

John Austin Frank

Compiled by L. Arden Frank



John Austin Frank was born 23 November 1895 in Providence, Cache, Utah. His father was Louis Frank, born 30 April 1866 in Logan, Cache, Utah. His mother was Ella Elizabeth Haderlie, born 10 July 1871 in Providence, Cache, Utah.

Austin was the fifth in a family of twelve children. Louis Winfield, Luella, Anna Hazel, Caroline (stillborn), Marie Haderlie, Ollie LaVenia, Genevieve, Wahneta, Radah, Charles Windsor, and Seth Clinton.

Austin was given his name and blessing 2 January 1896 by Godfrey Fuhriman in the Providence Ward of the Logan Stake. He was baptized 24 April 1904 in Providence by his father and was confirmed by Alma Mathews.

As he grew, he advanced through the Aaronic Priesthood and was ordained an Elder 19 January 1916 by his father. He received his Patriarchal Blessing under the hands of Patriarch Hyrum G. Smith 21 August 1917. He served as secretary of the Elders Quorum and later in the presidency. He also served as a Vanguard teacher in the ward.

-Some of the following incidents were obtained from his sisters-

Austin was a happy-go-lucky boy. He teased his sisters a lot, but they must have liked it because they thought very highly of him. When he was young, he would lose his temper very quickly. His mother talked to a Dr. John T. Miller, a G.P. and Phrenologist, about his problem. Austin went to see him and had the bumps on his head read. The doctor talked to him and told him how to control his temper, and after that he had good control of his temper.

Austin was the son of a farmer, and he and his father were inseparable. He especially liked horses, and his father didn't, so his father would take care of the cows while Austin took care of the horses.

His father, Louis, had a hand hay chopper which he probably used to chop hay for special animals. One Sunday while his parents were at church, a few of Austin's friends came to play. They were in the barn, and something got caught in the chopper. Austin told them not to turn the handle while he reached in to get the hay out, one boy, out of meanness, turned the handle and Austin's hand was badly cut, although no bones were broken. One of the boys hurried and got his parents from church. They bandaged his cuts the best they could, and his hand healed leaving few scars.

Austin liked to drive nails, and his father always kept him supplied with a hammer and a can of shingle nails. There weren't many spots in the old grainery without a nail hammered in. The children used to work in a potato field that their father owned near "Ballard Springs." If they came up with a few worms Austin would cut a willow, tie on a string and hook and try his luck in the springs. When he would catch one, he usually had to eat it as the others didn't care that much for them according to Hazel.

Radah says that one of his favorite tricks was to pretend to be talking in his sleep as he slept in the room across the hall from his sisters. They held some pretty funny conversations "in his sleep." Austin made a harness for his dog, put the top of an old buggy on his wagon and had the dog pull the kids around the neighborhood.

Austin attended the Providence elementary school where his first teacher was Diantha Hammond. He was in the first graduating class of A.E. Allen. Later he attended two Winter Quarters at USAC, riding over and back each day on horseback. He also took a correspondence course in Veterinary Science and received a graduation certificate. Aunt Marie said she could remember when someone's horse broke a leg so Austin fixed a sling from the ceiling of the barn and doctored the horse until it was well again. He had many calls from farmers with sick animals in Providence and also Millville and College Ward.

When Austin was 20 years old, he signed up with the Utah National Guard. He was supposed to be 21, but he got by. He also did not think there would be a war to get involved in, but less than a month after he signed up there was trouble on the Mexican border. Bands of Mexican raiders led by "Pancho" Villa and Emiliano Zapata were harassing small settlements and scattered ranches in Southern Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona along the border. In January 1916, a group of American mine officials and technicians were massacred in Mexico. The American Government sent General Pershing and some troops in to punish the bandits. In March 1916, Villa forces raided Columbus, New Mexico killing 8 soldiers and 9 civilians. In May 1916, Glen Springs, Texas was raided and on 18 June 1916, President Wilson called the National Guard units to active duty hoping to prevent all out war. Austin's Battery of the 145th Field Artillery was one of the units mobilized. He went into the service with Wade Pickett, Oliver Zollinger, David O. Theurer and Benny Janes. They first went to Camp Williams near Lehi, Utah for training and then to Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City. When the call to active duty was certain, these five went to the temple and got their Endowments.

They left Salt Lake 28 June and arrived 29 June, 1916, at Nogales, Arizona where they set up camp on a hill overlooking the border. While the Guard units were camped along the border, there were several skirmishes with bands of Mexican raiders. There were not many casualties among the Americans, but the Mexican losses were fairly heavy. With this show of force from the Guard Units and the Army, and with diplomatic negotiations going on between

leaders of the two governments, tension began to ease. General Pershing and his troops withdrew back into the United States and took up positions along the border. On 16 December 1916, most of the 145th was sent back to Salt Lake, but Austin's unit was not sent home until after the first of the year 1917.

While attending a welcome home party given by the school children for the soldiers from Providence, Austin met Christena Garrett, who was a teacher at the Providence school.

In October 1917, he was called into the service again, as American involvement in World War I was heating up. He went to Fort Douglas and onto Camp Kearney, California where he went to Remount School and learned to shoe horses the Army way. He came home on furlough 1 May 1918, and he and Christena were married on the 29th of May 1918 in the Logan Temple by William G. Noble. They honeymooned at beautiful Tony Grove Lake where they arrived on horseback. While they were camped there, a thunderstorm blew through and their horses ran away. Austin caught them though before they had gone very far.



Christena & John Austin

While Austin was home, his father had him go to Salt Lake City and try to talk to Hazel into coming home and going on a mission, which she later did. She said he took her out to dinner before he left. She said she remembered they had fried oysters to eat. (She was telling the story more than 60 years later). He returned to Camp Kearney, one month later and then was shipped to Fort Mills, N.Y. and then on to England and France on board *The Oxfordshire*. He said in his diary that France is the only place on the face of the earth where the sun comes up in the West. He was stationed near Bourdeaux, France with Field Remount Squadron 322. While there he worked up to the rank of Sargent and was a Squad Leader. He received letters from his parents, all of his sisters, his brothers, and many of his friends, but most often from his wife, Christena. All of these helped to keep his spirits up and to help him through the tedious job of shoeing horses and mules. For entertainment, he attended stage shows and movies at the "Y" in Bourdeaux. One entry showed that he was more content when he was busy and would get very homesick when things were slow. Another entry told about some of the "tussles" they had with the stock they had to shoe. Horses and mules that gave them any trouble were knocked down with a large wooden mallet, and while they were down, four shoes were nailed on. If they got up, it was OK; if not, that was OK too. While in France, one of the officers in Austin's squadron, Lt. Randolph, offered him a job after the war

shoeing race horses for him in Kentucky. Austin told him "No thanks" he wanted to get back to the farm.

When the war was over and the troops were being sent home, Austin found that he was going to have to stay on a little while to help finish shoeing the horses and mules which the U.S. government had given to the French. He got a pass and drove to Camp Geniert to see some of his friends off on their way home, "Odd" Zollinger and others. The entry in his diary the next day said that he was almost glad that he wasn't going yet but it wasn't long until he started to get anxious as the weather started to warm up in the Spring of 1919. On the 19th of March he noted that it had been 2 years since he met Christena. Finally in June, the word came that he was going home. He sailed from France on the *U.S.S. Black Arrow* and arrived at Newport News, Virginia.

During the train ride to Salt Lake City, they stopped at Chicago, and he went to the Khaki and Blue Club where the menu offered such things as hot cakes and syrup for 10 cents, two sandwiches for 5 cents, and coffee, pie, and ice cream, 5 cents each.

When he arrived home, Austin and Christena lived at the home of his parents for 6 weeks. Then they rented the Fife home on Main Street in Providence and later moved to the family home at 70 West 1st North. To them were born five children, Austin Garret, Nadra Rachel, Ella Ree, Marilyn, and Louis Arden. Austin farmed with his father and later purchased 20 acres of land at "Ballard Springs" on the Hyrum road. He owned the first tractor in Providence, an Advance Runley, and the first motor driven threshing machine. He did lots of custom threshing. He also bought a stationary chopper which was driven by a long belt around a drive wheel on the tractor. The chopper would blow the hay into the barn and things were dusty for weeks. He also had a milk route and hauled the 10 gallon cans with a 1919, 2 ton International Truck with the radiator behind the engine. He gathered the milk from the farmers in Providence and took it to the Bordon Milk plant in Logan and later to the Morning Milk plant in Wellsville. Austin G. remembered making the trip with his father by wagon, sleigh, and truck. He especially liked to go because they would stop and visit with Otto Liechty who worked at a bakery in Logan, and he would give them day-old buns and sweet rolls to eat. All of the children liked to go with their father and would meet him at A.E. Allen's corner and go along to deliver the empty cans and butter.

According to the book "Providence and her People," the 1st ward chapel was added on to in 1925-26. Austin worked many hours on the building and was generous in his donations. He took his family on trips to Bear Lake and Salt Lake City in the new Chevrolet touring car that he bought in 1928. In 1933, he went to the Ford plant in Detroit and drove home a new Ford truck. He also went to the Worlds Fair in Chicago on the way home.

The day Arden was born was the first time Austin G. hauled the milk. He was 15 years old. While Christena was in the hospital, Austin bought a G.E. monitor-top refrigerator to replace the old ice-box. He bought it from Les Nuhn and had it delivered before she got home.

Austin was the mayor of Providence for one term. At this time, much was accomplished on the culinary water system and many roads were paved.

On the morning of March 15, 1938, Austin woke his son, Austin G., and told him that he was ill and that he would have to do the chores and haul the milk. In the evening, he was still sick so he asked Austin G. to go to Logan and pick up a friend, Mark Lawrence, who was going to show his souvenirs of the Spanish American War, to the Explorer Scouts in the ward. Mr. Lawrence asked to go see Austin when he was through at the ward. He visited a few minutes and was leaving when there was a noise in the bedroom. They returned to the room to find that Austin had passed away.

His family, friends, and neighbors were all shocked when he died so suddenly leaving a wife with five children to raise. He had been sick like this before and not known that it was his heart. His funeral was held on Sunday, March 20, 1938. There were many flowers and the flower carriers carried them the block and a half from the home to the church. At the time, it was the largest funeral ever held in the Providence ward. Every seat was taken and loud speakers were set up all through the building to handle the over flow. The speakers all spoke of his honesty and integrity, his willingness to help others, and his love of pure bred cattle and horses. Also his concern for the security of the country and his willingness to serve in trying to make it a better place for all of us to live. The wind started to blow as the funeral began and by the time the family got to the cemetery, it was a real blizzard.

John Austin Frank lived a very short but very good life. He was a great example for his descendants to follow.

