

Johnson Vivian

Johnson Vivian was born 1 January 1830¹ in Camborne, Cornwall, England. He was the fifth of six children of John Vivian and Jane.² The family lived in Gwinear, Cornwall, England, in 1841.³ Johnson's mother died and his father remarried and had two more children. Then his father died, leaving Johnson living with his stepmother in 1851 in Gwinear, where he was a copper miner.⁴

Johnson immigrated to New York City on the ship "Isaac Wright", arriving 2 October 1855.⁵ He went to California for the gold rush.⁶ On the 1860 census, he was a miner, living in Chips Township, Sierra, California. He lived near Michael and Mary Ann Corbis, who will feature in the story later.⁷ He lived in Chips Flat for several years⁸, then moved to Virginia City, Storey, Nevada, by 1870, where he lived with the Carbis family.⁹

In 1875, he was a miner, living in Pioche, Lincoln, Nevada. He was one of the first to leave Pioche and go to Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory. He spent ten years there, in various positions of trust and responsibility.¹⁰ On the 1880 census, he was a miner, living in Silver Reef.¹¹ It was later that year that Johnson asked mine foreman Michael Carbis to fire Tom Forrest, a mine agitator. Forrest was very angry and waylaid Carbis and stabbed him. Carbis died and Forrest was later lynched in St George, Washington, Utah Territory.¹²

In February 1881, a local merchant named Greenbaum and John E Lloyd acquired a key from Johnson for the graveyard. They told him they wanted to pull weeds from the grave of Greenbaum's baby. Greenbaum put a pistol to Lloyd's head and told him his plan to set fire to the business section of town to obtain his insurance money. They left the graveyard and returned the key to Johnson. Later, Lloyd tried to tell the deputy sheriff but he didn't believe him. Lloyd then talked to Cliff Wilson and reported the plan to Captain Henry S Lubbock. Eventually Greenbaum was arrested and the plan for a fire was thwarted. This experience brought the town to arrange for a fire committee.¹³

After the murder of Michael Carbis, Johnson married his widow, Mary Ann Odgers. They moved to Bingham Canyon, Salt Lake, Utah Territory, in 1888, where Johnson engaged in mining and a mercantile business.¹⁴ In 1890, he was the superintendent of the Yosemite No 1 mine at Bingham.¹⁵ He died 24 February 1891 in Bingham¹⁶ and was buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Salt Lake City.

¹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 February 1891, p. 5.

² England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975.

³ England and Wales Census, 1841.

⁴ England and Wales Census, 1851.

⁵ New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957.

⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 February 1891, p. 5.

⁷ United States Census, 1860.

⁸ US Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865; California Great Registers, 1866-1910.

⁹ United States Census, 1870.

¹⁰ Nevada State Census, 1875; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 February 1891, p. 5.

¹¹ United States Census, 1880.

¹² *Salt Lake Herald*, 5 October 1880, p. 3.

¹³ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, pp. 128-131.

¹⁴ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 February 1891, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 April 1890, p. 6.

¹⁶ Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946; Utah Death Registers, 1847-1966; Salt Lake County Death Records, 1908-1949; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 February 1891; 25 February 1891, p. 5.

He was prominently connected with the Masonic order for over 30 years.¹⁷ His probate papers listed merchandise in his store (groceries, liquors, gents furnishing goods) as well as horses, home and business furniture, and cash in the bank, with a total value of \$8,160.75.¹⁸ Mary Ann lived in Salt Lake City with her son and his family¹⁹ until her death in 1914 in Bingham. She was also buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Salt Lake City.²⁰



Johnson Vivian (image from *Ancestry.com*)



(Image from *BillionGraves.com*)

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¹⁷ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 February 1891, p. 5.

¹⁸ Utah, Wills and Probate Records, 1800-1985.

¹⁹ United States Census, 1910.

²⁰ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964.