



JOHN & HILDA MINERICH

With Love To My Father and Mother

*I dedicate this book of family history to my loved ones
In memory and honor of our beloved and deceased parents*

Father John Evon Minerich

Mother Hilda Ophelia Erickson Minerich

*My deepest gratitude to our Heavenly Father who was my
co-pilot; who blessed me with a deep love and sincere desire to
know,*

*to research, to find and to record my family history and heritage
for all time and eternity.*

By Joan Christine Minerich Lemon

An Introduction to My Father's Homeland Yugoslavia

I share with you a bit of descriptive history of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia is a shimmering cascade of azure seas, mountains, gorges, beaches and vegetations; monuments, country dwellers, folklore, city dwellers and industry. The Julian Alps separate Yugoslavia from Austria. In the North there are the Dinaric Alps which stretch toward the South. The remaining country is made up of plains and plateaus. Yugoslavia is an extraordinary web of peaks and mountain summits extending over three quarters of the country. There are great plain areas which solely claim the North and the East. In the South several extensive plains nestled in the basin hollows, or at the feet of the high hills of the Dinaric Alps, which through the years was worn down by the sea and erosion, resulting in islands, bays and peninsulas, creeks and inlets. There are caves and coves of sponge like limestone, mountain gorges and waterfalls. The entire country is a network of beautiful rivers and basins. The Sava River, Drava Tisa, Bosno, Morava and Drina, the longest river in Yugoslavia, which drains in the Danube Basin. In addition to the rivers, there are more than three hundred lakes. There is evidently the Blue Danube River, as I so loved to hear my father play, "The Blue Danube" waltz on his accordion. He once told me the song was composed about the Blue Danube River. My father played the button accordion by ear he never had a music lesson. He had a natural talent.

Through the decades of the seventh century, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Avaros, Muns, Turks, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Italians and other creeds invaded, occupied and civilized Yugoslavia then returned to their original homeland. Those who remained and were unchanged through the course of centuries are the Yugoslavians. They stayed firmly fixed on their land and held tenaciously their language and identity, in exception of those who as my father's parents eventually migrated to other countries due to unfortunate situations or to seek adventure. During the war with Germany, their liberty and peace were at stake. They are neither simple nor silent people. There are many different religions, Catholics, Muslims, and

Orthodox. The Slovenians people are emergent, engaging charming, brusque, jovial, hospitable and moody. They are an aristocratic people, who have remained close to simplicity and naturalness while rising to the heights of culture, science, art and industry.

With Love To My Father

In Memory of John Evon Minerich

We always called him Daddy or Dad. I never called him Father, even though he was my earthly father. As I recall each of his children addressed him as Dad or Daddy. To us this was more personal and attaching. He was not tall in stature I would guess about five feet seven. As a young man, though he had a big heart. His shoulders were broad, he was muscular and strong. When he was a young man he engaged in amateur boxing. His hands were large, strong and beautiful, perhaps from seventy six years of hard labor. Dr. Brown had warned him after his first heart attack, several years previously, to retire the shovel or someone would be dragging him out of the irrigation ditch. Was it that he chose the Drs prediction or was it that he was driven by his love for the out of doors and his little farm? He loved life and he loved to work. It was Mother's Day that beautiful Sunday morning May 13, 1973. He was out with his irrigation shovel, within eye distance from the house. He fell by the ditch. Mother relates the events of that day with choked emotions. She said he arose early, bathed and shaved and dressed neatly. It was a beautiful day, blue skies and the air filled with the song of birds. Mother sensed a hint of loneliness in Dads voice as he said, "I wonder if any of the kids will come home today?" Mother assured him that brother Jim had promised that he and Charlotte would be out. He was pleased and asked her to roast a couple of chickens. Dad always enjoyed having any of his children or families around and there always had to be food on the table. He seemed to be perplexed in that it was Mother's Day and none of the children were around. Danny and Irene lived on the farm. They had left early to attend stock car racing in Grand Junction. Perhaps the Lord intended for this day to be different. Dad ate his usual breakfast and told mother he was going out to check his irrigation water. Mother asked him if he would bring her scrub bucket in so that she could clean the kitchen floor. With a mischievous grin, he gave her a little argument, that she was always pushing that mop around and was going to wear the floor out. He handed her the bucket and his very last words to her were. "Here is your bucket. Paul had it, was using it to pick peas."

I had such a strong desire to go home that week-end and spend Mother's Day. However, Jr. did not feel well and talked me into staying home, It was Sunday, Mother's Day and we had just sat down to lunch, when we received a call from Colorado telling us that Dad had a massive heart attack and was critical. We immediately left for Colorado. We arrived at the Delta hospital at four pm. The Dr. let me go in and spend about twenty minutes with him. I realized he was brain dead when I saw him and knew there was no hope for his survival and yet I did ask our Father in Heaven that he may return to us. The Lord does not always answer our prayers as for our prayers are often contrary to His plans. Our Dad had such a fear of being disabled or being in a care center. He expressed this several times. It was truly a terrifying experience for our dear Mother, being alone and finding him as he lay by the ditch struggling for his life. Mom immediately summoned for help. She said it seemed an eternity before the ambulance arrived to get him to the hospital.

Daddy returned to his Heavenly Father around six p.m. that evening. The night before your funeral Daddy, I stood by your casket and studied your beautiful peaceful face. You looked so young, handsome and peaceful as if just asleep. The dark blue suit so suited you. I understand it was Brother Bob's favorite suit and his last insistent gesture of love, so like brother Bob.

I kissed your two beautiful hands, with love and gratitude for two strong, worn, yet beautiful hands, which worked so hard to sustain twelve children, one being me. Sleep dear Daddy, you have earned a rest and I know tis true, we your loved ones will be eternally reunited with you, again your hands to kiss, to remember our joys, our tears, our fears, our budding years. We as you have will leave our earthly woes behind and as an Eternal family our Celestial joys to find. And while I know that life is real and has its beginnings as well as its ending, this life is one step in Gods divine plan.

My Husband, Estel Jr. Lemon was blessed to have the opportunity to dedicate your grave daddy dear, thus in my love to you, it is my desire to add this to your life story.

"Our blessed Father in Heaven, as we bow our heads before the family in humble prayer, I bless and consecrate this plot of ground and remains of our beloved brother, John Evon Minerich in thy infinite care, that this grave may be undisturbed by nature or man until the morning of resurrection, when the trumpet of God will sound calling forth our dear brother who sleeps in the

Spirit of our Lord. Bless us that we may find comfort in the knowledge, that our dear loved one, John Evon Minerich sleeps in thine infinite love and care. Dear Father, I dedicate this plot of love unto the end, by the authority of the Holy Priesthood and in the name of our beloved Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

One night in the late evening, several months before you passed away Dad, Junior and I went home to spend the week end with you and mother. Mother and Junior had retired. You and I sat at the kitchen table for several hours, me with a notebook and pencil and many questions. In response, you related to me many things about your life. I could see you were delighted to know that I was sincerely interested in your life. Your beautiful blue eyes sparkled and you laughed heartily as you reminisced on the highlights of your life. I endeavored to write as you revealed so many interesting stories and information to me.

Your father Matt Minerich about 25 years old and your mother Josephine Wolf Minerich age twenty lived in a large stone house in Delnice, Yugoslavia when you were born. Your sister Sophie was 2 years old and your brother Chriss was one. You Dad were born the 29th of June 1896 in Delnice, Yugoslavia.

There was a large rock fireplace in which your mother cooked the meals and baked bread. You were born in your home. In my mind's eye I can see a midwife or your grandmother Beauty as she was called boiling water in a large black pot over the fireplace, in preparation for your birth as your mother lay in labor on the huge wooden bed that you so vividly described. Oh! Dad you were pulling my chain. You said the bed was 15 feet long and 5 feet wide. That would be a monstrosity bed. That sparkle in your blue eyes and that mischievous laugh was for a reason...You even so described your entrance into this world on a bed adorned with crisp white linens, edged with hand crocheted lace. I can somehow vision you in a long white lace trimmed cotton baby gown, snuggled in your mother's arms, an inquisitive little sister and brother proudly peeping at you with much awe.

You described how your mother dried and cured meat for family food. Your father in later years was a business man, owned his own department store with groceries and merchandise. He also had his own vineyard. Your grandmother, Beauty evidently left a very strong impression in your mind. They had large hay fields that grew on the steep hill sides. They spent days cutting the hay with scythes.

Your grandmother Agnes Tomic or known as Beauty was at that time nearing the age of 80 years. She carried food and wine out into the fields on top of her head for the working men. My mother once told me that you were very proud of your grandmother Beauty. When your parents moved to America, you wanted to stay in Europe with her. You were very upset when you had to leave her.

You mentioned living in two different homes during your childhood. One in Delnice and the one you lived in when your family moved to Zagreb Yugoslavia.

Your sister Sophie was the first child born to your parents. She was born in 1894 in Temesvar, Romania. Your parents then moved to Delnice, Yugoslavia. Your brother Matt Chriss was the first child to be born in Delnice, Yugoslavia. He was born January 9, 1895. Thus you were the second child to be born in Delnice on this day of June 29, 1896.

Child number four, Frank Mark Minerich, was born on July 5, 1903, in Delnice, Yugoslavia. Sometime between 1903 and 1905, your parents moved to Zagreb, Yugoslavia as your sister Mary was born in Zagreb, December 17, 1905. Your sister Evelyn was born six years later on July 20, 1911 in Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

You were 11 years old when your father Matt Minerich first sailed to America via ship, in search of employment. He had heard much about America being the melting pot of industry. His first venture was in Painsdale, Michigan where he went to work in the copper mines. He then sent for his family in Yugoslavia. They also came to America by ship.

You related to me Dad that you too went to work in the copper mine at the age of 14. Your father purchased a farm in Muskegon, Michigan around 1910. You worked in the copper mine for two years in Michigan. You then ventured to Pennsylvania to work in a coal mine. Being young, unsettled and of an adventurous nature, you stayed with the coal mine in Pennsylvania for one year, decided to return to Michigan. You worked in a foundry there for but a short time deciding to return to the copper mine in Michigan where you worked for one year. You related how you enjoyed being with your family. Again, however, restless and yearning to move on and explore new adventures, you then went to Sal Saint Marie Michigan and worked with construction on a big canal. They were extending the canal in depth and width for the ships to

come in on. You worked there for about 8 months and again returned to the farm in Michigan. I feel you were a son who missed his parents. This is a good trait. You then worked for a cotton mill in Michigan. The girls who worked there operated the machines; you repaired and maintained the machines. You soon tired of this, again left the farm and traveled to Springfield, Illinois seeking work in another coal mine. You were about 18 years of age at this time. As I am recording this, Jan 27, 1981, I find this so interesting and impressive as my husband and I visited Springfield, Illinois in August of 1980. We sat on some bleachers across from the Illinois State capitol building one beautiful summer evening of that August. It was after night. The Capital was aglow with lights. A big spot light shone on the American Flag as it gracefully fluttered in the gentle breeze. We listened to an inspiring oration given on President Lincoln and his life while in the Capital.

You related to me Dad, that while you were in Illinois, the coal mine you were then working in was located right beneath where the capital building now stands; so many memories.

At that time you were boarding with a man, Boja Domoch in Illinois. He was an Austrian or Slovenian who worked in the mine in Springfield with you. After one and a half years in the Springfield coal mine, you decided to return to Michigan to see your parents. To your surprise and dismay, you learned that your parents had sold the farm and home in Michigan and moved to Somerset, Colorado. Your decision was then to join them in Colorado.

You were in need of finances, thus you traveled to Denver, Colorado and was hired on to work with railroad construction which took you to Soldier Summit in Utah. Here you helped to build the railroad round house or station on the summit. That was about 1917. You lived in a company boarding house. You were employed there for about 4 months. Ironically it is a small world, at this time my husband and I live in Carbon County Utah and we pass through Solider Summit when we travel to Provo or the Salt Lake City area. I think of you Dad and visualize you as a handsome energetic young man. Due to a flood, a massive flood, which was in the area where you worked geographically, the train depot, all living areas, even some of the rail construction was destroyed. It is now but a memory with new roads, rail tracks and new entries to Provo and Salt Lake City.

You and another employee, after leaving the railroad construction for some unknown reason back tracked. You did not continue on to your destination in Colorado. You traveled to Yosemite National Park in California to work for the Government. You worked there until the snow fell so deep you had to seek work elsewhere. You then traveled to the Redwoods in Eureka, California. You worked there in the timber until the rainy season moved in. You then moved to South San Francisco California and found employment at the steel mills, worked there for a few months then ventured to Watsonville, California where you tended bar for a short period. This was during the time of the terrible flu epidemic in 1918 which took the lives of so many people. You Dad related to me that the people were dying so fast and were so contagious they were forced to bury them immediately. They were occasionally thought to be dead, but were in a deep coma and would be buried alive. They put a light system on each grave which would light up with any movement beneath the ground and if so the grave would hastily be opened up in an effort to retrieve the person. What a horrible thought. They had to hire guards to patrol the graves. You even did work as a grave guard for a short time. I would say dear Daddy you experienced it all in your travels and adventures. It is amazing that you survived those years.

From this terrible experience, you ventured to Petaluma, California. You worked there on a ship for a short time. You and a friend then started a little business. You purchased eggs and chickens from farmers, took them into San Francisco and sold them. As I write this it slightly amazes me as it deeply penetrates my mind as to what an adventurous and ambitious young man you were.

You tired of this adventure and finally decided it was time for you to go to Colorado and reunite with your parents. You admitted you were happy and grateful to be with your parents again. I am sure they were elated to have their wayward son return. You then were about 22 years old.

You soon went to work in the Somerset, Colorado coal mine as a mule driver. They did not have motors and automation in the mines at that time. They hand loaded the coal into the cars after using a pick and shovel to break it loose. The coal was then pulled in carts out of the mines by the hearty mules I recall your reminiscence about the stubborn mule that took a bite out of your shoulder, stating it was literally a bite, causing you much pain and absence from work.

Dad then moved into the terraces with your parents, Matt and Josephine, Brother Frank, Sisters Mary and Evelyn. The terraces were one long unit of brick complexes which as I recall were of three large rooms each. They were all one connected unit. We would consider them now as apartments, to them they were terraces.

Dad's brother Chriss Minerich, his wife Katherine and their children William, Dollie and John who were born in Painsdale, Michigan, at this time also lived in a house on the upper Fanrow in Somerset, Colorado. Dad's eldest sister Sophie and her husband Joe Mihelich and children also lived in a house in Somerset. Joe and Sophie later returned to Yugoslavia.

Dad worked in the Somerset mine in Colorado for approximately one year before he met the woman he was to marry, our mother Hilda Ophelia Erikson. Mother at this time was living in the terraces with her parents next door to the Matt Minerich family. Mother had to walk down to the train which was but a short distance to get drinking water. This was during the spring runoff the drinking water from the river was too muddy and contaminated to drink. The train carried tanks of clean water safe for consumption. Dad's brother, Frank would go with mother and carry the water back for her.

Dad's brother Frank and mother Hilda were soon dating. Uncle Frank was quite fond of mother. Frank was not working so he would borrow money from his brother to take mother to a movie. Dad stated that his mother would take most of his paycheck and lock it in a trunk. She would give him a small allowance each payday. On one occasion Dad was so irritated, he broke into her trunk, took his money and ran off to Denver. His mother sent a sheriff after him and he returned him home to his parents. Mother said his mother was a very dominating person.

Hilda's mother Libby Erikson was out cleaning the porch one day, Mother was with her and her mother said, "Who is that handsome young man at the Minerichs?" At that age Dad had blonde hair and eyes as blue as the sky. He truly was a handsome young man. As he aged his hair darkened.

Mother did not like Dad when she first met him as she said he was conceited and bossy. He would demand his sister Mary to iron his white shirts. He first had a coy way of ignoring mother for a time after they became acquainted. Mother said Dad was stern and serious. Uncle Frank was

happy go lucky and always laughing. Dad bought a large box of candy, sent it to mother by his sister Mary. This was right after the first Christmas he had met her. Mother later learned that Dad's brother Frank tried to persuade his sister Mary into telling Mother that it was him, Uncle Frank, who sent the candy. He was without a doubt smitten with Mother and was not bashful in demonstrating his feelings.

I am sure Dad was likewise, though trying to conceal his feelings. Several months after the gift of candy, during late spring, Mother's dear friend Cora, Uncle Frank, Mother and John took a walk to the little town of Oliver, Colorado which was about two miles. They were fooling around a coal mine portal. Mother sat down in a wheel barrow. Dad wheeled a short distance into the coal mine portal and he said to her, "You are my Girl". He then walked her home. Frank walked Cora home. From that day on my Dad, John and my mother Hilda were sweethearts. Mother said that Frank and Dad did not get along too well after that day. Mother was 17 years old. When this courtship began, Dad gave mother a pink cameo as a gift. Each time he was a bit agitated with her, he would send one of his sisters to retrieve it. He eventually would give it back to mother.

Dad played the button accordion. He could not read music he had never had a music lesson; he played by ear and had done so since he was a very young boy. He was extremely good. It took him but a short time to play or learn a new song. He was very talented and self taught. He played for dances and various entertainments up until the time he passed away.

Mother graduated from Paonia, Colorado high school at the age of 17. This was in 1919. She had won a scholarship to attend BYU University in Provo, Utah and was going to major in English and Journalism. She won the scholarship on an essay she had written. Previous to the essay, she had written a short story titled "Fisherman's Luck". She was offered a contract to go to California and attend school and train to write for movies. She had no finances to support her travels. Her father was very much against this and she was afraid to leave her siblings as their parents had separated and they became very dependent on her. She turned 18 and her romance with her sweetheart had really blossomed. She was scheduled to leave for BYU on a Monday. Her solution to solving the negative opposition was to elope with our Father, John Evon Minerich. They were married on December 4, 1920 in Delta, Colorado by Judge Adair Hotchkiss. Dad was 24 years old and mother was 18.

Mrs. Barnes, a Mormon lady who had taught Mother in grade school was so elated when Mother won her scholarship to BYU. She made mother a beautiful dress to take to college. When she learned that Mother had eloped and married she was so upset she gave the dress to Rachael Mulstein. Mrs. Barnes commented "She competed against so many students and she won." She was very disappointed. Mother said she was married in a blue serge suit. I was once told in my later years, by an elderly gentleman that my mother was the most beautiful woman in Gunnison County before she was married. Her youthful photographs certainly supported this. Dad's parents moved back to Michigan shortly after Mother and Dad were married.

Dad and mother also moved to Milwaukee the following April. They rented a little apartment. Mother shared a cooking stove with her mother-in-law. I am sure it was difficult as Mother said her disposition was not the best. Grandfather Minerich would cook cornmeal mush, called Polenta; he ate this in his coffee, a Slovenian treat. He would talk mother into eating it. She did not like it. She loved her father-in-law, thus would eat it to please him. Mother one day cooked some prunes and scorched them. Grandma Minerich snapped at her, "Are you trying to kill my son?" They were evidently living in the same apartment. A bad arrangement I would say. Several days later, Mother came in to catch Grandmother Minerich scraping some cabbage in the garbage that she had burnt. The kitchen was filled with smoke. Mother just laughed and went her way.

Dad's Sister Mary had dark blonde hair. She was dying it dark like mothers. The landlord complained as she was staining the sink; Mary blamed Mother Hilda.

Grandfather realized it was Mary as he knew her hair was naturally blonde. He used a strap on Mary for accusing Mother. Mother was born with dark hair. He always held up for mother. Grandmother Minerich insisted that Mother find a job. Too many cooks in the house, so that saying goes, spoil the broth. Grandfather went with mother to find a job. They went into a garment foundation store. The manager wanted mother to model foundations such as corsets and brassieres. Grandpa informed that man, that his daughter did not do that kind of work.

Mother went to work in the great western leather store, or factory in Milwaukee where Grandpa Minerich worked. She put leather in a machine

that made shoe soles, belts and purses. This made her father-in-law happy. She earned five dollars daily. Grandfather cleaned the tables, oiled and cared for the machines and various other jobs. All of the girls liked Grandfather Matt Minerich. He was a handsome man with a very pleasant personality. The girls fussed over him and flirted with him. He would tell Mother, "Now don't you tell Ma how these girls fuss over me, as she will be very angry. Mother Hilda appreciated her father-in-law's kindness to her and he was fond of mother. Realizing Grandma's temperament, to Mother silence was golden. Mother too realized these girls were just a group of happy teasing girls and meant nothing by their mischievousness.

Mother with her literature mind would make up Western and Indian stories to tell the girls during their lunch hour. They loved and anticipated every lunch to work there. She worked until she was six months pregnant; she then resigned as they would not hire pregnant women. No one was aware that she was expecting a baby. They did not know that she was married; her husband John at that time was working at Wineburgers shoe factory and would stop by and take her home. The girls she worked with thought he was her brother and they flirted and fussed over him. Mother was never a jealous minded person. She just smiled and went her way. Dad decided in view of mother being pregnant and his mother being so domineering, it was time for them to have their own apartment. Dad found mother a job managing and cleaning a rooming house. It was owned by a little Greek man named John Mcstokas. Mother states he was such a nice man. He called mother Falda, instead of Hilda. He once told Dad, "If I ever get married I am going to find me a woman just like Mrs. Falda.

After sixty some years, Mother yet remembers the address of the rooming house, 270 9th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Amazing - her memory. There were three floors and thirteen rooms to clean. They sent all of the linens to a laundry. Mother kept all of the rooms cleaned. She worked until thirteen days before her baby was born. They then moved to 9th street in Milwaukee. Dad continued to work at Wineburgers.

Dad's parents, Matt and Josephine Minerich, their daughters Mary and Evelyn moved back to Yugoslavia in August of 1921. This had to be three months before Sister Elma, Mothers first baby was born. When Mother was seven months in her pregnancy her appendices ruptured. The doctor wanted to

take the baby as he feared mother would have complications after her appendectomy of which she did. She would not let them take the baby as she feared she might lose her. This was so like our mother. When she went home after her surgery her incision reopened and infection set in. She was very ill. Dad called her Mother Elizabeth in Colorado. She and her little daughter Ida Marie traveled by train to Milwaukee to be with mother. Mother's first baby, Elma Elizabeth was born two months later on Oct. 20, 1921. At 8 am, her MD, Dr. Mitchell, a tall red headed man came to the apartment to deliver the baby. He immediately recognized that it was going to be a long difficult delivery. Thus he picked mother up in his arms and carried her to his car and took her to the hospital. Mother said she was 48 hours in hard labor before the baby came. The nurses would give her a hot shower and walk her up and down the halls. It so amazes me how mother remembers every little detail, names, places and events. She indeed has a photo static memory.

Mother states Elma was a tiny, petite baby girl, she was immediately tagged with the nick name of Tiny and is yet called that. She weighed a mere six pounds, though was chubby with dimples in her knees and elbows. She had dark hair down on the nape of her neck. Mother said she looked like a pretty little dimpled doll. When Elma (Tiny) was seven months of age, the Dr. discovered that Mother had contracted Tuberculosis and was quite ill. The Drs advised mother and dad because of the extreme humidity in Milwaukee that her chances of recovery would be more promising if she were to return to Colorado where the air was purer and the climate dryer. Grandmother Elizabeth Erikson and daughter remained Milwaukee. She never did return to Colorado to live. She and Grandfather Erikson just had too many differences. She only occasionally returned to Colorado for a short visit. She found a dear friend in Chicago who took her and her little daughter Ida in and she helped grandmother get a job in a library there. She and her daughter built themselves a new life.

Mother was anxious and happy to return to Colorado, as she had been very worried about her siblings who had returned to the homestead ranch in the mountains with her father and their mother; were no longer there to care for them. It was spring and the snow was melting and water run-off would be high. The North Anthracite River would be over flowing and it was but a short distance from their home. She missed them and she missed her father.

Mother and her little daughter Tiny, who was just toddling, traveled back to Colorado on the train. Dad remained in Milwaukee until September of that year and he then returned to Somerset Colorado to be with Mother and his little Daughter. Mother related to me how sister Tiny bonded with the porter on the train. While they were traveling to Colorado, they were in the diner and the porter had just sat down to eat his lunch. Tiny toddled over to him and reached for him. He put her up on a chair next to the table, put a big white napkin around her neck and fixed her a little plate of food and she sat there and contently ate her food. Mother said he was a colored man and a very sweet person.

Sister Elma (Tiny) was always a spunky little girl who could always hold her own. Mother said when she was quite young and Grandpa Erikson was partial to Hilda who was also a little girl. He bought Hilda a doll and just ignored Tiny. Tiny took Hilda down on the floor and took the doll from her. Hilda was crying and Grandpa said to Tiny, "If you were my child I would give you a good thrashing." Tiny looked up at him and said, "You Pug, you mean old pug". That was a phrase we often heard our Dad use when he was referring to prize fighters. He loved boxing. It is amazing what little children absorb from conversations and what is spoken in their presence.

When Dad returned to Colorado from Michigan, he was employed at the Somerset, Colorado coal mine. There were very few houses there at that time and none to be had. Thus they moved into a large tent which had a wood foundation with a board floor. It sat in a little canyon quite near the mule barn and stables that housed the mules that were used to pull the coal cars out of the mines. Actually it was not too far from the coal mine portal. At that time the mules were the only automation for the coal miners.

The tent had one window in the end and there was a small wood or coal burning stove which they had to heat water on to bath, do laundry and etc. There was no electricity. The wash board and tub replaced the automatic washer. There were a few cupboards built from wooden boxes. Mother even so bottled fruit on this little stove. Mother had to carry water from the font at the mule barn to bathe, wash and for all household use. Sister Hilda was born in that tent on September 19, 1923, with the assistance of Dr. McConnel and Mrs. Clatt, a German woman from Paonia who took care of Dad's sister-in-law, Kate when her daughter, Katherine was born.

Mother describes sister Hilda as a chubby baby with blonde hair, as light as corn silk and eyes like her Fathers, as blue as skies. She was a beautiful baby; she was beautiful throughout her life. She always had a sweet smile. Tiny was two years old when Hilda was born and she slept in a baby buggy while they lived in the tent.

Dad and Mother later moved into one of the terrace units in Somerset. I, Joan Christine Minerich, was born in the terrace apartments. I was born Jan 2, 1925 about twelve noon. Doctor McConnel also delivered me. I weighed 9 lbs. I also had blonde hair. Mother, of course, told me I was a pretty baby. She said my eyes were violet. Of course as I grew they turned hazel. Mrs. Ungaro was the first person to see me after I was born. A Mrs. Taylor stayed with us and cared for Mother and me. Dad had bought a pretty brass bed for mother when they moved into the terrace. I was the first child to be born in that brass bed. There were twelve children born to our family. All were born in that brass bed with the exception of Tiny, Hilda and Danny. It seems in later years after we had all grown up that brother Keith took to the old brass bed. Tiny was four and one half years of age when I was born.

Mrs. Taylor was a bit late getting to care for Mother. Dad had fixed his lunch and went to work. Mother heard some banging around in the kitchen she left her bed and went to the kitchen. Tiny had pulled a chair up to the stove, had a skillet and was frying some lunch meat, Hilda not quite two years old was sitting on a chair, sucking her lips as she always did, watching Tiny very patiently. Mother asked Tiny what in the world she was doing, she replied "I'm cooking my sister some breakfast. She is hungry." When Mrs. Taylor came in she prepared some breakfast for mother and put it on a stool by mother's bed. The stool was not too clean, Tiny said to Mrs. Taylor "When my mama has a baby I will take care of her, I will wash the chairs," so like Tiny. She has always been proper since she was a little tot. Mother always kept Tiny, Hilda and I in white soft dresses when we were little.

Several months before I was born, Tiny was about four years of age and Hilda about three. Tiny was evidently dreaming about bears. She woke Hilda up crying and said "Sister there are bears in the closet." They both ran into Dad and Mother's room, stood by their bed crying "Bears in the closet", Mother sat up in the bed half asleep, shouting "Bears in the closet". Dad sat up in the bed in a cold sweat, before he could comprehend what was happening.

Mother says she can yet hear Hilda crying "Bears in the closet, Bears in the closet."

Several months after my birth our parents moved to a fairly new company house on what was called the Fanrow, in Somerset, Colorado. It was a small housing area that was located on a small hillside north of the Terraces.

The homes were larger with more living area and more modern than the terraces. Brother John Edward Minerich was the first child in our family to be born on the Fanrow. He was born Sept. 25, 1926. Mother said she was making peach jam that day. She had labor pains most of the day. He was born about 6 pm that evening. He weighed 8 lbs. He was delivered by Dr. James McConnel. Mrs. Walchols assisted and later took care of Mother and baby. She was the mother of a large family and so dedicated to helping others. She was a dear friend of mothers. Mother said the most significant memory of this birth was the beauty of this baby boy. He was a beautiful baby with a head full of blonde curly hair and brown eyes. He later lost all of his blonde hair and was replaced with a head of dark curls. It was always his crowning glory. He grew to be a very handsome young man, which caused him much grief through the years where the female gender was concerned. He was a dream maker and a heart breaker. Now in his sedate and elderly years with his silver locks is yet a very handsome man.

Brother John left a strong impression on my mind from our childhood when we lived on the Fanrow. We were probably five and four years of age. He was mesmerized by cars. There had been an old car near our home that he often played in. Someone had later hauled it down to the river bank, down over a hill and to the river. This was but a couple of blocks south of our home. A portion of the car was in the water. How John and our German shepherd dog wandered that far from home without being missed was unusual. A man walking down the road above the river saw John trying to crawl up on the car protruding out of the river. The dog was tugging on his trousers in an effort to get him away from the car and the swift river. As I recall the man slid down the bank and rescued our beautiful little brother and brought him home.

I recall walking along our street I had John by the hand we were going to our neighbors to play. We were at the side of the road. A car came down the street and my little brother pulled away from me and ran out in front of the car. The car was going slow though hit him and knocked him down. He was

out for a bit. Mother saw the accident and ran out and quickly had him in her arms. The man was out of his car and was terrified. John opened his eyes and looked up at mother and said, "Mamma go ride in car, car - go boom". This was only the beginning of his daring escapades, with age came more. As I write this Brother John is very domestically settled, humble and sweet. I do not ever recall him judging anyone. A loving devoted grandfather and seemingly enjoying life.

Brother Erick Emanuel Minerich made his entrance into this world on Aug 1, 1928, in our new home on the Fanrow in Somerset, Colorado. He was born mid-morning as mother relates. She had a long difficult labor, as he was trying to enter buttocks first. Dr. Hazlette managed his feet and pulled him feet first. Mother said she felt she was slipping away. A window slammed shut and she heard Brother John cry out "Mama". She said this brought her back to reality. John was about two, actually yet a baby. She said Baby Erick looked like someone had worked him over. His entrance into this world was a rough one.

Mother said during Erick's birth, she said "I want Dr. McConnel." He was her old standby and she had so much faith in him. Dr. Hazlett was an OBGYN specialist and I am sure in the event of the circumstances he felt that Dr. McConnel could not have handled the situation. Mother said that Brother Erick groaned for several days after his birth. It is great that babies cannot remember their births. Erick weighed over 9 lbs at his birth. Mother told me that he and I were the two largest babies born to her of the twelve.

I cannot imagine our family without Brother Erick. I can always see him as a little blonde headed boy of about five years old. He could not pronounce his R's and he always had his head tilted to one side. He always had a twinkle in his eyes and a mischievous little grin. That forever lingers in one's heart. How blessed we were that our Heavenly Father let us keep him. He and his wife Maxine have always supported all of the Minerich families, be it weddings or whatever. Seems their hearts are full of love, giving and sharing. Erick as were his brothers was a military man. Brother Erick was in the Navy, he was on a mine sweeper, air craft carrier, the San Diego. This was during the end of the Second World War. How blessed our parents were to have seven sons serve in the military in service to our country and all return home alive and not disabled.

Erick has always been a tease, I have always enjoyed being around him as he so makes life enjoyable. I have so enjoyed the letters I have received from him through the years, they are never long or boring, just short, cute and tricky, so many cute poems or rhymes that keep you happy and laughing.

Thus in answer to his poems and rhymes, a poem for you, dear brother mine.

To My Brother Erick

Oh Brother Erick, brother mine
Honest, gentle, sweet and kind
Even though he loves to tease
Everyone he tries to please
You can search for ever time
Be assured, you'll never find
A Brother quite so dear as mine

I once asked Erick what he best liked about his Dad. This was his response: "What I liked best about dear old Dad" When you are growing up it is hard to give credit where it is due. You live from day to day thinking mostly of one's self and the fact that you had to cut the wood or weed the garden or do other chores. You don't stop to think how rough Dad has it. He works and sweats six days a week to keep food in your mouth, clothes on your back and hope there is a dollar left over to pay on the farm loan. He came home from work, ate supper, grabbed his irrigating shovel and proceeded to the field and irrigated until dark. How he had time to raise twelve children is beyond me. He was strong and forceful as a father should be, but had a soft heart that most people didn't see. When we butchered a beef he would disappear until after the animal was killed. He would then return and help us butcher it. If we were to shoot the animal he would go to the house, sit in front of the radio and turn it up full blast so that he could not hear the shot.

He loved to fish and was a wonderful partner to go camping and fishing with. Of course, as times were hard and with a big family, money was scarce and he could not go as often as he would have liked to have gone. I only wish he was yet around so that I could take him more often with me. All kidding aside I am proud that I am his son and have loving memories of my Dad. Wherever you are Dad, "I love you". Your Son Erick Emanuel Minerich

Brother James Cecil Minerich, the third son, was born Sept 16, 1930 at 3 pm in our house on Fanrow in Somerset, Colorado. He weighed 8 lbs. He was

adorned with an abundance of red hair. He was as golden red as a little fox. As he grew his hair turned blonde. Dr. McConnel delivered him. Again Mrs. Walchols assisted with his birth and cared for mother and baby. Dr. McConnel said of James after he was born as he wrapped him in a blanket, "He is so husky and healthy. You could throw that one out of doors with nothing on and nothing would hurt him."

He was contrite as when he was quite young perhaps two years of age he had contacted brucellosis from raw cow's milk, we almost lost him. I clearly remember mother working with him day and night, wrapping him in cool wet towels, trying to break his fever, medicating him, walking the floor with him. There were many tears and prayers. This was continuous for almost a year. He finally won the battle and survived. He grew to be a loving, caring young man. He told everyone when he was a little boy after his terrible illness that was his mother's compensation. I am sure that she told him he was her compensation. He was always loving and attentive to his mother as he grew into manhood. Brother James was the last child to be born on the Fanrow.

Reminiscing of happenings when we lived on the Fanrow

Hilda and I were little girls. I would say five and six years of age. There were two naughty boys in the neighborhood, Freddie and Willie. They would hang on our gate and harass my sister and me with naughty suggestive advances. We had complained to our parents. One day dad was hiding behind the open door listening and like a bolt of lightning he was out of the house chasing the boys down the street. He grabbed one and boxed his ears as he warned them they were never to come near his daughters again. That day made our dad our super hero.

Dad always loved and enjoyed visiting with people. It always fascinated me when he visited with his fellow Slovenian friends in their Slovenian language. Mother being of Swedish ancestry never spoke nor understood his foreign language. As I grew older, I loved to hear him converse on political and intellectual matters. He was no prude on the contrary he was brilliant and learned on many subjects.

Dad entertained various clubs and celebrations with his button accordion. He loved socializing and in doing so he shared in alcoholic beverages. I am sure it was part of his Slovenian exposure and heritage, which started at an early age.

He often came home staggering and happy. He occasionally became agitated. Mother, God Bless her, never went out and socialized. She stayed home and cared for the twelve children. She went to the extreme to alleviate any confrontation with dad.

My childhood mind was always troubled when dad drank. It was difficult for a child to understand. With age my understanding grows, tolerates and forgives. I realized our dad was raised in a Catholic atmosphere and culture which can become addictive.

Dad had a heart of Gold. He would have given the shirt off of his back. Everyone who came into our home was welcome and was offered to share regardless how meager the situation was. We siblings would often bring our friends home for days. Our parents would never send them away. Even so we often had to sleep five in a bed and you could not tell whose legs belonged to whom. My parents were poor in materials things, though rich in spirit and willing to share.

We occasionally enjoyed a bit of humor from Dad even though it was a pretty somber incident. The bottom end of dad's lunch pail which also carried his drinking water sprung a leak. He had no opportunity to purchase a new lunch pail, thus was using an empty lard pail to suffice until he could travel to town to buy a new lunch pail. One morning he grabbed the lard pail thinking it was his lunch and went to work. He and his Finlander friend sat down in the mine to have lunch. He opened the lard pail to his dismay found a pail full of lard - no lunch. His friend chuckled and questioned "Are you going to grease yourself up John?" His friend shared his lunch with dad. Dad soon made a special trip to town to purchase a new lunch pail.

Our father was paying \$18.00 per month for our house on Fanrow in Somerset, Colorado. The recession was in its beginning and survival became very depressing. The coal mines were idle so much of the time. Dad could no longer pay the \$18.00 monthly for rent. This was about 1932. Our parents moved about a mile north from our home on Fanrow. We called the area the end of the tracks, which was true as there was what was called the train turn table. When the trains traveled North from Grand Junction their destination ended here and they had to turn around to return south. It was a huge round table that looked like a bridge. There were rail ties under the table on the ground and wheels on the table bottom that enabled the table to roll around,

turning the table which turned the train around facing south. It was quite a novelty to the children in the area and the train crew had to safely guard it when it was turning for if a child were to fall into the holding pit, the child would be crushed. When it was not being used it was padlocked so that someone could not turn it. Our parents had so warned us and to me it was a child's fear as a monster would be and I had a tendency to guard my little brothers.

There were four little bungalow homes in the valley and a little railroad house for railroad employees. Our little house had two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, pantry, back porch and front porch and an outside commode. In this era there were no indoor restrooms or bathrooms. We had a nice garden lot out back, which was a Godsend. We survived on our garden and fish which Dad caught in the North Fork River that was very near to our home; Dad as an avid fisherman. He never returned without his catch. We lived on fish and wild game. When the mines were idle at this time, which was often, Dad grubbed sage brush, clearing land for Mr. Audin up north of Somerset. For payment he was given weekly milk and ten dollars at the end of the month. My heart cries when I think of the many long hard hours and blistered hands my father endured to sustain his family. Dad was such a dedicated and hard worker. He tried to manage that we have the best.

It is funny how food impresses children's minds. I recall when things were not so depressed he bought us our first Campbell's canned soup. How delicious it was. I can yet see the big eyed little girl on the can and counting the alphabets in the soup. The Eskimo ice cream occasionally, such a special treat. My first when I had my tonsils out at the age of six was truly the most delicious treat I ever had. It helped the hurt go away.

In our little cottage at the end of the railroad tracks in Somerset, Colorado, our brother Franklin Dale Minerich was born July 31, 1933. His first cry was with the first crow of the rooster which dad killed later in the day. Mrs. Walchols made chicken soup for mother and the family's evening dinner. Dr. McConnel delivered Franklin. He was mothers largest baby, weighed 10 lbs. He had blonde hair that later turned red. I so remember that little golden haired baby boy. Hilda, Tiny and I wanted a baby sister however, we loved him dearly. Heavenly Father knows best. He was always a loving special brother. As he aged, his hair turned red and he was branded with the nickname "Dutch". He is yet often called Dutch. When I reminisce of his birth I relate

to our humble little house which was so spotless in preparedness for his birth that it was almost sterile. I can yet smell the Lysol and the new linens. I recall the new cotton crepe bed spread on mother's bed. It was pink and white, almost a luxury for her. I'm sure she saved her coins to buy that. The rosy cheeked baby boy's blonde fuzz crowned his head. I desired to kiss the tiny velvet cheek and say, even though he was another brother he was so sweet.

Brother Paul Willard Minerich, the fifth son and seventh child to enter our family was born Dec. 1, 1935 at 10:00 a.m. in our little house where the freight train ended its journey south. He was the last of the children to be born in Somerset, Colorado. Sister Tiny had to run about four blocks to get to the nearest telephone and call the Dr. There were very few telephones in Somerset at that time.

Dear Mrs. Wachols was such a faithful little saint, who gave such loving service to others in need. She was there to give her all. There were no nurses or home health care to call on. I'm sure you could say we lived in a pioneer state of life.

Dr. McConnel and Mrs. Walchols sat and talked about the price of flour and etc as they waited for Paul to get serious about entering this world. He was born at 10 am, and weighted between 7 and 8 lbs. How she remembers all of these details is beyond comprehension. Mother had a terrible headache after Paul's birth. Mrs. Walchols attempted to feed mother cake with peanut butter frosting. It made mother sick. To this day she cares not for peanut butter. Tiny, Hilda and I again were a bit unhappy that we did not get a baby sister. Tiny exclaimed "I was going to name our baby Doris".

Paul was a chubby little baby with a chubby little face and dark hair. We decided we would keep him as even though he was a boy he was precious swathed in his downy blanket. He has always been a special brother, with his quiet, peaceful mannerism; a sweet smile and a special gleam in his mischievous eyes. Paul was but a baby when our family was confronted with a dilemma. The depression was demanding and painful. The mines were idle, no work, no pay. Dad could no longer pay the five dollar monthly payments on our little house at the end of the tracks. There was no welfare or Government assistance. Can you imagine paying \$5.00 rent per month for a house?

Our Grandfather Erickson suggested that Dad, Mother and children move to his ranch that spring and live with him. This was a God send for our family. This was in the spring of 1936. Bless our dear Grandfather Erikson, he was our Guardian Angel. We moved to the Anthracite Mountains. He lived in a two story log home. The mountains became a haven for us that summer. His home was nestled in the majestic pines. The North Fork River was but a short distance from his home. It made magical music as it made its journey through the valley of the North Anthracite to its destination south. We learned to swim, to fish, a life of learning and joy.

Fish were plentiful and a big part of our nourishment and survival. There was wild game, such as grouse, venison and an occasional roast lamb. Grandfather had several cows, thus we had milk a plenty. There was a garden with abundant vegetables. This was truly a children's paradise; streams to wade, mountains to climb, horses to ride. Grandfather raised hay for his cows and horses. He taught us to help harvest the hay. Grandfather let the sheep men pasture their sheep in his fields in the summer. They rewarded him with mutton which was a treat.

Helping grandfather put up his hay for us was an experience, work, though we found it fun and self gratifying. We were in debt to no man, only gratitude to our Creator and to Grandfather Erikson for his generosity. For us children, it certainly was a haven. I'm sure this was much comfort to our parents. At this time dad worked at the Oliver mine for Ron Oliver. The mine work not that steady; perhaps two or three days a week but it did help. This was very difficult for our father as we had no car. Mother's cousins, the Norris brothers and their mother Aunt Myrtle had a homestead down the valley about 3 miles and dad would get up early enough to walk to their house and ride with some of the boys to the little town of Oliver where the mine was as they worked there also. Occasionally one of them would drive up to Grandfather's and get dad. George Norris, the eldest boy, managed the power plant at Oliver for most of his lifetime - from a young man until he retired in his later life. This was the only power plant in the North Fork Valley. Our father was a strong hard working man. It brings tears to my eyes when I reminisces the long hard struggles he went through or endured to sustain us, his family. I know without a doubt he has earned his glory in Heaven. I truly can say despite all I never once heard him complain.

One of the most amazing characteristics of my father was his determination, his energy and his strength. My husband ventured on several fishing trips in the high Anthracite Mountains with him; they took only a lunch. Dad would get so into his fishing, night fall crept upon them. Junior was a young man and was nervous and anxious to get out of the canyon. Dad assured him they would be fine, thus they slept on a sand bar with a log for a pillow and I spent the night worrying about them.

Grandfather Erikson would occasionally take two of us children grouse hunting with him. On one occasion he, Sister Hilda and I were walking along the creek. It was in early summer and the creek was quite swift. There was a baby elk in the creek and its mother was trying to get it out. I can yet see the big ears and I said, "Oh grandfather look at the baby donkey." He got quite a chuckle out of that. I was very young and had never seen elk before. I really don't know the outcome as he said we must not disturb them that the mother would get it out, thus we disappeared. Dad was a great fisherman and kept us supplied in fish. He would not kill a deer or animals. I really do not recall him shooting a gun.

Brothers Erick, John and I loved to go up the canyon trail along the river. Mother would pack us a little picnic lunch. Erick said today, "Yes and you and John used me as your pack mule". We would tie what we had on his back and play he was our horse. He was so sweet and submissive. I don't recall what John and I were supposed to be. We would occasionally fish or find a little stream and romp around in it and eat our picnic lunch.

We had the opportunity that summer while at grandfathers to meet a small circus troupe. We did not see them perform however we saw some of their animals and the performers. They were traveling to Gunnison, Colorado. To get there they had to go over a steep dangerous pass called Kebler pass which had many curves and a steep incline. Of it was course a dirt road - no pavement in the mountains. As I think about it now, I cannot comprehend whatever possessed them to take that route.

Grandfather owned a campground area where there was a natural spring of cool water, picnic tables, toilets and grills to cook on; it was called Erikson's Springs. These circus people camped there for one day and night then went up over the mountain. I remember a lion, monkeys and strange people, not much more. I for some reason was frightened and ran to grandfathers where I felt safe. I wonder how much of this my siblings remember.

Living the summer on grandfather's homestead in the mountains had such a magical atmosphere that mesmerized us siblings with eternal memories. We loved to sleep in the barn attic, especially when it rained. We cuddled in our warm pallets, supported by the soft hay. The thunder and lightning was to behold. No sleeping bags, no fears. The patter of the rain drops on the metal roof of the barn soon lulled us to sleep to dream our childhood dreams. The North Fork River, nightly sang its mystical rush of comforting secrets.

The sheep in the green pastures surrounding grandfather's house awed us with their nightly bleating. The song of the night owls, the tingling of the cow bells as they grazed in the pasture. There was a steep pass that wound up and around Kebler Pass Mountain. This road took you to Crested Butte and to Gunnison on the other side of the Anthracite Mountains.

I loved to lay in bed nightly with window open, upstairs and listen to an occasional car, chug, chug up over the steep mountain pass. It gave me such a safe peaceful feeling as I fell asleep. I have always loved those magical summer night sounds. I found years after I grew up and married if I was worried or troubled at night I would pretend, I was at grandfathers and my imagination helped me to hear those magical night sounds. I was soon relaxed, comforted and asleep.

The beautiful summer spent on the Anthracite passed too swiftly and due to necessary circumstances, our family was ready to start a new life in a new area. Before I take you there I first need to highlight and share some of the remembered and treasured memories of our life while we lived in Somerset Colorado.

Treasured incidents to be remembered when we yet lived in our little bungalow at the end of the tracks. There was a little valley nearby with a little stream that came down from a mountain. It was called Sanborn Creek. There was a little cliff that hovered over the creek with a nice sandbar. My brothers John and Erick and I loved to hike up there and play. It was about three blocks from our house. We played there for hours. We often took our lunch with us. We built little corrals with little sticks. We used little rocks for cows, horses and etc. and sticks for people. Mother evidently trusted Heavenly Father to watch over us as she didn't seem to worry about us. It was a much safer world at that time. No human predators. I think even so that the wild animals were more civilized and docile than the habitants in

today's world. I was the only one to create a problem. I did not like to wear shoes and seemed I was always losing one shoe in the creek. My parents were having financial worries and this must have been stressful for them, however, I do not recall a thrashing, just a lecture.

The one winter we lived there, our Aunt Anna was visiting with us. We children had scarlet fever and were quarantined in our home, thus she also could not leave. Our father had to board with a bachelor neighbor as the medical health laws were so strict because scarlet fever was so contagious. Mother kept the kerosene lamp turned down low on the living room table. We had no electricity. Aunt Anna was sleeping in one bedroom with some of the children and mother in the other bedroom with the young children. In the middle of the night the light disappeared into the kitchen. Mother called out "Anna, are you in the kitchen?" as she heard someone fumbling in the cupboards. They both jumped out of bed, realizing there was a stranger in the house. They crept cautiously to the kitchen and found the intruder had heard them and silently slipped out the back door. There was fresh fallen snow and they could see footprints leading away into the darkness. Their theory was that a transit had come in on the train and was searching for food. After that scare mother always made sure the door was locked.

I recall so many memories when we lived in that little house. One most significant to me was when Daddy and mother would travel to Paonia once a month to buy groceries. It was about 13 miles from Somerset to Paonia. They always brought us a little bag of candy. This was a luxury to us, a special gift. I can yet feel my face pressed up against the window, watching and waiting as did my little brothers for our parents return with our monthly treat.

The first and only time I ever saw my maternal grandmother Elizabeth (Libby) Erikson was when we lived at the end of the tracks in Somerset, Colorado. I was with my two little brothers, John and Erick up Sandborn Creek playing on the sandbar under the cliff. I was a little tom boy and loved to play with my brothers. Mother sent our eldest sister up to get us. She was so excited. She rushed us home to meet our grandmother, who had traveled with her young daughter Ida from Chicago to visit her family. I yet remember the little cotton print dress I had on and as usual I was barefooted and carrying my shoes. I was about 9 years old, brother John 8 yrs old and Erick about 6 years old.

How well I remember our grandmother, she was short and rather plump. She had a pretty face and a delightful laugh that has lingered with me all my life. I do not recall how long she remained in Colorado perhaps it was a month or so. She and her daughter did return to Chicago. I do remember her pleasant personality however she was very strict and forceful. Brother John was a little dare-devil at the time she was visiting with us. He would invariably leave the road that took us home after school and cross the railroad trestles nearby which spanned above a deep gorge. We could hear the train which was to cross the trestle to its destination. It was a mile or so south heading our way. It was his goal to get across the trestle before it reached the trestle. I would rush home every evening hysterical after school complaining to my parents. I could imagine him falling or getting his foot caught and the train crushing him. Mother would reprimand him and warn him of the severe consequences. He simply ignored her. When grandmother and Elizabeth were there, I arrived home crying and repeating my terror. Grandmother listened to me intently, saying not a word. The following evening as he was doing his spring across the trestle, Grandmother was waiting for him at the end of the trestle with a long switch. She switched him up the road until he decided to out run her; thus ended the trestle escapade. I often wonder if she did save his life and I wonder if he remembers these things that caused me so much fear.

John later ventured to climb upon a railroad car when it was stopped and ride it up the canyon above our residence. When the train stopped briefly he would jump off and walk back home. One of the train brake men was watching him and proceeded to wait for him at his jump off area. He grabbed him, sat down on a rock, turned him over his lap and paddled him good. He made it a point to talk to our father and tell him what he did. Daddy was truly grateful and thanked the man as he realized John could have been killed. Dad never upheld us when we were in the wrong.

Brother John says he remembers when he grew up and was insistent on joining the Navy; dad took him to town to meet the recruiting officer. It was storming and the road was slick and muddy. The car slid off the road into the gutter. Dad was very upset and said "This would not have happened if you were not going into the Navy." Dad told the recruiter to take him instead of Brother John as he said "Johnny does not know how to fight." Brother John certainly learned how to fight. He was on the ship "Louisville" during the

Second World War, during the conflict with Korea and Japan. He was on deck by one of the big guns when a Japanese suicide plane attacked their ship. He dove under one of the big guns which saved his life. He tried to pull the gunner down with him. He would not let him. He froze and clung to the gun. The gunner and many boys on the deck were killed. John did get shrapnel in his legs. He had to help bury many of his comrades at sea. Brother John was so handsome in his sailor suit and I am sure with his big brown eyes and dark curly hair the girls drove him crazy. I was so proud to say he was my brother. I so remember what a beautiful little boy he was.

Mom said she once put a little white dress on him. She said he loved it. He was about 3 years of age, she said he took her ironing board flattened it out. Leaned it on something and used it for a slide. He would wrap the dress around his legs and slide down the board. How he maneuvered that I know not.

As I reminisce I remember impressionable incidents while attending school in Somerset, Colorado. The school was a large two story building. We had to climb large cement stairs which on my first grade of school terrified me. My eldest sister, Elma had to drag me up the stairs. The first year was like a night mare. I was suffering with infected tonsils and earaches daily and often had to return home. My eyes and ears would both hold me back. I could not see the blackboard, my hearing was bad and my grades were terrible. I also remember my teacher letting me play in a sand box a good portion of my time in school. Not until my tonsils were removed did I become a learned student. I recall the Christmas programs each year and how I loved them. I once had a lead part and sang a Christmas solo, "The First Noel". This was my first treasured accomplishment until I entered the fifth grade in a country school in Paonia. A country school teacher took me under her wing. Climbing stairs and learning was no longer a problem.

I recall when I was in the Somerset School I did put a lot of stress and embarrassment on my big sister. I was standing in the hall waiting for the bell to ring, the elastic in my big bloomers broke and my panties fell to my feet. Elma just happened to see me standing there and she grabbed me, bloomers and all, rushed me into the bathroom, stood me in a corner and said "Now you stay there until I get back", one of the teachers gave her a safety pin and she put me together again. What a pain younger siblings can be. Eighty some years later I am sorry dear sister. I love you dearly.

We had a very talented musical professor in this school. He had a school band and Sister Elma had the honor and blessing of learning to play a viola which is a large violin. She played in the band. I would stay and watch them practice often. I have always loved the violin and secretly desired one though I never expressed my desire as I knew my parents could not afford another.

After I married and had two small children. My husband and I moved to Somerset as he went to work in the coal mine there. Our daughter Judy entered her first year of school and she was taught by Zora Zakley who was also my first grade teacher. We were her neighbors for two years. She felt so bad when we moved to Utah. She said just seeing our lighted windows each night was a comfort to her. She was up in the years at that time. We had no choice as the Somerset mine was idle so much of the time. Jr. had to seek work elsewhere and the mines in Utah were flourishing.

Fall was approaching and father and mother realized it would soon be time for us older siblings to be in school. Dad decided to apply for a Government loan and buy a small farm on the outskirts of Paonia thus in Sept of 1935 he was granted a loan and purchased a twenty acre farm on Lamborn Mesa for \$1500.00. It had a \$700.00 mortgage against it at the Federal bank. He bought it from James Plake. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Plake lived across the street. The Plakes were of Indian decent. They were very cultured and very good neighbors. Dad and Mother drove to Delta, Colorado each month to pay the twenty dollar payments on the farm. Dad was working at the Oliver mine at this time and Ron Oliver owner of the mine, co-signed for Dad's loan. He knew dad was a hard worker and reliable. How well I remember our first visit to our new home. I was ten years old Brother Paul was nine months old. Our home was a two room log cabin. There were black widow spiders spinning webs in the tiny windows and an occasional hole in the wood floor. It was very discouraging to my sisters and me. We cried. I am sure mother was not elated, however, it was home. I am sure dad had mixed emotions. However, it was his and he had a dream to build on. In all certainty he was looking in terms of land and soil. It meant survival for his family and he felt he had something to work for. The blisters and calluses on his hands would be made through toil on his very own property.

The roof on the cabin was actually a duplicate of a pioneer cabin. The roof was flat with soil on top and weeds growing on the roof. There was a large

barn, quite near the cabin, which had a large hay loft with a large bay opening. The eldest of we siblings chose to sleep in there on the hay through the summer months. We enjoyed the aroma of the fresh cut hay and the atmosphere carried on memories of time spent with grandfather on the ranch. We enjoyed the star studded sky and the glory of the awesome moon, which lulled us to sleep. The barn was eventually torn down and dad and our brothers built a small barn down in a pasture near his fish pond, an ideal distance from the house. Repairs were made on the cabin to make it livable.

Mother's brother Erick later helped dad to build a three bedroom house with a bathroom on the farm. Uncle Erick and his family lived in it for one summer. He then bought his family a little farm out on Lamborn Mesa. Dad and Mother moved into the house. The cabin was then used for extra bed rooms. It of course had many improvements, away with the dirt roof and weeds. There were no lush carpets, linoleum sufficed. We accepted and were a happy bunch.

The first few years on our little farm Dad and Mother planted strawberries. As I recollect two and one half acres of huge luscious strawberries. Mother and we three girls, the eldest of the siblings planted berries, until our hands cracked from the soil. Then came the plump red berries. There were strawberries and more berries which were carefully picked and packed into little boxes and crates. Dad would load the berries in the old Oakland car and we three girls were responsible for peddling the berries from door to door. Dad usually took the berries to Crested Butte, which took us through Bowie, Colorado through Somerset, our former residence, up to the Anthracite to where Grandfather Erickson lived and up the steep mountain of Kebler Pass, above grandfathers. That winding steep pass that I had previous lay in bed at grandfathers and loved to hear the cars chug, chug up and around the curvaceous road to reach their destination.

The people in Crested Butte loved our berries and awaited our arrival. We always returned home with empty crates. Elma and I usually made the journey as Hilda was very shy and did not relish knocking on stranger's doors. It was not my delight, though I urged myself on. Hilda usually volunteered to stay home and help Mother. I am not sure what Elma's feelings were, though she was always a trooper.

I feel encouraged to share with you a memorable experience on one of our berry crusades. We had sold all of our berries in Crested Butte, Elma and I were anxious to get home as the day was ending and darkness would soon arrive. Dad decided to stop at one of the pubs and visit with some of his old Austrian acquaintances and of course have a few drinks of beer. He loved to chit chat in his native Slovenian language and sip beer which was their custom. We sat in the vehicle and waited as a few hours passed and darkness slipped in. I'm sure he got carried away with his chats and beers. We finally had to go in and coax him out. Elma who was older and more experienced than I decided she was to drive us home. Dad was beyond that. We loaded him in the back seat and began on our journey over the mountains and down the steep curves of Kebler Pass, past grandfathers home, through Somerset, Bowie and headed for Paonia. Daddy was out of it, had not a worry or care in the world. The irony of this all was Elma's legs were too short to control the brakes thus she assigned little me to control the brakes. I got down on the floor board and when she said "brake" I would brake. I used the emergency brake too often. How she managed to steer down those mountain curves and instruct me to manage the brakes was a miracle. When we got to Bowie on level territory, we pulled over and stopped as smoke was billowing from the vehicle. Evidently using the brakes as we did to get off that mountain had caused a fire. It was burning the car. There was a residence at the right up on a little knoll. Elma told me to run up and get help. I rushed up, though could not get near the house. A large dog sent me rushing back to the car. We got down on our hands and knees and threw dirt on the fire. I was never so grateful for dirt and sand. We put the fire out and were soon on our way home. I think about it now and realize we were blessed with a miracle. I am surprised that old clunker even started up again. Dad slept through our touchdown.

Our little farm kept us going, both work wise and survival wise. Daddy planted several fruit trees. We had a supportive garden, eventually a few cattle with a productive milk cow and Dad's old mule Jug Head, who was his work force. He had good pasture and ditch water for irrigation.

When I think about Mother's stamina and courage it amazes me. Birthing twelve children and caring for them through the years with all the duties it daily entailed is unbelievable in this day and age. She washed clothes for years on a wash board. While on the farm I recall her doing laundry on

Monday and her ironing on Tuesday. A bushel basket of clothes dampened and rolled in a basket to be ironed. The following day thirteen loaves of bread she baked. Three meals a day needed to be prepared for hungry little mouths. I recall the days she worked in the garden and in the berry patch; and the days she bottled the many jars of fruit and vegetables. We all in our small efforts tried to help her. Her glory she never complained. When I see in this generation so many marriages breaking because young parents cannot endure a few crises or hardships even with all the automatic conveniences, I ask myself, "Where has all the courage gone? Gone to ashes every one?" I certainly pray not.

Brother Steven Keith, ninth child, sixth son was born August 2, 1939. He was the first child to be born on our little farm on Lamborn Mesa Paonia, Colorado. He was born in the little pioneer cabin. He was delivered by Dr. Haley. Mother does not recall his weight. He was crowned with an abundance of dark brown hair to the nape of his neck. He had a little round face; a very pretty baby. I so remember observing him as they lay him in Mothers arms, how aggressively he was searching for his din-din as though he was starved. He was seemingly sound, healthy and hungry. Aunt Anna Teasley, Mother's sister's daughter, Carolyn was born in the same bed, a few months after Keith. Dr. Haley delivered her also.

We were finally blessed with our longed for baby sister, Thera Ann. She was born July 15, 1941 in the new house on the farm which daddy and Uncle Erick Erikson had built. How fast the years do pass. I had been working for some people who owned a sheep farm in Crawford, Colorado. They lived up in the Maher Valley. I was attending high school at Crawford, Colorado. I came home that spring after school closed for the summer to help Mother bottle her fruit and vegetables. She was very tired and depressed. She confided in me she did not feel she was going to survive this delivery. She made me promise I would not tell anyone else. This was quite a load for a 14 year old to carry. I kept my promise, though I was terrified. When Dr. Hienk and his nurse came to our home to deliver the baby, Sister Elma was there. I wanted to be with mother but they made me leave the house. I silently slipped outside and into our dirt cellar, which was beneath the bedroom. I sat on an old wooden box and shed a few silent tears. I knew she was having a difficult time. I think I prayed her through her delivery.

Mother later told me that Thera was born on the Dr's lap. He had mother sit on the edge of the bed with her feet in his lap. As the saying goes, where there's a will, there is a way. I don't remember though I do hope I remembered to thank Heavenly Father for sparing our dear mother. I really do not recall what Thera looked like, as I was so frightened. She was tiny and sweet, our baby sister who has always been so special.

After returning to my job and back to my High School, I occasionally returned home on weekends. How I did enjoy our baby sister, Thera. Mother kept her dressed in little white soft dresses. I would reach down and bounce the bed and she would giggle and giggle. She was such a happy baby. Thera has never changed, she yet has that special laugh and always a sweet smile and a sparkle in her eyes as did our father.

Brother Robert Wayne, the seventh boy and eleventh child was born June 11, 1944, a day never to be forgotten. I was not there. The story is re-lived. Daddy and Brother Jim had gone fishing. Mother arose early, fetched some wood and built a fire in the kitchen range. No gas or electric heat. She felt the time was close for the baby's birth. Sister Elma, her husband and children lived about a mile from our parents. She came down to be with mother. She lived all of her married life near home and kept very close watch over Mother. She was somewhat a guardian angel who was always there to watch over our family. As mother's pains increased, sister went to the neighbors to call Dr. Gould. This was the only telephone in the neighborhood. Mr. and Mrs. Plake were very kind and always willing to share their telephone.

Dr. Gould and his nurse came out to the farm. He examined Mother and said, "Why did you call me, this baby will not be born until 6 pm or later." The nurse offered to stay with Mother. Mother kindly told her no. She said the Dr. needs to have his lunch and you also need to have your lunch. He seems to be certain the baby will not be born until evening. Soon after the Dr. left, mother's pains grew more intense and closer. Sister Elma ran to the neighbors to call the Dr. again. They could not get the Dr., he was out.

Mrs. Plake, the little neighbor rushed over to see if she could do anything to help mother. She tied ropes at the bottom bed poles and instructed mother to pull on the ropes and bear down. In the meantime Mrs. Plake and Elma ran over to her house to try to make contact with the Dr. Mother somehow managed to reach down and work the baby's head out. Baby brother was

born while they were trying to contact the Dr. Mother wrapped Bob in a little blanket and waited for the Dr. Robert was a large baby, weighed 8 lbs and I am sure pulling on the ropes, an old Indian custom, helped to gain his entry into the world. When Mrs. Plake and Elma came into the house they heard the baby crying at the top of his lungs. Dr. and nurse arrived soon after. When he saw the baby, he was a bit frustrated and I am sure embarrassed. Especially when he saw the ropes tied to the bed poles and realized the little Indian angel had to assist mother. Mrs. Plake who had to be near 70 years of age snapped at the Dr. "If I ever have another baby, I will never call you!"

The Dr. clipped and tied the baby's cord and sarcastically snapped at Sister Elma, "You let this baby get cold." He opened the oven door on the coal stove, placed a pillow on it and laid the baby on the pillow to get warm. Isn't it wonderful to know we have a father above who sees and knows who is really responsible and helps us through our crises and comforts and blesses us? Mother was truly blessed.

The eighth son, number twelve and last child born to our parents was Daniel Patrick, born April 2, 1947, about 10:00 a.m. in Saint Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, Colorado. In view of the problems Mother experienced when Robert was born, Dr. Gould was concerned about her and his misjudgments, wanted her to have the best of care, thus had her admitted to the hospital in Grand Junction. I have very few details on his birth. Mother said he was of medium weight and was a pretty baby. She added, "All of my babies were pretty."

Dad took Brother Robert on the bus to Grand Junction to see Mother and his new baby brother. Bob was 3 years old. He told his aunt in Grand Junction, "I come on two buses; to find my Mommy." I'll bet he was not too anxious to see his baby brother.

Danny would always be Mother's baby, as he was her last. I am sure she loved him dearly, as she did all of the twelve. Mother loved the Irish song, "Oh Danny Boy". I have always wondered if she named him Daniel Patrick because of her love for the song. Just remember Danny she always loved you.

Mother miscarried twins when Brother Jim was a teenager. Jim was alone with Mother. Dad had a large grey mule, which he used to do farm work.

One of the brothers left the mule hitched to a stone boat which was used to level the garden area. It was loaded with rocks. Something evidently startled the mule and it broke loose and was dragging the stone boat over Mother's newly planted garden. She ran out, grabbed the reins, attempting to stop the mule. He dragged her several yards and caused her to miscarry. It was too early to determine the gender. Brother Jim immediately got Sister Elma and they immediately got medical help for Mother. I was not there, however, I was impressed with Brother Jim, as I was told how upset he was and how he tried to take care of our Mother. Throughout my life I have tried to capture all of the good traits of my siblings and not dwell on our mistakes.

Had mother not lost these babies there would have been a total of fourteen children in our family. Mother's father Erick Erickson was one of fourteen children born to his parents in Sweden. His mother gave birth to one set of triplets and two sets of twins. Many of their babies perished after birth.

Dear Dad, I feel I need to add a brief review concerning your sisters as seems your departure from them, we know too little of; their life an ocean of separation.

Your eldest sister, Sophie was born in 1895 in Temesvar, Rumania. She married Joe Mihelcic, in Delnice, Yugoslavia. They had three daughters, Mary, Jenny and Josephine who were youngsters when their mother passed away. I was told that Joe brought his daughters back to America and they settled in Seattle Washington, I presume he remarried. I need to do more research.

Your Sister Evelyn who was born July 2, 1911 in Zagreb, Yugoslavia also married a Muslim gentleman named Tomislov Sokolovic, August 15, 1934 in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. They had one daughter named Gordina. Your brother Frank Minerich financed her medical schooling. She received her medical license and degree in Europe. She married an engineer and they came to America. The last report I received from Uncle Frank years ago was that they were in California and she was studying to receive her Medical degree in the USA which was a requirement. It seemed apparent that she distanced herself from all of her relatives in America.

Her sister Mary never remarried. Grandfather Matt Minerich was very self sufficient before communism overtook Europe. He owned and operated a department store and an apartment house. The Germans took everything

they owned. He had an ulcer but had neither medication nor food, such as milk, to cure his health problems. This caused his demise. Your sisters were teenagers during this time and they were forced to work in the fields harvesting to earn food for the family. They were given vegetables for their hard earned labor. It was so cold they had to wear gunny sacks wrapped around their feet to keep them from freezing. The family survived on vegetables such as rutabagas and turnips. I recall during this period of time, Dad and Mother sent packages of food and non-perishable necessities to the family in Zagreb. He also sent money when possible. His brother Frank and wife who lived in Florida also sent food and money often. I often wonder if Grandfather and his wife were very sorry for returning to Yugoslavia to face the tragedies and suffering of war.

Brother John traveled to Zagreb, Yugoslavia in 1989 to visit with our Aunts Evelyn and Mary. Mary and her daughter Veretz lived in a little house, behind the apartments that their parents once owned. Mary's daughter at that time was bedfast with arthritis. Aunt Evelyn lived in one of the apartments in the apartment house. Brother John described Evelyn as a tiny little woman with dark hair. John stated that Mary had the sweetest personality.

Grandfather Matt Minerich his wife Josephine and their daughters suffered immensely from the war. Their sons were very wise when they choose to remain America. Brother John said that Evelyn, Mary and her daughter were financially suffering as most of the foreign countries were from devastation and communism atrocities.

John took Mary shopping for groceries and she bought a chicken and made home cooked chicken and noodles which is a Slovenian specialty. On his departure he gave them money, which was a great treat. I am sure our dear little aunts whom I never had the honor of meeting have earned their glory in Heaven and I so pray we will all be reunited one glorious day. I so pray that wherever they are there are blue skies and sunshine; Lots of green vegetation and beautiful flowers; And an abundance of good food and water and much joy and laughter. No bad weeds and no evil people.

Work Records of John Evon Minerich

My father's work records after he settled in Colorado, which especially pertains to his coal mining experiences. August 1928 to December 1941. Oliver Coal Company, called "Swedes Mine" Somerset' Gunnison County' Colorado. Pick & shovel miner.

December 1941 to July 1944, the Juanita Coal and Coke Company, Bowie Colorado, Pick Miner. Brother John and Erick both worked at Bowie Mine during this period of time.

September 1944 to November 1947 he worked for Calument Fuel Company at Somerset, Colorado. His title was a Miner Driver. He drove a mule to pull coal cars and was also a machine helper.

The year of 1946, Dad stayed with Jr. and me in Somerset and went home to his little farm on week-ends. Junior also worked at this mine in Somerset Colorado for a period of years.

September 1948 to 1951 Dad worked for Bear Coal Company, Somerset, in Gunnison County as a pick miner.

April 1951 to August 1951 he worked for Kaiser Steel in Sunnyside Utah as a mason and timber man.

August 1951 to April 1954 he worked for Geneva Mine at Horse Canyon in Dragerton, Utah as a track man helper. He then boarded with his daughter Hilda and husband

Raymond Wardlaw. On weekends he traveled back to Paonia, Colorado to his little farm, wife and children.

September 1956 to April 1960, Dad returned to Colorado and went to work for Axelsons Black Beauty, mine at Somerset, Colorado as a pick miner. If he retired at the age of 65 this would put him retiring in 1961. Brother John related to me one of his and dad's experiences when they worked at the Juanita Coal Mine at Bowie Colorado which I thought interesting.

They had to ride down a very lengthy and steep mountain side, when they finished their shift and came out of the mine portal they rode what they called

a boat on the rails down the steep incline to the bottom of the mountain. When it rained the rails were slick and they flew down the mountain. They hung their lunch bucket on their pick and put the pick on their shoulders, held on to the pick with one hand and maneuvered the brake with the other hand. A hose served as a brake. This was very dangerous and hair raising experience. I would say two 2 X 6 cleats connected to a radiator hose were the brakes. It is a miracle that our dear father survived to the age of 76. Heavenly Father has truly blessed our family.

Dad's brother Chriss Minerich was injured in the Somerset Colorado mine in 1927. He received a broken back and spent the remainder of his life in a wheel chair. He and his family purchased a little farm on Stewart Mesa in Paonia Colorado where they raised their family.

My Fathers Obituary

John Evon Minerich, age 76, of Lamborn Mesa, Paonia, Colorado, a retired Coal Miner, died Sunday at 6:35 pm in Delta Colorado Memorial Hospital from a massive heart attack. He was a resident of Paonia, Colorado for sixty years.

Mr. Minerich came from Delence Yugoslavia, where he was born June 19, 1986. He married Hilda Erikson in Delta Colorado on December 04, 1920. He was a member of the United Mine Workers and Elks Lodge.

Surviving in addition to his wife, are Mrs. Bill Wienning of Paonia, Mrs. Bob Bowens (Hilda) of Carbondale Colorado, Mrs. Estel Junior Lemon (Joan) of Dragerton, Utah, Mrs. Bill Sandburg (Thera) of Montrose' Colorado. Eight sons, Danny, Paul, and Keith of Paonia, Colorado. Robert of Pryor, Oklahoma, John Jr. of Puerto Rico, Erick of Clearwater, Nebraska, James of Grand Junction, Colorado. Master Sargent Franklin Minerich of Brussels, Belgium. Two sisters in Zagreb Yugoslavia. Forty grand children and twenty five great grandchildren.

With Love to Mother

It is a noble faculty of our nature which enables us to connect our thoughts,
sympathies and happiness with that which is distant in places of time
and looking before and after.

To hold communion at once with our ancestors which elevates the character,
and improves the heart.

Next to the sense of religious duty and moral feelings.

I hardly know what should bear with stronger obligation on a liberal
enlightened mind that a consciousness of alliance with excellence which is
departed and a consciousness to instincts and conducts, and even in its
sentiments and thoughts it may be actively operating on the happiness of
those who come after.

By Daniel Webster

An Introduction to Sweden
The Homeland of my Mother's Father, Erick Erickson
By Joan Lemon

Leksand, Sweden is located in the South Eastern area of Sweden. Studying the atlas map of Sweden indicates it is not too far from the Eastern shore line. Stockholm is south of Leksand and appears to rest on the shoreline of the Baltic Sea. Stockholm is the capitol of Sweden. It rests on the rocky island facing the Eastern shoreline. As I have researched, I have learned Sweden is a beautiful, energetic, exciting country.

There are many lakes in Sweden, one special mentioned in the south eastern area, Malaren Lake. I recall my Grandfather telling me there were many lakes in the area around Leksand where they lived. He spoke of a Lake Siljan often. The Swedish people are water loving people. They do love water, water sports, boating, sailing, water skiing and fishing. They also love and indulge in winter sports, especially skiing.

The Swedish people are very active happy people. They engage in many colorful exciting activities. Their homes and their clothing are very colorful. They wore very colorful dresses and costumes for their traditional festivities and celebrations. The one tradition that impresses me is their homes. For centuries the families have built their own homes which were built with timber from the forests. They love their red houses and barns with white trim, gabled tile roofs, lilac bush bowers and birch trees. This is their traditional haven with a small garden a must. There are beautiful mountains and forests in Sweden for hiking and skiing. The forests are unrestricted with free access for recreation, hiking, picnicking, and picking berries and edible mushrooms that grow in the lush green forests. Traditions respected and enjoyed.

Sweden displays unique medieval heritage history of the old Vikings, old ships, old preserved castles and palaces as the little Versailles and the Drottningholm Palace, museums and lakes. Sweden for certain is a land of heritage and beauty that dates back for ages.

The history of the heritage of the Lapland people fascinates me. Mother once told me that one of her father's brothers (Erick) migrated to Lapland from Leksand to herd reindeer.

Lapland Sweden is one of the most North Western wildernesses in Sweden. The wilderness in the winter months gets thirty to forty degrees below zero. Lapland dates back to the 17th Century. Most regions in the North Western area are natural resources with vast timber, rivers, waterfalls, great mountains, rocky areas and abundant snow with glaciers and wild life; wolves, wolverines, bear, lynx, golden eagles, falcons and buzzards.

Sweden's main resource is the reindeer. The people depend upon their reindeer for their livelihood. They let them run free and graze in the forests. The reindeer are herded as our cattlemen herd cattle. They are corralled only when they are to be sold or butchered for meat. Lapland is a silent lonely wilderness. There are cottages in various areas and some people yet live in tents. It is an ideal place for people who love to ski. The Northern Lights are renowned as an atmospheric phenomenon and beauty in the winter months. With the summer months, the sun is known as the midnight sun that never sets.

I so wonder if all of the Swedish people love pickles herring as my Grandfather Erikson did; also cheese and hard tack candy. The Swedish royal family is to Sweden as the King and Queen of England are to the people of England. I surmise though am not certain if they live in the beautiful Drottningholm Palace. Sweden is certainly a world of culture, beauty and seemingly peace.

Mother dear, I fully intend to focus on a bit of history concerning your father and mother's lives. I only pray that I am correct in my research and memory of the years of information you gave me. This was gathered through years with much anticipation and love. Your father Erick Erickson was born on the 29th of February 1872 in Leksand, Sweden. He was the first of fourteen children to be born to Kerstin Andersson and Erick Persson. Please note the fathers in Sweden did not give their sons their last name. They take their own first name and add son, example, Erick was Erick Persson's son thus he traditionally was named Erikson, Erick's son.

While studying the Swedish films in the genealogical libraries, this was very difficult for me to at first comprehend. Erick's father Erick Persson was born Sept. 18, 1847, in Leksand, Sweden. He died in Leksand at the age of 94 year of age. Erick Erikson's mother, Kerstin Andersson was born June 19, 1849 in Leksand, Sweden. She died at the age of 49 in Leksand. Evidently after the birth of her last child, Fritz Erikson as her was born on the 24th of March 1898 in Leksand. She died at a very young age, however, after giving birth to fourteen children and losing so many children this had to be a burden on her body and stressful to her mind and soul. She had one set of triplets and two sets of twins of the fourteen children. They lost four new babies and one five year old son, Fredrick, from a sun stroke. So many babies perished in this era as they not the expertise or the medical equipment such as oxygen, incubators and recessitation equipment to save new babies with problems. Two brothers, Emanuel and Anders, young men who were professional house painters died with a few months of each other from a form of lung disease caused from chemicals in the paint.

Grandfather Erikson once told me that he and his cousin came to America together. There was but a few months difference in their age. They were about sixteen years old. His cousin's name was also Erikson. Thus to eliminate confusion over identity, mail, etc., he took his mother's maiden name which Valin. Henceforth he was known as Erick Valin. He and Grandfather Erikson were always good friends.

At this time the Colorado Rocky Mountains were prevalent and well known for prospecting for ore, minerals, even so gold and dreams of getting rich. Grandfather Erikson and his cousin ventured to Denver and worked there for a short time.

Grandfather once related to me his reason for coming to America. His parents left him at home to care for his young siblings for the day. They returned home to find him teaching the youngsters how to play cards. His parents were Lutheran and his father was very religious; perhaps a bit radical and definitely against cards. He took him out to the barn and whipped him with a wet rope. He told me this was when he decided to leave home and find a better life. I am sure there were other issues and pressures that came with raising a large family. Then there is the fact that boys of that age resent harsh discipline and they are adventurous and eager to try their wings. I only wish that I had questioned him more on his travels from Sweden to America such as the name of the ship he came on. I am sure he and his cousin had a few hardships as well as some exciting experiences.

Grandfather once told me he had a cousin who migrated to America and settled in Iowa and he told him that he would take a trip to Iowa and visit with him though got so caught up in his struggles and family that he never did keep his promise.

Grandfather Erikson and his cousin's first destination was Denver, Colorado. They worked in a smelter for a short time, then in a quarry for seven days a week for one dollar a day. Grandfather made friends easily and became a good friend of Jess McDonald who then was the Governor of Colorado.

The two cousins Erikson and Valin anxious to try their luck at mining and prospecting moved on to Summit County, Colorado; to the beautiful mountains where there were many mineral mines; quartz, silver, gold and others. There were many little mining towns: Dillon, Kokomo, Breckenridge and Leadville which were all prospectors' dreams. The two cousins worked at various quartz mines in the area. They took a fancy to Kokomo and worked as a team in the silver mines.

Grandpa once leased a mine in Breckenridge. It was called "The Lucky Mine". He would work until he found a vein, I presume it was silver. He would then lease it to another party for \$3,000.00. He would then get in a hot poker game and lose his money. He told me he loved a good card game and did gamble through the year frequently. This I am sure caused his wife much stress in later years.

Now Dear Mother, concerning your mother and her parents. Your mother Elizabeth Howell, whom was called "Libby", was born June 17, 1886 in Howard County, Missouri to Mary Angeline Heberling and James Henry Howell. There were seven children born to this union. Mary Angeline was

born in 1849 to Christine Amick and Dr. Cromley Heberling. There were ten children born to this family. Mary Angeline was the eldest daughter.

I elaborate on James Cromley Heberling, MD as he was a very prominent, respected and loved citizen of Howard County, Missouri. Dr. Heberling was born in Berkley, Virginia on March 28, 1816. He was one of ten children; seven sons and three daughters, moved to Howard County, Missouri from Virginia. A young man of twenty one years of age he married Christina Amick who was twenty three years of age. He graduated from the Institute of Ohio with distinction in 1847. He then returned to Howard County, Missouri to practice medicine. He previously spent four year in Saint Louis, Missouri and California and with a short absence during the war between the North and the South. He was very active in politics and held various prestige offices. Dr. Heberling and his family owned and lived on a large plantation with much acreage and forty some slaves. He managed his property and his slaves as well as his medical practice in Howard County. His slaves served him with respect and appreciation. He and several other citizens who were prominent in the county were banished to the Northeast for sympathizing with the seceding states. Aunty Myrtle Howell, one of his granddaughters once told me how kind and sympathetic he was with the poor and needy. He would often destroy medical bills that his patients could not afford to pay. His wife would get very upset, thus he made sure she was unaware of this. She was evidently not as kind and giving as the good Doctor. On his return home after the war Dr. Heberling found that all of his livestock had been taken during his absence. He was without a saddle horse on which to continue his medical practice, thus he purchased a trim built, unbridled, two year old mule, afterwards known in two continents as the famous "Light Foot". This was the 15th day of September 1865 and from that day until September 1872 Dr. Heberling said "the lives of the two, himself and the mule were so intimately interwoven with each other that the biography of one unavoidably included the other." Together they traveled in the practice of medicine, the mule doing the locomotion and the doctor attending patients. They continued visiting the sick and administering to the suffering until they had scored in the 12 year; 65,000 miles which equaled more than two and one half circuits of the earth. The faithful old pedestrian "Light Foot" was retired on full pay; corn and hay and the all the meadows and pastures. At the age of twenty, Light Foot was still active and chirp and often put his shoulder to the wheel. The facts of this biography were written by a gentleman in Vermont, Virginia and were so noteworthy that it was published by London and other European countries in their journals.

In his 68th year Dr. Heberling was yet hale and hardy and actively happy. In 1880 he was nominated on the Weaver ticket for Governor. This statement Dr. Heberling made for this article touched my heart and lingers in my mind.

“More generous to others than himself, he collected but a mere pittance of that which he made and is therefore not rich in worldly goods, although he has a competence to keep the wolf from his door. Never profane or temperate, but of a literate mind and domestic disposition, he finds unallied pleasure in the leisure of old age with his books and his grandchildren of which he has no less than twenty. In the language of Orlando, he can truthfully say; Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty, for in my youth I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors in my blood. Nor did not with untactful forehead woo the means of weakness and debility. Therefore my age is a lusty winter, frostily, but kindly.”

(I, Joan C. Lemon, acquired this biography from the library in Howard County, Missouri. This was published in 1883 and Dr. Heberling was yet alive at that time.)

Dr. James Cromley Heberling was my Great Grandfather, three times removed. He passed away on June 15, 1892 from a stroke in Howard County. His wife Christine Amick Heberling passed away September 24, 1898 in Howard County, Missouri.

Mother Dear I will now let your Grandfather Heberling rest in peace and script the history of your mother's parents, James Henry Howell and Mary Angeline Heberling. James Henry Howell was born 1836 in Tennessee to James Howell, Sr. and Agnes Cason; Mary Angeline Heberling was born 1849 in Howard County, Missouri to Dr. James Cromley Heberling and Christine Amick; they were married about 1867 in Missouri.

CHILDREN

These children were all born in Boonslick, Howard County, Missouri.

John Howell, born 1868, died 1954 in Delta County Colorado; he never married.

Lurene Howell, born March 26, 1871, died March 28, 1897 in Howard County Missouri.

Myrtle Florence Howell, born December 21, 1875, died January 15, 1970 in Colorado; married James Edward Norris, November 25, 1899 in Frisco, Summit County, Colorado.

Cason Howell, born September 17, 1878; died April 17, 1951 in Ohio; married Carrie Mae Phillips in Cleveland, Ohio. They are both buried there.

William Howell was born 1884. I have no record of his death or marriage.

Elizabeth Howell, born June 17, 1886; died February 21, 1935 in Chicago, Illinois.

Agnes Howell, born approximately 1888; died as a baby.

Lurene, the second child died at the age of 26 from the dreaded typhoid fever. Her obituary stated that she possessed a most lovely and lovable character and was a great favorite all who knew her. She was very active in the Christian Church and very faithful to her church callings. It stated that God in his wisdom and infinite goodness saw fit to remove her in her youth and innocence from the cares and temptations of this earth to the sun bright clime of Heaven. We question not God's wisdom, but bow in humble submission and say, "Thy will be done", then sorrowing ones think not of your great bereavement and loss, but of her great gain and weep not for her whom the veil has passed." This obituary really impressed me for wisdom we could all adhere to this advice however difficult it might be to do.

Coincidentally the three brothers, John, Cason and William migrated to the beautiful Colorado Rockies from Missouri. The mountains were well known for mineral mining and were enticing to these three brothers who were interested and anxious to mine and prospect for valuable minerals and ore. They ventured to Colorado prior to Erick Erickson and Erick Valin. The three Howell brothers decided to leave Missouri and venture to Colorado after their mother, Mary Angeline passed away. She died in July 1892 in Howard County, Missouri. Somehow they found out about mining and prospecting confluence in the Colorado Mountains. Their first destination was Denver, Colorado; from there they traveled to Summit County, a beautiful mountain area. There were little mountain towns that were booming. Kokomo, Breckenridge and Dillon and probably there were more. This county was also well known and popular to the cattlemen and cowboys for access to abundant lush pasture land.

John homesteaded a bit of property in Kokomo, as I remember someone had built a cabin on the land previously, thus he probably purchased the site. The sisters, Myrtle and Elizabeth, decided to join their brothers in Colorado and keep house for them. Their father James Henry Howell, having lost his wife had no reason to remain in Missouri, so he joined his two daughters and moved to the Colorado Rockies. Myrtle had finished college in Missouri. She got her

teaching degree and had taught two years of school before moving to Colorado. This was in the year of 1900. I am not certain by what means they traveled but logically thinking or guessing I would reason by train.

Grandfather Erikson and Erick Valin both left Denver and ventured to Summit County as they were eager to get into prospecting and mining. This had to be around 1888 or 1889. Erick Erikson leased or purchased property in Kokomo where he built their first home, a prospector's cabin. He also built a little church there which was the first church to be built in Kokomo, Colorado. He was a good carpenter. His father in Sweden was a fine carpenter; this was his profession and I am sure he taught Grandfather and his brothers many of his skills as they were growing up.

It was soon after that that Erick Erikson met Elizabeth Howell. He once told me that he fell in love with her the first time he saw her. She was running through a little field of wild flowers. The wind was blowing her beautiful dark hair behind her. There was evidently a speedy courtship as they were married March 5, 1901 in Breckenridge, Colorado. I have a copy of their marriage certificate. She was fifteen years old. As I recall, Grandfather told me she was fourteen years old when she left Missouri. They started their marriage in the little house which Grandfather had built in Kokomo. My mother Hilda Ophelia was born March 17, 1902 in Kokomo, Colorado on Saint Patrick's Day. Dr. Michael John delivered her. Amazing that she remembered so many names and dates in her elderly years. Her mother was sixteen years old when Hilda was born. Their second child, Erick Brook, was born August 18, 1904 in Kokomo, Colorado. He was two months premature. Grandfather went to the little country store that day and took Hilda with him. She was two years old, very bright and active. She loved strawberries she called them "purty's". The storekeeper put them up on a high shelf to keep them out of her reach. He was visiting with her father. She climbed in an attempt to reach the berries, fell and broke her arm. It upset her mother so, she went into premature labor. The Dr. came to their home to care for her arm and delivered her brother Erick, who was premature, tiny and frail. Elizabeth's sister Myrtle was there to care for mother and baby. Their Grandfather, Dr. James Cromley Heberling was a physician and surgeon in Missouri. As they were approaching teenagers, he had taught Elizabeth and Myrtle many medical procedures that certainly did benefit them through their years of pioneering and caring for their families.

Mother Hilda was fond of her Aunt Myrtle (Mirdie) when she was a little girl and they were yet in Kokomo; she had a doll with a tin head, it had painted features. She left it laying out in the yard and a horse stepped on its head and

smashed it. It looked like a wrinkled little old woman. She cried a bit, though seemed to love it more than ever. Her mother asked her why she loved that doll so much; her reply was "Because she looks like my Aunty Mirdie." She loved her aunt. Oh! The sweet honesty of little children.

When Aunt Mirdie was yet staying with Elizabeth, she was in the process of preparing dinner and said to her sister Libby, "I made a salad for dinner and you are out of vinegar". Little Hilda absorbed the conversation, she found an old bottle out in the yard that he had been playing with, it had a bit of dirt in it and a few dead flies. She silently trotted off to the little country store which was close by. She told the store keep "My Mamma needs some bignear." He knew her well, rinsed the bottle out, filled it with vinegar and sent her home. Seemed she kept him entertained. I'll bet the vinegar did not go in the salad.

It seems during this time Grandfather Erick and Elizabeth were yet living in Kokomo, Colorado. My research found that Grandfather's cousin, Erick Valin, who ventured to America and then to Denver with him had gone to work in the quartz mines in Leadville, Colorado which was also in Lake, south of Breckenridge and Kokomo, Colorado.

Erick Valin married three years after Erick Erikson. In 1904 he married Alida Johnson who was born in 1880 in Okanel, Sweden. Erick Valin was born in 1872 in Leksand, Sweden where Grandfather Erikson was born. I vaguely recall someone telling me that Erick Valin sent to Sweden for his bride. I was told he had a sister Marie though I never learned anymore about her.

Erick Valin and Alida had two children. Their son Theodore was born February 4, 1909 in Leadville, Colorado; he married Katharine Poletta, December 19, 1939. Their daughter Anna Marie was born June 2, 1910 in Pando, Eagle County, Colorado. Anna married Arvo Maki, June 39, 1936.

Erick Valin homesteaded a ranch on Snow Shoe Mesa in Gunnison County Colorado. This is located at the top of Kebler Pass above the ranch where his cousin Erick Erikson homesteaded. It would be six or eight miles, climbing up the winding road over Kebler Pass above Anthracite.

Cason soon introduced his friend Edward Norris to his sister Myrtle (Mirdie). After a brief courtship, Ed and Mirdie were married on November 25, 1898 in Frisco, Colorado. Edward Norris was born in Waterman, Indiana on October 10, 1878 to George Norris Sr. and Miriam. There were seven children born to this couple; four girls and three boys.

CHILDREN

Meryan Norris, born 1867; (Molly) born in Indiana; Florence born in 1870, Clara A., born October 1871; William A. born October 5, 1874, William died as a child; Ella Norris born 1875; James Edward born October 10, 1878 and Charles Norris born September 4, 1879.

The father to these children (George Norris Sr.) passed away in October of 1882. Their mother (Miriam) passed away February 4, 1885. The siblings were left at a young age and were sent to Nebraska to be raised by their mother's sister, Martha Cartwright.

When Edward Norris was 17 years old his sister was married to a man named Ed Hooter and they lived in Breckenridge, Colorado. They lived on a little farm on the Blue, near Breckenridge and Dillon. Edward Norris at the age of 17 left his Aunt and family in Nebraska and ventured to Colorado as he was set on finding his sister Florence. He evidently got on a freight train (box car) and traveled to Denver, Colorado. He got off the train on the outskirts of Denver in a desolate area with the intention of walking to Denver. While wandering he met a man on horseback. He asked the man if he knew where he might find a job. The man told him that they needed cow punchers on the Blue. Somewhat startled Edward related to the stranger that he had a sister Florence who was married to Ed Hooter that lived there. The man said he knew the Hooters and was willing to take him to his sister. Edward soon went to work as a cow puncher and was elated to find his sister. It was during this time period that Ed Norris met Cason Howell as Cason was also herding cattle on the Blue. Cason Howell and Ed Norris became good friends and as I mentioned earlier Cason became Edward's brother-in-law.

Cason tired of cow herding ventured to Somerset, Colorado searching for new adventure; this was about 1900. He met some people who were operating a saw mill on the Anthercite in Gunnison County Colorado. There was an abundance of timber for sawmilling. Cason then went to work on the first sawmill to be installed on the Anthracite. He then homesteaded some choice property on the Anthercite.

Cason Howell's brother John who had been prospecting on the Blue had been somewhat successful, however, the gold in Summit County was becoming scarce and so he decided to leave the Breckenridge area and move on to greener pastures and search for a new vein. He had his heart set on hitting a rich vein of gold. He heard rumors that the North Anthercite was promising. He also

wanted to be hear his brother, Cason, again. There was yet that family connection. Cason at this time was going full swing with the sawmill gang.

John Howell homesteaded some choice property near Muncy Creek on the Anthracite. A prospector had previously built a cabin on the property and for some unknown reason abandoned it. This was near the mouth of Dark Canyon. He also homesteaded more choice property in this beautiful valley. It later became known as the Erikson Springs Ranch, as John Howell gave the property to his sister Elizabeth and her husband Erick Erikson. It became one of the most admired and desired properties on the Anthracite.

Cason after a few years bought his friend's interest in the saw mill and he and a friend operated the mill. In 1906 he sold the saw mill to Mr. Beezley. Cason gained access to the Snow Shoe cabin area property. Cason after a period of time became restless again and evidently sold the Snow Shoe property to Jesse Beezley. Soon after selling all of his property Cason left the Colorado Mountains and seemingly no one in the family knew where he went.

This remained a mystery for years. Fortunately while I was deeply involved in genealogy and family history searching for the Howell and Heberling families in the Missouri area where they migrated from I was blessed to find my mother's distant cousin, Martha Dodson, who lived in Fayette, Missouri. Martha's mother was Carrie Lee Heberling, who was the daughter of James Lewis Heberling. James Lewis was the son of Dr. James Cromley Heberling. Carrie Lee Heberling married Joe Shelby Estill. Martha was their daughter, she married Sam Dodson. Martha and her twin brother, Marion, were born February 7, 1905 in Howard County Missouri. Their sister Annadell was born October 16, 1902, the youngest child, Georgia Lou Estill, was born April 25, 1910.

These children were all born in Howard County Missouri. Martha Dodson provided me a wealth of history on the Heberling and Howell families. My brother, Erick Minerich, and his wife took my sister, Elma Weinning, my husband Estel and me to Fayette, Missouri about eighteen years ago We all had the privilege of meeting Martha Dodson. What a wonderful, delightful person she was. We had a joyous reunion which bonded into a forever friendship. She was widowed when we met her. We have snapshots of her, my sister Elma and I and we could almost pass for sisters. She was the last of the immediate living family there. Martha passed to her glory beyond on August 25, 2003. She was ninety eight years old. How I miss her lovely long letters.

Back to Cason Howell, our prodigal son. Martha once sent me a letter stating that Cason had written to one of his old friends in Fayette, Missouri. This friend, Paddy, had given the letter to Martha. In this letter Cason told his friend that he had traveled over the majority of the United States and British Columbia then to Cleveland, Ohio where he decided to settle down. He said Cleveland was on the shore of Lake Erie. He met and married Carrie Mae Phillips of Cleveland and was very fond of her and happy in Cleveland. He worked for the city of Cleveland in the water department. He said the last time he had heard from any of his family was in 1924. His brother, William was in California and John Howell was in Colorado as were his sisters, Elizabeth and Myrtle, who were both married and had children. He had heard from cousins in California and Missouri. He later took a trip to Fayette, Missouri to see his family there.

Cason's wife, Carrie Mae, was born June 19, 1878 in Pennsylvania and she passed away December 22, 1945 in Cleveland. Martha, her mother and friends went to Cleveland to visit Cason after his wife passed. Martha said he was so sad that he had never heard from his family in Colorado. They had no idea where he was. It makes me feel sad that he did not contact them or make a return visit to Colorado as my generation could then have known him. It is so sad that families and loved ones drift apart with the passing of years.

Martha and friends took pictures of him when they went to Ohio and she did send me a few snap shots and also a baby picture. He was a darling baby. He looked so old and fragile, or I should frail, in the snap shots. Martha repeatedly told me what a sweet and gentle person he was. Thus ends the mystery of our sweet little uncle, Cason Howell. He passed away in Cleveland, Ohio on April 17, 1951. He and his wife Carrie Mae are at rest, side by side in Cleveland, Ohio. Hopefully we will all be reunited with him and his loved one in our glory beyond.

William Howell remained in Summit County while John and Cason were mining. I never heard of him mining or prospecting. He was in the area when Erick Erikson and his wife lived in Kokomo. He became a close friend with one of Erikson's best friends, a Henry Recene. I often recall Grandfather Erikson referring to Henry Recent. He and William Howell would slip away and fish in a private lake in Kokomo. When I was a child I spent a lot of time on Grandfather Erikson's homestead on the Anthracite and he told me so very many informative and interesting stories about his family.

William Howell once owned the popular natural hot springs resort in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. I was told that he moved to California. I understand he was

instrumental in the invention of the Bell & Howell camera. I feel that William Howell turned out to be the disappearing family mystery. I do hope that in my continuation of family research that I can find a bit about his life and what happened to him.

John Howell while yet prospecting in the Leadville area went into Denver on business. To his amazement he accidentally came in contact with his brother William who was with some Warner Brothers dignitaries. John asked him if he would take him to his home so that he could meet his wife and family. He told John "Only if he would let him dress him in a suit as he and his business partners were holding a business meeting in his home." John assured his brother if he was not presentable to meet his family and associates, he would refuse and he departed. He never saw his brother William again. How sad! John Howell was a sweet, gentle man, very humble. I had the opportunity to meet him after he left the mountains in Gunnison County Colorado.

He had ventured to Delta County Colorado and went down into the Escalante Canyon still hoping to find his gold. At that time I was staying in Olathe, Colorado with my elementary school teacher. I was then attending high school at Olathe High School. Uncle John had somehow made friends with my school teacher and one day came by to visit her before going town to his claim in the canyon. He then after a nice visit invited me, if I possibly could, to come down to his claim and visit with him. I am sure he lived a very lonely life. My sister Hilda, her husband Raymond Wardlaw and I decided one Saturday to hike down into the canyon and visit with him. He had explained the directions to me. We did hike down into the canyon and find his hide away. I should say we climbed down and what a climb it was. He lived in a dugout in the hillside. This was in 1940. He was elated to see us. He had a bed, old table and cupboard made out of apple boxes in the cabin.

Five years later I was married and lived in Somerset, Colorado. Uncle John had walked from Paonia to Somerset; he was on his way to the Anthracite to visit my Grandfather Erikson. He was going to walk there, another thirteen miles. I fed him lunch and insisted he lie on the sofa and rest until my husband came home from work and assured him that he would take him up to Grandfather Erikson's home in the car. He immediately fell asleep and he snored so hard it frightened me. He would stop breathing and then gasp to get his breath. I was afraid he was going to stop breathing and die. He was so old and frail. I wonder how many miles he had walked throughout his lifetime. That was the last time I saw my Great Uncle John Howell who had spent his life alone searching for his gold mine. He passed away in 1954 in Delta, Colorado and

now rests in the Cedar Hills Cemetery in Paonia, Colorado near his sister Myrtle (Mirdie). I so hope he wears his crown of gold in Heaven.

John Howell desiring to make a change had given his homestead to his sister Elizabeth when he decided to leave the Anthracite. Grandfather and Grandmother Erikson were very grateful. He had heard much about the beautiful Anthracite Mountains. It was about 1905 when they moved to the Anthracite. They were delighted to move to the area with green pastures and abundant water nestled in the pines. There was a small cabin there that had been built previously.

In later years when his sons were old enough to help him, Grandfather built a rustic two story log home which yet stands. There was much property for pasture. This included choice acreage which had natural ice cold springs that bubbled from beneath large rock slides. People from Gunnison and Delta counties loved to go there and camp out and picnic. The North Fork River flowed close by. Muncy Creek was accessible for household and culinary water.

Grandfather eventually traded the campground with the large pines and natural springs to the Gun and Rod Club for some more pasture property on a mesa above his home. The Gun and Rod Club built picnic tables, fire pits with grills for cooking and toilets. It was also called Erikson's Picnic Grounds and in our minds and hearts will always be. However, the Gun and Rod Club eventually dissolved and as I was once told the Forest Reserve took claim. The area with the springs has been closed off and there is a large home built down where the picnic grounds were. The Forest Reserve evidently tried to compromise by putting another picnic area up the valley near the forks of Dark Canyon. It will never be the same. It will always be the valley of my dreams. The Erikson homestead and property was one of the most admired and desired on the North Anthracite.

Edward Norris and his wife Myrtle (Mirdie) purchased property about three miles south the Erikson's homestead. Their property was very close to the banks of the North Anthracite River. There were five energetic, talented boys born to this marriage. The father first built a two room cabin on the property. They later built what they called a bunk house near the cabin for the boys to sleep in. When the sons grew to young adults, they built their own power house, which I remember as a small building, over a stream of water similar to a canal. In this was a water wheel which somehow provided power for electricity and water flow to the home. The boys later built a lovely two story home for

their parents. I had the opportunity to spend some time in this home when I was a young teenager. I have so many fond memories of Aunt Mirdie and her sons. It was in this home where I learned to cook, to clean and was taught much etiquette. Aunt Mirdie was an excellent cook and had a way of teaching not only school but the important things in life that would help me when I became a wife. I loved to polish her nice furniture and clean the floors in the new home which I admired.

The Norris brothers were very intelligent and very well taught. The majority of their education was taught to them by their mother. She taught them to play musical instruments. I recall her playing the organ. I remember the old fashioned organ in their home. The brothers each played a musical instrument and eventually had their own little musical band and played for country dances. George, the oldest son played a trombone; James Edward, the banjo; Bert, the violin; Jesse, the mandolin and Allen the guitar. They had a lady who played the piano with them; I do not recall her name. Allen had a nice voice and I loved to hear him play his guitar and sing.

The Erikson's and the Norris's lived on the riches of their productive land and resources. There was an abundance of fish from the streams; wild game such as deer and elk and wild birds such as grouse. I will always remember Aunt Mirdie's delicious garden produce, her raspberry patches and rhubarb. Her fruit cobblers and her cakes were out of this world. She always used Raleigh's condiments, her choice spices and flavors. Nor box cakes have ever excelled her cakes.

The Final Discourse of Elizabeth Erikson's and Myrtle Norris's Father James Henry Howell

James Henry Howell was born in Tennessee, 1836. Was of Welch ancestry, a Lawyer and Latin Teacher. He married Mary Angeline Heberling, about 1867. She was the daughter of Dr. James Cromley Heberling and Christine Amick. After his wife passed away in 1892 in Missouri, he with his daughters, Myrtle and Elizabeth ventured to the Colorado Mountains to be with his sons, John, Cason and William who were in the Colorado Mountains prospecting and mining for gold and minerals. Elizabeth met and married Erick Erikson; Myrtle met and married James Edward Norris. They both were working in the Summit County Mountains. They eventually ventured to the mountains in Gunnison County Colorado in the Anthracite territory; the Erikson's near the mouth of Dark Canyon. The sons continued to travel on for new adventures.

James Henry, their father settled down on the Anthracite. He was about 64 years of age at this time. He shared his remaining years with both families. He first stayed with Erikson's. He loved to work with wood building toys for the youngsters and special little things for his daughters. There was a saw mill nearby and he had access to wood. Mother said he loved the trees and even so the smell of fresh cut timber. He found a large pine tree on a little hill above Muncy Creek. He often hiked there and sat beneath the tree to meditate. He loved the sound of the rippling stream. He had expressed to the family when he passed on it was his desire to be buried beneath the big pine.

He spent much time chopping fire wood for them and he had built quite a large wood pile through the years. Mother said he had a long white beard and take the wash basin out by the wood pile and scrub his beard until it shined like silver. James Howell spent a couple of winters on the ranch alone while the Erikson's were renting in Somerset so that the children could be in school. Edward Norris would occasionally go up and check on him and would shovel the heavy snow off the flat roof. He would then spend the night with him. They would sit by the warm fire and visit in the evening. They once conversed about life after death wondering if there really was a hereafter. Edward said "I'll tell you what Howell, if I die before you do, I will come back and tell you; and if you die before me you come back and let me know." They agreed with a handshake. The following spring James Henry moved to the Norris homestead. The Erikson's continued to move around to be near the schools.

The Norris's were more settled and I am sure that James Henry Howell felt more secure with Myrtle and her family as he was getting up in the years. James Henry passed away in his daughter Myrtle's home in March of 1910. Myrtle's husband, James Edward Norris, hired a Mr. Beezley to make a coffin from some of the mountain timber. Mr. Beezley then owned the saw mill on the Anthracite that Cason Howell and another gentleman had owned. They sold it to Mr. Beezley. Elizabeth and Myrtle then lined the coffin with black satin. Erick Erikson and his friend dug a grave under the big pine tree he loved above Muncy Creek on a steep little hill. I am sure it was quite an undertaking to carry him up there. I am not sure who attended the funeral though Mother said that his daughters, Myrtle and Elizabeth, and Edward Norris sang a few hymns. They had nice voices. They sang the song that he so often sang to his grandchildren. "No more to wear, the brow of care. No more to sin or sorrow. I'm going home, I'm going home; I'm going home tomorrow. O'er yonder over the rolling river; Where the shining mansions rise. There will be my home forever, forever and eternity."

Mother said he had a beautiful voice. She remembered some of his little songs. Mr. Beezley read a few verses from the Bible. Mother said he had a nice funeral.

The following winter Edward Norris went up to the Erikson ranch to check on the home and to shovel the snow off the roof as he had done the past winters. He planned on returning to his home down the valley but a heavy snow was falling and he was forced to spend the night. He built a fire to warm the cabin up and was sitting by the stove as he and James Howell had always done before retiring. He suddenly heard a knock on the door and thought, "Now, who would be crazy enough to be out in a storm like this?" He went to the door, no one was there. He sat down again to hear another stronger knock. Again he went to the door to find no one. He was suddenly reminded of the pact that he and James had made. Now feeling very uneasy he crawled into the bed and pulled the blankets up around him only to hear a much stronger knock on the logs above his head. Edward Norris said "OK Howell, you old so and so, I really do not want to know if there is life after death."

When we were young children, my siblings and I while spending time with Grandfather Erikson would pick wild flowers and climb up the hill and decorate James Howell's grave and place little stones around it. We heard so many pleasant stories about his little man we just felt like he was a part of us. The Norris boys were my second cousins, however were to me like big brothers. They spoiled me and I will always have fond memories of them.

Erick Erikson, after moving to the Anthracite ranch worked in various places. He worked for Pete and Amil Doty, two prospector brothers who had mining claims above the Anthracite in Dark Canyon which was near Angel Pass. They were called the crazy Frenchmen. They tried to conceal their claims. Their old diggings are yet obvious. These gold prospectors will always be a legacy though there was no record of a successful vein. Perhaps they kept that hid. I recall Grandfather Erikson often talking about them.

I recall him telling about an old prospector named Bill Tanney who loved to gamble. He was trapping in the high mountains on the Anthracite. He evidently got caught in a blizzard and froze to death. When they found his body he was sitting under a big tree. His last gamble was his life.

Erick worked at various mines through the years, mainly mentioned, Somerset and Bowie. As the children were born and reaching school age there were many moves for the family. As we know Hilda and Erick Jr. were born in

Kokomo, Colorado before they moved to Anthracite. When Grandfather worked in the Somerset coal mine he rented a house in the winter in Somerset and batched there and kept his family with him during the winter. In the summer he would move Grandmother and the children back to the ranch. Grandmother then planted and took care of the garden and their animals. They had a milk cow and a few small animals. Grandfather attempted to stay on the ranch as much as he could during the summer months which I am certain was mostly on weekends. He would then usually have to walk a good 13 miles to the ranch. For a number of years there was no wagon road, only a beaten trail. He usually purchased groceries, that he could carry on his back, on a Friday evening and walk the long distance to the mountain ranch then walk back to work on Saturday. He had to be a very strong, determined and ambitious man. I cannot even visualize any man doing that in this day and age. Mother said when she was 14 years old, she would ride her horse to Somerset and do her father's laundry; he would buy the groceries and pack them on her horse with her then walk back to the ranch with her. She always took her dog Muncy with her as he would keep the coyotes and wild animals away.

One story that Mother related to me really impressed me. At the age of 14 she rode her horse to Somerset with her dog Muncy at her side. She made the trek to Somerset to do her Father's laundry. She always did the laundry and hung it out on the clothesline to dry. She decided to wash all of his clothes while he was in the mine working. She had just completed his laundry and it began to rain. All of his clothes were soaked. When he returned home from work he had to wear his suit with no shirt or socks to go to the store and buy his needed groceries to take to the ranch. In my mind I can hear him saying, "Oh Yah!" in his Swedish accent.

I now need to retrace to the birth and areas of the other five children born to Erick Erikson and Elizabeth Howell. Their third child, Anna Florence was born September 15, 1907 in Paonia, Colorado and delivered by Dr. Crawford in his home. Grandmother was staying in the home of Mrs. Tramel who was a widow. Her husband had died in the Civil War. Mother Hilda was then almost 5 years old. Their fourth child, Thelma Christine was born June 26th, 1910 in Somerset, Colorado. She was delivered by Dr. Weedon. At this time they were renting a house on Coney Island. Hilda was 8 years old and in the second grade of school. Her brother, Erick Brook, was in the first grade. Mother told me that she and her brother Erick both started their first year of school in Somerset.

When Mother was 11 years old and her brother Erick was 8 years old their parents moved to a little house on the Vidmar Place. The Vidmar Place was

above Somerset between Hawk's Nest and the Oliver. I would guess this to be six or seven miles from Somerset. This does convince me that they did move around quite a bit. Of course Grandmother was moved back to the Anthracite to their home come summer.

Their fifth child, Victor Emanuel, was born February 20, 1913 on the Vidmar Place. The Vidmar Place and Somerset were in Gunnison County. Emanuel was delivered by Dr. Hazlett. My Mother related a story to me I found to be very amusing and so different than what our children learn about in this day and age concerning the birth of babies. When Mother's brother Emanuel was born, they lived on the Vidmar Place, a little country area. Mother and her brother Erick were then attending the little country school called the "Bardine" school (I understand this little school was the first Bardine School and was built near the North Fork River and was the school that the river washed away. The second Bardine School as my research tells me was used from 1913 to 1919). One day when Mother was 11 and Erick was 8; they were coming home from school surprised to see their father walking down the road to meet them to give them the good tidings that their new baby brother had just arrived. A widow lady, Mrs. Jones was caring for their mother and baby Emanuel. She had left some blood stained linen lying in the corner. The children were troubled and frightened and wanted to know what was wrong. Their Father's quick answer was, "The stork was not going to leave you little brother, so I took the broom and took a swat at the stork. I hit his leg and made him bleed." He said he then bandaged its leg and it flew away. How time and tales have changed. I really wonder what the children thought to that story.

I am now going to highlight some of the experiences and incidents these children were challenged with while living on the Vidmar Place. The Bardine school house was a few miles from their home; they would often ice skate to school. The winters were very harsh. When they walked to school they wrapped their feet in gunny sacks to keep the frost out.

Mother Hilda loved to tell this story. She was 11 years old and her and a few of her classmates were playing hide and seek during recess. The teacher was outside. Mother slipped back into the classroom and hid under the teacher's desk. The teacher returned to the room and a young man called Blue followed her into the classroom. They were standing by the desk unaware of Mother's presence. Blue was sweet talking to the teacher and trying to woo her. He finally gave up and went outside to get on his horse and leave. The teacher followed him out. Mother hurriedly slipped into her desk chair and pulled out her book. When the teacher came back into the room she gave mother a startled

look as if to say “Where did you come from?” Amazingly Mother even remembered her name, Jessie Heuschemer. She said she was a pretty littler brunette.

During this time period Mother and her brother, Erick, were walking home from school through a field. A big bull began chasing them. They climbed on a large rock for safety. I am sure they were terrified. The bull was nibbling on grass near the rock as if he was ignoring them. As soon as they would try to slip off the rock he would come after them; back on the rock they went. The bull finally gave and wandered off.

I have an old newspaper picture of Mother Hilda, her brother Erick and their classmates with their teacher Jessie Heuschemer. This picture was taken at the Bardine School house. The classmates in the picture were the Vidmar children, Berg children, Rush children and Lloyd Beezley. Mother was 11 and Erick 8.

When Mother was 12 years old, she was again in the Somerset school and Mr. Rouk was her teacher. She would take paper dolls to school hide them in her book and play with them on the sly, pretending that she was studying. Mr. Rouk was aware of what she was doing. He waited for the right moment and caught her in the act. He made her get up in front of the class and tell the class all about each paper doll. She said she was so embarrassed. I am sure her classmates teased her for a spell. This evidently did not cure her.

She would read her geography lesson and remember it. She had such a memory it was unbelievable. She would get bored and was attracted to romance stories. She hid a romance story in her geography book and was reading it during study hour. She could not outsmart Mr. Rouk. He made her get up in front of the class and recite the geography assignment. She said it embarrassed her to know that he was aware of her manipulation and she never did this again.

Before that year ended there was a boy, Bill Angus, in her class who was a bully. He walked by Mother’s desk and spit in her ink well. The girls were seated on one side of the room and the boys on the other. Mother picked up her geography book and marched to the boy’s side of the room and whacked the bully a good one on top of the head. Mr. Rouk questioned, “Why did you do that Hilda?” Her answer, “Because he spit in my ink well.” Mr. Rouk snapped, “Hit him again Hilda!”

Mr. Rouk was an excellent teacher and one of long lasting. He was teaching school in Somerset when I was a student there. He taught music and taught my

oldest sister to play the viola, a larger version of a violin. He was a wonderful musician and we had a small school band. I think my sister, Elma, yet has her viola.

When Hilda was 13 years old her father Erick was working in the Bowie coal mine in Bowie, Colorado. Emanuel was then 2, Christine 5, Erick 10 and Anna 8 years old. They were now attending the Bowie school. Their father and mother were living with them in a rented house. Their sixth child was born in Bowie, Colorado. Ida Marie was born in December 1915. She was delivered by Dr. Bowie.

Their seventh and last child, James Henry Erikson was born in December 1917 in Bowie, Colorado; he died soon after birth. He was delivered by Dr. Bowen. Mother was then 15 years old. I understand they lived in Bowie for two years. As usual Grandmother and the children moved back to their homestead on the Anthracite in the spring when the school term ended. When they moved to Bowie they took their two cows with them and had to rent a pasture there for them. Bowie was a small country town with a few scattered farms with pastures and orchards. The cows were led behind the wagon and Mother rode her horse Nellie to Bowie. Fortunately by this time period there was a wagon road completed from the Anthracite to the Delta County areas.

Ike Taylor was the engineer and supervisor of building the roads to the Anthracite and Upper Mountain homes in the wilderness. George Norris was a young man when the roads were started and he helped to build the roads and I was told he stayed with them until they were completed. This was about 1917. His mother Myrtle Norris and another woman cooked for the road crew. Mother said she and her brother Erick were responsible for milking the cows.

Mother told me that they had to travel a distance of 18 miles to return to home on the Anthracite. She related to me an experience while they were traveling home from Bowie. Grandpa was driving a team in a lumber wagon she was riding a burro that day. There was a canal of water that ran right next to the road between Somerset and Paonia. She was wearing her favorite cloth bonnet which had blue forget-me-nots and lace trim. It had a wire brim. The wind blew it off her head into the canal and it sank. She was crushed as she could not retrieve it from the swift canal. Little things are often treasures.

Mother said her first car ride was from Bowie to Crawford, Colorado. Mr. & Mrs. Bill Bowie treated her to this honor and would you believe this is where

she was laid to rest in the Crawford Cemetery beside her little granddaughter, Patricia Ann Minerich, when she was 96 years of age.

I am now going to retrieve Mother Hilda Erikson's memories of her life while living on the Anthracite ranch. I will first highlight her pets which she loved. These animals were all a part of the Anthracite homestead. When just a small child she had a large yellow cat named Bobby. As a little girl's playmate there is nothing like a curious kitten. There was a collie dog name Muncy who was Mother's guardian angel while she was on the ranch and constantly at her side; especially if she was walking or traveling on her horse. Muncy kept the wild animals away from her and the other children.

There was a prospector up in Dark Canyon above the Anthracite searching for gold. He had a big black horse named Big John. He traveled up in the mountains on his donkey and left Big John in Mother's care. It would not let anyone except Mother ride on him. She rode him around the country side. It was one of her youthful joys. The prospector once tied it up with a rope and it accidentally hung itself. Something evidently frightened it. Mother was broken hearted as she loved Big John. She evidently had another horse as she once mentioned her horse Nellie.

Mother had a pet lamb named Patience. It followed her everywhere. It got trampled in the mud by a flock of sheep and almost died. She took it in where it was warm; cleaned it up and fed it with a bottle. Uncle Emanuel, her little brother, loved the lamb too and he got down on his knees and prayed, "Dear God don't let my lamb die." Our Heavenly Father answers the prayers of our little ones. The lamb got special care.

Then there were her three pet geese named Pet, Love and Darling and her gander she called Gandy. They took them to Somerset in the winter and back to the ranch come spring. When the geese were babies Hilda would coax her mother Elizabeth to hold one of the fluffy little goslings. Her mother would tuck the little ball of fluff inside of her dress near her bosom to keep it warm; this made Hilda happy.

Mother's Memories of Life on the Anthracite Ranch

It was Hilda's duty to milk the big jersey cow that her father Erick had brought home from the range. She soon learned that it had a powerful big kick and would kick the bucket of milk over. She soon learned to put a big milk stool between the cow's feet and the bucket so that the cow could not kick her or the

milk bucket. Notice how many times she said “Big”. She was a fourteen year old girl with big tasks and responsibilities.

Grandfather Erickson was very strict on mannerism: Yes, Please and Thank You; and much so on obedience. Hilda had a bad day at school and her mother forgot to put a spoon by her plate. She snapped at her mother, “Get me a spoon.” Her father said, “What did you say?” Her answer, “Keep your old spoon.” He went for his razor strap, she crawled under the table. He managed a couple of good wallops on her legs. A lesson to remember.

Grandfather was insistent that there be bread on the table with each meal. If Grandmother forgot he would say, “Oh Yah, get a ladder.” “Oh Yah” was one of his Swedish phrases which I will always remember. It will always be a part of Grandfather Erikson. I will always remember when he was upset he would say, “Oh Yah, Yah!”

The beautiful homestead mountains were a great and daring challenge for a young mother with six little children; so inhabited with so many dangers. My Mother Hilda related to me how during the nights the mountain lions would pace back and forth on the flat roof of their mountain cabin when she was a small child and their howl was so frightening. The family evidently adapted to this as they survived with no doctors, car or telephone; not even a wagon road for years. They had to carry their water in buckets from Muncy creek, a good block from the house, for drinking, bathing and for all household duties. For the laundry it was the round metal tub, a wash board and a clothes line. Not even so a conventional washing machine and no electricity, only kerosene lanterns and candles. Traveling to the nearest town for necessities was by walking or on horseback on a beaten path for many miles, guessing a good 18 miles and there was always the fear of wild animals. How things change through the years and this prompts me to say to our young mothers, fathers and youth of today, “Count your abundant blessings, Day by Day.”

Mother’s Memories of the Frightening Experiences on the Anthracite that Her Mother Endured

When Mother Hilda was a youngster nearing the age of five, she would wander down into the pasture and play beneath a small grove of tall pine trees. There was an old bull fenced in a pasture nearby. He somehow broke through the fence and was laying in the shade beneath the pines. Hilda was petting the seemingly docile bull and playing with curls on his forehead. I can just visualize that scene. Her mother after watching her slip off to the grove for a couple of days decided to see what drew the little girl to the grove so she

followed her. From a short distance she witnessed her little daughter playing with the curls on the bull's forehead. Before her mother could get to her, Hilda climbed a straddle upon the bull's back. The bull immediately jumped up and ran through some bushes and threw her off to the ground. Thus ended her escapades to the grove.

Mother's brother, Erick, when a young boy was attempting to wade in the North River near the bank. Hilda was with him and the river was about to carry him down stream. Mother went in and was trying to pull him out. The water was so swift it was about to take both of them downstream. Fortunately their father happened upon the scene and rescued his two little children. Had he not seen them they both would have been swept away and drowned.

Mother's cousin, Bert Norris, when a young lad crawled up in the attic of their barn to play in the hay loft. It was warm and quiet and he lay down in the hay and fell asleep. The family was running around calling out frantically, but he could not hear them. Their house was close to the North Fork River and the river was roaring from the spring runoff. His mother feared he had wandered to the river and fell in. She was hysterical and they had to hold her down as she was going to jump in the river. Her five sons were her life. One of her sons finally found him in the hay loft. I do believe our Heavenly Father watches over our little ones. Jesse another son was run over by a team of horses and a wagon when a young boy. He was in critical condition for quite a while as he had internal injuries. With much expertise, tender care from his mother and time he healed.

When Mother was fourteen years old she walked from the Anthracite ranch three miles down the canyon to the Norris home, to get her uncle, Edward Norris to take his wagon and her to Somerset to bring her father, Erick Erikson home. This was on a weekend. Grandfather frequently had severe headaches which were caused from handling the nitroglycerin used the coal mines for blasting rocks. He and Edward Norris met up with some friends for a card game; Erick and Edward were both a bit inebriated and Erick had his severe headache. They both ended up in the back of the wagon and fourteen year old Hilda had to drive them home. She had to cross the river with the wagon several times before she got them back to their homes. This was before the wagon road was fully completed and this could not have been in spring as I do not think that a man could cross that river at this time. Mother was an outstanding young woman with courage and fortitude, truly a pioneer mountain girl.

In the early spring when the heavy snows began to melt the North Fork and Muddy Rivers flowed with fury, washing out sections of roads and bridges which caused much havoc and work for the road crews. For years they were continually cleaning and rebuilding.

It was decided that many families who were now living in the North Anthracite needed a new school after suffering so much inconvenience with their children during the winter months. Dwight Bennett had purchased property on the Layton Ranch from Jesse Beezley and he donated this for a new school house. This property was between the Erikson and the Norris homesteads. A new school was built on the Bennett place in 1922. George Norris was hired to help build the school. It was named the Hill Billy Academy. It was a small building, however large enough to accommodate the students. George Norris's mother, Myrtle, taught Anthracite students between the closing of the Bardine School and the opening of the new Hill Billy Academy School. Mother Hilda Erikson's cousin, George Norris, described the eighth grade graduation at the Hill Billy Academy in the spring of 1928 as a joyful all day celebration that lasted almost until dawn.

The graduation began with a hearty picnic at Erikson's Springs. The majority of the families in the area attended; even people from Somerset and Paonia attended. It turned out to be a great social with greetings and visiting; much fun and laughter. They danced on the big sturdy bridge that spans the North Fork River which was very near to the Erikson's homestead. They had the Norris's and Erikson's old fashioned phonographs and Uncle Edward Norris played his violin.

They presented the students with their diplomas on the bridge. They enjoyed the moon and stars at this event and I am sure it created treasured memories. I can certainly relate to this experience as when in my youth my siblings and I played on that bridge often when we were visiting Grandfather Erikson. In the summers we would cling to the bridge railings and stare down at the river. It gave us the illusion that the bridge was traveling down the river with us. I am wondering if the bridge at that time had sturdy railings and I am surprised that someone did not end up in the river. The youth in that era must have been more mature and self protecting to have danced by the light of the moon and not gone overboard on that bridge. I don't know that I would trust my grandchildren to spend the night dance on the bridge by the light of the moon.

When I was a child and spent time in Aunty Norris's home, I had the pleasure of playing her old fashioned record player. It was quite ornate and to me pretty. One had to keep it wound up to keep the music going.

The Erikson children who attended the Hill Billy School were Christine, Anna and Emanuel. Emanuel was the only one who graduated from Hill Billy Academy. The Norris children were: Burt, Jesse and Allen. Edward Jr., Anna and Theodore Valin also attended. The Hill Billy Academy closed in 1928.

Mother's sister, Anna, as a young girl on the ranch had pneumonia and was very ill with no access to a doctor. Her mother Elizabeth and Aunt Myrtle Norris nursed her to recovery because of the medical knowledge they learned from the Grandfather Dr. James Cromley Heberling when they were young girls.

When Mother Hilda was on the ranch on the Anthracite with her mother in the summer months; she spent quite a bit of time playing with her cousins, the Norris boys. I am sure she and her brother Erick walked down to the Norris homestead which was about three miles south of the Erikson ranch. She told me she was a naughty little girl and the boys could not get the best of her. She would slip a leaf in her mouth and chew it. She then convinced the boys she was chewing snuff and would trick them into chewing snuff. They would get so sick they would have to go to bed. I just imagine it was George and Edward as the other boys were quite a bit young than her. She would sing to George: "Georgy Porgy pudding pie kissed the girls and made them cry. When the boys came out to play, Georgy Porgy ran away." She and George would then fight and George's mother would make Mother sit in the house and cut carpet rags. She once fed George some hot pepper sauce and she received a good spanking. It is difficult for me to feature my Mother as a mischievous; naughty child as throughout my life I only witnessed her as a sweet loving person. I guess as she aged and raised twelve children, her trials and hardships tamed her down and humbled her.

Mother said that Uncle Edward Norris called her Skelly. She really liked him as he seemed to relate to the little ones. He would often come home a bit intoxicated and would get down on the floor and play horse with them. He, of course, was the horse and they would climb on his back and he would buck them off. They would laugh and have a great time. They could not understand why Aunt Myrtle would get so upset and angry.

There was a period of time that the Norris family lived in Somerset. This was before they moved to the mountains to homestead. Grandfather Erikson and his

family also lived in Somerset. Edward worked as a pit boss in the Somerset mine. He soon worked up to master mechanic and worked in the outside mine shop. Mother said he was a very intelligent person. He also was the town sheriff at that time. She related how he could play the violin. She said he could make it talk. I am sure that the five Norris brothers inherited talents from both their Mother and Father. I do know they were very talented in electronics and building as well as music.

When the Erikson's lived in Somerset, Mother, at the of fifteen, taught Sunday school in the little Mormon Church which was held in the Somerset School house. Grandmother Erikson played the piano and helped to lead the singing.

Grandmother Erikson, Hilda's mother, also played for dances which were also held in the Somerset school house in the recreation hall. Grandfather Erikson spent his time in the basement of the school house playing cards with some of his friends. Mother often told me that her mother had a beautiful voice and she often sang as she did her house work.

When Mother was living in Bowie, Colorado she started her first year of high school in Paonia. As I remember, Mother said they spent two years in Bowie. Mother rode a passenger train from Bowie to Paonia daily to attend high school. The train traveled from Grand Junction to Somerset, Colorado. Mr. & Mrs. Chillcoat were baggage tenders on the train. They lived in Somerset. Mrs. Chillcoat gave mother guitar lessons for a short time and Mother did her ironing in order to pay for the lessons. A secret admirer had given mother the guitar and he later tried to make advances to her. She was so angry that she deliberately sat on the guitar and smashed it. The end of the guitar lessons.

Grandmother Erikson gave birth to her last two children while they were in Bowie. Ida Marie was born in December of 1915 and James Henry was born in 1917, he died shortly after birth.

Soon after this Erick and Elizabeth moved back to Somerset. They then lived in the Terraces. The Terraces were then what we would now call apartments. This is where Mother met our Father, John Minerich. Grandmother Elizabeth left Grandfather when Mother Hilda was sixteen years old. She went to work in a book store in Paonia, Colorado and boarded with Mrs. Tramel. Mother then moved in with her mother and Mrs. Tramel. Mother stayed with them in the winters until she graduated from high school. She stayed on the ranch with her siblings during the summer. She graduated from Paonia High School when she was seventeen. I was never told the reason why Grandmother left Grandfather Erickson, though reasoning tells me that she could no longer endure the isolated

living in the wilderness during the summers, the loneliness and hardships and the burden of the stress she had endured for so many years of moving back and forth for the children's schooling. I do know that it broke Mother's heart and she just would not talker about it

I was once told that Emanuel excelled in mathematics while in high school. He like his cousins, the Norris brothers, was very intelligent in electronics, building and engineering. Construction was a natural with him. When he finished his schooling, he joined the Army. He then worked on several dams. I think one was the Hoover Dam. There was one in Colorado and I cannot remember where it was. Allen Norris took my sister Hilda and me up there to see him when he was working there. I do remember that he worked on the Panama Canal when it was being constructed.

After Emanuel's sisters and brother married and started their own families, he left the construction jobs and returned to Colorado to care for his father Erick. He went to work at the Oliver Mine and had his father there with him. Grandfather was aging and shortly began to fail rapidly. Mother and Sister Elma offered to take care of him so that Emanuel could return to his vocation. He was needed for more construction work. Also he realized that his father needed to be near a doctor's care and medical facilities. Emanuel and his brother Erick then build a little one room cabin with a bathroom next to Mother and Father's home on the farm in Paonia, Colorado so that Grandfather could have some privacy. With Mother and Sister Elma he would get good care. Elma and her family, Bill Wienning and children lived about four blocks from Mother's home. She came every morning to bathe Grandfather. He would sit by the window each morning and watch for Elma. He would say to Mother, "Yah! I wonder when Tiny is coming to bathe me?" Tiny of course was her nickname. She always brought her little six year old daughter with her. Elma told me that Ellie loved the Little Golden Books. After his bath, Grandfather would always slip little Ellie a quarter to buy herself another book. He was pleased that she was buying books as he told her mother, "It is a good thing that she likes to read." Ellie is now a retired school teacher, a beautiful, sweet young mother with children and grandchildren of her own and may I add she was rewarded with a fine husband.

Grandfather Erick Erikson passed away on October 24, 1954 in his little cabin on Hilda and John's farm in Paonia, Colorado. He was then eighty years old. He was laid to rest in the Cedar Hills Cemetery in Paonia, Colorado on October 29, 1954. His funeral was held at Taylor's Funeral Home in Paonia, Colorado.

I recall his funeral sermon was on “Keep Your Heavenly Citizenship in Mind: Philippians: 3:20-40.”

Grandmother Erikson passed away in Chicago, Illinois on February 2, 1936 from tuberculosis of the spine. Doctors performed back surgery on her thinking that she had a disk problem finding during the surgery that her spine was destroyed from tuberculosis. She passed away soon after the surgery. It was her previous request that she be cremated. I was told her ashes were in an urn in a church in Chicago. She passed away at the age of forty nine. Calculating Ida's birth at time Ida had to be nineteen years old when her mother died.

Ida and I had corresponded for years and she traveled to Carbon County to visit with her brother Emanuel and his wife Clea. I was blessed to spend some treasured time with her, this was in 1960. She was then living in California. Her daughter also lived in California. She tried to talk Junior and me into moving to California. Junior's work was here and he had no special vocation. We had to stay with the coal mining which was a good living for us and we had two children to put through school. I feel bad that we never heard from her again. She could be alive as she would now be ninety six years of age, the age my mother was when she passed away. I have tried to find her with no luck; though I am going to continue searching as I would love to get acquainted with her daughter. I doubt much that Ida is alive.

After our father, John Evon Minerich passed away mother remained on the farm for about eleven years with the exception of various travels and visits enjoyed with some of her children.

Brother Robert and his pilot flew him and Mom over New York City. I am sure that for her that was an exhilarating experience. Bill and Thera took her on a cruise to Hawaii. Robert ventured to Florida on an ocean fishing expedition, taking mother with him so that she could stay with and visit with the sister-in-law while he played with the big fish. Robert was always very fond and so very protective of his mother. He recognized and appreciated the many sacrifices and hard work she endured by being a caring and loving mother while raising twelve children. He was determined to fill the remaining years of her life with joy, adventure and peace of mind. All of Mother's children loved and appreciated her, as did Robert, the best they knew how and tried to bring her happiness.

Shortly after Father's death Mother went into a state of depression. I went to Colorado and spent ten days with her. Brother Keith insisted she and I take our first ride on his snow mobile. We did, what fun even though we were flipped

off in the deep snow. She had some sing along phonograph records; I put them on the phonograph and we sang and laughed for several days. Our voices and performances were more funny than good but regardless we sang and laughed. The togetherness was enjoyed. I felt good to return to my family in Utah as I sensed that she was beginning to regain her peaceful, happy spirit.

Mother was truly blessed as she was surrounded by children who so loved her and were always there for her. Sister Elma Wienning and her family lived near and she was so dedicated to watch over and care for Mother. Brothers John, Paul, Keith and Daniel had built their homes on the farm surrounding Mother and Father. They were there to comfort, love and entertain Mother. Hilda and Bob Bauwens lived in Paonia. Thera and Bill Sandburg lived in Montrose an hour's drive away. They often drove to Paonia and took Mother to church and out to dinner. Thera often went to the farm and cleaned Mother's house.

I express my love and appreciation for my dear sister Hilda and her husband Bob. They eventually moved their travel trailer out on the farm and she took care of Mother as her husband was doing construction work for Brother Robert and was away from home for long periods of time. She stayed with Mother until she moved to Arizona. Mother had heart problems and the Doctor, after tests, came to the conclusion that she was not getting enough oxygen to the brain and she would be better off in a lower altitude. Robert had come to Colorado to spend her 84th birthday with her and he then decided he was going to take her to Arizona to live where the altitude was such lower and the winters much warmer. This was the last birthday she was to spend of the farm. Robert's children were living in Mesa, Arizona. His son Robbie was attending college there and Robbie and Mike both had jobs there. Mother stayed with them.

Ten months later Bill and Thera were living in their travel trailer in a parking lot in Mesa. Bill was working in Arizona. Mother stayed in the trailer for a short time as Robert was making plans to have a new home built in Sun Lake for her. Thera and Robert took Mother to the home show office in Sun Lakes and let her choose the model home she desired. Mother lived with Robert's children and Thera and Bill until her new home was completed. Thera related to me that Mother moved into her new home in 1987 and she spent her 85th birthday in her new home in Sun Lakes, Arizona on March 17, 1987. It seems almost impossible that they could complete such a nice home in one year. Brother Franklin prepared Mother's birthday dinner, Frank was a great cook. Thera and Bill returned to Montrose. Brother Franklin took Mother to choose new furniture for her home. Thera said she bought new furniture to completely

furnish her new home. As I recall, Erick and Maxine were staying with Mother at this time. Mother's home was truly beautiful. Her choices were great. Her home was landscaped and safely guarded by security.

Mother loved her home she was truly in her glory. I can yet see her sitting in her big wicker chair in her bedroom reading her Louis Lamour novels while the warm sunshine drifted in through her bedroom patio doors surrounding her in a security blanket of warmth. I can envision her green lawn and beautiful rose garden with a large decorative water fountain and I think no one deserved this haven more than did she.

How blessed she was to have never been placed in a rest home. My sisters Thera, Elma and I took turns caring for her in Arizona. Sister Hilda previously had a stroke in Colorado where she lived and could not share this mission. She spent about thirteen years in a wheel chair.

Erick and Maxine occasionally stayed with Mother and cared for her. She did get excellent care and an abundance of love and companionship. Erick and Maxine purchased a home in Sun Lakes next to Mother's home. Brother John and Amelia sold their home on the farm in Colorado and purchased a home in Sun Lakes, Arizona. Brother Robert and his wife Gwen had lived in Richmond, Kentucky for some time. Robert had established his micro-tower business in Richmond and purchased a lot of property and built his home and life interests in Richmond years previous. Gwen's family all live in Kentucky. Brother Keith and his family and Brother Frank and his family settled in Richmond, Kentucky.

Mother enjoyed three years in her new home in Arizona before she reached her ninetieth birthday. This was in 1992. Robert honored her with a very special birthday party. He reserved an elite dinner club in Scottsdale, Arizona. As I remember, there was a three tiered beautifully decorated birthday cake. The majority of her family and friends enjoyed her birthday. Bob hired a professional photographer who took many pictures of Mother and her families. He had a young man there who sang her favorite son to her – "Oh Danny Boy." She was elated. I do hope Danny keeps this in his mind and heart as to how much she did love him.

In July of 1992 Robert flew to Arizona and took Mother, Junior and I back to Kentucky with him. I had make a commitment to go to Kentucky with Mother and care for her for a time so that Robert and his family could spend some valued time with her before her demise. Junior was always there to support me.

I will always be grateful to Robert and to our Heavenly Father for that opportunity. As Junior said, that was the most enjoyable year of his life. I too, will admit it was wonderful experience. I feel blessed that I had that opportunity to share that time with my dear Mother and with Brother Bob and his family. It was like being on a vacation in another world even though I missed my family, my children and grandchildren here in Utah. Bob raised show cattle and Junior got to help with the cattle and go to the cattle shows and auctions. He loved to ride the four wheelers, and run Bob's big Labrador dogs. He fished in the ponds and helped in the tobacco fields. Actually, he just loved the farms and visiting with Bob's hired men. Junior was always on the go and there were many places to go and interesting things to do in Kentucky.

Bob had placed Mother, Junior and I in a big beautiful house furnished with our necessities. There was a large glass sun porch on the back facing a little hill. There was a bird house, trees, grass and many beautiful flowers. There were many red cardinal birds which Mother loved to watch. There were squirrels that occasionally raided the bird feeders. We usually ate our breakfast in the sun porch and enjoyed the miracles of nature. Bob occasionally took Mother to town for lunch and then for a ride in Kentucky.

Bob once told me that if I would stay in Kentucky and take care of Mother until she passed away, he would give us the house we were staying in. As much as I loved Kentucky and loved the house and hated to leave my dear Mother, I could not give up my children and grandchildren. I often felt my need at home, however, so humble it may be.

We enjoyed a beautiful Christmas in 1992 in Kentucky. Junior and the hired men hung lights on the big house we were in. It was so decorated and also the lawn with lit up deer ornaments. We had a Christmas party at our house Christmas Eve with Bob's family and one of his hired men and his wife and two little children. I yet have a picture of Mother hanging decorations on the Christmas tree. Mother had such a beautiful spirit and was so easy and joyful to care for; she was truly an earth angel.

The following March 17, 1993, we celebrated Mother's 91st birthday in Richmond, Kentucky. Bob and Gwen honored her with a huge beautiful cake, beautiful flowers and many gifts. Family and Friends enjoyed another joyous birthday with our dear little Mother.

Several months later, it was May of June of 1993 Robert, Mother Junior and I flew back to Arizona to her little home in Sun Lakes. Robert had opened a meat market in Arizona selling fresh prime beef from his cattle ranches in

Kentucky. He hired Sister Thera's husband Bill to manage the store for him, thus they moved in with Mother and this allowed Junior and me to return to Utah to be with our family. Mother then remained in her home in Arizona for four years where she had the opportunity to spend time with John and Amelia and families, Erick and Maxine and their families, Elma and her family and occasionally me and my family. There were other children in Colorado who could travel to see her and occasionally did. She had so many grandchildren who loved her and often traveled to see her. During the four years Thera and Bill, Maxine and Erick and Sister Elma in rotation cared for Mother.

In July of 1997 Brother Bob decided to take Mother back to Kentucky to spend her remaining years. Thera and Bill consented to go with her and care for her. Bob placed them on one of his farms in a nice home that was fully furnished. They were blessed to spend time with Mother on the farm for two years. I am sure those years will always be treasured by them. Mother's health was rapidly failing. Thera told me that she had to use a cane for three years as she had fallen numerous times but surprisingly had no broken bones. She was also hospitalized with pneumonia the last year. Mother was truly a strong, determined, enduring person. On December 6, 1998 our dear Mother had a massive stroke and was immediately hospitalized. She lived on life support for fifteen days. She passed away December 21, 1998 in the Richmond Kentucky Hospital at the age of ninety six.

Brother Robert and his friend Yuel Cobb flew back to Paonia, Colorado with her. She was laid to rest by her husband and soul mate, John Evon Minerich, and her little granddaughter Patricia Minerich in the Garden of Memories in Crawford, Colorado on December 26, 1998.

In my mind's eye she is in her Celestial rose garden plucking roses. There are so many beautiful things I could say about my Mother, though I feel that the eulogy given by our daughter Judy is the perfect ending for the history of my Mother's life.

I love you, Mother for all time and eternity.
Your daughter,
Joan Minerich Lemon

December 26 1998

Eulogy given by Judy Andra

Granddaughter of Hilda Minerich and daughter of Joan and EJ Lemon

Our Mother, Our Dear Grandmother, Hilda Erikson Minerich was the eldest child of 7 children born to Christina Elizabeth Howell and Erick Erikson. Erick came to America from Sweden when a young man with his cousin Erick Valin.

He and his wife homesteaded in the beautiful Colorado Rockies on the Anthracite. Hilda attended school in her earlier ear at Bardine, a little country school about 4 miles from their home. She and her brother rode a horse to school and often ice skated to school on the Anthracite River, though their parents opposed this. Her childhood spent in the Colorado Mountains was truly of Pioneer style, very colorful, along with many inconveniences and hardships.

She later attended school in Somerset and Bowie. She graduated from elementary school in the little Bowie school house, which now stands as a historical monument in Paonia. She graduated from Paonia High School at the age of 18 years. She had a very brilliant mind and excelled in literature and oration. Because of her excellence in journalism and a story she wrote and entered in a school contest, she was offered a scholarship to attend BYU in Provo, Utah. However, she chose to elope and marry her sweetheart, our dear father and Grandfather John Minerich.

Grandmother had a photo static memory, even so at the age of 90 years she remembered the names of her school teachers. She remembered her 1st day at school, her blue dress with white stripes and her pink pencil. She remembered poetry she had memorized in grade school and high school. She had recited many of these poems at school functions. One of her greatest pleasures as she grew older was to recite poems to her children.

My mother had the opportunity and blessing to spend quality time with Grandma in her later years and she says, "My fondest memories were the hours I spent with my dear little Mother reminiscing important family history to be implanted in my mind and heart that I may pass it on to my offspring and other family members. This has been one of the greatest gifts she could give to me."

My mother wrote down everything Grandma told her, including some of her poetry. Mother plans on writing Grandma's life history. Mother now has a book with Grandma's poems one of which went:

*I dream tonight of the sweet Anthracite
Which flows through a valley of dreams.*

Grandma loved to read and yet in her 90s read numerous books. This was truly a blessing, as reading brought much peace of mind and contentment to her. She loved Louis Lamour books.

She has always been a very reserved, loving, peaceful person. She lost her mother at a very young age and thus was the mother figure to her brothers and sisters. Grandma married John Evon Minerich, December the 4th, 1920. They lived in Somerset, Colorado until 1934. Grandpa then purchased his little farm on Lamborn Mesa.

Her life was truly a dedication to motherhood. Her children and grandchildren were her life. She had no time for socializing. They raised 12 children.

As my mother, Joan, related to me "Think about it". One day for laundry, and for years done on the wash board. I can yet see the bushel basket full of dampened clothes, rolled neatly, to be ironed. One day a week for baking 13 loaves of bread to be kneaded and baked.

"I can yet smell the aroma of her cinnamon rolls" says my Mother. The endless meals to be cooked. Standing over the hot stove bottling fruit and vegetables. These were truly labors of love and though her trials and hardships were many our precious mother and grandmother never complained.

She was a pillar of strength and a steadfast rock of love, wisdom and courage to her husband, children and grandchildren. She was a gentle, kind, unselfish person who touched the lives of many.

Though her home lacked much of the material things, it was always filled with love and laughter. It was always open to many friends who love to spend time there.

The greatest impression Mother and Grandmother left her children was to always be a good example. She was so Christ like, never spoke evil of anyone. If you were to belittle someone in her presence, she would immediately obliterate the remark by saying something very nice about that person. We all felt her sweet and powerful influence for goodness.

We hear much about angels in this generation and it is the belief of many people that each of us has a guardian angel from on high. I am sure our Mother and Grandmother had a Heavenly angel to help her through her many

trials and tribulations, however, Grandma was an exception for she also had an earth angel who took over when our Grandfather passed on. He was always aware of her needs and pleasures. He provided a home for her in Arizona where the lower altitude and warmer climate was kinder to her heart condition. We all realize this extended her life by many years. He took time to pay her many visits. He was not too proud to say I Love you Mother, not embarrassed to embrace her in public, or to take her by the hand and walk with her. She loved roses, he sent her many roses. He made a vow to her that she would never be put in a rest home and with the support of other earthly angels in the family was able to fulfill this promise. I teach Old Testament classes every Sunday at a rest home to these wonderful elderly men and women and I Thank God everyday that my Grandma did not have to be put in a rest home. We love you Robert for making it possible to have our Mother and Grandmother with us for so many more years.

Another earthly angel – Aunt Thera who has spent the last 5 years serving Grandma and enabling us to have more time with Grandma. We love you Thera.

Grandma's life was truly enriched by her 12 children, many grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was never alone nor lonely. She gave much and from her offspring received many blessings, which brought her much joy.

We are all shedding tears and feeling pain today – you cannot love the way we love her and not be hurting. We were so blessed to have shared her beautiful spirit. We will never forget the love she shared with each of us, the impact that she made on everyone of us and the beautiful memories that she implanted in our hearts. These memories will be tranquilizers for our minds that should help us with the aching and pain we are feeling right now. She was our Heavenly connection.

I know that she has a special place in Heaven, which will meet all of her needs. I know her heavenly home will be filled with children, laughter, roses and her loved ones who preceded her.

We will miss our Dear Mother and Grandmother so much. She will live in our hearts forever. I pray that we can honor her legacy by applying to our lives the true, honorable, pure, lovely gracious wisdom that she always lived.

May we find peace and joy in knowing she is now with our Father in Heaven. I know Heavenly Father said “Well done my Precious Daughter of God – you have been faithful in all of your callings.”

If Mother and Grandmother could speak to each of us now, I am sure she would say, "My dear loved ones, be grateful for your abundant blessings, love one another as our Father in Heaven loves each of us and love one another as your Father and I love you."

To the end. She loved us to the end.

I am sure that you asking yourselves "Why her? Why now?"

I can only say with Ralph Waldo Emerson, "All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."

One writer put it this way. "In a beautiful blue lagoon on a clear day, a fine sailing ship spreads its brilliant white canvas in a fresh morning breeze and sails out to the open sea. We watch her glide away magnificently through the deep blue and gradually see her grow smaller and smaller as she nears the horizon. Finally, where the sea and sky meet, she slips silently from sight; and someone near me says, "There, she is gone!"

Gone where? Gone from sight – that is all. She is still as large in mast and hull and sail, still just as able to bear her load. And we can be sure that, just as we say, "There she is gone, another says, There, she comes."

Help us, who are here Children and Grandchildren to draw near to each other now and near to her and through her, nearer to our Heavenly Father I pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

North Fork Medical Clinic

Woodrow E. Brown, M.D., F.A.A.F.P.
Don N. Ridgway, M.D., F.A.A.F.P.
Diplomate American Board Family Practice

January 10, 1978

Dear Joan,

Here is the history on your mother that I thought you would be interested in having.

Patient has no complaints at all. She gives a long history of tuberculosis in her mother's ancestry, especially on the maternal grandfather. These people lived in Scandinavia and there were many, many deaths in the family from tuberculosis. The patient's mother had tuberculosis of the spine and died at age 49. The patient's own father died at age 84 apparently of old age and was apparently free of tuberculosis. The patient developed tuberculosis in about 1921 and was ill until about 1927. She had severe lung hemorrhage in 1926. During these six years she bore three daughters and one son. The family moved from Wisconsin in 1921 because of the patient's health. She was treated with eggs and cresote and apparently made a very satisfactory recovery although the history states that she had a scarred right lung. The patient had 12 children and tuberculosis has only been found in the fourth child which was a boy and who developed it while he was in the service. Has been treated and is now recovered.

Sincerely,



W. E. Brown, M.D.
WEB:vm

Paonia, Colorado 81428
Box 47
(303) 527-4103

Hotchkiss, Colorado 81419
Box 578
(303) 872-3121

A Prelude to Mother Hilda's Quotes
Segments of Poetry She Learned As A Child and Remembered at
The Age of Ninety Years

Our Mother Hilda Erikson Minerich had a photo static memory. At the age of ninety years, she remembered things and events of her early childhood, events and names of teachers and associates, portions of poems she memorized as a child. She was a great orator and gave many readings throughout her school years, starting at a very early age she memorized "Chanatas Anatopisis" poem in one evening and recited it to her class the following day. She amazed her teacher Mrs. Crawford. She amazed me when I was caring for her when she was in her early ninety's. She lived to be ninety six years of age and her mind was yet flashing back to her past life. I loved it and am so grateful that I listened and put everything she shared with me on paper. I so pray that my siblings will love and appreciate and enjoy her memories as I have cherished them. She even so remembered the dress she wore on her first day of school. Her dress was blue and her pencil pink.

At the Age of Six, Her First Poem

Little White Lilly, Sat by a Stone
Watching and Waiting Until the Sun Shone

She said she could read when she was in the second grade. One of her greatest pleasures when she was married and raising her twelve children was occasionally reciting her remembered poetry and stories to her children. She loves to relate stories about her childhood. It became one of my greatest joys, appreciation and admiration of a precious, brilliant and dedicated mother.

Mother's Poems

I laid my head to the strawberry bed, to hear
What the red cheeked berry said.
Be good little Girl, Be good.

~~

I remember, I remember
The little house where I was born
The little window where the sun came peeping in the morn.

~~

If whenever you're in doubt,
Don't fuss and pout,
Just pick it up and throw it out!

~~

Briar Roses' mother, spoke to Briar Rose
You sit at neither spinning wheel or loom
You never wash the dishes you will not touch the broom
What will become of my child?
The Lord Almighty knows.

~~

Oh Moon, have you done something in Heaven
That God has hidden your face?
I hope if you have, you soon will be forgiven
And shine again in your place.

~~

An Epitaph
Here lies Deborah Bent
She kicked up her heels and away she went.
(And Mother adds with a chuckle,
And here lies Hilda, old and bent,
She kicked up her heels and away she went.
My comment, "Oh Mother!")

~~

And in the Valley's depth
The river leaped and roared aloud
And tossed its mane of spray
And hushed again its voice
To a softly splashing croon
At dark it rolled beneath the sun,
And white beneath the moon

~~

Trust him not, oh gentle Lady
Though his voice be low and sweet
And he's kneeling at your feet.

~~

I stood beside a running stream
And watched the water flow
I thought about him so much
A long, long ago.

~~

Mother Dear, the years have been long since last
I list your lullaby song, turn backward turn backward
Oh time in your flight
Make me a child again
If just for the night

~~

When all is calm and still
And evening shadows lore,
There will be someone
Knocking at my chamber door
You will hear, Joan my dear
Your Mother's here.

~~

Mother, Mother may I go out to swim?
Yes, my darling daughter
Hang your clothes on a hickory limb
And don't go near that water.

~~

Little drops of water
Little grains of sand
Make the might ocean
And the beauteous land
And the little moments
Humble though they be,
Make the mighty ages of Eternity.

~~

Let's take a trip
On memories ship
Back to the bye gone days
Let's look and see
There's just you and me
A couple of Kids once more

~~

Drifting apart, drifting apart
Snapping the cords that are bound by the heart
And yet as I see you
Day after day
I know and I feel you
Drifting away

~~

I stood beside a running stream
To watch the waters flow
As we together watch them
So many years ago
The sun was in its zenith
The April grass was wet
Ah folly to remember
Tis wiser to forget

~~

The day is done, the darkness falls,
From the wings of the night
As a feather is wafted downward
From an Eagle in its flight,
I see the lights of the village gleam
Through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of longing comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist,
A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain

~~

Talk to me only with thine eyes,
And let me pledge with mine

~~

Darkness is falling fast over the lea
Casting its shadows over you and me,
Far, far away beyond the starlit sky,
That is where the love light
Will never, never die

~~

Putting on the style
Putting on the agony
Putting on the style
That's what people are doing
When I look around me
Something makes me smile
To see so many people putting on the style

~~

When I was a little boy, about so high,
Mamma took a little switch and made me cry
Now I'm a big boy and Mamma couldn't do it
Papa took a big stick and hopped right to it.

~~

Johnny Jump Up and his little sister Violet Blue
Played tennis in the forest
All the spring time through

~~

There is a little bit of good in the worst of us.
A little bit of bad in the best of us,
So it doesn't behoove the best of us
To talk about the rest of us

~~

I dream tonight of sweet Anthracite
That flows through a valley of dreams
(Written by Mother)

~~

Blessing on thee, little man
With the turned up pantaloons
And thy merry whistled tunes
From my heart I give thee joy
For I once was a bare foot boy

~~

There swelled a miller hale and bold
Besides the river Dee
And this the burden of his song,
Forever used to be,
I envy nobody, nobody I
Nobody envies me.

~~

Morpheus the God of sleep
Reaches out to pull me under
That time is always drawing near
Let no man put asunder.

~~

Peace cannot be over argument
Whichever stirs up strife
A sunset needs no words
To prove its beauty

Mother gave this poem at a Christmas program at school when she was sixteen years old. I would love to find the rest of this poem.

The saddest words of tongue or pen
Are those who say
It might have been.

~~

There is many a slip
Twixt the cup
And the lip

~~

Beauty is as beauty acts
Where love is, there is nothing lax

~~

From my study I see by lamplight
Descending the broad oak stairs
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra
And Edith with golden hair
A whisper and a silence
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are planning and plotting together
To take me by surprise
A sudden rush from the stairway
A sudden raid from the hall
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall.

~~

This is the day we give babies away
For a half of pound of tea,
This is the day we give babies away
With a written guarantee
There's a long trail that's winding
Into the land of my dreams
Where the nightingale's singing
And a white moon beams.

~~

I love to sport and I love to glee
I feel as young as I used to be

In 1994 when Mother was ninety four years old she would say to me

Oh boy! Oh Joy!

Where do we go from here?

(Now you know dear Mother)

~~

Mother's Poems and Inspirations

Mother was lying down. Thera and I thought she was asleep. She came into the living room stating she could not go to sleep as her mind just took over her body and all she could do was think. We questioned her as to what she was thinking about. She began to quote a poem she learned when she was about fifteen years old. She could not remember the title, though quoted this:

Come read to me some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe these restless feelings and banish the thoughts away,
But read some simple poet
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer
Or tears from the eyelids start
Then cares that infest the day
Shall fold its wings, as an Eagle
And silently fly away

September 12, 1993 while we were in Kentucky with Mother I awakened about midnight to hear mother talking. I slept in the same bedroom with her so that I could watch over her. I questioned "Are you OK Mother?" Her reply was "Do you hear music Joan? Did you leave the radio or TV on?" I listened, I could not hear music. I went into the living room, all was well. I tried to assure her there was no music on. She insisted that she could hear music and that a man was talking to her. "What did he say?" I questioned. Her reply, "He said 'Now listen, my dear, very carefully, for this message cannot be paraphrased.'" She then asked me what paraphrased meant. I told her I was not sure. I said, "Mother, listen closely and get that message, it is important. I will find out tomorrow." She replied "No, I am tired I am going to go to sleep." She rolled over and went to sleep. I slipped out of bed, went to the living room, got a pen and paper and wrote this all down as I was afraid I would forget. I looked paraphrased up in the dictionary and it said something that cannot be repeated. I will always wonder who the messenger was and what that message was. Mother had told me of various

spiritual manifestations she had experienced through her life. Mother was very close to the spirit world.

I now close with Mother's poems by adding to this one of her very favorite poems written by Lloyd Lytton.

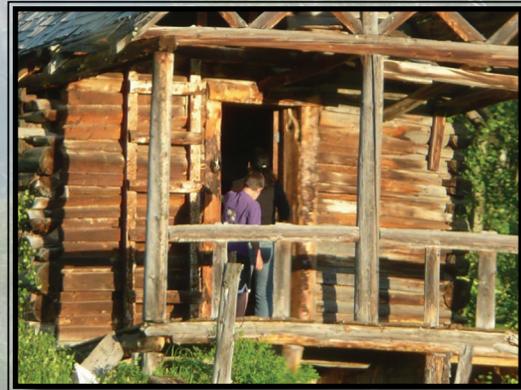
This is very significant to me. Mother as she aged hated to bath. It was so difficult. Thus Thera and I would sit her on a stool and put our bathing suits on and get in the shower and bathe her. She would cry and fight us. She would then suddenly calm down and quietly sing a song in a foreign language. It was if an angel had touched her or spoken to her. She was as sweet and gentle as a babe. I truly believe she was talking and singing in tongues as she knew no foreign languages. She was once talking the language at the table. Tiny asked her who she was talking to and she said, "Never mind, she is talking to me." Thus Tiny and Thera were both witnesses to this and I'm sure we will always wonder.

THERE IS NO DEAD

There is no death, the dust we tread,
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit
Or rainbow tinted flowers
And even hear us though unseen
The dear immortal spirits tread
For all the boundless universe is life
There are no dead

Mother clipped this poem out of a paper and sent it to me years ago when she and Dad lived on the farm in Paonia.

FAMILY PHOTOS



JOHN E.
JUNE 29, 1896
MAY 13, 1973

HILDA O.
MARCH 17, 1902
DECEMBER 21, 1998

*Mother and Father: With love in your heart you always took time
to share your feelings while mending ours.
These memories we have will endure forever.
Thank God for you and the times we treasured.*





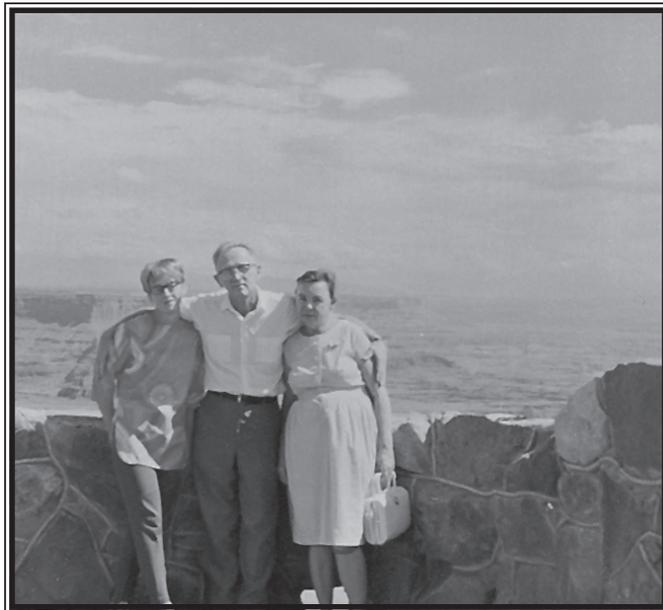
John and Hilda Minerich



Dad's Father Matt Minerich, Mother Josephine Wolf Minerich,
With Daughter Evelyn Minerich



Son John and wife Hilda



Left: Joan Lemon with Mark and wife
Evelyn Bradford



This picture is my father John Evon Minerich's Sister Evelyn, and her husband Tomisslovic, he was killed by the Germans in the World War I.

Her sister Mary married a gentleman by the name of Abdulla Grcic who was also killed in the same war. Their older sister Sophie died when she was thirty two years of age. She was married and the mother of three daughters.

Mary and Evelyn never remarried. They are both deceased.

Sophie's husband Joe Mihelcic, a Slovenian gentleman; his three daughters came to America and settled in Seattle Washington.



Left to Right: Grandfather Erick Erikson, Daughter Hilda Erikson, son Erick Erikson Jr. and wife Elizabeth Howell Erikson



Hilda Erikson with her baby sister, Ida Marie Erikson



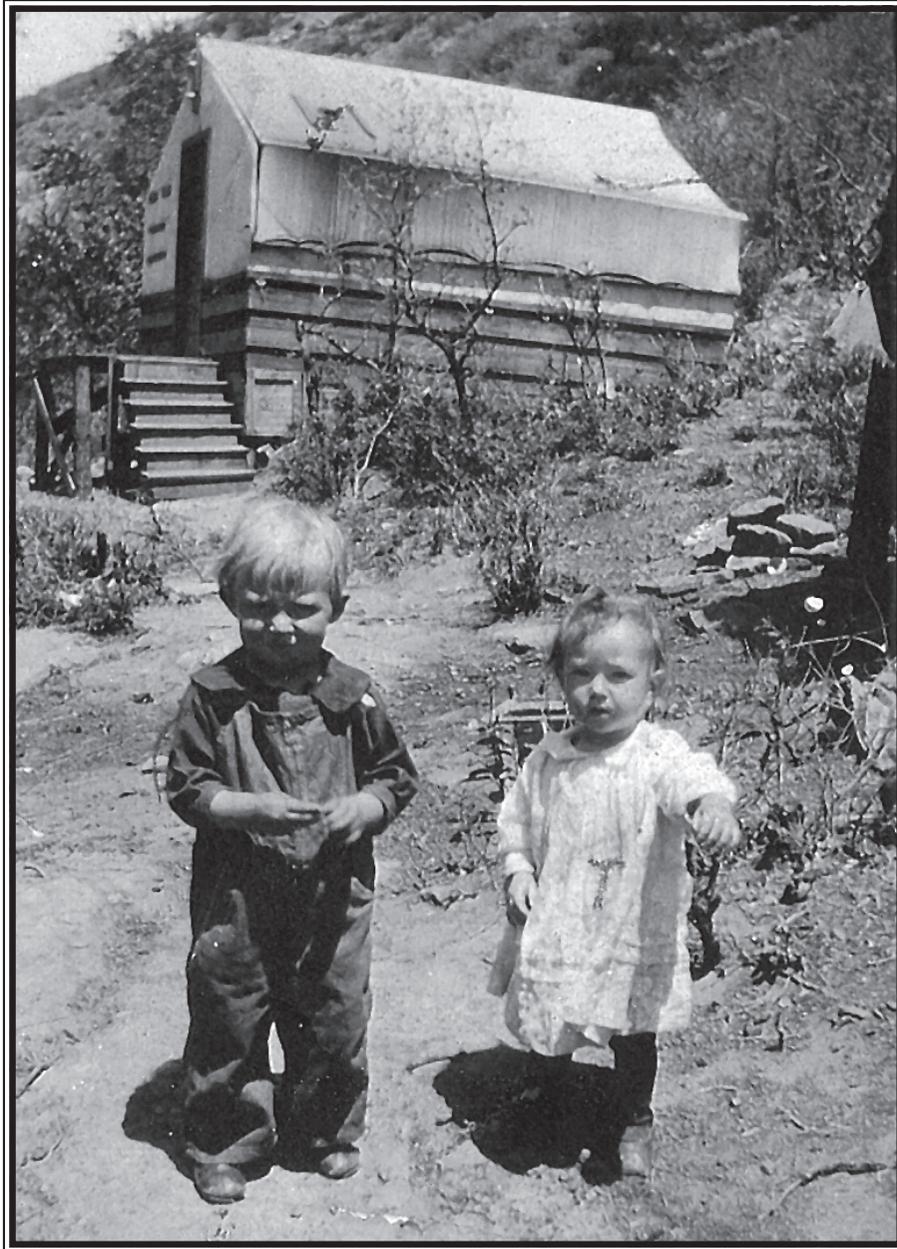
Hilda Erikson's Graduation, picture



Left to Right : James Edward Norris, Ronald George Norris, Kenneth Edward Norris and George Henry Norris. James Edward Norris is Hilda's uncle, George Henry is a cousin.



Left to Right: Lurene Howell (she died in teen years), Myrtle Howell Norris (wife to James Edward), Elizabeth Howell Erikson (wife to Erick Erikson, mother of Hilda Erikson)



John and Hilda's First home when they moved to
Somerset Colorado, A tent on a board foundation.

This is where our sister Hilda Marie was born.

Picture taken September 1923

The doll in white is Elma, who was born in Milwaukee in a hospital.

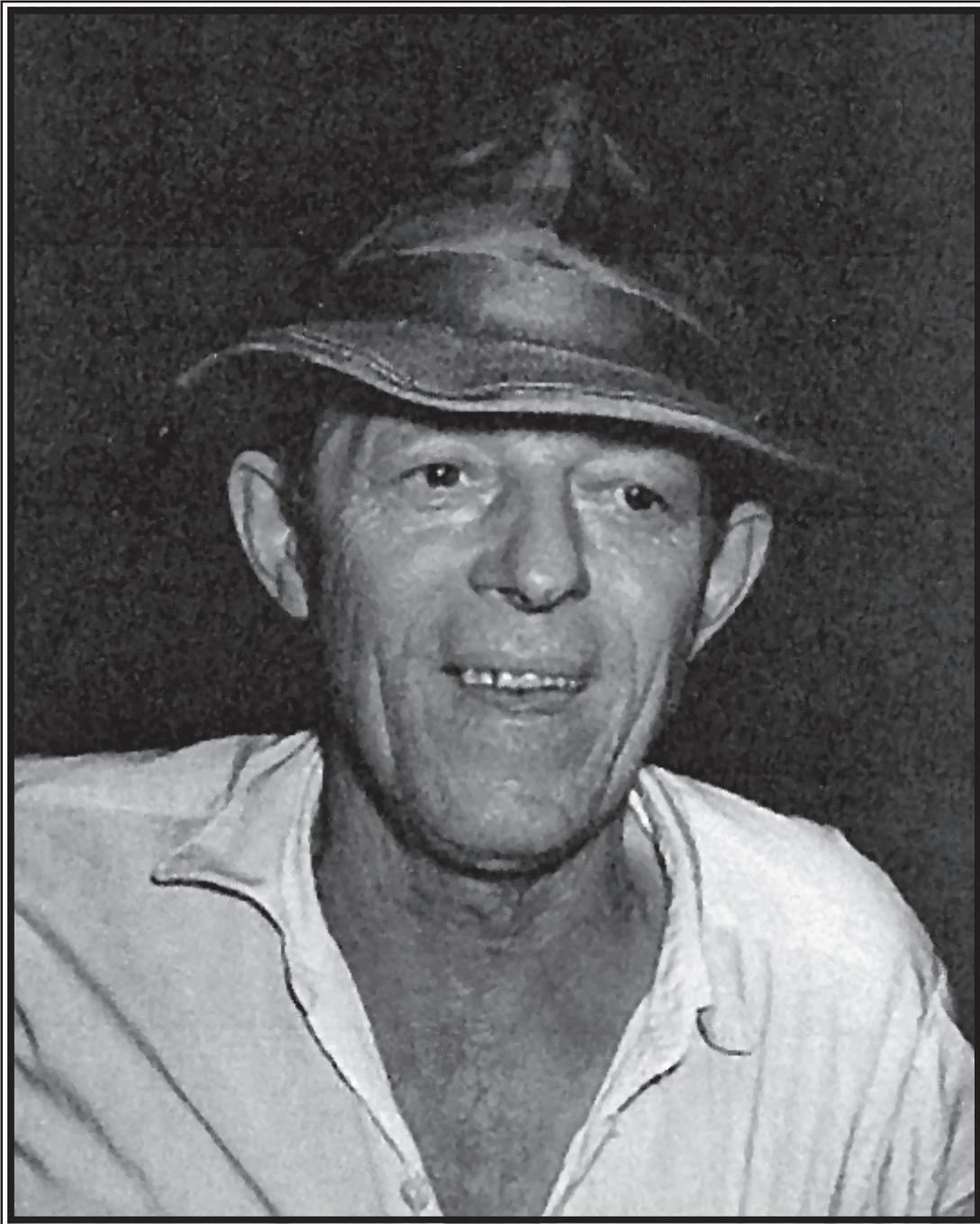
Quite a change! The little boy was a friend.



Hilda Erickson a beautiful Child
Born, March, 17, 1902
Kokomo, Colorado.
Photo was taken in Denver, Colorado, 1903.

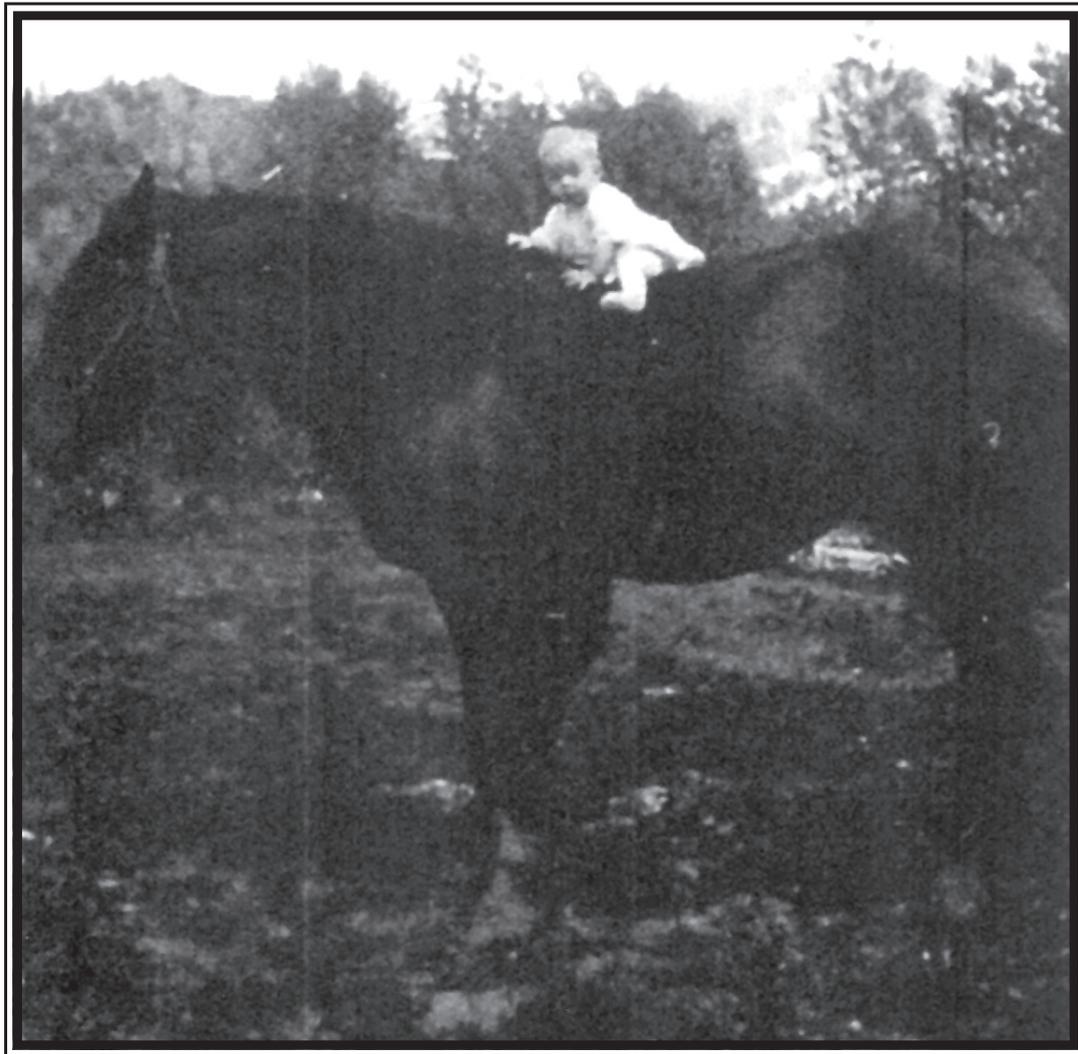


Hilda Erikson Minerich, On Ninetieth Birthday



My Hero! Our Dad our fisherman
John Evon Minerich

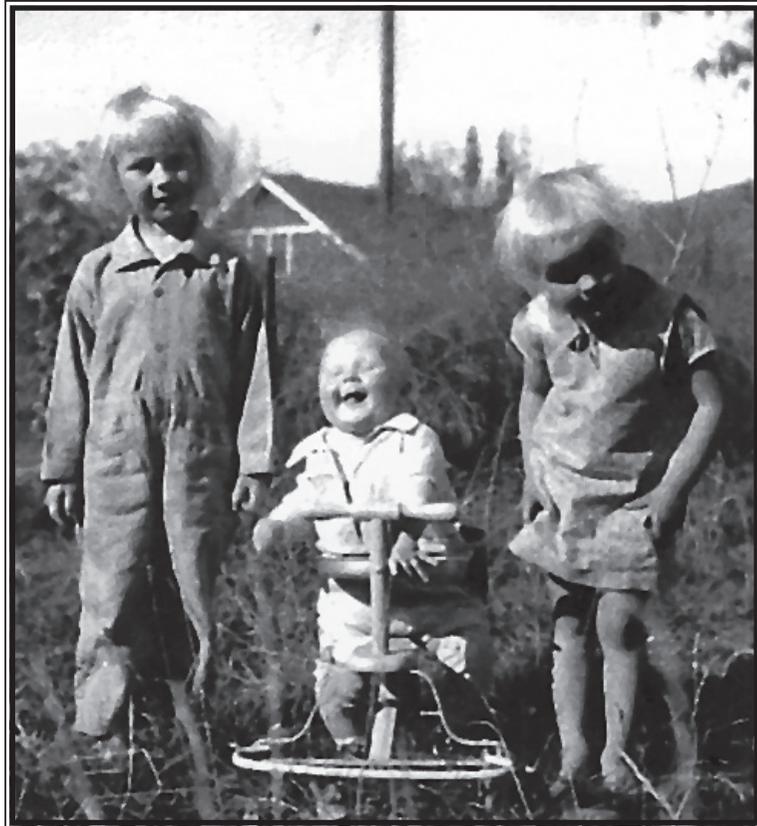
Mother Hilda watched as aunt Anna Erikson took this photo when I was about five months old.



Joan Christine Minerich
Yes I did end up in the mud.



Erik Erikson Jr. and his wife
Pearl Williamson, Marriage Picture
Married November 11, 1931, in Colorado



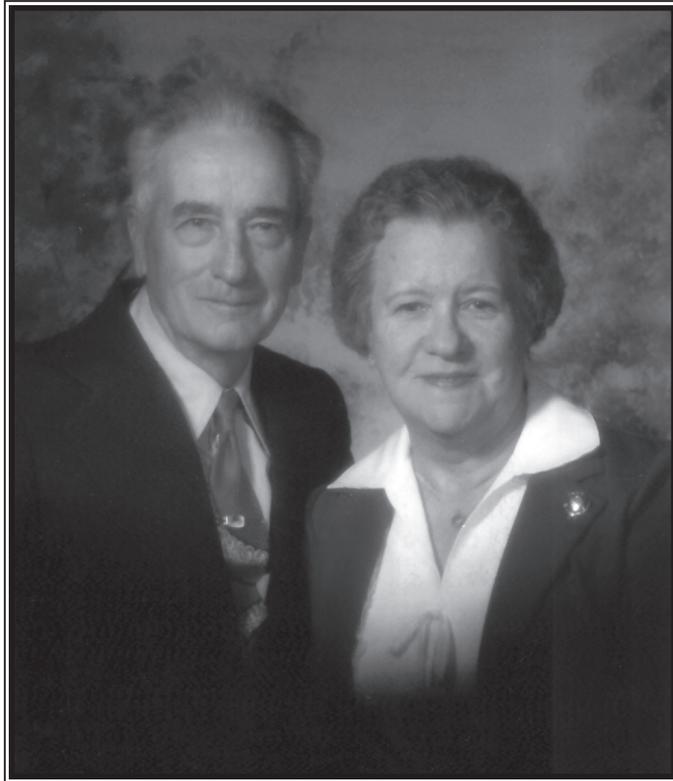
Left to Right: Three children June, Victor and Beverly



Anna Erikson with Eric Minerich



Left to Right: Anna's Daughters Kathleen Kirgis, sister
Carolyn Thrapp Eric Minerich and wife Maxine



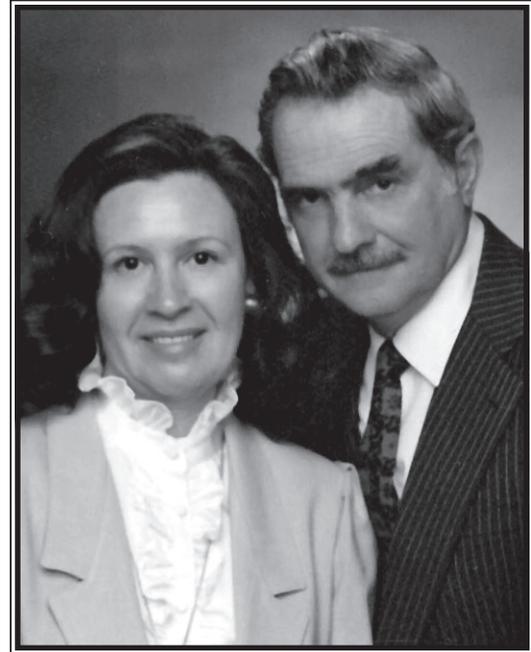
Victor Emanuel Erikson and Wife Mary Clea Tucker, Emanuel was born February 20, 1913 in Colorado Died March 8, 2001 in Manti, Utah. They were married June 23, 1956 in Sunnyside, Utah. Clea was born June 24, 1910 In Fairview, Utah died July 7, 1997 In Nephi, Utah.



Emanuel on his porch in Fairview Utah, taken a few years before he passed away yet has that sweet smile.



Mother Hilda with her eldest son
John Edward Minerich



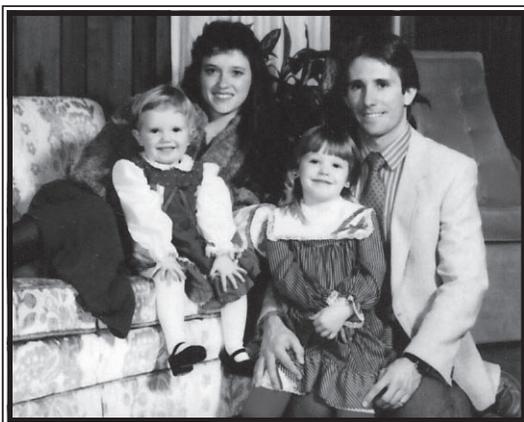
John Edward with his wife Amelia



John's four sons
Left to Right: Tony, Erick Minerich, father John Jr. his son John
and Thomas Minerich.



Left to Right: Lloyd Michael Minerich (son),
Kathleen, Wife Maxine and
Brother Erick Minerich



Kathleen Minerich Burman and Children
Jasmine and Leah



Son Lloyd Michael,
wife Kathleen Jo,
their Children, Michelle,
Michael Thomas and Mary Jo



Left to Right: Michelle, Michael Thomas and
Mary Jo



Hilda Erikson Minerich and her four daughters.
Back Left: Thera Ann Minerich Sandburg, Elma Elizabeth Minerich Wienning,
Front left: Joan Christine Minerich Lemon, Mother Hilda
and Hilda Marie Minerich Wardlaw Bauwens.



Hilda Erikson Minerich and her eight sons

Back row Left to Right: Steven Keith, Paul Willard, James Cecil and Franklin Dale.

Seated Left to Right: Robert Wayne, Daniel Patrick, Mother Hilda, John Edward and Erick Emanuel



John and Hilda's pride and joy
Mother with a few of her and father's Grand-Children
I am sure our family will be able to identify them, thus I will not register their names.



Brother James Cecil Minerich



Daughters Pamela and Brenda.



James (son) Brian with Aunt Joan Lemon



James and Charlotte his wife with Estel Jr. and Joan Lemon.



Having Fun with Mother on her Ninetieth Birthday
Arizona 17 March, 1992



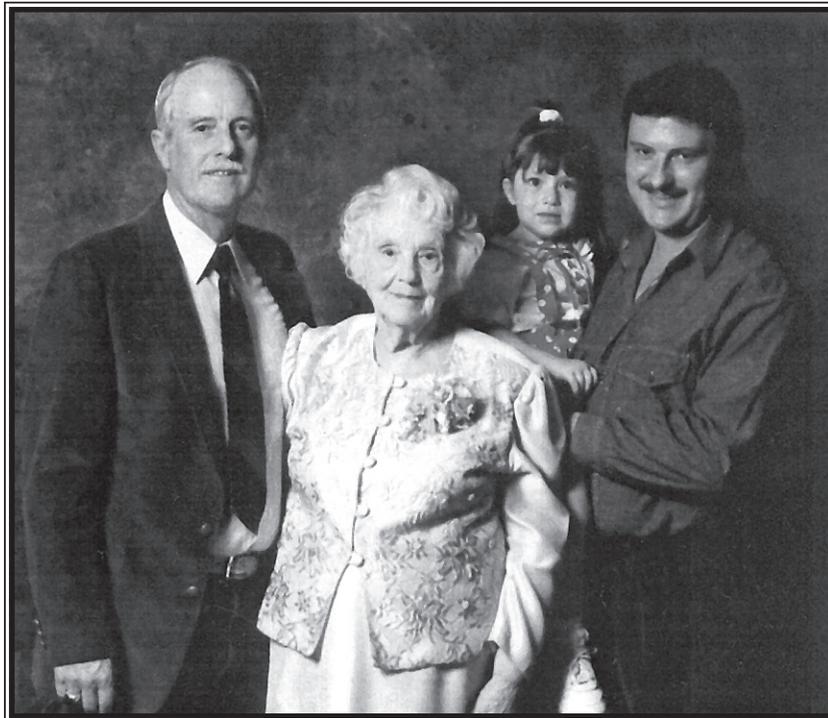
Front Row Left to Right: Mother Hilda her Daughter Hilda
Back Row Right to Left: Hilda's husband Bernard Bauwens with their
son Raymond and wife Peggy.



Left to Right: Robert Minerich, Erick Minerich,
Elma Wienning and Joan Lemon.



Back Row: Steven's three children, Steven, Brother Franklin and his wife Charlene
Front Row: Steven's wife, Mother Hilda, Franklin's daughter.



Brother Paul with son Allen a Great Granddaughter and Mother Hilda



Left to Right: Brother Steven Keith Minerich, Mother, Steven's wife Tina
Standing: Norman Minerich with his wife.



Left to Right: Mother Hilda, Steven Keith Minerich, his wife
Tina and son Norman in background.



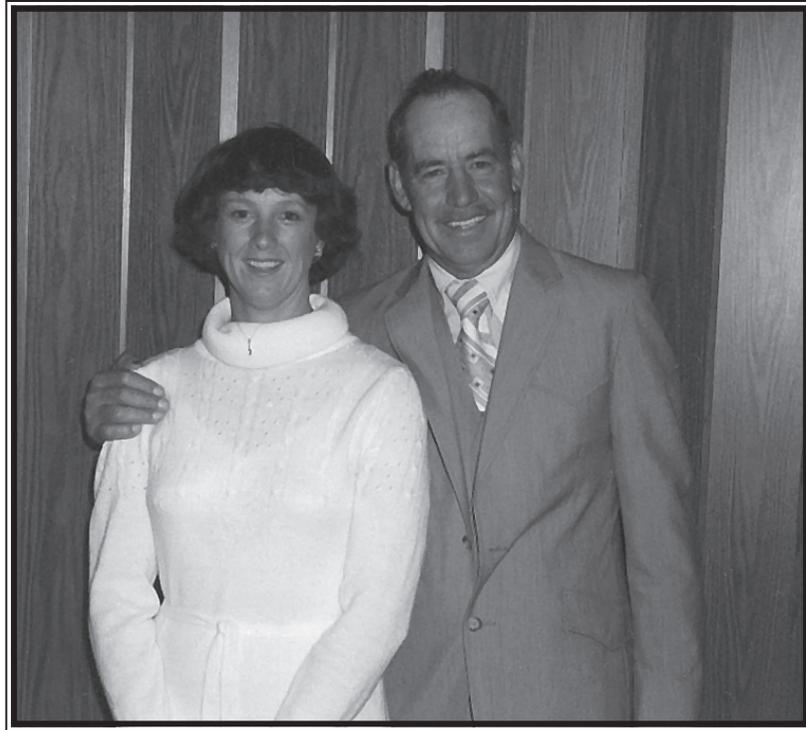
Hugs from Great grandmother



Seated: Mother Hilda standing Left to Right: Robbie's wife, Robbie, Robert's wife Gwen, Robert Minerich, Mike Minerich, Robert's daughter Kristine, Gwen's daughters Ashley



Brother Bob and wife Gwen with Uncle Emanuel Erikson at Fairview, Utah



Sister, Thera Ann Minerich with husband
Willis Laverne Sandburg



Bill and Thera with their children
Back Row Left to Right: Thomas, Monty and Trudy Sandburg



Mother with the eldest child Elma Wienning



Elma and William Wienning on their Fortieth Wedding Anniversary.



Mother's Youngest Daniel Patrick Minerich



Daughter Ellie



Joan Minerich Lemon Family
 Seated: Estel Jr., Mother Hilda, Joan Lemon
 Standing: Jennifer, Judith Lemon Andra, Anthony, Erick and Michele Andra



Jeremy Andra and his bride,
 Kristina, at the Saint George
 Temple



Right: seated Dale and Judy Andra and Joan Estel Jr. Lemon
 Standing Left to Right Eric, Anthony, Michele and Jennifer
 the Bride is Kimberly Andra the Groom is Lyle Allen

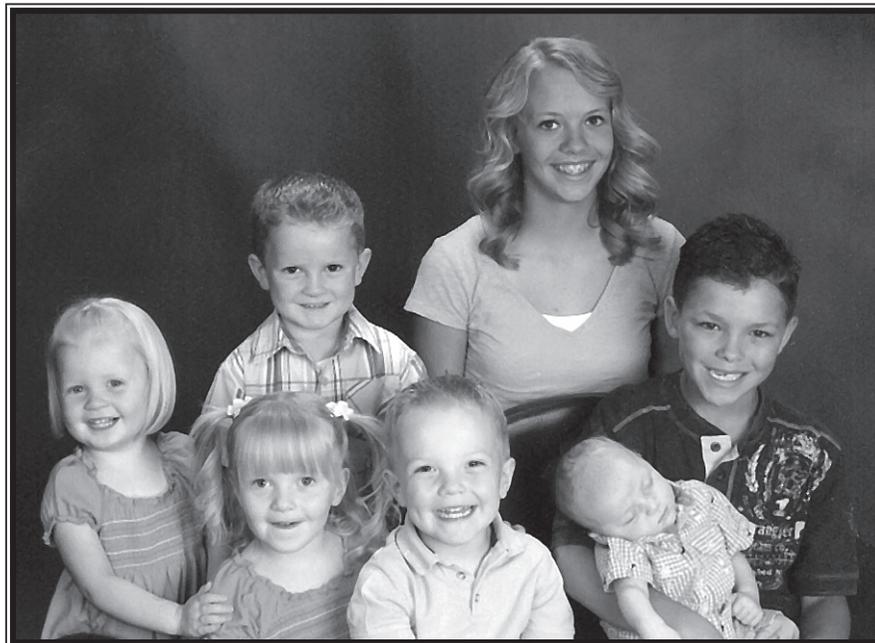


Joan Minerich Lemon's son's Family

Top: Joshua and Jill Lemon

Middle Row: Simon Greathead, Jerry Lemon, Ben Bean and Kaitlyn Bean

Seated: Brooke Lemon Greathead, Kathy Lemon, Colton Bean and Kristen Lemon Bean.



Joan's Great Grandchildren

Left to Right: Anaka and Mathew Lemon, Kaitlyn Bean

Front Row: Twins Chloe, Luke and Baby Logan Greathead and Colten Bean.

1984, Sisters and brothers having fun with mother Hilda



Sister Hilda Wardlaw



Brothers, Erick, Robert and Franklin



Thera, Mother and Joan

Family Living in Sweden, 2010



Mother Hilda's Cousin Gudrun Forsam on right her daughter Mona on the left.



Gudrun husband, Bengt Uno Forsam on the left, Mona and her husband Ollie center with their two sons Joakim and Peter. (Picture was taken in 1989)



The House Jr. and I lived in the year we spent in Richmond, Kentucky.
On one of Brother Bob's farms. All lit up for Christmas.



Mother in front of her house in
Sun Lakes, Arizona



Mother relaxing with Louis Lamour
in her bedroom in Arizona



Hilda, in her Rose garden on the farm in Paonia, Colorado

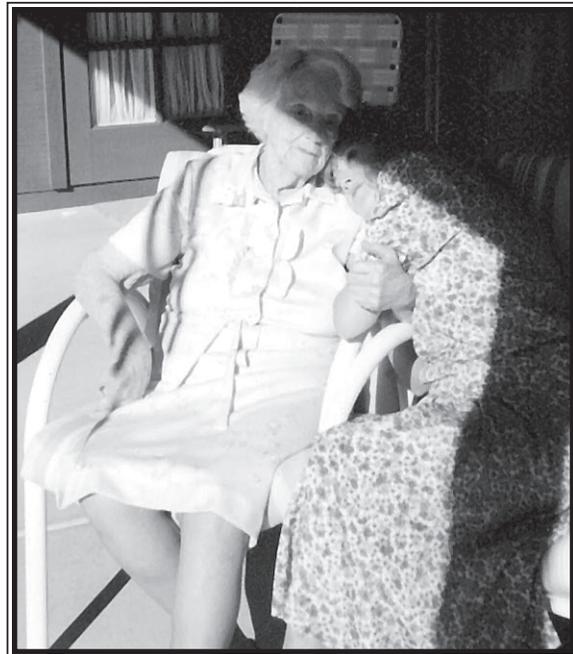


Mother's backyard in Arizona

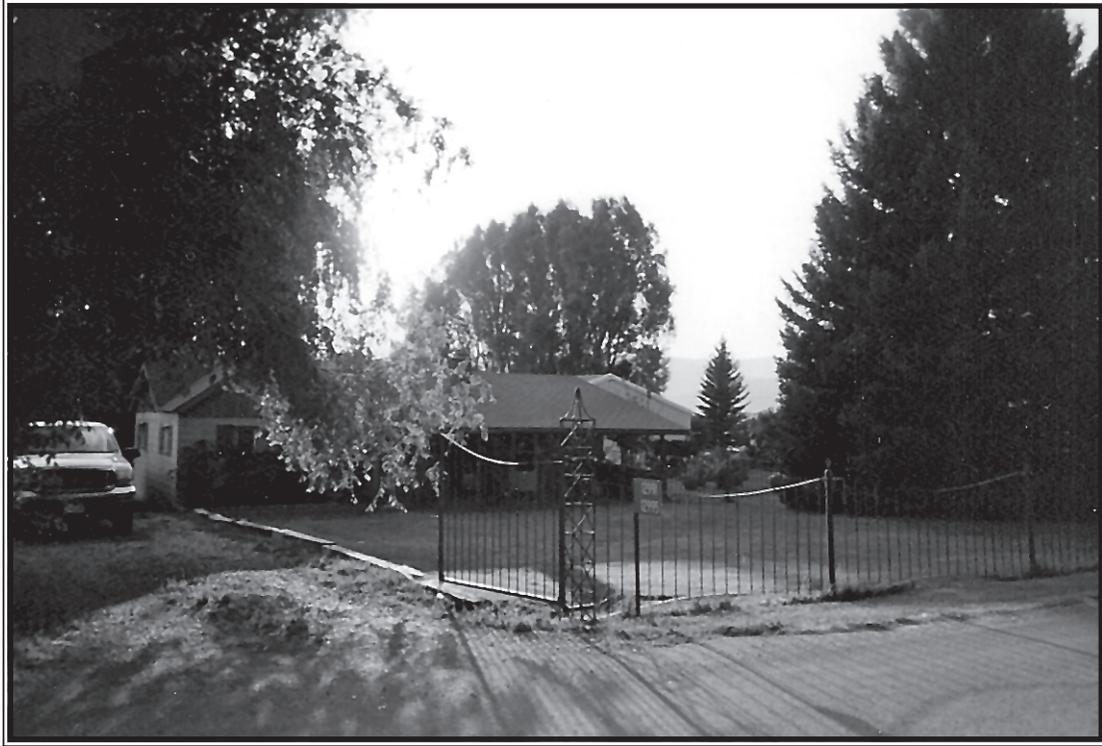
Treasured moments with Mother Hilda



Robert Minerich "son"



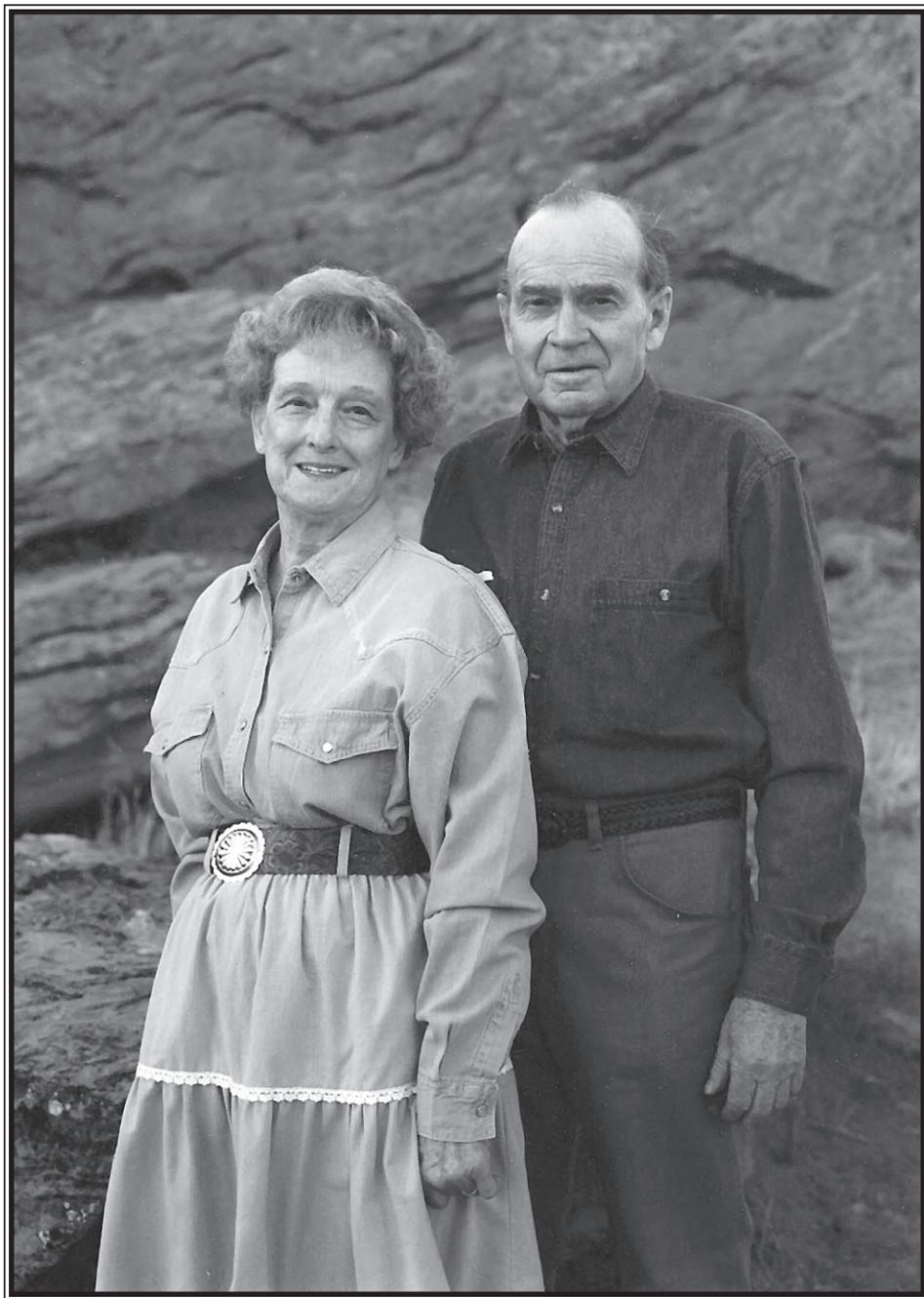
Granddaughter Judith Lemon Andra with Hilda



John and Hilda's home on the farm in Paonia, Colorado years later



Hilda and Joan



Our Family

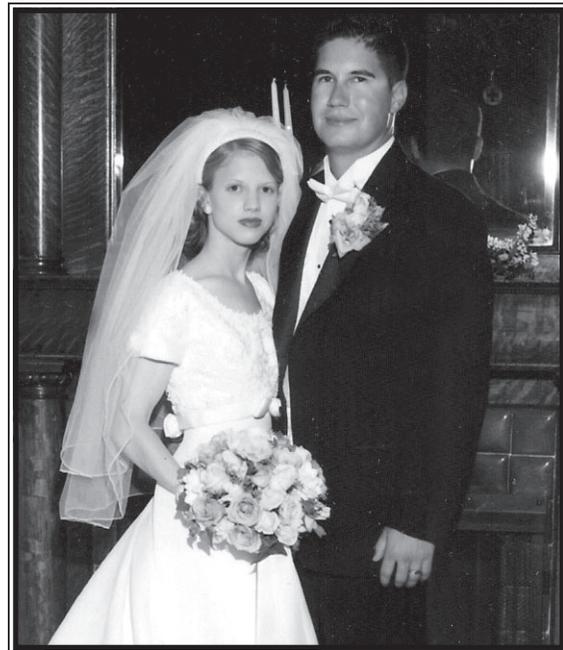
The first born Judy



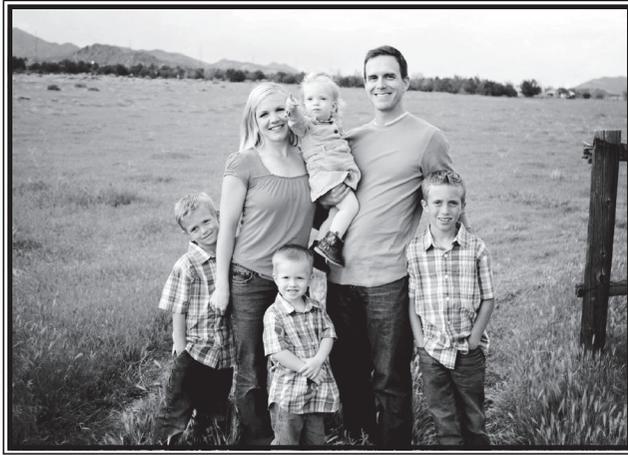
Dale and Judy Andra Family
Back; Anthony and Eric
Middle row; Kimberly, Michelle, Judy, Dale and Jeremy
Jennifer in front



Michelle and Brent



Jennifer and Richard Lee



Eric and Nicole Andra Family
Left to Right; Colon William, Nicole, Cole Eric,
Camryn Patricia, Eric and Cooper Junior



Anthony Andra with Daughters Page and Kala
and Son Cash



Lyle and Kimberly Allen Family
Left to Right: Abigail, Kimberly, Lyle and
Benjamin Allen



Jeremy and Kristina Andra and Family
Left to Right; Kristina, Jeremy, Kade,
Mallory and Keaton



Jerry and Kathy Lemon



Their Grand-Children

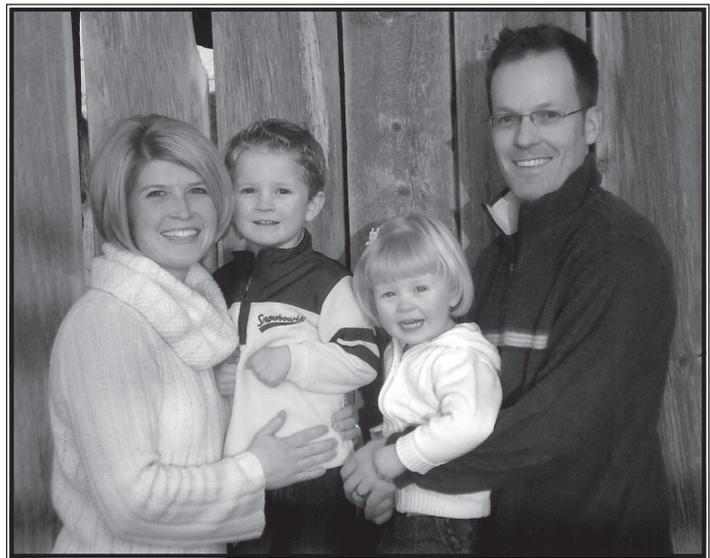
Back Row Left to Right; Colten, Kaitlyn Bean, Mathew Lemon

Front Row Left to Right Luke, Chloe, Logan Greathead and

Anika Lemon



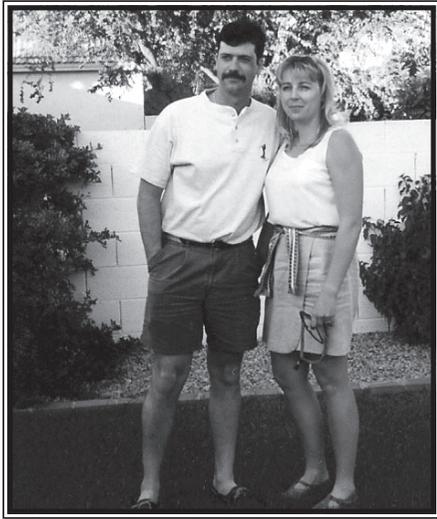
Ben and Kristin Bean Family
Ben, Kristin, Kaitlyn and Colten



Josh and Jill Lemon Family
Jill, Mathew, Anika and Josh Lemon



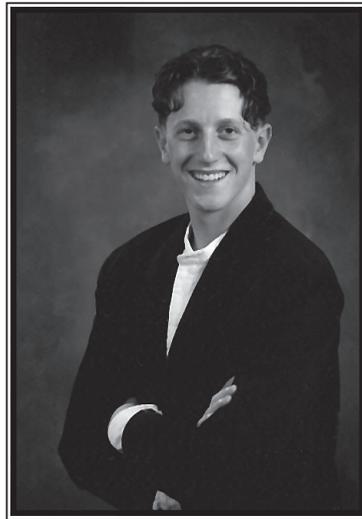
Simon and Brook Greathead Family
Brook, Simon, Luke, Chloe and Logan



Erick and April Minerich son of John Minerich



Charles and Kathy Wienen with their three children Charles is the son of Elma Minerich Wienen



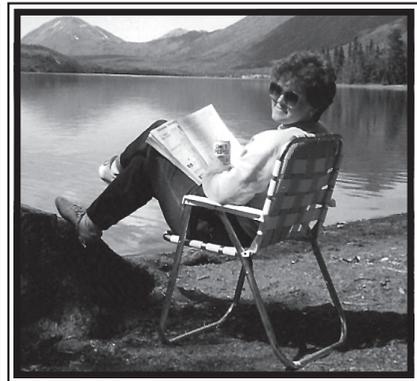
Daniel Minerich's Three Children Left: Trish, John and Candie



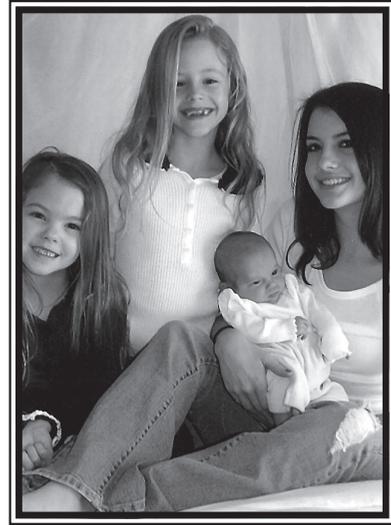
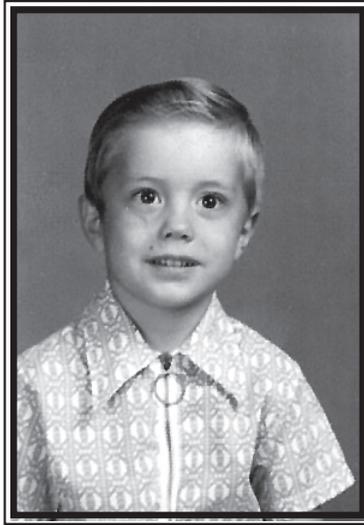
Eric and Maxine Minerich



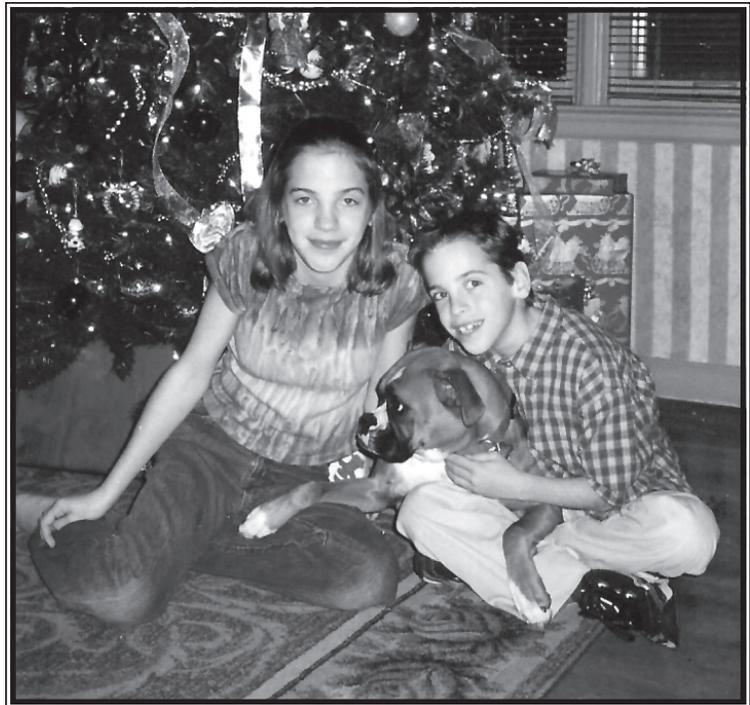
Their son Lloyd wife Kathleen and children Mike Jr., Mary Jo and Michelle



Kathleen a sweet and loving mother and wife who passed on.



Left: Allen and Danny Minerich sons of Paul. Granddaughters' Kyra, Madisyn, Kennedy and Balli daughters of Paul Jr. and Kathie Minerich



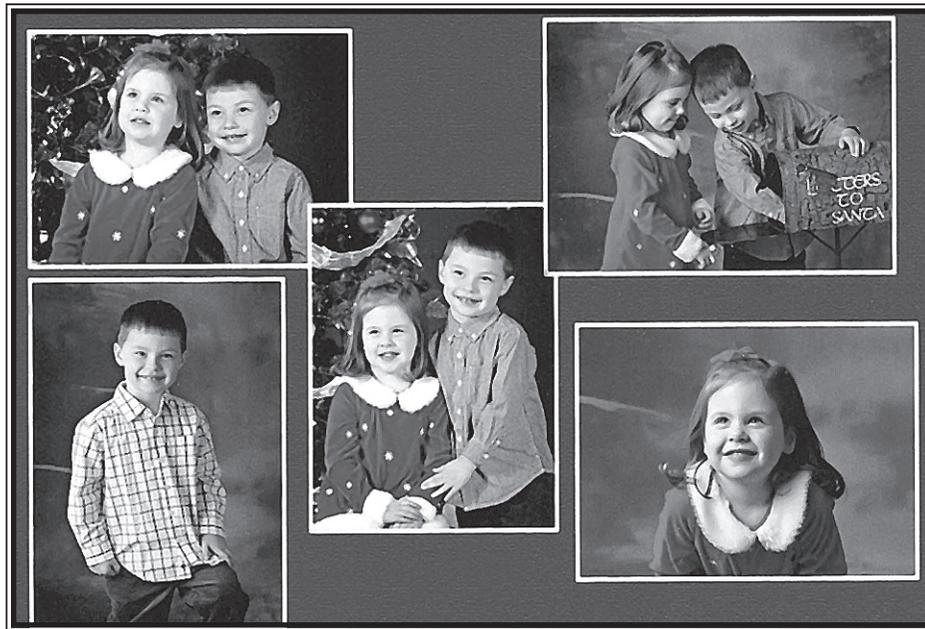
Steven Keith Minerich's Daughter Stephine left, her children Rae Ann and Kyle Wingfield.



Robert and Gwen Minerich's daughter and three granddaughters, starting with Kristine and husband James Woody and their girls Lynnea Rose, Alexa and baby Tayla



Left: Ashley then Dennis and Ashley Renton with twins Breckin and Katelin the twins below.

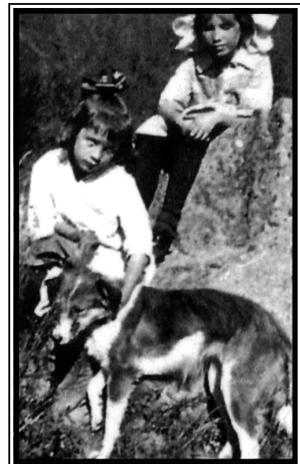


They are the Family of Robert and Gwen Minerich

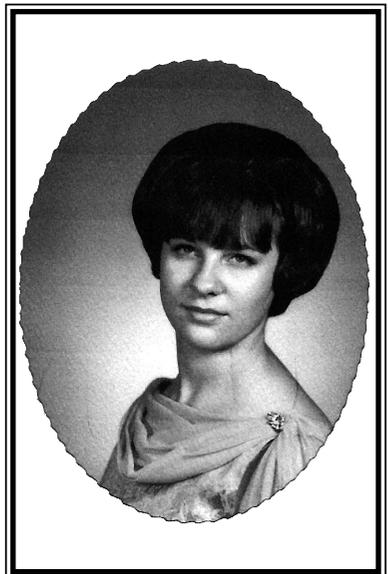
Hilda Erickson's Family



Erick Erickson's daughters: Christine, Ida and Anna above and below



Below Left to Right Christine Erickson's Children: Allen, Thelma and Mary Jane





Matt Chris Minerich's Children John
and Dwila Minerich



Dollie Minerich, Sonny Sigler and
daughter Sharon.

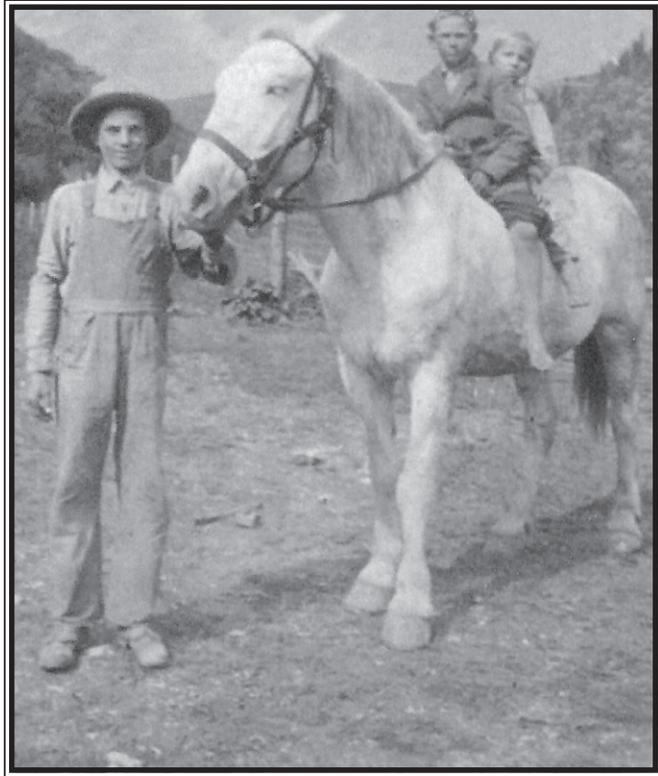


William and Josie at his right his sister
Katheryn and brother John Minerich.

Family pictures from the collection of Myrtle Howell Norris,
(Hilda's cousin) and her husband James Edward Norris



James Edward Norris



George Norris holding horse his younger brothers
on the horse.



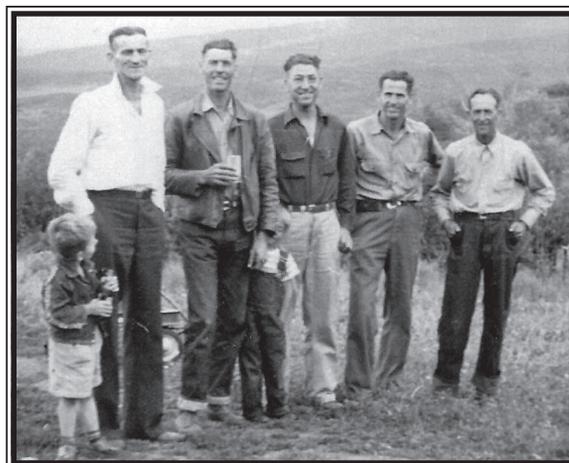
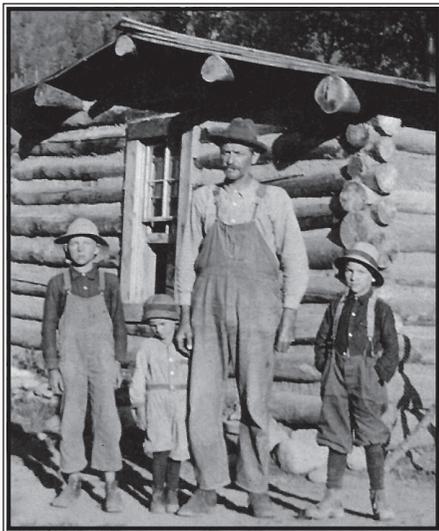
Myrtle Howell Norris holds her oldest son George while posing friends and an automobile



Myrtle Howell in her younger years



A few years later.



Bottom three; James Edward Norris with his five sons Edward Jr., Allen, Jesse, Bert and George



Jesse Norris with his Children, Bonnie and Gary



Bert and Mildred Wiley Norris



George and Ann Koklich Norris, parents of Ronald and Kenneth





Children of John and Mary Crumley Heberling

Standing Left to Right; Dr. James C. age 68, Hiram age 73, George age 70, Andrew age 67
 Seated Left to Right; Henry age 87 sisters Elisa Ady age 76 and Rebecca Lewis age 64
 John age 75.

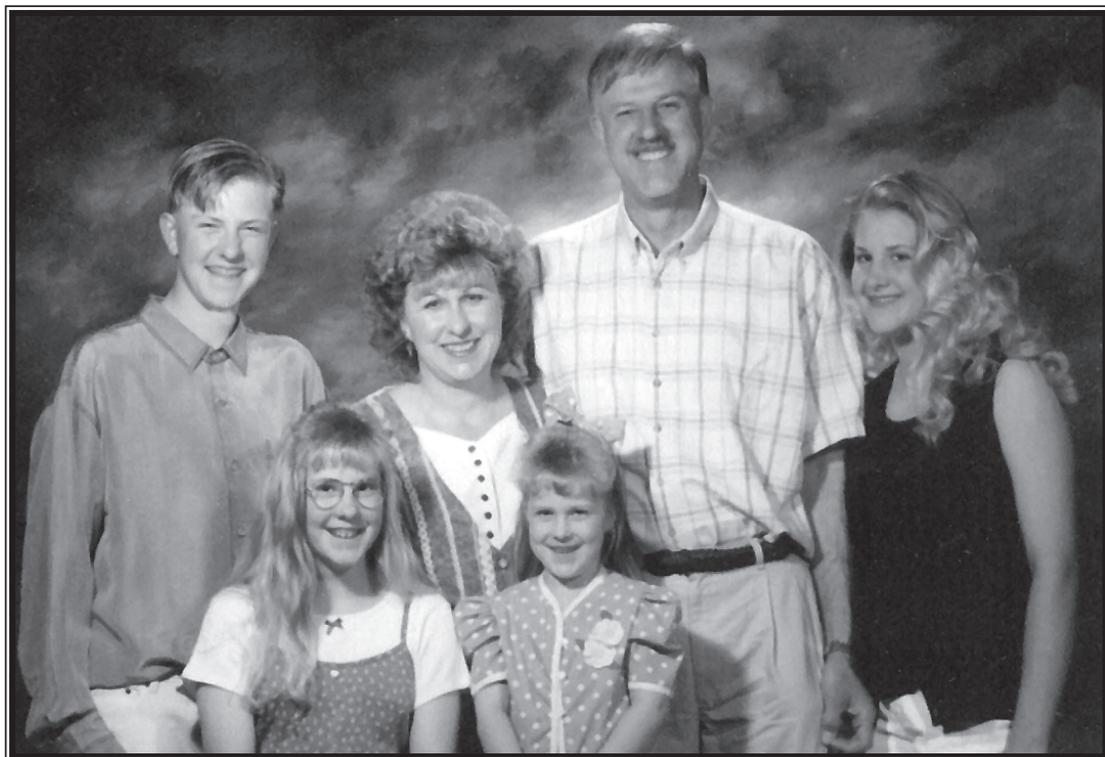


James Henry Howell with wife Angeline
 Heberling daughter of Dr. James C. Heberline



Carson Howell son of James Henry and
 Mary Angelene

Twenty- First century Norris'
Sons of George and Ann Norris



Ronald and Sharon with children Jason, Carrie, Lisa and Kaylee



Kenneth and Carlene Norris With Amanda, Michael and Mathew

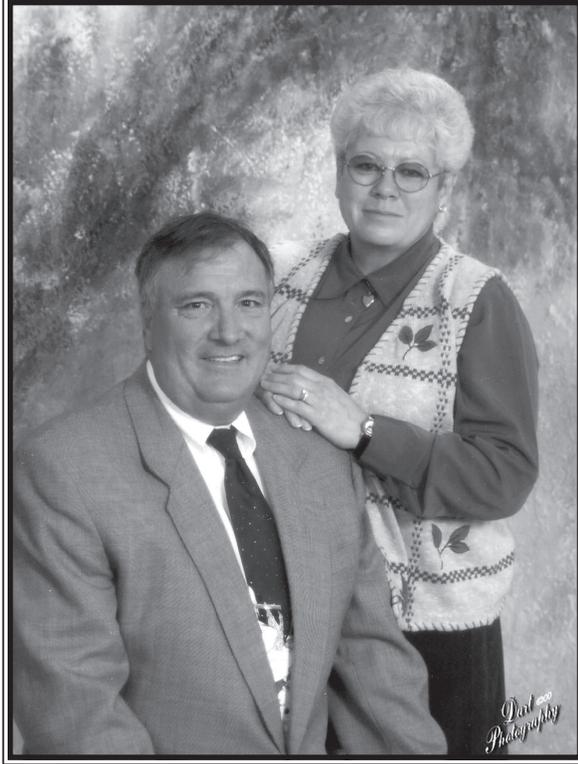
My love deepest gratitude to those who made it possible for me to have this book Published for my loved ones.



My daughter Judith Andra, Computer whiz



My son Jerry Lemon and wife Kathy for needed encouragement.



Grant and Kathy Bean for proofing and picture work.



Page layout and printer of book, my Grandson-in-law Ben Bean



God Bless you and yours
Joan Christine Minerich Lemon

