

Alexander Dawson and Mary Catherine Green



A Family History

by Shelley Dawson Davies

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Chapter 1

A FIRM FOUNDATION

Growing Up in Davis County

Allie was a tease. He enjoyed nothing better than telling a good joke no matter how serious the situation and loved playing pranks, especially on his father, Alexander, Senior.¹ One of Allie's sisters remembered seeing him on one occasion running over the hills of Dawson Hollow with his father chasing after him for an unknown offense. Allie was able to out run the elder Alexander and spent the entire day safely on the hill across the hollow, watching his father go about the farm chores. That night after the family had retired, Allie crept back home under the cover of darkness to rest up for another day of adventure.²

Alexander Dawson, Junior,³ or Allie as he was known by family and friends,⁴ was a typical country boy who was always involved in escapades of one kind or another. He grew up in a large, fun-loving family of six sisters and one older brother on the large Dawson Hollow farm in Layton, Utah.⁵ Allie's entire family was as cheerful as he was. "They had the best times you've ever seen," according to Donna Thurgood Patterson.⁶ "If they could pull a prank on anyone, it would just tickle them to death. They didn't do this to hurt them, but just to make them happier and smile. They liked to cheer people up and make them jolly. They were very close to each other and helped each other where needed."⁷

Apparently, Allie could be stubborn as well as cheerful. "I remember a story Dad used to tell," recalled his son Harold.⁸ "One night, when the boys came in from work, all they had to eat was bread and milk and Dad would not eat it. The next morning he got up and was offered that same bread and milk from the night before. He still would not eat it. He went out to work and he came in for lunch. By then the bread and milk had gone sour. He still would not eat it. That night his mother cooked a good supper. The bread was clabbered by then, but he was so hungry he started to eat it anyway. As soon as he had obeyed, his parents took the sour bread and milk away from him and gave him a good supper."⁹



Brothers Willie and Allie Dawson in a photo taken by C. H. Savage around 1867.



Looking east from the south ridge of Dawson Hollow. The homestead with its white silo is visible in the distance.

The Wilds

Allie was the third child born to pioneers Alexander and Elizabeth Jane (Fowle) Dawson.¹⁰ Alexander and Elizabeth immigrated to Salt Lake City in 1860, where their first child, William,¹¹ had been born late that fall. The next spring, Alexander bought a parcel of land complete with a rustic cabin in the bottom of what is now known as Dawson Hollow, gradually adding property over the years until he became one of the largest land holders in northern Davis County.¹²

When the Dawsons first moved into the hollow, however, they were far from prosperous. For many months Elizabeth made dinner with only a few garden vegetables and the one egg provided daily from a chicken donated to the family by a friend.¹³ The Dawsons made do living in the log cabin for several years, and it was there under the leaky sod roof where Elizabeth gave birth to her second child, Elizabeth Jane,¹⁴ on 24 March, 1863.¹⁵

Alexander divided his time between working the farm and building a suitable home for his growing family from the fieldstone turned up by his plow. The new rock house was completed in time for the birth of Alexander Jr. on 4 April, 1865.¹⁶ The homestead was a two-story dwelling with a pair of bedrooms upstairs, a kitchen and parlor on the main floor, and a verandah

running across the front of the house. A frame building in back served as the summer kitchen.¹⁷ It was the perfect home to welcome the rest of the Dawson children¹⁸ as they arrived: Isabella,¹⁹ Margaret,²⁰ Annie,²¹ Effie,²² Eva,²³ Mary²⁴ and Emma.²⁵

Dawson Hollow was known as “the Wilds”²⁶ in the early days due to the number of animals roaming the countryside. Wolves, coyotes and sometimes even bears and mountain lions wandered down from the nearby Wasatch Mountains in search of prey. “You could stand outside at night and hear the wolves howling and howling. It was nothing to get up in the morning and see from seven to ten in a pack,” remembered Emma.²⁷ The wolves were especially bold and dangerous at night, according to early pioneer accounts, one of which claimed that a single wolf killed “four of five cattle in one night’s raid for mere pasture.”²⁸

There were also several bands of Indians migrating across the flat lands between the Wasatch Mountains and the Great Salt Lake in the late 1860s, with some of them camping along the hollow’s southern ridge.²⁹ Encounters with the natives were not uncommon. Emma recalled her father telling of an Indian who “hung around for three days. He was waiting for a tribe to come along the open highway. He claimed that one of their tribesmen had stolen his wife and he was going to kill him. All at once, he disappeared and Father went out to the barn and noticed that his lariat was gone. He started a search for the Indian and when he found him, he asked him what he had done with the lariat. The Indian claimed he had not seen it and Father told him he knew he had. Father grabbed the Indian by the shirt and there it was wrapped around his waist. Father took hold of one end of the rope and spun the Indian around until the rope came off. Then he kicked his hind end and told him to git.”³⁰

The Dawsons found themselves fairly isolated living in the hollow. Besides the Mountain Road³¹ running north and south along the foothills and the stage road passing through downtown Layton,³² the only other thoroughfares were nothing more than occasional wagon tracks across the sage-dotted landscape. The open land might have spread out forever if it weren’t for the rise of the foothills to the east and the sand ridge³³ to the west, where low-land pastures were under the cultivation of alfalfa and grain. An occasional stand of high oak brush poked up in the odd place where the earth was too wrinkled to plow and no one had yet found a way to force it to submit.

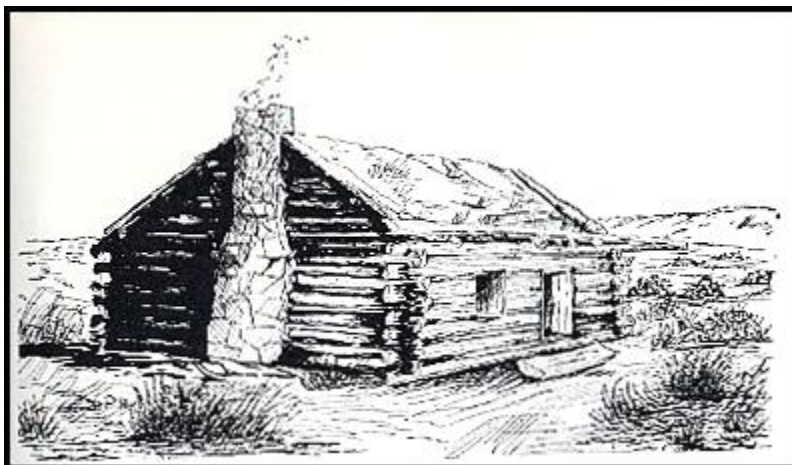
The Dawson home was the only house visible along the length of the hollow, although there were a handful of dwellings dotting its southern ridge. The few neighbors were far enough away to make visits difficult. The James Forbes family, whose home was located one and a half miles to the east on the Mountain Road, was the closest neighbor. Hitching up the wagon for a summer drive “wasn’t so bad, but when they were invited out in the winter, they had to take cattle to break a path in the snow,” said Emma.³⁴



The Dawson Hollow homestead was surrounded by a number of lovely shade and fruit trees.



Snow piled up so deep in the hollow that it often reached the second story windows at the back of the house.



The first school in the East Layton area was this log cabin, located at 2213 Oakridge Drive.

Out of the Best Books

Sparse settlement in Davis County also made attending Sunday services difficult. The nearest church building to Dawson Hollow, an 1863 adobe structure affectionately called the “Old Meeting House,” was located four miles to the south in Kaysville. Sunday school was held on a weekly basis, supplemented by a monthly fast meeting on Thursdays. The distance to church was made to seem even farther when the Dawsons walked in order to give their work animals a Sabbath day rest.³⁵

Allie was baptized a member of the church on 27 July, 1873, by family friend Richard Pillins, and confirmed by his father, Alexander Sr., on the same day.³⁶ He was probably not the only boy baptized that day as baptisms were a community affair, usually held in the summer when one of the nearby creeks could be dammed to create a pond deep enough for immersion. Children who had reached the age of eight years since the last baptism was held were gathered together and baptized one by one.³⁷

Allie attended school with Will and Lizzy in the first public building constructed in East Layton,³⁸ a rustic log structure on a little knoll southeast of the hollow.³⁹ The three-mile distance to school was covered on horseback or with pooled wagon rides organized by neighboring families. Students were only marginally protected from the elements by the school’s thatched roof, which was covered with a layer of brush and the same clay that was packed down hard to serve as a floor. Desks were nothing more than long slabs of

wood with log stumps set up as seats. There were no blackboards and very few textbooks.⁴⁰

Allie learned to love books despite his primitive schooling, becoming an avid reader like his father. “They both liked Scotch novels about pioneers and colonial Scotsmen,” said former school teacher Sarah Jane (Humphrey) Adams.⁴¹ Early Layton residents often traded books and magazines back and forth since there was no public library at the time. Allie grew up reading and discussing events of the day with his father, who “took a keen interest in all local affairs.”⁴²

The distances required to travel for both church and school instruction were shortened considerably in 1877, when Alexander Sr. donated land for a school to be built a quarter of a mile west of the Dawson homestead.⁴³ Twelve-year old Allie began attending class at the new school with children from the surrounding farms. School opened as soon as the harvest was over in late September and ran until the mid-May planting season, offering lessons in basic math, reading, writing and history. Newspaper reports of current events such as the election of Rutherford B. Hayes (1877), Indian battles still being fought across the west, and Thomas Edison’s invention of the phonograph added a lively element to the lessons.

Sunday meetings were held in the school as soon as the building was finished, with the elder Alexander called to preside as Sunday school president.⁴⁴ The Dawson Hollow Sunday school remained in session for twelve years until a larger, more centralized frame building was constructed in 1889, at 962 North Church Street in Layton.⁴⁵

Farm and Fields

Allie and Will grew up working their father’s land, which was no small task as the Dawson properties stretched across 800 acres from today’s Hill Air Force Base in Layton to Clearfield and Roy,⁴⁶ according to Emma, who said her father owned “so much land he hired men to work it.”⁴⁷ Alfalfa was one of the main cash crops grown in Davis County, and the Dawson boys sowed many acres with the plant. Grain became an important secondary crop for the family when it was discovered that the Dawson lands in the recently acquired sand ridge area were perfect for the dry farming of wheat.⁴⁸

All hands were required in the fields during the critical seasons of planting and harvest. Often neighbors and transient workers were recruited for additional help, especially during harvest when a horse drawn threshing machine was brought in to speed the separation of wheat from the chaff. Allie worked on his father’s threshing machine as part of a five-man crew for two months every harvest season. From sunrise to sunset, Allie took turns with the other men

feeding the “ever growling” machine with bundles of grain until fifty bushels of separated wheat were produced, bagged and stacked on wagons for transport to market.⁴⁹

Allie, Will and their father joined the threshing crews, which often camped at the work site for weeks at a time to save the many hours in travel time between home and the fields. The Dawson sisters took turns as cooks for the crew, joining the men in camp to prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner with “a stove that just took sage brush and they built a bowery out of sage brush for shelter,” said Emma. “They would be out there for three weeks at a time thrashing with the horses, no steam engines or anything.” Main courses with meat, potatoes and vegetables were all prepared in the fields, but desert items such as pies and cakes were baked at home and delivered to the crew by wagon. “They could bake bread out there, but they couldn’t bake pie and cake in them ovens, and the wind blowing to beat the band,” said Emma.⁵⁰

In addition to the acres of field crops in the Dawson holdings were vast tracts of dry land covered with sagebrush and grass good enough for grazing cattle. Alexander Sr. had grown his cattle and sheep herds to become one of the wealthier ranchers of the county, relying heavily on Allie’s expertise and interest with the stock. “Under the supervision of his father he became a very successful farmer and stock raiser,” said Emma. Allie took charge of caring for all the livestock, including feeding the pigs and milking the cows at the hollow farm.⁵¹

Allie’s chores began in the barn well before sunrise with feeding and milking, followed by raking out manure from the barn and putting down fresh straw for bedding. He was always met at the door with a chorus of animal calls, as the horses and cows were well aware of the time and were anxious to be fed. Each horse had an individual stall and the milk cows were lined up in homemade wooden staunchens that held their heads while they were fed and milked. After milking, both Allie and Will chopped enough wood to feed the kitchen stove for the day, and brought in an armful of split logs when they came inside for a hearty breakfast of eggs, bacon and biscuits around seven a.m.



The Dawson Hollow Farm

In 1867, seven years after his arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Alexander Dawson Senior bought one hundred and sixty acres of land from William Lindsey for \$350.00. The land was located “in the middle Fork Hollow of Kay’s Creek” which soon became known as “Little Scotland” after Alexander and his neighbor James Forbes, also a Scotsman, settled their families in a predominantly English community. Lindsey had built a rudimentary one-room log cabin on the land with a dirt floor and sod roof. “When it rained the roof leaked and Mother would have to put tin tubs, dish pans and buckets on the bed and around the house to keep everything dry,” according to their youngest daughter, Emma (Dawson) Simpson.

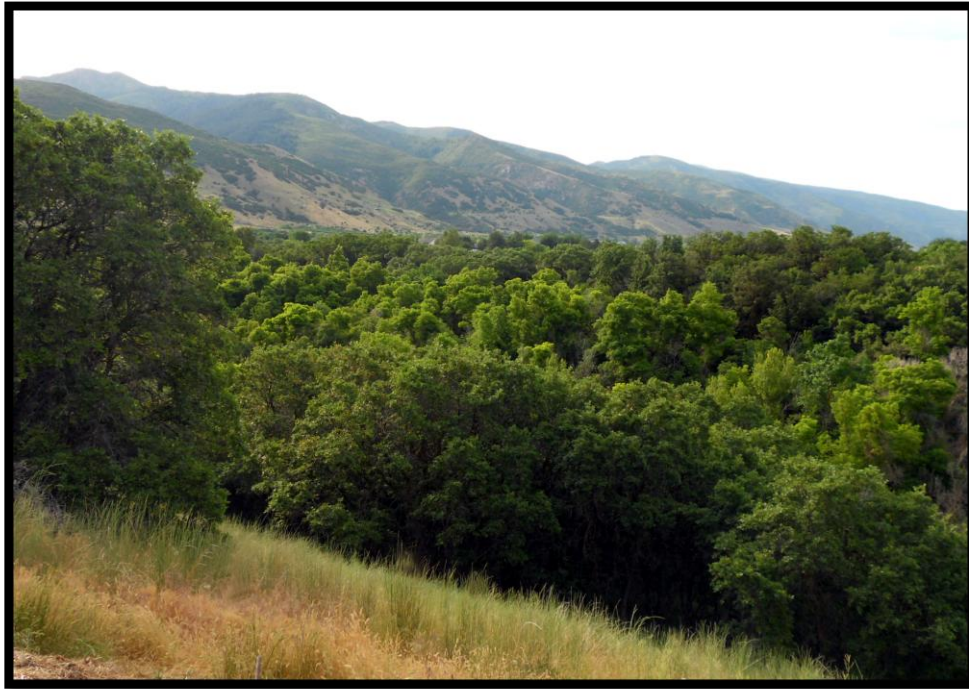
Alexander, who was an experienced mason, constructed a large rock house near the log cabin not long after purchasing the property. On the ground floor were two bedrooms, a kitchen, a pantry and a parlor. There were two bedrooms upstairs “with little windows. It was warm upstairs,” remembered Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, a teacher who boarded with the family while she taught school at the nearby Dawson Hollow School at the turn of the nineteenth century. A verandah ran across the front of the house and a wooden frame structure on the back served as a summer kitchen. There was a cellar “built out of rock west of the house,” according to grandson Harold Dawson, with a walnut tree in on the east side and an orchard to the south.

The well was located in back of the home near the summer kitchen. “It was cold water and quite deep, about thirty feet. That was good tasting water,” recalled Harold. “We used to hang the milk, butter and cream in there to keep it cool. There was an old cooler cloth on all four sides and tin pan with water in it. On top was a sack that would feed the water out and down the cooler to keep it cool.” The home was heated with a copper clad stove.

The rock house was home to Alexander and Elizabeth’s ten children until they married and left to make their own homes. Allie and his wife Cass later lived in the home for several years to help run the farm. When Allie finally retired, he sold the farm to his brother-in-law, Ted Simpson, who farmed the property, but fell behind on tax payments. Allie’s sons Alex and Harold later lived in the home with their families while trying to save the farm from foreclosure, but the house was abandoned when the property was lost to the bank in the 1930s. Sometime later the house was stripped of its roof and deteriorated to the point where it could not be saved. It was torn down in the late 1950’s by Jack Whitesides, Emma’s son-in-law, who bought the house and a few acres of the surrounding property. Jack built a summer home using stones from the original homestead. The silo, the only original structure from pioneer days, still stands in Dawson Hollow next to the Whitesides’ home at 2391 Kayscreek Drive in Layton. [2013]



The Alexander Dawson family around 1894. Back row left to right: Elizabeth, Annie, William, Margaret, Alexander Jr. Front row: Eva, Elizabeth, Emma, Alexander Sr., Effie.



The Mutton Hollow area in Kaysville, Utah, near the location of the Thomas Green home.

Young Cass

Kaysville's Mutton Hollow was almost identical to Dawson Hollow, five miles to the south and so close to the Wasatch foothills that the sun's shadow fell across the land until almost mid-morning. Thomas "Tuck"⁵² and Mary Ann (Huntsman) Green⁵³ had settled on the northern crest of Mutton Hollow⁵⁴ in 1863, after relocating from a successful farm outside of Council Bluffs, Iowa, with their six children: William⁵⁵ (thirteen), John⁵⁶ (nine), Levi⁵⁷ (seven), Joseph⁵⁸ (five), Robert⁵⁹ (three), and Susanna⁶⁰ (one). Mary Ann gave birth to her seventh child, James,⁶¹ in a log cabin the following June. Rose⁶² was born three years later, followed by Mary Catherine,⁶³ whose named was shortened to Cass, Cassie, or sometimes Cat, among family and friends.⁶⁴

Cass was born 24 November, 1869,⁶⁵ just six months after the transcontinental rail road was joined a few miles east of Kaysville near Promontory Point. The family farm was well established by then, and Cass grew up comfortably with the prosperity brought to Utah by rail. Kaysville's Main Street, only one and a half miles to the west of the farm, boasted a variety of business, including two general stores which carried "everything from groceries (including candies and gum) to dry goods, hardware, shoes, paints, coal oil, linoleum, oil cloth, coal,

brooms rope, buggy whips, horse collars, halters, chicken feed, beautiful chinaware, patent medicines and toys at Christmas time.”⁶⁶

The Green family often hitched up the wagon for a quick trip to the grist mill, carpenter’s shop or the farmer’s coop along Main Street where they could also pick up their mail. Although Cass enjoyed any trip to town, she was nervous as a small child when walking past Barton and Sons undertaking parlor, as “his sons liked to hide behind caskets and frighten passersby with strange noises.”⁶⁷

The Green farm covered many acres, including a ridge along the Mountain Road as well as several hollows where the important local cash crop of alfalfa was grown. Thomas and his sons also established large orchards on the bench lands, as the climate was excellent for growing apples, peaches, plums, cherries and pears.

While her older brothers became expert in tending the fields and orchards, Cass joined her mother and younger sister Julia⁶⁸ and brother Alfred⁶⁹ in tending the family’s kitchen garden and farm animals. Feeding the pigs, gathering eggs and milking the cows were daily chores that had to be worked in between baking bread and cooking three meals a day.

Cooking was an ongoing task, but other homemaking chores were scheduled according to the days of the week. Laundry was done on Monday, when the entire day was spent hauling buckets of water from the well to the wash tub where it was boiled and laced with homemade soap. Clothes were scrubbed against a tin washboard, rinsed in a second tub of clear water and wrung out by hand before they were hung to dry in the yard. Ironing the fresh laundry naturally followed on Tuesday, when clothes stiff from the line were sprinkled with water to loosen the wrinkles. A relay of heavy sad irons heated on the stove pressed the wrinkles out of both clothing and bed linens. Any item needing repairs was dealt with on Wednesdays, when mending and sewing became the focus of the household.

Thursdays were reserved for shopping in town. The Greens often traded surplus eggs and cream for store-bought staples such as flour and sugar, which came in large one hundred pound cloth sacks. Small items such as crackers, cheese and anything else the family didn’t produce themselves, were wrapped in newspaper and fastened with string.

Friday was dedicated to cleaning the house with a series of heavy duty jobs that included sweeping and scrubbing the wooden floors, beating tracked-in dust out of carpets, wiping away black deposits left by coal oil lamps on everything in the house, washing windows with watered down turpentine and old newspaper and polishing furniture with a homemade mixture of linseed oil, vinegar and turpentine.

Saturday was baking day, when the stove was fired up from early morning to late afternoon. Baking bread required several hours of mixing, kneading and rising before it was slid into the oven for thirty-five to forty minutes. Cakes and pies, prepared while the bread baked, were lined up on the oak table, waiting their turn in the oven. In cold weather, baking day was a welcome relief from the chilly draft of an uninsulated farmhouse, but during the summer the added heat transformed the kitchen into a miserable sweatbox.

Sunday was supposed to be a day of rest, but there was little difference in the work load as both animals and family members still needed to be fed and cared for. Extra time was required for dressing if the family would be attending church, as there were many bows to be tied and shoe buttons to be fastened before everyone was deemed presentable. Cass routinely helped dress Julia and Alfred, and often tended them during the week, especially when their mother was called away for midwife duties.⁷⁰



Kaysville's Coop on Main Street in the 1890s.

The Three R's

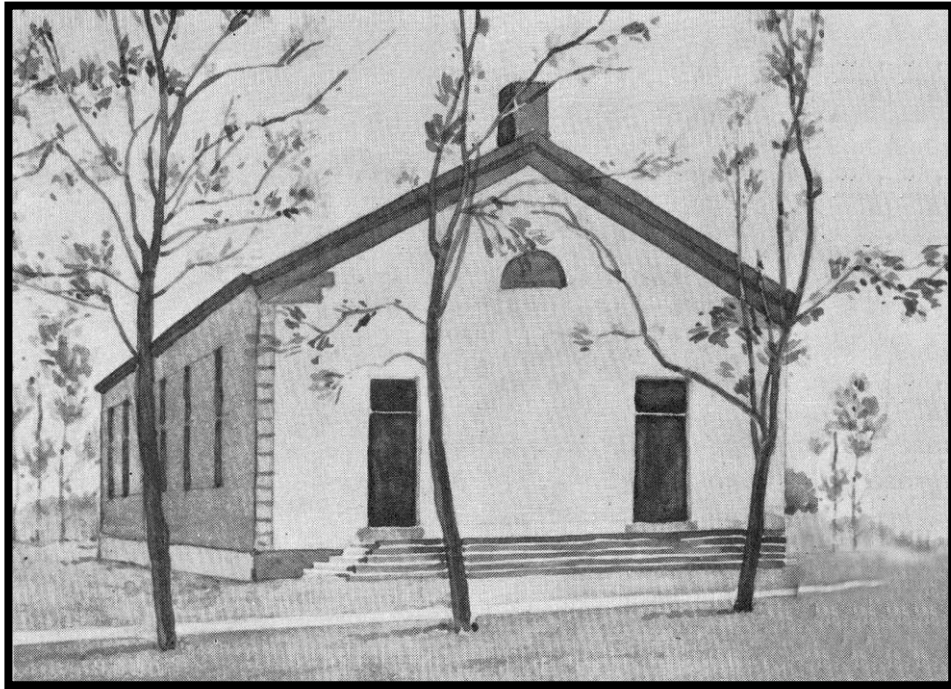
By the time Cass reached seven years of age, a new school had been built in Kaysville, a modern brick building one block east of Main Street. Even though the New Survey School was initially a one-room building where students of all ages and levels were taught by a single teacher, it was an improvement over the makeshift classes previously held in the adobe church where unruly children were punished by being sent to "Siberia" the unheated, far end of the room.⁷¹

Educational focus at the new school centered on the basics of reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic. Lessons were often memorized individually and as a group. Older students assisted the teacher in working with the younger pupils as they memorized and recited lessons from McGuffey's Readers and spelling books. Math, history and geography books were rare or non-existent.⁷² Facts were often taught with memory devices such as pairing the state names and capitols with rhyme and music. One student remembered the multiplication tables were taught by singing:

"Twice one are two,
Twice two are four, etc., to
Twelve time twelve.
Five times five are twenty-five,
Five times six are thirty, and so on
until Five times twelve are sixty."⁷³

By the time Cass was eleven years old, there were enough students to divide classes by age groups and expand the building to two rooms.⁷⁴ Because the New Survey School was funded by taxes, educational enhancements such as blackboards, maps and better textbooks became available. Although memorization still played an important role in learning, teachers were more inclined to assist students in understanding what they were reciting.

Cass graduated from school in 1885, at the age of sixteen. A recitation day was held in June, when parents and townspeople could watch as students demonstrated what they had learned through orations, spelling bees, lightening arithmetic, geographical and historical knowledge, and displays of penmanship.



The original pioneer LDS meeting house in Kaysville.

Keeping Company

Church meetings were held in Kaysville's Old Meeting House,⁷⁵ where Cass was baptized 24 November, 1882.⁷⁶ Even though the Greens lived only a twenty minute walk from the meeting house, attending services was not a priority. Like many farmers, the Greens apparently found themselves overwhelmed with the constant demands of caring for crops and stock, finding little time for church meetings. "My father [Robert] wasn't very religious," according to Cass' niece Elizabeth Tall Green. "He wasn't brought up to go to church all the time."⁷⁷

Even though the Green family was generally casual about church attendance, Cass may have joined occasional Primary classes as a child, and more than likely walked to the activities organized by the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association when she was a teenager. These socials were considered "an important factor in the development of the rising generation,"⁷⁸ and were especially attractive to young people looking forward to dating and eventually marriage. It was probably at one of these events where Cass and Allie first became acquainted.

Allie cut quite a figure at 5'6" tall. He was a handsome young man with brown hair and blue eyes.⁷⁹ Not only was Allie was a great favorite with the ladies, but he owned a beautiful buggy which he "drove with white horses," according to his son Harold. "He always had many white horses."⁸⁰ Cass was comely in her own right. "Mother was larger than Dad," recalled Harold. "She was about 5'8", two or three inches taller. She was a heavy woman, quite attractive in her younger years" when she wore her brown hair pulled tightly back into a bun with a knot of curled bangs up front.⁸¹ They were a devoted couple; once Allie and Cass began dating they never stopped.

Cass was "very jolly"⁸² and fit in well with the Dawson clan, who "loved company and loved music," said Emma, who recalled neighbors dropping by the homestead with their violins for dancing. "Up came the carpet and the straw came out and they danced until daylight in the morning and just had the best times."⁸³

Allie loved to sing and recite ditties and excelled at both. During his youth he established quite a reputation as a composer and was often called upon at dances to sing some of his compositions.⁸⁴ Many of these gatherings took place in his own home. Young people from the area gathered at the Dawson Hollow homestead almost every Sunday afternoon. In mild weather croquet and tennis were favorite outdoor entertainments and Mrs. Dawson made sure the table was set with tempting dishes such as tapioca pudding topped with whipped cream.⁸⁵ Emma recalled that "there was always a crowd at home in the hollow. So many young people used to come up and play croquet and tennis, every Sunday. There used to be a gang of them and I wished I could hurry and grow up so I could play with them. They had many a good time."⁸⁶

ENDNOTES

¹ Alexander Dawson (1837-1918).

² Donna Thurgood Patterson, "History of Annie Priscilla (Dawson) Bennett," undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

³ Alexander Dawson, NFS #KWCL-QGB. www.new.familysearch.org.

⁴ Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, "Life Sketch of Alexander Dawson Jr.," undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

⁵ Layton was originally an unincorporated part of Kaysville until 1902.

⁶ A great-granddaughter of Alexander Sr. and Elizabeth Jane (Fowle) Dawson.

⁷ Patterson, "History of Annie Priscilla (Dawson) Bennett."

⁸ Harold John Dawson (1911-1986).

⁹ Interview with Harold John Dawson, by Janice (Page) Dawson, 1 August, 1980. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Jane (Fowle) Dawson (1839-1908).

¹¹ William "Will" Alexander Dawson (1860-1903).

¹² Simpson, "Life Sketch of Alexander Dawson, Jr."

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- ¹³ Interview with Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson by Alice Rampton, 1965. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹⁴ Elizabeth “Lizzy” Jane (Dawson) Criddle (1863-1940).
- ¹⁵ “Alexander Dawson-Elizabeth Jane Fowle family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965. The home stood at the present address of 2391 Kayscreek Drive. It was one of the first rock homes built in Layton. See Dan and Eva Carlsruh, editors, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints* (Salt Lake City: Moench Printing, 1985), page 89.
- ¹⁸ “Alexander Dawson-Elizabeth Jane Fowle family group sheet.”
- ¹⁹ Isabella Dawson (2 March, 1868- 16 March, 1868).
- ²⁰ Margaret Isabella (Dawson) Dodd (1869-1930).
- ²¹ Annie Priscilla (Dawson) Bennett (1872-1935).
- ²² Effie Louisa (Dawson) Denkers (1875-1943).
- ²³ Mary Dawson (born and died 30 December, 1880).
- ²⁴ Eva Ellen (Dawson) Ray (1878-1957).
- ²⁵ Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson (1884-1969).
- ²⁶ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ²⁷ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ²⁸ Annie Call Carr, *East of Antelope Island* (reprint, Salt Lake City, Utah; Publisher’s Press, 1969), page 127.
- ²⁹ Dan and Eva Carlsruh, editors, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints* (Salt Lake City: Moench Printing, 1985), page 35. An active Ute winter camp existed near the Weber River well into the 1870s. See Glen M. Leonard, *A History of Davis County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999), page 13.
- ³⁰ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ³¹ Present day Highway 89 is still referred to by locals as the Mountain Road.
- ³² The old stage road is now Main Street in Layton.
- ³³ The area where Hill Air Force Base is now located, beginning at 3000 North and I-15 in Layton.
- ³⁴ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ³⁵ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ³⁶ LDS Membership Records, North Davis Stake, Layton Ward 1904-1943, film #0026066, part 2 number 59.
- ³⁷ Carlsruh, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints*, page 172.
- ³⁸ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ³⁹ A house now stands on the site at 2213 Oakridge Drive. Carr, *East of Antelope Island*, page 353.
- ⁴⁰ Carr, *East of Antelope Island*, page 125.
- ⁴¹ Interview with Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, ca. 1971. Transcript held by interviewer Janice (Page) Dawson.
- ⁴² Alexander Dawson obituary, *The Weekly Reflex*, 13 February, 1936.
- ⁴³ The site is now in the back yard of the home located at 1655 Kayscreek Drive.
- ⁴⁴ Carlsruh, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints*, page 169.
- ⁴⁵ Carlsruh, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints*, page 170.
- ⁴⁶ According to Emma, the property was located “where the Naval Supply Depot now stands,” at 391 East 1700 South in Clearfield. Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ⁴⁷ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ⁴⁸ Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge’s Histories, Volume II*, (Salt Lake City; Juvenile Instructor, 1889), page 65.
- ⁴⁹ Helen Denkers, transcriber, “Alexander Dawson Funeral Addresses,” typescript, 11 February, 1936. Held by Richard R. Dawson.
- ⁵⁰ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ⁵¹ Simpson, “Life Sketch of Alexander Dawson, Jr.”

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- ⁵² Thomas “Tuck” Green (1826-1910). Interview with Elizabeth (Green) Tall, by Anne (Dawson) Nace, November, 1997. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁵³ Mary Ann (Huntsman) Green (1830-1907).
- ⁵⁴ The Green home was located near the present address of 292 Boynton Road, Kaysville.
- ⁵⁵ William Henry Green (1850-1921).
- ⁵⁶ John Alma Green (1854-1918).
- ⁵⁷ Levi Green (1856-1903).
- ⁵⁸ Joseph Thomas Green (18858-1915).
- ⁵⁹ Robert Green (1860-1941).
- ⁶⁰ Susanna Marie (Green) Hodson (1862-1920).
- ⁶¹ James Green (1864-1936).
- ⁶² Rosabel (Green) Phillips (1866-1938).
- ⁶³ Mary Catherine (Green) Dawson, KWCL-QGT. www.new.familysearch.org.
- ⁶⁴ Interview, Elizabeth (Green) Tall, November, 1997.
- ⁶⁵ “Thomas Green-Mary Ann Huntsman family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.
- ⁶⁶ Doneta M. Gatherum and Kent C. Day, *Kaysville and Layton General Stores*, (Kaysville-Layton Historical Society, 1987), page 9.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid*, page 14.
- ⁶⁸ Julia Ann (Green) Perkins (1871-1944).
- ⁶⁹ Alfred Frederick Green (1873-1949).
- ⁷⁰ Interview with Richard Rex Dawson, 1997. Transcript held by interviewer Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁷¹ Carr, *East of Antelope Island*, page page 112.
- ⁷² *Ibid*, page 111.
- ⁷³ *Ibid*, page 111-112.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid*, page 112.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid*, page 328
- ⁷⁶ “Alexander Dawson-Mary Catherine Green family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.
- ⁷⁷ Interview, Elizabeth (Green) Tall, November, 1997.
- ⁷⁸ *Tullidge’s Histories, Volume II*, page 67.
- ⁷⁹ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid*.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid*.
- ⁸² Interview with Mattie Green by Janice (Page) Dawson, ca. 1971. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁸³ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ⁸⁴ Simpson, “Life Sketch of Alexander Dawson, Jr.”
- ⁸⁵ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid*.

Chapter 2

MARRIED LIFE

Hand in Hand

Young brides in the 1880s were married in a new dress that would serve as their Sunday best attire for years afterwards. Cass, with her flair for fashion and good taste, chose a dark colored dress with a tight-fitting bodice and fashionable leg 'o mutton sleeves which was topped with a large bow at the neckline.

Surrounded by a large gathering of family members who came to wish the couple well, Allie and Cass were married by Elder Peter Barton, on 12 January, 1889, in Kaysville.⁸⁷ Cass' father Thomas and brother John stood by as witnesses. The ceremony was held at the Kaysville church followed by an all-night long celebration of dancing and dining at the Dawson Hollow school.⁸⁸

The newlyweds were invited to live with the Dawsons in the hollow in order to save enough money to build their own home. It was a full house with ten people in residence, including Allie's parents and six unmarried siblings: William (twenty-nine), Margaret (twenty), Annie (seventeen), Effie (fifteen), Eva (eleven) and Emma (five), but the Dawsons were a loving family and everyone got along well.

Allie continued his ranch duties and farm work, allotting any of his spare time to building the two-room adobe home he promised Cass. The couple chose a site on the southern ridge of Dawson Hollow overlooking the old homestead below, at what is now 1813 Cherry Lane. Allie, Will and Alexander Sr. made the adobe bricks themselves from soil found right on the property. Not only were 'dobies inexpensive (they were literally dirt cheap), but they had the advantage of providing excellent insulation against both cold and heat. Plaster applied to the finished walls prevented erosion and provided an attractive finish. A few years later, Allie added a white frame veneer to the home.

Allie planted several fruit trees facing the road and a neat kitchen garden of lettuce, tomatoes, corn and potatoes on the west side of the house. Cass cultivated a few rows of flowers, including several white varieties, as white flowers were her favorite.⁸⁹ A small number of chickens provided daily eggs and, on occasion, roasted meat for a Sunday meal. Allie always kept half a dozen cows in backyard barn, which put milk and meat on the table and supplemented the income he received from managing the Dawson Hollow farm.



Although expanded with additions and covered with siding, the home Allie built for Cass still stands on Cherry Lane.

The house was small, but comfortable, with a parlor in front and the kitchen and bedroom in back. Cass made white lawn curtains for each window and enjoyed brightening up her new home with “fancy work,” the decorative needlework popular at the time. Designs for knitting, netting, crochet, braiding and embroidery were included in local newspapers and many of the women's fashion periodicals, with illustrations and instructions for working the patterns. A common fancy work project was making pretty lace corners for handkerchiefs, napkins and tablecloths, and Cass made several tablecloth sets and a variety of crocheted doilies to accent the furniture.

The couple eventually settled into their house and enjoyed the fruits of their labors. The Dawson farm continued to prosper, allowing Allie and Cass to purchase a variety of comforts for their home. By November, 1905, when *The Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company Directory* was issued, both Dawson households boasted a phone. Alex Dawson Sr. was listed at the number 14-5 in the Kaysville exchange, while Alex Dawson Jr. had the number of 14-6⁹⁰. Ringing up each other on the telephone became an easy way to keep in touch and everyone enjoyed being able to call downtown to do business with the First National Bank, the Farmer's Union, or to simply chat with family and friends.

Allie and Cass wasted no time in taking advantage of other technological advances, including access to electrical service soon after it became available along Cherry Lane in 1908.⁹¹ The old-fashioned oil burning chandeliers

requiring constant attention and cleaning were replaced by simple pendant lights in each room. These early electric fixtures were little more than a bulb hanging from a ceiling rosette on a twisted cotton insulated cord. The light was illuminated by turning a key on the fixture itself, which meant having to walk through a dark room to turn it on, but the brightness and cleanliness of the new light was worth this small inconvenience.

Early electricity was used initially used for lighting only, with power provided by the local generating plant from dusk to late evening. Power availability expanded once electric appliances appeared on the market, beginning with the iron, which came with a cord that screwed directly into the light fixture itself. Electricity soon became available on Tuesdays, the traditional day housewives set aside for ironing.⁹²

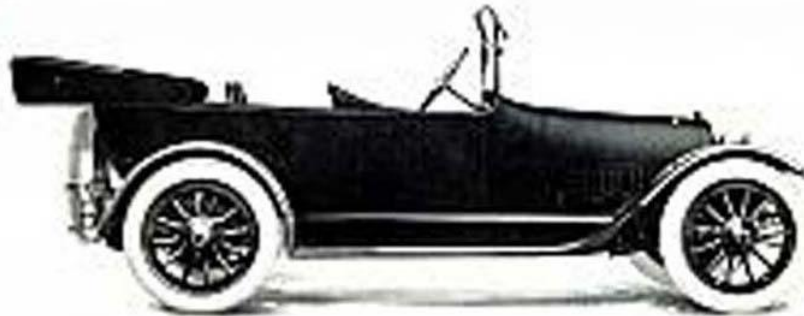
Hello, Hello

The telephone was introduced to Utah in 1879, and a year later twenty-four lines and thirty phones were in operation between Salt Lake City and Ogden. Despite primitive technology, phone service grew and by 1900 more than 1,200 people had a telephone. The Davis County Clipper asked telephone subscribers to help provide local news. "Ten rings on the telephone means that the Clipper would like to ask all the people on that particular line...for late news items," according to an ad in December, 1903.

The Bell Telephone Exchange was located on the second floor of the Sheffield & Sons Dry Goods and Grocery Store at 59 North Main Street in Kaysville. "There was no electricity. Power for the switchboard was obtained from gallon cans containing vitriol and other ingredients that had to be stirred when the power got low," according to an article in The Weekly Reflex, 25 September, 1980. Operators had to know how to check the coils and lines as the manager was also the lineman and the bookkeeper." Subscribers received free service within Davis County. Service to Ogden was fifteen cents, to Salt Lake, twenty-five cents.



Allie and Cass installed this telephone in their home around 1905.



Allie was one of the successful farmers who was able to afford a Buick like the one above, soon after automobiles became available for sale around 1915. It was around this time when Layton's Main Street became a paved, two-lane road. Above: Main and Gentile Streets.



Left: little Alexander around the age of three years. Right: Cass and Alex pose with relatives Noram Simpson and her son.

Welcoming Parents

Allie and Cass gradually realized they would be unable to have children and eventually made arrangements through the bishop to take in several children to raise as their own. Sometime in 1897⁹³ the Dawsons took in an infant named Alexander Anderson,⁹⁴ whose single mother was unable to support him. They made a warm, welcoming home for him, and at some point they also informally adopted a girl named Ellen. Almost nothing is known about Ellen, who is listed as part of the Dawson household in the 1910 U.S. census,⁹⁵ but then disappears from the records. Ellen may have had a falling out with the Dawson family as her existence was never mentioned in later years, except for a passing remark made once by a family member that the Dawsons had raised a daughter.⁹⁶

Alexander, known as Alex, received occasional visits from his natural mother as he grew up, but he spent his childhood living happily with the Dawsons, who were dotting parents. “He was very close to Allie and Cass, who were wonderful people and treated Dad as their very own,” according to Alex’s son Dick Dawson. “They provided him with the best of circumstances and were the best parents anyone could ask for.”⁹⁷

In 1911, Allie and Cass added a one-week old baby boy to their family, who they named Harold.⁹⁸ Although there was a fifteen-year age span between the Alex and Harold, the two brothers got along well. Harold recalled later in life that “Alex and I seldom had a disagreement. I not only grew up working alongside of him, but we did things together like go down to the old school and shoot snakes.”⁹⁹

Harold remembered years later that the Dawsons were a united, loyal and happy family.¹⁰⁰ Both Allie and Cass were loving, easy-going people who lived quite, productive lives and taught their children the same solid values they learned from their own parents. “Dad was as free hearted as anyone and would give you the shirt off his back,” said Harold. “They were was kind and understanding, quiet, friendly and jovial. They loved life and they made a real good home for me. I have a lot of respect for them. They were great people.”¹⁰¹



Cass holds two year old Harold while Allie reads the paper, around 1913.



Looking west towards the barns, silo and wheat fields in Dawson Hollow.

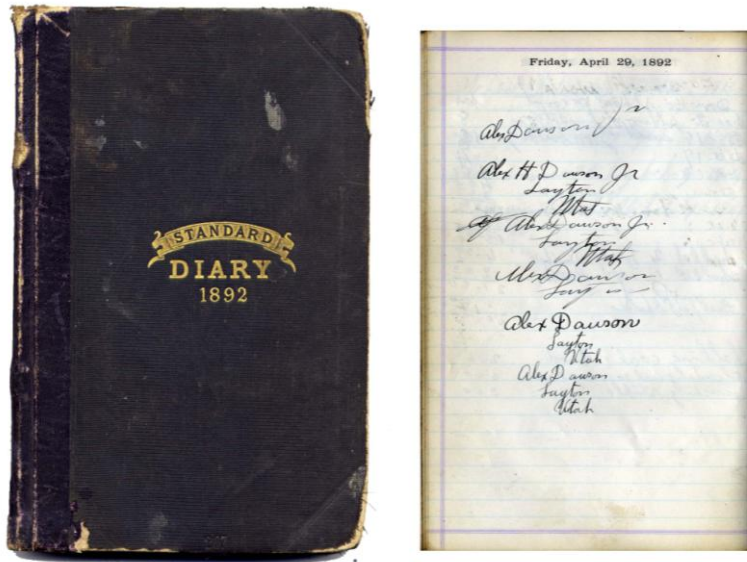
Farm Economy

Alexander Sr. loved the old farmstead, but as the years passed, he found it increasingly difficult to tend to the animals and keep up with the chores required of the property. He struggled on, but not long after Elizabeth experienced a series of illness, the family decided it was time for the Dawsons to trade places. Allie and Will built an addition onto the Cherry Lane house to accommodate Emma, who agreed to live with and care for their parents, and in 1902, Alexander and Elizabeth and moved up to the ridge.¹⁰² Allie, Cass and six-year old Alex made themselves at home in the hollow. The extensive Dawson lands had been unofficially divided among the children a few years earlier;¹⁰³ Alexander Sr. and Elizabeth established a life lease on the properties in 1897, leaving Allie and Cass in charge of the hollow farm.¹⁰⁴ Allie had managed the farm with his father for many years, so it was natural for him to take over the operation completely as the elder Alexander's health waned, even though the two family's financial accounts were kept separately.¹⁰⁵ A farm journal maintained by Allie from 1903 to 1917 in an old date book shows accounts for work traded between Alex Jr. and Sr., as well as trades with other family members and neighbors. Sometimes accounts were settled in cash, other times with trades paid for in kind.¹⁰⁶

An important part of the farm economy was offering pasture to neighboring farmers. Allie's records show a number of cattle taken in for both summer and winter care in the Dawson pastures. He kept careful track of which cattle were

put into which herds, noting which animals belonged to him and which belonged to his father. Allie also kept track of which animals were bred by other farmer's animals.

Traded labor at harvesting was also an important commodity as neighbors cooperated to bring in the crops. Depending on the size of the farm, a harvest could take days or weeks and time away from one's own fields would be compensated for later by fellow farmers. According to Allie's records for one of the Dawson's grain harvests in July, 1903, three weeks were required for the crew to complete the job.¹⁰⁷



A page from Allie's farm accounts journal.

Also noted is the labor Allie owed to others in exchange: "Alex Dawson owes Tuck Green for two days haying and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day threshing... Alex Dawson Jr. owes John Forbes for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day with one hand and ten pounds of Lucerne seed¹⁰⁸ ...plowed 10 acres on Morrystown, spike pitched on header 3 days, helped thrash on range 4 days, helped thrash at home 2 days."¹⁰⁹ There was enough work on a seasonal basis to require additional help on the Dawson farm, and Allie occasionally filled the need by hiring hands. "One year during hay hauling I was considered big enough to load a wagon," recalled Harold. "We had hired two transients to help. They camped out behind the house and washed their clothes in the creek for about two weeks. While they were there, the hay crop came on. We used one of the men to stack hay in the barn and the other one to pitch hay in the field." Apparently neither one of the day workers did a very good job and Allie "gave them the riot act. They did it better after that."¹¹⁰

Autumn was prime time for killing pigs and processing pork, as the large amount of meat from an animal weight approximately 200 pounds was more easily kept during the cold months ahead. Butchering pigs was a big job requiring help from the neighbors. “I have seen as many as fifteen to twenty pigs killed in a day. The neighbors would come in to scrape them and clean them out,” Harold remembered. The pig pen was located to the southwest of the house, near a cement pit shaded by box elder trees, where “they set a boiler with a flat bottom and wooden handles to scald pigs. Dad set up a block and tackle to pull the pigs up. The shed had a cement floor with a gutter and a spring of water that went out the west end through a pipe and surfaced to the ground.”¹¹¹

Allie was as a successful, hard-working farmer and stock man who was accomplished at every type of job required by the operation, but he was especially fond of working with the animals. Harold recounted that “Dad liked taking care of his stock and he always fed them fresh hay,” which was home-grown on the Dawson farm.¹¹² Alfalfa was a popular crop for cattle feed in the Layton area, but Allie fed his cows timothy hay. “The cows gave more milk on the timothy than the alfalfa,” said Harold, “so that’s what we fed them. We had a stack of it in the barn and in the west shed, which had pens where we could run the stock in to keep overnight. There were mangers in there and also in front of the horse stable, running east and west, where we stored the mowers for the winter. There was a loft over that also, where the hay was kept.”¹¹³

The barn was built into the side of the hill to make “throwing the hay into the barn a lot easier,” explained Harold. “Dad dug it into the side of a hill down by the road. The rafters were about twelve feet above the bank. We use to pitch hay into the lofts right off the wagon, one layer at a time. We would hand it in and throw it right down over the cows.”¹¹⁴

Hauling and pitching hay was hard physical labor, but had its lighter moments, too. “One time, when I was a boy, we were loading hay and Dad was on top of the wagon, pulling on a rope to tighten it down,” Harold related. “The rope broke and he rolled off the back of the wagon and landed on his shoulders and back. That took a lot of pep out of him!”¹¹⁵

Every spring Allie walked the three hundred and seventy-six acres of hollow property, checking and repairing his fences as he went. “He was always followed by his little yellow poodle dog, which had a black, short nose,” remembered family friend Mattie Green.¹¹⁶ Spring always meant more time with the animals as new babies were born and both mothers and offspring required extra attention. Winter work was curtailed to “tending and feeding the animals, milking the cows and fixing farm machines and harnesses,” according to Dick.¹¹⁷

Part of the farm duties entailed managing the several dozen bee hives Allie had taken over from his father, which were not only useful in pollinating the Dawson crops, but could be rented out for pollination in other farmer's fields. The resulting honey harvest was an added benefit. "The bee operation was set up against the hillside just north of the house," said Harold. "We had a coal oil stove. Alex would get the honey and I would light up the stove and get the water on. If the steam got up before Dad came in, I uncapped a few of the frames myself. We turned the four frame extractor with a gas engine. Later we got an eight frame. Before Dad got the sun extractor, Dad would cut the whole comb out of the frame to melt the honey."¹¹⁸ The amount of honey harvested could be considerable¹¹⁹ and was either sold or traded for other commodities.

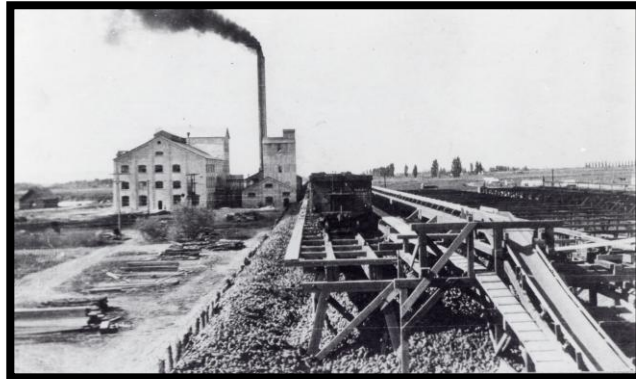


Allie used this foot pedaled grinding stone to sharpen the hay mower knives

The Layton Sugar Factory

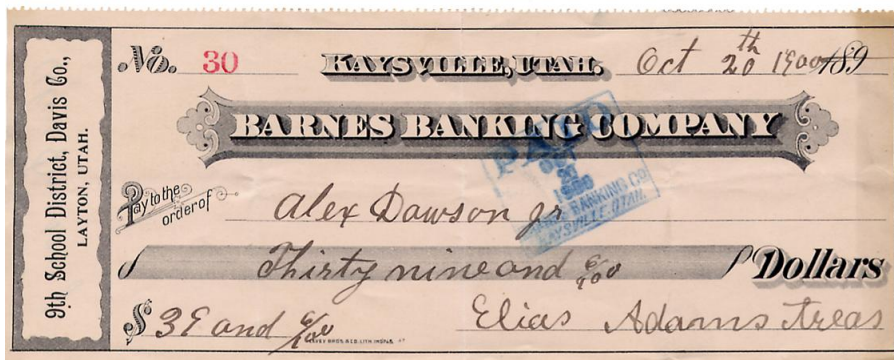
Sugar beets became an important crop in the Layton area after a processing factory was built just west of downtown in 1915. Considered ideal for rotation with grains and other crops that exhausted the soil, sugar beets also contributed to stock raising as the plant tops and pulp were fed to local animals.

As the beet harvest was the last of the season, many farmers took temporary jobs at the factory once their own harvest was in. Allie took a position on the sluice system, where the beets were washed and directed into the factory to be shredded and boiled in large pressure cookers, producing a sugary juice that was evaporated to produce crystals. The sugar was then bagged for storage until it was shipped across the nation.



Keeping Up the Dawson School

Allie was responsible for keeping the Dawson Hollow school building in good repair, earning twenty cents an hour for his labor from the Davis County School District. His account ledger shows he spent an average of thirty hours or more a year cleaning the building, replacing broken windows, repairing the stove, patching the foundation and washing out the privy. He also mowed and raked the surrounding property and built a small stable for the students' horses. In addition, he hauled many loads of kindling wood and coal and purchased and delivered textbooks.



Allie received a regular check from the Davis County School District for his work at the Dawson Hollow School.



Harold and Cass in the barnyard around 1918. Even though she was “very stylish and liked to dress up,” according to friend Mattie Green, Cass was not afraid to don pants for any hard work on the farm.

Cass on the Farm

Cass had a bit of adjustment to make in moving back to the farm from her comfortable home on the ridge, as she had grown accustomed to the convenience of electric lights and easier access to downtown shopping, but she took charge of life inside the homestead with her customary practicality and cheerfulness. Because there was no ice box in the hollow home, Cass kept perishable dairy products in the well on the west side of the house. “It was cold water, quite deep, about thirty feet. That was good tasting water,” said Harold. “Mother would hang the milk, butter, cream in a pan with an old cooler cloth on all four sides and tin pan on the top. She put water in the pan and put a sack into the water. The sack would feed the water out and over the food to keep it cool. That was their fridge.”¹²⁰

Cass was known for being an excellent homemaker who was skilled at preparing three large meals a day on a copper clad stove.¹²¹ Her day began before dawn when she started up the kitchen stove, swept the creaking wooden floors, cooked breakfast and filled a lunch pail for Allie, who would more than likely be away on the farm for the day. The rest of the morning was spent in the kitchen. Almost all food was made from “scratch” and took time and planning to prepare. There was bread to bake, cakes to make and fresh garden produce to be harvested and processed. Whatever Cass turned her hand to was delicious, according to Sara Jane Adams, who boarded with the Dawsons when

she taught at the nearby Dawson Hollow School. “She made a great yellow cake. She would always put some cake in my lunch and it was so good. She made good ham sandwiches out of the pork they raised and very good bread, and the Dawsons always had good honey.”¹²²

In addition to many hours spent cooking regular meals, Cass toiled over the stove for weeks every fall to preserve fruit from the trees Alexander Sr. had planted near the house many years before. The small orchard, consisting of a pear, apple and a black walnut tree, was located south and “a little west” of the honey shed. “West of that was a meadow that sloped onto the hill. There was a ditch down along the house and down to the point that watered the hillside of timothy hay,” according to Harold.¹²³

The entire family gathered around the table for each meal, and if one member was late, the meal was delayed until all were present. The noon meal was the largest if the men were nearby, as they needed to renew themselves for the afternoon work ahead. Cass loaded the table with at least one well-done meat dish that was accompanied by mashed potatoes, gravy and boiled garden vegetables spiced with salt and pepper. Desert consisted of a thick slice of pie or cake. Leftovers from lunch were served later that evening for dinner, followed by homemade bread topped with some of Cass’ fruit preserves.



Cass and Harold in front of the hollow homestead.

Once the dinner table was cleared and the dishes washed and dried, Cass settled into her chair next to Allie's with the sewing basket in her lap. There were always socks to be darned and shirts to be patched, and after she had worked her way through clothing repairs, Cass took up her knitting needles or crochet hook. Handwork was a soothing way to end the day, especially in the winter when the family gathered close together around the heat stove. On summer evenings, it was more comfortable to sit outside on the porch, away from the heat of the day that was still trapped in the house, even though all the windows and doors had been opened since early morning. After the sun had set and before the moon rose over the Wasatch, thousands of stars in the dark sky gave enough light to illuminate the barnyard, where an occasional skunk could be seen scurrying across the packed dirt and the old dog answered the chorus of coyote calls with a series of sharp barks.



Harold's son Mark Dawson stands by the original pioneer barn, silo and fields in the 1940s.

The Best of People

Allie spent a great deal of time cultivating his large kitchen garden near the homestead. “He loved to eat dumplings and the fresh produce he grew himself,” said Harold. “He was a good gardener who loved his berries. He was always in the garden with his berries. He used to have blackberries along the south fence. It was a battle to get in there to pick them. He also raised watermelons.”¹²⁴

One day when he and his father were working in the garden on the south hill [Burton Hollow Springs], Harold received a well-remembered lesson in hoeing. “Dad had planted two crops of radishes. The first crop was old and the other one was about ready to harvest. Dad was turning the old plants under with his hoe while I came up the new row, following his example by hoeing those under, too. After a while he turned around to see what I was doing. He did not say too much, but that was about as close to getting hided as I ever got. Dad never gave me a whipping, but he used to scold me, and that hurt worse.”¹²⁵

Harold recalled another scolding he received a few years later, after Allie had sold the farm to Ted Simpson, who had moved into the house on the hill after his marriage to Emma.¹²⁶ Harold was expected to ride up to the hollow from downtown to help during haying season. “We had a little gray mare I would ride there. She was good to ride, but Dad told me not to take her, but I took her anyway,” said Harold. “Some of my friends came along one day while we were haying and the horses decided to race a bit and ran all over the country side. I finally got them under control, but I got a Scotch blessing for it when I got home.”¹²⁷

Cass also subscribed to a strict, but loving, disciplinary code. “On my first day of school I was supposed to come right home,” recalled Harold. “I got down to the Green place and I stopped to play with Delmas [Green]. About three quarters of an hour later, I saw Mom coming down the road with a willow. I took off through Ted [Simpson]’s field and she took off after me. She didn’t catch me until I got home. I didn’t get a whipping, but I got a good scolding.”¹²⁸



The members of the Layton Ward pose proudly in front of their new red brick chapel in 1908.

Spiritual Blessings

Allie and Cass believed in traditional family values, faith in the Lord and never straying far from home. However, Allie and Cass rarely attended church after their marriage, possibly because that same year the Layton ward built a new chapel to consolidate the smaller, scattered congregations, including the Sunday school in Dawson Hollow.¹²⁹

The red brick chapel was located downtown at the head of Church Street, two miles west of the farm, which meant travel and lost time on the farm to attend meetings, but Allie was nevertheless happy to contribute to the church when necessary. He hauled nineteen loads of brick for the ward (perhaps for an addition to the building) according to an entry in his farm journal for 30 August, 1905.¹³⁰ Allie was called to be a “ward teacher”¹³¹ and in February of 1913, he was even called on a mission, according to an article in the *The Davis County Clipper*, which reported that Allie was among a number of Layton residents who had “received letters from box ‘B’ inquiring as to how they feel in regard to going on a mission.”¹³² For unknown reasons he decided not to go, preferring the quiet life at home instead.

Some nineteen years after their marriage, on 24 June, 1908,¹³³ Allie and Cass were endowed and sealed in the Salt Lake Temple, on the same day Cass's sister Rose was married.¹³⁴ The Dawsons may have been motivated by the recent deaths of their mothers to seek temple ordinances. Mary Ann Green died the year before in March, 1907,¹³⁵ and Elizabeth Dawson had passed on only two months before Allie and Cass attended the temple, in April, 1908.¹³⁶

Allie and Cass continued their pattern of limited church attendance, even after their temple sealing. "I could never quite figure out why Allie's dad was active in the church, but my grandfather wasn't very interested. Allie smoked a pipe. Maybe that had something to do with it," said Dick.¹³⁷ Harold recalled that his father "smoked a pipe all the time I knew him. He smoked Prince Albert tobacco in a can. I used to have a lunch bucket made out of one. We had a lot of Prince Albert cans for lunch boxes."¹³⁸ Sara Jane Adams also remembered Allie's enjoyment of tobacco "Mr. Dawson always smoked a pipe," she said. "One day he dropped his pipe and broke it. I wanted to laugh, but Cass signaled me not to because he loved his old pipe, so she sent his boy up to get a pipe from his father who was living at Emma's house up on the hill."¹³⁹

Cass was more active in the church than her husband, according to Harold, who recalled that his mother especially enjoyed Relief Society and local chapter meetings of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. "She would always make bread dough before she left," he said. "After the meeting was over, she would say, 'I guess I had better go home or the bread will come down the street to meet me.'"¹⁴⁰ Cass even served as president of the Primary for a time.¹⁴¹

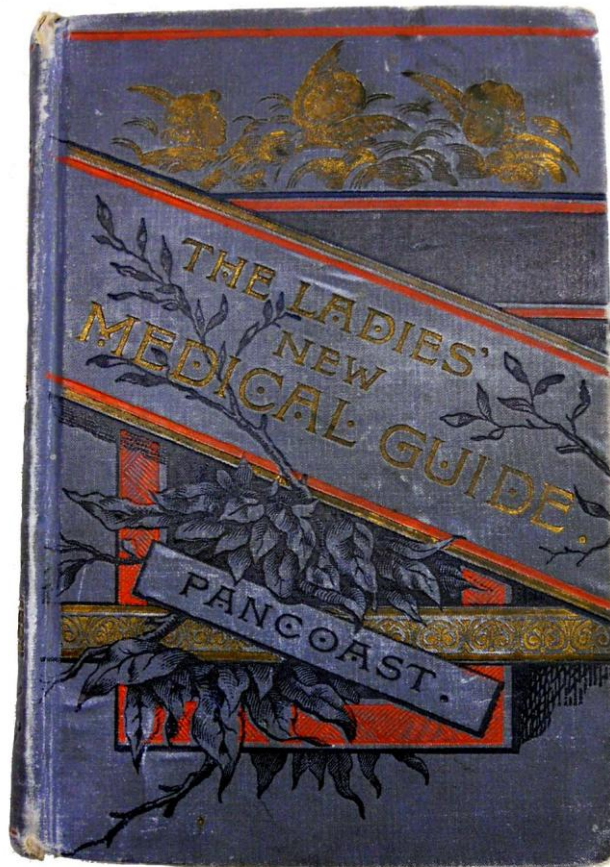
What the Doctor Ordered

Quarantine was a way of life at the turn of the twentieth century when there were few drugs available against infections. Enforced isolation was considered the best way to prevent the spread of dangerous communicable diseases and the local newspaper kept residents up to date when waves of illness such as small pox, typhoid and scarlet fever were on the rampage. Residents could be secluded at home for as long as forty days or until they were cleared by a doctor, and sometimes public institutions such as schools were temporarily closed to control contagion. One Dawson granddaughter remembered that "they used to quarantine for everything. When it was known that someone had something contagious in the family, there was a sign put on the door and no one was allowed to visit the home or leave the home."¹⁴²

The summer of 1903 saw a typhoid fever epidemic sweep through Layton with multiple cases reported in the local newspaper. Will came down with a bad case of the disease in mid-July, followed by Emma, who was reported to be ill during the first week of August. While Emma recovered, Will rallied briefly, then became deathly ill, eventually succumbing to the disease on 28 August.

Will's death was devastating to the Dawson family. "How Mother and Father felt when he passed on," said Emma. "Many a time I went into the bedroom and Mother would be standing, looking out the window, just sobbing. She would say, 'Oh dear, we've lost the head.' He took such a responsibility and was just so good to them. She really never got over it."¹⁴³ With Will's death, Allie was left as the acting head of the family.

Years later during a scarlet fever epidemic, four-year old Harold came down with the same dangerous fever and rash.¹⁴⁴ Cass asked Sara Jane Adams to stay at the homestead to help nurse Harold, as the school had been closed, and Cass stayed up all night to care for him. "Afterwards, everything had to be fumigated with formaldehyde," said Sara Jane.¹⁴⁵ People were anxious about possible exposure for some time during and after an outbreak of a disease. "We went to Lagoon after I got over this and when people saw us coming they would clear away. It was a small town and everyone knew who had been sick. That's the way it was. They still shied away," recalled Harold.¹⁴⁶



Cass often referred to this medical book to help care for her family in the isolation of the hollow.

Flood Damage

A devastating flash flood in the summer of 1923 brought huge amounts of mud and rock from several canyons along the Wasatch front, swamping buildings, blocking roads and damaging farmlands from Farmington to Layton. Harold remembered witnessing the debris as it headed toward the Dawson farm.

“Dad and I would often go on top of the hill and come out just north of Country Oaks and up to the Mountain Road. The day the flood came down we were over there on the flat. We could see the stream coming from the south. We started to head for home and we got up on the hill there and we could hear a noise. We looked up through the trees and we could see the boulders rolling down from the canyon. We headed for high ground where we watched them come down.” The flood left a layer of mud and rocks several feet deep in some places, and resculpted parts of the farm. “The hollow behind Jack’s house [1703 North Cherry Lane] at one time was a meadow with several springs flowing through it. The flood washed all of that away,” said Dick.

“Fortunately the flood ended beyond the cottonwood trees just east of the homestead.” Below: the floodwaters as they coursed down Main Street in Layton.



ENDNOTES

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- ⁸⁷ Dawson-Green marriage, 12 January, 1889, Kaysville, Davis County, Utah. Copy of certificate held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁸⁸ Helen Denkers, transcriber, "Alexander Dawson Funeral Addresses," typescript, 11 February, 1936. Held by Richard R. Dawson.
- ⁸⁹ Interview with Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, ca. 1971. Transcript held by interviewer Janice (Page) Dawson.
- ⁹⁰ *Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company, Official Directory*. 1 November, 1905. Copy of Kaysville Exchange pages held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁹¹ "Farm journal of Alexander Dawson," owned by Richard Rex Dawson, 22 October 1909: "drew up note with electric light and power company today for six months." Also see Glen M. Leonard, *A History of Davis County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999) page 281.
- ⁹² <http://www.rexophone.com/?p=1175> as of 14 November, 2011.
- ⁹³ Alexander Anderson Guardianship Agreement, 28 [no month], 1897, between Augusta Anderson, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Alexander and Catherine Dawson, Layton, Utah. Held by Richard R. Dawson.
- ⁹⁴ Although his legal name was Alexander Anderson, Alex was known in the community by the name of Dawson. He was sometimes referred to among family as Alexander Hagen, after his natural father. Upon his legal adoption by the Dawsons in 1924, his name became Alexander "H" Dawson (1896-1968).
- ⁹⁵ Ellen "H", age 15, Norwegian father, Swedish mother. Alexander Dawson Jr. household, 1910 U.S. census, Davis County, Layton, Utah, enumeration district #40, supervisor's district #1, sheet 11. Roll T624-1603. Online at www.ancestry.com.
- ⁹⁶ Harold's wife Doris briefly mentioned Ellen to Richard Rex Dawson. Mr. Dawson was unable to recall the date of the conversation and said Doris provided no other details about Ellen. Conversation between Richard Rex Dawson and Shelley Dawson Davies, June, 2010.
- ⁹⁷ Richard Rex "Dick" Dawson (1927-present). Interview with Richard Rex Dawson, 1997. Transcript held by interviewer Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁹⁸ Harold John Dawson was born 1 June, 1911 in Bountiful. "My mother never did make herself known to me," said Harold. Interview with Harold John Dawson, by Janice (Page) Dawson, 1 August, 1980. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁹⁹ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰² Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ¹⁰³ Emma stated the lands were divided when William was called on a mission, no date. "Father's property was divided equally among his children at the time Willie [William A.] was called on a mission to England." "Historical Sketch of Alexander Dawson," Emma Dawson, undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹⁰⁴ Abstract of title, page 14: SE ¼ of Section 11, Township 4 North, Range 1 West, Salt Lake Meridian, containing 160 acres, more or less; Book H of Mortgages, page 442, Davis County. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁰⁵ Allie acted as purchasing agent for Alexander Sr., who gave him \$387.80 to buy fifteen head of cattle for the operation. Allie also noted "we bought a mare for \$30.00."
- ¹⁰⁶ "Farm journal of Alexander Dawson," owned by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 21 July. Allie notes there were twelve acres of wheat and six acres of barley in this harvest.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 15 August, 1903.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1 August, 1908.
- ¹¹⁰ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

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- ¹¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁶ Interview with Mattie Green by Janice (Page) Dawson, ca. 1971. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹¹⁷ Interview with Richard Rex Dawson, 1997. Transcript held by interviewer Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹¹⁸ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹¹⁹ Farm journal of Alexander Dawson,” 27 May, 1913: “forty pounds of honey.” An entry for 1917 lists cases sold and traded, but no prices.
- ¹²⁰ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹²² Interview, Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, ca. 1971.
- ¹²³ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁶ Edward “Ted” Simpson (1889-1971).
- ¹²⁷ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁹ Dan and Eva Carlsruh, editors, *Layton, Utah: Historic Viewpoints* (Salt Lake City: Moench Printing, 1985), page 170.
- ¹³⁰ Farm journal of Alexander Dawson,” 30 August, 1905.
- ¹³¹ Alexander Dawson obituary, *The Weekly Reflex*, 13 February, 1936, front page.
- ¹³² *The Davis County Clipper*, 7 February, 1913.
- ¹³³ “Alexander Dawson-Mary Catherine Green family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.
- ¹³⁴ “Thomas Green-Mary Ann Huntsman family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.
- ¹³⁵ Mary Ann (Huntsman) Green died 31 March, 1907. “Thomas Green-Mary Ann Huntsman family group sheet.”
- ¹³⁶ Elizabeth (Fowle) Dawson died 20 April 1908. “Alexander Dawson-Elizabeth Jane Fowle family group sheet,” supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted. Alex and Harold were not sealed to Allie and Cass until many years after they had died. Alex was sealed to them after his death by Harold on 13 December, 1973; Harold was sealed to them on 24 January, 1951).
- ¹³⁷ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- ¹³⁸ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹³⁹ Interview, Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, ca. 1971. Apparently Alexander Sr. also smoked if he had an extra pipe for his son.
- ¹⁴⁰ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹⁴¹ Mary Catherine (Green) Dawson obituary, *The Ogden Standard Examiner*, 29 May, 1941, page 10. Also, *The Weekly Reflex*, 29 May 1941, page 8.
- ¹⁴² “History of Annie Priscilla (Dawson) Bennett,” by Donna Thurgood Patterson, undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹⁴³ Interview, Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, 1965.
- ¹⁴⁴ “The home of Alex Dawson Jr. was quarantined last week on account of their baby having scarlet fever.” *The Davis County Clipper*, 30 April, 1915.
- ¹⁴⁵ Interview, Sara Jane (Humphrey) Adams, ca. 1971.
- ¹⁴⁶ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.

Chapter 3

MOVING DOWNTOWN

Retirement

The Dawson family often enjoyed outings together at the nearby Lagoon amusement park in Farmington, and it may have been at Lagoon where Alex met a lovely young woman by the name of Lillie Young.¹⁴⁷ When Alex and Lillie were married in January, 1917,¹⁴⁸ they joined Allie, Cass and six-year old Harold in the Dawson Hollow homestead. Alex and Lillie moved into the west end of the house, leaving Allie and Cass to occupy the east end.

“The Dawsons were living in the hollow when we got married,” recalled Lillie. “We come up from downtown Layton and lived in part of the house. Mrs. Dawson had part of it and I had part of it. We had a living room and a kitchen and two bedrooms upstairs and a pantry. Well, this bedroom didn’t have a door in it, so they knocked a hole in the wall and put a door on the east side in that rock, so [Allie and Cass] had an outside door. That was quite a chore to get all those big rocks out without it all falling in. They had the kitchen on the east, and then there was another room and that was a bedroom on the east; Mrs. Dawson had that. She had a dining room before we moved up there, but she used it for a living room. Then there was a kitchen and a big long screened porch.”¹⁴⁹

Other than a shift in housing arrangements, life didn’t change very much for the Dawsons after Alex and Lillie’s marriage. That spring Allie and Alex planted the usual “cash crops of alfalfa, wheat and potatoes,” according to Dick. “A lot of the alfalfa was used to feed their own stock. They ran quite a few cows and horses on the land; it was a fifty/fifty farm and ranch.”¹⁵⁰

The extended Dawson family remained close. Harold recalled frequent walks up the hill to visit his grandfather, Aunt Emma and Uncle Ted, and had stopped to talk to Grandpa Dawson one afternoon just before he died in October, 1918.¹⁵¹ Harold remembered seeing Cass walking toward the Simpson house as he was on his way home. “Here came Mother down the road. She said I had to go back up to Aunt Emma’s because Grandpa was dead,” said Harold.¹⁵² Allie, Cass and their sons joined the extended Dawson family and friends at the funeral services held a few days later in Emma’s yard.

The Farmer's Union

Although his father was very visible in community affairs, Allie limited his role in public life, preferring farming to business dealings. "He had very little ambition to make a public name for himself," according to his sister Emma. However, there were times when Allie served in leadership positions over the years. In 1914, at the age of 49, he was appointed Director of the Morgan Brother's Land and Livestock Company.

The same year he was also appointed as an election judge. He later served as director of both the Kaysville Irrigation Company and the Layton Farm Association in 1925. At the time of his death in 1936, he was a director of the Farmer's Union, a cornerstone of Layton's business district.

Alexander Sr. had been one of the founding stockholders and directors of the Farmer's Union, which was incorporated in 1882. The original building was a frame store at the corner of Main and Gentile Streets that carried clothing, dry goods, groceries, grain and produce. A new, two story brick building with plate glass windows on the ground floor was completed and opened for business in December of 1892. The entire second floor was a large room known as the Farmer's Union Hall, where political meetings, social events, theatrical productions, dances and even sporting events were held. The ground floor continued to stock a wide range of items, including groceries, fresh produce, dry goods, clothing, fabric, dishes, jewelry, carpets, wallpaper, hardware and tools. Farm equipment, buggies, lumber and coal were available for purchase in several smaller buildings in back.

The store was enlarged again in 1930 when apartments and office space were added upstairs. However, the economic hardships brought about by the depression led to a slow financial collapse and the Union's doors were eventually closed in 1957. The building was remodeled and leased to several commercial concerns before it was purchased by the First National Bank and restored to its former state. It is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.





Cass happily posed for this photo on her new front porch.

Church Street

Allie and Cass decided to retire from the farm and move to a new home in downtown Layton a year after Alexander Sr. died, where they continued to raise a small garden, a few animals for family consumption, and enjoyed a less strenuous life. “Dawson Hollow home was pretty isolated back then, especially in the winter,” explained Dick. “When my Grandpa Dawson retired from farming he wanted to move to the more ‘civilized’ part of Layton.”¹⁵³

Allie sold part of the farm to Ted Simpson, who agreed to pay for the property in installments.¹⁵⁴ Allie then borrowed \$5,500.00 and mortgaged 131 acres of the hollow from to Federal Land Bank of Berkley in 1920.¹⁵⁵ This loan was used to pay the \$1,500.00 for the property and to build a brick home at 441 Church Street.¹⁵⁶ Allie also purchased enough land to allot parcels to both Alex and Harold when they were ready to build homes of their own.

Although Layton was still a small town of just over eleven hundred people in the early 1920s,¹⁵⁷ residents had access to a variety of conveniences still unavailable in the hollow. There were a number of stores along Main Street, and the post office, bank and the Bamberger railroad provided easy transportation to Ogden and Salt Lake. No longer would Cass have to hand-crank the washing machine or use heavy, labor intensive sad irons to keep up with the laundry. There would be running water in the kitchen and a flush toilet in the bathroom. Lights could be flipped on with a switch

and primitive kitchen equipment replaced with modern appliances including a refrigerator, an electric stove and even a toaster.

Allie and Cass selected house plans for a bungalow home, a modern new style popular during the 1920s. Bungalows were compact and efficient with the kitchen, dining area and bedrooms radiating from a central living room. The up-to-date homes were not only attractive, but took full advantage of recently available services such as electricity, telephone service and running water, and often had such conveniences as built-in cabinets, shelves and seats. Dick remembered his grandmother's kitchen having a "sink that stood on legs, a round table and a china cupboard with glass doors where Grandma kept her dishes. The living room was divided into two parts by a little wall. There were also low cabinets with glass doors that acted as a divider in the living room."¹⁵⁸

Allie contracted with Joe Harbertson, one of Lillie's uncles, to build the house.¹⁵⁹ The Dawsons were reportedly one of many families building homes in Layton. "Layton is enjoying a building boom in new homes and others are being planned for fall and winter construction," according to the 11 September, 1919, *Weekly Reflex*. "The buildings being erected are all of good construction and modern in design and detail. They are of brick construction and are costing all the way from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Ten buildings are now in various stages of construction and all will be ready for occupancy within a few weeks."

The home was completed by the early 1920s when the Dawsons moved in. "It was just the three of us, as Alex had been married for a few years by then," said Harold.¹⁶⁰ Alex and Lillie remained on the farm for another six years, but eventually joined the Dawsons downtown. They accepted the half acre Allie had deeded to them to the north at 457 Church Street,¹⁶¹ living temporarily in Allie and Cass's basement while a foundation was poured for their own home.¹⁶² Both Allie and Cass were delighted to have their grandchildren so close, and they spent many hours tending and playing with Marseille, Jack and Dick.¹⁶³

Downtown Layton

Layton was a typical Davis County farming community, producing hay, grains, vegetables, fruits, sugar and cattle for both local and larger markets in Ogden and Salt Lake City. Originally an outgrowth of Kaysville, Layton was a healthy town in its own right by the early 1900's. Its growing business district along Main Street included a general store, The Farmer's Union, a meat market, saloon, coal dealer, blacksmith shop, barber shop, hotel, The First National Bank of Layton and the Layton Milling and Elevator Company, "which in 1903 shipped more flour than did any other Utah mill," according to the Utah Encyclopedia. The Layton Canning Company also added to the economy, followed by The Layton Sugar Company, which began production in 1915.



Quiet Lives

Allie and Cass spent the last years of their lives as they had planned, surrounded by their family. Harold married Doris Marston¹⁶⁴ on 25 January, 1933,¹⁶⁵ and began construction on a home to the north of Alex and Lillie at 522 Church Street.¹⁶⁶ It wasn't long before more grandchildren arrived, and eventually Harold and Doris added five children to the family: Mark, Joyce, Carlene, Lowell and Patsy. All three families maintained separate yards, but shared the pasture, chicken coop and barn in back of their homes, creating a small farmyard which "helped our families through the hard times of the depression," said Dick. Allie and Cass continued to cultivate a large kitchen garden and planted a variety of fruit trees on the property, including peach, pear and apricot. A Virginia creeper-covered fence separated the back yard from the barnyard where chickens were allowed to run freely. An old wash house turned storage shed stood next to a small barn where "cows, calves and one or two little lambs" were raised, according to Lillie, who recalled a large sheep by the name of Fannie. "I remember one time when oh, the snow was deep! Alex shoveled a little trail over to Dawson's from our house and the snow was piled up on both sides. The Dawsons come over and spent the evening with us and it was dark when they was going home. [Fannie] was fat and she could just lay right in the trail. Mrs. Dawson went out first and she didn't see the sheep sitting on the trail, she was white like the snow. Over her she went! She couldn't get up."¹⁶⁷

Allie still enjoyed reading and often pursued local and national news in the pages of *The Weekly Reflex*, which was delivered right to the doorstep. Magazines and books in general became more widely available at the time and driving over to Main Street to attend the movies also became a popular activity. Cass busied herself with housework, handwork and church work. She continued to attend weekly Relief Society meetings and get-togethers with her

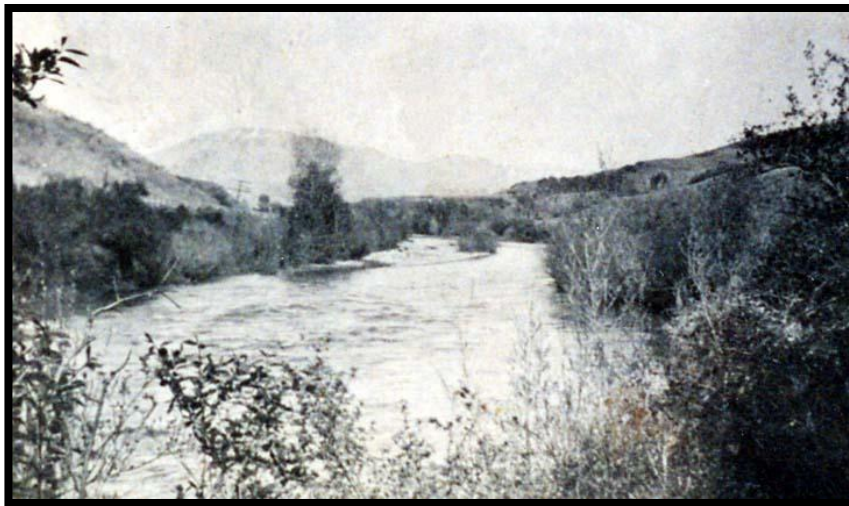


Left: Allie tending to business in the back yard. Right: Looking north across the shared pasture.

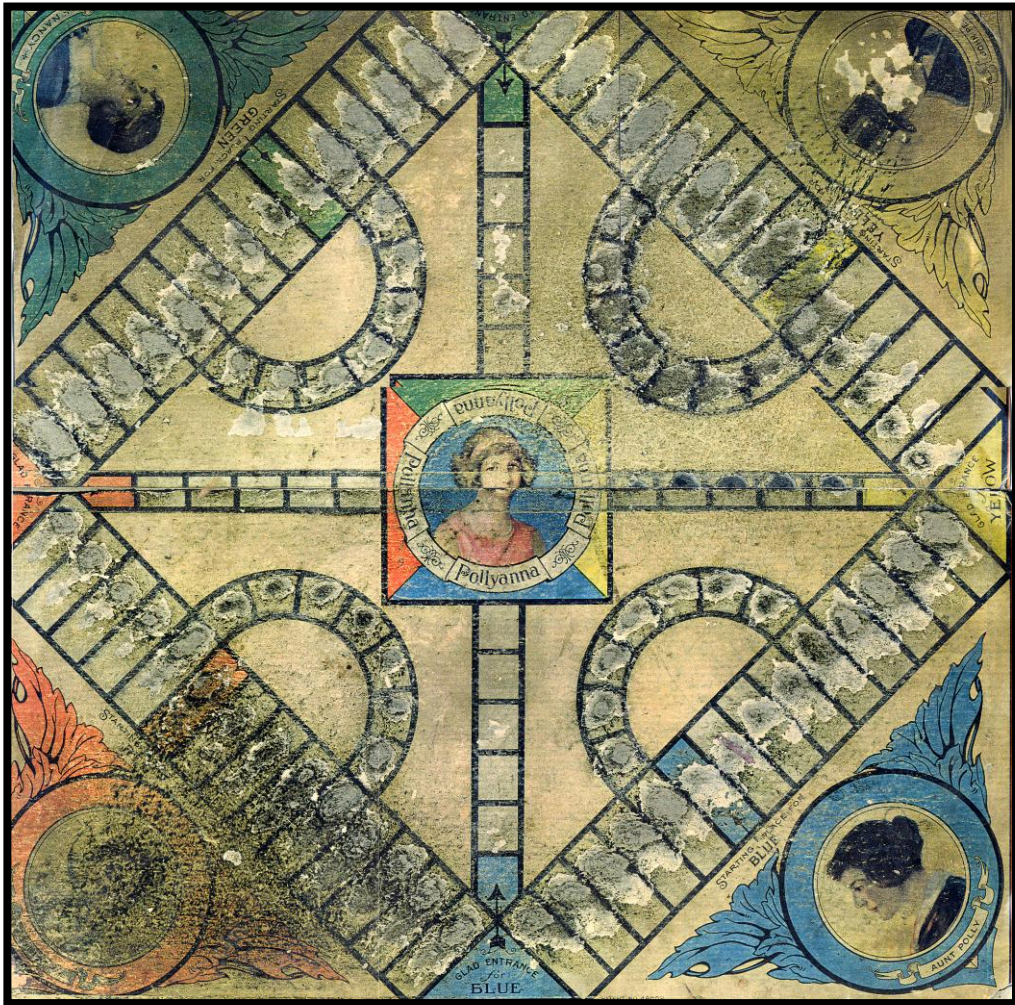
friends from the DUP, where members shared stories of their pioneer ancestors and socialized over homemade refreshments.¹⁶⁸ Always welcomed at the back door were the grandchildren, who often dropped in once or twice a day to visit and receive a treat from Cass' kitchen.

The Dawsons took pleasure in simple entertainments such as checkers, cards and the board game "Pollyanna." "Just about every afternoon, Grandpa and Grandma Dawson would come over and play cards with my mother until it was time for my dad to come home from work," said Dick. "She would have to hustle them out of the kitchen so she could hurry and get dinner ready before Dad got there."¹⁶⁹ Harold also recalled how much his father "loved to play cards. He used to play "High Five," "Pinochle" and "Sluff." I would take him to play cards over at Henry Morgan's or Rob and Jim Green's in Kaysville. They had signals with their fingers. They would call up and say, 'Come on up and let's have a cheat game.' Dad would get mad and say they knew they were cheating. I could never figure it out. We used to go to my uncle Fred Green's¹⁷⁰ and stay overnight and they would play cards the biggest share of the night. I also took him to play cards over at Jim Egbert's house [south of Fiddler's Creek]. They had a pot belly stove and one night while they were playing the fire went down. Jim came over and couldn't get it started again, so he poured some coal oil it and it blew the lid right off the stove and ashes all over the room."¹⁷¹

Allie and Cass enjoyed the out-of-doors and often camped and fished near Robinson's roadside stand in Ogden's Weber Canyon. Harold recalled driving his parents up to Strawberry Reservoir in the Uinta Mountains on a regular basis to fish. "We would get there about noon. We waded the river up to Peterson and back down several miles. We camped there once in a farmer's grove, east of the creek in the cottonwoods. I would sometimes drive Mother and Dad up there, come back to Layton, then go back to pick them up later."¹⁷²



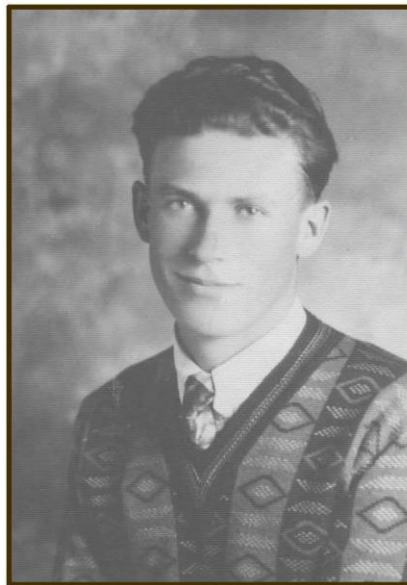
A canyon river from one of the Dawson's camping trips.



The Dawsons enjoyed playing “Pollyanna” so much they completely wore out the game board.



Alex and Lillie on their wedding day in 1917.



Harold and Doris around the time they met in 1932.



Alex, Doris, Harold and Lillie in the front yard with children Harold's children Carlene, Joyce and Mark.

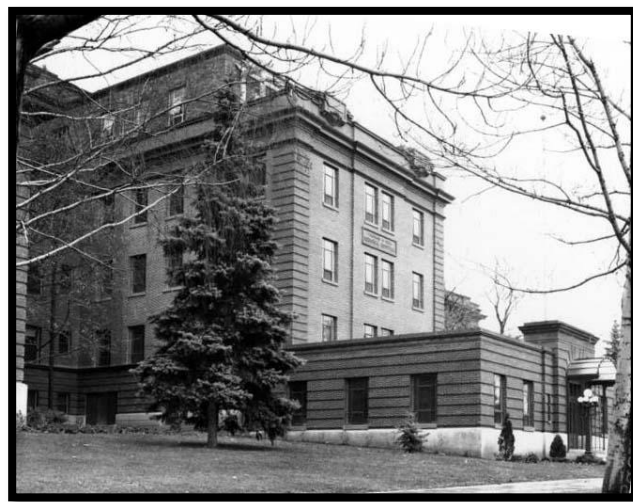


Left: Grandma Cass holding Dick in 1928. Right: Joyce, Carlene and Mark Dawson in Grandma's yard.

Allie's Death

Allie enjoyed good health most of his life and with the exception of an appendicitis operation when he was forty-six years old,¹⁷³ he didn't have any serious illness until he neared his mid-sixties. Sometime in 1930 he developed arterial sclerosis,¹⁷⁴ a hardening of the arteries, probably due to years of smoking and eating a high fat diet. Allie's health slowly took a turn for the worse as his blocked arteries contributed to chest pain and shortness of breath. His condition gradually worsened during the next few years until he became very ill during the summer of 1935. Dick remembered Alex and Lillie spending "quite a bit of time at his house taking care of him" over the following seven months. By February, 1936, Allie was reported to be "seriously ill at his home," according to the *Clipper*.¹⁷⁵ "One night that winter, my parents sent us kids to the evening movie and after we came home, they took us to see Grandpa. They knew he was going to die. I remember the room was dark and he was almost gone by then, but he talked about someone being there to take him home. He died later that night,"¹⁷⁶ 8 February, 1936, at the age of seventy years.¹⁷⁷

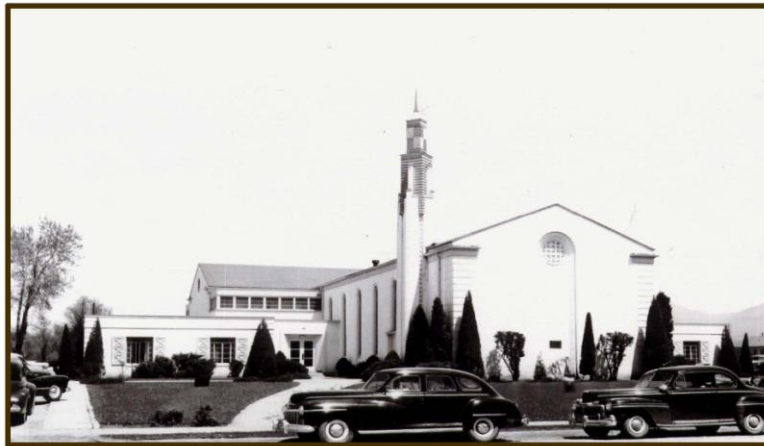
It was customary at the time to hold viewings of the body in the family home. Even though Allie's body was prepared by a local mortuary, it was returned to the Church Street living room for friends to pay their respects before the funeral. "There were so many people who came to the viewing that the county cleared out the snow on the vacant lot next to the house so people could park there," said Dick.¹⁷⁸ Two days were allotted for the viewing¹⁷⁹ before Allie's funeral was held on the 11th of February in the Kaysville Tabernacle,¹⁸⁰ as the Layton Ward chapel had burned down the previous July.



Ogden's Dee hospital, where Allie was treated shortly before he died in 1936.

THE WHITE CHAPEL

By the 1930s, the Layton ward had outgrown the red brick church which had served them for twenty-four years and a new, larger chapel was being planned at 195 East Gentile Street. The timing was right. During the night of July 24th, Pioneer Day 1936, lightening struck the church and ignited a fire that completely gutted the building. Harold remembered "looking out of the window and saw the lightning hit." The next day was Sunday and "people drove to church the next morning and found only a smoldering shell," recounted Dick. Sunday services and mid-week activities were moved to nearby Layton Elementary school until the new church could be completed a few years later.



The burned out shell of Layton's ward house on Church Street was replaced by a modern new building affectionately dubbed "the White Chapel."

Losing the Farm

There had been some trouble brewing over inheritance issues as early as fourteen years before Allie's death, beginning with the division of the elder Alexander's estate in May, 1922.¹⁸¹ One or more of the Dawson sisters apparently felt that any property inherited by Allie should revert back to the Dawson sisters in the event of Allie's death. "I remember overhearing conversations when I was a child about some of the family members who didn't want my grandfather's portion of the inheritance to go to Alex and Harold," said Dick. "Apparently there were those in the family who didn't consider them 'true' Dawsons."¹⁸²

Allie and Cass put an end to any inheritance disputes when they legally adopted Alex and Harold on 17 March, 1924. "They had tried to adopt Alex from the beginning, but could not get permission from his real mother," said Dick. With inheritance rights at stake, twenty-eight year old Alex and thirteen-year old Harold filed papers at the Davis County offices and became Dawsons before the law.¹⁸³

Unfortunately, other land problems developed over the land when Ted Simpson failed to keep up with his payments on the mortgaged acreage in Dawson Hollow. "Ted bought the best of the farm, and it went for two years and then he was supposed to pay on it, but he didn't, so Ted took out a moratorium," said Lillie. "He went for three years and never paid a tax and he reaped everything off of it for nothing. That just about broke Mr. Dawson."¹⁸⁴

Dick remembered how difficult it was for the Dawsons to suddenly be financially responsible for years of back taxes during the depression of the 1930s. "A moratorium meant the banks couldn't foreclose on anybody," explained Dick. "Ted didn't pay anything on the loan during this time, so the taxes just built up and the mortgage payments accumulated. As soon as the moratorium was lifted, he threw the farm back in the Dawson's laps. My grandfather had this property with all the back taxes and the mortgage built up and he all of a sudden had to pay it and couldn't, so in desperation Dad and Uncle Harold decided to try to save the farm by working it."¹⁸⁵

In December, 1935, a few months before he died, Allie legally transferred three hundred and seventy-six acres of the Dawson Hollow farm to Alex and Harold.¹⁸⁶ He also transferred to his sons an additional thirty-one acres of property out on the sand ridge, where Hill Air Force Base is now located, and received an extension on the back payment of taxes.¹⁸⁷

In the spring of 1936, an extension in the names of Alex Jr. and Catherine Dawson was applied for and granted on the \$1,237.29 owed to the Federal Land Bank for back payments, interest, and taxes.¹⁸⁸ Alex and Harold borrowed \$950.00 from the First National Bank of Layton with a mortgage on the farm and thirty-one acres of sand ridge property.¹⁸⁹ This money was used to purchase a team of horses, a wagon, harnesses, hay mower and other farming equipment and supplies in an effort to save the farm.¹⁹⁰

Alex, Lillie, Harold and Doris moved to the hollow in the summer of 1936 to begin the work. The first year's alfalfa crop produced a yield profitable enough to pay the

outstanding taxes and some of the interest on the mortgaged property. Harold and Doris returned to Layton that fall to be closer to Cass, while Alex, Lillie, Jack and Dick wintered at the farm.¹⁹¹ The next summer Alex and Harold were hopeful that a second good harvest would save the farm and so in 1937, they planted five acres of tomatoes.¹⁹² Just as the tomatoes were “big and ready” for picking, an early frost wiped out the entire crop. “The frost came September 15th. If we could have got that picking off we could have saved the farm,” said Harold.¹⁹³

“Dad and Harold really worked hard to save the farm, but that early frost ended all hope to avoid the foreclosure,” said Dick. “The bank was determined not only to take the property under mortgage, but also the rest of the farm. Dad and Harold hired an attorney who wrote threatening letters and the bank finally backed down and just took the property the Dawsons had originally mortgaged. We were forced to move back to Church Street that fall.”¹⁹⁴

Alex and Lillie had rented out their home next to Cass while they were living in the hollow, and until the renters were able to make other arrangements, they and Marseille, Jack and Dick set up temporary living quarters in Cass’s basement. Cass, along with Alex, Harold and their wives, were served foreclosure papers by the Federal Land Bank in March, 1939.¹⁹⁵ The Federal Bank of Berkeley received the mortgaged portion of the Dawson Hollow farm in February, 1940.¹⁹⁶



One last look at Dawson Hollow.



Cass in a photo booth snapshot taken a year before she died.

Cass Passes On

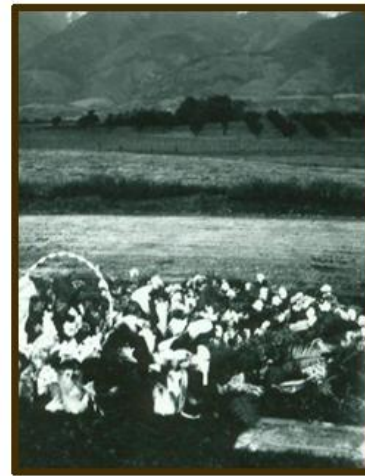
Cass' health began to deteriorate soon after Allie's death in 1936. Even though she suffered from cardiovascular disease,¹⁹⁷ she went about her usual household chores, gardening and socializing with friends as best as she could. She drew great comfort from being surrounded by her children and enjoyed daily visits from the grandchildren next door.

Life for Cass continued in its quite way until May, 1941, when she was finally admitted to the Dee Hospital in Ogden on the 18th. Cass was put under the care and observation of doctors, but there was little anyone could do for her condition by that time, and she died five days later of a cerebral hemorrhage.¹⁹⁸ She was seventy-one years old. Cass's funeral was held 27 May, in the newly constructed Layton ward chapel at 195 Gentile Street.¹⁹⁹ She was buried next to her husband in the Kaysville cemetery.²⁰⁰

After their mother's death, Alex and Harold divided her property and possessions equally. "They gathered all her possession into piles and sorted through them until they were satisfied that the two piles were the same, then threw dice to determine who would take which pile," said Dick.²⁰¹ Alex and Harold continued to reside next door to each other in harmony for many years, evidence of the legacy provided by Allie and Cass.

Cass was remembered as “a congenial, good natured person and a hard worker,” according to Dick. “She had good things to say about everyone.”²⁰² Emma summed up Allie as “very unobtrusive and content with enjoying the love and friendship of his family. All who knew him recognized in the man a loveable character and one with whom it was a pleasure to associate.”²⁰³

Allie “was straightforward and honest and kind,” remembered Harold,²⁰⁴ qualities that were held up as an example to Layton’s young men. When one of the neighboring teenagers was caught having a few beers at the local pool hall, his mother “got after him,” said Dick, who grew up with an awareness of family honor. “She told her son to look at the men in the pool hall and see what they were like, then look at men like Jabe Adams, Will Whitesides and Alex Dawson. ‘You can be like either type of man,’ she told him, but you would do well to be like Alex Dawson.”²⁰⁵



Right: Following the custom of the day, friends paid their last respects to Cass in her home where her body was on view shortly before the funeral. Left: Cass’s grave covered with memorial flowers.



Allie and Cass are buried side by side in the Dawson family plot in Kaysville City Cemetery, grave 14-1A space 6.

ENDNOTES

¹⁴⁷ Lillie (Young) Dawson (1895-1974).

¹⁴⁸ "Alexander Dawson-Lillie Young family group sheet," supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Lillie (Young) Dawson by Richard Rex Dawson, 1971. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Richard Rex Dawson, 1997. Transcript held by interviewer Shelley Dawson Davies.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Harold John Dawson, by Janice (Page) Dawson, 1 August, 1980. Transcript held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Abstract of title, page 17: part of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 21, 4 North, 1 West. Warranty deed, 18 August, 1919. Davis County, Utah, Book 1-D of Deeds, page 2. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.

¹⁵⁴ Interview, Lillie (Young) Dawson by Richard Rex Dawson, 1971.

¹⁵⁵ Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, First Mortgage Amortization Note, 28 February, 1920. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.

¹⁵⁶ Property purchased from Rufus Adams for 1,500.00 in August, 1919. Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, summons for loan foreclosure, 22 March, 1939. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.

¹⁵⁷ Layton's population in 1920 was 1,150. Glen M. Leonard, *A History of Davis County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999) page 360.

¹⁵⁸ Conversation between Richard Rex Dawson and Shelley Dawson Davies, 23 June 2010

¹⁵⁹ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Alexander Dawson, Warranty deed 61721, 10 December, 1935. Original held by Richard Rex Dawson.

¹⁶² Interview, Lillie (Young) Dawson, 1971.

¹⁶³ Alex and Lillie's third child, Richard, was born while they were living in the Dawsons basement in 1927).

¹⁶⁴ Doris (Marston) Dawson (1912-1999).

¹⁶⁵ "Alexander Dawson-Mary Catherine Green family group sheet," supplied 1979 by Richard Rex Dawson. This sheet offers only a generic list of materials consulted.

¹⁶⁶ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.

¹⁶⁷ Interview, Lillie (Young) Dawson, 1971.

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- ¹⁶⁸ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹⁶⁹ Interview with Richard Rex Dawson, 1997. Transcript held by interviewer Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ¹⁷⁰ Cass' brother, Alfred Green.
- ¹⁷¹ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹⁷² *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷³ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- ¹⁷⁴ Alexander Dawson, death certificate #250 (1936), Utah Department of Public Health, Salt Lake City. .
- ¹⁷⁵ *The Davis County Clipper*, 7 February, 1936.
- ¹⁷⁶ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- Death certificate lists cause of death as arterial sclerosis, acute for six years. (Utah State Archives, film 22081, Reel 1, Davis County, Utah, County Clerk, Death Registers) "five day duration, cerebral hemorrhage due to senility and hypertension due to cardiovascular disease of five years."
- ¹⁷⁷ Utah Death Index, 1905-1951. Online at www.ancestry.com. Alexander Dawson, death certificate #250 (1936), Utah Department of Public Health, Salt Lake City.
- ¹⁷⁸ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- ¹⁷⁹ "Friends may call at the family home in Layton Monday afternoon and evening and Tuesday until noon."¹⁷⁹ Alexander Dawson obituary, *The Weekly Reflex*, 13 February, 1936.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸¹ Life lease on 829 acres was cleared to be divided: Abstract of title, page 17: part of NW1/4 of the SW ¼ of section 21, 4 North, 1 West. Warranty deed, 18 August, 1919. Davis County, Utah, Book 1-D of Deeds, page 2. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁸² Conversation between Richard Rex Dawson and Shelley Dawson Davies in 1970.
- ¹⁸³ Alexander Hagen and Harold J. Hamilton adoption papers, Second District Court, Davis County, Utah; 17 May, 1924. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁸⁴ Interview, Lillie (Young) Dawson, 1971.
- ¹⁸⁵ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- ¹⁸⁶ Alexander Dawson, Warranty deed #61721, 10 December, 1935. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁸⁷ Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, summons for loan foreclosure, 22 March, 1939. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁸⁸ Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, First Mortgage Amortization Note, 28 February, 1920. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson. Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, application for extension, 21 May, 1936. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁸⁹ Davis County, Utah, Book of Mortgages "10" page 441, deed #62731. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁹⁰ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.
- ¹⁹¹ Marseille lived with her Grandfather and Grandmother Young on Gentile Street in Layton during this period.
- ¹⁹² Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1999.
- ¹⁹³ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.
- ¹⁹⁴ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1999.
- ¹⁹⁵ Federal Land Bank of Berkeley, loan #5560, summons for loan foreclosure, 22 March, 1939. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁹⁶ Alexander Dawson, Warranty deed #73826, 26 February, 1940. Copy held by Richard Rex Dawson.
- ¹⁹⁷ Mary Catherine (Green) Dawson, death certificate #205, (1941), Utah Department of Public Health, Salt Lake City.
- ¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹⁹ Mary Catherine (Green) Dawson obituary, *The Ogden Standard Examiner*, 29 May, 1941, page 10. Also, *The Weekly Reflex*, 29 May 1941, page 8.
- ²⁰⁰ Utah Cemetery Inventory Utah State Historical Society database, online at www.ancestry.com.

²⁰¹ Interview, Richard Rex Dawson, 1997.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ “Life Sketch of Alexander Dawson, Jr.,” Emma Victoria (Dawson) Simpson, undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

²⁰⁴ Interview, Harold John Dawson, 1 August, 1980.

²⁰⁵ Conversation between Richard Rex Dawson and Shelley Dawson Davies, July, 2010. Mr. Dawson quoted the reaction of Dorothy Wall as told to him by her husband Tom Wall.

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