

Alex came into this world on October 4th of the year 1889. It was in Upton, Utah, some miles up the canyon from Coalville. He had a happy life growing up on the farm. The family had a two-room log cabin for twelve children, and Alex was a middle child. His father ran a large cattle and sheep ranch at Pine View, five miles east of Upton. He was helpful and strong, so he was on the ranch more than in school (when it was in session). In spite of that, Alex was very sharp in arithmetic. He could do anything; he broke horses easily; he played the fiddle. Everyone liked Alex.

Ed Reed of Coalville once brought a fine black, but unruly, horse to Alex. "If you can break him, you can have him," Ed said. So Alex soon had a fine black horse.

Among the friends Alex had growing up was Drucilla Pearl Judd. She was the baby of her family. She grew up living in a "dugout". Her father had built all the furniture they used. And he added on to the log-reinforced dugout. Pearl spent loads of time outdoors with her father, who had almost 4000 sheep. She loved her father dearly, and tagged along whenever she could. One day in the spring of 1901 he took a piled-high load of wool to the railroad. He sat on top of the load to drive the horses. But on the way, he fell asleep and toppled down, hit the road, and fell into the canyon. He broke his neck; he died in a few hours. After that, Pearl's mother got a place in town and ran a store there. She also managed a dance hall the bishop owned. It was lit at night by gas lights on the walls. The walls had murals painted by an uncle. Young men who came to the dances generally wore black, and had white vests and celluloid collars. The girls wore calico dresses that dragged on the ground. Some put hoops in the hem of their dresses. Each dress took about 30 yards of material. Hair was braided, and you had to have a hat to wear, too. Also, Pearl attended school. Books were few, and they were shared by the students. She did sums on the blackboard, like the other students.

Pearl and Alex were often at the same dances. Their friendship in their late teens was courtship. Alex proposed to Pearl in 1907 while riding together in his buggy to a social. After nearly two years, the two went in that buggy to Salt Lake City and were married in the temple on October 7th of 1909. They stayed in a hotel, then returned to the mountains. They lived with Alex's folks for two months. Alex's brother, John, took a mission to Holland. Alex helped earn money to send to John. After John got back, he was made bishop of the Upton Ward, and Alex helped, being part of the bishopric.

In the middle of the two years courtship, Pearl's mother constantly thought of having lost her husband at so early an age. It affected her health. One time, lost in thought, she burned her hand. Infection set in, and she died on April 9th of 1908.

The division of Pearl's mother's estate gave Pearl 80 head of sheep. Alex already had sheep, and the two flocks were combined. In 1910, Alex found a range available in Hawkins Basin, in Idaho. The couple moved there and lived in a sheep tent for almost two years. Then they bought 80 acres of farmland in Bruneau, Idaho, and moved onto the property in mid-February on 1912. They moved into a nice four-room house. Their water came from a ditch across the street from the house. Alex and Pearl were impressed with the place: in Upton there was a foot of snow; here, no snow and the grass was just right for grazing. It took a lot of hard work to get the land ready to farm. John and his family joined them. It was great! Crops were good, the sheep multiplied. Alex was able to buy more sheep. He sold hay to others – his hay was favored.

And Alex and Pearl had their first baby. He came on June 5th of 1912; they named him Melvin.

And one summer (1913) rabbits appeared. The ground was covered with rabbits! They ate anything green – crops and hay. Fences were no help. Alex bought some hay for his sheep, but the rabbits ate that, too. When he brought the sheep in from the range for the winter, the state doctor said they had the “scab”, and ordered them disinfected by dipping them in a vat of hot water mixed with tobacco. It turned very cold the day after, and lots of the sheep froze to death. The rabbits left a legacy: their decaying dead bodies, piled high. The family had to boil water to drink.

The first day of September, 1914, a little baby girl joined the family; they called her, LaRue.

Experiences as LaRue grew:

When Alex sold a quantity of alfalfa seed and got a thousand dollars for it, in greenbacks, he and Pearl hid it in an envelope in a drawer. Little LaRue saw that, and the next day, decided to play with the money. Soon, something else caught her attention; she put the money in an old can. She had the can with her when she went to the outhouse. She saw some eggs there, and couldn't carry the eggs and the can both, so left the can there, and forgot about it. The next day, Alex readied a wagon for a trip into town, and to the bank. But the thousand dollars was not in the drawer. Pearl hadn't touched it. It came down to LaRue. She knew she had played with it, but couldn't remember where she had left it. She went to various places, thinking she might have left it in, but never found the can with the money. So she told her dad, “It's up in the sky!” She was put to bed real fast, and the trip to town was postponed. The next morning, she happened to go to the outhouse with her mother. There it was! the can! LaRue couldn't find words to express her relief. So she uncapped the can and showed her mother. Then they showed Dad, who made the trip to town.

When the kids started school, Alex was alerted by a neighbor that his two, Melvin and LaRue, had not been at school all week. The next day, instead of simply sending the two off in the buggy – Melvin knew how to drive the horse – Alex took them. They confessed they had spent the days in an old house, playing.

When little LaRue and Melvin asked their dad for money, he always had change enough in his pocket. He would ask each, “How much?” Usually ten cents satisfied a farm child. He always had fifty cents ready for each child when the 24th of July celebration time came around. The entire family went to the celebration. There were foot races. They were fun; Dad Alex could win first place if he wanted. Alex was also good at boxing. The carnival rides cost a nickel, and hot dogs, popcorn or soda pop was also a nickel. In the fall, there were movies in town on Saturday night. If the chores were all done in time, Dad Alex took the kids in for the show.

Alex liked to go to the top of a field to be alone and ponder. He loved his family and liked to plan for their welfare.

It took practically until 1917 to get the farm and ranch profitable again. That August, Pearl gave birth to another baby, a boy. He was to be Alex, Junior, but he died a day after he was born. The next month little LaRue came down with pneumonia. She languished for two whole months. Through fervent prayers and a promise to the Lord to save the little girl's life, she got better. But part of the promise involved the farm and ranch. It had an all-over downturn.

Discouraged? Not Alex. Alex never needed an alarm clock; he was up before the sun, and knew when dinner time was unerringly. He worked hard. Never shirked. He was innovative. Likewise was Pearl. In a year, they welcomed a new baby boy, Harland, in the middle of 1918.

Alex borrowed from the bank and got the farm going again. In January of 1921, another baby boy arrived; his name was Carson. But this time the farm was touch-and-go. Alex could hardly keep up with the mortgage payments. Finally, as 1922 came to a close, the family decided they had to give it up. The sheep had died off and there was no money to buy seed for crops. All the family's belongings fit in the back of their small truck. They started for Rupert, where Alex's folks lived. Money Pearl had got from selling vegetables bought the gas and food. They stopped at a bank near Rupert and started a savings account with the \$10 or so they had left. They drove out to the folk's house. The sheriff soon arrived and arrested Alex and Pearl on suspicion of bank robbery. It was mistaken identity (a Bertha and Willie Kidd had been the robbers) and the couple phoned the bank in Bruneau to straighten it out.

Alex's family helped his folks with their potato crop. One time when Melvin and LaRue were following their father, gleaning potatoes in the field, LaRue's Overall suspenders came off. She was next to tears – if she went to the house for a repair, she probably wouldn't be allowed to rejoin the group. But Father Alex was innovative, and saw that a nail would do the job, and LaRue happily continued.

Alex soon borrowed some money from his brother, Merritt, and bought a small farm outside of Twin Falls. He rented a house in town so the kids could attend school. On the 27th of March, 1924, the family welcomed a pretty little girl baby, who they named Viola. That summer, Alex moved his family to the farm outside of town. Things looked nice. But then the water levels went down, and the crops dried up. When Alex confessed to Merritt that he would not be able to repay the loan, Merritt told him he had a sawmill over in Jarbridge, Nevada. Alex could work at the mill and repay him. That was great! The place was in the mountains, and Alex and Pearl liked that. There were also gold mines in the area. That winter, Alex took on work in the mines.

The mines were some distance away, so Alex went home only on weekends. On Sundays Pearl packed a lunch and the family drove their car to the woods for a picnic, and fishing. There were also places with swimming holes. Rafts were fun to make and sail on. Alex was very religious. Though the family didn't get to go to church much, he still made everyone toe the mark. There wasn't any bad language used in the house or on the place.

One day there was a cave-in at the gold mine. All the men on duty were dug out in good time, but Alex had received a good blow on the head by a large rock. He didn't go to work the rest of the winter. Once a porcupine came in the house. Alex knew what to do. He threatened it with the floor mop. That filled the mop with quills, and left the porcupine manageable. Pearl took in laundry to help the family income. She earned plenty. A man from Salt Lake City started a branch of his bank in Jarbridge one day. Pearl made a deposit with him. Soon Alex followed suit. Melvin was a young man, and he had money to put in, also.

In the late summer of 1926, the family decided that the environment at Jarbridge was not right for young children. They got ready to leave. They called for their savings. The “bank” had disappeared. They only got half their deposits. They traveled away in their car. On the border with Idaho, the car's axle broke. The stage came through only weekly, so getting a spare axle took time. Alex could do the repair; he cleaned parts of the rear carriage. Alex's kids were playing around in the garage they used, and made dust. Alex became angry, threatening to throw them through the wall. That proposal was not possible to perform, and as the kids laughed, Alex joined in. But he was a very strong man, and quick.

It was autumn of 1927 when the family got settled in Declo. LaRue was old enough to help the younger kids get off to school in the mornings. Dad Alex regularly awoke her at the proper time. If

she happened to fall asleep, and he came back from chores, he would rub her nose with his calloused hand. She about always was up before that.

The diphtheria came through Declo in 1928. Carson, who was almost eight, got a bad case. He suffered for a week before he died of that terrible disease. It took a month for the sad feeling to leave the house. Five days before Christmas Pearl had twin boys; a joy! Like in the Bible, they were named, James and John.

The smallpox came through almost before the diphtheria was gone. In the spring of 1929, Alex got it. So Pearl and Melvin had to do the spring plowing and planting for three weeks. The pox give a person an awful itch as they go away.

Things didn't go well there near Rupert. Alex rented a place in Jackson, Idaho. Alex put in crops; Pearl raised turkeys. The turkeys got a disease. The landlord came by and said we had to vacate the place. A Hawker family had rented it. They moved in about before Alex's family could get moved out.

Alex's mother had a cabin on 80 acres we could occupy, there in Declo. They started all over again. The older children were a great help.

In a few years, daughter LaRue got married to a tall red-head from Utah. Alex had built a small cabin for the couple to live in; it wasn't quite finished when the couple was ready. It was more convenient for Alex to work on it if he lived in it. So he and Pearl lived in the small cabin while LaRue and Lee, her husband, occupied the main house.

On Sunday, October 13th (1940), a family friend, Elmer Saxton, came over to get his horse. It was in the pasture. As is the custom, younger folks did tasks like getting horses. One of the twins, James, went to get the horse. He loved horses. As he had the horse ready at the front gate, with another alongside, one horse turned and kicked. The surprise tossed James from the horse, and he fell on his head. The family carried him into the house, unconscious. James died a few hours after.

Viola ended up marrying Glen Saxton in February of 1942. Harland had married Dorothy Ann four months before. They had a son, Larry, in July of 1942.

Melvin found a choice girl to marry; Edna Lee from Heyburn. She already had three little girls. They married in June of 1942. Not long after, Melvin was drafted into the Second World War. In 1943 he came home on furlough, and then headed for Italy, where he was killed in a battle a year later.

In 1942, Alex and Pearl left the farm for Harland and Dorothy, along with John, to care for. Harland got his draft notice that fall. In early 1944, he came home on furlough to see his new baby be born. But Dorothy died in childbirth, having their second son, Jerry. Those two boys were war orphans, and Pearl volunteered, and raised them.

As the forties went on, Alex and Pearl began to feel their age. Still, they built a large house – they had tired of living in the cabin. That was 1948. They began farming anew. John was a help, but he got drafted, even though he had married.

In the fall of 1952, Alex and Pearl left the farm with Harland, and moved to Helena, where LaRue's husband and his brothers were. Alex joined them in working on the Canyon Ferry Dam. In the winter work slowed; Pearl and the men went logging in the mountains. A tree they cut fell on Alex. His head

was badly hurt. He recovered some, but had a stroke. Pearl did her best to care for him, and the two boys, who were nearing their teen years. But she was tired. After ten years and another of Alex's strokes, she put him in a hospital, where he died. It was the 18th of April, 1962.

Most of Pearl's brothers and sisters were gone by then, so she bought a house near her daughter, Viola, and was happy. She visited LaRue often, but kept her house near Viola. She remained healthy, and was never afraid of work. In 1985, she was in a rest home a few months; she died on July first.