

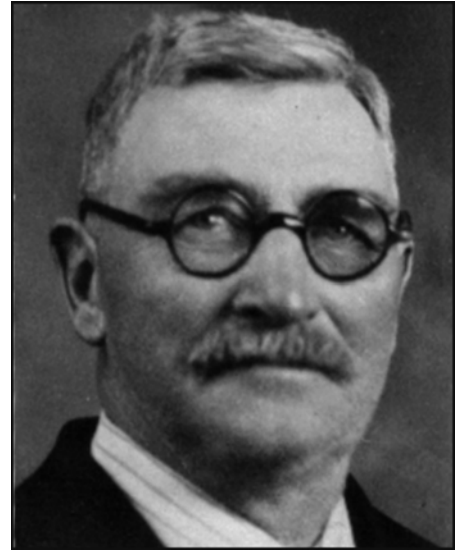
Memories of Ferdinand C. and Elsie Marie Christensen

Written by their daughter Anna C. Swann

In the year 1899 Ferdinand homesteaded a quarter section of land in what was later known as Central Idaho.

Ferdinand and his son Ferd went up there and built a small house about 12x12 feet. There were Elsie and six more children, that would be six children and the parents: Dorothy age 15, Ferd 12, Christ 10, John 8, Zina 4 and Heber 2. And Elsie was going to have another baby.

There were no trees but the sagebrush was almost as tall as a man. This was the condition when Elsie arrived in her new home. The land was good lava ash soil, but it had to have water to make a good farm of it. The house had been used to store wheat seed. So many animals had decided to live there before Elsie got there and she wasn't too happy about that. She slept in the wagon till they got the animals cleared out.



They lived in Central for a time and then moved to Lund before the new baby came. Leona Elsie was born April 10, 1900. Soon after her birth they moved back to their farm. One of the trials was that water had to be hauled about 6 miles from the Bear River for both household water and to water the animals.

In 1901 a ward was organized with Dan Lloyd as bishop but it wasn't very long before he was replaced by R. G. Jorgensen. Ferdinand was called as the ward clerk. He served in that position for 17 years. When the Relief Society was organized Elsie was called to be a counselor. That was a very busy job. She helped in times of sickness and death. In those days a body had to be prepared for burial by the Relief Society and the Priesthood. The bodies were not embalmed as they are now. Someone had to change some kind of solution put on their face so they wouldn't go dark before the funeral. Someone was with them day and night to take care of this task. The coffins were made by Andrew Rosdall and the Sisters made them look as good as they could. This was a hard task for Elsie and the other woman to do but it was a necessary part of their lives in those days. Alva Egan made many of the coffins when he came to Central a few years later. Elsie also assisted in the birth of many babies through the years.



New land had to be cleared and the hard work of starting a farm had to be done by Ferdinand assisted by his family. They did some real pioneering. There were times when Ferdinand had to go look for work other places to supply the needs of his growing family. The first crop they harvested was 30 bushels of wheat, for a family of 9 that didn't go so far.

Some time later, it was known water could be had from the Bear River. They called it The Last Chance. A canal was also needed to carry the water to Central. It was called the north extension. Ferdinand worked on both of these projects. It was a big job but they were very happy to have water for their farm and for the household needs

Now a bigger house was needed so they built on some rooms. Elsie was very happy for that. Things were getting to look some better but it is a big thing to bring a family up in pioneer conditions.

On Nov 2, 1902 Joseph Amos Christensen was born to them and they were happy for a fine new baby boy. So things were somewhat better. Elsie worked hard to help out and keep the big family together but sometimes things looked almost too big. At one time Ferdinand was so discouraged that he wanted to pull out but Elsie bent and picked up a handful of dirt and said "This is good dirt. We can make a living for our family here." They decided to stay.

On October 9, 1906 Anna Elvera Christensen was born. Elsie had a midwife that lived about 3 miles away, but her daughter had a new baby at that time and was gone so Ferdinand went to Thatcher for a Mrs. Toone. He drove two of Ferd's horses. Ferdinand knew that the baby couldn't be born without help. He drove those horses way too fast (guess they were almost ruined the rest of their lives). Ferd never forgot that but they were able to save the lives of Elsie and Anna.

In about 1907 or 08 a nice deep well was dug. They had to dig through lava rock before water could be reached but it was a good well and much appreciated. August 26, 1909 another baby was born to them: Austin Miller Christensen. That made eleven children. One was a still born baby that Elsie grieved about for years.

About 1910 or 1911 John left for a mission in Denmark and Norway. It was a three-year mission. The family was very proud of him but they knew that they would miss him as well. Elsie and Ferdinand had decided not to teach their children Danish so John had to learn the language on his own, but they were happy to have their son go back to their homeland.

The farm was doing good now and another room or two had been added to the house. On January 24, 1912 Zina married James Alva Egan in the Logan temple. Elsie went with them to Logan. In 1916 or 17 part of the farm was sold or traded for another piece of land, don't know for sure which.

In the summer of 1917 Ferdinand bought a car, a Dodge. How excited the family was about that. During the summer they traveled to visit Ferdinand's brothers who lived in Centerfield, Utah, about 300 miles away. They all enjoyed that trip.

In 1917 world war one began, Heber was just the right age for the draft. He got his draft notice in Aug of 1918 on a very rainy day. The lightning hit the barn and set it on fire (a bit of excitement). The fire burned much of the barn. Heber left for the service not long after that. He did not have to go overseas because the war was nearly over just before he was to leave. He came home in the spring of 1919.

On March 29, 1920 sadness came to the family. Their oldest daughter Dorothy passed away leaving 7 children, the youngest one 2 years old. The day of the funeral was a stormy day, almost a blizzard. Her funeral was in Bancroft, Idaho and she was buried in Central, about 12 miles by buggies or sleigh, what a hard trip. That night Elsie came home with Dorothy's husband, Ralph, and all her family. All the quilts were wet from the storm. Food and a place to sleep was no easy job for Elsie. What a Mother.

Ferdinand served on the school board for many years and he really enjoyed doing it. Florence, Heber's wife said she wouldn't have the job of teaching in Central if Ferdinand hadn't been a trustee.

In August of 1921 another sadness came to the family. Ralph Harrison had a combine accident. He was working on something underneath it and the combine slipped and fell on him and crushed his back. He passed away not many days after that. Now there were seven orphan children. It was Ralph's wish that they stay together. They did for a while but it couldn't be so they were split up and some of them came to

live with Elsie and Ferdinand. On Aug 30, 1922 Heber married Florence Nuffer in the Salt Lake temple. Florence was teaching school in Central.

In August of 1823 Ferdinand was feeding a bull he had and it got after him. It got him down and trampled him and ripped his body with his horns. The bull left him for dead. Somehow Ferdinand managed to get where Heber could help him. He was taken to the Soda Springs hospital. Dr. Kackley said that he couldn't live. But through the prayer and the power of the Priesthood he lived.

Of course that made a big difference in the family when a father can't work. Someone else will do it because on a farm the work goes on. So the family had to decide what could be done. It was decided Joe and Austin would keep things going on the farm.

John and Joe had bought a store in Banida. John was working somewhere else so that left Connie, John's wife alone to run the store, so Leona and Anna went to Banida to help Connie with the store and the Post Office. Anna was signed up as the assistant Postmaster at age 16 so she could take care of the mail. Leona got a job weighing sugar beets in Coulam. Joe came once a week to take care of what was needed to be done for the store and the post office, etc.

Joseph A, Christensen and Goldie Miles were married June 25, 1924 in the Logan Temple. After their marriage they went to Central and took care of the farm for a while. Ferdinand, Elsie, Leona, Anna, and Helen Hamson moved to Banida and lived in the back of the store so they could take care of it, but Joe still came down to take care of business.

The family moved back to Central in the spring of 1925 and Goldie and Joe moved back to Banida. By now Ferdinand was well enough so that he, with the help of Austin and Ann, were able to run the farm.

Leona Christensen married Harry Olsen Dec 24 in Ogden Utah.

About this time Ferdinand was very interested in genealogy and family history. He got many names in his line from Denmark. After he got them ready for the temple, Elsie and Ferdinand did their work in the Logan Temple. At one time they were called to spend the winter doing temple work. They enjoyed that very much.

Elsie was a very good cook and many delicious meals were eaten in her home. Anyone that came was welcome to a good meal. There was no need to leave her home hungry. Anna Christensen and Ephriam A Swann were married Dec 1, 1926. They lived across the street from her parents for more than two years. Things went on as best as farm work could.

Leona Olsen passed away Sept 10, 1932 from an operation on her appendix. All the family was with her when she died. Elsie wanted her to be buried in Central but Harry said no, so she is buried in Huntsville, Utah and Harry is buried in Ogden. Austin M. Christensen married Helen Johansen Dec 22, 1932.

In 1935 Ferdinand decided to retire and move to Banida, He sold the farm to Austin and had a home built in Banida. Elsie and Ferdinand moved in their new home in January 1936. The ward had a lovely house warming party for them.

While in Banida Ferdinand was a counselor in the Sunday School Presidency. He enjoyed that calling very much. Elsie was a visiting teacher. That job wasn't new to her as she had spent many years as a visiting teacher.

Ferdinand contracted pneumonia and died Jan 11, 1937. Now Elsie was alone. She lived 17 years as a widow in Banida and died Feb 13, 1953.

Some Memories of My Parents by Anna Swann

When I was small, I can remember Dad always had peppermint candy in his pocket and if we got restless in Church we got a piece. It helped a lot. I don't remember every taking a toy to church. Another thing, Dad always had was a pencil in his pocket. It was only about 2 inches long but every one was welcome to use it. When I got old enough to help in the hay, I rode the derrick horse. It was always old Tom, a very wise horse; he could open most any door. But he did his best when I worked on the derrick with him.

It seemed that there was never enough pasture or fences around so I had to herd cows or pigs, not fun.

When I was 16, Dad got worked over by a bull. I guess he was left for dead, but he managed to get where Heber could help. One night the Doctor said if the family wanted to see him alive they best come. I called Ferd. He called the rest of the family. When all the family gathered around Bishop Anderson gave him a Priesthood blessing and the family knelt around his bed and prayed. By morning he was a lot better. From then on he improved, so he lived because of the faith and prayers of his family.

Another time Mother wanted him to have a priesthood blessing but there wasn't anyone that could. So Elsie said to make a call where the Bishop lived. I had no idea where to go. I didn't know anyone in Soda Springs. But as I was going down the street, I decided to ask, so I knocked on a door. There was Myron Nuffer, Florence's brother. He found help and gave Dad a blessing. I was sure happy to see Myron.

Dad had much faith and gave many blessings. We depended on him and his blessings. Dad was honest. His word was as good as his bond. If ever I said I was F. C. Christensen's daughter, I could get what I needed. He was a hard worker and expected his family to work hard too.

Now Mother, she was certainly the center of the family, always there when needed. She said that she was with the mothers when about 100 babies were born; many of them were her family. I don't think a Christmas went by that I didn't get a new dress, even if she sat up late at night to make it. No matter who came they were always welcome to a good meal and my Mother was a good cook.

We had the small pox when I was about 6 years old. For three months there was someone down with the small pox all the time. Mother never got it but she took care of her family as needed. As far as the ward was concerned they were frightened and no one came near to help us while we were all so sick

One time Joe went to the canyon with Heber. The horses run away when they were on the way home with a wagon loaded with wood. The wagon tipped over and Joe got a branch run completely through his arm. Heber took him to the Doctor. After he got home Mother took care of it from then on. How carefully and how good she did until the arm was healed.

On my birthday she spent most of the day sewing for me. She was a hard worker and was always there when we needed her through sickness or otherwise. She was a good companion to her husband and they loved each other very much. Dad passed away Jan 1, 1937. After he died she missed him very much. They were hard years for her. She was very lonely. We took care of her the best we could, but that doesn't help the loneliness. She lived 17 years alone. She passed away Feb 13, 1954 at Pocatello.