

Ralph Harrison Frantz

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my father - David Henry Frantz was born in Penn in 1870 and was Penn Dutch and spoke only German until he was school age. He went to Illinois near Decatur and grew up there. my mother - Lydia Hannah Tropler was born in Illinois in 1877 near Decatur where she grew up and married my father June 8-1896 near Decatur. my father died in Modesto Calif Sept 1-1949. my mother died in Modesto June 20-1974. my sister Anna Mary was born in Illinois Feb 19-1900. my folks moved to Britt Iowa in 1901 and were farming and I was born Nov 13-1902 near Britt. my brother Ivan was born Dec 3-1904 near Britt. after two cyclones had destroyed the farm buildings on the farm my folks were renting they moved to a farm near Minot N. Dak in 1905 that they rented 5 miles south of Surrey so they could be in area of the church of the Brethren at Surrey. They were members and we went to church there. In 1908 they bought a 160 acre farm 1 1/2 miles west of Surrey. Viola Mae was born there Dec 12-1908. In spring of 1910 my father filed on a 160 acre claim in Saskatchewan Canada 60 miles south of maple creek in a new settlement of homesteaders from the United States at Battle Creek community area. we moved by train to maple creek and father hauled two loads of lumber to the claim to build a house. The Canadian Government had promised a railroad to Battle Creek but it was never put in. Before father started building because of impure water in creek used for water supply a typhoid fever sickness caused deaths in the settlement because of no doctor within 60 miles. Father gave up the claim and sold lumber to other settlers. He went to Medicine Hat Alberta and bought a 160 acre farm 11 miles south west of medicine Hat at Bulls Head Station. Battle Creek and Bulls Head are no more settlements. Father built a

covered wagon on our wide Hay wagon and shipped our farm equipment and furniture in a box car to Bulls Head. Then we traveled the 65 miles maple creek to Bulls Head in covered wagon and and grain wagon with feed and supplies for our cows and horses we led along behind wagons. The covered wagon trip took six days thru country that had no roads but what wagon trails were available between farms and open sheep range. The sheep herders wanted no cows crossing their range and tried to stop us. one day after having no water for nearly two days we came to a stream and were filling our water barrels and watering horses and cows when two sheep herders came and told us to get cows away from stream and to empty water barrels. Father offered to pay for water. They wanted no pay - just turn around and go back. Father got his single shot 22 Rifle and said we wouldn't go back and that if they didn't leave or started towards us as he was a sharp shooter only one of them would leave alive. They backed away and then got very friendly and said they were only trying to scare us. They then told us our map was wrong and best road was two miles north and good grazing area and good overnight camp about five miles. Father kept rifle pointed at them while they were marking the map mother showed them. They wished us a safe trip and left. mother asked if he would have shot. Father said he couldn't as gun not loaded so maybe he should keep it loaded. I have the rifle as an heirloom. we followed sheep herders directions and got to a better road and good grazing spot.

That evening while Anna and I were hunting Buffalo chips
 for our fire Anna was half mile from camp when
 two coyotes started chasing her. She ran screaming
 towards camp and mother got to her before coyotes
 and she beat them off with a stick until Father got
 there with rifle. we had no more troubles on our
 covered wagon trip. At Bulls Head we had a one
 room school that was used for Brethern church
 services. we had open range in front of our
 farm but our farm and neighbors farm was fenced.
 To get to school we stayed inside our fence to the
 corner. Then when no bulls close we ran the 200 feet
 to corner of neighbors fence and stayed inside their fence
 to railroad where we could cross it to fenced school yard.
 we were $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from school. we were used to one
 room school as we attended one room school in N. Dak.
 of course it was hard to learn English History as
 their history taught that George Washington was a
 traitor and would have been hung if he had been
 caught. mother was sure I was wrong until neighbor
 told her we were in England now. one day at noon
 the boys got me to sing the Star Spangled Banner under
 the school window. I got 3 sharp cracks on left hand
 palm from a steel edged ruler from our good English
 teacher. She hit my left hand so my right could
 be used to write on Blackboard ten times George
 Washington was a traitor. our well was $\frac{1}{2}$ mile
 from house in a low area so hauled water in
 barrel from well for house use. we took animals
 to well to water. Several times Anna and I had
 to fight off coyotes and wolves trying to get
 calves at water hole. we both had heavy

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wood wagon wheel spokes to protect ourselves and they wouldn't attack us if we stayed together back to back but if we ran to protect a calf and not together they would jump at us. Father planted the farm but we had no rain so it only came up from snow-melt dampness and then dried out. Soil was very deep and rich so we had the best garden as we hauled water for it. we had carrots 3 feet long and very good. The folks turned place back and we went back to our farm in north Dakota in 1912. In 1947 I took Nera to the place in Canada. The house had been taken down but I could show her the rows of our garden and marks of grain drill that father made as no one had tried to farm after we left. I took her in the school house to show her my seat at school not used and not locked. After returning to Surrey we returned to our farm after renters moved. we had very good crops in 1913 and built a big barn for horses and cows and a big long low pig sty for 80 to 100 pigs. we had 12 or more milk cows and delivered our milk to a restaurant in Minot 7 miles away. As no refrigeration during hot summer months we hung the milk in 5 gal milk cans in our well to cool. Each morning during hot weather it was my job to take cooled milk to minot early before sun would warm it. It was a 2 hour trip in one horse buckboard to minot. after delivering milk I would buy some groceries or other needed things and be home by noon or 1 P.M. Then help pump water for live stock. It became too much work to

hand pump the large amount of water needed so
 we got a gasoline engine to pump the water and
 also use to run corn sheller. we were one of first
 farmers that engine pumped water so neighbors for
 miles came to see if it was successful. The engine
 had big fly wheels and a belt pulley for belt to
 the pump. we got a large round watering trough
 for cattle and horses and hauled water to the pig pen.
 one of my duties was to keep water level high. we
 carried water into the house. The engine was hard
 to start as fly wheel had to be turned to right position
 and then put a match in striker. Then turn fly
 wheel and at same time push the striker so match
 lit and fired the fuel. Cold days it might take
 several tries before engine would keep running.
 after started the belt had to be put on pulley and
 I had to be very careful not to get my hands
 caught between belt and pulley. It was a water
 cooled engine with a 2 or 3 gal water tank over the
 cylinders. no anti freeze so had to be drained each
 night. During winter we had a kerosine heater
 in watering tank and a wood cover over tank and would
 open half of tank for stock to drink and fill tank
 on heater and recover tank to keep from freezing.
 many winter mornings even with heater we had to break
 ice before stock could drink. The folks rented 160 acres
 north of our farm and also 160 acres 3 miles north. In
 spring I plowed with 2 and 3 horses on gang plow from early
 daylight till after dark. I was excused from school
 in spring till crops planted and in fall until wheat all
 cut by our big binder ready for thrashing machine.
 when rains delayed wheat cutting we worked afternoons

and till midnight until dew got wheat too damp to cut. after rains and ground damp we had an extra team ahead of 3 horses used to pull binder. I rode one of lead horses to keep them pulling their share. after dark I carried a lantern so father could see where grain edge was to keep rear horses next to edge. The thinking in those days was that I could easily catch up on school work during the winter. after I started school fall of 1914 my health gave out. my teacher sent me home because I was throwing things or dropping my school book for which I had razor strap used on me for misbehaving. But when I dropped things at home mother took me to family doctor. after his best examination for those days he said my back was out of line from heavy work I had been doing. This caused pinched nerves causing nervous convulsions that caused me to walk uneven and throw or drop things because of pinched nerves. Doctor said many children when overworked when too young had same thing and because of their funny walk it was called Saint Vitus Dance. He gave me medicine and said no more school work till I was better. Also if I walked past the hot cook stove to be sure some one was between me and stove so I wouldn't fall on it. mother gave me school work so I could keep up with my grade. During that winter I think in Jan 1915 mother got a bad cold and doctor came out to check her. she had pneumonia so doctor wanted her in hospital. Doctor asked how I felt. I said O.K. except for pain in my lower back. He checked me and said I should go to hospital also so he could check my back pains. we went to the

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Saint Joseph Hospital in Minot. we were both put in a private room together. mother became much worse and doctor got two special nurses to stay in room with us. Each nurse had a 12 hour shift. after a week my back pains turned into Pneumonia. Doctor stayed all one night with nurse to help mother past fatal point. She made it and started a slow recovery. But a few days later doctor had something with me and after an all night watch I started my recovery. as mother improved she thought she could take care of me without expense of special nurses. I nearly died one day because nurse would not give me medicine ordered by doctor. when using hospital nurses they could give no medicine until the mother superior told them to and she was at mass. mother got doctor on phone and he rushed over and gave me my medicine and stayed till danger past. Doctor then had mother superior post an order that I was to get my medicine as ordered without her O.K. after we got home doctor let me return to school in a few weeks. Before my nervous illness I wrote a very nice hand but ever since very bad. my teacher would hardly believe that my hand writing had changed so much. I have no writing that can be compared from my early childhood. mother during spring did not recover as she should. she couldn't breathe in the house so doctor had us put up a tent for her to sleep in to get pure air. During the summer doctor said mother had T.B. and could not live thru another winter in North Dakota. He said she might recover and live many years if we went to Arizona where a warm dry climate. we had very good crops in 1914 and 1915. after crops all harvested and threshed in 1915 we had a sale of all

stock and farm machinery and household furniture
in October. The auction sale brought in much more
than expected. After the sale the folks bought the
160 acres north of our home place so had rental
income from 320 acres. We left by train about
Nov 8 for Arizona by way of Seattle and visited friends
couple days in Centralia Washington. Then stopped in
San Francisco for a couple days at the World's
Fair. Nov 13 my birthday we went from Frisco to P.A.
we got off at Tropico - now Glendale - to visit father's
sister and family. We stayed there during winter and
didn't go on to Arizona. In Spring of 1916 the folks
bought 40 acres farm land south of Chowchilla and 5 miles
west of Berenda in Dixie Land Settlement. We rented a house
and our children attended Dixie Land School. Father's sister
and family and Brother's preacher at Glendale also
bought farm land there. But we moved to Empire and
rented 40 acre alfalfa farm north of Empire. We had
a dairy farm and milked 15 or more cows. It was not
profitable so folks rented a farm west of Fairmeade
which is between Chowchilla and Berenda to live there
while getting buildings on our 40 acres to move on it.
Then it was found that the area had hard pan
a foot or two down so alfalfa wouldn't grow. My
Sister Anna had been in High School in Modesto
and got work in a bakery there. My Brother Leon
and I attended Fairmeade School and graduated together
in June 1918. Mother didn't want Leon and I to take
military training as required in public schools so we
moved to La Verne and we went to the 9th grade
at La Verne College - Academy - as it being a Brethren
Church School military training not required. we

attended school thru winter of 1918 and spring of 1919 but didn't complete the school term so got no credit for that year. That ended our schooling as during the war and for next year work was available so we worked to help with the family expenses. after soldiers returned work was hard to get. I worked for Santa Fe Ry as station helper at North Poncha Depot for a year in 1920 and 1921. In Sept 1921 I went to Soap Lake Washington to pack apples. It was a contract company - Betz Packing Co - They took us by steamship to Seattle and by train to Soap Lake. after apples packed clean and I collected our wages and went to Seattle and bought a 1917 model T Ford touring car and drove back to La Verne. we were out of work during the winter so sold the Ford. (I forgot to say that when we lived in Empire the falling got a 1915 overland 4 door touring car that we had for several years after moving to La Verne. Also at Fairmont I got a one cyclinder belt drive ^{1915 model} Harley Davidson motor cycle for \$15.00. It had a top speed of 20 miles an hour. on Currier Highway speedometer was 30 miles an hour. I sold my Harley before we moved to La Verne where I got a one cyclinder chain drive ^{1916 model} Indian motor cycle - top speed of 30 miles an hour. I sold it and in 1919 got a 2 cyclinder - 2 speed - Thor motor cycle. It was very heavy to pick up if it fell flat. It had a top speed of over 45 miles an hour but Highway speed was then only 35 miles an hour. I had the Thor only a few weeks when I wrecked it jumping a curb to keep from hitting a Ford that pulled out in front of me. So I got no more cycle. No drivers licenses required then so anyone could drive as car if big or old enough to reach clutch & brake pedals. at La Verne the falling traded overland for a Case Touring Car - 1916 model right hand drive.

It was very hard to drive so father left the driving to me. we made a trip to Modesto in it from La Verne and one tire wore out over Ridge Route so at Baker I filled the only tire to fit our size wheels was a used one and it cost \$85.00. so tire costs very high (Father's wages at orange orchard at La Verne was 75.00 a month.)

In 1923 I got a 1915 Buick Radiator Ford Touring Car and in Sept I took mother and a friend of mine and her mother to near Hood River Oregon at no. 11 to pack apples. after packing finished we returned in Ford to La Verne by Thanksgiving. I sold Ford and worked at any job I could get during winter. mother packed oranges at La Verne orange house. They would not hire her packers as the said men caused trouble and started strikes. But she would let me pack in mother's place when I was not working but I had to put her name on packing slip. I was packing one day when two young ladies started learning to pack. with over 80 doing a packer. I was only man at packing bins. one girl I got to know I met and should know so I asked where she was from and when she said Reedley and her name was Edith Lusk I remembered knowing her at Southern Church. She introduced me to her friend Nera Clough. I told mother Edith Lusk and a friend were learning to pack oranges. She had me tell Edith for them to come visit and they came several times. I had a friend that had a car and we took them for picnics and rides several times. That is how I met my wife and after a couple months we were married in Riverside on April 30th 1924. we lived with my folks for a few weeks and then went to Puente and Hood

our first home in an apartment and I packed oranges and I loaded packed oranges in Refrigeration railroad cars. After a couple months Nera's sister Edith came for a visit. We had bought a 1920 model T Ford touring car. Edith talked us into going to Watsonville so we loaded all our things and Edith and her son Bill in Ford and moved to Watsonville. I met all of Nera's family there. We camped out in a tent at a fruit orchard. Nera cut cots and I picked and worked in orchard. After harvest we lived with Nera's folks and then rented a house next door after Edna's birth. I had got a job at Watsonville in Southern Pacific Railway car repair yards. We moved to a house near the repair yards. After daughter Nera's birth we bought a house in a new subdivision in Watsonville. Edith and her son lived with us and Nera took care of him while Edith was at work. The Pacific Fruit Express wanted me in their new office being opened to take care of reports of firing Peaches from Salinas valley vegetable farms. My record of Station work for Santa Fe Ry was what they wanted. S.P. Ry then loaned me to them and I worked two years. After harvest season over I was layed off for lack of work. No union so my years of work didn't count and new men on for 3 months rush season work were kept because their father was not yet depot Station agent. P.F.E. that they could get better cooperation from S.P. because of their father being S.P. agents. So with no work available in Watsonville we sold our new home and returned to La Verne and moved in with my folks in spring of 1928. During that summer I sold Club Aluminum cookware and put on evening dinners with Nera's help. As I was not a cook.

and a very good deal of the production of a very
 small we don't have some of the old and
 Pans in use after over 50 years. we had traded
 our Ford twin car in on a 1924 Dodge Sedan with leather
 upholstery. our first closed auto that gave us good
 service for 15 years. In Sept 1928 I started work
 on Pacific Electric Railway as conductor on the
 Big Red Cars and worked between Los Angeles thru
 San Bernardino to Redlands and also to Riverside.
 I worked as motor car conductor on one man cars in
 Los Angeles - Redlands - Riverside and in Pasadena.
 about a bus driver in Pasadena. when snow above
 Pasadena on Mt. Lowe. I was kept busy on Mt. Lowe line
 taking tourists from Pasadena to Mt. Lowe
 I used to play in the snow. not many conductors took
 the time to be out to work to Mt. Lowe as no pay for the
 trip in time. also they did not like working the incline
 Railway and narrow gauge open cars from top of incline
 to Mt. Lowe Tavern. we had no union so worked
 12 to 16 hrs a day or night for straight pay - no extra
 pay after 8 hrs. each hour 50 to 55 cents depending
 on whether local cars or no in line 52¢. Single track 55¢ using
 it in and out of line on mt. Lowe above incline and
 on San Bernardino line from North Pomona area to the
 scenery was very beautiful on Mt. Lowe when covered
 with snow. But very cold when called out at 5 A.M. to
 hurry to top of incline and get Snow Plow and clear
 the line so that regular cars of tourists could be
 brought to Mt. Lowe Tavern. Being of those days we
 now at Travel Town in Griffith Park. I was on
 many days everyone had to work to take people
 to Rose Parade. I took a few reports and to be off.

Dad's sister Mary - married to Jake Reppert
went Mary and uncle Jake lived in Tropic, Calif. when
we came to Calif. to Tropic on Nov 13-1915.
Aunt Mary had 2 or 3 children. we stayed in Tropic
till May 1916 and moved to Silver Land and Empire, Calif.
at Empire till Feb-1918. moved to Fairmead, loaned
I graduated from 8th grade at Fairmead in June. moved
to Lordsburg in June. went to 9th grade at Lordsburg
College. name changed to La Verne in 1920.

uncle Ralph said (4/4/87) that
they came to CA, from ND, in 1915
and settled in La Verne (Lords-
burg) in 1918.

In Roots 3

Dear Lorraine,

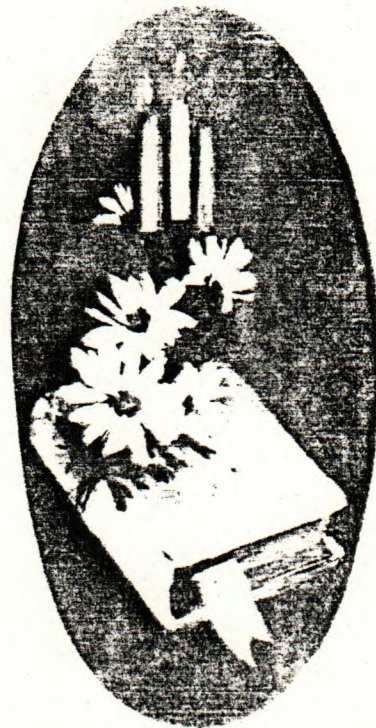
I tried to call you Fri
night. Did you get my
message?

He went very peacefully
in his sleep about 3 AM.

Mother is handling it
fine. I felt sending there
would be easier on her
than writing notes or
making phone calls.

Thank you for your loving
thoughts + prayers. Love, Babe

fff
A Memorial Record
for
Friends and Relatives
ff



In Loving Memory Of

God hath not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through
God hath not promised
Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor,
Light for the way.
Grace for the trials,
Help from above,
Unfailing sympathy
Undying love . . .

RALPH HARRISON FRANTZ

BORN
November 13, 1902
Britt, Iowa

PASSED AWAY
October 21, 1988
Canoga Park, California

There will be
NO SERVICES

If desired, Memorials may be
sent to your favorite charity.

His family thanks you for your
loving thoughts and caring.

Nena Frantz, Edna Warner
and Nena Wolfe.

**Ralph H. Frantz, construction equipment serviceman,
General Plant Division, 21 years, 11 months.**

Prior to beginning with the DWP, Mr. Frantz worked for the Santa Fe Railroad, Southern Pacific Railroad, Pacific Electric Railway and the Los Angeles City School District. He was born in Britt, Iowa, and attended schools in North Dakota, Canada and California. He has two daughters, nine grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. His son-in-law, Kenneth Wolfe, is a line foreman in the Power Operating and Maintenance Division and his grandson, Dwayne Wolfe, now serving with the Army in Germany, is also a Department employee. Mr. Frantz is a rockhound and enjoys trailer trips through the United States and Canada. Following retirement, he will travel by trailer through the U.S. and Mexico. He will also spend some time in his cabin in Oregon.

Page 36 - David and Henry Kins
from Cerro Gordo. Ill. close relatives
of my mother - Anna was born in
Cerro Gordo - Iwan and I born at
Britt, Iowa. J. S. Kins. Page 37
Plate XV - Trustees of College.
Page 39 - H. L. Kins - one of founders
J. S. Kins may have been a near relative,
Lordsburg College name changed
to La Verne College in 1917.
Iwan and I started in La Verne College
Academy in Fall of 1918