

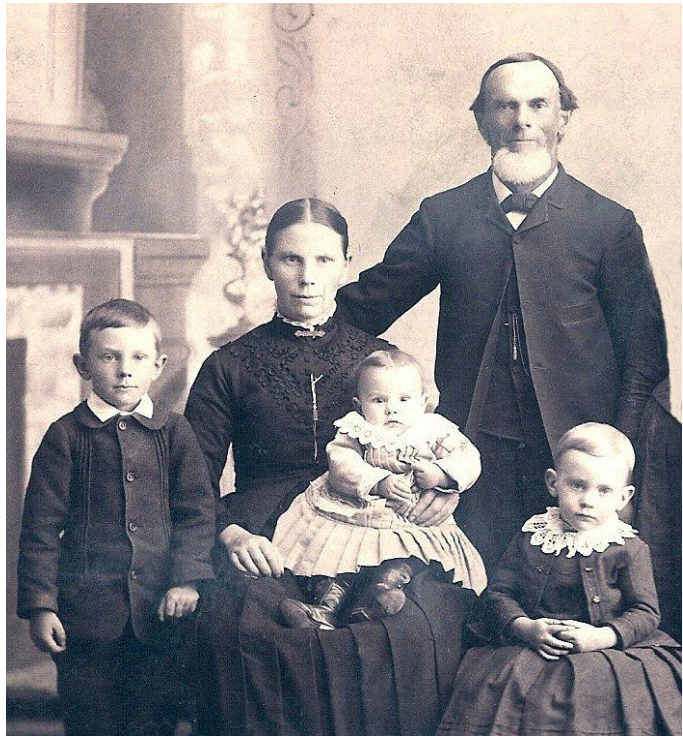
It Is Worth It All

John Alder was born in Schwellbrunn, Appenzell, Switzerland, on July 8, 1827. When he came of age, he married Anna Barbara Alder and they opened a mercantile establishment in their hometown. Evidently, they were doing well.

Then about 1856, Latter-day Saint missionaries came into their town. Anna “was a studious and noble woman and religiously inclined.” She listened to the elders and read their material, including the Book of Mormon. She came to know it was true and wanted to be baptized. However, when she tried to persuade John, he was not interested, nor did he want to be “disgraced with Mormonism.”

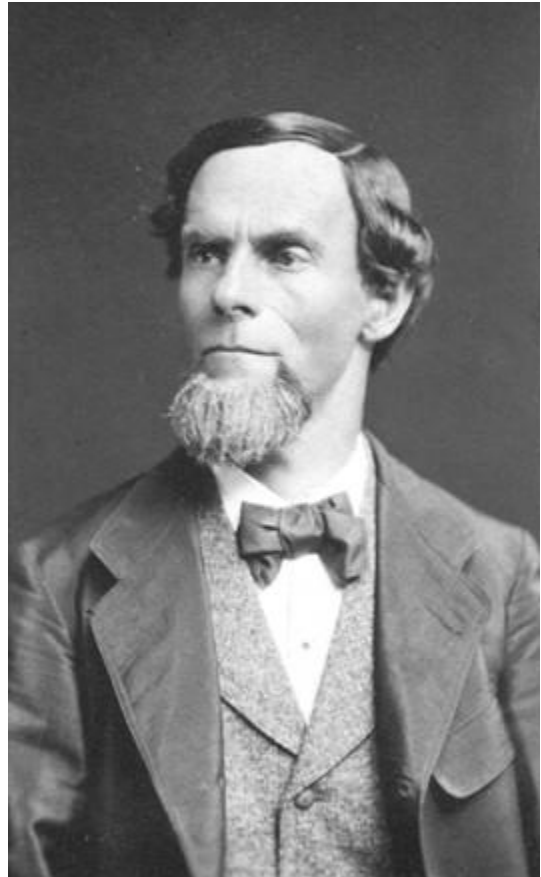
This situation lasted for more than a year until she persuaded him to listen one more time. “He agreed if she would finally let Mormonism alone.” He investigated to find fault, but instead was converted. They were both baptized June 29, 1857.

As soon as their neighbors learned that they had become Latter-day Saints they boycotted their store, refused to buy their goods, and their house was mobbed and stoned. In consequence, they quickly sold out and decided to emigrate to America. However, just east of Salt Lake City, Anna gave birth to a baby girl. The baby did not live and Anna was ill. She lingered for two years before finally passing away July 26, 1862.



John took her death very hard, sinking into the “depths of despair. Without her faith and optimism, everything seemed dark.” He became so ill himself that he was delirious for months. His children were taken away. His livelihood failed—and he could not speak English. It was a very dark and difficult time. Then:

“One night after he was able to sit up a little, he lay there alone thinking of his devoted wife who had always been full of faith and helped him through many trying scenes of life. He thought of all the dear ones left in Switzerland. He had taken his family from their beautiful home, business, and everything they loved to struggle far out in the wilderness to die. But she had persuaded him to leave everything for the Gospel. He wondered if it were really true. Was it worth it all? He thought of her sufferings, the birth and death of the child, and greatest of all, her long illness and death. It seemed to him in his weak condition that he could not carry on and face what was before him alone without her. If only she, the faithful one, had been spared. He wept bitterly in doubt and fear, and then the room seemed to light up and he saw his beloved wife at the foot of his bed. ‘John,’ she said, ‘do not weep so, do not doubt. The Gospel is true, yes, it is worth it all, although it is terrible and dark now. The sun will shine again for you, you will get well and find work you can do. Get a good wife who will help you and mother our children. Don’t despair, my dear, and be brave.’”



And the sun did shine again. By another miracle, John met and married Matilda Sophia Schramm. The family grew. John served as a missionary and then mission leader in Switzerland and Germany. Once back home, John worked in business and then as a temple worker in Manti and St. George. He passed away July 11, 1911, at the age of 84.

Source: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/tree/person/memories/KWJ4-LT9>

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