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Date:

Biography of Hyrum Don Carlos Clark by Owen Morrell Clark

MY FATHER by Weston R. Clark

Father to me was basically a man of mystery, a man who kept his own counsel and became thoroughly acquainted with few persons. His lifestyle seemed similar to a patriarchal family order somewhat after the pattern of his father, Ezra T. Clark. His reserve and rather dignified, serious minded no-nonsense posture tended to establish a sense of distance with his family, particularly the children. This at times led to a respectful fear of him and a tendency to approach him through mother for approval of things we wanted to do and have.

Father's tendency to always "tend to business" serious mindedly allowed little or no time for relaxation, sports, or pure family fun. For parts of several years we lived on a large ranch which provided opportunity for several sports, as fishing in the valley river that ran through our land, duck hunting, trapping for fur-bearing animals, sage hen hunting, and the like. Not once, however, were we - three sons - taught, participated with, or allowed time to enjoy such activities.

His stance of strict discipline and formality was not conducive to the development of close family unity of compassion and a feeling of being loved and desired. I do not recall expressions of love and caring by father to any member of the family.

It was indeed customary for each of us to kiss father upon his departure for an extended trip and upon his return. And this we dutifully did. The warmth and love and caring, of concern and appreciation, were abundantly manifested by my mother. This formed the core of our family. When I was a freshman in high school we moved back to Star Valley after living a few years in Logan. The purchaser of one of the ranches failed and we had the ranch back on our hand in a depression period.

Our pattern of living for the next few years was somewhat as follows. We moved to the ranch in the spring following the end of the school year. Father would leave me in charge of the ranch - with the assistance of my two younger brothers - while he was tending the farms in Farmington. My responsibility included irrigating the over 200 acres of meadows, which required maintaining dams in the sloughs and streams, repairing the fences, milking the cows as they freshened (up to 25 or 30), planting and caring for the garden, and so forth. Come haying time - around July 24 - father would come to the ranch and supervise the cutting and stacking of the meadow hay. (This operation was accomplished with the use of mowers, with six foot cutters, hand dump rakes - drawn by one horse, buck rakes using two horses, one on each side, and an overhead two-arm stacker, powered my two horses.) Haying time usually lasted until the second week in September, which meant we always started school late. At that time father would leave for Farmington to take care of affairs there, and we children would commute to school in Afton (7 miles by horseback or buckboard during the first two years) until late in the fall, when pasturing of cattle and our milch cows had ended. We would then move to Afton taking the cows that were still being