HARVEY GIBSON
1877-1938

Harvey Gibson was born in Hyde Park, Utah, 4 Dec. 1877, the 2nd child of William Moroni Gibson and Harriet Woolf. There were to be 5 brothers and 3 sisters in his immediate family.

His father, William Moroni Gibson, had taken a homestead right on Maple Creek, near what was known as Cherryville, some 3 ½ miles northeast of the town of Franklin, Idaho. After some moving back and forth between the homestead, Franklin, and his home town of Hyde Park, Utah, the William Gibson family settled on the new ranch when Harvey was 3 years old.

There were fine stands of timber in Maple Creek Canyon and nearby Franklin Basin, so William Gibson established a successful lumber mill business. In his teen years and early twenties, Harvey worked at his father’s mill and on the ranch, which was primarily a livestock operation of sheep, cattle, and swine.

Harvey received a fundamental education beginning with his mother’s tutoring. She had been a school teacher and realized the importance of a basic education for her children. The Cherryville 1 room schoolhouse was constructed in about 1895, and Harvey attended this school during the winters of his late teens.

Of his youth, it can be said that he grew up as truly a child of nature. With Maple Creek at the back door and a pioneer home surrounded by tall cottonwoods, extensive pastures for livestock, fields of newly-mown hay, wild flowers in the spring, deep and difficult snows in winter and green-splotched foothills adjoining the ranch that seemed to roll up against the spine of the mighty Wasatch Range, the classroom was provided from which he gained a keen understanding of the ways of nature, and a lasting love for animals, especially fine horses.

By the age of 21, Harvey had grown to a good looking, fine physical specimen of manhood. He stood a slender 6 foot 1 inch, had blue eyes, wavy blond hair and a fair complexion that belied his Anglo-Saxon heritage.

During his early mature life, he worked at ranching, clearing the virgin land of brush, growing crops, tending livestock, and helping at the sawmill. The summer of 1901 he spent working for Thomas Lowe, tending sheep north of Soda Springs, Idaho.

On 29 June 1904, he married Lucy Doney Lowe at Logan, Utah. 11 children were born to this union. Harvey, along with his older brother, John filed homestead rights on adjoining virgin, semi-desert, sage-covered grassland, 3 ½ miles northwest of the present town of Grace, Idaho, and in what was to become a part of the Central School District in 1905.

While Harvey was commuting back and forth to the homestead by saddle horse or buckboard, and getting a 2 room frame cabin built, his first 3 children were born in Franklin, Idaho. Retta, their first child, was born 3 Oct 1904. On 1 Feb 1906, she succumbed to pneumonia and is buried in the Franklin Cemetery. Their 2nd child, Grant, was born 30 May 1907. State came next on 30 May 1907.

By 1907, the William Gibsons had succeeded in skidding the heavy stationary steam engine over Maple Creek dugway into Franklin Basin, and were set up on Gibson Lake in extensive stands of virgin saw timber. Harvey had purchased his 1st team of young black horses, “Rock” and “Roud,” from Uria Wilkinson of Franklin, and spent the summer and fall skidding logs on the new mill site. Harvey had stated that he saw deer, bear, pine marten and cougar in that area.
In the early spring 1908, Harvey moved his family by team and wagon. All of their possessions—home-built furniture, a cast-iron kitchen stove, 2 dozen chickens, a red house cow named “Liney” (lead in back of the wagon), a hand plow, hand tools and several barrels of seed and feed grain, as well as food supplies—were moved to the new ranch at Grace.

Harvey worked on the Utah Power and Light Company’s new dam at Grace during the fall of 1908, and with his family, returned to Franklin for the winter.

While operating the homestead ranch at Grace, 3 more children were born to Harvey and Lucy: Cluff, 9 Oct. 1909; Budrow, 24 Sep. 1912; Gean, 5 Sep. 1914. On 16 Oct. 1909, Harvey and his older brother, John, purchased the irrigated ranch of George Telford, one and one half miles northwest of Grace.

Tragedy struck hard in Harvey’s life in 1915 to leave scars from which he never fully recovered. Two younger brothers lost in an avalanche in Maple Creek Canyon in January. In late June of that year, he was struck down by typhoid fever and was bedfast and near death for 9 weeks; he never again fully recovered his health.

On 25 June 1917, Harvey traded his interest in the Telford property for his brother John’s homestead dry farm. On Nov. 5th of that year, he bought the Joe Gunnell irrigated ranch and moved his family to the Gunnell home to be near the school van route for the winter.

Their next child, Hattie, was born at this home 16 Dec. 1917. In the spring, the family was again moved to the former John Gibson home for the summer of 1918. Working the ranch with 12 head of horses in the production of wheat, hay, barley & cattle occupied the efforts of the entire family. In the winter of 1918, Harvey moved his family to the nearby new home of William Perry, to be nearer school, but kept his school-age children at home to avoid the 1918 flu epidemic, which was causing many deaths in the area.

While there, plans were made for a new home. Both homestead cabins were taken down, and Carlos Lowe and Alma Myers began building the present house in August of 1919. It was completed in November. 4 children were born at this home site and new home. Don (while cabins were being taken down), 12 June 1919; Homer, 23 April 1921; Chet, 26 Feb. 1924 (died at birth); Opal 26 Feb. 1927.

The year 1920 was disastrous one. Harvey’s grain crops, stacked and ready to be threshed, were 90% lost to heavy rains in October and November. But through this loss, Harvey had the courage to prevail.

While Harvey was a quiet and retiring disposition, he was easily met, and friendly, with a welcome smile and cheerful word for those he knew. He had a pleasant attitude toward life and dearly loved a good joke. He was very well versed in telling the witty short story. When ranch equipment was taken to the local blacksmith shop for repair, good humored conversation with the “smithy” and friends was in order. Following are 2 selected stories he often told:

THE BIG ONE THAT DIDN’T GET AWAY

When Harvey was in his early twenties, he was exploring the headwaters of the Cub River, he discovered a large, deep pool containing many, many large native trout.

Keeping the secret to himself, he made several trips back to the pool with a willow pole, hooks, line and bait; but not being a fisherman, he couldn’t catch a one. Deciding he must have those trout, he enlisted the help of a friend, Josh, who had access to blasting powder, caps, and fuses. Well, Josh agreed to go and they set out for the big pool.

On arrival at the spot, it was decided that Harvey would wade out into the main current to gather up the shocked trout and Josh would sink the charge in the right place. With everything
set, there was a terrific BOOM and water shot up in the air as the charge let go. 
Josh saw all the shocked trout come up, but Harvey had disappeared somewhere in the 
downstream current. What had gone wrong? The shock wave had hit Harvey in the legs, 
knocking him out cold. He was floating downstream with all the shocked fish. 

Josh rushed into the river lugged Harvey out of the water and went to work helping him 
regain consciousness. But–by the time Harvey came to, all the trout were lost downstream. 

BLACK BEAR THAT MOVED THE CAMP..FAST 

During the summer of 1901, Harvey tended sheep in the Caribou Basin area north of Soda 
Springs, Id. There were no roads and very few trails. A pair of small mules were kept with the 
herd as pack animals, to move the tent, duffle, and camp equipment as the herd was moved onto 
fresh feed areas. Several bags of oats were kept for the mules. Regardless of where they grazed 
at night, they would always return to camp for their feed of grain in the morning. 

One of these mules so dearly loved the grain that on several occasions he got under the 
tent flap and helped himself to the oats. One calm morning, Harvey returned early from spotting 
the flock. From a hundred yards or so away, he noticed the tent canvas wiggling and jiggling. 
Since there was no wind, he figured that the mule was again in the tent stealing the oats. Well, 
Harvey thought it was about time that the stubborn mule had a lesson or two on how to stay out 
of the tent and stop stealing the grain. 

He found a good, stiff club and sneaked up in the tent flap with his club ready. He 
popped under the flap and into the tent. WOW...There was a black bear with his head in the flour 
sack. With a mouthful of flour, the bear jerked his head out of the sack, let out a terrific w-h-o-o- 
of flour dust and hit the far side of the tent, running wide open. While Harvey stood spellbound 
and frozen to the spot, the bear took off with the tent, knocking Harvey down, and scattering the 
camp over several rods before tearing a bear-sized hole in the tent and tearing off into the woods. 

Harvey did not aspire to become a noted public figure, but he could always find time to 
help with school lessons, go with his family on a picnic, or take them to the county fair. He was 
successful in his chosen field, stable in character, industrious and thrifty. He lead an honorable, 
upright and righteous life, his integrity unquestioned by his peers. He was a great man. 

Harvey died at his home of a heart attack at age 60, 25 Aug. 1938, and is buried in Grace, 
Idaho.