

Peter Edmund Van Orden

by daughter Alta VanOrden Neel

3 March 1960

Peter Edmond Van Orden was the seventh. child and fifth. son of Everett Clark Van Orden and Elisabeth Harris Van Orden. His brothers and sisters were: William Robert, Isaac Chancy, Willard Arthur, Sarah Elizabeth, Everett Clark, Marie Antoinette, Mary Adelia, Edith, Henrietta, John Milton, Joseph Daniel, Charles LeRoy, Luella, and Arminta May. Only seven of these children grew to adulthood. He also had two half sisters: Lucy Samantha and Julia Ann, as well as a half brother who died as an infant, Everett Clark.

Pete, as everyone called him, was born the 23rd of January, 1868, at Kaysville, Davis County, Utah and was blessed 7 May 1869, at Kaysville. He was baptized on 1 April 1877 at Lewiston, Cache County, Utah, in the Cub River in back of Dee Smith's place, by Henry James Talbot and confirmed the same day by J. E. Layne. He was re-baptized 2 December 1884 by Moroni Stocks and confirmed on 6 December 1884, by George Leavitt. He was ordained a deacon by William Orchard, an elder 3 April 1887 by William Waddoups and a High Priest, 6 Nov. 1887, by Thomas Duce.

On the 1st of February 1888, he married Ida Philinda Merrill (daughter of Marriner Wood Merrill and Cyrene Standley Merrill), in the Logan Temple with her father performing the ceremony. To them were born 13 children Edmond Merrill, Elbert Clark, Peter Bertrand, Harris Olonso, Merlin Thatcher, Cethel Jay, Idella [Mrs. Alfred Hess Bateman], Mazel Wood, Evelyn, Mabel, Velferd Merrill, Alta, Don Merrill. These children all grew to adulthood, married and had children.

He came to Lewiston with his parents in 1871, when he was three years old and they experienced the hardships incident to early pioneering. At that time there were only three families here. He can remember how they would all stay at one home at night to protect themselves from the Indians, while the men folk were away trying to make a living. No one was ever hurt by the Indians, however, but they would beg for food and it would take most of what they had to feed them, at times.

His schooling was very meager although it was as good and as much as could be provided at that time. He was always interested in religious work and the positions he filled in this field include: in 1884 he was set apart to preside over the deacons quorum by William H. Lewis, a position he held until 1887. He was set apart as Sunday School superintendent of the Lewiston Ward on 2 October 1887 by W. H. Apperley and held this position for eleven and one-half years. He was set apart as acting priest in the Lewiston Ward on 7 January 1889 by William H. Lewis. On 17 April 1899, he was called on a mission to the Southern States. He was set apart as Conference Superintendent of the Sunday Schools. Upon his return in March 1901, he was appointed as teacher of the Theological class in the Sunday School. He also served as Assistant Superintendent to Herman H. Danielson from 1901 to 1903. He worked in the Sunday School Superintendency with Joseph Iyer, John N. Bernhisel, Lewis W. Larsen and Orson U. Hyer. He also served as Sunday school Secretary for a few years. Making a total of 35 years in actual work in the Sunday School Organization. His other offices were High Priest Secretary for about 20 years, Secretary of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association for several years, and was actively engaged as a ward teacher most of his life. He was chosen Stake Superintendent of the Religion Class in 1922 and served for about two years. Then he worked several more years with Melvin E. Kent in the Stake Religion class. In 1926 he was again called to the Southern States Mission. He served for 6 months and was honorably released because of poor health.

For many years he served as secretary of the Old Folks' Committee. And many years in the Genealogical

Committee of Lewiston.

He served civically as Cache County Assessor and Treasurer for many years. He was also Town Clerk of Lewiston and was the first City Clerk after Lewiston became a city. He served on several committees for the improvement of the community. Was city sexton for a time. Was Captain of the Sons Of The Utah Pioneers, in Lewiston, for awhile.

Pete was a farmer, a dairyman and, to some extent, a merchant. He witnessed many changes in Lewiston and thrilled at each improvement. His life's ambition was to see his town prosper and his family live true to the Church Of Jesus Christ. He was a man that believed "by the books ye shall know them," because he kept records of everything. He was a great hand to write things down as they happened. He wanted so much to have a history of Lewiston published, that he kept records of happenings as long as he was able. He was thrilled and consoled when he found John N. Bernhisel had the same idea.

On the 3rd of August 1954, he had a stroke from which he never recovered. On Saturday, 9 February 1957, he entered into rest, at Prove, Utah County, Utah, at the age of eighty-nine years and seventeen days. The place of interment was Lewiston City Cemetery.

His wife, Ida Philinda Merrill Van Orden, who was ever at his side at home and carrying on in his absence, also followed him in death nine days later on 18 February 1957.

They were survived by twelve of their thirteen children, forty-three grand children and fifty-three great grand children. Peter Edmond Van Orden was also survived by one brother Charles LeRoy Van Orden.

Ida was also survived by the following half sisters; Hattie Funk, and Anna Mae Hale, of Logan, Orella Jensen, Elna Johnson, and Nellie Johnsen of Richmond, Loretta Rigby, Idaho Falls Idaho, Lenora Olson, Smithfield and Hilda Richards, Malad, Idaho.