

Personal History of Kate Locke Brower

I, Kate Locke Brower, was born of goodly parents. My father was Gus Thomas Locke, born 23rd of June 1862. He was the son of Josiah Locke and Mary Elizabeth McClellan. She was born in 1832.

My mother was Elizabeth Caroline Parker, born Nov. 27, 1868 at Bledsoe County, Tennessee. She was the daughter of Joseph Lewis Parker and Elender Rebecca Cates. Joseph & Elender were married at Walker County, Georgia at the home of the bride. Her father was Thomas J. Cates and mother Mary.

My parents had three children. My sister, Irene, was born February 8, 1897 near Jasper, Tennessee. I was born April 17, 1899 near Jasper, Tennessee. Our brother, Albert Haden, was born March 23, 1904.

My mother had a midwife at our births. When I was born, Sis ran around the bed saying "Tate, Tate" so they called me Kate. That was my mother's youngest sister's name, Kate. That was also the family name, Cates.

Father was a farmer and we lived on a small acreage, I think 20 (acres), and Papa rented river bottom land. We had a nice orchard and raised Irish and sweet potatoes. We also had geese, chickens, guinea, cows, pigs and a pair of mules. We kids had to pick the potato bugs off the potato vines in the garden. We didn't have spray and dust like they do now. Irene and I had to milk cows, feed pigs and have all the chores done when Papa came from the field. Oh yes, we also raised broom corn which was used to make brooms. Also Okra mustard green that the older people loved so well. The okra was so slick when you put it in your mouth you didn't have a choice, it just slid down. We would go into the woods to pick black berries, dew berries, mulberry and persimmon. They made such lovely jam and jelly. We would also gather black walnut, hickory nut and chestnut. They were so good during the winter months. I really enjoyed sitting out in the sun and cracking those nuts. We raised all kind of melon which we enjoyed so much when we came home from school. We enjoyed sitting down with a juicy watermelon right from the vine.

The dogwood trees were so very beautiful when they were in bloom in the Spring. I remember we had a maple tree in our yard. Papa would hang a bucket on it in the Spring when the sap was up to catch the liquid for syrup. We loved to watch the sugar cane harvest. When they ran the syrup it made good candy we loved.

Our closest playmates were our cousins, the Turners, Mama's oldest sister's family. They were the only members of the church (LDS) we knew. Uncle Poley, Ida, Nettie, Mama and the twins, May and Ellen joined the church when Irene and I did. Aunt Harriet would have loved to join but was so drawn up with arthritis she just sat in the chair. She couldn't straighten her legs and everybody feared that when she died it would be hard to get her in the casket. Mama worried about leaving her behind when we moved to Idaho, but she passed away before we left.

Some of my early memories are of our living conditions. We had outdoor toilets and used a Sears Roebuck catalog for paper. There was no such thing as an indoor toilet and no running water. We went to Ebenezer School and on Sunday to church in the same building. Later we moved to the Killian

School which was much further away, and always had to walk. Irene and I went to church alone when we were older. I don't remember Mama going to Sunday School with us, but Sis says Papa took us when we were younger. We went to revival meetings where people would get the "Spirit" and yell "Praise the Lord, Amen". They would carry on so, I couldn't see anything of value they could offer for someone seeking something from religion.

Our parents joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in November of 1902. My sister and I joined and were baptized on April 26, 1911 by W. H. Lawrence and confirmed by J. F. Hiatt.

One year at school we had a lovely teacher who won the students over with her kindness. She took the class to her home for dinner in town. Dinner was served in courses. We didn't expect such service so we filled up with the first course. We really enjoyed it and it was so much fun. One day when we went out for recess a Ford car drove by. We were all excited seeing our first automobile. I remember sitting behind a girl who had head lice. I was so worried about getting them but Mama had us keep our hair and heads clean.

After the folks joined the church Papa did a lot of reading but never explained anything to us. When the Elders would come we just had to sit and listen. They didn't explain the Gospel like they do now, but we still enjoyed a sweet spiritual feeling whenever they came. The folks said we children were to be seen and not heard so we never learned much about the church. I loved to read the Book of Mormon and always loved the story of Joseph Smith.

We had a neighborhood well where we drew water and carried it home. The Elders would go with Sis and I to get water and the neighbor thought that was awful for the Elders to accompany us.

Our parents were always willing to give a helping hand to the neighbors. They would sit up with the sick and comfort the mourners in death.

One day my brother cut his leg just below the knee. We were three miles from the doctor with only horse and buggy for transportation. This fact alone made us self reliant. Mama took soot from the chimney and applied it to the cut and this stopped the bleeding. Mama always seemed to know what to do in any situation. She would always say, "You don't need to tell children the things that nature teaches them". That's why I was never told anything. That is just the way we were taught.

One night our home was hit by a tornado. It blew the roof off our house and only the chimney was left standing. Even though not totally awake I saw the lightning and heard the rumble of the thunder. I said to Mama, "this bed is full of water." She said, "yes, the roof is blown off the house." She spent the rest of the night trying to calm us down. We lived in a log house and when the wind started to blow Papa knelt by the bed with my brother, Buddy, in his arms when five logs from the house blew on to the bed. The rain was coming down so fast that I said, "let's go to the barn," but that too had blown away. One of the Turner boys came to see how things were. We found some clothes and shoes and went to the neighbor's house which was saved from the wind where many other neighbors gathered. The mother in that house was in bed with a new baby. The next morning a black greenish cloud come up over the trees with terrible thunder and lightning. I will never forget that storm as it seemed it would be the end for all of us. It looked like a ball of fire and took everything with it wherever it dipped to the ground. People in town said you could read a newspaper in the dark from the light. We went to grandmother Parker's home until our house was repaired. All our good neighbors gave a helping hand to gather the scattered livestock and repair the fences and houses that were damaged or destroyed.

I distinctly remember hog killing time. The hogs, dead of course, would be put into large barrels of boiling water where the hair would be scrapped off. Then came the curing of the meat, sausage making and head cheese. Lots of hard work but rewarding with lots of good things to eat.

Some time after Uncle James' family moved to Blackfoot, Idaho Aunt Lou wrote to the folks telling how telling how many wonderful advantages there were in Idaho. My parents were thus convinced to move to the west. Our house and possessions were sold and we were soon on the train headed for Idaho. Near St. Louis I saw an Indian for the first time. Also, a negro man came into the train car and sat down beside my brother. This was most unusual as in the South negroes weren't permitted to ride in the same car with the whites. We had a long layover in Cheyenne, Wyoming and arrived in Blackfoot on March 18, 1913. A cold wind was blowing, which right off we didn't like. Uncle James' family met us and we stayed a few days with them until my folks could rent a house from Antone Burnett, which was near the present fairgrounds. Uncle James soon persuaded Papa to homestead 320 acres of desert land west of Rockford. Papa's first job in Idaho was thinning sugar beets. I went with him to help. Soon he was busy buying stock, building a house and barn, drilling a well and getting things ready to move to the desert.

I had a job working for Mrs. Jensen tending Jessie. I also helped in the dining room and made beds upstairs. One day one of the male boarders left a quarter on his bed and then hung around. I was afraid of him so hurried and made his bed and then dashed downstairs to tell Mrs. Jensen. Mr. Jensen at the time was on a mission so it was up to Mrs. Jensen to run the boarding house at the sugar company farm. One time Ardena Jensen and I cooked up some fun on Halloween. We put some sheets over us to scare young Waltermar. He was really upset, but we had fun. I stayed at the boarding house till school started.

In the Fall Papa worked at the sugar company. When Spring came he rented land to farm. As a family we all went out to thin beets to get the extra money we needed to go on. That Fall when Papa was hauling straw he caught cold which developed into pneumonia. This resulted in his death on December 22, 1915. Uncle James came to help Mama get a casket. Papa's funeral was the day before Christmas, December 24, 1915. My brother and I were too sick to go to the funeral.

A Brother Van Orden came and talked to Mama about making preparations to go to the temple. Then she could have her husband and children sealed together as a family. I took in every word for I very much wanted to be with my father and family after this life. On New Years Day I was taken to the Mitchell Hospital in Blackfoot with pneumonia. Irene said they put me out on the porch. For some time I didn't know anything that was going on. I remember they took me to a room which was next to where a man kept fighting the nurses to get out of bed. I was afraid for fear he might come into my room. I spent thirty long, dreary days in that hospital. One day when I was trying to go to sleep the doctor came in and sat beside my bed and watched me so carefully. I was afraid of him and wanted to close my eyes and go to sleep. The doctor told some of the nurses that if I went to sleep I would never wake up. I wanted to give up and go and be with Papa. The Lord had a greater mission for me, for which I am grateful. Mama had to drive three miles to see how I was coming. When I was able to go home I was put on the train for the ride to Rockford. Brother and Sister Wheeler met me and took me to their home for a week until I could drive out to the desert in a sleigh pulled by two horses to go home. I will never forget the love and kindness of those dear people. That was a trying time for my dear mother. Mama wouldn't let the nurse cut my hair even though in was in a tangled mess. It took months to get it straightened out again.

Mama went out to cut large sagebrush for wood to heat and cook. No one ever gave her a helping hand.

Will Bingham lived just above us and Loren watered his horses at our well. He would just sit on the horse and let them drink the water in the trough. Sis and I figured that he could at least have filled the trough once in a while.

We had a pet pig named Bell Don. One time he came in the house through an open door and crawled into the oven. This amazed us to say the least. We found it difficult to butcher our pet pig, especially since Mama and us kids did it by ourselves.

I went to school at Rockford and graduated from the eighth grade. I had to walk three miles to school every day. How I would have loved to go on to school with the friends I had become so close to, especially Susie Shelmon and Jennie Summer Corn. Egan Lamprect tried each Sunday to meet me on the way to church while I was staying at Ryan's. He tried so to sit by me. I didn't want that man to bother me.

I met Steve Brower, my future husband, through Sadie Knight. She lived in the grove on the sugar factory farm. Steve's folks lived in a tent on the sugar company farm where many beautiful homes now stand. Sadie and Lucy, Steve's sister, chummed together and I got to know Steve through this association. We went to dances together and after Steve left for the army we corresponded. Several times when Sis and I were going to church Ray Eskelson and Bryan Parker would drive by and try to get us to go for a ride, but we never did. One evening when returning from Mutual they drove by and asked me to go for a ride. I told them it was too late. Mrs. Ryan was sitting on the porch and overheard our conversation. She said, "I'm glad you didn't go with those boys." I told her that one of them was my cousin and I didn't want to be out with him. Mama would call on the telephone [and] we would report all the happenings since her last call. Mama didn't approve of me marrying Steve. She had met him several times and all she could say about him was, "If you marry him all you will have is a lot of kids." She didn't approve of large families.

My parents never did show us any love or affection. I used to sit on Mama's lap and put my arms around her and try kissing her, but she would always push me away and say, "don't kiss me, I have bad breath." They never told us anything of their lives or their parents. I suppose that is the way they were raised.

My father was left an orphan at a very tender age. His mother died in child birth when twins were born on June 6, 1866. One of the twins died on June 23rd, only a few days after they were born. Grandfather passed away March 3, 1868. The children were put into different homes until they were older at which time they again moved together until they were each married. One twin married a man the family didn't approve of. He took her away and they never heard from her again.

I have been bothered by one particular name. On the record it says John F. Locke departed this life August 5, 1864. No birth date is given. We've had research done on this line without success. I pray the way will be opened so we can locate more information on our parents and find the names of our grandparents.

Steve and I were married September 17, 1919 in the Salt Lake Temple. None of our family or ward were with us. We went by train from Blackfoot to Salt Lake City, Utah. We stayed in Hotel Utah across from the temple. I was really scared to stay one night alone. It was late when we came from the temple. After spending our wedding night in Hotel Utah we left for Hooper, Utah where Steve's folks lived. We went from there to Ogden, Utah where we met and shook hands with President Woodrow Wilson.

Steve worked on the (Indian) Reservation south of Blackfoot. While he was gone I stayed with Mama. When he came home I would sit on his lap and hug and kiss him. Mama would say, "Now let's have none of that." Never was any love shown to us or expression of affection made. How I longed that we could be to ourselves. Even though mother said that there was no reason to teach children what nature would provide she still gave of herself to be with us when each of our children was born.

When we moved into our own home Lucy, Steve's sister, stayed with us for some time. Then Grandma Brower wanted Grace to come. She stayed several months. Then Alice came. We didn't have much time to ourselves. Brothers Acy and Jody were also in and out often. After we moved to the sugar factory farm then brother Lorenzo and friend came often. We were finally alone when our first child was born. We were so happy with our little one. The little neighbor boy looked out their window and said, "Mama, I can't see the baby at the window." Mrs. Barker lived next door with her son and his wife. She was so good and kind to me. She told me so many things I didn't know and was a big help.

On a Christmas morning our second little boy was born. He was so frail and tiny - a blue baby. Both the doctor and Mama said he wouldn't live. They wouldn't tell me of his condition. I wasn't well during the time I was carrying him, but the Lord blessed us and spared his life and we continued to cherish and love him for the twenty years he was with us.

On the 20th of September our third little boy was born on a Sunday. He was a beautiful, bouncing baby. We were so happy with our three boys. They were a joy to our lives.

Our first little girl was born on November 27, 1928. Steve went for Mama, then went out to milk. No sooner had he come in from milking when she was born. Dr. Beck was out on another call when little Dorothy came into the world so Dr. Mitchell came to our aid. I wasn't even undressed when he arrived. He wanted to know if this was my first child and I answered "No, it is my fourth, but I have always had plenty of time." Everything was alright.

We were so happy with our first little girl. Steve always said he wanted a little girl dressed in blue.

Our second little girl was born January 31, 1931. Evelyn came into our lives and increased the happiness in our home to overflowing. Before I was out of bed following her delivery the other children came home with whooping cough. The baby caught it right away and we almost lost her. Our prayers, I know, were instrumental in the Lord saving her for us, and we were blessed in our home beyond measure. I also caught cold and had sinus trouble which continued to grow worse as I didn't take time to go to the doctor, with caring for the sick ones and all, and that is when my ear trouble started. This was also the time my hearing problems started, which grew worse over the years. I used to cry at night with ear pain.

We've been tried and tested over the years. We were looking for a favorable grain harvest when Steve went to check on the grain he found the Indian's horses had been in it so we didn't get much harvest that year. Leon was a baby the summer we lived on the reservation. Leon was so much pleasure and company to me as I was left alone most of the day. Steve ran the Sugar Factory farm. When we moved back to the home we bought we found out Bill Cox had put a \$750.00 mortgage on the place. We didn't know and we had failed to register at the court house. Mr. Wealand came to see if we were ready to pay the \$750.00. We couldn't and we felt so bad. He was a very dishonest man, (was Pres. of High Priest Quorum). We found he was charging for water on our place as well as his and had put everything in his wife's name.

This same year my brother was killed by a train near Salt Lake City. Sis was working in Dr. White's office and got word of the accident but she wouldn't tell Mama. I had to break the news to Mama. I was told he was in the hospital in Salt Lake and this is what I told her, but sis corrected me and said he was killed. It was such a hard blow for her. A man from the railroad came to see mama to tell her what happened and to tell her that Albert had taken out a life insurance policy to help mama in case anything happened to him. Mama never did get over the heartache of his death.

That year we moved from the Indian Reservation back to the burned out farm which was across from the Stake Tabernacle on Highland Drive. There we lived and farmed for eight years and here our last three children were born.

When our youngest child, Wayne, was a year old we moved to the Jeppeson place for the summer, which was only 20 acres. Bishop Jeppeson tried hard to sell us the place but we ended up buying the Thornton farm instead. Steve worked on the Thornton farm during the summer when he suffered a sun stroke. The children and I continued to tend the irrigation and other farming at the Jeppeson place. We moved here the 1st of November when Wayne was two years old.

The following winter was really hard. Steve and Uncle Walter worked hard to put two parts of a house together for our home when Steve fell ill and had to go to Boise to the veteran's hospital. His appendix ruptured before anyone would give him any care and he nearly died. Uncle Walter tried to bring us a load of coal and couldn't make it from town because of a bad snow storm. The boys and I had to saw and chop up a tree in the front yard to use for fuel. Some of the boys from the Ward came to chop wood on Saturday. It was so cold the livestock wouldn't drink the cold water in the mornings when the boys could man the pump, so I had to pump the water for them. Evelyn would watch Wayne while I fed horses in the pasture. The wind blew so hard and was so cold I could hardly carry in the wood and feed a bundle of hay to the horses. Our only income was what the cows brought in. We would drive to town in the wagon to go to church. We were members of the 1st Ward.

The snow was so deep you could only see half of the barn door. I remember one morning about five o'clock we could see the rotary plow coming down the highway and throwing the snow as high as the telephone and it was 3 1/2 to 4 hours getting past our place. It almost covered our mail box. Steve had to be taken to the Veterans Hospital in Salt Lake with a bleeding ulcer. He was gone for more than a week for the treatment. It was hard to keep things up, but we all worked together and helped make the payments on the farm. The children were a big help. The neighbors would all go together helping to hauling manure, hay, threshing grain, spud, and beet harvest. The children would all help thin the beets, pick potatoes and beets along with the grain and hay harvest. Dorothy was always the derrick helper for the neighbor. Goldie Anderson and I did the cooking for the hay and grain men and the harvesting of the potatoes and beets. We had a lot of fun together along with our work.

The children in the neighborhood all went to Mutual. Dorothy was the only girl, but she had her brothers.

Leon and Wesley always administered to the sacrament. When Leon was called on a mission then Wesley and Richard would do it. We never had a problem getting our children to go to church. When it was church time each one would get ready and we all went together. When I couldn't go Steve would always take them. If I stayed home I usually had Jay Anderson (he was the neighbor boy Richard's age) here until the rest of the family came home.

Steve was called as Bishop of the 4th ward and was very busy. I spent a lot of time at home alone

taking care of things. We only had one car because we were so poor, and I couldn't drive anyway. I have always been sorry I hadn't learned. The members of the ward were always close to each other as was the Bishopric and they worked long hard hours.

Steve worked at the Co-op and went to Portland to several meetings. He also did a lot of traveling while he was County Commissioner. I didn't go very often as we couldn't afford it. One time I went and we drove to Portland to a meeting and down the coast to Bud and Evelyn's to be with her when Danny was born. We stayed two weeks, but he was not ready to come. We left and drove to Frank and Ora's and they took us to Los Angeles to Steve's sister Katie for a visit. Then we drove to Las Vegas and visited with Alice and Paul. Then to Cedar City Cedar City where Leon and Vivian lived. The two little girls came home with us. We had some trouble at Cove Fort when our car slide of the road. We drove on to Salt Lake to Dorothy and Douglas's with no more trouble until we were a couple of miles from home and hit slick roads. The car turned completely around. A truck from Utah Power Co. was just behind us and they jumped out of the truck and ask which way we were going. They picked the car up and set us back on the road. Another time we were driving to Boise for Thanksgiving. We were almost there when the car got so hot we thought it was going to catch on fire. We pulled off at a small station and found out that when Steve had bought gas in Blackfoot before leaving they had left the small plug out of the differential. It was a new car and we had trouble getting the Co-op to service it. The insurance guys didn't want to do it for a time.

Excerpts

We visited Leon and family in Ithaca, NY while he was in school in 1958 or 9.

We were with Evelyn when Elizabeth was born 26 July 1959

We visited again in 1975. Leon and Vivian took us in their station wagon. We slept in a tent with an air mattress. We had a lovely trip and enjoyed it. We visited important places in Nauvoo and saw where the temple stood. Went to Adam-ondi-Ahman.

We flew back to Indiana when Elizabeth was killed to find Evelyn in a wheelchair and her arm in a cast. Evelyn visited Nauvoo with us and we left to go to the worlds fair 3 Aug 1964.

Wayne, Scott and Brett took us down to the Stake breakfast July 4th 1983. They came home and hauled one more load of hay, cut both lawns and irrigated. We enjoyed the breakfast and to see people we hadn't seen for sometime. We sat across the table where a couple with four young children sat. They ate a good meal never heard a complaint out of them. We enjoyed a lovely program. Then Scott took Steve and I out to visit Sis and Walter's. They are like we are having to depend on someone else to take us. Scott sat in the car and studied while [we] visited, bless his heart. He is a choice helpful person. Later that evening we went to the fireworks, which was very nice. Scott and Brett both fell asleep.

Monday, July 5th

Brett's birthday. I baked a cake for him and had a birthday dinner - fried chicken, baked potatoes, green beans, lettuce salad, raspberry jello salad.

Tuesday, 6th

We enjoyed a lovely warm day. I could sit out doors and enjoy the soft breeze. I didn't do much today.

Wed., 7th

Wind blew hard most of the day and later in the day a real wind and dust storm blew one of Wayne's trees down. We were out of power for awhile, has been so many times lately. I did some wash today.

Thursday, 8th

Went to town for medicine and groceries. Was really tired out the rest of the day. That evening I had a rough time and really rough Friday. Cathy came home early Friday morning, her husband had to go right back to go to work at 6 o'clock. His 16 yr old brother came up with him from Provo as Brad's folks just came back from Hawaii late Thursday night.

Sat., 9th

Bud and Evelyn called and we talked to Danny from Indianapolis. So good to hear from them. My voice wasn't very good, could only say "hello" to Danny. I did talk to Evelyn for awhile, it made the day for us. Wayne, Cathy and the two boys left for Washington this morning. They will be gone until Monday. Jim Hofer brought Sister Thornton out to visit and took Steve into the 4th ward meeting. They are having old 4th ward get together, but Steve said there wasn't too many come. He was gone from twelve to four - thirty. Saturday was a bad day for me. Bp. Benson is a sealer at the Idaho Falls Temple now.

This autobiography of Kate Locke Brower was obtained from her daughter, Dorothy Brower Brown. December 1986.