

Life Sketch of
Walt Winters Randall
given April 29, 1966 by Severn Marchant

Walt Randall was born November 25, 1899, at Harlan, Iowa, to Soren Winters and Dorothy Peterson Winters. He was given the name of Nels Wallace Winters and his twin brother was called Chris. There were 10 children in the family, the two eldest girls passed away before Walt was born.

When Walt was about 5 years of age, a typhoid fever epidemic struck the family taking the lives of his mother, his twin brother Chris and two older sisters, Lana and Mary. This left his father with a new born baby boy, Beck who was three, Walt five, a brother Jens and a sister Ida, who were older.

After this terrible tragedy, the father was unable to care for this family of little ones so he gave the three younger children to different families. The tiny baby was given to a minister. Beck was given to a family by the name of Anderson and Walt was given to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Forbes, who had three daughters. At this time Walt himself was just recovering from typhoid fever.

Now that he was a member of the Forbes family, they changed his name from Nels to Walter. They lived in Iowa for a time then moved to Nebraska and from there to South Dakota. During this time he never saw any more of his family. His elementary schooling began in Iowa. He also attended school in South Dakota when they lived there.

Even as a small boy, Walt was ambitious. He told of selling popcorn at the show house for 5 cents a bag and earning his first \$5.00, which he took and bought a new suit. He was very proud of that suit. There were many chores to do and he had cows to herd when very young and he had to do this mostly on foot. On occasions he was allowed to use a pony. Mrs. Forbes belonged to the Presbyterian Church and she wanted Walt to be baptized, but told him he couldn't use swear words. After herding cows on the prairie all day his patience was worn pretty thin and he was never baptized.

When Walt was about nine years old Mrs. Forbes became tired of her husband and kicked him out in zero weather in the middle of the winter, leaving Walt to care for the stock alone and mile 7 or 8 cows. The winters were so cold and the snow so deep that the cattle were kept in the barn for two weeks at a time. The "Great Northern", as the blizzards were called, were so fierce that they tied a rope from the house to the barn so you would be able to find your way back and forth at chore time.

Sometime later, Mrs. Forbes and family with Walt came to Idaho, settling in Idaho Falls. Here they lived by a family named Mr. and Mrs. Heber Fields. Mrs. Forbes, after living a while in Idaho Falls, decided to take her family and move to Oregon. Mr. Fields had become attached to Walt and he was afraid she might put him in an orphanage or let him shift for himself so he brought him out to Grant to some of his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ace Randall. The Randall's took him into their home and loved him as their own with their two little girls, Hazel and Alta. A son Milton was born later that fall and another

daughter, Ora, joined the family years later. Walt came into their home in August and he turned 11 in November.

What a lifetime of work and experience he had already had at this young age. He now took the name of Randall, but never forgot that Winters belonged there also. He was never legally adopted by the Randalls.

Walt loved this new life and family he had found. He became great pals with his father's brother, Orval Randall, who was about the same age. They grew up together, attended school together and shared much farm work.

He continued his education in Grant, grew up on the farm, did more chores, which he was well accustomed to and had his share of milking cows, again.

As Walt grew to manhood he was a quiet, retiring young man, never given too much publicity and always in the background. He had a pleasant disposition and a pleasing personality. He was liked by all who knew him. Walt had a mania for personal cleanliness and if cleanliness is next to godliness, he is there.

He met and courted Leone Waters and they were married April 27, 1929 at Idaho Falls. Today is their 37th Wedding Anniversary. This marriage was later solemnized in the L. D. S. Temple. They made their home in Grant for sometime, always farming and still milking cows. After 8 years of marriage they welcomed a baby boy, Noel, into their home. They idolized Noel. With the exception of 1 year at Lincoln and 1 year at Terreton, they have spent their entire married life at Grant, buying a farm just west of his father's, which he owned at the time of his death.

After coming into the Randall home, Walt was baptized a member of the L. D. S. Church and was active in the church affairs. He was Secretary to the Elders Quorum two different times, a position he held at the time of his death.

Walt was honest in his dealings, gave everyone the better half and I speak from experience as we had many such dealing with him. He was a good neighbor and a friend to everyone. He loved and was especially considerate of his mother, calling almost daily as long as health would permit. He loved little children and could always be found on the back row at Sacrament Meeting with a pocket full of candies and the children looked forward to this. He has two grandchildren that he idolized.

Even after finding this good home with the Randalls and marriage to a lovely girl, Walt still had an empty spot in his heart. He was never able to forget that when as a small boy he had been given away. He never gave up hope that some day he might find some of his family. He often talked of his early years and we wondered how he could remember so much and we probably doubted him, but later it was proved that he knew what he was talking about. What a memory for a five year old. He continued his investigation and through a friend, Eldred Lee and a kind postmaster in Iowa, Walt was able to find his relatives. Just about three years ago he was surprised on a Sunday evening by a phone call from his brother Jens, or Jim as he called him, and a sister Ida. They informed him that he had a brother, Beck, who lived at Davenport, Iowa, and that their father had died in 1936, and that the young baby had passed away.

I think perhaps this was one of the happiest times of his life for within a few weeks brother Jim and his wife came here to visit and later that summer Walt and Leone visited them in Iowa. They met nieces and nephews. Just last summer, again Jim and his wife and Walt's sister Ida spent a week here visiting. Two years ago this summer, Beck and his wife spent a week here with Walt and Leone. While enroute home from Kentucky last year where they visited Noel and Judy, Walt and Leone again visited with his family. It has been a life long dream come true for them all.

About 10 years ago Walt's health began to fail and the doctor treated him for an asthma condition, which later proved to be emphysema. From then on he has been ailing, but only until about the last three years has he had to give up farming and sorting potatoes, which he did in the winter.

Last November, Walt entered the hospital with a gall bladder condition and through diet and medicine was relieved some. For the past four months he has been in and out of the hospital several times for infection, congestion of lungs and was a patient there for four weeks before his death with his faithful wife always at his side, Walt was saddened a short time ago when he learned that his son, Noel, was going to be sent to Viet Nam.

Two weeks ago, Walt underwent major surgery and was apparently recovering when an infection in the blood stream entered in and his battle was lost. Walt passed quietly away at 11 a.m., Saturday morning, April 23, 1966.

Walt is survived by his wife Leone
a son Captain Noel C. Randall, who is serving with the armed forces in Viet Nam, but
who was able to come home for the funeral today
two grandchildren Shawna and Eric, who live with their mother in Moscow, Idaho
Mrs. Victor (Ora) Oswald of Coltman
Jim Winters of Adair, Iowa
Ida, Roth of Aubudon, Iowa
Beck Anderson of Davenport, Iowa
as well as a host of relatives and friends who mourn his passing.