

## 5. Russell Arthur Bateman, fifth son of Alfred and Clara Bateman

Biography by Dr. Harold C. Bateman

**Russell Arthur Bateman**, fifth child & son of John and Clara Hess Bateman

Born: 14 October 1907 Paris, Bear Lake, Idaho

Died: 14 December 1909 Paris, Bear Lake, Idaho



Russell Arthur Bateman 1907 to 1909.

## Across Three Centuries Alfred John Bateman & Clara May Hess Family

Russell Arthur was the fifth child to be born to the marriage of Alfred John and Clara May Hess Bateman. He was the only child to have been born in the small frame home on East Canyon Road, Paris, Bear Lake County, Idaho and this noteworthy event occurred on 14 October 1907. He was a beautiful child and a family member seemed to feel that Mother loved this lovely child too much. I was about five years of age when he arrived and while he is remembered, I do not remember specifics too clearly. He had curly golden hair which had grown quite long at the time of his death.

Some members of our family have long felt that he was a special favorite of Father and Mother. I think it is quite natural for this feeling to develop because he contracted his terminal illness so young; about twenty-six months old, which focused their grieving attention on his memory. The demonstrative suffering of them created this impression. Personally, I have strongly felt that each and every child in our family occupied a very special place in the affection of Father and Mother. It was to be expected that they would sustain strong feelings of nostalgia and reminiscence. What I am basically saying is that according to my considered opinion, Father and Mother loved all of their children about the same, but due to the premature passing of this precious child, he received emphatic treatment.

I remember somewhat vaguely my little brother's illness during his final days here in the earth. I recall him quietly lying listlessly in his sick bed for hours, neither alert nor responsive to those around him. I in trying to attract and to communicate with him, spoke sharply to him, but in return for my efforts only received a blank stare. After this incident, even as young as I was I seemed to realize that he was just too ill to respond. The attempt to communicate was not repeated and I was quite upset and discouraged about his condition. I got a strong impression that Mother and Father did not feel that Dr. Ashley had diagnosed his sickness accurately and thus had not prescribed the proper medication.

Ashley said he suffered from inflammation of the bowels. Could he have suffered from a ruptured appendix? We will never know the answer in this life but God must have it. It does not seem just and fair to blame a doctor for not having the understanding wisdom and insight of but must conclude that the poor doctor did his level best to save little Russell's life. It could be that God wanted him home and that the parents be taught a lesson. [Editor's note: One family story has it that Russell was kicked in the stomach by an older siblings' jealous girlfriend, which could have presumably caused a ruptured appendix or spleen.]



Russell A. & Alfred H. Bateman.

Russell's passing and Lucile's birth, both of which took place in the old large Marvin Allred house located on W. Canyon Road, Paris, Bear Lake County, Idaho happened close together. Dr. George Monroe Bateman in his autobiography describes what happened in his statement: "John was gone a lot since he was shipping horses to California and selling stallions to farmers. A fifth son was born October 14, 1907 and he received the name of Russell. He was Mother's most beautiful baby with blue eyes and curly golden hair. I sometimes felt that Mother loved him too much. It fell my lot to help Mother and tend Russell."

Farther on in George M.'s narration we read: "Winter seemed to come too early that year and Mother's health was not very good. She was pregnant again and had to carry the burden of taking care of four husky, hungry boys and their little brother. Little Russell seemed to have delicate health and in December, both he and mother were ill in bed. I shall never forget the night of December 14. As usual, the boys went up to their beds after the evening chores and were soon fast asleep. At about midnight Father wearily came into our room and turned on the lights. He stood by our bed and sobbed. Alfred and I awoke and climbed out of bed and John drew us in his arms. He then told us in broken tones that we had just gained a little sister, but our beloved baby brother had passed away. His funeral was held and I can remember the long ride from Paris to the Bloomington Cemetery. As I watched the casket lowered into the frozen earth, I felt cold in both body and spirit,

## Russell Arthur, fifth son of Alfred John and Clara Bateman

for this was my first encounter with death. It was very difficult to mix emotions of two types; those of sorrow as an after-effect of the loss of a baby brother, and those of joy as a result of the birth of a baby sister. I was also greatly concerned for the welfare of Mother who was still suffering from the great enduring love for little Russell. Mother's always been an inspiration to me. Our new sister was named Lucile, and through the years she was a source of pride and comfort for Mother."

Lucile pungently describes impressions gained from these events at a very tender age in her autobiography as follows: "I was the first girl born to my parents, Alfred John and Clara May Hess Bateman after five boys, Alfred H., George M., Leroy, Harold C., and Russell Arthur. Dad and Mother had almost despaired of having a daughter, even so - great was their sorrow at the passing of their beautiful golden-haired baby boy. My mother never got over his death and each birthday I had at home, I remember her grief through the years and I hated my birthday to come. One of my first memories was being rocked in her arms as a very young child and her tears falling like rain into my face mourning the loss of this precious child saying, "When you came, they took my darling baby.' It hurt me to the core of my being, a hurt that never entirely healed even though she took good care of me." In this quotation is noted that years after Russell's demise, Mother continued to mourn this tragic loss of her baby son.

Alfred H. in his autobiography has this to say about little Russell's passing: "My favorite little baby brother was Russell. He always sat near the front window and came running and put his arms around my neck. His sudden death brought great sorrow to us all. Our own son Russell was like my little brother Russell in being affectionate."

While I do not clearly remember the funeral services of little Russell Arthur, but as a small boy of seven, I do quite clearly recall the long cold ride with Father to the Bloomington Cemetery in December. It seemed almost more than we could bear to see that brilliant white little casket containing the precious little body of baby brother being lowered into that ugly excavation in the cold frozen earth. It seemed cruel to think that such a thing could happen to this innocent lovely child sired by God Almighty. Death was and is a very difficult subject for an adult to understand much less a small boy.

I have lived over and over my recollections of this event and I have concluded this was a brutally hard way for a youngster to learn about the mysteries of this event and death. After the heavenly casket had been lowered into the black hole, someone next carefully covered the white fur



Stone reads: "Russell A. Son of C. & J. Bateman Born Oct. 14, 1907 Died Dec. 14, 1909." He is buried in the Bloomington, Idaho Cemetery.

covered casket with boards to protect it somewhat from the elements and dirt to be returned. When this work was completed, someone began to shovel the gravel and dirt back into the hole. In my memory, I can still hear the horrible sound of pebbles bouncing loudly on the boards and their sounds chilled my soul and left me almost an emotional wreck with grief and depression saturating my soul. I wanted to scream on hearing the sounds and this description is not hyperbolic. Why didn't they wait until the loved ones departed? The subzero weather did little to uplift our spirits. In this baptism of fire, we were rudely introduced to the subject of death. No wonder the subject since that time has been approached with fear and trepidation. The long cold ride back to Paris left us cold, spent and deeply depressed. To compound an already sad situation, Mother was unable to attend the services or go to the Bloomington Cemetery to witness the burial of her beloved baby boy.

Soon after burial as soon as weather conditions permitted, the folks had an attractive headstone placed on his grave decorated by the similitude of a little lamb with his name and pertinent data inscribed on it. On the top was the inscription: "Born in Heaven but budded on earth."

As the cold weather passed with the passing of time, Mother was very vocal with her grief and anguish. I all-too-vividly recall her on many an occasion fall to her knees by her bedside and literally scream in her prayer to Almighty God in inquiry about the passing of her baby boy and these sessions were lengthy. It could be that these ca-

thartic experiences saved her sanity and if a valuable lesson can be gained from it, I would conclude that it is never wise or proper for mankind to ever get too possessive about anything in this transitory life here in the earth except our love of God and his commandments. I believe that in the subject of death, God plays no favoritism and everyone has his turn at it. Here no one can shift his weight around for advantage, except in the holy cause of righteousness. These incidents left their scar tissue in the lives of the witnesses and you can well believe they were traumatic experiences for the children. No wonder, we have the subject of psychiatry and I do believe that the Heavenly Father is the one and only great psychiatrist living.

Again in conclusion, I candidly think that this remarkable woman would have reacted in essentially the same way had any of her loved ones passed away. She was not perfect, but she did not have a false fiber in her being for certainly she was genuinely honest. She erred on matters of judgment but her objectives or goals could never be questioned. Both Father and Mother loved all of their children with equal ferocious intensity and depth. The fact that she got by without a psychosis is explained by her great belief in God and the Church. I never saw her faith ever waver or ever heard a word of criticism of either, in fact she would never tolerate such criticism. Father's love and support buoyed her up and her love of her family intensified her strength and gave her spiritual sustenance. She finally became reconciled that little Russell as summoned back to God to live eternally with Him, and this nurtured her and gave her additional strength to continue her sojourn in the earth with a more useful philosophical and spiritual outlook.