

Alfred John Bateman

Story of his life told to Lucille B. Johnson, his daughter.

I was born 11 July 1874 to George Bateman and Anna Wilks Bateman in Almy, Uinta, Wyoming. being the second son in the family. I was the first son born in the U.S. My brother Fred was born in Ockendon, Essex, England 13 August 1871; he came with my parents when they emigrated to this country in 1873. Others who came were grandfather Alfred Bateman, grandmother, Ester Wiffin, and their sons George, Herbert, James and Alfred, plus grandfather Wilks.

They came from Liverpool on a large ship called the Minnesota with many other emigrants leaving their homes to come to Zion where they could be close to the body of the Church of Jesus Christ and worship as they wished. They encountered a rough voyage and were late in their schedule in arriving here [with] 14 of the 16 life boats washed away.

They rode the steam line from New York to Ogden, Weber Country, Utah. A cousin of my father, Joshua Jarvis, met my parents at Ogden and hauled them up to Bear Lake at Bloomington, Idaho. My mother said there weren't any floors in the houses nor brick chimneys only pipes through the roofs were used.

After they had lived at Bloomington, Bear Lake County, Idaho for a short time and because living and money were so scarce, they decided to move to Almy, Wyoming to seek employment in the coal mines where my grandfather Wilks Mother's father and grandfather, and Alfred Bateman [all] worked in the stables where mules and horses were kept and worked in the coal shafts of the mine. One day the mine exploded and killed 30 men but luckily my relatives escaped injury. Uncle Alfred Bateman hooked 2 4-horse teams on cold mornings at 6 o'clock to bring out big loads of stove coal in two wagons each hooked up with trailer wagons.

My father worked in the mines for a short time to help pay for a farm In Bloomington. My parents, my brother Fred and I moved back to the place they liked so well and my father ran a small farm and freighted 30 to 40 years farm produce to Randolph Rich County, Wyoming and back a distance of 75 miles each way. They brought back coal oil, dried fruit, sugar, etc..

My two granddads, John Wilks and George Bateman, used to freight also and I used to go with them and Fred also. We had lots of fun going with them. One day Fred was batting me around and I knocked the wind out of him [and] after that he left me alone. My mother sometimes used to go to Evanston, Wyoming for the trip to visit the uncles Alfred Batemans, James, and Herbert Bateman and their families who were brothers of my father.

I liked school fairly well mostly the school of mathematics. until I passed the 6th grade. I also went to Fielding Academy for a little while riding a horse to Paris about 2½ miles North of Bloomington.

I went to church In a meeting house of cheap frame construction.

Dad was councilor to Bishop William Hulme for 25 years and they were in charge of building a new meeting house.

Father and granddad, Alfred Bateman and families were converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Apostle James Penrose in England. My grandfather was told by a voice to go prepare to meet the servants of the only true church which he did and he was converted as it was the church he had been waiting to join all those years. The message of the young Mormon missionaries touched his heart for he knew it was from the power of God.

Father was a great scripturion, and about knew the Bible by heart. Mother was a great cook, her favorite dishes were beef steak, roast goose and potatoes cooked all different ways. All kinds of cakes and pies. She could surely get up a good meal for Thanksgiving. She always kept her home beautiful and in order. Most of her floors were carpeted in rich colors and she and she loved to collect little knick knacks of beauty such as figurines for the home. Thelma resembled her in looks. She had a family of 7: the girls were Marjery, Lizzie (Elizabeth) and Lucy, and the boys were Fred, I (John), William and Steve.

Dad's farm was about 30-40 acres of hay land.

My parents bought a nice home next to the church and planted many shrubs and flowers. My father was a trained gardener as he was head of a large vegetable and grain farm in England. He hooked 3 horses in tandem when they took produce to market and would walk with the lead horse. The former owner wouldn't let a hired man ride.

I had no favorite brothers or sisters. They were all the same. I thought a lot of them all.

Fred went on a mission to England. The land of his birth and married an English girl Maggie Hargreaves. He was a fine school teacher. He studied at the B.Y.C. and the Utah Agricultural College.

Will was a successful farmer and Steve was a very good lumberman and horse buyer.

Both father and mother were influences for good in my life. Father was a great student and humble, quiet, peaceful man. Mother was very spiritual minded and energetic in church affairs. She was always one of the first to console at a house of sorrow and she always hung the big black crepe bow on the door at the time of death and arranged for funerals. She was a familiar figure seen in her black taffeta dress and hat riding around in her little spring buggy and driving her horse about town.

My best friends were Alfred Hart of Bloomington, William Forgy of Denver and H.P. Zimmerman of Riverside, California.

I played a cornet in the Bloomington band for 5 or 6 years. and I played baseball as a

youth for the town team.

I met Clara Hess when she was in school. I took her home when she was 13. She was the cutest girl around and I had quite a time keeping her for my girl, she was very popular. She was the champion reader of the school. I took her to dances but could only get in one dance with her.

I was 21 and she 19 when we were married at my parents home. James H. Hart of the Bear lake Stake Presidency performed the ceremony. We were sealed in the Logan Temple the next fall.

We had a big wedding party. Lizzie Hart made two beautiful wedding cakes and decorated them with figurines. Our lovely supper was roast chicken, boiled ham, salad, pies, cookies, [all] cooked by mother, Clara and Marjorie.