

# Remembrance of my Early Life

by Ethelwynne Stringham Collett

Written in the year 1957

When my parents moved to Ashley Valley, it was a new country with few people. The Indians were around there near Whiterocks, an Indian Fort. But Father took up some choice land, in the west of the valley near the canyon called now Dry Fork Canyon, and worked very hard with others getting water on the land and with very little to eat. But all the people then were very good to each other and shared their food, which was very scarce. But what I am leading up to is this; along the Ashley Creek and up the canyon grew black native currents, gooseberries; choke cherries, buffalo berries and raspberries, farther up the hills. Cottontail rabbits for meat. Can't you see how Our Heavenly Father provides food for us. May we ever serve him.

We as a family had many a hard time getting food, clothing, etc. But I remember as a child how Mother and Father went once a year to Salt Lake City and brought back clothing that was given them by Heber J. Grants family and another sister of Fathers, Julia S. Wooley. How Mother made over the dresses. (Mother was a fine seamstress, especially at mending. She could mend a tear in a shirt and you could scarcely tell where the tear was then.) They brought us apples in stockings that was given her. (Remember they traveled in wagons then and made the trip in seven days. Now three and half hours.) We each had one apple then Mother bottled the others. We could have the core and peelings and they tasted delicious. My Mother always had the little parties for us and we had a very happy home.

I remember picking up sage-brush after Father had plowed and grubbed the sage-brush, and then Father would burn it at night, and how we children, (girls three) would have a good time dancing and laughing in the fire light.

We lived in a two-roomed, saw-log house and Father and Mother white washed the logs once a year and Mother kept the window and door spotless clean. I remember one time on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Feb. that Mother had a birthday and the neighbors came and surprised her and what a jolly time all had. The men out door pitching horse-shoes and trying out their horses to see who had the best team. I stayed out with the men enjoying every moment. I being eight years old.

On my eighth birthday, Mother invited a number of my playmates to a party for me, but when I awoke on my birthday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, I had the mumps. In those days, no telephone so all the playmates came. Mother had them stay out doors and play games. She served lunch outdoors, too. I sat on the step and watched.

I was called Fathers boy because I helped milk and feed the cows. I remember many a morning I and Father were driving the cows to the pasture as the sun was coming up. Father worked in the winter time as a clerk in the General Store, by James Hacking corner, and I would feed the cows before he got home. Also in the summer I helped Father with the hay. Stomping down the hay as Father threw it on the wagon, and when any of our neighbors came to see us I would hide in the hay until they left. I also

herded cows in the Basin above our home, on a little grey horse, and sometimes I would hear rattlesnakes, which frightened me very much. I also dreamed while herding cows, how I would like to be a poet. I would try but never succeeded I was sorry to say, for I believe if I had tried harder I would have succeeded.

I went fishing with my Father many times and would catch on once in a while. In those days the canal was full of fish. I remember once when the water was turned off so the men could clean the canal, of us girls going up to the canal and getting a big dish pan full of fish that wouldn't have lived after the water had evaporated.

One day (my Mother had a brother by the name of Mr. Trout) Mother said, "Winnie, what will I do? I haven't anything worth while for that man to eat. Run quick and fetch some water from the canal so I can make him some coffee." So I took the bucket and my fish hook and pole and went for water. While I was dipping up the water I threw the hook and line in the water and a large trout caught on. I ran home quickly and Mother often told the tale how I helped her with the dinner by catching a trout for Mr. Trout.

Mother and Father had four girls before they had a son. Girls names were Claire, Winnie, Grace and May. One day she said to us girls, "You all go to the neighbors across the river to Patrick Carrolls and perhaps when you come back you will have a baby brother." That was the longest day for me, but how rejoiced I was when Father came and brought us home and said "You have a darling baby brother." (Philip Crouch Stringham)

When I was six years old Father and Mother already being married in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, heard they should be sealed to each other, so to the Logan Temple they went. They had five children, four girls and a boy. So we were sealed to our parents then. I remember going and staying with My Grandfather Crouch, who lived there and the dear second wife he lived with, gave us some sweet yellow apples. They were the best I ever tasted.

I remember in those days Father planted sugar cane and how we enjoyed the syrup in the fall. We dearly loved pig meat in those days, and I remember how we would put on our plates a big supply of cane syrup, then a lot of pig grease, stir it up, then eat it on our bread.

When I was about 14 years of age, a Prophet of our Church spoke in Stake Conference and told the people if they would stop eating pork meat, that they would not have the dread diseases, like Diptheria, Scarlet Fever, that speach thrilled me thru and thru, so I went home and told my folks I was quitting pork meat. Then some of them said, "Well, if I do anything worse than eating pork meat, I will be alright." I am still obeying that testimony today. The reason the Prophet and Apostle spoke that way was so many children were dying with dread diseases and in those days the pens where the pigs stayed were so very filthy. My family were soon converted and most of them today believe the word of the Apostle.

We had a vineyard in those days. Mother used to go around in a covered wagon and sell grapes. I would go wither her many times. Father told us children or girls, (Mother had eight children then) if we would keep the weeds out of the vineyard that he would buy us an organ. He soon had the organ and I took

two or three lessons it. At the time of this writing I loved music and did a lot in my life in helping others to sign etc.

Father decided he couldn't make the farm pay, so decided to go to Salt Lake City. While I was there (16 yrs. old) I worked at different places. One I will tell about for I believe that Our Heavenly Father protects us if we put our trusts in him. I was kitchen maid in the of Dr. Benidict. I did not stay at night, but the particular time, I decided to stay the night, I could get an early start with the washing. I went to Dr. Benidict's (it was dark) and stooped down to get the key under the stop at the back door when there stood a man, I was so frightened that I stood there for a few minutes and said good evening, then he passes around the house, but I rushed out in the street and home as fast as I could go. The next morning I went to Dr. Benidict's to wash and as I got in the wash room the hired man of Dr. Benedict's came and crushed me in his arms and said, "Why didn't you stay here last night?" "I was going to sleep with you. Other girls working here sleep with me." I was ready to scream when the milkman came in and the wicked man let me go. So you see I was protected, and thanked my Heavenly Father. The other man who said good evening to me was a night-watch man who was paid to watch the home. I never told my Mother or Mrs. Benedict. I cannot tell you why because I do not know myself.

While living in Salt Lake City, we as a family attended the dedication for the Salt Lake Temple. A glorious privilege.

Father decided he couldn't make a living in Salt Lake City, as he liked open spaces. (Father while in Salt Lake City drove mules on the street cars) Now street cars are done away with. So we all went back to Ashley Valley. Mother wouldn't let any of us stay in Salt Lake City. While we were traveling back, we were 30 or 20 miles from home, and the horses went home in the night. Father took off on foot in the morning to get them. We took some cross cuts and missed him. I will never forget the trip, for it was hot summer and no streams of water between. We almost chocked to death. We would lay flat on the ground with pebbles in our mouth, for we heard that would quench your thirst. Then when we got where the water was, Grace said, "Winnie, do not drink too much it might kill you." Mother got worried and soon followed us. All arrived safely that evening. (All, Claire, Winnie, Grace, May, Phil, Susie, Zina, Bry, and Will)

Father soon had fruit trees planted and every year a good vegetable garden and melon patch. One Sunday Claire and I were left home to guard the melon patch, (Father and Mother to Church), as the melons were getting ripe. But alas, two young men cam and almost destroyed the patch. Sister Claire said, "Winnie, you sit on that melon over there. I'll sit on this one,". Two large melons. But the boys pushed us off and took the melons. Alas the boys got a good talking too and scare from Father.

From now on Father raised cattle, then later went to the sheep business.

Fort Thornburg was east of our place joining on to Father land. We girls used to peddle chickens, milk, eggs, and butter to the soldiers. One day we were peddling milk. One of the soldiers spoke up and said, "What color of cow does the milk come from?" I said a red cow. He said, "I want milk from a white cow." (Then they laughed, I'll never forget that.)

We went to school cross some lots to a little log house. I was then in the lower grade. (all grades met together) I was walking slowly home when here came a man with a big whip driving an ox team. On his wagon was a load of logs. He looked at me and said, "If you do not hurry home I'll cut your ears off." I remember how scared I was, and then hurried home.

As we got older we went to school on horseback, with just a cirsingle and a blanket on the horses. We got so we could race horses that way by just holding on to the cirsingle. We attended the academy in Vernal and many nice times.

At our ward we just had the log school house to go to dances in. Father wouldn't let us go alone, but always went with us and brought us home at 10 P.M. Sometimes we would coax him to say longer.

As Claire grew older, she had the privilege to go to B.Y.U. in Provo. I remember Mother sent Claire a dollar in a letter but Claire received that letter long after she was married from the dead letter office. Grace, May and I attended L.D.S. college and University of Utah in Salt Lake City. We would stay all winter then go home in the summer. I worked out one summer and earned enough money to buy my three small brothers suits of clothes, Bry, Will, and Ray, then came home and found I had a baby sister who was nine months old, Beatrice. Father said every time Mother had a child, that that one was the sweetest of all. So you see Bea was the sweetest. Carrie Claire, Ethelwyne, Grace, Mary Fontello, Phillip Crouch, Susan, Zina Roxanna, Briant, Gertrude, William Sterling, Irving Ray and Beatrice. Twelve children of the Mother's.

While living in Salt Lake going to L.D.S. College, I worked for my room and board. Then Saturday worked for others for 10 cents per hour. Then one winter and summer I worked out by the week and got \$2.50 per week. While in Salt Lake City, the Uintah Stake Sunday School called me to take a Sunday School Kindergarten course, given at night, so I took that. Then gave it back to the Sunday School when I went home. I then visited the different wards in Uintah Stake, and was a kindergarten teaching in Maeser Ward for a good many yours. I enjoyed the word very much. Also I was called by the Uintah Stake to take a night missionary course. There we were taught how to visit and present the Gospel Truths to the people of the world and studied the bible so we could turn to different passages. I remember will the first night Benjamin Godhand has the teacher and he look right at me and said, "Sister, Winnie Stringham, will you open the meeting by prayer?" The room was full of men and women much older than I. I leave you to guess how frightened I was. I enjoyed the class very much for Bro Godhand was a very good teacher. Being educated as a minister before he joined the Church.

I sang in the Tabernacle Choir. Bro. Evan Stephans was the choir leader.

After I was married to Sylvanus Collett, on January 20, 1904, he was called to be Forest Supervision of the Dixie Forest at St. George, Utah. (He was the first Supervisor)

I was the stepmother of four children, Wiley, Orin, Alice, and Bryon. Be lived then in Naples Ward, Uintah Stake. Sylvanus went first to St. George, I followed with three of the children Wiley being at Prove, at the B.Y.U. in school. I was very ill during the winter but Bro. Cannon, President of the St. George Temple, was passing our home one day, and said, "Sister Collett, if you will come to the Temple,

you will get well quicker.” So I went see After that and provide it to be true, for I speedily recovered. I worked four days in the Temple for most of the two years we were there. Vene, worked sometimes also. We returned after two years of Service. Years later we had a child or Boy we named Claude. He lived three months and passes away. My heart was sare sad.

I was called to take a Primary teacher course, which lasted six weeks. (I stayed with Pres. Heber J. Grant’s Family) the course consisted of folks dances, basket weaving, sewing, teaching truths, cooking, etc. I gave it back to the Uintah Stake Primaries. We then danced in Jake Workman’s Hall. I enjoyed the course very much.

Since then so many things have happened. We had a happy married life, and had four more children, Howard Samuel, Edna, Edith, and Carl Stringham. Sylvanus was a good husband and father, But he took the dread disease asthma, and died on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1932.

I then struggled along and took my two children, Edith and Carl to Provo to school. (Edna being in New York in the Mission Home with Don B. Colton and family) Then during the Second World War, I stayed in Salt Lake City with Edna, she was then married, I worked in the Temple often, and one time nursed President Grant’s wife, Aunt Augusta, Then later on went to California where Howard and family lived and still later on with Edith to be with her when her first baby was born.

I went to Mesa, Arizona for six winters. Most of the time working in the Mesa Temple. Howard and Edith were living there with their families. They being very good to me. I lived with Mrs. Martha Merriell, Lavina Covington, Mrs. Marion Turley and Mrs. Vesto Freestone for two years. I spent six months in Vernal and six months in Arizona.

I am not bragging, but I have been a Stake Primary President, Stake Primary Counselor, Stake Chorister, Councilor in Maeser Primary and boy Trail-Builder teacher for years in the Primary at Maeser. Chorister in Relief Society, President of Relief Society, Secretary of Relief Society, President of M.J.A. in Maeser and class leader. Worked in Stake Sunday School a Kindergarten teacher, Relief Society teacher and class leader. I taught a religion class when it first came out in the Maeser School. Xhaiwarwe in Naples War, Sunday School and Ward Chorister. 12 years chorister in Maeser Sunday School. Taught boys harmonica band in Marsers and M.J.A. girls band. I taught some boys in Naples singing, and called Naples Ward Boys Singing Class. Reeves Bird and Mina Hodskensin were my helpers. No I am still working in the Temple at Mesa, Arizona. “How thankful for all my Blessing” (Also was Stake Relief Society Secretary, worked eight years in the Mesa Temple and at St. George. In 1961 was block Relief Society Teacher)

I helped my husband Sylvanus Collett raise and tend his four children left mother less, namely Wiley Sylvanus, Orin, Byron Sylvester and Alice, now Snow. All are married and have nice families of their own and are Latter-Day Saints.

We had our children that lived, of which I am proud and thankful. I was married eight years before I had a family. When our son Claude Stringham was born, he lived three months and passed away, a lovely child. Then two and one half years later Howard was born, Edna, Edith, and Carl. All are married now

and have lovely families. They are trying to do their part and be faithful in the Church. All are very good to me and I thank my Heavenly Father for my family daily. (This was written in the year 1957)

Ethelwyne Stringham Collett died July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1962 at her home in Maeser, Utah. She lacked a few days of being 86 years old. She was buried on July 12<sup>th</sup> at Vernal Memorial Cemetary. She has 21 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren as of July 1963.

#### A Word of Appreciation for a Very Worthy Woman

By. H. L. Reid

She had the glory of age  
The wisdom of a sage,  
A personality pleasing and fair.  
She was given the call  
That will come to us all  
To answer for duty over there  
As mortal below  
We don't always know,  
Where the Masters last call will be  
But thanks now be given  
To the God of Heaven  
For our faith in Eternity.  
And thanks let us give  
Because she did live  
So wholesome, so clean, and so pure  
With bright honor claimed  
That soul that's unstained  
Will be crowned at Heaven's door.  
At the trumpet's blast  
The life that has passes  
Will arise with her glory reflected  
And onward she'll climb  
Through eternities time  
With the beautiful soul resurrected.