

George Alvin Gifford (1879-1967)

Written By

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In memory of George Alvin Gifford, members of the family have attempted to piece together a short life story in his honor.

George Alvin Gifford was the firstborn son of George Washington Gifford and Louisa Hale, born 24 Nov 1881 at Joseph City, Sevier, Utah. He was a very welcome playmate for his older sister Lucy Ann, who was born at Marysvale, Piute, Utah 20 Dec 1879. Until the later years of his life, George Alvin was called Alvin and will be referred to as such in this history.

The Gifford family was involved in farming and worked at other jobs to help sustain them. Alvin, being the oldest son was taught to work at a very early age. He went with his father into the fields and when working on other jobs even though he was not much more than a toddler. He received love in abundance from his parents and his constant companionship with his father helped to pattern his life for the years to come.

When not more than 3-1/2 yrs of age his parents moved to Hooper, Davis, Utah where his mother's family, the Hale's, were living. Hooper was in both Davis and Weber Counties, the lower half where the Hale's lived was in Davis. Here they lived with Grandmother Hale until they could build a home of their own, which was undertaken immediately. They soon had a comfortable 2 room home built near his grandmother. Alvin's father crossed the Great Salt Lake to Antelope Island on a homemade raft to get lumber with which to build their home and for firewood. Even though Alvin was very young, his father took him with him a few times which pleased this young boy immensely.

When Alvin was about five years old, in 1886, he lost two of his sisters. his oldest sister Lucy Ann and his new baby sister, Effie Louise, born 23 July, 1885 at Hooper, Utah and died 6 Aug 1886 This saddened the family and Alvin and his brother Henry Elmer, born 6 Jan. 1884 at Hooper, were the only children left in the family. His sister Lucy Ann was building a fire in the cook stove, although only seven years of age, and the flames caught her long dress sleeve and being alone at the time, she rushed outside and the wind whipped the flames. When her parents returned home from visiting relatives, they found Lucy Ann in the front yard burned to death. This was an experience Alvin remembered in horror for the rest of his life and he was extremely careful with fires from that day forward, even in instructing his own children in the dangers of carelessness with fire.

While in Hooper another child was born to this family, Helena, born 7 Aug 1887. Soon after Alvin's father desired to move on to new adventures and he took this young boy of seven with him and with a few supplies in their wagon, headed for Idaho Territory. His father kept his eye open for "his dream of the future" and when they reached the area now known as Shelley, Idaho they stopped to visit his friend, a Mr. Mitchell who was living on the south shore of the Snake River, Mr. Mitchell tried to talk Alvin's father into homesteading some of the farming land near him, but as George W. looked across the Snake River to the northwest he had a great desire to explore that area.

The only way to cross the Snake River and get to that inviting land was to go to the north and cross the river at Eagle Rock, now Idaho Falls, or go back south and cross at Blackfoot. Although Blackfoot was a lot farther from Shelley than was Eagle Rock, George W. and his son Alvin decided to go back and cross the river at Blackfoot and follow the river to the point of interest. This put them on the edge of the lava beds and they came across far too many rattlesnakes for their liking, but they were able to continue their journey without a mishap.

When they reached their point of interest they were surprised to find that five families had already homesteaded there and much to their pleasure they were friends of theirs from Hooper, Utah who had moved on a year or so before. Their new friends took them around to see the country and George W. decided on homesteading 180 acres about a mile north of the river and his friends so he and young Alvin set up housekeeping in their wagon bed while they built a one room cabin that was to be their home. They also dug a root cellar in which to store their food as this was the only way to preserve food for their livelihood. George W. filed his claim and broke up a few acres for planting and began to work his land.

Alvin and his father returned to Hooper in the late fall to bring the rest of their family to their new home. The father borrowed another "rig" from their new neighbors in which to bring their belongings and when loaded they bid their cousins and Grandmother Hale goodbye and wended their way to what was to be their permanent home.

Alvin chattered like a magpie as he pointed out things of interest and told his mother and brother about it. Of course, by now, he was an authority on the trip north because he and his father had spent all that time together on their first trip north.

How proud Alvin was as they came in sight of the new home he and his father had built. He could hardly contain himself as he took his family into this "home on the prairie". It was so good to be home.

There was a lot of work to be done to get the farm producing and although Alvin was still a child he did what he could to help his father. Only a small part of the farm was cleared those first two summers, but each summer more land was put under cultivation. Alvin was in charge of their one cow, to see that it was cared for and close at hand when milking time came. He started milking at a very early age and was responsible for the chores his young body could handle. His mother and father were very gentle and loving with him.

In the fall of 1889 his mother took her young daughter, Helena, with her to Hooper where she stayed with her mother until she gave birth to James Alma on 10 Sept 1889. Although only eight years of age, Alvin was left in Woodville and in charge of his brother Elmer when his father was in the field and he served well, taking Elmer with him when his father allowed them in the field.

When baby Jim was a few weeks old George W. took the two boys to Hooper to get their mother and they were able to bring back a few much needed items to help with their work on the homestead and spruce up their home. Their father had built another room onto the original house and surprised their mother when they returned to the homestead. The boys had a hard time keeping the secret from her. How happy they were with a big house to live in and all that land to explore. They had no close neighbors, but their friends dropped in often to visit and offer their help and they always brought their children along to play with Alvin and his brother and sister.

The new community was without a name and a school for the children. The only schooling the children had received thus far was in the various homes taught by those who had some form of formal education, which was not much to be sure. The community was growing quite rapidly and the need for naming it became evident. The men called a meeting and each was asked to select a name, give his reasons for naming the town that particular name. These names and reasons were placed in a hat and each name drawn and discussed. George W. wrote down the name Woodville and explained that since a good part of their living was derived from selling the cedar wood gathered in the lavas to the residents and businesses in Idaho Falls, he felt it would be an appropriate name for their community. It was voted upon and the name of Woodville was chosen.

At this time the townsite was surveyed by George W. Gifford and lots of 1 acre each were drawn by the residents. George W. drew the corner lot where he later built his log store. After the death of his wife he moved for a short time to the store. Nora has a few stories about the time she lived at the store

in her personal history. Later George W. moved back to the homestead and Alvin and Florence ran the store on the corner lot. While George W. and his children lived there Helena papered the walls with newspaper and as late as the 1920's that paper still remained on the walls. The logs were roughly hewn, and chinked together with mud and later cement. This store was later sold to the George Colby family and used exclusively as a home.

The county of Bingham took in a large area including the town of Woodville. Later the county was divided and the new county was named Bonneville, putting the county line through the middle of Woodville. The Gifford homestead was in the new county of Bonneville and the townsite, store and later the new church and school were in Bingham County.

Every one living in this community at this time were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon). Although Alvin's father had been a baptized member for years, he was no longer affiliated with the church, having withdrawn his loyalty while living in Hooper, having been influenced by a number of apostate neighbors. This grieved the mother very much, but she never lost her faith and also continued to love and support her husband. So great was her testimony of the Gospel that she was able to teach her children the principles of the Gospel in such a way that they remained faithful and true. George W. was kind and understanding and made sure that Louisa, the mother and the children attended Church although at first it was 10 miles to Eagle Rock. Soon the members of Woodville were organized into a Branch of the Eagle Rock Ward and the various meetings were held in the homes of the members until a building could be erected for that purpose.

Soon a two room school was built about one mile east of George W.'s home, in what is now part of the Ernest Balmforth home. Religious meetings and social dances and other activities were also held in this building for some time. The non-Mormons who had homesteaded on the north also used this building for meetings.

In talking with some of the older residents of Woodville who were children at this time, we are told that the children were taken to these dances and put to bed on quilts placed on the floor in the smaller of the two rooms while the grownups danced in the larger room to their heart's content. May Taysom Hammer recalled one time when her folks went to a dance and took their children. When they returned home and were putting the children in their own beds they discovered they were short one child and had to return and found their child sleeping soundly in the corner of the room. She noted that this was not an uncommon thing in those days and it always served for a good laugh.

As there were no places for entertainment, the children had to make up their own fun. There was ever so much more snow in Woodville than they had in Utah and snowball fights became a favorite sport. Games such as "Mother Goose", the "Fox and Geese" or "Run, Man, Run" were played. The children were given homemade sleighs and the nearby hills were favorite spots. Ice skating, without metal skates, was very popular and at that time the temperatures were so low that the Snake River was frozen over completely. However, the children were cautioned to use their sleighs and skate near the edges to avoid going through possible thin ice. On more than one occasion someone had to be pulled out of a "hairy" situation when they ventured too far out on the ice. The older children would pile into a horse drawn sleigh and far too often they had some narrow escapes as they would "shine" around a miner. They liked to see how many times the horses could swing their sleighs around and around on a slick corner and often the sleigh would tip over and spill its occupants hither and yon. More than once someone was hurt quite badly, but it never seemed to dim the thrill of their "shining" and the sport carried down to younger generations.

In the summers they were almost too busy for "fun", but they still found time for buggy rides, dances, rabbit hunting, horseback riding, and courting. When the work of the day was over the men would gather and hash over the times, never, no never, did a man gossip, it was always "business". The young women and girls would involve themselves in taffy pulls, quilting bees, sewing bees, cooking contests and popcorn parties. There was usually a "community" pattern which was passed from one party to the

other and unless you had an imaginative mind, the clothes almost always looked alike. A mother or daughter with a flare for designing could dress up the “pattern” and stand out in a crowd. There was also a “pattern” for boys and men’s pants. The choice of materials was limited, but all were very proud and happy when they had something new to wear.

The only dolls the small girls had to play with were rag dolls fashioned by their mothers or corn husk dolls, with homemade clothes fashioned by a mother or older sister, but they were happy with their toys. Sometimes a father would make a wooden toy. Whittling was a favorite pastime while the men were ‘talking business and works of art were carved for the small children. Willow whistles were a favorite among the small boys.

Four more children were born to the Gifford family at Woodville: Lester, born 23 Aug 1891; Martha Elnora, born 5 Nov. 1893; Moses, born 27 Sept 1895 and Milo, born 20 Oct 1899. The family was poor in worldly goods, but rich in love. They were no worse off financially than the others of the settlement and they had one pair of shoes a year, reserving them for the winter months and special occasions. They attended school, church and went to town (Eagle Rock) barefooted. Their mother kept their meager wardrobe clean and mended and they had many happy times together.

It was the boys responsibility to see that there was plenty of kindling and firewood for family use. They were just a short distance from the lava beds where cedar trees grew in abundance. They accompanied their father on many trips to the lavas to gather wood during the summer and early fall months and large piles of cedar wood were piled beside the house for winter’s use. Usually several families would go to the lavas together, not only for safety but to assist each other and they really enjoyed these times together. Sometimes it would be necessary for them to spend the night in the lavas and bring their load home the next day. They would have large metal tubs in the wagon where they built a fire to keep warm. They always had warm blankets and quilts to wrap themselves in, but there was also the ever present danger of rattlesnakes in their midst and it was nothing to find a snake curled up in their wagon when they returned home. Fortunately no one was ever bitten by a snake in this family. It all seemed worth it when they could smell the fresh cedar burning in the stove and fireplace.

In one way or another, a Gifford seemed to be involved in the grocery business while they lived in Woodville. Besides Alvin’s adventures and those of his father in this field, their Grandfather, Henry Dill Gifford, operated a small store in his two bedroom home back of his son’s Alma’s home that is now owned by Leon Kelly. The George W. family opened a small store in a lean-to they had built on to the house on the homestead, later building a log house on the lot on the townsite where they operated a small store until it was later run by Alvin.

On 5 May 1901 Alvin’s grandfather died at the home of his uncle Alma and his grandmother came to live with the family. She had become quite senile and Martha Elnora (Nora) recalls that her grandmother used to go into the store and take packages of pins, needles and other small items and hide them in her trunk. Periodically Louisa, the mother, would go through the trunk and return the items to the store. This was while the store was in the home on the homestead. On 8 Jan 1902 Alvin’s grandmother Gifford died at their home. They loved her very much and were very lonesome without her. They had fond memories of her.

In 1903 Alvin was introduced to his future wife in an unusual way. A young girl by the name of Lilly May Chaffin was working in Woodville and a group of young kids decided to call her sister on the telephone who was living in Ammon, Idaho at that time. They thought it would be fun to introduce her to Alvin which they did. It must have been “love at first sound” because after a whirlwind courtship of nine weeks they went to the Temple in Logan, Utah where they were married 5 Nov., 1903. His bride was Florence Ellen Chaffin, daughter of Henry Albert Chaffin and Letha Jane Crow. Florence was born 20 June 1886 at Salt Lake City, Utah and had come to Idaho with her mother when a young girl. Her father had died in Utah some time before.

For the first few weeks of their marriage Alvin and Florence lived with his folks on the homestead while they built a home of their own. They soon had a two room house built just north of the family home and were very happy to be by themselves, as all young couples should be. Alvin continued to run the farm and his father became more involved in the small store. Alvin's older brothers Elmer and Jim also worked on the farm, but Alvin was more or less in charge.

On 4 May 1904 Alvin's mother was taken seriously ill and taken to the hospital in Idaho Falls. She was ill eight days. The doctor operated on her, thinking it was appendicitis and cut into an abscess, sending the poison throughout her body which resulted in her death on 12 May 1904. Alvin's grandparents had been buried in the Idaho Falls Cemetery, but the community of Woodville purchased a small acreage of land from George W. and Alvin's mother was the second person to be buried there. The first was a cousin, Albert Gifford, son of Alma Gifford and Alice Shelton. Lots were sold for \$5.00 for 8 burial plots to help pay for the land.

The death of their beloved mother came as quite a blow to the family. They had loved her and leaned on her for spiritual guidance. Helena was then seventeen years old and she, with her younger sister, Nora, assumed the household duties. She married Oliver Arthur Moore on 9 April 1906 and moved away. This left the housework to 10 year old Nora who did her best to run the household and do the cooking and washing for her brothers and father. It was hard indeed. Nora relates that she was so small that she had to stand on a stool to reach the tub and scrub board in order to do the washing. Alvin's wife, Florence, was very good and kind to Nora and helped her as much as she could with the burden. Alvin was always kind and gentle with Nora and gave her much love and encouragement. He also did what he could to direct his younger brothers in the way their mother desired them to live.

For a while Alvin and Florence ran the small store on the townsite, but most of their time was spent on the homestead. They had a large orchard behind their home. It consisted of apples of many varieties, black cherry, pie cherry, pear and apricot as well as pottowattomie plums. They smoked their own ham and bacon, dried fruit and vegetables, made their own soap, built an ice house and went to the Snake River in the winter and cut large chunks of ice and hauled them home to put in the icehouse to keep things cool. Sawdust and straw was put over the ice to help keep it from melting and it served well for most of the summer months. They churned their own butter, raised chickens for meat and eggs, had a large garden and fared very well with their large family although money was a scarce commodity.

Alvin and Florence built a large frame house back of the original home. It had 7 rooms in it. There were two bedrooms on the second floor. One was quite large and the other was "L" shaped which was occupied by Alvin's father a good deal of the time. There were no closets on the top floor and they clothes were hung on nails on the walls. Their dressers were crates covered with material and it was all quite homey. On the main floor there was a small pantry type kitchen with cupboards at one end and room for a stove. There was a large dining room, living room and two bedrooms and a large closet under the stairway which served as a clothes closet and bedding. It was quite an elegant home for that day. There were three outside doors.

There were no modern conveniences as we know them. No running water and the drinking water was hauled by the barrel from existing wells on the townsite. Ditch water, as it was called, was used for all purposes except drinking and a ditch ran in front of the home. Washing was still done on the board and huge boilers of water were put on the stove to boil for the washings, often many batches were placed in these water baths with homemade soap to bleach them. Nothing went to waste. Soap was made from the fats of the animals they killed. This was usually done outside in good weather in a large tub or boiler placed over an open fire. Old clothes were cut up and made into rugs or quilts. Their quilt bats were made from the wool from their sheep. They cleaned the wool in lye water and then hung it out to dry. Then they used cording boards which consisted of boards with a handle and small wires or nails protruded from the boards and by rubbing the wool between these two boards the wool became fluffy and it was easy to pick out any sticks, straw, burrs, etc. that might have been caught in the wool "while the sheep was wearing it". When the wool was the right softness it was shaped into the size of a

quilt and gently rolled in cheese cloth or unbleached muslin until it was to be used in a quilt.

Their mattresses were made from straw that had been stuffed into a clean canvas or other heavy mattress material made the size of a bed and was covered with clean warm blankets and homemade quilts. Each fall the mattresses were emptied of the old straw and new straw from the threshing was stuffed into the mattress cover. It was a good feeling to lay on that freshly made mattress. It was a long time before the average family could afford "store bought" mattresses. Everyone was in the same boat so no one seemed to mind their homemade beds. The beds in winter were heated by putting large rocks in the oven and then wrapped in heavy blankets and placed at the foot of the beds under the bedding. Many mornings the children would wake up with frost on their blankets caused from the extreme cold air mixing with their breathe. There were chimneys in each room and when stoves could be afforded a stove was put in there for comfort.

In 1919, Evon Wesley Huntsman and his wife Martha Elnora Gifford, purchased 40 acres of the original homestead from George W. and moved into a four room home just north of the Gifford home. The Gifford and Huntsman children were very close and were in each others homes as much as they were in their own.

While Alvin and Florence were living on the homestead a band of gypsies came through and asked Alvin if they could stay over night. Alvin allowed them to camp in the orchard. He could never say no to anyone. Also, Alvin took up a dry farm and lived on it off and on for seven years while living in Woodville. The dry farm was about 2 miles west of Woodville right next to the lava beds. Dry farm wheat and alfalfa were about all that could be raised there because it was impossible to get water to the farm. Florence moved the family out on the dry farm and was there by herself for weeks at a time while Alvin was in the valley working the homestead. It was a hard life.

Dora tells of a time when they were living on the dry farm when Alvin had gone to the valley or townsite to get some groceries for the family. He was stranded and couldn't get back to the family for several days because there was a lot of water between the townsite and the dry farm area. The weather became cold enough that the ice was frozen sufficiently for him to cross. However, the night before his return there was nothing in the house for food except some bacon rind, a little flour and commel. Florence told the children to go out and get a big rock and she would make rock soup for supper. The children obeyed and she scrubbed the rock clean and put it in the pot. She then added the bacon rind, flour and cornmeal. This is what she fed the children that night and Dora recalls that it wasn't very nourishing, but that was all they had. Florence put the children to bed and waited. She said the sweetest music she ever heard was when heard Alvin singing as he pulled a hand sleigh full of groceries. When he heard that his children had gone to bed hungry he asked Florence to cook a good meal and he awakened his children and they were fed a hot nourishing meal. Alvin said his children would never go to bed hungry and he meant it. After they visited for a while the children were sent back to bed. This was the turning point for Alvin and he felt it unfair to the family to live out on the dry farm and he moved them into the townsite.

George W. sold the remainder of the farm to his son-in-law, Wesley, and Alvin moved his family into a home on the townsite. Just when Alvin opened his store across the street from the corner lot owned by his father is not known, but it was a one room store in front of his home. He had been bitten at an early age with the "store bug" and wherever he lived he started a small country store. He and Florence ran this store for many years and then he sold out to Vernard Huntsman and he moved his family a block east to a two story house. This house was on an acre lot and had a large apple orchard, a corral for his cows and horses and plenty of room for large garden. The house had the bedrooms upstairs and a large kitchen-dining room area and a large living room. He worked on the dry farm while they lived in this house and then the "store bug" got him again and he fixed up his garage which was in the front of the yard and a little east of the house. He ran this store until he moved to Roberts, Idaho where they lived for approximately 6 years.

For the benefit of those who might not know from experience, the store that Alvin built and sold to Vernard Huntsman was later sold to Eldon Thompson when Vernard and his two sons Ivan and Boyd opened a large Supermarket in Shelley. Eldon sold out a few years later, but the store started by Alvin is still serving the town of Woodville and probably will for several years to come.

Alvin couldn't seem to get the "store bug" out of his system. His big problem was he was generous and kind to a fault. He would let his friends and neighbors have groceries on charge and when they couldn't, or wouldn't pay, he would have to go bankrupt until he could get enough money to start another one. Many of these people were better off financially than was Alvin, but he would rather close up than cause hard feelings. Florence, according to Dora, used to get rather vexed at him for not getting a little tougher on his customers, but he would turn the other cheek and give them the shirt off his back if he thought they needed it.

In the late 1960's a grandson of Wesley Huntsman, Ronald Nelson, served a mission in California for the LDS Church and while tracting he met a man who said he had lived in Woodville and the missionaries were invited in. It was learned that the man was a former son-in-law of Alvin's, George Schelff, having been married to Louisa, Alvin's oldest daughter. George said Alvin was a very wonderful man, but there were things about him he just couldn't understand or accept. He said that the family was so poor they couldn't afford shoes or other necessities and yet when Alvin received money he would pay 10% to the church for tithing. It was beyond his understanding. He also said he couldn't go along with a church that would take money from a man when his family was in such dire need, but Alvin's Church was his life and he knew the Lord would provide if he followed the teachings. Had George Schelff been in tune with the Lord he would have known, as did Alvin, that the Lord gives no promise he doesn't intend to fulfill. Alvin's Patriarchal Blessing states that if he paid an honest tithing his family would never want for the necessities and he bore a strong testimony to the fulfillment of that promise on many occasions.

Dora tells of a faith promoting experience she had when she went to Idaho Falls with her father to sell a wagon load of wood so they could buy groceries for the family. They had no luck and by the time night came they were very discouraged. Alvin pulled the wagon off the road and he and Dora kneeled to pray and ask that someone would buy the wood so he could feed his family. No sooner had they gotten the wagon back on the road when a man stopped them and asked if the wood was for sale. Alvin said, "You bet it is." and the transaction was completed. They returned to town and they were able to buy the necessary groceries for the family.

Dora couldn't remember much about her life in the seven room home on the homestead, but she did remember she lived there while attending the Woodville school down near the townsite. She said it was so cold and windy one night when they were returning home that she had to walk behind her older sisters so she could breathe.

Alvin and Florence had thirteen children born to them while living in Woodville. They were Louisa, Thelma, Elzada (Peggy), Denzel, Dora, Oscar, Lewis, Effie, Alma, Elnora Ellen, Lavern, Theda Rae, and a stillborn son. Elnora, and Theda Rae died in infancy and Lavern at age 13. They are all buried in the Woodville Cemetery.

Alvin was always gentle with his children and Dora says she doesn't remember him punishing them very often. She did remember one time he whipped her older brother Denzel, but later found that Denzel was not at fault and he felt very sorry for it. She said one day she swore and her father slapped her so hard she fell across the room. He said he didn't want his children to swear. These periods of punishment was very rare in their family.

While Alvin and Florence were living in Roberts they went to Utah for a load of fruit with Alvin's father who had converted an old car into a pickup truck. They must have gone on faith. George W. was subject to fainting spells and on their way home he blacked out and the car hit a pole and fell into a

canal full of water. Alvin was knocked out and the others thrown into the water. Alvin came to long enough to see that Florence was in the water and through sheer strength and determination he reached her and held her head above the water. He then passed out again. When help arrived Alvin was still holding Florence's head above the water. George W. had been injured, but managed to pull himself to safety before passing out again. They were taken to the hospital and remained for several days. Florence was more seriously hurt and had to remain there longer than the others.

Alvin moved his family from Roberts to Kimball, Idaho and ran a country store there as well as a farm just below the store. He also had an agency with McNess Co. and sold their products from the store as well as traveling throughout Snake River Valley. He made many friends while selling his McNess products and became well known for his honesty and integrity. He had no enemies.

While he operated the store in Kimball, LaReah Huntsman, his niece was visiting with them for a few days and she recalls a band of gypsies coming by. They asked for permission to camp in the small camp grounds south of the store. The store was a large room with adequate living quarters in the back. Alvin gave them permission and then came into the house and told those present that if the gypsies came into the store the family was all to go into the store and keep watch on the gypsies so they couldn't get away with anything. This they did and thought they had been very observant, but after the gypsies had left they noticed several shelves had been stripped clean. They had tucked the stuff in the many skirts they wore for that purpose. Alvin called the authorities, but by the time they got there the gypsies had completely disappeared.

Alvin and Florence were both very religious and worked in the various organizations of the church in each community they lived in. Florence loved Relief Society and was an asset to the organization. She taught Primary, MIA and Sunday School through the years, but Relief Society was her main interest and she was on the active Relief Society Teaching Roll until her death. Alvin held various positions in the church and was a High Priest. He served a Stake Mission for the Shelley Stake. He also was Sunday School Superintendent of the Kimball Ward and was custodian of the church house while living there. Dora recalled a severe winter storm one Sunday and the roads were impassible. It was Alvin's job to keep the building clean and have it warm when it was time for the meetings to start. This cold morning Alvin went to the church as usual and had a nice warm fire going. Only about six people braved the storm and came to church, but Sunday School was held anyway.

When their health failed they moved to a small house across the tracks and a little south of their store in Kimball. They always had a small garden and flowers. Alvin continued to sell McNess. Their daughter Dora lived a short distance east of this little house.

As years passed Alvin continued as a Ward Teacher for the Kimball Ward and his wife served as a Relief Society Teacher. Alvin received a 35 year pin from the McNess Company and that is a long time to work for one company. As their health failed they would spend their summers in Kimball and their winters in Olympia, Wash. where some of their children had moved. The doctor told Alvin if he moved to a different climate five years could be added to his life. They moved to Olympia permanently and opened a small country store in front of their home and sold McNess products, groceries and notions until their deaths.

A year or so before Alvin's death he made one more trip to Idaho Falls to attend the George Washington Gifford family reunion. His son Denzel and wife drove them here from Washington. He was weak in body, but strong in faith and bore his testimony to his loved ones who attended.

Alvin passed away 16 Nov. 1967 at Olympia, Washington. He was laid to rest in the Woodville Cemetery which was part of the original homestead. He was surrounded by his many friends and relatives who had been buried there. He had truly come home. He was survived by his wife and family, a sister Nora and brother Milo.

Those who knew Alvin were made richer for the experience. He was truly a man of God and lived His principles as he understood them and spent his lifetime teaching the gospel so that others might find the joy therein.