

MARIE ROSE ESCALLIER FAURE

By

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"It was an awful feeling after landing in New York to hear a language we couldn't understand. I wanted to go back." Rose Escallier Faure was eighteen when her family moved to the United States in 1919 to join their father who had arrived ten years previous. Although the mental and emotional aspects of the journey were strenuous, the trip itself seemed to be quite enjoyable. Life on the ship from France to New York was very pleasant. Many soldiers were on their way home from the war, which made the atmosphere happy and entertainment plentiful. "Service and meals were out of this world", recalls Rose. Although Rose was too bashful to join in the dancing and other events, she did seem comfortable with the surroundings.

Marie Rose Escallier was the third child of a family of four. The eldest daughter, Helene, died in infancy from either pneumonia or small pox. A brother, Vincent, was born in St. Bonnet, France, on September 26, 1898, and died November 18, 1937, in Worland, Wyoming from an accidental gunshot wound. Rose was born January 30, 1901, and Jeanne was born June 24, 1903, both in St. Bonnet. Rose and Jeanne are currently residing in Worland, Wyoming. Their mother, Leonie Pellegrin, born February 5, 1863, in St. Bonnet, Hautes Alpes, France, and father, Alexandre Escallier, born in Marseille on January 17, 1870, were married at St. Bonnet in October, 1895. No history is known about Rose's father -- she never knew his parents. However, her mother had five brothers, Vincent, Auguste, Francois, Alexander and Joseph and four sisters, Marie, Neomie, Rosa and Gabrielle. Rose's grandmother was Madeleine Chartel from Basses Barraque who later married Vincent Pellegrin of St. Bonnet.

Not much is known of what Alexandre Escallier did for a living in France. The relationship between Rose and her parents was one of "children should be seen, not heard." Her father apparently worked in a butcher shop for quite a length of time, and also performed other odd jobs. Her mother was a

seamstress for many years, and later owned a dry goods store up until the time they moved to Wyoming.

Schooling in France was much like we have now, with children beginning around age five and proceeding through high school and college. Classrooms were divided by age and sex. Males and females did not attend class together. To graduate from high school, students would usually go to another town to take their final exam. They were required to pass this test before they were given their diploma. If they failed the exam, they would return to school for another full year before being allowed to retake the test. Rose also feels that much more respect was given to teachers in France, who were not as friendly as they are in the United States.

As for sports during school, Rose does not recall any for girls or boys. It is very possible that sport activities did exist; however, their parents did not allow them to do much. Dancing was also another activity in which her family did not participate, nor were they allowed to watch. Rose believes that this was not just her family, but the families of all religious people. Since Rose was never allowed to do any of these things, she did not miss them; however, looking back she can see what she missed.

Holidays in France were slightly different than they are in the United States. Christmas trees were put up on Christmas Eve and taken down on January 6 which is a holy day in the church. For gifts at Christmas time, they usually received house slippers, two or three pieces of candy neatly wrapped in decorative paper, an orange and possibly a doll or some gift to play with. On January 6 the children would also receive an orange or piece of candy which had been placed on the window ledge by an angle.

Alexandre, Rose's father, came to Wyoming in 1907 to work for Francois, his brother-in-law, who owned sheep in the Big Horns, bringing with him Rose's

mother and brother, Vincent. Leonie and Vincent stayed two years and then returned to St. Bonnet so that Vincent could receive his education. During this time period, Rose and her sister, Jeanne, stayed with their mother's sister, Mary, who was "single and very religious". They stayed at home the majority of the time playing with dolls, knitting and attending church "for every occasion".

In 1919 Rose's mother decided to return to Wyoming with the girls, while Vincent stayed in France to join the Army. Rose was a junior at this time and had to quit school -- thereby never receiving her diploma. "I was very unhappy to leave St. Bonnet and all my friends", claims Rose.

Upon arrival in New York, they were met by people who placed a sign around their neck stating their destination. "I felt as if we were a herd of sheep." They then boarded a train and traveled to Chicago. In Chicago they met some people who took them in for the night, which Rose remembers with much appreciation. The next morning they boarded again. The only problem that Rose recalls of their journey was the difficulty in ordering their meals. No one in her family could read or speak English, so they always managed to order the craziest meals. Their next stop was Casper, and this was the first time Rose ever had a piece of chewing gum. She could not understand what it was since chewing it never made it go away. Their ride continued and Rose remembers the ride through Wind River Canyon and recalls wondering how they would ever get out with only steep rock on either side.

Alexandre was unaware of their arrival date, so there was no one waiting for them when they arrived in Worland. They were loaded with their suitcases and began to look for a motel. Luckily they ran into a friend of theirs from St. Bonnet who took them to her home to stay. The woman's name was Minnie Faure, who later was to become Rose's sister-in-law. A few days later

Minnie drove the family to the sheep ranch in the bad lands -- this being the first time Rose ever saw a woman drive a car. Back in France people traveled by bus to go from town to town and normally walked within the town. When Rose left France she only recalls one person owning a car in St. Bonnet. Quite a number of people owned cars in Worland.

When the family arrived at the sheep ranch, Rose recalls how it was almost like meeting a stranger, since she had not seen her father for ten years. She remembers looking at him and him looking at them. "He was so happy." They stayed at the camp for a few hours and had lunch. This was the first time Rose ever had pork and beans.

Her father was allowed to go to town to spend some time with his family and get them settled. At this time they moved into a house which was located next to Jeanne's present home.

The town population at this time was approximately 2,000 with a small mixture of various races. There were quite a few churches in town at this time, including a Catholic church. The town's law enforcement consisted of a judge and the sheriff's office. The only major crime Rose recalls occurring or hearing of while living in Worland was the "Tensleep Raid" which occurred in 1909. Apparently some cattlemen burned a sheep wagon, killing two men inside and shooting one who came out with his hands in the air. An account of what happened can be found in "Frontier Times", Summer 1962 edition.

Since Rose and her sister could speak no English, a school teacher whom they met at church advised them that the only way to learn English was to attend her first grade class. Rose and Jeanne did this, even though they felt very foolish with the children in the class. The school teacher also advised them to find jobs around town so they could learn the language that much faster, so Rose began working for various people in town doing laundry by

hand using a washtub and scrub board. While working for one woman, Rose met a black woman who also did work in their house. The black woman was not allowed to sit with the others and had to sit at another table. Having never been around negroes, Rose went home that night and told her mother that she did not want to work there again.

With the knowledge that there were two single french girls living in town, their home was frequented by many of the older bachelors. This is where Rose met her future husband, Frederick Antoine Faure. Fred, also a sheepman, was born on July 3, 1878, in Villardon, Hautes Alpes, France, to Victor Faure, Born August 18, 1849 - died August 13, 1886, and Elisa Reynaud, born August 19, 1850 - died January 11, 1885, both also being from Villardon. Victor and Elisa were wed on January 17, 1872. Fred was the second to the youngest of five surviving children -- Joseph, Caroline, Felicia and Emile. One other brother died at the age of one, and a sister died at the age of twelve.

Rose's mother had met Fred from the first time she was in Worland, and her father was a good friend of his. All the men were middle-aged, but Fred was the only one Rose was interested in. The difference in age was quite great which caused Rose's mother to disapprove, but this did not matter to Rose, "He was young for his age."

Fred owned his own car and was always willing to take their family for a ride, but Rose's mother was very strict and never allowed Rose to go with Fred unless someone else went along..."so, such was our romance!"

Fred decided to go to Texas for the winter and wanted Rose to go with him. "He was good looking, kind and so attentive we decided to get married." They drove to Thermopolis with Jeanne and Frank Brochier, Fred's associate, to wed on October 13, 1923. Father Endres, a close friend of Rose, performed the ceremony. Rose recalls Father Endres describing to her how he traveled from

town to town before churches were built and performed services once a month in the pool hall in Worland or other facilities which the towns had to offer. He would travel from Thermopolis, Meeteeste, Cody, Powell, Greybull, Worland and Ten Sleep by horse. Father Endres also told Rose how he would wrap heated bricks around his feet to keep them from freezing as he rode from town to town during the cold winter months.

Fred and Rose remained in Thermopolis for their wedding night, while Jeanne and Frank returned to Worland by bus. The following day they also returned to Worland where they packed their things and went to Harlington, Texas. They stayed in Texas for a few months, returned to Worland and built the house now located next to Rose's present home.

During the first summer of their marriage, they stayed in the mountains in a sheep wagon. "Those were the happiest times of my life." Rose loved the time they spent in the sheep wagon. "You can do everything by just sitting down." They had a wood burning stove in the wagon and all the conveniences anyone would need. In order to wash clothing, the water would be carried up from the spring -- sometimes being placed in a large barrel. They had no ice box, but kept the food in the spring water. For bathing purposes, they would fill the washtub with water and then heat more water on the stove so the bath was warm. The bath was taken inside the sheep wagon in case of unexpected company. If the weather was nice, they would leave the washtub in the sun to warm. "Nothing fancy in sheep camps!" On occasion Rose and Fred would drive to town to buy supplies.

Each winter season, Fred and Rose would travel south. Fred did not like the winter months. The second year they traveled to Arizona where Fred purchased sheep and sold them in the Spring. The third year, they traveled to Texas, California and Arizona. While in Yuma, Arizona, Rose recalls hearing

the Indian ceremonies all day long; however, never observed any herself. She did see quite a few Indians in Yuma and felt sorry for the children who looked hungry and always had flies surrounding them.

During the third year in Yuma, Rose became pregnant. After returning to Worland she gave birth to Fred, January 20, 1926, in their home with a doctor present. At that time mothers stayed in bed for ten days. A nurse had been hired by Fred to help with the baby. After the birth Rose recalls telling her husband that something was wrong and that she felt as if she were wetting the bed. The nurse then checked and found that Rose was hemorrhaging. After this, the doctor informed Rose that she was not built to carry children and should not risk another pregnancy. It was believed at this time that if a mother were breastfeeding that she could not get pregnant. Four months later Rose discovered that this was not true. The doctor advised Rose to "get rid" of the baby, to which Rose's mother said no. Rose gave birth to her second child, Madeleine Leone, on February 23, 1927, with less complications, thirteen days after the death of her mother.

The following year the family traveled to Bakersfield, California, where Fred became sick on Monday in their hotel room. Rose had no idea what was wrong and managed to contact an acquaintance of Fred's who lived in the area. After contacting this woman, she was then advised to phone a doctor. By this time Fred was in a coma. Fred was taken to a hospital and died on Wednesday, December 13, 1928, from a kidney failure known as Brights Disease. Rose then packed their belongings and returned to Worland by train, leaving the car behind. She remembers that the undertaker in California advised her that when she arrived in Denver to be sure that the coffin was placed on the train to Worland. Rose recalls standing beside the train in the snow with a child in each hand making sure that the coffin was removed from one train and placed

onto the next and wondering how Fred could leave her alone with two small children. Fred was buried in Worland on December 18, 1928.

In 1930, Rose noticed a gentleman measuring the lot next door to her home. She approached him and discovered that he was the owner, and a carpenter. Her husband had always talked about buying this lot, so Rose decided to purchase the land and have the gentleman build a larger house so that she could stay home with the kids. In order to make some sort of a living, Rose decided to rent rooms to teachers.

During this year Rose also took her citizenship test, and passed. The test covered the Constitution and was orally given by Judge Metz. All those applying for citizenship were present in the room and the Judge would choose a person at random, ask them a question, and they would answer. She recalls jumping up and down and clapping her hands when she passed the test.

Vincent, her brother, suggested to Rose that she purchase a homestead next to his in the Big Horn Mountains, which she did with the help of the money left to her for handling Father Endres estate after he passed away. In order to retain the homestead, people were required to "prove up" on the land -- fences, cabin, reservoir, etc. -- which required living on the property five months each year for three years. Since Rose had two children in school, she was only required to live on the land three months for five years.

A teacher from Oklahoma by the name of Verle Young stayed at the homestead with the family. Verle planted a garden of vegetables and also helped teach the children their catechism, even though she was Baptist. Rose would drive the car to town whenever other groceries were needed. "I still wonder how I could drive that Chevrolet in the mountain hills." There were two one-bedroom cabins -- one for them, the other for company. About the

only wild meat they would eat were sage chickens, which some visitors or sheep herders would bring.

After five years of "proving up" the homestead, the children had other interests -- school, church, playing ball, girl scouts, summer camp -- which caused a halt to the homestead summers.

Alexander Escallier, Rose's father, died in Worland from lung cancer on March 7, 1939.

After the children graduated from school, Fred went into the Navy and Madeleine to Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa. Rose continued to board teachers and also went to work at the sugar factory bagging sugar "to help out during the war". Rose also worked at the bakery in town for a short period of time.

Motels were few, and during the summer months, while most teachers were away, Rose would rent rooms to tourists. She recalls how the tourists were amazed that people would open their doors to complete strangers. Around this time Rose was asked by the priest in the area if she would consider housing nuns who would come to town to teach catechism during summer. Rose was rather nervous about living with nuns; however, the priest convinced her that they were really no different than herself.

In 1950, Rose, Jeanne, Frank (Jeanne's husband), and two former residents of St. Bonnet, Louis Devine and Julie Pellisier, returned to St. Bonnet. Rose and Jeanne sold the house they were raised in and visited many relatives. They then traveled to Algeria to visit a cousin, and returned to France to visit again before they returned to Worland. "I saw more of France on that trip than the 19 previous years I lived there." Rose has not returned to France since this trip.

At the age of 83, Rose still resides in the home she built, and as she looks back she recalls, "It hasn't always been too easy to be a widow with two

children, but I am sure that I wouldn't change a thing if I had to do it over again."

The new generation seems to have too much freedom -- her life being too strict. "But I am no judge. Children are much smarter than I was, so I guess as long as they can choose between right and wrong, they probably will enjoy life more than I did. No doubt I missed a lot, but have no regrets."