

*Bernard & Louise Knapp*  
*Family History*

---

Jennie Knapp Walters  
Life Sketch

FROM THE FILES OF BERNARD ELDEN KNAPP

1

Sketch of the Life of  
Jennie Knapp Walters

Born: October 12, 1884 at Richmond, Cache County, Utah.  
Daughter of Justin A. and Anna Eliza Lemmon Knapp.

I am going to attempt to write a sketch of my life. This has been requested by some of my grand children, especially my oldest one, Mary, who is Mrs. Steven L. Bates. When I am gone she can have it and read it if she wants to.

When I was four years of age I came with my parents to Idaho. That was in 1888. At that time the train came as far as Eagle Rock, known now as Idaho Falls. My father came to Idaho and settled in Island Ward, later known as Hibbard. He took up a quarter section. He came to Eagle Rock when we came in on the train. I can remember how sick I was, this being my first train ride. What made me feel so badly was when I vomited all over those pretty red cushions. My father was there to bring us the rest of the way with a faithful old team named Pet and Queen. When we reached the river there was no bridge on which to cross but there was a ferry run by cable. My uncle, George Hibbard, was the ferryman. He was a very fine man. He married one of my mother's sisters, Julia. He later became bishop of Hibbard and that is how it was named Hibbard, in honor of him. What seemed odd to me was when they put our team and wagon on the big flat boat, like a raft, and brought ~~our~~ us accross to this side. How desolate it looked! No trees, no canals, nothing but sage brush as far as the eye could see. Maybe a rabbit or porcupine, badger or skunk would pop out from behind a sage brush.

That first summer we lived in a little log cabin in Rexburg. It had a dirt floor and roof and was owned by Neils Nelson. My father went to the timbers, as we called it, and got out enough logs to build us one room. Then when it was completed, we moved into our castle, as we called it. It was no bed of roses for my parents to come up to this desolate place and go through so much. But they had the pioneer stuff.

There were four of us children at this time; Annie, Mabel, myself and a brother Justin. Later there was another girl born. When she was a few weeks old she took very ill and died. Her name was Lydia Malinda, named for my father's oldest sister. That was a very trying time for my parents, here in this desolate place away from all of their loved ones to have this happen to them. I only remember of seeing my beloved father cry once and this was the time. He didn't have the money with which to buy a lot in the cemetary in which to bury her. Finally a kind neighbor loaned him the money with which to buy a lot. There are many little mounds through the country where people have had to bury their loved ones in their fields. Seven more children were born to my parents; Clara Leona, Elsie May, Warren, Esther Jane, Alice Eveline, Edwin Raymond and Adrian Leroy, twins.

My father was a cripple in one foot due to an illness he had when he was three years old. This was quite a handicap for him but it didn't stop him from working. There was the land to be cleared of sage brush. As soon as we children were old enough we had to help clear the sage from the land. Father would plough with the sulky and we would pull the sage and pile it and burn it at night. The neighbor children would

II

help us burn it--Berry, Park and Statham. We weren't so tired at night when we could have a bonfire, roast potatoes. We lived quite a way from each other. When we would run out of supplies we would sometimes have to borrow. We lived thirteen miles out of town and transportation was slow in those days. Sometimes we would have to make our own light. We would render tallow and braid cotton cloth, put it in the tallow and leave one end out until it got hard and then at night we would light it and let it burn. It wasn't much of a light but it served the purpose. We called it a bitch. The mosquitoes were often so bad we had to wait until after dark to milk the cows.

The following is taken from the obituary of Jennie Knapp Walters written by her sister Elsie. It gives detailed information about Jennie's childhood and courtship which she omitted from her writing.

She knew the hardships of pioneer life, she helped clear the sage from our father's farm. She had a sweet disposition and a willingness to do all she could to help. She was jovial and full of fun. One felt a little bit of heaven when they were with her. Jennie and I had many happy times together herding our father's cows. We'd take our sewing along and sew quilt blocks and doll clothes and carpet rags so our Mother might have a carpet on her bare floors. We'd eat the raw and choke cherry red which would stain our lips and our fingers bad. We'd watch the wild ducks play until the close of day. Our good neighbor, brother Keppner who lived just across the road from our pasture would bring us a hat full of apples from his orchard. How good they tasted to two hungry girls. One day while going to the pasture we saw a man in the brush with guns in his belt. We became a little nervous. Jennie said "Let us go behind this tree and pray". Our heavenly father guided us in what to do. We went down to the river, took our shoes off and waded across and then scampered for home. We found our afterwards that the man was hunted by the law. Jennie learned in youth the value of prayer and with a song in her heart and a prayer on her lips she faced the challenge of life.

Our father played the violin and accordian. We children learned to dance at home. When we became older we were allowed to go to the dance over in the William Lutz Hall. Our father helped play for the dances. One night a group of us kids walked from the dance. It was a beautiful moonlight night and when we were passing the Steve Hunt ranch some of the group wanted to go up in the field and get a watermelon. Jennie wouldn't go so I said I would stay with her. When the kids returned and cut the melon it was as green as grass. How Jennie did laugh, "You'll learn to steal".

Our father and Uncle Morgan Knapp went in partners in the sawmill business on Moody creek. There sis and I together with our other sister, Esther and Eveline had more happy days together. One day my younger brother, Warren, wanted me to go squirrel hunting. We went further than we anticipated and soon found we were lost. It started to rain. We heard the tinkle of a sheep's bell. We followed the sound and came to a clearing and there we saw a young man coming toward us on a horse. We told him we were lost. He said he knew where the Knapp mill was. He told us his name

III

was Francis Walters. He took us home. Of course we were thirsty after our jaunt and went to the spring for a drink. There we found sister Jennie at the spring with her picture as Rebecca of old. This young man visited our spring very often to fill his canteen.

The weeks passed and we moved back down into the valley. All winter our father worked on the Sugar factory at Sugar City. On its completion men came there to work, among this group was young Francis Walters. He was a strong built man with muscles of iron. For this reason he was given the job of fireman, keeping the furnaces going to grind thousands of tons of beets. My aunt, a Mrs. Davenport, ran the boarding house at Sugar City. She got sister Jennie to come and help her. There these young people renewed their friendship.

The history now continues in Jennie's own words.

I was married in the Logan Temple to Francis Gummel Walters. I always said I wanted to be married in the temple my father worked on and I was, March 13, 1907. When my father and mother were courting they would sometimes go of a Sunday afternoon and walk side by side around the walk. There is much that I could tell. Things haven't been so easy for us, but I have tried to make the best of it. There were seven lovely children born to us. Their names are; Francis LeRoy, Jesse Raymond, Jennie Donnetta, Glenn Clinton, Ross Edwin, Adrian Abraham, and Dorothy Eliza. All were married except Dorothy and she has her endowments. They were all married in the temple except Adrian and he has his endowments.

We lived most of our married life at Plano, Idaho. I was President of the Mutual Young Ladies at Plano for a number of years and also President of the Primary. I received much joy from this.

My companion, Frank, died October 1, 1939. Dorothy and I then moved to Rexburg and lived with my son Jess for about a year. Then we moved to the 4th Ward.

Then came the cruel war and took two of our sons. Jess in the Sea Bees and Adrian in the Air Corps, in India. Adrian didn't come back. That was just about the last straw. I have never been the same since, but I know he was a good soldier. He left a little son whom he never did see. I know he is better off than I am and the Heavenly Father will take care of him and reward him. His son Milton A. is eight years old now and is a very bright little fellow. He is now baptised.

At this writing I have twenty-two grand children and two great-grand children. After living in the fourth ward for about eleven years Dorothy and I moved to the first ward where we are now living.

.....

Jennie Knapp Walters died June 23, 1954 at the age of 69. She was buried in the Rexburg Cemetary on June 26, 1954.