

**A History of  
ELVA ANDERSON FINLINSON  
1918-2006**



Elva Anderson was born on a calm, cool, 27th day of February 1918, in the southwest bedroom of her parents three room house. She had red hair and blue eyes.

Her Grandfather, Joseph Smith Anderson, and Great-Great Grandmother, Eliza Gill Hartley Couch were among the first group of settlers in Oak City the fall of 1868. Because of their being such industrious and hardworking people, it is no wonder that following generations acquired this trait.

Her father, Jens Franklin Anderson, was a farmer, and was tall and slender with blonde hair and blue eyes. His temperament was quite mild-mannered and conservative. He was a hard worker and a good provider who raised good crops of melons, vegetables, apples and chickens to sell.

Her mother, Eliza Ellen Matilda Hartley, was medium build, with dark hair and blue eyes. She was strong willed, kind and thoughtful. She was a good storyteller and teacher of the gospel.

Elva was the tenth child and fourth girl in the family, and so she received an abundance of attention. Philomelia Lyman Lovell was the midwife that delivered her. Twenty-three months earlier, twins, Eda and Ada, had been born, so Eliza had her hands full now with another baby, but

she was happy to be getting some girls after so many boys. The children's names are: Loy, Lawrence, Leroy, Norvel Reuben (who died at two and a half months), Osmer Lars, Alice (who died at six months), Carl "F", the twins, Ada and Eda, and now Elva.

Joseph Smith Anderson blessed her and gave her a name on 5 May 1918. For two and a half years, Elva thrived on being the center of attention. On the 23rd day of August 1920, she and the twins, along with their "guardian", Carl, came in the house from playing to find a new baby had arrived. Her name was Anne and at first Elva was jealous, but soon learned to love her.

The family pet was a little duck that would follow the kids around and play with them. They had some fun times with it.

During the summer of the next year, Elva was three, the family added two rooms onto the east side of the house, a basement underneath, a back porch, and cement floor on the front porch. Here again Elva is characteristic of her mother in that she was intrigued by the laborious task of the horse pulling a "scraper" and the men with their shovels digging the basement. As the work was progressing, Elva would have to get closer and closer to the edge in order to be able to see the progress at the bottom. One day she went toppling in, scaring her but not hurting anything seriously. From then on she was to watch from the window, which is now the doorway into the addition.

As the work of digging the basement was nearing an end, the men uncovered a large boulder. They had no idea of how to or means to lift the heavy rock out of the hole, so Eliza just told them to leave it and cement over it like a table in the corner.

When the remodeling was finished, the family very much enjoyed having a living room, a new kitchen with lots of spacious cabinets. They had replaced the old coal oil lamp with a gas light that had bulbs, which had to be pumped with a little pump to make them burn brighter. Later on when electricity was available, they purchased a wonderful invention, a refrigerator! (As well as new lights.)

The most enjoyable item in the remodeling was the new "heating plant" that was in the basement to keep the home nice and toasty warm on cool days and nights.

A happy memory for Elva is when, on her sixth birthday, she visited with her sisters, Eda and Ada, at school. The teacher was Miss Margaret Walker. She made Elva feel very special and gave her a pencil and paper

to write on. In the fall when Elva was enrolled in school, Miss Walker was Mrs. Roper.

That same year for Christmas, one of Elva's gifts was a beautiful china doll. Ann was playing with it and to keep Elva from taking it away, wheeled around and sent the doll flying, shattering it against the wall, and Elva's heart along with it.

On March 31, 1924, another baby arrived in the family. This one was a boy, and was named Marlow. By this time Elva was old enough that she could help with the new little one. She remembers her grandfather Joseph Smith Anderson, coming to see the new baby and commenting, "He's a good boy, now you have your dozen", and making such a fuss over him.

Baptism day for Elva came on 11 April 1926, and was performed by her second cousin, Wilbert Anderson. Her age group was the first to be baptized in the new baptismal font in the church house after remodeling earlier. Before the font was installed, baptisms were performed in the creek above town. Some men dammed off the water to make a place deep enough. Elva remembers riding in the buggy to see Eda and Ada baptized there.

During the hot summer days the kids in town would go swimming in this spot. One day Elva's mother had told her and her sisters not to go swimming as she was going to be gone, but they talked Leroy's wife, Martha, into going with them, thinking that with her along it would be alright to go. They had a great time swimming and Elva dove in one last time before heading home. She hit her head on a rock and split the skin open. She held a towel to it as it bled quite a bit as she walked the three or so blocks home. Elva was already in bed when her mother came home. She checked on Elva and put some camphorated oil and dressing on the wound.

In February 1927, Elva had gone to school and felt a bit ill. When she returned home at the end of the day, as usual, she went into the kitchen. She was met with Eda exclaiming, "Oh mama, look at Elva!" Her mother quickly put a blanket about Elva, putting her to bed, and telling her to go to sleep. When she awoke, her mother told her that she had the measles, and that Carl had them also.

Elva enjoyed "grade school". Her classmates were: Verla Roper, Lem Lovell, Joseph Wells, Verl Jacobsen, Alta Stout, Eva Elder, Nelda Talbot, Isabel Finlinson, Amos Anderson, Ray Lovell and Glen Nielson. She and her friends had many fun times at birthday parties and Sunday School parties which were usually held by the big cottonwood trees down from Earl Harris' home. Their favorite games, at home, school or parties, were: kick the can, annie-I-over, hop scotch, marbles, volleyball, follow-the-leader, hide and seek, and dare base. Quite often they would get together and play on some large trees around town that had been blown over in the cyclone, which occurred in April of 1920.

Elva was around ten years old when Dr. Hinckley came to their house to remove the tonsils of Eda, Ada, Carl, and Elva, as well as the neighbor children. She remembers playing around waiting her turn to get up on the kitchen table to have them extracted. (At age 16, she again had to have a tonsillectomy at Fillmore.)

In school, Elva was quick with spelling and had great fun participating in the spelling bees. The class would divide into two teams and would stand with one team lined along one wall and the other team on the opposite wall facing them. When someone misspelled a word they had to sit down. This would go on until one person was left standing. Usually the last four to be left standing were: Elva, Lem Lovell, Glen Nielson and Alta Stout. They enjoyed the competition.

A typical day at school would begin with classes lining up outside according to grade and would mark time with their feet to phonograph music until everyone was in place, then the teacher would give the signal and everyone would march into the building to their rooms.

Primary was another fun experience for Elva. She remembers the 50th year anniversary, and to celebrate the Jubilee, they rode on a hayrack pulled by horses to Hinckley, which was about twenty miles west of Oak City, just east of Delta, they had to stop to get a drink and water the horses at the well. At Hinckley, the Primary children danced and marched in the program, which was held in a large field. Marching and dancing was such an exciting time. Because they had to awaken early that morning to make the trip and arrive in Hinckley on time, they were exhausted at the end of the festivities that evening and slept all the way home.

Elva remembers how exciting it was to perform in the annual Christmas Eve plays put on by the Primary children each year and weaving the May Pole each May 1st. She graduated from Primary the summer of 1932. At that time they were 14 years old when graduated instead of 12 as they are today. In the fall she began to attend the YWMIA and Mary C. Finlinson was her Beehive teacher.

Elva received an award of a picture of the First Presidency of the Church for 100% attendance at Sunday School for two years.

Quite often during the summers, the families in town would pack up and go to the canyon for a week of "rusticating". Eliza would take her quilting frames and make quilts or would take her sewing machine and do some family sewing. Their favorite camping spot was in the White Horse area of Oak City canyon.

In May of 1932, Elva graduated from eighth grade in Oak City along with her classmates and friends. The following fall she began riding the bus 14 miles to Delta High School in Delta, Utah. During her high school days she had fun. Her best friends were Leala Jensen from Sugarville, and Violet Sorenson from Leamington.

When Elva was in her early teens, the family bought a Model T. They were going to Fillmore and Carl was driving. The road went over a hill and on the way up the car quit, forcing them to back down the hill. They all thought this was funny, except Carl.

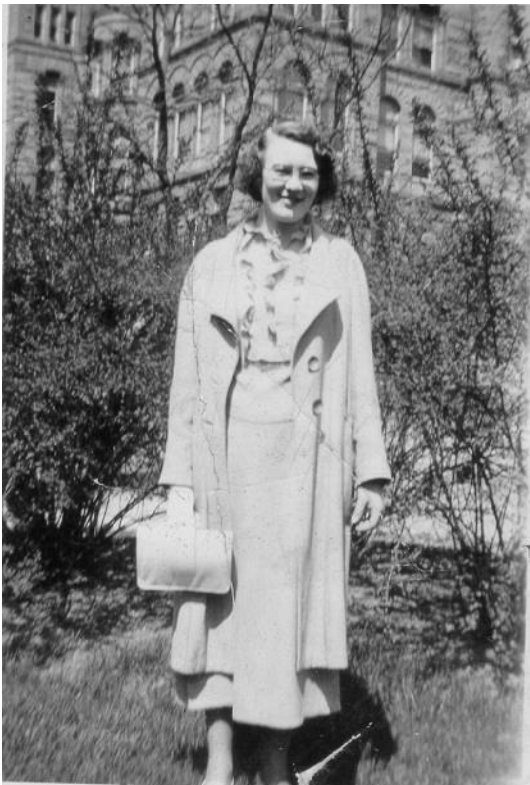
November 22, 1932 was a day of great grief for Elva and her family. Her father died in a hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah. He had bone cancer and had suffered with terrible pain for several years. He would often stand over a hot stove trying to bring a little relief from the pain. No electric heating pads in those days.

At an early age Elva learned to work. She would take turns with Eda and Ada at washing the dishes. Her father didn't think the corral was any place for girls, but Elva and Carl would herd the cattle to the fields for grazing. She along with the rest of the family would pick melons, apples, and vegetables to sell.

As a senior in high school, she began working for Edgar Jeffery's family in Delta. They had six children, four of whom were preschoolers. She lived with them that winter and the money she earned helped pay her school expenses. Mr. Jeffrey was the Stake Patriarch and for Elva's 18th birthday, he gave her a patriarchal blessing.

Seminary was held in the basement of the old first ward in Delta. Elva attended regularly and enjoyed the lessons taught by Ward Moody. She graduated a couple of weeks before her high school graduation, 14 May 1936.

The snow that year was extremely plentiful. The road between Delta and Oak City (which took a different route than today), was drifted full of snow and the men took shovels to dig it out. It was higher on each side than the school bus.



The next spring (1937) Elva went to live with and care for her Aunt Irene Carlson who was quite ill. She lived on the outskirts of Salt Lake City. After her aunt was well again, Elva gained employment at Pykes Clothing Manufacturing Company as a presser, and moved into downtown Salt Lake with another aunt, Lillian Reid. She lived just five blocks from Pykes, so Elva would walk with her cousins, Lillian and Ethel, who also worked there.

When in Salt Lake, Marvin R. Finlinson began to "sport" Elva. He was from Oak City also and was living with his sister Amy and family in the Cottonwood area and working for John Robbins family there. Elva had known him all of her life.

Marvin and Elva continued to date through the summer, going to shows in Salt Lake or to the canyon to dances, or to Libby Roper's to parties in Oak City. On one of these such dates, Marvin very politely said, "Let's get married." Elva agreed, and they decided to move back to Oak City so Marvin could help his father with the farm and Elva could make the necessary preparations for the wedding.

With \$25.00 in their pockets and a \$5.00 wedding band, Elva and Marvin drove his parents old black Chevy to Salt Lake City and were married on 1 September 1937 by Nicholas G. Smith in the Salt Lake Temple. Afterwards, they were permitted to climb the spiral staircase of the temple. They were told by the workers there that their marriage

now was one step toward exaltation, and that we gain exaltation one step at a time as they had climbed the staircase one step at a time.



That evening, Aunt Lillie gave a wedding party for them at her home. They had a very nice time, and afterward honeymooned at a motel.

The next day they traveled to Oak City for a good old fashioned wedding reception and dance that evening. And of course as was the custom, they were put in the back of an old pickup and driven around with cars following honking horns, and making all sorts of racket. This was called "shivereeing" the newlyweds.

Marvin's parents, George E. Finlinson and Mary C. Roper, let them fix up the two east rooms upstairs in their home for an apartment. They worked and soon had it looking very cozy.

In November, Marvin and Elva took their "honeymoon" trip to Rexburg, Idaho. Marvin's two sisters, Angie and Lucy, and their families lived there.

Soon after Marvin and Elva had settled into their roles as husband and wife the Primary President, Ruth B. Stephenson, and the Second Counselor, Harriet W. Finlinson came to their home and extended a call to Elva to teach in that organization. She taught mostly Blazers and other boys classes from that time until 1951 having a short break with each of the five children born during that period.

Elva helped with the finances by working for ladies around the town. She worked for Mamie Wells Lovell who had cancer, and Martha Dutson, Silva Harris, and Bessie Dutson when they had babies. She worked for Alan and Virginia Lovell when Virginia was expecting twins. Soon after this, Elva had to quit working for others as she was expecting a child.

This child was born 12 January 1939, a boy, and they named him Jerald A. He was born in the northeast room downstairs of the Finlinson home. Marvin's mother was the nurse that helped Dr. M.E. Bird bring him into the world.

When Elva was expecting their second child, Mary and George let Marvin and Elva have the two east downstairs rooms and built another bedroom on the front of the house.

Lois Ellen was born in the north room of these two rooms on 31 July 1941. She was tiny and cute with such fair white skin, a beautiful delicate girl.

In 1943, Elva was called to serve as a visiting teacher in the Relief Society. She accepted the call.

Another boy was born to Marvin and Elva on 9 September 1944. He was very small and looked like a "shriveled up old man." Under Elva's loving care, he soon grew and doubled his weight in two months. Jack was born in the hospital that Dr. Bird had founded by his home in Delta.

When Cordell was born, Marvin and Elva had to make the fourteen mile trip to Delta on unpaved bumpy roads a lot faster than they would have liked to. Marvin's brother, Esdras, had the car so they had to take the old Chevy Truck. The truck almost took flight as they hurried on their way, arriving inside the hospital door when he made his grand entrance. This was 7 October 1946. Shirley Harris was the nurse then and was such a great help and a grand lady. In those days it was the practice for the mothers, after delivery, to stay in the hospital for ten days. They would get so weak from lying around that it took extra time to recover, after leaving the hospital.

The following summer the county oiled the road between Delta and Oak City and the city oiled the roads in town.

15 September 1951 was the day a little girl arrived into the family. She was the largest baby born to them and she was not the delicate child that her sister was. Marvin wanted her named Ella, after a very dear family friend. Lois suggested Trudy. So Ella Trudy it was.

When Trudy was just one month old, Elva had to have an appendectomy and as she was nursing a baby, the hospital staff let the baby come along for the hospital stay. Because the baby had been out into the world from the hospital, she was kept in the kitchen instead of the nursery.

In June 1952, Elva was called to serve as the first year Beehive teacher in the YWMIA. She served in this position until the fall of 1956, when she was released to have another baby.

Preston was born 29 December 1956. Marvin had been present when all the children were born or when anyone in the family had tonsillectomies or other operations, but as Preston was taking so long being born, he had

gone back to Oak City to check on the other children and do the morning chores. By the time he arrived back at the hospital he didn't have enough time to get prepared to enter the delivery room. Lois was madly involved in the teen scene at that time and thought the new baby should be named Elvis Presley Finlinson. Elva didn't care for that name, but it caused her to think of the name Preston.

Another boy was born on 18 November 1958. He had HAIR! Lots of dark thick hair. None of the children before had been born with anything but peach fuzz. He also had blue eyes and a cute little round face. When Marvin took the family to the hospital to see him, Preston and Trudy had to stay outside because they weren't twelve. The nurse brought him to a window so they could see him too. When he was brought home, Trudy knew that the nurse had sent the wrong baby.

When Arvin was two, Elva was called to be Nursery teacher in the Junior Sunday School. The position of teacher was carefully done by her until February 1975 when she was released. Shortly after being called to teach the Nursery class, Elva was asked to be the Nursery Leader in Relief Society. She has enjoyed associating with the little children of the ward. She was released from this calling 1 June 1979.

In the fall of 1961, Marvin and Elva had the opportunity to have the telephone switchboard moved to their home so they could have a little extra income. It was placed in the northeast room downstairs. The telephone system was very unique. There were 48 phones on one line. When someone wanted to call, they would take the receiver off the hook and on the opposite side of the telephone there was a crank with which the person would crank so many long rings and so many short rings according to who the person was calling. "Central" as the main switchboard was called, was one long ring. Marvin and Elva had a separate phone installed for those who wanted to come to the house and make a private long distance call. They also had two sets of bells installed outside so they could hear the phone. One set of bells was connected to the Oak City line and another set with a different tone was connected to the Delta line. Cordell and Trudy thought it was great fun to operate the switchboard, so were quite often left to take over for Marvin and Elva. Together, the four would handle approximately 400 calls a month. Because of their dependability, the number of long distance calls increased considerably. They were able to continue in this line of work until April 1966, when dial phones were installed and the operators in Delta began handling Oak City's calls.

That October, Cordell was called to serve a mission to Brazil for the Church, and so they sought ways to help support him in the mission field. They decided to do upholstery work. Marvin had learned this trade while working at the school bus garage in Delta. They never had to advertise other than word of mouth and their own good works. They purchased a machine and within one year had done enough work to completely pay for it. They did everything from bailing aprons and tractor seats, to household furniture. People would come from all parts of the state to have work done by them. After Marvin retired, his health wouldn't permit him to do this line of work any longer, and Elva couldn't do it alone so gradually wouldn't accept any more work to do.

Elva and Marvin helped his brothers and sisters care for his mother in her aged years. She still lived in the west side of the house and depended on Marvin and Elva when the other children were not near. She died on 20 July 1963, and the home was given to Marvin and Elva.

In January 1965, Loy, Elva's bachelor brother who had been living with their mother, died and Eliza was moved into the west two rooms of Molly and Marlow's home. Elva would take an evening meal to her mother, and would help her get ready for bed every night until her death on 20 October 1966.

In the spring of 1970, Marvin retired from work at the Millard County School bus garage in Delta after sixteen years working there. This was an adjustment for both Marvin and Elva. Marvin's health was getting bad and under doctor's care couldn't do certain things or eat certain foods. It is hard to say which he hated worse, the not doing or the not eating.

On 30 January 1973, Gloria, Cordell's wife of almost four years, died in the Cedar City Hospital of a blood clot in her lungs. This left Cordell alone to care for their year old son. He was transferred with his employment to Salt Lake City, Utah and asked Elva to care for the little boy, Dustin.

After all but the two youngest children had left the "coop", Elva went to work again doing what she does best, caring for the elderly and cleaning house. She worked for Ranae Christensen, a high school English teacher, and cared for Mae Shipley until her death and George Anderson until his family had him moved to a rest home.

During the summer of 1977, Marvin's health was continuing to grow worse, and he couldn't breathe very

well. They had rented a hospital bed to have him sleep semi-sitting up and hopefully be able to breathe better at night. 6 September 1977, Elva awoke before Marvin as usual, and went outside to do the chores and some gardening. Marvin usually came out to help her finish, and when he did not, she decided something was wrong. When she returned to the house she discovered he had passed away in his sleep.

After Marvin's passing, Elva kept busy with the responsibilities of the home and farm. With the help of Jack and Valene who live the nearest, she does her best to keep the farm up.

Elva always planted and cared for a large, productive, vegetable garden, and froze much of what she raised. Although most of the family is living elsewhere now, she still purchases many bushels of fruit to bottle each year saying, "Next year we may not get any."

Elva takes quiet pride in being an American, and loves her country and liberty almost as much as she loves her God. She does all she feels she can to preserve her great heritage.

When asked if she could live her life over again what would she live differently, she replied, "I'd still be me so I'd probably do it the same way." Her personal philosophy of life in general is, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and her personal philosophy is "if you want anything done right, you have to do it yourself." The most admired attribute she likes in others is that of genuine friendliness.

Both Marvin and Elva can take unto themselves some credit for the accomplishments of their posterity. All the married children have married fine spouses and are raising good children.

Elva passed away on 2 December 2006 in her Oak City home and is buried in the Oak City Cemetery.

To conclude this history of Elva Anderson Finlinson, I feel it appropriate to quote from the Book of Proverbs, chapter 31:10-31.

Who, can find a virtuous woman? For her price is  
far above rubies.  
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,  
so that he shall have no need of spoil.  
She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly  
with her hands.  
She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat  
unto her household.  
She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit  
of her hands she planteth a vineyard.  
She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth  
her arms.  
.....her candle goeth not out by night.  
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; Yea,  
she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.  
She is not afraid of the snow for her household  
are clothed with scarlet.  
Strength and honour are her clothing; and  
she shall rejoice in time to come.  
She looketh well to the ways of her household, and  
eateth not the bread of idleness.  
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman  
that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.  
Her children arise up, and call her blessed;  
her husband also, and he praiseth her.  
Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let  
her own works praise her in the gates.

This history was completed by her daughter, Ella Trudy Finlinson Tesch, June 1980. Re-edited by her son Arvin, July 2017.



## Elva Anderson Finlinson

*February 27, 1918 ~ December 2, 2006*

Elva Anderson Finlinson, age 88, of Oak City, passed away on December 2, 2006 in Oak City, Utah. She was born February 27, 1918 in Oak City, Utah to Jense Franklin and Eliza Hartley Anderson. She married Marvin R Finlinson on September 1, 1937 in the Salt Lake Temple. He died September 6, 1977.

Elva was a life long resident of Oak City. She loved being a wife and mother. She enjoyed working in her garden. She was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints where she worked in all the organizations including Relief Society, MIA, Junior Sunday School, and Primary.

Elva is survived by children: Jerald (Janet) Finlinson, Ammon, Idaho; Jack (Valene) Finlinson, Oak City, Utah ; Cordell (Terri) Finlinson, Layton, Utah; Trudy (Garth) Tesch, Liberty, Utah; Preston (Alice) Finlinson, Oak City, Utah; Arvin Finlinson, Oak City, Utah; 35 grandchildren; 47 great-grandchildren; 2 great-great-grandchildren; son-in-law: Peter Therianos, West Valley City, Utah; brother: Marlow (Molly) Anderson, Oak City, Utah. She was preceded in death by daughter: Lois; 4 grandsons; 1 great-great-grandson; 3 daughters-in-law; 6 brothers; 4 sisters.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday December 9, 2006 at 11 am in the Oak City Chapel. Friends may call at the church on Saturday from 9:30 to 10:45 am. Burial will be in the Oak City Cemetery under the direction of the Nickle Mortuary.