

JAMES VERLAND SORENSON

This story begins with James Sorenson, son of Peter and Karen Marie Madsen Sorenson, who was born 27 January 1865 at Tidsville, Fredricksborg, Denmark. And with Mary Davis, daughter of David D. And Cedy D. Davis, who was born 19 September 1865 at Merthyr Tidfil, Glamorganshire, Wales. James and Mary in their youth had left their native lands and headed for Utah as converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Eventually settling in Logan, Utah the parents of James and Mary took up residence not far from each other in this city. Before too long there was romance, courtship and marriage of James and Mary. Soon a daughter Ines was born 17 October 1892. On 19 July 1896 another daughter Gladys, was born and just a bit more than four years later is where my story begins.

According to my parents, I was born on the hot and dry day of 22 August 1900. Apparently a very welcome addition to a family of two girls. I am sure there was a very definite purpose in my being born, if for no other reason than making it possible for my wonderful parents and my two lovely sisters to have someone around to pamper and spoil and to have someone to wait on. I was born in the old Grandfather Davis home located at 490 West 3rd South, Logan, Utah. My earliest recollection of being an individual was a trip to Brigham City with numerous relatives in a white top buggy. They tell me this happened when I was five years of age. I remember the old log home we lived in, on the same corner on which now stands a newer home and lived in by my sisters. If only it were possible to re-live the many happy and memorable days and evenings in the old home. Of the skating pond Dad fixed up for me just east of the house, of the home made sleighs and stilts and all of the other playthings any boy of that day could ask for. If only he were here today so that I could tell him how much they meant to me and how grateful I was for them, but did not realize it at the time. I remember the Saturday excursions up to "Old Man Wilson's" Confectionary along with my sisters and others of the neighborhood, taking an egg or a penny to spend for penny candy and then home to an understanding Mother with my usual stomach trouble. Then those wonderful years at the side of Grandfather Sorenson, who like my mother, never knew what it was to be cross, or out of patience, nor too busy to have time to answer my many questions and to put up with my pranks and wrong doings. Of the times herding cows, taking them to the pasture and the trips to the ranch at Benson Ward with Grandfather Sorenson. Of his fine gardens and fruit trees and bushes, and of how I could always sneak into them without fear of being stopped. I remember the

many morning and afternoon "snacks" at Grandmother Sorenson's sometimes alone but most often with Grandfather and Grandmother. Often Uncle Ernest and Uncle George and sometimes Aunt Mary, occasionally Dad or Uncle Will would be there. Oh for the return of those wonderful summers, hauling hay, weeding beets, driving cows to the pasture, and the extra fun of having Cousin Teague here for the summers and the fun we had with Uncle Ernest and Uncle George. Harvesting at the ranch at Benson Ward. And after threshing time in the fall, filling out bed ticks with new fresh straw. When Grandfather Sorenson died, I thought the world had suddenly come to an end. I had been with him every minute possible and no one ever had a more kind and loving Grandfather. I am getting a bit ahead of my story because not long before Grandfather Sorenson passed away, Grandfather Davis had passed on to his reward. We missed him very much, but I was not as close to him as I was to Grandfather Sorenson. Grandfather Davis was a professional Spring Maker and Wheelwright by trade and after working for the Oregon Short Line Rail Road (Now Union Pacific) for many years he left and established a shop of his own in Logan on the Southeast corner of the intersection of first South and Main street in Logan, Utah. Grandfather had a fine reputation as a skilled mechanic, conscientious and honest in his dealing with his fellow men. And in case you are interested Grandmother Davis had the largest cookie jar filled with the best cookies in the world. I remember disobeying Dad one time when he was trailing an extra load of hay up the street past our home, of how he warned me to stay away, jumping on the tongue of the trailing wagon and being thrown off on to the ground, one wheel had passed over my mid-section and the second was on the road to my chest, when Uncle Chris Hansen called to Dad to stop, which he did at once. Of waking up in bed with Dr. H. K. Merrill bending over me. For the loving care of my parents and my sisters I shall be eternally grateful. Just for the record this was not the only time when disobedience cost me plenty, but I learn the hard way only. I remember the Ward Christmas tree each year when each young one of the ward received a gift from Santa Claus (my last one was a pocket knife, a must in those days for every male). Soon I experienced the greatest desire of my life up until that time, Baptism and Confirmation to membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was then and still is one of the "High Lights" of my life. Soon it was Primary and Religion Classes each week, and the activities attached to these organizations. I remember the plays, cantatas and the like and the patience of Sister Millie Ewer in trying to make a singer out of me for a certain cantata (poor Millie, doomed to failure). I must not forget just prior to this I had started to school at the Old Ellis, located on the same ground as at present only a two room affair, with coal stoves and outdoor conveniences. Rachel Kewley was my first teacher and a good one too. The time passed rapidly by and soon I was ordained to the office of a Deacon. Holding that office in those days meant passing the sacrament in Church and using a glass pitcher and one glass for the water. The same glass was passed from person to person along the benches. Gads!! No virus in those days

however. It also meant helping to remove the benches from the church for adult dances and replacing them in time for Sunday services. Not long after this I was a member of the first scout troop in the ward, with David Tarbet acting as the first Scoutmaster, I must add here that Sunday School was perhaps my favorite session of church. I must also say here that each year one of more circus' came to Logan and we could be sure that no matter how hard up the folks were financially Dad and Mother always managed to take the family to one circus. Admission prices were fifteen cents for children and twenty five cents for adults. Now I was going to high school at the Brigham Young College in 1913 and was wearing knickerbocker pants with a turtle neck sweater for most of the time, of course the usual heavy underwear and heavy shoes went along with this, good enough but I was not the best dressed freshman in the school. Played some Basketball there and had great fun with such good friends as Bourke Tarbet, Nathan Nibley, George Eccles and Stanley Picot, and Henry Hurren. Still Henry and Bourke as good friends, the others have left my life. For reasons of my own, I quit school after one year of high school. Dad was just recovering from a year in bed with rheumatic fever and Ines had been laid up for some time with a broken leg, and no money coming in to sustain the family. These were not the days of church welfare nor of Bishops being interested in how you were getting along. But soon Dad was able to get around and was appointed to the position of Road Supervisor for Logan City, a position he filled very well for many years. Soon I was able to spend a summer combating what was known as "Walking Typhoid Fever" and that was a rough summer for me. The same gentle and kind hands of my parents and sisters came to my rescue again and I had recovered enough to spend the fall in Petersboro working for the Yonk family. In case you are interested I grew six inches that summer and all six inches were straight up. Here comes a part for which I hold no alibis nor excuses, but for some unknown reason for the next few years of my life I became lost in a maze of something or other. Try as they would no one could find me nor could I find myself. Came the age of seventeen, and my friends had found work in the state of Washington and wanted me to go with them. We signed and after that fall turning eighteen years of age and registered for the draft. However before I had been processed the Germans had surrendered. The next year found me Dry Farming with George Willmore in Holbrook, Idaho and the next I went into partnership with Thomas Roberts in a dry farming adventure in the Blue Creek Country in Utah. Spent two years with Tom there and "batching it" and all of a sudden realized that I was in the hole so far financially that it would take some time to recover and to pay my debts and it really did take a long time. This was the time of \$2.45 wheat dropping to eighty cents per bushel. I am getting ahead of the story again for in the year 1918 I had just began to really notice the girls and for awhile had really gotten up courage to ask one or two for a date. When all of a sudden here comes the cutest little brown eyed brunette you could ever see, Ruby Hansen of Iona, Idaho who was attending school in Logan. Well, I fell like the well

known "brick" in 1919 and it took me exactly three years of contentiously chasing and pleading to get her to say "yes". This she finally did and on 8 June 1922 we were married in the Logan Temple, the greatest thing which has ever happened to me. And as far as I am concerned it has been a wonderful like. On December 10, 1922 I started work in the Logan Post Office and have been there since that day. Our family started to come about then and Jim, our first child was born the following 6 April 1923. He was the first child for us and the first grandchild on both sides of the family, and that was really something. Jim had a hard time getting into this world and we were not sure for several days if he would or would not live. Soon Jack came along and Dr. Jones predicted he would become a second Jack Dempsey. Then Fred was born and he seemed destined to keep the medical profession going as he was sick for years after his birth with one illness after another. Then along came the one and only daughter of the family and Dr. Randall danced around with her on his hand saying "Ruby here is your girl". Then along came the last child David and he was born with a broken leg. Each child was a welcome addition and brought joy and happiness into our home. In the year of 1928 we built us a home next door to my folks on a lot which Dad and Mother had given us. I was very busy at the office this year around Christmas as was usually the case and so Mom and Dad tended to all the work of moving which enabled us to be in our new home for Christmas of that year. We had real fun living in our home or at least I did and had a great time with the family, but spending only a very small part of my time with them, when I should have spent all of my spare time with them. I am sure they all appreciated being next door to their grandparents and their two aunts Ines and Gladys and they should be ever grateful to them for their devotion to my family. My love for my family is beyond words and my words are inadequate to here tell of my love for them and my pride in their accomplishments and aims in life. We survived the depression years of the late twenties and thirties and perhaps were better off because of it. As a family we had to live close to each other and we had our summer vacations together, such as they were. We would load the old car down with provisions and family and head out for the hills or for a trip to Iona to visit with Grandpa and Grandma Hansen. This was a great occasion and it was wonderful to me as I was able to become well acquainted with my father in law, Charles W. Hansen. I was able to go with him on occasion both to work and on a few short trips into the out of doors. As a fine and honorable man no one excelled him, though he was very much misunderstood. I learned to appreciate his deep sense of responsibility and of his desire to do those things which were right, not only for his fellow men but for his God. I shall ever be indebted to him for teaching me many valuable lessons of everyday life. I have enjoyed sports of all kinds all my life and have managed Ward Men teams in Basketball and have also managed two local Baseball teams. One known as "Beckers", a group of young men who loved baseball. Another team was the Logan Collegians, this group was a fine ball club and were on top in this state for several years. I enjoyed the

association of these two groups very much. Now along comes High School years for Jim and Jack. Busy, crazy mixed up sentimental days of fun and troubles. Jim a great scholar and baseball player and dramatist. Jack an average scholar with great athletic ability. Great boys both of them, Mom and I about burst with pride over them. Then along comes Fred to High School and he was still hurting from his serious illnesses of his early youth and was lucky to be able to go to school and we took great pride in watching him grow and develop into a fine young man. Then all of a sudden we are mixed up in the middle of another European war. And right off Jim leaves with his ROTC unit from his college (need I tell you how heavy our hearts were over this) and soon Jack enlists in the Air Force and we had no rest from Fred until we signed giving him permission to enlist in the Navy. Unless you have experienced such an ordeal you have no idea about it. However we think that due to our faith and prayers they all returned safe and sound and in good health considering. Jim married Mary Bertram of Columbus, Georgia and Jack had married Verla Larsen of Hyrum, Utah during the period of wartime and they returned to Logan to complete their college education and for two years we had three sons going to college. Jim making a great record in scholastic work and Jack in athletics at U.S.A.C. (Now USU). Fred, after spending two years in college, went to Samoa on a mission and after a year had to return because of ill health. He had found his mate and was busy courting and Renee had found her mate also, he was on a mission to New Zealand. Soon our first grandchild appeared on the scene and was born on my birthday, and what a birthday present and before we had gotten over the excitement along came Susan the second granddaughter. Now Dave is all mixed up in High School and Athletics. I really don't know what I was doing all this time unless it was going around in circles. You might say this is a family history, perhaps so, but it is my history also as my family is my history. Then Jack moved to Ogden to coach at Weber High School and Jim and his family left for Eugene, Oregon where he obtained his Masters degree and Mom and Renee and I went to Oregon to see them. Then Charles came home from his mission and he and Renee were married. Just one month later Fred was married. Soon after that David was called on a mission to Sweden and doggone it I am fifty years old right now and haven't even started to get going. Well Mom and I settle down to our most peaceful and prosperous years. And I bought a new car and waited patiently for Dave to be released and return to New Your Harbor where we could meet him. In company with sisters Inez and Gladys we left early one August morning of 1952 for New York. Had a wonderful trip across the country and arrived in time to see the "Stockholm" dock and greet Dave as he walked down the gang plank and had a happy reunion with the baby of our family. (Dave likes me to say that). We traveled for three weeks to Niagara Falls, Palmyra, Washington, D.C. and then on to Belleville, Illinois to meet Uncle Dan Davis and family whom we had never seen. Then on down through the Southwest and to the Grand Canyon in Arizona, Boulder Dam and next to San Bernardino, California to see and visit with Charles and Renee and

family (Charles was in the Air Force here). After a short visit we returned to the peace and quiet of Cache Valley and Logan. It was good to be home after such a wonderful trip. Not long afterward Jim and his family moved to Mobile, Alabama to work for the Air Force. Jack and Verla became separated and he moved to Portland, Oregon to work for the Civil Air Patrol and later was moved to San Francisco, California. Fred moved to Ogden and is working for the Post Office and Charles and Renee are in Salt Lake City while he is attending medical school. (There is my doctor in the family). Dave has since finished college and married Lee Ann Murdock and is living in Moreland, Idaho teaching school there. They have recently made us famous, last February when we were in Mobile visiting Jim and his family, Lee Ann gave birth to a daughter Mary Ann and in December of the same year she gave birth to twin sons Jimmie and Bobby (red headed and blue eyed), and that brings our total up to fifteen grandchildren, ten boys and five girls and without fear of successful contradiction I can truthfully say they are the best, cutest and smartest grandchildren on this earth (and you can mark that down in your day book). I have twenty five years of Scouting work and have been Counselor in the YMMIA, Scoutmaster, Vanguard Commissioner, Troop Committee Chairman, Explorer Leader, Counselor and Secretary in the Elders Quorum Presidency, Counselor and Superintendent of the Sunday School and President of the YMMIA, member of the Cache State Board of Mutual, Superintendent of YMMIA. I am now on my thirty fifth year as an employee of the Logan Post Office and have just been relieved of my duties as Examiner in Charge of the U.S. Civil Service Board and Money Order Clerk to accept the position of Superintendent of Mails at this office. This position will present a challenge to me and am looking forward to it with a great deal of anticipation. We will see if anticipation is greater than the realization. However we do have the finest group of employees to be found anywhere and I am sure they will give me their unqualified support. I'll report later on the outcome of this venture. At the present time I am a High Priest, a ward teach and a member of the Stake Church Services Committee of the Stake High Priest Quorum and am Secretary in the Stake Gospel Teaching class, a position which is very soul satisfying. Just recently we have acquired a new daughter-in-law, Margaret Froelich, who became the bride of our son Jack on 16 January 1957 at Reno, Nevada. We have not met Marge as yet, but we are hoping that very soon we shall have the honor. I am sure she is a very fine girl and hope and pray that she and Jack are happy and have a long and happy married life. We have four daughter-in-laws and are very happy with all of them. Mary Bertram Sorenson, Margaret Froelich Sorenson, Jean Bradshaw Sorenson and Lee Ann Murdock Sorenson. I know if their husbands hold up their ends of the marriage, the girls will do their part. Just a note to say that our favorite son in law is Charles Low Hyde of Hyde Park, Utah and parts unknown. Over the years Mom and I have made many friends (at least I like to think that) and enjoy meeting them and appreciate knowing them. However like most everyone else we have our own special group. Earl and Jennie McDonald, Frank and Ella Paulsen and Marvil and Jane

Bell. We are certainly very fortunate in being able to call these fine people our special friends as they are the best. I like people and enjoy meeting them and have made a hobby of trying to remember each person I have met, but now as the years go by this is becoming more difficult. During the years of serving the public at the Post Office I have met some of the finest and more prominent people of our state and have always found it a pleasure to serve them. I consider the Governor of the State a person friend. Up to now I have had a wonderful life, nothing to brag about, but I have enjoyed every minute of it and my only regret is that it cannot go on forever (perhaps I would not want it that way). I am sure I have not tired of it up to now. I have suffered some losses which cannot be replaced, I have reference to the passing of Grandfather Sorenson, Mother and Dad and my father-in-law, all wonderful people, perhaps some time I can find them again.

As I understand it grandchildren are born mainly to give the grandparents an opportunity to fuss over them and spoil them. I am looking forward to the day when I can knock off work and begin making the rounds of our family, spending about two month with each member and trying our best to make the children do what their parents could not do when we had them. This will help us out on the groceries also, so beware my beloved children we're coming. Just in case you do not know when this will happen, I've just about made it to fifty seven years of age and as soon as I reach sixty one (if I do) we are on the road. I might add here that in addition to the two sisters mention therein I have another sister Mrs. Blanch Bird of Brigham City and a grand sister she is. Also brother Alton (Tony) who is at present the Bishop of our ward, and is doing a wonderful job of it. My appreciation to all the many fine people who have helped me on life's journey.