

Clara May Hess Bateman

My father Jacob Hess was born of goodly pioneer parents, John W. Hess and Emeline Bigler on 6 Jan 1849 in Farmington, Davis, Utah. He was the first child of the great Mormon leader and pioneer who served in the Mormon Battalion, colonizer, and statesman serving 3 terms in the legislature of Utah and was a Colonel in charge of defense, as well as serving as Bishop, Councilor to Stake President, and Stake President, and Patriarch until his death.

My father Jacob was a person of honest convictions and personal integrity and goodness of character and very independent, he spent his early years in Farmington keeping busy with gainful occupations. For a while he herded flocks at Promontory, he returned to Farmington and his home. He met Hannah Thornock, a lovely girl who won his heart. He took her away from his brother Jed, who was also in love with her. They were married Feb 1869 in the Endowment House, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. They lived in Farmington where their first child, Elzada Emeline was born 17 June 1869.

My grandparents, parents of mother, the John Thornocks, were pioneers in a handcart company coming across the plains. They buried 2 little children who were taken ill from the hardships.

Father accompanied a group of pioneers who were called to settle Georgetown among them were the Thornock family, who later settled in Bloomington, ID. He came back to get his young wife and baby where they made a home in Georgetown. When Elzada was 3 years old and mother was expecting her second child, Mary Ann, father pulled mother and Elzada, a babe in her arms on a hand sleigh a distance of 22 miles on hard-crusted snow from Georgetown to Bloomington so she could be in the home of her parents for her baby's birth because the roads were snow-blocked and could not be traveled by horse and bob sleigh.

Father and mother later moved to Bloomington, a thriving town at that time where father bought a 3 acre plot of ground and built a little home.

Perry and I were born in my dear grandmother Anne Bott Thornock's home. I was born 26 Feb 1876 being the 4th child of Jacob and Hannah Hess Thornock. As a child I lived in a dear little frame home father built. It faced the East and had 2 large rooms, one across the front which was the large one and one across the back. How I loved that home, I'll never forget it. There was a little hill at the back to the West that we girls loved to climb. It was covered with beautiful flowers, buttercups, daisies and cowslips; we loved to pick them in bouquets and bring them home to mother. My sisters were Elzada, Mary Ann, Dora, Lizzie, and Addle and my brothers were Perry, Arthur, Delbert, Acquilla, and Milford.

We were poor and life was a struggle. I would tie my feet up in burlap when I went in the hills to get the cows in the evening. One old bossie wore a cowbell which helped me find her.

Father took pride in having a good garden, he also had a large strawberry bed and raised lots of peas and potatoes. Mother would cream and make such a good supper, but she was always pleasant and sweet; how I loved her.

We lived one block from grandmother Thornock and I would sit on the steps and watch her as mother told me. She was widowed and often did not have a bite to eat.

When we went to the store, there were so many routes to go and I would enjoy deciding which way to go. I liked to do this and also going to Church and school.

My parents were very neat, there was never a straw in our door yard. Mother was immaculate and kept everything scrubbed white.

Father traded our dear little home for a 4 room log house and 16 acres of farming ground between Paris and Bloomington about 1½ miles from either. We went to school at Bloomington. It was terrible going in the winters. Often we were caught in the blinding Bear Lake Blizzards. I would be able to keep my way holding on to the fence and following it when my vision was cut off. The snow would drift at times over the fence posts and many times we children would walk to school over the hard-crusting snow piled many feet high. I needed to stop at times to rest.

We always went to Sunday School, afternoon and night meetings. It was a long walk, especially in a blinding storm at night, but I would be determined to go. I would sometimes stay with grandmother Thornock when it got too bad. Poor grandmother could not afford lights and I would study from the light reflected from the crude little stove which opened up in the front. I remember dear grandmother's knitting needles clicking while she knit in the dark.

I remember also how we children would crowd around the round pot-bellied stove to keep warm when we got to school. It stood in the center of the hall and burned big blocks of dogwood. Sometimes my fingers would be so frozen, I could hardly move them as we didn't have many clothes to wear. Grandmother Thornock knit my black wool hose as I never had overshoes.

We had our good times, though. In those early days, we loved to go to the dances in bob sleighs with the bells a jingling as merrily we went. We enjoyed parties, etc. also.

I met John Bateman when he was a shy gangling youth with curly hair. He took me home when he was 12 and managed to be around most of the time to single me out. I would get so mad because he wouldn't learn to dance good as I liked dancing very much. I thought a lot of his sister Marjorie. He wasn't a very studious scholar. I would catch him drawing horses heads when he should have been doing arithmetic, he was a good athlete and played on the Bloomington Baseball Team and he played the cornet in Bloomington Band for 5 years.

I went to work when I was 12 years old and milked 18 cows twice a day. I later did housework and had many interesting experiences working with people in Montpelier,

Idaho, and for polygamists. I loved pretty clothes and was able to buy me some nice dresses and a trousseau of nice things.

I finally decided to marry John Bateman 14 Feb 1894. The snow was very deep, but we had a lovely wedding. Many relatives and friends came to help us celebrate the event at John's parents home, the George Batemans. I was very tired as I helped Marjorie and mother Bateman cook the big dinner. I was very hurt at John's mother for telling me not to buy a new wedding dress, (which I obeyed) and put the money into a mattress and bedding, but I guess it was for the best in the long run. We went to the Logan Temple in the Fall, 10 Oct 1894 and were sealed. It was a wonderful sacred day in my life. I will always remember it. We settled in a little frame home in Bloomington, where 2 darling babies, Alfred and George were born. How I loved all my babies; they were the joy of my life. Alfred was a tiny 2½ lb baby with long golden hair and his head was small enough for a tea cup to go over. His grandmother Bateman loved him so.

(Mother was tired so we stopped. Never to begin again.)