



1918 Spanish Flu

BEHIND THE SCENES

One of those 1920's women could have been Aunt Dolly! Francis Maude Brown Bussey could not have imagined her time in history, resurfacing now so clearly. Here she is in my life in the midst of the influenza pandemic of 2020, helping me to see the wider view of life and death and also to continue writing my twelve year project of behind the scenes view of the Telluride Brown family history. Daily writing and walking in the Montrose parks has filled my solo hours with intense reflection. Phone calls with friends and family are sharing times.

Frances Maude Brown, was born in 1879 and died in 1921 at age forty-one. She was the "strong-spirited rudder of the family", according to her dad, Franklin Brown. She was known as my dad's Aunt Dolly and the mother of Henrietta Jane Bussey DeJulio, of Montrose, Colorado.

A GLIMPSE BEHIND THE SCENES: 1891, BROWN HOMESTEAD, TELLURIDE, CO.

"Mama's home!" (Henrietta Cloud Brown, from her all day butter-delivery route to the mines and stores of San Miguel Valley).

In the kitchen window, she sees her daughters, Dolly, (Frances Maude, age 12) and Babe (Mabel Clair, age 10) as they pull back the checkered curtains, smiling at her.

They will be wanting her nod of approval for all the supper preparations. She always glances first at that kitchen window before entering the house, eager to see her girl's faces there, a signal between them that all is well; supper is ready on time, after all the very early morning preparations together.

As Henrietta Cloud enters the house, she hears Babe exclaim, "Dolly, we forgot the napkin rings!" They have set the table places for supper; six family members and three hired hands, nine hungry souls!

The menfolk come in the back door, wash up in the basin of hot, soapy water and approach the big, oval table in the center of the kitchen. Faces are flushed, eyes

hungrily survey the steaming bowls of venison stew. The men rub their hands together and take a seat at the table. Franklin Brown intones a brief, heartfelt prayer for "the hands that prepare this meal". Then, "Pass the biscuits, please!"

1921 MONTICELLO, UTAH

Dolly, now married to Harry Steward Bussey, M.D., is forty-one and dying in the Utah influenza epidemic, an outgrowth of the 1918 Spanish Flu, it is believed.

Her husband is the only physician in Monticello, Utah. He is caring for many dying patients assisted by his twelve year old daughter, Henrietta Jane Bussey. They are together when Dolly succumbs.

When Franklin and Henrietta Cloud Brown hear of their daughter, Dolly's death, they drive for several days from Telluride to Monticello to find, as Franklin told anyone who would listen after that, "I never saw such a worn down, shell of a man as that Dr. Bussey." Their silent little granddaughter, Henrietta Jane, returns with them to Telluride where she is raised with her cousins; Franklin Hamilton Moore, age nine and William Cloud Moore, age 11. Their mother, Babe (Mabel Claire) had died in 1912 giving birth to baby Franklin Moore. He was considered the youngest child, calling his grandparents, Mama and Papa.

Now the Brown Homestead was once again full of the sounds of children which helped lift the heavy veil of sadness. Franklin Brown died in 1926. Henrietta Cloud Brown moved to Montrose with her grandchildren, Franklin Hamilton and Henrietta Jane. After college, Henrietta Jane, married Orest DeJulio in Montrose, Colorado. She became their beloved Aunt Henri to the DeJulio family.

The Telluride Browns and the Montrose DeJulios are bound together by this history.

Excerpted from forthcoming book: Henrietta Cloud Brown, Telluride Mountain Woman 1855-1941, by Donnalee Brown.

First photo on left, photo taken during Spanish Flu. Next photo right, the Brown Homestead. Third photo right, Douglas DiJulio, his wife Gayle, and son, Gary, sitting in front of Brown Homestead. Last photo, Orest and Henrietta DeJulio.