

EMILIE HELENE CHRISTENSEN KNAPHUS

Emilie Helene Christensen Knaphus (Millie) as she was always called, was born in Murray, Utah, November 17, 1891 to Mads Miller Christensen and Anne Marie Lundgreen. She was their fourth daughter. However, her sister Lillie had died before Millie's birth.

When Millie was 3 years old, her mother and father were divorced. Her mother and the three little girls and 10 month old baby Chris moved to a 7 acre farm in Central, Utah. This had been their home before they moved to Murray, Utah.

In 1894 it took one whole day to make a train trip from Salt Lake to Salina, Utah. One more day was needed for the bumpy ride in the back of a wagon from Salina to Central. It was on this wagon ride that Millie met the parents of her dearest childhood friend, Olga Hansen.

As a little girl, Millie spent much time playing with rag dolls. As she grew older she would glean wheat. The stubble was painful to her bare feet. She would pick the wheat heads off the ground. They had been left by the binders. Using her apron as a basket, she filled it with wheat and then carried it to the grainary in the rear of their small log home. The family farm had been let out on shares, but they had maintained a garden, a faithful cow and a few chickens. Millie learned to cook and sew very early. Myrtle and Millie would take their dolls and lunch with them when it was their turn to herd the neighborhood cows. Both Millie and Myrtle started to work in the beets at an early age. They saved their money and each bought a bicycle with it. Oh, how they loved to ride them. They would ride three miles to Elsinore and five miles to Monroe quite often. The whole family was always active members of the church.

Summertime was baptism time. Millie was baptized in the Sevier River on July 1, 1900. which was exciting. The river was about a mile or two east of Central and the town collected there at baptism time. This was an event which sunk deep into her heart.

A canal ran through their little farm west about ½ block from their home. There they went swimming or wading and splashing on Saturday afternoons. The children were so delighted because Ma, as they called her, went with them and enjoyed it too. Likewise, in winter they went sliding and skating on this same canal when it was frozen over.

For entertainment the young folks would usually meet cross the street at the home of Soren Nielson's because he had a wind-up phonograph and the latest records as well as many comic records. On moonlite nights they would play hid-and-seek, run-sheep-run or sister per root. The boys would walk the girls home.

The boys all loved to come to Danish town. The homes were always clean, the people friendly and the girls fair. They were good singers too. Millie's two uncles, Jim and Peter Christensen were considered well-to-do farmers at the time. They kept bees and would give Millie and her sisters all the honey they wanted for honey-candy pulls. At these, Millie would play her harmonica and every one would sing.

In 1907 her sister Rose taught school in Indianola, Sanpete County and Millie and Chris went to stay with their father at 6400 South in Murray. From Rose, much of the money was supplied. The next year Millie moved into Salt Lake and worked as a maid for a Mrs. Derris while attending the LDS Academy. At this time Rose was living in Salt Lake City too. She was in love with Conrad J. Hansen, a convert to the LDS Church from Northern Norway. One Sunday afternoon Millie and Rose had gone to Liberty Park. Rose was to meet Conrad there. It was here Millie met Torlief S. Knaphus, also a convert from Norway. Torlief told many how he was impressed with Millie and her many abilities as well as her sweet disposition. They spent many happy hours hiking in City Creek Canyon. Millie would pack a lunch or they would build a camp fire and she would make french toast and then serve it with plenty of strawberry jam. It was over this treat that Torlief proposed marriage to Millie.

On the 25th of November 1909 this loving couple were united for time and all eternity in the Salt Lake Temple. This was just two and a half months after Conrad and Rose had been united there. For a few months the two couples lived in the same house. Millie and Torlief occupying two rooms and Rose and Conrad the other two. The next year Millie and Torlief moved to Monroe, Utah. Torlief worked as a housepainter with his brother Andrew, who had come from Norway and it was through Torlief that Myrtle, Millie's sister, met her future husband.