

A Tribute to Twila McInelly

On September 13, 1912, in the little town of Boulder, Utah was born a beautiful, dark haired little girl to Christian Moosman Jr. and Mary Ellen Thompson. Aunt Susan Heaps delivered her. She was the tenth of twelve children. At her birth she had eight brothers and one sister. Her mother was so happy to have another girl, that she dressed Twilia in nothing but white until she was two year old. The family grew a little more with another girl and boy. This made a family of 12 children.

Her parents were married October 1, 1892, in Escalante, Utah. They lived in Escalante until the spring of 1896, when they moved to Boulder with their two little children. They pulled out of Escalante in a covered wagon, the load consisting of clothing, some furniture, a crate of chickens, and three weaner pigs in a box made of lumber. Mary and the children rode in the wagon until they came to Phipps Wash, from there on Mary walked. She carried Baby Frances with little Eddie hanging on to her ankle length skirt. On one part of the trip they had to take the wagon apart, push the wheels and other parts up over a shelf, reassemble the wagon and load up again. The three skinny little pigs got away but Mr. Moosman finally caught them all.

Their first home in Boulder was a dugout. Then they built a log house, in which Twilia was born, Then they built a large ranch house. The ranch was at the foot of Boulder Mountain five miles from the town of Boulder. They also had a home in the town of Boulder just across the road from the schoolhouse.

Twilia's fondest memories of her childhood are of riding the range with her father and brothers. They had a lot of cattle and horses, also pigs, chickens and pet dogs and cats. They had a small sheep herd. The boys would go up on the mountain to the large sheep herd and carry dogie lambs home in grain bags on their horses. Then they raised them on bottles. In the fall the sheep were sheared, mom would wash some fleece and we would card it into tiny bats. These they would put inside a quilt and then quilt it.

They had to work hard and learned to do everything there was so many chores to do. They had large gardens to tend because they raised almost all of their food. They made all their clothes. Later when Twila had her own family she was thankful for all her training as a child.

It wasn't all work, they had a lot of fun fishing and roaming about the hills and mountains.

They had to chop wood and bring it in. The only heat we had was a kitchen range and a wood heater in the front room. The bedrooms were always cold, and it was much better to sleep two or three in a bed than to sleep alone.

They had a lot of milk cows, her mother helped milk them, but she wouldn't let her daughters milk the cows. Twilia never milked a cow until after she was married. She did help herd the cows. They had alfalfa fields on one side of a hill and a pasture on the other side with no fence between them. They would spend hours watching the cows so they wouldn't go into the alfalfa fields but it was fun because they had a "mudhole". They found some red clay in the creek bank and spent hours making clay people and animals out of it.

One day while walking along the bench outside the field. Twilia came face to face with a long horned cow. She ran as fast as she could for the fence. She could feel the cow right at her heels. When she climbed the fence and looked back the cow was running in the other direction even more scared then Twilia was.

Bath day was quite a day. They had to heat a lot of water on the stove and then drag in the #3 tub and fill it with water. Then they would all take turns bathing. They got water from a ditch that ran past the house. Her father made a trough out of boards for it to run in and at the end was a fall so they could put a bucket under it to catch the water. Sometimes there were a few wigglers in the water. They did the washings in a tub and with a scrubbing board. They heated water in a tub over an open fire outside. They always boiled the white clothes in lye water. Her mother's first washer was one operated by hand. She made good use of her boys on wash day. Later the family got a Maytag washer. It had a long exhaust pipe that had to be outdoors because of fumes.

When they had a good year of pinenuts, they had fun gathering them. Before the nuts fell out of the cones they would build a fire and put the cones in it and roast them. Then they would shell them out, and boy they were good. Later when the nuts fell on the ground they would pick them up. The family always had a flour sack full. They would eat them on long winter evenings.

They didn't live near a store, so very seldom had candy only what they made. They had lots of friends, but only saw them on Sunday and special occasions. On Sunday they went 5 miles to church in a buggy drawn by a team of horses. Every Sunday they would either go to someone's house for dinner or take a family home with them for dinner. On Memorial Day we would walk from home to the cemetery and gather armsful of wild flowers to put on the graves.

It was a real treat to get to go to "town" (Escalante). It didn't happen very often because it would take all day on horseback. The mail was carried by mules led by a rider over one day and back the next.

They had lots of good dances and parties. They did quadrilles or square dances. Everybody danced with everybody, the oldsters danced with the

youngsters and it was fun. We never knew what picture shows were. They had a victrola that played round cylinder records. They really enjoyed it. They had an organ and Twila took lessons from Rose Peterson. She played the organ in primary when she was a just a girl.

Twila started school when she was 6 years old. The school house was also used as meeting house and dance hall. It was one large room with a folding partition in the middle. When there was a dance it was folded back. We had two rooms with four grades in each room and two teaches. In the fall and spring we would ride to school on horses, tie them up all day and ride back to the ranch at night. We lived the farthest away so on our way to school we were joined by the children of the Lyman family, the Ormond family and the Peterson children. There was quite a group of us when we all got together. We had a lot of horse races, and sometime we had to ride double (two on one horse) During the cold weather we moved to our house in town. I completed eight years of school in Boulder. She started high school in Bicknell but there was an epidemic of spinal meningitis in January. They closed the schools down. Twila's folks sent her brother Harvey over the mountain with horses to bring Foster, Idona and Twila home. There was a lot of snow and deep drifts on the mountain. They left Grover early in the morning with lots of clothing. It took all day to get to the ranch. They were quarantined for two weeks just the four children. They were homesick but they were not allowed to see anyone just talk to them on the phone. Frances Lyman would bring food and anything they needed to the gate and then leave. They had fun though, they played games and made candy and popcorn. It was still a long two weeks. Because of this Twila didn't finish school that year, The next year Twila went to Logan and lived with her brother Welborn's family and attended North Cache High. In 1929 She attended Escalante High school. School was held in the old "tithing House" now the D.U.P. museum. They had Home Ec. classes across the street in a large room of Ray Shurtz's house. Seminary was held in the Relief Society room just west of the South Ward Chapel.

Twila says, "I had lots of dates during my school years. One night after school, when I was living in Escalante, Winferd Lay came down to where I was living to see if I would go to a party. He had a boy with him named Dave and that is how it all started. From that time on Dave never dated another girl and I never dated another boy. It wasn't until several months later that I learned his name was Arthur and not Dave.

We dated the rest of the school year. During the spring we became engaged. We were riding a horse double when he gave me my diamond. He took me home and introduced me to his parents and family. I fit right in. His dad said getting married to me was the best thing that could ever happen to him. When school was out I went back to Boulder so he would come all the way over there to see me.

In July my mom gave me some momey to go to Escalante to get a permanent. When I got to Escalante, we decided to get married so I took the money and bought material to make a wedding dress. We were married July 16, 1930 by Roy Lee at his home. They made their first home in Escalante.

When their second son was only 9 months old they decided to move to Boulder so Arthur could carry the mail from there to Escalante. Their move was similar to her parents move to Boulder years ago. They also moved with a team and wagon and it took them a long, long day to get there. When they got to the "Clad V Cut Off" which was a very steep rough road down into lower Boulder, Arthur made Twila get out and walk down over it. It started to rain and she just knew that the team and wagon were going to go over the edge of that dugway. She carried her baby Kent in her arms and her son Wells hung onto her coat. Wells lost one of his shoes. The two children were both crying and before they got to the bottom so was Twila. They had a pig tied on the back of the wagon in a box and it got away. They never did find it, but the next spring it came into the ranch in lower Boulder and was truly a "razor back."

Twila's first years of housekeeping was very similar to that of her parents and our pioneer ancestors. She did her washing with a tub and a wash board until they had 5 children. They did not have water in the house, it had to be drawn from a well outside. They heated it over a fire in the backyard. Their bathrooms were little wooden "outhouses" with mail order catalogs for toilet paper.

They lived in Boulder for a year then decided to move back to Escalante.

There are many more stories that could be told about this couple and their Pioneer like lives in Escalante and Boulder. They had 8 children: 4 boys and 4 girls. They worked hard together to provide a livelihood for themselves and family during the depression. Many jobs were worked at including WPA jobs. One job Arthur had was helping build the tunnel through Zion's National Park.

Twila has been a widow for 30 years but she has kept herself busy with her family, a special interest group, the senior citizens program, Relief Society and the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. She has grown a garden many years and she has made many many quilts for her family as well as quilted many for other people. In one year she had quilted over 25 quilts for other people.

Twila has been a member of D.U.P. over 30 years. She was Captain of the Escalante Camp 6 years during the years 1966-1972. She was organist for the camp several years before she was a member and then for many years after until just a few years ago. I feel Twila has a true pioneering spirit and deserves being honored for the great lady she is..