

JOHN ALFRED DEWEY AND LILLIAN LOVELAND

In the summer of 1916 the family moved to Almo, Idaho where Alf worked a dry farm he was homesteading. After land was filed on, it must be lived on at least part of the time each year, so he and his family moved to an area about seven miles north of Almo, along the road to Albion, Idaho. The house consisted of one large log room, a frame room, and later a cellar that Alf dug just back of the house. Alfred's sister, Susan, and her family (Christian Hansen) had moved there in 1904 and were raising cattle, so they didn't feel as though they had been completely cut-off from the rest of the family. (The Hansen's family of 6 children lived in Almo until 1924).

During the time the cellar was being dug, they all helped as they could, even Lil dug what she could. One day Lil and Lila were in the cellar digging. By this time it was about four and one half feet deep. A shot was heard. Alfred had a shotgun, and Chester would take it once in awhile, with or without permission from his parents. This day Alfred was away hauling some wood; Chester, Vonda and Janie were feeding the cow over at the corral about a block away. Lillian was sure Chester had shot one of the youngsters. She put her hands on the edge of the cellar and leaped out like an athlete, ran the distance to the corral in no time (she beat Lila). When she got there, Chet had killed a rattlesnake and not one of the children.

They had a covered wagon that Alfred had put close to the house. The children slept here sometimes. One night the children were awakened by a terrible howling noise. It was a coyote howling not far from the house. Alf grabbed the shotgun and ran outside. He shot a couple of times but did not kill it. However the shooting did frighten it away.

Across the road east were the only neighbors; a man and his wife, by the name of Brackenberry. There was a spring on their land not far from their house, where both families got all of their water for family use. It was packed in buckets. One day while the children were hauling water for their mother to wash the clothes, Chet had filled his two buckets and started for the house; Vonda filled her two buckets and was walking behind him. They had to cross the overflow from the spring on an old board. As Chester crossed this board, he stepped on a nail and ran it into his foot. He dropped his buckets and ran for home crying loudly; as Vonda came along she stepped on the same nail, running it into her foot; so she dropped her buckets and began to limp for home howling as loudly as Chet. Lillian must have thought they were both half-killed. Even slight injuries were serious in nature as there were no doctors and almost no medicine. They had to do the best they could with what was available; and then put their trust in the Lord.

Alfred used to go to the mountains for wood for the stoves. Mahogany, a hardwood, was cut and loaded into the wagon on many a trip, as this was the only thing they had for heating and cooking. The children were always glad when they could go along and help on a wood trip.

The first winter they moved down to Ward's ranch and lived in one of their houses. During this time, Lillian had a baby who died at birth. This was late 1916 or early 1917.

The baby was buried in the Almo cemetery. After this they moved into town when winter came. The family grieved and a special poem came to Lillian from her mother as a solace.

During this time, Alfred drove the freight wagons from Tracy's General Store in Almo. He hauled everything necessary to supply the store in two large wagons from Burley back to Almo. He used two teams of large horses. Alf enjoyed this, as he liked to work with horses. He handled the four horses without any trouble. Once in a while the children would go with him. Sometimes, Lillian and the entire family would go. Usually Lillian and Lila would be in the white top buggy with some of the smaller children. Chester and Vonda, or Janie and Vonda would ride with Alfred on the wagon. He usually put a large sack of peanuts and maybe a keg of candy close to the seat, just back of it in fact. So it was a double treat to be able to ride in the wagon with their Dad. It took two days to go and two days to return.

In town they lived in a large old home called the rock house. At one time it had been used for a store. Sometime during 1918, Alfred got a bad case of the flu; then the children got it, Lillian had her hands full trying to nurse her family and finally got the flu too. All of the country had the flu in epidemic proportions with heavy vomiting, etc., and many died as a result of it.

Vera was born while the family lived in Almo. She was born 6 June 1918. Vonda and Lila were the only help Lillian had when she had her babies. This must have been very hard on her.

There were two places the family always went. One was to church and one was to school, no matter how poor or how far from town they lived. When they were living on the dry farm, they came to church in the morning in the white top buggy. Lillian would pack a large lunch, which they ate after Sunday school. In the afternoon they went to Sacrament meeting.

During the fruit season, Lillian and Alfred would come down to Deweyville to see the folks and get fruit to take back. Lil bottled all fruits, dried some, and also made very good pickles. They made one trip down when Uncle Duane Loveland died. Uncle Joseph Heusser met the family in his car about halfway, so they could attend the funeral. These trips were long and tiring for Alfred and Lil in a wagon, but the children liked the trips and looked forward to them with much pleasure. They were highlights in their lives. One trip down Alfred was unable to go so Lillian went with the children. She could harness the team and with Chesters's help they managed. Although as Lila looked back on it, she doesn't know how her Mother had the courage, or the strength.

One day on the dry farm when Eldon was about 2 and a half years old, he strayed away and was lost for quite sometime. Family prayer was held; finally he was found walking down a dusty road all covered with dust; he had been "climbing a mountain."

There were no trees around the house, and a bowery had been constructed next to the house for shade. A distance from the house was a corral made of poles where one pole was rather pointed and stuck out some. The milk cow was kept in here, this day something frightened her and she ran into the sharp pole and it went into her side. Alfred was gone for a few days to buy supplies for the family; the rest of them did what they could and then gathered together for family prayer; but the prize milk cow died.

In winter the family lived in town. One day a large buck Indian came to the door. The children were very frightened. Lillian prepared some food and gave it to him and he left. The families in the area were following the advice that Brigham Young had given to the pioneers when they came in contact with the Indians; feed them, don't fight them.

Recreation for the family consisted mainly of visiting relatives and friends by buggy. The entire family went and when the visit was some distance and it was necessary to stay overnight, the children were joyfully bedded on the floor.

Janie was sitting in front between Alfred and Lillian in the white top buggy on their way to church with the rest of the family in the back. As the buggy descended on a slight incline, the front wheels came out from under the buggy and the horses continued jogging along pulling the two front wheels minus the buggy and the family. Alf checked the family; then chased the horses. The family finally made it to church.

Alf had been very sick for some time and wasn't getting better. He was vomiting blood and Lillian was very concerned and remembering it was conference, she went to the main road and stopped the stake president. He willingly delayed his trip to administer to Alfred, who then grew progressively better.

After the First World War began, and America entered it in April 1917, many men felt the desire to serve their country and protect our precious freedom. Alfred left one morning to sign up; the children felt the end of the world had come as they watched their father leave. Alf was never called to active duty because he had a large family to care for.

Alfred loved horses. In Almo his favorites were a black and a bay. Using both hands he would comb and brush them until they glistened. In late autumn of 1918, the school teacher's parent was very sick. It was more than 30 miles to her parent's home. It was important to get there as soon possible. Alf and Lil, leaving Lila to care for the baby and the other children, took the teacher the 30 miles. The trip took overnight and Alf had to run the horses faster than he liked and felt sorry the next day about the stained and sweating, travel-worn horses. He had forgotten how hard it had been on Lil and himself as they bounced and jogged in the dust; and Lila who had slept with one eye open all night watching the baby as she lay beside her on the bed.

Alfred and a man were pacing off the farm in slow steps. The man held tightly with both hands onto a "witching stick" or a divining rod. Eagerly the children followed and mimicked, keeping a close eye on the man. Lila saw the stick suddenly turn down (Later

she wondered if it was with or without help). Alfred dug a 12 foot deep hole on the exact spot and got a working well. Looking back, the spring was two miles distant from the well in a direct line. For weeks the children used their “witching sticks” and “looked” over every square inch of the farm for water.

Besides putting up all the fruit during harvest, Lil baked bread, churned butter, made and remade all the children’s clothes and made her own soap in addition to caring for her family.

Janie was 6 and a half and old enough to go the 2 blocks and begin her schooling. Lil took her to school and for a few minutes waited in the back of the room. When she left, Janie would be close on her heels. After a few weeks of this, the family decided to wait and start her again the following year.

Christmas was always kept, even during those times that were extremely difficult money wise. The girls were given doll heads to which cloth bodies had been added. The girls spent hours cutting and sewing clothes for them. Christmas was a happy time for the entire family as the true meaning and spirit of Christmas was stressed.

The family moved back to Deweyville late in the year 1918 when Vera was still a baby.

Lillian was about 5’4” tall, with dark brown hair and hazel eyes. She wore long skirts, that were gathered and belted around her waist. Her days were long and sometimes hard; often during the evenings she would crochet, the girls would brush and comb her hair. Alfred was about 6”2” tall with blue eyes, and brown hair and he was never heavy; he enjoyed horses and dancing and was expert at waltzes and polkas. He was an easy-going man who thoroughly enjoyed living and felt that he had a good life.

From larger biography written by Kay M. Richards, granddaughter 24 July 1969
2954 E. 4800 N.
Liberty, Ut 84310
801-745-3076

In 1916 Chester would have been 12 years old
Lila would have been 10 years old
Vonda would have been 8 years old
Janie would have been 5 years old
A child was born in 1916 or 1917 and died, buried in Almo
Vera was born 6 June 1918

Family left late in year of 1918 to return to Deweyville, Utah.