

Bernard & Louise Knapp

Family History

Eliza Anna Lemmon Knapp
Life Sketch

FROM THE FILES OF BERNARD ELDEN KNAPP

Eliza Anna Lemmon Knapp

In 1763, Robert S. Lemmon, second great-grandfather, emigrated from Ireland and settled at Baltimore, Maryland, where he remained for a number of years. He strongly advocated the question of American liberty and when independence was declared in 1776 was at the front and aided in bearing the brunt of battle. He was present at General Braddock's defeat and also at the capture of Cornwallis. Robert S. Lemmon had four sons: Robert Jr., William, James and John, of whom Robert Jr. died at New Albany, Indiana. William went to Louisiana and later to Mississippi where he passed away. James served as a messenger boy in the Revolutionary War, carrying messages between George Washington and his father, Robert S. Lemmon. He was at that time a youth of seventeen. He lived in Pennsylvania until 1786 and then removed to Kentucky. His younger brother, John, died in Kentucky in young manhood. James Lemmon subsequently removed to Corydon, Harrison county, Indiana, in the year 1818. He married Sarah Carr, who became the mother of Washington Lemmon, the grandfather of Ann Eliza of this review. Washington Lemmon was born Oct. 6, 1806 in Shelby county, Kentucky, and was reared to manhood in Harrison county, Indiana. In 1830 he removed to Adams county, Ill. where he resided for twenty years. In 1841 he joined the church of Jesus of Christ of Latter-day saints, and he became a personal friend of the Prophet Joseph Smith and assisted in building the temple at Nauvoo. During the time that Joseph Smith was a candidate for the presidency of the United States, Mr. Lemmon made campaign speeches in his behalf throughout Illinois. He was absent in Indiana at the time that Joseph Smith suffered martyrdom at Carthage. For two years Mr. Lemmon resided at Council Bluffs and on the 10th of September, 1852, arrived in Utah. He settled on a farm in Millcreek ward of Salt Lake county and became a prosperous agriculturist of that region. At Corydon, Indiana, in August, 1826 he had married Tamer Stephens, a daughter of John and Stacey Stephens. They had a family of twelve children, eight sons and four daughters, all of whom reached adult age, namely: James William, who was born May 16, 1827; Stacey Ann, who was born March 8, 1829, and married Vergil Merrill; John Wesley, born August 15, 1831; Nancy Melissa, who was born September 6, 1833, and married Patriarch John Smith; Jasper, born August 5, 1835; Willis, August 12, 1837; Leander, November 10, 1839; Alfred, Jan. 9, 1842; Cliver Perry, Sept. 25, 1843; Mary Emily, Sept. 17, 1845; Artimzie Caroline, November 8, 1847; and Hyrum, November 23, 1849. Of this number Alfred and Hyrum are still living (when this history was published). Washington Lemmon, the father of this family, was a prominent churchman and served as Bishop's counselor for more than twenty years. He died October 2, 1902, at the notable old age of ninety-six years.

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Of the Homer Family we give briefly this, that the name means "a low island" or "a low place near water." In the year 1066, when Wm of Normandy sailed to invade and conquer England, one De Holmere went with him and fought at the Battle of Hastings.

The earliest direct ancestor to whom we can definitely trace, was Richard Homer who was born at Etings Hall England, Mar. 1540 who married Margaret Wright of Sedgley in March of 1565. His fourth child Richard is next, he married and had five sons, the third son, Edward was born about 1600, married Elizabeth Wilkes, The eldest son of Edward and Elizabeth was Edward Homer Jr. He married Anne Gibbons, they had a family of five sons and three daughters. John, fourth child of Edward and Ann, born 20 March 1665, each of these were born at Etting Hall as it passed from father to son.

John went to sea at a very early age and at twenty-seven was master of his own merchant ship. And early in 1692, he sailed for America. On the 13 th of July 1693, he was married to Marjorie Stevens of Boston. The second son of this family, Benjamin Homer, was our ancestor. He married 1721 Elizabeth Crowell and they were the parents of six sons and two daughters. Two of these sons became sea Captains, one Capt. Thomas Homer who was next in our line was born 31 March 1736 married Elizabeth Sears, their family consisted of six sons and four daughters, three of whom (sons) were lost at sea in young manhood before marriage. Next in our line was the third remaining brother, Benjamin Cobb, Homer born 24 June 1777. He married Anna Warner who's great-grandmother was a princess of the Cherokee Indian Nation. Her grandmother lived to be 113 years old.

Their son, Russel King Homer next holds our interest. He married 26th of Dec. 1836 in Erie N. Y. Eliza Williamson. These two joined the church and became friends of Joseph Smith, Martin Harris and others of the church leaders. He died Feb. 1890, his wife Eliza died 11 June 1912, at the age of ~~87~~ 95 years.

Anna Eliza Homer, fourth child of Russel King and Eliza Williamson was born 19 March 1843 in Logan County Ill. She knew the difficulties and hardships of pioneer life. She assisted her mother in caring for a hotel and store in Crescent City, Ohio. There they entertained missionaries, emigrants and Indians. When she was fifteen years old she came across the plains walking and sometimes driving an ox team.

After arriving in Salt Lake, she met Willis Lemmon who lived with his parents on Mill creek. In Nov. 1859 there was a triple wedding in the old Endowment house, when she and Willis Lemmon, her sister, Nancy Homer and Martin Harris and their friend Stephen White and Agnes Mc Gregor were married.

Early the next spring the two sisters and their husbands settled in Smithfield Utah and built a log house. Soon after, the brother-in-law was called to go back to Iowa and bring a train of emigrants across the plains, which took about six months. During this time, there was Indian trouble, Eliza and Nancy ran for the fort. Nancy in the excitement dropped her baby in the creek, however she recovered it and they safely reached the fort.

Eliza's oldest child, Anna Eliza, was born before her husbands return. Eliza died 1911, was the mother of ten children. This child, Anna Eliza was born 18 Nov. 1860 and was the first girl born in Smithfield, Utah. She grew, and attended school as often and as much as other pioneer children did and being the eldest of her mother's family, shared in the responsibility and work of caring for a large family. Many times did the children huddle in fear in corners when the Indians came to the doors demanding or begging for food.

One evening when her parents went to some social gathering they left Eliza in charge of the smaller children. There were no electric lights or even lamps so they cautioned her to be very careful of the candle and take good care of the baby. She sat by the baby until she became so tired she fell asleep still clasping the candle stick to keep it safe.

Eliza was left-handed and one teacher she had became very cross with her because of that and one day he whipped her severely because she did not do her lesson with her right hand. When she went home and her father learned what had occurred he waited near the gate till the teacher came by and proceeded to thrash him as he deserved.

Each fall after Eliza was large enough she would go to Mill Creek to the home of her grandparents to gather and dry fruit for the family because their own orchards had not begun to produce.

Eliza liked singing and did sing much at home and in public. She also attended school in Logan, it was there she met Justin A. Knapp and their romance was carried on around the low walls of the Logan Temple where he was working at the time. They were married 9 Oct. 1879 in the Endowment House in S. L. C. His home was in Richmond Utah there they built a home where four of their 12 children were born Anna Rozina who married William Widdison; Mabel who married C. Heber Ward; Jennie who married Frank Walters; Justin W. married Mabel Hale. Then they moved to Rexburg, Eliza and children coming to Market Lake, (now Roberts, Idaho) on the train and the rest of the way by team. Their house hold goods were coming by team. Soon after she arrived, her fifth child, Lydia, was born who lived but a few months. They settled on a farm on the Teton river west of Rexburg, called Island Ward, later given the name of Hibbard in honor of their first Bishop who was the husband of her sister Julia.

There her seven other children were born: Leone, died when she was seven years old; Elsie May married Chas M. Larsen; Warren died when he was nine years old; Esther Jane married Leslie Robertson; Eveline Alice married John Hillman; Raymond and Adrian, a pair of twins, died at birth, one-- and the other at ~~1 1/2~~ 1 1/2 years.

Eliza knew the hardships of building a new home in barren land, in making the desert to blossom as the rose. She had not many of the material comforts of life. She must have craved the prettier things, for later when all the children were married she would buy the little trinkets a child would delight in. Cache Valley was so far from Snake river Valley in those days of slow travel, that many years of homesick days passed by before she again saw her father and mother. Yet on the farm or at the sawmill she carried her share of life's load cheerfully and with a song on her lips, other people's trials were made her burdens. Her oldest daughter died a few weeks after her first child was born. Her own little baby died a few months after she reached this lonely barren country. Typhoid Fever took the little seven year old girl. Later this dread disease visited their home again, this time took a son while at the same time two or three other children lay in the shadow of death for weeks. Very few people would come to give assistance because they were afraid of the disease.

Then her twin babies came. One died at birth, the other from an accident when he was about two years old. Thus half her children were taken from her. Then when the rest were all married, her husband, too, passed on leaving her alone in her home. Through all this she did her duty as she saw it. Her son and husband filled missions. She sent the children to school and went with them on Sunday with a song on her lips and a prayer in her heart. She lifted her eyes to the Lord and her burdens were made lighter.

Much of her time she gave to the Relief Society, going about from place to place with her horse and buggy, making quilts, doing Red Cross Work, during World War I; visiting the sick and cheering the sad, as is the calling of a Relief Society President. She also raised her voice in song as choister in this Women's organization.

Much needed help was given her children in their homes at different times.

After suffering about three strokes, she left this life to join her loved ones beyond, 13th Dec. 1931 leaving behind hosts of friends and six sorrowing families.