

ALOWIS BAUER

Born: 29 April 1831 Switzerland

Age: 25

Hunt Wagon Company



Alowis Bauer and family

Mormon Elders from the Italian mission first came to Alowis Bauer's homeland in 1851. Alowis was the only member of his family to convert to their faith. Two other important friends also converted, Ulrich Bryner and Barbara Elliker, who was Alowis's sweetheart.

In 1854, a tragic accident befell Ulrich and he became blind. Ulrich had been given a vision 10 years before where he saw himself being led half way around the world blind. When he joined the Church and accepted the call to gather to Zion, Ulrich knew the meaning of his vision. His friend, Alowis, became his teamster and his "eyes" on this journey.

Alowis (25), Barbara (24) and her family, and Ulrich (28) with his wife and daughter, all sailed on the ship *Enoch Train* for America in May 1856. From Iowa City, Barbara and her family went ahead of Alowis with the McArthur handcart company. Barbara's father and three of her siblings died on their trek. At the Iowa campground Alowis was kept busy for two months with his carpentry and wheelwright skills, constructing handcarts and wagons. The Bryners were supplied with a wagon and outfit acquired by Ulrich's brother, Casper, who had emigrated the year before. The Hunt company was the last group to leave Iowa City that year. They traveled closely with the Martin handcart company and helped them as much as they could.

As Alowis drove the wagon, Ulrich held on to the back and walked behind. During the journey, Alowis reportedly suffered a broken arm during an oxen stampede. When the well-known trials of this journey bore down on the immigrants, Alowis had his feet seriously frozen. He became somewhat crippled and lame afterwards and used a cane for the rest of his life.

Barbara was waiting when Alowis arrived in the Valley in December. They were married immediately and first moved to Lehi, subsequently pioneering in Cedar City and Beaver. He also lived close to the St. George Temple for a time and was able to complete a great deal of temple work. Alowis had many skills he had learned in Switzerland, including intricate wood carving, furniture making and working on watches and clocks. These skills would prove useful to him throughout his life, especially when his handicap limited him in other occupations. As his sons grew older, they took over the farming and stock raising. Through the Bauer family's industry and hard work and the blessings of the Lord, Alowis prospered greatly. In 1882 he was called to serve a mission in his homeland of Switzerland. His son, Alowis Bauer III, and other children, took over the responsibilities of the farm and family during the time their father was away. He had trained them well as he never could tolerate idleness and was somewhat impatient in expecting everyone in his family to be as precise and thrifty with their time and money as he was.

Alowis humorously acknowledged his heavy accent in a Church meeting once when he stood up and said, "Ven I comed to dis country, I couldn't speak the language very plain. I used to say shurch, shicken shoop, and vagon tongue, but now I say shurch, shicken shoop, and vagon tongue zust as goot as anie body else."

Alowis married two more times and had a large number of children. He died in 1906, just before his 75th birthday. One of his descendants wrote: "May Alowis's posterity continue to grow and ever pay him homage for his commitment to the Gospel and his desire for eternal life that motivated him to leave his childhood home of Switzerland and suffer the hardships of the journey to Zion and [to receive] the blessings of the Temple of the Lord."

Sources: "Personal History of Alowis and Barbara Elliker Bauer," unknown author; "From Eternal Snows to Life Eternal: Story of Alowis Bauer Family," compiled by Mrs. Wesley P. Bauer; "Alowis Bauer," by Jay A. Aldous; letter from Jay A. Aldous to Jolene Allphin, March 25, 2009.