

HISTORY OF ALBERT LYONS

This was a personal history given to the High Priests Group meeting on May 28, 1978.

It is my turn to give my history. I haven't had a very eventful life, but have had many wonderful blessings given to me and would like to share some of them with you.

I was born of goodly parents in our family home which was located at about 8th West and 3rd South on July 17, 1909. I was the third of 4 boys. My oldest brother is now living in Lehi after having lived in California for 50 years. He likes Utah and is happy they made the move and so am I.

When I was about 6 years old we moved to the Poplar Grove area. The house was much larger but was in sad condition. In fact the neighbors said it was haunted, but this didn't worry us. There was a potato cellar in the back yard and fruit trees, chicken coops and rabbit pens. Dad got busy and we boys helped and we soon had it looking real nice. Dad loved animals and he got the idea he could make money raising cats. We always had lots of long haired Persian cats to take care of. Dad sold the males for \$10 and the females for \$15 and it did help us financially.

At this time we went to the Poplar Grove Ward with Mother. Dad didn't belong to the Church. When I was about 10 years old Mother made arrangements to have us 4 boys baptized, but Dad wouldn't give his permission so none of us were baptized. She felt bad. When we became Scout age we joined the troop at the Neighborhood House. Oscar Kirkham was our leader. He sure was a good one. He later became Scout Commissioner and did a lot to help the scout program.

Some years later we moved into a new home on Van Buren Avenue and I attended South Jr. High School. Then I graduated from West High School in 1928. I enjoyed school. At this time it was compulsory to take R.O.T.C. but I sure didn't like it. Football was my favorite subject. I wasn't very big but played to win and in 1927 West won the State Championship. I have a picture of this team and the little gold football they gave us, but the sweater was worn out long ago. I still enjoy all sports as a T. V. spectator, but football is still my favorite.

During one summer I worked on the D&RG railroad section gang. I worked this job for two reasons. First to help build my muscles for football season and second to buy my school clothes. My wages were \$.36 an hour and that was the hardest work I ever did. After graduating I had the opportunity to follow in my father's and grandfather's footsteps and work a friend's vacation as a messenger boy on the railroad for \$.56 an hour. That two weeks extended into 45 years with the Union Pacific Railroad. When I retired in July 1973 I had worked just about every job in the clerical Department. For several years I had charge of the transportation of all the missionaries of the church and the General Authorities.

Brother Murdock was the Church transportation agent at this time and he sure was a good man to work with. This job gave me many opportunities to meet some of our great leaders.

One I especially remember was Elder Matthew Cowley. He would come in

our office nearly every time he passed the Hotel Utah and would always have an interesting story or experience to tell us. Elder Levi Edgar Young would also stop in real often. He was always in a hurry and would say, "I really don't want any tickets but someone is coming down the street and I haven't time to talk to them right now, so I'll just wait until they go by then I'll be on my way." We would all smile and understand.

The old Grabateria was a favorite gathering place for many of my friends and also church workers. There was always good snacks, drinks and sandwiches. The food was good, reasonable and the service was fast. It was a good place to spend our lunch hour and also visit with friends.

During the war all of the troop trains had to have a representative of the railroad as well as a military officer in charge on all trains. I was assigned by the traffic department to act as one of these representatives for all of the trains going East or West. I was on one of these trains when the armistice was signed and when we stopped in Pocatello a band greeted us and the USO served us lots of food and drinks and we were all real happy to hear the war was over, but we sure had a hard time getting everyone back on the train.

I do appreciate the opportunities that my employment afforded me. It helped me to meet many wonderful people and also gave me the opportunity to travel across the country. When our twins graduated from high school they wanted a trip to New York as their gift. We had a wonderful time and to help with expenses the Grayline Sightseeing Company gave me a Gold Card or Pass and we were able to see more places than we could have afforded. The boat trip around the Island was most interesting, we also climbed the Statue of Liberty.

In 1935 I met Cleo at a dance. We were married a year later. Cleo and my brother Emery got me interested in the Church and we had the stake missionaries come to our home and on January 23, 1941 my brother baptized me and Cleo's brother confirmed me. In a short time I was advanced in the Priesthood and on Jan 4, 1942 I was made an Elder. On June 5, 1942 we went to the Temple. We had three children at this time that were sealed to us.

A short time before I was baptized Dick Foreman came to me and asked me to be his counselor in the MIA. This was the beginning of my church activities. We lived in the Whittier Ward, Wells Stake. Dick's other counselor was a neighbor of mine, a very quiet, humble Mexican convert, Gabe Torres and we had a good MIA and I learned a lot about the Church from these two men.

Soon the Ward was divided and I was called to be Ward Clerk of the new Browning Ward. I held this position for 7 1/2 years. Dick stayed in the old ward and then moved away and I was so happy when we moved into this ward and saw him again. He has been a real inspiration to me.

On the 2nd of May 1946 I was ordained a Seventy by Elder Milton R. Hunter. After I was released as ward clerk I served as one of the Presidents of the Seventies until 1950 when we moved into Hawthorne Ward, Sugarhouse Stake. I continued my activities in the Seventies Quorum until I was called to be a counselor in the bishopric. I was ordained a High Priest and set apart as a counselor in the Hawthorne Ward on Jan 19, 1957 by Sterling W. Sill. I served in this position for 5 years. I had the full

support of my wife and family in every position I have held and each position has helped to strengthen my testimony.

We have six children, the oldest are our twin daughters, both have served mission. We also have three other daughters and one son. I am so thankful for my son to carry on our family name. They have all been good children and have brought us much happiness. We also have 11 wonderful grandchildren.

When our children started getting married and spreading their wings we decided to look for a smaller home. In July 1963 we moved into our little home on the corner. We have many wonderful people here and have had many wonderful experiences. My first Church calling in this ward was Chairman of the Aaronic Priesthood which gave me the opportunity to get acquainted with the young people and their parents. I also enjoyed attending the sport activities the boys were involved in. Then I was called to serve in the Sunday School Presidency with Clarence Coombs and Al Hansen which I enjoyed very much until my health made it impossible for me to continue.

I have missed not being able to be as active as I used to be, but am thankful I can come over whenever possible. I remember some time ago Dick and Brother Eccles came to our house to visit and suggested I get a wheelchair. This was something I really didn't want to consider but we talked it over and decided to try it and now I realize they were right and I really do enjoy being able to meet with you. I appreciate all who have helped to bring me over and want to thank Jim Downward for the privilege of going to the temple with them so many times. I pray the Lord will continue to bless him and his family and all of you.

Before closing I thought I would tell you a little about my health problems. About 8 years ago I started falling down quite often so I went into the hospital for tests. The results of some of them were encouraging but the muscle biopsy tests they took showed I had a rare muscle disease called Poly-myositis, which means inflammation of many muscles. There isn't much they can do for it. I take Predizone for it, which slows it down, but it has it's side effects such as ulcers, stomach problems and cataract. We don't realize how important each little muscle is until the strength it gives us is gone.

I also have Parkinson's disease on my right side and it is starting to affect my throat. I take medication for this too that helps some.

When I went into the hospital last November. I had bleeding ulcers and pneumonia. My blood pressure went so low my body went into shock and they rushed me to Intensive Care where I stayed for 5 days. The doctors sure have a great amount of knowledge to know what to do when things like this happen. With prayers of the people in this ward and my family I started to improve and they took the tubes away one by one until I was well enough to be transferred back to the other floor. I continued to improve and was soon able to go home. I hope I never have to go through this experience again. I do appreciate all of you in this Quorum and this wonderful ward. I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Observations of Carolyn Lyons Engstrom, Daughter

As I typed this history I felt I should add a post script to it. I

have also been born of goodly parents and ones who have taught me the Gospel. I have many fond memories of my father and can not record all of them, but will record a few of the personal ones.

I always appreciated the way he would give of his time on Saturdays to take me to my accordion lessons and the encouragement he gave me to keep on playing. I appreciate the courage he had in the last years of his life when his health was deteriorating. He never seemed to get discouraged even if he had to depend so much on others; he always seemed to appreciate it so much.

I remember the sacrifices he made for us. Once he was offered a better job for the railroad if he would move to Ogden and so we had a family council and none of us children wanted to move so he turned down the promotion and spent the rest of his working days in Salt Lake. He often took extra work to help provide for us. He had a job as a night custodian at Keith O'Brians in Sugarhouse where he would go from 9 to midnight several nights a week. My mother also worked at different jobs as I was growing up to help support the family. I remember her working at the hospital and breaking her leg and coming home in a cast. She also worked as a school lunch cook (which is very hard work).

I remember my father with deep affection and thankfulness to the Lord for letting me come into this family.