Interview of Eva L. Colledge Oxborrow Johnson

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Interviewer: Susan Whittaker

with assistance from Connie Nielson and Layne Whittaker

Connie: This is Eva Johnson from Lehi, Utah. Her address is 9859 West 9600 North Lehi, Utah 84043. Today we are going to have Layne Whittaker tape this interview with you in behalf of the Lehi Historical Preservation commission and the State Historical Society and we are going to enjoy this little visit with you.

Layne: Do you understand what we are going to do and what we are going to do with it?

Connie: Eva, we are going to film you and you are going to share some of the history that you know of Lehi and of the area and of the things that you can remember. And this is why we are going to film you. And then following that, we are going to put it on a DVD and make sure that it is put into the museum and used here and it may be put on the Historical Society of Utah. But you have wonderful history of this community and we need to hear it and share it so that we can use it in your behalf.

Eva: Are you going to ask me questions?

Connie: Yes.

Susan: I would like you to tell us about who you are and when you were born and a little bit about you.

Eva: Well, my name is Eva Louise Colledge. I was born on the 22nd of September, 1911. I think I learned to walk the day I was born because there was so much beauty. And I had the most wonderful Dad. He kept telling us kids that you don’t need money to be happy. So I am like my father. I love the out of doors, I love the birds, and I love the mountains. I’ve covered a lot of them…up in west canyon and lived out there and have some wonderful memories with my brother Jack. Jack was there 65 years and I would go out and ride with him and help him with the cattle. And some days I didn’t go, so I would walk the mountain and I would walk for hours and find arrowheads and just things that were out there. One time he sent me to look for some cattle. He said go up the left fork and come down Iron Canyon. He said, “I want you to see how many cows were drinking there and see how many tracks were in there.” So I did, I went on up there and down to the spring and I gave my horse a drink and I threw the reins down and let her go eat. So, when it came time to go home, she let out a squeal—just a terrible scream and she just left me. She just jumped over bushes and everything. I couldn’t stop her and I didn’t know what in the dickens to think of her. I never found her for three days. It was only about five miles to walk out. But I wondered what would she do that for and I thought I would get me another drink since I’ve got to walk. So I went over there and there was a lion track that big. She’d seen the lion and I hadn’t. So that was one of the fun trips that I had up there.

And then there was another time that we were staying in the Lee Stewarts cabin. We’d just stay out there. It was just so beautiful, so beautiful and once in a while you would see a great big old rattlesnake, but you would not be afraid of them because they don’t hurt you.

Another time, he and I was deer hunting out there, and we were going up to a certain place and my nephew, Bud Hutchings, was supposed to go with us. But he didn’t get there. But when we got up there, we were just sitting there. There was a big stream down there and a few cows there, but you always see deer there. So I sat down on the edge and pretty soon we seen Bud. We had told him where we were going. And he came up there, He had my father’s old .45-70 gun. You couldn’t lift it. I never could shoot it. So I got him over there on the edge and I said right here he could get him a deer. So he went over.
there and sure enough, there comes a deer. So I
told him to wait, wait, wait until he got right over
in that clear spot and then take a shot at it. Well,
he took a shot at it and it knocked him over like
this, and smoke was in the air. I said, “Well, you
got ya’ a buck.”

“I did,” he said. So anyway we brought it up
where we could clean it out and my brother
cleaned it out. We only had the two horses, the
one I was on and the one my brother was on. So
he said, “Eva why don’t you stay here and maybe
you can get another shot at a deer and we’ll
got down and I’ll get another horse and come
back.” Okay that was fine. I sit there and waited
and waited and waited and waited. The sun was
going down farther and farther and farther and fin-
ally it went down. So I finally didn’t know what
to think. They weren’t going to come back so I
finally decided that I better head to camp. But
I was on the old silver horse that Jack had and
he was smart as a whip anyway. So I got on the
horse and just turned him loose, and he took me
down to camp. When I got there they were all
inside and having their supper and I opened the
door and my brother says, “What the turf took
you so long?” That’s how he swore. I didn’t have
a brother that swore. And he said, “What the turf
took you so long?” And this guy said, “Wasn’t
you afraid leaving her up there?” “Leavin’ her
up there? No, I wasn’t afraid. The horse that she
is ridin’ knew every inch of this canyon,” and
he did. I could ride him anywhere and let go
of the reins and he would just go. It was about
ten o’clock at night when I got down there. Jack
didn’t mind…it was alright.

There was another time that we all decided to
go hunting. And we were going up to White Pine
and sleep up there over night.

Susan: Where’s White Pine?

Eva: Its right up at the far end of the canyon.
Anyway, we was going up there and me and
my daughter had a bed there and my brother
and two or three more had a bed and my oldest
brother was with me too. And when we got up I
said, “Let’s just go over to Jackson.” It’s steep and
there is always water in there and there is always
deer. We didn’t have any breakfast, we just went
hunting. I said, “Let’s stay up on this ledge…you
can see everywhere.” I knew the canyon like
every bit of it, ya know. You could see anywhere
that you wanted to see. So we stayed there and
the boys went down into the hollow. They got
two or three deer down there and she and I just
kept looking around and looking around and
she said, “Mom, look at that, that’s coming over
the top.” Well, I looked and it looked about that
size. You couldn’t tell. And you watched it and
watched it until it came down and turned until
it went up this hollow. But before that she said,
“Mom, you can’t shoot it because it’s too far
away.” And I’m not that dumb, I wasn’t going
to shoot. But anyway, the deer came down and
started up that hollow. There was a little bush
there and I got down, followed it and shot it, but
we didn’t see the deer anymore. Well, old Elliott
Smith, that’s the Smith twins’ Dad, he’s gone
now and so was Haws Bone who’s gone now,
was waitin’ for the deer to come to them. They
wanted to see how close the deer would come
to them. And I dropped it before it got to them.
And Elliott he swore at me, “…that Eva, what
am I going to do with her?” I got the deer before
that. We had lots and lots of wonderful times out
there…just by myself. It was so beautiful.

Susan: What else did you do besides go to West
Canyon? What was there to do in Lehi?

Eva: I’ll tell you about going to school. Well,
when I was in the 5th grade, that was in 1917,
and we had to walk to school. And in the win-
ter it was terrible. Mama would take burlap and
wrap around our feet to here so that we wouldn’t
get so deep in the snow. The snow was deep.
We were going along and the bigger boys were
laughing and talkin’ and me and Pete got stuck in
a snowdrift And they had to come and get us out.
But when we got to school, the teacher would sit
us by that old pot-belly stove. I could almost put
my arms around it. We would be so cold…froze
almost, and the teacher kept us a desk right by
the stove. Well, that was fine, but in ten minutes
you’d be asleep. She didn’t care. She let us sleep.
And she was so sweet to us. But every time she
would come she would let…I’ve got something to
read about the pot-belly stove.

Susan: How far did you have to walk to school?

Eva: Four miles. Four miles up and four miles
back.

Susan: And did you do that every day?
Eva: Sometimes we would be snowed in too much, but yes, I walked it all the time.

Susan: Did it used to snow more than now?

Eva: They say it didn’t, but I will tell you, there was no way to get to town or a way to get on the road or nothing because there was so much snow. But we had a sleigh and the horses and everything. We walked to school and me and Pete had to take the grade over again because we slept all day. But it was a learning experience even though I was only six years old. It was a learning experience for me and I loved it.

But first of all before you go to school, there’s the cows to milk. So me and Jack would go out and milk cows. But your fingers would be so cold and they would stick to the rim of the bucket...the handle of the bucket. That was what we did before we went to school. Then what we did when we came home from school, we had to keep that big wood box filled and then there was the cows to milk again and they all had to be fed and the pens cleaned out. I was just as good as any boy and that’s what I did. And I loved the outdoors. I wasn’t an indoor person because of my Dad. He showed me everything that was beautiful.

One time he said, “If you get your chores done, I’ll take you and show you something.” So I was just little. So when I got the chores done he took my hand...and my hand was little...he walked me clear down to the river and around to the horseshoe bend, and he parted some grass there and showed me a curlews’ nest.

But my Dad never got to go to school in his life and his Dad was a college graduate in the East....or back in the old country. He was a city record-er and the last toll keeper of the bridge. So, I had lots of things to do before going to school and it was a long walk. My youngest brother Jack and I were close. We were just about a year apart, and he would always come back and get my hand...get my hand.

We would get out of school in the fall to dig the sugar beets. After that, my teacher’s name was Miss Wally...and there were no cars. Once in a while you would see a car, but she got killed on Main Street by a car...one car. All of us felt bad. I don’t remember exactly when we came up here, but the Mannings lived right down below us. But Harry Manning, after we had a new teacher and he made us clean up the yard and pick up the paper, Harry said, “I didn’t come here to pick up the paper, I came here to learn.”

Anyway he went out there and was pickin’ up paper and he found a big penny and Hardy’s had a little ice cream parlor across the road. So he went over to spend his penny. There was a man who says, “Let me look at your penny.” So he let him look at it and he said, “I’ll give you a nickel for your penny.” So he gave him a nick-el—and it was a five dollar gold piece. And that guy got away with that.

Susan: So what did you learn in school and how did you learn it?

Eva: The hard way. I can’t remember learning too much there. But I had a lot of friends and I loved my teacher. But I would be asleep mostly. We would be so cold and so wet that me and Pete would go to sleep. I just can remember the last year that I was there except that I loved the teacher. Then by the time that we got up to Franklin school we didn’t have to walk quite as far. But, Miss Southwick, she was our teacher one year, she would line us up and make us open our mouth and look to see if we had brushed our teeth. And all of us would say “Oh yeah.” But she came to me and I hadn’t brushed my teeth so she made me walk home that 2½ miles. My Mother was a bit upset over that because at that time there were tramps and everything along the railroad tracks. So she really chastised her for making me walk home. A lot of kids would just tell her that they did...and they didn’t. But that’s a lie.

Susan: So did you take your lunch?

Eva: You had to take your lunch and I can tell you about that, too. That’s the first time that I found out that there was boughten bread. I thought that it all came out of the oven. Mama just made tons of it you know. But Charlie Johnson had a store up there in the Junction, and Ines was his daughter. She was my age and she went to school with me. I had homemade bread, you know, with butter on it that thick and probably a big piece of meat. And every day I could see her looking at that sandwich. Finally she said, “Let’s trade sandwiches.”

“Okay.”
That’s the first time that I tasted boughten bread. That’s the first time that I knew that they made cheese. I didn’t know that they made cheese. But we traded like that for a long time. And then we had… the girls little bathroom, and here was the boys little bathroom. So what did we do during noon and recess—the boys would chase the girls and the girls would go into the bathroom and shut the door. So we just had a good time up there.

I’ve got a story that I’ve got to tell you. I’ve got a doll in there that I am going to show you. But when Jack and I… Jack was in the 4th grade and I was in the 3rd and we had a cousin up in Salt Lake and we didn’t get to see him very often. This day, Willard came to school and he had on just a pair of overalls that fastened here… no shirt, no underwear, no socks and it was cold. And he come to me and said, “I’m going to run away.” Well his mother had died and his father had remarried again and she was mean to him. The little boy could have anything he wanted. And I said, “Well you can’t do that,” I said, “Mama will just break me up if I don’t take you home.” “Okay,” he said.

“Have you got money?”

“Well I’ve been saving it for a long, long time and I have two dollars,” and he had it in his pocket. Well I told him that he was going home with me and Jack and don’t you leave here. Now what are you going to do until we get out? And he said that he would wait right there. We come out and we didn’t find him and no one else ever did. And he was never found. He had given me this little doll and nobody ever knew where he went.

Susan: How did you get around back then?

Eva: Horse. I was a horseback rider. I rode a horse a lot.

Susan: When did you get your first car?

Eva: We didn’t have one until we bought an old Flint and the brake was up here and you pulled it up here like this. And anyway, Dad was up working in the field and Gilbert Mitchell helped him and he had an old model T Ford. Me and mother were going into town to get some groceries and he said, “Git in that car and take it.” I said that I had never driven a car, but he said that there was nothing to it. So mama says that she would walk up and if I can drive it that far I will ride with you. So I got in that car and putted up that road like nobody’s business and I never had a driver’s license for years. I just drove. No, we didn’t have a car for many long, long years. And it was a funny old thing anyway.

But the thing that I enjoyed most of all was tagging my Dad. He would go out to work in the field. When he was a young boy, he had a broken ankle and they set it wrong and he walked like this. So that’s the way I walked. I would walk in his footsteps and once in a while he would find an arrowhead.

Susan: Did he farm then?

Eva: Yes.

Susan: What did he raise?

Eva: Wheat, hay, barley and then later we got into sugar beets. But I was an outsider—not in the house. My Dad, he was the kindest man I ever saw. I played with mice. I could play with anything that I wanted to play with. When he would go outside to stack the hay, he would say to me to “come on” and you can catch the mice. He made me a little box and I would put the mice in the box. I had a sand pile there and he made me a little road right around that sand pile. I got a match box and tied some string on the match box and then around the neck of the mice and make them go around and around that sand pile. I played with mice…I would play with anything. I guess now you would die.

I was allowed to hunt… go with the boys and hunt. And me and Jack we’d go down to the river and get catfish for dinner. We trapped for things along the river like muskrats. And I would help catch and clean them and everything. Everything we did we did together.

We had a bunch of chickens and we had pigs. And in the early morning the sun would be on that island and the water would only be a couple of inches deep and the big old carp would be going along like that. We’d take a pitchfork out there and sail a pitchfork and get them and we would take them home and feed them to the chickens and the pigs.

One time I can remember that my Mother, because we were out of meat… that carp must have been that long. She soaked that in vinegar
and salt water overnight and then she stuffed it and rubbed it with something and she baked it. I think it was the best meal that I ever ate. I remember it. She could make a peach cobbler that was great. I could never make one that tasted like hers. We had all that thick cream that you would cut off with a knife...you would have all that good cream. I didn’t learn to cook too good because I always wanted to be out riding the range. That was my life.

And then when my youngest brother went into the army some of the cows had to be taken out to the Canyon. So I got on my horse and picked up some cows from Allreds and did it myself. I didn’t go clear to the canyon, but went to Tickville. But that was the first water that was out there. That’s what I did for fun. When I would get on a horse and see all those beautiful mountains....when I was five years old, my Dad had a mare out there and she died and left the little colt. I don’t know how he got the word in, but he did. My brother Joe went on his horse ahead of us and Dad was going in the wagon so he could tie the little colt on the side. I cried to go and mother said, “No, you can’t go. It’s too far and it won’t be till morning until they get back.” And I can hear my Dad right now saying:

“Well, Mary, let’s talk this over. You go in the house and get me a pillow and get me a quilt.” He had this high seat and he said that he would make me a bed underneath and she’ll be alright. So I got to go and I can remember every turn in that road. I can remember that there were two old shacks and we stopped at one of them. I remember that we got to the canyon and we got the colt...and I knew where the colt was because I hunted, walked or rode every inch of it later. That was the most wonderful time that I ever had in my life. And they can say how hard it was for kids in those days. There was times that I thought that I was picked on, but my Dad...he had a way with me.

We had one cow that had udders that long, you know, and when she went through the ditch she would step on them and cut them. The boys didn’t want to milk that cow and Dad says, “I don’t want you to, anyway, because Eva gets all the milk.” So I got to milk the cow. Dad always said that I was the best...the best at everything. So I would milk the cow and separate the milk and the cream.

And then when we thresed the wheat, I pitched to the thresing machine. And I stacked all that grain and then they would take it to the stack. But I stacked grain, I hauled hay and I did everything that the boys did.

But the one thing that really bothered me, Eunice was my oldest sister you know...she had a horse. I was only two years old when she got married, but that horse went through every one of us kids. I told my Dad that the horse was getting old. What am I going to do—I need a horse. I need a horse of my own. Where was he going to buy a horse for my own? Well, he went down to the sugar factory when they brought a load of horses off the desert. And he picked one out...one for my oldest brother and one for me. You oughta seen it. It had more fire in it...it was like heat coming up from a fire. So he told the boys to take the rough off of her and I guess they thought they did. I got thrown off time and time again. Dad would come and brush me off and say, “That wasn’t your fault, just get on and you can ride it.” So I learned to be a good rider. I knew I could ride that horse if I had a saddle. So how could he afford to buy a saddle? He paid five dollars for those two horses. Where did he get the five dollars? I don’t know. He says, “My girl, if you learn to ride bare back you would be the best rider in Lehi.” Well, that horse never did conquer me after that. He made me think that I could do anything, anything there was.

Susan: What did you get to do on holidays?

Eva: We would walk to town. I remember one time that we had just worked in the sugar beets and my knees were that big and rubbed together when I walked because they were swollen so bad. My Dad gave me fifty cents. Where he got it, I don’t know. But, he gave me fifty cents. I went to town, stayed all day and ate ice cream and every thing and went home with a quarter. I’m telling you, it was slim going then. Then me and Georgita Goates...I would meet her on the highway as we would come to school and we would have a new pair of shoes. We would get one pair of shoes per year to go to school. We would pack our shoes to school and go barefoot and put them on when we got down there. We got a new dress once a year too. I look back now and I think that was the most wonderful time in my life and I thought then that I was kind of...
picked on because these other girls didn’t have all this work to do.

Another time, me and Jack had got into a little argument and Mama said, “Jack, you go out and clean that barn. Eva, you go up and gather the eggs.” I had to go right past the barn to get up where the chickens were. There was a crack in the barn about like that. Old Jack got a shovel full of that old soft manure and as I went by, he let me have it. It was all on my face and all down the front. Then he took me over to the watering trough and dunked me in there and got it all off. That was just common, the fun that you would have.

Then we’d go for Easter, Mannings lived below us. Harry Manning and Slater’s lived on the other side. There was my Mom and Dad, and over on that there was Mama’s brother and Dad’s niece and on this side was Dad’s niece too. So there was 31 of us. There was 31 kids in those three houses. But we weren’t all there at the same time.

But the best time that we had to help was when we killed the pigs. Oh, I loved that time. We had to haul all that water and put it in the boiler room, and let it boil. Let it get hot and then pack it out and that barrel went down like this—you would have to push the pig down in lye water to get the skin off. And when Dad would clean them, he would give Mama the bladder of those pigs. She’d clean them and get a straw out and blow them up and hang them up to dry. We could kick them and play with them and they never would break. That’s where we get the pigskin name from. We’d play with them all the time and that was a good time for us. We had to work to get the water and the wood to heat them and everything, but it was a good time.

But Uncle Harry Manning would cut them up for us. Mama would make a big pan of Yorkshire ducks about that size for everybody. Yorkshire ducks was from the liver and the vale. You’d just cut the vale in a piece like that, put your liver in there and salt and put all the spices in there and hold it and bake it. There were those three families and we would all get a pan of that.

**Susan:** How often did you do that?

**Eva:** We would kill our pigs in the fall.

**Susan:** How did you cure them?

**Eva:** Mother would cure them in salt and brine. She would cure them.

**Susan:** And where would you do this?

**Eva:** In a big wooden barrel.

**Susan:** Where would you have these, in a shed?

**Eva:** Down in the cellar.

**Susan:** How else did you store food and what kind of food did you store?

**Eva:** We would hunt rabbits. Back then a young rabbit was not a cottontail, it was a jackrabbit. A young jackrabbit was choice. They don’t eat them now. I guess they are all right, but we ate them for years. And then geese and ducks off the river.

I remember one time when my youngest boy was in high school and him and his little buddies would go down to the river after school and kill ducks and geese and leave them on the porch, and Eva was up all night cleaning. So I got them together one time, and I said, “The next time anyone kills anything, they are going to clean it.” So I was out hanging clothes and a beautiful flock of geese came over and they were pretty low. So I went into the house to get my shotgun and I ran out there. Another flock came over and I shot twice and I had three geese. So Jack came home from school and said, “Oh, Mom, who shot the geese? I think you said, the first one who kills the geese has to clean it.”

I love that place so much. I love where I am. And just last week I had a migraine headache and I have this big couch on the porch and I was laying there and there came two quail, right up there and ate right in front of me. And then those sandhills, they come in the spring I spend half my time sitting on that porch. They are the most beautiful things. And we own that island in the river and they nest down in there. They are beautiful things. We used to have swan on that river, but not anymore.

**Susan:** How did the new inventions and technology in Lehi change your life?

**Eva:** What technology?
Susan: Like television. How did that change your life?

Eva: I never got a television until about 1942. I was working down here at a cafe and I bought one. That was when that little deer—Skip goes out into the canyon with my brother and they saw this little deer. You know how they hide, and it was there. Jack said don’t touch it or the moth-er won’t come and get it. So they went on and did what they had to do but when they came back it was still there but it was pretty weak. So Jack went over to it and it had a hole right in there. I don’t think it was a bullet hole, but I think it was a stick or something. But it was fes-tered. So Jack took it down to the cabin and give it to Mother to see what she says. I don’t know how they got word to me, but I went out there to see it, and it hid under the bed. But when we got it out...have you heard them cry? That little thing would cry and cry and cry. So at the time, I was working with the Fish and Game and knew all the game wardens and everything and here come the game warden up the road. And the deer shut up...never made a sound. When we got it home, I went to work on that...cleaned it all out and worked with it. It had a hard time getting used to the milk and that. We got some like we fed to the calves and I started him on that and he did so good. I went out to see him one morning and I couldn’t find him. Skip was sleeping up stairs, and I hollered at him and said, “You’d better get up, your deer is gone.” He was half asleep and he said, “What’d you say?” And I told him again and he didn’t respond so I went up there and there was a little brown ear sticking out of that white sheet. That deer slept with him ever after that. He’d go up those stairs just like that. He ate to the table and had a plate. What-ever Skip would eat he would eat.

Susan: What do you remember about businesses in town like the People’s Co-op?

Eva: I remember the Co-op and the drug store. The old Co-op was by the theater. The theater was here and the Co-op was there right by it and the drug store too. I remember all of that. My girlfriend, Bertha Brem’s Dad was a night watchman there. We could get a PCI ticket when we would buy our groceries and then for a dime we could go to the movies. So that’s what we would do. You didn’t have any money to spend. But we would get to go to the movie for ten cents. I worked so I could get ten cents to go to the mov-ies.

One time we got in a terrible blizzard. When I didn’t get home, Mrs. Brem’s told my Mother, “Don’t you ever worry, she will just stay home with my daughter.” And I did. I would go there when it was a bad stormy night. I don’t know how I got home that night. But we came to a place where the railroad was up there and below there was a big snowdrift over some trees like this. We got in there and stayed for quite a while until we could see enough to tell where we were going until we got home. I stayed up to Udell’s that night. But we had some rough, rough, rough old times.

And then when I worked at Wattie’s and at the drugstore, I worked the midnight shift. So I would get off at midnight. I had to walk home and there were no lights, with no houses...there was nothing. You had that one light about that big up on State Street. That was all there was. Then I had that two-and-a-half mile walk over the railroad tracks and everything. That’s where they dumped the sugar beets...was there.

Susan: Why didn’t you ride a horse home? Why did you always walk?

Eva: I didn’t want to take that to work. But, I did ride a horse a lot. I would have to go to the store for Mother and I would ride a horse. But I would take a couple of eggs and they would give me candy for those two eggs. That’s how we got our candy, you know. I rode a lot, and I got to be an expert rider.
Susan: You mentioned the movies. So what kind of movies were there?

Eva: Tex Ritter, and I can’t remember the other one.

Susan: Did they all have sound, the movies that you watched?

Eva: No, they were all silent movies. And that lady that lived up there on State Street played the organ. She would come down and play the organ in between and everything. So it wasn’t fancy, but we really enjoyed it.

But my horse was my pride and joy. I got so I could ride the wind. I was in the rodeo too. I won lots of trophies.

Susan: When did the rodeo start in Lehi?

Eva: It started in about….the first rodeo was down there to Evan’s. But I wasn’t here. I was down to Monticello at the time. But we played ball there. That was a ball park. It had big trees...a whole row of poplar trees and everybody played ball there. And my brother, Tom, he was an excellent ball player. He went into World War I you know, and when he came home, he got his job by working at the mines. He got the first unassisted triple play that they had ever heard of. And they put him in “Ripley’s Believe or Not”. I had three brothers. The one brother was mean to animals. Me and Jack had the animals to do. I think of it now, of how well I was blessed. What a wonderful life I have had. And now here I am, down there alone, on the same old farm. Nobody can drive by. It’s almost like heaven.

Susan: What do you remember about the co-op?

Eva: The thing that I remember about the co-op is that they put the money in this thing and pulled the handle and it would take the money clear up to the office to get the change. They had a line from there...to that telephone that they had down there on Main Street and that they could call down to there on the telephone.

Susan: Was that the first one you can remember?

Eva: I remember going there and they had a beauty shop up in there. I remember going there and getting a permanent. She would take this thing and she would burn my head, she would burn there and burn there and would roll it up in rollers. But I thought that I was pretty smart when I got that.

Susan: Did you ever bring crops in there from the farm?

Eva: Eggs. And the cream we sold to the creamery in Salt Lake. We had to bring it up to that station up there on State Street, and they would pick it up and take it and bring the cans back. And that cream, I’m tellin’ ya....afterwards I used to sell it for a dollar a quart and you would have to dig it out. It would be so thick, you would have to dig it out. Everybody said, “You’re going to die if you eat that…and I like a good rare steak. You’re going to die...look at that butter, that cream.” I said, “I know that I am going to die sometime, but I’m going to enjoy it while I am here.”

Susan: So what happened in the drug store?

Eva: I have a case out of that old drug store...the showcases like you have out here. I got that when he dismantled some of it. It was fun to go and watch them make all that good stuff. The one that I remember most was the one down here. We’d go in that one up there to get warm, because it would be so cold when we would go to the show and everything. Mrs. Taylor was always so good to us, and Bertha’s Dad was the night watchman so we had pretty good protection. I’m telling you, it’s a wonder that we didn’t freeze to death.

I walked home from there one night and there was so much blizzard I could hardly tell where I was going. And I had a coat on with that much space between my coat and the top of my boots and it froze my legs just black. So it was cold. And mama would put a lamp in the window, but the windows were froze, you couldn’t see. There was no light that could go through the windows because they were froze solid. I was coming down the lane one night, feelin’ my way along the fence and I put my arms around the bull. He was laying there and he bellared and went and I did too.

And then when I got to go and stay in that beautiful canyon…Dad showed me that canyon when I was five years old and I was hooked. I would go up there and stay in that cabin and when Jack got his arm broke and I brought him into town, I told the girls to take care of him and I will go.
I was so sick I was going to get to the house or not because sugar beets.

Eva: got sick?

Susan: on the other hand.

my brother told me that next year he would work and cleaned that out put my gun up and I got him.

doggin’—you guys get on the outside and I’ll do that trail right at us. My gun was over here, but Tom had his.

One was a four point and one was a three. Tom told me to take the big one. The big one was hopping down like this. “You take it, and I will take this one.” So that one went the other way and went to jump the fence and I got it while it was in the air and it landed on the other side of the fence. And then we was cleaning them out.

Tom’s knife slipped and it went right through my hand. And my tendon that went up here…it just tightened me. But it didn’t hurt me. So we got them all cleaned out and hung up. But when I was just coming into Lehi, it started to hurt. And so they tied my arm to that they would stretch it and cleaned them out.

My gun was over here, but Tom had his.

And my tendon that went up here…it just tightened me. But it didn’t hurt me. So we got them all cleaned out and hung up. But when I was just coming into Lehi, it started to hurt. And so they tied my arm to that they would stretch that tendon like this. I went out there the next day. So now how was I going to hunt? So I asked the Doctor if I could have just that thumb out.

He said, “If you wreck that I am going to beat you.” I said I would be careful. It was the last day of the deer hunt and there was one place that we hadn’t hunted. Me and Tom had slept there a few times and we got to the spring and I said, “Let’s go there.” There was a nice big hollow full of stuff. I told them guys, that I would do the doggin’—you guys get on the outside and I’ll do the doggin’. Well, I just got in there and something jumped up and it was a big buck. Well, I put my gun up and I got him. Jack came down and cleaned that out. I said, get back out there. And by the time that I got to the top where the guys were, I had deer….all bucks, nice ones. And my brother told me that next year he would work on the other hand.

Susan: What do you remember about when you got sick?

Eva: I got sick one time when I was doing the sugar beets. I got sunstroke and I didn’t know if I was going to get to the house or not because I was so sick. I was in bed for a week. I can’t remember exactly what mother did, but she put me to bed and put stuff all over me….I can’t remember all of it. But I tell you that they all had remedies. Now mother always had migraine headaches really bad. But she would take a brown paper bag and soak it in vinegar and put that on her head. You didn’t have pills. Once in a while you could have an aspirin.

Susan: Did you ever have a doctor come out to your house?

Well, one time my youngest brother came home from the canyon one night and my other brother…the cow had got out and he was chasing the cow. They had the plough that was up about that high and he didn’t see it and it cut his leg…just a little hanging it together. We got Dr. Worlton down there and he said he didn’t think he could save the leg. My Dad said, “You’d better. You’d just better save it.” You couldn’t put anything across the front of it because there was a big open sore. But he got over it alright. They had ways. You didn’t have medicine. I’ve got the old Raleigh linament that I brought. The Raleigh man would come and open the door and say “Raleigh Man”. He would never knock. I asked him once, “What if you were in the tub?” He would always come and they had different remedies that they would always use.

My Mama was telling about a lady that had an infection in her knee. They had tried everything on it and Grandmother put a poultice of cow manure on it and drew that all out. She was always crippled some, but she was alright. My Dad was coming home over the river on the hay rake and his legs were a dangling like this, and he broke his leg. We called for the doctor for him. You didn’t call the doctor much. You took care of it yourself, as much as you could.

Susan: What did people do when they got married?

Eva: Well, sometimes they would make a cake and sometimes they wouldn’t. Sometimes they would have a little party, but mostly it was just the family. There was no money so there was no way to do anything. I remember my Uncle Charlie when they used to come down and work on the farm; they had farms there too…nobody brought lunches. They would stop off at our place or the two other houses. Nobody brought
lunches. And mama had walked to town that day and the potatoes was on the back of the stove with the lid on and to fix a plate for me and Dad. So Uncle Charlie came in for dinner. I was six years old…I was a big shot you know. I had charge. So I walked over to the stove. I had a little box that I stood on and I made milk gravy and it had big lumps in it. And Uncle Charlie ate that and he came over and loved me and said, “My Dear, that’s the best gravy that I ever ate in my life.” I loved him from that day on. We just did lots of really, really fun things. Catfishing was mine and Jack’s treat. We would herd the cows and we would drown out gophers. At that time, there was gophers all over. And Mama didn’t know it because she didn’t want us to go to the river because she had lost five babies and she was always afraid that we would get…but anyway, we would have a big bucket that we would take them down to the river and drown them and knock them on the head as they came out. That was our fun. We had a lot of fun. And we would have that homemade bread and put all that thick butter on it and go down to the river and get some watercress and put on it and oh, it was good.

Susan: What do you remember about the Depression?

Eva: I remember the Depression more than anything because when these guys would get off the train at the station up there and they would see the light, they would come down there to get something to eat. My Mother…I don’t know how many she fed. But she would always fix something for them, you know. And then they would tell the next guy and then the next guy and then the next guy and they just kept coming. But Mama always fed them. It was bad…it was really bad. There was no money for nothing.

Connie: Were you right next to the trains?

Eva: It’s about a quarter of a mile, maybe.

Connie: So tell us about that.

Eva: They would come from across the river from the railroad track that was about a quarter of a mile east of us. So they must have saw that light because they kept coming and coming. There was a little place up there that they dumped the sugar beets and that’s where the tramps would stay. They would make a little fire in there where they got off the train. Then, when I would walk home, I would take my shoes off when I walked past there so they wouldn’t hear me walking. But always, they would come down to our place and Mom would feed them. A lot of people would come down there fishin’, kids especially and they wouldn’t bring any lunch and they would come up to our place.

This one day, Jack seen this little boy going into the chicken coop. So he went out there to see what this kid was doing because he had come up from the river. When he was asked what he was doing, he said, “I’m just looking at the chickens”, but he had put two eggs in his back pocket. Jack saw the eggs and said, “You’re a pretty smart little kid, ain’t ya”, and he hit the eggs. And it went running down his legs.

But he never hit a horse. He broke horses with a whisper. He would just talk to them. And when he went into talk to them, I said that I’d go tend the animals, but I wasn’t going to stay and talk to them. I’ve regretted that ever since, because that is how he got his horses broke. The guys would take their dogs out there when they came to train them. This one time, I told him that I didn’t like him to do this. You are out here alone and what if that dog bit your horse and it would throw you off and we couldn’t find you in time. So I looked out into the trail right then, and that dog just nailed onto one of those mules and that mule went into the air. So we were going along the trail through the cedar and the trail was about this wide. And that dang dog got a hold of his mule. I think if he would have been out of those trees, he would have stayed with it, because he was a good rider. They knocked him off and I went down and picked him up. He said, “Where’s my mule, where’s my mule?” “It’s down there and I will go get it.” So I went down the trail and got it and I knew that they had packed a .22 on the saddle. And he told me that if I was going to shoot that dog to make sure that I didn’t hurt the mule. I won’t hurt him. So I shot the dog and he kept running around so I tied a little string on him and shot him right there and killed him. He would have hurt somebody…especially if he had been up there alone. And I learned to be a good shot…I was a pretty good shot.

Susan: So tell us about the train. Where did they come from?
Eva: They came from back East and coal from down south here. Most of them were loaded with coal and we would go along the tracks and pick up the pieces of coal to help with the fires along with the wood. And then there was that old Interurban. We could ride that to Salt Lake and it would just go back and forth and back and forth. Me and Georgita, her Dad was a lawyer, and her Dad and Mother had separated, but he would let us go up there in the fall to get our clothes to go to school. Well, we would go to Kresses and for twenty-five cents, you could get a nice…you know. And we would go up there and get our clothes. And he would take us to dinner. You would just sit there and look at all this good stuff. He would always take us to dinner.

Connie: Was that where the train would come down from American Fork Canyon?

Eva: No, no, no. This one would come from Salt Lake and from back East. The one that came down from American Fork Canyon brought the ore down and went up to the Junction up there.

Connie: What do you remember about the wars?

Eva: I remember a lot about the wars. My oldest brother went to World War I. We didn’t hear from him for the longest time. You wouldn’t get any mail for a long, long time.

Connie: Do you remember the building being built?

Eva: I don’t remember it being built, but I do remember part of it being put together. I went to school right there (across the street). And when we finally got word that he was there, and I’ve still got the penny card that said, “I have arrived”. And that’s all he could say, “in Germany” and that’s all he could say. I got the most beautiful cards and stuff from him. He was my buddy when we hunted.

Eva will show some things that she brought and provide an explanation.

Axel tool: Now I helped my Dad do this job. Do you know what it is? It takes the axel off of the wagon. And here is the axel grease…this was my Dad’s. He would take the hub off and he would leave the wheel…it would just be hanging and then I was the one that fixed the grease on the wagon. I had a stick and I would put it down and then he would put it all around the axel and then he would put the wheel back on. But this was the thing that would put on the axel. How did he raise the wagon? He would put something under the wagon so that if it fell, it wouldn’t go all the way. That was my Dad’s and Dad has been dead since 1936.

Pig Scraper: this is what we used for the pig. This would scrape the hair off the pig after you would get the pig out of the lye water. The lye would loosen the hair and then you would scrape the hair.

Susan: Tell us the step-by-step process of how you would take care of the pigs.

Eva: You have your barrel of water with lye in it after you had shot the pig in the forehead. Just .22 it right there. And then we had a big platform like this that was wooden. The pig would drop on that and then you would take the back legs and push him down there into the barrel...back and forth and back and forth until the hair would come off. And then when the hair comes off, you would start with the pig scraper. And it gets all the dead hair off. And that was the best time for me because that’s when we got our football. And believe you me, you could kick them and they never would break. You would just hang them up to dry and they was just as solid as they could be. And I was telling this one time and this lady said, “What, the pig's bladder?” And I said yes and she said, “Ooooh”. I said, “don’t oooh me, I had too much fun with it.”

Doll: Now this was the little doll that my cousin gave me before we never found him again. And I’m sure that I got more from Broadbents. He gave me that and that was up at the old Franklin School. And he was supposed to stay and go home with us. We never found him and he was never found after that. He had two dollars and a pair of overalls and a shirt...no underwear, and no socks. I just cherish that so much. He was just our age, so I had that.

Card: This is one that I got going to school. That was a valentine that I got when I was in about the 6th grade.

Shoe: This my brother brought to me when he came home from World War I. And I’ve got the most beautiful cards but I didn’t bring them.
Jar: And this is what we got, when we woke up in the morning and there was no butter, Mama would put the cream in that and while she was cooking breakfast we would shake it. And we would have butter about the time she’d finish because the cream was just so thick.

Picture of School: This is a picture of the first school. It’s right there by here.

Pencil Box: And this is how we took our pencils. We had our pencils right in here to go to school.

Linament: And like I said, the Raleigh man would come to the house with his linament. And he would say “Raleigh Man” and he would open the door. But we didn’t have much medication. Mother made about everything that we had.

Jar: This was my Grandmothers that she put her fruit in, before I was born. So I’ve got a lot of those.

Lunch Box: This is something I didn’t have for a long, long time. Lots of times our lunch was just tied up with string and paper. But maybe it might be cloth because paper was quite scarce. This old brown paper was all we had to write on. But, I was a long time getting one of these. That’s when I traded sandwiches with her.

Halls Remedy for Canker: This is something that we did have…Halls Remedy for Canker. We had that.

Ink Well and Ink: And this was what your ink was in. You’d dip it in. This is what you wrote with—your ink and your pen.

Report Card: This is my brother’s report card from up to the old Franklin School.

Susan: Where did you get your ink?
Eva: Don’t ask me. The school had it.

Picture of Deer: And this was the deer that loved my Mother. That deer wouldn’t let her go to the mailbox or anywhere.

Picture: And this was when I was in the 8th grade. That’s my ball team. And as I said before, they called us Dog Towners because we came from up at the Junction. And it made me mad. So this is the team that beat the high school boys.

Poem written by Grandpa: In closing, I’m going to tell you a poem….I think this was my Grandfather’s writing. My name was Eva Louise. And this is what it came from and I think that Grandpa wrote it.
Susan: That’s beautiful handwriting.

Eva: And there he was a school teacher and a college graduate and my Dad never did get to go to school in his life. Because when they were in the old country Dad had a brother eight-years old and he had a pair of twins…a sister and a brother and they lost them all before they left…all except for the older brother. They lost those two and then she had a little girl and they brought her and when they got to Nebraska she got sick and died. And they buried her in a chicken box. They had some chickens and they buried her in the chicken box. And I really think—and Dad was her baby…he was born here in Utah. But, I really think she wouldn’t let him go to school. She had lost so many. I just don’t think she would let him go to school. But if I had the knowledge that my Dad had, without going to school….I would just sit and listen to him. I would get stuff from my Dad, because I can sit and watch the beautiful sunrise and sunset and sit on that mountain out there going down and it’ll knock you over.

Susan: Do you still own land up there?

Eva: Oh yes. That’s where my cows are. I got land up there.

Frame of projectile points: These are some of the arrowheads that I found on the place. My Dad and I…he didn’t find these, I found these. I followed my Dad everywhere and I can’t ever remember him being upset. He never, never did get angry. Mama did, my Dad didn’t.

Susan: Why did you Grandfather come to Utah?

Eva: For the Church.

Eva: So in closing, I am going to do some of my poetry. And you can tell from that I loved what my Dad done. Here’s the picture of the school up there…Franklin school out of the paper.

Susan: And what year was that?

Eva: I can’t read it. I can’t, it’s on the other side.

This is the one that I did about the old pot-bellied stove. I did this for the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers because they are always asking me to do these things.

That’s the only thing that really bothers me, when the cows are there and I can’t go, it just knocks me. Just knocks me. But I am 94 and pretty healthy and I want to keep my health.

POETRY BY EVA C. JOHNSON

The Pot-Bellied Stove

We all walked to school
In the snow and bitter cold
When we’d see the smoke a comin’
From that old pot-bellied stove.

We’d cut through the fields
It was quicker than the road
And all you could think of
Was that old pot-bellied stove.

Mama had a way with it
She’d open it from the top
Fill it up with wood and coal
Then you’ll heard that belly pop.

They say it was the Remington rifle
That really won the West.
But that old pot-bellied stove
Gonna put that gun to the test.

The Remington got really hot
When you’d shoot off a dozen rounds
You couldn’t shoot her anymore
Till you cooled the barrel down.

But that old pot-bellied stove
Never made a groan
She just kept her belly hot
Till all of us got home.
That beautiful old pot-belly
Kept throwing out the heat
She didn’t mind how hot she got
She never missed a beat.

You’d get up in the morning
And you’d hear that cracklin’ sound
It was just that old pot-belly
Shooting off a few hot rounds.

So I tell you, Mr. Remington
You’ll have to settle for second best
It was really that old pot-belly
That truly won the West.

—Eva C. Johnson, 2001

The Seagull

In the shadow of a wagon wheel
They walked across the plains
They’d been driven from their homes
Their hearts were filled with pain.

They buried their fathers and their mothers
And tiny babies along the way
Then pleaded with our gracious Father
Please don’t let the varmints prey.

They arrived in Salt Lake City
With a shovel in their hands,
By the grace of God
They found a piece of land.

With aching backs and bleeding hands
They furrowed out the rows
Packed water from the ditches
To wash their dirty clothes.

They crawled on hands and knees
Dropping seeds one by one
Then prayed to Heavenly Father
To send the moisture and the sun.

They crawled into dugouts
To get a little rest
Then thanked a gracious God
For they felt truly blessed.

They crawled out one morning
And to their utter surprise
Hordes of crickets and grasshoppers
Darkened the sun from the skies.

What should they do?
They simply knelt to pray
Please Heavenly Father
Send these terrible things away.

Then they saw a miracle
Unfold before their eyes
Flocks of beautiful seagulls
Came flying through the skies.

They came by twos and tens
By twenties and by flocks
God had sent these precious birds
To save the pioneers’ crops.

That happened in 1848
When the seagulls came to stay
We see a monument in Salt Lake City
To honor that miracle bird today.

—By Eva C. Johnson

The Cattle Call

It’s time to hit the trail, boys
I just feel it coming on
The blackbirds are a singin’
Don’t you love their pretty song.

The cows are getting restless
Just a standin’ by the gate
It’s springtime in my canyon
Like me, it’s hard to wait.

Grab your spurs, put on your stetson
Then climb up in the saddle
Can’t you hear what I’m a sayin’
It’s time to move the cattle.

The cows are eating tender grass
The calves are bucking and playing
It’s springtime in my canyon
Don’t you hear what I’m a sayin’.

‘How can I thank my Maker
For the beauty he has made
There’s a gentle breeze a blowin’
Across that purple sage.

You just set there in amazement
It’s almost like you’re in a trance
Then you hear this commotion
And you watch the sage grouse dance.

That old rooster got his chest puffed up
He puts on a quite a show
You just sit there in the quiet
Please don’t let the quiet go.

You see a beautiful rainbow
Sneakin’ across the western sky
Then you see a gorgeous sunset
And you watch an eagle fly.
You see this old coyote
A sneakin’ thru the trees
You’re hot, your horse is tired
Then you feel that canyon breeze.

Your eyes just seem to wander
Back and forth across the sky
You make angels out of clouds
As they go awanderin’ by.

—Eva C. Johnson