

BIOGRAPHY OF SYLVANUS COLLETT

At Smithfield, Cache County, Utah, in the winter of 1866, an exciting event took place on the 15th day of December - twins were born to Reuben and Elthura Merrill Collett. Sylvanus arrived one and one half hours after his brother, Sylvester Daniel, making him their fourth child. The first child, Phoebe Teresa, born 24 July 1862, had died at six months (16 January 1863), but Reuben Samuel (26 May 1864) was there to welcome his brothers. Almost immediately the two were nicknamed and were called "Vean" and "Vest" for the rest of their lives, while Reuben Samuel answered to "R.S."

Shortly after the birth of the twins, Reuben Collett their father suffered a personal tragedy in the loss of his right arm just below the elbow, in a threshing accident. This made him depend on his boys for help while they were young.

Julia Ann was born 22 February 1869. Sorrow filled the family to discover she was deaf. This affliction seemed to make them love her even more. Then came Adelbert Teancum on 3 November 1872.

In 1873 the Collett family moved to Nounan, Idaho, where Reuben built their first home. The winter there was very severe, with snow five feet deep on the level. Food got so low that several men made sleds with long handles and traveled with these, on snow shoes, to Cache Valley where they picked up food and hauled it back over the crusted snow.

Reuben and family moved, in 1874, to Bennington, about twenty miles from Nounan and five miles north of Montpelier, Idaho. There on 6 June 1875, Charles Merrill was born, also Vean was baptized on 4 August 1875, by A. P. Scrow and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints, by Thomas Heaps.

Reuben got the urge to move again - this time it was to Cokeville, Wyoming. The family found a coal mine and built a coke oven to process the coal - therefore the name, Cokeville. Reuben's brother Sylvanus and John Boren had gone there earlier so were the first white settlers. The weather in the valley of Cokeville, about forty miles long and five miles wide, was very cold and there was a lot of snow, but plenty of wild game and Indians.

Reuben was a good friend of the Indians and learned four of their languages. At Cokeville he had an Indian Trading Post, always being fair in his dealings with them. In fact, he got along so well with the Indians that he was called to help settle many new towns in the West. The few white people gave a "pow-wow" for the Indians. Many deer were killed for a real feast. The twins, Vest and Vean, really enjoyed themselves. They liked the Indians and the Indians liked them, especially Vean. The Indians were fond of sports, especially horse racing and sports to do with dogs.

Vean was a great hand to go to bed early in the evening and get up early in the morning, while Vest was just the opposite. This led to many arguments because there were a lot of chores to be done early in the morning, such as feeding the pigs, chickens and milking the cows. One morning, in the winter, Vean was dressed ready to do the chores and Vest was behind the big heating stove with nothing on but a short undershirt. A flat iron was heating on the stove. Vean told Vest to hurry and get dressed to help or he would brand him with the flat iron. Vest stuck out his hip and said, "Brand!" so Vean touched it with the iron, leaving a brown mark which stayed there all his lifetime.

Another time the twins were cutting willows for the kitchen stove. Vean was using a sharp ax, while Vest fed the willows over the block. Vest kept putting his fingers where Vean wanted to cut, therefore causing the length to be too short. At last Vean told him that he would cut off his fingers if he did it again. Vest pushed his finger up farther the next time so Vean cut it off to the second joint. Vean never tried to bluff anyone. He was always a man of his word.

From Cokeville, the Collett family moved to Circleville and then to Escalante, Garfield County, Utah. Reuben bought a home there and fixed up the front room for a store and Post Office. He also bought sheep and cattle, as there was a good summer range and they could winter on the desert southeast of town.

Reuben was chosen first counselor to Bishop Andrew P. Schow. He and the Bishop scouted eighty miles along the Colorado River for a possible crossing and for making a wagon road, at the time of the "Hole-in-the-Rock" expedition which was making its way to Bluff, San Juan County, Utah. Reuben was also Deputy Sheriff of Escalante.

On the 11th day of January, 1878, a daughter Princetta was

born. The house was small, so four of the boys slept in the same room. One night Vean went "skylarking" after the rest were asleep. When he came home, Vest jumped straddle of the trunk and started yelling, "Hold him!" and had to be awakened. The twins enjoyed school and had a lot of fun. There were many new cliffs and caves for them to explore. They both liked to participate in all kinds of sports.

When the twins were fourteen years old, in the month of April, 1881, the family left Escalante for Maricopa County, Arizona. Father Reuben took two hundred head of cattle, one hundred horses, three wagons and \$1000 in cash. R. S., Vean and Vest were the cowboys who drove the cattle for six months through the desert, Indian-infested land.

The water was so scarce that they had to keep a sharp lookout for water signs made by the Indians. The water holes were often scum-covered and filled with wigglers. It had to be strained through cloth and then boiled before it could be used. Many times the young boys worked all day and most of the night to get their stock watered. It was often necessary to dip the water out of the sand rock pockets with a bucket and rope, then pour it into shallower holes for them to drink. The country was covered with juniper and piñon so there was very little feed. This made it difficult to keep the cattle together and going in the right direction. They would go crazy from thirst, making it very dangerous for the boys, but, so far, not one animal had been lost.

The country was rough and there were no roads. Many times they had to lower the wagons down over the steep sandstone slopes with ropes and saddle horses. The cattle and horses swam the Colorado River at Lee's Ferry. The river was wide with a swift current in the middle and quicksand near the banks. If crossed rapidly, it was safe, but a slow mule stopped. Vean put a rope around the mule's neck and hitched it to a team horse. The mule was saved but came out badly stretched. The family crossed in a skiff and the wagons were ferried, being roughblocked by putting a log chain around the ferry and then around the axle of the wagon. They landed in a valley of good feed so they stayed there for several days.

When they were ready to leave the verdant valley, they latched forty-gallon water barrels on each side of the wagons, for cooking and drinking. Their route took them through both the Navajo and Apache Reservations. The latter tribe was on

the warpath so they were advised to go around. This changed the route they had planned to take.

One day the water sign was missed so the family traveled two days and one night without water. The cattle went crazy. One cow butted Vean to the edge of a cliff, but he managed to dodge her and she plunged down the hill to her death. One night seventeen head got away, so R. S. was sent after them. He did not return that night. The next day father Reuben went to look for him - neither returned that night. About sundown an Indian came running into camp. He had been shot through the arm. Elthura dressed it for him and asked him to stay for the night. She gave him the bed between the fourteen year-old twins. The Indian stayed the night but was gone before daybreak. The next day the Indian met Reuben and told him that his squaw had dressed his arm and that he had slept there. Reuben and R.S. returned the third day with all of the lost cattle.

Another time the twins and R.S. were sent out after stray cattle, taking a pack horse to carry their bedding and food. R.S. built a fire so the boys could always tell where the camp was. One night they had their supper and then started arguing about who was going to sleep on the outside of the bed. Each claimed he was the oldest and should sleep in that position. While they were arguing, R.S. kicked the fire against a big cactus tree and it flared up. The coyotes began to howl and this scared the twins. Now a bigger argument started as to who was the younger and should sleep in the middle.

The family camped in Mancos Valley for three weeks. It was a beautiful place, especially after spending so much time in the desert. There was plenty of feed and water for the stock. The ranch where they stayed had just been raided by Indians, so R.S., Vean and Vest spent the three weeks hunting for the horses that had been stolen.

Before breaking camp Reuben sold seventeen head of steers, one of them being a yearling. This young steer didn't like being separated from the rest of the herd and kept coming back to camp. Vean was grinding an ax while Charles turned the grinding stone. The steer started chasing the boys. Vean got away but the steer bunted Charles. He laid on his back with a bucket over his head kicking and yelling. R.S. rescued him. The whole wagon shook when he got in - he was that scared.

The family moved on. One evening they found water in a deep ravine, so the boys spent the night drawing up water and pour-

ing it into shallow rock basins for the cattle to drink. Charles, who was always trailing away, walked up into the hills and eventually got lost. He thought the family camp was a camp of Indians, so he didn't dare move. He howled until he was rescued.

After a few more weary weeks, the family arrived at Lehi (Mesa), Arizona. They stayed for a while with the Marsh Hunt family. While living at Lehi, there were three more children born to Reuben and Elthura. Orrin was born 16 July 1882 and died 22 December 1883; Roseltha May, 27 April 1884, and Clarence James, 5 May 1886. Lehi was their home for five years.

In 1883 R.S. left for a mission to England. One experience he had while there was when he and his companion, S. R. Bennion were having a meeting on a vacant corner near a church. After singing a hymn, the church dismissed and the minister led his congregation to the elders. The people did not come to listen - they came to trample the elders by going around and around and around them, trying to knock them over. R.S. was ready to grab the minister when he (R.S.) was suddenly carried away in a vision. In this vision he saw the punishment the minister was going to receive. When he came to the crowd was gone. He said he couldn't bear to harm the minister because he knew how he would have to suffer.

R.S. returned to Salt Lake City in 1886. Almost immediately, he was called to Vernal, Uintah County, Utah to serve as first counselor to Samuel Reuben Bennion, in the first organization of the Uintah Stake. The following was taken from the Deseret News of April 1887:

The saints in Ashley Valley were organized as the Uintah Stake by Apostle Henry Smith and John W. Taylor, with Samuel R. Bennion and Reuben S. Collett and James Hacking as counselors.

R.S. wrote to his father, Reuben, about what a wonderful cattle-horse country Uintah Basin was, so he decided to move once again. The family left in October 1886. This was a sad mistake because Reuben had begun to get rich and when he moved he never did as well again.

Vean had married Sarah Elizabeth Simkins, a daughter of Hezekiah and Ann Darling Wiley Simkins of Lehi, on 2 June 1886. When they heard about Ashley Valley, they decided to go along. Before they started, the families of two of Reuben's sisters

joined them for the trip back to Escalante and Vernal. They were Mary Ann Collett Wamsley and Rhoda Collett Eldridge. They moved this time with four wagons, four horses to each wagon, plus about one hundred and fifty head of loose horses, following most of the old trail they had traveled going to Arizona. It had been well traveled by now so they were able to go much faster and with less hardship.

By the time they reached Cannonville, Utah, a terrible blizzard set in and lasted several days. The Bishop of Cannonville let the travelers stay in the church house. There was a large stove which kept the building warm and on which they could do their cooking. When the storm cleared, they started up Posly Canyon to Escalante. The canyon was narrow with cliffs three hundred feet straight up on each side. During the journey through the canyon the river had to be crossed twenty-nine times. The snow blew off the cliffs constantly. The family would select a large bushy pine tree, tie three wagon covers end to end and stretch them around the tree. This made a sheltered room large enough for all of them.

After they arrived in Escalante, December 1886, the family found two vacant ranch houses three miles apart, which were secured for winter use. Each had a large fireplace and an abundance of pitch-dry pine for fuel.

The Wamsley family occupied one house, Vean and Sarah lived in a tent nearby. One night a severe wind blew the tent down and really frightened them - so they moved into town. Sarah got a job teaching school. Brother Adelbert boarded with them and attended school. The other boys scouted the hills and explored the caves. One cave they found was large enough to hold one hundred head of cattle, another five hundred bushels of corn. In a side canyon between the caves were many beautifully painted crockeryware dishes, cups and saucers.

On 30 March 1887, Vest left Escalante to fill a mission in Old Mexico. He served twenty-five months and six days. The Elders had a conference in Mexico City, on 28 April 1889, and later met at the cemetery to look at it. It is considered to be one of the most beautiful in the world. After looking around the grounds, they went to one corner and sat down under a little orange tree. Vest said, "Boys, bury me under this tree." One of the elders said, "You'll be leaving for home in three days." Vest answered, "I'm not going home." One week from that day, on the 5th of May, they buried him under that tree. His folks never did find out what caused his death.

After school was out in the spring of 1887, the family, including Vean and Sarah, and the Wamsleys, started for Vernal. The others had left before this time. In Rabbit Valley they stopped at Blackburn's Ranch to get a herd of cows, which had been bargained for ahead of time.

One day a cloudburst came from the northwest. Reuben ordered all of the wagons to get on the highest ground and the stock to be driven into the circle. The teams of horses were tied to the wagons. It was a hard job to hold the stock in the circle. When the storm was over there was six inches of hail on the ground. In only one half hour there was two feet of water on the flats and eight feet in the washes. When the water settled into the ground, the wagons moved on. Ten miles farther on they saw a large forest where the storm had swept clean about a one half mile swath. All vegetation had been washed away. That night the weather was beautiful, so with a few large fires the family was cheered.

They moved on to Vernal, Uintah Basin, arriving 20 August 1887. On 17 September 1888, another boy, George, was added to the family of Reuben and Elthura. Vean and Sarah leased a farm in Mill Ward (Maeser) known today as the Andrew Vernon home. On 8 May 1888, their first child, a son, Wiley was born. Sarah had to do the chores and leave Wiley in the house, so she got a large black dog to guard him. One night an Indian came to the house and the dog protected the baby by not letting the Indian come in.

While living in Maeser, in the fall of 1887, Vean was chosen president of the YMMIA and Sarah president of the YLMIA. They served in these positions for two years. On 11 January 1888, Vean was ordained an Elder by Charles Glines. They traveled to Cache Valley by horse and buggy in September of 1889 to receive their endowments in the Logan Temple.

In the late fall, Vean butchered a large pig and left it hanging in a tree overnight. Early the next morning, Sarah woke Vean to tell him she had dreamed that a certain man, who lived a mile from them, had stolen the pig. Vean got up to do his chores and saw the pig was gone, so he mounted his horse and rode to the man's place. Vean told him to bring the pig back by 10 A.M. or he'd have the sheriff come and get him. An hour later the man came with the pig. Vean helped him put it back near the house and offered to give him part of the meat. The man refused the meat, but from that time on Vean and he became the best of friends.

Early in the spring of 1891, Vean, Sarah and Wiley traveled to Lehi (Mesa), Arizona to visit Sarah's family. This was the last time she saw her parents. A short time after they arrived, 5 June 1891, their daughter Annie Elthura was born. They later traveled back to Vernal where Vean purchased a forty acre farm in Naples Ward, two miles from his father's home.

A traveling photographer was coming to town so the Colletts decided to have a family picture taken. Vean looked so sad in this picture and he told the reason why. On that day Vean had no work, no money and no food. As they walked to have their picture taken, Vean found a purse containing \$2.50. He bought \$2.00 worth of groceries, leaving the purse and the rest of the money with the storekeeper. If the owner was found he promised to replace the money he had taken, but no ever claimed it.

Vean worked and maintained three teams of horses, hauling freight from Price for the merchants of Vernal. Price is located on the D. and R. G. Railroad, one hundred and twenty miles southwest of Vernal. It took twelve to fourteen days to make the round trip with five to six tons of freight. He received \$1.00 per one hundred pounds. Of this, he took sixty percent in trade from the stores.

Vean served as Sunday School Superintendent of Naples Ward for two years, 1892-94, and was later appointed second counselor to Bishop James Shaffer.

Vean and Charles attended the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple by President Wilford Woodruff, 5 April 1893. At this dedication President Woodruff said, "There are present on the stand with us Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, the Pratt brothers and many others --" After they left the meeting and were walking down South Temple, they heard a noise above them. Charles jumped out of the way but Vean was cut on the head by a falling brick.

On 27 June 1893, diphtheria struck, taking the life of their young daughter, Annie, age two years. Vean was gone when this happened, but Charles was staying at the home to help Sarah with chores. The child was buried quickly because of the contagiousness of the disease, so her father was not able to be there.

Sarah had learned tailoring from her grandfather. She made men's suits as well as women's dresses. One neighbor, James Gardner, had several daughters. One at a time they would stay at the

Collett home, when Vean was gone, to help Sarah in exchange for sewing lessons. One daughter, Laura Gardner Evans, told this story in 1950.

A son, Orin, was born 3 October 1893. In the same year a man named Willie came to Vernal and took up claims of phosphate in the valley. He hired Vean as his foreman and other men to work on the assessment each fall. Charles worked there too and also ran the farm for his father.

In 1895-96, R.S., Sterling Colton and a man named Garvis bought the Dyer Strip on Taylor Mountain. It was copper chloride of a high grade. The three men made \$30,000 on this place. They hired Vean as foreman and Sarah hired Princetta to help feed and board the men.

One day Vean, Charles and Bob Green went hunting on Taylor Mountain. Vean killed a deer, then he and Bob went to Island Park. Charles was supposed to drive the team to meet them, but he took the wrong road so Vean and Bob stayed there waiting all night rather cold and hungry.

After the Taylor Mountain claim was worked out, the same three men bought a prospect in Colorado. This time it was a true vein of copper and Vean was made foreman again. A crude smelter was built at Douglas, where much of the rock was removed. The mine shaft and melting pots, as they were called, are still there. Charles nearly lost his life in this mine by cutting a fuse too short and hardly making it out of the hole in time.

Many stories were told of these summers spent at Douglas Mountain. Here are two of them, about meeting the "wild bunch." As they were farmers by nature, they planted a garden and grain field. One day, while Vean was at work, Sarah (who was five feet four, weighing under a hundred pounds) saw three horses in the grain. Taking her broom, she ran them out of the field. Three men appeared and one said, "I am Tracy and those are our horses." Sarah replied, "This is our grain field. Put your horses some place else. If you are hungry, my husband will be home at six o'clock and you can come and eat." This they did. One day some time later, the men appeared at the Collett home and brought Sarah a beautiful set of dishes - service for twelve (some pieces are still used today). They explained that it was the first time they had been made to "toe the mark" and it was by a tiny woman with a broom.

One fall the snow came early and it was snowing hard when a man knocked at the door asking for shelter. The next morning it was still storming, he told Vean, "I can't stay here any longer, they are after me. When the snow is gone in the spring, you go to a certain place and there is a fallen tree with notches on it. Each notch means a step in the direction the tree points. There you will find two graves, a large one and a small one. In the large one is a man and in the small one is the sleeve of his buckskin jacket full of money." He left and Vean thought it was a good time to go, as the snow was still coming down. He never returned, but often wondered if he had gone looking if he could have found the spot.

Vean was acquainted with the outlaw Butch Cassidy. Butch's name was really George Parker. One day, while at the Bromide Mine at Brown's Park, he was talking to the man called Butch Cassidy. He asked Vean, "Where have I seen you before?" Vean answered, "I don't know, but we have met." In reminiscing they found out that they had played together in Circle Valley as boys.

During the summers, 1896 - 1899, Vean rented his farm to his brother Dell (Adelbert) and went to northwest Colorado, Brown's Park, to be superintendent of the Bromide Mining Company, which was owned by R.S., Sterling Collett and others. The mine produced rich copper ore, with some silver and zinc, which was hauled by team one hundred miles to Rock Springs, Wyoming. At Rock Springs it was loaded on the U.P. Railroad and shipped to smelters in Utah. The snow was so deep in the winter months that the mine had to shut down, so Vean would return to Vernal until the next spring. After three years of operation, the vein faded and was never found again, so the mine was abandoned. The mine shaft and the melting pots they used are still there.

Mr. Jarvie ran the store and ferry at Rock Port on Green River, in the lower end of Brown's Park. Two men robbed, beat and shot him, then put his body in a boat and turned it loose down the river. Two of his sons chased the murderers for three months, but finally gave up in San Francisco. Mr. Jarvie was a very good friend of Vean. He was a kind man who helped people and hurt no one. There they also became good friends of the Thompson family. "Auntie" Thompson was a mid wife, in Vernal, for many years. Later she cared for Vean's second wife, Winnie, when her babies were born.

Vean received his Patriarchal Blessing, 26 June 1892, from Jeremiah Hatch. The same year and for four more years, 1892-1896, Vean was deputy sheriff under William Priest. One day Vean and Bishop Shaffer followed the tracks of a band of horses that had

been stolen from them and their neighbors. Because of the rain, when they got to Green River they couldn't tell if the outlaws had crossed or not. The river was too high and dangerous to cross with a horse, so Vean stripped off his clothes and swam over in his excellent style. On the opposite side of the river, a large tree had fallen and the top of it was in the water. Vean swam to the tree and climbed on it. After looking around, he returned to where Bishop Shaffer was waiting. They gave up the chase and went back to their home. Several days later, the leader of the outlaws, Tracy, was caught and brought to the Vernal jail. Vean visited him and Tracy said, "Vean, never do that trick again you did the other day at Green River. I was hiding under that tree with a rifle and if you had discovered me, I would have had to kill you."

Vean was once in a school house built on the border of two states, while the law was trying to get a man. The man stood on the other side of the room, so the sheriff couldn't arrest him because he was in another state.

Vean returned to his farm and began freighting again. He was coming home from Price with a load of freight and camped on the Duchesne River near Myton, for the night. A man and his family came to the camp late that night, saying they were on their way to Vernal. They had a sick horse so Vean got out of bed, made them comfortable and doctored the horse. Next morning it was dead, so Vean gave them his best horse. When he got home and told Sarah the story, she was naturally a little upset because they did not have enough money to buy another one.

Two days later the man came into Vernal leading the horse. He inquired around town and found out it belonged to Vean Collett. Several years later, Orin went to this man, Heber Langston, to borrow money. Because Orin was the son of Vean, the man wrote him a large check and told him if he ever needed more to come back.

One day Vean and Sarah were driving over Diamond Mountain with a sick child. It was late so they camped. Soon Jessie Knight rode in and when he heard about the sick child, he insisted on driving Sarah and the child to the doctor in Vernal, which saved its life. Vean never did see Mr. Knight again to thank him. Jessie Knight told him that the Lord had given him his wealth to use for his fellowmen.

A son, Byron, was born on 28 January 1902. Due to poor

medical care, Sarah never recovered, passing away 27 Febraury 1902. The Vernal Express printed the following concerning her death:

Mrs. Sylvanus Collett of Naples, died at her home Wednesday morning after a severe illness of a month's duration. On the 28th day of January, she gave birth to a baby boy and apparently was recovering. A little medical attention was needed but could not be secured soon enough and the demise of one of the most useful and prominent women of Naples Ward was the result. Mrs. Collett was formerly Miss Sarah Simkins, and was born in Beaver City, Utah, 37 years ago. The family came to the valley in 1887. They lived in Naples Ward for several years and during that time Mrs. Collett's attention and energy were largely devoted to public work, for which she was ably suited. Five of the Ward institutions have received her attention, being at the head of most of them. Mrs. Collett was a model woman both at home and abroad. She was in every sense a help to her husband and a wise mother. The cause of her death might have been prevented, but after the trouble was discovered, nothing was left undone, but in spite of it all, death claimed her. The baby is strong and healthy. The funeral will be held in the ward house on Sunday at one o'clock.

Alice, born 11 October 1897, was just a young girl, but she recalls the incident of her father carrying her across the field to Uncle Dell's. He stopped at the middle ditch, sat down, held Alice close and then wept. She thinks this must have been at the time of her mother's death.

After Sarah's death a man told Vean he had a gift for her. Vean explained that she had died. The man said Sarah had once saved his life, so he gave the gift to Vean providing he would always keep it. The gift was a piece of gold, which Vean had made into a tie pin. His grandson Vene Collett now has this pin.

Vean sold his freight teams and wagon to pay for the doctor and funeral expenses, then he went to live with his parents, Reuben and Elthura.

In May 1902, Vean was appointed head ranger of the Ashley District of Wasatch National Forest, with Bert Ray and Jack Turnbow as rangers working under him. Six rangers, one supervisor,

and three office workers took care of the whole forest, then extending from Heber to the Colorado state line. The children would be frightened of him, when he came home, because he would have a week's growth of whiskers and a black face from fighting fires.

On 28 November 1903, Vean became engaged to Ethelwynne (Winnie) Stringham and 20 January 1904, they were married in the Salt Lake Temple by John R. Winder. They soon moved into the home in Naples and the children became acquainted with their new mother whom they called "Aunt Winnie."

Aunt Winnie told the story of how Vean came courting to her house and she wondered whether he came to see her sisters Grace and Mae or herself. He did choose Winnie and he told her that before Sarah died she told him to choose a good girl like Grace, Winnie or Mary Merrill.

Vean was a very good husband and father. He was especially kind to women, children and elderly people. He was a large man six feet tall, weighing one hundred eighty pounds, with a forty inch chest. His eyes were brown but seemed to change color with what he wore. His hair was a dark brown. He had very white skin which did not tan.

In August 1904, they bought their first washing machine. The crops were good that year so they were also able to buy an organ, a horse named Fan and a cow named Brin. Their tithing that year was twenty-one pounds of butter, three chickens, eleven dozen eggs, one-half bushel tomatoes and three bushels of potatoes. The value came to \$30.00.

Vean's sister Julia took care of Byron from the time he was one month old. Even though she was deaf, she knew when he cried. When Vean and Winnie were married he stayed on with her until she became engaged to be married to William Postma. He was three years old when he came to live with his new mother.

On 27 September 1905, Vean was transferred to St. George, Utah to become the first supervisor of the Dixie National Forest. The family traveled to Watson by stage, then by train to Modena and on to St. George in a white-topped buggy where Vean met them. Byron said his first memory of his father was seeing him standing on the bank of a swollen stream guiding the stage across. They made their home in St. George for two years and were able to do a lot of temple work. The children were baptized for the dead and the parents performed endowments. During this time Wiley went to

Provo to attend the BYU. One of his classes was studying to be a blacksmith. Vean and Winnie attended weekly lectures on "The Life of Christ." The home in St. George had no electricity, no refrigeration and no ice, so they had to get ice sixty miles away at Pine Valley for a treat of ice cream.

The forest service job only paid \$85.00 per month which was not enough to pay rent, buy food for the family and feed for his horses, so Vean resigned and returned to Vernal.

Here Vean was ordained a Home Missionary, 17 November 1907, by Rudger Clawson. In the fall of 1908, Vean ran for sheriff of Uintah County on the Republican ticket, but lost to Richard Pope of Vernal by a few votes. He was ordained a High Priest by Anthon W. Evans, 22 August 1908.

The family moved back to Naples. Once they all went to a Christmas Eve Party at the ward and when they came home, their father had surprised them by bringing a tree from the mountain on his horse. That was their first Christmas tree. He was very active in the Naples Ward as a Sunday School, MIA and Priesthood teacher, Also he was a Stake Missionary and managed the church dance hall. He worked for the county roads but always took time to raise a big garden with plenty of vegetables.

People loved and trusted him. Orin was in the mountains when he came to a tent and woke the man to see if he could stay until morning. The man asked Orin his name and when Orin said he was a Collett, the man told how once Vean saved his life. He told Orin that he was welcome to stay and use anything he had.

In the spring of 1909, Vean sold his Naples home and bought the Iverson place on the Lapoint road. This home was in Maeser in the northwest part of the valley. The soil and water were much better there. In 1910 electricity was brought into the home and in 1911 a telephone was installed. After one year he bought the Moore place located about two miles east. The house was better and it was closer for the children to go to school. They had a happy home as the children always cooperated about doing chores.

It was in this home that four of their children were born. Claude Stringham, 29 October 1911, died 7 February 1912; Howard Samuel, 11 July 1914 (married Fern Walkup, 17 August 1935); Edna, 2 April 1916 (married Adrian Archie Rains, 13 June 1943); Edith, 1 July 1918 (married Clarence Joseph Hatch, 3 April 1946).

In the spring of 1912, Vean was appointed supervisor of State Highway 40, in Uintah County. He helped build the road from Roosevelt to the Colorado state line. The bridge abutments at Ashley Creek and Powder Wash are still standing.

Wiley went on a mission to England 2 April 1912. After his return on 3 June 1914, he was married to Erma America Billings in the Salt Lake Temple, by Adair Madison.

Vean was good to animals. One day he and Francis Caldwell needed hay and went to Lapoint to get it. As the day got warmer, the roads began to thaw, making deep mud, and it was hard to pull the loads. Vean suggested to hook all of the horses to one load and to leave the other there and come later to get it. Francis had one old horse and a large young mare, but made them pull the whole load all of the way which was awfully hard on the horses. Vean said he would never be guilty of treating animals like that. He often commented how sorry he felt for that old horse. He often hired men and their teams but he would never allow them to abuse their animals.

Vean loved nature. He taught his children the names of different stars. He had them often watch the sun set and the moon rise. Making objects out of the clouds made the trips by horse and buggy seem much shorter. One morning after camping near Big Brush Creek, their father had Alice and Byron climb up a big rock to look over it. There they saw a mother bear and two cubs playing together.

Orin went with his father to the mountain for the summer, and learned to find his way without the aid of a map. This came in handy later in Orin's life because he spent many years working in the mountains of Utah, Wyoming and Colorado. Carl remembers an incident when he and his father went to the cow pasture nearly one mile away from home. Vean told Carl to stop his horse and look. There was a mother skunk with her babies walking single file across the pasture. Alice and Orin kept loitering after school, so their father threatened to whip them. Finally he did but every so gently. When he came back to the house he promised never to do that again and he never did.

Byron and Vean went camping together on a Boy Scout trip. Vean was made supervisor of it and he would always circle back to make sure everyone was coming all right. He was the first leader to take scouts to the high Uintahs for Uintah Stake.

The boys did the farming because Vean worked away from home. Usually there was no work done on Sundays. One Sunday, however, there was so much sickness that church was not held. Vean told Byron it wouldn't hurt to rake Alley Anderson's field because he was sick, which they did. Later Alley became active in the church, was President of the Elder's Quorum, ordained Byron and was always a good friend to Vean. Vean served as first counselor to Thomas Bingham in the Maeser Sunday School during 1916. At this time everything started getting higher priced because of World War I.

On 30 September 1914, Orin married Essie Pearl Reynolds in the Salt Lake Temple and Alice married Newell LeVell Snow, 29 May 1918 in the same temple.

During 1918 Spanish flu was epidemic all over the U.S. Public buildings were closed and people wore masks even when they were in town. On 11 November 1918 peace was declared and on the 30th Vean went to work near Price to help build two bridges. He was gone three months.

In 1919, Vean sold his two homes and bought the William Vernon place east of the Moore place. That same year in November the city water was piped in. From this new home Byron went on a mission to Australia. Nine months later, 10 June 1922, Carl Stringham was born. When he was only four days old, Vean went back to Hill Creek where he and fifty-six men were working on the oil shale filings.

Carl was blessed 2 July 1922 by Don B. Colton. Also, Vean was made Bishop of Maeser Ward, which was a shock to the family because they hadn't even let Winnie know. He was ordained by George Albert Smith. Immediately, Edna was teased by the boys because she was the "bishop's daughter." While he was in this position, tithing was paid with wheat, oats, pigs, eggs, etc., so there was a lot of book work for him to do.

He had about twelve milk cows to take care of night and morning. The cream was separated and sent to Calder's creamery, for which a check was received twice a month.

Vean had a set of dental tools. On Sunday afternoons, parents would bring their children to the house and he would pull their teeth, ever so gently. He always gave them their tooth to take home to put under their pillows.

In 1927, Vean was released as Bishop because of his poor health.

Bryant Stringham, his wife Katie, Vean and Winnie all went to St. George, 10 Feb 1928. Vean remained there to improve his health. Even in September his health was poor and he was not able to do much work because of allergy and asthma.

In 1929, Vean served as head of the building committee for the new Maeser chapel. The ward built this \$110,000 church in ten months. On December 29th it was dedicated, with 954 people present. The chapel was all paid for thirty days after its completion.

This same year, Alice had to have an operation. She wished so much for her father to be with her, but she decided not to tell him so he wouldn't worry. When she arrived at the hospital, there he was, very pale, but ready to give her a blessing.

During the summer of 1931, Vean took five trips. Once to Wiley's, twice to sister Princetta's in Meeker, Colorado, and twice to Salt Lake and Provo. While he was so ill, Jim Fisher took care of their one hundred head of sheep. The cold winter was hard on the sheep and cattle and money was very scarce. Vean was such an honest man, that once when Byron and another man needed a tire fixed before they could go to work, the store owner, Ben Kelly, told Byron just to sign the bill because he knew his father and trusted him.

In the spring of 1932, Byron and his wife Clela (Young) spent a week with Vean and Winnie. Byron did the plowing. This was the first time in years his father hadn't been able to work. The garden was all planted by April 15th.

Vean did not live to see the harvest for he passed away 29 April 1932 of asthma and heart weakness.

After their father's death, the sons wanted to settle the \$100 debt Vean owed to Andrew Vernon for hay. Andrew claimed that Vean owed him nothing and that the deal was just between Vean and himself. Many people said they would give anything if they could have been so cool and able to think of things to do when an emergency arose. They wanted to also have people follow them like they followed Vean.

Vean often commented that he had wanted to be a doctor. He enjoyed visiting and cheering the sick. No matter who was ill in the ward, they always called him, sometimes even before the doctor. Byron went to settle with Dr. Rich for two house calls and also to Mrs. Dillman Swain with payment for use of the hearse. Dr. Rich

refused to charge for the calls or for writing the death certificate. He said too many times to count he had found Vean was at the homes of the sick when he arrived. Mrs. Swain told Byron that his father had ridden so many times in the front of the hearse, that she would be ashamed to charge him for riding in the back and then she cried. Mame Hacking said she wanted to drive Vean to the cemetery but since she couldn't she wanted the honor of taking the men who were carrying him. Byron had borrowed his mother-in-law's car, but he left it and let Mrs. Hacking drive the pallbearers to the cemetery.

Men came to Winnie's home, harrowed and drilled the wheat, oats and barley. They also brought loads of cottonwood for fuel. The family was very sad but they believed in the hand of God.

The Vernal Express had the following article concerning Vean's passing:

PIONEER BISHOP OF MAESER SUCCUMBS FOLLOWING COLD AND ATTACK OF ASTHMA

BISHOP COLLETT SUCCUMBS FRIDAY AFTER USEFUL CAREER

Entire Valley honor splendid life of former bishop and organizer at impressive services held in Maeser Chapel Monday afternoon.

MAESER (special) The whole community was surprised to hear of the death of Bishop Sylvanus Collett at 11 p.m. [29 April 1932] Friday. For several years he had been afflicted with asthma but had felt better lately than for some time. Having been exposed to a severe wind storm recently, he took a severe cold which resulted in his death.

The commodious chapel would not hold the huge crowd of admiring and sympathetic friends who assembled on Monday to pay respect to him and it was necessary to open the folding doors of the amusement hall to accomodate them.

The services, held [1 May 1932] at 1 o'clock p.m., were under the direction of Bishop Lester Bingham. A chorus from the Maeser Choir, directed by Warren S. Jones, and assisted by Mrs. Thomas E. Caldwell, as accompanist, and other singers from Vernal, feelingly rendered: "Providence Is Over All." The opening prayer was offered by

President Ernest Eaton of the High Priest Quorum, to which Mr. Collett belonged. Mrs. May Jorgensen and Mrs. May Calder rendered the duet, "Hope on Dear Heart."

Thomas Bingham, who served as first counselor to Bishop Collett, was the first speaker. He told of his loyal devotion to duties as ward leader and his ability to unite its members. As an illustration of his interest in folks, Edgar A. Guest's poem "People Liked Him" was read. Albert G. Goodrich was the second speaker. He referred to the high esteem in which the deceased was held in Naples where he had lived many years.

Charles H. Colton, supervisor of the priesthood activities in Maeser Ward, related incidents in proof of how true religion was exemplified in the life of Bishop Collett by his unselfish service to his family and people in need everywhere. Mrs. Lucile Calder sang touchingly, "There is no Night."

R. S. Collett of Salt Lake was the concluding speaker. With great difficulty he bore witness of the kindly disposition and loving nature of his brother. He referred to his splendid wives and honorable family which he had raised. The speaker gave eloquent utterance to the reward of a well spent life. The chorus sang, "When the Mists have Cleared Away." Benediction was pronounced by President Hugh W. Colton.

A large number of High Priests stood with bowed heads in columns on either side of the entrance walk, in token of their high esteem of the departed. Three sons, Wiley, Orin and Byron, and three brothers, Adelbert, Clarence, and George acted as pallbearers. The floral tributes in the form of wreathes and house plants were profuse. A large cortege followed the remains to the Vernal Cemetery where the grave was dedicated by Phil Stringham, Senior.

Mr. Collett is survived by his wife and the following children: Wiley S. Collett of Lyman, Wyo.; Orin and Byron of Vernal; Mrs. Alice Snow of Jensen; Howard S., Edna, Edith and Carl who are still at home with their mother. The following brothers and sisters are still living, all of whom, except Charles, were present at the funeral: R.S. and A.T. Collett of Salt Lake; Charles of Bennington, Idaho; Mrs. Julia Postma of Smithfield; Mrs.

Princetta Bills of Meeker, Colo.; Clarence of Murray; George of Salt Lake and Mrs. Roseltha Neilson of Sandy.

Mr. Collett's first wife [Sarah Simkins] having died previously, he was married to Miss Ethelwynne Stringham [20 January 1904]. From this very happy union two boys, Howard and Carl, and two girls, Edna and Edith, survive and live with their mother. Mrs. Collett is a very useful member of the Maeser Ward and has, with her family, numerous friends who mourn her untimely loss.

PEOPLE LIKED HIM

People liked him, not because
He was rich, or known to fame;
He had never won applause
As a star of any game.
His was not a brilliant style,
His was not a forceful way,
But he had a gentle smile
And a kindly word to say.

Never arrogant or proud,
On he went with manner mild;
Never quarrelsome or loud,
Just as simple as a child;
Honest, patient, brave and true:
Thus he lived from day to day,
Doing what he found to do
In a cheerful sort of way.

Wasn't one to boast of gold
Or belittle it with sneers,
Didn't change from hot to cold,
Kept his friends through the years,
Sort of man you like to meet
Any time or any place.
There was always something sweet
And refreshing in his face

Sort of man you'd like to be:
 Balanced well and truly square;
 Patient in adversity,
 Generous when his skies were fair.
 Never lied to friend or foe,
 Never rash in word or deed,
 Quick to come and slow to go
 In a neighbor's time of need.

Never rose to wealth or fame,
 Simply lived, and simply died,
 But the passing of his name
 Left a sorrow, far and wide.
 Not for glory he'd attained,
 Nor for what he had of pelf,
 Were his friends that he gained,
 But for what he was himself.

Edgar A. Guest

We are indebted to the following for the material in this history :

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