

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER ALMA ALLEN
Written by his own hand.

Born in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, September 28, 1845, son of Ezra Hale Allen and Sarah Seriah Fiske. My parents joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the early days in the State of New York, moving on to Ohio and to Nauvoo, Illinois, suffering persecutions which were brought upon the Church because of their belief in a living God and the restoration of the true Church.

Father built a little house in Iowa for Mother and her two children. Two children died in infancy, their names were Jerusha Elvira Allen and Alexander Hamilton Allen. Father then Joined the Mormon Battalion and marched away never to live with his family again. He was killed by the Indians in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. (The account of this history is given in the October issue of the Improvement Era 1966, under the heading "Two Pouches and a Ring of Gold" by J. L. Larson.) Some time later a man came to Mother's place in Ohio and gave her two pouches of gold and said, "This is what your Husband panned in California. We found it on him when we found the bodies of three soldiers at Tragedy Springs, California." Mother used the gold to fit out an outfit to go across the plains to Utah. She kept some out and made two wide band rings which she wore in life. She took a young man and his wife in the wagon with them and in company with a group of emigrants started for Utah. After arriving in Utah she taught school in Salt Lake for a while, then moved to Centerville where she married Joel Ricks. Later we moved to Farmington, Davis County, Utah, where my stepfather set up a Tannery.

I witnessed the cricket war of 1854 and helped guard off the Indians. We moved to Nephi, Utah, when the Johnston Army came to Utah. On our way home we met some sarcastic soldiers. We moved to Cache Valley, Logan, Utah, in the spring of 1859; I was 14 years old. There were a number of camps on the north of the river and one house was being built. We located our plot and after getting settled I went with my stepfather to Logan Canyon where he started a saw mill. There I learned something about saw mills.

I joined an organization of young men for military duties to guard against the Indians. We started a band and I was Fifer. A Ward was organized in Logan. William B. Preston was made bishop. My sister Emoretta was married to Lewis Ricks that winter, 25 Dec. 1859. My stepfather drove me out of his and mother's home that winter. I couldn't find work so I had to go live with my sister and her

husband that winter till I was able to find some work. I went to Bear Lake, Idaho, with my sister and her husband, Lewis Ricks. We worked a lot of places on the road through Emigration Canyon. There was only a trail through the canyon made by the Indians. We went to the canyon and got out a home and cut up wild hay for the animals. That winter was so cold we were able to cross parts of the lake on the ice with loads of hay for the animals.

In 1869 Apostle C. C. Rich wanted me to go with him to find a way through Logan Canyon. We went on horseback and had a hard trip. I carried mail back and forth between Cache Valley and Bear Lake Valley for a while. One time I was driving some cattle to Bear Lake and an Indian Chief and his Braves came riding up and said, "I fight you for them cows." I was a husky young fellow, six feet four inches. We locked in tight grips; I stuck my thumbs in the middle of his back and squoze for dear life. Soon he gave up and went down. I let him up, he jumped on his horse and they all rode away. I was tempted to go and get work in the mines, but my Mother begged me not to go. On Dec. 27, 1864, I was called with five other boys to go to Salt Lake and receive our endowments. I was keeping company with a young lady by the name of Maria Cowley. We went to Salt Lake and were married on April 5, 1869, by D. H. Wells. We lived with her folks, Charles Cowley, until I got out a log home for us in Logan. While logging my team ran away with me. I got hurt and it bothered me the rest of my life. I worked for Brother Card where I learned to be a sawyer. Then my brother in law, John Cowley and I ran a Saw Mill a number of years. We sawed the lumber for the Logan Tabernacle. Then I was called to run the saw at the Logan Temple Saw Mill in Logan Canyon.

In the winter of Feb. 22, 1867, I was called to be the Bishop of Weston, Idaho Ward. In company with Brigham Young, Jr. and W. B. Preston we went to Weston and got acquainted with the situation there. Later I sold out in Logan and went to Weston to live. My daughter Amoretta was born and we had a hard time saving her Mother. I soon found difficulties in Weston. There were a number of people that claimed prior rights to the stream on Weston creek, and we had a never ending lot of trouble of trying to get a little water past them for culinary purposes in the Weston Village.

I was the first Bishop of Weston Ward. There had been Presiding Elders in charge before. In the year 1876 we built a new meeting house, costing \$800.00. The people were united and we paid for it that year. In 1877 we had it dedicated by Bishop William Maugham of Wellsville. I was given authority of being the Constable there. In the year 1877 the United Order was organized, with Alexander

A. Allen as President. The people came forth and were baptized according to the Order. We organized the Coon Store which helped our Settlement. I completed in organizing the Relief Society and Mutual and two branches, one at Trenton and one at Dayton which I had charge of, serving up till now, without Counselors. June 12, 1877, I was given Nels Georgesen and Peter Mickleson as Counselors. Attending the meeting was President George Q. Cannon, Lorenzo Snow and Erastus Snow.

I married Miss Elizabeth Clarke as second wife April 11, 1878. Born to us were four boys and four girls. My first wife Maria and I had two boys and six girls. My wife Maria was called to be the President of the Young Ladies Mutual in 1882 and served many years. In 1878 the work commenced on the Logan Temple. I was called to supervise the building of the road to the site, and later was called to saw the lumber at the Temple Saw Mill. The Temple was dedicated on May 17, 1884. The people of Weston donated to it very liberally. In the midst of polygamy trouble I was called to go on a mission to the Southern States, leaving 4 May 1885, laboring in Virginia and South Carolina. I took rheumatism and was released after one year service. I was released as the Bishop of the Weston Ward and John S. Clarke was appointed in my place. I went to work for Hodge and Nibley in the saw mill in Logan canyon and also in the Hams Fork Canyon, Wyoming. In the Spring of 1891 my Mother died. My brother-in-law and I went by horseback from Bear Lake to Logan to the funeral, but when we got there we were warned that Federal Men were waiting for us, so we turned and went back to Bear Lake. That year Hodge and Nibley owed me \$1000.00 for labor in the Saw Mill, which they beat me out of. January 23, 1893, I was ordained a member of the Oneida Stake High Council by Apostle Merrill. July 10, 1900 my wife and I received our second annointings. 1903 we sold our home in Weston and moved to Logan, where I suffered with Diabetes.

He passed away at his home in the Third Ward in Logan, July 31, 1916, buried in the Logan City cemetery.

The following was added be a grandson John LaVon Larson, Preston, Idaho: In Hams Fork, Wyoming, where Grandfather ran a saw mill for Hodge and Nibley, a fire got started one day while they were eating their dinner. They fought hard to save it, but it all went, including Grandfather's wagon, a set of harnesses, all the lumber he had sawed shingles, warped the saw so it wouldn't run, left him to start out in the saw mill business again. One time Grandfather had a 60 acre patch of wheat all ripe ready to harvest. The Union Pacific Railroad ran by on one side and a spark from the train engine started it afire. The neighbors all turned out to help him save it, but it all burned to the ground. I was a young fellow; our family went

to see him the next day and he was lying in bed singing the song, "Dark sorrows may come with many a sting, stern trials in life my portion shall be, Oh Father in Heaven this song will I sing, the rock of my refuge is Thee -- the rock of my refuge is Thee."

Grandfather's second wife, Aunt Lizzy (Elizabeth) got a divorce (civil) because the Federal Officers made it so miserable for them and he moved her family to Logan, Utah. His second oldest son Ethan built a house for her. Ethan became a contractor and builder. Oliver, his oldest son, was in business for himself. His third son, Royal, was killed in a rock crusher and his fourth son, William Oran, was killed in World War One, a big shell exploded be him. The girls were all married and lived at Logan, Utah. Their names were Ellen, Elizabeth-Nettie, Ivana and Luella Emily. Grandmother Maria Eleanor Cowley Allen lived with us all the time I was going to High School. She was the sweetest woman in the world. If Grandfather held his arm out straight, she could walk under it and just touch the top of her hair.

The two rings which Great Grandma Sarah H. Fiske had made from the gold panned by her husband in California, at her death she gave one to her granddaughter Ester Ricks Lindford, living at St. Charles; the other she gave to her oldest granddaughter on the Allen side, Eva Allen Brown, living at Lanark, Bear Lake. Aunt Eva Brown lost hers in a spring near her homes in Lanark and was never able to find it. I have never found out who got the ring Ester Lindford had after she passed away. This story was told to us many times by Grandfather.)