

BERT AND NONA GATES
AT D-7

Bert Gates took out his homestead on Derby Mesa sometime before 1897.

In 1900, Bert and Nona Gates moved to the beautiful spot they had found on Derby Mesa, Eagle County, Colorado, proving upon it in 1902. It would be known as D-7. As they looked across the land they saw lots of hard work ahead. Fields to be cleared, fence and ditches to build, hay grain and cattle to raise and through the years, a family.

It was all there, but they knew that was what it was all about. They would take it in stride and do just that, even without too good of roads, no automobiles, and the nearest railroad would be in Wolcott, Colorado miles away.

Bert and Nona were married in Breckenridge, Colorado, October 13, 1897. They went to Leadville, Colorado on their honeymoon. Bert was working in the mines in Breckenridge at the time. After moving to Derby Mesa, he still worked in the mines to get extra money to get the ranch started.

James George, their first child, was born in Breckenridge in 1899, so they had him when they moved to Derby Mesa.

Bert had an extra talent for hewing logs just right and building houses from them. This was all done with a broad axe. He built their house, minus electricity and water. He would dig a well, build a spring house and a store room for supplies and in those days, an out house.

Bert and Nona Gates nearest neighbors would be Charley and Ella Albertson, all coming to Derby Mesa about the same time. Later, Bert would be building the Albertson's their new log house, as they had a smaller cabin to live in at first.

A little later, Clark and Grace Gates came to live on the James P. Gates ranch up the road a ways. James P. Gates came to Derby Mesa ahead of the rest.

Bert and Nona's first girl, Ruth Nona Gates was born in 1900 in Eagle, Colorado at the home of their friends Ernie Nogals. She would grow up to be a school teacher and later be Ruth Albertson.

Frank Foster Gates was born in 1902 at Derby Mesa at the D-7 home. He lived all his life on Derby Mesa and lots of those years were on D-7. Later he bought his own ranch which was known as the Barger Place.

The home place on Derby Mesa would be the birthplace of another little girl. She would be Mary Elizabeth Gates. Mary grew up to be Mary Wurtsmith and lives on the Doan Place, which at one time belonged to James P. Gates.

Albert Ewing Gates was born at home on Derby Mesa in 1909. He grew up to own D-7, the home place.

Bert would have to enlarge his house now as his family was getting larger. Bert added on to the original house completing it, making a beautiful home with carbide lights.

The older children would be helping with the younger ones. One of the younger ones was born at home on Derby Mesa in 1912. His name was Lemley Clark Gates. Since there was not enough ranch for everyone, Lemley went to the city to make his living in California and Arizona.

Berta Adeline Gates was born in 1914. She was born at home on Derby Mesa. She would grow up to be Berta Albertson. She and Orris have lived on Derby Mesa all of their lives.

Marie Katherine Gates was born at home on Derby Mesa in 1917. She grew up to be Marie Younger and later Marie Albertson.

Edith Georgia Gates would be Bert and Nona's ninth and last child. She was born at home on Derby Mesa in 1919. She grew up to be Edith Pierson and later Edith Groves.

In those years, nearly all the babies were born at home. Nona Gates and Ella Albertson always had all the supplies they would need ready to go at a moments notice. Nona Gates was a natural born nurse and always knew just what to do when someone was ill. She would use this in her own family years to follow. Dr. Cole of Oak Creek was all of the folks family doctor for years and would come to assist Nona and Ella.

Since Bert's health was not good as a result of his mining work, his health started to fail. After doctoring several years in Grand Junction and different places, Bert died in 1927 in the house he had built. Nona kept the ranch going for a few years with the help of her sons. She died in 1935 in the same room Bert did.

The following stories happened over the years. There are no records of when, but they are special stories.

Mary Wurtsmith said she remembered as a small girl going to Grandma Gates house. Not only was Grandma an attraction but her very special cookies were too. One time a friend told Mary that Grandpa Gates (James P. Gates) would kill bear and render out the nice lard. Mary then realized why Grandma Gates cookies were so delicious. Another time when Mary visited Grandma Gates she was cooking hops. She strained the liquid off of them and mixed it with cornmeal. She would then pat out little round circles out of the mixture and place them on a shelf to dry. This little cake was used for bread baking.

Frank Gates told the story which was very typical in those times. Bert Gates was miles away across from Derby Mesa, building a house for the Keeners.

He had piled a big pile of sage brush quite a ways from the house, but in line with where he was across from where they were building the house so he could see it if necessary. He told Nona that if anything went wrong she was to light the brush pile. This one day things were not going well at all. Nona and all the children were sick. Nona decided she needed Bert, so she lit the brush pile. It made a big fire alright and Bert would be able to see it. Bert got home as fast as his horse could bring him. Frank said when his father came through the door he knew something was wrong with him too, but did not know what it was. Next day the whole family had typhoid fever, including Bert.

One way James P. Gates got more money for supplies for the ditch building was to go to the flat tops on his horse and catch the big beautiful fish that were in those lakes at that time. He knew how to pack them so they would be fresh and would take them by horseback to Leadville. He would sell them there and buy the supplies, bring them back so there could be more work done on the ditch.

One of the tremendous tasks the Gates and Albertsons undertook was to build the ditch that would bring water from the high country to the Derby Mesa ranches.

James P. Gates was a leather tanner. Bert learned leather tanning from him. Bert would tan the leather from deer hides and Nona would make the children two pairs of mocassins each for winter. In summer, the children ran barefoot all they could. Of course, Nona made nearly all of their clothes.

BERT GATES FAMILY
VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Death</u>
Bert	1872	1927
Nona	1877	1935
James	1899	1968
Ruth	1900	1967
Frank	1902	1981
Mary	1905	
Albert	1909	1959
Lemley	1912	
Berta	1914	
Marie	1917	
Edith	1919	

SUBMITTED BY: LEMLEY AND PAT GATES