

Eugene Hill's Life History

Written by his wife Hermione J. Hill

In the Sanpete valley of Utah, a warm spring bubbles from a small depression among the foothills and its water, with a singing splash, makes its way some distance down into the valley where a village, like many other thriving pioneer villages make use of the water for many household purposes and for gardens and flowers. Here a number of closely related families worked, sang, played and gossiped away the summer days and braved winter's chill. As September the ninth 1884 dawned, one family in much anxiety awaited the birth of another child, of course it would be welcome. After three days of intense suffering by the mother, parents and five brothers and sister, at last the hour arrives and a baby boy, later named Chancy Eugene, was born. Thus began the life of the man I was to spend my life with, my husband, the father of my children.

Little Eugene's childhood spent among the foothills and meadows of Warmcreek, later named Fayette, grew but seemed to have a hard time getting started. In his earlier years he was seldom well and never strong. At one time his high chair, in some way was tipped and he fell on a hot stove, receiving severe burns. When in school he worked hard to get his lessons and would no sooner get them in shape so it would be easy for him, than his father would notice his run down condition and keep him out of school. The same thing happened time and time again, but in spite of it all he graduated from the eighth grade with his classmates.

He has often told me of the summer days he spent down by the river watching the cows. At one time while there he and one of his boy friends began wishing the river would overflow and water would be all around. Soon a dark cloud arose in the sky and down came the rain. It came in such torrents the two boys got their wish. The river overflowed - water everywhere so much they became frightened and gathered the cows for the journey back to town and home. Their parents also became anxious and sent out a searching party for them. After some troubles they arrived home in safety.

He told me of the death of his three year old sister Myrtle who in some way was poisoned and just before she died had her long curls cut off and gave them to her loved ones.

When quite young Eugene often sang for church and school also many other gatherings. At one time he was dressed in shabby clothes. His hair which was usually in long curls was untidy. He portrayed the character about whom he sang, "The Drunkard's Lone Child". This was at quarterly conference of the Sanpete Stake, either in Gunnison or Manti. His father, James Allen Hill, a very well to do man and respected by all, through trusting a near relative just a little too much, lost all his property which left his family destitute. A brother-in-law came and took their last cow. Eugene, at this time- about eight years of age, began herding buck sheep during the summer and thus became a help to his family. This was one of his life's characteristics, always helping others. Several other children were born to his parents making twelve in all. Two died in their early years.

After graduating from elementary school, he spent more of his time herding sheep and

thus took over much of the burden of helping his father support his large family. I have heard men say that he was one of the best workers in the community and all were pleased to have his help.

While herding sheep with his oldest brother, James W. Hill, on camp tender, he had an accident which left him in a poor condition. One day when preparing to move camp, while loading large lumps of rock salt into the saddle bags of a donkey, the animal gave a jump and dislodged a large, 200 lb lump of salt on Eugene's right shoulder, then ran away. The weight of this ripped the muscles of his shoulder loose from the back bone. The pain was almost unbearable. He had to tie his arm in a sling and be about herding the sheep. His brother could not find time to watch the sheep while he went to the Dr. He felt his duties were too pressing to take over herding the sheep that long. The arm was kept in a sling until nature made its own adjustments and by that time doctors said it would be better to leave it as it was than to have it ripped loose again. So all the time this shoulder has been lower than the other.

He herded sheep and saved what money he could after the family needs were taken care of. In the fall of 1902 he decided to go to Snow Academy in Ephriam. His oldest sister and two brothers went also. While at school, they spent a very pleasant winter there, and during this time his oldest brother married and his oldest sister met my oldest brother, George F. Jackson. They soon became attached and planned to get married. Along towards spring Eugene was taken ill. The doctor said he had typhoid, of course, school was out for him.

My brother and Eugene's brother were called to go on a mission to the southern states. They were to leave in early April or March 25th. My brother and his sister were married in the Manti temple. I met Eugene at the wedding dinner. My brother's wife came to live in a little home in Venice (formerly Wallsbury) Sevier Co. My sister and I stayed with her and taught school.

While herding sheep, Eugene and I corresponded and through our letters, plans to be married were made. Later this came to be very doubtful because Eugene's brother, Allen, accidently struck him in the head with an axe. He was unconscious for some time and was so ill afterwards, that he was in bed and unable to be at work. We had planned our marriage for June and needed his wages badly. Through the blessings of the Lord he recovered and we were able to carry out our plans. So on the first of June 1905 we were married in the Manti Temple by Elder John D. McAllister.

We began our married life living in two rooms of his mother's home in Fayette. We lived in Fayette a few years. It was while herding sheep again Eugene had a partial stroke and was again down in bed and unable to earn our support. While herding sheep near Marysville he found a hill that glowed at night. He knew he had found something but knew it would be better for the family to struggle and be humble. It was during these trying times that our first child, a baby boy, named Horace Eugene was born on the 26th of July 1906. After my husband became well again, life went on much as before. He worked most of the time and helped his father and brothers when not on a job. In the spring of 1908 his father took a trip to Shelly, Idaho and was so impressed with the country, he came back planning to move to Shelly. His plans were never

carried out, but after a short wait our son, Iran Roy was born the 14 of March 1908. We arrived in Shelly the morning our small son was three weeks old. Uel, Eugene's younger brother and his wife and small son went with us.

The two men did farm work during the summer moving from one place to another, living in houses and tents. In the month of July Uel, went back to Fayette and in the fall we moved to Iona where Eugene worked in the fruit fields and apple orchards. The same summer Eugene went with a cousin, George Lake, to the Mud Lake country, and they each filed on one hundred and sixty acres of homestead land. After Thanksgiving day, we moved out to our tract of land, and lived in a tent. Eugene got some logs for a house, but the winter was upon us so we moved into a board shack on another homestead. The winter was long and cold. We made a trip to Idaho Falls while there. One of our horses became ill and we were left in a wagon with a beet bed on it, and a wagon cover kept the cold storms out. Eugene got his cousin's son to bring his team from Shelly to Idaho Falls and pull our outfit back to our homestead.

The house we lived in was built of rough lumber and just a shell. We papered the sides with newspapers to keep out the cold. Wolves were seen and heard most every day and no human beings but we four, my husband, two small sons and I. Still we lived through it and in the spring we moved to our homestead and lived in a dugout. Here we lived until August. We then went to Market Lake, now Roberts, Idaho, where on August the 12, 1909 my daughter Alta Hermione was born. In the fall we rented a farm south west of Roberts but moved back to our homestead and lived there for improving our land. The next summer we farmed our farm and moved to another one in the fall. While on this farm our son James Jackson was born on the 30th of September 1910. We then moved to our homestead and built a log cabin. Eugene worked for Woods Livestock company all one summer after James J. (now called Jack) was born. Eugene was kept busy clearing sage brush off the land. He'd take a railroad rail and hitch his team to it and drive through the brush. This usually uprooted the brush and piled them in piles to burn.

In the fall of 1915 our oldest son fell out of a buggy and broke his leg. He died five weeks later on 5th of Nov. of stoppage of the bowels. Two doctors were caring for him at the time of his death. Our family consisted of the sick son, 3 other boys and two girls, the second one was born at Crystal Lake and we named her Crystal. She was born on the 3 of February 1914. Her full name is Clara Dinah Crystal being named after both of her grandmothers. Our third little girl was born the morning after Horace broke his leg. We named her Laurel Dorpha. She was born on the 3 October 1915.

Eugene did work and got water for our land from a canal running up from Mud Lake and pumped on our land, but a big company wanted our land so our notice of time to prove up was held up to a month after the water should have been proved. By this we were left with no water. We stayed there until the fall of 1916, then decided to leave as my health was not very good. We had to boil all the house hold water we used or haul it from a well five miles away. When we lived in Idaho Eugene was the water master and also the Justice of peace. He built a canal to water his land and helped settle many disputes about the water. A man was killed over one dispute about the water and Eugene decided to have the state judge take care of that. He did not

want to make the wrong decision. He was a very honest man and he was respected by all.

Some early experiences in his life in Idaho were recorded by his son Roy...While we were living in the dugout, mother got us four children to sleep and went to the garden by the lake which was about one fourth mile away. When she returned Jack had awakened and was gone. We all hunted for him and got all the neighbors to help look for him. A neighbor found him at sundown. Jack had just learned to walk and was so small that the sage brush completely covered all trace of him.

The cabin Eugene built seemed so nice and sunny after living in the dugout while he had been hauling logs for our home. The cabin had two windows and a door. We were grateful for the light.

Eugene asked Horace and Roy what color dogs they would like. Horace wanted a black and white one and Roy wanted a red one. Dad returned with the dogs just like the two had ordered but Roy could not see that a reddish brown dog was red so he named his dog Funny. We had many happy experiences living on our ranch even though we were lonely.

We went by train back to Ephraim and spent the winter living in the upstairs of my brother's home south of Ephraim. We had three sons and three daughters at this time. Eugene stayed on in Idaho disposing of our horses and cattle and household goods. He came to be with us in Feb. 1917, having been to the Uintah basin and contracted to clear and farm a large piece of land west and north of Altonah, Duchesne Co., Utah. He used a rail road tie to clear the brush and added a brush burner made of an old steel toothed harrow, a long chain was fastened to it and the fire scattered and started fires in the brush lying around. In this way he was able to, after brush had been uprooted, burn and clear for farming, as high as twenty acres of ground in a day.

While living on the Indian's lands two more sons and a daughter were born. Then as the Indians were desirous of living on their land he exchanged his contract lease of their land for cattle and moved his family to another Indian farm, the Ben Weir farm, east of Randlett, Utah. The next winter we moved the family into town for school and in the spring moved on to the Pearl Brigham farm between Randlett and Myton. We farmed and gardened and tended cattle during the summer then moved to a place near Randlett for school.

In the spring we moved to the Joseph Jensen farm west of Roosevelt. Eugene having made a bargain with Mr. Jensen to clear the land and get water on it in use for proving up. For which we received twenty acres of land. The work was done but Mr. Jensen failed to prove upon water rights. We moved several times to Colletts and DeFriezes places. It was while on Colletts place that our youngest son, Lester June, caught pneumonia, by running in the cold weather and getting warm then taking his coat undone to cool off. He died 22 December 1924 at the age of six. While we were living in DeFriezes place, Eugene sent me and part of the children to visit my mother and his parents also our brothers and sisters and families in Ephraim and Fayette, Siguard and Glenwood, Utah. On our return we began building a five roomed house on our twenty acres of ground, the title and deed of which Eugene obtained on a tax sale, also the rest of the forty acres. Here we soon had a comfortable home though lacking in modern conveniences it was our own. It was an adobe home for which we made all the bricks ourselves, with Roy's help.

The construction was very good. This home was in a little cove between the hills west of Roosevelt cemetery and north of the highway. It was a fun place to be and many fond and cherished moments were spent there.

The family of Eugene (Chancy Eugene Hill) at this time consisted of the following: M- Chancy Eugene born 9 Sept 1884 died 16 Sept 1958 Provo, Utah F- Hermione Jackson born 25 Nov. 1883 died 9 Oct 1953 Provo, Utah

M- Horace Eugene born 26 July 1906 died 5 Nov 1915 Mud Lake, Idaho (later moved to Fayette, Sanpete, Utah. M- Iran Roy born 14 Mar 1908 Mar. Erma Darley 23 Dec 1960 F- Alta Hermione born 12 Aug 1909 Mar. Welby George Lovell 2 Aug 1937 M- James Jackson Hill born 30 Sep 1910 Mar LaVetta Carter 28 Jan 1946 M- Return George born 26 Mar 1912 Mar Nila Pauline Booth 10 Sep 1940 F- Clara Dinah Crystal Born 3 Feb 1914 Mar Hillard Ruben Broderick 4 Sep 1934 F-Laurel Dorpha born 3 Oct 1915 Mar William Smellie Redd 28 Jan 1946 M- Harold Wayne born 3 Apr 1917 Mar Edith Zella Sundquist 28 July 1949 M- Lester June born 26 Aug 1918 died 22 Dec 1924 F- Eva R L born 5 Mar 1920 Mar William Dean Ford 29 Dec 1940 F- Wanda Maybeth born 12 May 1922 Mar. Max Morgan Daley 11 Feb 1942 F- Izora Faun born 6 Feb 1924 Mar Grant Morgan Bosworth 21 June 1951 F- Joy Wendolyn born 26 July 1925 Mar Garth Earl Adams 3 Oct 1946 F- Gloria RaOla born 4 July 1928 Mar Darrel Dean Lee 6 Mar 1953.

Fourteen children in all, two boys passed away in their youth, leaving an even dozen. Four boys and eight girls. The children attended elementary, High school and seminary in Duchesne and Uintah counties. Six of these graduated from college and three went on missions for the church.

Eugene was a Sunday School worker as well as the Superintendent in Fayette also a ward teacher. In Altonah he was Scout master among other positions of trust. In Roosevelt he was in the Sunday School superintendency, scout master, and ward teacher and other church offices. As a young man he was well loved. He entertained at many young peoples' gatherings with his wonderful gift of singing. He has a lovely tenor voice and at the time of marriage he knew and could sing over 200 songs. His health was never very robust, although he did much and many kinds of hard labor. The large family surely kept him going. He was taken to the hospital in Mar 1953 and passed away 16 Sep 1958. As the family, we pay tribute to a wonderful, honest, trustworthy, and loving Father. We are glad that you were our special father.