

Some Of My Thoughts Of Dad [David Stirling]

By Katherine S. Christensen

He wasn't a big man, of medium height and slim build, he had red hair and it was always neat. He was a gentle and patient person. Always whistling while he worked. I never recall of him raising his voice or using bad language. He was always busy and a hard worker.

I can remember many times the tinkling of pans early in the morning, he would often start a pot of cereal for breakfast before he would go out to milk the cow, and you could hear him whistling as he came back to the house.

Dad always took pride in his crops, and would always try to sell quality products. He raised lots of peaches, some apricots, pears, a few grapes, sugar beet seed, hay and grain and always sorghum cane to make sorghum. He was known for the good sorghum he made. Many times during the peach harvest he would take a load of peaches and try to peddle them. Often he would take flour, sugar and honey as trade, and probable other things that I don't remember about.

Dad use to go to Lund and Modena, which are along the railroad and would haul freight for the store his parents had. He told me that one time in December just before Christmas, (he couldn't have been much more than fourteen or a little over because his mother died when he was fifteen years of age). But he said he went to Lund after a load of freight and it was bitter cold. An older man, Oscar McMullin, had gone earlier and when he returned home dad's mother asked Oscar if he had seen Dave on his travels. He said yes, but I doubt that he will ever make it back. He will probable freeze to death. Dad said it was about 20 below zero. His mother worried about him until he returned home. I remember once when I was quite young and was going to Cedar City, dad showed me the narrow winding road that you can see down in the canyon going up the Black Ridge north of Pintura that they traveled on.

I remember what we called the old jail house, it was an Old Jail that dad had bought. It had been up to Silver Reef during the mining era. It was down the lane on the southeast corner of the lot. I remember of dad storing ice in it. One winter he went to Anderson's Junction and cut 20 inch thick blocks of ice from a pond there. Mother said that they would put water in the pond and keep adding water and letting it freeze. He would store the ice in sawdust and it would keep for quite a while that way. He would have ice to sell and for our own use. We would have ice to make home-made ice cream.

I also remember the pickled grapes that he used to make. He would use the California grapes in the fall, he would put them in a wooden barrel and put a special brine on them. I'm not sure what it consisted of, but I am sure it had sorghum in it. During the winter we would eat those tangy cold, crisp grapes as a treat.

Of conveniences we have today, so there were bare necessities. Dave tried, after he married, to make the home more comfortable, but with a family and farming was so uncertain; many years he was beat out of his crop by people that bought his fruit, or it was frozen, so the pay check was very slim. He spent his whole life on the small farm. During World War II, he had a good crop of fruit and received a good price for his fruit. He said he had one good year in twenty. There was not much to buy that year, but he paid off some debts and for Christmas his children received mostly saving bonds.

In 1946 Charlene left for a mission to the North Western States. In 1955 Merrill went to the Spanish American Mission, a 2 ½ year mission, and came home in 1958. Then in 1958 Culbert left for the Australian Mission. While Culbert was away, Dave suffered with arthritis in

his hip. When he was a small boy he was riding on the wagon with his father. He went to sleep and fell off the wagon and the wheel ran over his leg and broke it. It healed and he never had any trouble with it until he was about 75 years old, and arthritis set in. In 1960, he had two operations; one for hernia, and one for his hip, where they put a pin in. He went on crutches for a year, then used a cane for the rest of his life.

In February 1969, he had a stroke. The day before he spent at the St. George Temple. He came home very tired, but happy. During the night he had a light stroke and during the next day he had some more strokes. From then on he was in and out of the hospital or had to be cared for at home. We took him to Las Vegas, where we stayed with Florence and Dave for several months. He was then brought home where he wanted to be and was cared for by me. He had some more strokes that put him in the hospital and from there to a rest haven where he was very unhappy. I could not care for him alone at home and we could not find anyone to help me. He passed away on the morning of July 27, 1970 of uremia poisoning, a few days after his eighty-fifth birthday. His services were on the 30 July 1970. He had many friends and people loved him.

By Eldon Stirling

When I was a small boy I would walk to the field with dad quite often and he was a fast walker. I had to run to keep up with him. Dad liked to dance. When we had dances here, they would always play the Berlin Polka for him and most of the time he would dance it with Lula Sullivan. He was always honest in his dealings with people. He was a good farmer and always had good crops. He was a good neighbor, always helping those in need.

By Florence Adams

I remember in the winter after we had supper, we used to play some wild games of Pit and Rook. Then sometimes table tennis. Dad would get laughing so hard he would lose his teeth. I remember how us girls would argue about whose turn it was to wash dishes. Dad would go in the kitchen and start washing dishes.

One year my Christmas present from Dave was a plane ticket to come home for Christmas. Mom and dad weren't going to have a Christmas tree, but when I came dad and I went out by Anderson's ranch and found a pretty cedar tree, brought it home and decorated it.

Dad did not like profanity. If he heard kids swearing he would send them home. All that knew him, knew him to be honest in all he did. Dad did not talk about anyone. If he couldn't say something good, he didn't say anything.

By Merrill Stirling

As we worked in the cane making sorghum in the fall, I would always get hay fever. Sometimes my eyes would swell shut. Mom had a solution she would bathe them in. One night she had to go to a meeting and asked dad to do it. When she got home the solution was still there on the cupboard. She got after dad for not bathing my eyes. He said he had done it and showed what he had used. It happened to be spinach juice from supper.