

# Warren and Vera Tew



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## Our Story

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Researched,  
Narrated and  
Created by  
Reba Johnson

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A Heartfelt Story of Tragedy, Choice, Love and Family

## Prelude

I'm sure Warren did not want this story told but since it has been revived this "year of the Titanic"—let's set the record straight.

### Sources of Information

1. My two grandfathers as written in their histories and journals.

- William Thomas Tew, Senior
- Leonard Alison Hill



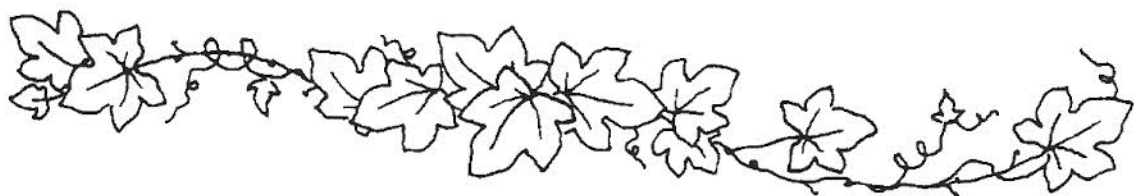
2. Rodney and Noma Tew, who started gleaning but did not finish the task. They stirred up in me a desire to complete this story.



3. Alice Graham Blake—Daughter of Harry V. Graham, who was dad's (Warren's) missionary companion for many months. She has had access to her fathers history and memories of this incident used in their home.



4. Verl Teeples, whose wife, Jessie, is also a daughter of Harry V. Graham. He has called and given me much information and put me in touch with Alice, who has the record of her father.



# Characters in this History

1. Warren Snow Tew
  2. Vera Hill Tew
  3. John Leonard Hill (Len)—Vera's Brother
  4. Deseret Mendenhall (Aunt Retta)—Sister-in-Law to Vera, Wife of Len
  5. Harry V. Graham—Warren's missionary companion in England
- Researcher and Narrator was Reba Johnson—Daughter of Warren and Vera
  - *Thanks to Ranae Wyatt who helped me start putting my scribbles together in June 1998.*
  - *Thanks also to Mike Dickey for his computer help and Jill Dickey for helping to assemble this book*



# Hill Family Members



Maria



Leonard Hill



Vera Elva Hill Tew

Mother (Vera) was fifteen years old when she moved with her father and family to Mapleton. Her Mother Maria died and she took care of the home and the children. She had a brother Leonard, 1 ½ years older than she was, who was a great help to her. As Mother used to say, "He was my best friend and helped me in so many ways as I tried to bake, sew, and care for the small children." Mother sewed, baked, cooked, washed, ironed, and churned.

Young Len had a friend that he brought home often. His name was *Warren Tew*, and he was the son of the bishop. Len was dating Deseret (Retta) Mendenhall at the time. The four of them worked during the day. The girls picked fruit. They climbed the cherry trees to get the sweet cherries on the highest branches. Apples were Mother's passion and she strapped the apple harness over her shoulders and around her waist. She was always one of the fastest pickers in the orchard. Of course Retta worked in the orchard also.

Len and Warren worked in the hay fields, thinned and topped beets, and did all of the hard jobs that kept farms going.



Retta Hill



# The Tew Family



William



Warren



Bird



Bryan



Burton



Reba

The settlers knew the area as *Mapleton Mountain*. And the Indians called it *Sierra Bonita*. Dad had many Indian friends as he grew up. He told us many times of when he used to take the cows to the canyon before school each morning. His little Indian friend would go with him. And again when he retrieved them after school.

Dad's father, William T. Tew, was bishop of the Mapleton ward for 26 years, while grandmother Clara raised their seven children. She says in her history that it was not an easy task. Life was hard then. She lived for two years in a one-room house with a wheat bin that took up half of the room. Daily tasks were time consuming. When they first moved to the one roomed house, water had to be carried in buckets from a neighbor's well. Clara churned her own butter, preserved all of their food, made her own bread, and there was always a heavenly smell from the freshly baked food.



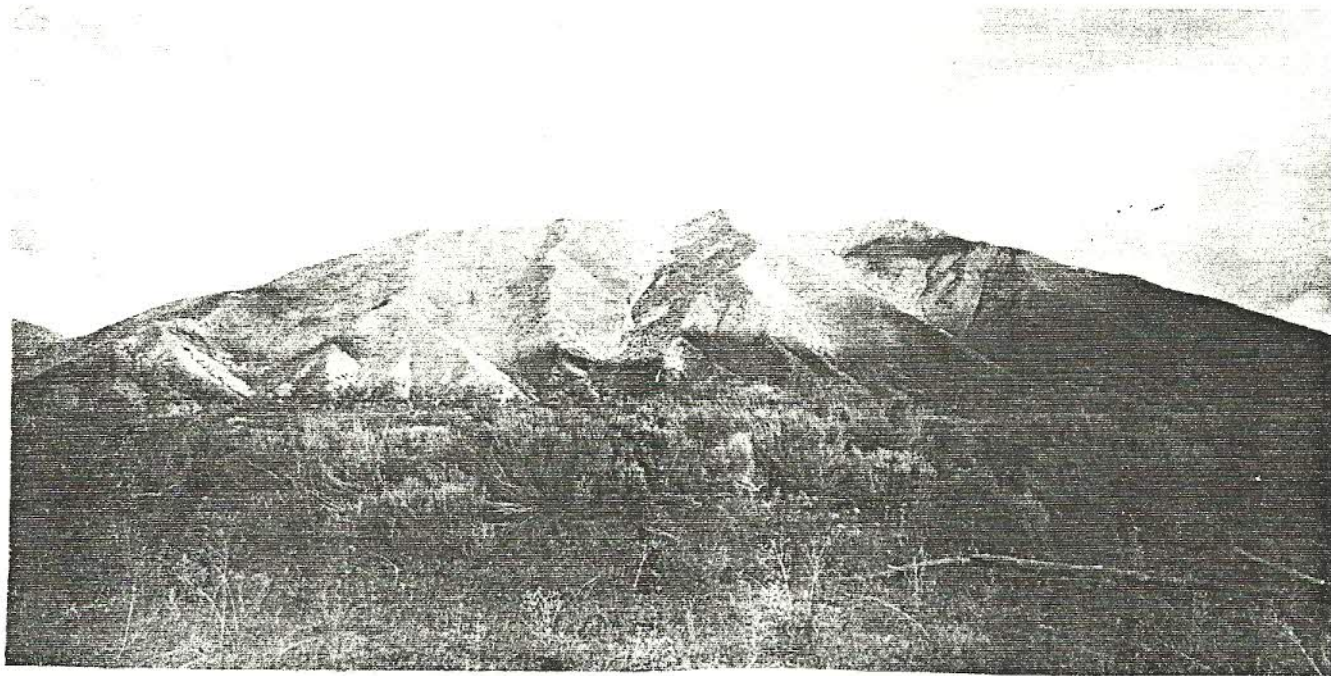
William T. and Clara Elizabeth Snow Tew



Melba



# Life in Mapleton



## Sierra Bonita—Mapleton Mountain

Mapleton is a small rural community located fifty miles south of Salt Lake City on a bench land southeast of Springville. Hobble Creek flows along its northern boundary and Spanish Fork River is a mile south of its southern boundary.

In the days before Mapleton was settled by the Mormon pioneers, Indians made this *Utah Valley* their home. One source of their food supply was the lake that lies in the center of Utah Valley. Large lake trout were caught and used as a mainstay in their diet. They also dried a good supply of fish for the long, cold days of winter. The streams throughout the valley were also good fishing havens. Rabbits and other small game were common and easy to catch. There were many wild ducks and waterfowl.

These same animals were also available for the taking when our father was old enough to hunt and fish, enjoy the sport, and help provide food for his parent's table. Many of the stories I have heard were of Father and his four brothers as they hunted the big game on Mapleton Mountain during the summer of 1910. They had to be careful of the large Timber Wolves that roamed the area. They ran into a few grumpy bears on occasion. Some of the favorite stories told when these brothers (my father and uncles) got together was when they shot the bears. Uncle Bryan had some toes shot off while they were hunting on Mapleton Mountain.





Despite the hard work, there were off days and holidays when Warren, Leonard, Vera and Retta could get together for some fun. Warren could usually get riding horses and they all loved to ride into the canyons and up the mountains. The girls fixed picnics and they would eat along a cool mountain stream. These were lazy, fun days.

Mother (Vera) tells of the boys going up the Mountainside on the horses. She and Retta decided to take off their shoes and stockings and go wading. They were enjoying this sport so much with their dresses held up high when they heard the horses coming pretty fast along the mountain trail. Mother and Retta hurried fast to get out of the water and get *decent*. They had to scramble onto the stream bank and quickly cover their feet with their long dresses. The boys almost saw their bare feet! That was a *no no* in 1909. (I can still hear Mother giggling as she told this story. After years and years this story stood out as an extra special memory in her mind.)

There was also evening fun. They all loved to dance. The big dances were held in Spanish Fork. They usually traveled the 8 miles together in a white topped buggy (carriage) drawn by a team of fine horses. The girls wore lovely dresses they had made for themselves.

They danced until the orchestra stopped and it was time to go home. Then back to the carriage and home to Mapleton. During the cold weather they had blankets to tuck around the girls. There were no heaters for sleighs.



The good times could not last. Vera's brother John Leonard was called to leave on a mission during September of 1910. He went to the Southern States mission two weeks after marrying Retta. His leaving left a big void in friends' social life. There was still much work to do to keep them busy and at times, earn a bit of money. Warren spent more time with his brothers and other male friends and Vera still spent lots of time with Retta and girl friends. Things soon changed.

Vera and Warren both sang in the ward choir and enjoyed that experience very much. They spent time with each others' families. They enjoyed getting letters from Len and hearing about the work he was doing with the saints in the Southern part of the United States. Life doesn't stand still and there were more changes on the horizon for Vera and Warren.

Warren and Vera were in love and decided to be married, but it was hard times to be in love. So much was expected of young couples. They would get married and all would be new and wonderful, then the husband would leave the wife for 2 ½ years to serve a mission. Several of Warren and Vera's very close friends had done it this way. Now it was Warren and Vera's turn to decide if Warren should serve a mission. Retta was so lonely without Len and they wondered why it needed to be this way. Retta longed for Len to come home to her so they could begin their life together. Warren and Vera finally made the decision that Warren would be "Called to Serve." He responded to the call:

His Destination: England

When: November, 1911

Just a few short weeks away!

On October 23, 1911, Grandfather Tew (William Thomas Tew) recorded this in his diary,  
*"Ordained our son, Warren Snow Tew, an Elder tonight. The spirit of the Lord was upon me and I know if he is humble he will make a mighty man."*



Warren and Vera were married on November 1, 1911 in the Salt Lake Temple by President Anthon Lund. Grandfather Tew again records in his journal of the wedding at the temple and of the reception that evening,

*"Held Warrens reception (Farewell) tonight. The meeting house was full. We collected \$45.00 for Warren besides a \$5.50 set of Church Works that was presented to him by the Sunday School. He has been secretary for about two years giving good satisfaction."*

Warren and Vera had just eleven busy days together-- parties with families, planning receptions and farewells, packing, remembering, and planning for the future that was so far away for them. After these eleven days they parted at the depot in Salt Lake City on November 13, 1911. Warren boarded the train for New York City. Vera boarded an electric trolley for Springville and on to Mapleton. She would remain with her father and family for a time. It was a sad time for each of them and they wondered about so many things.

Although it was a slow and monotonous trip for Warren, there were always new things to see. He had lunches to eat (even a piece of their wedding cake to remind him of that special day.) He had other missionaries to visit with and his pleasant memories of home.

Warren arrived in New York City a few hours before boarding the ship headed for Liverpool, England. He and the other Elders saw some of the sights of New York city in these hours. They boarded the ship late in the afternoon of November 16 in New York Harbor. The ship passed the Statue of Liberty and on to the open sea. From the moment he put his foot on the ship, he didn't like it. It swayed and it rocked and it wasn't long until he had funny feelings in his stomach. His appetite left him. The farther he got from home, the more he wished to be back in Utah with family and especially with VERA. Despite all this, the ship rolled endlessly on East, always East.





Warren had strange new feelings--

The first time away from his wife

The first time away from his family, except when he went twelve miles away to attend the Brigham Young Academy. He was homesick, very homesick. Not only was he homesick, but he was also seasick, very seasick. He would spend long hours hanging over the ship rail with other green Elders. Seasickness and homesickness were not a good combination. He never knew anyone could be so constantly sick.

As he clung to the rail of the ship with his head down, he dreamed of a petite little sweetheart that he had left behind. In minds eye, he could see her - her long, thick, curly, dark hair with flecks of auburn gold. When she took out the pins and the clips and let it fall down, she could easily sit on it. Her eyes were dark and when she became happily excited or angry, those same auburn flecks showed in her eyes. Oh! How he missed her. Eleven days of marriage was so short.



Warren and Vera

## *Gray Days*

*Precious days they would always hold dear  
They were on their highway of life  
Each had faith that the gospel was true  
Knowing there would be hardship and strife.*

*Eleven short days to love and to share  
And to relish the things they held dear.  
Farewells and parties with family and friends  
There was so little time to be near.*

*Gray days came the day that he left  
They were days filled with sadness and fear  
He missed the love that they had shared  
And so longed for her to be near.*

*It was the little things that he missed the most.  
The saucy tilt of her head  
Her beautiful hair as she brushed it at night.  
Their sacred prayers before going to bed.*

*The great ocean vessel went steadily on  
Taking him farther from home and his love  
At times he resented the choice he had made  
He needed strength from his Father above.*

*Each day was long and so filled with despair  
He had no desire to banter or feast.  
He stood at the rail and fed hungry fish.  
The big ship sailed on - always EAST.*



The day that they docked in Liverpool was a day of turmoil and confusion. Warren wandered around the Albert docks before his mission president appeared. His president was wonderful. He was full of understanding and love. He took Elder Tew to the apartment of Elder Harry V. Graham. He was to be Warren's companion for a long time. They were both young and very handsome.

Elder Graham was very nice and very accommodating-

Warren just conformed to the missionary lifestyle:

- If there was a meeting, he went.
- If it was his turn to knock on a door, he knocked.
- If it was his turn to present the discussion, he did it.
- If called on to pray, he prayed.

But he was not happy in England. He wanted to be out of crowded England - out of the old world. He wanted to be in familiar places with mountains and fields - with beautiful sunrises and sunsets. He wanted to be in Utah with family and especially with Vera. He was physically and mentally ill and he knew it.

December came and the holiday glitter appeared. Christmas carols and music were everywhere. The stores and the outdoor market places were full of the holiday fun. But Warren's stomach hurt. He could not handle the strange, unfamiliar food. He realized that he was ill.

Elder Graham encouraged Warren to work. He fixed them fancy tidbits to eat. But all Warren wanted was to be home for Christmas and sing again in the ward choir - to sing the duet again that he and Vera sang last year. He wanted to be with Vera.

Christmas and Boxer Days come and went. It was time to get out and tract again. The weather was so cold and damp in January that he never felt warm. Every place they went to give discussions, people were "poorly". The new year (1912) was not any more successful for them. Elder Graham coaxed and pleaded but Warren could do no better at this time. Both Elders were working hard and accomplishing some each day.



Warren



About January 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>, 1912, Warren received a telegram from Vera - a tragic telegram. Vera's brother John Leonard had been killed while serving on a mission. Retta's grief was heartbreaking. Warren tried to portray new ideas to Vera and Retta about what Len might be doing now and that he would be planning and waiting for Retta to come to him.

## Obituary from Deseret Evening

### STORY OF DEATH OF ELDER HILL

Elder Ervin Bair, Who Accompanied Body Home, Tells Of Accident.

### WAS WALKING IN SNOWSTORM

He Was Surprised by Eastbound Train On Westbound Track—Was Able Missionary

Elder Ervin Bair, of Logan, who accompanied the body of Elder John Leonard Hill, from Dickson, West Virginia, where Elder Hill was killed by a train Jan. 8, arrived in Salt Lake City today.

Concerning the accident which caused the death of Elder Hill, Elder Bair said: "On the morning of Jan. 8, Elder Hill left Dickson in a heavy snowstorm for Caldwell, two and one-half miles distance, to get our mail. I did not accompany him because of having cut my foot with an ax three weeks before and such a walk would have been difficult for me. It was, however, on Elder Hill's suggestion that I remained.

"At 12:45 p.m., after Elder Hill had been gone about three hours, the wife of the towerman of the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad at Dickson, an acquaintance of ours, came to our room and told me that she had just been informed by a member of the train crew on a local freight, that a man had been killed half a mile down the track toward Caldwell, and that from the description, she thought it must be Elder Hill, whom she had seen go up the track three hours before.

I hurried to the scene of the accident and found the dead body of my companion lying near the track in the snow. I immediately notified the section man, who in turn notified the officials of the road.

### WAS SURPRISED BY TRAIN.

"From the footprints in the snow we knew that Elder Hill was on his return with the mail, and had been walking between the double tracks of the railroad. An eastbound train approached from behind, and it was the unanimous opinion at the inquest that Elder Hill stepped on the to the west bound track, as indicated by the footprints in the snow, because of his confidence in the regulation of the company by which east bound trains travel only on the east bound track. The prints further indicated that he walked only a few steps on this track when he became aware that the east bound train was on the west bound track, and he then started to step off that track. One footprint only was left outside of the rail. From this spot there was no other print, a distance of about 20 feet, to where the body lay.

The body had to remain at this place until a train came along and picked it up, about 6:30 p.m. We took the body to Roncevert, seven miles distance, to the undertaker's parlor, from which place we shipped it Thursday morning at 1:48 o'clock. It arrived at Springville Monday, Jan 15, at 11:15.

### WAS ABLE MISSIONARY.

Elder Hill had been in the mission field just 14 months, and had become well versed in the Scriptures and one of the most able missionaries in the conference.

According to Elder Bair he was a favorite of all the elders with whom he had labored, as well as of the many friends of the missionaries in that district.

"We had been together only five weeks," continued Elder Bair, "and were holding meetings regularly. Elder Hill had made many friends in the district around Dickson. He promised to be a most successful elder, and eager to accomplish all he could while away. He often talked of his wife, however, whom he married only one month before leaving for his mission, and awaited anxiously the time when he might return to her with a record of good, earnest work."

It is supposed that neither the engineer nor the fireman on the train which struck Elder Hill saw or knew anything about the accident since the train did not stop, and no word was given in to the office of the railroad officials from them concerning it.

The funeral of which an account appeared in yesterday's News, was held at Mapleton, Utah, Wednesday at 12 o'clock.

### By Reba

This is John Leonard Hill, born 23 Aug. 1890 in Newton, Cache Co. Utah. Even though I have not know him in this life; I have very strong feelings that I have known him and I have much feeling and empathy for this uncle. His wife, Aunt Retta worked with mother cooking for men on railroad crews in Nevada. Both of their husbands were serving missions for our church. When they found Uncle Len, he had the letter from Aunt Retta that he had walked through the blizzard to get.

While mother was in the hospital just before her death, she told me very often that "Brother Len has been down to see me. He has been speaking to me. He says that I will be better soon." "Listen," She would say, "Listen and he will speak to you, too." Oh! How I wish that I could have heard. It was a testimony to me that there is a life after death. She was so close to the ones who have gone before her.

Mother tells of how Uncle Len's dog sensed that something was wrong with Len long before the telegram came about his death. He just howled and howled. Nothing would make him stop. Grandpa Hill just kept saying "Something is wrong with Len." And there was. The dog did not quit howling until Len's body arrived in Utah from the other side of the continent a week later.

Histories of loved ones who lived before I came to earth only make my testimony of the truth of the Gospel grow stronger.





According to the records on April 9, 1912, Elders Graham and Elder Tew arose and started their day's early schedule. Scripture study was always very early. Suddenly Elder Tew spoke, "I can't stay. I'm going home. I've already purchased my ticket. I'm going. It is all decided. The ship leaves tomorrow."

The two young Elders agonized over this situation. Finally Elder Tew agreed to go to the mission home and tell the president of his decision and that he would be sailing tomorrow.

The mission president listened intently and had empathy for the young, homesick missionary. The three of them knelt in prayer. The president offered a very special prayer. He blessed the two Elders that they together could conclude this dilemma. He blessed Elder Tew that he could overcome this sickness to go home and that he could rejuvenate his spiritual outlook and grow in the gospel. He gave him the desire to succeed with his missionary service. He blessed Warren's wife with safety and peace. He blessed Warren and Vera that they could accept the tragic death in their family.

After the prayer they arose and the president asked Elder Tew for his ship ticket saying, "I know of several people who would like to buy this ticket. That is a popular ship that you have booked passage on. I will have no problem getting your money back—and more. Elder Tew, if you will give missionary work your best effort, if you will work hard and fast and pray for two more weeks and then you still feel that you must go home, I will give you an honorable release and you may go home. But please give it your best." Elder Tew reluctantly agreed.

The two young Elders shifted gears and went to work with renewed enthusiasm. Warren quit verbally lamenting the fact that his wife was in a stuffy railroad town (of sorts) cooking for a dozen dirty, hungry men. He was once more quite content and ready to do the work that he had been sent here to do. He did as the mission president suggested and was willing to put in the best two weeks anyone could dream of. The days moved on swiftly—each day busier than the last—more appointments, more discussions. April 10, the day he almost sailed was all but forgotten. The two Elders were in downtown Birmingham on April 15, 1912, when they heard the loud shouting of a paper boy.

"Read all about it. Read all about it. Titanic sinks in the Atlantic on way to New York City. A few were saved, but many hundred died. Read all about it. Two pence a copy—Titanic sinks"

This is the same ship for which Elder Tew had purchased his ticket home!



Warren knew in an instant that his mission president had rescued him from "Death Row." It had been so hard for him to hand that ticket over to the president. Now he would praise this president's name forever. Why had he wanted to leave England? Why? Why? He was a changed person. And the paper boy kept shouting, "Read all about it—Just two pence for the whole story of the Titanic. Twas the biggest shipwreck in the history of the world. It hit an iceberg off the coast of Nova Scotia—Twas her maiden voyage, it was. She just left from Southampton five days ago. Just two pence folks. Read all about it."

What a gift. Warren knew that he had an innocent verdict from a sure death sentence. He was mesmerized. He did not want that honorable release next week. He would earn an honorable release in about two more years of time. AND he would begin now!



Len's death was very hard on Warren. Len had been Warren's best friend for several years. Then he became Warren's brother-in-law. Vera wrote to Warren and told him all the details. When Len's body arrived in Utah, he was in a sealed casket. They could see him but not touch him. The letters went back and forth as Warren and Vera grieved on opposite sides of the Atlantic.

But life must go on and missionary work must go forward. There were meetings to go to and mission conferences to attend. The Elders must do their scripture study and get in their many hours of tracting each week. They must get their reports to the mission president on time. Letters home must be written and sent. And there were always household chores to be taken care of -- washing, ironing, mending, and cooking. They couldn't grab fish and chips to take home every day, although they tasted good to the young Elders. And there was a fish and chips shop on every corner. The Elders were really trying and things were looking better. Things were looking up on Warren's side of the Atlantic.

Things were also going better on Vera's side of the Atlantic. After the shock of Len's death, Retta and Vera started to make plans for the months ahead. As soon as the weather became a little warmer they would begin work cooking for a crew of men who worked on the railroad. They would be traveling with a Brother Boyer, who was a very fine man from their stake. He would take care of their needs such as transportation, food, and housing. Brother Boyer would provide adequate furnishings -- two cots, a table, two chairs, a rack for clothes etc... They would be leaving soon and they were looking forward to steady jobs and a good income.

Vera and Retta were rather excited. They knew it would be hard, tedious work but they were both used to hard work and long hours. Vera even got real brave and wrote to Warren telling him of her plans. Yes, she had plans for the money she was saving. She wanted to sail to England, find her husband, and sail home with him. She thought it would be a wonderful honeymoon. She would work hard to accomplish this scheme. Now if she could just help all of her plans fall into place. (I have used this statement many times in my life. I feel that Vera may have used it also.)

*"I walked without a dream and I Fell Down."*

*-By Keats*

*She had a dream - a wonderful dream and she would work hard to make it come true.*

Vera and her family and Retta spent many hours separately and together studying the scriptures and talking together.



Vera



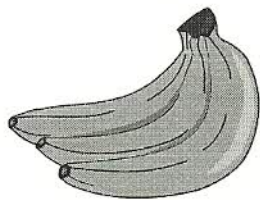
Back in the U.S.A., Vera was planning her strategies and spinning her webs in two states. Her only solace month after month were her letters from Warren and her work. Her friendship and time with Retta was also special. Retta was dear to her heart and they spent much of their times close to one another. Vera's work would provide her with the means to travel to England and to find her love and enough money to live there with him for five long months. I remember Mother telling me how her father-in-law (William T. Tew) made a special trip to visit Vera. He told her that it was frivolous for her to spend so much money to go get Warren. Let him come to you. Later, I quizzed mother on what she said and she answered, "I just smiled." He insisted that she should save that money to make a good down payment on a farm for Warren. But again she just smiled. "He expects me to come." And she eventually went.



"Tent life" was not an easy life for Retta and Vera. They worked hard during the days and were not through until supper dishes were done. They lived in the tent but their kitchen was a box car. Brother Boyer equipped the box car as best he could with some cupboards, a wood stove with a heavy metal base, and a large ice box. He kept large squares of ice in the ice box and supplied good meat and fruit and vegetables and staples for his little cooks to use. The "girls" had a good start of yeast which they guarded carefully and when they added potato water they had the most delectable smells permeating that box car. They were paid by their

boss but often received "tips" from the appreciative men and their other bonuses weren't shabby either. Sometimes when the tent seemed very cold, they would move their cots into the box car close to the dying embers of the stove. There they would chatter, write letters, or knit. They bought the finest wool yarn and knitted socks, scarves, and sweaters for Christmas. Retta had no one to send them to so she helped Vera send Warren an adequate supply. In his letters Warren was constantly thanking them for their thoughtfulness.

One evening, Brother Boyer brought home a full case of bananas. Bananas were a rarity. The cooks ate and ate and ate—even after dark. Vera became very sick. She thought she ate something in the dark that poisoned her. She was so sick that she was no help to Retta for a couple of days. She never enjoyed bananas after that.



Letters continued to sail back and forth from England to America and from America to England. Many plans were made for the time Warren and Vera would have together. Vera and Retta first worked in the settlement of Thistle. That was quite close to Mapleton and they could get home quite often. Brother Boyer was very good to lend them his horse and buggy and give them the day or weekend off. When the train operations moved farther, it was harder to get home. Then the operation moved to Nevada and they were there for many months.

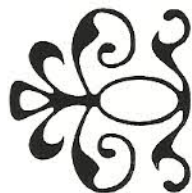
Work went on in England. Warren and Elder Graham were working up many new programs in the mission field. Warren was obsessed with the work and the good that was coming from it. He was an outstanding missionary and could lead the other missionaries in the way they should go. He made many friends and brought people into the gospel. He was put in as the first president of the Birmingham conference.

This was a great honor and he was able to fill all aspects of the calling. He was outstanding in all that he was doing. He seemed to be determined to be released with honor at the end of his mission. He still took time to write long, lovely letters to his wife and was surely looking forward to her coming over. He always expressed his concern for her working so hard.

Warren became an avid student of the scriptures. His morning study of the scriptures started earlier. His desire to learn scriptures was intense. Through the years that I knew him, you could ask him almost any gospel question and he could quote you the answer or he knew quickly where to find the answer. His mission president described him as "dynamic" and "in a class of his own." He fit in easily with dignitaries and high church authorities but it was also as easy and fitting as I saw him ease the cry of the hungry and downtrodden.

In 1945, at the time they dedicated the Idaho Falls Temple, Warren and Vera were called to be officiators. This was before the days of the film and it took real talent, dedication, and time to learn the Temple Ceremony. Warren learned and used all of it. He could be put in any position. He also gave the "Lecture" at the end of the endowment session.

I'm sure that I did not appreciate the privilege I had to go through sessions in this temple with Mother and Dad being such a big part of it. I think it takes years and maturity to be truly appreciative.



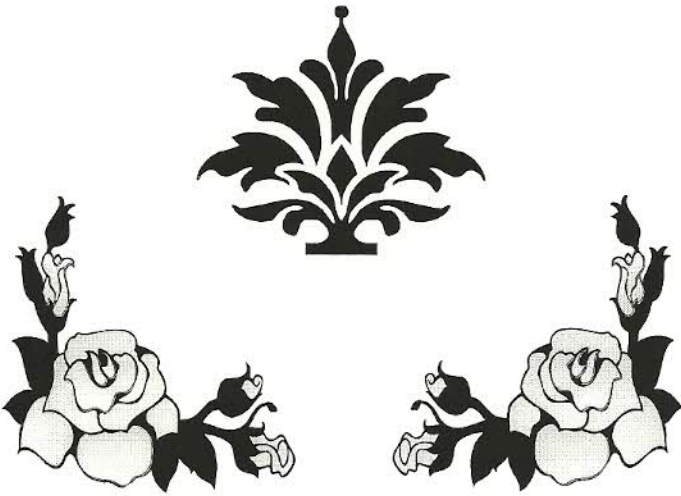
When I was very small, I watched dad send pails of milk home with neighbor children because he knew there was nothing in their home for them to eat. Very often he would slip out of the house and a large, freshly baked loaf of bread would go to the Kendalls or other families in need. Lonely hearts and the cries of the hungry were comforted as he helped the hungry and lonely. He saved many soles along his way. (This was in the early 1930's during the great depression.)





A thought by Gary Nalder (son-in-law) as to his description of Warren at the time of Elaine's death.

(September 1986)



*Dear Reba,*

*Elaine is no longer in that state of anguish. There is a sense of guilt that more could not have been done to alleviate Elaine's condition. I have often wondered how your father would have dealt with the situation had he lived. Probably in no better way than was done. Yet he was such a powerful, dynamic man, one expected he would have done more. He always seemed bigger than life to me. Again, thanks for all your help with all of this.*

*Love*

*Gary*

Now, back to England. As Warren was dealing with so many mission problems, he was also hearing from Vera often. She was planning on coming to England for sure. She had cleared all of the hurdles and would be set apart as a missionary in August of 1913. The letters went back and forth and they were very excited to meet again after nearly two years apart. They realized that he would be very busy with many responsibilities but they would handle the missionary work and they would still find a little time for "them". He could not wait until he could introduce his "bride" to the many friends he had made in England.

The reunion was just as wonderful as they had planned. Vera sailed on the Queen Elizabeth. They met in the Liverpool, England on the Albert Docks—the same place Warren had landed nearly two years before. Vera was so excited to see Warren that she was never seasick in her travels. She was still as lovely as when they parted. She had been able to sew and buy a nice wardrobe. They lived at:

Sycamore Cottage  
23 Boothe St.  
Handsworth  
Birmingham, England



It was a nice little cottage strewn with flowers and it had a wicker fence and gate. Elder Graham had gone home to the United States and Warren's only missionary companion was Vera. It was so wonderful for them to share their home and meals and many hours with each other. The little chapel was out back and they went there together often. It was peaceful and quiet. Warren could do some record keeping and Vera could write letters home.

As recorded in their history on November 1, 1913

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Their second wedding anniversary they were together all day long. They went the short distance from Birmingham to London on a train. They strolled across London Bridge together and they talked about their dreams for the future. They took a tour of London in a carriage pulled by a horse. They were in an old world but life was new and exciting. They had waited so long for this time together.



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*“They walked “with” a dream  
and that dream had come true.”*



They were together in an old world with new with  
exciting things happening every day.

Vera tried some of the food from the Old World. Some of it she enjoyed but some of it she just looked at. There was fish and chips, blood pudding, plum pudding, bread pudding, biscuits of every kind (meaning rolls or cookies), puky pie, and many other concoctions.

It was a wonder of wonders to be together again. Life was real again for each of them. Warren was so busy that at times, Vera would go with a couple of Elders and tract. Mom talked to us many times about these fun days with Warren and with his friends. There were many sisters that Warren knew that needed Vera to help them and she spent many hours counseling and helping them. On many of his train trips to other far-away districts, she traveled with him. There was never a time in their married life when they were so happy and content as when they were sharing their lives with others who needed them so badly. The gospel filled their lives and souls as they taught the principles of the gospel to others and filled their lives with the same joy.

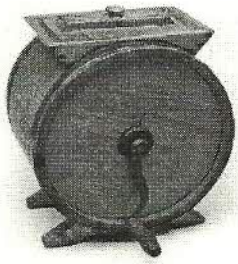
Dad had accomplished things in England that he did not realize he could do. Because of his great work, he gained a sense of pride and a love of Christ and His gospel. I have talked a lot about Warren but not as much about Vera.

Mother—was just Mother; sweet and tender to each in spite of nine very challenging children. She was special in so many ways. She could never say anything bad about anyone. If she heard a bad thing about anyone, it never went farther than her ears—never to her lips. She did not share gossip—never—and she would never have to pick up those wind blown, scattered feathers(as the story goes.)

She was a housekeeper and a homemaker. She was also an excellent cook. She used starter yeast and potato water to make her bread and that smell permeated her home for hours. Dad loved her bread and just tolerated the store-bought bread. He insisted that it tasted like sawdust.







One of the childhood jobs that I remember the most was churning the cream into butter. The churn was made of wood, with a big lid at the top to put the cold, thick cream in. It had a handle on the outside that had to be turned to turn the ladles or paddles on the inside. We had to take turns with the “churning”. Mom would make it into a delightful travel game. If we turned it 50 times, it would get us to Birmingham; if we turned it 75 times, we would get to London; if we turned it 100 times, we would get all the way to London Bridge. We would usually each get there before we heard the sound of the butter turning in the churn. Then there would be

buttermilk to drink and butter to eat on that new bread that we could smell baking in the oven.



When we made it to London, mom would again talk of her lovely adventures there with our father. It was fun to travel with them through the medium of make-believe. Sometimes we would go with them to Stratford-upon-Avon (the land of Shakespear. ) She would then tell us how beautiful Ann Hathaway’s cottage was. She would tell us about the thatched roofs and how Ann’s cottage had one. Dad and Mother made England come alive for us in our Home Evenings and many other occasions. I suppose Dad looked back on the events thinking of what might have been.

Mother was a lady. A lovely little one from the time she weighed less than 100 pounds and married our father until she was again tiny and fragile and suffering from health problems because of old age. She taught me so much. I look forward to seeing Mother and Father together again in the great beyond.

*They spent just short of five months together in that beautiful country, enjoying the splendors together; the castles, the rivers, the cathedrals, and the customs. They especially enjoyed the people and the missionary work and being together in this lovely land.*



## An Afterthought—Told in Retrospect

In 1937, while Rodney (Warren's son) was serving in England on a mission, a lady came up to him during sacrament meeting and asked him if he was by any chance related to an Elder Warren Tew. Rodney answered that Warren was his father. Rodney was very proud to claim Warren as his father.

This lady answered "I feel so bad. When Elder Tew and Elder Graham were tarred and feathered in June of 1913, I helped to clean the tar and feathers from their bodies. It was a terrible experience for them and their clothing was ruined. They were the best suits they owned. They were conducting a street meeting in Hyde Park when it happened. "Me" mother and me kept those clothes all these years until last week. Last week me mother died and I was cleaning things out and I burned those suits with some other things that I had to get rid of. Yes, I did and I feel so sad that I did not keep them one more week."

Also in Grandfather Tews journal—(William T. Tew)

23<sup>rd</sup> June 1913

*"Just heard that our son Warren has been tarred and feathered in Hyde Park, England."*



Warren Tew



*“God works in mysterious ways-  
His wonders to perform.”*

And now you know the “Rest of the Story.” A true story that lay on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean for about eight-six years after the Titanic hit an iceberg and sank on April 15, 1912 off the coast of Nova Scotia. It was on its way to New York City.

*A Titanic that Warren did not board—although he came very close*

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## *Little Things Change Big Things*

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Buying a ticket on the Titanic almost changed the future of hundreds of people.

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## *Little Things Mean a Lot*

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I want his progenitors to know him and how close we came to not having him as our ancestor. Think what could have happened to our family if (just if) Warren had not given that ticket (unwillingly) to his mission president on April 9, 1912. Where would each of be now? He was packed and ready to leave Birmingham for Southampton on April 9, 1912, from where the Titanic sailed the following morning, April 10, 1912. He was just a train ride away.

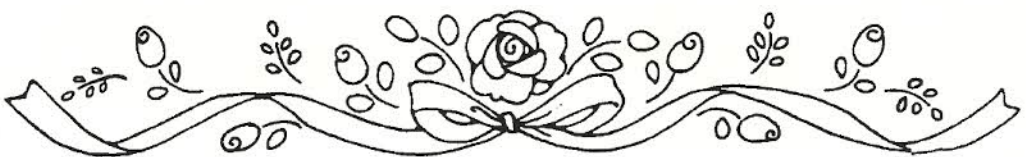
This true story leaves me with a testimony of love and trust in my parents—(Warren and Vera). He had such a strong desire to right his wrong and-

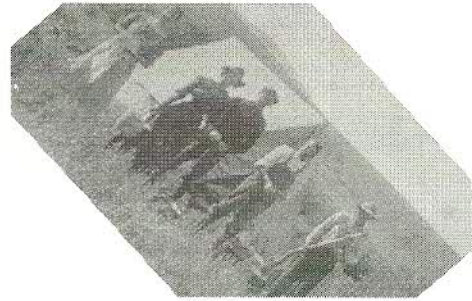
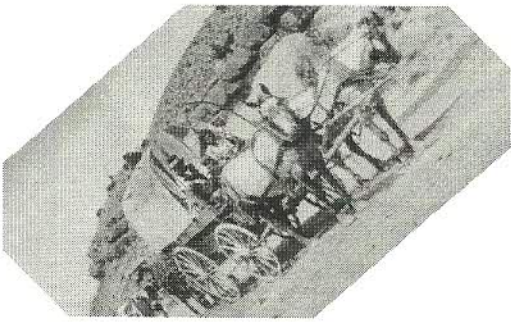
## **To Return With Honor**

They had a desire to have a family and to rear their children in the gospel

*And now you know the rest of the story!*

On January 23, 1914, Warren and Vera returned to Mapleton. Another land that they loved. After an interim there, they left this beautiful valley and moved on to Lost River Valley. They then moved to Shelly, Idaho. They would just go somewhere in the west and let the rest of the world go by.





Warren and Vera in Lost River Valley

If you are tempted to purchase a ticket on the Titanic or to do other things that you know are not right---

## Stop-Ponder-Think

**Make your little wrongs right while you can. Also remember to “*Return with Honor*” to your Heavenly Father who loves you.**

*Bon Voyage*  
*Reba*



*Reba*