

HISTORY OF VERNON WILSON VALANTINE

Written by his wife – Ruby Potter Valantine

It is with a feeling of deep responsibility that I write this history of my husband, knowing that he alone knew his innermost feelings; his dreams, aspirations, longings; his anguish over his inability to do what he had planned, when a young man, to do. I can only write what I saw, partly understood and gleaned from other sources.

In the quiet little town of Beaver, Utah, lying in a valley that extended to the Rocky mountains in the East, was born on the 6th of May, 1893, a baby boy who was named Vernon. He was the third son and fourth child of George Wilson and Eunice Ann Stewart Valantine. He arrived in the spring, always a time of rejoicing when the winter's cold had given way to the awakening promise of new life and with a caul of veil on his face which resembled the face of Joseph Smith. According to traditions that was supposed to mean that he was destined to be one of the great men of the earth.

The family lived in the eastern part of town in a two room log cabin. Before them stretched great open fields. There were only a few houses lining the road that led up to the canyon. It was a hard life for his mother. No conveniences to lessen the drudgery of the housework and no proper sanitation. She often moved with her husband and children to other towns wherever he could get seasonal work.

Vernon was not a robust child. When he was one month old, he was very ill with pneumonia. When he had the mumps, he would say "My mumpa do "hut" – hurt. He got every disease there was. After he had started school, he nearly died with Diphtheria. He was also sensitive and of a retiring nature. His brother George was a great tease and would tease him because he got so angry. He would throw anything, even knives, at George when he was goaded beyond endurance. Yet he always received the punishment. In later life, he kept his temper under control. He had a sweet singing voice and learned all the old English ballads his father sang. When his father's friends were at the house, he always had to sing, often being pulled out of bed to perform. The men would pay him nickels for his singing. When he had children of his own, he would sing these old songs to them.

He was four years old when his father enlarged their home. He could remember climbing up on the rafters and falling down one time from them. The new house had three rooms and a large pantry store room.

When he was perhaps seven or eight years old, he and his brother George had to go to the canyons for wood. They cut down small trees if there were none on the ground and would place the wagon so that the log could be rolled into it. Often they would be gone all day with nothing to eat. In the winter with temperatures nearly to zero and snow on the ground; it was doubly hard. One time they were so cold they were in danger of freezing. They made a fire in the bottom of the wagon box to warm themselves and then went home without any wood. They were scolded for their father was generally very severe with them. Vernon never cared for farm life but he did enjoy getting out in to the fields and mountains with his father.

He was very studious and a voracious reader. He determined to better himself in every way and rise above the poverty of his early life. When he was in the eighth grade, his parents, with Irma their baby girl, had gone into Beaver Canyon where his father was doing construction work for the Telluride Power Co. Two little boys and a little girl had died while young. Vernon and George stayed in Beaver batching it while they went to school. In March, George left to go shear sheep. That was the end of his formal education. Vernon stayed home alone, finished his school and graduated, in overalls, with the highest marks of any of the class. He was fourteen years old. After he graduated, he joined his parents in the canyon. They were living in a tent house. Another boy from Beaver came up with him to work. They slept in another tent a short distance away.

One day some rocks had been loosened by blasting but the camp seemed to be in no danger. However in the night, a great rock came bouncing and crashing down the mountain. Vernon's mother awoke with the noise and soon heard a feeble, "Ma – help". Jumping out of bed, she ran to Vernon's tent. What a sight met her eyes! She saw the one boy dead and Vernon lying unconscious on the floor between the bed and the side of the tent. The rock had broken through the tent, knocked down the stove, killed the boy, grazed Vernon – mashing his ear into the pillow case, gone through the other side of the tent and had then rolled to the bottom of the canyon. Vernon's mother was afraid to stay with the dead boy. She left her husband with him and ran to the Telluride plant where she phoned for help. She and Irma returned with Vernon to Beaver and nursed him back to health.

That fall, Vernon went to a Methodist High School in Beaver called "The Belknap." In the summers he worked wherever he could find something to do. One summer he worked in the mines in Newhouse, close to Milford. One day he and a friend rode a horse to Frisco, another mining town nearby. The horse got away from them so they decided to return to Newhouse on a railroad hand car which they saw on the tracks. They were traveling very fast when they saw their horse on the tracks. They couldn't stop and in the resulting crash both boys were thrown from the handcar. Vernon received a bad cut on his elbow. It became infected and was so painful he couldn't work. He went home to Beaver with a severe case of blood poisoning which nearly proved fatal.

He began working for the Telluride Power Company when he was about seventeen or eighteen. This company had power plants in many parts of Utah, Idaho and California, as well as a school in California. It was the policy of this company to take young men into their organization. They would work for the company for half a day and the remainder of the day would be spent in study under capable teachers. Each boy would receive \$20 a month, plus their board and room. When a young man proved worthy, he was given a scholarship to Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. to work on a Masters or Doctors degree. The Telluride kept a fraternity house there for the use of its members. Many young men who qualified for this scholarship, became well known in their various fields, especially in the East.

Vernon first worked in the Telluride plant in Beaver Canyon. A Mr. Blaney was Supt. of the company at that time. Vernon soon became proficient in handling the complicated machinery found in a power plant. Besides working in Beaver, he was in Idaho for several years. He did surveying work there for the Telluride, helped build the club house and dining room. He

helped construct the giant flumes for the water needed. He did patrol duty on these flumes and on those in Provo Canyon. Back in Beaver, he helped patrol the power lines over the mountains into Marysvale. In the winter, this was a hazardous job. There were always two boys on these patrols and yet they often got lost and became wet and hungry. They had to wear snow shoes to be able to walk on the soft snow.

By 1916, he had completed two years of College with the Telluride and went to Salt Lake to the University of Utah to finish. While there, he stayed at the Emery House.

In the spring of 1917, he finally received the scholarship to Cornell. His field was to be in Electrical Engineering. He received this award strictly on his own merits and not by ‘apple polishing’, a practice he detested. In fact, sometimes he bent over backward to be just the opposite.

But he never got to Cornell. Our country declared war on Germany and her allies on April 6, 1917. This war had been going on since 1914 when Germany invaded Belgium and France. We had become involved because of our shipment of arms to France, England and their allies. Also our shipping had been hampered by the German subs. Finally a big U.S. passenger ship, the Lusitania had been sunk by subs with the loss of most on board.

U of U Salt Lake

At the



Vernon had been called Val during his college days and had added the name of Wilson – his great grandmother’s maiden name. Now, he gave up his chance of a career to serve his country. He was intensely loyal and patriotic.



Valantine Farm

Boys who lived on farms were allowed to stay home to help grow more food as it was urgently needed. Val’s father had a farm of forty acres a few miles out of town and they wanted George and Val to stay home to help them. But George enlisted as a sailor and Val wrote home asking his parents blessings so he could enlist, for as he said “You don’t want me to tell my boys I couldn’t serve my country because I was tied to my mother’s apron strings, do you?” Naturally, he got their blessing to go.

That summer, he worked for the Telluride Company in Richfield. They sent him to Marysvale to work with a friend of his, Mel Miner, in wiring the town. While he was there, I went to Marysvale to spend July 4th with Mel’s wife, Pearl, who was my good friend. I met him

and found him handsome, charming, full of humor and lots of fun. We had a couple of days together, danced under the stars, went hiking, drank pink lemonade and really enjoyed ourselves.

When he finished his work there, he went to Fort Douglas in Salt Lake to Volunteer. He enlisted October 4, 1917 in Company A of the 25th Engineer Corp., and was soon on his way to the East. From a letter he wrote home, he told of his impressions of the great and lovely country he was traversing, his impressions of Fort Ayer and later Fort Devon, both in Mass., and the difficulties of adjusting to the rules and regulations of army life. From Fort Devon, the troops were sent to New York to embark for France on the Agamemnen. Hundreds of troops were crowded in the ship but it didn't sail for two days. No one was allowed to leave; the boys became sick, the air was foul and putrid. It was a relief when the ship sailed.

It was part of a convoy and sailed without lights. They passed safely through the submarine zone and decked at Brest, France. Val spent most of his time in the Crows Nest as a look-out. He strained his eyes until later, he had to wear glasses, but it was preferable to being in that smelly place below decks.

He was first stationed at Brest, later at Bourdeaux and Dinard. He was acting corporal for several months, got his corporal rating Sept. 4, 1918 and his sergeant's stripes April 1919. Often he did detached service away from his company, overseeing French workmen as they did various construction jobs. He learned to speak French well enough so they could understand one another. He wired many lovely homes and chateaus for our generals, besides all the menial tasks of building and cleaning latrines, repairing blown out bridges, pushing wheelbarrows in the mud, making wooden sidewalks and so on. It rained so much that he facetiously said it had rained as long as Queen Victoria did in England. The troops ate, slept and lived in the mud.

From his work in detached service, he made many friends. Many Americans were living there in Paris. One American lady, Madame Heff, lived at 78 Ave. DuBois de Bologne and was called "The Soldier's Mother." Val had several letters and cards from her inviting him to teas or concerts. In fact, among his papers were many passes – one to go to a dance, one for the hospital so he could get his glasses, one giving permission for him to leave on detached service and various others. One of these was issued at Camp Pentenozen in Brest. All the troops received a letter of appreciation from Gen. Pershing.

For several months, his company was stationed up near the front, where they had to repair the damage the German bombs and artillery caused. There were dugouts for the troops when under fire. At first Val dived in them when a shell came over, but decided he would as soon take his chances in the open as be buried in the earth. One day, as he was holding on to a limb of a tree, a shell whizzed by and sheared it off by the trunk. That was just one of the close calls he had. His company suffered many casualties but he was spared. One time, his company was sent on a forced march for three days with heavy packs and equipment and trudging 25 miles a day. Their supply wagon didn't catch up with them until the third day. Once they were near a field of onions and the boys thought they were delicious. However, when Val got home, he never ate them or salmon or rice.

Whenever he could, he visited places in France where great battles had been fought. One was Verdun. He was in Paris several times and visited the Louvre.

The Armistice was signed Nov. 11, 1918 amid universal rejoicing. As soon as it was signed, all the Yanks – as the troops were called – wanted to go home. Many did leave but as Val was in the engineers, he had to stay and help get the country back to normal, at least give them a start.

It was in May 1919 when another large contingent of troops left for the States – Val with them. On their arrival in New York, he, with a few others had to stay to police the ship. The remainder of them marched up Broadway with bands playing, flags waving and the enthusiasm of the crowds on the sidewalks. It seemed Val's luck to leave without any public demonstration and to return the same way. He had known the horrors of war but none of its glory.

Why didn't I wait to be drafted
And led to the train by the hand?
Or put in a claim for exemption
Oh, why did I hold up my hand?
Why didn't I wait for the banquet
For the drafted men got all the cream?
While I only volunteered.
Nobody gave me a banquet,
Nobody said a kind word,
The pull of the engine and the grind of the wheels
Was the only goodbye I heard.
To be trained for the next year
And in the shuffle forgotten
I was only a volunteer.

Rather a cynical poem. Even though Val didn't get the adulation given the draftees, if he had to do it over again, he'd still be "only a volunteer." He was discharged at Fort Russell, Wyo., June 4th, 1919 and given a bonus of \$60.00. He had served nineteen months in a war that was to make the world safe for democracy. What dreams we all had and what irony!

He came back to Beaver broke, for he had sent half his small salary to his mother each month. He had carried a \$5000 insurance, but dropped it when he returned. Later, he took out \$1000. He said very little about his war experiences. Even though not wounded, he was still a war casualty. He had strained his eyes so that he needed glasses – he had lumbago in his back and was very nervous. He was altogether different than when he went away. He was moody, his gaiety was gone, he would get nervously upset very easily. He wanted to get help from the Government so he could continue his schooling. He filled out numerous forms and saw many doctors – and had so much red tape to bother him that he dropped it. He said he served his country freely and wasn't going to haggle now to get paid more for it. Later in his papers, I found a form that awarded him \$3 monthly, but I do not recall he ever got any.

After visiting his parents in Beaver, he went again to Richfield to work for the Telluride at \$90 a month. I had been in Arizona teaching and returned that June. We had corresponded during the war and liked each other. When we met again, the liking grew into love and we became engaged to be married the following spring. I wanted to teach one more year for I needed the money.

That August, my Aunt Amanda died in Arizona and my grandmother wanted to go out to comfort the family. As I was going anyway, we left the following day. I left in a very sad state of mind. Val and I had quarreled the night before and I didn't see him before I left. I didn't hear from him again until nearly Christmas when everything was cleared up.

Soon after Christmas, Val quit his job in Richfield and went to Cedar City as the assistant manager for the Dixie Power Co. He got \$110 a month. That spring when I said goodbye to teaching and to Arizona, and was on my way home, Val met me in Lund, Utah, where we spent the day together and planned for our wedding June 20th. There was to be a Telluride Convention in Provo, starting June 21st, and Val wanted to go, so we made that our honeymoon trip. He came over from Beaver with his mother and sister, Irma and Jessie, the latter's intended husband John Gunn driving them over in his car. A new road was being constructed in Clear Creek Canyon and it was most difficult for them to get through. They came on the 19th and all went back that same day, but Val's mother. Val was a devoted son to his mother and sisters – gave his mother a washing machine and money and gave Jessie money.

We were married the next day – June 20th at noon by Bishop Hansen. Besides my folks, I had invited two of my friends – Irene Orrocks and Ione Christensen. I wore a pink dress two years old. Val had brought me a bouquet of white roses. It was a joyous yet solemn occasion. Mama had prepared delicious sandwiches and cake so when the ceremony was over, we all became quite gay.



In France



Val home 1920

Next day, we left for Provo, Mother Valentine going with us. From Provo, she took the train to Milford, then a bus to Beaver. We got a room in a hotel and we were there for a week. When Val wasn't in meetings, we strolled around, visited Uncle Olof and Aunt Mary, went to some shows. When it was over, he returned to Cedar City and a few days later, I went back to Richfield to pack. When Val could find a place for us, I would then go to Cedar City. In about

two weeks I did go, as he had found rooms for us in the Cannon's house. We were there for six months when we had to move. The house was being torn down to make room for the Escalante Hotel. Our next home was two rooms in the old Jensen house two blocks East of Main Street.

Val joined the American Legion and went occasionally. He didn't care to dance, but he did enjoy movies. He seldom would go to parties. He was general trouble shooter for the Dixie Power Co. as well as his regular work. He would be called to go all over Southern Utah, sometimes having to stay a few days. He worked weight hours a day and most of his evenings, staying at the shop until ten or eleven o'clock. He would repair washers, sewing machines, irons, wind motors, work with meters – in fact anything and everything that needed to be done. He installed the first underground lighting system there. During blizzards or other winter storms, he had to maintain the power lines, often climbing poles slick with ice to repair the wires. During floods when some of the poles were about to be swept down the current, he had to brace them and climb them to repair the wires. This was dangerous and exacting work, but he took it in his stride. I was the one who worried while I waited for him to return.

One time when I was visiting my mother in Richfield, he phoned me that he had just been baptized, confirmed and ordained an Elder in the Mechezedek Priesthood. A wonderful answer to my prayer of many months.

Val had suffered many shocks while working on the power lines. He had a severe one while he was in Richfield but he went right up the pole again, so he wouldn't lose his nerve. He said the Dixie Power Co. had built their lines too cheap and they hadn't observed proper safety rules. He was always careful when he had work to do. One day he was working on the underground system which was supposed to have no juice running in it. He had no fear of working on it, thinking it was not hot. But it had become charged from a guy wire leading from the other system. When Val touched it, he received a terrific jolt of 23,000 volts passing through his body. Electricity does not always act the same. This time, he was thrown from the wires which was the only thing that saved his life. After this frightening experience, he decided to quit. He said he now had a wife and a darling baby (our Lora) and did not want to take such chances again.

This was in August 1922. Some of our furniture we sold, some trucked to Beaver where it was all eventually sold, except my sewing machine and flat iron which I kept. We had saved a few hundred dollars which helped us through this crisis. I took Lora and went home to Richfield to be with my mother. Val started to look for work. His friend Mel was then in Long Beach, Calif., and said he could get a job where he was working. Val went there and began working with Mel. They were wiring old houses and doing extra wiring in stores and offices. In the latter case, they were around hot wires. As soon as Val felt them again, he went all to pieces, smashed a large globe he was installing and became so nervous he couldn't do a thing. He had to go to the doctor before he could get over it. That was the end of his participation in any manual electrical work.

He went to Los Angeles and lived with his sister Ethel on Kipp Street and got a job in a foundry. The pay was low and the heavy lifting he had to do was more than he could stand. He took a civil service examination for electrical meter reader for the city and although he passed

with a grade of 91%, there was no opening at that time. He returned to Utah and hunted everywhere, even in the mining towns. He went into Idaho with no better luck. He had many chances of going to work for Power companies, the Dixie Power being one of them, but nothing else could be found.

He came back to Richfield to spend Christmas with us. Even though the future looked black, we were very happy to be together. During the summer we had made a trip to Salt Lake to be sealed. Our recommend was to be sent to us. It didn't arrive in time. In January of 1923, we went again. This time we had our recommend. On the 23rd, we were sealed in that holy house for time and all eternity and our Lora was sealed to us. What a joyous occasion.

Val went over to Beaver to help his father get ready for the spring planting. Soon after, I received a telegram from his sister Ethel that he had been appointed a temporary job as electrical meter reader and was to report Monday. I phoned Val at Beaver and he left immediately for Los Angeles. He had been out of work for over six months and it was such a nightmare to him that he never dared leave his job after that and look for a better one. He felt like security was more to be desired than better wages and the threat of dismissal at any time. It was lucky for us that we had some money saved. Mother didn't charge us anything for being with her although she was a widow and had scarcely any money. From her summer garden, she had vegetables put away in the cellar and had a cow, so we got along without spending much money.

Val finally found a place for us on South Catalina – two rooms – part of a duplex. Both sides shared the same bathroom. I had shipped down my dishes, linen, sewing machine, bedding and other articles we had to buy. This place was quite undesirable. We were there two months when we got a small four-room furnished house in Highland Park, but just for the summer while the owners were away. It was \$45 a month. Houses were scarce then as now when there were children. Val knew he'd have to build if we were to have a family. Small building lots were being sold off from a canyon running back in the hills by the Southwest Museum. He bought a lot there for \$795. It wasn't far from where we were living on Avenue 43 which made it handy for him to work on it. I still had two \$50 bonds which I had purchased during the war. He used them as a down payment, on the lot. He made himself a wheelbarrow with a wooden wheel and proceeded to dig out a level place for a tent. We had no money to build then. He boarded the tent to the eaves, put a floor in and an extra fly over the top – made shelves for our dishes and food, as well as clothes and books. We bought a stove, table, two chairs, bed and crib for Lora. We had an outdoor toilet at first. A few months later, he dug a cesspool and we got an indoor toilet. He made a little room for it on the south side of the tent and a closet to give us a little more room. We had the cold water piped in. We moved in that fall. Val worked every spare minute he had, digging out more space for our house.

After about a couple of years the tent began to leak and we had to rush around with pans and buckets to catch the drips. There was a big trunk under one window. Lora and Helen were always climbing on it to watch the floods in the streets when it rained – it fascinated them. We had excitement one time. A car rolled down the hill from the street above and landed right by our tent. The driver had jumped out.

One time, Lora got hurt by the milk truck backing on her. We were given \$200 damages. Val borrowed it to put it on the lot. He later returned it to Lora with interest. We were very frugal and saved what we could. We were able to pay for our lot in three years. He mortgaged the lot for money to build our place. While the framework was being put up, we rented the Egan home nearer the mouth of the canyon while the family were in Idaho. Val had a carpenter friend from Beaver who was living in Los Angeles, help him and show him how to do the work.

When the Egans returned, we moved into our home. It was only the shell. There were only windows in the kitchen – no plastering yet. All the house was open. Val boarded up the kitchen and we practically lived in it our first winter. Lora and Helen had the measles that October. It was no easy task to care for them in that open house. Val got all the windows in before winter set in. We were really primitive. We bathed in a tin tub – had the cold water only – used lamps for lighting. We had the toilet in, for by that time we were connected up with the sewer.

Val had only been in Los Angeles a few months when he joined the Victory Post of the American legion, but he rarely attended his meetings. He had been taking correspondence courses in Electrical Engineering even before we were married, for he was most anxious to finish his schooling. At first he took from the International Correspondence School, later he switched to the Y.M.C.A. extension schools. He received good marks, mostly in the high nineties. He dropped both schools when he became so involved in building our house. There was no proper place to study and there was noise and confusion, making it almost impossible for him to continue. It was such a pity for him to give it up.

His salary as a temporary meter reader was \$110 a month. In 1924 he was appointed a permanent reader at \$115 a month. He had to buy his own uniforms and clean them. Prices were very high, so we had to live simply. For all that, we enjoyed our life together. Often on Sundays we put the babies in the buggy and Val would push it. We would walk all over the hills which were often very lovely with flowers and green verdure. Or we would go to Lincoln and Sycamore Parks or down town to Pershing Square. We went to all the movies that starred Harold Lloyd and Charlie Chaplin. Sometimes Val and I went without the children and saw most of the magnificent movies in the Egyptian and Chinese theatres.

After our first winter, we moved into a vacant house next door for a month while our house was being plastered. It had previously been wired for electricity. Both of us worked hard on the house, Val outside and I on the inside. I painted, made drapes, bedspreads, blinds and so on. Val worked every minute that he could be at home and Sundays also, which put a stop to our happy walks. The work went slowly for he would only buy material as he could pay for it.



463 Museum Drive

Our house was finally finished in eight years and was quite an attractive house. A great deal of money went into the cement work of walls, steps and so on. I had planted trees and flowers and Val had done a beautiful job. Everything was done with exactness. It had cost almost \$5000 to build. Val had done most of the work himself but by buying a small amount at a time, the material had cost more.

We now had five children and our house was too small to hold us. That meant a move. We found an old two story house on South Ave. 60 which Val disliked all his life and moved into it in December 1935. I felt sad leaving our little house that had been built by the sweat and toil of Val and just as it finally became livable. He had put his life into that home – and his health.

In 1932, he had tried to take out more government insurance but the doctors had turned him down. They even said his health was so poor, especially his kidneys, that he might not live. That was a frightening thing to tell a man. He did try to take more thought of his diet and stopped drinking coffee, although his kidneys never were completely healthy. The last few years at our Museum Drive house had been hard ones. He was moody and depressed most of the time which made it difficult for all of us. He drove himself too hard, never stopping to relax, and denying himself all pleasures.

He worked hard for the city too. He was called out to perform many tasks outside of his meter reading because of his capabilities and his grasp of the problems in his department. The city bought out the Edison Co. and Val incorporated their routes into the city's system, remaking all the meter books. The city then decided to combine the water and power readings into one book and have one man read them both. He again took the books and made these changes. He made out lessons for the new readers and taught them. He studied all the city's laws and ordinances pertaining to the work of the water and power department. He would work late at night at home doing all this extra work. He was so desirous to succeed for the sake of his family that they might have the comforts of life he had always wanted to give them. He studied constantly and took every examination that was given, always making excellent marks. But the jobs would go to other men. As I said, we moved into our other house just before Christmas. We didn't have much furniture for this bigger house, and everything looked bare and empty. Our Christmas was rather bleak. The house consisted of six large rooms two halls, a pantry, bath

and half, service porch and a porch on the front and side of the house. It was quite run down. The cost was \$2000 plus a \$500 street assessment. The government had given all the war veterans a bonus. Val's amounted to \$1500. He borrowed from his insurance and his sister Ethel which made it possible to pay cash for it.



229 So. Ave 60

About a year later Ethel broke up housekeeping and sold her lovely furniture to us for \$100. It really improved the house. Val rented our canyon home for \$10 a month. Finally received \$18 a month for it. He wanted to sell it for \$100 which was preposterous. I finally gave my consent to him selling for \$2000 which was less than half of its cost. We had paid an assessment of \$500 for the sewer and street paving as well as other assessments. Had we waited a couple of years, we could have made on the house, but Val was no landlord and he couldn't rest until he had sold it.

Val surely disliked having to work on that old house, but he did. He made all the wiring safe, installed new outlets and switches, made cupboards, fixed doors and windows. There was a constant stream of something to be done. Again he worked around home every Sunday. He painted the house twice on the outside. To do so, he had to build enormous scaffolds. He would be months getting it done. He re-roofed several times which always scared me as the roof was steep. He started to put a cement foundation under the house, as it was only resting on cement blocks – but he didn't get that finished. Putting that foundation in was one of the most difficult of jobs. He had to crawl on his stomach and use a hand pick to dig a trench for the cement, then carry it under the house a bucket at a time. How he struggled and worked. He would spend all his vacations in doing these jobs.

His salary was raised to \$150 a month which seemed so much to us. About this time, he was taken into the office as a clerk. He applied for a senior clerk position in 1944 – and in 1947 he was given the position of a principal clerk at \$188 a month. Our two oldest girls, Lora and Helen, had gone to City College but neither one graduated. Val wasn't able to help them financially. Both worked to get a little money, but all wages were low.

Next, our sons Ted and Roy went to City College. Roy graduated from the two year course. Ted went to UCLA one year and one year to Berkeley, where he graduated. Val

couldn't help them much either, except to let them live at home and clothe them. That is why he was always unhappy because he wanted to do more for all his family.

There was war again in the world. It had begun by Hitler in Germany over running most of Europe. In 1941, the Japanese made a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and practically annihilated it. That caused us to enter the conflict. Val wanted so much to help that he tried to enlist as a clerk in the Navy so that a younger man might serve in the ranks. His application was refused. We were all glad that he didn't go.

Wages were beginning to get higher, perhaps because of the war and Val's salary slowly crept up. We had needed the money when our children were young and in school; now when they were grown and most of the married, even our youngest – Saralyn – we got more money. That seems to be the way of life.

I do not know the exact date when he was appointed as a supervisor over the billing and computing Dept. but it was perhaps 1948 or 9. From then on, he worked harder than ever, early and late. His salary was again increased until in 1954, he was making \$433 plus, a month.

He was never happy as a supervisor. He disliked being a boss. It was much easier for him to do the work than get others to do it. Also, he was continually being called on for help. All the branch offices came to him for help as he always took time out to solve their problems. Business people, if they had questions, came to him. By quitting time, he had done everyone's work but his own. He would stay after everyone had gone home to finish his. He would come home exhausted – eat his dinner and go to bed. He had headaches constantly, low blood pressure, muscle spasms and poor circulation.

TO VAL

When I get a nasty Survey
That keeps getting in my hair
I know just where to take it
A burden I can share.

A telephone ring becomes
A complicated call
I don't know what to say—
He has the answer to it all.

Even when he is the busiest
He always has time for me
I know I am a nuisance
But he bears up cheerfully.

So on Valantin's Day I'm showing
My appreciation to
The Valantine who helps me

All the whole year through!

Written Feb. 14, 1948

By Claudia Warmus

We had quite a siege one winter. Lora and her baby Curtis were with us, as Conrad was in the Navy. She became very ill with pneumonia and was taken to a hospital. A few days later, both Ted and I got it. For some reason, we were taken to the general Hospital. I think because pneumonia is contagious. What irked Val was that he had to hand over the deed to our house to the hospital until our bill was paid. We were there in January and we didn't get the bill until in April. It was around six or seven hundred dollars but Val paid it immediately for he couldn't rest until he had the deed back.

Another notable event was that Roy was called on a mission to France in 1950. What a wonderful blessing to happen to us! Val was very willing to keep him there. It cost him around \$800 a year which wasn't bad at all. The first year Roy was gone, Val was charged for him in his income tax which wasn't right, as he was supporting Roy. The government finally sent him back the money, plus interest, but it took three years to do it.



At Val's retirement

In 1956, Val had to quit his work for the City. His health and state of mind was such that he couldn't stand any more. Everyone was sorry to see him leave. He was given a farewell party by his department, a book of Remembrance full of pictures and sentiments, a brown traveling bag and \$90. But he was not contented to just be around home. He had to be doing something. He got a part time job with the county registration office, but the work was too hard for him. He helped the girls if they had trouble with their electrical appliances and often washed for them and helped them when they moved. He still puttered around the house, always finding something to do. He liked to look at TV. The children had given us a set for Christmas. He especially liked the boxing. It wasn't too long after he retired that he looked less at that. He said his eyes and head hurt. He had given up going to movies also.

He had improved the house over the years until it was pleasant and comfortable. He had made the side porch into a small bedroom. Together we had pulled paper from the walls and painted them, had new drapes, rugs, some furniture and the woodwork had been a very dark brown. It had all been scraped and painted either white or a light color. I had worked outside, making it more attractive with some help from Val and the boys. Besides working in the registration office, he helped Ted who was building a home on Palmer Drive in Glendale. He enjoyed working on a new home with good materials. Ted paid him a token wage. He got a lot of pleasure having his children and grandchildren visit him – more than when he visited at their home. He always had cookies, ice cream and root beer for them. He was much more lenient and loving with them than he had been with his own family.

All of us had implored him to have a complete examination by a competent doctor as we knew he wasn't well. He did consult a doctor occasionally but only for minor ailments. However, when he noticed blood in his urine, he did see a doctor who told us to go to a specialist and have a cystoscopic examination.

Roy was in the Navy and had a furlough due him, as we had planned to drive out to Lincoln, Nebr. where Jesse was stationed, to see Helen. At first Val had not wanted to go but after this visit to the doctor, he said he would go or he would never see Helen again. We couldn't even think such a thing would be, but were happy we would be together. He left about a week before Christmas – Val, Roy and I. As Roy was afraid there might be storms in Wyoming, he took the route through Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas and Nebraska. Val enjoyed the trip and was in very good spirits.

We arrived at Helen's a few days before Christmas. Val was so happy to see them. Jesse had arranged for him to see a doctor at the Veteran's Hospital there. We all thought it would be for an examination only, but when Val got there, he was put right in. As they couldn't give tests before Christmas, he was back at Helen's for that wonderful happy day.

He received his tests, which showed a growth on the bladder. The doctors suggested an operation which would mean a long stay in the hospital. Roy had to report back on the first of January and I needed to go home to see to the house, so I went back with him. I was home about ten days and then took the bus back to Lincoln.

The news was bad. The tumor was malignant. The doctors had gone into the bladder through the penis and had scraped the bladder and cauterized it. They had wanted to operate and remove the bladder, but Val had not wanted them to. The big question now was, had the cancer gone through the walls of the bladder. Time would tell. He was to have X-ray treatment to stop further growth, but he was to wait until his organs healed somewhat. They were taking a long time and he was in intense pain most of the time. Because of the long delay, he was permitted to go back to Helen's. He was there a little over a day, when he had to return. He started to have such severe pains, he couldn't even stand. He went back in a wheel chair. It was found that the ureter leading to the right kidney had been blocked off by the cancer. He was put under sedation, had to have intravenous feeding, a pump in his stomach and oxygen. He was kept that way for four days when he had another operation to remove the right kidney. This added shock to his

body was difficult to overcome. He recovered slowly. He was not yet able to walk much when he got infection and fever. That put him back to bed. The doctors finally cleared that up and said they would try X-ray, but didn't give any hope that it would help.

I had been spending every afternoon and evening with Val. Helen would drive me over, go home and then come back for me. She was surely good. I was under a great strain knowing I was powerless to really help and constantly wondering if the doctors were doing the proper things and everything they could. I consulted his doctor several times but although they said his cancer was bad, yet always said there was no reason why he shouldn't recover at least for awhile. Val had constantly wanted to get back to his own home, and as the doctor said there was a great element of chance in the X-ray treatment, I asked if I might take him home. They gave me permission. I had seen Val break down and cry many times and I broke down myself many times. I thought too, it would be best to return. After our decision was made, we left in a couple of days. We were to fly home and had to go to Omaha to pick up a through flight.

As hospitals go, Val had liked this one. Everyone was friendly and kind. There was a feeling of helpfulness around. There were many events planned to help the patients keep happy – movies, bingo, games, concerts and lectures. The American Legion and other organizations brought the patients candy, gum, cigarettes, little favors for each holiday and tried to make them as happy as possible. They were given menus each day so they could choose what they wanted to eat. The doctors and nurses did everything for Val to make him comfortable on the ride home. They gave him blood and provided him with pills to keep down the pain.

We left Lincoln on a Sunday morning – I think March 15th. All the grandchildren and Jesse came down to the hospital to say good bye to him. He had come out to have a visit and get acquainted with them and had scarcely seen them. We had an ambulance for him to take us to Omaha. Helen went with us. We took the plane out from Omaha about noon and got in Los Angeles airport at Inglewood at five. Roy was waiting for us with an ambulance, which brought us home. Roy had made the couch bed down in the dining room and had every thing so comfortable.

The next day, all the family came to visit him. He saw his newest little grandchild – Lora's Connie Lorraine. He didn't seem to get too tired and he loved seeing everyone. He even got up and walked around. How he enjoyed being out of the hospital. We did all we could for his comfort and he was happy and contented. But the doctors in Lincoln had said he must get back to the hospital as soon as possible. He was taken back to Sawtelle about the last of March. How he hated to go. He felt like we didn't love him anymore.

He didn't feel the friendly atmosphere at Sawtelle that he had in Lincoln. It is such a huge place that it seemed cold and forbidding. He had another examination which showed the other ureter was being blocked off by the tumor, which meant operate once more. This time, the ureter was brought to the outside. That was what the doctors long before had wanted to do in Lincoln when Val objected. At that time, it might have saved his life. Now it had to be done regardless of the consequence.

After the operation, he was in isolation and on the critical list for three days. Then he was taken to X-ray each day for a week. His poor tortured body had to suffer more. To visit him, I had to take the bus. I would leave the house around eleven in the morning and get back around seven and be with him during the afternoon. Roy was home going to school. He came quite often and the others came when they could.

Val was growing weaker, but still the doctors would talk as though he would soon be able to snap out of it. The last day I saw him, Roy had come by from school. Val was in great pain and suffering. The nurse gave him something but it didn't help much. I was so touched by his misery that I prayed that the Lord would relieve him and take him home. Roy and I stayed by his bed until five. I had told the doctors he needed attention and I knew I wouldn't be allowed in the room then, so Roy and I went home. I was very upset about him and phoned as soon as I got home. The nurse said he was the same. But in an hour, I received a call from them that he had died. I felt so terrible that I had not been with him at the end and felt like the doctor should have called me back, but still I could not possibly wish him back to suffer more. I felt to thank my Heavenly Father that he had heard my prayer and taken him home.

Val passed away April 29th, just twenty days after his last operation. His whole body was full of cancer after all the cutting that had been done.

His memorial services were held May 2nd – just three days before he would have been 65 years old. It was in the Garvanza Ward. The Chapel was completely filled with neighbors, friends, his fellow workers from the office and relations. George and Virgil Valantine, Jessie and John Gunn, Jane Ann Gunn and husband Jerry Kindred, all from Beaver, Utah. Clyde and Pearl Allgood from Downey, Calif. My sister Pearl and cousin Leora from Arizona. Helen came home from Lincoln. It was such a sweet comforting service. The flowers were beautiful. Elaine Escoto sang, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" and "Abide With Me." He looked peaceful and happy because he was without pain. He was buried in Valhalla near Burbank. About thirty cars were in the funeral procession. I received dozens of cards – most of them contained money. I was so grateful for them and the money as for awhile there was nothing coming in.

The same loving thoughtfulness had been extended to him while he was ill. There was never a day passed that he didn't receive several cards, most of them from his crew in Billing and Computing. Which gave an indication of how his friends regarded him. In his quiet way, he made many friends.

He wanted to enjoy life but he had never really learned how. In a letter he wrote me from Lincoln, he said "That rosy glow I saw on the horizon at retirement proved to be just a mirage, didn't it? Days are so long waiting – waiting."

He had often seemed stern and harsh to the children but when they grew older they realized his sterling worth and appreciated the example he had always set before them. He taught them honesty, integrity, to be morally clean, a love of country, to study, to work for the best in life, to be dependable and to do every piece of work well.

He would write cute little letters to Lora and Helen and later to the boys and Saralyn. When I was cross to the children, he would sing to them and rock them in our old rocking chair. They would soon be happy again. He was so proud of them, especially as they grew older and began to achieve success in school and their work.

He was meticulous in his work. Everything he did, no matter how trivial, had to be correct and beautifully finished. It was his life long sorrow that he saw his family struggling and working when he wanted to give them comforts. He felt like he had been a failure. He was not a failure but a success. With his meager salary, he had provided a home, food and education for his family. He had given his children music lessons. He had sent Roy on a Mission. He had built one house and repaired another. He didn't owe anyone a cent of money. He left money that was divided and given to his children. He loaned Ted money when he was building and I am getting the benefit of that now.

He had talents he didn't develop. He could express himself in choice words. He had the knack of writing interesting letters. He would patiently help the children with their English and Math. He could have been a successful teacher. He loved his home. It was his castle, his place of refuge. He would rather be at home with his family than out in society.

We can honor his memory by incorporating in our lives the sterling principles by which he lived.

Retyped by Marci Stay Stringham on November 15, 2002.