

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.
Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

An American Legend

- 1 The life of a pioneer was not easy. From sunrise to sunset in all seasons, cooking fires had to be tended. Livestock had to be watered and fed, fields had to be plowed, and crops had to be planted. Despite the physical demands of these tasks, men, women, and children, too, labored to meet their daily needs. One of the ways we know about this period and especially about the lives of pioneer women is through the photographs of Evelyn Cameron. Today her photographs are probably more famous than her name.
- 2 Cameron's story begins in London, England, where she was born in 1868. Her father owned a large estate, and Cameron was surrounded by many comforts while growing up. She was never required to do chores, and she experienced the many privileges that came from her family's wealth. But this wasn't the lifestyle Cameron desired. She wanted adventure.

Leaving a Life of Luxury



- 3 In 1889 Cameron married a man who also liked adventure. For their honeymoon, they took a trip to Montana. At that time Montana was a wild, untamed place—nothing like an English estate, with its neat lawns. In Montana the open and desolate grasslands rolled on for miles. Weather was extreme, marked by periodic droughts, severe winters, and scorching summers. But Cameron and her husband fell in love with the open sky, the colorful sunsets, and the star-filled nights.
- 4 Living in Montana proved to be satisfying for Cameron and her husband. They lived in a ranch house and often spent their free time hunting, exploring, and watching birds with binoculars. Each day provided a new encounter with nature. To them the prairie was perfect for the rustic lifestyle they craved.
- 5 Cameron's husband started his own business breeding polo ponies that he planned to ship to England for sale. Unfortunately his business failed, and he suffered health problems. Cameron was determined to stay in Montana, though, so she looked for ways to provide for herself and her husband.

Making a Living



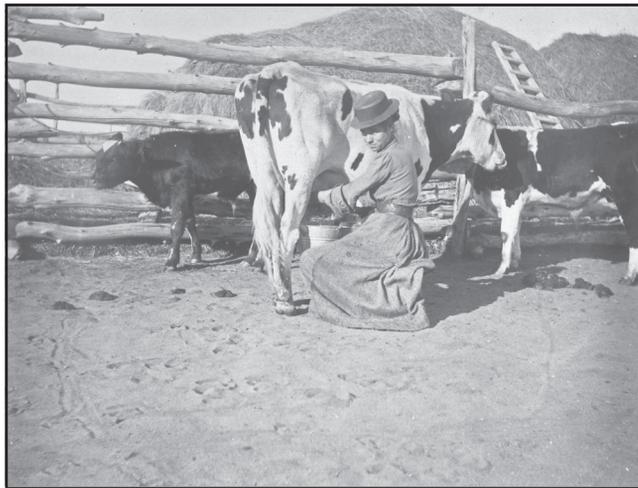
- 6 Cameron grew vegetables to sell, which raised some money. She also rented out rooms in her house to boarders, although this didn't bring in much money either. However, this venture did bring something else, which changed Cameron's life. One of her boarders introduced Cameron to the art of photography. It soon became her passion.
- 7 In 1894 Cameron bought a camera. Although it was large and somewhat complicated to use, Cameron soon mastered the art of taking pictures. She started a business in which she traveled around and took people's portraits. This brought her in contact with cowboys, ranchers, sheep shearers, and pioneer women. Her pictures captured people hard at work—cowboys tending to their horses, ranchers threshing wheat, and women cooking, mending fences, and roping cattle.



Self-portrait of Evelyn Cameron

© Montana Historical Society Research Center—Photograph Archives, Helena, Montana

- 8 By the early 1900s work was steady, but the health problems of Cameron's husband had worsened. So Cameron performed many of the ranch chores herself. Her once soft skin now showed signs of her long hours working in the sun. She wrote to her niece, "Manual labor . . . is about all I care about, and, after all, is what will really make a strong woman."



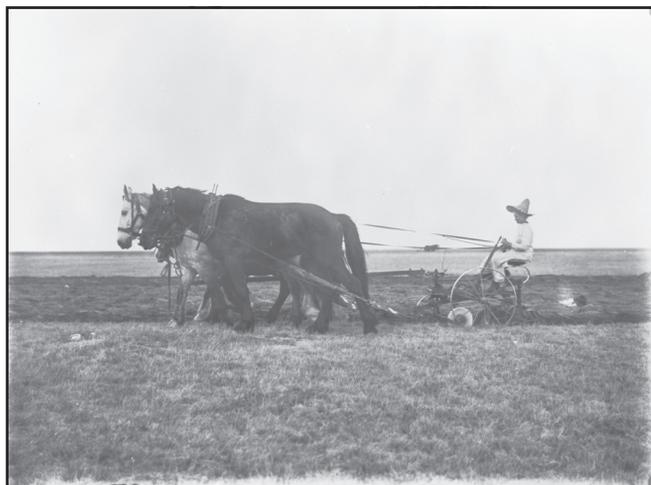
Cameron Milking a Cow

© Montana Historical Society Research Center—Photograph Archives, Helena, Montana

Discovering a Historical Treasure

9 Cameron continued taking photographs until her death in 1928. All her pictures were stored in her basement. It wasn't until 1978 that Cameron's photos were discovered by a writer researching the lives of pioneer women. While looking for information to include in her book, she unearthed around 2,500 photographs, various photography items, and 35 leather-bound diaries belonging to Cameron.

10 Cameron's photographs tell stories about pioneer life. It was a life she loved and documented well. Cameron's photographs have been collected in books and can be viewed on the Internet. They can also be seen in museums located throughout Montana and in the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas. Cameron's photographs will forever remain a part of American history, making her a true American legend.



Cameron's Photograph of a Female Homesteader Plowing a Field

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