

John Bickmore Kidd was born a year after Johnston's Army marched through Salt Lake City. His town was kind of close to where the U.S. Soldiers made their camp. Early on, he got the job of herding his family's sheep. In the winter, they stayed near the home in Fort Herriman, southwest of Salt Lake City proper. In April, John took them to summer rangelands. He herded them northeast from home, through the south of the City, up Parley's Canyon and on to Trail Creek, high in the mountains.

John was lonely up there. The nearest civilization was a small town called Upton. The people there were mostly church members like his family. John and his camp tender learned of socials and dances they held, and joined them after the sheep were bedded down for the night.

Mary Annah Staley was the bishop's daughter, born one day before the Fourth of July in 1863. She had two older brothers, and an older sister. Before she was ten, she gained two younger brothers and a younger sister.

Certain people stand out to you. Annah caught John's eye. It was 1880. John and Annah saw more of one another; they made plans for a wedding. But Annah's mother got sick that winter. She died in February. The older Staley children had married and had their own homes. There were still three young children at home, and it looked as if Annah was the one and only to run the house and take care of them. Annah wrote a letter to John at home in Herriman. The wedding plans were off. A sad time.

John took the sheep to summer range the next spring. He went to see Annah. It was lovely to be together again. They needed each other. They talked things over. It was – it was possible that they could marry and consider her brothers and sister step-children for a while. So they arranged to go down to Salt Lake real soon. They were married June 1st in the Endowment House.

Father Chester, along with Chet, Eddie and Emma, went up to the saw mill that September for a visit. He had left Merritt, his oldest son in charge, and wanted to check on things. All was going well. At their departure from the mill, Chester knew the road was steep in places; he told Eddie and Emma to walk while he and his 15-year-old son Chet drove the wagon. On a straight stretch of road, the wagon and horses gained speed. A curve was coming, so Chester got ready to slow down. He put his foot on the brake lever; it slipped off. The horses didn't want to slow down. At the curve, the wagon tipped over. Chester was thrown off. He landed on his head and shoulders. Chet was okay, and ran to his father. Chester breathed only two breaths in his arms, and then died.

Annah was inconsolable. She really needed to be with John, away from Upton. When John took the sheep back to Herriman that fall, Annah went with him. They found a place to live. Annah found she was pregnant. It turned out to be a girl; they named her Harriet, after Mary Annah's older sister. That summer they moved a few miles east, to a farm in Riverton. They did okay there; they had three more children: John, Elmer and Margaret. Little Elmer got sick in the late summer of 1887. He died that September. After five years, the couple decided to move their family to Upton, next to Annah's old farm. There John built a fine house and barn, all placed so that the farm was easy to run. He had a herd of sheep, earned from his father; Annah had twenty cows she managed. The two oldest children were in their teens, and helped well. Milking was a group chore.

John also made a blacksmith shop. That brought in many neighbors who needed smithing done. John was easy-going, easy to talk to. John was gentle, but strong. He could lift a horse on his back until its front feet left the ground. With his wife sitting on the palm of one hand, he could lift her until she

touched the eaves of the house. John was about 5-foot, ten; he had sandy hair and blue eyes, with a Roman nose between them.

Harriet, the oldest daughter, married Samuel Banner in 1902.

But after John passed age forty, he complained of arthritis. It was bad. He almost couldn't move. And his almost-twelve-year-old son, Eddie, died in September of 1904 just before John turned 45. And the oldest son, John, was called on a mission to Holland at the same time. John continued serving as First Counselor in the Pine View Sunday School.

In these years, John had taken up smoking cigarettes. He had a pouch of Bull Durham tobacco and used special paper to "roll his own". One winter after the roads were snowed in, John ran out of paper. He searched for something to use. He found it. He was okay, and when spring came, he got more of the real paper. But he told a neighbor what he had done. Annah overheard, and couldn't believe it. But John turned and quietly told her, "Yes, I did, Girlie! Yes I did. I smoked up the Bible."

By 1912, most of the children had married and left. Only Margaret and her husband Buzz stayed with John to help run the farm. Cora married Elmer Saxton in 1915. That was the year a real-estate man told John of the fertile soil in Raft River, Idaho. A visit there verified the idyllic situation. That "dream come true land" energized John; he forgot his arthritis. John and Annah and their household, arranged things, sold their holdings in Upton, and moved to Bridge, Idaho in 1916. There was John, Annah, Cora and Elmer, and Gilbert, Norman, Orthella, Arania Marie, Vera and Verda. In those days, wagons with household goods did not go sixty miles an hour. It took four days to get from Upton and go down the Weber River track to Ogden. And from Brigham City to Idaho, you had to plan your day's trip to be able to camp where there was water.

There, on the land they had purchased, they found dry hills. The green grass and verdant valley were brown. Even so, they gritted their teeth and settled into the simple log cabin that was on the property. John set about making buildings, sheds, and putting up fences, getting the place ready to farm. The only source of water was the Raft River, several miles away. Household water had to be hauled home in barrels.

The new settlers, like the Kidds, often got together for socials and dances. John could play the fiddle for the dances. In 1917, Gilbert married Nellie; then he was drafted into World War One.

The new settlers talked again and again about the possibility of some company getting water from the river to the farmland. Gradually it became clear that no company, no man, ever would do that. The settlers would have to move somewhere else and leave their dry farms, lose them. John and Annah moved to a farm near Rupert. Norman married Irla Newbold in August; that was 1918. Early in 1919 Gilbert returned from the Army. He and Nellie moved in next to John and Annah.

It was in February of 1923 when their eleven-year-old daughter, Verda, complained of sharp stomach pains. Doctors had no advice for that condition. It was appendicitis, and Verda died in a few days.

There was a depression after the War. In the early 1920s, reverses came in farming. John, Gilbert and Norman each lost all they had. From then on, they never bought a place; they just rented. Gilbert and Norman took more of the work of farming as John aged. They made a great team. In one place they lived, John borrowed space in a neighbor's outdoor cellar to store his potatoes over the winter. (There's no room in the house; if you leave them outside they'll freeze.) When spring came, John was at the

neighbor's getting out his potatoes. A friend was visiting the neighbor, and asked, "Don't you need to check that man's counting of potatoes?" The neighbor replied, "John knows how many he put in. I don't have to verify his count. He's an honest man."

By 1926, Gilbert and Norman had separate farms. John was too old to farm anymore. He went and lived out his days with Gilbert. He died there on the 22nd of February, 1929. John's trials weren't over; the Lord sent a dandy blizzard the day of the funeral. He barely got his burial.

Annah had Norman build her a small house to live in on his farm. Norman provided her a pen and some chickens, and dug her a well. She was happy there. Her daughter, Orthella, had never married, and she stayed with her mother. In 1935, when Annah became too ill to function, oldest daughter Harriet took her and cared for her until her death on the 19th of April, 1936.