearing from you. I've talked with Ann since I read your letter; she doesn't seem to have a lot of things she remembers of your parents when they were young. She mentioned how she loved Claudia and her talents of observing things like the first yellow flowers...brave little yellow flowers that poked their heads up thru the snow in the spring. And she loved her poetry! So she'll try to remember some things and may be able to add to your list.

I have given some thought to it also since talking with her. What I will try to do is send you some things I remember hearing about as I grew up. Well of course she was the first child. By the time the family left Hibbard where all of my siblings were born and moved to Island Park, she must have finished grade school. The pictures in the family Books of Remembrance with pictures taken in I. P. shows her as the oldest of course. As far as I know she did not attend school in I. P. Instead she lived in Ashton with her mother's oldest sister, Elizabeth Hammond (Aunt Finnie) and attended school there. The younger children, Warren, Marjorie and Thelma did however go to the little log school house in the camp.

When living in Hibbard they lived on the ranch with her grandparents, Justin A. Knapp, and his wife, Ana Eliza Lemmon Knapp, the two houses near each other. No doubt she got to know her grandparents well. Her father had a hired man, he was a brother to his sister, Elsie's husband, Charles Larsen. Her mother didn't really care much for the guy. He was sort of a whiner and lacked manners. He really annoyed Mabel. This story I've often heard from her. I'll refer to our mother as Mabel in this narrative.

The hired hand, Ern would sit around the house. He boarded with them. When Mabel would ask Claudia to do something, almost immediately, Ern would pipe up and say, Now do what your mother told you. Mabel said she could just see Claudia grit her teeth because it was so objectionable to her. So Mabel got to where she often refrained from asking anything of Claudia when Ern was there.

In I.P. the school house also served as a mtg. house and a dance and recreation center. There were even boxing matches held there. In the small Sunday school there under the direction of an Ashton Ward the officers were J. W. Knapp, Charles Pond, George Muir, and Samuel R. South in charge of music. He had been a school teacher in Randolph, Utah before acquiring a sawmill and moving to I.P. He had training in music and played a violin and lead a choir. He had his sons, Lorenzo (Ren) Bernard (Barney) Charles (youngest) and daughters Zelma, Elgie, and Dorothy (Dot). All would have known each other in the branch and camp. Island Park siding was the headquarters of the Targhee Tie Co. They probably sang together quite a bit. Marjorie once told me that Sam South said Claudia had a special voice with perfect pitch. I take that as a special and rare gift. Recently Anna told me that she once heard Marj and Claudia sing a duet that she remembered as being perfect. She said Oh, if I only had a recording of it!

After the family moved to Goshen, the older children rode the school bus to Firth High school. They lived in a small house they rented in the town site. There was a small ditch in front of the yard with a graveled road in front. Arch began seeing Claudia. Arch had a younger brother, Cleo who was a very good friend of Warrens. One photo I remember shows Cleo on a black horse wearing a tall black ten gallon hat and Warren on a gray horse he called Laddie. On one occasion these boys removed the little foot bridge across this stream, knowing that Arch would come calling after dark on his motorcycle. He did come and crashed into the ditch. Of course they were no where to be found, which was good for them. Arch no doubt would have been pretty mad---- and maybe suspected who may have done it.

Arch's father was Ace Hess. He was well known around Goshen. He ran cattle each summer in Wolverine Canyon below Goshen. When the time came to take the cattle to the summer range, Ace would let everyone know the day of the cattle drive. He would ride through the community and have people get their cattle out where he could pick them up. Warren told me this. He would help with the drive. In the fall after rounding the cattle up Ace would bring them back onto the streets of Goshen and drop them off at their owners gate. He would never take any compensation from widows that sent their cattle.

One time after they had been married a while, Arch wasn't too sure he liked being married and he left Claudia. But Ace went to him and explained you don' just quit and told him to go back and take care of Claudia and his responsibilities. And of course he did. Claudia always liked little trinkets and such things. Maybe this came from her early days with her grandma Knapp. I've heard she was fond of such things. In later years after she was a widow she used to hitch her little mare, Birdie to her buggy and drive into Rexburg and go to a picture show. One of her favorites was the silent cowboy star, Hoot Gibson.

I remember when Claudia made a special effort to come from Presto where they lived to Idaho Falls so her kids could all see the new movie, The Wizard of Oz. With Judy Garland. I don't know that I ever heard of it before. Maybe she had been reading the book to her kids. Anyway they knew about it and were excited to come. I was born November, 14, 1929. Before I was born Claudia was expecting Elinor and she was rather persuasive with my parents that I should be named Bernard. She had known Bernard South in Island Park. He was a little older than she, I doubt there was any mutual interest between them. The oldest South boy, Ren married Ruth Bjorn one of the winters they lived in I.P. They went out and down to the Logan Temple to be married. Charlie South was younger so I suppose naturally Barney was the only single man there she would have noticed. So the result was such that later on when Barney met Marjorie after she had graduated from Ricks College and was teaching 2nd grade in Sugar City. I was in the First grade in Rexburg. They went to Randolph and were married during the Christmas break. So with 2 Bernards in the family I became Bernie to differentiate the two of us. Souths always pronounced the name Bernard rather than the English or Swiss way as in the name of the St. Bernard or the dog of the same name. Neither of us liked

that pronunciation and there were others sometimes used at school that were even worse. Barney hated some of them, improperly mispronounced. Well hopefully this may be of some interest to some of the family members such as Cherie and as far as errors, it was a long time ago and forgive me for my bad memory. I guess this is about the best I can do. Perhaps Ann can add to it.

Bernie