

Rosa Florence Nicholas Durfee - My Grandmother
by Edith Fae Ward Carlson

As told to me by my Grandmother Rosa Florence Nicholas Durfee.

On May 31, 1872 a baby girl was born to Nancy Allen Nicholas and Joseph Nicholas, at Willard, Box Elder County, Utah.

It was their last child of a family of eight girls and one boy. They named her Rosa Florence.

When she was six months old the family moved to Snowville, Utah where she lived until she was two and one-half years old and then the family moved back to Willard.

In the year 1878 when Rosa was six years old, her family moved to Almo, Cassia County, Idaho and went to live on the old Joseph Nicholas place.

School wasn't very regular in those days and the first school Grandma went to was in a two room log house on the old Joseph Nicholas place. Dave Ward's wife, Cynthia, was her first teacher.

Ward's live on the place now owned by my father, Orville Ward. Cynthia came to school in a lumber wagon with a spring seat, bringing baby Addie, 9 months old and her knitting. When she arrived at the school house, the spring seat was carried in the school house and placed at the front of the room. Cynthia sat on the spring seat knitting and heard the children recite their lessons. The children sat on benches; they didn't have desks. (Dave and Cynthia later built the brick home in Elba where Edris and Orvil Sears live.)

It was in this old school house that Grandma first met the man she was later to marry. His name was Henry Miller Durfee but he went by the name of Hank. Grandpa's three brothers Frank, Will and John Durfee also were going to this school.

At first Grandma liked Frank (he later became Aunt Cecil Durfee Lowe's father) best because he was older, but a little later decided he was too old for her!

The first time she went with Grandpa she was 12 years old and she came home from a Christmas dance with him at Almo; the year was 1884.

Not long after this Grandpa gave her an engagement ring. This same ring five years later became her Wedding ring. In those days while you were engaged you wore the ring on your front forefinger, left hand and when you were married it was changed to your fourth finger. It was a plain, wide, yellow, gold band.

Grandpa quit school in July 1887 and went to work in Nevada as a cowboy for Sparks and Tinnan, a large cattle outfit just out of Reno. He rode his horse from Nevada to Willard, Utah to see Grandma in August 1889, when he quit his job with Sparks and Tinnan.

Grandma's family had moved back to Willard in the spring of 1888. Grandpa Joseph Nicholas died October 15, 1888. (It was exactly ten years later October 15, 1898 that Daddy's father Geoge Alfred Ward died at Willard, Utah.)

Grandma and her mother moved back to Almo the winter of 1888. They moved back to Willard in the spring of 1889. In October 1889 Grandma and her mother came back to Almo to visit Grandma's sisters, Helen (Nellie) Edwards, Mary Ann Jones and Ida Durfee. They came in a wagon and Grandma drove the team.

The Christmas before they were married, Grandpa stopped Grandma's older sister and her husband, Aunt Ida and Den Durfee, and gave them his Christmas present for Grandma. He wanted them to give it to her. It was a tan dress, wool with a silk sash and trimmed with tan lace

and buttons. This same dress was later to be worn as a wedding dress.

The night before she was to be married, November 2, 1889, Grandma stayed at her sister's Aunt Ida's and Uncle Den Durfee's house in the Cove, west of Almo. She had ordered a wedding dress and it hadn't arrived! The next morning she drove a team to Almo to the post office at Jake Payden's (later the Will Eames place) to see if the dress had come. Such a disappointment! It wasn't there! She went down to her sister's Mary Ann Jones, got out the tan dress that Grandpa had given her the previous Christmas and was married in it.

Grandma and Grandpa were married at her sister Mary Ann's and her husband William Jones's old house November 3, 1889 at Almo, Idaho by Henry P. Cahoon. They had a nice dinner afterward and had a wedding dance that night at the old log meeting house; later it was the Harry Taylor place. (Across the road and a little south from the Louis Eames place.)

They stayed their wedding night at Aunt Mary Ann's. Grandpa had a horse, saddle and ten dollars. Their marriage was later solemnized in the Salt Lake City Temple, October 15, 1901.

On November 19, 1889 they took Grandma Nicholas and moved to Willard, Utah. Grandpa worked on the narrow gauge railroad.

The next July 31, 1890, my mother, Nancy Lerona (Nina), was born. The winter of 1891 Grandpa worked on the Bothwell Canal at Corinne, Utah and earned enough money to buy a harness and wagon.

Their second child, Ivan Leo, was born March 1, 1902 and on Grandma's birthday, May 31, 1902 they moved back to Almo, Idaho where they were engaged from then on in ranching.

Grandma's mother always lived with them. They had two more children, Edwin Ruthven and Rosa Florence, making a family of four children. They raised one foster daughter from a very small girl, Louise Jones.

They built a very lovely rock home in Almo (now owned by a grandson, Harold Durfee) and for many years owned and operated Durfee Hot Springs swimming pool--a natural warm water spring on their ranch. People from all around the country came to go swimming. It was really nice to have our Grandparent's own it, as their grandchildren never had to pay to go swimming!

Grandpa passed away June 7, 1930 at the Rupert, Idaho Hospital from a ruptured appendix, at the age of 62 years. Grandma died at her home in Almo, December 17, 1937, from cancer at the age of 65 years. They are both buried at Almo Sunny Cedar Rest Cemetery.

They were wonderful Grandparent's! Grandpa was the World's Best Story Teller and I've never tasted apple pie or baking-powder biscuits like Grandma's! When we were little, Mamma would shine the looking glass from Grape Creek over to Grandma's at Almo. She would shine the glass back and it wouldn't be long until here she would come in her little one horse buggy, driving Daisy, a buckskin mare.