

## Charles and Nancy Wilson

Source: *The Family of Augustus and Eva Stevenson*. 1982. Compiled by Faye Bertrand, Jackie Dobbins, Thelma Duncan, Helen Martin, Jeanne Reed, Judy Sorenson, Marie Wilson. p. 26–31.

[This entire volume, with much more information about Charles and Nancy's Wilson and Stevenson relatives, can be viewed on line.](#)

Bracketed revisions and clarifications [ ] by Peter Martin, October 2022

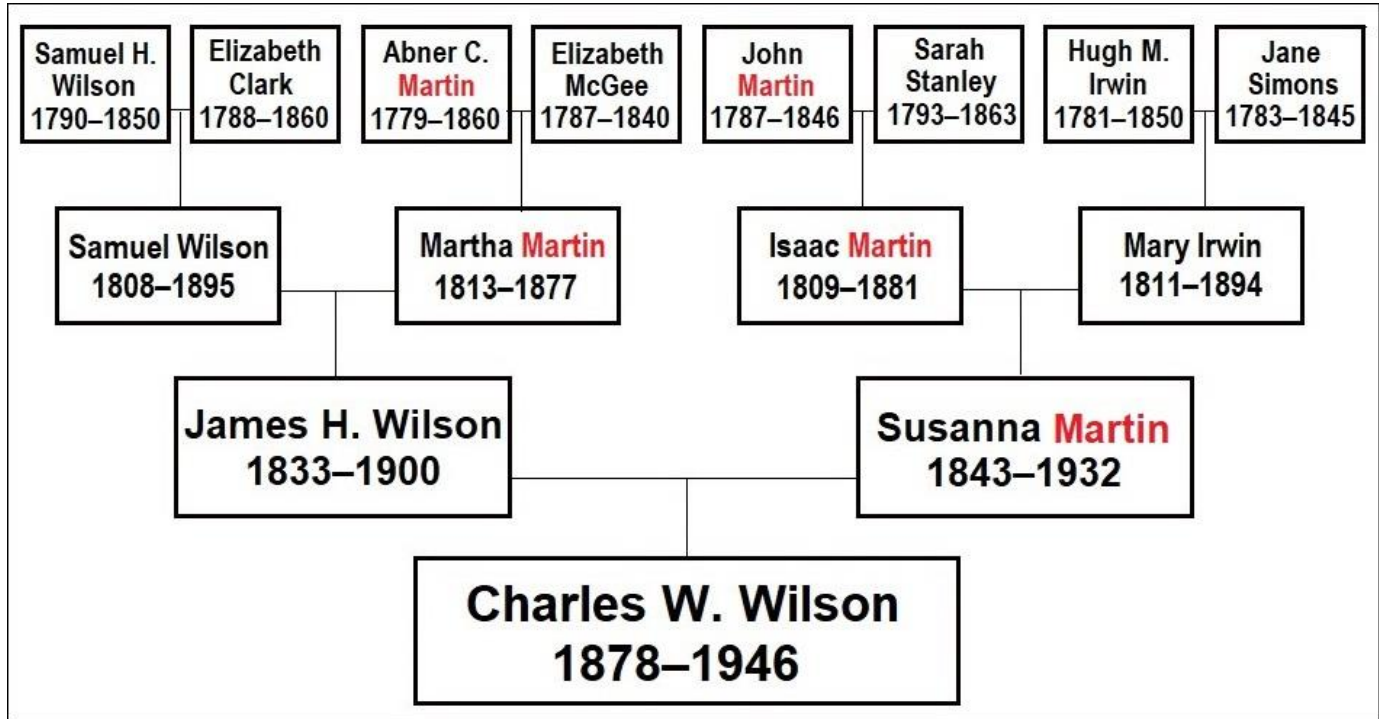
Nancy Ethel Stevenson was born January 21, 1892, in Mud Creek southwest of Mancos, Colorado. She was 5 ft. 4" tall, dark brown hair, brown eyes and weighed between 120 and 125 pounds in her younger years. She attended school at Mancos, a short time at Montrose, and Cortez. Nancy was one of four of the first graduating class at Cortez High School. During her High School days, she rode four miles to school, horseback. Her Dad and sister Lottie passed away the same year she graduated, a few days apart [Feb. 1909]. During the time Nancy was in high school her family lived four miles north of Cortez. She was living there when she met Charles.

Charles Wesley Wilson was born November 3, 1878, in Sydney, Iowa. His ancestors [on both his father's and his mother's sides] were great frontiersmen named Martin. [See chart on following page for clarification of Charles's ancestry.] They [his father's Martin ancestors] came from England and settled in New Hampshire in 1635. Later descendants moved to New Jersey and then over to Pennsylvania. The men fought Indians and served in the Revolutionary War. In 1797 a number of Martin families, including John Martin, Grandfather of [Charles' paternal grandmother] Martha Martin Wilson, moved to the Ohio River Valley. Edward Martin,



**Charles Wesley Wilson, about 1902.**

great-grandfather of [Charles' mother] Susanna Martin Wilson, lived in this same valley in 1805. The Martins established homes, and participated in the formation of local government, schools, churches, post offices, and fought in the War of 1812. Charles' [paternal] grandparents were both born in Virginia; but at an early age moved with their parents to Ohio in 1816. Abner



**Ancestry chart for Charles Wilson emphasizing the two Martin lines from which he is descended.**

Martin [father of Charles' paternal grandmother Martha Martin Wilson] purchased 160 acres in Ohio for \$640. Samuel Wilson and Martha [Martin] were married February 22, 1831, in Ohio. Charles' father, James Harvey [Wilson], was their first born. [James' siblings] Joseph, Josiah, and Susan were also born in Ohio. This family moved to Illinois where Olive was born; then to Fremont County, Iowa in 1854, where Marietta was born a year later.

Charles' mother, Susanna, moved with her parents, Isaac and Mary Martin, to Fremont County Iowa from Forest City, Missouri. Isaac was born in Ohio and was a Methodist-Episcopal Minister. His other children included: Sarah, Elza, Jane, John Irwin, Joseph Wesley, Mary, and Lucinda. James Harvey Wilson and Susanna Martha

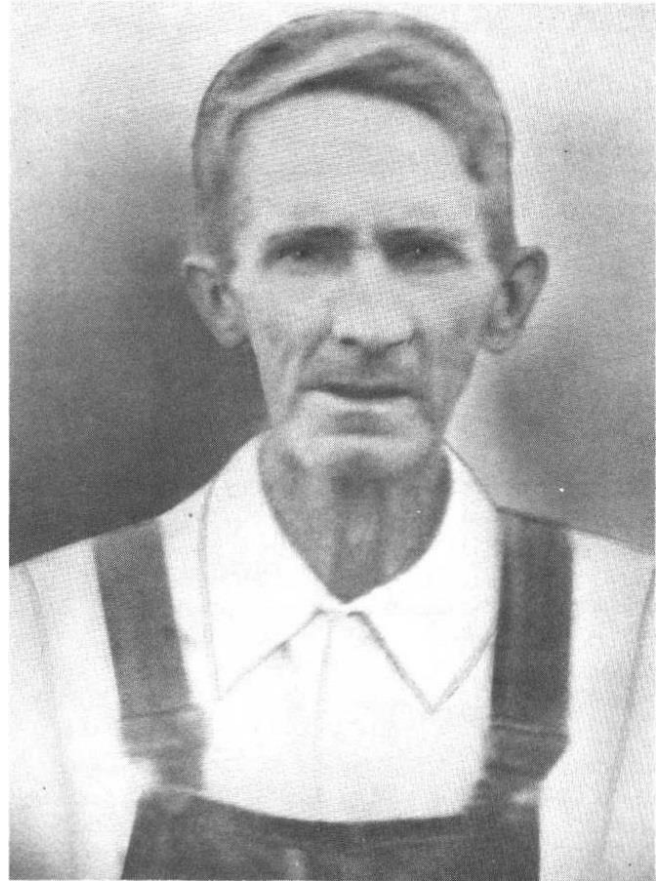
Martin were married April 5th, 1860, in Sidney, Iowa, by Isaac Martin. Along came the Civil War. James was unable to fight due to a hearing loss, but helped haul dead soldiers off the battlefields. Josiah Elza was their first child; Martha (Mattie); Isaac and Samuel, twins (Sam died at ten months); Mary; Olive Mae; Clara; Charles; and James Lewis followed. James Harvey was a farmer in this very productive southwest Iowa county [Fremont County]. He died suddenly in 1900, at the age of 67. A few [Two] years later Susanna ~~sold the farm~~ [left the farm in care of her sons Elza and Isaac] and moved to Paonia, Colorado where several of her brothers and sisters lived. Charles and Lewis accompanied her. Some-time later [1906] Charles came to Montezuma County. Susanna remained in Paonia until her death in 1932 at the age of 80.

Charles and Nancy were married January 25th, 1911, at the Stevenson home four miles north of Cortez. Their first home was four miles north and one-half mile west of Cortez. Dorothy May was born there February 6, 1912.

They homesteaded the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  sec. 29, T38N, R17W, two miles west and a half mile south of Yellow Jacket in 1911, moving there into a tent while building a one-room house of sawed lumber 16 $\times$ 16. There Elsie Florence was born November 7, 1913. Charles gave notice on final proof of his Sec. 29 property on December. 29, 1915.

Charles and Nancy moved back to north of Cortez and were living there when Marjorie Mary was born October 8, 1915, then moved back to Yellow Jacket, where Paul was born March 11, 1917, and Charles was then a mail carrier in Cortez. While Charles carried mail, Nancy and the children lived the required time on the homestead in order to prove up the homestead. The entire family moved back to the homestead to improve the land and to make their home. Robert was born March 15th, 1918, but he died at birth. He was buried on the northwest corner of the homestead. James Everett was born March 6th, 1919.

The survey was off about 100 yards. In 1919 they re-surveyed and the house, barn, cellar and chicken house had to be moved east 100 yards. Arthur Augustus was born January 18, 1921. Nancy Ethel was born November 17, 1922. Nellie Evangeline was born September 1, 1925. Samuel Glen was born August 14, 1927. Olive Faye was born July 17, 1929. Lawrence Lewis was born August 4th, 1931. Charles worked off and



**Charles Wesley Wilson, July 1943.**

on at the Tomboy and Smuggler mines until 1928. He worked at Rico the fall of 1928. He was winter guard at the Standard Oil Well on the Glade [a ravine about 9 miles northeast of Dove Creek] for two winters. While going back to this job, he was caught in deep snow the coldest night ever recorded in Montezuma County. It was 35 below zero and he was on snowshoes. He survived the night with just frosted toes, but got blood poisoning from the frost bite. He also sawed wood for a while north of McPhee. He got on W.P.A. at the Lowry Ruins for one day, he broke his legs and had to quit. He farmed the remaining years until his health required his retirement. During the time he was working away from home, the family

acquired milk cows, chickens, pigs and work horses. The land was farmed with horses until 1937 when an F-20 Farmall tractor was purchased.

The country was overrun with rabbits and wild cattle, which furnished the homesteaders with meat. One time Charles, Tom Gilliland, and Hod Stevenson were arrested for butchering wild cattle but were released for lack of evidence. School was held in the Fairview School House. The building was

built in 1911 of logs and was used until 1927 when it was closed for four years for lack of money. During these four years, school was held at Four Corners for the two districts. In 1932 Fairview School reopened and stayed open until the new school house was built in 1939. Fairview closed in about 1954 when the district was consolidated.

Charles Wesley Wilson died June 30, 1946.



**1920. Back row left to right: Charles Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Baby Jim Wilson, Aunt Ann Wilson, Aunt May Wright. Bottom row left to right: Paul Wilson, Marjorie Crowley, Elsie Chaffin, Dorothy Wilson.**



**Aug 1 1958 — Seated left to right: Arthur Wilson, Paul Wilson, James Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Glen Wilson and Larry Wilson. Back row left to right: Faye Bertrand, Marjorie Crowley, Elsie Chaffin, Dorothy Wood, Nellie Bradfield and Nancy Conrad.**

## **NANCY STEVENSON WILSON [1892–1975]**

*By Faye Bertrand*

Mom to her family, Aunt Nan to almost everybody in the community, hard work, hard times, a twinkle in her eye, a laugh, a teaser, the need to help anybody having problems, seldom complaining. Nancy had a special love for her garden, flowers, books, games, pranks, and wonderberry pies for her son-in-laws. A typical day for her was, to get up early in the morning, to work in the garden, orchard or, flower beds. Her flower beds were off limits to everybody and could raise beautiful flowers with very little water.

She furnished many flowers for funerals and different occasions in the community. She sewed for her large family, always trying to make new dresses for special occasions, especially Christmas. Washdays were hard, everything washed on a board for 10 or 11 people for years. Water had to be hauled from a well, carried in to wash, and carried out again. The clothes were scrubbed, rinsed twice and the white things boiled on the stove until white, water was used sparingly. White sheets were often used for



bedspreads, a white tablecloth on Sunday, clean scarfs on all of the furniture and all of this starched stiff, sprinkled and ironed with flatirons heated on the stove. Her first gas washer was a blessing even if it was noisy and stubborn at rimes. Nancy's house was always open to friends, relatives, and neighbors. Sunday dinners were an affair, and she would cook for 30 or 40 people a lot of the time, some invited some dropins, but all welcome. In the summer, after dinner everybody would go to the ballgame. She would make a big freezer of ice cream and a cake to be eaten in the evening, anybody welcome to come help eat it. Ice for the ice cream was cut with saws at Narraguenip lake and stored in the ice house under sawdust for summer use. Most of the food was raised at home, everything preserved from the garden that could be, potatoes, squash, carrots, and apples stored in the cellar for winter use. Four or five hogs were butchered at one tune. The hams and bacons were cured in a brine in a barrel, the fat rendered for lard for frying and baking. The cracklins and fat left from rendering was made into a white lye soap, the remains was made into an awful smelling, thin, strong, black soap to be used on the wooden floors and greasy overalls.

Nancy canned beef and venison to be used in the summer time. She saved every edible part of an animal that could be used, even the tongue, which was cleaned, boiled, peeled, pickled and delicious. The heads were cleaned, boiled and made into head-cheese. Nancy raised chickens for eggs and to eat. She would make a waterglass brine to drop eggs into for winter use. She had



**Nancy Stevenson Wilson, 1972, 80th birthday.**

fryers in the summer, and could pull a chickens head off with a broom handle over its neck, a foot on each end of the handle, in less than a second. The old hens were used for chicken and noodles, chicken and dump-lins and canned for winter. Fruit was not plentiful, but her cellar shelves were lined with jars of fruit that had been hauled in from Grand Junction or McElmo Canyon.

Nancy had a love for games, the 500 card game being her favorite. She loved to dance and encouraged her family to dance, which most of them do. She would have 500 parties and often would have a game going until sunup. She would host 500 at oyster

soup parties at the schoolhouse, with every family bringing a can of oysters and some milk to go in it. She could play cards nearly as well at eighty as at forty. Books were encouraged and always had a supply in her home. At her death, she had a huge collection that anyone was welcome to if they would return them. Holidays were always special, Christmas being her favorite. Everyone had a gift from her including the many grandchildren she had in later years. April Fools meant she had to sew the boys' pants together so they couldn't get them on. She would stay up at night and wait for them to go to sleep, she would then steal the pants and sew the legs up good, or she would get up early and milk the cows and not tell anybody, until whoever tried to milk later couldn't get any milk, then would holler "April Fool." Her tricks were unlimited. Halloween was costume day, usually being a witch or ghost and would come around the house yelling like a banshee. She could scare the wits out of anyone. Easter was the first picnic of the year, if possible. She always wanted her family home for holidays, but one of the big things of the year was a Stevenson family get together. Nancy was always willing to help a sick relative, neighbor or friend in illness and had a huge store of remedies in her mind. The first thing she did for an upset stomach was a round of callophine followed by a big dose of castor oil; mustard plasters for croup and pneumonia; drops of whiskey on sugar for colic; fat salty bacon and turpentine or bread and milk poultices to draw infection; tea leaf poultices for sore eyes; and a mixture of sage honey and vinegar or lemon juice for a sore mouth. She would peel the lining from

an egg shell to put on bad burns, and could quiet a fussy baby by putting its feet close to an open oven door to warm them. Everybody had to drink sassafras tea in the spring to cleanse the blood. Sulphur and lard was used for itch and was also eaten for something. A dresser was used as a crib if the need arose.

Nancy had a cunning way of putting people in their place with a few words usually indirectly. Some of her favorite sayings were "the pot shouldn't call the kettle black"; "sticks and stones may break your bones but names will never hurt you", if you were called a name that wasn't to your liking. "What's good for the gander is good for the goose," if you hit somebody and they returned the favor. Things were getting lost a lot at her house and she would say, "you will find it in the last place you look;" this is probably where she found her button hook for shoes and her scissors. For business it was, "don't put your eggs all in one basket" – "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" – "early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise" – "can't, never did anything."

Pete Outzen, a neighbor, had a crush on Nancy and gave her a pink, oblong basket with a lid and a handle which was filled with chocolates. It was about 10 inches long, 8 inches deep and 5 inches wide. Charles was always jealous of this and called it the green basket. Nancy kept many of her small treasures in this, such as baby hair, papers and small novelties. Among her other treasures were her pretty dishes, she had many of these that were never allowed to be touched. She had two favorite platters that

her mother had given to her. One was a huge one that was used mostly for turkey, nobody washed these but her. She was proud of her French Heritage, and was the recipient of a beautiful, beaded purse from France, that had been handed down from her Mother's family for generations. This purse had gone from oldest daughter to oldest granddaughter and back to oldest daughter for many generations. Dorothy Wood has this purse now, and it will go to a future generation next.

Nancy taught her daughters to sew, cook, can, embroidery, and keep house in general, as well as to milk a cow, clean a chicken, and work in the garden and fields.

Nancy felt her daughter's hair should be kept curled or neat. She had her own ways of doing this. We didn't have permanents or rollers so she would use short pieces of rags for short hair and would wrap the hair around the rag then the rag around the hair, for long curls she would use longer pieces of rags and would tie two short rags on the end of each of these then would wrap the hair around the rag in a spiral fashion then the rag around the hair to the top of the curl and would tie this in a hard knot with the tails of rag at the top. She also had a marcell iron and a crimping iron that was heated in the chimney of the coal oil lamp, the marcell iron would make nice round curls but the crimping iron would make funny looking crinkled waves.

Nancy was an astounding cook but seldom used a recipe. Her fingers were her measuring spoons and bits and dabs filled in the rest. Very often a member of the family

was called on to go to May's to borrow a little salt, sugar, flour or whatever the item maybe might be she needed. There was a trail the half mile between our houses that would have started a canyon had it not been plowed under after the sage was cleared. Nancy or May probably never knew who owed who, as it was vice versa with the borrowing.

Nancy was an active member in community affairs, she was active in the Grange, was a school board member, a 4-H leader, and was active in the Literary programs that were held in the schoolhouse. She wrote a scandal sheet for the programs, the scandal included her own family, as well as the community scandal. Edith Reece read them at the literaries, and was the only one that knew the author. She would get upset about poker games, and would never play poker except when she played Tripoley, that was different. Nancy could not tolerate lying, cheating, snoopiness or cattiness, and would offer a saucer of milk to anyone making a catty remark about somebody.

Edwin Wilson lived at Yellow Jacket, Emory Wilson lived north of Cortez. They were nephews of Nancy's husband Charles. Edwin had four children, Florence, Mary Ellen, Elza, and Martha. Emory had five children, Harold, Emma, Pat, Joylene and Ruthie. Emory's wife, Zona, passed away when Ruthie was two years old. Emory and family, then moved in with Edwin, because of limited space in a small house. Nancy took Joylene, who was four and Ruthie, who was two, to help raise, in addition to her own large family. She kept the two girls for about six years.



Nancy surely had a body of steel and iron nerves, she had very little time of her own. One of her sons-in-law said, when she was about seventy, “she still has better looking legs than any of her daughters.” She never quit wearing her corset, with stays, her petticoat, long stockings, long dresses and sensible shoes. She seldom wore long pants except to picnics.

Nancy never learned to drive a car because she wouldn't cross a bridge. In her later years, she would travel to California,

Idaho or wherever on a bus, and finally on a plane, if someone would go with her.

Nancy was stern with her family but not intolerable. Life to her was hard work, honesty, and a lot of fun, but work came first.

Recycling was not a new word or way to any of the homesteaders and Nancy recycled everything that was possible from buttons to nails. I could never wear her shoes, but am proud to have had her for my Mother.

## **Other References to Charles and Nancy, Elsewhere in the Book**

### **From Recollections of Lola Isabel Stevenson (Nancy's Sister)**

[Page 14]

The Christmas before we left Mancos [1909], Charlie came to spend the holiday with Nan. He stopped in town on the way out and bought Ma a big black fascinator and himself a pair of underdrawers. He had them wrapped in separate packages so that Ma's gift could be put directly under the tree. Christmas morning Ma opened her gift and held up a brand new of men's underdrawers. A red faced Charlie quickly produced the other package and retrieved his drawers.

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[In 1910] Charlie came to spend the holidays with Nan again. He had been working on the road using heavy equipment

at the time. An accident just before Christmas left him with a broken rib which was very painful. Ed and I were very concerned because he now had a bad rib. We went out to the bone yard, picked a nice strong rib from an old cow's skeleton and wrapped it up in pretty pink paper. We put it under the Christmas tree for Charlie. He thought it was funny and laughed and laughed but Nan was so mad she would have liked to kill us.

Along towards the end of January [25 Jan. 1911] Charlie and Nan were married. We had had a beautiful open winter and planned nice weather for their wedding, but it rained and rained for the big day. Charlie's brother [Isaac?] and the Ashbaughs came and they had to stay several days till the storm was over before they could go home. The preacher had a terrible time getting there.

Ma made Nan's wedding dress from white silk. The material for the dress cost \$12.00. Ma sewed on the dress for a week or ten days. It had yards and yards of white silk embroidered trim around the skirt and on the bodice. It had a high neck and Nan really looked nice.

I don't remember Ma making a wedding cake but I do remember that she fixed pressed chicken and pineapple with whipped cream. Ed and I were sent to the kitchen to entertain our little guests and I am afraid that things got out of hand. I got out of sorts with the other kids and ran into the living room to tattle, "them kids are eating your pressed chicken." Of course, my mouth and hands were crammed full too. When it came time for the wedding feast, Ma was still so mad at us kids she forgot to put the pineapple and whipped cream on the table. Later, when she remembered, she wouldn't let us have any.

Ma had had a room fixed on one end of the porch so that Charlie and Nan could have some privacy on their wedding night. We had strict orders that we were not to go near their room. Ed was only five and sometimes made his own rules. The next morning, he opened their door and looked in. One look and he went flying in to Ma yelling, "My God, Ma! Charlie is in there in bed with Nan."

Charlie and Nan had planned a wedding trip. Ma made Nan a brown wool traveling suit to wear on their trip. The day they were to leave Charlie woke up with the gripe and was so sick he couldn't get out of bed for days. Nan was sick too but not as bad as Charlie. When he was well enough to travel

his time was all used up and he had to go back to his job.

Charlie had a place about a half mile from the Carpenter place and he took Nan there to live.

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Nan's and Charlie's second child Elsie, was born in November 1913. Ma went to take care of Nan and the new baby. Charlie's brother, Elza was there. He told Ma we could have a patch of potatoes if we would dig them. Gus plowed them out and us smaller kids picked them up. The ground was frozen and it was bitter cold. We nearly froze to death but we got three sacks of potatoes, all about the size of marbles. We really appreciated them, they were about all the potatoes we had that winter.

**From Recollections of Dorothy May  
(Wilson) Wood  
(Charlie and Nancy's Daughter)**

[Pages 31–32]

I was born in the old Fox house February 6, 1912, at Mildred. Dad owned 80 acres west of the Fox place, he had hay, peaches (no cherries to my disappointment), and honey. There was not a house on our place. He hauled hay and fruit from the place long after we moved to Yellow Jacket. They lost it to water tax.

I think in the fall of 1916, we moved to the Royce place. Dad carried mail. . . . World War 1 raged, all anyone talked about was the war. I thought, like the rain or air, it had always gone on and always would. . . . Dad was in line for the Postmaster at Cortez, he also had the claim at Yellow Jacket. . . .

Of course, we were going to get rich off of the claim, but we didn't — the drought, the rabbits, plus low wages and clearing the sage. The house, on the claim, 16×16, which was to be used as a granary, was used with added rooms, until 1947.

Dad went to the mines in 1924, I think. He wore sacks over his shoes, he had no overshoes. He stayed there until 1927.

**From Recollections of Elsie Florence  
(Wilson) Chaffin  
(Charlie and Nancy's Daughter)**

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I was born November 7, 1913, in Yellow Jacket, Co., although, I doubt it was then called Yellow Jacket. I was the third child born in the Yellow Jacket homestead area, with Dr. Eugene Johnson driving from Cortez through sagebrush on a very narrow wagon road with his Model T.

My parents, Nancy and Charles Wilson had just homesteaded 160 acres and built a 16×16 granary to live in until they got rich and could build a house. Well, we lived in that one room granary for almost 14 years, when by hook or crook we got a 12×12 log kitchen added on. To us kids it seemed like a mansion. At least we had a place to cook and eat outside of the bedroom. Several years later, two bedrooms were added on. I never had a chance to enjoy that luxury as I was married by that time.

We had hard times and good times in that little shack. The worst times were when the north wind blew and the heater would smoke no matter what was done to stop it. We would hover around the cook stove to

keep from freezing. Mom's temper would get high just trying to find room to cook a meal with all of us kids in the way.

I think one of the worst things was the fact of no running water. Our water had to be hauled two miles in wooden barrels. I was about 14 years old when that job fell to my brother Paul and myself. My father had a wild team — a white mule and a bronco mare. The bronco mare was noted for running away at the drop of a hat, and if she got the chance, kicking our heads off. One time the team ran away upsetting the wagon, spilling the water and nearly killing Paul and Nellie. I had got down and opened the gate when the team spooked. Why we had Nellie with us, I'll never know — she was only three years old.

But, we also had lots of fun. We all loved to read and play cards since there wasn't anything else to do. At times there were country dances at the neighbor's house and also, literaries at the schoolhouse during the winter.

**From Recollections of Marjorie Mary  
(Wilson) Crowley  
(Charlie and Nancy's Daughter)**

[Page 34]

I am the third child of Charles and Nancy Wilson, born October 8, 1915, on the old Fox place near Cortez, Colorado. My parents homesteaded 160 acres of land in the Yellow Jacket area in 1911. Our home was a 16×16 one room cabin, built by our optimistic parents for a granary. It was to be our home for a good many years, though they built a kitchen on later, and still later

added bedrooms. Our folks were in the process of building a modern home when our dad died in 1946.

My first recollection was of a country covered with sage brush, dotted with small fields, with heavy timber toward the canyons south of us. As the land was cleared, it was fenced in, as everyone turned their stock out. In those days, everyone just cut across the brush, fields, or whatever, when we were on foot or horseback. There were trails everywhere, but there were also wagon roads through the brush.

There was always plenty to do. We hauled our water and wood, and used kerosene lamps. We melted snow in the winter to use and also to water the stock. We had to do everything the hard way. Clothes were washed on the board, and all the white clothes were boiled in our boiler on top of the stove. We ironed with the old sad irons (there was no wash and wear material in those days). Mom rendered her lard and made soap out of the cracklins. She also made most of our clothes and baked 12 loaves of bread twice a week, besides rolls. Mom always raised a huge garden. Our cellar was full each fall with canned fruit, potatoes, and other vegetables, as well as 45 or 50 bushels of apples from our Uncle Elza's orchard near Cortez. We butchered several hogs, and usually a beef each winter, so with our milk, cream, butter, and eggs, we were very well fed.

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Life was not easy, but we were not used to anything different and all the neighbors were more or less in the same boat. We enjoyed life and made our own entertain-

ment. The school house was used for everything; church, funerals, all kinds of meetings, picnics, literary programs, pie suppers, and dances. We had card parties, parties at different homes and we all liked to read. We were never bored.

We lived 20 miles away from the nearest doctor in Cortez. But Dr. E.E. Johnson always came when called, either by car, buggy or horseback, depending on the weather. . . .

Every year brought more changes, more land was cleared, homes were built onto and improved, cars began appearing in the neighborhood and everyone started raising a few pinto beans. People outside the community began to see what a good thing the dry land was and began buying and clearing land. Then the depression came along. There was no more work for our Dad, except in the hay fields in the summer. I was in my teens and us kids worked at whatever we could. When things looked about as bad as they could, I got a job working for Lillian Retherford, taking care of her little girl and keeping house while she taught school; the pay was 50¢ a day, five days a week, but I was happy to have the job and you wouldn't believe the things you could buy for ten dollars a month.

### **From Arthur Wilson's History (Charlie and Nancy's Son)**

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Arthur Wilson, seventh child born to Nancy and Charlie Wilson on January 18, 1921. . . . Two months premature, weighing about five pounds, thus the

nickname "Runt" lasting a lifetime. He, however, grew to average size of that time, 5'9" and weight 160 pounds.

He started to school at Fairview Log School, 1926 at five years old lacking four months. . . . In 1927 and '28 he went to school . . . at Four Corners walking two and one-half miles. This year a big flood and hail storm came up on a Friday about Sept. 10, 1927, just as school was almost out. A huge black cloud rose up out of the west, and caught the kids before they got home. Runt, Paul, Ben, and Jim started for home on the run, and Runt says he remembers coming up the old road walking in the tire track with water sloshing around his legs, and rain pouring down on his head. When they got home water was a good four inches deep in the kitchen, and leaks had sprung everywhere. This storm destroyed crops, gardens, and tarpaper roofs from homestead houses, washing out almost all bridges in Montezuma and Dolores Counties.

In the fall of 1928 and spring of '29 the family moved to Grandma Stevenson's place, on the rim of Yellowjacket Canyon. . . . This was depression days. . . . Charlie, with failing health, farmed from 1932 until his last part day of work in 1938. All this time the farming was taken over by the boys Paul, Jim, and Runt. In the fall of 1935 Jim went to the CCC camp, and in the spring of 1936 Paul went to Oregon, looking for work. Runt did the farming this year, it being a good one with prices up a little. After harvest Wilsons had enough money, (with some borrowed) to pay the taxes, delinquent from day 1, and buy an F.201. H.C. tractor, two row, hand lift cultivator,

also a six foot one-way to clear the last 60 acres of sagebrush from the farm.

### **From Recollections of Nancy Ethel (Wilson) Conrad (Charlie and Nancy's Daughter)**

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I was born Nancy Ethel Wilson on November 17, 1922, at Yellow Jacket, Colorado, the eighth child of Charles and Nancy Wilson. I grew up on a farm in Yellow Jacket and attended school at Four Corners and Fairview. They were hard years, especially after the depression hit in 1929.

My brothers, sisters and I always found ways to have fun. We built tunnels and tracks out of bed rails over the cellar for marble games. I rode miles and miles every summer curled up in a truck tire pushed by my brothers. We walked on homemade stilts, waded in the pond after a hard rain, went to ball games, sledded, and played fox and geese in the winter.

Mom and Dad and all of us played many card games during the winter. Rook, Flinch, 500, Dominoes were some of them. Many a pitch game with the neighbors lasted all night. Even though the times were hard, our parents had quite a lot of books. We were all avid readers. We all attended, and at times took part in the Friday night Literary Programs.

After my older sisters were married, I was left the oldest girl at 12, with two nieces who lived with us. I did mountains of ironing for twelve people, with the old sad irons. Nellie and I did thousands of dishes.



Mom had two long rows of gooseberries across the garden. Nellie and I spent hours almost every summer day picking those gooseberries. Mom sat in front of the door stemming them. They were canned in half gallon jars. They were delicious in the winter for pies and sauce.

A chore I disliked in the summer was hunting the milk cows. They were turned out to roam free after the morning milking, usually heading for Grandma's canyon several miles away. I can still remember the wonderful feeling of looking across the sagebrush and seeing old Cherry, Daisy, and Roany, and knowing my search for the day was over. We were very fortunate none of us kids were bitten by a snake, as many miles as we roamed over the sagebrush, rocks and canyons. . . .

When the boys were in the fields, us girls had to milk, and separate. We also hoed weeds in the bean fields and shocked beans. When the well was dry, water was hauled in two barrels either from the mother well or the spring in Yellow Jacket Canyon.

Every winter Dad took the team and wagon and went to the timber for wood. It took quite a few loads to keep the cookstove and heater going all winter. I used to love to sit on the oven door in the winter time.

Every winter Dad went to the valley to Uncle Elza's and brought back a wagon load of apples, many different varieties. I loved the smell of the cellar. All the apples were put in bins. Also there were potatoes, carrots, and onions, and canned fruit and vegetables there.

The folks bought their first pickup in 1937. We went by horseback and wagon until then. The snow got much deeper in the winter then, than it does now. We walked to school most of the time, riding horses occasionally.

We packed lunch buckets to school. Mom always sent a cloth sugar sack full of apples for us, and something hot when it was very cold. The old log school house had cocoa on the ceiling until it was torn down. Our syrup bucket of cocoa blew up once when we were heating it. . . .

There was no church in the community then. We went to Sunday School in the summer in the school house.

**From Recollections of Olive Faye  
(Wilson) Bertrand  
(Charlie and Nancy's Daughter)**

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I lived with Dot and Earl [sister Dorothy and her husband Earl Wood] my first year of high school and went to Pleasant View. . . . I went to Cortez the first half of the sophomore year, and boarded with Mrs. Garlinghouse. Dad had heart trouble and needed to be near a doctor, so the folks bought a home in Durango. That was in December, 1943. Glen [brother Samuel Glen] and I graduated together from Durango High in 1946. Dad sold the house in Durango then. He had paid around a thousand dollars for it and sold it for three thousand, he could have got more but he said that was enough profit. Dad passed away in June of that year.