

# Alpheus L. Rawlins



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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ALPHEUS LEAVITT RAWLINS  
Written by his wife Mabel L. Rawlins 1 Sep 1943 at Denver, Colorado

Alpheus Leavitt Rawlins was born February 10, 1886 at Lewiston, Utah. He was the fourth child of Franklin Archibold and Leona Leavitt Rawlins.

He started school at the age of six in the first school house built in Lewiston, Utah. This school house still stands today.

He was baptized February 10, 1894 in Cub River by his father and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints February 11, 1894 by H. M. Rawlins, an Uncle.

He graduated from grade school in 1900.

His ordinations to the Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were as follows:

Ordained a Teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood January 25, 1899 by William Waddoups.

Ordained an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood November 19, 1906? by his father, Franklin A. Rawlins.

Ordained a Seventy in the Melchizedek Priesthood September 15, 1907 by  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Ordained a High Priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood May \_\_\_\_, 1919 by Rudger Clawson at Shelley, Idaho.

When father was nine years of age his father was called on a mission to California. He worked hard on the farm along with his brothers and sisters to live and keep their father in the mission field. Although only nine years of age he was obligated to do a man's work. Part of their farm was in what is now known as Cornish. In those days there were few settlers there. He often told me how lonely it was for him alone over there while they were plowing and planting with cayotes howling and hoboes walking up and down the railroad tracts. The only companion he had was his dog for weeks at a time. He also told me of having to work all night by the light of the moon at harvest time.

A year after his father returned home from his mission, his brother George had black diphtheria. He and the others of the family had to stay with their grandmother Leavitt. She

gave them 2 tablespoons full of castor oil and turpentine every night. He often said maybe that was what made him so well all his life because it was either a kill or a cure and he guess it cured. He also told of his Uncle Harty and Edward Leavitt being such big teases. He said they would bring a black whip to the table to see that they ate their food right.

When he was twelve years of age his mother died of a heart attack following the birth of a baby girl who later also died. He had saved his money to buy a harmonica or mouth organ which he could play very well and had gone to Logan for this purpose and to see a circus. It was while he was there that his mother died. Following his mother's death, Elzira, his older sister kept house and cared for the family and their father.

After his graduation from grade school and there being no high school in those days, he entered the BYU or better known as the Brigham Young College at Logan in the fall of 1901. He attended that college for 3 years or until February of 1905.

In December of 1904 at a leap year dance in Lewiston, Utah, he met me and the following year on the fourth of July, I went with him to Lewiston to celebrate and as I have always said to be approved of by his family. On the twenty fourth of July he asked me to marry him even though it was leap year. \*1

We were married the following twenty third of December 1908 in the Logan Temple, Logan, Utah. President William Budge married us. \*2

The following summer he helped his brother George build a home on the twenty acres of land given them by their father. He was going to help build and pay for Uncle Georges home then Uncle George would help us, but the following October father was called to fill a mission to New Zealand. We were expecting a new baby in November so father was released until January 22, 1910.\*3 At that time our first son Lloyd was born on November 29,1909.\*4

It took him four weeks on the ocean to reach his field of labor. He labored in Christchurch among the English people the first eight months of his mission. He was then called to teach school among the natives. He had children in his school from six years to twenty one years of age. One of his pupils later became a prominent figure in the Maori College. His name was

Stewart Mahi. Father received letters and messages of love from his pupils for he did a great work among those fine people and they were so good to him. They treated him as if he was a King and he surely loved them. He labored among them two years and then was released six months earlier to bring the remains of Elder Larson of Springfield, Utah home who had died of typhoid fever while on his mission.

Several years later a company of Maoris came to Utah to do temple work before the Hawaiian Temple was completed. They had a reunion at Logan. We were there and they put their arms around fathers neck and expressed their appreciation to him again.

He arrived in Salt Lake City June 1, 1912 from his mission in New Zealand after a very strenuous journey. When he arrived in Vancouver, BC with the remains of Elder Larson, the casket was leaking and it looked as if he would have to go back in midocean and bury the elder but the Lord interceded and President Melvin J Ballard the President of the Northwestern States Mission was successful in getting the remains through.

After returning from his mission to New Zealand, we went to live in one part of Uncle George's house. The following March 11, 1913, our first daughter, Leona, was born. We then bought the David Van Orden's place and moved there. Father built chicken coops and a room on the house. He worked at the Sugar Factory in the winter. He worked twelve hour shifts and received \$5.00 per shift. In eighteen months, September 6, 1914, our second son, Kenneth, was born. When Kenneth was two years old we sold our farm under the advise of grandpa Rawlins and in connection with Uncle Ruel bought a 50 acre farm in the Third Ward. This was the beginning of the first world war. It was while we lived here that our third son, Murl, was born November 29, 1916.

This farm wasn't a very good one so we sold and bought a farm which had 116 acres in the Snake River Country at Kimball, Idaho. Uncle Ruel went with us to the Sanke River Country. Father proved to be a real asset to the Ward in Kimball. He was sustained as Superintendent of the Sunday School and staged a very successful celebration which is still observed. He also organized a baseball team and swore saturday afternoon a holiday in which to enjoy a game of ball. He was later sustained as First Counselor to Bishop William B Taylor and acted as

Bishop one year during the absence of the Bishop. We were there for eight years. It was on November 17, 1921, while we were living in Kimball, our fourth son, Warren, was born.

April 22, 1925, his father, Franklin A Rawlins, died. We purchased his fathers farm and in the early spring of 1926,\*5 moved back to Lewiston, Utah to our new home and farm.

Shortly after moving to Utah there was an East Drainage System organized for the purpose of draining land that wasn't tillable of which there were many acres in Lewiston. Our farm had several acres of land to be drained. Father was made President of the East Drainage System and his labors were greatly appreciated. He and Mayor Dr J M Bernheisel, DDS became fast friends through this association.

Father was later chosen as water master of the East Branch Canal, another office he very successfully filled and through this office gained the respect of all because of his fair dealings and reliable character. While working in this capacity he and David O Hendricks became very close companions and friends.

While father was serving his people he also was serving his God. He was filling the position of First Counselor to Casper Merrill in the Benson Stake YMMIA and as Scout Executive.

On my 40th birthday, September 3, 1929, our second daughter, Eva, was born. This was our last child making a family of four sons and two daughters.

In January 1938,\*6 we sold our farm and home in Lewiston and went to Kansas City, Kansas to work for the Excelcis Products Co. We remained there four months and then was transferred to Logan, Utah. After one year in Logan we moved to White Bluffs, Washington where we had purchased a fruit farm. Father was very happy and contented because he was in the mission field where he could present the gospel to those less fortunate. There was a branch of the Church organized in a short time and he was sustained as First Counselor to President John C Hyer, a position he held at his death. He was also the priesthood teacher, a work he loved and performed wonderfully well.

Through his faithfulness he became a very fluent speaker, a talent he longed for and did not have in his earlier life.

Besides farming, he worked at the Grand Coulee Sub Station sixteen miles from White Bluffs. In January 1943,\*7 his work ended there and having Warren in the mission field he felt he must continue to work. We went to Pasco, Washington where there was a large Army Air Base and Navy Air Base to find work. He had decided to be a guard and we had rented a place expecting to move but the ship yard work in Tacoma, Washington offered more so on January 13th he left for the ship yards. He started to work there January 15th and on March 1st he took the old time flu and the lady he boarded with sent for me March 7th. All efforts failed and on March 10th at 5:30 am he passed away.

Father was truly a man of God. Living his religion to the best of his ability. He was a firm but kind, noble father and a true husband. He never ask anything of anyone that he would not have done himself. His aims were dependability and punctuality. I can't remember a time when he was late, it was done and it was none right. He did not have tolerance with anyone who knew the gospel and did not live it. He had a strong character and firm testimony of the gospel borne to me the day before he passed on.

He was a proud father and reared a noble family through his noble example. His family was just what he wanted them to be and often said my family is qualified to perform any office in the Church and fill it well.

Blessed be his memory. May we read his life and thank our Heavenly Father for such a noble husband and father.

His wife,

Mabel Rawlins