

Elva's life as told by her sister Mary Carlson

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>I do not weep for Elva today. My heart is full of happiness and joy for  
>her. She has graduated from elementary school and now can go on to High  
>School.

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>For almost the first time in her life she is free to do something "just  
>for herself".

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>Elva has told us several times of the special dreams she has had, over  
>the years, where Morgan came and walks with her. It always made her sad  
>to wake up and find she had more work to do. A few years ago I said to  
>her "One of these times you will keep on walking with him". Her answer  
>was "Oh I hope so".

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>Last night I feel sure that her beloved Morgan came, and they quickly  
>walked away together.

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>Elva's life has been one of service, dedication, striving to live the  
>best life she possibly could, and also loneliness.

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>When Elva was a young a young teen, she assisted the bishop's wife in my  
>birth. She watched as Sister Lowry struggled to untangle the cord from  
>around my neck. The terrible blue baby was wrapped in a blanket and put  
>on Elva's arms where it was expressed that I would die.

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>I revived and while my mother tried to care for a sickly baby, Elva  
>assumed the responsibility of managing the household and meeting the  
>needs of everyone in the family. My mother's recovery was slow. Elva  
>played a major part in stabilizing the whole family.

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>Another time Elva worked on the "cook car". This was a wagon where  
>someone was hired to prepare meals [3 each day] and snacks for  
>threshers, probably 8 to 15 very hungry men.

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>She did a great job of this, which likely was for a month or so, and  
>then paid back her wages to the person who owned the machine, to pay for  
>the threshing of the wheat on our own farm.

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>Again when I was 3, I became deadly ill. I was taken to the hospital  
>where I remained for a month with my mother beside me. It was determined  
>that I had polio and I remember learning to walk around furniture.  
>During all this time Elva was caring for the family and assuming  
>responsibilities way beyond her years.

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>She sewed for all of us. She was active in our country ward of

>Taylorville. She was a good conscientious student, and loved her  
>childhood friends. She took advantage of every opportunity to learn and  
>grow and develop.  
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>Elva learned to succeed at many things, teaching in Sunday School and  
>Primary, preparing meals, and helping others in times of need.  
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>I remember once she went to work for a month for the Bracha family. The  
>mother in the home was not well. I believe Elva earned \$5.00 for that  
>months work. She would have been paid \$2.50 more if she had milked the  
>cows.  
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>With her precious dollar she went on a shopping trip to Lethbridge where  
>she bought material for anew dress for me, and I think for Verna too.  
>She brought everyone a little present and felt such joy in sharing what  
>she had.  
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>My mother's sister Blenda lived in Salt Lake with her family. This was  
>the worst of the depression, but somehow funds were available for Elva  
>to go to Salt Lake and stay with the Kounalis family, and take a  
>business course. I know she was a good student and used what she learned  
>the rest of her life.  
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>Morgan Smith was one of the most eligible bachelors in southern Alberta.  
>He was handsome, great personality, had traveled quite a lot and made  
>those around him feel good just to be in his presence. He had dated many  
>lovely girls but had not found the right one.  
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>Although he had net Elva briefly before the summer of 1937, I don't  
>think they had really dated before. From what I have heard, they both  
>recognized almost immediately that they had found their true companion.  
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>They were married Sept 22, 1937 in the Cardston Temple and life really  
>began.  
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>They shared the family home on the fireguard road with Morgan's mother  
>Evaline. The Smith family was very close and loving and readily included  
>Elva and she was happy to share their home with Grandma Smith.  
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>The children came, Arlen, Eldon, and Carol. It was so exciting to be  
>with them in the summers. Elva was well prepared for the demands of  
>caring for a husband, little babies a grandmother and carrying on what  
>was expected of a farm wife in raising a garden, doing farm chores,  
>driving a truck, taking meals out to the workers at harvest time,  
>entertaining friends and family and working in a variety of church  
>callings.

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>It was customary to have company on Sundays. Morgan would find someone  
>who needed a friend or just someone to spend an afternoon and he often  
>invited several people to spend the afternoon and enjoy a meal. Elva  
>always made sure she was prepared for extras.

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>Morgan was a man who liked challenges. He decided to sell the lovely big  
>house on the Fireguard Road because there was a water problem. He moved  
>his family to property he had purchased on the river near Carmangay. The  
>house on the property was very small and had few conveniences. As always  
>Elva and Morgan agreed on the move and changes were made. Elva said she  
>loved this little place in Carmangay because she had her family close  
>around her, and they were cozy together.

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>After a few years they found the property in Alston with a large house  
>that would accommodate their growing family.

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>While in the brick house in Alston four more children joined the family,  
>Richard, Linda, Lorraine and Lorna.

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>Life was very busy, very good and challenging. The children were growing  
>up. Arlen was 13 and the ages ranged down from there.

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>The Christmas Linda [she was born on Christmas Day] turned four Morgan  
>said "wonder if she would remember me, I was this age when my father  
>died". He thought all his children were so wonderful and it was very  
>evident that his love for Elva had never lessened in any way.

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>The summer of 1951 the family was planning a little summer holiday.  
>Morgan had some fencing he wanted to finish at the river place before  
>they could leave.

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>Morgan, Arlen, and Eldon and the hired man went to do the fencing.  
>Morgan went to change the position of the tractor and got too close to a  
>river bank and the tractor rolled down the hill resulting in a fatal  
>injury.

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>Elva's world and the children's world changed forever on that day. None  
>can imagine the impact of losing a husband and father unless they have  
>experienced such a trial.

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>Elva knew that she had to raise her children in the way that would make  
>Morgan proud. The task was overwhelming, but with her strong faith that  
>she could do what she had to. She tried in every way to teach the  
>children to support them, to love them, and to provide them.

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>Life without a companion and the strong arm of support that she was used  
>to took every ounce of strength and courage Elva had.

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>She told me once that not very long before Morgan was killed, that he  
>said to her "If one of us has to go, it will have to be me, because you  
>can raise the children and I wouldn't be able to. That thought bothered  
>her.

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>The loneliness of attending church functions, community activities, even  
>family gatherings alone never became easy.

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>The children's weddings, temple visits, problem solving, making  
>decisions that she was not prepared to do were very difficult, but she  
>did her best.

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>Elva carried on the tradition of having Sunday guests as much as  
>possible. She welcomed family anytime they dropped in. She continued to  
>care for Grandma Smith. She gave her best to church callings, she  
>visited the sick and comforted those with troubles and problems.

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>Elva took care of everyone else before herself. Her children are  
>thankful they could make her last years as comfortable and pleasant as  
>possible.

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>She told me in November "I am very blessed". I said I knew she was , and  
>it was wonderful that her children looked after her because they wanted  
>to --- not because they had to. Then she said "yes - and I am not in  
>pain - my leg aches sometimes, but that isn't pain".

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>Her wonderful sweet spirit has been so evident during this past year  
>with Lorna and also after her return to Alberta.

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>I am told of the feeling of peace in her room at the time of her  
>passing, of her positive attitude about any part of her care and how she  
>tried to show her love for those who came to visit.

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>Yes, I'm happy for Elva, what a reunion with Morgan and her parents,  
>with our son Don, Duane and the precious grandbabies that died at birth.

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>She will be so busy - and free from the cares that she has carried for  
>so long.

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>She worried about being an old lady while Morgan was still young.-now  
>she leaves the old ladies body behind, and walks in youth and glory.

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>JOKE

>One time told a joke at a party about Elva. She was Relief Society

>president at the time. One thing was doing bake sales.

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>My joke was that Elva died and went to heaven and they said to her "We

>have been waiting for you - we need to have a big bake sale - and we

>knew that was your speciality - you do such a good job.

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>Everybody laughed really hard - mostly Elva.

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>I really hope there aren't any bake sales for her in heaven.

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