

## MINI-BIOGRAPHY No. 48

John Leonard Allen was born 11 August 1903 at Cardston, Alberta. He was the youngest of seven children born to Heber Simeon and Amy Louise Leonard Allen, pioneers of Cardston and Raymond.

Brother Allen's great-grandparents on the Allen side were converts to the Church in Illinois. They showed great faith by contributing funds and travelling with the Saints westward under Brigham Young.

John's grandfather, Simeon Franklin Allen, was a contractor of railroad bed construction. He actually brought his crews into Alberta as early as 1883 and helped construct the road bed of the C. P. R. between Medicine Hat and Calgary and west of Calgary.

On one of Simeon's trips from Utah to Alberta in 1883, he brought his 19-year-old son, Heber Simeon with him, and they made an over-night camp on Lee Creek, the future Mormon settlement of Cardston.

In the next five years, the Simeon Allen family were involved much more in railroad construction, mainly in Montana; and young Heber S., with a good secretarial education from Brigham Young College at Logan, acted as the firm's bookkeeper, treasurer, manager of the commissary, and sometimes freighter for his father's business. It was a training that served him well in the years to come, both from the standpoint of good business practices and in the wisdom of abiding strictly to high Gospel standards.

In those days polygamous Mormon families of Utah welcomed opportunities to escape the clutches of the law by going to Canada or Mexico. Cardston had been settled in 1887 only by such divided families. In the Fall of 1888, Simeon F. Allen decided to bring his wife, Rebecca, and their children to Canada. Heber S., now 24 years of age, came with them.

Young Heber's education had qualified him to teach school; and his first job was to succeed Miss Jane Bates who was Cardston's first teacher. The Allens arrived in Cardston in November 1888. They had been preceded in October by the Truman Leonard family that consisted merely of the father, his wife, Margaret, and a grown daughter, Amy. Amy was one of those who waved her kerchief in welcome to the Allens as they drove up the street on their arrival.

Romance blossomed in the months that followed. Amy, a few months younger than Heber, was a woman of exceptional talent and personality. She and Heber played leading roles in numerous dramatic presentations in the young colony. Practically all of Heber's spare time beyond his

By April 2, 1889, the wedding "banquet" had been read in Church on three successive Sundays, and Heber and Amy were married in the Leonard home by Bishop John A. Woolf, to become the first couple to be married in the new settlement. In July of that same year, they journeyed to Logan and were sealed in the Temple.

All seven children of the Heber S. Allens were born in Cardston. Besides John L., only two daughters are still living. They are: Viola Wing of Raymond, and Lucille Douglas of Salt Lake City. John has three half-brothers and one half-sister--children of his father's second marriage--all of whom live in the U.S.

After Heber left teaching in 1889, he worked on his father's farm, brought timber from the mountains to build a house, and managed the Cardston Company's co-op store. This latter job he held for four years until he saved enough to go into business for himself. The H. S. Allen general store was a success from the start. Heber's services were in demand in both religious and civic positions, as school trustee, councilman to C. O. Card, the first mayor, postmaster, Sunday School teacher, Ward Clerk, Stake Sunday School Superintendent, and finally Stake President on Sept. 7, 1902.

Five days less than a year later, he was called to preside over the newly created Taylor (now Raymond, Alberta) Stake, but not before John Leonard was born as previously noted.

At Raymond, the Allens farmed and operated the Raymond Mercantile general store. Young John worked on his father's farm and attended the Raymond Public and High Schools. He served on the High School Year Book Staff for two years, being business manager during the second year. In sports he was one of the school's star basketball and baseball players. In 1922 he played outfield for the Raymond town baseball team.

In the Fall of 1922 John went on a mission to the Eastern States and served until July 1925. He had the distinction of being District President in Connecticut and also in West Virginia.

In September 1925 he went to B. Y. U. at Provo and took business administration. While at B. Y. U. he was very active extracurricularly in a great variety of functions. These included: assistant yellmaster (1925), head yellmaster (1926), vice-pres. of Alpha Kappa Psi Business fraternity (1927), member of the cast of the "all boys show" for four years and was "leading lady" in the second year, member of the Tennis Club for two years, member of the "Returned Missionary Club"

merces Club for two years and its president in the second year, on the football team for two years but saw little action--("too small and too slow", he says), member of the Junior Prom committee, member of the Public Service (1927), president of the Inter-Social Unit Council (1928), and member of the Nuggets Social Unit for four years.

During John's freshman year he roomed with a student by the name of Ezra Taft Benson--now President of the Quorum of the Twelve. John was on a committee that elected student Benson as the most popular man on the campus in the Spring of 1926. The next year, John, himself, was one of five finalists in the same popularity contest, which was won by the captain of the football team who had everything.

In 1928 John was selected as the most outstanding student in the B.Y.U. Business College. He graduated in 1930 with "honors"--only missing "high honors" because of too many activities and girl friends during the first two years. Getting engaged during his Junior year settled him down to serious study. The fact that "she" lived 45 miles away in Salt Lake City, contributed to a less hectic campus life, since he got to see "her" only on weekends.

John's five-year college career is explained by two events. He dropped out of one quarter due to an attack of ulcers (understandable), and stayed out another quarter to work and earn money to buy a diamond ring for his future wife, whom he first met in 1927. But Amy Leone Judd was so popular that it took John two years to wear down her resistance and weed out her other suitors. But John knew from the moment he first saw her, even before they had been introduced, that she was destined to be the future Mrs. Allen.

They were married 11 June 1930 in the Salt Lake Temple, and came immediately to Raymond to live.

He leased his father's farm for three years but went broke in two--a victim of the "great depression". Besides that, his old malady of ulcers returned from which he nearly died in '33.

Brother Allen testifies that many of the determining factors of his life have been based upon a patriarchal blessing pronounced upon his head in Raymond in 1915 by Presiding Patriarch of the Church, Hyrum G. Smith, on the occasion of a Quarterly Stake Conference. Among other things he was promised that he would be guided throughout his life by the voice of his guardian angel. He feels that his ulcer cure was an example of this. He first of all refused to undergo surgery; but sought advice from other practitioners. And finally it was a chiropractor who cured him; not by manipulating his spine or joints, but by prescribing a diet. The Allens' first child, Shirley (now Mrs. Homer Jensen of Salt Lake City) was born in 1932. Sister

Allen fed her husband the same food she fed Shirley only more of it. Basically it was five quarts of whole/Holstein milk per day, plus any prepared baby foods that agreed with Shirley. In 18 months he was cured and has had no recurrence of the trouble.

In the meantime, John started working for the Raymond Sugar Factory in 1933 as a bookkeeper, but religiously stuck to his diet, nonetheless. He kept this job until 1942 when he was made chief accountant for the same firm, and held this position until November 1968 when he was retired on pension.

John says it took him until 1948 to pay off his debts accumulated from farming in 1932. But fate was still far from the Allens. Son, Richard John (now a doctor of languages at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md.) was born in 1937. It was eleven years before Robert Grant (now a real estate agent in Provo, Utah) was born. Sister Allen had a number of miscarriages which may have contributed to the hemorrhage that accompanied this birth in the Raymond hospital. As there was no blood supply in Raymond, she was rushed by ambulance to Lethbridge, but died enroute.

John feels that he had been prompted again, this time to have his wife go to Los Angeles where her brother was a highly rated obstetrician and gynecologist, but Sister Allen declined to leave her family. Of such metal are Latter-day Saint women molded!

Misfortune struck again in 1950, when John was involved in a car accident from which he was

sued and went broke a second time--mainly due to the bungling manner in which his lawyer handled the case.

The infant Allen had been cared for by a neighbor until John engaged a housekeeper to look after his home and children. Even so, Robert Grant nearly died of Hepatitis in 1962, from which he spent 80 days in the hospital.

Brother Allen has pretty well followed in the footsteps of his famous father, insofar as his Church activities are concerned. He was Secretary of the Stake M. I. A. at age 18, and worked up through many M.I.A. jobs to be Stake Superintendent 19 years later. He was First Counselor to James H. Walker in the Taylor Stake Presidency from 1947 - 1954. Following this he was a High Councilman from 1955 to 1962. That year the Canadian Sugar Factory moved their offices to Lethbridge. John commuted to his work which often required him to spend overtime in the office. He, therefore, felt it best that he be released from the High Council. But he continued to serve in other capacities--Secy. of his High Priests Group, Home Teacher, and member of the choir.

On being retired from work in 1968, John began coming regularly to the Temple. He came so often that he was soon made a Temple officiator, and has been such ever since. In June 1974, he sold his holdings in Raymond and moved to Cardston to be near the Temple and the work that is dear to his heart.

Brother Allen's family have all been active in the Church. Both boys filled missions and are active where they live. Shirley Rae, whose husband died of cancer in 1970, was left with seven children. But she still finds time to work in the Ward and to attend the University of Utah music department to get courses in which she is interested. In all, John has ten grandchildren.

John cites another incident in his life that supports his confidence in his early patriarchal blessing. At a time in the early 1940's when he was still paying off debts from his 1932 financial losses, he was impressed to give a \$200 cheque to an indigent Raymond resident who had been called on a short-term mission to Saskatchewan. The gesture so angered Sister Allen that she threatened for a time to "go home to mother". On the other hand, the elder felt so elated and flushed with wealth that he induced the Stake Authorities to call his wife to go on the mission with him.

It was not until 20 years after, that information came to John and he realized why he had made the unusually large donation to the poor elder. The Branch in Saskatchewan to which the couple were sent was so torn by dissension and petty hates that they were all in danger of apostatizing and destroying the branch. But it was Sister Smith who rebuked the evil spirit in the Branch and called the members to repentance with such fervent power that it saved the branch and its members from their imminent folly. Too bad that Sister Allen had not lived to share in the satisfaction that would have come to her as it did to her humble husband.

Brother Allen's mother passed away in Raymond in March 1936--less than two months before her illustrious husband was released from his 34-year term as President of the Taylor Stake. Shortly after his release, he was honored by a mammoth gathering of Saints in Raymond that included President and Elder Heber J. Grant, President and Sister Antoine R. Ivins, President and Sister John H. Taylor, and Apostle Melvin J. Ballard. But Heber S. lived into his 80th year, passing away 15 Sept. 1944. Both are buried in Raymond.

Persons influencing John's life most besides his immediate family, have been his father, Presidents of the Church, and most of the General Authorities from 1903 to 1936 who were in the Allen home in Raymond when they came to Stake Conferences.

Brother Allen's fondest recollections are of his athletic career in Raymond, and of the happy family life of the Allens both before and after his marriage. Another honor worthy of note that came to John was his receiving a "Master M Men Pin" while he was in the Taylor Stake Presidency.

John has two hobbies to occupy his spare time. In Summer it is fishing. In Winter it is applying the "Dow Theory of Investments" that he learned at B.Y.U., to the stock market on behalf of himself and a few of his close associates. It is his definite conviction that this investment "theory" is sound. So far his profits far exceed his losses; and John is quick to point out that the Dow Theory is so scientific that it is outside the pale of mere gambling.

John carries his age well. In spite of his ulcers, a hernia, and a touch of diabetes, his jet black hair, inherited from his father, belies his 71 years of age.

Another of John's definite convictions is his patriotism and loyalty to the Queen and to the country of his birth.

He feels that the world needs most of all to develop love for their fellowmen through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

His advice to younger generations is to "live close to the Lord, and never, never quit doing right, regardless of difficulties that may arise". (Pretty sound advice from a man of wide experience.)