

AXEL HOFFMAN
1864-1912

Axel Hoffman, one of the early Lewisville pioneers, was born on Amager Island 10 Nov. 1864. Situated between Denmark and Sweden, Amager Island is a part of Denmark. His father was Jean Scholebar, who served his country as a sailor and died at sea. His widowed mother, Christina Marie Frelander, lived in Malmo, Sweden with her parents who were book binders and violin makers. In her younger days Christina made kid gloves by hand and crossed the Baltic Sea to sell them in Copenhagen where there was a good market for them. Christina later married Herman Henrick Martin Hoffman, of German descent. He legally adopted Axel who took the name of Hoffman.

When Axel's mother met the LDS missionaries in Malmo, she was converted, but her husband refused to let her be baptized. She became very ill, but recovered after her husband promised her she could be baptized. However, after her baptism her husband resented his decision and became bitter, putting the church between them. When life became unbearable for Christina, she vowed to join the Saints in Utah. She and Axel struggled to earn enough money for him to come to America. In 1881, Axel, who was only 17 years old, came to Utah with other converts from Sweden. He found work at Melville, a few miles from Logan, Utah and sent his money home to his mother who used it to send the rest of the family-one by one- to Utah. His oldest sister came first, then Selma, Hilma and Clara, who was only 6 years old. By this time most of the family was here, except for his mother and brother, Adolph. He worked a year for a man who couldn't pay him, so he took a job driving Lon and William Clifford's cattle to Idaho.

While enroute, he encountered a terrible blizzard somewhere around Blackfoot. He found shelter for the cattle, but none for himself. In desperation he sought help through prayer and was guided across the sagebrush plain to a one-roomed cabin where a woman had put a light in the window for her husband. She took him in, soaked his frozen feet and legs in cold water to draw out the frost, and gave him something to eat. The next morning her husband came home and they took care of Axel for 3 weeks until he could walk again. After telling the man his story, he loaned him the money he needed to send for his mother and brother, upon condition that he would return in the spring and work it out. Axel agreed to this.

After he'd delivered the cattle, he returned to Salt Lake City where he spent the winter, coming back early the next spring to pay off his debt. He continued to work for others in Idaho—Gib Wright of Market Lake, Edward B. Hunter, Eli Campobell, William W. Selck and others from Lewisville.

When his mother and brother, Adolph, arrived in Salt Lake, Axel met them. The united family spent their first winter in a log cabin with a dirt floor. Because they were so poor the church helped them out. The following spring both Adolph and Axel returned to Idaho where they found work in the area.

On 26 Oct. 1893 Axel married Ann Catherine Petersen at Ogden, Utah. She was born 25 Sep. 1867 at Tyvalas, Denmark and immigrated with her parents to Utah. They loaded their meager possessions into a lumber wagon and came to Idaho to make their home in Lewisville. That first winter he worked for the railroad cutting ice on the Snake River. They lived in a log cabin on Beam's Flat west of the knolls. While her husband was gone for a month at a time, she burned sagebrush. It was so cold the water froze on her rough-board floor when she tried to mop it. In the spring the river flooded them out.

Then Axel and William W. Selck, Sr. Formed a partnership and homesteaded a large tract of land a mile southeast of Lewisville where Clarence Hoffman lives. They grubbed off the sagebrush, dug the first wells, made canals and irrigation ditches, and built the first fences and roads in that area. He also helped build the Selck and Taylor Canal which runs east and west along the Lewisville-Rigby Highway. He also worked on the Parks and Lewisville Canal which is a mile north. He hauled logs from the Deep Creek (now called Pine Creek) area and built a log house on the 80 acres of land he and Selck had cleared.

Axel and his wife were the parents of 9 children, all born at Lewisville. They were: Myrtle Mary Ann born 24 1894, died 6 August 1895; #2 Lenard Axel born 27 Oct. 1895, died unmarried 27 Feb. 1928; #3 Hildred born 7 July 1897 married 1 Sep. 1926 Charles Benjamin Dinsdale; #4 Clarence Hulger born 21 Jan. 1899 married 12 June 1928 Ida Alzina Shurtliff; #5 Melvin Claus born 10 Sep. 1900 married 10 Sep. 1926 Fern Marie Wilson, #6 Magdalene Kathryn born 18 May 1902, married 9 May 1923 Marion Aquilla Lufkin; #7 Annie Oriole born 17 Feb. 1905 married 15 June 1927 Ivan Frederick Hanson; #8 Earl Christian born 26 July 1907 married 10 May 1943 Lucille Neilson; #9 Reynold Peter born 4 Aug. 1909, married 7 May 1932 Barnetta Lucilla Farber

Axel suffered a stroke and was bedfast for nearly 2 years before he passed away 26 May 1912 at Lewisville, Idaho. His wife died 25 Dec. 1930 at Rigby and both are buried in the Lewisville Cemetery.