

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND GRANDDAUGHTER MEMORIES

Anders Frederick Ahlander: This Was His Life

Andrew F. Ahlander was the name he was known by in America. For the present we will refer to him as Anders Ahlander. He changed his name to Andrew when he came to America. He was born September 13, 1856 in Krogstad, Bohus, Sweden, to Lutheran parents Jonas and Brita Marie Jacobsen Ahlander, the third child in a family of ten. He moved with his parents to Drammen, Norway where his father followed mercantile interests. He owned and operated a brewery as well. He was a very successful business man. Both parents lived to be 93 and most of the family lived long upon the earth.

Anders was educated in the public schools of Drammen, Norway. When he was just 15, he started out to provide for his own support. He served an apprenticeship to acquire a knowledge of blacksmithing and carriage making in the Gronnenberg carriage factory in Drammen. He earned \$6 per week for 4 years as an apprentice. He served a short time in the Norwegian Army.

One night Anders and a group of boys heard of a meeting being held with the Mormon missionaries. They decided to have some fun and break up the meeting. When they arrived on the scene, they had a sudden change of plans. After listening a few minutes, Anders became interested in what the missionaries were saying. He sent the other boys on their way while he stayed and listened to the rest of the meeting. Anders saw the error of his ways and made a decision that would change his life, and the lives of many others he would later influence. He immediately quite drinking and smoking, a habit that was so strong he would carry a slight cough the remainder of his life.

This young man of medium stature, with black hair and blue eyes had an air that demanded respect and received it. Anders married Karen Annette Johannessen and moved to Bolders, Norway. Here he set up a blacksmith and wagon shop. He met with success while living there 6 years. While there his wife gave birth to 3 sons: Frank, John, and Berton.

In 1886, Anders took his wife Karen and their three small sons from Bolders and set out for America. They arrived on June 24, 1886.

They immediately headed West. When they arrived in Utah, Anders received employment in Ogden with C. Peterson. He was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints on June 17, 1887. On August 19, 1887, Karen gave birth to their first daughter. They named her Clara; she passed away 3 months later. Seven months after Clara's death Anders wife, Karen, passed away. It was at this time he was forming a partnership, in the blacksmithing business, with two other gentlemen under the name of Carlon, Ahlander & Emstrom. At the time of his wife's death Anders had three small sons age 8, 6, and 3. Living in a strange country, with a new language, trying to start a business with limited funds and losing his young wife and daughter, Anders was forced to pick up the pieces and make a life for himself and his sons.

Since Anders had joined the Church he had always taken an active part, holding positions that helped to further the work of the Lord. Just a few weeks after Hyrum's death, Anders was called to Norway to serve the Lord as a missionary. He left 19 year old Frank in charge of the business. With only \$100 in the bank, a cow, 2 pigs, a few chickens, and faith in the Lord that all would be well, he left his family to serve the Lord. Anders served a mission from 1899 to 1901. During this time he baptized 56 people.

On his return home he found that he and Anna Lou, his second wife, owned more cows, more pigs, and more chickens than when he left. They also had more money in the bank and enough to pay his passage home. Anna Lou had been raised in poverty and knew how to manage on every dime. She was the one with the business mind. This was Anders' failing. He had no trouble making the money; however, managing it was another story. He was a good example of, "It isn't what you make that counts, it's what you save." Because of his love for the Lord, and furthering his work upon the earth, Anders and his family made many sacrifices.

Anders was a mental genius in design. In 1905, he won a gold medal at the Fair for "Most Beautiful Buggy." He designed and built the first ambulance south of Salt Lake, in 1913, on the back of a roadster. Anders designed and Joe did the sheet metal work on "Bugs", his daughter Clara did the upholstering of the seats and covered the tops. Amanda, his other daughter learned how and later helped Clara. The Crescent Ice Cream Co. needed a truck insulated to keep the ice cream below 30'. Anders designed and built it. He invented a hand that would drop when making a turn and Joe designed the lighting

for it. Anders designed and built a machine for the Telephone Co. to stretch wires from one pole to the next that may still be in use today. He originated Home on the Range, the first sheep camp on wheels weighing less than 300 lbs, as well as a school bus. These are just some of the things Anders created and never patented. Joe worked with his father and became Junior Partner when things were tough during the depression. After Anders's death April 6, 1938, Joe became the manager and made it the success it is today. Fred is taking his place beside Joe, as Joe took his place beside Anders. If Anders had been money minded as far as his business was concerned he would have been wealthy long before he died.

I have only covered the surface of the life of Anders Ahlander. I would like to have said more about him, but it would have filled a book. My great, great grandfather showed so much compassion and determination in his life. I am also so glad that he made the decision to join such a wonderful church, and that he came to America. These decisions have brought happiness to all of his descendants, and the happiness will continue on indefinitely. I hope to be as great as this man someday. I now understand what my great, great Aunt meant when she said, "I have always been proud of my heritage, but I've never loved my family more nor have I been more proud of them than I am right now."

— Prepared by Mae Brunstad (Granddaughter)

Memories of my Grandfather, Anders F. Ahlander

Grandpa and Grandma Ahlander's house was a congregating place for our family. The front porch was bedecked with chairs for climbing for us children, and visiting and laughing for adults. The front door opened into a huge living room. In my memory's eye I can see the brown leather sofa, which to me as a child, seemed huge and inviting. A large round dining table was in the middle of the room. To the left was a parlor furnished with a piano and countless bookcases.

The kitchen was in the back of the house. The adults sat around the table eating little teacakes and drinking coffee made from bumed, scraped toast. As grandpa sipped, he would "squeegee" his mustache clean with his forefinger. My fondest memories of Grandpa's house are of having fun with my cousins.

A steep staircase lead to the upstairs rooms. We loved sliding down the banister or scooting down the carpeted stairs on our sit-downs. Grandma and Grandpa didn't seem to mind. We loved playing under the huge lilac bushes. My brother, Fred, armed with garden shears, snipped branches away making a cavern for Helen and I to play house there. He helped us furnish it with an orange crate for a table and small boxes for chairs. The door was a blanket held up to the opening with clothespins.

A millrace ran by the east side of the house. Kids often fell in but somehow managed to climb to safety, but there were many times when Grandpa Ahlander came to their rescue. We had fun using the railings on either side of the sidewalk crossing the millrace as tricky bars. Kids playing there would find old shoes, sox, bikes and countless miscellaneous items stuck among the rocks.

Grandpa always wore a hat. We laughed when the wind blew it off when we were fishing in a rowboal on Fish Lake. He was devastated and angrily said, "daaaaaamn!" That was the only cuss word I ever heard him say. It was a straw hat and mother referred to it as "grandpa's ice cream cone." (All the well-dressed men wore straw hats in those days.)

Grandpa and Grandma Ahlander knew tragedy. Dad told us how Grandpa tearfully carried his son, Hyrum, home on Christmas Day when he was drowned while ice-skating on the Provo Lake. Hyrum was trying out new ice skates Santa had brought him.

Grandma was a kind, portly little lady with a sweet face, bobbed hair, and an obvious Norwegian accent. I remember being held on her lap and being called a little "skeet boksen", a Norwegian slang expression. It was not complimentary, but I'm sure they were words of endearment.

In those days viewings of the deceased were held in the family home. When Grandma Ahlander passed away, the casket was placed in the parlor. I remember my cousin, Helen Gaisford, and I tearfully peering out the parlor window watching the casket being carried down the walk followed by the family. We were just little - We weren't allowed to attend the services.

After Grandma's death. Grandpa was lonely so he decided to go to California to find a wife. Why California, I'll never know. But

in preparation, he bought himself a new suit and hat and dentures . and proceeded on his journey. That was when he married his third wife, Minerva Clark. She was a cute, petite, gray-haired lady and fit beautifully into the family.

At the time, Aunt Amanda, Uncle Joe Banks, and Cousin Mae were living downstairs, and Minerva and Grandpa lived upstairs. They invited mother, dad, Fred, Diane and I to a "get acquainted" dinner. She served artichokes, and it made her day when we tried to eat them with our upper teeth rather than correctly pulling them on the bottom teeth. She taught us how to eat them in one easy lesson. We never did live that one down. Actually, I think the folks were embarrassed. That was a "big city" item and we were small town folks.

Grandpa's favorite dish was stuffed, roasted pork spare ribs. One Christmas mother prepared them especially for him with all the trimmings. While we were at the dinner table, Grandpa seemed more enthralled with a wind-up train Santa had brought Fred than this gourmet meal mother had prepared. He liked watching it zoom around the mini track and toot it's whistle.

Before my dad, Joseph, and mother, Lucile Ferguson, were married, Grandma and Grandpa Ahlander invited them to dinner. Dad suggested to mother she learn some Norwegian words and phrases like, " please and thank you" and "please pass the potatoes" etc. Mother consented and conscientiously practiced her Norwegian. Seated at the table were grandma, grandpa, and dad's sisters, Amanda, Pearl and Martha. As mother responded in her best Norwegian, they laughed uncontrollably. Mother was so embarrassed. Dad had taught her inappropriate Norwegian slang. She married him anyway!

When Winn and I were first married, we lived in my folk's apartment on 1st East and Center Street in Provo, Utah. Grandpa and Minerva sold their home and purchased one next door to us. It was nice having them so close. Grandpa's health was failing and this sweet little lady took such good care of him, and, I'm sure, added years to his life. It was there that Grandpa passed away and Minerva returned to California to be with her own family.

The original Ahlander home was later purchased by a well-known builder, and moved to a location on the Provo Canyon Road where it was beautifully restored. Before it was completed, they gave my sister, Diane, and I the "grand tour". We noticed many changes, but

were delighted to see they had preserved "our" staircase that provided so many childhood memories.

— Afton Ahlander Dahlquist (Granddaughter), July 2002

My Memories of Grandpa

My memories of Grandpa (Anders F. Ahlander) are all very dear to me. I can remember he always carried a pocket full of quarters which he continually passed out to all the grandchildren whenever they came to visit. I can remember a family outing, up in the canyon, to celebrate his 80th birthday, and that he pumped himself way up in the swing, we were all so impressed with his abilities at that age. My mother (Pearl) the youngest in the family, told me about his being a strict but loving father.

He definitely wore the pants in the family until Mae came into the household. Clara, the oldest, had died at her birth and her father, Steve Senhouse, left her with the family to be raised. She literally wrapped Grandpa around her little finger, and at that point Grandma started to wear the pants in the family.

— Shirley Curling (Granddaughter), September 2004

My Grandpa

When I was very young, there was a family picnic and I fell out of a swing. I remember Grandpa running to me and picking me up and loved me until I stopped crying.

I remember seeing Grandpa listening to a radio with an ear phone.

We, Shirley and I, would go visit Grandpa, he would let us play in his trailers he built.

I remember he liked Smith Brothers Cough Drops and always let us have some.

He had a money purse that folded up in his pocket. He would give Shirley and I money for a treat and we would buy Smith Borthers

Cough Drops and we would go to a movie.
My family moved to Oakland, CA and Grandpa passed away after and
we went to Provo to his funeral.

— Beverly J. Borges (Granddaughter), August 2004

A Touch of a Hand by Someone Who Loved Me

Grandpa Ahlander had a thumb nail that was flat on top with a ridge just before it turned down flat into the cuticle. It was different from any other thumb in the family. I was fascinated by it as children are by any unusual thing.

I loved to go to his shop as a child and watch his hands pick up red hot bars of steel with a tool that looked like a pincher, from the red hot coals in the fire. He would place the hot bar on an anvil and pound it with a hammer, with red sparks flying until it was bent into a completely different shape by the time it was cool.

I'd watch his hands take a piece of wood and run it through a band saw and make the wood into different shapes.

Those hands would take a piece of leather and a hammer, and pound a few nails into the leather on a board, and push what looked like cotton into the little diamond shaped pockets. Before long it was tufted and it made a beautiful leather seat to be put into automobiles.

He'd reach into his pocket in his vest and pull out his watch, which was on a golden chain that sparkled, when he wanted to know the time.

When I'd ask for money, he would reach in his pocket for his coin purse and unfasten the top to take out a coin. I'd kiss him and be on my way.

I'd watch him stroke his mustache from side to side, and when he drank his Postum the mustache would get wet. I was interested to see how he dried it.

When I was sick he would lay his hands on my head and pray to Heavenly Father for me to get well. I was surprised when I would feel better right away.

How I loved my Grandpa. Never more than I did when one day I

took Afton for a walk in her buggy. About a half block from their home was a covered wagon parked within a few feet of the sidewalk. An older man came each year to preach religion, he called himself a missionary. I stopped the buggy and left it at the door of the wagon. I took Afton and we went in to visit.

He had some beautiful pictures of Jesus with a halo around his head on a pamphlet, which intrigued me. I held Afton on my lap and gave her one. She was about 10 months old. She enjoyed sucking it, while I folded them for him. He had a portable organ. I had taken piano lessons for about a year and asked if I could play it. He held Afton while I played this cute little organ that was more like a toy. He said that I could play it that night at his meeting if I could come. Aunt Lucile came and got Afton and I practiced all afternoon on the easiest tune I could find in the book.

That evening under the trees, he held a meeting. About 8 people came and I played the organ while they sang. Suddenly a hand lay firmly on my shoulder. I know whose hand it was without looking. I got up from the organ and took hold of Grandpa's hand and skipped along bobbing my curls around trying to think of something to say, as the singers voices faded.

Then, after all those years holding his hand to my cheek, I asked, "Grandpa, how did you hurt your thumb nail?" He told me that it had been that way ever since he could remember. I was crushed. After all these years I had imagined all kinds of tragic or adventurous things happening to him. I could feel the pain he must have suffered each time I looked at it. I almost cried with disappointment.

By now we were home. Mother asked me what Grandpa had said when he found me. She was amazed when I said, "He didn't say anything." She said that Grandpa came home and said, "Some democrat told me that my Granddaughter was passing out pamphlets for the opposition." She said that he was furious with her.

I learned a good lesson that day, from a touch of a hand by someone who loved me.

— Mae Brunstad (Granddaughter)
Ahlander Family Reunion
July 27-28, 1984, Park City, Utah