

Services for Walter Walker

From a letter by Mae (Walker) Bond, February 17, 1940

“Ervin and Jesse went to Albuquerque as soon as they could arrange their work and get away. When they left they expected to get the remains and return the same day. There were so many papers to fill out and so much red tape to attend to before they could take the body. They arrived in Shiprock the next day at 12 p.m., Wednesday. Of course that left me here alone to get things arranged. I had to decide where, when, and how to bury him. I thought at first to bury him beside Willie but found there wasn’t any room, and anyway, Willie was buried in the Brimhall lot.

“I bought a lot for ourselves and had him buried in the northwest corner. Then Miral Bond came to my help, and we went to mark off the grave and Uncle Clabe and one of his boys and Don Walker came up and dug the grave. Then they went over to the brick yard to buy some brick to line the vault, but the brick had all been sold, so we had to go all the way to Farmington to get the brick, so it made it rather late Wednesday night before we got all the things together.

“Ervin got up at 5:00 Thursday morning, and he, Miral, two brick layers, and one of Miral’s boys and Edgar Walker worked hard all day building the vault, and they certainly made it nice. They put in a three-brick thick wall and plastered it, and it looked so pretty and clean, and I was proud of it.

“Miral did all the rushing around with me, finding brick, cement, etc., and then he helped every minute until the last brick was put in the arch over the top.

“Armina rushed around and helped make his temple robe, and honestly, they were just grand. Back to the burial details. Ervin and Jesse got a nice pair of white pants, white shirt, tie, and underwear in Albuquerque, and the Relief Society made the robe, cap, apron, shoes, and girdle (of course we will pay for them), and we used as nice a material we could get, for the robe, cap, and girdle. The apron was made of green taffeta. When he was dressed, he was beautiful; he looked as though he was ready to talk. You have often heard him say, ‘Die young and make a good-looking corpse,’ haven’t you? I certainly thought of that a lot after I saw how beautiful he looked. He just looked so happy, and I think he was when he died.

“The nurse said he woke up Tuesday morning and said, ‘My, what a night’s sleep. That is the best sleep I have had for weeks.’ He seemed so much better. The nurse just left to go to another room. When she heard him give two little coughs, she rushed back and found he had gone. The end wasn’t too bad. But believe me, he had enough suffering before that. Honestly, when he left here to go to the hospital, he was so swollen up he could hardly sit down. He just wouldn’t give up and let us take him to Albuquerque sooner. The doctor here could not do anything for him. He said his kidneys were sending poison out, and of course it was his heart causing his kidneys to be bad. He wanted so badly to go to California but just couldn’t stand that long trip.

“He didn’t want to be buried in Albuquerque because he said he didn’t have any friends there, and I wanted him to be in an LDS cemetery and buried in temple clothes, and here so we can feel like he is near relatives and friends. It would have cost us too much to send him to California, and the government wouldn’t pay his transportation there, but would here. We brought the remains ourselves to save expenses. We were allowed \$25 on burial expenses, but of course it cost more than that because we wanted everything nice for him. We paid for it out of our own pockets. The suit would have been furnished, but Ervin told them no, we as a church always bury our dead in white, and he didn’t take the suit they offered him. We are supposed to get a headstone from Washington as soon as we fill out the blank they sent us and tell them the name and other information we want on it. They also sent a large American flag with the casket. We wanted to bury it with him, but the American Legion boys took it off and told Sherman to

send it to his mother (of course not knowing she was divorced). I don't think she would care for it, do you? I am going to try and get him to keep it. I know she destroyed his pictures and all his other army things.

"Perhaps you would like to know what kind of services we had, so I will give it in detail:

"The American Legion acted as pallbearers, and we met at the Bond home, and all who cared to view the body could do so. We took our last look at him, then the casket was closed. It was then taken up to the church house, and Bishop Stolworthy conducted the services. The American Legion boys raised a big flag at his head, and three of the boys stood at attention during the services, which lasted one hour."

Song—"Abide with me"

Prayer—Alex Bloomfield

Song

Obituary—Bishop Stolworthy, written by Don Walker

Poem—Sister Decker

Song—"Oh, My Father," Lloyd Taylor

Talk—Willard Stolworthy

Remarks—Bishop Stolworthy

Song

Prayer—Elmer F. Taylor