Time of Ripening

THE LIFE OF SIDNEY ALVARUS HANKS

from

His Own Notes

and

The Recollections of His Wife and Children

MY WORK
by
Sidney A. Hanks

I would not mar the joy of others living
With all my petty cares I know must come,
I do not want to shirk the joy of giving,
Or feel that none but pride should crown my home.
But let me bear each day my daily burden,
And let me share my joys with loved ones dear,
That I may keep some other's heart from yearning,
God let me bring a smile where reigns a tear.

My work today if conscience be my bidder,
Will be to scatter joy instead of pain.
Words of hope I scatter hither thither,
If parting comes until we meet again.
Let me succeed in keeping friends from frowning,
For happiness is mine that others share,
With smiles and cheers my efforts ever crowning,
A consummation of my faith and prayers.

One aching heart today has lost its sorrow
Because of me, my actions, tongue,
One life will know a happier tomorrow
Because of gracious things that I have done.
In gorgeous hues the western sun is setting
For me tonight because I've done my best,
The silvery stars in me will find no fretting,
Tonight my slumber brings me sweetest rest.

Chapter I

It was a strange land, strange bushes, strange skies; even the rock wasn't the right color for rock. Not yellow or gray or black, but red. Red as blood, little Proph thought, looking at the vermilion planes lifted in bare jagged nakedness almost close enough in places to rub your elbow if you stuck it out of the wagon. But blood wasn't the word. More orange than blood, more like the color of the embers Ma raked to one side when she put the oven in the fireplace. A mighty pretty red, but a color that made a seven-year-old feel like he was walking out in a dream—or in a nightmare.

If Proph wanted to, he could look across at his pa's face. It wasn't every boy that had a pa like Eph Hanks, Proph could think. Pa had been a soldier in the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican War; he had carried the mail even in the winter across the snowed-in Rockies; once he had owned the biggest silver mine in Utah—maybe in the world—and folks had called him Father of Park City; he had saved lots of people, even Ma, when a handcart company of pioneers had got snowed in and were fixin' to die. But best of all Pa had the Priesthood and nothing bad could happen to any of the Hanks family because Pa could go to Heavenly Father about it and everything would be fixed all right. Lots of people, strangers even, called for Pa to administer to them when they were sick because they could feel Pa's priesthood and knew that he had the gift of healing.

All these things Proph could think of when he looked across at Pa. Pa was good at stories and sometimes when he got tired of playing horse with the young-uns, bucking 'em off on the buffalo robe in front of the kitchen fire, he told them stories of the old days; the days when Eph was younger and Brigham Young always called on him when he needed somebody who was strong and never afraid.

But now, rattling along the road to Pleasant Creek, the stories seemed far off and Pa, his pa that was glad to have a boy's head on his knee when you got plumb tired, was beside him on the wagon seat. Eph Hanks was good to brag onto the other kids, but Pa was something different again.

On the other side of Proph was his older brother, Walter, squinting into the sun. "Likely country?" Pa nodded.

"Most too red," Proph said.

Pa and Walter laughed. "That's what your ma will think. Right at first, anyway," Pa said. "We'll all get used to it." He paused for a time and then said, "Leastwise it'll be better for us on Pleasant Creek than in Burrville."

Proph knew what Pa was talking about. Even a young-un could tell when times was hard. There was the stink of dead milk cows that had frozen to death and then rotted when the first thaws came. Anybody could smell that and see the tears on Ma's face when she thought no one was looking. Proph thought of the times he had been hungry in Burrville. Seemed like there had never been enough fancy stuff, like butter, after the feed for the cows fell off.

Once Pa had invited the church authorities home for dinner. Proph had watched a cloud of worry come over Ma's serene dark face. "Not much in the house; but biscuits are filling," she had said.

Soon the dinner was ready and the authorities and Pa sat down at the table. The children had hung around until Pa sent them packing with a look of his eye and a jerk of his head. But Proph hadn't gone far. He had hid behind a door frame but he kept his head out and his eyes open. He felt the spit coming into his mouth and he pulled it back and forth through his teeth as he watched one of the brethren split a biscuit and reach for the butter. "Ma, look at the chunk of butter that man's taking for one biscuit!" she cried.

When Ma got him, she held him by the two shoulders and made his blue eyes meet her dark ones. She wasn't mad, but she did let him know that the Servants of the Lord must have all they want and the best of everything even if other folks go without.

Then there was the time when he had sat between Ma and Major Anderson's high-nosed wife in meeting. Sister Anderson held her hat on her lap and on the hat was a beautiful bunch of cherries and gooseberries. Seemed like just to look at those gooseberries and think of the sweet sourness made the water run in your mouth and set you to

swallowin'. And cherries! When Sister Anderson dozed he reached for the fruit. It wasn't fixed too tight to the hand and he had one of the cherries almost between his teeth when Ma saw it and took the bunch away from him. Sister Anderson's face looked awful grim, and her fingers sort of flattened out like she would like to see how her hand would bounce on the seat of Proph's pants. Ma whispered something and Sister Anderson nodded. Next Sunday Ma wore her big hat without the beautiful lilies that had laid loving-like on the brim. Sister Anderson's hat had the lilies.

"Get a move on us and there'll be plenty for next winter," Pa said. "Cows can feed out all winter on Pleasant Creek, and there'll be a long growing season."

Thinking of his own long, thin fingers reaching out toward Sister Anderson's fruit made Proph remember something else. "Pa," he said, hesitating a little, "I'm squashed up here. Can I ride in back?"

Eph stopped the horses while Proph climbed over onto the top of the load. He wasn't nearly as comfortable as he had been on the seat with Pa and Walter but he had wanted to see if there was still a special bulge under the canvas cover. A bulge that meant a much worse mistake than taking Sister Anderson's hat trimming.

Last night, the first night away from home, they had stopped at Brother Stringham's ranch in Rabbit Valley. Sister Stringham had fed the three of them at her table but there wasn't room for extra folks to sleep in the house, so Pa and Walter had made a bed for the three of them in the granary. After Proph had stretched out between the heavy quilts Pa and Walter had gone back up to the house to visit a little. It was gray light in the granary with brighter shafts falling through the chinks where the logs didn't fit. And one of these light fingers had pointed out a beautiful yarn ball. A boy could easily climb to the place where it was wedged in between the roof and the rafters. Lots of toe holds and not too high. But of course, it was Jim Stringham's ball. No use for Proph to climb to it. No use at all. He had gone to sleep thinking of the ball and wanting it so bad he could almost feel it in the palm of his hand with his long fingers closed around it. Good thing Pa and Ma had taught him that to steal was a deadly sin or he'd climbed right up there, and -----

The next morning, just before Pa had finished with the wagon and they were about to go up to Stringham's house for breakfast, Proph ran back to the granary, climbed up the logs, took the ball and hid it under the canvas that covered the load.

He wished with all his heart he hadn't stolen the ball. For two reasons. One, stealing was a deadly sin. Two, Pa would find out about it when he unpacked the load. The thing to do was to tell Pa all about it right now. Then when the three of them got the crops in and went back for Ma and the others, they could take the ball back to him.

"Pa," he said, "I--------"

"What is it, Proph?" Pa asked in his kind way.

"I------." But there weren't any words to tell a noble man like Pa that you were a thief. No words at all. "Pa, I'm thirsty."

"We'll get to water soon," Pa said and turned his eyes back to the road.

Proph kept his eyes on Pa's back while he slipped the ball from the hiding place and threw it into a bush. Heavenly Father knew all about having stolen the ball—but Pa didn't need to. He might be punished in some horrible way at some far off time in some far away place. Pa's punishment would be much quicker and much surer.

He felt bad inside as he had when he say Ma's big hat without the lilies, but he felt a lot safer, just the same.

Imperceptibly the road gave way to a wagon trail, then to wheel tracks. For several minutes at a time the wheel tracks disappeared entirely and Proph had the feeling that they had come from nowhere and were going to the same place. When the wagon rattled over bare rock there was almost no sign that anyone had ever traveled this way before, then in the distance where the rock had broken into shallow top soil, he could pick up the snake-wiggling track with his eyes again.

It was hard staying on top of the canvas-wrapped load. First the left wheel would go over a big rock, and cart, load the Proph would tip to the right. Almost before he had straightened himself a wheel on the other side would run over a bigger rock and the cart would rear up on that side and the load and boy would slide to the left.

"Let me come back on the spring seat with you, Pa," he begged at last. Pa just laughed a little and said, "Got to have elbow room up here, Proph, on this road. Remember, it was you that wanted to come along, not me that drug you."

That's so, Proph thought. He had wanted to come more than anything.

He remembered the night when the family first heard of Pleasant Creek. Pa had got home late afternoon and Ma hurried up a bread pudding for supper just to celebrate. Pa had the biggest heaped up dish and the children watched him slowly eat it, tasting each bite to the end. Ma had told them they better not ask Pa any questions till he'd finished supper or they'd have to answer to her.

At last Pa took the last bite and wiped his mustache with a best white napkin.

"Begin at the beginning, Pa," sister Thisbe and Proph begged.

So Pa began at the first. They all remembered the day Pa left, desperate because the winter snow was never going to melt and there was no food left for the cattle. Proph knew in a vague sort of way that the cattle represented all Pa had got out of his mine shares and his other property up north. If anything was to be saved, feed had to be found for the cattle. So Pa had started out with Brother Rust and Brother Burr and Brother Whitehead, breaking a road for the cattle through waist-high snow all the way over the ridge and to the next valley. It was some struggle to get the cattle up over the ridge. They were dumb beasts that didn't know what was good for them. That night they camped and made a big pitch pine fire. A little way from the fire, in a sort of protected hollow, they scattered a little hay that they had brought along and the cattle finished it before you could bat your eye. The next day they worked the cattle down to Rabbit Valley. Brother Stringham sold them some hay and the cattle made short work of it.

Two more days and they were at Carkes Creek; then on they went to Miner's Mountain. Here there was white sage, Brigham tea and bunch grass. The animals fanned out and made themselves right at home. Brother Rust and Brother Burr stayed with the animals while Pa and Brother Whitehead went exploring. And then Pa found Pleasant Creek, the prettiest little valley in the world, all hemmed in on three sides by mountain ledges.

"Tell us more about this creek," Walter spoke up.

And Georgina said, "Does it have fish?"

"Well, it's a stream about twice the size of Little Creek and up close to the mountains where the floods don't bother them, there's plenty of nice speckled trout."

"Do people live there?" Proph asked.

Pa's face lost its shine. "We wouldn't be the first," he said. "Cy Bunanan and Major Anderson wintered there in a dugout."

"Then it's their place," Ma said, losing her shine, too. "Sister Anderson says it's a beautiful place, with no snow to contend with."

Pa smiled at Ma and a little of Ma's glow came back as she smiled, too. "A body'd think you was just about ready to pull up and move there, Ephraim," she said, lovin-like, as if the young-uns weren't even around.

Pa's voice shut out the young-uns, too. "All I lack is your consent, and ---"

"Let's go," shouted the young-uns.

"And to make arrangements with the Anderson's if I can. One more hard winter here will strip us."

The next morning Pa was gone when the little kids got up. They were still eating breakfast when he came back. "Looks like a trade," he said. "Major Anderson will swap his place down there for this place here, and give me a team and wagon to boot."

"We're on our way," Walter sang out.

"Not so fast," Pa said, but his face was as eager as Walter's. "First I've got to collect on some of my old black smithing debts so that Ma and the kids can eat while you and I go down there and break ground and put in the crops."

Proph looked at Pa and Walter so eager and happy. "Ma and the kids can eat," Pa had said, and Proph was one of the kids and he wouldn't get to go at all. He'd have to just stay in Burrville. In a moment he was off his stool and had both arms wrapped around Pa's waist. "Take me, Pa. Please take me. I can help."

"Six is pretty young, Proph."

"In three days I'll be seven."

"We'll wait for you to be seven," Pa had said, and so they were on their way and he was already half wishing that he hadn't come, so scary was the road.

The wagon crossed Sulpher and Sand Creek Lava Flats. At Sulpher Springs they got down and prepared and ate dinner. Proph hated to climb up on the load again, but looking at the wagon tracks ahead, he knew Pa would still need elbow room. From Sulpher down to Junction, then the lava land dropped away and now there were red cliffs on the left and cedar breaks on the right. They crossed and recrossed a wash and Proph's heart stuck in his throat as the cart swayed along the sideline places.

"I wish I had cat claws to stick in this cover," he called to Walter and Pa, but they paid no attention to him. Pa had to watch every minute to keep the cart from going upside down, but Walter might have turned and answered so that Proph could feel there was somebody alive in the swaying world.

At last it was night and they'd made only a mile since they left Junction. "We'll camp here," Pa said. "We won't find another place soon enough to be safe."

Proph prayed before he crawled in between the quilts. He prayed for Ma and the family in Burrville, for Pa and Walter and for himself. But mostly he prayed that Pa's priesthood would keep them safe if they were going to travel on any more roads like those they'd been on today.

Hardly had they started the next morning when they saw the wagon tracks ascending a hill so steep that it seemed to go straight up. It wasn't long, but such a steepness. No horse could climb that, let alone drag a heavy wagon behind him. This is the turning back place, Proph thought, but Pa hot down, lifted Proph from the load, untied the cover and began taking the load apart. Pa handed Proph the frying pan and water bucket. "Your first load," he said.

Pa and Walter carried flour, bacon, bedding, sacks of seeds, and between them the hand plow. Proph carried all the light things. Slowly up, swiftly down, then slowly up again. At last the load was all at the top.

"Now comes the tug of war," Pa said. "Getting the team and wagon to the top won't be easy."

Walter was to hold the lines and walk on the outside of the cart and do the driving. Pa was stronger. He'd push from behind. Proph scrabbled behind, too, carrying a good sized rock to put close under the wheel every time Pa had to stop pushing for a minute.

Foot by foot, yard by yard, the team strained toward the top. Finally at the top the three of them sat down to rest.

"If a mosquito had lit on that outfit we'd never've got it to the top," Walter said.

It was twelve miles to Pleasant Creek over rough washboard country. The road twisted and turned.

"We ain't going', we're comin'," Proph said and Pa, gray wet with sweat, laughed. The laugh sounded natural and good in this strange country. Then they were out of the cart gain going through Capital Wash with all three of them holding to one side of the cart to keep it from tipping over.

It was one o'clock when they reached the ranch and Pa waved his hand, taking in the box of red cliffs that held the valley and the stream. "This is it," he said with eagerness growing in his voice again. But Proph didn't follow the wave of Pa's hand. He was, instead, a bucket made from a powder can. It was half full of water and an old tin cup lay beside it. Proph was after it at once and was just raising it to his mouth when Pa took it away from him and threw the water away.

"Here, Proph," Pa said. "We don't want for anything. Specially not water. Take this bucket down to the stream and bring us back some water while Walter and I turn out the team and start dinner."

We won't want for anything here, Proph thought. Not for butter or meat or milk or anything. And thinking of heaven on earth he stumbled over a stick and fell headlong into a prickly-pear bed. He was too big to cry so he limped down to the stream, took off his clothes and pulled out all the thorns he could reach. When he finally got back with the water Pa thought he'd been slow so he bragged about the prickly-pears.

"I couldn't get all of them," Proph said, thinking Pa would offer to pick out the rest.

"After a while they'll fester," Pa said kindly, "then you can get them easy."

The next day Walter and Proph hauled rocks and Pa built a fireplace right inside the dugout. Now they could keep warm evenings and mornings and do their cooking without getting out into the weather. A couple cart loads of fresh clay made a fine floor and Pa built a bunk of small poles covered with the pummy Proph brought in, and in one day they had set up housekeeping.

After the first day, life wasn't so exciting. Most of the jobs needed grown folks like Pa and Walter, and Proph was told to "run and play." Running and playing isn't so easy by yourself when you've been raised with a parcel of young-uns. Often Proph sat by the stream and felt lonely and sorry for himself.

These times it helped to think about his friends back in Burrville. It'd be fun if Henny Burr was down there right this minute. Henny and Proph and five other little boys had sat together on the long bench at school. They had been a neighborly little group. If one of them had something nice, like some pine gum or a stick of licorice, he always passed it down the row. One day Henny came to school with a chunk of chewing tobacco. He took a nibble and passed it down the row. Proph saw it coming, saw each boy take a tiny bite and when it came to him, with much bravado he bit off a pretty good nibble and passed the cut along. The crumb hadn't got past his Adam's apple when his stomach reversed and he made for the only door, plainly marking the way for the others who soon would follow. Clara had hurried him home across the meadow. All the way Proph had begged to lie down but his big sister had dragged him along. Ma knew what to do for any sick man or beast- even what to do for chewin' tobacco sickness.

It had been fun at school. What sort of school could anybody have at this ranch! Nobody to go and nobody to teach it. Eva Steele, up at Burrville, had been a mighty pretty teacher. George Rust, the biggest and best looking boy in the school had thought so too, and the two had been quite chummy. One day the boys had put Proph, the youngest boy in the school, up to making fun of the teacher and George. They had taught him to say, "Steel is bright but will soon be Rusty." Then they had stood back and listened to see if he'd get away with saying that right to the teacher's face. He did get away with it, but just for a day or so. Miss Steele pounced on Proph's habit of wandering all over the room instead of staying in one place on his bench. She warned him to keep his seat and the first time he forgot she took a string from her apron pocket, tied his wrist to hers firm as a handcuff, and lead him around the rest of the day.

Just the same it would be nice to see Rusty Steele again, and the pupils, too. Henny, and Dave Rust and Dord Burr and Frank Cloward. If they were here now what fishin' fun they could have. Seems like they was always tryin' to catch fish in the little stream that wandered past the Burrville log school house. The big boys started it by catching some minnows and putting them in a water filled lunch pail for the amusement of the teacher. Why can't I get to be teacher's pet that way, Proph wondered. So one day he and Dave and Dord and Frank spent their whole recess time trying their luck.

Proph went a long way up the stream; that's how he happened to miss hearing the bell. He finally got a fish – at least two inches long – and with it folded between his fingers and his palm ran pantingly to school.

Miss Steele met him at the door. "What have you in the hand you are holding behind you?"

"Nothing." Everybody in school looked up from his book.

"What are you holding in your hand?"

"Nothing."

She put her hand out and spoke very sternly. "Proph, give it to me!"

Proph held out his hand, his fingers still curved around the wriggling fish.

"Give that to me!"

He slowly unclosed his fingers and the minnow gave a flip into her hand. She screamed and fainted and the big boys and girls brought her around while Proph picked up his fish and hurried home to show it to Ma. Ma hadn't been very mad.

But here there wasn't anybody to play with. He could watch Walter breaking ground with the little twelve-inch hand plow or he could watch Pa working on the ditch. That was all.

One day he was with Walter, playing in the sand near where he made his end turn with the plow. Walter was nearly to the turn at the other end of the field when Proph screamed. Walter dropped the plow and came running.

"What is it? What is the matter?"

Proph clutched a handful of one pant leg and danced a jig.

"Proph, tell me what's the matter," Walter insisted.

"A lizard. A lizard ran up my leg. I'm holding him to keep him from biting me."

"Well, hold on," Walter said, half disgusted. "I'll unbutton you and we'll get those pants off."

As his second foot came out of the pants leg he let go of the piece of trouser leg he had been clutching and dodged behind Walter who grabbed a stick and waited for that terrible varmint to run out.

"It must be a snake," Proph quavered. "Or a lizard."

Walter reached out with his stick to turn the trousers over and free the creature.

"Don't do that, Walter!" Proph expected at least a copperhead to glide out and attack the two of them. Nothing happened. Walter lifted the trousers with the stick and out fell Proph's pocket knife.

"Tryin' to squeeze that thing to death," Walter joked, but he had wasted a lot of good sunlight time, and Proph was ashamed.

He heard Walter tell Pa about it later and Pa said, "Poor little young un. Anything for a little attention. We shouldn't have brought him along."

Sometimes Proph was thinking the same thing, and sometimes he was mighty proud and glad that he had come. Every day Pa's ditches got longer and deeper, every day Walter's plowed land stretched wider and wider. At last the planting began and again Proph could be of use. Every day, too, his one pair of trousers grew thinner and thinner. Finally his underpants took the place of pants but still they hadn't completed their work.

It seemed a long time to Proph before everything was done and Pa hitched up the wagon to go back to Burrville for Ma and the family. Everything in the dugout was left in perfect order. Pa was determined that Ma would like her new home right from the start.

Proph was certain that the trip back to Burrville was much longer than the trip out. He wouldn't admit that he'd got baby-lonely for his pretty, dark-eyed, sweet-voiced ma, but all along it looked like a fellow could make better time than the team if he really stretched his legs a little. Pa and Walter smiled a little at his impatience, but Pa allowed he'd be glad to see Ma and young-uns after the time away.

The three of them walked into the house at Burrville just as Ma was getting the kids ready for Primary, and when she saw the sad condition of Proph's clothes she didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. Proph, watching her face, could see that. Anyway, she put him straight into a wash tub filled with good hot water and handed him a smooth bar of homemade soap to get clean with. And while he was bathing she fixed him up some clothes so he could go to Primary with the others.

June and July passed with Eph getting everything in shape for the big move. Their new place was being cared for by a neighbor while Eph finished everything up in Burrville.

Often Ma asked about the new farm, about the house, about the neighbors. Pa always answered with such a shine on his face that Ma's face smiled, too. Ma said, "You've got itching feet, Eph, itching feet."

And Pa said, "They won't itch to move again this time. This is the last time."

In August the whole family made the move to the ranch. There was the same stop at Brother Stringham's in Rabbit Valley, the same wagon trails over bare rock, the same drop down to Junction. When Ray whined because the wagon swayed from side to side as they crossed the wash, Proph said wisely, "You wait until tomorrow!" And tomorrow brought the steep, steep road and everybody got out to walk, even Ma. And everybody but Ma helped to carry the load to the top. Proph, seeing the weariness in Ma's face when she wasn't smiling,

and the tired, tired dark eyes, thought of the new home on Pleasant Creek and waited for the sight of it to bring happiness over her face again.

The twelve miles from the top of the hill to Pleasant Creek seemed ever so long, but at last they came in sight of the vertical red cliffs that rose on three sides to box in the valley. He wanted to cry, "This is it!", but somehow he knew he should wait for Pa.

Pa waved his hand. "This is it," he cried with pride and eagerness in his voice. Proph's eyes went to Ma's face; with his whole body he waited for Ma's words.

"Where's the house, Eph?" Then after a moment, "A dugout, Eph?"

"I'll build you a house, Thisbe. Just as soon as the crops are in, I'll build you a house."

But Ma said, drawing her shoulders tight, "I didn't think of it like this, Eph."

Proph took the young-uns to show them the wonders of Pleasant Creek. He knew if Pa kept on talking and there weren't too many people about, the happiness might come into Ma's face. But still he thought, Women are strange folks. This place is new. Seems like Ma would like it better than Burrville.

"A dugout's just a----a cave," Amy said.

Proph looked at it. He thought of the hard work that he and Walter and Pa had done to make it nice and clean and comfortable. "It isn't just a----a cave," he insisted.

The next day Pa and Walter unloaded the wagons, and the next they started to bring in logs to build a room on the front of the dugout. The shine was slow in coming back to Ma's face.

But it did come with September. The new room was finished and harvesting was begun. There was sweet corn to cut from the cobs to dry, there was dry corn to grind into meal, there was sorghum to make and molasses. There would be plenty of food for the winter and surplus to trade for staples when Pa could afford the time to take a trip out to do the trading.

Then when the harvesting was all done and everything was in shape for winter, Pa drove Walter and Georgina down to Fremont to go to school. Of course, there wasn't any school on Pleasant Creek since nobody lived there but the Hanks family and the Buhanans, and both Pa and Ma were determined that the children should have book learning along with religious training and practice in practical everyday work.

Proph thought of the school in Burrville—of his friends. He wished he was going to Fremont. Ma promised that she would take over Amy's share of the work and Amy could start a school right in their own home, but that didn't sound like the real thing to Proph. It wasn't the inside of books he wanted. It was the other boys passing a stick of licorice down the row, fishing in the creek that went by the school house, wrestling with the other boys before the bell rang, rolling in the clean dirt in front of the neighborly school house.

When Pa came back from Fremont, he had food for the winter and something special for each of the children. The girls had a dress length of store cloth and the boys each a pair of new trousers.

"Don't give Proph those new pants," his sister Thisbe teased. "He'll just cut the buttons off."

Proph took the new pants and put them between the straw tick and the criss-cross slats on his bed. His face was hot and prickly, but he didn't care. Let the folks laugh if they wanted to. Even Ma. There were times when cutting buttons from trousers was a good thing to do. Ma should have known better since it was Ma that had taught all the young-uns the danger of lightning.

From the time that Proph could remember, at the first sound of thunder Ma would collect all the family in a dark room as a scared hen gathers her chickens. Proph always crowded close and hid his face under her big apron. While the storm was gathering strength and fury Ma and the girls took the pins from their hair, the boys got rid of any metal they might have on them—even their pocket knives. Separate yourself from all steel, run to Ma, --that had been Proph's training.

One day when he had been six he had been about a fourth a mile from home wading in a shallow pond. His eyes were on the water that divided slowly to pass his legs, then rolled together again. In the water were all sorts of living things. There were tadpoles, some

short, some so slim they resemble minnows. Some had such large full stomachs that they almost looked like a black commie marble with a thin tail tied to it. Others had tails and legs that seemed to grow out of the same end. Suddenly he saw one bigger than the rest, without a tail, but with four little feet.

He dropped one of the trouser legs that he was holding up to his thigh and tried to help the little fellow with his hand. He waded along the edge of the pond. His feet and legs were surrounded with a sort of white jelly with black dots settled in it. So interested had he become that he didn't notice that black clouds had rushed in quickly to cover the sun. He was still trying to help the pollywog when he first heard the low growl and rumble of thunder in the west. With a few leaps he was out of the pond. Then he saw a flash of lightning. His hand went to his pocket for his little knife. He drew it out to give it a throw, but then his eyes caught the luster of the shining buttons which held his pants up. Another flash, another rumble, and he didn't hesitate longer. With his knife he cut all the buttons from his trousers and tossed them away. Then, holding the waistband of his trousers with one hand, he ran for Ma.

Now he smoothed his new pants lovingly and looked at the shining, metal buttons. He hoped he wouldn't be wearing these special new store pants when a thunder storm crept up. Because he'd do the same thing again. Yes, the very same thing.

CHAPTER II

Life at Pleasant Creek was happy. There was work for everybody and play for everybody, too. Proph was allowed to help when Pa built a new house for Ma to take the place of the dugout and lean-to that had to do for a little while. There were chores he could do for Ma, and help he could give his big sisters. He was a large boy and he was strong and willing.

Proph was eight the fall that two brothers he hadn't ever seen before – or maybe he had seen them when he was too little to remember – came deer hunting and stayed all fall. "These are your brothers, Proph," Pa had said when the grown young fellows first rode up and climbed from their horses.

Brothers? The word worried Proph and finally he asked Amy how come.

"I know, but I won't tell," Amy said, and shrugged her shoulders.

"Why won't you tell?"

"Because you aren't big enough to know, that's why."

But when Proph asked Ma, she left the work she was doing and sat down with his hand in hers. "It's like this," she said. Then she told the long story that Proph already knew about how Ma was a little girl freezing and starving to death on the plains when P had come and rescued her. Then she told about how Pa had taken her and her ma and her sister to a warm pleasant home where they had been treated wonderfully well. The home belonged to Pa and Aunt Harriet, who was Pa's wife at that time. Sill and Perry had been little boys then.

"Why didn't Pa's first wife and Sill and Perry move to Burrville and down here?" Proph wanted to know.

But here Ma's tongue faltered. "Aunt Harriet and Aunt Jane aren't Pa's wives anymore, that's why," she explained. She shook out her apron and went back to her peeling chore.

When Proph was ten, his oldest sister, Georgina, was married but that made little difference to Proph. What did excite him was that Pa sent Walter down to Teasdale to build a winter house. There was a school in Teasdale and the family would live there during the school term and on the ranch in the summer. "What I can teach my children isn't enough for them to know," Proph heard Ma say over and over again. And Pa seemed to agree.

"Come here, boy," Pa said one evening after supper was over and the candle had been lighted on the cleared table. Proph had an uneasy feeling that he must have done something wrong until he saw a bright glint in Pa's blue eyes sparkling out from his sober face. Proph went toward him slowly, his hands locked behind his back.

"What's your name?" Pa asked.

"Proph."

"No, it ain't," Pa said. "It's Sidney Alvarus Hanks and you remember that."

"But folks call me Proph."

"Not in Teasdale, they won't, if they never hear it. We're using your real name starting now, tonight." He turned to Ma just rubbing dry the last knives and forks from her dishpan at the back of the stove. "What do you say, Ma? Is it Sidney or Alvarus?"

Proph watched Ma's smile grow as she shook her head. "Both sound mighty old and important for a boy."

"Alva," Pa decided. He said it , Alvay. "You're Alva for short."

"But I'm used to Proph."

"Proph isn't a fit name." Pa laughed then was serious. "It would be a fit name if you aimed your sights that high and hit it. But to be a Prophet is something you can't seek for yourself. It's something God gives you."

"How'll I know to come when folks say Alva, me used to being Proph?"

The glint began to grow out of Pa's eyes. "The name was a joke and the joke's gone far enough," he said almost sharply.

Proph knew about the joke. When he had been a baby his Uncle Lije and his wife had been visiting Pa and Ma in Park City. Though they were Spiritualists, Pa had been anxious to tell them about Mormonism. When he'd explained about the Prophet Joseph and the

restoration of the gospel Uncle Lije had laughed, and pointing to the baby had said, "If Joseph Smith was a prophet so is that child."

Everybody had laughed, more because they were surprised than that they had thought Uncle Lije's remark funny. But the name Proph had stuck to the boy just the same.

Pa turned to the rest of the family. "And you remember it too. Down in Teasdale there's no such a fellow as Proph."

He lifted Alva's chin with his kind, firm hand and looked into the blue eyes that matched his own. "If anyone calls you Proph around here you smut their faces for them. You have my permission."

"Does that count you and Ma?"

"Your Ma and me won't forget."

But it wasn't more than a half hour or forty minutes at most before Pa said, "Ray, you and Proph get into bed."

With a quick dive Alva grabbed a piece of charred wood from the edge of the fire and was on to Pa with a whoop and a holler. Pa laughed and let his face be blackened from hair to whiskers.

And Pa was only the first. Before the family moved down to Teasdale to go to school every one of them had been blackened more than once, even to Ma. Proph was now Alva and everybody remembered it.

Life was much easier at Pleasant Creek than in Burrville, but still it wasn't too easy. There were times when Alva saw worry in Eph's eyes and in Ma's eyes, too.

Once when things were at their lowest Pa went over to Cedar City on business and when he came back he brought the most beautiful mare that Alva had ever seen. Her name was Black Bess and she was a three-year-old. Her neck was arched, her mane was flowing, a crease down her back gave her the appearance of being in fine flesh, her eyes were fiery, her nostrils large and sensitive and her long racing legs gave her away for speed.

"Where ever did you get the horse?" Ma asked.

"Same place I got this stock," Pa said, and indicated some fine cattle he had driven to the ranch.

Ma smiled back into Pa's teasing eyes. "But I want to know."

"Not by gambling," Pa said. Then the whole family laughed because they'd heard so often the story about Pa's gambling.

Alva thought of the gambling story just the way Pa told it.

"Pretty fair looking team you drive," Pa had said to Harmon, his neighbor, as they met one spring day near their cattle ranches in Parley's Park.

"Yes," said Harmon, "there's not a team in this valley that can beat them to town and back." He stopped a minute, then said, "And I'm looking at your racing mules."

"Well, as long as you feel sure of yourself, that is all right," Pa said, and he looked at his mules. "My wagon is a good bit heavy for my light mules, but I suppose you don't care how many passengers I carry for ballast."

"No, I don't care. Guess I'll take my wife along. She says she likes to see my team travel. Now don't bet anything for I know my horses can trot to town and back as fast as your doncs can run it."

"Well, neighbor Harmon, I thought I'd also take my wife to town and I got a boy who's never been over the road."

At this point in the story Alva had always said, "That was me," but when Pa was telling the story he had just smiled at the interruption and went on as if no one had spoken.

"---and his ma wants to get some short clothes for him."

"Now Hanks, don't joke with me. If you really want to bet I'll put up twenty on my team."

"I'll take you on. You know there is always an element of chance when you bet."

"Not in this bet," Harmon said, putting his hand into his pocket.

"Maybe you better bet your small change first."

"Well, if you think I'm afraid of your long-eared jackasses, I'll add a quarter of beef when we kill this fall."

"That's a go. Since you offer a hind quarter, it reminds me that ten sacks of oats at threshing time may help my doncs get ready for next Christmas."

"Do you cover it?"

"Sure, I cover it. Twenty dollars a hind quarter of beef at killing time and ten sacks of oats at harvest."

"Shake?"

"Shake."

"Meet right here on the road at ten?"

"That's a go," Harmon agreed. "One hour stop in Salt Lake City then come back to this point to finish. I'll ask Snider to come out and judge for me."

"Well, I'll take Tom Terry. Two hours road time will do the doncs."

"We'll see," Harmon said. "We'll see. Remember, neither one of us is to receive outside help."

Next morning all the ranchers for miles around were there. Betting was going on with the bets a bit one-sided; in fact the horses were taking the odds.

So Pa's friends lined up on the east side of the road and Harmon's friends took the west.

"Then we came riding out in Terry's new buckboard hitched to the mules," sister Thisbe would put in. "Me sitting between you and Ma, and Ma holding Alva on her lap."

"Yep," Pa would say, then go on with his story. "Well, Harmon's Missus was dressed fit to kill," he'd say. And Ma would say, "And she turned her head like she was ashamed to be found in such company as us."

There was talk between Terry and Snider and after awhile they said, "On a single road the race can be run safer and fairer if one team has five minutes start of the other."

Then Terry and Snider tossed for it and the doncs got the chance to start. The gun went off at ten sharp, Pa gave a shrill whistle and the mules were off at a dead run. They were half way to Sam Snider's by the time the gun went off for Harmon to start.

The mules ran fine until they hit the slough, then they stopped dead. Harmon drove his bays around them, splashing mud on Ma and the baby. Those stubborn mules put back their ears and in spite of the rawhide whip, sulked like a she-bear in a trap.

But Pa knew one thing those mules were afraid of. Indians! He walked out on the wagon tongue and took the blinders off the mules so they could see what was going on behind them. He took the Navajo blanket that had been tucked over Ma's knees and threw it over his head and shoulders. He gave two blood curdling Indian war whoops. The doncs looked back and did they begin to stretch leather!

It wasn't long before Harmon's rig came in sight, bogged down in mud. With a few more whoops and some blanket work, Pa made it around the Harmon's mud spattered outfit by a cat's eyebrow. Looking back he hollered, "Take off your team and we'll pull you out."

Harmon swore but he unhooked the team and drove them out. He hooked Pa's chain to his wagon tongue. When the doncs heard a couple more whoops and a holler and caught sight of the blanket again they gave a mighty tug that got Harmon's wagon out of the mire. The race was on again.

Of course, Harmon had to hitch up again and he lost time.

The end of the story was always disappointing to Alva and the other young-uns. Every time Pa told it he quit right there and when they'd urge him to go on he'd say, "I don't know what I did with that twenty dollars but we sure did enjoy the hind quarter of beef."

After the family had laughed, thinking about Pa and his gambling, Pa said seriously, "I wasn't gambling, not at all, when I was in the service of the Lord." And he went on to tell about how he met the son of a man who had been in the same handcart company with Ma and would have died if it hadn't been for Pa coming with buffalo meat in time to save them. This man invited Pa home and his father, the man Pa had saved out in the snow-blocked mountains, insisted on giving him the stock and Black Bess. Black Bess, the giver said, looked just like the horse Eph Hanks had been riding when he came into camp that first white night bringing hope and faith and life to the stranded Saints.

Alva watched Ma's face as Pa told the story. Ma said, "She does look like that horse, Eph. Exactly like it. What's her name?"

"Black Bess. She's yours, Thisbe. I want you to think of her as yours."

So Black Bess was Ma's horse, but, of course, the whole family used her. She wouldn't ride double, though, so the children rode her one at a time. She was good for riding and she was good for pulling, and she was good for working in the field.

One day Alva and Walter and Ray were plowing corn with Bess hooked to the cultivator. Walter was holding the cultivator, Ray was uncovering the corn behind the plow and Alva was riding Bess and keeping her in the furrow. Though the sky was blue a cloud floated by and one streak of chain lightning zipped through the sky toward the steel plow. All three boys were dropped in their tracks. For a moment Bess, too, was stunned; then she got to her feet, jerked the plow free of the ground, and raced for the stable. The sharp plow share missed Alva's head only by a hair. When the boys regained consciousness they staggered to the stable and found her standing there trembling. Alva thought of the day he had cut the shiny buttons from his new pants. Nothing he or his brothers had done for themselves had saved them from lightning this time. That they were saved was a miracle and they gave thanks that night as they knelt in family prayer circle.

Bess had a colt, a stallion, Deck, that looked so much like her that from a distance they couldn't be told apart. The two made a wonderful pair in the harness. Trouble was, at first, that the Hanks family didn't have the right getup for such fine animals. Ray and Alva took care of that. They herded sheep all one summer and paid for a new shuttler wagon and a set of fancy harness.

Golly, it was hard not to be proud when the whole family set off in the new wagon behind the beautiful gleaming horses. Cy Buhanan took his family out --- all eleven of them, nine children and the father and mother – in a wagon pulled by two slow oxen, Blue and Paddy. The Buhanan family could start on a six-mile trip to Notom an hour ahead of the Hanks family and Bess and Deck would come prancing in with their fine new outfit, far ahead.

The Hanks family wasn't especially musical, but its high spirits simply exploded into family song. "Come, Come Ye Saints," was Alva's favorite. Ray liked "In Our Lovely Deseret," especially the chorus. Pa always said that Bess and Deck enjoyed the singing and pointed with his whip at the way they pricked up their ears.

When Pa was appointed counselor to Bishop Harry Giles in Blue Valley the whole family was pleased.

It was ward conference time and Pa and Ma and Baby Nettie started off in the new wagon for conference. Three days later, Alva, watching from the front of the house, saw a strange procession. Ma was riding Deck, carrying Nettie in her arms. Pa was leading the horse.

Alva's first thought was, Why, that looks just like the picture of Joseph and Mary and the donkey taking Jesus to Egypt. His second thought was, Where's Bess?

He ran toward Pa calling, "Where's Bess?"

Pa answered in an unusual, flat voice, "Dead."

It wasn't until Pa had made arrangements to borrow the Buhanan mules to go back after the wagon and harness that he told the story. The accident had happened on the way back from conference. They were traveling over a particularly narrow stretch of dug way, Ma walking and carrying Nettie. Suddenly the outer edge of the road broke off. The wagon went with the falling rock and landed, with the team, upside down in the creek below. Ma and Nettie were safe because Ma was walking on ahead and Pa managed to jump as the wagon rolled over.

After just a moment of standing dazed, Pa slid down into the creek, cut tugs and lines and rolled Deck off Bess. He raised Bess's head from the water, helped her to her feet and lead her up to the road. But Bess was sick. Pa jerked the harness and let her lie down in the sand. In less than a minute she was dead.

For a minute after Bess died, Pa and Ma had been silent, then Pa had said, "Let us give thanks, Thisbe, that you and the baby weren't under the wagon in the water. But Bess----is gone."

When Alva heard the story he wasn't ashamed to cry. Even Pa was crying. There were some words from the Bible – or from some other book – that came into Alva's mind. "Pride goeth before a fall." But it was too bad altogether that the pride that Alva and the others had felt riding along behind the prettiest pair in Southern Utah, should go before Bess's fall. Wasn't Bess's fault that the Hanks children had felt so high and mighty passing up the Buhanan oxen.

CHAPTER III

"Alva!"

Alva turned over. Sounded like Pa but it couldn't be – not in the black of night.

"Alva!" Now Pa was shaking his shoulder and Alva sat up, rubbing at his eyes. There was a lighted candle on the table and in the flickering gleam Pa's face looked tired and worried. "I want you to get on the old black horse and ride over to the Jenson ranch. Make it fast, Alva. And ask Brother Jenson to ride over to Blue Valley and bring back Mrs. Foy."

In spite of Pa's urgency Alva was slow in getting into his clothes. "Ma doesn't need Mrs. Foy for another month," he said, thinking aloud more than he was talking to Pa.

"She needs her right now. And fast," Pa said.

"Fast?" Alva questioned, still stupid from sleep.

Pa bent to lace Alva's second shoe. "Very fast. You understand, don't you?"

Outside was awful dark for a twelve-year-old. He thought of asking Pa why he didn't ride to Jenson's and let Alva look after Ma. Pa seemed to read his thoughts. "Some folks say, 'Don't send a boy to market' but I don't believe that. You can make that trip faster than a man and I know you'd do anything for your ma."

"I would," Alva answered soberly.

Don't send a boy to market, Alva thought as he took the canyon trail, riding the black stallion bare backed, what did Pa mean by that. But that was easy. There was Jack who went to market to trade a cow and came home with a handful of beans. There was Moses Primrose in the story of The Vicar of Wakefield who was sent to the fair to sell a horse and came home with a gross of green spectacles. Most folks thought a boy couldn't do a man's work but Pa knew better and so did Alva.

His teeth chattered, though he wasn't cold, as he forced his horse to cross and recross Pleasant Creek. Many times he'd counted the crossings. Twenty-two of them. The horse's hoofs slipped on the submerged rocks and click-clicked on the hard canyon path.

At Jenson's Alva jumped from the horse, and still holding it by the bridle, pounded on the front door. Brother Jenson came, rubbing his eyes, and listened to Alva's story. Then, though he was looking right on Alva's stallion with its heaving sides he said, "Have you got a team I could drive to Blue Valley?"

Alva would have laughed at Brother Jenson's sleepiness but he remembered the way Pa had said, "Very fast."

Brother Jenson said, "My span of mules is turned out for the night and there's no chance of finding them until morning." He pointed with his thumb. "John Fenn lives just three miles up the way. He's got a good team. You ask him."

Alva was on his horse and away. Brother Fenn answered his knock. "Why Boy, I haven't a team," he said, "except my mules and they're turned out." He scratched his head. "I wish I could do something though at a time like this. Elias Johnson, he lives six mile down the road."

Alva was on his horse again and praying that Elias Johnson's team wouldn't turn out to be mules that couldn't be found until morning.

Elias came to the door with his pants in his hand. He put them on as he said, "Well, I did have a team, a fine one, but one of 'em died with colic and the other's mighty sick."

Alva felt the tears coming to his eyes. "But my ma's sick and she's got to have a midwife."

Elias buttoned his shirt as he shook his head. "I'm a single man myself. I'd sure like to help but standin' here talkin' isn't going to help none. If that animal of yours can stand another five miles to the Norton ranch ---"

On the horse again and off down the road. By now the horse was in a lather and the miles stretched slowly under his tired feet. At the Norton ranch Sister Norton answered his knock and her daughter stood behind her wrapped in a long white nightgown.

"So your ma is having a baby," she said, as if having a baby were the very best thing in the world. "Charlie," she called, "hook up the horse and go over to Blue Valley and get Mrs. Foy for Eph Hanks's wife." She turned back to Alva. "How about some nice hot breakfast?"

Alva shook his head. He climbed on the stallion and started slowly toward home, letting the animal choose his own speed. He had barely reached home when Charlie Norton drove up with Mrs. Foy. And Mrs. Foy was in plenty of time. All along the way Alva had thought of telling Pa about how hard a time he'd had getting someone to bring Mrs. Foy back. But when Pa finally asked, "How come Charlie Norton ---" Alva answered in an off hand manner, "Ah, the others didn't have a team handy."

Pa looked at him closely. "Some folks'd say you were a boy, Alva, but I know better. You're the size and age of a boy, but inside you're a man."

And from that day on life changed for Alva. Pa thought he was a man, capable of doing a man's work, capable of understanding a man's place in life.

There were lots of ways that his new attitude showed. Take work in the Church, for instance. Walter had married and gone on a mission and now he was home and Bishop of Caineville Ward. Caineville Ward stretched from Floral on the west to Hanksville on the east – a distance of forty miles. In 1886 when Alva was thirteen he was ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood and set apart as a teacher.

The office of teacher might not have meant much to him if Pa hadn't made it possible for him to work at his calling. Once a month Alva and his companion rode into Caineville, had breakfast with Walter and got their instructions and "message." The "message" was the lesson that the two young ones were to teach to the families they visited.

There were visits in the morning, dinner with any family that invited them to stay, and visits in the afternoon. At each home the two boys gave the message and knelt with the family in prayer. By night they were home again, having covered all the ground their ponies were capable of covering in a day.

Often as the two jogged along, silent, Alva wondered what two young boys would have to say that would help the folks they visited. Spending a day like this was nice, and it was a change, but maybe it was sort of useless.

One day they visited the Curtis family at Aldrich. After they had given the message, Brother Curtis said, "My father was a good man, a fine man, but he always did all the praying."

Alva waited for him to explain. "We used to kneel in family prayer, but my father always prayed and we never learned how. Now that I have a family I can't teach them to ray because I don't know how myself."

Thinking of Pa asking each member of the family to take a turn at praying in the family circle made Alva suddenly very proud of Pa and his way of doing things. "We'll teach you to pray, Brother Curtis." And they did. Each visit that they made Brother Curtis prayed and with help he found it easier and easier to talk with the Lord. The first afternoon that he prayed alone he stood up with tears on his face, and Alva and his companion cried, too. "We'll pray daily," he promised, "and each of my children will take his turn."

Another opportunity to take over a man's work came when the family needed meat and Pa let Alva go hunting by himself. He was so eager to leave that he was almost on his way before her remembered something that was very important in the Hanks home—morning prayers. But when he knelt down to pray he was still so excited that his prayer was, "Please let me shoot something."

He had not gone far into the woods before a deer appeared suddenly before him. He fired point blank but the deer jumped away unhurt. Another came up in almost the same place. He shot at it and it jumped away. After he had fired at four of them and could see no reason why he had missed them entirely, he checked his gun. He had been so up in the air he had failed to throw the lever the last snap so there was no cartridge to explode.

When he started to load his gun he found that every muscle in his body was jumping. He wanted to bring home meat for the family with such intensity that even when he lifted the gun for another shot he could see that the barrel was shaking. On the sixth shot a yearling fell. He dressed it and tied it on top of his pack and rode home.

The family poured out of the house to see his catch. He was feeling mighty grown up and proud of himself until Ma said, "This morning your Pa said if you prayed for meat you'd surely have it when you came in."

Ma's words reminded Alva of his hurried prayer, of the five shots he had missed. He knew it was the family faith, not his skill as a hunter that had provided the family with meat.

Pa trusted him again when the whole cow herd wandered away and was lost. Pa had ridden out as far as he could and still get back the same day, and he was pretty satisfied that they had wandered down Sheets Gulch. When he came home, more tired than a man of his age ought to let himself get, he spoke quietly to Alva.

"Son, want to go camping?"

Alva didn't know what to expect so he was silent.

"Over to Sheets Gulch and down to see if our cows are there." Still Alva was silent. "For a young man that'll be quite a trip," Pa said as if the whole thing had been decided.

Pa fixed the pack himself from fry pan to tarpaulin. Ma packed the bags full of good things to eat, including a batch of ginger cookies baked special for him. There was bacon but no fresh meat. A likely young man could take a gun along and get what fresh meat he needed. Last thing Pa added salt and pepper to the pack.

"Why there's enough grub for a week," Alva said.

"Maybe," Pa answered, and Alva felt another moment of disquiet.

When Alva had mounted Prince, Pa passed him the new 45-70 gun. A good saddle horse under him and best gun in the family in his hands with a pack horse on lead behind him! It was hard not to grin like a kid with the whole family waving him off.

He took the trail over the hill and headed for Sheets Gulch. A look over the shoulder told him that home was out of sight. Suddenly, he felt very much alone. He wondered if he really dared to ride into the silence and camp out alone. There weren't any men, good or bad, in Sheets Gulch. I should worry about coyotes, I should worry about mountain lions, he told himself bravely.

He sang or whistled in rhythm with the jog of his horse as it trotted over the mountain trail. By noon he had reached Tantlett's Creek, the heart of the cattle range from which the herd had disappeared, and stopped to eat lunch. He made the lunch last as long as possible. Finally he mounted his horse again and, half hesitating, turned due east and headed for the cedar breaks. There travel became much slower as he wound his way through thickets of cedar and crossed and recrossed small ravines. There was no path to guide him and the best he could do was to move in the right general direction.

The sun was aslant in the western sky when he came to the rim of a deep, dark canyon and gazed thousands of feet down into its gloomy depths. It seemed like the end of the trail, but Alva turned toward the right, and following the rim searched for a side canyon that would lead down to the floor of the great canyon. At last he found it, and at the same time came upon the trail of the lost cattle. It was easy to explain what had happened. The cattle had got thirsty and had smelled the water several miles away as cattle do.

Dismounting, Alva led his horses, practically sliding them, down the side canyon. When he reached the main gulch he found the cattle with good feed and water. Just as the sun set he pitched his camp. It would be a job to get the cattle back up to the range land, but he could count on help: help from inside himself and the help that any man can count on if he asks in faith.

Once again Pa had "sent a boy to market." And Alva wouldn't be returning with a handful of beans or a gross of green spectacles. He'd have his herd before him.

CHAPTER IV

A town'll be a strange place for me, Alva thought as, in 1893, he traveled toward Provo. He had been called by the Church to attend the B.Y.A. for a term. It would be new and exciting to meet new people, go to classes taught by Karl G. Maeser, one of the finest scholars in the state, if not the finest, learn about things he had only dimly heard of in the short-term school in Teasdale.

When he came to think of it his education had been pretty sketchy. Sometimes the teacher had been good, sometimes not. Some winters he had been taught by his older sister in his own house where a young-un was likely to fool some when Ma's strict eye wasn't on him. He hadn't had much education at all, unless you called working on the ranch, herding sheep, going on long hunting trips into the forest, education.

There was another thing that bothered him, too. Never, never had he been willing to let anyone outshine him. On the ranch he could ride and rope with the best. In Church he was as able to take his part as any other young man. But what would he find in Provo? Young men born and bred to city ways, most likely. And how would he fit in?

Attending classes was easy enough, he found, though he was terribly homesick for his busy, noisy family, the back of a horse and an open trail, the rugged, red cliffs and the gray-green brush of Floral. It was hard to fit in socially, and to friendly Alva, being liked by other people was more important than having food.

Finally he took himself in hand and started to go to the school dances. The young men wore neatly pressed store suits, fancy socks, pumps, white vests. This sort of clothing was out of the reach of a ranch fellow. Alva's idea of dress was quite different. A new pair of Levi's with a fancy cartridge belt to hold them up, a soft checkered shirt with a red silk handkerchief-—hat was dress in Wayne County. Oh, yes, and a pair of high heeled cowboy boots were the very stuff.

As he watched the city swells he wondered how they would fare if they had to take a swim with their clothes on, on the way to a dance. What would happen to the starched collars and vests, the neat trouser creases of the young men; the long pleated skirts with the flounces and frills, the rats, bangs, and bustles of the girls if they should be dropped into a stream of cold water?

That was just what had happened to Alva back in Wayne County. Three couples had been on their way to a dance when they had been tipped out of a double wagon box into a stream. They hadn't gone back home to change their clothes. That would have meant missing the dance. Instead they had rung their clothes out as well as they could without removing them, poured the water out of their boots or shoes, and the girls had rearranged each other's hair as they traveled. They had been almost dry when they got to the dance, completely dry before they started for home four hours later. And all six of them had a big time.

Alva, standing on the side lines at the B.Y.A. dance, wasn't dressed like the swells of either Wayne County or Provo. He wore his usual school clothes and felt uncomfortable and out of place. Finally he could stand the dance music no longer. He foot began to tap and he went over to a young woman who happened to be `sitting out' and asked her for a dance. She was in one of his classes, Miss Bush was her name, and she'd be glad to dance. Alva was no mean dancer and Miss Bush told him so. It was a glide polka and they flitted along like a race horse and a canary, Alva so broad shouldered and tall, and Miss Bush so tiny and slim.

She turned her face up to him and said with a giggle, "I should have brought my stilts tonight."

"Oh, no," he answered, "if it is too much strain on you, I'll put you in my pocket."

After the dance Alva went outside and leaned against the building. The music drifted out to him and he almost felt its pulse against his back right through the lumber of the dance hall walls. And he was achingly homesick.

The dancing bug had first hit him when he was seven. He had been at a children's dance and Ma, beautiful in her hoop skirt, had lead him through a simple quadrille. That had

started it. From that time on he had danced in every available hall, from the eighteen by twenty foot schoolhouse at Caineville to this ballroom at the B.Y.A.

Leaning there against the wall he thought of other dances. Just two years before, the Hanks young people had invited several of their friends home to spend Sunday. There were three young men who particularly liked the Hanks girls, and the three sisters of these boys were attractive to the two Hanks boys and to a neighbor, Chris Jorgenson. The day had started with Sunday School, followed by a big chicken dinner, then an outdoor afternoon. But what could be done with the evening? Ma suggested they all walk over to the empty church house and play the organ and sing some hymns.

The evening started with hymn singing, then while they were picking out another song, Chris produced a harmonica. He started to play a dreamy waltz. The girls paired off and danced a round or two, then the boys broke them up and soon all of the crowd but the girl at the organ and Chris were dancing. The music and the sound of scuffing feet were picked up and carried to the Hanks front porch by an evening breeze. Pa and Ma lost no time in getting over to the little meeting house.

When their disgusted faces, framed in the doorway, met Alva's eyes, a feeling came into his heart which he felt must be akin to the feeling the Children of Israel had when Moses came down from the mount and found them worshiping the golden calf. Pa spoke just five words. "Latter-day Saints dancing on Sunday!" Then Pa and Ma disappeared and all was quiet as a tomb. Finally Lilly spoke up and said, "Let's go over to our parlor. Ma will make us welcome."

So it had been checkers for the evening and sandwiches and cake and lemonade. Finally Pa had joined them and the evening had turned to telling stories. It wouldn't be so lonely in Provo if Pa-----

Alva turned his mind away from his pa. Talk about being tied to a mother's apron strings! Why, he was tied to Pa by a double hackamore and would be useless as a thrown steer if he didn't grow up and stand on his own feet.

Just the same, Alva didn't go to many school dances that school term. He liked other socials better. Seemed like he fit into Church functions better than into school affairs.

It was at stake conference that he saw the most attractive face he had ever seen. It belonged to Martha Huber and she was from Payson. Martha Huber was a mighty nice girl, too, and somehow different from any other girl Alva had ever met.

Seemed like the winter had gone by in a hurry when the term ended at B.Y.A. and Alva went back to Floral. Funny how after you've once left home you aren't truly satisfied any place. At first at the B.Y.A. he had missed the ranch until his bones actually ached to be on a horse and off over the lonely trails. And all winter long he'd counted the days until he'd be back at Floral. Now he was home he missed the young people that were always so bright and jolly and eager. Seemed like the very silence of the ranch sounded louder than thunder.

And he was lonely. Lonely for the associations, lonely for the school studies. Lovely for hazel-eyed, dark-haired, lovely Martha Huber.

"Alva," Pa said one morning at breakfast, "you put me in mind of a horse that's wintered out."

"I am, Pa," Alva agreed. Then with a laugh, "How do you like my new spring coat?"

Both Pa and Ma seemed to understand that it was the coat of manhood Alva was talking about. A long time ago he'd grown out of being a young-un. That was when he was twelve. Now he'd stopped being a kid. While he went about his ranch work he thought of the professors and students at school. Of the sweet, sweet girl from Payson who worked in the Payson Co-op on weekdays and sang in the stake choir on Sundays.

When Ma asked point blank, "Has the ranch lost its charm for you, Alva?" he answered, "Why, Ma. No. Of course not." But it seemed like it had.

Nights when he'd lie and look out of the window, it seemed like he couldn't stand the sight of the moon riding in and out of the clouds like a good horseman does through the brush. The birds' singing in the morning, especially the lark's and the robin's, was too beautiful to tolerate.

He could send a letter to Martha in Payson, of course, but not even a term at the B.Y.A. had made letter writing easy. He had promised to write to her, but what could he say? He smiled a little wryly as he formed the words in his mind.

Dear Martha,

Broke three colts yesterday.

But why should she be interested in colts. What reason had he to believe that she'd be interested in a ranch hand anyway?

So he put off letter writing and took up saddle and rope. He astonished his range companions, who freely prophesied that he'd break his neck, with his recklessness. He rode every wild thing, little and big, that he could corral. May and June passed and he hadn't broken his neck, and he hadn't written a letter.

The neighbor boys and girls were just as they had always been, friendly and warm and welcoming, but his heart wasn't in their fun. One evening in July he lit the little number two lamp in his room, spent a long time looking over snap shots to get into the spirit of the thing, then took up his pen. He didn't write a long letter and it wasn't and account of how many colts he'd broke since May.

The next morning his brain was busy studying how he could get away from the haying crew to mail the letter. Now that it was written it seemed most important that it should go off at once. He tucked the letter in his inside pocket and went about doing his chores, trying to wear his everyday look.

The first thing he saw which seemed to present a solution to his problem was Snipp, the black bronco. Alva stopped to examine the animal. Could he ride him? The bronc was wild and wily. For the last three years he had been the leader of the wildest band on the range. He had been in captivity three days and hadn't yet quieted down to the hackamore. He had eaten and drunk very little for he had spent most of his time tugging at the rope that held him prisoner or looking toward his old home on the mountain and lifting his voice in mournful calls.

"I'll ride him," Alva said almost aloud. "I can ride him."

At breakfast he said most casually, "Think I'll break Snipp to the saddle this morning so he'll be some use by roundup time." Ma stopped with a kettle of mush half way from the stove. Alva saw a strained look in her eyes, but she didn't say a word.

"That's fine, Alva," Pa gave his consent. But from the fired men at the table there was a loud guffaw and a jumble of comments. They wanted to see just what Snipp could do with a kid fresh from school.

Snipp snorted a little when Alva led him out to the snubbing post. The gang circled around and sized him up. One old timer said, "That critter is a perfect type for a rope horse, a real mixture of cayuse and Hamiltonian. He will pick up the fastest critter in twenty-five yards." Then Alva heard the same man, in an aside to another hand, say, "If that kid doesn't spoil him he'll be a race horse some day."

Another old range hand called, "Hold on there, kid, blindfold that colt before you touch him with a saddle. He'll kick your eyebrows off. I've seen that gentleman at the head of his band. He can top an eight-foot fence and never touch a heel."

"You better use my old saddle," another suggested. "Yours looks too pretty to get turned loose on the range strapped on the back of an animal like that."

Pa helped Alva blindfold the horse and strap on the saddle. "That silver trimmed saddle sets him off like a bonnet does a pretty girl," somebody laughed.

But Alva wasn't paying any attention to the good natured joshing. Snipp kept a hump in his back and a peculiar kink in his tail. These were decided signs of a hard backer and a bad omen to any one that wanted to ride to the Notom Post Office before the mail went out. No one said a word as Alva mounted and the horse's blindfold was lifted. Snipp stood in bewilderment. Alva patted him gently on the neck. As he stood there sulking, Pa said, "Well, stay up there, Alva. That colt may go high. There's a lot of room above and less danger. Keep yourself on top. You're all right, kid."

Alva knew what it was costing Ma to stay in the kitchen and go about her work' but only men folks were clustered around the corral.

To Alva's surprise as much as to anyone else's, Snipp trotted around the corral like a broke horse. "How about taking him over to Notum and bringing back the mail, Pa?" Alva called when it was clear that he could handle the colt.

Before Pa had time to say yes or no Alva was off down the trail. The canyon was deep and the trail was defined, so all went well for a time. When the trail led under an overhanging tree Alva, through habit, reached up and picked up a small branch. The snapping sound gave Snipp a fright. Down went his head. Up came his back. Five twisting jumps and Alva was soaring through the air like a grasshopper. When he came down he missed Snipp's back entirely, but in some mysterious way his arm tangled in the hackamore reins and before he had reached the ground he was snatched like a fish on a hook.

The rope was just long enough to allow his body to reach the excited horse's heels, and for the next few seconds death seemed to be inevitable. Some time later Alva opened his eyes and say that his head was pressed against Snipp's heels. Suddenly he realized that he had been dragged; that he was in great danger of being dragged again. His right arm was drawn tight between the bronco's hind legs. The animal was fairly reeling for breath as Alva's weight had partially cut off his wind. Alva's first thought was his pocket knife, but it was in a back pocket under him. Slowly he moved his free arm from his side. Then, with great fear of uncorking the fiery devil, he reached to untie the rope. It was like embracing death, but it was the only thing to do. He reached carefully around the leg of the animal and fumbled the rope as carefully as a man would tough a trigger of a cannon if her were looking down the barrel. The rope slipped readily from the elbow. Slow as a snail Alva crawled away from the threatening danger.

At a safe distance he staggered to his feet and went around to the horse's head. Taking a rope, he tied the now weary animal to a tree. He removed his coat and shirt and began to pick the prickly pear thorns from his body. He went to the stream and bathed his swollen head with cold water. Then suddenly he realized that he had started on an important errand. He reached into the inside pocket of his coat. The letter was still there. Then he glanced at the snipped-nosed, death-dealer tied to a tree. There was no time for wasting. The letter must reach the post office in the next half hour or it wouldn't go off for a week.

He untied the rope and got himself back on the colt again. Heading him straight for Notum, his spurs played a lively tune on the cinch and Snipp responded to the music.

Alva stood blushing at the post office while the postmaster read the address and canceled the stamp. He could have ridden away without this embarrassment but he was determined to see that letter safely off.

When he got back to the ranch there was respect in the hay-workers' attitude, although they joshed Alva about allowing Snipp to present him with a thicket of wild roses.

Three weeks later a letter came from Payson. Martha hadn't thought the letter dull. Not at all. She'd like many more of them in the future.

CHAPTER V

Alva would have liked to return to school – he felt that he had just a splash or two of education and he wanted to drink deeper. Much deeper. But there were other things to be done. Pa was growing older and the ranch needed young men to work it. Then, too, ready money was always short and it took money to go to school.

So, in 1895 Alva hired himself out to his brother, Walter, and Walter's partner, Willard Arnold. Just to look at it the job seemed easy enough – herding sheep. Alva had herded sheep before. When he was just a kid he and Ray had herded and had earned enough for that fine outfit for Bess and Deck.

But this job turned out to be different.

In order to collect a sizable herd, Walter and Willard had bought animals from several ranchers. There were slow-moving marinos purchased from Brother Akland, fast-moving cotswools (these could get three miles away while Alva was eating his lunch) and a dozen intermediate breeds. The herd of a thousand had as many whims as sheep, it seemed to Alva. After a week behind the herd Alva's horse needed new shoes, the three untrained dogs were tender footed and practically useless, and Alva wondered if he had bit off more than he could chew. However, either Walter or Arnold tried to be with him when it was time to move camp and that lightened the load somewhat.

One day when Walter had gone ahead with the camp equipment and Alva was alone driving the herd down a narrow draw, a small rock rolled from the side of the canyon. The animals, startled, began to run to the bottom of the draw from the sides where they had been grazing. The space at the bottom was no wider than the tracks of a wagon and when the sheep piled in, they piled layer on top of layer. Alva worked frantically, praying all the time, but fifty sheep were smothered to death in the pile up. Only two muttons and the pelts of the fifty could be saved.

"It wasn't your fault, Alva," Walter assured him. "Alva, listen to me. That could have happened with anybody. Why it would have happened with me if I'd been behind the herd. I don't want you to feel that blame can be attached to anybody."

But still Alva knew what those sheep had meant to Walter and he was discouraged and disappointed in himself.

Two weeks later he was watching the herd south of Blue Bench on Sand Creek. It was warm weather and the stream had dried up entirely. Walter had made no arrangements for watering the animals. For two days the sheep grazed without water, moving slowly north toward Pleasant Creek in which water still flowed. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when Alva became conscious of a faster moving of the herd. He was on the south side of the herd, but he moved quickly to get on the north to head the animals off. They had smelled water and were now traveling at a fast lope. Before he could head them off, they had hit Pleasant Creek just at the Jimmie Ide ranch.

Hurrying at top speed Alva arrived about ten minutes later than the leaders of the flock had reached the creek. They had drunk and were spreading out to cover a fifty-acre pasture. Alva thought, It's just plain luck that they hit Jimmie Ide's corn patch. Before he started to turn the sheep back he drank two double handful's of water, then with the dogs, began a frantic effort to turn the determinedly grazing sheep back toward Blue Bench. He glanced behind him and not more than four rods away Jimmie Ide was approaching with his rifle cocked and aimed at Alva's heart.

"The wicked shall lay on thy right hand and on thy left hand but you shall have power to go through unharmed." This was the promise that Patriarch McBride had given to Alva before he was ten. Now he thought of it with all his might. Jimmie Ide was not exactly wicked. No doubt it had looked as if Alva had driven the herd into the pasture since the herd was in front and Alva with his horse and dogs was bringing up the rear. Anyway, Alva kept his mind on the promise as he faced the angriest man he had ever seen. The eyes were slits in the sun-cracked face; the lips were drawn back from the jagged teeth in a grimace that would have been a smile if there had been any mirth in the face.

"Get those sheep out of here or I'll fill you so full of holes you won't hold shucks."

With lips that trembled Alva whistled to the dogs and waved his hat in command. "I'm sorry, Mr. Ide. Sand Creek has dried up and these sheep got away from me when they smelled water."

The saliva ran from both sides of Mr. Ide's mouth. "No _____ _____ sheep man can rob my children of their milk and leave my place alive."

Suddenly the remembered promise that he should have the power to go through unharmed seemed to remove him from the danger of Mr. Ide's rifle, his threats and his curses. Alva smiled into the man's face, not even looking at the gun barrel and the twitching fingers so near the trigger. "I have no intention of letting my sheep eat the grass that you need for your milk cows." Then with courage he was surprised to find in himself, he turned his back on the rifle and began to drive the sheep back into the water and out toward Blue Bench.

For a moment Jimmie Ide stood with his rifle ready, and then slowly he dropped the gun to his side. "I don't know why I didn't shoot you. I don't know why I didn't shoot you from ambush," he said, the ring of anger gone from his voice. "If I'd a shot you, I'd have been a murderer. A murderer of one of the Hanks boys. I can't understand-----"

But Alva thought he knew what power had stopped Jimmie Ide's rifle. He only said, "Oh, that's all right. Anybody would have been mad seeing me coming at top speed with my herd in front of me."

Jimmie wiped his bare arm across his lips; then he helped Alva to start the herd back south.

"Water 'em when you want," he said.

That was the greatest concession anybody ever made to Alva. Even then, both cattlemen and sheep men felt there wasn't room on the earth for the other.

Shortly after the tilt with Jimmie Ide, Alva came even nearer to losing his life, but this time it wasn't an accident. Alva and John Stewart took their herds down on the Henry Mountain range where there were miles and miles of open range waving with bunch grass and white sage. The range had belonged to a cattle man named McEntire, who for several years had ranged a large herd of polled Angus cattle. It seemed now, that McEntire must have sold out his cattle and there was this beautiful range tempting Stewart and Hanks. What they did not know was that McEntire interests were saving the range for five hundred two-year-old heifers that they expected to bring down in the spring to stock the place.

To Alva and John it looked plain selfish for a rich concern like McEntire's to hog so much good range. With four guns and plenty of ammunition, they drove their sheep onto the range with the intention of staying until spring.

However, they soon got the warning that they were on dangerous territory and had better move before they were moved. The two boys said they had no intention of moving before spring. A second delegation composed of Larry Thompson and Tom Moore, both known as tough hombres, called on them.

They moved.

No use having bloodshed, they thought, especially if it were Stewart and Hanks blood. Besides, the sheep did not belong to them and they had no right to risk the animals to carry out a foolish, ill-considered boast. But, Alva thought, there must be some better way to divide the range. Some time, somewhere, I'll figure it out.

It was the fall of '95 and Alva still could not go back to school. Pa was always tired and boys did more and more toward running the ranch.

With the coming of spring, Pa's energy seemed to flow back again and Alva began to make plans of his own about going north for a bit, at least as far as Payson.

Pa's birthday was the twentieth of March and the family planned a big celebration. The girls did all the work and the house and garden were both full of the family and the grandchildren. It was the day after the family party that Pa announced a new plan. Pa was going to leave Floral!

Everyone was surprised but Ma, and she would have been if Pa hadn't told her ahead of time. Alva and Ray could take care of the ranch and the married children would look after the young-uns, then Pa and Ma would spend a visit in Salt Lake City and the rest of the year in Manti or Salt Lake or St. George doing temple work.

To Ray and Alva it meant putting off any personal plans for another year. But they gladly agreed. Hour after hour they talked with Pa making plans to take everything in hand. Just one week after his birthday Pa was sitting out on the front porch looking toward the west when he suddenly cried out and put his hands to his head. The girls and Ma heard him and went running. In a few minutes Clara was out in the fields shrieking for Alva to come quick.

The boys hurried to the house and helped get Pa in bed. Pa didn't have a word to say. He didn't even look as if he wanted to speak. After a time he found his speech again and Alva and Arthur went riding away to bring the Elders to administer to Pa.

As he rode, Alva thought of the hundreds of sick that Pa had administered to. Maybe thousands, counting the handcart folks and all. Now the Lord would surely hear the prayers of the righteous and make Pa well again. Seventy wasn't a great age if you had lived the clean, active life Pa had.

Alva listened to the prayers. Each time the elders laid their hands on Pa's head they blessed him with comfort and relief from his suffering. Not once did they promise him that he would get well. The pain eased in Pa's head but his legs got cold as death. The pain in them brought beads of sweat to his forehead.

Standing by Pa's bed Alva felt weak and helpless. "I'm going for a doctor, Ma," he said after he had beckoned his mother into the kitchen.

"It won't do any good, Alva. No good."

"It might, Ma."

"I've listened to the Elders, Alva. I've prayed and you children have prayed. A doctor can't do good --- now."

"I'd like to try, Ma."

"Try, then," Ma agreed.

So Alva rode away. He planned to travel day and night, stopping only to change horses. The ride became a nightmare. He rode awake, half asleep, stupidly weary. But he got a doctor.

When the two returned to Caineville, eighteen miles from Floral, Pa's coffin was ready and his grave dug. While Alva was riding Pa had died, propped against Walter's shoulder, and the rest of the family had hurried into the bedroom to see the look of joy, of complete fulfillment, on Pa's face.

Alva and Ray had promised to take over the ranch. Ma went to Caineville to live in the little house on Walter's place that Walter had built hoping both Pa and Ma would enjoy being in town after Pa was no longer fit for ranch work. With Pa gone and Ma away, Floral seemed like the ghost of life. Alva didn't like it anymore. But he'd promised and he'd stay until other arrangements could be made.

The family took up its old habits. There was winter in town so the young-uns could attend school. Summer on the ranch. Alva, the oldest boy at home, took Pa's place. Once when the stake presidency stopped by in their usual way, Ma put on a dinner with her famous cream biscuits. After a lecture on manners, Alva took his father's seat at the table. He slit a hot biscuit with his knife; then, reaching for the butter, he began to tell an exciting story about how the god had chased a snake under the house through a small opening in the foundation. He helped himself to a liberal serving of butter.

"It was right there," he explained, gesturing with the hot knife on which a lump of butter was beginning to melt.

The butter struck Brother Robertson's vest and rolled down to the bend of his leg where it nestled in a wrinkle and continued to melt. Ma reached for a large napkin to clear up the situation. Alva thought of the time when he was a little boy in Burrville and had looked askance at the large serving of butter a guest had taken. Then he hadn't been allowed to eat at the table; now he was the host. Maybe if Ma was on to him he'd still be shut in the bedroom when it was time for company.

Alva was disappointed in himself. A big overgrown kid, that's what he was. Wasting his life and his time down here at Floral when his heart was someplace else, entirely.

CHAPTER VI

It was 1898. Eph Hanks had been dead for two years and Alva felt as if Floral were no longer a real part of him. Later that year Alva helped Ray build a home in Caineville, then he had gone to Grover to work for a Mr. Hutchinson. For five years he had written to Martha Huber in Payson and life was lived from day to day, from month to month.

At October conference he was called on a mission. But there was no money for a mission. Eager as he was to go, a mission was impossible without some financial security. It was agreed that his call would take effect in a year, which would give him time to earn the necessary money.

At the same conference young Joseph Blackburn was called. And, of course, he could go. He could go at once. He had a good job in his brother's store. Alva felt the uncomfortable prick of jealousy. He didn't stop to wonder just why he couldn't like Joe Blackburn – couldn't even tolerate him. Perhaps it was because Joe always seemed to have plenty of spare cash, always seemed to stand ace high with the Loa girls.

Both Alva and Joe were sons of patriarchs. That should have given them something in common. They lived forty miles apart. That should have kept them out of each other's way. All the same, when both boys were called on missions and Joe could go at once, Alva felt unhappy and somehow cheated.

In order to earn the money for the mission Alva had to do something that paid good money. Working for the railroad between Provo and Heber was just the ticket. Besides that, the railroad job would put him not too far from Payson.

When next conference time came around he had enough to see him through his mission if he handled things very carefully. He was set apart in October by President George Reynolds and left at once for the eastern States Mission.

Arriving in New York, he found that Elder Blackburn was laboring in the same mission. He was just about disgusted enough to give up and go back home. The first night in New York, instead of savoring this new adventure, he lay in bed thinking of Joe Blackburn. They hadn't really ever had "words" and besides the mission was big with several different conferences. Most likely he and Joe would never even run into each other.

There was a long meeting at headquarters office. After the meeting President Snow called Alva to him. "Elder Hanks," he said, "we'd like to know all about your church experience so that we can use you where you are needed most."

Alva hesitated. It was hard for him to blow his own horn. Reluctantly he said that he had been the president of the elders in his stake; that later he had been a president of seventy; finally that he had experience in most of the auxiliary organizations.

"Elder Hanks, they need you down in the West Pennsylvania Conference," Brother Snow said. "How would you like that?"

"I've prayed to the Lord to help me to fill my mission with honor and glory. I'm ready to take instructions."

"It's quite a trip to Pittsburgh. You won't mind that. You can work in the country and you'll like that. Elder Leroy E. Cowles is your president and he's a fine young man."

Alva shifted from one foot to the other. He was eager to be on his way. Everything sounded fine.

"By the way, out in the west Pennsylvania Conference they have a patriarch's son from your stake. Maybe you know him. I'll get my list and give you his name."

"Elder Joe Blackburn. I know him."

"He'll make you right at home. He's one of our finest elders."

"Will I labor with him?" Alva asked, though he wanted to keep his mouth shut.

"No, but you'll see him next conference. About six months and they'll be holding one."

If I never see him that will be soon enough, Alva thought. He could see Joe, money jingling in his pockets, surrounded by a group of laughing Loa girls. Joe and his newly pressed store clothes!

One night and a part of two days on the train took Alva to Pittsburgh. In Pittsburgh he took the Monongahela Line to Coal Center. From the station at Coal Center it was about two and a half miles to the settlement of the Saints.

Somehow Alva expected these Saints to be just like the folks at home - sort of as if Mormonism had made everybody one - but they weren't like the folks at home at all. They were folks of the usual coal digging class. He arrived there Sunday morning and everybody was dressed up for testimony meeting. President Cowles looked up into Alva's smooth boyish face and smiled. He introduced Elder Hanks to everyone and then the meeting began.

The place of meeting was a humble cottage and it took Alva back to Floral in memory. He joined the singing of "We Thank Thee, Oh God, for a Prophet." Now it began to seem that these folks of Coal Center were more like the folks back home. The same spirit filled the room. There was the same warm feeling that God was near.

When he rose to bear his testimony he no longer felt out of place and strange. Everybody was dark eyed, dark skinned, dark haired, even President Cowles, and Alva's extreme blondeness, the whiteness of his skin, his blond hair, the clear blueness of his eyes, set him apart from all of them. Yet strangely, he felt one of them.

"I feel very humble," he said. "I feel very humble, but I'm sure that through prayer God will give me strength according to my day."

For a moment he hesitated, thinking of the wonderful testimonies that he could bear on the faith and gift of healing of his father. But that might seem like bragging to these strangers. Instead he said:

"I'm a humble Elder and I look to President Cowles to be my leader. I will do just as he directs me." Then he bore his testimony. To him the story of Joseph Smith, the first vision, the trials in Nauvoo, the sacrifice that had accompanied the moving of the main body of the Saints to the West, were parts of an often-told story. Again he wondered if he should repeat it. Instead he closed:

"I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God sent to earth to give us His gospel plan. I believe that Joseph Smith restored Christ's plan in the latter days. I know the gospel to be the word of God and the way to salvation. Amen."

When he sat down and looked around him the brothers and sisters were crying. God's spirit had been stronger than Alva's words, a lot stronger.

At the close of the meeting, Brother Barnes, who presided over the Coal Center Branch, asked Alva to spend the night in his home. President Cowles also stayed and shared Brother Barnes' own bed with the young missionary. In the morning President Cowles got ready to leave. Alva waited for instructions.

"You just wait here for a while, " were the instructions. "Some time this morning Elder Joseph Blackburn will come in. I've been thinking that you two will make a fine team to send down into Green County. Green County has never been worked and it will be a challenge to you two."

For a moment Alva felt desperately sick. Things were going worse than he could have imagined they would. He wanted to say, "No, President Cowles. Anybody but Joe Blackburn!" But he remembered the testimony he had born just the day before. He had been inspired to say that he would do just as the young president directed and he felt now that there had been a reason for those words coming into his mind. The things he himself had thought of to say had been left unsaid. He had spoken other words - words that had been given to him to say by some power outside himself.

Now he kept his mouth shut.

At noon elder Blackburn arrived. When he saw Alva standing alone on the tiny sagging porch he ran to him with outstretched arms. For several seconds he held him in a tight hug; then he let him go and stood facing him, still holding him with both hands. The two boys looked into each other's eyes. Gone was the Joe Blackburn that Alva had built in his imagination. Here, holding his hands, was the fine young elder President Cowles had spoken of.

The first words that Elder Blackburn spoke were, "Brother Hanks, we're going up to Green County. That's a hard nut that hasn't been cracked by the Mormons yet. I've been praying for a strong companion and the Lord has sent me you. I'm ready to go."

That evening when President Cowles gave them their final instructions for the new area he said, "Go humble as lambs. Don't go as mountain lions ready for a fight. No doubt you will find plenty of wolves. Be kind and forgiving." He paused for several seconds before he said, "I feel there is someone waiting there for you."

The next morning the two young elders took the railroad tracks, not the railroad, up the Monongahela River to California City. They stopped a day or so with the families of Brother Gale and Brother Pasco. From there it was four or five days journey by foot to Waynesborough, capitol of Green County. The oil industry was booming in that district. There had been recent rains and the dirt roads were deep, sloppy mud. Elder Blackburn taught Alva to take off his shoes and wash them before asking at roadside houses for a night's lodging.

Sitting beside the road, scraping the mud from the shoe he held in his hand, Alva remembered the fourteen by sixteen log school house in Burrville. Sunday School was going on. Ma was the teacher of the little folks and while she was busy with the others, Alva walked out, all dressed in his best. At once he had got interested in the little minnows in the brook that ran past the school and in his efforts to catch a pocketful he had sloshed up and down the stream until he was mud from head to foot.

Soon the water began to feel cold and he gave up the chase and went back to Sunday School. He sat down by the warm hearth and before the congregation he proceeded to take off his shoes and stockings. Ma was so busy with the lesson, her back turned to him and all, that she didn't see what was going on. Pa saw him, but seemed to think he was doing the best thing possible under the circumstances. Soon the class lost interest in Ma's lesson and began to laugh at Alva. Ma looked back and there was her four-year-old, naked to the knees, with legs and feet streaked with black mud. Ma took over from there. Alva remembered that there was even snickering during the final prayer.

Now as he wiped the mud from his shoes and planned how to say, "We are Elders of the living gospel, traveling without purse or script," he thought of Pa and Ma and the family and how they had always gone to church together and he was thankful to Ma and to Pa and to God.

As the two elders drew near Waynesborough they began to worry about how they would fare in a city without any money in their pockets. Along the road some people had been harsh but some had been kind. City folks were different from country people.

An oil man came along in a fine rig and offered to give them a ride into the city. When they had climbed into the rig beside him he said, "You fellows are Mormon preachers."

"Why , yes. We are."

"I want you to stop at the Waynesborough Hotel with me and warm up one of my old preachers that are always trying to make me get saved and keep me out of hell. I tell him I'm farther out of hell than he is."

The stranger paid for a good room and some fine meals for the boys, but he couldn't get the preacher to go the elders' room. He wouldn't even meet the boys in the lobby. The oil man was disappointed but Alva and Joe had an hour's gospel conversation with him and he accepted the free literature and insisted on paying for a copy of the Book of Mormon.

"I like you fellows," he said when he left. "Any time you're in this town come to this hotel and the proprietor will give you lodgings and meals at cost. If you don't have any money charge your board and bed to me."

They left their heavy luggage in the hotel and again on foot made straight for the Southeastern corner of the state. With a map before them they closed their eyes and put a finger down on a place called Deep Valley. Strangers, they took a meandering course, held several meetings, and their fine bearing and their faces which showed clean living, got them invitations to meals all along the way. They had been out several days and were within a day's walk of Deep Valley when Alva left the wagon road to go into cottage to deliver a tract.

The man who opened the door looked into Alva's face and asked, "Where is your little short companion?"

How does he know I have a short companion, Alva wondered, but he answered as matter-of-factly as he could, "Out on the road."

"Please go and call him in." The man hesitated a moment then the words seemed to burst from his throat against his will. "I saw you both in my dreams last night. I just got through telling my wife about two young men who came to me in my dream and you're the tall one. I'm Mr. Ducket and you have a message for my wife and me."

Alva returned to the road, Mr. Ducket by his side. When he saw Elder Blackburn Mr. Ducket grabbed Joe's hand and held it while he said, "I saw your red hair and your red face. Yes, you are the man."

Then Elder Blackburn was interested and awed and Mr. Ducket had to repeat the story of his dream again. He ended, "You have a message for us."

President Cowles had said, I feel there is someone waiting there for you.

The two elders ate dinner with the Dockets'. All afternoon they explained the gospel. Toward evening the Dockets' said they'd like to have their neighbors in to hear the message, too, and the elders prepare to hold a cottage meeting. The preparations were simple. Alva, Joe and Mr. Ducket each took a separate route to issue the invitations and Mrs. Ducket readied the house.

It seemed to Alva and Joe that evening at the cottage meeting that the Lord put words into their mouths. They found themselves explaining what they, themselves, had scarcely understood before. At the close of the meeting another neighbor insisted that a cottage meeting be held in his home the next night. For two days the young elders fed on chicken and pie, preached the gospel day and night.

After two days both boys felt that they had just about run down. On the pretext that they ought to go into Deep Valley and get their mail they took a side trip into the woods. For two days they fasted and prayed and studied. They planned their Sunday meeting with care. Elder Blackburn would talk on the apostasy, Alva on the restoration.

Saturday afternoon they returned to the Ducket home. The group had planned a meeting for Saturday evening. Alva felt worried and disappointed. They had built such plans for one meeting – not two. But there had been a potluck dinner planned for the woods, with plenty of friendly spirit and plenty of chicken.

Elder Blackburn was to take what time he wished with the apostasy then give the folks a chance to ask questions if they wished to. Alva would finish up with the well-known story of the restoration and he, too, would answer questions.

Alva felt terribly weak, almost afraid. Sitting in the meeting, listening to Elder Blackburn, he remembered the first time he had ever been really frightened. He had been five or six at the time and Pa had been the blacksmith in Burrville. Alva had been playing outside the three-roomed log house when his sister, Georgina, grabbed him by the hand. As she dragged him into the house she pointed to three Indians in war paint and feathers, fully armed, drawing up before the smithy. It wasn't that the Hanks children weren't accustomed to seeing Indians. They had never seen Indians in war paint before. Not long before, the Indians had killed five or six settlers as they were traveling with ox teams between Richfield and Glenwood. Since that spot was only twenty miles or so from Burrville, the stories had been told beyond recognition. So even if the three were regular visitors to Burrville, they looked like the coiled rattlesnake Pa had once shown him and explained the need to be ever alert.

Georgina and Alva had crawled under a low cot in the bedroom and had stayed there for hours until Ma had finally found them. She took the two children in her arms and assured them that the Indians had gone after forcing Pa to shoe their horses. They had molested no one and had gone their way back to the mountains.

Ma's voice, quietly talking, had made Alva see that sometimes Ma - nor even Pa - could keep the family safe from harm. But always there was a higher power and He could be counted on.

Now Alva and Joe were counting on Him. Before the meeting they had made sort of a double prayer; first that God would direct the questions; second, that two unschooled boys

with the aid of His spirit would be able to answer adequately everything that was asked. Alva, listening to Joe, knew that the prayer was being answered for Joe. And when he, himself, stood up so frightened that he could scarcely speak, his voice sounded loud and strong in his own ears and the words he had prepared came to him without effort.

At the close of the meeting eight members of the community applied for baptism. But they were not baptized at once. That is not the way of the Church. There is not a place in the church for those who join because of an hour's enthusiasm. The eight were advised to wait until conference when, God willing, the two young elders would return to build up a branch.

Elder Blackburn almost cried when he was told at conference that he had been released and that Alva and Elder John R. Williams were to go back to Green County and baptize the folks who were ready for baptism.

Shall I tell Joe what I used to think and feel about him back home in Wayne County, Alva wondered as the two slept together on Elder Blackburn's last night in the mission field. Of course not. What good would it do, he decided. Instead he prayed that for the rest of his days he'd be kept from making quick judgments about people, especially judgments founded on a few coins jingling in a popular boy's pockets.

Alva and Elder Williams went back to Green County to organize a branch, then they traveled on through the mission. There were twelve pairs of elders traveling without purse and script and Alva and his companion were supposed to visit with them and encourage them. At the next conference, which was held at West Elizabeth, the twenty-six elders all gave excellent reports.

President Cowles was released and Alva felt there was nobody in the mission who could take his place. Elder John McQuarry was named to the position and he chose Alva to be a counselor. The two traveled together, held meetings together and slept and ate together. He realized that there is no position in the Church for which God cannot raise up an excellent leader.

When President McQuarry was called to New York City to be President of the Eastern States Mission, Alva was named President of the West Pennsylvania Conference. With Brothers Rich and Cruikshank as counselors he put his faith in the promise that he had been given before he left Salt Lake City. He would fulfill the mission with honor and glory.

At the invitation of President McQuarry, the two met in Washington D.C., visited the Utah representatives and senators, and saw the points of interest.

Returning he visited the Gettysburg battle field and the scene of the disastrous Johnston flood. "What is man that God is mindful of him?" Alva asked himself. And in silence he thought for the first time of death. Of death on a large scale. It is different to visit a cemetery that over the years had received the remains of those who have lived their lives and died in due time. To visit a spot where hundreds of young men, who, until the moment of their death were as alive as hungry for life as Alva, himself, was ---! Well, that gave the feeling that either God cared little for his children or that --- that --- .

Alva fumbled with the idea. At last the answer came; not like the answers had in the meetings in Green County with Brother Ducket and his neighbors eager for the gospel, but slowly and then only half formed. Death is not the worst thing in life, he decided. It isn't final. It is wonderful to belong to a church that believes that these young men who died at Gettysburg would waken some day as eager and ambitious and willing to learn as they were the day they made the transition from mortality to immortality. Death does not end life. Life has just begun with death. And thinking of the eternal life, stretching from pre-existence through mortality into eternity made Alva <u>feel</u> the answer to "What is man that God should be mindful of him?"

Just the same, as Alva stretched himself and felt the good strength in his long arms and legs, the feeling of well being throughout his strong clean body, he was glad to be alive. It was good to remember Patriarch McBride's words when he had given the ten-year-old Alva patriarchal blessing. "The wicked shall lay on thy right hand, and on thy left hand, but you shall go through unharmed."

It was in Buck Valley that Alva had cause to think of this promise in a different, more direct light.

A Time of Ripening

He and three other elders had made every effort to hire a hall to hold conference meetings; but an influential minister had been angered when some fine families joined the Church and left his congregation. He made it impossible for the elders to rent any place that would be satisfactory. The four elders made a meeting place a matter of prayer and they believed it was in response to inspiration that they prepared a meeting place in the forest, rigging up a speaker's stand and placing seats for the expected crowds.

The conference moved as scheduled. In fact the congregation was singing "God Be With Us 'til We Meet Again" when there was movement in a neighboring clearing which had been planted to corn, and a shower of rocks and eggs fell on the meeting. Several vacant seats were hit with large rocks hurled at terrific speed. A half-pounder hit the edge of the table near which Alva was standing. Alva grabbed the lamp before the table overturned and held it until another elder put the table back in place.

The sheriff, whose family was very much interested in the gospel, was in the center of the congregation. An egg hit his daughter on the hip, burst and the spoiled contents spread over her clothes and those of her mother. One whiff of the egg and the sheriff forgot he was in church. "Up and at 'em," he shouted and all the male members of the congregation were after the mob in the cornfields and woods. With a trembling voice Elder Shumway closed the meeting with prayer. His words were covered by the crackling of the corn and the shouts of both the pursued and the pursuers.

After a time the men returned. The rocks that were meant to kill had hit the trees or fallen harmlessly among the people. Jessie Hebner, a devout young lady was hit in the stomach with an egg which didn't break and she proudly carried it home as a souvenir. Alva took the half-pound rock that had missed him and hit the table home to remind him that Patriarch McBride's promise to him had been fulfilled.

Strange thing. The very attempt of the wicked to break up the meeting had sealed the testimony of the investigators.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform…."

That was the way He had moved through all of Alva's mission. First the reconciliation with Joe Blackburn; then the miracle of Brother Ducket's dream; words and knowledge when Alva and his companions had asked for them in humility and faith; and now protection from their enemies.

Truly, with Divine aid, Alva's mission had been completed with honor and glory. He wished that Pa were alive to hear the account of his missionary experiences. But there was the family and Ma.

And there was hazel-eyed Martha, waiting year after year in Payson.

CHAPTER VII

While Alva was in the West Pennsylvania Conference he had thought often of Martha Huber back in Payson. He had written to her and she had answered and the feeling had grown stronger and stronger that he had waited long enough to marry. "The man is not without the woman or the woman without the man in the Lord," Alva thought. And he knew, despite the satisfaction he felt in his missionary work, that life wasn't complete without marriage and a home and a family. Besides, the very gospel taught that without the union of man and woman there is no reaching of the highest degree of glory. It wasn't glory that Alva wanted. He wanted the assurance that he would live eternally in a sphere where he could continue to progress forever.

When Alva returned home his first call was at Payson where Martha was still working in the co-op. It didn't take much proposing to arrange the marriage. Mostly what they needed to do was to name the date and make plans for the future. Alva had no desire to go back to Floral. When he went home to report his mission to the folks in the ward and to see Ma and the family, he knew that he didn't want to make his home there. Ma's brother, Walter Read, was superintendent of the Salt Lake City Transportation Company and he gave both Alva and his brother, Ray, jobs on the cars. Alva was as ready as he ever would be to marry.

He and Martha were married May 21, 1901.

The evening of their marriage, Aunt Clara, with whom Alva had been boarding until his marriage, gave a party and had friends in to meet the new bride. Martha was adorably shy. She could measure goods behind a counter without any self-consciousness at all, but when cards were suggested for the entertainment of the evening she told Alva in an aside, "I don't even know how to hold them."

Alva did. It was against church teachings but he had always enjoyed a good game of cards. "I'll help you. You'll see how easy it is," he promised her and the others chimed in that they'd all help, too. Though she tried hard she couldn't seem to get the hang of which was hearts and which was spades. They told her again and again but still she didn't remember. Near tears she withdrew from the game. Alva played with the best of them, trying not to see the lost look in Martha's hazel eyes. For himself he would have preferred to leave the party and take Martha upstairs where she wouldn't "feel out of it," but he didn't want folks joshing him so he just stayed on at the card table.

He and Martha stayed on at Aunt Clara's for a few days but boarding and rooming in somebody else's home certainly wasn't fulfilling either of their plans for a home of their own.

Evenings, after a day's work as conductor on the cars, he and Martha walked around looking for a house. At last they found a part of a house that had been made over for housekeeping. It was with a Sister Stewart who said that the rooms wouldn't be vacant for two weeks. Alva and Martha talked it over and decided that Martha should go to Payson for the two weeks and get together the things that she had planned to use in her new home. Since she had worked in the Payson Co-op up to the night before her wedding she had come to Salt Lake City with nothing more than a suitcase.

The next two weeks were the longest Alva had ever spent. He had known that he wanted to marry Martha, that he loved her and longed for her; but being married to her had brought such a surge of deep affection and feeling of "togetherness" that he was lost without her.

For Martha the two weeks went by like a flash. She went home bursting with happiness. Before she had married she had been afraid that she would miss the store and would want to return to it. She had worked in the co-op for eight years. Once she had missed work for three months when her sister, Mary, had died of small pox and the rest of the family had contracted it. That time she had been so impatient to get back to the store that she had been miserable. But now, as she returned to Payson and stopped to laugh and talk with folks in the co-op she found that the desire to work there again was all gone. Everything had changed for her. She was a different person. She felt in her heart that her

Heavenly Father had blessed her with this feeling of unbounded joy and contentment that had come to her in the temple.

At home she and her mother went right to work preparing her bedding. She had bought many things during the years she was working but she hadn't had time to get them in shape. There were six pillows to fill with goose feathers that Mother had saved; a mattress tick to be made under the supervision of her cousin, Lydia Schramm, to hold the feathers she had purchased for just this purpose. The quilts were made, and had been for some time. Mother had been making them since Martha was seventeen.

Mother couldn't seem to get over the fact that although Martha had reached the great age of twenty-five without marriage she had got married after all and would use her dowry. In her quaint German way she told Martha that she had almost given up hopes.

Father, too, was busy helping to get the belongings together. "We want Marcy to have all she needs," he kept saying. "We don't want to use her things now that she needs them."

Five years before, her parents had given her a large trunk and during the years she had waited for Alva to say the word she had filed it with pillow cases, sheets, towels, table linens, everything she would need. Some of the things were getting yellow with age, but her folks would never use them. Being German they insisted that every girl must have a dowry.

At the end of the two weeks everything was ready; sacks of potatoes, boxes of apples, fresh vegetables to do for a month. Mother had made needles and dried them; boiled down butter and put it in cans to keep for cooking. There was furniture, too. Martha's greatest delight had been to collect dishes and these had been kept in one special cupboard. Father said, "We won't need the cupboard when Marcy takes her dishes," and he insisted that she take the cupboard along. It was a large one with two glass doors behind which dished could be arranged in sparkling beauty. There was a large looking glass, too. Martha had bought it five years before for herself, but it had hung on the wall in Mother's bedroom. Father insisted on taking it down and crating it. It made an empty space on the wall but that made no difference to Father and Mother.

It took a man with horse and wagon to take the stuff to the railroad. Fourteen hundred and twenty pounds of dowry!

Martha, waving at Father and Mother from the station platform saw not a shade of sorrow on their dear faces; instead they looked contented and happy as if they were telling her the joy they knew was in store for her with her own home and family. Now they would go back to the house that had always been filled with young folks and that would now be empty. Martha's brothers, Jacob and Arnold, had moved their families to Mexico and taken with them the two unmarried boys, Ernest and Emil.

Alva met Martha at the railroad station. It took a man and wagon to carry her things to the rooms at Sister Stewart's house. Alva was so glad to see Martha he felt he could carry her, himself, to the ends of eternity.

But Martha was soon ready to go back to Payson for another visit. It was just a hop, skip and jump to Payson from Salt Lake City, she argued, and Emil was back from Mexico. He'd be itching to be on his way somewhere else and she wanted to see him.

"Well, for a day. You can go for a day," Alva agreed.

Gaily she was off. Could she, Father asked, take Emil in if he could find work in Salt Lake City. So, accustomed to making her own decisions, she said, "Yes." Then, after a moment, "I'll ask my husband."

"Sure," Alva said when she talked it over with him. "We've got two beds and plenty of room. Maybe it will help us out a little."

So Emil came. A short time after, Alva asked Martha, "How about taking Ray in?"

"Of course," Martha said. "He can share a bed with Emil."

So, the family was doubled. Ray, Emil and Alva were all conductors on the cars and Martha was hurrying about getting meals at all hours. Seemed that the three of them were always on different shifts. It worried Alva to see Martha working so hard but it wasn't his way to say anything about it. It wasn't her way, either. She went about, singing from morning until night - putting delicious meals on the table, hanging snowy sheets and

pillowcases, and underwear and shirts on the line "every which way" and keeping the rooms spotless and homelike.

Now and then Alva tried to tell Martha what a wonderful wife she was as he held her in his arms, but he wasn't much for such words. When he did speak them Martha would answer, "Pshaw. I've got everything to learn." All the years she had been working in the store her mother had never asked her to prepare a meal, except maybe on Sunday, and she never put out a washing. But is seemed that homemaking came naturally to her. If she had to learn, Alva could never see that she was practicing on him and the boys. Everything was done well from the first.

Martha, and Alva, too, wanted a family so it seemed to them that their first child took a long time before he promised to put in an appearance. It wasn't until December 1902 that Samuel Hadley was born.

All went pleasant as a dream - almost too pleasant - until one night Alva did what he called a "dumb fool thing." It had been the habit of the men who worked on the cars to stop by at the Deseret Gymnasium for a swim after they came off work. Alva's long, lean body cried out for exercise and riding the cars all day was a lazy man's work. He enjoyed the daily swim more than most of the men.

One night, coming off work at midnight, he went over to the gym with some of the boys from the cars. There were a few men still visiting in the lobby but Alva passed them and went into the dressing room. Quickly he stripped off his clothes and, running into the pool room, dived head first into an empty pool.

The other boys picked him up and carried him home but he was laid up for nearly three months. Maybe the men in the lobby should have warned the boys that the pool had been drained, maybe the pool room should have been kept locked while there was no water in the tank - maybe Alva should have been less impulsive and looked before he dived in.

He joshed with the boys about how fortunate it was that he had a hard head, but all the time he knew that it wasn't a hard head that had saved him. He knew, in a way that was too deep for words, that there was a work for him to do and that he had been saved to do that work. When he got up from bed and went back to normal living, back to the job and all, it was with a sense of dedication. Since he had been spared to complete his mission on this earth he'd find that mission and fulfill it to the glory and honor of God.

He hadn't been back to work long before he received word that Ma was very ill, most likely dying. Packing hurriedly, he left for the ranch, hoping and praying that he would find Ma still alive and capable of knowing him. But when he reached home, she had already died. Her last wish was that her three unmarried children, Ray and Arthur and Clara, might have been married in the temple before she left them. She advised them to pick good company, marry in the temple and raise good families.

When Alva returned to Salt Lake he took Arthur, 18, and Clara, eight, back to live with him. Martha accepted them, but it meant moving to a larger house. Now there were seven in the family, counting the baby. But in the new home there was still one vacant room upstairs.

Alva was a little shamefaced about suggesting that they rent this room to Cora White and Blanche Hendershot, two of his converts from Pennsylvania. There wasn't anything the folks in the mission field wouldn't do for the elders and it seemed as if the elders should pay back in kind when the converts came to Utah; but Alva knew most of the increased load would fall on Martha.

"Of course," she said, as she had when he first asked about taking Ray in. "There's room for them."

There was never a livelier household. Cora was a quiet girl, even quieter than Martha and that was something to say about any one. But Blanche was lively. She always had a story or joke to tell. She was always laughing and merry. Sometimes she and Alva would sing the songs of the Pennsylvania hill country and it would be like a concert.

The only time that Blanche wasn't laughing and joking and cutting up was when Ray was away at work. Then she'd cry to Martha about how much she loved him and he just took her affection for granted. Martha, thinking of the long years she waited for Alva to name the day, would try to comfort the girl, but all along she knew that Ray was different

from Alva. She knew that Ray had a dozen girls - well, at least three, that he liked as much as he did Blanche.

Then, with everything going almost perfect in Salt Lake City, with a pleasant home filled with laughing, friendly people, Alva had to get itching feet! Martha blamed those itching feet on Alva's half brother, David, and Alva had to admit that she was at least fifty percent right.

David lived in Heber and he had got together quite a bit of money. It was his idea to invest this money in a ranch and stock and would make Alva a partner if he'd live on the ranch and run it. Alva, riding back and forth on the cars all day, longed for the range. He couldn't help the range hunger. He'd been born and reared that way and Pa had always felt the hunger, too. Several times David came before Alva was fully sold on the idea. David said he would furnish everything that was needed to start farming. All Alva would have to do was get on the train and ride to the Teton Basin in Idaho. A railroad car would hold all the Hanks belongings. Household goods, furniture, even horses and cows were to go in this car.

For a time Alva hesitated about telling Martha, but when he did she seemed satisfied with the plan. Often he wondered if she wanted to go or if she was just willing that he should have his way.

"You say the word, Mama," he'd say. He had been calling her Mama since Hadley had been big enough to notice.

"Oh, go on with you," Martha would say in her lighthearted way. And he'd laugh and put his arms around her while his mind was full of the new venture.

It was spring in Salt Lake City, late March, and in the Tetons it was still almost winter. Alva was eager to be off to get ready for the spring planting. He and Martha and David talked over the problem and it was decided that Martha should stay in Salt Lake City until the weather in Idaho had broken, but that it would be wise for Alva to go as soon as possible.

It was exciting while the packing was being done. Martha's father crated a beautiful heifer calf and sent it up to Salt Lake to go in the freight car and be a herd starter in Idaho. Emil was to be married on his birthday, the first of June, and he had already bought a house. Martha could move into Emil's house with the baby and stay until the wedding. Emil approved of the plan because Martha was the perfect person to look after things.

In April Alva and the freight train left. In the end there was too much to put in one freight car, so Alva drove a wagon and David a sleigh, loaded to the top with household goods and farm equipment.

As the wagon moved north through the winding lane-like road which passed through several picture book little towns, Alva'' heart grew lighter and lighter. There was Brigham, the tortuous winding road through the mountains that reminded him of the Wayne County Roads, then Logan and the little villages of Cache Valley. Then he was in Idaho. The little settlements looked as if they belonged to Utah. Many of them, he knew, had been settled under Brigham Young's own direction. Finally he reached Rexburg - the taking off point for Hayden, which was to be the center of the world after he got installed on the ranch.

Out of sight of Rexburg you could look in every direction and see nothing but wilderness. Oh, but I was stimulating and exciting to be out on land like this that shouted a challenge to you no matter which way you looked. The log houses were from one to five miles apart - no neighbors to care what you did or intrude upon your solitude. But when you wanted company there was a center not too many miles away with a log store, a school house and a meeting house.

Alva felt almost guilty that he should feel so inspired, so happy, with Martha away from him. There's a side of a man that needs nature, and a side that needs a hearth and a home and a wife and family. And the two men can't be mixed. It was Alva, the frontier man that was whistling and singing a little off key as he rode horseback over his domain.

When he got a letter from Martha he felt freed from guilt. She enjoyed living in Emil's new house and looking after him. It was a pleasant change with only three of them to do for after the houseful she'd had in her own home. Amy had taken Clara home and Arthur

was visiting his folks in Wayne County and would come to Idaho later. Ray was working on the cars, of course, but then Ray could take care of himself.

Just about the time that Alva expected Martha to join him and found that he was very eager for her arrival, she wrote that Emil was married but she had decided to take this opportunity to spend a visit with her parents at Payson. She wrote that her father's fall wheat was almost as high as the buggy wheels.

Alva looked out across the rolling hills of the Teton Basin, trying to see it in Martha's eyes. But he couldn't do that - no one can see things as another will. Instead of just standing there and thinking about Martha and growing lonelier for her by the minute he'd do something. He carefully uncrated her large mirror - though he hadn't unpacked a piece of the household goods except the bedding - and hung it over the bed so the place would look like home to her when she came.

At last she wrote that she was coming. It was the middle of June now and they had been separated two months. He was to meet her in Rexburg. Well, that was good enough. He needed a wagon load of bailed wire and a keg of nails that were best bought in Rexburg.

Martha, traveling north, kept her eyes to the train window and was less and less impressed by what she saw. The wheat was about four inches high in some places, in others just peeping through the ground. Why couldn't Alva have wanted to farm down Payson way where there was a real growing season? Things had looked less and less promising since they had left Brigham City. She hoped Rexburg would be different from the other small towns they had passed through.

When the train stopped in Rexburg she looked out of the window. There was Alva, waiting to meet her. He looked good even in this forsaken country. She hurried to his arms, but even as he held her close her eyes went to the wagon. Wasn't it just like him to fill the wagon with bails of wire and put a nail keg on the floor right in front of the spring seat so she would have no place to put her feet!

He helped her into the wagon, explaining he'd done his buying and was ready to start home. Sitting high on the spring seat she felt the bitter bite of the wind - like January or February down in Utah Valley - and said, "Why, the wind's blowing."

"In Idaho the wind never stops blowing," Alva said, and he laughed.

He clucked at the team and they started off across the wilderness. It seemed that every mile brought a fiercer wind. Martha wrapped the blanket more tightly about Hadley and finally stood him in the nail keg to protect him from some of the cold. Alva spread a blanket over her and she held it with her teeth when a great gust would have lifted it off her, so that her hands were free to keep Hadley wrapped.

Up one hill, down another, up another. The way was the dreariest Martha had ever known. From time to time she looked up at Alva's wind-reddened face and read a look of pure joy, absolute satisfaction. He didn't seem to notice that she was silent that she couldn't have chatted in her own gay way if her life depended on it.

"Papa," she finally said. "I'm getting scared. Seems like we're going to the ends of the world."

Alva pointed with his whip to a dark place in the floor of the next depression. "We'll stop over there and warm up. That's where the stage stops for tourists to eat."

When they sat down in the neat cabin presided over by a kindly, lean woman, Alva begged, "Eat something, Mama."

"I can't. I'm full up," she said. But when the woman handed her a cup of tea she tried to drink it and be sociable though she felt as if she were sleepwalking in a nightmare.

Alva, looking across the table at her, saw that tears were very near to rolling down her face. "We best be on our way," he said. He lifted the sleeping baby from a couch where Martha had placed him at the woman's invitation, and wrapped the blanket around him carefully. It would be wonderful to have his own little family with him. Martha and he and their children could do big things in this new country.

They got back onto the wagon seat and drove on. It was just a few miles until he pulled the horses up in front of another cabin. "This is home, Mama," he said.

It seemed as if something inside Martha stopped when the wagon stopped. She began to cry. Putting her face against Alva's sleeve she cried and cried. When he would

have comforted her she turned away, but her shoulders still shook and he knew how tears were streaming down her face.

"We best go in before Hadley takes cold," Alva said matter-of-factly and he helped her from the seat. Once inside the house she'd be all right. There had been five wagon loads of stuff to haul from the railroad and he hadn't known where to put all the stuff. Martha would know what she wanted to do with things. Everything was all piled up. All of the boxes he'd pushed under the bed, and all stray items he hadn't known what to do with he had stacked on the couch.

She looked around with a helpless gesture. Why, a body wouldn't know where to start. Seeing some potatoes on a box which he had used for a table she said, "Those aren't as big as marbles."

With his arm around her waist he lead her to the bedroom. The first thing she saw was the beautiful mirror, hanging a little crooked above the bed. She saw her own dismal self framed in it, but most of all she saw the great ditches between the lags against which it hung. Having the mirror there made her think of the pretty papered wall it had hung against in Payson, and she felt that she couldn't stand it.

Alva, looking at her, remembered Ma seeing for the first time the dugout she was to live in down on Pleasant Creek. Martha didn't have any call to feel so bad about living in a good two-roomed log house. He acted as if he didn't see her disappointment. Just went on talking about the five loads of hoods he'd hauled from Rexburg.

At last she gave a smile, pretty weak and sickly, but a smile.

He had planned wisely, Alva thought, in getting ready to go to the high timbers the next day. That would leave Martha with the baby to fight this thing out for herself. According to his philosophy that was the only way to face anything - alone. Martha would be all right, too. There was a neighbor not more than a mile away who had brought over a loaf of bread as soon as she saw them drive in. Folks looked after each other in this wilderness county.

A month went by. Night after night when Alva came in he'd say, "How did it go today, Mama?" And she'd give him some putting-off answer. But after a month she put her arms around him when he took her in his arms.

"I'm going to make the best of it, Papa."

And she did.

CHAPTER VIII

This is where I belong, here on the range, Alva thought as he hauled and peeled logs for buildings and fences. If you shut your eyes and skipped over a few hard years with your imagination, it was easy to see yourself the owner of a fine herd, living a free and joyous life with the money rolling in each year as the cattle went off to market. Of course, he hadn't a herd yet, but dreams were cheap and it was a fine country to dream in.

The Teton Basin was an exciting county, too. The age old struggle between sheep and cattle men was going on in the Tetons just as in all other range country and Alva arrived just in time to see it flare into trouble. Not that he was involved. He owned neither sheep nor cattle on the herd scale, and besides his experience with Jimmie Ides and with the range on the slope of the Henrys had taught him a lesson.

In Hayden, a sheep man couldn't even drive his herd across cattle range to get where he wanted to go without getting into trouble. The deadline was established at Badger Creek. Woe be unto any sheep or sheep man found south of Badger Creek. It had taken a killing or two to establish this line, but established it was. Along came a stranger, Whittlebeck, who drove his herd of sheep across Badger Creek and set them to grazing on the south side.

In no time at all a delegation of cattle men rode up to warn him. "This here's cattle country."

"Who says so?"

"By agreement. Other side's sheep country."

"That agreement was made with the old settlers, not with me."

The cattlemen, having said their say, rode away.

About four o'clock the next morning Whittlebeck heard a disturbance. Looking out of the front of his camp wagon he saw in the semi-darkness about thirty horsemen encircling and closing in on his wagon. Suddenly a voice rang out clear as a gunshot.

"Come out of there. Throw down your guns!"

Whittlebeck didn't comply at once.

"If you think anything of your lives come out of there. Leave your guns where they are."

Still Whittlebeck didn't comply. Shots were fired into the wheels and cover of the wagon.

"We mean business!"

Finally Whittlebeck and a companion came out and stood quaking by the wagon tongue. In a few minutes more a frightened boy of about fourteen stuck his head out. "Please don't shoot me," he quavered. "I'm a Ramell boy. I live on the farm over there. I'm just visiting here."

There was a few seconds conversation among the horsemen, and then they lined the boy up with the rest. Leaving a guard with the three, the horsemen raced through the herd of sheep, trampling down the animals and firing volley after volley into the helpless herd. As they rode away the horsemen shot Whittlebeck's horses which were hobbled nearby.

The next day Whittlebeck swore out a warrant for the arrest of the riders. Every cattleman in the area proved an alibi, an alibi that the officers thought sufficient to release them from custody.

The next night the sheep camped on the north side of Badger Creek.

Alva, telling Martha the story as she undressed Hadley before the kitchen fire, thought of the sheep and the horses - not the men. Whittlebeck didn't deserve any sympathy. He should have had more sense than to force the issue. There must be some better way of settling the range problems than by shooting. Maybe the government ----

But the problem of how the sheep and cattle men could live peaceably together was a theoretical one as far as Alva was concerned. His immediate problem was to haul enough logs to fence three sections of land. In return for the fencing of three sections Alva was to receive title to a town site lot on which he could build a home of his own for his little family. Always Pa had said, "Never live in a rented house," and here Alva had done just that ever since his marriage.

To get the logs Alva had to take long trips into the mountains, staying overnight sometimes several nights, and Martha complained that he was hauling enough logs to fence all of Idaho. But that was because she was lonely. On days that he couldn't go to the mountains Martha would bring Hadley out in his buggy and work side by side with Alva, peeling the logs. Hadley was getting a big boy to stay in his buggy.

"Wish I had a corral for the child," Martha would say exasperatedly when she'd put Hadley on his feet and he'd start away on adventures of his own. "I'm just not fit to run."

Then Alva, proud that Martha was again expecting, would catch the boy and throw him into the air in sheer animal good spirits. "Tether him out. That's what we'll have to do, Mama."

When Alva had brought in enough logs, he fenced the three sections for the Felt brothers and they paid him for his work with a quarter section town site two miles closer to the little center of Hayden. Martha would like the new location much better. Martha would be happier with a home of her own.

Now there was increased interest in bringing in the straightest, finest logs, peeling them to a beautiful whiteness, stacking then just right to season and dry.

Up in Pack Saddle Canyon, two miles west of Old Hayden, Alva cut and peeled about ninety perfect house logs. He cut and peeled them shortly after cropping time in the spring and by August they were dry and ready to haul.

Happily Alva whistled as he rode on the running gears of his wagon toward his supply of prepared logs. At the mouth of Pack Saddle Canyon was the Harrington Ranch and Alva had to cross the ranch to get his logs and recross it to bring them home. As he approached the ranch he saw Ed Harrington with his rifle in hand run into an old blacksmith shop which was about five rods off the road.

The sight of the rifle and its disappearing owner gave Alva a strange feeling, not exactly of fear, but at least of suspense. "Evil shall be at your right hand and your left hand but ----" he remembered. Twice the prophecy had been fulfilled. The feeling of uneasiness left him and he continued to drive toward the canyon's mouth.

At the mouth of the canyon some quaking asp brush had been thrown across the road. Ed's two little girls, about eight and ten years old, came down from the house.

"This is private property," the oldest said importantly. "My pa has shut off this road."

"Little ladies," Alva said, smiling and speaking as if the two little girls before him were really grown women, "will you please go ask your father to come down and talk with me?"

"No, I won't," the older girl said and the younger child repeated the words.

"Now you don't mean that," Alva said, still smiling.

"Don't you dare to touch us," the older child called, making a nasty face and moving into the center of the road.

"If you would call your father I know he'd tell me to drive right along," Alva insisted. "This is the only road to the canyon."

"Won't do it," the children sang, again pulling their faces into nasty grimaces.

"Then I'll just have to drive on," Alva said. He got down from his wagon, piled the quaking asp brush out of the way, got back onto the running hears and drove on up the canyon.

He was gone about three hours and when he returned he way Ed again sneak into the old shop where he could cover Alva with his rifle.

When he came to the spot where the brush had been piled, he found a five-pole fence across the road and Ed's wife stationed in front of the fence.

"Let's see you pitch his out of the road," she said. She added a word or two which would not have been so shocking coming from a man.

Alva sat on his load, smiled and tried to turn the whole thing into a joke. "I can't turn around and find another road," he said, "and I don't like to unload right in front of your house."

"You're not going to get by here," the woman declared, and Alva could feel the rifle that was out of sight in the old smithy shop.

"Well, it looks like I'll be obliged to hook my team onto the back of my wagon and pull the logs back up the canyon," he laughed.

The woman's expression changed not at all. "Get off our property and stay off," she ordered.

"Do you think your husband will take his team and double me back up the canyon?" he asked.

At the ridiculousness of the situation the woman finally smiled.

"There, I've always told you had a good heart," Alva said, as if the whole conversation had been a bit of lighthearted foolery.

"Well, go ahead, you good-natured Mormon. But if you prize your life you put that fence up after you."

Alva got down, moved the rails, got back up and drove the team through, got down again and returned the rails. All the time the woman stood watching him, never offering to draw her gun, but never taking her eyes from him. Though Ed, out of sight, watched every move through the sights of his gun, he didn't offer to molest Alva.

That night, thinking over the experience of the day, Alva tried to figure out how God moved to protect him whenever he was in danger. And he came to a decision. As long as there is no anger in my heart, he decided, I am safe. If I let in anger, evil will enter with it.

More than a week later Alva, dressed in his best, stopped at the Harrington Ranch to make a social call. The little girls were asleep in their loft bedroom, but Ed and Honey, his wife, met him and invited him in and talked pleasantly with him. Alva explained that he had the logs cut for his home and there was no other way to bring them in. The Harington's gave him permission to haul them across the ranch.

Some time later Ed Harrington was arrested for stealing a car and resisting an officer. He confessed, rather proudly, to a career in his younger days which had led him to hold up five stage coaches single handed and had brought him a store of jewels, watches and money.

It would have been easy for Ed Harrington, or his wife either, to have settled the little argument with a bullet or two, but Alva, true to his blessings, had passed between them unharmed.

So the pile of beautiful white logs grew and the plans Alva and Martha made for the three-room home they would build on the town site grew, too.

In December 1904, a baby girl was born. Alva wanted to name her Blanche for the missionary convert who had joined the church and come to Salt Lake as a result of his teaching. And Martha, thinking of the high spirits, the ready laughter and the beautiful singing voice, agreed.

The next summer the long white logs lay in the sunshine drying and seasoning, and toward full Alva began to build. He hauled the logs down to the building site and actual work began. There were four great rocks, forming the corners of each room. These were the only foundations. It made Martha happy to see the rapid progress the house made, even when the corners didn't always come out right as they should.

Alva worked rapidly on the structure, but fall was coming on and it was late to be building in the Teton Basin. It was November before they could possibly move into the new house. Although it was snowing lightly the day Alva had set for the move, he drew the hayrack up to the door of the cabin and carried out the household goods. Before they were half done with the moving, snow was really falling—the biggest flakes they had ever seen. By the time the goods were put in the new house more than half of it was soaked with melting snow.

Little Blanche, about a year old, caught a terrible cold. For several days Martha could do nothing toward making a home out of the house; she had to spend all of her time taking care of the baby. It isn't much fun to live so many miles from a doctor when a precious little thing like Blanche is sick, Martha wanted to tell Alva. But she didn't. She rubbed the little infected eyes with olive oil, kept them covered with a bandage, shaded the windows, and prayed. After a time the eye infection cleared up and the bandages were removed. The vision in one eye was impaired, but God had listened to the family prayers and had been good.

A Time of Ripening

"Where's that draft coming from?" Alva asked one morning as they sat down to breakfast.

"You just noticed it, Papa?" Martha asked. She looked up at the ceiling and Alva's eyes followed her glance. The ceiling was made of rough boards. When they had been placed they touched, but now, from the heat of the kitchen, the green lumber had shrunk and there were cracks from one end to the other.

"Never you mind, Mama. I'll fix that," Alva said.

"What are you going to do?"

"A good thick coat of sawdust up in the loft will keep the cold out."

"Sawdust," Martha scoffed. "It'll sift right through on us."

Alva smiled reassuringly. "Leave it to me, Mama. Coarse sawdust won't snow through the cracks."

So Alva whistled and sang and put a thick layer of sawdust in the loft over the kitchen ceiling. It seemed for a week or two that his idea had been a good one. But the boards that made the ceiling continued to dry and as they dried the size of the cracks between them increased. After two weeks every time a door was closed or there was any real movement in the kitchen, the finer particles of sawdust sifted through. Sweep as often as she would, there was always a coating of powdery sawdust on Martha's floor.

The sawdust on the floor didn't bother Alva so he couldn't see why it bothered Martha; but since it did he finally got around to nailing a narrow strip of wood over each of the cracks.

From the first Martha took a special pride in the bedroom. In one corner Alva built a bed for Hadley. The two walls supported the head and one side of the bed and he built a frame for the other side and the foot. In place of springs he used slats laid from one side to the other. The frame that supported the foot was part of a cupboard which Alva had built to accommodate the clean clothes. Hadley had a wonderful time with these clean clothes if he wakened and nobody came to lift him down. Martha learned to hurry to him at once the moment he called.

What Martha couldn't get used to was that Alva was away from home so much. Whenever he needed money he left her with the children while he went elsewhere to work. Martha realized that they needed money, but still life was not as sweet and full as it would have been had he been home a greater part of the time. It made her unhappy, too, that Alva seemed to take the separations rather as a matter of course. In the fall of 1906, when there was no longer any chance to work in the snow-covered Teton Basin, he left for Salt Lake to earn a little ready cash. His nephew, Jack Allen, was making his home with them and could do a man's work around the place. "You'll be all-right while I'm gone, Mama," he said, as he made his plans to leave. "Jack's most as good as a man."

Martha wanted to cling to him and say the Jack Allen was as good a boy as ever lived, but a dozen Jacks wouldn't make up for one missing husband. But she was proud. She wouldn't show Alva her tears. When he left she waved him away with the same surface unconcern with which he left.

It was the last week in November and Alva was still in Salt Lake. "Sunday is just like any other day," she grumbled to herself, then suddenly the notion struck her to visit friends. She was expecting a third child and sometimes she thought she was pretty poor company for herself. "A woman needs a change," she argued to herself as she dressed Hadley and Blanche for a three-mile ride in the cutter over the windswept snow fields.

Going toward Driggs, Jack had to cross a ditch with steep banks. He took it carefully but both he and Martha thought they heard a runner crack. Jack got out and looked over the vehicle carefully. "It looks all right, " he said. "Do you think we better go back?"

"No," Martha decided. "Let's go on."

The visit with the Ed Little family was pleasant, and Martha was glad she had decided to go on in spite of that ominous cracking sound.

On the way home Jack hesitated before he drove into the same ditch. He drove in more carefully than before but this time the runner broke completely off, the sleigh tipped over on its side and out rolled Martha and baby Blanche into the icy water. Hadley was left clinging to the seat. Jack carried Blanche to the bank, then went back after Martha. With

their clothes freezing on the backs in the wind straight off the tops of the mountains, the family walked home.

Martha thought that Alva would be most concerned; but two weeks later when he was home for the birth of the new little boy he laughed and said, "Well this is one child that was baptized before he was born."

"I ought to be mad that Alva looks at things like that," Martha thought. "But Alva's Alva, no getting around that."

When Martha suggested that the little boy be named Sidney Alva, she was saying to herself that she was used to Alva's ways in this great open country. That she was even used to the strange country. Hadley was four and Blanche two when the new baby came. All three were December babies and each had been born in a different house; Hadley in Salt Lake, Blanche in the rented cabin and Sidney in the new house in Hayden. This almost nomadic existence was something that Martha had not counted on. Well, anyway now they were in their new home. To Martha the little house became a symbol of something that might be lasting in a transitory world.

Alva, watching Martha, was more conscious of her feelings than she knew. He love the Basin, the life that it brought, but he knew that Martha tolerated it only because he and the children and their home was there. And wanting to show Martha that he appreciated the way she had conquered her subconscious rebellion against the pattern of life, he sought for something to delight her. The home –that was it. Next to the children it was Martha's greatest pride. He remembered Martha's eyes as she looked at her beautiful mirror hanging against the ugly uneven log wall of the rented cabin. The bedroom should be papered!

For the paper they chose red roses on a yellow ground. Martha made heavy blue curtains to hang over the shelves in the corner where the children's bed was. The curtains had a story, too. In the Payson days, when Martha was working at the co-op, she had dreamed someday of having a beautiful home. She had bout a lace bedspread and made a heavy sateen cover to go under the lace. The bedspread she had traded for a special kind of voluminous wraparound dress to conceal her first pregnancy. Now she cut up the sateen lining to make the curtains. This wasn't the home she had dreamed of, but she was happy about tying her dreams into reality.

Because the room was now the most pleasant room in the house, Alva bought a heater. None of the dirt of an open fire for their pretty room. He wouldn't let it be spoiled with a fireplace. The heater, which would hold great blocks of wood, would keep the room comfortable even in Idaho's below-zero weather.

There was another room, too. A spare one. But it was never finished. Two rooms were enough for a family of five. The boards had been laid for the floor but were never nailed in place. Martha hid extra firewood under the loose boards. Alva never did take very kindly to chopping wood, but he would chop each day what he figured Martha would need. If there were blocks left over, he would chop less for the next day. Martha took to hiding what was left over so that each day he'd have to chop the regular amount. The wood she hid she would have if she ran low on special days like wash day, ironing day, or baking day.

Once Alva brought home a sack of lump coal. You'd have thought it was the best present Martha had ever had. Later he tried a sack of slack, but Martha wasn't happy about that. It was hard to use – smothered the flame if you didn't handle it just right, and it was everlastingly dirty!

Life was busy and happy – for Alva. Martha, watching Hadley snuggle and snuggle until he had made a suitable indentation in his warm featherbed, thought of how Alva had seemed to snuggle into the life of Hayden. First he was Sunday School Board member, then home missionary, then the year after Sid's birth, president of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. He put his shoulders and his indomitable push into the job and in 1907 took charge of raising one hundred and five dollars to purchase a bell to hang in the steeple of the church. He was school trustee, too, and justice of the peace.

But always, while Alva was serving the community, Martha was serving her family. It was the winter of 1908 that little Sid, not quite two years old, came down with a heavy cold. Doctors were hard to get and nurses unheard of. Martha took over the job of breaking the cold. She rubbed camphorated oil on the baby's chest, then thinking if a little were good,

more would be better, gave him a tablespoonful to drink. Instantly the little form stiffened out as if Sidney were already dead. Frantic with fright, not even remembering that she was dressed only in a nightgown, Martha knocked out a screen door that was nailed closed for the winter and ran across the fields, Sidney in her arms, to the home of the nearest midwife, Mrs. Homer.

"There now, it ain't so serious, it ain't so serious," Mrs. Homer half crooned as she took the baby and listened to Martha's excited, garbled account.

"Camphorated, huh?" she asked. Then she gave the baby something to make him vomit. It was a long time before she put him, wrapped in a fresh blanket, back into Martha's arms. "You did the best you knew how," she soothed Martha. "The best you knew how."

It was that same winter that Alva suggested that they take the school teacher to board and room with them. Her name was Miss Heckstead, and she was a lovely girl. Once Alva heard her read, he couldn't be satisfied until he had prevailed upon her to read a part of the Book of Mormon aloud each evening. Alva had read the book to himself and Martha had read it, but hearing it aloud made it come to life in some glowing, inexplicable way, and the reading that winter was one of the finest experiences of their life.

The only thing about having Miss Heckstead living with them was that Martha had to give up her beautiful bedroom. "Finnish the spare room for the teacher," Martha had coaxed, but Alva had other things to do. Besides, where would the money come from?

"There's plenty of room in the kitchen for out bed," he had said easily, and so that was that.

One night when Alva and Martha were sleeping soundly they were awakened by Miss Heckstead jumping into bed with them.

"Here, here, what's this?" Alva asked, rising hastily.

"Oh, I'm so frightened, so frightened," Miss Heckstead kept chattering.

Finally Alva got it out of her that someone had broken the glass window in the bedroom.

"Well, I'll go out and look around," Alva said in his usual easy-going manner.

One of the horses was loose and came up to the house. Presumably he had wanted to scratch himself and had rubbed against the house, breaking the window.

When Alva came back with the explanation, Miss Heckstead's teeth were still chattering hysterically. He patted her on the shoulder and left her to sleep the rest of the night with Martha while he slept in the bedroom.

Martha kept after Alva to finish the third room, but he put her off. His brother David had decided to dissolve the partnership. David tried to make it sound as if dissolving the partnership would be best for both of them, but Alva knew, and so did Martha, that David wanted to put his money into something else.

At David's suggestion they had broken up housekeeping in Salt Lake and come to the Teton's. Alva had pushed himself, worked with all his strength and energy toward the fulfillment of a dream, and now David could say as easy as you please that he was drawing out. If he did, what would Alva and Martha have to show for these hard years? There was the house, of course, but what good was a house where there wasn't work a man could do to support his family. If Alva had money he would buy out David's interest; things would have been different. Martha began to hate David with a hate that was deep. Alva didn't have time to hate. He had a wife, three children and another one expected. He had to plan for providing a living for his family.

In February of 1909 he took the Forest Service Examination and passed it. On April the fourth, on his thirty-fourth birthday, he received his permanent appointment with the government.

Leaving Martha and his three little children, Alva went out with a surveying crew. This was a familiar pattern; Alva's going on ahead. Martha had stayed in Salt Lake while Alva started in Hayden. Now she would stay in Hayden while he got started goodness knew where.

His first job was to survey from Heise Hot Springs to Mill Creek in the Teton Basin. The next job was to survey from Medicine Lodge to Kilgore. The camp moved with the crew. Alva, not yet versed in surveying, moved camp, did the cooking, and learned! Always he

had a gift for getting along with folks. Now he thoroughly enjoyed every day spent in the open with this group of congenial men.

When he was given the Kilgore district as a regular ranger, he was delighted. Almost at once he bought a five-acre parcel of land near the Kilgore school house. The log house on it was old, not nearly as nice as the house he was asking Martha to leave. But he could fix it up.

Martha, hearing of the parcel of land and old house in Kilgore, looked with new eyes at the home they had built in Hayden. The lovely yellow bedroom paper with its bright, happy rose faces. There never again would be such paper. The blue sateen curtains over the neat clothing cupboard; those tied her to the dreams of her youth. The linoleum on the kitchen floor; she had bought it with butter sold at seventeen cents a pound. Why she couldn't leave this house! The lovely furniture that had come from Payson to Salt Lake and then on the Hayden was part of the house, and part of her. She took to crying when the children weren't awake to watch her with round, troubled eyes. The home meant far more to her than it did to Alva – that was clear. Why, every time you went out to draw water you could look directly up at the Teton's and drink in their strength. Now if David hadn't dissolved his partnership with Alva –

It was August, and Martha had learned to live one day at a time. There was to be a party for Martha Little in the log church and Martha had made sandwiches for the affair. In addition to making the sandwiches, Martha had done her morning work, got the children dressed up, and milked two cows before she left for the party which was to begin at eleven. Maybe she had hurried too much, she thought as she entered the friendly log building. Maybe that was shy she felt as she did.

As the party wore on she felt no better. In fact she felt worse. Aunt Clara Felt hustled her home and then went to find Brother felt to send for the midwife.

When the midwife, Mrs. Rammel, arrived she said warily, "I'm sure dead beat out."

Hushing the children, Martha answered, "You lie down for a spell. I don't feel as bad as I did over to the church."

So Mrs. Rammel, who had been up all night delivering another mother, fell asleep on the bed in the bedroom. Quietly Martha got up from the bed in the kitchen and went out to pull weeds for the pigs. The pigs couldn't go hungry and goodness only knew when she'd be up and around again, or when Alva would get home to take over such jobs.

When the pigs were fed she turned resolutely to getting in some fire wood. The pains were pretty hard now, regular, and close together. In order to cut the wood she had to kneel as she pushed the saw. Mrs. Rammel wakened, and missing her patient, looked outside. She helped Martha carry the wood into the house, and then she undressed her and put her to bed. The baby was born at three.

The baby was two days old when Alva got home. This time he stayed for three days. He was gentle when he talked with Martha – gentle and sweet and tender. "I must get you up to Kilgore where I can take care of you," he said over and over again. And Martha, wanting desperately to be where Alva was, still looked at her home with love and found it hard to agree to any plan that would leave all they had built so carefully, behind.

When the baby named Martha for Martha Little and its mother, was six weeks old, Alva came back to move the family to Kilgore. Into one wagon would go the heating stove and the family. Into the other, driven by Joe Crocker, would go all the family possessions that could be packed into it.

Martha watched the packing with a heart that grew heavier and heavier. There were things that <u>had</u> to go, and among these things weren't Martha's prized possessions. Finally the men made room for the lovely mirror. But the sofa, the cane-bottomed chairs, the glass center table, the glass-door cupboard that had held her collection of pretty dishes - they would all have to be left in Hayden.

"I'll make a special trip back after your stuff," Alva promised, but Martha knew the promise would never be kept. It wasn't that Alva didn't intend to do as he promised. It was just that these things meant little to him, and life was busy and complicated and Kilgore was a long way from Hayden.

As the two heavily loaded wagons started toward Kilgore, Martha thought, I won't be like Lot's wife. I won't. But she looked back as long as her tear-filled eyes could see the little house of fine straight white logs which held so many visible symbols of her plans for her married life.

Finally, when the house was out of sight she turned her face to the front. "What did you get for our place?" she asked.

"Eighty acres of fine river land," Alva answered, trying to pay no attention to the tears.

"What will that ever bring us?"

"Oh, I'll watch for a good chance to trade it for something nearer Kilgore, or else for cash."

If a fortune teller had risen up in the road before them to tell Martha that the land would bring just two hundred dollars, she wouldn't have been surprised. Two hundred dollars for five years' work. And they were leaving so many valuable things behind. Two hundred dollars would be less than the store price of Martha's furniture - and there was the sentimental value, too.

But it wasn't a fortune teller, phantom or otherwise, that rose before them on the road. It was a deep drift of soft sand, in which before long the wagons were hopelessly stuck. There was pushing to be done and pulling, and poles to be carried to use under the wheels. There was a campfire dinner to prepare steak to be fried over a sand-banked campfire. The children were noisy with excitement and Alva and Martha were silent in an attempt to reach across Martha's unhappiness to be one again.

They arrived in Kilgore in the middle of a rainy night. The log cabin had a leaking sod roof and the bed stood in the only dry spot in the whole place. The rain cleared before morning and when Martha awakened, lying there beside Alva, she looked up at the sun streaming through the cracks in the roof. Alva's eyes followed hers. "It won't be long, Mama. I'll fix this place up for you. Before you know it, I'll build you a new house."

Martha was silent. Promises were such phantom things contrasted with the actual tangible things she had left.

"A job with Uncle Sam," Alva exulted. "One hundred certain dollars a month!"

CHAPTER IX

When Alva had taken the forest ranger examination he had, as the form required, written his full name: Sidney Alvarus Hanks. Sam Stoddard, his ranger partner, not wishing to stand on formality, had cut the name down to bite size and started to call him Sid. Sid was as good a name as any other. First Proph, then Alva, then Papa, now Sid. Adopting the new name wouldn't put Martha out any. She called him Papa most of the time; so he began his ranger life under the new name.

Sam Stoddard and Sid had been appointed rangers to look after the Idaho side of the forest from Medicine Lodge on the west to Sawtelle on the east, a distance of approximately ninety miles. Sid, with his headquarters at Kilgore, had charge of the east end and Sam with his headquarters at Spencer, was responsible for the west. But in 1909 being a forest ranger wasn't the safest job in the world, owing to the bad feeling of the cattle and sheep men, and Sam and Sid were advised to travel together.

When the sheep were sheered and branded at the corrals, Sid and Sam put up long strings of lath fence to make a sort of shoot so that the animals could be counted as they entered the forest ranges. Sometimes when the herd was located where a wagon load of lath couldn't be brought in, the two rounded up six or eight sheep herders, and lining them up, made a makeshift shoot of human material. The two asked the foremen for sheering counts and checked their own account for accuracy. This willingness to count the foreman's word on the same accuracy of their own count pleased the sheep men and soothed troubled feelings.

The head foreman would send a good cook on ahead and after counting five or six herds into the forest, the rangers and wranglers would sit down together around a big tarp and eat to a finish. Sometimes the meal was wild chicken, sometimes mountain fish, sometimes mutton - but always it was very much worth eating. The forest range was summer heaven to the sheep men. The Wood Live Stock Company had range rights for most of Sid's district. They ranged about four thousand sheep, one thousand cattle and a hundred mules and horses. There were about one thousand cattle that belonged to small owners, mostly Kilgore folks, but there was never any trouble between the large company and the small independent owners.

West of Spencer things were different. There sheep and cattle men were in dispute. The region had only recently been thrown into reserve, every rider still carried his forty-five on his hip, and Sam and Sid were counted on to regulate with an iron hand.

There was a town site or so of range recently attached to the forest in the west Medicine Lodge district. The grazers were greatly agitated about losing the free use of this area. Sam and Sid were asked by officials in the office at Ogden, Utah, to go down to Medicine Lodge and post signs requesting that the grazers meet in ten days. In addition to posting the signs the two wrote each grazer a special invitation on a postal card. All of the grazers came to the meeting and each accepted an application form to fill out for use of part of the new range.

There was only one who refused an application blank. He was a loud-spoken, swaggering fellow who kept his hand near the gun he carried on his hip. "I'm not the sucker to get down on my knees to any _____ _____ government. A grazing permit when I've been grazing on this ground for twenty years! I'll see 'em in hell first."

Sam nudged Sid's elbow as they filed out of the meeting. "We'll have trouble with that worm before we get through."

Sid shrugged, but he did feel concerned about what might happen at the meeting that had been called ten days hence to give out the permits that would be granted by the Ogden office.

The ten days seemed to go in no time and Sid, feeling a growing uneasiness, turned his saddle pony down the road to Medicine Lodge. Sam wouldn't be at the meeting because he had to attend a family funeral. It was up to Sid to stand alone. Alone, that is, with the forest service men from the Ogden office who had little idea of the problems faced by the rangers in the forest.

The meeting was called to order by one of the men from the Ogden office. There were twenty men present. Most of them pretty well liquored up. They stopped talking among themselves when the meeting was called to order. The presiding officer got straight down to tacks. "All of the applications filed with our office have been granted. Ranger Hanks will give out the permits."

Sid gave out the permits. The grazers pocketed them with casual thanks. Seemed the meeting would end almost before it started but the fellow who had refused to fill out an application stood up and started to deliver an address, damning indiscriminately the government, the rangers and the cattle men. He ended his speech by pointing an accusing finger at Sid. "This _____ ranger never gave me an application blank."

Every grazer in the room knew that the man had refused an application; not one made a move to say so. Sid had told the officials from Ogden about the scene ten days before, but not one of them spoke out either. It was up to Sid to make the next move. Anger and disgust made him want to tie the fellow down to the truth. He rationalized that every man present would lose respect for him if he didn't stand up for himself. Yet, something deeper than anger – deeper than reason, dictated his course of action.

"It wouldn't do," he said, speaking to the Ogden officials but smiling t the man who had cursed him, "for one grazer who used this land for twenty years to fail to get a permit. If he fills out the application now, could you have it granted before the herds enter the forest?"

The fellow was trapped. Having once refused to fill out a permit, Sid had put him in a place where filling out the blank was the reasonable thing to do. The men from Ogden saw the situation and promised all speed in putting the application through. No one said a word to make the angry man lose face. When Sid left the meeting he felt something in the handclasps of the other grazers that told him he had passed through evil, once again, unharmed.

The year of 1910 was dry. There was less rain than usual, less snow, more wind, and more sun. Everywhere the rangers were dust dry and everywhere the cattle and sheep men were heartsick and almost desperate. The open ranges could not feed the animals that had been accustomed to graze on them; the forest ranges were limited. In Montana, along the border near Sid's part of the forest, were open ranges where cattle men and sheep men fought it out, frequently with a sheriff's posse on one side or the other. The forest range over which Sid had control lay from Spencer Creek on the west to Ice House Creek on the east, a distance of forty miles running along the continental divide round the forest on the north and Kilgore and Sheridan valleys on the south. It was a beautiful range and determined to keep it so.

That was the summer that it was necessary to try an experiment - could the sheep and cattle be ranged on the same land. Sid thought so, so did certain grazers and a part of the forest service experts. The cattle were put on the low swampy land and the sheep on the higher reaches. The cattle fattened satisfactorily and the sheep did better than that. Early in the spring Sid took twenty sheep from every thousand that entered the range, weighed and numbered them. He weighed the sheep again in September. The test showed that he and those who had felt that cattle and sheep could graze the same ranges were right, and Sid was delighted.

The summer was a nightmare for most of the forest service. One fire after another raged in the forests. The Idaho Panhandle was burned over in many areas, countless lumber feet of timber were destroyed and many people lost their lives. But in Sid's forest there was less destruction. The largest fire, on the Targhee, was put out without loss of life.

Sid was praised but he passed the praise on to others. When Mr. Morris, the supervisor, had seen that it was going to be a dry season, he had advised the rangers to write to the grazers and thank them for keeping down fires in the past and ask them to be particularly careful now since the summer was going to be fire dangerous.

Sid wrote the letters, but he did more than that. He called on most of the men and chatted in his warm friendly way. He made them want to report each fire they saw. All summer these reports came in. Small fires, mostly started by summer lightning, were put out by the herders themselves before they had grown too large to make this impossible.

Each time such a report came in Sid wrote the name of the grazer or herder and a description and commendation of the action in a report to the Ogden office. The office always relied with a personal letter of appreciation to the one who had helped. Because of the warm cooperation of every one interested in the range, Sid didn't have to call on an outside crew all that long dry summer.

Sid had a genuine love for people, and the men in his district, especially the supervisors, the foremen and the herders for the Wood Live Stock Company, had respect for him. One thing he soon learned to do was to mix with them and enjoy their frolics without ever taking sides in any of their skirmishes. And there were plenty of these. Take the matter of politics, for instance.

The Woods Company was really a capitalistic venture. Ex-senator Haggenbarth was the president of the company. Ex-senator William Hart was its manager of lands and water, and Hugh J. Woods was its superintendent. The best men on the range worked for the company because it was famous for its excellent treatment of employees. Each man received a yearly bonus which became larger for each year of service. The best horses, harnesses, wagons, saddles, guns, traps and provisions were furnished, too. And the cooks could always cook!

The Woods Live Stick Company's top men and most of those who worked for it were Republicans. Why shouldn't they be? Free trade would bring down the price of wool and a Republican government would never hear of free trade.

The farmers of Medicine Lodge and Camas Meadow district and the independent cattle men were against anything that would make sheep men richer and stronger. They were Democrats. Why shouldn't they be? Free trade would bring down the price of commodities and a Democratic government would never think of imposing a protective tariff.

There was a great deal of argument over politics and finally the whole thing localized in a fight over the election of a sheriff for Clark County. The Democrats named a veterinarian, Doctor Ulrich, ho was an educated gentleman from the South, as their candidate. The Republicans named Bill Schaufhausen, a foreman for the Woods Live Stock Company with eleven bands of sheep as well as cattle and horses under his direction. The contest, which had started out to be a political one, soon became a personal one between the two men. And even more than between the men, between the two men's dogs. Bill's dogs were Spot and Ring, Scotch collies; Doc's were Buster and Granny, Airedales, or as Doc called them, "Bear dogs."

It was Bill who first made the argument a personal one. On the evening of the thirty-first of March he stuffed an old pair of overalls and shirt full of snow and made a recognizable replica of a man's body. He added a man's cap, one shoe, and a pair of old skis and placed the dummy, half hidden in the snow, in a lonely turn along the road near Dead Man's Hollow. Early the next morning he called a rancher who lived near Doc and asked, "Is there a man missing in your neighborhood who may have perished in last night's blizzard? There is something that looks like a body under a big willow bush near the road at Dead Man's Hollow. I didn't go too close, but I did see a pair of skis."

The rancher hung up hurriedly without asking Bill for his name. Just as Bill had expected the rancher hurried straight to Doc. Doc, sensing an opportunity to appear as a heroic leader, dressed at once, fed his dogs, and called out a group of ranchers to accompany him on the search.

Doc and his self-formed posse bucked the snow for fifteen miles. With Doc were Dick Barney with his Winchester, Dent Heroman, the man who carried the mail by dog team from Kilgore to Big Springs, and about a dozen others. The snow was shifting with the constant winds, covering tracks, but not entirely obliterating the road. When the party finally came to Dead Man's Hollow there were the skis and the form partially uncovered in the whorled snow. Doc removed his gloves, blew his warm breath on his icy fingers and jumped from the sleigh in which had been riding.

"Come back, back," he ordered his dogs, which had already begun to sniff toward the body. "I must not allow any track to be covered."

Slowly the group pressed forward, feeling the solemnity of death. Doc, a little ahead of the others, saw a piece of paper sticking from a pocket. "We'll no doubt be able to identify the man," he said as he carefully pushed through the snow and drew the paper from the pocket. On it was written: April First.

"That _____Bill Schaufhausen," he shouted, kicking at the stuffed overalls until he raised a geyser of snow. "That____ _____ _____!"

The crowd didn't listen to his oaths, to his vows to kill. In spite of the fifteen hard miles and the below zero weather, they laughed. Doc turned on them furiously. Some of his epithets were used to describe those who were laughing. He took a bottle from his pocket and drained it. Color came back into his white set face. He drew his bowie knife and began to test the edge against his thumb. "Who's coming with me?" he demanded.

It was only a mile to Bill's camp and none of the crowd wanted to have murder done in Clark County over an April Fool's Day joke, so they followed along.

Bill, preparing his breakfast, heard Ring's warning bark and was able to reach the door before it was kicked open from the outside. "Come in and get warm, gentlemen." Bill tried to look past Doc's set, furious face, away from his angry slits of eyes.

"_____ you, sir," Doc cried. "You've offended all Kilgore. There isn't a woman or girl whose husband is away from home but who is thinking that this frozen man might belong to her. "_____ you, sir!" He gave Bill a ringing slap across the face. "You deserve a good beatin'!"

Bill gave him a push that sent him back against the clustered men. "Stand back." Then he said to the others, "Take this mad man home before I have to hurt him."

Doc lunged again but Dick Barney grabbed him and pulled him back.

"If there's anybody here can't take a good joke, come and beat me up. But come one at a time."

Ring and Spot snarled at Buster and Granny, the men backed out, and Bill wondered just how funny his joke was. Maybe he was no nearer election to the position of sheriff than he had been this time last week. Maybe not so near.

The ripening berries, the long green cones on the fir trees, the tall bunches of wheat grass, the overgrown nigger heads, the seeding white and yellow dock, and the full-grown blue grouse announced early summer on the Camas range.

Sid watched the contest grow between the two men. It was something to laugh about two grown men acting like kids for a chance to show off with a gun and a posse. But it was something to worry about, too. No telling what might happen next between Bill and Doc, their dogs and their tempers.

Bill had forty bands of sheep strung from Old Beaver Creek to Sawtelle Peak, a distance of bout forty miles along the continental divide. Handling so many sheep was a big job but Bill felt equal to that and the sheriff's job, too. Election in November. Hah!

Then one night a mere bear outwitted him. He had hung a fresh mutton in a sack from the branch of a tree and a bear, leaving its claw marks on the tree and its footprints on the ground, had stolen it.

Bill appealed to Sid and Sid loaned a bear trap. Bill put the trap at the foot of the tree trunk with a short piece of logging chain. He covered the trap with leaves and grass. He hung another mutton on a low branch, together with a small sack of sugar and a bag of currants. He then waited for two or three nights. The bear with his first course digested, returned for the dessert. He took the sugar and currants and left the mutton, the sack and the trap just as they had been placed.

Riding into the ranger station Bill admitted that he was baffled. Sid scratched his head and came up with some suggestions. Returning with several new ideas, Bill built a v-shaped pen of logs near the bottom of the tree leaving a small opening in one end for the bear to enter. In the opening he placed the trap and in the opposite end of the pen he wired his bait to a stake.

Wherever Sid went he remarked that Bill was out to trap a grizzly. Bill told some of his herders who told others and soon everybody in the area was waiting for the contest between man and brute. In a day everybody knew what had been done and everybody had asked to be informed when the animal was trapped.

In the morning the bear was in the trap and Sid, true to his promise, started the news around. Men, women, dogs and horses started to Caggy Camp. Sid rode with the rest and Hadley was on behind Doc Ulrich on his excellent saddle horse, the good model for a sporting picture on a calendar, Sid thought as he looked back at the troupe strung out through the timber along the rough trail winding up to the camp.

It was midday when they reached the camp and the bear. Bruin was a big one. Maddened from the agonizing trap he looked out upon the crowd with a glare of rage and hatred. He was just at the foot of a little hill backed up against a big bunch of willows. The crowd sat on their horses silently, looking at the animal with a little awe tinged with excitement.

"Bill," Doc said, "what say we try our dogs?"

Bill measure Doc with his eyes. "Go ahead."

Sid got out his rifle to shoot if necessary.

"Get him, Buster," Doc shouted and all the others shouted "Sic 'em!" The dogs tumbled over each other to get to the bear, but when they got close and took a real look they stopped, barking a little. Then the fell to fighting among themselves. Again and again Doc shouted at his "bear" dogs, but they'd have none of the beast. Buster and Granny preferred to fight Ring who had taken a stance nearest the bear.

"Don't let those dogs fight so close to the bear," one of the women shrilled, and Doc demanded. "Back, Buster, back!"

"Kill the poor thing and put it out of its misery," the women began to plead and a few of the men joined in. Sid, himself, thought it was a good idea. Just as soon as Bill agreed, Doc said, "What say we take him alive?"

He took a long rope from his saddle, twirled it and put the loop squarely over the bear's head. Things started moving at once. Sid sensed the danger in the rough play, but no one else seemed to. The men grabbed the rope and played with the massive creature without evident fear. Sid sat at a respectful distance, one eye along the barrel of his gun, the other on the men and dogs.

The string of men and boys dragged the growling, scratching bear from the brush and brought him up the hill toward the crowd. Suddenly Ring got between the men and the animal and Spot, watching, slipped in behind the bear and gave it a snap. Crazed with fear and rage the bear gave a sudden lunge forward, seized the ring-necked collie with his claws and bit him. The sudden slackening of the rope brought the string of men to his side and a general scrimmage, accompanied by the screams of the women, prevailed.

The danger was too great for sport. Sid brought his gun to his shoulder. His blue eyes blazed but he didn't discharge the gun.

Ring, when released, tore through the timber with a string of agonized yelps echoing behind him. Buster and Granny left the bear fight and took out after Ring.

"Your dogs are brave, Doc," Bill shouted. "Two of 'em chasing my poor wounded dog."

Doc turned on him. "Shut up, sir."

"Your own mouth looks better closed. If you weren't so old I'd shut it for you."

"Old?" Doc screamed. "Old? Try it. Strike me. Strike me, I say!" His face was so white it looked yellow.

Everybody dropped the bear rope to face the angry pair.

"My mother taught me never to strike a fool."

The bear entirely forgotten, the men made a ring around Bill and Doc. Through the ring rode Mrs. Gillyard and her pretty daughter, Juanita. "Surely you gentlemen wouldn't settle a matter like this before ladies," she said quietly.

"Ring needs attention," Juanita said, looking straight at Bill.

Bill's hands fell to his sides. "We'll drop it," he said. Then, looking at Doc, "Just for the ladies' sake." He walked away, whistling to Ring. Sid shot the bear and the men fell to skinning it. Doc, determined to show off in some way, made the fancy cuts with his bowie knife. Looking up he said to Sid who was watching the operation, "If that fool had said one more word I'd have thrown him to the bear."

Sid didn't smile. Doc never said anything for the purpose of being funny.

A few days later Bill dropped in at the ranger station. "If Doc had said one more word I'd have thrown him to that bear," he said.

This time Sid smiled. "He said the same thing about you. You know, Bill, you'd make a good sheriff, but you'll have to be elected first."

Bill rubbed his head ruefully. "Any advice?"

"You'll be a smart man if you outwit Doctor Ulrich."

"In other words you think my future success will come through me and not through a mistake of my opponent."

Sid folded his long, pliant hands and said with a twinkle, "Trust your friends, treat your enemies square. Don't suspicion them, and at least figure they are as smart as you are."

Bill slapped his knee. "I'll take that lesson," he said.

Leaves were falling, the tops of the mountains were snow capped, lambs were being shipped and it was early October. The people of Clark County didn't pay much attention to any of the autumn phenomenon. One more month until election.

Now the Woods Love Stock Company picked Doctor Ulrich as the right man to administer the new government program for ridding the range of predatory animals, just as if they didn't know of the struggle between Doc and their foreman, Bill Schaufhausen. They equipped Doc with a fine camp wagon, a good supply of provisions, traps, coyote scent, veterinarian supplies and a stock of serum with which to inoculate trapped animals with deadly diseases to be carried to the rest of the pack. This outfit was to go into the heart of the sheep range, trap and snare coyotes, inoculate them, and nature would do the rest.

The government plan seemed simple and well worth the money involved in carrying it out. The sheep men thought a good half of their loss was due to the coyote. Doc seemed the right man in the right place, though the whole thing seemed to move intolerably slow to the hot-blooded southerner. His report to the Government never failed to rank first in the bulletin.

Doc determined to get along well with the sheep men and cowboys for political as well as personal reasons. He was a good cook and his camp was hospitably open to everybody. Sid rod five miles out of his way to visit Doc's camp, and he wasn't the only one. Doc could spin tales as well as he could deep-fry mutton chops and the men would sit for hours around his campfire listening to him. Part of the entertainment was always showing off Buster and Granny, and Doc slipped in a word here and there about how well the dogs would serve Clark County after the election.

About October the fifth Doc made a real catch, a family of six half-grown coyotes. What better time than this to make a good impression, he thought. He lost no time in sending the word about the coyotes to Spencer, together with an invitation for the company officials to come out to lunch. The invitation was accepted. Bill, forgetting his hard feelings, rode out with Fred Woody, Kim Kennedy, Walt Gentry, Bill Gentry and McDowell, all foremen for the company. There were other cattle men invited too, and they came singly and in groups. Wherever there was an opportunity to talk with that many grazers at once, Sid felt it his duty to be.

Doc's face was smiling when he greeted the crowd. Five pie faces smiled from the cupboard shelf at the back of his chuck wagon. To go along with the pies there was a big pot of beans and an enormous mutton roast. Doc left the wagon to shake every hand. "Come along, come along," he cried jovially. "Come see my pets."

He turned to slide a big pan of sourdough biscuits into the oven and put on an immense coffee pot. "Buster and Granny did it," he went on, all the time continuing his preparations for the dinner. "They tracked these fellows to their lair then waited for me to dig them out. I wanted you to see them and watch me inoculate them so you'd know exactly what sort of work we're doing."

Still talking he picked up a cup of kerosene, evidently taking it for water, and poured it into the beans. He poured two more cupfuls of water into the pot, added a quarter of a pound of butter and clapped on the lid. "Well, I'm happy you're all here but this is too big a crowd for the wagon. What say we make it a picnic?"

The guests helped to spread a tarp on the grass and when the beautiful biscuits came out of the oven, dinner was on. Every new tin plate was filled to the rim. Bill was the first to taste the beans. He took a big mouthful, shuddered and spat them out on the grass behind him.

Doc was on his feet in a minute. "_____ you, sir. You can't insult me that way." He waved his bowie knife. "East those beans you _____ turkey buzzard or I'll kill you, sir."

Every man, eyes on the knife, started to eat. Bill set the pace but they all dug in. Both Bill's face as he swallowed down the beans and Doc's as he held his bowie knife in readiness, were white and set. When Bill reached the bottom of the plate he passed it back for more. "Some more of your fine beans, Doctor."

Doc turned to the pot, put down his knife and picked up the ladle. He refilled the plate and turned to look down Bill's gun barrel. "Will that knife cut bread?" Bill asked. "If it will I'd like to borrow it."

Doc handed the knife, handle first, to Bill. With the knife out of the doctor's hands the crowd began to laugh. They rolled with laughter. After a time Doc was induced to taste the beans. He spat them out on the grass. "Here boys, let's try to take the taste out of our mouths," and he produced a bottle of whiskey.

A large part of the crowd accepted the proffered bottle. Later, without a look at the captured coyotes, the crowd rode back to Spencer.

The next month was election and doc was elected. Maybe it was because the crowd hadn't approved of Bill's jokes. Maybe they'd liked Doc's cooking. Or maybe the registered voters of Clark County were Democrats.

CHAPTER X

In Kilgore Sid was really happy. He had not only a free run of the beautiful primitive country, the companionship of likable men and boys, a position of responsibility and authority, but his family was with him. He tried to be blind to the look of unhappiness that Martha couldn't keep from her face, and to plan, instead, for a day when he could give her some of the things she had been forced to leave behind in the Teton's.

In September Hadley and Blanche started to school in Kilgore and they were as if they had never been transplanted. The school was a one-room log house, but Margaret Rasmussen was a good, thorough and kind teacher. There were friends nearby for the children, too. A large family by the name of Jensen went to the Kilgore school and Sid, coming in from work, found Edith and Ivy Jensen in his home so often that he soon felt as they were almost kin folks.

In 1910 Martha's father died in Payson and Sid agreed with Martha that she should go to the funeral. Taking the baby, Martha, she went by train to Payson. Her mind was free. Sid loved the children and would take care of them. Besides, Hadley and Blanche were responsible young ones and could be counted on to take care of their little brother, Sidney.

What Martha didn't know, and what would have disturbed her immensely had she known, was that soon after she left, Sid was called out to fight a forest fire. The children discovered boards which had been nailed bout a foot apart on the roof of the barn. These made easy stepping places and the three, even little Sidney, sat up on the ridgepole of the barn much of the time, trying with Papa's binoculars to find Papa fighting fire somewhere in the distance.

Although much of Father Huber's life had been spent with ill health, Martha could not feel as she took the long train trip south, that her father was really gone. In Payson everything seemed the same - the Co-op, the home where she had spent her childhood and girlhood, the members of her family and her friends, who had aged but no changed, and her mother. Now with a shock she realized that Father was no there. His kind way of saying, "We want Marcie to have everything she needs."

Lying in her own bed with her fourth child beside her, Martha thought of the joy and responsibility or rearing a family. She thought of her father and mother, of herself and her husband, of their own children grown to adulthood and beginning their own families to take their place in the endless eternal chain. For the first time she thought seriously of the earlier links of the chain - of forefathers who died without knowledge of the gospel and were waiting to be linked to the chain for time everlasting.

It would be wonderful to live in Salt Lake City where one could go to the temple often with her heart turned toward her fathers. But Sid had found in Kilgore the life he loved.

After the funeral Martha went back to Salt Lake and carrying her baby in her arms, purchased in two days, five hundred and twenty dollars worth of general merchandise from the Z.C.M.I. She had one hundred and fifty dollars cash which she had borrowed from a friend, Sam Stoddard. The rest of the stock was purchased on credit and Martha was sure it wouldn't take long to pay that bill. There was no store in Kilgore. Martha was planning to start one and she was a natural business woman.

The trip back on the train was the most pleasant trip she had taken since Sid's decision to move to the Teton's. Now she had something definite to do. She would be getting ahead through her own efforts and that was something she was used to and enjoyed. Her head was full of plans to talk over with Sid. But when she arrived in Spencer, the nearest railroad station, she had to ride to Kilgore with the mail man. Sid was away fighting fires and it was eleven days before he had a chance to return home.

In one of the three rooms of their little dirt-roofed log house, Martha started her store. Life was something like the old days at Payson, something like those days, but different. In Payson there had been a thriving town' the population of Kilgore was about fifty people. Even so Martha enjoyed visiting with the people who came to her store. She enjoyed planning for and buying stock. She enjoyed making enough money to practically

keep the family so that Sid's salary could go into savings. Martha was one who liked to "get ahead." Besides, Hadley was big enough to help in the store and there were never so many customers that running the business was such a heavy job that she didn't have plenty of time for her family.

In 1911 Sid built a new combination home and ranger station, and he built a nice little store for Martha.

Often Martha dreamed the dream she had first had in Payson the night before her father's funeral. Some day the family would move back to Salt Lake City. Oh, there were plenty of reasons that anyone would understand - better schools for the children, high schools when their grade school work was completed, more advantages in a larger, better organized church group. But greater than any of these, was Martha's desire to be near a temple. And Martha, with her store, with her constant work, with her everyday economies, was paving the way for the fulfillment of that dream.

Sid loved the open range. His dreams weren't of crowded city streets and of confining occupations. He took up a homestead of two hundred and sixty acres of land. There wasn't much chance of profitable farming because the altitude was so high and the growing season so short, but land was land. The best investment in the world.

So, each dreaming a separate dream, they lived side by side, watching their family grow, and working, each in his own way, for the family welfare.

Late in 1911 Sid and three neighbors made an unusual agreement. Each of the four was expecting a child within the next few months and there was no one in Kilgore competent to take care of the four women. The men agreed to get together and bring in a doctor. Finally they found a Dr. DeHart who agreed to come. He brought his family with him and the four anxious men provided a cabin for him. It was sort of a lark for the city-bred doctor; it was a source of security for the four women who were waiting. Mrs. Jensen was the first patient and all went well with her.

The night that Martha gave birth to her fifth child, the doctor and some friends were playing cards in the Ranger Station in order to be near at hand. Martha could hear their voices, their laughter, now and then the scrape of a chair. It was a comfort to have the doctor close, but their concern with the card game instead of her condition was annoying.

Then suddenly the game was over and a nonchalant card player became a very intense doctor. Folks said afterwards that they'd never seen anybody work so hard as that doctor did in saving Martha's life and bringing the new baby through. Close after the birth came a heavy hemorrhage. The doctor called Mrs. Mortenson, the practical nurse, to help him with Martha. Mrs. Mortenson laid the baby down and worked shoulder to shoulder with the doctor, the baby forgotten. When Martha was out of danger the baby couldn't be found. Sister Mortenson couldn't remember where she had put it. Everyone looked and finally the baby was found in bureau drawer! The drawer had been open and it afforded a safe place for the baby. In the excitement over Martha the drawer had been pushed closed and the baby effectively put away.

The child was all right, though, and for four days Sid breathed easy. Then suddenly Martha took an unexpected turn for the worse. Her temperature began to rise and she was terribly sick. At the time of the birth she had evidently been infected with the dreaded "childbed" fever. Now Martha felt that she was swirling, swirling. It seemed to her that a great cone of light and darkness revolved about her and against her will she would be drawn into the cone and whirled down, down toward the center of the vortex. For a time she would be unconscious, and then regaining consciousness, the very memory of the spells of unconsciousness would frighten her and plunge her into another whirling, swirling, diving motion into darkness. Finally, in a short period of real consciousness, she called upon God. It wasn't prayer in the usual sense. It was much more desperate than prayer.

"Father," she begged, "if you'll bring me out of this, if you'll save my life so that I can take care of my five little ones and my husband, "I'll ---I'll ---." She searched for a suitable promise. "---I'll give up tea."

She had fallen into the tea drinking habit back in the Payson Co-op days. "Don't leave me any supper," she'd tell her mother. "Just a cup of tea and some crackers will be all I want." Since that time she had turned to tea when she was lonely, when she didn't feel

well, in short, she'd turned to tea. Now the habit had become so strong with her that she loved to take the tea leaves and chew them for their wry bitterness. Martha knew that too many people the promise she had made the Lord would seem silly; but she was sure that He understood that the sacrifice of her one weak habit meant a promise to walk always in His way.

And God saved her. The infection subsided, the fever left her, and she slowly recovered. Sister Mortenson had great praise for the alternate hot and cold packs that had been used under the direction of Dr. DeHart. Martha had praise for her Father in Heaven who still had work for a willing daughter. It was not too long before Martha was back in the store, visiting with the neighbors and waiting on the Indians who were among her best customers.

She placed the orders for the store by mail, and the goods coming out of Z.C.M.I. at Salt Lake were delivered by rail to Spencer, twenty miles from Kilgore. Martha wasn't well enough to make the trip and though it should have been an easy thing for Sid to work it in between his ranger duties, he couldn't do it. There were those in the district who would have been glad to find proof that he was spending government time doing private work. This, of course, would be cause for job dismissal and there is always some envious person ready to step into a good job.

That's how it happened that Hadley and Blanche went in the wagon to pick up the orders, taking two days for the round trip and staying overnight, like grown ups, in Spencer. The only scary part of the trip was the way the horses danced with fright when the train roared to a stop at the station platform.

In 1912 Mother Huber and Martha's brother, Emil, came up for the Fourth of July celebration. It was a wonderful "old west" affair and the children thrilled with pride as Papa rode the broncos with the best of them. Martha didn't join in their cheers. It seemed to her that Sid was absolutely crazy to risk his life for no-good reason at all.

Sid lived each day as if he intended to spend his entire life in Kilgore. The way he built the ranger station and the store showed he was not building for just overnight. The way he did his daily job showed that he was building a life work. Besides his ranger insignia, he wore have warden badges for three states, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. In all the time that he was a warden he never arrested a man for poaching, but one day he did some mighty hard riding to keep a hunter from shooting a cow moose who had a calf hidden. Sid figured she was entitled to protection until the little one was raised.

The way he entered into the activities of the tiny settlement showed that he loved the place and its people. Kilgore was a branch of the Yellowstone Stake. Sid was chosen counselor to Branch President Smith and gave to the Church all the time that his job and his family didn't require. He helped to build the Kilgore school, donating both time and money. He and Martha contributed freely toward building the St. Anthony Stake House.

Still when Martha, taking the little girls with her and leaving the boys in Sid's care, went to April Conference in 1914. She had a special plan churning in her mind. During the winter she had shipped eleven carloads of hay to Salt Lake City to the Hancock brothers. She would do some business with them and the payment for the hay would mean an increase in capital. She'd also do some, what she called, looking around.

Taking the girls with her she attended conference, then she went to see the Hancock boys. For many years they had peddled goods from Payson to Eureka and Martha had grown well acquainted with them when she was at the Co-op. Now she mentioned casually to them that she might like to settle in Salt Lake. They were immediately helpful.

"Why Martha," one of the boys said, "I know just the place, just the place." She went with him to the corner of Thirteenth East and Ninth South. "This is the building lot," he said, waving his arm at nothing.

Martha looked about her. On one corner there was a tremendous building in the course of construction. "A new high school to accommodate the East Side," he told her.

"I'd thought some of being in town," she said doubtfully.

"Now why do you suppose they're building a high school here? This is the way the town's growing. You buy this piece of property and it won't be any time before it'll double in value if you don't put a stick or a brick on it."

Martha was still doubtful. "But a store here?"

"Listen. I know what you did at the Co-op. And if you can make money running a store at Kilgore you can make a fortune right here on this corner."

Then Martha talked about price and went down to Payson to think it over.

The first Sunday that she was in Payson little Martha broke out with measles right in Sunday School. That meant that the four of them were quarantined in Payson for six weeks. She wrote to Sid about the misfortune and he advised her to have a good time! Have a good time with the children desperately sick with the old-fashioned measles and her with her head swimming with plans she needed to talk over with him before this choice lot that would make their fortune should go to somebody else!

At last the six weeks were over and Martha and the babies went home. They were met at Spencer not by Papa as they expected, but by the mailman, Mr. Harmon. He began to talk at once about how Sid should either go to Idaho Falls to the hospital or a doctor and nurse should be brought in. It was some time before Martha got the details which Mr. Harmon had assumed she had received by mail. Sid had been thrown from a bronco – I always knew it would come to this, Martha thought – and was dangerously near death. He was coughing blood and his fever was running between a hundred and four and a hundred and five.

The twenty miles between Spencer and Kilgore seemed to stretch into a hundred. Yet Martha was not really worried. She was concerned, but somehow she knew that Sid's illness wouldn't be fatal.

When she arrived at the ranger station, Sid didn't recognize her. Mrs. Zink, a neighbor, was putting cold packs on his head. Martha turned from the bedroom and went in and stood by the kitchen sink, trying to let the familiar things in her own kitchen bring peace and comfort to her. Mr. Zink, coming up behind her said, "Good thing if you had that thousand dollars insurance right now."

Some time before, the men in Kilgore had wanted to organize a lodge. There hadn't been enough men to get a charter without Sid so he joined to help the others out. Later when his membership was no longer needed, he withdrew. It was the thousand dollars insurance that had gone with the lodge membership that Mr. Zink was talking about.

The assurance of having obeyed the counsel of the church by withdrawing from the secret order was more important to Martha than insurance money. She knew that Sid would get better, and he did.

In two weeks he was on his way to Salt Lake City to look at the valuable corner lot that Martha had saved and what they could borrow they purchased the Salt Lake property. Sid resigned his position with the forest service and took over the supervision of putting up the new building. It was to have four apartments, a store on the ground floor, and it was to be built of long-lasting cement block.

In November again Martha was left alone with the family while Sid went on ahead. She supervised the shipping of a carload of lumber from Kilgore. The lumber would go into the new building. She took full responsibility for the family. She ran the store with Hadley's help. She wound up all their affairs in Kilgore. And she had the worst attack of lumbago she had ever had in her life.

It might have been queer to appeal to an animal doctor but Martha turned to Dr. Ulrich for advice. He suggested Denver Mud and Martha tried it. Folks might have laughed seeing Martha treating herself with the nasty stuff, helped only by her little children; but to Martha it was no laughing matter to be alone with no one to look after her. Still she didn't feel bitter as she had when she had been left at Hayden while Sid moved on to Kilgore. This time her dream was coming true and each report of progress on the building brought a strengthening of her desire to hold up her very heavy end of the bargain.

At first Sid had thought he would be ready for his family to come to Salt Lake City at Christmas time, but the new building was far from completed. Martha and the children ate Christmas dinner with the Sid Albino family. It was no until February that the move was made.

The original move from Salt Lake City to the rented house in the Teton County had been a heavy one. Martha had taken along all her household goods. The move from Hayden

to Kilgore had been accomplished in two wagons and only the actual necessities and the beautiful mirror had gone along. Sid had never gone back after the rest of the furniture, but Martha had known from the first that though his intentions were good, she would never see her things again. Now the move from Kilgore to Salt Lake City must be even lighter. Even the mirror must be left behind.

There was nobody in Kilgore who could afford to buy the mirror for what it was really worth, so Martha sold chances on it at fifty cents a chance. She was glad when Effie Harmon got the lucky ticket. Effie would take good care of this one remaining tie to the home-plans of Martha's girlhood.

Papa had written that the building wasn't done but "livable." Martha wondered what he meant by "livable" when she saw the gaunt, partly finished building surrounded by a sea of mud. Sid carried each of the family through the mud and into the house. Proudly he showed them the fourteen rooms, the new store. Martha had never felt so let down in all her life – no, not even when she had ridden through the freezing cold with baby Hadley standing in a nail keg!

Next day the new life really began. The children were wild as coyotes. In Kilgore they had the run of the country; now they didn't know how to conduct themselves in a town. They played house with the bricks that were piled about; they played in the gravel and sand. Sidney built a dugout with a tin and board top where the tribe of them huddled and told stories while dirt from the caving walls ran down their backs. They pursued each other, shouting, from room to room of the great empty building.

When Martha, in desperation, drove them out of the house, they raced over to the East High School building and played hide and seek around the cement portals and slid down the huge stair casings. When she grew embarrassed about their antics and called them in they took up their roughhousing where they had left it off. One day Sidney, acrobating on the rafters, using a chair to get up and down, tipped over the chair and broke off a front tooth.

And all the time this was going on, Martha was trying to get the store open for business. Business! In Kilgore one purchaser often spent ten or twenty dollars laying in a supply of goods. Now the bell tinkled in the store, Martha hurried in and some child wanted five cents worth of candy, a spool of thread, a sock of salt. It was run, run all day, and some days the total receipts were less than a dollar.

It was a comfort that the older children could be in school at least part of the time. The children attended the Douglas School, which that first winter was meeting in the basement of the high school, so it was to school at the L.D.S. Academy, going the three miles on roller skates. Passing ice wagons offered freewheeling unless the drivers were watchful. With Blanche away, the children were left to their own devices more completely than ever. Martha was expecting another baby and it seemed the constant noise and confusion would drive her wild.

There were, however, bright spots in the life in Salt Lake. The whole family enjoyed the Emigration Ward. It was the first large, fully-organized ward that they had ever attended. Blanche's Sunday School teacher was Alvin Keddington, and Martha, listening to the reports of the class and the instruction, felt that Blanche's experience alone had made the move "into civilization" worthwhile.

Then, too, Martha was near the temple. Whenever she could have the children cared for, she went into the temple and let its peace and spirituality bathe and bless her. Never would Martha lose her desire to work in the temple, and that work would someday, when the children had their own homes and Sid had made the great move to prepare a mansion for his family, fill her life with joy and solace.

Martha got into the habit of counting her blessings when she felt the impulse to shoo her wild children out on the Kilgore range and get rested just once.

Sid wasn't entirely happy in Salt Lake though he tried hard to be. He just didn't feel really at home. Once he was called on to tell a story in Sunday School. He told it in his own inimitable manner while everybody was transported by the tale to his world. But when he finished and mopped his brown with a red bandana, a laugh swept the crown. His older children were embarrassed, but Sid laughed with the audience. The city, with the regularity

and complexity of its life, was not for him. If this was the life Martha wanted and that would be best for the children, he would try his best to fit into it.

But he was range hungry, forest hungry!

CHAPTER XI

"We've simply overbuilt ourselves, Mama," Sid said one night as they walked south on Thirteenth East toward their apartment house and store.

"We ought to hang on," Martha said.

It wasn't the first time that the subject had come up between them. Sid had known the pinch of poverty. If he let himself do it, he could smell again the stench of thawing dead animals – animals that had died of cold and starvation when he was only six years old. He could remember all the lean years. Seemed like there were those years in the forest service when they had his salary clear to count on and Martha was making a living besides.

The forest service. That was the answer. So had applied again for an appointment in the service. A record like his meant a certain appointment and it was only short time until he was placed in the Ashley National Forest, not too far from Salt Lake City. This time he didn't plan to take Martha and the children with him. Only eleven-year-old Sidney went with him in the white tip buggy pulled by two buckskin horses that would serve as saddle horses after they arrived. Before he left, he leased the store for five years to relieve Martha of part of her responsibilities. It would be a matter of only a few months, a year at most, until the mortgage could be whittled down to sizable proportions.

His district was the Greendale district of the Ashley National Forest. The district lay forty miles north of Vernal, Utah. Green River formed the north boundary and the mountain divide the south. This was a different set up from the Kilgore area. There were only four or five lonely cattle ranches in the whole district. Sid's station was twenty-five miles from the nearest store. The trail was a broken one that could be traveled only with a sure-footed horse carrying a small pack.

One day he was in the tiny town of Manilla getting his mail and supplies when he received a letter from his supervisor giving him orders to go down to Hideout, deep in Green River Canyon, and either kick the rancher there and his three hundred cattle off the forest range or get the grazing fee.

The supervisor's letter said nothing of the correspondence with the cattle man that had preceded this ultimatum, and Sid knew enough to get the lay of the land before he rushed in. Casually he asked, "What's Jim Allen like?"

The storekeeper whistled. "Don't have no dealings with them."

"Orders from headquarters," Sid said, showing the letter.

The storekeeper shook his head and clicked his tongue against his teeth. "If you're going down into that lonely place don't go without the sheriff and a posse. Him is a man you can't step on, and his black-eyed wife is just as good a shot."

Sid said nothing, just thoughtfully turned the letter over and over in his hands.

The storekeeper continued, "Besides, they'll figure they've got the right on their side. They've spent months in drilling out rock and blasting tail into that forsaken bend of the river. Better leave 'em alone."

Sid could see the Allen's side of the argument. But orders were given to be obeyed. A twenty-mile trip through the forest that afternoon landed him back on the rim of rocks overlooking Hideout. It was deep dusk in the valley below and the cattle grazing there appeared the size of mice. After some searching he found the trail that led his horse down toward the river. He watered the animal, then hobbled it without a bell and ate a cold lunch so as not to make a fire.

At daylight he was moving again, looking for the Hideout camp. The cattle he passed were a little wild but fat and sleek. When he had traveled about an hour over this beautiful range he came to a small stream coming in from one side. Finding a slight trail, he followed up the canyon side. Suddenly he came upon a garden, neatly fenced and perfectly cultivated. With a pounding heart and alert eyes he continued on, when all at once there came rushing out from a thick bunch of aspen, three big vicious dogs. By their savage barking Sid knew they were inviting him off his horse so they could tell him with their teeth how much their master liked strangers.

The flap of a partly visible tent went back and a black-eyed woman looked out, then drew her head back into the tent. Sid tried to steady his nervous horse and, with an effort,

kept his had from reaching under his saddle bag for his gun. In a moment a little figure, dressed entirely in men's garb, came out of the tent. Her hand was suspiciously close to the handle of her forty-five automatic, but she whistled to the dogs and watched him without greeting.

Sid smiled. From somewhere came the words of blessing that had been given him so many years before. His nervousness left him and he smiled, "Good morning, Mrs. Allen. I was just admiring your beautiful camp ground."

She did not return the smile. "You're one of those damned forest rangers come to kick us off."

"Yes, I'm a ranger." He paused a minute then said, "But I hope to do you good rather than harm."

He got off his horse and walked away from it a few paces so that she could see that he didn't intend to reach for his gun. She seemed more at ease. "We've invested our money for powder to make it possible to get our cattle into this valley, she said. "And if it's necessary we'll use more money to keep them here."

Sid smiled again, ignoring the threat in her last words. "Yes, you have spent money. And you've spent a lot of backbreaking work, too, I can see that. Since you have done so much to open up this new range I think you deserve the government's protection from other sheep and cattle men who might want to make use of what you've worked so hard to get."

"Now you're talking like a white man."

"May I see Mr. Allen?"

Hesitatingly she said, "He is after horses and may be back soon."

Sid made conversation in his genial way. "Good-looking white face cattle you've hot."

"The garden's my special pride," she said. She pulled a fresh carrot for Sid and one for herself and they stood munching like old friends.

Sid missed the sign she passed to her husband, but she must have given one because in a moment he appeared from a nearby thicket. The man whistled as he climbed through the fence and came toward them. His gun was dangling from his hip. "What do you want? Spit it out," he said, but his voice wasn't as gruff as his words.

Sid smiled again. "I've got nothing on my mind that'll hurt you in any way. You can count on that," he said. "I've made this two-day trip to see that you get your rights. I want to fix it so that this beautiful piece of range will be held for your stock."

"Now you're talking," he said. "How much?"

"Twenty-five cents a head, and under the circumstances we can promise to exclude all other grazing."

"On the spot," he said, and he offered Sid the money.

"Can't take it," Sid shook his head. "It's got to go from Manilla by money order so that I can make this permit from date."

Mrs. Allen insisted on preparing a fine dinner. After they had eaten, Sid and Mr. Allen climbed the steep trail and by evening they were in Manilla doing business with the post office. The store keeper's mouth hung open so he was like to step on his chin, but he didn't say anything. Sid would give credit where credit was due when he said his prayers.

Sid hadn't taken eleven-year-old Sidney with him on this dangerous mission, but usually the boy was at his side. From ranger station to saw mill, from saw mill to shearing pens, wherever he had work Sidney followed along, improving his riding skill, learning to hunt, learning to love, as Sid did, the outdoors.

It was on a trip between ranger stations that Sid left the overnight camp to bring in the horses that had been hobbled for the night. After he had been gone some time, a herd of cattle grazed down the meadow toward the temporary camp that had been thrown up beside a stream. Sidney didn't feel exactly safe in their company, and when two big white-faced bulls got into a fight he climbed a large aspen tree and tried to act casual.

When Sid returned he called, "How come, Son?"

The words chased each other in explanation. "There were two big bulls right under this tree and they were just ready to take after me so I had to climb!"

"I see," Sid agreed. Then he hunted for bull tracks. When he found that the nearest ones were some distance away he just smiled and let Sidney go on thinking he had been quite a hero.

When it was time for school to start, Martha came up for a visit. She laughed when she found some saucepans, burned as black as sin, in which Sid had cooked lumpy dick. When she went back to Salt Lake she took young Sidney with her. Already he preferred his father's life to school, but he was a fine student and he wouldn't be allowed to miss his education if his parents could help it.

In October Sid went back to Salt Lake for a brief visit. His fourth daughter, Elda, was born in the L.D.S. Hospital. Six children and this was the first one to be born under "civilized" conditions. Sid didn't like it too well. He would have preferred to have Martha right at home and the tiny new daughter where he could have feasted his eyes on her.

Before the winter closed in he was back at the station. The ranger station was located at Greendale, in the forest. Linwood, the little town where he transacted most of his business, was on the Green River. Between the two places, the river ran in a great horseshoe bend. To go around the road was a distance of about forty miles. But there was a trail that crossed the river, ran for seven miles, then crossed the river again after it had completed the loop.

This short cut was almost irresistible to Sid. The saving of time, he told himself, was the big point. But all the time the dangers in it were appealing, too. In summer he might ford the river on his horse, or even swim it. In winter he crossed on the ice.

One February morning he was traveling to Linwood. When he got to the crossroads he hesitated, but only for a second. He turned his horse down the trail to the short cut. Others had crossed and recrossed the river in the past few days with horses and pack animals. Why couldn't he? Of course the last few days had shown signs of spring, but, four feet of ice will stand several days of warm weather, he argued as he rode down the trail.

As he had hoped, the river ice was hard and safe. It had been protected by the canyon wall that rose steeply, almost a half mile in height. It was not over three hundred feet wide at this particular point and it was only a few minutes until Sid and his horses were climbing the opposite slope. As he began the seven-mile trip across the width of the loop, he began to think about the ice on the other side. There weren't any high protecting walls where the river doubled back. What about the ice there? There was still time to go back. A half mile from the river and he could see that the ice was beginning to break up. He could see great chunks of it elbowing each other on their way to the gorge. Maybe he should go back.

Seeing a herder he inquired, "Is there still a bridge of ice across the river?"

"There's a narrow piece still hanging at the bend. My camp jack was crazy enough to cross it this morning just before sunrise. But I warn you, Mr. Ranger, don't attempt to cross it. I've been watching every minute to see it go out. I doubt if it would hold up a sheep now. To make it more risky, the water has fallen about two feet since Bill crossed this morning."

Sid could see that the sinking of the water would leave the ice bridge totally suspended between the two banks. Still he hesitated.

"Cross if you've got to, but I wouldn't give a nickel for you nor your horses' lives if that ice breaks. Remember that span of rotten ice is two hundred yards wide and the river under it is twenty feet deep."

Sid glanced back over the trail. How he wished he had taken the longer road. He could still go back. Yet, he argued, only cowards turn back. Something inside him said, "Only fools go on." But he didn't listen to the voice. Sid Hanks, the ranger, would try anything once. He observed the frail bridge for a moment and watched the water sweep under it carrying great cakes of ice that fairly groaned as they ground their way under the ice strip.

The herder sneered as he took a piece of driftwood and walked out a little way and tapped the ice. It sounded to Sid as though it didn't care what fool tried to walk on it. He went back and tied his thirty-foot lariat onto his bridle reins and led his saddle horse onto the ice. He kept as far from the horse as possible. About four minutes of suspense and they were across. He untied his lariat from the reins of the saddle horse and went back after the

pack animal. The herder watched. "Better take off that pack," he suggested, but for some reason Sid didn't take the suggestion. "Well, if you find a cold grave you'll be plenty warm when I meet you in hell," the herder said.

Sid lost no time but lead his pack horse quietly onward. The horse had reached the center and Sid had begun to breathe more easily, when his breath left him and his heart stood still. That immense span of ice bent like a steel beam sagging down into the water. He dropped the rope and rushed across the fast sinking ice bridge. The horse tried to catch up with him and the closer the two were together the greater the danger. The two made a wild scramble for the shore. They had scarcely reached safe footing when the water and ice flow came rushing over the top of the span.

Sid mounted his horse and rode away. A fool, that's what he was. Taking his life in his hands to save himself a few miles, while back in Salt Lake City Martha was watching over the family and counting on him to do his part, not to kill himself in some kid adventure.

It was a great occasion at Burn Fork, that bleak November day in 1915. One of the biggest cattle men in the valley had died and was to be buried from the little log school house. When Sid and two other cattle men drove up to the school, there was scarcely room at the paling fence to tie their horses. "We're late," Sid said, drawing his big watch from his pocket. "Five minutes." An overflow crowd was standing near the door, in the sleet that had begun to fall, as the three drove up. Sid bared his head as came close to the door. His height was a convenience to him, as by craning his neck he could look over the heads of the crowd and report what was going on to the others outside.

The sheriff was conducting the meeting and when he saw Sid he said, "The minister we hired to run this funeral hasn't hot here. Weather, I guess. Will Ranger Hanks please come forward?"

Sid pushed his way through the crowd to the little four by eight platform on which there were four chairs. Two of the chairs supported the casket; the sheriff stood behind the third, using its back as a pulpit; Sid sat on the fourth, brushing the velvet of the casket with his knee as he took his place.

The sheriff read the will, then said, "Burnt Fork's lost its oldest settler, one of the best cowmen that ever threw a rope. If all the men on this green globe treated their fellow men as square and fair and honest, we couldn't ask for a better heaven than this old earth we're on." Then he turned to Sid. "You folks know Ranger Hanks. His father carried the United States mail during the early fifties from Salt Lake to Independence, Missouri on hose back. His mother dragged a hand cart plumb across the plains. Ranger Hanks was raised on a ranch like ours here in this valley. He's swung a rope, busted broncos, rode in roundups since he was a kid. He's our kind. The best ranger that ever wore the United States badge."

Sid stepped forward almost diffidently. The introduction had caught him off guard. What did you say at a funeral, anyway? There was a glass lid on the coffin and he looked down upon the white face of his former friend. Ash white, it was. A verse that he hadn't thought of for a long time came to him almost as if it had been spoken to his inner consciousness.

"When the long, long day is over
And the boss gives me my pay,
I hope it won't be hell fire
As some of the parsons say;
All I ask is quiet,
Quiet to rest and forget.
Look at my face, toil furrowed
Look at my callused hands.
Master, I've done Thy bidding
Wrought in Thy many lands."

Robert W. Service said those words and he could have been writing about Jack as well as anybody. Jack came here about forty years ago, driving a few poor cows. The valleys and hills were waving with natural grass but there were no corrals, no houses,

no-good women, no children. The early life of the cattle pioneer must have been lonely indeed. Let me quote another line from Service.

> "Living in camps with men folks,
> A loveless and lonely life.
> Oh, how I'd have cherished children
> Or the fond caress of a wife."

There was plenty of room on the range, yet the early cowboys had to defend their rights with their lives. There was the angry Indian, but worse than that, there were renegade white men stealing beef for eastern markets. There were wolves and bear and mountain lion. The horse, the gun, the saddle and the rope of the cowboy are his best treasures.

"These early pioneers were men to be trusted. One cowman drove all the cattle that were to be sold to a faraway eastern market, and what he got back he used to pay those who had stayed home to guard the range, every cent that was due them. Jack was the kind of man. His word was his bond."

"You folks know your Bible. Some of you do, at least. Let's see what the Apostle John had to say. He had been banished to a very lonely island and he said: "I saw the dead both small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which was the book of life, and the dead were judged out of these books, every man according to his works.""

"Now, Jack isn't going to mind that. I can see his face right now and if he could speak he'd say, "Whoever wants to look at my life's book, look at it.""

"Let me tell you a story about my association with this man. It was springtime and he was driving some of his fine bred stock from the feed yard to the summer range. Some of them didn't want to go and acted about as ornery as cattle can – you know how ornery that can be. But Jack understood them. I will admit he called some of them a few names that you don't often see in print, but he didn't hurt one of them and he didn't leave one of them behind."

"You can't fool dogs or little children, that's what folks say. Look at his faithful ring-necked dog lying beneath his casket. Tonight when all of us have gone home that dog will stay near the mound that covers the casket and will pour out his soul to the stars."

"See that little girl and boy who are sitting up here with their folks. They're weeping. Really they ought to be happy because you just heard the sheriff say they were getting rich from what Jack left them – rich in fine stock, in grazing rights, in a good hay ranch. But they'd rather have their friend back."

"Let us hope that the old adage that love will never die is true and that this same love our friend showed for these little folks, and for us all, will live on until the dawning of the eternal day when God's sheep will all lie down in green pastures beside the still waters."

Sid stepped in front of his chair but the sheriff whispered, "Do we pray now?" So Sid prayed and the funeral was over. At the little unkempt cemetery he prayed again.

Folks said they were glad the minister didn't show. Some said, "We didn't know you were a parson, Ranger." But Sid was thinking of the days when he was a kid and went teaching down in Caineville. Of his mission days. Of the days in Hayden and Kilgore when he'd been working in the church and suddenly he was lonely for those days.

It wasn't that Sid was away from other Mormons. Linwood, Manilla, Lone Tree - these towns were all Mormon towns. But Sid's job kept him from really settling into any one of the congregations. Yet Sundays, whenever he could, he worshiped with one or the other of the groups, and even more frequently he enjoyed their weekday festivities.

Down along the border line between Utah and Wyoming there were some really tough customers who liked to consume bootleg whiskey, then come to one of the Mormon dances and dance with the pretty girls. These fellows had little respect for the law and order brought by the quiet Mormons. They didn't want to worship and didn't understand why anyone else wanted to. They didn't have any civic pride and could see no reason why the Mormons did. In fact it made them angry to see the Mormons working together to build

canals to better utilize the soil and water. It made them angry for the Mormons to share the range because they were lone wolves and they feared the organization of the Mormons.

But one thing that was appealing was the pretty Mormon girls and the dance halls from which came enticing music.

The Mormons welcomed the toughs providing they followed rules - quite impossible rules. A husky Mormon stood at the door and pointed to a sign which read: Guns and liquor not allowed in this hall. Some of the younger men tried entering sober, with a bottle cached outside to drink from between times, but that didn't work either.

On night four husky cowboys rode down from Lone Tree to Tarry Bench and when invited by the husky bishop, who was acting as floor manager, to leave their guns on their saddles, defied him. "Let's see you make us," they jeered.

That's where the trouble started. The bishop shot a right under the foremost boy's jaw. He staggered and fell back and crashed into a small banister. This went over like matchwood, loosening several short two-by-two's which the bishop quickly grabbed to use as weapons for the other Mormons who came hurrying out from the dance floor. The fracas didn't last long. The cowboys were disarmed and most of them got out of the hall under their own power. Their guns were returned to them empty and they were invited to come back and enjoy the dancing whenever they wanted to follow the rules.

Once Sid dropped into a dance at Manilla in time to see some interesting action. A young stranger entered the hall. He looked clean and pleasant and he wasn't drunk. The floor manager not only sold him a ticket but introduced him to a few dancers. Although he was short and inclined to be stocky he was a beautiful dancer and his manners showed that he had been around. Twice he danced with the same young girl, then he asked her for a third dance. She said, "I've enjoyed dancing with you. I like the way you dance. But around here we don't dance a third dance with a fellow unless we're going stead."

"Dance a third dance with me on that proposition?" he asked.

The girl shook her head. "Next time," she said.

He flushed. "You go to hell."

Her brother was standing near enough to hear the last remark. "Come out of the hall," he invited the stranger.

Sid and the rest of the men in the hall followed the two out and made a ring around them. They fought like tigers. When the stranger saw he was outmatched, he struck his opponent a terrific blow in the stomach. The Mormon boy turned away, vomiting, and several others were ready to rush in, but still pale green and deathly sick, he turned toward the stranger. "If you insist on fighting dog fashion I can do that, too. I'll meet you in Linwood at the store, tomorrow. Before I'm through with you, you'll be on your knees. Don't forget it."

The stranger said, "I've knocked out bigger men than you. Sure, I'll meet you. I'll fight you any time, any place. You boob!"

Color came back to the Mormon's face. "Five o'clock. The Linwood store."

The stranger left and the crowd went back to the dance as if nothing had happened, but the next day a crowd had gathered at Linwood long before the time for the fight.

When the two stripped down there was little difference in their weight, but nearly a foot in height so it was with the crowd "Shorty" and "Slim." Shorty tried several times to get under Slim's guard to make his favorite belly punch, but every time got a wallop on the nose. The crowd insisted on the frontier rule that there was to be no fighting on the ground. As long as a man could stand up and take it he was still in the game.

Shorty was so game some folks in the crowd couldn't help but admire him, so there were cheers for both Shorty and Slim. It was amazing how much punishment those boys could take. Several times they broke and stood for a few seconds with their guards up and panted like a pair of fighting cocks. Then at it again, neither of them willing to be first to squawk. Their faces were battered, their eyes almost swollen shut.

Suddenly Shorty rushed in, lifted Slim off his feet and carried him to the river bank. He gave a lurch as if to throw Slim in, but Slim held on and they went in together. Now Slim was on top with a grip on Shorty's collar. Slim righted himself and held Shorty under the water.

Now the sympathy of the crowd shifted. "Let him up," they shouted.

Slim pulled Shorty's head out of the water. Shorty coughed while Slim steadied him, the mush ice dividing to pass them. For a second the two boys' eyes met and Shorty said a few words that Slim was mightily glad to hear. They waded downstream to a place where the bank wasn't so steep and the crowd offered a hand up.

Shorty never appeared again at the Manilla dance hall.

Strangers often were astonished at the number of dancers that a tiny dance hall could accommodate. Sid wasn't. He had been dancing in ten-by-sixteen rooms all his life. Each ticket was numbered and the floor manager would call the dancers to the floor by number. It was easy to guess that some dancers would appear out of turn. Once a young man, who had been away from the range working in the mines for a couple of years, got back home just in time to go to a dance. He was feeling pretty important and pretty gay. He grabbed his old girl friend and went on the floor no matter what number was called. When the floor manager spoke to him he said, "Why don't you put me off if you think you're big enough?"

The floor manager turned to the other dancers. "This man must leave the floor before the dance can go on."

One of the fellows grabbed him low around the legs, another jerked him backwards and he was on his way out. They gave him a swing into the dust which eddied up. "Come back when you can act like a man not a bum," they told him.

He wasn't as stubborn as Shorty. He came back and apologized.

The socials Sid enjoyed most were the big outdoor affairs where he didn't get to thinking about Martha and feeling a little bad about stepping around while she was home working so hard for them both.

McKay's draw was a valley three miles wide and six to eight mile long. The grass was up to the sheep's eyes and the valley was fringed with shade trees and crisscrossed by fine springs of water. McKay's draw was Sid's idea of a sheepherder's heaven.

There were six herds grazing in the valley. All of the herders were young kids, mostly newlyweds. They had their wives with them for the summer just for the lark of it.

After the sheep had taken to the shade they were perfectly safe until about three. At three they'd want to move out again and graze until dusk. This left about six hours for the herders to be free of responsibility. During this time they'd saddle their horses, ride for an hour or two, and then eat all together at one camp or another.

The first day that Sid visited the draw the men and women all turned out in full regalia. For awhile they ran their horses, played a tug-of-war, fooled around, and then ate a wonderful dinner. "Come back next Tuesday," they invited Sid as he rode away.

He was back next Tuesday on his best saddle horse. That day they started to dance their horses. The horses were soon trained. They'd dance them to a white later, and then turn their faces to the center of the ring, and leaning on their saddle horns, they'd chat and tell stories.

From then on each Tuesday was dance day. The dances got more and more intricate. There was more and more pleasure in directing the horses through all sorts of dance figures. If the herd owners came around they joined in the fun. They approved of Sid's was of keeping peace on the range.

Over in Greendale there were no sheep allowed. This was strictly cattle country. When Sid told the cattle men of the Tuesday fun in McKay's draw the Greendale folks decided to show the ranger that cattle men could throw parties, too.

One of the old grandmas tipped Sid off that a surprise party was being planned for him, so he housecleaned his station and got it into fine shape. Two days later he saw a cavalcade coming across the half-mile meadow toward the station. Men, women, children. He was surprised to see that so many people could come out of the few houses and camps in the district. When they rode up they called out, "Surprise, surprise," and Sid, who had been watching their progress for some time, appeared with a book in his hand and made the most of the surprise.

They placed some wide boards on trestles left over from building the station and the women set the potluck meal. Veal, rows of pies, cake, canned fruit, vegetables, mashed

potatoes with brown gravy, cream biscuits, coffee with pure cream, fruit punch, ice cream, milk with extra cream stirred in for Sid and the children.

While the dinner settled, Sid told some stories, they all sang and visited. After awhile they put down three dirt-filled burlap sacks for bases and had a game of ball. Everybody over twelve played except one three-hundred pound lady. The little yarn ball didn't last long before it left a string flying behind it.

In the middle of the game a group from McKay's draw rode up. Sid asked them to give an exhibition dance. They insisted on Sid saddling his horse to call for them. After the dance was over there was plenty of applause, and the folks were invited to eat ice cream and cake.

Cattle folks had entertained sheep folks. And they were going to get together twice more that summer. Feelings had never been so peaceful on the range. Sid loved it. The range was his life. He loved the country, the people, the responsibility, the feel of a horse, the opportunity to show off his horsemanship to an appreciative audience.

On horseback Sid might have thought of the accident that happened when he was bronco busting in Kilgore and nearly died from his fall. If Martha had been with him she would have reminded him, but since she was in Salt Lake, he conveniently forgot it.

Instead, with a jumping creature between his knees he liked to think of the days when he was Alva and he and his brother, Ray, were the best Wild West performers - to hear them tell it - in Wayne County.

Down at Floral, as he remembered it, there had always been plenty of broncos, and if they weren't available, a few burs under the saddle of the riding pony, Old Jack, would make him as active as any outlaw.

It was always fun at the ranch to get a new would-be-cowboy up on Jack with those cockleburs under the saddle. With this encouragement he could buck worse than a Brahma bull. He could make more fun than a Ringling Brothers Circus with all its clowns. He had his tricks down pat, and he never had to look in the book to see what came next. He had a way of holding his breath and making his belly ridged so that you would think your saddle was very tight. Three wicked, high twisting jumps and everything was loose. At this point Jack would stop bucking, suddenly put his head down between his front legs, give his back a quick hump, and saddle and cowboy would smack the dust.

Alva and Ray, doubled up with laughing would say, "Jack didn't want to hurt such a pretty boy as you, so he just stopped bucking and let you fall off easy."

Sometimes the would-be-cowboys kept after it until they discovered that without the burs Jack was the most docile of animals. Sometimes they left the ranch lop-eared, convinced riding the range wasn't for them.

Long legs counted for something in bronco riding, Sid remembered. Alva and Ray, with their long, bony legs from which dangled number nine brogans, made use of every facility. In their early teens the boys had but one saddle between them and that saddle went on the wildest horse. That meant that Jack was usually ridden bareback. One day the boys, Alva on a fractious colt and Ray on Old Jack rode up to Bishop Wright's house for him to look over the colt. He took a long look at the colt, and then turned to Ray, bareback on Jack. Ray's feet were dangling nearly to the ground and Bishop Wright said, "Ray, you had better tighten up that belt of yours or you will split clear in two."

That joke went around the family and everybody got a good laugh. Everybody but Pa. He saw to it that Ray got a saddle.

The horse that was the real problem was a little outlaw mare who picked the wildest band on the Boulder range to run with. She raised three colts, each as speedy as their mother. They wintered on the Boulder and summered on the Tantalets.

One day after Sunday School Chris Jorgenson said to Alva, "Why don't we round up that roan mare and her colts today?"

Alva, whispering behind the songbook, said, "Pa doesn't allow us to handle broncs on Sunday."

"He'd be glad if you'd get that mare and you know it."

Alva allowed that Pa would be pleased, so after Sunday School they slipped away, Alva, Ray and Chris. The caught the four horses just right and headed them into a box canyon. Alva got his rope on a three-year-old stallion.

"Dare you to ride him," Chris said?

"Double dare," Ray added.

Alva felt something flicker in his stomach but he said, "Help me get my saddle on him, then."

First they tired the colt out with their three saddle ponies, and then they put Alva's saddle on to stay. Alva, with all the outward courage in the world, climbed on. The stallion set right in to rid himself of his rider. He made about a dozen high jumps, stuck his head in a bush and turned a somersault. Chris, being a good cowboy had his rope on the stallion before he hardly got to his feet. Alva went straight through the bush. His face looked like it had the map of Mexico scratched on it. And what about his Sunday pants? They were torn from stem to gudgeon and his vest had every fancy button gone. His coat had one sleeve ripped clear out. But he remounted the three-year-old and rode him to the ranch.

Pa, seeing them coming, raised a great shout of pride and joy before he remembered that it was Sunday. Then he sobered. Chris rode away before he heard the lecture on keeping the Sabbath Day holy.

If Martha were here now she would treat Sid to a lecture on riding broncs any day in the week. But Martha's worrying had to be done by long distance, by letter.

When Sid thought of Martha he got to worrying, too. Her health wasn't holding up under having the full responsibility of the family. Besides, the mortgage wasn't coming down as fast as they had planned when Sid took the forest service appointment. The beautiful front apartment was still unfinished. Leading a free and easy life as a ranger was fine, but under the pleasant day-to-day existence, there lurked a heavy worry.

Martha wrote that he could get employment with the Hancock Brothers in Salt Lake City and Sid could see in which direction his duty lay.

Loving the range as he did, he resigned again from the forest service and returned to the city.

CHAPTER XII

Back in Salt Lake Sid went to work for the Hancock Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Company. He missed the range, he missed the position of trust he had held in the forest service, most of all he missed the free and easy companionship of the men with whom he worked. But he had Martha and the children, and his family meant more to him than the things he had turned his back on. He had been able to visit in Salt Lake now and then, but visits aren't the same as being a regular day-to-day part of the family.

It was while working for the Hancock Company that he met an old friend who set him to thinking. He was putting up an order for the Utah State Prison and the face of the "Trusty" who was acting as truck driver seemed familiar. He looked at the man's face again and again, trying to place him somewhere in his experience with men. Kilgore? Hayden? Floral? Burrville? That was it, Burrville. But he had left Burrville when he was seven. When the driver signed the invoice Sid discovered that his memory had served him well. This man had once been his closest friend. They had gone to the same Sunday School, the same Primary, and the same school. They had loved each other like brothers until Sid had moved down to Wayne County.

For a moment he didn't know whether to speak of the old times or not. He didn't want to hurt the man, to make him feel embarrassed. But what would be the harm? "Do you remember me, Frank? I'm Sid - when you and I were friends I was Proph – Hanks."

"Do I remember you!" The driver was out of his seat in a minute, both arms around Sid. "What have you been doing?"

There were no other customers who needed immediate attention so the two climbed back into the truck. Briefly, Sid sketched his experience. Life at Floral, his term at the Brigham Young Academy, his mission, his marriage, the frontier days of Hayden, Kilgore, and the Utah-Wyoming line along the Green River.

"The straight road, I can tell that," Frank said. "Well, I took a short cut."

Sid waited for him to go on.

"I got a job with the government, too. Carrying the mail. Must have been most of two years that I lived up to my job. Every morning I'd start out with a sack of mail tied behind my saddle. I had to cross a mountain, over a winding saddle trail. Most of the way was lonely and that's what got me started to think about – about shortcuts."

Sid put his arm across the man's shoulder but didn't speak.

"I could shorten my way considerably both coming and going if I left the regular trail and went off over a ridge and through a thicket. This way, too, I'd be able to open the mail sacks without being seen."

"I thought those things were padlocked."

"They are. One day I found a loose rivet. After that it was easy."

"But they caught up with you?"

"An inspector took the trip with me one day and noticed the loose rivet. There was a trial. I was guilty. The least I could do was say so." He studied Sid's thoughtful face. "Fifteen years I got."

Customers came and Sid had to climb down from the truck to take care of them. Frank drove away. Sid went about his work thinking of shortcuts. Thinking of temptations boys faced no matter what parents did to safeguard them. All at once he was more glad than he had been since his return home. The children needed a father as well as a mother to encourage them to take the long, straight way.

Try as he might, Sid just couldn't be too satisfied in Salt Lake City. As he worked in the feed store he thought of the forests and the ranges, of the freedom and joy of pioneering and ranching. It was just at this time that there began to be a great deal of talk of a new frontier in Canada. Sid'' feet itched. Finally, they itched so much he decided, with Martha'' consent, to go up and look around. Nothing ever came of the trip, except Sid always thought that God had used him for His purpose the first night on the train.

The station master called, "All aboard for Pocatello, Butte and all points north." Sid showed his ticket to Calgary, Canada at the gate and climbed on to the coach. He took the only double seat that was vacant. In a moment a young soldier dressed in a shabby

uniform, came down the aisle. He looked over the car and Sid moved over to make room for him. He slouched into the seat and without a word looked Sid in the eyes. Sid thought, You're half as ugly as Abe Lincoln and twice as sober, but he didn't say anything. The gave of the boy's large, sad, blue eyes was too remote, too impersonal.

For miles they rode on together. Sid, never one to remain silent, was hoping for a conversation, but try as he would he couldn't start one, nor find an opening for one in anything the boy did.

At last, discouraged, Sid bought a paper and began to scan the headlines. He felt a little letdown shudder go through the boy's body. The boy, settling into a restless sleep, began to mumble a word or two. "Kill him. I ought to kill him. Clean job. I ought to—"

Sometime later when the boy came awake with a jerk Sid said, "Look here. It isn't any of my business, but you're in trouble."

"You bet I'm in trouble." The large, sad eyes stayed on Sid's face for a second, and then swiveled away.

"It would help you to talk about it."

"I don't think so." He turned his back on Sid. After a long time he said, "You may be right at that." Again he was silent for several minutes, and then he swung around suddenly, lifting his face close to Sid's. "What would you do? That's what I'm asking you. You're older than me and you've got experience."

Sid remained silent, not wanting to dam the story that he knew would soon flood over the gates of the boy's self-imposed silence.

"I just got home." He looked down briefly at the mussy uniform. "But you can see that. While I was away my wife was – well –"

"Unfaithful?"

"Worse than that. She's still married to me but she's living with another man and they've got – a kid."

"And you still love her?"

"I don't know about that. No. Yes, I guess I do. More than ever, maybe. What I should have done is kill her and him and the kid. That's what I should have done. But I didn't and I don't know why not. I just walked out. I'm a coward, I guess. Now I'm on my way up to my folks' place in Butte."

Sid was silent and the boy pounded a closed fist on his knee. "I ask you. What should I do? Turn back and take care of this unfinished business?"

"Let me think," Sid said. He had always been taught to put himself in another's place before judging another's course of action.

If it had been Martha! Suddenly Sid's fists closed, too. He knew what he would have done. To leave a wife stealer like that wallowing in his own blood would be too good for him. He opened his mouth to advise the boy to turn back. Suddenly he seemed to hear his father's voice. It wasn't really Pa speaking, of course, but every tone, every inflection of the voice came back into Sid's memory. "Don't kill your enemy." Those were Pa's words. "Damn him by the power or the priesthood. Stop him. But leave the death sentence to God." " Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord.

Pa's words, speaking out in his memory like that, was the answer the boy needed. Sid took the restless hands in his and pressed them between his palms to show the sympathy and friendship that flowed between them. He said, "I think I have the answer."

While the rest of the people on the train slept, the two talked and talked. It was a trite thing to say that another wrong wouldn't right the first one. It was commonplace to say that if the boy gave his wife a divorce so that she could honestly marry the father of her child, the wife would suffer more in making a decision between the men than she would from a bullet that would terminate her life. And it would be good suffering that would lead to humility and repentance and a better life.

Finally, Sid said, "Shall we pray together?"

"You pray for me," the boy said.

The prayer was not that the two who had been guilty of wronging a man away at war should be punished; but that the man who had been wronged should find peace of mind and strength to follow the good course.

And the way the boy dropped into a quiet sleep almost at once showed Sid that the prayer was already being answered.

So nothing came of the trip to Calgary except Sid discovered that Utah and Idaho were good enough for him; and a young boy didn't take three lives and then his own.

After the trip Sid knew that Canada wasn't for him, but every day that he lived he grew more certain that Salt Lake wasn't either. He had never been one to worry, but thinking of his life in Salt Lake it seemed to him that he'd had nothing but worry. There was the constant mortgage. Sid knew trade, barter and build, but he didn't know borrow. He hated to not own outright the roof over his head. There was the still unfinished building. It seemed as if they'd never get time and money ahead to finish up the plastering and get all of the apartments livable.

But worst of all, Martha hadn't been well. Elda had been born in October of '16 and in May of '18 there had been another baby, Mae. And between the two births Martha had an operation. It seemed that she just couldn't recover. For the first time Sid realized just how much Martha had meant to him. Back in Kilgore days he had teased her about selling the pants off his back. Once a tourist had wanted a pair of cords when there wasn't one in the store stock. Martha sized him up and decided that Sid's second-best pair which he had worn just once or twice would do, and had gone into the house and brought them back. Now he'd be glad if she were able to do just half the things that she used to get through in a day. He'd be glad if she were well enough to even counsel him in the business affairs that were out of his range of experience.

When the doctor suggested a quieter life, a change of location, Sid's mind went at once to Kilgore. Kilgore was the answer!

Martha protested that Kilgore was the last place in the world that she wanted to be, that she had worked herself nearly to death on purpose to get out of there. But Sid had made up his mind. In spite of Martha's objections, in 1921 the family moved back. Blanche and Hadley stayed in Salt Lake City. They were old enough to be self supporting and go on with their education. The baby, Mae, was left in Salt Lake, too. One of Sid's nieces would care for her until Martha was well enough again.

CHAPTER XII

Going back to Kilgore meant one thing to Sid, another thing to Martha, and still something else to the children.

To Sid it meant returning to the life he loved and to problems that he knew how to cope with. It meant leaving behind in Salt Lake City and worries and the illness and the frustration he had found there. To Martha it meant leaving the property which she had worked so hard to obtain, the dream which had seen her through the Kilgore days when she was caring for the children, keeping house and running the store; it meant moving without Hadley, her close companion and ready assistant, Blanch, the second mother to her family, and baby Mae. To the children it meant the wide-open spaces, and freedom, and adventure.

Sid thought only of the homestead at Kilgore, Martha hugged the idea that soon the lease would reduce the mortgage to a point where they could handle the Salt Lake property and that it would not be too long before they'd all be going back.

When the family arrived on the property on which Sid had filed, his heart was near bursting with the joy of it. There were one hundred and sixty acres of land with a hundred and sixty acres of range country. Near the place where he would build his home was a mountain spring bubbling up in a grass-green basin. In season there would be wild strawberries and desert flowers. During the summer there would be plenty of wild chicken and fish to supply the table. Oh, the Hanks family would never want for the necessities of life now they were located where Sid knew how to acquire them.

Martha's heart churned with rebellion alternating between hope and despair. There wasn't even a home for the family on the primitive ranch.

At first the family lived in tents. Tents, after that beautiful cement block apartment house that they could be living in as well as not! When Sid began to build, the house was of logs – logs he brought, himself, from the forest. This was different from the days in which Martha, with baby Hadley in his buggy, had helped to peel the logs for the house in the Teton's. Now the children worked with Sid, even the small ones peeling away so that the logs for the new home might be beautiful and white.

When the house was built Martha could see daylight between the logs. To warm the house for winter Sid built a great rock fireplace. He insisted that as soon as the wood caught fire properly the smoke would go up the chimney. Every time the fire was lighted Ruby ran out to see if the smoke was rising and every time she returned hurriedly to announce that it wasn't. Sid always declared that the smoke was not filling the room. Martha insisted that the whole tribe of them smelled like a bunch of Indians after being bathed in front of the hearth. Finally, Sid gave was to pressure and got a big iron heater. Even supplanted by the ugly heater he could feel that the fireplace was some beautiful rock work.

The children saw none of the defects in the house which bothered Martha so much. They took the cabin for granted and loved the freedom of the outdoors.

In Salt Lake Blanche was working for board and room. When she came home for summer vacation, Martha left her to look after the children and went to Salt Lake to bring back her baby. In Salt Lake she looked over the property and what she saw made her sick. The place was still unfinished; the finished part needed redecorating and cleaning. She threw herself into the work with all her might. To do the things that must be hired done, she borrowed one thousand dollars from her mother. With it she put the place in perfect condition. Before she left, the apartment house was bringing in more than a hundred dollars a month to be used for upkeep and to pay off the mortgage.

She was unsuccessful in bringing Mae home, but with a part of the thousand borrowed dollars she bought a beautiful graphonola. If her children were going to be stuck out in the sticks, she would at least take culture to them. And how they did enjoy that machine!

It was the same summer, too, that the mysterious crate arrived from Montgomery Wards. The family ringed the crate while the lid was lifted and the mountains of excelsior were removed from around literally hundreds of little round discs. In the bottom was a rather large piece of machinery on which was painted an Indian head complete with feathered headdress.

Finally every piece was out and with the help of the enclosed instruction sheet and advice from every member of the family, the contrivance was assembled. Then, when it had been mounted on a stool, Mama poured in a pail full of milk. The family held its combined breath until a stream of cream poured from a little spout, a stream of blue milk from a larger one. A cream separator! Ruby danced up and down with the joy of it. "Now," she cried, appreciation of the miracle shining in her eyes, "now Papa can have cream for his mush!"

One day Blanche and her sister, Martha, hitched up the horse, Diego, to a one-horse buggy and went to Cliff Smith's old saw mill with the intention of fishing. They unhooked the horse and tied him to an aspen tree. They were just cutting willow fish poles when they heard a growling. They climbed a sawdust pile and there at the edge of the willows was a large black bear just nosing toward them.

The girls flew down the sawdust pile. One untied the horse while the other put the harness on backwards. When they drove in Sid looked over the horse with a twinkle in his eyes. He asked them gravely if the horse had run out and come in hind side before.

Then Blanche was gone and the winter was back, long and cold, and, to Martha, lonely. The next summer Blanche didn't come home. She was working for the Staynor Richards family for board and room and four dollars a week. When summer came she was invited to go with the family to Ogden Canyon and take full charge of the children during the time that Mrs. Richards returned to Salt Lake to do her canning. Blanche would earn eight dollars a week and she needed the money.

Sid laughed heartily when Blanche wrote that, left alone with Bob, May, Billie and Marion Richards she had tried out all sorts of fancy cooking, only to spend most of her time changing beds and clothing due to upset stomachs, with time sandwiched in for nursing the sick.

On the homestead the family was a solid and isolated unit. Papa was the head of the house but Mama was the spindle upon which family life was wound.

Sid thought back on his life as he worked at the fences, at the felling of trees, at the breaking of ground. First Proph, then Alva, then, in the forest service, Sid. But now he was Papa and the title was as good as any title of nobility that a king could give. Now he thought of himself, not as an individual, but as a part of a household – as Papa. And Martha, whom he had called Mama since Hadley's birth, was always in his mind as Mama even though his memories might be of the days when he was riding a bronco to the post office to send her his first love letter.

The homestead was five miles from Kilgore, which meant going to church in the wagon – a planned family expedition. Sunday became the high spot of the week.

Saturday night was the big night of the week. After supper the shoes were shined, the clothes laid out for Sunday, and each member of the family had a bath. Mama fixed a blanket over two chairs and placed the bath tub discreetly behind the shelter and close to the friendly stove.

One Saturday she had finished bathing the two youngest and had scrubbed Ruby's ears, neck, elbows and knees. When she would have lifted the child from the tub to make room for the next oldest - baths were strictly by turn - Ruby begged, "Just a minute loner. Just a minute." So Mama left her to soak and enjoy the caress of the warm water.

"Time to get out now. Martha's ready," she admonished. Rather reluctant Ruby stood up and leaned over to get the towel. Whenever Ruby had come in with the cold stinging her face, the red spots on the great stove had looked like bright jewels. Now, as she leaned over, she was branded with the same red jewels.

It was Mama who held the home together, caring for the children, seeing that they walked in the right way, shining the shoes and washing and ironing the Sunday clothes so that the family could have the advantage of Sunday School; but somehow Papa, with his warmth and vitality and joy of living was the motivating force for much of the family activity.

Once when he had been away for more than a week, Mama set the two girls, Martha and Ruby, to work getting the house ready for Papa. They each scrubbed four logs up the wall, which was as far as they could reach. Each had an equal number of boards on the floor

to scrub. To finish up the job they washed the windows inside and out, and then each, with a nail covered with a rag, went to work on the corners of the windows. One working on the inside and one on the out left no room for argument regarding who had left the smears.

Mama, inspecting the girls' work, said, "Papa can see through those windows the minute he turns the corner." And Ruby, looking down to the turn in the road a quarter of a mile away, was positive that he could.

This simple log house with the outside and inside alike, since each showed separate sides of the same logs, was always shining clean and it seemed to Papa more a home than the Salt Lake place had ever been. He was certain that Mama would come to think so, too.

She often talked of the advantages of the city, but Papa, in his mind, countered with the advantages of the country. For example, he felt the children were getting more out of school than they ever had in Salt Lake. In the winter they hall went to school in dog sleighs, an experience they would never have had if they had stayed in Salt Lake City, or even if they had never gone to Salt Lake, but had stayed on at the ranger station in the heart of Kilgore.

The first year a Miss Anderson taught the Forest Park school. She had a gift for drawing the best from the children. Papa found his hand in Mama's and his eyes tear-filled when his eleven-year-old Martha recited her Christmas program piece:

"Just a little empty stocking,
Just a little broken heart.
From the eyes once filled with laughter
Tears of sadness quickly start.
Santa Clause had her forgotten
Though she'd been as good could be'
Just a little empty stocking
And a missing Christmas tree."

When it came time for the annual visit of the school trustees the girls scrubbed the floor of the school house with brooms dipped in lye water, and used good yellow homemade soap on the desks and benches. The boys chopped wood and piled it neatly, then polished up the school clearing. The children had learned cooperation as no city young ones would ever learn it.

Then there was the advantage of learning to know and love the out-of-doors. The hills were a haven to the children, too. Sometimes they were a little frightened sometimes enchanted by the mountains' changing moods. Once young Sid let his two puppies, Maggie and Jiggs, follow him into the woods. He forgot they were following him and crossed a swollen stream without lifting them into his arms. Suddenly he heard their cries for help as they were being floated down the river. But it was too late. He couldn't reach them. The best he could do was to turn back toward home with tears blinding his eyes. Young Sid grew up that day. All the lectures in the world couldn't teach as good a lesson in responsibility.

On the Fourth of July the children gathered red Indian paint brush, white berry blooms, and blue bells to make patriotic bouquets. They sold two wash tubfuls at the Kilgore celebration for twenty-five cents a bunch. Martha, almost twelve, won a foot race and received a nickel for the prize. But what tickled Papa more, she said "Leedle Yacob Straus," which he had taught her, and won a quarter.

Of course even the children had a longing for temporal things that the homestead couldn't provide. One day on the way to church, Martha said, "I hate to be seen riding to church in a white top."

Papa laughed easily, "Why, Martha, you know we're as good as folks that sail by in cars."

Martha didn't answer, but Papa read her feelings. Her words had brought back to him the pride the Hanks family had felt riding in a good rig behind Bess and Deck, the most beautiful team in Wayne County. Not that he wanted the luxuries of life for his children but - anyway, he could understand the longing.

The next winter Lettie Osmond, who lived over the hill from them, taught the little school. The whole family learned to love her, and the next summer Sid and Martha crossed the hill and plowed her homestead, sowing it to Timothy hay so that she could prove up on

her claim. Sid was prepared for eighth grade competitive examination by Lettie Osmond and by the prayers of his younger sister, Martha.

Papa watched the companionship of his third and fourth and his heart filled to bursting. Together the two cut down trees, sawed log lengths, harnessed the horses and hitched them to the plow, grubbed sage brush, did the work of grownups. Don't send a boy to market. But every day Sidney and Martha were going to market. They were fine, self-reliant youngsters. In the fall he left the two of them to harvest the grain and hay themselves while he worked in town hauling gravel for the new school.

"Let's all go to choir practice," Mama said one day, and the children jumped at the chance to ride the five miles into Kilgore. The family got into the buggy and away they went. They did their shopping, visited Papa, went to choir practice and then started home. Suddenly Sidney dropped the short line. In an attempt to stop the horses while he retrieved it, he pulled the other line so tight that the horses turned, cramping the wheels and throwing the wagon seat out of the box. On the seat were Mama, Sidney and baby Mae.

The horses righted themselves and took off with Martha, Elda and Ruby in the back of the wagon. Pap had taught the children in case of a runaway they should drop from the back of the wagon. This wouldn't hurt them, he had told them, if they held on the end gate and got their feet going before they let go. Martha dropped from the back and kept running along behind until she had helped Ruby and Elda out. Elda was just five years old and didn't know how to help herself so she got quite a bump.

They stopped by the side of the road and listened to the wagon rattling over the wooden bridges. Then they started back to meet Mama and Sidney so they could all walk home together. It was eleven o'clock at night and there were three and a half miles to walk.

The next morning Sidney went in search of the wagon. The horses' tracks showed they had come home, turned in at the gate, and continued on back into the hills. The wheels had caught on a log and there the horses stood, still fastened to the buggy. A can of baking powder and a jug of syrup were all the groceries that were left at the end of the ride.

It was near this time, too, that Papa and Sid met with another near fatal adventure. They had been to Clark Jackson's saw mill scaling logs and about three or four in the afternoon decided to start home since there was a storm brewing. Hooked to the white top were one gentle horse, and a three-year-old colt.

As soon as they had started home the rain began to fall in sheets, the lightning streaked across the sky and the thunder followed each zigzag streak with frightening rapidity. Papa held to the lines with all his strength, trying to reassure the frightened colt. As the wagon was going down a narrow lane, a fearful flash lit the sky and the crash of thunder was immediate. A telephone pole at their left was sheared off, the horses, their feet in water, were knocked to their knees. Dazed for a minute, they knelt, unable to rise, and then they were off. Papa and Sid held on for their lives as the wagon careened for two miles behind the heels of the terror-stricken horses.

It was not until later that Papa remembered his other experiences with the lightning-the day he had cut the buttons off his new britches and thrown his little knife away; the time that a single streak in the sky had struck so near him at Floral that Bess had raced away with the plough, missing him only by inches. Three experiences, two of them really dangerous! Surely there was work for him to do and he was being preserved to do that work.

Life on the homestead would be practically perfect if Hadley and Blanche were not separated from the family. Papa had arranged with his niece for the return of Mae to her mother's arms though, oh, how the folks she had been living with hated to give her up! Hadley was showing exceptional promise. His grades at high school and business college were something to be proud of and after his graduation he went to work, first for Keith O'Brien's, then for the bank. Hadley was a city person, just like Mama, and like Mama he had a head for business. Most likely Hadley would never be happy at home again. He was weaned. He'd make his own way in the world.

But Papa and Mama and the family looked forward to Blanche's return. In '23 she would be graduated from the L.D.S. Academy prepared to be a teacher. Mama and Papa planned on her getting a job somewhere near home.

A Time of Ripening

Early in ’23, after two years on the homestead, Papa decided to move the family to Parker. In Parker he could work during the winter but he would be close enough to the homestead to go back summers and finish proving up on his claim.

The decision was difficult for Papa to make. Parker was a little town, but it was a town nevertheless. The family had need of cash. Papa thought often of Hadley, of the fine boy he was, of the service he could give the church if he were sent on a mission. Often he thought of his own experiences in the West Pennsylvania Conference and wanted similar experiences for his children. When the time came that Hadley was ready to go he wanted to be able to help him.

To make a home for the family in Parker, Sid rented a small, white cottage from Will Remington. He made bunk beds for the children with pieces of lumber and Mama made bed ticks which he filled with straw. The family was comfortable and the school facilities excellent. He had told himself that the school near the ranch, Forest Park, had met their needs perfectly, but Sid had skied to high school and such efforts couldn’t be expected of the girls. Then, too, in spite of his own optimism, Mama hadn’t been satisfied out on the homestead, away from neighbors, with no chance of attending her weekday meetings, with no opportunity to look around town.

True, she had recovered her health, but that she attributed to the time that she spent with Mr. Harmon in inventorying his store, not on the country life.

One day Mama, visiting Effie Harmon, saw the mirror which she had raffled off when she moved to Salt Lake City, hanging in Effie’s home. Suddenly she was overcome with such a longing for the mirror that she said, “What’ll you take for that mirror?”

“Why, five dollars, I guess.”

“I’ll take it,” Mama decided at once. To Effie who had paid fifty cents for a chance, the deal was a good one. To Mama, whose happiest recollections were tied up with that mirror, the deal was even better.

Papa worked through the winter in Parker. Mama worked part-time, too, earning money to meet the interest on the money she had borrowed from her mother to improve the Salt Lake property. In the spring Papa returned to the ranch, leaving Mama and the little girls in Parker and taking with him Sidney and Martha to be his helpers.

He’d rise early in the morning and go into the fields. Late at night he’d come in dog weary. For the first time in his life he began to feel physical weariness - deep down, dog-tired weariness. And he wouldn’t be fifty for two more years.

But after supper, lumpy-dick which he prepared or something else that Martha would cook up, he would feel almost himself again. Big as they were he’d take Sidney and Martha by turn on his knee and sing and sing. Martha always called for the sad songs, the sad stories, she gloried in them. When he grew tired his lips would start clucking and his knees would start bouncing and he’d buck them off in their heads. That was the signal for bedtime. Sometimes Martha would cling on his back. “Papa,” she’d beg, “buck me off. Just try it.”

He’d say, “But you’re such a big girl, Martha.”

“Your back’s still big enough,” she’d counter, and he’d buck and rear and find a sense of fulfillment in the rough and tumble play.

It was while Papa was out on the homestead that Mama had the biggest worry of her life. Blanche disappeared! She had been graduated from the L.D.S. Academy and would come home for the summer to look for a teaching position. She left Salt Lake City as she planned, the Richards family seeing her off at the station. But she didn’t arrive in Parker. Mama met the train. No Blanche. She met the next; still no Blanche. She phoned the Richards. They had seen her off and knew that she had started on the trip. The authorities were called in to assist with the search and the Utah papers ran this item:

> “Blanche Hanks, 18 years of age of Parker, Idaho, was reported to the detectives yesterday as missing since last Monday. Miss Hanks had been staying at the home of Mrs. Staynor Richards, 2646 Alder Avenue while going to school in this city and was accompanied by Mrs. Richards to the railroad station where her ticket was purchased for Parker, Idaho The girl did not arrive at her destination and authorities have been

requested to find her. Miss Hanks is reported to be a very pretty girl and of good habits. Her disappearance is a mystery to her family and to Mrs. Richards."

When Blanche arrived in Parker she was disgusted that such a fuss had been made about her. She had lost her ticket and since she couldn't cash a check on the train she had stopped off at Pocatello to visit a friend, Erva Neal, and had a wonderful time.

Mama admitted that Blanche could take care of herself and that she never before caused her a moment's worry, but still she figured that young ones weren't as thoughtful as they might be.

Blanche passed the Idaho State examination for teachers but there didn't seem to be a position open at all. In the fall, with Hadley's help, she entered Ricks College. It wasn't until Thanksgiving time that she got a place at Canyon Creek, filling the position of Miss Edna Thomas, who had died.

In 1924 Papa moved to Parker to stay. In his own mind he had given up the idea of ever returning to Salt Lake though he didn't tell Mama so. She had been so happy about fixing up the property there and was dreaming and planning toward the days when she would return to enjoy the fruits of her work. When Hadley had decided to go on a mission she had been willing to increase the mortgage on the property to help him. She agreed with Papa that the Lord would provide, but she never once have up her plans for the future.

She was happier in Parker than she had been out on the homestead and Papa seemed happy, too. He was made scout master and he loved the boys and they loved him. He hiked with them through the hills, and it was he who started the Boy Scout Carnival in Parker. Days were spent in preparing ski jumps and dog sled race tracks. The boys were trained for months to give exhibitions of building fire without matches. Somehow the scout work put back into his life something that had gone out when he left the forest service. It wasn't just getting out into the open. It wasn't just working with other people, either. It was that Sid was a natural organizer and the work gave him room to use his ability.

One day he came home, afire with enthusiasm. "How would you like a new place?" he asked. "A place big enough to stretch out in?"

Mama, thinking for a minute that he was speaking of the fourteen-room apartment house across from the East Side High School in Salt Lake, asked, "How big?"

"Ten rooms."

"Now where would we get the money to buy a ten-room house?" she wanted to know.

"I've got a chance to trade our equity in the Salt Lake place for this ten-room house here."

"No," Martha said. "Why Papa, you haven't even seen that place since I fixed it up. No. I won't sign. No."

Papa argued that the place was heavily mortgaged and that to make the trade meant once again owning clear property. Mama argued that if they could just stick it out, the place would pay for itself and sometime they'd have that income and property to take care of them.

It wasn't clear to the children who won the argument, but the argument wasn't really important. Mama knew from the first that Papa would have his way and that her dream would die. When the family moved into the ten-room house Mama went out on the homestead. She hated the house. Hated it. And besides she felt as ill as she had those dreary months in Salt Lake.

But when fall came, Mama moved into the house as Papa had counted on her doing. She took over the house and took five teachers – <u>five</u> – to live with them.

It was this same year that Blanche, with Sidney's help, bought a nice, new car. The family was jubilant. Of course, the car belonged to Blanche and Sidney, but the rest could use it. Papa, Mama, Elda and Mae borrowed it for a trip to Salt Lake. Papa drove the car just live he drove a team of horses, the starts were jerky and the stops were worse. Mama had her old lumbago and with every jerk she suppressed a groan - not quite suppressed it - the sound came vaguely to the front seat where Papa held the wheel and trusted the car to cooperate. At Blackfoot he came so near colliding with a wagon load of Indians that the

driver reached out with his whip and struck the car such a blow that it sounded like a pistol shot. The roads were bad and that made the tires bad. Again and again Papa got out to change tires and Mama and Elda and Mae walked on. When Mae said in Salt Lake, "Anyway, we did ride part of the way," the others laughed. Mama thought secretly that the time spent in walking was less nerve wracking than the time spent in riding.

Things moved along quietly in Parker. Hadley returned from his mission and started back to work at the bank; Sidney, just eighteen, and far too young to know his own mind, married. Then all of a sudden things did happen.

Blanche, teaching at the Hibbard School and taking part in a play fell, in love and was married in the Salt Lake Temple June the tenth. Mama and Martha went to Salt Lake for the ceremony, but Papa was too busy.

They visited around until June the twenty-first, then Mama watched Hadley married to Edna Folsom in the Salt Lake Temple. Martha and Mama went to a reception at the home of Edna's parents and were mighty proud of Hadley. Before the year was gone, Martha, just under seventeen, had married, too. Of the seven children, only three were left.

Papa and Mama celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. How much can happen in twenty-five years!

CHAPTER XIV

Papa was working on a potato machine at Remington's when the awful pain hit him. Seemed as if he had eaten a thousand green apples - or even worse. At supper time when he went home he stretched himself out on the couch. "Mama, I feel terrible. Don't fix me any dinner."

Mama, always practical said, "Go up to bed then." But she was putting a large square pan of baked apples on the table. "I'll just eat one of those apples before I go to bed," he decided.

The next morning he felt lots better. All the pressure from his side left and all he felt was an extreme soreness.

"Going down to work, Papa?" Mama asked.

"Well, I wouldn't if the potato inspector wasn't going to be there."

He went. At noon when he came home he brought the inspector and they sat down together at the table and each ate a large piece of pie.

He didn't go back to work that afternoon and later when Blanche came over from Rexburg she said, "You look terrible, Papa. You're going home with me and going to see Dr. Rigby." Papa felt terrible. Not in such pain as he had been the day before, but sort of sick all over.

It was Blanche's insistence that got Papa into the hospital and on to the operating table before night. The severe pain had been acute appendicitis, the appendix had ruptured and gangrene had set in. Peritonitis was inevitable.

For three days the family prayed, the nurses and doctors worked and waited. But Papa knew nothing of this. He was a child again at his mother's knee.

> "Now I lay me down to sleep
> I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
> If I should die before I wake
> I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Over and over the prayer repeated itself. Then the dream changed and he thought he was a grain of sand being swept before the wind on the desert. He'd pause to rest, then a gust of wind would pick him up and sweep him on again. The dream shifted.

> "Now I lay me down to sleep
> I pray the Lord . . ."

Someone was shaking him gently by the shoulder. I must wake, he thought. Ma wants something. Maybe Pa's ---"

He opened his eyes. Two nurses stood over him. He was surrounded with hot pads, covered with blankets, and two girls were rubbing his wrists. "Come on now, Mr. Hanks," one of them said, her voice trembling a little. "You don't want to slip away from us like that."

Papa wanted to answer. He'd have liked to reassure those nice girls, but even one word would be too much effort. He closed his eyes again.

It was a long time before he was up and about again. He felt perfectly useless sitting around while Mama and the children were working. By autumn he was still not strong enough to work. Hadley, who had moved to Glendale, California, suggested that he come down and stay with them until he felt better. Hadley made a great story of how fine the winter weather was and urged by Mama, he accepted Hadley's invitation.

At first he had been rather undecided. He didn't care if he went, he didn't care if he stayed. But in California the orange groves, the rose gardens, the happy men puttering around in their shirt sleeves, made him want to stay.

But how? He had a family to support, responsibility to live up to.

It was then that he made his covenant with the Lord:

"Our Father, which art in heaven, if You will open up the way for a poor, sick, unskilled man, who isn't young or strong as he used to be, to fit into some kind of work that will make him able to support his wife and family, I'll pay an honest tithing. For every dollar I earn I'll give you a dime."

At first he tried desperately to get into the park service or the Los Angeles County Forestry department. Then he decided to do anything. He walked the streets for two months, sometimes repeating the prayer, sometimes letting it stay unspoken in his heart. During the two months he grew stronger, more sure of himself. At the end of two months he got a job - a job for one week. He handed up lumber and drove nails, and on Saturday night he was paid twenty dollars. Before he went home he put two dollars in an envelope and mailed it back to the bishop in Parker.

Sunday Rome Remington from Parker called at Hadley's house. Would Brother Hanks like a job selling potatoes? He'd be down in Long Beach on Anaheim Boulevard, and the pay would be a dollar a day and board. He'd be working with Will Remington and it would be a job that would keep him out in the open.

Papa didn't hesitate. Monday he was selling potatoes to folks who stopped along the boulevard to purchase them. At the end of the month he sent three dollars to his bishop.

The potato business prospered. Papa and Will Remington sold three carloads of potatoes. Rome raised their salary to ninety dollars a month and Papa sent nine dollars to his bishop. By the first of April they had sold twenty carloads of potatoes and had sold themselves out of a job.

Papa heard that in Monrovia a new high school was being built. Monday morning early he went to apply for work. There was a long line of carpenters and masons lined up before the window to ask for a job. Papa stepped in line, and then an impulse caused him to tap at the door to the office.

"Come in if your nose is clean."

He smiled at the strange greeting as he pushed open the door and the face behind the desk smiled in return. That didn't keep the boss from looking him over from head to foot. Graying hair, frank blue eyes, and a face tanned with sun and wind, broad shoulders, tall, strong frame. "Carpenter?"

"No." Papa thought, I might pass for a carpenter, but I better be honest.

"Mason?"

"No."

The boss turned to his assistant. "Put this man down as a laborer." "Name?"

"Sid Hanks."

"Three fifty a day."

Papa threw all his energy, all of his boundless good nature into his work. He worked for two months and sent his bishop two dollars and ten cents each week.

That job, too, was growing to a close when the boss called him in. "I like you, Hanks," he said. "How about working on the new Elk's Temple? Same pay."

The Lord was truly opening up the way. He sent for Mama and the girls to plan to join him in Monrovia.

On the Elk's Temple Papa sharpened the stakes and drove them, he worked as carpenter and cement workers helper. Then his boss got into a rumpus with the big boss and the whole crew was laid off.

"It's all right," Papa assured him when he said he was sorry to have cost the whole crew their jobs.

"Tomorrow you go down to the new boss and tell him that you want to work. I'll get word to him that you're a damned good worker."

The new boss started him at twenty-four dollars a week with extra when he wet down cement on Sundays. It was not uncommon, now, for the tithing payment to be two dollars and sixty cents a week.

Then the Elk's Temple was completed and the new boss asked him to go to Los Angeles with him to work on the County Building. It was nice of the boss and he would go, of course, but with Mama, Ruby, Elda and Mae in Monrovia, he wanted a Monrovia job, a steady one. The girls had been so excited and happy about the move to romantic California

that ten-year-old Mae had been actually thankful to Papa for nearly dying so that they could make the trip.

While Papa went back and forth to Los Angeles to work on the County Building, Mama went with him and clerked at the Broadway. She had the time of her life clerking at a really big store and seeing how such establishment were managed from the inside. Still they both kept their eyes and ears open for a better job for Papa. Talking the matter over they decided that if he could get the job as janitor of the newly completed high school they could get along perfectly.

There was to be an examination. When Papa showed up for the test, thinking of the examination he had taken to get his appointment in the forest service, he found ninety men ready to try. Only three could be appointed as there were just three jobs. It seemed that the three highest were not to be named. Rather, the examination would weed out all those who weren't fitted for the job and from the group who passed, the appointments would be made.

Mama carried a petition all over town asking for his appointment. When he got home from a day's work in Los Angeles he would bathe, dress, and go out to talk with people who had something to do with the schools - the principal, the school board members, the business agent of the school system. It wasn't that he wanted to pull strings. He wanted to meet these men so that when the appointment came up his name would be connected in their mind with a face and a personality and a character. He got letters of recommendation from Utah and Idaho and the men he worked for in the construction of the school, the Elk's temple and the county building gave him letters. If he had been trying for the Superintendent of Schools he would not have worked harder.

Then the depression struck. Fear was so heavy in Los Angeles that you could feel it like smog in the streets. Fear that grew out of the depression and in turn fed the condition that had given it birth. Sid turned his back on the fear. He had his agreement with the Lord and so far the Lord had honored it completely.

Then building was suspended. Papa wasn't laid off but was set to shoveling cement on Huntington Drive. And he and the family prayed for a steady job.

When the letter came from the school offices he opened it with trembling fingers. He shouted as he read it. He had been appointed caretaker of the new school and would go to work Monday. The Lord's share of his new salary would be ten dollars and ninety cents a month.

At the school Sid found an opportunity to do the work for which he was most fitted. He worked with the children. Of course he did the physical work that was expected of him, too, but he soon became the confidant of the boys and girls and was able to influence them in the way that they should go.

One afternoon an English teacher passed him a student composition. "Read it," she said. "You already know how the boys and girls feel about you, but you'll enjoy this."

> "Mr. Hanks, our janitor, is not just a janitor. He is a true friend to everyone. He is awfully nice to all of the children at the Clifton school. Whenever you see him he always has a smile on his face. One thing I like about him is that when the boys and girls get into trouble he helps them."
>
> By Edna Mae Armstrong

Sid smiled and the teacher said, "You may keep it if you wish." He folded it up and put it in his pocket, thinking of other boys and girls he tried to help. This was pay for it all.

There had been the scout up in Idaho. Ray had been an outstanding scout. Merit badges? His shirt was lined with them. As he grew older he became senior patrol leader, finally scout master. Sid had watched him develop with as much pride as if Ray were Hadley or Sidney. Then one day the boy didn't show up at the scout meeting and Sid, who was on the scout committee, had to take over. Soon the absence began to be a regular occurrence and Sid, scouting around, heard that Ray and another young man were "going out" with a

crowd in a neighboring town. At first Sid couldn't believe the information because Ray was practically engaged to one of the nicest girls in his own ward.

Finally one night as Sid was finishing his shift at sorting potatoes, two young girls came into the store. One was Ray's sweetheart, the other his sister. They were both crying. Ray had been arrested, was in jail. Sid put an arm around each of them. "I'll go over and see what I can do," he said.

He hurried to finish his work and clean up the place, then just as he was, in his work clothes and everything, he went over to the jail. Yes, he could see Ray, the sheriff said. No, there wasn't any chance of getting him out of jail that night. He was on probation for stealing a car some time before. Didn't Brother Hanks know that?

Sid hadn't known. He asked to talk with Ray. Ray came out sullen, unwilling to talk. Sid sat there, thinking with a part of his mind that Mama would have his supper on and would be worrying, but with the other half of his mind was trying to figure out a way to talk with Ray. Finally, the boy broke under Sid's gentleness, and told everything.

Sid put his arm across the boy's shoulder. "I'll be back to go to court with you," he promised. And in the morning he was there. Ray and the sheriff and Sid went in to talk with the judge. It was an informal court hearing, each talking when he had something to say, each answering the questions the judge put to him. Sid told of the wonderful scout work the boy had done' how he had stepped off the right path and kept slipping. He suggested that they all give him a hand and pull him back onto the road he should go.

A jail sentence, the judge suggested.

Sid, watching the boy's face, saw the muscles working at the sides of his eyes, saw his lips tense and his face go white. Ray supported his mother and a jail sentence meant punishment for the whole family when only Ray was to blame.

"Isn't there any other way?" Sid asked.

"The law allows a minimum fine of twenty-five dollars."

"I don't have a cent," Ray said.

Sid had reached into his pocket and drawn out his last pay check. Twenty-four dollars. He borrowed the judge's pen and endorsed the check. Maybe he didn't have the right to do this; Mama had counted on that check for household expenses. But they could all eat beans for a month rather than let a boy continue on the downward way.

The judge looked at the check and raised his eyebrows.

Sid said, "That's all I have."

The judge took a dollar from his own pocket and put it with Sid's check "You'll pay us back as soon as you can, won't you, Ray?"

And Ray had. From that time on he had done the right thing. Soon he and his sweetheart were married. Sid's twenty-dour dollars had bought a priceless thing.

Now as he stood with Edna Mae's letter tucked into his pocket, he said, "That's what I like about this job. Working with the kids."

"You should have been a teacher."

"Me?" He didn't say that at one time he had been certified to teach in the schools of Wayne County. That one time he'd even taught a spell at Floral.

"Yes, you. You can handle kids like nobody else in this building can."

"Love is to young folks what sunshine is to the vegetable kingdom," Sid said. And he returned to his sweeping and dusting.

With a steady job he felt permanent in Monrovia. He traded eighty acres of land in Kilgore for a home in Monrovia, got his recommends moved from Parker to the ward to which Monrovia belonged, and decided that he was settled for life.

When the family's recommends left Parker, the Parker folks wrote to Sid.

> Dear Brother Hanks:
>
> Kindly permit us a few of your former neighbors and associates to express to you our appreciation for the work you did while a resident of our community: as a scout master, as a village board member, as a home builder, as a worker in recreation and amusements; as a true friend to the sick and

helpless; as a neighbor and fellow citizen; as a believer and worker for better education; of the clean life you lived in both thought and action; as a teacher in our church organizations; and for the many kind deeds you did and the words of commendation and encouragement you did not fail to give us at the opportune time.

As a token of the high esteem in which we hold you and in appreciation of the many good things you did we take pleasure in affixing our signature hereto and our prayer is that success will attend your efforts wherever you may sojourn here in this life.

In the spirit of love and friendship we are: …."

And the names of George Rudd, Bishop; George Ricks, City Councilman; and Arden Stoddard, Justice of the Peace, together with those of former friends and neighbors were signed to the letter.

Just as he had in Parker, and in every other branch and ward in which he lived, he threw himself into church work. At first the family had to save all week to pay car fare or to buy gasoline to attend church twenty-five miles away. Then a chapel was begun in Baldwin Park, just sixteen miles from Monrovia. The whole family gave money and time toward the completion of the structure.

Soon Papa became a counselor to the Bishop of the Baldwin Park Ward and for a time Mama worked as the ward's Relief Society President.

From Monrovia to Baldwin Park and back again. The trip was made at least twice on Sunday and as many times during the week. Papa still was more horse than motor minded, and often strange things happened.

One day returning from Sunday School something went wrong with the gears. Papa worked from noon until dusk while Mama and Elda and Mae sat by a fence and baked in the sun.

"Stop somebody. Ask somebody for help," Mama urged.

"Oh, I'll get this thing going. Just a matter of finding the right thing," Papa said soothingly.

"Papa, I wish you'd stop somebody."

Still Papa worked on. Where he came from it was a disgrace to be unable to fix anything.

At last Mama took the girls and started for Monrovia on foot down Huntington Boulevard. With the family out of sight Papa hailed a car which stopped and the driver, a mechanic, fixed the car in a few minutes. Mama and the girls were glad to climb in when Papa came abreast of them.

Papa still drove a car as he had a team, trusting it to use its native intelligence in tight places. One Sunday, seeing a lady in distress on the other side of the road, he drove across the road to see if he could help out. A car coming down its own side and not expecting this gallant crossover almost struck the side of the Hanks car, but was able to swerve precariously around it.

A friend said, "Well, Brother Hanks, it's not your good driving that has saved you and yours; it's been the good Lord that has saved your neck many times."

Papa didn't have an answer to that one so one of the girls spoke up. "Well, He has been good to us. He's taken care of us through all our trips. He knows that Papa is always willing to more than do his part to help other people, to make others happy as he has always been."

In connection with their church work the family made many friends. Sunday afternoon was always spent with church folks. Papa often invited families of six to dinner without even consulting Mama. Mama planned, and worked, and took things in her stride. She knew how much companionship meant to Papa.

Papa loved his family, too. One Thanksgiving Hadley came for Papa, Mama, Ruby, Elda and Mae some time after noon and took them home to a family dinner. All morning

Papa had hurried the family to get ready, and at noon when Hadley hadn't come, he came in and wanted to piece. "Well," said Mama to the girls, "all men are like Papa. Watch how it is. Feed him and he'll smile for you."

These family dinners were much more than food for the body. They were food for the soul. Papa enjoyed seeing his children growing beautiful and good, probably most of all he enjoyed the release from tension that came in the closeness of the family group. How easy it was after a good meal to nod his head and sleep, hearing the conversation swirling about him but not sensing the meaning, just the tone of harmony and mutual affection.

The last Sunday of November 1929, Blanche and her family arrived in Monrovia. They stayed for four months while Elmer worked on the Azusa Bridge and did other odd jobs.

It was in March of '30, just when Blanche and her family were ready to return to Idaho, that Ruby left on a mission. Ruby's mission had posed something of a problem. For a long time Ruby had been self supporting; a mission for her would mean a financial burden that would be hard to support. It just couldn't be done on Papa's salary, so Mama showed how much she wanted Ruby to have a mission. She went to work at the school, also as a janitor, and used her salary for Ruby's mission.

Ruby was the leading lady in a play, "Ghost Bird," the night before she left. Then, with Mama and Ruby as comfortable as possible in the back of Elmer's truck, they with Blanche's family, started for Utah. They went by way of Arizona and celebrated Mama's fifty-third birthday by going through two sessions at the Mesa Temple with Arnold Huber and his wife, Jacob Huber and his wife, Etta Huber and Eva Johnson - all relatives of Mama. Mama wished as she participated in the holy ceremonies that Papa was with her. But Papa was too busy. He hadn't yet felt the spark of temple work.

Later, they attended general conference in Salt Lake and the glorious pageant that commemorated a hundred years of Mormonism.

One day Sid was called to the school office. The depression was getting worse by the week and the call frightened him in spite of his faith, in spite of his knowledge that he had done his work well. But he didn't need to fear. The school was offering him a chance to buy, very reasonably, a home just at the edge of the school campus. The little home which he already owned was traded for ranch property at Kilgore and the Hanks family moved down on Palm Street where the family could be next door to their work.

And it was a family job. Sometimes Mae and Elda took turns helping to sweep the school house. They hated it, especially when kids their age were still around the building, but that didn't alter the fact that it had to be done. Mama noticed their attitude. It didn't worry her. She put it down to false pride and false pride was something one should have taken out of her as soon as possible. Papa didn't even notice it. At least if he did he paid no attention.

Papa took all the work associated with his hob as good work that needed to be done well. The raising of the flag and lowering it was part of his duty. He never did it as a routine job. Each morning, each evening, as he handled the flag he reaffirmed his loyalty to America and America's ideals.

Now he began to have a dream - a dream of quiet old age with an income to take care of his and Mama's needs when the girls were married and settled. Around his neat little frame bungalow he began to put up small rental units. Martha was to have the responsibility of the rental units and the money that came in from them. In time he'd stop work and they'd both get along on this income.

He had another dream, too - a dream of beauty. Around his home he planted flowers which would be a joy to him forever. Every day saw some improvement in his place.

And yet another dream. For years - all of his life, in fact - he had been most proud of his father and his mother. His father had been one of the great men of the Western Frontier and Sid wanted to honor him. He began to spend his spare time getting notes together to write a book about his parents and their contribution to the West. Martha laughed at his writing, some others did, too, but when Sid had a dream he worked toward it and mostly that dream came true. So he gathered materials and tried his hand at making bits from the material into stories.

The years went by smoothly and happily. Ruby returned from her mission to the Central States and in two years she was married. Mama was made president of the Baldwin Park Relief Society. Elda went on a mission to the Central States in 1936. In the same year Mae was married in the Logan Temple. In 1937 Sidney, with his wife, Malva, and his children, Rena, Beth and Max, joined the family in Monrovia.

Life was full of activities and of friends. Mama took adult education classes and hiked with a group over the mountains near Monrovia. She surprised even herself when she gave a talk at a public program on "From Friend to Friend." Papa joined the Foothill Writers Club and worked regularly on compiling material on the lives of his parents and on his own memoirs. Once, on his birthday, sixty friends, including the writing group and folks from the church, gave a surprise party for the two of them. For Mama it wasn't a surprise, but for both of them it was a heartwarming experience.

But the big event of the Monrovia years was the selection of Sid to be Patriarch for the San Bernardino Stake. What was it Pa had said when he changed the boy's name from Proph to Alva? That Proph would be a fine name if you could live up to it. If you really were a prophet. And now Sid had been given the power to lay his hands upon a person's head and through the spirit of God and the authority of the office which he held, really be a prophet. Speaking for God he could tell a person, who came to him with faith in his heart, what work was foreordained for him, what heights he might achieve if he lived for his blessing.

He was set apart by President Heber J. Grant for the office and calling. Somehow after the prayer he felt different – holier, somehow. He thought often of his father's last years. Pa had dedicated them to the Lord, and even when he was pretty miserable he had gone on long trips to bless and comfort the saints of Wayne County. He thought, too, of the patriarchal blessing he had been given as a boy: That evil should be on his right and his left side and he should pass through unharmed. He realized that this blessing had given him courage time and again, made it possible for him to smile and "josh" and talk his way through seemingly impassable barriers of anger or prejudice.

He knew from his own experience the magnitude of his calling and resolved, in humility and prayer, to be worthy to be the mouthpiece for God.

His daughters, first Elda, and then Mae traveled with him to take down the blessings as he pronounced them. To each of them the companionship with Papa, the sharing in his calling, was a rich experience. Most Sunday mornings they would get up early and travel to some distant ward. During the day he would give eight or twelve blessings and complete his service by speaking at the evening meeting.

When Elda was called to the Central States Mission he gave her a patriarchal blessing. "You will meet and labor with some of the people your sister, Ruby, worked with." Afterwards, reading the blessing, he wondered, "Now why did I promise her that? Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas are all in that mission. It would certainly be strange if she did labor where Ruby had been."

Elda's first assignment was to labor in Dodge City where Ruby had finished her mission.

When the San Bernardino Stake was divided and the Pasadena Stake was organized, Patriarch Hanks became a patriarch for the new stake.

Back and forth to meetings in Baldwin Park. Back and forth. Three times on Sunday. Once on Tuesday. There were 30,000 churchgoing miles on the family Chevrolet. The Arrowhead Highway was in the course of constructions, half paved, half dirt, but the trips were always pleasant.

One evening Elda, Mae, and a family convert to the church, Virginia Phillips, were on their way to Tuesday evening M.I.A. It was just dusk when they came to the place where there had been a temporary bridge over a big wash. Now the bridge was gone and the road was crossed by a big gully. Sid stopped the car and wondered what to do. A big new car drove off the road, and several feet above, forded the gully, sending up a spray of water and gravel.

There was a way to go around – fifteen miles farther by that roundabout way – why not follow the big car? Temporarily Sid forgot the decision he had once made never to take

a short cut when the long road was surer and safer. He put the car into low and plunged in. When he reached the center of the stream his power went out and nothing happened. The water divided to go around the car, but even then the underflow was up to the doors.

Another big car came through, the occupants yelling something out of the window, and sped on. Now Sid had time to remember that other short cut. He had time to picture the car carried down the gully in a growing flood. He had time to pray.

A Model-T Ford pulled in behind him and pushed till its wheels spun, but the Chevy didn't move. The Ford's driver waded through the water up to the side of the Chevy, borrowed a handkerchief from one of the girls, opened the hood and dried the points. Sid stepped on the starter and the Chevy moved through the stream and onto the road again.

"You're never too old to act like a fool," Papa said, ashamed that he'd not taken the safer way. But the girls, out of danger and on their way to church, laughed and sang again.

The girls loved Papa, though often they felt that he was strict with some of his rules. He wouldn't permit the girls to come home from a dance with a boy who hadn't taken them; they couldn't run out to the honk of a car, they were to observe the Word of Wisdom and go only with boys who did so, too. Religion was the motivating force of his life and he wanted it to mean the same thing to his children. If the girls went out for Sunday afternoon they went after Sunday School and came home in time for Sacrament meeting.

Papa's insistence on his standards paid off. Each of his seven children was married in one of the temples. In 1941 both Papa and Mama went to the St. George Temple to see Elda married. It was the only wedding in the seven that both of them had witnessed.

Papa had always been too busy and Mama scolded about it. "You'd think that old school was your life," she'd scold and Papa would smile and say, "Where would we be without it?"

Mama didn't mean the school was his life even when she was saying it. She knew, as everybody else did, that love of people was really Papa's life. He loved to consider other people's problems, to give them advice and help. He loved to ho that extra mile to put his arm around somebody that would be strengthened by that arm.

Elda's wedding reception in the makeshift Mormon church, a bid house that was serving as a church until the chapel should be built, was the last big affair that Sidney attended. He had pneumonia and shortly afterwards he began to have trouble with his leg. After some time the doctors diagnosed the trouble as osteomyelitis, a purulent inflammation of the bone. It might have been that the same germs that had caused the pneumonia had settled in his leg in a place that had been weakened by a bruise. It might have been caused by something entirely different. But it meant that Sidney was in and out of the hospital for two and a half years. It was at this time that Malva took the children back to Idaho, leaving Papa and Mama the responsibility of helping Sid back to normal life again. When he wasn't in the hospital he had a bed in Mama's living room. When he was in the hospital both Papa and Mama kept in close touch with him.

It was during this time that Sidney learned to really know his parents and feel the strong motivating power that religion was in their lives. The endless game of checkers that went on between Sidney and Papa was more than a game. Papa's playing hour after hour, as if he heartily enjoyed moving the men about on the board when, no doubt, he would rather have been doing something else, was an assurance to Sidney of his father's patience and affection. Now there was time for the quiet talks between the two, which had been pushed into the background since Sidney had been his father's "helper" in forest service days.

Papa welcomed the opportunity to come close to Sidney. For the first time Sidney was gaining a true testimony of the Gospel that had meant everything to Papa and Mama and to their parents before them.

Boys had always been Papa's enthusiasm. Wherever he had lived he had worked with them. Especially did he love working with the scouts. When he wasn't scoutmaster he was on the scout committee. In 1946, at a special court of honor, he was given an award for twenty-five years of service with the scouts.

Mama's life was full, too, but her interest was still principally in her family and its problems. In 1942 Elda and her husband, Elwin, packed all their belongings in an old truck

and started for Idaho. Mama's heart hurt as she saw them start out. It seemed to her that Elda was reliving her own life of following a husband to the unlikely places of the world. If she had spoken her heart she would have begged them to reconsider. Instead she looked over her life and saw that even with the illnesses and disappointments it had been good. She thought of Paul's advice, "Be obedient to your husband," and waved them goodbye.

It wasn't a wise move and three years later they were back, Elwin with a broken shoulder that didn't heal until it had been operated on. Mama wondered if she should have lifted her voice. Oh well, she decided, I've lived my life. Others must live theirs.

Now Sid was growing older. He knew it by the fine lines in his face, the whitening of his hair, the way deep-down weariness settled in his bones when he had overworked, the urgency he felt for doing the things he wanted done before his death. He hadn't ever really realized the passing of time, however, until Hadley took him back to Floral to see the scenes of his childhood. There in a little widening between red and purple and yellow canyon walls was his abandoned home. Under trees now dead or broken down he had played with his sisters, Amy and Clara. A short distance away he could see the Indian hieroglyphics high on the canyon walls which had intrigued him so in his boyhood. The condition of the once beautiful ranch made him see in a new light the aging of a man's body.

Mama had just left for Idaho to be with one of the girls who needed her, when papa got an awful cold in his chest. He kept on working, but he kept on coughing, too, and he felt so miserable he could hardly get around. He didn't call a doctor. In his home the power of the priesthood had usually made a doctor's service unnecessary.

"You're burning up, Papa," Violet, Sidney's second wife, told him, and Papa folded up and called the doctor. The doctor came; Don Nebeker, so full of life and vitality that it made you feel better just to look at him. But his face lost its ready smile. "You're a sick man, Brother Hanks," he said. "It's the hospital for you."

Papa didn't object. He was too sick to put up a fight even if he had objected. It was double pneumonia and Dr. Nebeker used everything that science had discovered to stop the progress of the disease. Then he wasn't too hopeful. Papa's spirit had kept him going long after he should have given up and hone to bed. Now that same spirit helped him to battle against the disease.

The family called Mama in Idaho. Ruby, who had been driving the car between California and Idaho, unaccustomed to ice covered roads, had an accident that held them in Southern Utah for two days. Mama had barely arrived when she got the message, turned around and caught the train back.

During the long train ride Mama thought of the two times that papa had been critically ill, of how he had come through both times. She remembered that Papa's blessing had said he should live as long as he desired life, and she was comforted and strengthened.

When she arrived at the hospital there was Papa with a tremendous tray of food before him. And she hadn't eaten a bite since the girls forced a few bites down her in Idaho. The disease conquered, Papa was on the mend and he was one who could always enjoy a good meal. "Mama," he said as he looked over the tray, "can have the tea."

It was no long before he was able to leave the hospital and soon after that he went back to work.

He wasn't feeling too strong any more. It would be nice to retire and have time to putter around his place, to sit in the "office" he had recently had constructed from the front porch of his cottage, to take life easy. But a strange proposition came up. The State of California voted to give employees of the school who weren't regular teachers a school pension when they reached sixty-five providing they had worked two years after the law went into effect. Papa was way past sixty-five, but there were those two years to work and he decided to work them. If he worked until April the first, 1949, he would have been with the schools twenty years. Well, he'd work until April the first, 1949, then.

Sidney did more and more of his father's work. Mama helped too, and everybody was kind. But Papa was sick. He hadn't got real strong from the pneumonia before his stomach began to bother him. Just a little pain after he'd eaten but nothing that a dose of soda wouldn't help.

Often he sat in his "office" and counted up the fulfillment of his dreams. He had his home clear and some rentals bringing in a little money. His Life of Ephraim Hanks, Scouting for the Mormons, was off the press and had been named the M.I.A. reading course book for the L.D.S. Scouts and the Explorers. A book about his mother, The Tempered Wind, was ready for publication. All of his seven children had married in the temple, and there were twenty-seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The Monrovia Ward had been cut off the Baldwin Park Ward and a beautiful new chapel was nearing completion.

Now he had a dream. He wanted to live to help to build a temple in Southern California. If a temple was completed then he and Mama would get a small cottage somewhere near it and do temple work. Funny, Pa had a dream of a winter of temple work just before he sickened for the last time.

And Papa was feeling worse. The pain in his stomach was more troublesome and he was losing weight. He tried not to worry folks but he did some complaining to Sidney and Mama. Finally when his food began to come back tinged with blood he went to Dr. Nebeker. Into the hospital again, this time for observation. Out to be built up. Then in again.

The family had written:

"Dear Folks:

When Papa retires we'd like to see the two of you go to Hawaii. You could see something new, have a nice trip and do some temple work there…

There had been more to the letter but the gist of it all was that the children would put up the money for such a trip.

Before Papa went back to the hospital he talked to the doctor. `How sick a man am I?'

Dr. Nebeker was not evasive. "You're a pretty sick man, Brother Hanks."

"I want to know just how sick."

Dr. Nebeker's brown eyes held Papa's blue ones. "You want to know?"

"Don't think I'm afraid of anything you're going to tell me. I want to plan ahead."

"I know what you're afraid of," the doctor said, the word not passing between them. "And you're right."

"How long will I live."

"A few days, maybe a few weeks."

Papa thought of the trip to Hawaii. Of how much Mama wanted to go.

"With an operation, maybe a few months."

Without hesitation Papa said, "I'll take the operation."

He went to the hospital Sunday. Friday he was dead. "That great heart of his," the doctor said. "It would have lasted him a hundred years!"

It was April the first, 1949, Mama's birthday, and the day that he was officially retired from the schools, that he died.

For the funeral the Monrovia chapel, its foyer and the opened-up amusement hall, was filled as for stake conference. The speakers for the church paid him the tributes that were due him as a patriarch of the church. Superintendent Lydell called him one of the most valued members of the school staff and spoke of the love that reached out to embrace everyone with whom he worked.

But an even greater tribute to their beloved patriarch was given the following Sunday at testimony meeting when those who had felt his strength and his gentleness rose to acknowledge his importance in their lives. One of the members, Mary Ellen Romney, a student at Clifton School, said, "Nobody thought of Brother Hanks as a janitor. We all thought of him as our best friend. He meant more to the kids than the principal or the teachers. He was a father to all of us."

The Cliftonian, the annual yearbook of the Clifton School, was dedicated to him with this tribute by Bernice Byrant.

"Mr. Hanks has always been so much a part of Clifton that we shall miss him very greatly. His friendly greeting and cheerful smile at all times have been an example and an inspiration to the teachers and the pupils. His kindness was unlimited. NO effort on his part was ever too much work or trouble if it added to our convenience. He was always ready to

give himself and his time to help the school and each one individually. And many a boy and girl will always remember the wise and kind advice he could give at just the right time and in just the right way. We who have associated with him and have learned to know the depth and sweetness of his character have indeed been privileged and fortunate."

When he had the long delirium following his emergency appendectomy he had thought again and again of his childhood prayer. He had said then, "When my final sleep comes I hope my soul will re-echo the words:

"If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

In his scrapbook he had pasted this poem by Harrison R. Merrill.

"Dear God, let this be heaven---
I do not ask for angel wings,
Just let me climb 'til comes the night,
I want no golden stair.
Then when I say my last adieu
And all farewells are given,
Just leave my spirit here, somewhere,
Oh, God, let this be heaven.

Oh, God, let this be heaven---
I do not crave white stainless robes,
I'll keep these marked by toil;
Instead of straight and narrow walks
I love trails soft with soil.
I have been healed by crystal streams
But these from snow crowned peaks
Where dawn burns incense to the day
And paints the sky in streaks.

Oh, God, let this be heaven---
I do not ask for golden streets
Or long for jasper walls,
Nor do I sigh for pearly shore
Where twilight never falls;
Just leave me here beside these peaks,
In this rough western land.
I love this hard old world of thine---