

# MY HERITAGE

By

**MARRIETTE COLLETT NILSSON**

Born 22 April 1897  
Bennington, Bear Lake County, Idaho  
Daughter of  
James Jones Collett and Jane Owens Wardrop (Duncan) Collett  
Married 3 July 1915 to Bert Oscar Nilsson  
Raymond, Alberta, Canada  
Died 10 November 1981  
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada  
Buried 13 November 1981  
Raymond, Alberta, Canada

Recollections recorded December 1978 by Marriette Collett Nilsson  
Transcribed by granddaughter Dianne Thomson

Editing and footnotes by Ellen Claire Weaver Shaeffer, January 2011



PHOTO: Mariette & Bert Nilsson, seated center, daughters seated, sons standing.<sup>1</sup>

## MARRIETTE COLLETT NILSSON

I, Mariette Collett Nilsson, recall and remember a few things in my early life but I have put off recording them and don't remember as much as I should. I wrote some of this in November 1970 one night when I couldn't sleep. I am jotting down a few things of my early life. My first recollections are of Bennington, Bear Lake County, Idaho, where I was born April 22, 1897.<sup>2</sup> I was very young, only five when we left there, but I remember a few things while there. I was a tomboy. Anything boys could do, I was there. My father wanted a boy and I guess I was as near to one as could be. When my father went to Uncle Syl's funeral in Kirkville, Wyoming, I recall that it was raining very hard, but I walked through the trees and wet grass as far as they would let me and then I stood and cried because they wouldn't let me go further. My father came back several times to dry my eyes [and ask me to come back] but I still wouldn't go back. There was a stand of willows there and he cut one and spanked my legs [to get me to come back]. And that was the only time that my father ever disciplined me.

I can still see it now in my mind: that beautiful country and river that went by our home in Bennington, Idaho. Another early memory was one time when we were coming home in a sleigh I saw a coyote trying to get the butchered hog we had hanging on a beam in the granary. I was despondent, hoping that the coyote could reach it because it was very hungry. I recall another time we went to Silver City<sup>3</sup> along with Uncle Charles Collett's family. I had great fun with a bottle of bubbly soda water. When we got to Uncle Charles' home I fell off the piano stool and had quite a hemorrhage. It didn't bother me as much as it did the others, only they wouldn't let me go out and play with the boys.

In 1901 or 1902 we moved to Logan, Utah. My first memory there was of my sister Margaret and her family coming through that way on their way to Canada..<sup>4</sup> How I wished I could go way up there where there were Eskimos and Santa Claus.

The next memory was the birth of my twin brothers, Ralph and Riley. They were such beautiful babies. Blanche was my younger sister, born in December 1898, and the twins were born in May of 1902. Blanche, who had the urge to cut her hair, took Ralph as her baby because he was bald. Mine was Riley. How I loved him! I thought that he really belonged to me. We only had him a few months when he died, and I thought that I had lost everything. My dad had a lot of loving to do to make me realize that it was for the best. After that, for a very long time, every beautiful white cloud I saw, I thought that he was in it and was watching me.

I had many playmates in Logan but the main ones were two boys. One was Edgar Hopking, I think; the other was Andy but I can't remember his last name. I also played with my brother Bob who was eight years older than me.<sup>5</sup> He was a terrible tease. We quarreled continually. He was

my nemesis. When my mother was in bed with the twins (they always had their babies at home back then) I was Mother's helper. I was setting the table one night, and Bob kept taking our only white handled knife which I was trying to put at my Dad's place. Bob kept putting it at his place. I kept telling him to quit and when he wouldn't I threw the knife at him and cut his cheek. I was known for my quick temper. Of course I went into Mother's room and got a good spanking. To this day I felt that was an undeserved punishment.

Another time Blanche and I were playing dolls and had a box as our dolls' cradle. Bob kept jumping on our things and upsetting our house and I told him that if he didn't stop I would turn his squirrels loose. He had three squirrels in a cage. They were long-tailed squirrels that had lived in a tree. He didn't stop so I did set his squirrels loose, and another spanking came my way.

Of course school time came and Blanche and I started proudly to school. After a few days they wouldn't let Blanche stay as she was only five so therefore I quit too, as we were inseparable. I stayed out of school until the latter part of November or first of December. When I went back I had a surprise for everyone including myself when I passed at the head of my class. School never was hard for me, but lots of fun and I loved it.



Blanche was very nervous and in her young life had a hard time at school as she was out with illnesses so much. In our first year at school, my two boy playmates and I went throwing rocks in the river that ran close to our house and while I was gathering rocks in the pocket of my pinafore (we always had to wear pinafores over our dresses in those days) I looked around and saw the boys going down the river. I ran to tell one of the boy's sisters to go get his father who was working at the Agricultural College (which is now the Utah State College where Keith went to school). We had been playing under the hill and so I ran up the hill to tell her. That was the first time I fainted. A man brought me to and took me home. They got Andrew out of the river but Edgar drowned. For a long time I couldn't stand to hear running water.

I went to school in Logan until I was nine and was in writing and reading level five in Cache Valley. I was

selected to go to Salt Lake City to try out<sup>6</sup> but Mother couldn't go and wouldn't let me go either. But I was sure I could have won out at Salt Lake City where they thought they were so smart.

While in Logan, my oldest brother Jimmy came home ill. It was summer and so hot! Of course, there was nothing for the heat except throwing water on the house. I would sit for hours fanning him and putting cold cloths on his chest and his hands and his arms. I thought I was so big and that he would love me so for it. I always prayed lots and when he passed away, that was another great sadness to me as I thought that he was the most handsome man. He was twenty-five years old.<sup>7</sup>

When we lived in Logan I was happy to be near my two sisters, Sadie and Julia (Collett),<sup>8</sup> who lived near Logan. I was proud of them and loved them so much. They had not lived with us in Logan, just came on visits. One day, my sister Julia and her boyfriend, Nephi Tarbot, came over from Smithfield and wanted to see Dad who was working on the farm away from the house. So they took Blanche and me with them in the buggy to see him. When they arrived, Nephi asked Dad for Julia's hand in marriage. Julia told us that Nephi would be our new brother. We were so happy because we liked him very much as he always had time and patience for us kids. Of course on arriving home, I went running to tell Mother and spilt the beans.

One of my Christmases in Logan I got a rag doll, and it was beautiful to me. We had gone to Smithfield for Christmas and I remember that it was very cold. But before we left Bennington, Mother gave me the rag doll. Mother was very good with her fingers and had made such a beautiful face on it. Later I lost my doll and when I found her she was in the pasture and she had been chewed by the cows. But I still loved her after she got fixed up. I also had another beautiful doll, my last doll, with long hair and a china face. She was very lovely. I had her for fifteen years until after I was married and one my little girls played with her and broke her. That was the last doll that Santa had brought me.

As I was such a tomboy I went fishing with my father often. It didn't matter how early he got up, I got up too. I loved to go with him and he taught me many things about nature and fishing and Indian wars. He had been made a blood son to an Indian chief when he was six or seven years old. They cut a little slash in his ribs and they exchanged blood and his Indian name was Little Swift Rider. He spoke their language well and often some of them were at our house in Logan. Mother would be very nervous because she hated the Indians around there. So I did too, but still, I would sit on Dad's knee when they were around. My Dad was my hero and my pal. Even when I was a big girl he would sing and rock us three kids, Blanche, Ralph and me to sleep at night. I wish he were here now when I have such a time sleeping and I get so lonesome.

While we lived at Logan we went often to Wellsville. That's where Grandma Wardrop<sup>9</sup> lived. We went there to visit her and my Aunt Kate and family who I thought lots of. Kate was my favorite aunt. Grandma Wardrop lived with us some in Logan and I am so glad she did, as that is the only grandparent I ever saw and she was so good to us three youngsters.

Now a little more: this is going to be very little as I can't write any more and just have to do this by memory: While in Logan, Mother made a trip to Canada. to see Margaret (her daughter) and Riley Weaver and family and I think Clarence Duncan was there but I don't remember for sure.

While she was up there, oh, she thought that it was the only country she had ever seen! She sent us a letter in which she had pulled up a bunch of wheat, roots and all and sent it down in the letter. It was ripened wheat and what a letter it was, all broken into pieces and they had put some tape on it to hold it into the envelope. Of course from then on Mother was all for Canada.— nothing but Canada. We just had to go to Canada! We spent until about the fall of 1906 in Logan and then we went to Oxford, Idaho. Dad had gotten a job up there since Mother wasn't satisfied with Logan and this and that and the other, so we moved up to Oxford, Idaho. It was fall and oh, that was a cold winter. We had to walk to school quite a ways; I think it was a bit over a mile, but we had some friends that used to pick us up in a wagon sometimes. They didn't have any buggies there, it was just wagons, and they would take us to school. We attended school often even though it was so cold.

While we were there, I can remember one thing: Dad was working on a horse ranch and the horses got loose and got up into the mountains and then the snow had come so deep that they couldn't come out, and no men would go up and bring them down. They tried to get a bunch of men to go up to get the horses and none of them would go, so Dad went. It was a very dangerous thing, but he went. We would sit down in the yard and watch till we couldn't stand the cold any longer and then we would run in the house and get warm and out we'd go again and watch him as he went up to get those horses. At last he got to them and then he started them down and he had such a time getting them down as there was only one little pass that a single houses had made going up and, if I remember right, there were about twenty or twenty-five horses. He made a trail and brought them down one at a time for quite a ways. He got them down and everyone was getting their big binoculars out and watching him and, oh, it was quite a thing, especially for Mother.<sup>10</sup>

But Mother was still anxious to go to Canada. so at last she got Dad talked into the notion of getting some cheap land. He was quitting a good job which he didn't want to do, but he came to Canada. and it was in April of 1907 that we came. Of course we came by train and that was

quite a thing as most transportation then was horse and buggy. We didn't go anywhere except with a horse, and so we had a big freight car on the train and we put all our stuff in it and our little Scottie dog and I think that we had two or three cows but I don't remember whether we had any horses or not. And we had a new horse-drawn democrat with a white top and it was a very good buggy. Oh, it was quite a buggy. It had a second seat that you could take off and it was really fancy. [Sample photo]



So we came to Canada. on the train and we kids just had to take our pet cat with us. It was the ugliest cat you ever saw in your life; it was every color and we called it "Slim" because no matter what you fed it, it never got fat. It was a wonderful old cat to play with and we would dress it up in our doll clothes and wheel it

around just like a doll. We got the cat on board the train and while we were on the train the conductor came around and he said, "I think I heard a cat down here. Did any of you bring a cat?" Well, Blanch and I were just petrified. We didn't dare move, as we had covered up this old cat when we thought the conductor was coming. People would laugh, but of course he knew the cat was there; but Blanche and I didn't think he knew it and so we brought this old cat clear to Canada. on that train. After we got to Canada., we kept the cat when we moved to Taber, Alberta, and the cat was still around when we moved back out to the homestead, as well as when we moved to Raymond. That cat lived to be 17 years old!

The Scottie dog we brought was a beautiful dog and quite marvelous as a sheep dog and everyone wanted him, but he lived with us until he was 19 years old and one night he just didn't come home and that was the end of him. That poor dog got so that in his last days he would snore just like any old person would, and when the young people came to our house they laughed at our snoring dog. We loved him anyhow.

On our way to Canada we had stopped at Great Falls, Montana, and that was the first time we kids had ever slept in a hotel. Boy! Was that something: to sleep in a hotel! We thought that was marvelous. We had to change trains at the line<sup>11</sup> and as we were changing trains there was a terribly big prairie fire. It was the first one we had ever seen and we were on that little narrow-gauge railroad and I remember it because the wind blew and that old train would sure rock. The conductor stopped the train so we could see this big prairie fire. It was a huge thing and I remember afterwards, of course, as in later years we bought that same land and I could still recall what a huge affair that fire was. When we got off the train at Stirling, Alberta, there was Margaret and family<sup>12</sup> waiting to greet us. William Wilde was there too. He had come to meet someone else, and I thought it was so wonderful because he went around and shook all our hands just like we were old friends and I wasn't used to that and I always remembered him that way.

We went to Margaret's at Welling and stayed there with them and of course we had to start school, even though it was April. I had been in the fourth grade down in Utah , but in Canada. they put me in the first grade and I didn't think very much of that school.

While we were in Welling, Dad was going over to Taber one day in that white topped buggy and I wanted to go too. Whatever Dad did, I always wanted to do. So he took me with him and it was the first camping that I ever did and I thought that was such fun. We slept under the buggy and had blankets and things to sleep out with and we had a campfire to make Dad's coffee. He cooked the meat over the fire and he taught me how to make a fire with sticks like the Indians did and we cooked the meal like the Indians do. I didn't like the meat very well because it was burnt-like, but oh, I told Dad how good it was. Then we went over to Taber and Dad got a job over there working in the mine. He tended the horses in the mine and also ran a livery stable and, of course, he always did work at as many jobs as he could, but he still kept his white-topped buggy.

Taber was a very, very small town and there were very few people in it and so they had no hearse and they used Dad's white-topped buggy for a hearse. Oh boy, the day before a funeral we kids sure had to get in and polish and clean that big white buggy to perfection.



We lived in Taber<sup>13</sup> for a while and the boys<sup>14</sup> came up too, and we lived in a big tent—the biggest tent that I have ever seen. They put boards up along the sides of it so it would stand up good and all of us lived in that tent while Dad was building a new home. It was fall before they got this new home built and we moved into it just before a cold, cold winter. The lumber that they used for the house was quite green and it would shrink and we had to

use every piece of paper and cloth we could find to push in the cracks of the house to keep it warm. Dad would get pieces of wood and put them in our Home-Comfort stove and get it all warm by our beds. Minnie [Duncan]<sup>15</sup> came up from Utah, but she just hated it and she said that was her first and last winter that she would ever stay in Canada. and she never did come back in the winter. She would come up in the summer but never again in the winter. That was the winter of 1911 and it was such a cold one.

We lived there about two years or something like that when Dad took up a homestead. The homestead was out about 12-15 miles from Taber, close to Purple Springs, so we moved out there, but there weren't very many people out there at all. Of course the first thing they thought of was a school. Dad got all the people to sign up for school and he got the school alright. They sent the names in to Parliament to name the school and jokingly they sent the name as Collett, so that was the name of the school, and to this day there is still the Collett School District. They got the school teachers to come out there, but they had to take most anyone they could get and once we got a British teacher and that was quite a thing. She was teaching us English and she couldn't pronounce our Canadian names nor our Indian names and she would try to pronounce the English [with her British accent]. We had quite a time in school, but we got through that year.

Before this, we had started school in Taber where they still kept me in the first grade and as I was in the fourth grade in Utah, I thought this was pretty hard on me. They kept me in first until Christmas and then they put me up and I went two grades and part of the third grade in that first year, so then I didn't feel so badly. Some of our first teachers were really mean to us Mormon kids because they were sent out here from the East and they thought Mormons were some kind of natives – Indian – or something and they thought they were supposed to teach us how to behave and they weren't too good to us and they used the strap<sup>16</sup> a lot. I never got the strap but I had quite a few friends who did. I had never seen a strap used before. By the next year I was caught up, and in the fifth grade, so I was all right.

We did have three good teachers sent out: one man and two ladies. This man became a neighbor of ours and he and my dad got on very well and he soon learned that we Westerners, Mormons, weren't as bad as they thought we were. We got on pretty well after that.

When the teachers would come, the parents had to take turns boarding them. Of course it was up to us to be the first because my dad was the one who headed the school district and we hired the school teachers. After the British teacher, the next one we had was a wonderful young lady and

she was a marvelous teacher. While she was teaching us, we boarded her for six months. The teachers would pay for their board but they had no place then to stay while they were here teaching and it was her turn to be at our place when Mother was called down to Utah when Grandma was sick.<sup>17</sup> I was about thirteen or so and I had to stay out of school to take care of the teacher. She had to be fed and I had the washing and ironing and I had to keep the house clean. I didn't like that kind of work as I'd rather be out in the yard and the garden than doing housework, but I had to do it. Mother was gone four months and she got home and she was only home for a very short time when Grandma passed away but the mails were so long coming that she didn't get word in time to get back for the funeral. I finally got back to school and I was so glad.

On the homestead it was very, very sandy and we had much work to do. We had to do all of it with horses as there was no machinery. Dad worked so hard and the wind blew so badly that he grew to hate Canada.. I felt so sorry for him because he had such a hard life. We didn't have any money because back then you didn't have money unless you hired out as a laborer for someone else, and we only worked on the homestead. Of course we raised everything we could. Mother was a wonderful gardener but we all had to help in the garden. I worked in the fields with my dad as much as I could and I got so I could run all the equipment and we stoked the grain and hauled the hay and everything. Blanche couldn't help as she wasn't very well all her life. We somehow got along financially, but I think the biggest crop we raised was ten bushels to the acre and we got about twenty-five or thirty cents per bushel then, but not much more. We stayed there and proved-up<sup>18</sup> the farm for about five years and then we traded that farm for a place in Raymond, [Alberta, Canada].

I wanted to go over to Raymond because of the Knight Academy, as I loved school. When we went to Raymond, I got started at the academy and I loved it. I went to the Knight Academy and Blanche went to live with Sidney.<sup>19</sup> They had two little children and Blanche went to live with them as they wanted her for a chore girl—somebody they could leave their kids with. So she went to live with them.

However, I recall that back when we lived in Taber we had a lot of fun. I went to Purple Springs to Sunday School which was held over the top of a store where they always had a dance on Saturday night. So we had to go a little early to sweep it out and roll the bottles out so we could have Sunday School. But we had marvelous Sunday schools and wonderful teachers and I loved to go.

I'll tell you some more about what happened in Taber: In Utah we had had lots of apples, usually all the apples that we could ever eat and I practically lived on apples but when we got to Canada. there was hardly any such thing as an apple. But one of the stores in Taber got some apples in. So I went downtown and when I saw those apples they looked so good that I couldn't resist, and I stole one and when I got home my dad said, "Where did you get that apple? And did you pay for it?" Of course I didn't dare tell a lie and I said, "No," and he said, "You'll have to take it back and pay for it." Well you know how that would be--to go back and pay for an apple that you stole. I had one of these little Canadian nickels and I thought that nickel was so grand that I'd kept it for quite a while because that nickel was something I had never seen before, so I thought it was pretty special. So Dad went with me and we went back to Smith and Woods Store

and Mr. Smith was such a nice man and Dad said, "She stole it," and he told me to get my little nickel out and pay for it. So I had to pay for it with my special nickel. But that was the best teaching I ever had and I never took another thing without paying for it

Later, while we were still on the farm, I first starting thinking about boys. There was Lettie Litchfield and her step sister Leona Hall and her two brothers and Reid Litchfield and all of us would get together and go to some of the dances. They would start kind of early and they'd dance all night but we always had to get home early which was a good thing. Then when we'd walk to school we'd talk about which boy was nice and which boy was pretty good, so the first boy I ever thought was pretty nice was Eddie Price. We'd dance the first dances together and then I got so I wanted to go with some of the older boys, but my dad didn't like us to stay out very late at night and if I ever told anybody I would go with them I had to go. I was never permitted to make a date unless I kept it. There was one fellow who kept coming that I didn't like very well and he kept asking and asking me until finally I said, "Alright, I'll go with you." I was about 15 then and Dad heard me say it and he made me go with him because I had given my word. I didn't feel very good about that.

After we were at Taber and then Purple Springs, we went to Raymond and I was really happy then because it was only a little while until I was in the Knight Academy. How I loved that school! It was a wonderful school and I was always so good in school I didn't have to do much studying. I played more than I studied. By this time I was much older, about 18 and Blanche wasn't home. She was in British Columbia and so I went to school and I took in all the things they had in school and there would always be some dance or something to go to and so we had lots of fun. By then Margaret [& Riley Weaver were] also in Raymond and there was Duncan, their son, and he and I were such good pals. He was only a little older than I was and we would go to the dances and did so many things together.<sup>20</sup> He was quite a musician and played the fiddle and guitars and almost anything he could pick up.

Our first Christmas there, Mother had everyone for Christmas. The older boys were here and everyone. I don't know who it was that brought a little liquor, probably one of the older boys, but they had put it on the sideboard. So we kids, Blanche and Lucille and Duncan and I-- we were the main ones, as Ralph and Allen were too little and weren't quite up to us. But we poured it around and tasted the liquor and it was pretty strong and didn't take too much and it wasn't long until Blanche and Lucille got pretty funny. Duncan and I didn't get so bad but they were doing all kinds of things. They really got funny and eventually the big people figured out what we were doing.

Duncan and I used to go to the dances and loved to dance together. We'd even get outfits the same. There was Lizzy King and that bunch that was older than us and Lizzy was always getting all the prizes, so Duncan said, "Come on. Let's get into this thing. We can dance pretty good. We'll have fun anyhow." So we waltzed and waltzed and when they announced it was Duncan and me that had won, they gave us a dollar and you don't know how big that dollar was!<sup>21</sup> We thought that we were so smart to think that we were better dancers than those who had been getting the prizes all the time. Duncan and I were very close pals all that time [even though I was his "Aunt"]. Clarence Duncan<sup>22</sup> was with us and he was so good with us kids. He never let us kids go anywhere alone no matter if we wanted to go to Stirling or wherever to a dance, he

would go with us because he didn't want us to be going alone. He was a favorite brother of mine. [Clarence was about 10 years older than Marriette.]

We were once at a dance in Raymond, and a friend, a boy from Taber, was staying there and he wanted us to go to this dance, so I said, "Alright, I'll go." We weren't really with him, we'd all just gone as a group. At that dance, Bert Nilsson was playing in the orchestra and so when he got down this boy introduced us and we danced together. Bert asked me if I'd let him take me home after the dance. Of course, I sure would because the minute I saw him, I thought he was *the man*. So I came home with him. That boy from Taber really bawled me out but I said, "I don't care."

So Bert and I started going together and we went together for nearly two years. We had talked about getting married and by then I was out of school and was working out at the Sugar Ranch west of town and making some money. I sure wanted to make that money because we didn't have any money and I was sure glad I had that job as I was getting paid \$30.00 a month for cooking for twenty-five men. So Bert says, "We are going to get married!" I said I wanted to work a little longer, so since I was working for Bishop Walker, Bert went and told Bishop Walker I was quitting. So I decided that I guess I had to quit alright.

So I did, but Bert didn't want to have any wedding party. Blanche and Harold had come home and got married the month before<sup>23</sup> and had a big splash and Bert had wanted to get married then, but I didn't. I wanted to work. Bert didn't want his mother or anybody to be there or to know about the wedding because his mother would want to put on a big party. Bert didn't want any big party, he just wanted us to go and get married, so I told my mother and dad and I said, "What will I do?" And Mother said, "You've got to have a party," but Dad said, "It's her wedding and she can get married like she wants to." So we decided to go downtown and get married and not to tell anybody, although Grandpa Nilsson and my mother and dad knew about it. But Bert didn't want to tell his mother because she liked big parties and cooking up big things and inviting in lots of people. He didn't like parties all that well and he just didn't want it.

So we got Ollie McLean, Bert's best friend for one witness and we took June, Bert's sister, and went downtown [Raymond] and were married and then we came home. They took Grandma, [Bert's mother] out to Uncle Joe Nilsson's that day so she wouldn't be around. And just as she got home Ada, Bert's sister who was about 14 or 15, went running out and said, "You don't know what happened! You don't know what happened!" Grandma then saw me in my white dress and Bert all dressed up and so she went to get out of the buggy and she fainted. She was holding a dish of strawberries and when she fell they spilled all over and that made me feel bad. So Grandpa put his arm around me and said, "Don't feel badly—I'm happy to have you for my daughter." I felt a bit better and of course Grandma, after she came to, thought it was alright, but she didn't like it that we didn't tell her. So we picked up the strawberries and washed them off and that was our wedding supper. I'll tell you, that was a different one than most people had!

Then Bert and I went home, up to my home and we told our folks about it and they were happy and my Dad was really happy because he sure did like Bert. Dad thought he was the nicest fellow I had ever gone with, and I'd had lots of fellows. And so we went to bed. The window was open as it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July [1915], so it was pretty hot. We had only been in bed a little

while when a bunch of guys came who had heard [about the wedding]. And they put a hose in the window and soaked us really good. I mean really good. The bedding wasn't dry for a week. I jumped up and ran downstairs in my nightgown and Bert came down and the kids brought us some clothes to get dressed with and we had quite a party. Of course Mother had a cake baked and they all stayed nearly till midnight and so that was our wedding party.

Well, the next day was Sunday and we went to Sunday School and everyone was coming up and asking, "Are you married? Are you married?" Bert said, "What do you think?" He never would say yes or no. Then when we got out of Sunday School, Grandma had a big dinner cooked for us, but my mother was sick. I guess it was too much for her. She used to get these terrible headaches and she got one of those headaches and couldn't come. We went down to the party at Grandma's and she had this big bunch of people that she could get hold of, and some of them I didn't even know. I'd met some of them before and one of them came up and put her arms about



Bert and said, "Oh, Bert. You're one of the main ones of the outfit and we really thought you was goin' to marry someone wonderful." Well, that didn't make me feel very good and right to this day I don't like her very much. But that was our wedding!

We then stayed at Grandma and Grandpa [Nilsson]'s for a little while and then we stayed at Mother and Dad's for a little while, and then we went out to the farm. I went out to cook for the hay men and June was supposed to help me but she didn't get there very often and so I was the main one to cook for them. Then when I got through cooking for the hay crew, I went right on cooking for the grain fellows and we stayed there for quite a while. In the fall we bought a little home across from Grandma's and oh, I was so happy with that and we worked hard to fix it up and I put paper and everything on it. We got it fixed up and I'll tell you, money was pretty darn scarce back then, for everything that we did.

Oliver McLean was with us. He was a marvelous man. He and Bert grew up in childhood together and had been best friends for a long time. He would stay with us and bring his mouth organ and we'd sing and dance and have fun in the evenings. We had a lot of friends who were always coming in and by that time Edgar [Bert's brother] and LaVern had gotten married and they were living just next door to us so we had some great times together. We'd get a bunch down and do silly things and a lot of the time we'd just have bread and butter and milk for our supper, but we had a lot of fun anyway. We stayed there for about two years.

Bert worked for his Dad at the farm and I would go out and cook for the men in the summer and so we decided that we would move to the farm but by that time I had a brand new baby. When Demoy was born we called him Robert Demoy Nilsson because I had read a story, a cowboy story, and I fell in love with the cowboy in that story and his name was Demoy. So that is where we got his name. Now he is called Bob, but before that he was called "Moose." Then of course we went to the farm and, *Oh Boy*, was it cold out there and we only had a two room home and it was part of one that they had made more for summer than winter and it was certainly cold. We had two rooms and a little pot bellied stove to heat up the bedroom but the windows were too cold. That house wasn't built for cold like we are now and I got pneumonia. I never had anything like that before and I didn't know anything about taking care of anything. So Grandma said we should put a poultice on.<sup>24</sup> I had never made a poultice before and neither had Bert but he said, "Well, we'll put a poultice on." She said you put the flour on, so we did, we put the flour along with the mustard, but we didn't know that you were supposed to cover it with a piece of cloth, and Bert put it right onto my skin. *Oh Boy*, did I get a burn. When we took it off, it took the skin right off with it and I'm telling you—I'll never forget that siege of pneumonia.

We lived there at the farm and kept the farm going and then pretty soon it was time for Ross to be born and I went to town to our own little home and stayed there. We had it rented out but got it back and Ross was born there. Bob Demoy had been born there too. Ross was born in June and as soon as I could I went back to the farm to help with the cooking and everything. I milked the cows because the men had too much to do. We had a few chickens and a few pigs and things and we thought we were really wealthy then.

I also worked in the Church during all that time. I started when I was a girl in Taber, about 12 years old, teaching Primary. In Raymond, I was in the Primary and in the Mutual. June [Bert's sister] was in the Mutual and that bunch of girls were older than I was and they all wanted to go up to Waterton Lakes but they couldn't go without having a married woman with them, so they talked me into being the married woman. Grandma said, "I'll take care of Demoy and you go up and be the chaperone." I think I was about 21 by then and they were all older than me and I didn't know about taking care of these older girls. They weren't supposed to go out without letting us know where they had gone but one girl met a boy up there and they decided to climb a mountain. So they did, but she hadn't let us know where they had gone and we hunted and hunted and it was getting a little late and oh, I was scared. And finally I said, "We'll just have to get the police, the Mounted Police, that's all." So I did, and told them what had happened. They started to look. They wanted to know if she was with a boy and we said we didn't know but we thought she was. Everyone started to hunt and we climbed mountains and it was the only time I did much mountain climbing, but I did it that day. We went all over. We didn't have cars in

those days, this was with horse and buggy and the police had a search party out and just before dark somebody ran onto them and brought them home. They had fallen down and their clothes were all torn and their skin all torn and she had gotten burnt with the sun and what a mess they were! And that was the last time I was chaperone to a bunch of girls and I was sure glad to get home and get those girls all home.

In about 1920 we had a terribly, terribly wet spring, something like the spring that we have this year with lots of rain and wind and I had to come to town a little early as we were expecting Jack. They didn't want me out at the farm and we didn't have anything to come to town in but a buggy. So I came in to Mother's and I was there about two weeks before I had our son Jack. We wanted a girl so badly this time but we got another boy and we called him Jack. The doctor had to come from Lethbridge, and he was like the rest of us: he had no car to come in and Jack was three or four hours old before he got there because he got stuck everywhere he went and had quite a time getting there. There were no paved roads then, just mud.

Bert had got some cattle the winter before and they had got some kind of disease in their throats—lockjaw or something—and the bulls got this in their mouths and they were terribly sick so Bert had to wash them every day and clean and tend them and the doctor wouldn't let him come over to see me and the baby. Jack was three weeks old before Bert got into the house to really see him. We would hold him up to the window and that was all he saw of him. Well then we had to find a name and they suggested John. I said "What's the use calling him John? We always nickname everyone anyway, so we'll just call him Jack." So he was called Jack, really after Blanche Jackson, but we didn't like Jackson, so we just called him Jack.

That summer turned out quite nice and at that time there was an old creek that went by the front of the house at the farm and the kids used to play in that creek every day from morning to night and I let them do it 'cause I couldn't keep them clean anyway. I was busy cooking for the men, and I was doing it all alone, as we didn't have any help then at all—only myself. I was milking cows and feeding chickens and all that, besides keeping up with the kids. Well one day when Minnie was here visiting, staying with us for a few days that summer, the kids were out at the ditch, and a big snake came along. The kids yelled for Minnie and me to come and see this snake. When we got out there, there were little baby snakes running all over and the kids were hitting the water with their switches and the big snake opened her mouth and all those baby snakes went right into her mouth. I'd never seen that before and I've never seen it since and Minnie still remembers seeing the snakes go down the mother's mouth.

Minnie, who had married Matt Bordges, but who never had any children, came out and saw us lots. She came up from California in the summers but never in the winters. She sent the kids so many things—always such nice things like dresses and cloth for dresses and always such nice big Christmas things—things that we'd never see here such as candied fruits and she would send games that we never saw here and I think that the first Monopoly game that was ever around here came from her. The kids sure liked to get the parcels from Aunt Minnie<sup>25</sup> and then Aunt Margaret [Weaver] would always make us a big batch of candy. She made the best candy and she'd always make us a lot of it.

I'll tell another thing that was funny. One time Clus [Cluster Monroe Nilsson, Bert's brother], who was always wanting to do something to raise money, talked me into helping him. Well I was silly enough to do it. Clus had the great idea that we should get coyotes and lasso them and keep them all summer and then we'd sell them in the fall for their skins. Grandpa said, "OK, if you want to—I'll tend the kids in the morning." We'd go right after breakfast. We'd get on the horses and we'd go down there to the lake and we'd lasso coyotes and we'd try to get the younger ones because they were pretty wild. Clus was pretty good with the lasso but I wasn't so good but I'd get one or two and we'd tie their mouths together and we'd tie their feet together and tie them to the back of the saddle and *Oh Boy*, if you didn't have them tied good you'd get pretty scratched up, and I got a real badly bitten hand. So we got them all tied up and on the back of the saddle. The men had built a sort of a barn affair at the farm which they weren't using and so we decided to use it and we got wire and put it all up so the coyotes couldn't get out. I think we got about ten of them. Anyone that had anything die brought it there and we fed it to the coyotes, and *Oh, Momma*, what a smell! I'll tell you, we weren't very popular with all the neighbors around, especially when the wind blew, but we raised them until fall and Clus said, "Are you going to help me butcher them?" I said, "Nothing stirring! They could all die before I'd do that job!" But I talked Bert into helping. He helped Clus get those coyote pelts ready for the old fellow who came around buying things like that, and when he came, they went and talked to him and they got a hundred dollars for Clus and a hundred dollars for me, and I'm telling you, that was money! So what did I do? I got me a new coat and I also got new coats for our kids, That was the first really good coat that I had since I was married. That was about 1920.

Bert and I ran the farm and by this time Bert had taken the farm on shares with Grandpa Nilsson. Grandpa had gotten a Model T Ford and that was about the first one in this area. There were a few others I'm sure, but this was one of the first. He drove that car just like he did horses, just let them go wherever they wanted and he'd follow. Well it wasn't too long until he had tipped it over and the top broke off of it. So then he didn't like that car any more. In fact, I don't think he ever drove it after that. He sold it to Bert and we thought that we were pretty good. We used that old car for three or four years. We never had a top on it, but it would sure go. We could make it to town easier and we could go to church and do so many things better because we had a car now. Well, Bert decided to teach me how to drive the car. I said, "All right!" Although I had hardly ever ridden in a car, let alone drive one, I got in and he showed me to do this and that and so we got to the gate and instead of saying, "Step on the clutch," he said "Step on the gas." So I did and went right through the gate and that was my first [experience] at running a car. I soon learned that I didn't step on the gas to go through gates.

By this time we had a little more money and we got to going here and there and we always tried to go to the Lakes [Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta] once a year. We decided that was about all the vacation we would get and so we went every year. We started taking the kids when they were very small and kept it up practically until they were all grown. Sometimes we'd only go for three or four days and sometimes we'd stay a whole week, depending on the money.

One time we took Jack when he was just a tiny baby. He was a good little fellow and he didn't do much crying. LaVern and Ed and Ern and Lou and three or four others along with us were all in tents, and one night Lavern got to walking in her sleep. At one in the morning she had gone out wading in the lake and had gotten in way up past her knees when Jack started crying. He

never cried at night so we got up to see what Jack wanted and there was Lavern sleep-walking out into the lake. She always said that Jack had saved her life. We had quite a bit of fun up at the Lakes but *Oh Boy*, we didn't have anything like they have now. Everything we did or had we took with us.

Well, we were still on the farm and I was cooking for the men and we both were doing everything we could by the time the beets were coming in. [The sugar beet factory originally came in 1912 and closed some years later. When they brought it back again in order to keep it] here we had to sign up for more beets. So Bert signed up for 200 acres of beets and I'm telling you, that was a lot of beets. It was a lot of work and everybody had to help with the beets then.

So we just stayed on the farm and did lots of work and some silly things like catching coyotes and two years went by and then we were having another baby and this time, oh, we did want a girl for sure, but it was Keith and we loved him just the same. We were going in to town to have him blessed at church and I had worked so hard to get the kids all white suits. I made them and embroidered them and worked at them so hard to have them all so nice and clean. We could never figure out a name for the baby and so I said to Bert, "Well, it's your turn this time and so you name him." So I really wasn't sure what his name was going to be, but I kind of guessed. Well, we were driving into town and we had the old car and the car quit. Bert worked and worked to get it going and we were planning to be in town there early because we were supposed to be at Grandma's for dinner. Bert worked and worked and finally got the car going. You should have seen the kids. They had played in the ditches and played in the dirt and played in their white suits and were they ever dirty! So by the time we got to the church, I said to Bert, "You better take the baby in and up to the front and get him blessed because I wouldn't dare take these kids up there in all their dirt. I'll just sit here in the back." I really didn't know exactly what name he had in mind but he had named him Keith B. We had given all the kids a second initial but not a name, only Bob had a second name, Demoy. But we called the baby Keith B. and then we went down to Grandma's and had dinner. Then it was back to the farm.

We were raising beets and things just like every old farmer and by then the kids were riding to school. They went in a wagon or anything that was there, so Grandpa decided that he would fix up a two wheeled cart that Bert had found. He fixed it up pretty nice for the kids to go to school in. The first morning the kids went to school in that cart, the horse came back that afternoon with the harness all kicked off. Bert got in the car and went to see what had happened to the kids. Grandpa had put the wheels on wrong and as the kids were coming home the wheels came off, but the kids hadn't gotten hurt. Then here came Ross walking home. He had caught a couple of rabbits. He didn't lose his rabbits when the cart upset, he still had his rabbits, but his face was all scratched up. All the kids had a few hurts but nothing very much. So they got the wheels put back on and fixed it up again for the kids.

There was a tree about a mile and a half on the way to school, and that poor tree never got to have any branches because the kids would stop at that tree and get a branch to whip their horse to get on to school. I kept telling them, "Oh, let the poor thing grow. It's the only tree around here." But they didn't. You should see it now that those kids aren't taking any more branches. It certainly is a big tree now!

When the kids were small, my sister Blanche let her two girls come up here from Seattle. I think Keith was about three years old, but her two girls were the same age as Bob and Ross, about 12-14 years old. And they came up here to spend the summer. They intended to stay for two weeks, but they stayed the whole summer. They had too much fun to go home. We were out to the farm and they were supposed to stay in town with Mother but they wouldn't do it. They had to come to the farm. The boys would come from all around on horseback to have fun with these girls. We took them into town to stay with Mother and before we'd get home, they'd be back, so Blanche wrote a letter and said, "If they want to stay out there, let them do it, but try to get them in to see Mother a bit if you can." Well, they learned to ride horses and all this while they were here. They were straight from the city and didn't know any of this kind of thing and, *Oh Boy*, right to this day they say that was the most fun summer they ever had and they sure wish their own kids could come up here and spend a summer like they did when they were kids.

When things were getting a little better for us Ern [Ernest Harold Nilsson, Bert's brother] and Bert decided that they would take Lou and me down to California—down to the opening of the new big bridge.<sup>26</sup> So we got a new car and we started out. We had a lot of fun as going down there was our first big trip down to California and there were so many things for us to see that we had to stop and see everything. We went through the big woods and we could have made it to San Francisco for the big ball game but we didn't know anything about football and so we phoned and told them we couldn't possibly get there in time. Matt<sup>27</sup> had gotten tickets for us which were very hard to get, but he did get them sold since we got there too late for the game. But there was no use in our going to see it 'cause we didn't know anything about it anyhow.

When we went to the hotel—they had gotten a hotel for us—the fellow at the hotel took us all around San Francisco and showed us all around where the big earthquake was a few years before [1906]. Some of it still wasn't all cleared up so it must have been a really bad one. Then Matt came home from the ball game and then we did have a big time. We stayed about a week with Minnie and Matt and we did see lots of things. Matt was a very good fellow to take us all around and show us California. He had never been out of California before that time and that was his home so that was all there was. We really got to see a lot of California and we really enjoyed the trip.

We came home and it was back to work at the farm again. We didn't have a doctor in Raymond, then but one moved in from Bow Island, which I think was close to Medicine Hat, Alberta. They didn't have anything, and the doctor's wife said that if they hadn't come to Raymond where she could wear old clothes they never could have stayed. Well, the doctor didn't have anything to go on calls in, and we had this new car and it was such a smart car that Bert had a key made and gave the doctor a key. We had moved into Raymond by then. We moved in on Halloween in 1925 and had put the kids in school. Well, the doctor had a key to the car and lots of mornings we'd get up and didn't have a car. That never bothered Bert one bit and he'd get into something else and go to the farm. In the spring we'd move back out to the farm, then back into town in the fall and it seemed that's all we did was move. I sure got tired of that. In 1925 we moved into town and I think Iris was the baby and from then on I didn't go back out to the farm as much. I would go out for a few weeks but not move everything. We got so we had things at both places.

The next big trip Bert and I and Ern and Lou decided to take was to the coast of Oregon. Bert and Ern had some relative there and we talked all the time about going to Oregon. We made another California trip and Blanche and Hal were with us, and when we got to this place in Oregon, I can't remember the name of the town, but when we got there Bert said, "Nope." He wasn't going to look up any relative there. He never was one to want to look up folks anyway, but we were going through this town and Blanche said, "Here, wait a minute. You don't go there. You have to go over here and turn over to this other road then over here to get out of this town." So Bert, he didn't know, he went this way and that and pretty soon Blanche said, "Wait a minute," and she got out and went into this house and I said, "Who does she know that lives here?" Well pretty soon she came out. She had gone and found Bert's cousin and so then we all went in and spent about an hour and a half with her and I got quite a bit of genealogy from her about the family, but before I got home I lost it. But that was our trip anyway and I sure enjoyed meeting her. Then we went on to California and went to see Minnie and Matt and we sure enjoyed that. They took us all around to different places and it was a wonderful trip. We always enjoyed it there, but we decided we would go a little further that time and so we went to Mexico to the line. We always said we'd never go across the line because we'd never get back, but we did go to the line at Mexico.

\* \* \*

Dear Family: I am now going to say a little more and tell you what this mother went through trying to raise her family. The first thing when Bert and I knew we were going to have a baby, we decided that we would try to be the best parents we could, and we used to study and work on it at night—what we would be and do. I said that one thing that I would do, would be to always know where they were. At that time there were a lot of little kiddies that were getting lost around here and as there wasn't lots of civilization, I wasn't going to have any of mine lost.

When Demoy came, we were so happy with him, we decided he was the most beautiful baby ever. Of course, he had lots and lots and lots of black hair and he was so big and he gained so much, and I had so much milk that when Olive<sup>28</sup> came along and was such a little thin baby--the doctors didn't think that she would live--and so every four hours I would nurse Demoy and then I would wait for four hours and then go and nurse Olive. I did that until she was almost a year old. I always felt like, and everyone else felt too, that I had saved her life.

When Bob, we call Demoy Bob now, was just a little fellow, just walking around a little bit, I was late getting supper one day so I hurried and ran down to the cellar to get some potatoes to cook for supper. We had cellars then instead of basements like we do now, and I didn't know that he had followed me. I hurried and got the potatoes and went back out as I knew he was outside and I shut the cellar door. Well, I started looking for Bob and I couldn't find him and I looked all around and I commenced getting pretty worried and went over to Grandpa's. That is where I went whenever I had a problem. He came over and started hunting and the Websters came and Evesons came and all the neighbors around and they started hunting and we couldn't find him. Grandpa said, "Are you sure he isn't down the cellar?" And I said, "Oh, he can't be down there." But Grandpa went and opened up the cellar there was poor little Bob a-crying and a-crying. He must have been an hour in that dark, dirty old cellar. I'll tell you he sure was happy to see me.

Then another time when the kids were small, we couldn't keep Jack out of anything. He was always getting into everything. He was just walking around good and Bert got up early in the morning and got the coal oil to start the fire and I was always scared of that stuff and said, "Don't go leaving that stuff around, and be careful when you light that fire." Well, this time he left it on the little ledge of the porch outside and Jack was up because he always got up when Bert did, and he was up walking around and all of a sudden I heard this gurgling and terrible coughing and I looked out and he had drank this coal oil and so I grabbed him and yelled for Bert and we went right to town and it was early in the morning and we got the doctor out of bed.

We had gone to Mother's first and he was taking convulsions and I had never seen one before and Mother got a big tub of water and put him in while Dad went across to the doctor's office and got him out of bed and brought him over. He gave Jack this stuff and he said, "Now, every time he has a convulsion, you call me." Well he had five of them that day and so we had the doctor there most of the day. But he brought him along fine and said that the coal oil had eaten the lining out of his stomach, and that we were supposed to give him a dozen eggs a day. What a job that was to get a dozen eggs—raw eggs—down that kid. When he was over five and even after he started school, everything he ate had to be all mashed up and the milk had to be strained and put aside overnight and the cream taken off before he could drink it. We didn't have cream separators then.

The next thing that we went through, even while he was still on this diet, happened when we had been down to the river. We came home and the gate was closed so Bert opened the gate and I was going to drive through and Jack was in the back seat and he opened the door and as I started the car, he fell out and the back wheel went over his leg and broke it. So then we had him on crutches. Well, he just about drove us all crazy because he would climb the trees or the houses or anything he wanted to. He would climb with the crutches that Grandpa had made for him. Then he started coming home from school with all this money and I said, "Where are you getting all that money from?" He said, "I let some kids walk on my crutches for a nickel" or something, like that, but it probably did not total much over a dollar.

The kids used to ride to school on horseback or anything they could find to ride to school on. I've told the story about the two-wheeled cart Grandpa made. Well, one time Iris was just a little girl and she was riding behind Jack on the saddle. They came to a gate that had to be opened, and Bert and I and the other kids were riding in the car, so she said she would open the gate. So Iris slid off the horse and fell and broke her leg. It was a terrible break because it was broke across and split up. We got her in to the doctor and he said they couldn't fix it so we had to take her into Lethbridge. So we took her right into Lethbridge and she got her leg set. We didn't know how to get her to the school, so we bought a little red wagon and the other kids would take her to school in it, and then when they got her to the door, one of the teachers would carry her upstairs to her room, and Iris got to be at the head of her class when it came time to get the diplomas.

Another time when Shirley was just a little tot and Iris and her friends were going on a big walk I told them they couldn't go very far as they had to take Shirley because I had to get the garden in. There was a lot of fuss but they decided to take her and they didn't come home for a long time.

When they came home they came in the front yard and they didn't have Shirley. Oh, I got so scared because they had been walking up by the canal. But they went around back of the house and brought her in. They had gone around out back of the house and they had taken Shirley and put her in a post hole and left her all that time because she couldn't walk fast enough.

Then another time Iris and her friend, Trudy Phillips, were going up to the canal for a walk and it was a hot day and I wanted them to put on a hat. But oh, no—nobody wore hats like that and so they went up and stayed almost all day and they came home and Iris was sure sick when she got home. I put her to bed and bathed her in warm water, but she was sure still sick so we called the doctor and he came right down, and said she had a sun stroke. She was in bed quite a while and he said to give her lots of eggs and milk and so she would drink this eggnog. Aunt Margaret<sup>29</sup> had a bunch of little pullet chickens that had small eggs and she wouldn't drink that unless we made it out of those little eggs, so we had to get those little eggs from Aunt Margaret for her eggnog every day.



Nilsson kids about 1930

Another time when Bob was eight or nine years old we had two Hungarian<sup>30</sup> workers. One had been there for three years and Big Paul had worked for us for seven years and he was quite grouchy about things that the kids did. Well, Bob did something that Big Paul didn't like and he said he was going to take the strap to him. So Bob disappeared and nobody knew where he was. Then Paul got scared too, and thought that he had run away, so we started hunting and we hunted and hunted and couldn't find him. It was a Sunday afternoon and there were lots of kids there. I usually let the kids bring all the friends they wanted home because then I knew where they were and what they were doing. Well, we all started hunting and we couldn't find Bob. He had gone down to the barn and climbed in the manger and put the hay up over him and went to sleep. We didn't find him until he woke up and came up to the house.

There was another time that we had hunting kids: Shirley didn't like to go to Primary very well and she wasn't a very healthy little kid, so if she didn't want to go, I didn't make her. Iris got

ready and went but then we couldn't find Shirley. We hunted around and all for her but couldn't find her and pretty soon, I had to go into the back porch for something and there she was—asleep on the bed.

One time, when I was out at the farm cooking for the men in the hay--we had about twenty men working in the hay--Bert got a goat. It was the first one I had ever been around but I didn't like that goat. It was always where you didn't want it to be. I got the table all set and the dinner put on the table one day, but the men were in the barn and they didn't come so I decided to yell at them and I started down to the barn to see why they didn't come in, and that goat got up on the table. Well, you can imagine how that table was!

While I was working in the church Primary<sup>31</sup> we decided that all of the Primary workers would go to Salt Lake City for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Primary. We were all going down, but we had to make money to do it. So we made what they called “Grandma Nilsson's doughnuts” and they were made with sour cream and they were such good doughnuts that we made them and would sell them and tell all the people in town the day that we were going to make them and then the kids would have to deliver them. We made a lot of candy and such that summer and we made enough money for all the Primary officers and teachers to go to Salt Lake City. It got just about time to go and Bert said, “No, you can't go.” And I said, “Why?” I had bought a new suit and I thought that I was pretty swell and all, but I was pregnant with Shirley and he said that as they were all going in cars, somebody could have an accident and with the baby coming, he just wouldn't let me go. I felt so badly. I was the only one out of the whole Primary that didn't get to go, but they all went in cars and the car that I was to go in did get into a wreck on the way home. Nobody was hurt but it cost each of the ones there \$50 to get it fixed so I guess he knew what he was talking about.

Whenever we made those doughnuts it was always in the summer and it was always so hot. We didn't have air conditioners or anything then, and I'll tell you it got hot while we'd be making those doughnuts all day long. We'd make dozens and dozens of them and then the kids would take them around. We got all the sour cream used up that everyone had saved for a long time in order to make those doughnuts, then it was all over and they'd all go home. Oh, my kitchen was so greasy it just had to be washed, so Bert came home after working at the farm all day and he and I washed down the walls and the ceiling and floors and out in the porch, as it was all so filthy with grease that it was so slippery you couldn't even walk without almost falling down. So that's what I got out of all that doughnut deal—stayed home and cleaned the kitchen!

While we are talking about doughnuts, I'll tell you how good they were. Grandma would always come to see that we were doing them right when she knew we were making them. She'd come to see if we were getting them done just right and we did get pretty good at doing them.

Another time I took my Primary class, which was the oldest girls, up to the temple in Cardston to do baptisms for the dead. Bert didn't want me to drive our car because he said if there was an accident I would never live it down, so he hired two cars from L.D. King's garage and they charged us \$35 for each car so it cost us \$70 and the cars were so darn worn out that when we'd start up a hill, we'd all have to get out and push the car up the hill and then we'd get in and go down again. The roads then weren't very good. They weren't even sanded then, not like they

are now. But I took all the girls up there and we had six or seven in each car. We took lunches with us and I took salads and other things. They didn't usually let you eat on the temple grounds, so we thought we would go down to the creek, but when we got there, they let us eat on the temple lawn, since we had come all that way to do that work. The lawns were beautiful green and we had a lot of pictures taken but I don't have any of them now. We were the first group from the Primary that had ever gone up to the temple to do work [proxy ordinances] for the dead and I was always quite proud of that after I found that out. I didn't find that out till about 25 years later, but that was another doughnut and candy deal. I was always thinking of some silly thing that was a lot of work. All my own kids did baptisms at the temple too, and I think it was really wonderful that this was the first big bunch to go up there and I was quite proud of it.

Another time, Bert and I went to church and left the kids out at the farm, Jack and Ross and Demoy. I had Keith with us. And when we got back, and we hadn't stayed only until they said "Amen" in church, why here was Ross with his head all done up. They had been riding a calf and it threw him off into the barbed wire fence and it cut his head. But Demoy had done a pretty good job of bandaging it. He had cut the hair away from the cut-- and it was quite a cut in his head-- then he had taped it together and it was all wrapped up when we got home.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FAMILY DATA

### Parents and siblings of Marriette Collett Nilsson:

*Father:* James Jones Collett, son of Daniel Collett and Esther Jones, was born 24 April 1856 at Lehi, Utah; married Marietta Tidwell 28 December 1877 in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was born 23 Aug. 1858 in Ogden, Weber, Utah; died 25 Feb. 1887, Utah. He then married Jane Owens Wardrop, widow of Moroni Duncan on 1 Feb. 1875. He died 12 May 1924 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada and is buried there.

*Mother:* Jane Owens Wardrop Duncan Collett, daughter of Robert Campbell Wardrop and Margaret Evans Owens, was born 7 Apr 1859 in Salt Lake City, Utah. She married Moroni P. Duncan 1 Feb. 1875 and together they had six children. After his death in 1894 she married James Jones Collett 25 July 1896 in Bennington, Bear Lake Co., Idaho. She died 5 June 1951 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada and is buried there.<sup>32</sup>

- (1) Marriette Collett, born 22 April 1897 at Bennington, Bear Lake County, Idaho; married Bert Oscar Nilsson 3 July 1915 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada; died 10 November 1981 at Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada; buried 13 November at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Alice Blanche Collett, born 20 Dec. 1898 at Bennington, Bear Lake County, Idaho; married Harold Stanley Jackson 2 June 1915 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada; died 24 Sep. 1987 at Seattle, Washington.
- (3) Ralph W. Collett, born 21 May 1902 (twin) at Logan, Cache, Utah; married Virginia Elizabeth Miller 9 Feb. 1920 (div.); died 25 January 1981.
- (4) Riley Collett, born 21 May 1902 (twin) at Logan, Cache, Utah; died December 1902.

### Parents and siblings of Bert Oscar Nilsson:<sup>33</sup>

*Father:* Christopher Nilsson, son of Nils Anderson or Schill and Elna Jeppesson or Olsson, born 6 August 1857 at Malmo, Scona, Sweden; married Amanda Matilda Johnson 30 March 1882 at Salt Lake City, Utah; died 13 July 1943 at Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada; buried at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.

*Mother:* Amanda Matilda Johnson, daughter of Augustus Johnson and Carolina Magnusson Persson or Peterson, born 14 July 1864 at Fairview, Sanpete, Utah; died 19 August 1940 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada and is buried there.

- (1) Arthur Christopher Nilsson born 15 Feb. 1883 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 2 July 1956 American Fork, Utah.
- (2) Iven Clarence Nilsson born 18 Sep. 1884 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 3 Nov. 1885, Monroe, Sevier, Utah.
- (3) Lawrence Augustus Nilsson born 22 Aug. 1886 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 7 Sep. 1886 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah.
- (4) Edgar Andrew Nilsson born 31 Oct 1887 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 14 May 1946 at Provo, Utah.
- (5) Amanda June Nilsson born 24 June 1890 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 25 June 1966 at Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada; buried at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (6) Ernest Harold Nilsson born 13 April 1892 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 26 Oct. 1976 at Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada; buried Raymond, Alberta, Canada.

- (7) Bert Oscar Nilsson born 15 Jan. 1894 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 5 June 1968 at Duck Lake, Glacier, Montana; buried at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (8) Loring John Nilsson born 14 Dec. 1895 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 16 Mar. 1906 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (9) Royal Lamont Nilsson born 27 Dec. 1897 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 22 Jan. 1907 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (10) Carl William Nilsson born 28 May 1900 at Monroe, Sevier, Utah; died 26 Oct. 1976 at Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada; buried Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (11) Alta Delight Nilsson born 30 July 1902 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada; died 24 Feb. 1906 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (12) Cluster Monroe Nilsson born 24 Sep. 1904 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada; died 18 Mar. 1970 at Ogden, Weber, Utah.
- (13) Ada E. Nilsson, born 4 June 1907 at Raymond, Alberta, Canada; died 31 Oct. 1993 at League City, Galveston, Texas; buried at Paradise, Butte, California.

### **Children of Bert and Marriette Collett Nilsson:**

**1.** Robert (aka Bob (“Moose” by family) Nilsson was born 13 July 1916 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. and died 8 Mar 1983 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.. He married Annie (aka Anne) Bolton 4 Nov. 1940 in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. She died 17 Nov. 1990.

Children of Bob and Anne are:

- (1) Roberta Anne Nilsson born 4 June 1942 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Colin Wayne Nilsson born 3 June 1943 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (3) David Michael Nilsson born 20 July 1946 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (4) Christine Elaine Nilsson born 19 Dec, 1948 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (5) Linda Lurane Nilsson born 27 Sep, 1952 In Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (6) Bryan James Nilsson (twin) born 27 May 1954 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (7) Barry Mark Nilsson (twin) born 27 May 1954 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (8) Karen Joanne Nilsson born 17 March in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.

**2.** June Ross Nilsson was born 1 June 1918 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. He Married (1) Jessie Ellen Johanne Tullock 1 February 1939 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. She was born 23 December 1917 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada and died 17 December 1987 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. After they were divorced he married (2) Phyllis Ethel Bailey 13 February 1946. She was born 4 April 1918 in Rudyard, Montana. She died 5 August 2007 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.

Child of Ross Nilsson and Jessie Tullock:

- (1) Darlyne Juanita Nilsson born 18 September 1939 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

Children of June Ross Nilsson and Phyllis Bailey are:

- (1) Valerie Lee Nilsson born 10 October 1947 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Roslynn Rae Nilsson born 25 February 1950 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (3) Bruce Jay Nilsson born 26 March 1959 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

**3.** Jack Collett Nilsson was born 28 May 1920 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. He married Pearl (aka Pep) Elizabeth Boyson 5 June 1940. She was born 16 July 1917 in Stirling, Alberta, Canada. She died 12 January 2007. Jack Nilsson died 1 December 2003.

Children of Jack Nilsson and Pearl Boyson:

- (1) William Bert Nilsson born 14 January 1942 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Richard Jack Nilsson born 30 April 1945 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (3) Ronald Boyson Nilsson born 17 August 1948 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada. He died 10 April 1966 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (4) Jacquelyn Mary Nilsson born 29 June 1951 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada.
- (5) Phillip Chris Nilsson born 21 December 1952 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada. He died 15 July 2008 in Sooke, British Columbia, Canada.

**4.** Keith Bert Nilsson was born 29 March 1922 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. He married Verniece Barton 29 July 1940 in Stirling, Alberta, Canada. She was born 2 July 1923 in Stirling, Alberta, Canada.

Children of Keith Nilsson and Verniece Barton:

- (1) Dianne Marriette Nilsson born 23 February 1941 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) James Barton Nilsson born 12 November 1942 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (3) Janice Nilsson born 9 December 1945 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.,
- (4) Maureen Nilsson born 4 December 1946 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (5) Dawneen Verniece Nilsson born 2 July 1950 In Brooks, Alberta, Canada.
- (6) Kathleen Nilsson born 2 November 1953 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.
- (7) Judy Lynn Nilsson born 12 January 1955 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada.

**5.** Iris LaRee Nilsson was born 4 February 1926 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. She Married Gordon Robert Mossey 6 December 1947 in Great Falls, Montana. He was born 30 June 1923 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, and he died 26 June 1955 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

Children of Iris Nilsson and Gordon Mossey are:

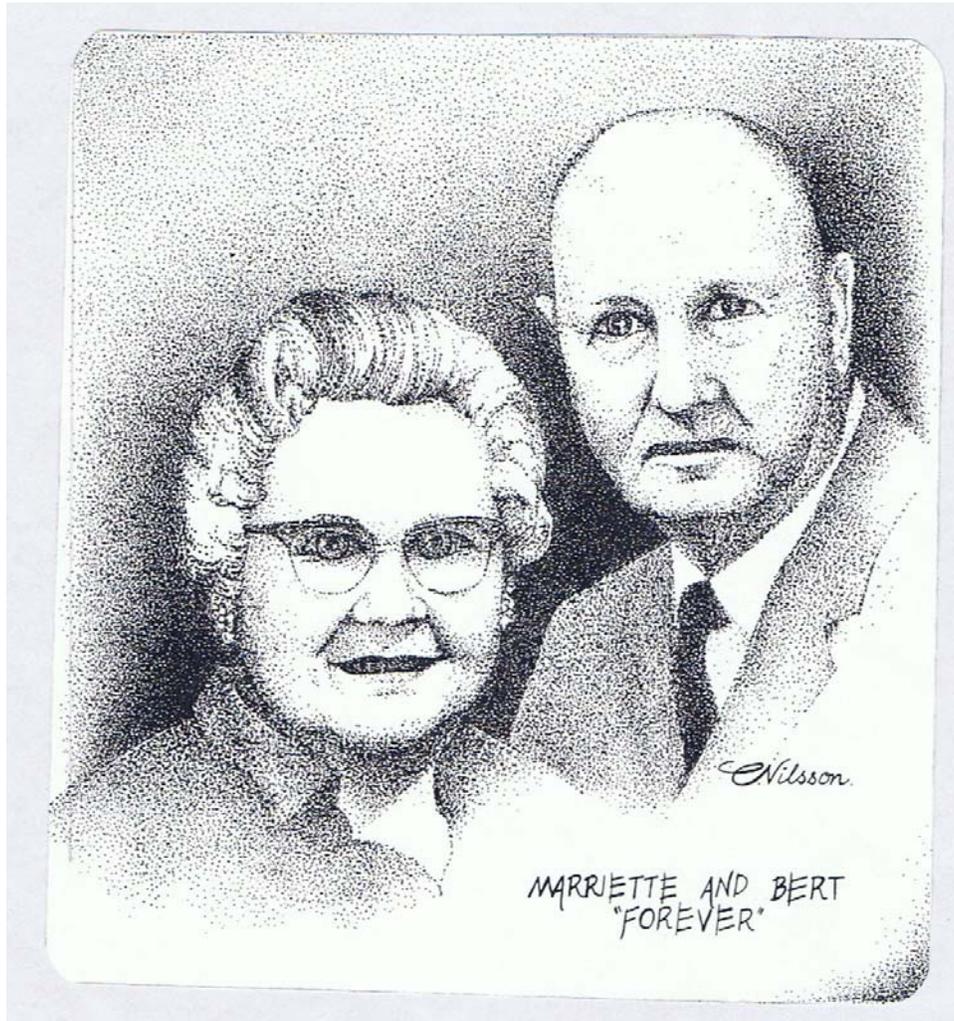
- (1) Margaret LaRee Mossey born 30 April 1949 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Sharon Leigh Mossey born 8 May 1951 in Creston, British Columbia, Canada.
- (3) Robert Gordon Mossey born 21 May 1953 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

**6.** Shirley Blanch Nilsson was born 16 September 1928 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada. She married Earnest Harper Frank 6 November 1946 in Cardston, Alberta, Canada. He was born 8 August 1921 in Blackie, Alberta, Canada. He died 22 September 1994 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

Children of Shirley Nilsson and Earnest Frank Are:

- (1) Daryl La Ron Frank born 16 October 1947 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada.
- (2) Stephen Lowell Frank born 4 November 1950 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada.
- (3) Shauna RaNae Frank born 25 July 1952 in Brooks, Alberta, Canada.
- (4) Sheila Dawn Frank born 14 June 1954 9n Brooks, Alberta, Canada
- (5) Mary Colette Frank born 9 January 1957 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

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50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary etching



**Bert Oscar NILSSON with his wife, Marriette COLLETT**



**Back Row: Moose, Ross, Ernie, Bert, Gordon,  
Jack, Keith Front: Annie, Phil, Shirley,  
Marriette, Iris, Pep, Verniece**



Back Row: Moose, Gordon, Keith, Verniece, Ross,  
Phil, Ernie, Jack Front: Annie, Iris, Marriette,  
Bert, Shirley, Pearl



All Bert and Marriette's children and grand children



Bryan. Colin Robert David Barry  
Koren Christine Anne Linda Bobbie



Bruce Ross Roslyn  
Dartyne Phyllis Janet Valerie



Urban Bill Jack Chris Pearl Richard  
Jacqueline



Niane Janice Kathy Maureen Judy  
Jim Verniece Keith Salomes



Lafée. Rob.  
Sharon, Iris  
  
Shoita, Shauna, Louella  
Mary Shirley Ernie, Daryl



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## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>1</sup> Photo from page 570 of Raymond Roundup, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. 1967.

<sup>2</sup> She was the first child of her parents, although both parents had been widowed and had older children. Her half-sister, Margaret, had a child almost a year older than herself, Henry Duncan Weaver, born May 30, 1896, also born in Bennington, Idaho.

<sup>3</sup> Silver City, Owyhee County, Idaho (<http://www.historicsilvercityidaho.com/>)

<sup>4</sup> The Weavers moved to Canada. to homestead in 1902. See From Wagon Trails to Subway Rails, by Ellen Claire Weaver Shaeffer.

<sup>5</sup> Bob Duncan was the youngest child of Jane Owens Wardrop (Duncan) (Collett) and Moroni Duncan. Moroni Duncan died in 1894.

<sup>6</sup> Possibly for a spelling bee or other school competition.

<sup>7</sup> James Tidwell Collett, born 30 Sept. 1878, died 6 July 1903.

<sup>8</sup> Daughters of Jim Collett by his first wife, Marie Tidwell. Sadie was born in 1880 and Julia in 1884.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Evans Owens (Wardrop) 1829-1913. Kate (Catherine) Owen Wardrop (Garrett) 1855-1934.

<sup>10</sup> Jane Owens Wardrop (Duncan) (Collett) lost her first husband, Moroni Duncan, in a blizzard near Rock Springs, Wyoming.

<sup>11</sup> The national boundary line between the United States and Canada..

<sup>12</sup> Margaret (Duncan) and Riley Weaver with children Henry Duncan Weaver, Lucille Weaver, Allen Weaver & Leta Weaver.

<sup>13</sup> Taber was settled by homesteaders in the late 1890's and initially was a coal-mining town. Coal was mined in Taber and shipped to Medicine Hat, first on the Oldman River steamers and, later by narrow gauge railway. Mining declined dramatically in the late 1920's, however, the extensive development of irrigation in Southern Alberta, led to a major recovery in the early 1930's.

<sup>14</sup> Most likely the older Duncan boys.

<sup>15</sup> Minnie Jane Duncan (Bordges) b. 1885, d.1979. After she married in 1919 she spent the rest of her life in California.

<sup>16</sup> “Belting is the use of belts made of strong materials (usually leather) as a whip-like instrument for corporal punishment. It is most often associated with educational institutions where it has been used as disciplinary measure but it has also been applied domestically by parents. This practice has now been abolished by most schools, at least in the Western world, as it is seen by many as abusive and excessive punishment, though many parents, especially fathers, still belt their children.” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belting\\_\(beating\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belting_(beating)) Feb. 2010

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<sup>17</sup> Margaret Evans Owens (Wardrop) b. 1829. She died in 1913 at the home of her daughter Margaret Taufer in Salt Lake City, whose house is located directly across the street (1200 East) from the residence of Jo Ellen Shaeffer (Killpack) (who lived there from 2001-2009).

<sup>18</sup> “Proving-up” a homestead meant living on the land for a certain period of time, usually five years, and working it, which was required by law. After it was proved up, the land would be deeded to the homesteader.

<sup>19</sup> Eugene Sidney Wardrop Duncan, b. 1882, d. 1938; wife: Edith Mary Lawrence (Duncan). Blanche would have been their helper and babysitter about 1914 prior to her marriage.

<sup>20</sup> Henry Duncan Weaver, 1896-1955. See [From Wagon Trails to Subway Rails](#) by Ellen Claire Weaver Shaeffer 1988: [www.OurFamilyBiographies.com](http://www.OurFamilyBiographies.com)

<sup>21</sup> A 1910 dollar would be worth \$99.70 today (2010) in unskilled wages, or \$426.60 as a percentage of GDP. <http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/uscompare/result.php>

<sup>22</sup> Half-brother, who was about 10 years older than Marriette.

<sup>23</sup> Alice Blance Nilsson married Harold Stanley Jackson June 2, 1915 in Raymond, Alberta, Canada..

<sup>24</sup> Applying a mustard poultice was less drastic than using a plaster (mustard paste spread inside gauze, towels, or other dressing). A medical doctor, Finley Ellingwood, explained in his 1919 work, “The American Materia Medica, Therapeutics and Pharmacognosy”: .” <http://www.metnews.com/articles/2005/reminiscing022405.htm> Feb. 2010.

<sup>25</sup> As long as Duncan Weaver, the editor’s father, was alive, we always received nice gifts from Aunt Minnie. Minnie did not have children of her own, so she delighted in “spoiling” all her nieces and nephews. Minnie and Margaret were actually Marriette’s half sisters, although considerably older.

<sup>26</sup> Golden Gate Bridge, dedicated in 1937, the longest suspension bridge in the world at that time.

<sup>27</sup> Matt Bordges, husband of Minnie Duncan. Matt and Minnie were childless.

<sup>28</sup> Olive was the child of Edgar and Lavern Nilsson. Edgar (brother of Bert) and family lived next door to Bert and Mariette.

<sup>29</sup> Margaret Duncan Weaver. She married Bryant Meldrum about 10 years after Riley Weaver’s death.

<sup>30</sup> The first wave of Hungarian immigration to Canada. took place toward the end of the 19th century. These pioneer immigrants were mostly poor peasant farmers. At the time, Hungarian population growth exceeded food production and many peasants were without food or land. At the same time, Canada. was faced with a labor shortage and was beginning to look beyond its borders to overcome this problem. Hungarians sailed for Canada. in the hope of earning money and of returning home to buy enough land to support a family. However, for many Hungarians, life in Canada. fell short of their expectations: they were discriminated against because they weren’t considered white like the British or other northern Europeans. As such, they had to accept dangerous, low-paying jobs no one else wanted. Many Hungarians ended up farming or mining. Some of the first Hungarians in Alberta, settled near Lethbridge. There, they worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) in the coal mines and some farmed in the summer. Others established a Hungarian community in Raymond, where they farmed sugar beets for the local sugar factory. Many of these Hungarians had farmed sugar beets in Hungary and were familiar with the work. [http://www.edukits.ca/multiculturalism/student/immigration\\_hungarian\\_e.html](http://www.edukits.ca/multiculturalism/student/immigration_hungarian_e.html)

<sup>31</sup> The Primary organization for children 3-12, was an auxiliary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

<sup>32</sup> See website: [www.OurFamilyBiographies.com](http://www.OurFamilyBiographies.com) for biographies these family members.

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<sup>33</sup> From the book, *Raymond Roundup*, p. 570: "Christopher Nilsson and wife Amanda Johnson had nine children: Arthur, Edgar, June, Ernest, Bert, Loren, LeRay, Cluster and Ada. In 1901 they moved from Monroe, Sevier County, Utah to Raymond to buy land and farm. Mr. Nilsson was a carpenter—taught many this trade, and also architect. He had the first large hay meadow in the south country, made caskets in early days—free of charge and his wife decorated them. He built the Harold Stevens home and others. His wife was a poet and promoted the first junior band in Raymond, directed by Wm. Rouse. She was a promoter of education. Arthur married Rhoda, Edgar married Laverne Sobia, June married Milford Allred, Bert married Marriette Collett. Cluster teaches English at Weber College, Utah."

Corrections to the above by granddaughter, Shirley Nilsson Frank, March 2010: "The book Raymond Roundup is somewhat outdated. It should read "Christopher Nilsson and his wife Amanda Johnson had 13 children and seven survived to adulthood: Arthur, Edgar, June, Ernest, Bert, Cluster and Ada. In 1901 they moved from Monroe, Sevier County, Utah to Raymond [Alberta Canada] to buy land and farm. Mr. Nilsson was a carpenter - taught many this trade. He had the first large hay meadow in the south country, made many caskets in early days - free of charge and his wife decorated them. Theirs was one of the first large homes in Raymond which Mr. Nilsson built as well as others. His wife was a poet and promoted the first junior band in Raymond directed by Wm. Rouse. She was a promoter of education. Arthur married Rhoda Ransom; Edgar married Lavern Sowby; Ada married John Henry Ford." "Also add that the baby, Carl William Nilsson, was buried just a few days before emigrating to Canada."

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