

**Personal History of
Mary Elizabeth Grover Innes**
[1888-1980]

Written in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1965

Pioneering did not stop with the heroes of 1847. There was still a wide open country to conquer and populate. Populating countries was one of the most efficient things the pioneers did, not to say they were not talented in many other respects. They had courage and wisdom beyond the understanding of the people of today. Life has become comparatively easy for our generation. What determination and courage we have now, I believe, we inherited from our courageous ancestors - pioneers all of them, back to and beyond 1847.

When I was born in Elba, Idaho, April 22, 1888, my father and mother were still pioneering. I was born in a house my father had built with logs he had cut and hauled from the mountains. How did he know how to build a house? He was a very young man even then. He had already built a house in Farmington for his mother when he was still in his teens. This is the year 1965 and that little rock house is still standing and being lived in. It will probably have people living in it years and years from now.

Father was practically boiling over with pioneer blood. He never could stay in the same house for many years--one child to each house seemed to be his motto. He fathered nine of us, all in different houses. He built houses in the same towns only in different locations. Mother went along with his will in all things so far as I know. She was loving, patient, and the best mother ever born. That is the opinion of each and every one of us eight remaining children. (At this time--February, 1965, my sister Alice is the only one not living.)

My very first memory is peeking through the keyhole of our house in Elba, Idaho, because I could hear the cries of mother, evidently in pain. Father and some women were standing by the bed. No doctor. My brother James Millard Grover was coming into the world. I was too young to remember when Alice was born. We were only about a year apart. By this time there were George, Leslie, myself and Alice, and the new baby Jim in the family. Father decided it was time to move, so in 1891 we helped to pioneer the Bear River Valley in Utah. We didn't know that anybody in the world traveled in anything but a covered wagon, at least I didn't, it was fun. Kids can have fun with very simple things, especially if they are going somewhere. We wound up in the Bear River Valley, East Garland. It didn't have a name when we got there. It started out by being called "Sunset." I wasn't very interested in scenery at the time but we did have beautiful sunsets. No trees or houses in the way. We had to haul our drinking water from the Bear River, down a deep dugway about a quarter of a mile away. Dad made a sled to be pulled by a horse so we could haul a barrel of water at a time. Mother and father had a bed. The rest of us slept on the floor. (We all have good, straight backs.) One of my clearest memories of that time was lying awake in the night listening to the coyotes howl. Our food consisted of homemade bread, milk, home cured pork, eggs, with an occasional chicken. I don't ever remember being hungry when there wasn't food. Mother was a genius with food. In the spring we would gather pig weeds, mustard and other green things and make greens. They sure tasted good. We churned our own cream to make butter. There were no refrigerators then but we had a good dirt cellar which served the purpose

very well. I was a good sized girl before I knew that everybody in the world didn't eat bread and milk for supper.

I only owned one doll in all of my life and it got broken--not by me. I still feel sad when I think of it. I made dolls out of tumble weeds, etc. Just before that next Christmas Jed Earl, owner of the only store in the valley, was going to raffle off a doll. It was a beautiful thing. We were on our way to Collinston--I was sitting in the back of the wagon. I could hear mother and father talking about the doll and hoping they would win it. They didn't and I didn't get a doll. My little girls have always had dolls, lots of them.

We could make real cozy play houses in places where the sage brush wasn't too thick. We liked to explore ant hills. Mother love is everywhere, we found, as we watched the ants carry their little white babies, still in the eggs I guess, to safety. Sometimes we'd pay for our curiosity with some bad stings. We could find all kinds of Indian arrow heads. I suppose the Indians had killed many rabbits around there or it might have been a battle ground in times past. Indians had various battles near the Bear River according to Utah history. We did have one scare with an Indian while we lived there, but outside of that they gave us no trouble outside of having to share our meager supply of food with them, but we did that with all travelers who might be passing by. Father had gone to Plymouth, a settlement about twenty miles north of us, to shear sheep. A big Indian came to our house when mother and we little kiddies were alone. Standing against the front door he demanded food. Mother gave him nearly all of the groceries we had and he still demanded more. Mother did some quick thinking. She went to the back door and called as loud as she could... "Walter, Walter, come here quick." Father was about twenty miles away, but the Indian didn't know it, so he took what he had already collected and left. I will say at this point that the Indians have treated the white people much better than we have treated them. My sympathies have always been with the Indians.

The only doctor in the whole valley was a midwife named Mrs. Gimmet. When Leslie was about ten years old or less, he was bringing the horses up from the Bear River where he had driven them to drink. One of the horses kicked at another horse which Leslie was riding and broke Leslie's leg. He had a bad time getting home even though it was not far away. He had pain in that leg for days and days, I don't remember how long. There was no one to set the bones in his leg. He would be in so much pain and during the night he couldn't sleep, then father would tell him stories of his own young adventures, including bear stories. Of course we all listened in. We were all in the same room. It was a one-room house at that time. A lean-to was built on later. After several weeks Mrs. Gimmet drove by and she set that leg, then he was relieved of so much pain. He has had doctors look at his leg several times since he has been grown, and they have said it had been a fine job of bone setting. Mrs. Gimmet was the only doctor of any kind in the whole valley, she delivered all the babies, if she got there soon enough. There were no phones, and our only means of communication was by our own "Pony Express." One thing that saved us I think was our morning prayers. That is a memory I shall never forget--all of us kneeling by our chairs before we had breakfast every morning. I loved to hear dad pray. It always sounded like his words would land on holy ears, and I think they did or how could we all have survived - mother, father, and all nine of us. At this particular time there were only five, but we always had morning prayers as long as we were living with father and mother. We really needed them I guess. One time when father

was off shearing sheep we ran very short of food, so mother took it upon herself to ford the Bear River so we could get some groceries from Jed Earl's store in Collinston. That came near being the last of mother and five little kids. The wagon box was almost floating, the horses were swimming, mother was praying and doing her best. We made it. She didn't take the short cut home.

One day father was going to Collinston to do some shopping. I was on the list for a pair of new shoes. Mother said I could pick them out, but they must not cost over \$1.00. I found the shoes I wanted and was so thrilled with them that I didn't think of the price. I put them right on and ran out to play while father finished his shopping. All at once I remembered. I was panic stricken for fear they might have cost more than the allotted price. I shockingly asked the clerk how much my shoes were and he said one dollar. What a relief! Bills were paid in those days after crops were harvested.

About once a year we would all go down to Farmington to see Grandpa Millard and Aunt Mary, mother's sister. It took us two days to get there. For miles this side of Ogden was nothing but deep sand. We youngsters would get out and walk to save the strength of the horses. We would stop about half way for the night. Father and the boys would sleep under the wagon and mother and we younger ones would sleep in the wagon. I loved to hear the horses chewing on hay all night. It was such a pleasant sound and good reminder that we were on our way to see Aunt Mary and Grandpa. He was a patriarch and gave all of us our blessings. We usually had a trip on to Salt Lake City, especially at conference time. Going to the Tabernacle, hearing the organ, etc. was a big thrill. That is where we first saw inside toilets. The flushing of same was a deep mystery to us. We finally decided that a woman was back of the wall and would pour a bucket of water down when needed. Salt Lake City had gas lights long before they got electricity. There would always be a little sign by the lights saying "Don't blow out the lights." That was for the benefit of us country folks.

Some of our fondest memories were the trips we would take to Logan to see our grandmother, great grandmother, and Uncle John. They were my father's folks. Uncle John was our great-grandmother's husband. She was a widow when she and her daughter, father's mother, crossed the plains with a handcart company. They were a happy trio. My little grandmother spent the happiest days of her life there I think. We all loved them very much. Uncle John was generous and hospitable, full of fun, and very English. Grandma Gillins had a little hand organ which she brought from England. How we wish we could find that little treasure now. It played on little rollers with pin like things sticking out of them. You had to turn a handle to make it play. We all loved music and this helped to fill our natural need for it. She wouldn't let any of us but George play it. (When I was in the Hawaiian Islands in 1959, we visited Queen Lily Kalina's old home which is now a tourist attraction. They had a little hand organ which looked just like the one our grandmothers had. I asked if I could play it and they were happy to let me because they thought I might be able to identify the one tune it played. I couldn't. It was an old English type tune. (it sounded a bit like "How Dry I am.") We saw our first circus in Logan which left us all trying to be acrobats, trapeze performers, bareback riders, etc. We had a little trapeze in the barn. George and Leslie could ride the cows and horses standing up, for a short distance that is. I was better with the trapeze.

Alice, Jim, Odell and I had our pictures taken on one of these trips to Logan. Alice had developed a tooth ache and her face was all swollen, but we had the picture taken anyway. That was one object of the trip at that time and we couldn't put it off just for a swollen face. I still have the picture.

Then the little Green Schoolhouse was built. (It was still standing last time I went that way.) I had to start school when I was about 4 ½ years old, maybe five, to make up the quota to justify having a teacher. I have a picture of that first school. Everybody who wasn't married had to attend. Lena Larsen was our first teacher. She was a daughter of one of the first settlers of the valley. They were there before us. Lena was a good teacher. I don't know now what qualifications she had but we all thought she was pretty smart. The Larson's lived about a half mile from our home, down a steep hill from our very dusty road. I remember the first time I went down there alone. I felt very big and brave. I ran onto the cutest little animal I had ever seen. It had the look of a cat but it had a strange white stripe down it's back. It seemed real friendly and I did think of picking it up, but my guardian angel told me not to. It was the first skunk I had ever seen.

We had good coasting in the winter not far below the school house, but no one had a sled. (I wonder if that is why I never could stand to throw Reid's old sled away. It is still in the garage with a broken runner.) Did anyone but me ever try to go down a steep hill in a dish pan? I did. I spun around like a top but that wasn't the worst. The bottom of the pan got awfully hot before I got to the bottom of the hill.

As time went on other settlers came. We lived from one half mile to several miles apart. Aunt Polly, and her husband, Uncle Ren (his name was Lorenzo) and three children, Lizzie, Clara and Horace lived about a half mile from us. We played together often. I remember being very homesick there one night. It was the first night we had ever slept away from home. I didn't know why but the next morning when we got home we had a new baby brother, Thomas Odell. Here is a list of most of the first families in the Bear River Valley: Gleasons, Halls, Capners, Uncle Ren and Aunt Polly Smith and the Larson family. Eliza L. Gleason was one of the first.

Before mother could have another child we moved about two miles north to what seemed to be a better location. It was near the East Garland canal. Father was always a Presiding Elder, or a Bishop wherever he lived. We still went to school in the Little Green Schoolhouse. I never did get very far in arithmetic. By the time we got to fractions it was time for school to let out. We started at the first of the book every year - same book.

We were only one-half mile from another family, our nearest neighbor, the Sam Capener family. They had a white horse named "Old Kit" and we all had a chance to ride him. Father would never let us ride our horses unless it was on business, like hunting for lost cattle, which I couldn't help with anyway. Our horses had to work too hard. But we could ride "Old Kit". When she got tired of her back full of kids we would sit gently down and we would all slide off.

Children who have never been raised on a farm miss something. They don't have a chance to get acquainted with animals. There was an irrigation ditch not far from our house. Mother used to put duck eggs under the old hens to hatch. Poor old hens didn't know just what they were about to

give birth to. When the little ducks all hatched the proud mother hen would take them for a little walk. The little yellow fluffs of down headed right for the creek and dive in. The mother hen would almost lose her mind. She would try to call them back and they didn't mind at all. Then she would wade out in the ditch as far as she dared but the little ducks would go right on swimming. The most disobedient children I have every seen in man or beast. We named them all for Spanish-American war heroes.

I was baptized in the Bear River by Mark Hall, a giant of a man, so I felt quite secure. When my brother Jim, we always called him Millard, turned eight years old, February 27th, he was baptized. Father was a ward leader, either Bishop or Residing Elder, and he was anxious to live the gospel to the letter. The latest instructions were that children should be baptized on their birthdays. The good church leaders in Salt Lake didn't know about our conditions in the Bear River Valley. The canal was our baptismal font. Obediently father went down to the canal and cut through about two feet of solid ice and dunked poor Jim in. I doubt if it ever did "take" too well. He has never been too active in the church. Seriously they should both be eternally rewarded for their faith and bravery.

Leslie was born with a great musical talent. He longed for a violin, so he made one out of a cigar box, his first violin. He waxed the cord strings, tuned them all up and could play any melody he knew right off. Later on he earned money doing janitor work for the school, so when he went to Logan he bought a very cheap little violin, but he played for dances, by ear, with Uncle Ren playing on the banjo. They had dances in the Little Green Schoolhouse. (it is still standing in East Garland, I'd like you all to see it.) Mother and father wouldn't leave us little ones home alone so we slept on the benches while they danced. I remember it well.

Leslie and his musical talents affected father like the little ducks puzzled their old hen mothers. He didn't go along with his boy being a "fiddler." The only fiddlers he had known were loafers and drunks. He probably had not known many. Leslie has never forgiven his father for denying him the opportunity of developing the talents he was born with. In spite of it all he is a very fine musician and still plays in a symphony orchestra. He had many higher aspirations.

Leslie and George also made a bicycle out of wooden packing boxes. It went fine down hill. They never would let me ride on it. May be just as well as I think of it now. I might not have lived to mother all of you.

One time when we were on our way from Farmington we had stopped to cook dinner on a camp fire in the Ogden Tabernacle grounds. Travelers at that time were allowed to stop there, fix meals, etc., as well as giving their horses time to eat. We heard some kind of a machine coming down the street some distance away. People were gathering all along the sidewalks to see it. We all ran out to see what the excitement was all about. It was the first automobile seen by us or most folks in Utah. You could hear it for blocks. People were shouting "Come and see the horseless carriage!" I don't know how fast it was going, pretty slow by present driving, but it sure scared all of the horses to death. Those first cars caused more runaway horses than has ever been recorded. I was about seven years old at the time.

A few years after the last move, North Garland was being settled and a ward organized, so father, seeing more and better opportunities there, sold his farm which was a very good irrigated farm, and we moved there. A canal and the Malad River ran between the two settlements. We built a fine two story house. It was a good farm. Father was soon made Bishop of the ward. The town needed a store, so not knowing anything about a store, we built one. A schoolhouse was built one half mile west of our home. It still stands but it is not in use. We enjoyed life in North Garland. Before moving to North Garland my brother Leland was born (in East Garland, we stayed with Aunt Polly). My brother Preston was born while we lived in North Garland, but my mother went to Farmington to be confined. There was no doctor in Garland or thereabouts. While mother was gone we learned to be the best top spinners in the valley and mother didn't even scold us for what had done to the kitchen floor.

In 1905 a sugar factory was built in the south part of Garland, which drew in many settlers from all over the country. Father saw better opportunities there so he moved our store to South Garland. We found it was very inconvenient to go so far to work so father sold our home and farm and we moved to South Garland. We built a real good two story brick home which is still in good condition and being occupied. I was beginning to have dates to go to dances and such. We also used to have bob sleigh rides in the winter. They were pretty wild things as I look back on them now. We would run races with any one who might happen to be going our way. The exciting thing was cutting didoes around corners. Sometimes the sleigh would go so fast it would throw the box off with everybody in it into the snow. I only know of one or two who were hurt very much. They lived and it was fun. (Come to think of it, they are now dead. Could that have caused it? I wonder.) That kind of sport just couldn't happen these days, but there were wide open spaces and not many people on the roads at that time.

The dearest girlhood friend I ever had was Mayme Clayton. They moved there from Panguitch when she was about twelve years old. I was about the same age. Her mother had died several years before. Her sister, Mrs. George Henrie, and family were already living in Garland. Mayme and I always had fun together. I remember one Christmas Eve Mayme came to stay all night with me. The next morning Jim, who was quite small, thought everyone was slighting Mayme when they kept say Merry Christmas. He changed it by saying "Merry Christmas and Mayme Christmas." She became my sister-in-law when she married my brother George. We were always very close as two families even after we were both married. There is no wonder that I love their children so much because I loved her so dearly.

I hadn't had a chance to graduate from grade school because I was working as a clerk in our store. When I was about seventeen years old I went to Salt Lake to take a business course at the L. D. S. Business College. How I suffered! I was a good adder upper and all right on the simpler forms of math, but to try to keep up with the Salt Lake students who had every opportunity was torture. However, there was a boy who boarded at the same place I did who helped me a lot and I got by. I don't know how. Then I went to Logan to the B. Y. College. I took a business course and finished the last half of that year there. I boarded with some girl friends from Baker City, Oregon, the Taylor girls. I had known them for some time. They welcomed me into their little rented house and we had fun, even if we did have to sleep three in a bed all winter. I rented a piano and took lessons so I was pretty busy, what with dates, dances, etc. It was a good year with

plenty of fun thrown in for good measure.

There was a bank in Garland. I got a job as bookkeeper and typist. We had a kind understanding cashier who helped me a lot. I got along fine and it was very good experience for me. Edna was born while I worked there, September 9, 1907. Mother was 45 years old. What a joy and comfort she always was to her parents.

About 1908 I had saved a little money and took my first tour. My friends, Ruth Larson and Nellie Barnard, school teachers, and I took a train trip to California, via Las Vegas. All that was there at that time was a big water tank. It was 103 degrees in the shade. We didn't get off the train. There was nothing to see. We surely were three green things but we had a great time. We saw California in a time when there were plenty of tour guides meeting the trains. We did all that up brown. We went to Los Angeles first. One of the tours was a trip into the big tree country. Everyone should see those mammoth trees. This was about a year and half after the big earthquake. We visited Stanford University on the way to San Francisco. They had a wonderful museum, the first one I had ever seen. There were still crumpled buildings around Stanford U. as well as in San Francisco. Some of the sidewalks were still all bulged up several feet and a big section of San Francisco was black from burning. We went on to Portland. The roses were all in bloom. You should see Portland in June. They have the most beautiful roses in the world I'm sure. From there we left for Baker City, Oregon. I wanted to visit the Taylor girls. When we were nearing Eugene, Oregon, we heard people talking of a big celebration going on there for retired Civil War Veterans. We arranged to stop over for a day. At that time there were hundreds of Civil War veterans. It was a lucky stop for us. The train we left was held up and all the passengers searched and robbed. The next morning when we got on the train for Baker City there were policemen and police dogs all over the place. They got on the same train and got off to search for the robbers where it took place.

While in Baker City I saw my first airplane. Everybody had assembled in a football stadium. The pilot was a Mr. Ely. He flew over the crowd several times in his little bi-plane, then landed near by. He was killed when his plane crashed several months later. The railroad ticket for all of this trip was a little over \$60.00, and hotels, the ones we stayed in, were not expensive. Nellie had a hat she didn't like. I re-trimmed it every morning before she would leave.

Some time after that I decided that I wanted to get more schooling – I wanted to study stenography. I had saved about enough money working and playing for dances in an orchestra to take me six months of school at Henager's Business college. Salt Lake city. I worked hard and came out pretty well. When I got back to Garland I was offered a job at the Utah-Idaho sugar company office where I worked until I was married, with the exception of one summer when I took a job in Salt Lake as a bookkeeper and stenographer in a store which is now extinct. I went back to work at the Sugar company office in the fall.

Radio and television had not been invented then. There was much good musical talent in Garland. I was accompanist to almost everything in the way of songs, solos, Etc. There usually would be someone at home waiting for me to practice with them when I got home from work. I enjoyed it all and am sorry at this time that I have let my music go to pot. It just got pushed aside by other

pressing things to do. I sure didn't have any time to learn how to cook, which I regretted after I was married for some time.

About 1911 a new dentist moved to Garland. All of my other romances faded away real fast. Tom and I were married August 21, 1912, in the Salt Lake Temple. It was a very busy season for the Sugar company and Tom was just getting started in business so I worked on through the campaign. Along in January or February I got very nauseated so I quit and went home and waited for Hazel to appear on the scene. Of course, I didn't know just who was coming but it was a very happy though painful event.

There now, my dear family, is the history of my young life.