

George and Anna Marker Heath, Pioneers

From Edith Lovell, *Captain Bonneville's County*

George F. Heath, as a young man, had gone to Montana from Utah with prospectors in 1858. A severe Montana winter caused the death of his co-workers, but friendly Indians saved George's life. He lived with them for several years, learning their language and way of life. He left them when he learned that a wedding was being planned for him. He lived in Eagle Rock for several years and located a ranch on Willow Creek, then returned to Utah where he married Anna Marker. The Heaths were living at Willow Creek in 1874, where he raised wheat, other crops, cattle and horses. Two daughters and a son were born, but the son died.

According to Edith Lovell, in 1882 The George Heaths moved to town from their home on Willow Creek. Their past experience as innkeepers on the Wells Fargo line led them into the hotel business.

Quoting from Elizabeth Heath Elg: "Mr. Heath at that time owned a city block where he built a hotel on the corner of Eagle Rock Street and Capital Ave., later known as the Brooks Hotel. The family lived in a little home south on the other corner of the block."

According to Andrew R. Marker, Mrs. George Heath wrote to her brother Alma Marker in the fall of 1882 that the "bullwhackers plainsmen and railroaders were frolicsome folks and loved to dance; she thought he could make a good living fiddling for dancers in Eagle Rock."

When Alma Marker arrived in November on the Utah and Northern freight train, "Eagle Rock street consisted of a single row of shacks fronting on the railroad track, and so near to it that their one-whitewashed fronts were fouled with the smoke and cinders from passing locomotives."

Anna Maria Marker Heath died in 1884, and later that year George was married to Mary Eliza Fife, also of Utah. The couple had eight children born in Eagle Rock, which was renamed Idaho Falls in 1890.

George Fluker (Fisher) Heath was born 18 March 1837 in Jackson Mississippi. He died 10 April 1903 in Idaho Falls and is buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, old part.

Note: Anna Marker Heath is a sister of Alma Marker and great aunt of Joe Marker.

By Mary Jane Fritzen