

Adelia G. Groesbeck Lambert

I was born in Farmington, Trumbull County, Ohio, April 14, 1822, daughter of Garrett Lewis Groesbeck and Mercy Bosworth. She went to school when she was three years old and learned very rapidly to read, spell and write. At that time the Bible was used in the schools and it wasn't many years until she knew the New Testament from memory, and could always tell when it was quoted incorrectly. When she was six years old she went with her parents and some of their friends across Lake Erie in a sailing vessel. When they reached the other side and were just ready to cast anchor, a great windstorm came up and blew them back to the other side in one night. They were very much frightened and were on the lake three weeks before they could land. When the water was stilled, they asked the little girl to read to them out of the Bible.

She spent most of her school days in Ohio. Eliza R. Snow was one of her school mates. They became good friends and Adelia always visited her at [LDS General] Conference time. She often said, "If I don't have a good visit with Eliza when I go to Conference I hardly feel like I have been to [Salt Lake] City."

Adelia Groesbeck's father said he wanted all of his children to have a good education and he gave them the best they could get then. When each of his children were grown he gave them a good bed, feather tick, good riding horse and saddle, a side saddle for the girls. (Adelia was a fine horse-back rider and rode until she was about 55 years of age when a horse fell with her as she was riding out to Woodland to visit her daughter Sarah. Her family then persuaded her to stop riding horses.) She brought the bed to Utah with her that her father gave her. The springs were rope woven across the bed, and fastened on wooden pegs on the sides.

She was a school teacher, and taught in Iowa from the time she was about 20 years of age. After she came to Kamas she taught in the old District school house. She was the first lady school teacher in this little town. Later she taught in one room of her own home, a few children besides her own.

She was the first Relief Society secretary in Kamas, serving with sister Nancy Smithies.

Adelia kept her husband's accounts in his business dealing and was very accurate in this.

The Groesbeck family moved from Ohio to Iowa and it was there she met John Lambert. After a courtship of two weeks, they were married February 6, 1846 [in Nauvoo, Illinois]. He visited her first on Sunday and found her alone and reading the Book of Mormon. He was a devout Latter-day Saint, having joined the Church in England. Her interest in the Book of Mormon impressed him greatly. He said it was a good sign.

Her daughters sometimes would say to her, "How would you like us to marry anyone on so short an acquaintance? Why did you?" She said, "I knew your father was a good man and he had a call and they advised him to get married." She never stated what that call was.

Her wedding dress was a black silk dress which she already owned. She said, "I have often thought maybe it wasn't the best omen to be married in black. I had a very pretty delain dress, but your father's clothes were real plain."

They could have come to Utah with the pioneers of 1847, but her husband wished to get a little better fixed to start the journey westward. So he worked at his trade as a brick mason in St. Joseph, Missouri, (where their first child, Martha Adelaide, was born) and in Kansas City, Missouri, (where John Carlos was born).

Adelia, while living in Missouri, wished to add to their income. So she made moccasins and trimmed them with fancy bead work and sold them to the Indians. [She] also made men's suits. She was an expert tailor and seamstress, doing all the sewing by hand. She made suits for her husband.

In 1850, they started West, better equipped, perhaps, than most who crossed the plains in those days. They had gotten one yoke of black Spanish cows, one yoke of oxen, a good wagon with bows and cover

with which to make the journey westward. One of the cows gave milk and Adelia would milk her each morning. She put the milk into a small covered bucket and fastened it to the back of the wagon, so every night they would have butter and buttermilk.

Despite that, the trip was long and hard, lasting three months. Their difficulties were increased because the two children had the whooping cough the entire way, and her husband bruised his heel and a felon developed from which he suffered terribly. She drove the oxen part of the time to let him rest. Sometimes they would get a bit unruly so he would have to get out of the wagon, hop on one foot and whip them. They arrived in Salt Lake City on September 11, 1850.

Adelia experienced all the hardships of the early pioneers. She was the mother of ten children of whom nine lived. Her seventh child was born dead. She had been working very hard. The day the child was born, she cooked the mid-day meal and carried it about two miles to the field where her husband was working. On the road back she took sick and had to lie down all alone. A Danish woman came along, but she could speak no English and was unable to understand Adelia, so she went on. After the baby was born, Adelia lay there an hour or two, then got up, put the dead baby in her apron, walked home and went upstairs to bed. No one knew anything about it until her husband came home at night. She was asked how she could ever do that and she replied, "Well, I don't know. I think it seems sometime 'as your day your strength shall be'."

Her husband worked at his trade and farmed only in his spare time which left the gardening for Adelia to do.

When her third child, Mary Adelia, was born she nearly lost her life. She was sick for three months and lost all of her hair and all of her teeth. When she began to recover, her husband carried her out of doors to get fresh air and sunshine. Her husband's mother took care of her baby.

On June 10, 1855, John Lambert married, as his second wife, Elena Hansena Larsen. She and Adelia always got along very well. Two better women never lived.

We have followed the record which Adelia kept of her children's births:

Martha Adelaide, born Feb. 24, 1847, Thursday morning at seven o'clock, at St. Joseph, Buccanon (sic) County, Missouri.

John Carlos, born Sept. 19, 1849, in Kansas, Jackson Co., Missouri at 2 o'clock, Thursday afternoon.

Mary Adelia was born Sept. 11, 1851 at S. L. C. [Salt Lake City], Utah, Thursday morning at 10 o'clock.

Sarah Amelia was born March 9, 1853, Sunday eve. at 6 o'clock in S. L. C.

Jedediah Grant was born July 10, 1857, Friday morning in S. L. C.

Ann Maria born, May 24, 1861, Friday eve at 11 o'clock, Sugar House ward, S. L. C. Utah.

Emma Cordelia, born Jan. 5, 1864, Tuesday eve at 6 o'clock at Rhoades Valley, Summit Co., Utah.

Mercy Harriet, born at Kamas, Utah, March 21, 1866.

In April of 1861, John Lambert moved his two wives and their children to Rhoades Valley, now known as Kamas. He wanted to live where he could get more land and raise cattle and sheep in order to support his large family. This however, necessitated taking the children to live on the frontier. The children were taught the fundamentals by their mother. The hard life of the frontier, working for one's daily bread and the fear of Indians occupied most of the time of all the members of the family. They made their own clothes, washed wool, carded rolls, spun yarn, knitted stockings, mittens, comforters, etc. Some of the wool was died with weeds gathered from the fields.

Winter in Kamas was very cold. The night her daughter Emma was born was the coldest night they had had. It was so cold that when her son John went two miles with ox team to get a doctor he froze his feet. Later that night, three men came in the house nearly frozen to death. The house was one big room, but her bed had curtains around it. That was her only bedroom.

Her husband preceded her in death seventeen years. He died on November 25 1893. The remaining years of her life she spent living with her children. In her later life she was healthy except that she broke her leg twice after she was eighty. Both times it healed successfully.

Adelia was a devout Latter-day Saint and the only member of her father's family to join the Church. She was secretary for the Relief Society [the women's auxiliary of the Church] in Kamas for many years. She had a very kind disposition and always tried to make others happy and to be of little trouble to others herself.

I quote from one of her last letters, written March 4, 1908:

"I was 85 my last birthday the 14 of April. I take cold easy, can only see to read and write with my right eye. Cannot bear the lamp light on my eyes, go to bed early on this account, not because I am sleepy. I wake early in the morning. I have time to remember my children and grand-children and don't forget to pray for them, those that are far away and those that are near, that they may be blessed as they need with health and strength and be found striving to keep the commandments, attending to their duties, putting away things that are evil, walking in the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life. To my daughter Mary Gibson with love and best wishes for you all."

(signed) Adelia G. Lambert