



## **ALBERT LAWRENCE CROWTHER 1885-1960**

Albert Lawrence Crowther was born in Harrisville, Utah, on 20 July 1885, the eighth child of David Crowther and Anna Louisa Josephine Hultgren. The family lived in a snug two room adobe house until two more small rooms were added to the back of the house. Situated on a bend of North Harrisville Road, the house was set well back from the road on a pleasant lot with large shade trees. Albert helped work the family's fifteen acre farm, plowing and planting the fields, weeding the garden, and caring for the cows, horses and chickens. When old enough, Albert hired out to earn additional wages. Though he had a slight build, Albert was strong, with brown, wavy hair, blue eyes, and a ready smile.

Albert grew up with six sisters and two brothers: Annie Josephine (1871), Alice Charlotte (1873), Clara Marinda (1875), Walter Herbert (1879), Emma Adella (1882), Albert, May Eveline (1887), Ethel Delora (1892) and William Leslie (1894). Another brother and sister died as infants. Although there was a nine year difference in their ages, Albert and Will were close friends throughout their lives.

In 1891, Albert started school in the old adobe school house on West Harrisville Road. After it burned in 1892, school was held in the Harrisville church building until a new two room school could be built beside the church. Albert did his school work on a small slate tablet that was then taken to Miss Inga Shurtleff, his first teacher, to be corrected. Once the work was checked, the slates were erased and used again. After finishing school in Harrisville, Albert completed one year at Weber Academy with David O McKay as his principal. Anticipating serving a mission, Albert took a missionary course, but then he could not afford to go.

Albert was eager to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On his eighth birthday, he walked through the fields to where Bishop Levi J. Taylor was working and asked Bishop Taylor to baptize him. Bishop Taylor left his work and walked with Albert to the Harrisville canal, where Albert was baptized and confirmed. Albert remained a devoted member of the Church throughout his life, serving in deacon, teacher, priest and elders' quorums, teaching Sunday School and serving as a councilor in the MIA for many years.

After he started work, Albert bought a horse-drawn buggy with rubber tires and a fringed canopy. The buggy was fast and one of the first of its kind in the community, and Albert liked to drive it. For entertainment, Albert and his friends organized evening bonfires, as well as buggy, hay, and sleigh rides. They enjoyed horse back riding, skating and bicycling parties, and attending house parties and dances. Dances, popular among old and young alike, were held frequently in the ward and stake buildings.

It was at a dance in Farr West that Albert met Ellen Catherine Groberg, daughter of John and Johanna Larson Groberg. Soon, Albert began courting Ellen. On a winter morning, Will drove Albert and Ellen to the train station in Albert's buggy. The young couple took the train to Salt Lake City and the next day, on 25 November 1907, Albert and Ellen were sealed in the Salt Lake

Temple by Elder John R. Winder. They had to stay an extra day in Salt Lake because of a train wreck, before returning to Ogden for a family party at the Groberg's. Albert's mother, Josephine, was delighted to be able to speak Swedish with the Grobergs.

Albert and Ellen's first home was in a small harness shop that had been converted into a two-room apartment. It was a few hundred feet to the east of Albert's parents. They only lived in the converted shop for a little over nine months before moving to Idaho Falls to help Ellen's brother, Enoch, care for his two small boys. Enoch's wife, Maude, had died leaving the boys and an eleven day old baby girl, who was being cared for by Maude's mother. While living in Idaho Falls, Albert worked as a clerk and a delivery boy for Brunt's Grocery Store, which was owned by Enoch's father-in-law who was Mr. Brunt's bookkeeper.

On 9 February 1909, Albert and Ellen's first child, Eva Maurine, was born. Intending to build a home, they bought a lot on a corner across from the current location of the Idaho Falls Temple. Soon after they purchased the lot, however, Enoch became ill. Taking the boys along to visit their grandparents, he returned to Farr West to recuperate. Instead, his condition grew worse; he died in his parents' home.

After the funeral, Albert and Ellen sold the lot in Idaho and returned to Utah with Enoch's boys, Delbert and LeRoy. They bought a small farm in Slaterville, near Albert's sister, Clara Smout. Following a difficult pregnancy, Ellen delivered a second child, Lawrence, on 11 December 1910. It was then that the family decided Delbert and LeRoy should live on the farm with their grandparents and Ellen's brother, Charlie, and his wife, Mattie, who did not yet have children.

Albert and Ellen then sold the farm in Slaterville to Albert's brother-in-law, Benjamin Dinsdale. They moved back to Harrisville to live near Albert's parents, who had health problems. Albert purchased a lot from his father and built a four-room frame house on the far side of the old harness shop. Two children were born in this home, Jennie Rose, on 4 June 1913, and Chester Groberg, on 21 March 1915. Albert and Ellen's young family enjoyed going on short trips and for rides in their Model T Ford.

The years 1917-1919 were difficult. In February 1918, Albert and Ellen sold the frame home to Albert's brother, Will, and bought a brick home from Morgan Lake less than a block to the east. Will was twenty four years old and had a young family. Their father had diabetes. As no medicine then existed for its treatment, he was in severe pain and his health was deteriorating rapidly. Josephine was in poor health also. She stayed for a time with Albert and Ellen, and then stayed, in turn, with her daughters, living finally with Clara in Slaterville.

During this time, Albert and Will were taking turns working at Weber Central Dairy, hauling milk from the farms to the dairy. They were the first to haul milk for Weber Central Dairy, and very likely were the first of the Dairy's employees to job share. Albert and Will divided their wages, so one or the other was always able to stay home to care for their father. David died on 8 September 1918.

Four months later, Albert's eight-year-old son, Lawrence, suddenly took ill and died. Shortly after the new year, Lawrence had begun complaining of a pain in his side. A doctor made a house call, but the pain had eased. Four days later, on 8 January 1919, Lawrence died. Ellen later suspected he died from a ruptured appendix. Due to the flu epidemic of 1918, movie theaters were closed; church meetings and public gatherings were banned. As a result, in spite of the cold weather, Lawrence's funeral was held on the front lawn of Albert and Ellen's home; the

casket stood inside the open parlor door. J. Ben Maxfield recalls sitting on the front porch during the funeral, crying at the death of his best friend.

Several years passed before Albert and Ellen had three more children; Elva Josephine, was born on 4 April 1922, Eleanor, on 28 April 1924, and Kenneth Bert (Pete), on 7 November 1926. Ellen often said that they raised two separate families, the four older children, and the three younger ones, because of the gap in their ages.

Prior to moving to Idaho, Albert worked as a conductor on the early electric street cars, making many trips up Ogden Canyon. Later, he was water master for the Western Irrigation Company and then for two years was the county road supervisor for Harrisville. He worked for the Utah State Road Department for almost twenty years, building bridges and repairing roads in the summer, plowing and sanding roads in the winter. If it began to snow, Albert went to bed. He knew he would be called out in the middle of the night to clear the roads. The work was cold, strenuous and nerve wracking, but he felt responsible for keeping the roads safe. On Sunday afternoons, the family often went for rides through Weber, Ogden, or Sardine Canyon, stopping when rocks were found on the road so Albert could clear them off. During World War II, he left the road department to work at the Utah General Depot, retiring in 1955.

Albert's daughter, Eleanor, said that he was a very hard worker, the first one up in the morning to light the stove and milk the cows. If he sat down in the evening to listen to a radio program with the family, he cracked and cleaned walnuts. Albert was frugal and dependable, which helped him provide for his family through the depression. He always raised a large garden and enjoyed sharing produce with others. He milked a couple of cows, and raised pigs, chickens and alfalfa. After so many years of arduous work, he enjoyed retirement. He took up fishing and spent time with Will and friends. He and Ellen took a few trips to visit friends and family. Although he was shy, he sometimes surprised his family by engaging in long conversations with strangers, especially when traveling.

A few years after he retired, Albert began to suffer from fatigue. He was diagnosed with intestinal cancer and twice underwent surgery, but died on 6 April 1960. He is buried in the Ogden City Cemetery beside his son, Lawrence.

**SOURCE:**

Crowther, Ellen Groberg. "Life Sketch of Ellen Groberg Crowther." Unpublished manuscript.

Painter, LeAnn. "Albert Lawrence Crowther." Unpublished manuscript.

Painter, Eleanor Crowther and LeAnn Painter Wheeler. Family remembrances of Eleanor Crowther Painter.

Brunt's Grocery Store	Dinsdale, Benjamin
Crowther, Alice Charlotte	Groberg, Charlie
Crowther, Anna Louisa Josephine Hultgren	Groberg, Delbert
Crowther, Annie Josephine	Groberg, Ellen Catherine
Crowther, Chester Groberg	Groberg, Enoch
Crowther, Clara Marinda	Groberg, Johanna Larson
Crowther, David	Groberg, John
Crowther, Eleanor	Groberg, LeRoy
Crowther, Elva Josephine	Groberg, Mattie
Crowther, Emma Adella	Groberg, Maude
Crowther, Ethel Delora	Hultgren, Anna Louisa Josephine
Crowther, Eva Maurine	Larson, Johanna
Crowther, Jennie Rose	Maxfield, Ben
Crowther, Kenneth Bert (Pete)	McKay, David O
Crowther, Lawrence	Shurtleff, Inga
Crowther, May Eveline	Smout, Clara Crowther
Crowther, Walter Herbert	Taylor, Levi J.
Crowther, William Leslie	Winder, John R.