

## Chapter 4 1920 - 1929 Getting Started



*Ira and his little brother, Earl, about 1920*

The next few months Ira worked at various jobs. He noted that on Christmas Day, 1919, he was contented to be home and expressed appreciation for his blessings. He also reminisced respecting his whereabouts of the previous Christmas. That winter and spring he took a renewed interest in religion, reading the Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants and much of the Bible.

The summer of 1920, Ira's sister Faye, was working at the laundry. She had met, and was working with a nice young lady by the name of Vyla Dayley. With a handsome young bachelor son running around, it is no wonder that Ira's mother was keeping her eyes open for a girl worthy of him. When she met Vyla, she said, "Now there's a special young lady. If Ira and Vyla ever meet, they will get married." Vyla had previously met most of the family and was friendly with the sisters. One night in November, as Ira and the family were seated at the dinner table, Faye came home, bringing Vyla with her. The fact that he was twenty-nine and she was only nineteen, did not seem an important issue, as they started dating, and felt a strong attraction to each other, which soon blossomed into full love.

When they talked of marriage, they knew it was better to have a longer engagement, but Ira had made plans to leave for Pullman, Washington to enter the vocational



*Ira (middle) with his friends Jode McClaws (left) and Stan Martindale (right) about 1920. Both men married Ira's sisters.*

training school under his G.I. Bill. Vyla, coming into his life certainly complicated the situation, so what should they do? He did not want to leave her, nor could he afford to lose the opportunity of the schooling which he was entitled to through his service to his country. True love won out and they quickly made plans for an early December marriage.

So it was that on December 4, 1920, a cold wintery day, Ira and Vyla were married by Frank B. Datson, at the Cassia County Court House in Burley, Idaho. Attending the couple were Mother Frost, his sister, Faye and her new husband of one hour, Bill Olson. They celebrated with a wedding dinner at the home of his sister, Cora. As was the custom, their friends and relatives wanted to shivaree them by playing tricks on them. Despite the bitter cold, these "friends" were persistent in searching Burley and Oakley in hopes of locating them. The newlyweds avoided them by spending the night in the Cook Rooms, a hotel in downtown Burley.



*Ira and Vyla Frost*

On Sunday they spent the day at the home of Vyla's parents in Starrs Ferry. The next day was spent with the Frost family, where they were busy sending out wedding announcements to friends and relatives. Ira was preparing to leave for Washington. The family gave them a nice

reception at the home of his sister, Cora. The following day, Ira left his new bride and boarded the train for Washington. Undoubtedly, this was a lonely adventure for him, finding himself in a strange place with added responsibilities of marriage and gaining a vocational education. At Pullman, he was transferred to Moscow, Idaho, where he attended the University of Idaho. He quickly located a small one room apartment close to town and sent for Vyla. She arrived two weeks later. They soon moved to a larger and nicer place. Thus was the beginning of a long and happy marriage and a new era in the life of Ira L. Frost.



*Ira and Vyla at a church picnic in in Moscow*

The Frosts soon became friendly with other young couples. They took an active part in the church and helped organize the Moscow Branch. At that time, it was in the North Western States Mission. Vyla served as the first secretary of the Sunday School. Their home was always open to the missionaries and they often furnished meals and a place for them to sleep. By their involvement in the Branch and the close relationship they shared with the missionaries, their testimonies of the Gospel of Jesus Christ were greatly strengthened. Ira was ordained a Priest in the Aaronic Priesthood by George Wood on March 21, 1921 and an

Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood by Gideon Condie on August 28, 1921

As the months flew by, Ira was totally involved in the study of agriculture at the Vocational School. Among other experiences, he told one on himself about having to give an oral report in class. As he stood before the group, he stated, "I'm not much of a speaker", and then proceeded to present his material. After the delivery, the professor answered, "Mr. Frost, it wasn't necessary for you to tell us you weren't much of a speaker. We were able to tell that as soon as you started."



*Ira while a student at Moscow*





*Their home in Moscow*

Ira anticipated the end of school. But that was not the only event he was anxiously awaiting, for he was about to become a father. This was quite an ordeal for him to go through, but with the help of Dr. Clark and Nurse Savage, he managed very bravely, and at 3:00 p.m.

February 7, 1922, Ira and Vyla were blessed with a baby girl. They named her Eunice, in honor of a lovely girl they knew. On March 5, she was blessed by Joseph Sudweeks, a friend and professor from the college.



*Vyla and Ira in their garden at Moscow.*

Though they were anxious to return to the Burley area, they regretted leaving Moscow and the good friends they had enjoyed good times with.

On March 9, 1922, they boarded the train, selected a berth in a Pullman, and had an enjoyable trip. Arriving home was exciting, seeing loved ones again, but especially were they proud to show off their new baby. They stayed with the Dayley parents for a few days while preparing to go into farming. It was through the North American Mortgage Company that Ira was

able to get his start in farming. They would assist families who had no means by setting them up on one of the company farms and supervising their operations. Also, Ira was still involved with the college through their extension program. The first farm the Frosts were assigned was north of Declo, Idaho, on a sand hill on the bank of the Snake River. Their first year of farming proved to be unprofitable. Yes, they had raised ten acres of quality potatoes, but were unable to harvest them due to the low market value, which, that fall, was only ten cents a bushel. They asked the mortgage company to take them, but it was to no avail. Therefore, except for the few they used, this beautiful crop of potatoes remained in the ground. They also raised melons and had an excellent garden, from which Vyla canned their winter food supply.



*Ira and Vyla at Moscow  
"just goofing around"*

The fall of 1922, they moved to the Starr's Ferry area west of Burley into the George Schultz house and were fortunate to have electricity. It was a nice home and they enjoyed the winter there. Christmas was special. They had a tree, lots of food, and were happy to be close to their families. They invited all of them to their home and except for Net and her family, all came. Beds were set up all over the house, as everyone stayed all night. No one slept because they were just too busy having a good time. The next day was topped off with a big dinner.

Still associated with the North American Mortgage Company and the college extension program, they moved to a farm in Twin Falls in February 1923. The farm was located south of Twin Falls about a mile and a half from South Five-Points. The house had an interesting reputation, as all the neighbors believed it to be haunted. Ira did not believe in haunted houses and since he was interested in farming to the best of his ability, concentrated his efforts in that direction. He was still learning and working hard so someday they could own a farm of their own. However, there were noises in the house. . . and the stairs creaked as if someone were walking up and down them. . . and there was the matter of that upstairs door no matter how tightly they closed it, somehow it always came open!!! Regardless what they did, they could not keep that door closed!!

Ira planted the crops that spring which consisted of onions, beans, and potatoes, then ventured into a new area, that of raising purebred Duroc pigs; they also had a flock of chickens. But the most wonderful item that they produced that summer, was a beautiful baby daughter, born early the morning of June 29, 1923, and they named her Thelma June and both of the grandmothers were with Vyla. During her stay, Mother Frost was surprised one night, as she was sitting in the rocking chair dozing, to look up and see a woman standing close by. Her immediate reaction was to ask Mother Dayley what she was doing up, but was startled to realize that it wasn't Mother Dayley!! The woman then disappeared. Mother Frost had the good judgment not to mention this to Ira and Vyla until after they had moved.

Several events in the fall of 1923 should be mentioned. First, Vyla and both of the babies had a serious case of the measles. The babies had whooping cough. Ira had a productive harvest. But most important were plans they were formulating for a special event to become a reality. Ira knew he wanted his wife and family to be together throughout all eternity, and so he was preparing



*The Logan Temple in the early 1920s*

to go to the Temple. It was a special day in their lives when they left by train for Logan, Utah. They were met by Lee Bolton, a friend from Moscow, and spent the night in his home. The next day he accompanied them to the Temple. It was on December 5 1923, Ira and Vyla were sealed for time and eternity and Eunice and Thelma were sealed to them.

The following spring, 1924, Ira completed his extension training. They were still associated with the North American Mortgage Company. They moved once again, this time to a farm a mile west, and a little south of Burley, and down on the canal bank about a quarter of a mile. This was to be their home for the next three years. Ira was becoming quite knowledgeable and raising some



excellent crops, but times were hard and they were careful about their finances. The Frosts lived in the Burley First Ward and they were faithful members although there were times during the winter they couldn't go due to the weather conditions. The canal bank



*Their home in Starr's Ferry*

drifted over every time it snowed, but the stork got through on a happy day on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, 1925, when their first son was born. They named him Myron Delbert Frost.



*Thelma, Myron, and Eunice*

Those early days, with their small family, and struggling for a start in life, were rewarding times for Ira and Vyla. To go places, they hooked a team of horses to the wagon, placed the children in the bottom and headed for town, church, or family gatherings. In the winter, a few blankets wrapped around the little ones made them cozy and, everyone enjoyed themselves.

In their third year of farming west of Burley, the Frosts were blessed with another happy event, as a little round faced baby girl was born to them on August 19, 1926. She was named Celia Gean. Vyla was busy with the family and Ira with the farming. Their potato crop that year was bounteous and the market value such that they felt they could reward themselves by buying their first automobile. What a thrill for Ira to load his family into their new Model. T Ford and drive to town.

In January of 1927 the mortgage company rented them a farm in the Springdale area, southeast of Burley. It was located a mile and a half south of the Springdale store (which was on Highway 30 toward Declo). Ira had now accumulated a few pieces of machinery and a few horses and other livestock. Neighbors were always willing to assist one another and traded machinery when needed. They often visited and were mindful of each others needs. They were given



*Their home in Springdale*

positions in the Springdale Ward soon after moving there. Ira was Assistant Sunday School Superintendent and Ward Teacher (or Home Teacher) and assisted with the Aaronic Priesthood committee.

Ira kept a close relationship with his family and Vyla's. They had many good times together. To see the New Year in, they always met at one of the brother's or sister's home to have a party. It was traditional for all the family to spend New Year's Day at Mother and Father Dayley's, where they always had a big meal.

The first day of school was September 10, and that night there was a hard freeze but the harvest went on. Ira sold his clover for twenty-five cents a bushel. It was cold enough, he wore his



*The Chauncy Frost Family - about 1927 Back row: Christena, Pearl, Elva, Nettie, Lonevie, Faye, Cora, and Florence. Middle: Ruby. Front: Earl, Chauncy, and Ira.*



overcoat while harvesting the beans. The Frosts took the girls to the fair and let them ride the merry-go-round and the ferris wheel. Ira found that he could give his wife a worthwhile gift and a luxury at that time. . . a Maytag washing machine with a gas motor. The gas was necessary as they had no electricity. Ira bought a shot gun and a top for the car. October of that year (1928) saw the potato harvest. . . and what gems! But somehow the cows got into them, and when Ira went to milk them, they were all sick. In the fall he added some sheep to his expanding list of livestock. It was a cold fall, but he managed to complete the plowing and to help the neighbors harvest their sugar beets. He also acted as clerk of the elections, did lots of fencing, building, pheasant hunting, and chased the coyotes out of his sheep, but not before they had killed two of them.



*Ira and his guitar*

They were having mechanical problems with the Model T Ford, so Ira took it to town where he helped repair it. While it was being fixed, he rode his horse to town, took Eunice to school on the horse, and used the wagon when the family needed to go someplace. They were without a car for approximately a month and got it back on December 20, but not until after midnight. It required additional adjusting and Ira worked on it late into the night and then had to keep it running all night in cold 15 degrees below zero weather, in order to use it the next day. They were thankful to have a car to do Christmas shopping and to visit during the holidays with their families.

Ira sold eight hogs that winter at eight cents a pound. They weighed two hundred pounds each and the check totaled \$128.00. Vyla was involved in genealogy work and had meetings to attend. Ira went to Stake Priesthood meetings in Burley and usually took this time to visit his parents. The winter was cold with Ira keeping busy with helping neighbors get their cars started or get out of snowdrifts. During one bad snowstorm, Ira was on his way to the Unity store to get supplies when he got stuck. As he was digging himself out, the snowplow went by, so he followed it the rest of the way. The snow on each side of the road was higher than the car. He planned to pick Eunice up from school on the way home, but he got stuck again. Vyla came to his aid and on the way to pick up Eunice, they met her walking home. The child was nearly frozen before they got

her home. The next few days Ira took her to school in the wagon.

The last of January, 1929, there was a terrible blizzard, closing the schools, church, and stopping the mail delivery. For several days, they saw no one. They spent their time playing Flinch, reading, and Ira telling stories to the children and sometimes treating them to a song, accompanying himself on the guitar, and sometimes yodeling for them. He fenced the horses away from the house and fixed the manger in the stable for the cattle. It was great when the road was finally plowed out and they were able to take the car and go to town. He sold some more hogs and sheep, made the last payment on the washing machine, and bought the 1929 car license (No. 64668).



*More goofing around*

There was still plenty of snow and cold weather ahead; but they enjoyed such activities as the Ward Reunion, a dinner and dance, and other socials. In his diary, Ira tells of leaving the children home alone for the first time. He also helped to paint the church house and attended stake conference where Stephen L Richards was the speaker. When the thaw hit in March, water was everywhere, covering many roads to the car's running boards. Ira was called to serve as second counselor in the Sunday School and received words of congratulations and thanks for the things he had done in the ward. As the winter went on, Ira did lots of reading. One special evening he showed the children a book with pictures of Teddy Roosevelt's hunts in Africa. This was the kind of interest he had in the children; he mentions in his diary that this book would be kept for little Buddy (Myron) when he was older. He also mentioned that he had to spank Buddy for being naughty and how it hurt him to have to do so. The children were helpful in many ways; Ira noted they chased the cows out of the neighbor's field.

It was a cold late spring in 1929. From his diary, "It being such a late, cold and backward spring has blown my spring work in such a mess I don't know what to do first. I never saw such a late cold spring; hay just barely high enough to founder a cow, nothing growing to speak of, not even my income or hopes." This was May 5, and in the midst of all this, there arrived, the next evening, another baby. They welcomed her with loving arms. Nellie Dayley was there to assist, and Dr. Dean delivered the little girl, whom they named Lorna. Spring finally came, as Ira noted that on May 18, the kids left off their winter underwear, and the next day, Ira took off his underpants. But a few days later, it was snowing and cold again. making it necessary for him to wear his overcoat while irrigating. It was a busy time with the planting, selling lambs and taking care of the chicks they got by mail order. All this was complicated when three of the cows bloated. Ira's father came and helped with plowing. Many days started at 4:00 a.m. with so many things to do.



*Ira, Chauncy, and Earl - about 1929*

In June the first Ford Airplane stopped in Burley. Ira was in town for supplies and joined the large gathering of people who went to see it. He attended a primary conference where the little girls performed. On June 22 he was planting potatoes it was a late spring! The Fourth of July was celebrated turning a freezer of ice cream at Dad and Mother Dayley's and then watching the fireworks. With the haying season in full swing, Vyla mowed the hay (which she did for many years) while Ira raked. He tells about the haying

crew he hired. One man failed to show up; Ernest Dayley stuck his foot with a fork; Leland Fillmore tipped a load of hay over, and Fred Dayley broke the jackson fork! He finally got his father and cousin, Wilson, to help finish. After the hay was in the stack, his father stayed and mowed the ditch banks. All this work was done with teams of horses, as there were no tractors available. The rest of the summer was spent with routine farm work and some non-routine events such as taking



Thelma to the Doctor after she fell over Buddy's wagon; and soon after that, Eunice broke her arm. They had some entertainment watching the circus parade, and then went to Oakley for fruit to can.

Ira still kept close contact with his and Vyla's families, mentioning often in his diary of stopping at one of their homes for a meal and Ira and Vyla frequently feeding family visitors in their home. They were faithful in their church attendance. Ira mentioned in September of attending Stake Conference in which David O. McKay, then an apostle, spoke on "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and else will be added unto you."

It seems that there was always something needing repairs, either the machinery or the old car. It was a common event to have a flat tire to fix while enroute to or from town. Another common event was the regular visits of the landlord, Mr. Fabric. He came to see how the farming was going; this fall he informed Ira that the farm had been sold. So Ira began the search for another place, hoping he could find one to buy. In the meantime, he continued the harvest, cutting the grain and shocking it (putting several stocks in a bunch and then standing it up to dry out before being threshed). He was especially grateful for the grain crop, as a bad hailstorm had struck and missed his field by only an eight of a mile.

On his thirty-eighth birthday in 1929, Ira went to town to settle up for his grain. He sold 702 bushels at \$1.65 per hundred. He went to the fair and on Sunday, his parents were guests at his birthday dinner. He seemed to always stay busy, either at home or helping others. He tended the children all one night while Vyla sat with a sick neighbor. (She herself was miserable suffering a burned bottom after sitting on the hot oven door.) In November, Ira worked some ground for Mr. Proudfit in return for labor in the grain harvest. He worked for the Bishop topping beets (by hand) and butchered a lamb which he shared with the parents. During all this time, they had been looking at farms, hoping for one they could buy. The plans did not work out, so they decided to rent a place one mile east and a quarter mile south of Unity. The ward held a farewell social for the Frosts, Wixoms and Browns, who were all leaving the ward. A bearing had burned out in the car and it was not running at that time, so Net and Henry Rasmussen (Vyla's sister and husband) often took them where they needed to go until it was fixed.