

## CHAPTER 16

### Sixteenth Child — Colly Adolph Wells

COLLY A. WELLS

16th Child of Hilary Mercer Wells and Sarah  
Catherine Stone  
By Ross LeRoy Wells

Colly A. Wells, Grandmother Wells' last child was born in Gleeson, Arizona, September 17, 1902, several years after the family had come to Arizona from San Angelo, Texas.

Colly was duly petted and teased by older members of the family and was pretty much a "Mother's boy," I've been told. However, because of his mother's failing health much of his care fell to his sister Pearl, who was just two years older than him. Colly always felt a deep affection for his sister and was loyal and helpful to her until the end. Her children and grandchildren held a special place in his heart.

Colly never married. Having no children of his own to love, his affection went to his nephews and nieces. He was interested in all of them and took opportunity to help several through school. Colly was family conscious and just couldn't understand how anyone in the Wells family could get so involved in their own interests that they didn't communicate. He, personally, just gloried in any achievement, or prestige gained by any one of them.

Many of the brothers had died by the time he moved back from Lancaster, California, to Elfrida, Arizona to establish a service station there. From that time forward he took over most of the responsibility, and much of the expense of maintenance of the Wells family cemetery, which had been set aside by his father for his descendants in the year 1906.

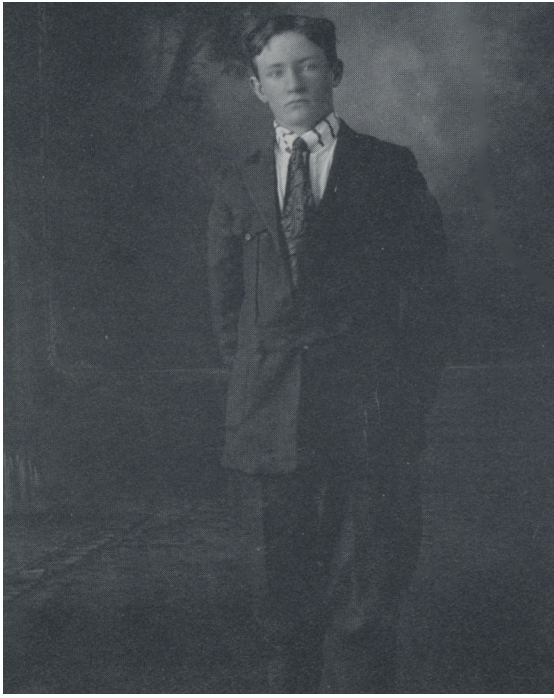
After Colly became terminally ill he was almost frantic in his desire to see a stable organization

formed which would perpetuate cemetery care. Esther Jean Best, Uncle Hilary Wells' youngest daughter, who was taking care of him at the time, brought him to the Memorial Day meeting in a wheel chair, May 1975. It was fortunate that he attended this meeting at Uncle Jeff's ranch home because he saw his dreams come true.

There was a good representation of the family at the meeting, and they formed The Wells Cemetery Association. Officers were elected; procedures adopted; and a finance committee established, that would perpetuate cemetery care. Colly was happy that day and seemed completely satisfied with what had been done. It was his last Memorial Day meeting.

Colly died October 1, 1975, and was put to rest near his mother and father and father and his sister Pearl, in the Wells' family cemetery.





*When the family assembled for Uncle Colly 's funeral, each one felt too close to him emotionally to present the eulogy and they asked me (Ruth Wells) to do so. I felt it an honor, since I had known and loved Uncle Colly. Excerpts from written tributes handed to me that day follow:*

#### **By Quinten Wells**

Uncle Colly used to take the Ajo football players to all the games, since there was no school bus and private cars were used for transportation. All the players preferred to ride with him because he was so well liked, and he always had a new car. Uncle Colly always brought us (Winston, Dorothy, Richard and myself) a big bag of candy when he came to visit. I remember one time he brought us each a baby duck, we sure loved those ducks! Uncle Colly loved to laugh and play jokes, but his jokes were good, in that even the ones who had it pulled on them laughed as hard as the rest. One time he “hot” wired the front seat of his car and took Winston and me downtown to watch. We had a hard time keeping a straight face while he got a friend of his in the front seat to go for a ride. When Uncle Colly shot the juice to him he about tore up the car trying to get out. There are so many people

in Ajo who knew and miss Uncle Colly. Every once in awhile someone asks about him. Jack Breen told me not long ago how he and some of the other boys, coming back from a football game, had ‘snuck’ a bottle in the back seat. He said Uncle Colly was plenty mad when he found out. He threw them into a cattle tank to sober up and really bawled them out. I know my life was a lot richer because of Uncle Colly’s love.

#### **By Hilary McMahon**

Uncle Colly was born when Arizona was a territory, and spent about 60 of his 73 years in the state. He helped numerous boys with part time jobs, and gave a home to many. He taught me in model airplane building, knowledge of basic auto mechanics, how to drive, to milk cows, and to hunt. He motivated me to do my best in scholarship and sports, and to do an honest days work.

The things I remember about Uncle Colly was how he loved children, and how he helped several boys that could have, and would have, gone into reform school. He spent time with them, helped them buy cars and fix them up. He took them into his home and treated them like sons. I have heard several people say that Uncle Colly was in the wrong profession. Instead of being a mechanic, he should have worked in aboys home. I wouldn’t have had a bike, because of finances, if it hadn’t been for him. He put bits and pieces together, painted it – and I was so proud of that bike! And the best thing he could have done for me was introduce me to my husband.

#### **By Esther Wells Best**

Uncle Colly had his schooling in the Wells school house and in Douglas schools. At one time he was in the drilling and hauling business with his brother Arthur. Uncle Colly had a terrific sense of humor and loved to laugh and play, even if the joke was on him. He was a good Christian. He tried to apply the Lord’s principles in all aspects of his life. He was well known for helping boys in learning a trade and getting a good start in life. He lived with me the last five months of his life, during this time, one fellow he had