

MARTHA MAGDELENA HELM SALWAY

I came from a long line of pioneers. In the 1970's my ancestors left Wurttenburg, Germany to travel by wagon and oxen to the southern part of Russia. They left in pursuit of religious freedom and freedom from wars. My mother and father were born in Russia and came to America with their parents when they were nine years old.

I was born in Ashley, North Dakota to Karoline Schaffer and Karl Helm. I was their first and only child as my father died before I was born. I had an older brother, Alvin, who my parents adopted when he was eight years old. Soon after my birth my mother went to Irvine, Alberta, Canada to live with her parents. My mother married Otto Deering and we moved to South Irvine on a wheat farm. I was around thirteen when I was told who my real father was. Alvin left home and I became the oldest of six brothers and three sisters. These were hard times. With many crop failures we survived by selling milk, butter, eggs and garden produce.

We had to walk three miles to school and during the winter we stayed in Irvine with our grandparents to go to school. We would trade off. One week some of us would stay at Grandma Schaffers and the next week we stayed at Grandma Deerings. We always wanted to stay at Grandma Schaffers as she was kind and a good cook. Grandma Deering was a terrible cook and made us eat everything. One day my brother poured his soup down the front of his pants so he wouldn't have to eat it.

In 1924 our house burned down while we were at church. We lived in a granary while pop and his brother went to look for farm land. When they returned they told of a beautiful land they had bought. The land had flowers and a beautiful church. Pop told us that someday we would all go to that church. (The Cardston Temple).

Our move to Cardston was one I'll never forget. Mom and Pop took the car and four kids. Two of my brothers were left with the livestock and I was to take my three brothers by train. Mom packed a lunch which we ate before we got to Lethbridge, (four hours). We transferred to a coach to Cardston. One half of the coach was a cattle barn. The train was very slow, stopping at each little town for several hours. The boys became hungry and restless. I was around 13 years old and had never been away from my mom before. The conductor felt sorry for us and brought us some food. He was friendly and teased the boys. He told me there were Mormons in Cardston and that they had horns. He warned me to watch out for the Mormons. I wondered why pop would buy a farm where people were so different. I was wondering if we would ever see mom and pop again. Finally the train stopped at Cardston. I wasn't going to leave, when a man in a hat appeared at the door and said, "Are you the Deering children?" He said he had come to take us to the farm. I just stood and looked at him, wishing he would take his hat off, so I could see if he had horns. We finally got to the farm and I cried into my mom's apron.

I enjoyed those growing up years in Taylorsville. I played Topsyie in a Church play, and went to some Church parties and dances. When I got older I went to work for Mrs. Wolff, taking care of her children and helping at the hotel.

Mom and pop moved back to Irvine and were soon back on the farm.

During World War 1 the schools were closed as many people died of the flu. We had to wear masks when we went to town. After the war

someone decided to burn an effigy of the Kaiser. The younger kids, my self included hauled wood up the largest hill in Irvine. It was so big. After I was married I looked at the hill and said it had shrunk. I could never understand why these Germans were burning a German Kaiser.

My stepfather liked to gamble, but never won because he didn't know how to play cards, even the boys could beat him. One time mom went to the place where they were gambling and threw a rock in the window.

The first time I met Jack, he was working at the Union Bank in Irvine, and in his spare time he taught basketball to us at the school. When Jack left Irvine no one knew where he went. When we moved to Cardston I again met Jack. We were married in his parents home and moved to Calgary. Our first child was born during the depression, times were bad for everyone, but Jack always found work.

My family and friends always called me Martha or Marta (German) but Jack called me Mutch, which he said means I love you. From then on I became known as Mutch to everyone.

I made all our clothes, knit, sewed and crocheted, made quilts for beds and remodeled and sewed clothes for others.

Our second child was also born in Calgary. A son named after Jack's brother, Alfred, and my father Helm.

Every summer I took Alf and Millie to Irvine to help mom cook for the threshing crew. Jack worked for the railroad so we had free passes.

We moved to Medicine Hat and bought our first home and our third child was born. We called him John Edward after his father and grandfather.

When Jack retired from the railroad we moved back to Calgary to be near our sons. We travelled a lot visiting our children who lived in Kelowna, Montana and Oregon.

One morning Jack had a heart attack and died in his bed. I was alone with him but our home teacher from the Church arrived immediately to help me.

I have had a good marriage and a good family. I now live alone in Calgary and try to keep busy with my quilting, sewing, for my grandchildren and great grandchildren.

An old couple were sitting on the front porch enjoying the warm evening breeze. The old man asked his wife if she would like some ice cream. "Yes" she replied. "What flavor would you like." "Vanilla." "Would you like a topping on it," he asked and she thought a moment and replied "Chocolate would be nice. Yes, vanilla ice cream with chocolate topping." The old man started for the kitchen and his wife stopped him and suggested he write it down so that he wouldn't forget. "Oh no," he replied, "I can remember that. Two vanilla ice cream with chocolate topping."

Fifteen minutes went by and the old man came out of the house with two hot dogs. "There" said his wife. "I told you to write it down, see you forgot to put mustard on my dog."