

Ephraim Knowlton & Thisbe Read Hanks

Floral Ranch, Wayne County, Utah

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Ephraim and Thisbe Hanks moved from Parley's Park (Park City) Summit County, Utah in 1877. They built a log home. Their son, Arthur Eugene (my father), was born there 14 May 1882. The weather in the winters was very cold. Many cattle froze to death.

In the spring of 1882 they bought a ranch where the temperature was warmer, eleven miles south east of Fruita, Wayne County, Utah.

Ephraim and the older boys went to the ranch in early spring and planted crops. They moved the family to the Floral when Arthur was six weeks old. He was the tenth child.

It was a beautiful place, surrounded on three sides by red and black sandstone ledges. Beautiful wild flowers bloomed abundantly, which inspired them to call it "Floral Ranch."

The soil was very productive. Pleasant Creek flowed through the ranch. A spring east of the house supplied the drinking water. A ditch ran along the west of the land, to irrigate the crops.

The first winter they lived in a dugout in the side of the hill. The next year they built a log house. They invited other families to come and live there. My father, Arthur, said his sister, Amy and husband John Giles, built a cabin. Joe Wright, Jorgen Jorgenson, Joseph Hutchinson, Urban Stewart, Dave Stewart and Major Anderson lived there for a time.

In a few years Ephraim and Thisbe built a two-bedroom frame house with a big fireplace in the front room and a porch on the southeast. The attic was used for storage and drying corn and fruit.

Two more children were born, Nettie and Clara, at the ranch.

A home was built in Caineville, Wayne County, Utah, where the family moved during the winter months, so the children could go to school and church. Ephraim and Thisbe's son, Walter, was the first and last bishop, serving eighteen years in Caineville. The town was later abandoned and the church moved families to Teasdale and other towns.

Ephraim Hanks died at the ranch 9 June 1896, at the age of 70 years. He took a slight stroke and his legs become numb, gangrene set in, causing his death. He was 36 years when he married seventeen-year-old Thisbe as his fourth wife. They had 12 children.

Thisbe also died at the ranch 23 July 1903 from an attack of gallstones. She was 58 years old. Thisbe and Ephraim are buried in Caineville, Utah.

Their family was all married except Raymond Elijah, 27 years, and Arthur Eugene, 21 years. Raymond never married. He filled a mission then lived in Salt Lake with his sister Amy and John Giles. He died from pneumonia 3 Sep 1910 and is buried in Salt Lake City Cemetery. Arthur went to Haden, Fremont County, Idaho, to see his brother Sidney Alvarus and Martha Huber Hanks, and family.

Ephraim Hanks married first Harriet Amelia Decker Little, a widow of Edwin Sobieski Little, with a son George Edwin, three years old. They lived in Salt Lake. Ephraim married Hannah Hardy, divorced, no children. Ephraim married third Jane Maria Capener, 17 years old, 27 March 1856. He married fourth Thisbe Quilley Read of

¹ Sherry Smith had been doing research on her Ephraim Hank's line and was visiting with a newly acquainted cousin. She was graciously sharing pictures for our family use. One picture was of the Hanks Floral Ranch house. She commented the person in that picture was not one of the Hanks relatives and didn't know why he was pictured in front of the house. Reading the caption I commented that this person may not be your relative but the man named, William Morrill, was my grandfather. She respectfully said, "This is your photograph now."

Stepney, England, 17 years old.

Ephraim was the father of 26 children. My husband, Golden Jackman of Provo, helped me compile a 510-page book, printed and bound, 1959, of the Descendants of Ephraim K. Hanks and Families.

George Little was a stepson of Ephraim, so Arthur went to visit them, living near Sidney. A large picture of Ephraim taken in 1889 hung in the living room. Arthur met their daughter, Mattie, who was home from her school in Rexburg, Idaho. She was the youngest of fourteen children. They fell in love and were married the next year, 30 December 1906, by Sidney Hanks, in the little home.

I, Teton Hanks Jackman of Orem, Utah, after my parents, Arthur and Mattie, passed away acquired the large picture of Ephraim Hanks. Just had it retouched and cleaned by a specialist of pictures in Orem.

Arthur and Mattie lived in a spare room on the Little's for a while. I, Teton, Mattie Hanks, was born there, 5 December 1907. They all loved the beautiful range of the Teton Mountains on the East of Teton Valley. So they named me Teton.

Arthur bought out the rest of his brothers and sisters, as heirs to the Hanks Ranch. He took Mattie and baby Teton back to the ranch in the spring of 1910. A family had been living there taking care of the place.²

Crops were planted and they started a new life. Their crop of cucumbers was heavy. Mattie salted down two barrels full. She was expecting a new baby the first part of December so it was a hard job. When they came back in the spring from Idaho they were all frozen.

In November 1911 we went back up to the Teton Valley. My sister, Floretta, was born 18 December 1911, at the George Little home. We came back to the Floral Ranch in the spring of 1912.

It was a busy summer. Relatives enjoyed coming to visit. If their friends from Fruita, eleven miles away came to visit, they spent the day. Many shepherders passing through or transient men found food and rest at the ranch. Usually there was a hired man there to help Arthur with his ranch work.

I remember riding behind Mother on her saddle pony, clinging on for dear life as we helped Dad chase and herd a band of our wild horses to the ranch from up near the Miner's Mountain. The corral was made of cedar posts and long poles from trees in the area, placed on top of each other and wired to the post. It had to be high and strong to hold the wild rearing stallions until they could be broken to ride.

² George William Morrill and Ellen May Adams had been living at the Hanks Floral ranch while Arthur and Mattie's family lived in town. Will was the foreman of the ranch while May was well known for her good cooking. Other ranch hands lived on the land and it was Will's responsibility to supervise the work.

According to Ora Morrill Mason, daughter of Will and May, her parents lived on the ranch for 2-3 years. Dellos and Alton were the only two children from the family that occupied the home. When visiting the Indian writings on the canyon wall one will find some unusual markings of a white boy, Alton Morrill. Obviously these markings are a result of all in-a-day's-play at the ranch.

Regrettably we do not have many oral stories of the family life on the ranch but we do recall a couple of short ones of the boys. May Morrill sent Alton to the pigpen to fetch the bucket they would use for table scraps and water to feed the pigs. Water was scarce there so none was ever wasted. May waited for some time for Alton's return. Since he was delinquent May had decided that Alton had gotten sidetracked and went off to play somewhere. She knew she could not wait any longer for that bucket. May took a switch with her to locate him and as an impression that she meant business.

When May arrived at the pigpen she couldn't see Alton at first. She looked around for him and found him laying face down on a rock. He was laying so quietly it was if he were asleep. Another rock was right beside the rock that Alton was laying on and it rose just a little higher.

May walked over to Alton and his eyes were wide opened. She noticed that there was a snake that he was staring at. May grabbed hold of Alton and asked him if he didn't see the snake that was near him. Alton said, "Nope, I was asleep." This blow snake had him in a trance-like stare. She got him by her hand and led him back to the house with no incident.

Dellos and Alton had been riding along on the road with a wagon and a team of horses. On the road Dellos noticed a bar of chewing tobacco that had been dropped by a previous traveler. He stopped his wagon and picked the tobacco up. Upon showing this to his mother and father, his father asked Dellos what he had planned to do with it. Dellos thought he could use it for when one of the horses had a bellyache. Will asked him if he wanted to try it out. May immediately objected to this idea. Will told Dellos' mother that this would be a good way for him to never take up the habit. Out of curiosity Dellos took a bite of this tobacco bar and became very green in the face. Shortly he was hurling. Dellos never wanted to touch that stuff again.

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Arthur only kept a few cows for milking for their own use. He raised fine horses and donkeys. A few sheep were pastured in the south field. A few pigs were raised for winter meat. Rhode Island hens grew large and were appreciated for their meat and eggs. Mattie enjoyed watching the setting hens come off with a batch of biddies. The chicken coop had to be closed at night to protect the chickens from weasels and other bloodthirsty animals.

When Mattie wanted chicken for dinner, Arthur would catch a fine hen or rooster, chop his head off on the chopping block and hang it on the clothesline to bleed and cool. Then Mattie would dip it in a pot of boiling water to loosen the feathers. After it was picked off all its feathers and its insides taken out it was ready for cooking. The wood range had to have wood just the right lengths to fit on the firebox and keep things cooking.

Probably Ephraim and Thisbe, Arthur's parents, did their cooking in the fireplace. Arthur and Mattie enjoyed the fireplace in the evenings, or for winter heating. Pinion pine or cedar wood was used for burning.

During the winter Pleasant Creek froze over. Arthur would chop blocks of ice and store in straw or sawdust for making ice cream. The six-quart ice cream freezer was our pride and joy. A filling was made with eggs, milk, sugar and flavoring, cooked in a double boiler until thickened. When it was cook it was put in the freezer with lots of rich cream and enough milk to fill the can to two-thirds full. We all helped put in the ice and turn the handle until it was hard to turn. Taking out the middle dasher and packing with more ice made it more solid. We enjoyed scraping the dasher until we could have a serving.

Sugar cane grew high in the field where Dad planted it. In the fall when it was ripe the leaves would cut from the stalks then cut to the ground and hauled near the mill. A dependable pony was hooked to a pole connected to the mill. The pony went around and around turning the rollers. Dad would feed the stalks in; the juice ran into buckets, then emptied into barrels and covered it until ready to use. A large metal boiler was placed on rocks and a fire was kept going until the juice was of syrup consistency. This was called sorghum and used for cooking and sweetening. When a boiler of juice was put on the fire, it was a constant job to stir and keep the fire going. Arthur enjoyed having his brother, Walter Hanks from Grover, help him at this time. People in the area liked to come and buy sorghum.

The fruit grown on the ranch was also in demand. One day some people came for fruit. Dad had just nailed down their boxes, stepped down from the wagon and he let his axe swing. I came up by him at the moment and the axe caught me on the right eye row cutting a big gash. Everyone was panicky for a while. The bleeding soon stopped with bandages. I carry a very tiny scar in that eyebrow.

Watermelon was one of Dad's special crops. The picture shows Walter, his wife Mary Ellen Hanks of Grover, their children, Verd and Retta. Dad is in the middle, I am front right. Mother took the pocket. We were having a good time.

Arthur had a small box camera and pictures were his hobby. Most of the pictures were taken with that camera. A good picture is worth a thousand words.

I remember in the fall, probably in 1916, after the sorghum was finished, the folks invited all the folks from Fruita to come for a candy pull. North of the house, near the Indian writings on the red cliff, was an alcove surround on three sides with tall cliffs. It was sandy on the bottom and warm. This was a fine place to make a bonfire and place rocks around to support the kettles to make the candy. When the syrup was placed in a cup of cold water, it was ready to be poured out on plates to cool. Then the fun began when each person was given a handful to pull back and forth until they felt it was ready for eating. They sang songs and had a merry time.

The picture shows families from Fruita, Wayne County, at the Hanks Floral Ranch for Sunday School. They all brought food and made quite a feast. This was probably taken about 1915. Mother is in the back right, holding baby Ray. So as he was born in March, 1914, it would have been that summer. George Carrell and wife Alta? are seating in center. Flora is standing by Brother Carrell's knee. I am standing on the left, white short dress, black neck trim. I am happy Dad took this picture and that I have it in my possession.

The mailbox was three miles north of the ranch at the entrance to the Capitol Gorge Wash. I think mail came twice a week, from Fruita then on down to Notom, Caineville and Hanksville. South of the box is a mountain named Eph Hanks Tower. We like to take pictures there as we go to Wayne County. If a storm was brewing it was dangerous to enter the Gorge. Flash floods could come in a hurry. The high cliffs are so close together. There is no place to get on higher ground.

The folks looked forward to letters from their folks in Salt Lake and the Teton Valley. It was a happy time when Mattie's folks, George and Martha Little, sent word that they could come for a visit in this far away land. They came by train to Richfield where the folks picked them up in the white-topped buggy. Roads were bumpy and up and down, tiring one out to travel far. So a stop at a hotel or relatives home over night was restful.

In February 1914, Arthur and friends spent some cold days digging holes and placing poles for telephone wire from Capitol Gorge to the Ranch. This was finished the 1st of March. It was fun to turn the handle for so many rings to Fruita or Torrey.

Mattie was expecting a new baby the first part of March. They rented a house in Torrey and Arthur had taken

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a load of their things to the house. Plans to live closer to neighbors and a midwife made them feel more secure.

The Jorgen Jorgenson family had moved to the ranch to take care of things. The new phone had just been in three days. When Mattie started with labor pains, she phoned to the town of Torrey and told Arthur to bring the midwife and hurry. She told Mrs. Jorgenson to heat some water and to calm down. Flora and I wondered what was going on. Mother was in the front bedroom. The baby came in a hurry. The cord was wrapped around his neck and he was blue. She sat up in bed and they cut and tied the cord. Rubbing him with olive oil, he soon took on the right color. Her prayers were answered. Mother always told Ray the angels brought him and was watching out for them. This was the 4th of March 1914.

Dad got a fast team of horses and a light buggy and the midwife, probably Mrs. Foye. They had a fast ride over hill and dale. When they arrived all was well and Dad was happy the new baby was a boy. Teton was six years and Floretta was 2½ years old. They named him Raymond after Dad's brother and Mattie suggested Eugene, Arthur's middle name.

Ray learned to walk by going around and around a big pumpkin that Dad had raised in the garden. A picture shows Dad on his favorite riding horse and Ray on a donkey. Dad could hardly wait until Ray could learn to ride.

Teton needed to start to school now. The folks rented a place from George Carrell in Fruita. Tom Nixon came to take care of the ranch. The schoolhouse was only one room, one teacher for all grades of students of Fruita of all ages. The pot bellied stove stood in the center and lengths of wood had to be put in real often when it was cold. This building was used for church and town programs and dance. The building still stands and is a historical spot for tourist to visit when they come to Capitol Reef National Park. I returned the original bell that I got from Zelpha Pendleton Marengo, now of St. George, Utah, a few years ago. I have a picture handing it to Ranger Clark. As I visited the area in August 1981, they have a new bell on the desk.

When it rained up on the Miners Mountain, floodwaters came down the Pleasant Creek, going through the ranch from the south and going north towards Notom. It was taking out much of the farmland along the banks. When a flood came rushing down the creek it took trees, rocks, calves or sheep in its path. The men of the area had built a reservoir several miles above the ranch to store water for irrigation.

One day in the spring Dad was up on the range and we were alone. Mother heard a loud roaring sound and feared the dam had broken. She prayed that she could get us up on the Black Hill to north of the house. It was higher land. She gathered a blanket and a loaf of bread. We were just leaving when it started to hail, the largest hailstones I ever remember. She soon realized the roaring was from the storm coming down the canyon. It was soon over and we were thankful for our safety.

We enjoyed the fruit that we raised on the ranch. When the pears were ripe, Dad would have us hold a canvas under the tree while he shook the limbs for the fruit to drop. Pottawattamie plums had their place near the road going out of the ranch. They were thick and stickery. One day my friend, Zelpha Pendleton, daughter of Leo and Marantha Pendleton of Fruita, came to visit. Her parents were special friends of my parents. Their daughter Thelma chummed with my sister, Flora. I still write to Zelpha in St. George.

Zelpha and I decided to put a bridle on a fat old burro and take a ride around the yard. We lead her to the fence so we could get high enough to mount. The old burro decided she wanted to get rid of us so she went over to the plum patch and up the row scratching our legs. We soon kicked her sides and made her get out. We ended up with bleeding scratches.

The outside toilet was a short distance from the house. We never dared to go there after dark. A bedchamber was used and tucked under the bed until morning. The Montgomery Ward catalog was used for paper.

One evening just at dusk, Dad and Mother went up in the south field to milk the cows. We children were playing out in the yard. I noticed a bobcat laying in the rock on a small hill not too far from the house. I gathered the children, Flora and Ray, in the house and barricaded the door with the kitchen table. Soon we heard scratching on the door and I knew it was the bobcat. Mother and Dad came home and told us it was our old red dog that wanted to get in. It had been a scary time.

My folks decided to sell the ranch and move to Idaho. They bought a forty-acre farm, 20 acres in fruit and 20 in alfalfa. On the ranch we called alfalfa, lucerne. The farm was six miles south of Nampa, Canyon, Idaho. The Leo Pendleton family also bought a farm near us and we continued our friendships.

Before we left the Floral Ranch my father, Arthur, built a long ladder and carved our names high above the Indian writings on the red cliff northeast of the house. It took a lot of time to carve Arthur Eugene Hanks; and underneath, Mattie Little Hanks; then, Theton Mattie Hanks; then Floretta Hanks, then Raymond Eugene Hanks. Dad thought he would add an "h" to Teton to make it sound different. Mother took the picture of Dad up on the ladder, Flora and I standing at the base. Ray is sitting on a rock nearby. On the rocks where he is sitting are dips where the Indians used a small flat rock to grind corn or wheat.

It was hard to leave the Floral ranch with all its fond memories the 16th of September 1916. The buyers,

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Richardson and Graham, came riding to the ranch in a new Ford Model T, and frightened all the animals.

When we reached Nampa, Dad bought a two-seated Ford with fringe around the edges and leather curtains to snap on when winter came. Dad shipped by train, two carloads of horses and donkeys to sell. He kept some horses to use around the farm.

The Hanks Floral Ranch has changed hands a few times but has been owned by Lurton and Alice Knee for several years. They piped water from the spring up on the Black Hill where they built their home. They installed a power plant, built a 9-unit tourist motel and named the ranch, Sleeping Rainbow Guest Ranch. They have had tourists from all over the United States come to enjoy the beauty and peacefulness of the valley. Capitol Reef National Park has now incorporated their land at the ranch in their property. The home and a small piece of land still belong to Lurton and Alice Knee.³

It was been interesting to recall memories of 1910-1916, which were spent at the Floral ranch with my parents Arthur and Mattie Little Hanks, my sister Floretta (Flora), and my brother Raymond (Ray). I will be 74 years old the 5th of December 1981. Picture taken 1 April 1981.

³ Capitol Reef National Park was created 18 December 1971. Even after Capitol Reef became a national park, some land within its boundaries was still privately owned. Lurton and Alice Knee's Sleeping Rainbow Ranch along Pleasant Creek was included in President Johnson's huge monument expansion in 1969. The property had a colorful history having been settled in 1882 by Ephraim K. Hanks' family. In 1899 widow Thisbe Hanks received title to a quarter section on Pleasant Creek under the Homestead Act. A succession of owners tried to keep the Floral Ranch, as it was then called, operating in its remote and beautiful setting through the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1940 Lurton Knee and his first wife, Margaret, purchased the property, hoping after World War II to develop it as a tourist facility-renamed the Sleeping Rainbow Guest Ranch. They "built a house, cabins and a small concrete block motel on a knoll...[and] a power/telephone line through the Pleasant Creek Gorge to the west." They also had water for irrigation and culinary use. As the Knees developed their facility, they installed air conditioning and offered a variety of Jeep trips inside the monument and to other attractions such as San Rafael Swell, Goblin Valley, Thousand Lake Mountain, the Henry Mountains, and the Circle Cliffs. Their advertising appealed to a clientele interested in photography, nature, and geology. When Capitol Reef became a national park, the Knees began to consider selling their property and retiring. The sale was complicated and delayed by legislation creating the park, but in 1974 the NPS purchased 140 acres for \$300,000. In April 1878 most of the remaining acreage (minus the Knee's twenty-five-acre life estate) was purchased for \$450,000 in a transaction that involved a Seventh-day Adventist Church in California. Two months later, the Knees received \$17,805 for slightly less than half of their life estate. After Lurton Knee's death in 1995, the National Park Service acquired the remaining acreage from Alice Knee."

While park officials were considering what to do with the aging structures on the Knee property, Utah Valley State College (UVSC) in Orem made a unique proposal to renovate the buildings and use the 330-acre ranch as a science field camp for students. The area's geology, fauna and flora, and sites associated with prehistoric Fremont and Ancestral Pueblo peoples make it an ideal place to study many related scientific fields. Educational centers in national parks are not common, although two of the nation's premier parks, Yellowstone and Yosemite, do have them. Mark Peterson, regional director of the National Parks and Conservation Association, praised what he called "a really creative partnership." Calling Capitol Reef National Park "very little understood by the public," he stated his hope that "such a facility will be a tremendous resource to countless people in helping them better appreciate the unique environment of the park." In 1999 officials at Capitol Reef drafted a Memorandum of Agreement with the college. According to Tom Clark, UVSC will probably use the facility about one-third of the time, and it will be available for use by other colleges, universities, and public schools the remainder of the year." SOURCE: The Floral Ranch, From Wonderland to National Park, History of Wayne County, page 373, US/CAN 979.254 H2m; COMPILED: Sherry Smith, 14 July 2002.

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