

**NANCY “NANNIE”  
HAZLE  
DOSS  
1905-1965**



**LONELY  
HEARTS  
SERIAL  
KILLER**

At first glance, Nannie Doss looks like a loving grandmother with a charming smile. The amiable appearance was only a façade. Nannie Doss was a cold-blooded murderess who nearly wiped out her entire family singlehandedly.

Nancy “Nannie” Hazle was born in November 1905 in Blue Mountain, Alabama. Her father often kept his girls out of school to work the family farm. They couldn’t wear makeup, attractive clothing, attend dances or social events. At seven, Nannie suffered a head injury after striking a metal bar on the seat in front of her when the train she was riding suddenly stopped. For years, she suffered severe headaches. She was also soon obsessed with reading her mother’s romance magazines.

With her father’s approval, she married husband #1 Charley Braggs at sixteen. His single mother insisted on living with them. The marriage produced four daughters from 1923 to 1927. Stressed out, Nannie started drinking. After the two middle daughters died in 1927 of suspected food poisoning at breakfast, Braggs became increasingly suspicious of his wife and left with eldest daughter Melvina, leaving newborn Florina with Nannie and his mother, who died soon after. Braggs brought Melvina back the next summer but the couple soon divorced. Braggs was the only husband not to die.

Nannie married alcoholic husband #2 Frank Harrelson in 1929. Nannie killed Melvina’s newborn daughter in 1945 after she gave birth by sticking a hairpin into the baby’s head. Her two-year-old son later that year died mysteriously under Nannie’s care, who collected \$500 in life insurance she took out on him. At the end of the year, Frank was killed with rat poison when he came home drunk and forced her to have sex. Nannie collected enough life insurance money to buy ten acres of land.

Husband #3 Artie Lanning was also an alcoholic womanizer. No one suspected Nannie when she added rat poison to his meal since she appeared to be the perfect spouse, evidenced by the entire town supporting her at his funeral. Soon after, their house burned down and his mother died in her sleep. Nannie pocketed the insurance money and left North Carolina to live with her bedridden sister Dovie, who died soon after.

She married husband #4 Richard Morton in 1952 in Emporia, Kansas. Soon after Nannie’s mother came to live with them due to a broken leg, she died of severe stomach pains. A sister also died in a different town with the same mysterious symptoms while Nannie was visiting. Three months later, Morton died after drinking coffee that Nannie that spiked with arsenic.

Nannie married her final husband Samuel Doss of Tulsa in June 1953. He was a Nazarene minister who disapproved of her romance novels. In September 1954, she failed to kill him with arsenic-laced prune cake. During his month-long recuperation, his doctor suspected foul play. A few days after he got home, her tried-and-true “arsenic in coffee” killed him. The doctor ordered an autopsy, which revealed massive doses of arsenic in his system. Nannie was immediately arrested.

She confessed to only killing her four husbands. Exhumations revealed she killed at least twelve family members, which she blamed on the childhood head injury. Journalists called her “Giggling Granny” because she laughed whenever she told how she killed her husbands. She was only tried for Doss’ death. Nannie would be the first Oklahoma woman executed but a judge declared her insane, sparing her the electric chair. Nannie insisted the murders were actually motivated by marital boredom. Nannie died of leukemia in June 1965 at age 59, on the tenth anniversary of her incarceration.