James Alfred Hancey was born in Hyde Park, Utah, 27 July 1883, the second child and the 2nd child and the oldest son of James Hancey and Annie Marie Christophersen. He was christened in Hyde Park by Niels Christensen on 6 Sep. 1883, and was baptized by his Uncle L. Peter Christopherson on 6 Aug. 1891.

As a boy, Alfred spent his time helping with chores around the home. Being the oldest boy in a family of 11 children he learned to work and share. One of his jobs while a very small boy was drawing water from the well to water the pigs and cows. He and his brother, George, would prepare and plant the garden at their place as well as at Grandma Rachel’s place (his father’s first wife, whom all the family called ‘Grandma Rachel’ because she was the only grandma they knew and she was so good to them).

Later in his teens, Alfred went to work for Lorenzo Petersen hauling milk from Hyde Park to the Smithfield Creamery. His pay was $15.00 a month. Part of his earnings went to help out on the family budget.

He was always ambitious and worked hard at any job he took on. He always wanted a team of horses and a wagon and he knew the only way he could have them was to work and save his money to buy them. After much hard work and struggle, his dream was realized and he bought a Studebaker Wagon and a fine team of horses. How proud he was of them. One year he rented land from Lizzie Christensen and he and George decided to raise sugar beets. The worked hard, learned a lesson, but didn’t get rich from the crop. The land had a high water table and the beets didn’t develop. It was a crop failure as they didn’t make enough to pay for the rent on the land. However, Lizzie reduced the rent so they at least broke even.

In the summer time, Alfred and George would go to the canyon east of Hyde Park for wood for the winter fuel. The roads were so rough they could only take the wagon so far and would have to roll the logs down the canyon to the wagon to load them. Alfred also tried sheep shearing and one year went to Lucine, Nevada. He left his horses with George, but during the time he was gone it was necessary to sell one of them.

James Hancey and several of his sons were builders and Alfred worked with his half-brother, Jesse Hancey, building houses and barns in the area. Cement was used in building, but there were no electric or powered mixers in those days, it was all done by hand and was hard work. But Alfred was not afraid of work and he run cement for steps and walks for many people in town. Wages of $5.00 a day were considered really good, no matter how hard the work was.

With his hard-earned money, Alfred bought an Izzer Buggy and had a good horse named Mike to go with it. He was always fussy about his buggy and always had it clean and shining. One night when he was in North Logan to see his girl friend, Susan, his brothers George and Lee and a friend, George Ashcroft, were also in North Logan. They had no way to get home except walking. Seeing Alfred’s horse and buggy, they took it and rode home. Alfred walked home, but George was in trouble. Alfred came in and doused George with a bucket of water while he was in bed. He also went through the pockets in George’s trousers and took his pocket knife, George never saw the knife again.

Alfred was in on some antics with friends in town. Christmas eve was the time for “tipsetting.” They would trade Lorenzo Petersen’s horse for Peter Nielsen’s cow, so when Peter
Alfred married Susan Ormond on 29 June 1910 in the Logan Temple. They started their
married life in a 2 room log cabin in Hyde Park. He earned his living as a carpenter in the early
years of his married life and he, with others, built round-roof barns in the valley, some of which
are still standing. Also, in the fall he was tare man for the sugar beet company. The job site was
at the Oregon Shortline Station, several miles west of Hyde Park. He rode a bicycle every day
regardless of the weather.

A well-remembered story of Alfred is that at the end of World War I he climbed up on the
barn of William Perkes and rang the fire bell so hard that he finally pulled it off the barn. This
was to wake up the town to let them know that the armistice has been signed ending World War
I, Shortly after World War I, he moved to North Logan to join the operation of his father-in-law’s
farm. This was one of the largest farms in North Logan and consisted of 160 acres of dry farm
east of Hyde Park as well as land down through the valley to the bottom lands where there were
meadows. He was an excellent farmer in all aspects of farming including the dry farming,
irrigated farming, milking and caring for 10 to 20 milk cows, and 100 head of cattle.

Alfred did many small jobs for neighbors such as sharpening saws, knives, and scissors.
He built chicken coup and garages and did repair jobs of all kinds. He was the neighborhood
barber and kids with toothaches would come to him to pull the tooth, which he did with the
forceps of his father. He was a jack of all trades and was known in the neighborhood as an
excellent and willing neighbor. Most of the kids brought anything that was broken to him as they
were sure he could fix it—and he usually did. Most of the town kids called him Grandpa Hancey.
When he died, the school closed so all the children could attend the funeral services.

Alfred built his own house in North Logan and made much of the furniture that went in it,
including bookcase, cedar table, rocking chair, end tables, magazine racks and flower stands. He
was a lover of flowers & was very particular how his flowers, lawn & house looked.

One of his early vacations was with a friend by the name of Orvin Nyman. They went by
covered wagon to Bear Lake for 10 days. This trip took them 2 days from North Logan to Lakota
and 2 days to return. He said that sometimes they had to move trees out of the road so they could
get by. He enjoyed fishing and quite often would take his family down to Bear River and Logan
River and spend the day fishing.

Alfred was one of the first constables in North Logan and this included Stray Pound
Master. He served in the Sunday School Presidency for many years. He was in the Elder’s
Quorum Presidency and was a home teacher for years.

Alfred, together with his wife Susan, operated a grocery store and service station in North
Logan during the later years of their marriage. It was a very successful operation.

Alfred and Susan were the parents of 4 children: Ross and Orpha who were born in Hyde
Park; and Edith and Duard who were born in North Logan. Alfred died at his home in North
Logan 8 Nov. 1949, and is buried in the Logan City Cemetery.

Alfred was loved and appreciated by his family and neighbors. His younger brothers and
sisters remember him as being a father to them after their father died. He always had concern for
his widowed mother and would bring a load of hay to feed the cow and would bring a load of
wood for the winter fuel. He was thoughtful and kind in all ways. His children remember him
teaching them to be honest and to always give their employer a good day’s work for the pay.
Another teaching was “always be the first one to help your neighbor—if not, the first, at least
always be on hand when help is needed.” These teachings he gave not only in word but in action.

Aleda adds memories of her brother, Alfred, as follows:

“I remember Alfred as a very loving and concerned brother, especially when mother was a widow and still had some her family members at home. He called Lillian and me-his 2 little girls. He would bring a load of hay for our cow to tide the winter over. He would also bring a load of coal. He was very good to us, walk hand in hand, whenever they walked together. If they had a little misunderstanding, Alfred would later say “Suz (he always called her Suz), you were right as always.”

Written by Orpha Andrews  Information in book JAMES HANCEY AND HIS FAMILY
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