

Nymphus J. Watkins was born in Midway, Utah on June 4, 1885, the ninth child of six boys and five girls born to John and Mary Ann Sawyer Watkins. One boy, Thomas John Edward died in infancy, another son, Walter, died around seventeen years of age.

Nymph's boyhood days were filled with the usual fun and games of childhood, but realities of a large family necessitated all hands to contribute. The girls were busy with cooking, sewing, and cleaning. The boys had to work in the fields and in the family sawmill with father John. Nymph, a muscular, strong young man was happy when John asked him to "stoke the boiler" at the sawmill, a job usually done by the older boys. He wanted so much to show his father how good he could do it that he overdid it and got the boiler so hot it blew up.

Nymph remembered being removed from school classes many times to help handle the hay and produce that were brought as tithing the Bishop John. These items had to be put into the Bishop's storehouse to be distributed to the needy families in the valley. He also remembered being stirred often from a warm bed early on a cold morning by his mother or sisters banging loudly on the metal chimney because he had neglected to bring in firewood the night before. Without the wood the stoves couldn't be started for the cooking of breakfast in the morning.

When he was only fifteen years old he left Midway to work in the silver mines at Park City. He worked at the Old Daley West Mines and boarded there as well. Then as many young men of the day, he sought his fortune in other places. He worked briefly on the Lucien Cutoff about Logan, Near Tremonton, Utah. He heard of blacksmith work in Frontier, Wyoming at the Kemmerer Coal Company. It was there he met a beautiful young woman, Estella Thomas, with an equally beautiful baby daughter, Evelyn. They married in March, 1914. Three more daughters blessed their union; Mildred, Elizabeth and Patricia. Their only son was stillborn. An interesting note to this history is that neither Nymph nor his brothers had sons to carry on the Watkins name.

The blacksmithing job in Wyoming involved crafting and repairing coal mine machinery. Nymph's job required frequent descents into the mine and he was scheduled to do so on August 13, 1927, but the plans were changed and that day a terrible explosion occurred in the mine killing over one hundred miners. Stella always felt divine intervention kept him out of the mine that day. While in Frontier, Nymph and Stella lived in company housing as did all who worked for the mine company. Their house, one of a few on Front Row, was set aside for company executives and skilled workers. One time a man named Hoad, came to town and organized a town band. Nymph claimed he was asked to be the tuba player, not because of his musical ability, but because he was the biggest man in town and the only one who could carry the instrument. Even though his father John was trained musician, Nymph had no formal musical training and therefore much like the method used in the musical "The Musical Man," he had to "think" the notes so he could be a member of the band. From all accounts, the band was average, but always loud, especially the tuba.

Around 1929, as the mines worked less and less, Nymph moved his family to Salt Lake City. With work difficult to find, he managed to keep the wolf from the door. In May 1930, he and Stella bought an acre of ground and 2308 South 21st East. On the property stood a small house and Jonathan apple trees dotted the rest of the property. The money from the apple crops was most welcome each fall. A few years later Nymph took out an \$800 loan from the bank to expand the house. The bank used before and after pictures of the home in their ads for many years with this statement: "See what you can do with an \$810 loan from our bank." Of course, what the ad neglected to state was: "See what you can do with

\$800 if you draw the plans yourself, do all the work yourself and have the talent to make all the components fit and come up with a work of art."

Nymph and Stella lived in this home on 21st East for the rest of their days. Nymph was always adding and improving on it. Stella died February 19, 1953 at the age of 66. Nymph remarried Elizabeth Nichols in the summer of 1957. She died August 11, 1973. Nymph passed away November 28, 1973 at age 88. Even though Nymph was a giant of a man, he was good natured, loved his family and always found time to help friends in need. He worked hard, took complete responsibility for his actions. All who know him loved and respected him. With his keen and creative artistic sense he loved making things for the house. He crafted wrought iron furniture and outdoor lamps for his home and for the homes of his family and friends. He also made swing sets for his grandchildren. His ancestors take great pride in the legacy of love, independence and creativity he left them.