

The EULOGY of RAYMOND TAYLOR

(15 APRIL 1905 - 7 NOVEMBER 1984)

By Rose Taylor Wray

It's 1933, a depression year. Grandfather Taylor has just passed away. A shocked and depressed family sit around the big, dining room table. The eldest man still living at home, 28-year-old Ray Taylor sits with his head in his hands. All are wondering how they can keep the \$4000, rocky-acre ranch with its \$7000 debt. Ray votes to keep the place. It is not honorable to turn from a debt. So with Mr. Sargutz to extend the necessary finances to carry on, and with help from his younger brothers, plus his hard work and good management, the ranch is eventually cleared. Why did Uncle Ray make this decision? It all goes back to his training in a hard working, considerate, closely knit, and tremendously humorous family who could look with optimism on hard times.

This great man was the eighth child born to Priscilla Merrill and Frank Taylor, April 15, 1905 on an isolated ranch among the rolling hills of Mapleton, Idaho near the Cub River, and seven miles from Franklin, and where the only company might be the bands of gypsies who passed by and scared the little ones. As soon as Ray could walk and talk, he shared family chores. No one shirked on the Taylor ranch.

In 1912 the Taylor Caravan with their two wagons, a white topped buggy, a string of horses and cows traveled through Crow Creek to Fairview, Wyoming, where they lived in four little dirt-roofed cabins (two with dirt floors, that joined end to end, where they had to tunnel through the deep snows for one winter before they moved into their new home. Pleasures for Ray, after hauling wood and water, and feeding the pigs, was wrapping up in his Dad's old fur coat and rolling down the steep stairs of the new home, or skating to school on ice skates, or trading eggs for candy at Mr. Child's store. Another recreation was wrestling in the barn. He would tie one hand behind his back and could still throw the twins both at the same time. He trained a dog to pull his wooden sled, so that he could ride to the store. One time when Del slid off the footbridge into the deep canal, Ray dived in and pulled him out.

When he was 21 and out of work, he rode a horse all the way to Rawlins, the bleak Red Desert area, to find a job herding sheep, then back to Rupert, Idaho. By this time the horse was worn out, so Ray resorted to freight trains before he finally found work. It was these persistent struggles piled together that built him into a strong man because he never gave up. So he was capable of taking his father's place as head of the family so they could pay off what in those days was an horrendous debt. He and his younger brothers kept on leasing the Clark Place where they would ride their horses across the Salt River each morning and night to milk. Ray took one horse and went ahead and rounded up the cows. Al and Del followed on a shared horse and helped with the milking. It was these guys who showed me the star in a cow's tit, which turned out to be a face covered with warm milk. The boys put up 700 acres of hay each summer on the Clark Place. Grandma would fix a big grub box. During haying they lived in the old log cabin. Uncle Vern remembers how tired they would be after each long day's work. Uncle Ray was the stacker, and with three buckrakes going steadily, he made three stacks a day until the land was cleared. They had a sheep camp by the cabin where they would go after work, visit, and play a game or two by candle light until Ray called "Roll out or Roll up, Four o'clock comes early."

Also, in the winter, the three boys had to go to Smokey for wood. They dried their clothes by a fire, slept in a tent; and on

the way back, walked behind the sled to keep their feet from freezing, since the weather was often 40 below.

1941-The struggle was over. The boys divided the place. Ray took the meadow and the sheep and brought his Mother to live in Hastings apartments for three years. 1944-Grandma bought a lot and Uncle built a home on it where they both lived until 1951, when she moved to Boise for her health. There Ray built an apartment for his mother in Aunt Marie Creamer's home.

Ray took the sheep business seriously. Because of it he became a loner. Whenever he went through Lower Valley, he would point to the canyon above S. V. Ranches that leads to Grey's R. and say, "For twenty-six years I drove my sheep up that canyon and stayed right with them until it was time to bring them home for winter feed. Many of us drove up Myrphy Creek with his supplies, have lunch with him, and then watch him go back up the lonely hill to Prater with a loaded pack horse.

One summer when he and Uncle LeGrande were with the sheep, Ray developed a terrible pain in the stomach. After three days, LeGrande insisted that he leave the sheep and go down to the doctor. His appendic burst, and we almost lost him. He always said that his brother saved his life.

One winter he and Del hauled hay for their sheep every day from the Clark Place in Etna with a team and hayrack. They would go one day, load the hay, pitch a tent by the stackyard, drive back the next day with what looked like a huge stack coming down the highway to the ranch at Afton, and prepare for the return trip. After many years of herding, once again honor was at stake. Ray had a chance to sell his animals. It was a handshake agreement, no money down. Later, he was offered \$3000 more for the band; but his word meant a great deal. He stayed with the first offer.

The family always said that Ray was too busy taking care of people to marry; but he did marry Edna Thrig in June, '52. They were divorced in May, '56. He had no children; but he was father-brother to Uncle Vern. Since Ray worked long, hard, hours, he went to bed early and told his brothers to do the same. But Vern, being a great deal younger, wanted to socialize a bit. One night Uncle had told him not to go out; so he put a tomato under the hind wheel of the car in case he slept too soundly to keep a good check. I don't suppose I need to tell you the tomato was smashed when Ray checked the next morning. Uncle Ray also had time to tease. Vern told me about walking him in twilight hours, cutting through the pastures by Murray Wilkes and coming around the corn of the barn to be greeted by Ray, covered with a white sheet. Ray jumped out with a loud "boo" and about scared the living daylights out of Vern. That's why Vern was afraid of the dark till he was fourteen.

In a sense, Ray adopted all of his nieces and nephews. When Uncle Al was killed by lightning, he helped Aunt LaVivian shepherd her four small children. And love begets love. Laura Dean, Joy, and Naomi would flick to his house and do the spring housecleaning. Nolan ran his errands. It thrilled Ray that they liked him so much. Nolan remembers when Uncle Ray gave him two bum lambs. He watched him ear mark them; but it was years before he could forgive him for cutting off their tails. Linford was always cleaning his driveway or crawling through the window when Uncle Ray was locked out. But we would certainly be remiss as a family, if we didn't publicly thank the Ruby Kennington family for their love and kindness. Uncle Ray was a grandpa to their little ones and a dear friend to the adults. They never left him out of any family gathering. Ruby and Ray have been very dear to each other over the past eight years. They took turns inviting each other

to dinner on Sundays and other holidays. And I know of occasions when Ray prepared Thanksgiving dinner for special friends and family. Through all of these associations Uncle Ray gained a great love for the people.

For a long time, this loner had watched Edward Hale, all dressed up, pass his place. Finally Edward stopped and began to encourage Ray to attend Special party. It had been all work and little play for so long that it took him a long time to condition his mind to go; but once he started, he went regularly. He was younger then and so were his friends; so that determined the activities they enjoyed. They loved to eat, so there were cookouts, fish fries, picnics. Ray and Bill Robinson would make Dutch-Oven potatoes and brag about how good they were. They also loved to dance. At one time the Special Interest had a stereo and several records. Although the women outnumbered the men ten to one, Uncle Ray always went around the dance floor and danced with every lady. Some hadn't danced for years. How they loved this activity. After he got interested in Special Interest group, he could see that he needed a car, and he always picked up anyone who needed a ride. He took the group each year to Logan to the louau and to Jackson for other group entertainments. I was told that at every Special Interest function he shook every hand and greeted everyone with a smile, a pleasant word, and some humorous anecdote. We called him King Solomon, because he took care of so many ladies. His car was always loaded; his dance ticket always filled; and his legs ached every Sunday morning; but he still made it to church where he was a greeter for several years in the third ward and his new ward.

Later, when he was the only Special Interest man that participated in the ward, he still met with the ladies each month for a Home Evening program. He always took his turn, prepared a program of lovely reading or poetry, served ice cream and pie that he had baked or a cake made by his niece Naoma. Everyone felt rewarded by this wonderful hostess. Ray was Special Interest Leader in Third Ward for many years. Also, he and Ruby were Stake Leaders for a long time. And it was because of these last positions that he began to think seriously about the hereafter. Vern and Wilda took him to Provo, where he took out his endowments, June 23, 1978.

I'm reminded of Saint Luke when he asked Christ what he could do to inherit eternal life. Christ answered, "Love thy neigh
(article ended here)

Eulogy found on FamilySearch, accessed 5 Nov 2015.