

LIFE HISTORY OF ELMER DELOS HUNTSMAN

I, **ELMER DELOS HUNTSMAN**, am the son of Elmer Ames Huntsman, who is the son of Isaiah Huntsman, who is the son of James Huntsman, who is the son of James Huntsman.

My mother's maiden name was Augusta Ann Norton, who is the daughter of Isaac Norton, who is the son of John Warren Norton.

I was born at Annabella, Utah, July 24, 1901, in a two room log house owned by my parents. Father was a miner and worked in the coal mines at Sunnyside at the time of my birth. I was blessed on September 1st, 1901, by Delmar Nebecker.

When I was three years old, my father took seriously ill with appendicitis and was immediately rushed to Salt Lake City for surgery. When the doctors operated, they found his appendix broken and gave him no hope for recovery. We were notified of his condition, and mother, with her children, left for Salt Lake City to see him. While we were in Salt Lake we received word that our home and all it's contents had burned to the ground! Somehow, Father learned of our home being destroyed, and up until that time he hadn't had any hope of ever leaving the hospital alive. He offered a prayer to the Lord in all sincerity and humbleness and told Him that he couldn't leave his family under such circumstances, and he promised the Lord that if He would preserve his life so that he could establish his family again, he would spend the rest of his life in His service. This promise he kept. After offering this prayer, he began to improve and was soon on his way to recovery. Some of our relatives called to see Father, and when he learned they were on their way to Idaho to make their homes, he asked them to wait a few days until he could gain more strength and then he would go with them. They agreed to wait. Father was soon released from the hospital, and so on May 31, 1904, we left for Idaho. Father had to walk all the way because he could not

stand the jolt and bounce of the wagon. All that he had saved and owned went up in flames in our little home in Annabella, Utah.

Father arrived in Idaho with fifty pounds of flour and a quarter in his pocket, with a wife and five children to support. He worked for wages for some time and then bought the farm in Woodville on June 3, 1905, (where Mother and Father lived until their deaths). Father secured a few blacksmith tools and started to do "blacksmithing" to get a little extra money to sustain life. He cleared sage brush off the farm in the day time and worked in the blacksmith shop by lantern light at night in order to make the payment on the farm.

At six years of age, I was sent to school with my brother and sister. I shall never forget my first day at that one room school house. I was very excited and nervous, and after school had taken up and I was sitting in a double bench with my brother Vern, I began to cry. The teacher, who was William Bartlet, gave me a book to pacify me. I supposed he gave it to me to read, and knowing that I couldn't read, I burst into tears again. My brother Vern asked me what the problem was, and I told him I couldn't read that book and he told me I didn't have to...just look at the pictures.

I

I remember many experiences while attending school. We went skating one noon on the Woodville Canal. We went several miles up the canal, and in doing so we underestimated the time. When we arrived back at school, it was 1:30 P.M., so we had to stay in after school several nights for this error in judgement.

I remember attending church at the Hall on the town-sight, which was later used for amusement and dancing, and then still later it was turned into an apartment house by my brother Vern. They would draw curtains to separate the classes, and you could

hear all the teachers talking at the same time. How we ever got anything out of Sunday School under those circumstances is more than I can understand, but I remember many of my teachers and some of the lessons that were impressed upon my mind, and how they helped me keep in line with the Church.

When I was eight years of age, I was taken with some other children, on a Saturday afternoon, to the canal just in front of the one room school house to be baptized. When I was smaller I fell into a ditch and it left me very much afraid of water, especially large amounts of it, such as was in the canal. The water was riled, dirty, and running swiftly. I became frightened and didn't want to be pushed under that dirty water. I guess I created quite a scene and was taken home unbaptized. My father thought that it was pure stubbornness and told me he wouldn't take me again, but when I got ready to be baptized I should make it known to him. It was one of my Sunday School teachers, Harry Hurst, that helped me understand the purpose and importance of baptism. I consented to baptism, and so on the 2nd of September 1911, I was baptized by James P. Fugal and was confirmed a member the following day at Sacrament Meeting by the same brother.

I often think of the difference between then and now. Now, the Bishop interviews the boy or girl and they understand fully the purpose of the ordinance before they are issued a certificate to be baptized. Then they go to the font at the Stake House, which is white and clean, are dressed in white clothes, and step into clean warm water to be baptized members of this great Church.

When I was a small boy, nine or ten years of age, I was asked by my father to herd the pigs on the wheat stubble while he hauled the newly threshed grain to the mill. I made a small fire and was roasting wheat heads and eating them when a gust of wind came up and spread the fire into the stubble. It was burning toward the straw stack and the wheat that was sacked and piled by it. I tried to put the fire out, but it spread faster than I could extinguish it. So I decided to call on the Lord for help. I knelt down in the grain stubble and prayed for help to stop the

fire. When I arose to my feet and opened my eyes, the fire was completely out! From that day to the present time, I know that God hears and answers prayers.

On another occasion when I was twelve years old, I had a similar experience. In order to make a few dollars for clothes and for spending money, I gathered up the neighborhood cows and herded them on the sage brush ground north west of our home, for \$1.00 per head a month. I was trying to catch young jack rabbits one day and had run some distance when I decided to get back to the cows. No cows were in sight! I looked in every direction where they had grazed, but no cows could I find. Again I decided to pray for help in finding them. I knelt and prayed, and as I stood up and looked, I saw the cows coming up over the ridge toward me about one half mile away.

As a boy, I witnessed a miraculous healing through administration by an Apostle. My younger sister Zalia, contacted a dreadful disease called Infantile Paralysis and had lost complete control of her arms and legs. Our doctor said nothing more could be done, and she would be crippled the rest of her life. Father and Mother had great faith and decided to take her to Stake Conference and have the visiting Brethren administer to her. After the morning session, the Stake Presidency and Apostle David O. McKay administered to her. Apostle McKay sealed the anointing and promised her she would again use her limbs. Just a few days after the conference, she used her arms some and one morning as Mother was washing the morning dishes, she looked in the front room, and my little sister had got hold of a chair and pulled herself up alone. She was standing by the chair. In just a few days, with some help, she was walking again! At this writing today, she is as normal as any woman and is the mother of four children.

I was ordained a Deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood the 10th of November 1913, by John M. Rider. I shall always remember how proud I was when I passed the sacrament the first time. The only person I remember was my mother looking at me

with a smile of approval and gratitude

We gathered Fast Offerings in "kind" (which is, whatever the members had to offer: meat, butter, eggs, sugar, chickens, and even clothing). Very few paid cash. In the summer we would ride our horses and tie a clean white sack on our saddle. In the sacks we would put whatever they gave us. In the winter we would hitch a team on a sleigh and make the rounds.

I remember holding Priesthood Meetings on Monday nights down at the Hall. Joseph P. Bischoff was Bishop at the time I was a deacon, and one night he called me to the stand to talk. It scared me nearly to death, and so it was some time before I could get to my feet and walk up in front of the Priesthood group. I had been taught to obey those in authority over me by my parents and the Church, so I obeyed. I don't remember what I said, but it was very short. When I returned to my seat, I was happy that I obeyed as it helped give me strength to carry on. Shortly after this, I was made President of the Deacons Quorum.

I also took scouting under Scoutmaster George H. Risenmay during this period of my life. I remember how thrilled I was with Scouting and the training I received.

I was ordained a Teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood by George H. Risenmay, a counselor to Bishop Bischoff, on the 5th of February 1917. I remember visiting as a Ward Teacher and remember some of the men I had as partners. One partner, Winfield Hurst, strengthened my testimony by the life he lived and the fine way he did his Ward Teaching. Because of him and the influence of some others, I always wanted to do my Ward Teaching. Others, I'm sorry to say, weren't very good examples. It was during this period of my life that many temptations came. Some of my boyfriends started smoking. Some drinking of alcohol would take place in our groups at dances and elsewhere. I didn't escape all temptations, but somehow I was able to keep in the line of decency and attended to my Priesthood Quorum duties.

I remember one Father and Son's Outing in the Teton mountains. After breakfast, we started on a hike to the top of Table Rock. My father was the oldest man in the group, and I was sure he would not make it to the top. About thirty minutes after the first group arrived at the top, here came my father, and I have never been so proud of him! It was announced on the spot that my father was the oldest man to climb to the top of Table Rock.

When I arrived at the age to be ordained a Priest, I was considered worthy to be advanced. I was ordained to that office on the 2nd of February 1920, by Winfield Hurst. It was during my Aaronic Priesthood Quorum years that I remember many happy experiences in the M.I.A. [Mutual Improvement Association]. The Father and Son's Outings were all outstanding, and they were the happiest trips I had ever taken. So many thanks to my father for always finding the time to take us boys on such outings. Taking part in the M.I.A. plays and going from ward to ward to put them on were also very happy times.

When I was about eighteen, I had a very unhappy experience. Our home caught fire and burned to the ground. We were able to save only a few pieces of furniture. I had just bought a new suit and other clothes, and I had a set of drums which I played in our family orchestra to make a little spending money. They all went up in smoke! It was a sad day, not only for me, but for my folks who had their son Vernard in the mission field. With faith and works, my brother was able to finish his mission, and in a few years, Mother and Dad had built another new home.

My father was not able to send me on a mission when I was nineteen because of our home burning down, but he promised me that he would send me when he got a new one built. This is the reason I was twenty-four before I was called to serve on my mission.

On April 27, 1924, I received the Melchizedek Priesthood and was ordained and Elder by Lloyd Bennett. I was sustained and set apart as a

counselor in the Elders Quorum Presidency of our stake. At that time there was only one quorum of Elders in the Shelley Stake.

In the spring of 1925, I made my first trip to Salt Lake City, Utah. It was in June, during the M.I.A. Golden Jubilee Celebration. How thrilled we were as we marched in the parade as a group from Idaho singing, "O, we're from Idaho, Idaho. Up where the big spuds grow." Up until that time, I had hardly been out of Woodville. Lava Hot Springs, to the south, was as far as I had been. I thought Salt Lake City was about the largest city in the United States.

In the spring of 1926, I received a call from the Prophet to serve in the Southern States Mission. I left for Salt Lake City, in company with my brother Vern, on the 17th of February 1926, where I entered the mission home for a two week training course, prior to my leaving for the mission field. As I left, I couldn't help thinking of how well my father had kept his promise to the Lord. I was the third son he was willing to send into the mission field from the proceeds of a forty acre farm, and his tithing was always full and honest.

During my mission in Tennessee, some of my favorite companions were Quentin Shumway, Robert Gordon, and Donald Ellsworth. I labored mostly in the Chatanooga, Nashville, Knoxville and Memphis areas. My mission was a difficult but happy time for me. Witnessing God's children accept the Gospel and go into the waters of baptism was a truly marvelous experience. I received an honorable release from the mission on the 15th of March 1928.

I reported my mission to the Ward on the 8th of April 1928, and then on May 7th, to the Shelley Stake.

That spring, I rented Father's farm. That year we sold potatoes for only thirty-five cents per hundred pounds. In September, after George H. Risenmay was sustained as Bishop of the Ward, I was chosen as President of the Woodville Ward

M.I.A.

In the spring of 1928, I first met my wife-to-be, who was a sister to one of my missionary companions, Quentin Shumway. He brought his two sisters, Nettie and Anona, out to our home for a brief visit while their folks were in Idaho Falls on business. Anona was wearing a diamond at the time, but as she said "Hello" to me, I noticed her sweet smile. We all had a nice visit, and after they left, I asked my mother which of the two girls she was most impressed with. She commented, "The one on the piano stool," which was Anona.

Soon after that, I went to Treasureton, Utah, to visit the Shumways. I had made a date by mail with Nettie. When I arrived at the Shumway Ranch, I found Anona milking cows by hand. Instead of being embarrassed, as most young girls would be, she kept right on milking as she talked to me. Even though she was in her milking clothes, there was that sweet smile, and she looked good to me. She told me that she helped with the chores while the men were busy in the harvest. She told me where I could find Quentin in the field.

The next afternoon, Quentin and his girl and Nettie and I had planned a drive up Bear River Canyon. We invited Anona to go along with us. She wasn't wearing her diamond! She hesitated, but we finally persuaded her to go along. I told her quietly that I wanted her to go as much as I wanted Nettie to go. I sat between Nettie and Anona in the back of the car, and we had a good time. By the end of the day, my attention had been diverted from one lovely young lady to the other...I couldn't keep my eyes off of Anona. When we returned home that evening, Nettie told her brother Quentin that I was not interested in her, but was interested in her sister, Anona!

After I returned home, I wrote Anona and asked her for a date. Through the persuasion of Quentin and her family, Anona accepted. I suggested that Quent come up and meet my sister Zalia and bring Nettie and Anona. Anona hesitated to come because she thought I was interested in

Nettie, and Quentin and Nettie weren't really sure which one I was interested in. They agreed to come and decided ahead of time that which ever one I chose to be with, the other would go along and be a good sport. Well, as we got ready to leave to go to the movie that evening, I opened the door of the car and held the seat down so Quent and Zalia could get in the back seat, and then I straightened the front seat and took hold of Anona's arm and put her in the center beside me. I helped Nettie into the outside seat...*and then they knew!*

At first I felt that Anona had no interest in me. Besides breaking her engagement, she also had a boyfriend in the mission field that she was interested in, and she told me that she needed time to think things over.

I drove the hundred and fifteen miles many times in my Durrant to court my lady fair. In the fall, on a visit to Treasureton, after the family had retired, and while standing in front of the old cook stove which we used for the warmth, *I asked her to marry me, and she accepted. I was a happy man!*

I drove down to get Anona and brought her home with me to spend Christmas with my folks that winter, and then we drove back to Treasureton and spent New Years with the Shumways. We had a severe winter that year, and while I was there, we had a heavy snow storm. When I got ready to leave, Anona's dad told me he thought I had better go around through Preston because he didn't think I could cut across the hills to the highway. I didn't listen to him and tried it anyway. I soon found out he was right. However by then, I could not turn around to go back. It took me all day to go eight miles. I did a lot of shoveling, backing up, praying, and more shoveling. I tore my snow chains into pieces and finally wrapped a piece of barbed wire around the tires. Eventually I made it to the highway and went on home, but it was a day to be remembered.

January 20, 1929, I was sustained as Ward Chorister. Because of heavy snow storms, most of the roads were blocked all winter long. I attended Leadership Week at Ricks College in Rexburg,

Idaho. I had to go by train because the Yellowstone Highway was blocked with snow. Sleighs met the crowd at the depot to take us to the College.

April 1, 1929, I started working for my brother Wesley, for \$85.00 a month. I decided that working for wages would be better than farming because of the low farm prices.

Anona and I were married on the 20th of June 1929, in the Logan Temple. Present at our marriage were my father and mother, Anona's father and mother, her Grandmother Hymas, her sister Hattie Neeley, and sister-in-law Thelma Shumway. Our first home was the little house on my father's farm, which was owned by my sister, Oreta. Earlier that spring, I had planted flowers in the little flower bed spelling my sweetheart's name, "A N O N A." By the time we were married, they were blooming and I remember how thrilled she was when I brought her to look at our first home and she saw those flowers. Our furniture consisted of a dresser and bed that I had purchased prior to our marriage, an unpainted table and chairs we were given as a wedding gift, a cupboard and a new Monarch Range we had purchased. As a bonus with the range, we were given new linoleum to cover our kitchen floor. We had all the necessities, and we were happy in our little love nest.

On August 11, 1929, Anona was sustained as Second Counselor in the Ward Y.W.M.I.A. (Young Women Mutual Improvement Association)

After the spud crop was harvested in '29, we moved to Idaho Falls, and we both obtained employment. I worked at J.C. Penny's and Anona worked at Wright's Department Store (which is now known as C.C. Andersons). After the first of the year, I was laid off and couldn't find employment. My brother Vern had offered me a job trucking on a percentage basis, so we came back to Woodville. I drove truck until spring and then decided to work for Wesley again. My sister needed the house we had lived in before, so Wesley and I built a new two room house on his farm for Anona and I. This was our second home.

I played the drums in the Hanson Dance Orchestra for a few years to earn some extra money. I also did some vocal soloing with them. Anona would go with me and do some dancing, but I would keep my eyes on her from my position behind the drums.

On the 29th of July 1930, my grandfather, Isaac Norton, passed away. He had been living with my parents at the time. He was 93 years of age at his death, and he was the last of our grandparents. The funeral services were held the 3rd of August 1930, at Woodville, and he was buried in the Shelley Cemetery.

In August there was a lull in the farm work, so my brother let me off for a week. Anona and I took a trip to Yellowstone Park. This was our honeymoon! When we first got married, we were so busy and needed money so bad we hadn't taken time for a honeymoon.

In September, I was chosen as Stake Music Director of the M.I.A. and was released as Ward President of the M.I.A. on November 9, 1930.

Our first baby was born the 23rd of November 1930. He was our pride and joy, and we named him Merrill Delos. We spent Christmas with Anona's folks, and we took the first picture of our baby on Christmas day. While we were there in Treasureton, the baby became seriously ill with bronchial pneumonia, and on the 5th of January 1931, he passed away. Our hearts were saddened, but we knew that he was still our baby, and we would be with him again. We buried him January 7th, 1931, in the Shelley Cemetery.

We rented a farm from my brother Vern, which we later bought. On March 1, 1931, we moved into our new location across the river from Woodville near the south bank. We sold part of our potato crop for thirty-five cents a sack in November, and then in the spring of 1932, we sold the balance for twelve and one-half cents per hundred pounds. Hogs were then two and one-half cents and butterfat only eighteen cents a pound. The national

depression was taking its toll.

On November 4, 1931, our second baby blessed our home. This time, a baby girl weighing eight and a half pounds. On December 6, I gave her a Father's Blessing and a name. Her name was a combination of our names, Delos and Anona. It was "Deona."

We next had two little sons who were to be very good friends as they grew up and throughout their lives. Thayne Shumway was born on the 13th of October 1933, and Dale Robert was born on the 25th of June 1935. As they grew up, they were a big help to me on the farm.

On December 12, 1938, I was sustained as Second Counselor to Bishop George H. Risenmay.

In 1938, my father and mother's family had one of our outstanding Family Reunions. We chartered a bus, and all of my brothers and sisters, and their husbands or wives, went through Yellowstone Park together. We really enjoyed ourselves. It was one of the happiest experiences of my life. I would like someday to do the same thing with my own family.

On April 17, 1939, I was called by President J. Berkley Larson to be Bishop of the Woodville Ward. On November 19, 1939, I was sustained as Bishop, with Walter Christensen as First Counselor and A. Roy Summers as Second Counselor. April 14, 1940, I was ordained and set apart as Bishop by Apostle Reed Smoot. He stated that he had known and shook the hands of all the Presidents of the Church except the Prophet Joseph Smith. So I had the privilege of shaking the hand that had shaken the hands of all those wonderful prophets.

Our second daughter, Julene, was born on the 17th of January 1940. How happy Deona was to have a little sister.

The first year I was Bishop, we beautified the grounds of our chapel. On April 27, 1940, we took the Aaronic Priesthood boys on a Stake Pilgrimage to Clarkston, Utah, to take part in the unveiling of

the new Martin Harris Monument. There were three men there who had known Martin personally. They were a Bro. Godfrey, a Bro. Simmon, and a Doctor Stevenson. Each had heard Martin Harris bear testimony concerning the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

September 1, 1940, I performed my first marriage as Bishop. It was for Ernest Nelson and Juanita Irene Crow.

September 3, 1940, I started excavating for a basement to add on to our home. I dug the basement by myself with a team of horses and a slip scraper. We added a new bedroom, a bathroom and a sun porch above the basement.

On the 12th of December 1944, we were blessed with another precious baby girl, whom we named Vanece. Each new baby was very welcome into our family and brought us much joy.

On September 23, 1945, we attended, by invitation, the dedicatory services of the Idaho Falls L.D.S. Temple. After serving five years as bishop, I was released on December 9th, 1945.

In 1946, we were made members of the Shelley First Ward, and I left the Woodville Ward in which I had been raised and where I had lived for forty-two years.

In September of 1946, I went with my father-in-law, Charles Shumway, my brother-in-law, Clarence Neeley, and his friend, on a trip back east to follow the Pioneer Trail westward. Our first place of interest was Independence, Missouri. There we met President Thomas E. Romney. He outlined the places in and around Independence that we might be interested in seeing. We first went north ten miles to Liberty Jail, where the Prophet Joseph Smith and others had been confined for many months. In Richmond, we visited the graves of David Whitmer in the City Cemetery, and Oliver Cowdery in what is called "the Mormon Cemetery." Here the Church had just erected a large granite monument in memory of the three witnesses and the Book of Mormon.

We then visited the Temple site at Far West. Just north of Richmond, across the Crooked River, is where David W. Patten was killed. He was the first martyr of the Church. We also visited Adam-Ondi-Ahman. From there we crossed the Mississippi River at Hannibal, Missouri, into Illinois and drove north up the river to Nauvoo. We stayed that night at the original home of Loran Farr, who was President of the Seventies at Nauvoo. We visited the homestead of the Prophet Joseph, where he lived from 1839 to 1842, also the Mansion House. From there we went to the graves of the Prophet Joseph, his wife Emma, and his brother Hyrum.

We then drove to Carthage where we were taken through the Carthage Jail. There we went into the cell where the Prophet Joseph, Hyrum, John Taylor and Willard Richards were confined. We saw the bullet hole through the door that hit John Taylor, and we saw his blood stains on the floor. I sat in the window from which the Prophet leaped as he was shot and killed.

We then started west, following the Pioneer Trail as near as possible. The next major place of interest was when we arrived at Council Bluffs. Here we visited the Chieftain Hotel where we were shown the Historical Room. It was dedicated to the first Mormon settlers. On the walls were painted the homes and buildings as they appeared when the Saints settled there.

Then we crossed the Missouri River into Nebraska, where we visited the Pioneer Mormon Cemetery at Florence or "Winter Quarters." There we have a memorial that is a credit to the Church. On a large bronze plaque are the names of the nearly six hundred Saints who died and were buried in this enclosure that terrible winter at Winter Quarters. Among the names were two Shumways. Grandpa (Charles Mendon) Shumway's grandmother and aunt, (wife and daughter of Charles Shumway). Inscribed on the West Gate are these words, "*In loving memory of the six thousand devoted pioneers who died on the plains between 1846 and 1869.*" On the South Gate were these words, "*For they shall rest from their labors here and*

continue their work," D&C Sec. 124:86.

From Winter Quarters, we followed the Pioneer Trail on to Salt Lake City.

I have taken many parts in drama and plays in my lifetime, but the most outstanding part I have ever taken was in the Shelley Stake drama called "A Stranger Passes," presented March 19, 1946. I played the "Stranger."

On July 21, 1951, in connection with the Shelley Stake Pioneer Day Celebration, a pageant was presented which was called "The Land of Promise." In it I played the part of a grandfather.

In 1949, I was sustained as Stake Superintendent of the Sunday School, and in this work I received a lot of joy visiting the ten wards in the Shelley Stake and meeting many people. After my release as Superintendent, I was sustained as Group Leader of the High Priests in the Shelley First Ward. Later I was appointed President of the First Ward Choir, and I also served as Chairman of the Ward Education Committee.

Another baby girl blessed our home on the 8th of December 1948. We gave her the name of Neva, and we all loved her very much.

Anona was expecting a baby in the spring of 1950, and two months before the baby was due, she began hemorrhaging. She was hospitalized for a few days, but on the 26th of May 1950, our little baby boy was stillborn. We held grave side services for him and buried him beside our little Merrill. We almost lost Anona, too. She was very ill, but through the power of administration and faith, she recovered and was allowed to continue raising our family, for which I will ever be grateful to my Heavenly Father.

On September 20th, 1950, Anona and I, along with her brother Charles and his wife, Ada, and her brother Dean and his wife, Evelyn, all left for a weeks trip up into the northwest. We visited with my sister Zalia in Portland, Oregon and my sister Oreta in Ellensburg, Washington. We also visited

the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River, the base of which covers thirty-five acres.

On November 16, 1950, our oldest daughter Deona married a returned missionary, Donald Robinson Kirkham, in the Idaho Falls Temple.

On March 26, 1953, our first grandchild was born to Donald (Bob) and Deona, and they named her Gayla.

Our son Thayne received a call to fill a mission in Argentina, South America, and he left Salt Lake City the 25th of November 1953. Our son Dale also received a call to fill a mission in Argentina and left September 4th,

1955. Thayne and Dale always liked to do things together so this seemed natural. It was normally quite unusual for brothers to be in the same mission at the same time, and as a climax to this special privilege, they were given the opportunity to labor together as missionary companions for four months.

After Thayne's return from his mission, he was drafted into the U.S. Army where he served for two years. Upon his return from the service he married Alene Beth Cox in the Idaho Falls Temple on the 24th October 1958.

Dale returned from his mission and married Denise Ann Cox (a cousin of Alene's) in the Idaho Falls Temple on the 22nd of August 1958.

During my life I have held civic positions which included serving on the County Soil Conservative Committee, serving as Chairman of the Shelley Local Farm Bureau, Vice President of the Idaho Purebred Sheep Breeders Association, and on the committee of the Idaho Annual Spud Day Celebration in Shelley, Idaho.

Our farm was considered an attractive farm, and on it several farm tours were conducted. I had a sign made that read, "The Riverbank Farm, Purebred Panama Sheep." Under the direction of our County Agent, some of the tours included Sheep Tours, Dairy Tours, Irrigation Tours, etc.

During the fall and winter of '58 and '59, we built a new brick house at 356 North Park in Shelley and moved into our new home in February of 1959. (This move did not require that we change wards). Our son Dale, and his wife Denise, then moved onto the farm.

In 1961, I was sustained as a member of the Stake Senior Aaronic Priesthood Committee.

On 31st of August 1961, Julene married Larry Earl Hampton in the Idaho Falls Temple.

February 23, 1964, I was sustained as an assistant Stake Clerk in the Shelley Stake. My assignment was Home Teaching and Secretary of the Shelley Stake High Priests Quorum. I served in this assignment under two stake presidents, Pres. George E. Grover and Pres. Eugene Christensen, until the time Anona and I were called to fill a mission for the Church.

Vanece married George Henry Siems on the 8th of October 1965, in the Idaho Falls Temple.

On February 21, 1968, Anona and I were called to be officiators at the Idaho Falls Temple, and are still serving in this calling at this writing (October 15, 1981). This has been the most enjoyable and spiritually edifying experience in our lives, even though we have to arise at 4:00 A.M. to be at the Temple at 4:45 A.M. for our meeting with the Temple Presidency. Many rich spiritual experiences have come to us during our service as officiators. One of the highlights is to see children sealed to their parents--all dressed in pure white. It is a beautiful sight!

My father had four sons: Evon Wesley, Vernard, Elmer Delos, and Lenard G. All four of us have served as officiators in the Idaho Falls Temple.

On August 21, 1968, our youngest, Neva, married Hal Pratt Poulsen in the Idaho Falls Temple. We are grateful that each of our children have chosen to be married in the Holy Temple.

On November 1, 1968, Anona and I received mission calls to serve in the Southwest Indian Mission, under the direction of Mission President Dale Tingey. This call was one of the greatest challenges my wife and I have ever had in our lifetime of service in the Church. It was difficult to know how to labor among the Indians, but with the help of the Lord, and after placing ourselves on the level of the Indian people, we found it most rewarding. My first assignment was to be Branch President of the Perea Branch of the Gallup Mission District, and this was really a test of our faith. We found five hundred members on the records of the Branch, but only twelve to fifteen attended church meetings. Not one of the members held the Melchizedek Priesthood. I had to lead the singing, then offer the prayer, administer to the Sacrament, and then preach the sermon. I felt like a sectarian minister. I assigned Sister Huntsman to lead the singing, teach the Sunday School class and, also, to be the custodian of the chapel. We were allowed \$100.00 per month for the custodian, and we turned this money into the Branch Budget, because they were in the red. We did the custodian work without pay.

Perea Branch was Navajo country. We had an old breezy trailer home as our living quarters, with no neighbors, no car (when we started), no telephone, and we felt isolated from the rest of the world. We went into Gallup, the "Indian Capital" of the world, for our groceries and to District meetings. It was at Perea, on January 18th, that Thayne and Alene brought our new pickup, and were we glad to see them and the pickup. Before we left Perea Branch, we had an average of seventy-five in attendance, and I had a Lamanite counselor holding the Priesthood and another Lamanite brother ready to be advanced to the Priesthood to be my other counselor. It was in this branch that we were given a most beautiful Navajo rug by Sister Grace Charleton.

Our next assignment was down at Fort Apache in Arizona among the White River Apache's. We were sent there to finish a farm project which had been started. We were only there for four months,

but we learned to love the Apaches. They were more jovial than the Navajos. Here Sister Huntsman learned to do bead work, as taught by the Apache Sisters. She also got a cradle board in which they pack their babies. The Apaches were skilled in making cradle boards.

We were then transferred to Dulce, New Mexico. It was way up in the northern part of the State, just next to the Colorado State line. Here we labored among the Hickorella Apaches. We spent our time proselyting and helping in the Branch as teachers in the Sunday School and Priesthood meetings.

We baptized many, including one family, the Montoyas. This branch was well organized. We found it to be very cold the winter we spent there, but we had a comfortable two-room home to live in.

While there, Dale, Denise and family visited us and then Hal and Neva came and spent Christmas Day with us. It was a real joy to see some of our family again. George and Vanece, and their son Travis, also came to visit us at Dulce.

We enjoyed our labors there in Dulce very much, and while laboring there, we were presented with the *Second Miler Pin* by President Dale Tingey. We were the only couple out of sixteen that received this honor for extra service.

We felt sure we would remain there the balance of our mission because of the success we experienced, but early one morning, President Tingey called me and said, "Elder Huntsman, I felt inspired to call you to go down among the Pueblo Indians to help them get their gardens and farms back in cultivation. They are on the verge of losing their water right on the Rio Grand. Will you go down and help them?" I said, "President Tingey, if you feel inspired to send us, certainly I will go!" So on May the 1st, 1970, we said goodbye to the Apaches in Dulce and packed our pickup to leave for Santa Clara, New Mexico.

On arriving in Santa Clara, May 2nd, we found the worst trailer accommodations we had ever had during our mission experience. No shower or bath, no ventilation, except the door. When Sister Huntsman saw where we were going to be living, she could not contain herself and broke down and cried. We got consent from President Tingey to get an air conditioner to put in the trailer so it would be livable. It was now early May and there was much to be done.

We found a suitable spot to plant an experimental garden and leveled it with two shovels and a leveler we made out of 2 X 4's. The Elders and I pulled it by hand lengthwise and crosswise until it was level enough to water. Anona and I then went up to Espanola and bought seeds of all kinds to plant. We spent two days down on the river bottoms where the cows had bedded and picked up cow chips to put on the garden, because I could see that the soil was lacking in humus. We put one sack of fertilizer and the cow chips on the area then planted the seed. I would like to mention here that when we went to the Governor of the tribe to get permission to help his people and get a piece of ground for the garden, he said, "Ground no good!" "Soil dead!" I said to him, "If you will let us have some soil, I'm sure we can bring it back to life!" So he consented. No one will ever know how that garden "blossomed as a rose," except those who saw it. The tomato vines grew four feet tall and were so heavy with tomatoes that they laid down on the ground. They measured six feet across the vine. When the Indians saw this garden, they all wanted us to help them get a garden started. Well, this was the start of the farm projects among the Pueblo Indians. We also had two fields of corn, and when Dr. Farnsworth came down from B.Y.U. to help with testing the ground, he said to me, "Elder Huntsman, you are growing 30 ears of corn where the Indians are growing one ear of the Indian corn."

With the help of the Lord, we were able to prove to the Indians that their ground was not "dead," and that they just had to put something back into the soil, rather than just take it off of the soil, as they had done for hundreds of years.

In Santa Clara, we lived next door to the Eugene Naranjo family who became and are our dear friends. Bob and Deona, and their family, came and visited us while at Santa Clara, and what a joy it was to see them.

We returned home from our mission in November 1970. We had our Welcome Home Program on December 20, 1970. Larry and Julene came from California and were there with the rest of our children.

Upon returning home, I was assigned by the Mission and the Brigham Young University to work on a committee of three to get free machinery from the stakes to send to the Indians to help them with their farming. We were able to secure eight truck loads of tractors and machinery to send down to them. Four of the trucks were the large semi forty foot type loaded to capacity with farm machinery and tractors. And thus ended our mission among Indian Israel.

In 1977, we had 500 acres of ground under cultivation among the Pueblo people, which started with the help of a couple of missionaries from Shelley, Idaho, and a whole new life had opened up for those dear Lamanite people.

In the Fall of 1971, we were very happy when two of our children, Thayne Huntsman and family and Bob Kirkham and family, each took an Indian placement student into their homes. These students returned year after year. Our whole family has a special place in their hearts for those brown skinned brothers and sisters.

On October 13, 1974, at the age of 73, I was called to serve on the High Council of the Shelley Idaho Stake. My assignment being the secretary of the Stake High Priests Quorum, Genealogy, and Temple assignments. While serving in this capacity, we set up a new Branch Genealogical Library in the Shelley Idaho Stake.

On October 30, 1979, we were called to attend the Idaho Falls Temple to receive a

Special Blessing under the hands of President Spencer W. Kimball and President Nathan E. Tanner.

During the year of 1979, Anona and my descendants totaled 47, and each of our children and grandchildren were active in the Church and serving the Lord in the capacities to which they had been called. Each of our children were holding executive positions in the Church at that time: Thayne as Bishop, Deona as Stake Young Women President, Dale as a High Councilman, Julene as President of the Ward Relief Society, Vanece as a counselor in the Ward Young Women, and Neva as President of the Ward Primary. We are extremely proud of each of them.

On Saturday, June 23, 1979, our children honored Anona and I on our 50th Wedding Anniversary with an open house in our back yard. We had beautiful weather, lovely refreshments, and 235 guests called during the evening. All of our family were present with us, and they presented us with a Book of Remembrance which held the personal histories of our family members. Our children sang a song written for us on this occasion by Gayla and Holger Nickel.

In 1980, we had five grandsons in the mission field at the same time. They and their missions were as follows:

Lane Huntsman	Australia-Melbourne
Michael Kirkham	Japan-Kobe
Darren Huntsman	Missouri-Independence
Bryan Huntsman	California-Oakland
Mark Kirkham	Japan-Fukuoka

We gave each of our children an acre of land in the pasture along the south bank of the Snake River on our farm. Bob and Deona built a new home there, Thayne and Alene followed, and then George and Vanece built their new home. Dale and Denise built onto the farm house where we raised our family, and now these four families are all in the same ward, the Woodville Second, while Anona and I are in the Shelley First.

On July 24, 1980, my children had a big birthday party for me on my 80th birthday. They portrayed my life in pictures and served refreshments to the many friends and relatives who dropped in. We had a lovely program, with some of the grandchildren performing and a couple doing some Hawaiian songs and dances.

In September 1980, the doctor diagnosed a skin cancer on my forehead, so in October I had to go into the hospital to have it surgically removed. This was my first time in the hospital and the first surgery of any type I had ever had. I have never had a broken bone or any health problem. That's pretty good for an eighty year old man to be able to say!

On October 28, 1981, after serving almost fourteen years under four different temple presidents (Parley A. Arave, Cecil Hart, D.V. Groberg, and Devere Harris), Anona and I were released as Temple Officiators at the Idaho Falls Temple. This service was one of the richest spiritual experiences of our lives. We plan to go to the temple and do endowments for the dead as long as our health will permit.

In January 1982, we were assigned to arrange and hold Home Evenings weekly at the Shelter Home, 328 State Street, in Shelley. At that time I served as the Priesthood Music Director, Secretary of the High Priests Group and as a Home Teacher doing 100% home teaching every month.

Anona and I still plant and care for a large garden by ourselves. I am a farmer at heart and enjoy working in the soil, growing pretty flowers, growing and sharing the garden produce with our family and neighbors. We have a nice raspberry patch which we share with our children and from which we sell some berries.

At this writing [July 1983] our descendants total sixty-four.

EPILOGUE

Delos loved his children and grandchildren and would often baby-sit the little ones while their mothers would go shopping, etc., with Anona. *His was a life of service.*

He and Anona continued driving to the Temple once or twice a week, doing three or four endowments each day. Delos' reflexes slowed in his latter years, and his family feared for his safety, so in 1987, they approached him about giving up his car keys. He kindly said he had been thinking about it and knew it was time. It was hard for him to have to be dependent on others for transportation, but he had a good attitude. The family pledged to drive he and Anona anywhere they wished to go and kept that promise.

So in April 1988, his last car, a gold colored Dodge, was sold to a nephew, Brent Shumway. The folks were happy that a relative was enjoying their "good old car," and it tickled them as they would see it being driven past their home. Delos and Anona lived just a block and a half from their chapel, so when the weather was good, they would walk to church arm in arm.

Delos loved parades, and when the flag went by, he was the first to stand, remove his hat and place his hand over his heart. Often you would see a tear in his eye. He loved his country!

In the summer, he always planted a garden and flowers and took great pride in his yard, which had the greenest grass, the first flowers, and the first vegetables of the season. In the winter, he enjoyed making latch hook rugs and wall hangings. He took good care of his family and his neighbors, especially the widows on his block.

Delos began having a problem swallowing his food and would often choke. In January 1990, he choked on a piece of orange and then was unable to drink or eat. He was taken to the Blackfoot Hospital where a surgeon said the X-rays showed a blockage of the esophagus, either something he had

tried to swallow or a mass. His family was concerned. His son administered to him before they took him to surgery. The surgeon identified the problem, which was the piece of orange, and they dilated his narrowing esophagus. Delos was a good patient, and following the procedure, he was able to take nourishment and keep it down, and he returned to his home that evening. He and the family were very grateful for the blessings of the Lord in his behalf.

Delos always loved watching the fireworks on the 4th of July, but on the 1990 holiday, he was just too tired to go and stayed at home and retired at 7:00 P.M.

As is evident, Delos and Anona were completely devoted to the Church during their entire lives. Their faith never wavered. They enjoyed attending church meetings and socials and doing temple work as often as health permitted. One day in December of 1990, they spent ten hours in the temple doing five endowment sessions.

Delos' health remained very good for his age, but the last few years of his life, his family could tell that he was definitely aging, and his energy level greatly diminished. In spite of this, he remained active in the Church right up until his death. He had maintained a 100% Home Teaching record all his life, even doing it the month he passed away, and as usual, on the second Wednesday.

The spring of 1991 was the first year Delos did not plant his own garden. He just didn't feel up to it. Thayne and Anona planted it, and Anona sold the raspberry starts and weeded the flowers, which were jobs Delos usually enjoyed doing.

Delos' loves were: Anona, the Church, his family, honey, strawberries, ice cream, *crisp* cookies, bread and milk for supper, and potatoes prepared any way. He enjoyed family get-togethers, reunions, and especially his 24th of July birthday every year. The year of 1991 was to be a big 90th birthday party for him. Plans were well underway, invitations sent, and the birthday cake ordered.

Delos had experienced some dizziness and would sometimes fall. At times he would even lose consciousness momentarily. A week before his passing away, he fell, bruising his rib cage. This made it difficult for him to breathe deeply. He began coughing and he developed pneumonia, becoming too weak to stand.

In answer to prayers, never having spent a night in a hospital in his whole life, the spirit of this good man departed his eighty-nine year old worn out body peacefully at his home on Friday the 28th of June 1991, with his beloved Anona and family members around him. How grateful they were that he could slip away so quickly and easily without pain.

So the birthday party plans were cancelled and a funeral service was arranged instead. On 2 July 1991, Delos' family expressed a temporary goodbye as he was laid to rest in his loved Temple clothing. The weather was beautiful and so was the service, with family members providing the prayers and music. Neva gave a life sketch, and son-in-law Donald Kirkham paid tribute to him in a talk in which he described how Delos loved his Savior and was obedient to His teachings all of his life. He compared Delos to some of the prophets of the Old Testament, stating that if Delos had lived in Noah's time, he would have said, "Get the kids, Anona, and let's get on the boat." And if he had lived in Jonah's time, he would have said, "I know it may not do much good, but if the Lord asked us to, let's go to Nineveh and preach." Then he said, *"It's a good thing the Lord didn't pick Delos for Adam, or none of us would be here today, because he would still be sitting in the Garden of Eden. If the Lord told him not to partake of the fruit, he would not!"* Donald also gently admonished those who needed to make some changes to get their lives in order, to do so by following Delos' excellent example.

As a final tribute, following the dedicatory prayer at the Hillcrest Cemetery in Shelley, each of his daughters and adult granddaughters placed single long stemmed roses upon his casket, and he was laid to rest beside his two infant sons who preceded him.

His daughter Deona stated, "Delos may have been short in stature (being 5' 4" in height), *but he was a giant of a man*, with a great spirit in the eyes of his wife, his family and all who knew him."

was compiled by
Deona Huntsman Kirkham

Delos and Anona had been blessed to spend sixty-two years together taking care of each other. Their posterity totaled one hundred when he passed away, which included thirty-four grandchildren (one grandson deceased) and thirty-five great grandchildren.

How appropriate that Delos, the Patriarch of such a large posterity which he loved and was so proud of, should go first and prepare a way for the rest of his family. How grateful his family members are for the knowledge and blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How happy they are for having the opportunity of knowing and loving him! The memory of this great husband, father and grandfather will always be cherished.

May each member of his family honor his good name by righteous living.

O my Father, Thou that dwellest
In the high and glorious place,
When shall I regain thy presence,
And again behold thy face?
In thy holy habitation,
Did my spirit once reside?
In my first primeval childhood,
Was I nurtured near thy side?

When I leave this frail existence,
When I lay this mortal by,
Father, Mother, may I meet you
In your royal courts on high?
Then, at length, when I've completed
All you sent me forth to do,
With your mutual approbation
Let me come and dwell with you...

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Life History of Elmer Delos Huntsman"