



# Bever Family History



**The urge to come west** in search of a job brought young independent Purdue University teaching student and farmer, Ora E. Bever to Billings, Montana where he learned from a billboard of the

opportunities on the new Shoshone Project. After visiting the area, he saw the chance to have his own land and try his farming skills in the arid, high plains desert.

In March 1913, Bever filed on a homestead outside Garland.

Just three months later, his sweetheart Ruby Philpott arrived in Billings where they were married.

The young couple set up housekeeping in this homestead. Working with a team of horses and a plow, Ora cleared the land for the "little white house." With \$50 of savings, he

was able to adequately furnish the home for his bride.

Three years later, their first child, Mary Elaine, was born in the home and they used the woodstove as an incubator.

*While I was being born, the doctor said to my father, "Orie, build a fire in the cook stove." So, of course, my father did. Then when I was born, the doctor wrapped me in a blanket, and put me in the oven. —Mary Elaine Bever*

Ora and Ruby contributed generously to Powell's community until their deaths. Ruby was a member of many clubs, including the Library Club, PEO, and EPASC. Farmers recognized Ora for pioneering the seed and bean business in Powell. The cash crops helped keep Powell's economy productive. He also served as mayor for 8 years and his administration was instrumental in building both Powell's first swimming pool and first nursing home. Bever's interest in the community even took him so far as to personally plant the grass in Washington Park.