

# Life Story Written In December 1939 By Frank Melvin Barton

I, Frank Melvin Barton was born July 13, 1898 at Hamsfork, Wyoming, being about 20 miles north of Kemmerer, Wyo.

It happened that I was a twin, having a twin brother whom they christened Fred Milburn.

My Father's name was Marion H. Mower and my mother's maiden name was Ruth Fenn.

Three years later our home was blessed with another birth, this time, however, they were twin girls. Their names being LaVon Martha Mower and LaVern Matilda Mower.

You have perhaps noticed that the middle name of each of the four twins begins with the letter "M". This perhaps meant "Many."

One year later my parents separated, due to incompatibility, my father moved to Salt Lake City, while my mother remained at Logan, Utah.

Father married another woman some two years later, living just south of Sugarhouse, Utah

Mother was given custody of the four children plus a cash alimony settlement of \$175. With this money she began a struggle for existence which lasted two years, at which time she married William Ethelbert Barton. We boys and girls assumed the name of Barton upon entering our first grades at school.

Some few years later a daughter, Wanona, and later a son, Chester, were born to the above union.

My early years from six to sixteen were arduous, yet eventful years. One point I will mention is that my Mother supported we four children thru the toil of "Taking in washings". It used to be the job of we boys to deliver these bundles of washing.

My first job outside of helping at home was working on a farm and I had care of about 50 sheep. The first money my brother and I earned was used to purchase my mother a washing machine.

When I was about fourteen, I received a letter from my father at Salt Lake City inviting me to visit him. We were living then at Driggs, Idaho, at which place we had lived ever since the separation of my parents. We had moved to Driggs, as my mother's parents were there together with two of her brothers and a sister. Well, I took the trip to Salt Lake City to visit my father and found that he had six children by his second wife. It was a thrilling trip, but my love, my loyalty and devotion to my mother had become part and parcel of my being, and my father never seemed even near to me. Thus we never changed our name from Barton.

In my formative years, while living with my grandparents, mother, uncles and aunts, I learned to appreciate many things and from these "almost forgotten years", I well remember that my Grandfather, Fred Fenn never used a swear word. I also remember the strict discipline of one of my uncles. He used to hit me on the arms with a hammer handle. This was Dave Fenn, he now lives at Kemmerer, Wyoming. It was he who cured me forever of wanting to smoke cigarettes or drink whiskey as he gave us boys 10 cents for the one who could smoke the most and drink the most, thus making us deathly sick and killing any appetite we may ever have.

Due to our economic stress I stole some eggs from a neighbor and my uncle Dave whipped me until he had used a big pile of Willows. But he taught me a marvelous lesson, which has lasted for life.

Another remark which my mother made was as follows "Be sure and enjoy every day while you are young and carefree, as you will soon be busy making a living".

It was a pleasure to live with my grandparents through these early years. We went through the usual experiences of growing children up through the grade school.

The 7th grade was one of the first turning points in my life. My mother had me take this grade over again that my twin brother and I would be in the same grade of school. He ran away from home and had missed one year of school.

My high school years were the most eventful and fruitful years of my life to this date. It was my pleasure to win 7 out of 9 major debates, and I served as vice-president and later president of the "Vin Cimus" (We shall Conquer) debating club.

I played in the high-school band all four years and was also active in field and track work, having won the pole vault 3 out of the 4 years.

I graduated from the high school in 1918, and was the president of my graduating class. The school I must mention. It was the dear old Teton High School, located in Driggs, Idaho.

During these four years, I also entered the church glee-club and public speaking activities having won Ward and Stake finals 2 years. I also acted as Stake Sunday School Secretary 2 years.

In 1918 I left Driggs, Ida., and went to Salt Lake City to join the Army, having waited until school was over before this move. My Army Serial Number was 5206166 and in 2 months service I was promoted to Corporal. For this 2 months service I received regular pay plus the \$60.00 bonus awarded by the government. In September 1918 we were all discharged as the armistice was signed. I played in the Army band. (Baritone Horn).

My next employment was at the copper plant at Magna. Utah, having been employed there for about one year.

I moved in 1919 to Ogden, Utah and was employed by the Dumke Floral Co. While employed here I met Vera Chidester whom I married the following June 16, 1920. At the time of our marriage we were both employed at the Utah State Industrial School at Ogden. We were there 4 years. We were promoted to Company Manager and Matron. While there we had some 600 young boys who were in our charge. June 6, 1921 we were blessed with a son, Keith Frank Barton, but by 1924 we left the school that our son might not be reared in this particular environment.

Upon leaving the school; I took 2 years work at Weber college 1924 & 1925 having graduated from their 2 yr. course we moved to Salt Lake City where I took summer school at the University of Utah. We were both musicians and had helped finance my schooling by playing for dances evenings and I worked in a barber shop Saturdays. There was a hair-cutting contest in Salt Lake for the best Ladies hair dress. My contestant won \$65.00 and a weeks engagement on the Victory Theatre stage. I then worked in the Beauty Salon at Auerbacks store & at the Z.C.M.I.

In 1929 we came to California. I worked in Beauty Salon at May Co. L. A. until I was offered work at Marinello Shop in H. P. (Huntington Park) where I stayed one year. Then opened my own Salon at Winemans store where we stayed 7 yrs. 1 yr. in Loews State Bldg in L. A. Then I decided on Real Estate. I received employment at Sears Roebuck & Co., Glendale and started studying for R. E. After taking the course at the Jr. College they put me in as teacher. Then I took my examination opened my office in N. H. (North Hollywood). Upon moving here I was put in as president of the YMMIA & Ward Chorister which position I now hold.

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