

## **Elnora Hull Widdison 1897-1992**

As recalled by Richard S. Widdison,  
Grandson, 2010

Elnora Hull was born in Hooper, Utah on December 14, 1897, the 5th of seven children born to Thomas Hull III and Mary Ann Flueitt. The Thomas Hull family lived in several different homes in the northern part of Hooper, one of them being an adobe structure, and the last one a red brick home which is still standing on their original property.



Elnora attended the Hooper School, graduating from High School in 1918. In 1917 while she was still attending school she was enlisted to teach in the Taylor School, north of Hooper where she often talked of hitching up the wagon and horses for the trip which was some distance from her home. She enjoyed teaching so much that she enrolled at the University of Utah to pursue a teaching degree, however, a young man by the name of Gilbert Pinney Widdison pursued her for her affections; she gave into his proposal and they were married on July 20, 1921. Out of this marriage, seven children were born. In sorrow she buried

her first four children, two daughters who died shortly after birth which were unnamed, one daughter, Doris who lived a few short months before she died, and Irene another daughter who lived to be 2 years of age, before she was taken by an illness from some kind of abnormal obstruction that attacked her internally. Three more children then came, Lenore, Richard G. (known as Dick), and Albert; all living to adulthood, and marrying.

The loss of her sister Loreta (Rheat as she was called), was another sorrow she bore. Out of compassion and love, most every day, she and her mother, Mary Ann would walk the miles from their homes to tend to her 10 motherless children. Rheat's children looked forward each day to the loving care given them by their grandmother and Aunt Nora (as she was called). Elnora had a special love for her grandchildren, spoiling them whenever possible. Dick and Shirley's son Rick (Ricky as he was called) spent most of his childhood at his Grandma's house, as he lived next door. Albeit's children, although they did not live close by were not left out in her attentions, and then, when Gilbert was born to Lenore she was elated, as Lenore had waited many years to have a child. But sorrow was to touch her life, once again, when Albert, along with his young son and daughter, were burned to death in their home when it caught fire while they lay sleeping; leaving behind his wife and daughter Wendy who were not at home at the time of the fire.

Teachers were always in great demand, and when the opportunity arose, Elnora turned again towards teaching as the Widdison family could also use the extra income, as well, to help with their

financial needs in an up and down farm economy. Besides it gave to her a sense of purpose. She did not mind the long hours of preparation required. Her teaching talents were put to use teaching Kindergarten and First Grade in the Taylor, Roy, and Hooper Elementary Schools. The students loved and adored Elnora; she was well respected as being an outstanding teacher by the administration, as well, earning many teaching awards.

On November 28, 1951, Gilbert, her husband, after a short illness which the doctors thought was the flu, died; this was a sudden and unexpected shock to the family, bringing Elnora another sorrow to bear. Her brother, Harve, suggested to her that she might consider returning to College and achieve her former goal of getting her Teaching Degree. He egged her on to do this with much encouragement; telling her that she was a person with the abilities to achieve at this endeavor, even though she was at a more advanced age. So with this encouragement



she returned to the University of Utah and earned her B.S. Degree in Education, all the while continuing to teach school. Upon totaling 32 years in the teaching profession; her students included 1st, 2nd,

and even 3rd generations. It would be amazing to know how many hundreds, if not thousands of lives she touched in her teaching career. Even after retiring she was often asked to substitute teach, and she always accepted.

In her retirement, Elnora spent hours upon hours piecing together and making quilts from the polyester material scraps brought to her by her niece Kathryn Simpson Penrod retrieved from her sewing job, which otherwise would be thrown away. She also was adept at crocheting and knitting. But with the many boxes of scrap material from Kathryn, a quilt was always set up in her living room, and that is where you could find her along with her daughter Lenore whenever you dropped by for a visit.

Her membership in the Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter Day Saints meant a great deal to her; she was active in many different callings. She served in the Relief Society Presidency, and taught Sunday school and Teacher Training courses. She was a volunteer at the Ogden Family History Center for 15 years, served as a missionary in the Ogden Regional Mission from June 1961 to August 1963, and was a faithful member of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers.

- Elnora passed away on May 12 1992 at the age of 94 years, outliving all but one child, her son Dick, at the time, (he is now deceased). Surviving are three grandchildren, Wendy, Gilbert Kap, and Richard S. Widdison, and several great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. She now rests peacefully among her family and friends at the Hooper Cemetery.