

LIFE OF SYLVESTER [O] LOW

Wanted

God, give us men!

A time like this demands strong minds,
Great hearts, true faith, and ready hands;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men who have honor,
Men who will not lie.



Sylvester Oliver Low

In recording the life of the man who is the father of this branch of the Lows in America, it is my desire to give you a true picture of him that all who are connected with the family by birth or marriage can rejoice in their connection with this man, Sylvester Low.

The material in this narrative has been gathered from different sources; from an autobiography of himself, a sketch brother Jim gave at a family reunion, Sylvester Jr.'s and Osborne's records, things his wife and members of the family told of him and comments of his friends and people who knew him, and from the history of Smithfield and Church history.

In stature Sylvester was not a large man, being about 5'8" or 10" and weighing from 140 to 150 pounds. His hair was brown and his eyes were hazel. Sylvester Jr. is more of his build. He always wore a chin beard and spoke with a Scotch accent rolling his R's. He was clean in his habits and person.

He was a man of sterling worth; honest and truthful, his word being as good as his bond; loyal and

trustworthy; serious, but enjoyed good clean humor. As a seeker after knowledge, he became self educated, excelling in writing and figures; precise and exacting in all he did; the best being none too good. His was a religious nature, quoting from his autobiography.

“The so called pleasures of life are no pleasure to me. The sweet companionship of the Spirit of the Lord and of those who enjoy it and the discharge of my duty to my Heavenly Father, to my fellow beings and to myself, are my greatest pleasures and my greatest hopes and desires are that I may be spared as long as I can be useful in assisting to carry on the work of the Lord, and live and die in full faith of the realization of the Gospel.”

He was a strict tithe payer, a firm believer in obedience to the church authorities, whom he revered; and observer of the sacredness of the Sabbath day; his faith in his Creator was unbounding. He did not care for the spotlight, ut was willing to be a humble servant. He was an enthusiastic follower.

Here is a little rhyme which fits Sylvester as the sparrow for his confidence was the same:

Said the Robin to the Sparrow
“I should really like to know
Why those anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so.”
Said the Sparrow to the Robin,
“Friend, I think that it must be
That they have no heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me.”

If he could see those assembled to do honor to their ancestors and further the bonds of family ties, I fancy we would hear him say, “Well, well, well, a fine family, a very fine family, one to be proud of.” May we be worthy of his praise.

Sylvester Low as born March 12, 1836 five miles west of Dundee, Scotland in the Parish of Tealing near the Sidelaw hills. He was the fourth and youngest son of David and Jane Oliver Low. His brothers were William, James and David. ¹ William and David had no children. James had one son who died in the South African War and had one daughter, Jean; thus the [descendants] of David Low bearing the name Low would have become extinct had it not been for their baby boy, Sylvester. There was one sister, Betsy, ² who lived one week.

It was a humble home in which he was born but he grew up in a healthy atmosphere of family life. His mother's pet name for him was “Silve”. He knew his grandfather as he was eight when his grandfather William Low, died; but his grandmother, Ann Chalmers Low, and his grandfather, Sylvester Oliver, died before he was born. He must have known and loved his grandmother, Mary Smith Oliver, as she lived until 1856. She evidently sorrowed with the mother when Sylvester left Scotland for America. ³

¹ Born Respectively: 14 June 1829, 5 September 1832, and 11 July 1834. All born in Tealing, Scotland.

² Born in 1840 in Tealing Scotland.

³ Sylvester joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in January 1855 and then left for Salt Lake City arriving there in November 13, 1855. See following information.

The father, David Low,⁴ was a weaver using a hand loom. The mother⁵ assisted with this trade, but in spite of their hard and earnest labor they could scarcely make a living because of the use of steam power and the beginning of the machine age.



Jane (Jean) Oliver



David Low

There was a strain of refinement and culture in Sylvester which showed in early childhood for he said he did not like the idea of all eating from the same bowl which was the custom then among the poorer class, and he rejoiced when they each could have a dish for their own. When he was on a mission, his brother, William, told him his share of their parents' belongings was the clock but Sylvester said that it would be too expensive to ship to America. Don't we all wish it had been sent? For it was a real grandfather clock. He asked for some small token that had been in his childhood

home, and he brought a teaspoon which is a symbol of his love for better things.

At the age of seven, Sylvester began herding cows on the hills, knitting as he herded and dreaming of the future. He said that he thought if the time ever came when he could have all the milk porridge with cream on it, he would be rich as a king. In 1864⁶ the dream came true. He was doing such work as he could upon a farm in the summer and attending the Village school in the winter "Where he gained the rudiments of a literary education." This continued until he was 14 when he said, "He could no longer brook the idea of being a burden on his parents and as a miller, in the manufacture of oatmeal, the remuneration for this period being \$17.00 per year." Thus at the early age he learned to be frugal and industrious.

In October 1854 when 18 years of age and desiring to extend his milling information [skills], he obtained work in Arbroath which is 20 miles east from Dundee on the east coast of Scotland. Here this young man naturally of an inquisitive mind was well informed educationally considering the period of the time and advantages offered for milling flour. One of the fellow employees began talking to him of something new in a religious way, telling him of the restoration of the Gospel in this dispensation. Having been reared among the Free Church of Scotland, a sect dissented from the Established Church of Scotland and being lulled with tradition and false theories, it was hard at first to comprehend the astonishing fact that the God of Heaven and His only Begotten Son had again visited the earth and spoken to its inhabitants. But being of a religious nature, he gave it much thought and prayer and through the mercy of his Heavenly Father he obtained the satisfaction his soul craved and in obedience to the Gospel was baptized January 24, 1855 in the German Ocean by John Gillis,

eagerly he went home to tell his father's family of the glad tidings and to get his savings book as he had saved enough money to pay his passage to America. After listening to the story the son had to tell the father asked, "And who is this man so highly favored of the Lord to receive a visit from Him?"

⁴ Born 30 Jan 1803 in Tealing, Scotland. Died 16 Sep 1863 in Tealing, Scotland.

⁵ Jane (Jean) Oliver, born 27 Oct 1793 in Tealing, Scotland. Died 13 Apr 1871 in Tealing, Scotland.

⁶ This date is correct which means this happened after he got to America.

On learning it was Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet and that it was the Latter day saints his son had allied himself with, it so enraged the good old father that he opened his door and kicked his son from the house. This was the last time he saw his father.

The next day his dear old mother followed her baby boy to Arbroath, walking the whole distance and carried him his savings book. He gave her enough money to return by rail bade her good bye and started for Glasgow from which port he expected soon to sail for a new home in the land of America. Years after when misfortune had come to this good Scotch couple and the father was forced to quit his loom as a weaver, Sylvester was in a position to send his parents some money to keep them from want. The remittance was made through the office of the church presidency and his brother, James, wrote and told him that "This was one TIME WHEN THE NAME OF BRIGHAM YOUNG WAS A GOD SEND TO THEIR PARENTS."

With his earthly possessions tied in a bundle Sylvester set sail from Liverpool in the good ship "S. Curling" on April 22, 1855 and landed in New York one month later May 22, 1855. It was while on the ship that he first met the little girl Ann Allan Paton, called Annie, who [afterwards] became his wife. He traveled by rail to Philadelphia and Pittsburg[h], then down the Ohio and Mississippi by steamer to St. Louis, where he expected to stay for the season to earn money to continue his journey to the west. After four weeks an unexpected opportunity came, in the form of an invitation from the church heads for young, able bodied men to work their passage across the plains by driving ox teams in the church trains. He joined Isaac Allred's Company (Anna Low's husband, Kenneth Allred, is a grandson to Isaac Allred).

Being unused to oxen and green as to the ways and customs, he was the butt of many a joke at the hands of experienced help; but his face was turned to the west and in his mind's eye, he visualized the joy of joining the Saints of God in their gathering place in the tops of the mountains, as he did his best and plodded on, learning much from the activities and associations of his fellow passengers. They were detained for three weeks on Green River because of losing too many cattle on account of the alkali. Bishop A. O. Smoot and Company with cattle from Salt Lake Valley came to their relief. At the end of this journey of 1100 miles, he reached Salt Lake City November 13, 1855 in a severe snow storm with the family of James Boyact (Eliza Low's great grandfather) who had taken him into their circle as one of their own. The good mother of the family washed and mended his clothes and cared for him as mothers have a way of doing. Sylvia heard one of this family tell that while Sylvester and others were working for a John Sharp (this was after they came to Salt Lake) making a rock wall, Sylvester took out his dinner one day and opened his sandwich which was bread spread with grease and sliced green cucumbers on it, put the sandwich back, and said, "I can no go the green stuff the day."

The winter of 1855-56 was severe and food was also very scarce due to the grasshoppers and he knew what it meant not to have enough to eat. Scarcity of food became one of the horrors of his life and he often said, "I hope none of my children will ever cry or want for bread." He spent the first three months of his life in the west in Rush Valley which is Tooele County, but had to leave there in February 1856 on account of the Indian troubles. During that summer he worked on the Cottonwood Canal near Salt Lake and in the fall found employment in the Jordan Mill owned by Archie Gardner and worked there until the spring of 1860. This mill was situated west and south of Salt lake City. He took part in the Echo Canyon War and started out September 26, 1857. He went out to Hams Fork and from there to Bear River, then back to Echo Canyon. He was seven weeks on the campaign. He wore a pair of buckskin trousers and a plaid shawl as he had no coat. The first night he was caught in a snow storm, and when buckskin gets wet it shrinks so his trousers were pretty tight until he got them

pulled into shape again.



Ann Allan Paton Low

When Sylvester was 23 and Annie was 15, a union of hearts took place wherein was laid the foundation, broad and deep, which bears the structure of one part of Sylvester Low's family. They were married February 28, 1858 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City by President Brigham Young. His wedding suit was home-spun; his coat was borrowed. The bride's dress was a brown print that cost 75 [cents] a yard. Her trousseau was small but she did have two pillows for which she had worked in a home two weeks.

The young people began married life under conditions that today would be considered poverty beyond description, but they did possess health, faith, courage, and a determination to succeed on their voyage of matrimony.

There is no record of Sylvester and Annie's having a home of their own in Salt Lake. It is presumed that they lived with Annie's mother, Jacobina Wills Osborne Paton,⁷ who had married Christopher Williams who was the first Bishop of the Third Ward in Salt Lake City.



Jacobina Wills Osborne

Sylvester and Annie's first child was born February 3, 1859 and died the next day. She was named Jacobina after her maternal grandmother. Their first son, James Paton, was born May 21, 1860. Soon after the birth of James P Sylvester moved his family to Providence, Cache Valley where he secured 20 acres of land and a yoke of two year old steers. Besides farming his land, he worked in Alex Hill's Flour Mill near Wellsville which was about _____ miles from Providence.

Sylvester Jr. was born in Providence December 22, 1862. The man of the house took his turn guarding the small settlement from the Indians who were hostile to the white settlers. One night Annie woke with a start and could not find the baby in bed. Her first thought was that the Indians had come in the open door (it was summer time) and had stolen her baby.

Rushing toward the door to give the alarm she was topped by the thought to look under the bed. She did and found Sylvester Jr. quietly sleeping as he had fallen down behind the bed.

In 1863 there was a call for 50 families from Cache Valley to help settle Bear Lake Valley. Sylvester was among those called. Taking his little family, he settled in Ovid where he lived in a dug out. The winters were very severe, much snow and cold weather for months. Feed for cattle was scarce as soon as the south side of the hills became bare. The cattle were taken there. It was not an uncommon thing for him to strap on his [skis], tie a bundle of hay on his back, take his bucket, and make the trip to milk his cows and give them a small portion of feed. Food for the people was also scarce. At times much of the grain was frozen. That which was harvested was of poor quality due to the frost. The flour was made by grinding the grain in a coffee mill.

⁷ Jacobina's first husband, Ann's father had passed away. Jacobina had crossed the plains with her family as a widow and married the Bishop after reaching SLC. She is one competent lady—see her history.

A warm friendship grew up between the families of Francis Winters and Sylvester which centered round the following incident. At one time during the winter of 1864, the girl wife became so sick of eating bread made from frozen wheat that she declared she could eat no more. Sylvester asked Francis Winters if he could spare a little good flour which he had brought from Cache Valley. Francis generously shared it and thus helped Annie through a trying period. Osborne, the third son, was born April 1, 1865.

It was while living in Bear Lake Valley that the dream of Sylvester's childhood came true. He got the milk porridge which is milk thickened with flour and cream. He did not say how rich he felt.

In the fall of 1865 being released from the call to settle Bear Lake Valley, Sylvester with his family returned to Cache Valley. Quoting from Sylvester Jr.'s record, "Passing through Smithfield on his way to Providence he was hailed by Alonzo P. Raymond, an acquaintance and co-owner of a grist mill that was in operation (now known as Smithfield Roller Mills). Answering the question where he was bound and would he like a job of running the mill, Sylvester answered in the affirmative, accepting the job. He drove into Raymond's yard and stored his belongings in a granary where the family lived until the next year. He took charge of the mill and also obtained a city lot in the northeast part of Smithfield, on the west side of second east and near second north. As soon as he could he build a log house on this lot."

Three children were born in this house—William, February 3, 1867; Annie, November 5, 1868; Jeanetta (Nettie), February 24, 1871. Later he built a four room white plastered house just west of the log house. While painting the eaves of the new house the ladder slipped causing him to fall and break his arm. The children born in this house were Lydia Gertrude May 9, 1873; Laurina May September 14, 1875; Sylvia Euphemia December 11, 1877, Jane March 27, 1880 (she died just after birth; Charles David November 18, 1881; and a son still born July 28, 1886.

Quoting again from Sylvester Jr.'s record: "In addition to his work as a miller, his knowledge gained as an apprentice in Scotland fitted him to manufacture different mill products such as split peas, peameal, oatmeal, etc., which gave the community a greater variety of food stuff. These products were new to the mill owners as well; it also required additional equipment such as roasting ovens, hullers, cleaning machines, etc.

"He was well liked by his employers and the industry grew. A finer quality of flour was produced by a new process of cleaning the wheat and bolting⁸ the ground products, thus the fame of the mill and miller placed them on the "Montana Trade" which was the best commercial outlet for mill products." Sylvester Jr. says he recalls seeing three, four, or five 12 to 15 mule outfits waiting to be loaded with flour for Montana. It was burr mill. The grain was ground by means of mill stones, one large round stone moving on another which must be kept rough. There is no record to show what his wages were. When not busy at the mill his time was taken up fencing, building, and making his new house comfortable for his family.

On this city lot he planted shade trees and an orchard of apples, peaches, and plums (a row of Potawatome plums marked the west boundary of the lot); Mulberries; three walnut trees; black, red, and white currants; gooseberry bushes; etc. The first well dug in that part of Smithfield was on his home lot. Water was struck 15' down. They had been digging part of two days.

⁸ Bolting is the process to sift the ground products to separate the powder (flour) from the bran.

In time he acquired more property—the dry farm southeast of Smithfield, a claim in the school section, some acreage on the east bench, part of what is now known as the dairy land west on the highway which Sylvester Jr. and Osborne were endeavoring to care for, etc. He always had some sheep and cattle some of which were cared for in the community herds. He was always industrious. His methods of bookkeeping and his good penmanship attracted attention and in 1871 he was offered a position in the co-operative store as bookkeeper and clerk which he accepted at a salary of \$1,000 per year.

Early in 1878 the Co-operative Association passed into the hands of private ownership. A change was made in the management and Sylvester was released from his position. He labored on the farm until 1879 when he again took up milling. He went to work for William D. Hendrick at the High creek Mill. He worked there about two years, often walking to or from his home in Smithfield which was a distance of about 11 miles.



Sylvester O Low

Then he entered the employment of the Ricks and Hendrick Construction Company, railroad contractors, as bookkeeper at \$80 per month. He worked with them until the completion of the Utah Northern Railroad to Butte, Montana which ended the Ricks and Hendricks contract. He also spent a short time in the fall of 1881 as a bookkeeper and general manager in a mercantile establishment in Montpelier, Idaho.

The first city charter granted to Smithfield was given in 1868. The election was held May 20 for municipal officers, and George Barber Sr. Was elected mayor. Sylvester was chosen June 8, 1968 by the mayor and councilmen as treasurer. He held this position until 1870 when he was chosen Justice of the Peace which position he held until 1876. He was also a school trustee.

A night school was organized about 1874 in which he taught penmanship giving his service free. He was active in Church affairs—president of the Seventies Quorum, teacher in Sunday School, editor of the “S. S. Gazette” which was a Sunday School paper, ward teacher, and home missionary. For a number of years he took part in the local drama, being prompter for the home organization.

He did his part to help on the school house. It was built in the winter of 1887 on the southeast corner of the public square at a cost of about \$1700. It was also used as a meeting house and amusement hall. Each Wednesday night for some years, a singing school was held in this house. Choir practice was often held in Sylvester’s home. He was a lover of music and once said that he hoped a son of his would be the choir leader. This wish came true with two different sons. James P. took vocal music lessons from Hyrum Johnson, the choir leader. The price was 12 lessons for one dollar.

Sylvester played the flute for past time. He enjoyed whistling of which he was an expert. He also had a shrill whistle which he produced by placing his thumb and finger in this mouth and blowing. This was his method of calling his children when they were away from home. It could be heard for a very long distance.

Sylvester Jr. recalls when he was a very small boy going with his father to stand with the people to welcome President Brigham Young as he came through the town. A large arch made of evergreen boughs and decorated with flowers with the word “welcome” in large letters was placed across the street. As President Young approached, the people greeted him with cheers and by waving their

handkerchiefs. The Sunday School stood in line and sang and the band played.

In the fall of 1880, Sylvester was called with three others to go on a three month's home mission and they were set apart by President William B. Preston and councilors to labor in Cache Stake, which then included all of Cache, Marsh and Gentile Valle[ys].

In 1882 or 1883, Sylvester became the miller in the Central Mills at Logan, Utah. He rented a house from David Jenkins which was on the south side of first north between first and second west, and moved his family there. Afterward he moved closer to the mill into a house owned by Peter Affleck. This house was on the west side of First east between center and First south streets. It was in this house Millicent (Millie) was born March 18, 1884. Some Scotch friends, President Hugh Gowans of Tooele Stake and wife, were entertained in this home while attending the services of the dedication of the Logan Temple in May 1884.

Later he bought a two story frame house on what was known as the island in Logan. It is on first south between second and third east. This house still stands (1951) with little changes. The porch has been extended to cover all of the front of the house where originally it covered only the door. It faces the north and is numbered 140. They lived here until sometime in 1885 when his wife, Annie, and family moved back to the old home in Smithfield. He labored in the superintendency of the seventh ward Sunday School. The ward was organized June 5, 1884.

November 13, 1884 Sylvester married ⁹ Mary Smith, ¹⁰ Daughter of Nathan Smith and Jane Sant of Oxford, Idaho in the Logan Temple. The marriage was performed by President Marrener W. Merrill.

Mary lived in Smithfield with Sylvester Jr. and his wife, Lillian. She attended school until the summer of 1885 when she went to live with her mother in Oxford. She moved to Logan in the autumn of 1885 into the house in the seventh ward. It was here their first child, Mary Jane, was born February 21, 1886. Another son was still born to wife, Annie, July 28, 1886.



Annie in her 50's

Sylvester continued to work in the Central Mills until he answered the call of the Church to fulfill a mission. Quoting from his autobiography he states, "On November 1, 1886 I was set apart by Apostle John W. Taylor and Elder Abram H. Cannon for a mission to Great Britain arriving in that land later that season. I was appointed by President D. H. Wells to labor in the Glasgow conference of Scotland traveling the 18 months in east and mist sothian, from the city of Edinburgh to Dunbar on the coast and as far north as north Berwick, but principally in and around the old town of Haddington. Did not have much success so far as making converts was concerned for although kindly received generally; two only were baptized in that time. In May 1888 I was called to labor in Glasgow and Dumbartonshires, visiting scattered members and holding meetings as circumstances permitted; one more new member being baptized while

⁹ By the record Sylvester was already a polygamist. He married Elizabeth J. Knox in December 1869. Then on April 13, 1900 he married Jane Duncan (born 1 April 1836 by Sylvester's note) in Cardston, Canada, I believe. The records indicate there were no children from these marriages. I have no information as to when these women died.

¹⁰ She was born 23 Aug 1865 in Smithfield, Utah and died 15 Dec 1936 in Cardston, Alberta, Canada.

traveling there.

'On August 6 I was released from traveling in the missionary field, after which I went to the Government Register office in Edinburgh, and labored there compiling genealogical information for myself and friends, continuing until March 14, 1889 having very good success obtaining in all the names of the 44,000 of the dead with sufficient particulars and dates to enable those living concerned to officiate for them in the ordinances of the House of the Lord. A great amount of the work has been accomplished in the St. George Temple, and still the work goes on. Among the most prominent of my friends for whom I labored and who themselves have gone beyond the veil were Edward Stevenson and John S. Blythe of Salt Lake City, Richard Ballintyne of Ogden, and James A. Leishman of Logan.

'I returned home to America in company with President George Teasdale, in time to attend the April Conference of 1889." He told of an incident that happened in Scotland that showed he had been under the watchful eyes of the officers of the law. He said that one night when he was "out for a bit of air" a policeman tapped him the shoulder and said "I'd like to know what you have in that satchel and what your business is." The officer went on to say that they had shadowed him for some time, had searched his room, gone through his papers, and personal belongings, had seen his light often far into the night and were puzzled to know what he was doing; what his business was as his actions searching in the records in the register's office and among tombstones gave them no clue; the answer must be in the black bag he always carried with him.

The officer was invited to his room where the contents of the mysterious bag were turned out on the table and he was allowed to see the church publications; the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, and tracts and genealogical data. The officer also heard something of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ taught by the Latter Day Saints. This is just an incident that might happen to anyone with a happy ending.

"The work of gathering genealogy was a great joy and satisfaction to Sylvester Low and he was very anxious that his [descendants] keep a strict family record.

While her husband was in Great Britain, Mary lived part of the time in Logan and for some time in Smithfield with Ida Low as James P. was also fulfilling a mission in Great Britain.

Sometime in the summer of 1889, Sylvester took Mary ¹¹ and daughter, Jane, and moved to Afton, Wyoming. ¹² ¹³ The following is Osborne Low's record of his father's life in Wyoming. "Father came to Afton to help build and run a new grist mill for Archie Gardner, Ozro's father. He was the mill wright, placing the burr and machinery in order. It was a log building with a lumber roof, run with water power. It started to grind about Christmas time. He was also the bookkeeper. October 13,

¹¹ What has happened between Annie and Sylvester and why he left Annie in Utah is not known to me. Through comments by my mother, I have the impression the Sylvia (my grandmother) did not have the best of feelings about polygamy because of the move of her father and younger wife to Wyoming and then to Canada. Annie's family had some hard economic times after Sylvester left.

¹² Sylvester had six more children with Mary: Sylvester Wilford (6 Apr 1890 in Afton, Wyoming); Joseph Smith (22 Dec 1891 in Freedom, Wyoming); Sterling Oliver (31 Oct 1893 in Cardston, Canada); Brigham Young (13 Sep 1895 in Cardston, Canada); Edwin LeRoy (26 Jul 1897 in Cardston, Canada); Mabel May (18 Sep 1899 in Cardston, Canada)

¹³ Sylvester had a total of 21 children, 14 with Annie and 7 with Mary.

1889 was the first [entrance]. I am not sure of the month he came to Afton, would say about August as he had time to make preparation for winter before working on the mill. He purchased 10 tons of hay and hauled it 10 miles to Afton, rented a one room log house to live in and a stable for his team and cow. He brought food and clothing enough for the winter. In the spring of 1890 he wrote to me to come and see this new country and bring 200 pounds of bacon, which I did, arrived here May 7.

'The winter of '89 and '90 was known as the Star Valley hard winter when nearly all the animals died and people were hungry. Father was well supplied for a long winter, being a good Samaritan shared his hay and bacon with his poorest neighbor. April 6, 1890 Mary's son Sylvester, was born in this log house.

'Father and I went to the lower Valley, or Salt River Valley to Freedom and bought a squatter's right for \$400. I homesteaded and we put in the summer building up a ranch, making fences, dams and ditches, diverting the water, sewing timothy seed, getting out timber for building and firewood for the winter. We raised enough hay for our stock the first year. He had bought 2.5 acre lots in Afton on which he planted grain. I have forgotten the price paid for them but they were very cheap. These were sold when he went to Freedom. Afton and Freedom were then in Uinta County, now in Lincoln County.

'Father taught school four months for \$40 per month at Freedom which was four miles from his home, making the trip each day, also on Sunday to attend church. Roads were poor and there was much snow. He was second Councilor to Bishop A. B. Clark of the Freedom Ward. We had a few cows and sold the surplus butter and cheese to the Caribou Mines 15 mile west of Freedom.

'The second winter he discovered he was not cut out for a rancher and on June 1, 1892 he started for Canada. He and D. W. Rainey traveled together. I went with them until we passed Soda Springs, Idaho then the women drove the teams and the men drove the cattle. It took about 52 days to make the trip before they reached Cardston, Alberta Canada. They never traveled on Sunday."

The home in Wyoming was between the Tincup and Jacknife Rivers. Sylvester was of a peaceful nature but desired fairness. While living in Freedom, an incident happened which showed his nature. The settlers near the Jacknife River dammed off part of the stream and put a trap in the small stream to trap fish, each family was to get its share. For some time, all the fish that were in the trap were suckers when Sylvester went to it. One morning he went to it [unusually] early and found a neighbor with his bucket full of white mountain trout, while all that was left in the trap was the usual amount of suckers. He objected, insisting on having some of the trout. Mere words were not enough to get results—it took physical force. They were both considered old men and were officers in the church. This quite amusing, yet it showed plainly his traits of character.^{14 15}

Compiled by Sylvia [Euphemia] Low Jensen 1951

¹⁴ Annie died 13 December 1905 in Smithfield, Cache, Utah. As noted in the appendix, Sylvester visited twice in 1905 to Smithfield. The first time was during September and the second time during December for Annie's funeral. He notes that he also visited Smithfield in 1897 and 1900.

¹⁵ Sylvester died 17 May 1908 in Cardston, Alberta, Canada.

Note:

This history was transcribed [January 2007] by Robert J. Burnside, grandson of Sylvia, from a type written narrative of 16 pages. Any bracketed words were added by me to correct the spelling to current standards. The foot notes are all mine also. I believe the narrative was in draft form and not yet finished—and was never finished

I have added the pictures. I don't know the dates of any of the pictures.

The type written narrative spelled Sylvester's name as Silvester and then was corrected by pencil. Why I don't know.

APPENDIX 1

Continuation of SYLVESTER LOW BIOGRAPHY ¹⁶

Upon arriving at Cardston, Alberta, Canada on Aug. 4th, 1892, being on the road since June let, they stayed with Bishop and Elisabeth Farrell's former resident of Smithfield, Utah. Sylvester soon purchased a lot in the north part of town, which had a one room log house on it, and began to repair it for winter. He took the wagon cover from the wagon he had been traveling in and lined the room to make it warmer. After locating his family, he secured a job, putting up hay for a cattle ranch called Cochrane Ranch, which gave him some cash to live on the first winter.

For the next five years he operated a flour (Burr Grist) mill located on Lee's Creek. It was for this purpose he left Star Valley, Wyoming. Sylvester had received a letter from President Charles Ora Card, requesting him to come to Canada to operate a flour mill which had recently been built. When a roller mill was constructed by H. Allen at St. Mary's river, the burr mill was discontinued.

Oct. 31, 1893, his son, Sterling Oliver, was born at Cardston, Alberta, Canada. In 1895, the Alberta Stake was organized. Sylvester was the first stake clerk, which position he held until the time of his death. At this time the Alberta Stake included all the wards and branches in western Canada, ranging from 20 to 95 miles to the north, including the wards of High Rider, Claresholm, Frankberg, Orton, Sterling, Raymond, Magrath, Mountain View, Leavitt, Beazer, Aetna, Kimball, Taylorsville and Cardston. At the end of the year when reports were to be made, Sylvester would drive in a one horse buggy to each ward, to insure that each Bishop would make out his reports correctly. He would take his son, Sylvester Wilford, now 8 or 9 years of age, along that in case of trouble he would have help.

Sylvester, Sr. had difficulty in keeping his feet, warm. On one occasion his wife, Mary, put about an ounce of red pepper in each wool stock, which helped keep his feet warm. But when the lady went to make the bed in which he had slept, she also got warm when she shook the sheets. ¹⁷

Tithing came in the kind thereof in those days, and Sylvester, who was also the tithing clerk, was either pitching hay into the tithing barn or pitching it out. Large pits of potatoes had to be sorted each spring, and grain taken care of, as well as other produce.

Sept. 13, 1895, his son Brigham Young was born at Cardston, Alberta.

Enjoying the finer things of life—photography appealed to him. He bought a camera; built a dark room for developing, and also built an extra room onto the house that had a glass north half of the roof to give enough light to take the pictures. Each day the family would pose, some days as a group, other days separately. He had to get the practice to perfect himself. Two years elapsed when he lost the novelty, as there was no success in this venture.

In March, 1897 Sylvester made a trip back to Utah to see his family in Smithfield; not by wagon as he had entered Canada, but by train. Deeming it necessary to take a trunk in order to bring back such articles as dried fruit, honey and commodities hard to secure as yet in Canada, he put his one suit of

¹⁶ Provides information of Sylvester's life while living in Cardston, Canada area.

¹⁷ This is the way the sentence was written. I am not sure what was intended so I left it as is.

clothes in the trunk, took a 100 lb. sack and filled it with hay and placed it in the trunk to keep his clothes from bouncing about and becoming wrinkled.

July 26, 1897 his son, Edwin LeRoy, was born at Cardston, Alberta.

At this time Sylvester desired to visit his brother, David, who lived in Picton, New Brunswick, Canada. His trip across Canada to Toronto was made on a cattle train, helping to take care of the cattle to defray his expenses. From Toronto to New Brunswick he purchased a tick[et] thus making that part of the trip as a passenger on the train. He was not favorably impressed with that part of the country; he had lived too long "out west." He said their methods of farming were really antiquated.

His last child, a daughter, Mabel May, was born Sept. 18, 1899 at Cardston, Alberta. At this time Sylvester thought he would avail himself of a homestead, that is, he could have a 160 acres of land free, if he would fence the land, build a house, plow 20 acres and live on the land three months of the year for three years, so he filed on a quarter section N.E. Qt, of Sect. 31, range 25, Taylorville, Alberta, twenty miles southeast of Cardston. A shack was built. He stayed only a few weeks on this property, then left his two sons, Sylvester W. and Joseph, 10 and 8 years of age, to do most of the staying. After the first year he discovered that by living on a piece of land he had previously purchased from the Hudson Bay Co., which is two miles southwest of Cardston, he could prove up on his "Homestead." July, 1902 he moved onto this tract of land which he called his farm and lived there until the time of his death.

While hauling hay one day with his boys on the farm, he took a partial stroke and fell from the load and the wagon wheel passed over him, fracturing his shoulder. He recovered in about three months time. (Quote from his record)

"My labor since coming to this land has been varied such as is common in pioneer life, but of late years have been more directly occupied in attending to the duties of stake tithing and ecclesiastical clerk and the High Priests Quorum; in all of which I took great pleasure, and although I expect to mail this for publication on my 70th birthday: yet, I am blessed with vigor of body and mind far above my expectation at my time of life: as an instance when compiling the annual tithing and statistical reports, I have labored this season for weeks from 15 to 16 hours per day with head and pen without difficulty, for which I am very thankful and acknowledge the hand of the Lord in being so blessed."

May 17, 1908, on a lovely Sunday morning, Sylvester prepared himself to attend the Sacrament meeting. While putting the horse to the buggy, was taken suddenly with a pain in his head and died in a few hours. The doctor pronounced it apoplexy.

Comments: His death occurred two weeks before the Alberta Stake quarterly conference, but all reports for conference were made up and complete for reading. He enjoyed an anniversary birthday with his friends by inviting them on his 60th birthday and also his 70th birthday. His wages as clerk was \$400.00 per year, but at his death he never owed a dollar, leaving this world free from debt.

Written and prepared by Mary Jane Low Anderson in 1951.

Note:

This Appendix was transcribed by Robert J Burnside from a type written two page narrative by

Mary. I believe it was a continuation of a type written three page biography of Sylvester. I have not included the biography here as I believe my grandmother's history is more complete and includes the information from the three page version. Again anything in brackets [] were added by me.

APPENDIX 2
Letter in Sylvia Low Jensen's Papers

SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

My Parents

David Low, Born January 1803 (Bab ¹⁸ Jan 30th) Died Sept 16th 1873
Jane Oliver Low Born October 17th 1793 Age 77&6 Mon Died Apr 13, 1871

My Brother James Low Born September 19th, 1832 Age 38Yr 6 Mon & 20 Days Died Apr 9th, 1871

My Brother William Born 15th June 1829
His Wife Margaret Born 12th May 1832

My Brother David Low, Born 11th July 1834, Came to Canada April 1873

My grandfather William Low died January 1844 aged about 72
My grand Mother Ann Chalmers Died July 27th 1824 Aged about 52

My Uncle Alexander Low Died March 1845 aged about 42

My grandfather Sylvester Oliver died about 1797
My grand Mother Mary Smith Born February 1762 - died 3rd February 1856 aged 94
My Aunt Betsey [Betty] Oliver Born January 1797 Died 30th October 1861
My Aunt Elspeth Oliver Born April 1789 -

MARRIAGES

Sylvester Low & Ann A Paton, February 28th 1858
Sylvester Low & Elizabeth J. Knox, December 1869
Sylvester Low & Mary Smith, 13th November 1884
Sylvester Low & Jane Duncan, 11th April 1900 (born Apr 1st 1836)

There is also a note on this page of the record of
Alex. Duncan Born Sept 19th 1808 Died December 1869
Jane Brent Born August 1811 Died 1886.

I trust that this information may be of some use to you but you may have it already.

This is Thursday evening and I just phoned the Hospital and was informed that Irene is in the case room now. I surely hope that things turn out alright for her and all concerned. I saw two or three of the kids at School today, in fact Kenneth and Loretta have been playing with me in the Band.

Well Dear Sister, it has taken me four days to write this letter and if you find disconnected ideas, it will be because it has been written intermittently and when I have had a few minutes to spare. Blanche just came in from the temple or rather I just went for her so I am going to close. The weather is fine again and people are back in the fields. The beet harvest is on around Lethbridge and the fat cattle are being

¹⁸ I don't know what this was meant to be or say. It was in the narrative so I left it in.

marketed. Most of the grain will be picked up in another few days and then I suppose we will be looking forward to winter. We had a grand garden this year - took up the potatoes and have more than enough vegetables for the winter. In fact the Lord has been good and we have plenty of most things for the winter. Love

I am changing paper in order to send you the copy of Father's history as written in long hand and now in my possession.

SYLVESTER LOW

[Written by Sylvester Low in long hand of unknown date]

I, Sylvester Low, was baptized 24th January, 1855, in the German ocean, near Arbroth [Arbroath], Scotland. Left Liverpool the same year on April 22nd. Landed in New York May 22nd.

Arrived in Salt Lake City, November 13th, 1855

1855-56	Lived in Rush Valley, Salt Lake City and West Jordon.
1857	Lived in West Jordon and Bountiful
1858-59	Lived in West Jordon
1860	Lived in Salt Lake City, Providence and Wellsville
1861-62	Lived in Wellsville and Providence
1863	Lived in Providence and Bear Lake
1864-65	Lived in Bear Lake and Smithfield
1866-70	Lived in Smithfield (Mill)
1871-78	Lived in Smithfield (Store June 11th)
1879	Lived in Smithfield until June 20, then in Richmond until Nov 1st 1880
1881	Mar 1st, lived [in] Montana until Nov 1st then in Montpelier until Nov 1st 1882
1882-86	to Nov [in] Logan (Central Mills)
1886-89	March 16 [in] Scotland
From Apr 1st to Oct 16/89 Smithfield, then Afton until June 1890	
1890-92	Freedom Wyoming (June 3rd)
1892-97	Cardston, Canada—arrived Aug 6th 1892. Visited Smithfield 1897 & 1900
1898-1902	Cardston up to July, then on ranch
1902-05	On ranch from July 1902—visited Smithfield Sept 11th to 29th 1905 and again from December 18th to 26th to attend funeral of Sister Low
(Naturalized Canadian Citizen June 18th, 1896 at Fort Macleod)	

(Died on May 17th, 1908 at the ranch near Cardston)

Notes:

- 1- *This information was transcribed [January 2007] by Robert J Burnside from a carbon copy of a two page letter written by a family member to his sister with the information on Sylvester Low. The letter was in possession of my Grandmother Sylvia Low Jensen—is she the sister? Don't know as she had the carbon copy. There is no date on the letter nor the name of the writer. Any information in brackets [] was added by me. I also edited the dates by excluding each year in the sequence to make it easier to tableize and read. Wellsville was spelled with one l and two l's and I used the two l spelling.*
- 2- *Some of the genealogical information given in the letter is at odds with what has been listed in the family genealogical records I am familiar with. Some research is needed.*
- 3- *Sylvester was a polygamist and why he left his wife, Ann Paton in the US and took the “younger” wife with him to Canada I do not know.*

History of antipolygamy acts: The US made polygamy illegal by several laws passed as early as 1862 [Morrill Act]—this law was not enforced very well. The Edmunds Act followed in 1882 and many of the LDS men [~1300] were imprisoned as a consequence—this included Parley P Pratt. Then in 1887 the law [Edmunds-Tucker Act] was passed that disincorporated the Church. The Manifesto was issued in 1890.¹⁹ The US passed a final antibigamy [also antipolygamy] law in 1892 which excluded polygamists from immigration to the US.

¹⁹ Many historians will tell you the manifesto was just the church's response to survive. But I know the Church would not have quit practicing polygamy because of US laws. It took the Lord to say that the Church was released from practicing it before the Church would stop.