

MY HISTORY

Oreta Huntsman Hammer Child

Oreta was born January 16, 1895 in Cainsville, Utah to Elmer Ames and Augusta Ann Norton Huntsman. In 1889, Elmer Huntsman bought a ranch and after his marriage to Augusta, they built a one room log cabin and there, Oreta's older brother Evon Wesley was born, March 12, 1892. This homestead, in Wayne County, was just a few miles east of Cainsville. Why the home where Oreta was born had no roof, is not known, but from this excerpt taken from Elmer Ames own written history came this statement, "On 16 Jan. 1895 at Cainsville, Wayne County, a baby girl came to gladden our hearts. We named her Oreta. There was no roof on the house where Oreta was born, so I took a wagon top and placed it on the roof over the bed to keep the rain off Augusta while the baby was born."

During the summer of 1895, a reformation was taken place in Cainsville among those that had not been sealed in the temple. Elmer and Augusta were caught up in this and saw the necessity to do so themselves, so on November 20th, 1895, they headed to the Manti Temple with their baby, Oreta, and 3-year old Evon Wesley. There, they had their temple work done and Evon and Oreta were sealed to their parents for Time and Eternity.

It was too difficult and expensive to fight the many spring runoffs and floods that kept washing out their canal. The Huntsman family moved back to Annabella, Sevier County and there they bought a vacant lot and built a house. These were hard times for the Huntsman family, as Elmer's own history so states. He had to spend a lot of time away from home to make a

living. On April 26th, 1887, Oreta's younger sister was born and the name of Leona was given to her. Leona was only a little over four months old, when she took sick and died, September 4, 1897. This was also, apparently, a sad day for two year old Oreta. She loved her baby sister. After she was married to Austin Hammer and their first child was born, they named her Leona out of love for her yonger sister.

On November 20th, 1898, a baby brother, Vernard, came to the home of three year old Oreta and on July 24th, 1901, another brother was born, Elmer Delos. Now Oreta was old enough to become a lot of help to her mother. Time was still hard for the Huntsman family the next few years. On September 7th, 1903, Oreta again was overjoyed to have another sister and she was named Delta.

While Elmer was working in Sunnyside, Utah, in the coal mines, he became very sick with what was diagnosed as appendicitis. About this time, March 13th, 1904, his wife and family came to visit and as he soon got somewhat better, he rented a small home and there they set up house keeping. His condition continued to get worse, so he instructed his wife and young family to move back to their home in Annabella, after he left for the hospital in Salt Lake City. This was a sad time for Oreta and family, as they were not sure they would ever see their father again. On the train that was to take Elmer out, word came that their home in Annabella had burned to the ground and everything was lost. What another sad day this day, April 10th, 1904 was!

Augusta took employment in a Sheep Shearing Camp as a cook, to feed her small family. Much of the care of the two younger boys and baby sister, now fell on the shoulders of nine year old Oreta. Over the years, she had a lot of responsibility and knew what hard work was like, starting at a young age. When the shearing was over, Augusta and family went to visit some of her relatives. While there, they got word from Elmer that some of her family, the Vests and Jones, had dropped off to visit him in the Hospital, on their way to Idaho to take up a homestead. During the conversation with them, they told Elmer that if he would send for his family, they would wait for them to arrive and they would then take all to Idaho. Elmer told Augusta that they now had nothing to go home to and felt that this was a great opportunity.

As soon as Augusta and family reached Salt Lake, Elmer had miraculously improved enough, after his operation, to check out of the hospital and he walked all the way to Idaho, as the wagon was too rough to ride in. The Huntsman family left with only what they had on their backs, yet this was a happy time for Oreta and her brothers. Her sister was too young to know what was really going on. To be with their father again, when they had earlier doubted they would ever see him again, was a happy time.

There were 24 people and three wagons. It was on their way, between Salt Lake and Ogden, that Oreta and her brothers saw their first automobile. Evon Wesley stated in his history, "It was not much of a car, but enough to frighten the horses." They left Salt Lake, May 18, 1904 and reached Idaho Falls, May 31, 1904. The trip to Idaho took 12 days.

With the help of Elmer's nephew, Lewis M. Nebeker, who was in the Real Estate business

in Idaho Falls, the Huntsman family found a farm on the west side of the Snake River and it was eight miles southwest of Idaho Falls. This was in the now thriving community of Woodville. Their first home was a tent. That winter, they moved into a home that was owned by the Gifford Family. When the snow came, the house was so full of cracks that the snow would blow in. During this cold winter of 1904--1905, the now ten year old Oreta and her three brothers complained very little, as they were now together again as a complete family. The next winter, Elmer bought a small home near Shelley and they put it on slides and with teams of horses, they pulled it over the snow and the river ice, to their farm in Woodville.

Most of the community of Woodville were Mormons and School and Church was held in the one room, white schoolhouse near the Southeast corner of the Huntsman farm. Here, Oreta and her brothers went to school and to church with their family. Also, it was in this Schoolhouse that Oreta completed grade school.

In 1906, the community of Woodville built the one room, white frame Church and Cultural Hall on the Woodville Townsite, it being about one mile south of the Huntsman farm. March 31, 1909, another girl was born to the Huntsman family and was named Zalia. On February 23rd, 1913, a son, Leonard, was born. Just one month later, Oreta married Austin Josiah Hammer, the son of William Austin Hammer and Anna Messervy Hammer, of Woodville. Their marriage was Solemnized in the Temple April 2nd, 1913. To this Marriage was born four children, Leona, February 20th, 1914, Bernice, July 16th, 1915, Afton, January 14th, 1917, (she dying of the flu, a little over a month later, on the 20th of

February 1917 and Louis Elmer, born March 30th, 1918.

Austin and Oreta bought a farm, about one mile north of the Huntsman farm and were farming it in 1918. There, Austin caught the flu and died November 11th, 1918. This was also, the day that the Armistice was signed to end the First World War. Three others from Woodville died the same year of the flue. Sorrow and hard times fell on Oreta and her young family.

In 1915, Elmer completed a two story house that he had built out of his own cement blocks. Sometime after Evon got home off his Mission, he with his Dad, built a small two room house, just north of Elmer and Augusta's home. Evon and Elnora lived here and farmed with Evon's dad. In 1918, when Austin died, Evon traded his home to Oreta for the equity they had in their farm. Here, Oreta and her three children lived when she married John (Jack) Child, April 8th, 1923 in Pocatello, Bannock County, Idaho. Jack was born March 3, 1901 in Sandy, Salt Lake County, Utah. Jack, his siblins and his mother, Minnie Bolander Accampo, moved to the Shelley area in 1907 to be near the Bolander relatives. Jacks mother, Minnie, married Heber T. Child, a widower, in January of 1909

Two children were born to Jack and Oreta, Maxine, October 13th, 1925 and Cheryl, December 4th, 1928. Maxine was born a tiny, premature baby due to Oreta having Typhoid Fever. Maxine was born at Grandma and Grandpa Huntsman' home. They were taken to the Hospital; Maxine was cared for by her Grandma Child while Oreta regained her health. Three years later Cheryl was born in the "little white house".

When Cheryl was six weeks old, Bernice,

Louis and Maxine came down with smallpox. They were quarantined in the house; Jack was quarantined out of the house. Leona had been vaccinated and she stayed at Grandma and Grandpa's house until the quarantine was lifted.

Jack, Oreta and family moved to Blackfoot area where Jack farmed and raised pigs.

Bernice and her Aunt Zalia, together moved to Portland, Oregon in 1934, soon following was Zalia's sister Delta, and other Huntsman cousins. Leona was on her own and Louis was staying with Grandma and Grandpa Huntsman.

In the fall of 1936 Jack, Oreta, Louis, Maxine and Cheryl moved to Ellensburg, Washington. A few of Jacks relatives had moved there previously. Louis stayed a short while and then moved to Salt Lake City, Utah to go to school at the LDS Business College. He and Leona moved together to Portland where they worked: Louis then joined the US Coast Guard in 1946. Bernice and Leona had both married ; by 1949 Louis, Maxine and Cheryl were married.

In 1946, Jack and Oreta moved to Prosser, Washington onto a newly irrigated land project. They remained on the farm until a Stroke disabled Jack in 1962. The farm was sold and Jack and Oreta moved to Portland to be near Bernice and Cheryl and their families. Oreta died in 1968 due to stomach cancer. Jack died in a nursing home in 1974 due to the effects of his stroke.

Lois and family left the Coast Guard and moved to Richland, Washington area in 1954 where he farmed and worked at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. He sold his farm in 1972 due to health problems and moved into town.

Maxine had moved to Portland from Spokane in 1970 after her husband, Duane Cox had died. Leona retired from her work at Motorola in 1976. Maxine died unexpectedly from a heart attack in 1970.