

Our Family Links

The Groberg/Holbrook Family History Association Newsletter

Special Issue, February 2005

Delbert Valentine Groberg 1906-2004



"A GOOD BOY AND A GREAT MAN"

by Nancy Tingey

Presented at Delbert's funeral on December 9, 2004. While this memorial to Grandpa and the previous newsletter honoring Grandma include only the grandchildren's tributes from their respective funerals, full transcripts and audio CDs of both services are available through the family association.

Delbert Valentine Groberg's life on earth began February 14, 1906 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. He was the second child born to Maude and John Enoch Groberg. His life was forever changed two years later when his mother died following the birth of sister Maude. One year after that his father succumbed to a lingering illness. Delbert's only memory of his parents was of his father's death bed where he pulled the boys close and admonished them to "be good boys." That simple wish of a loving father became the guiding desire of the young boy whose long and exemplary life we celebrate today.

Loving relatives cared for the young children. Delbert and his brother LeRoi were raised by newly married Uncle Charlie and Aunt Mattie Groberg in the community of Farr West, Utah. Grandma and Grandpa Groberg, immigrants from Sweden, were nearby and participated in the upbringing of the boys. The boys shared in the responsibilities as well as the love of a farm family life. They grew up as brothers to their cousins. Delbert was always grateful to the wonderful cousins and relatives who cared for him as their own.

When in the 7th grade he entered his best potatoes in the County fair. He watched and waited as the judging took place. To his great disappointment, he received no recognition at all. He thought, "I'll take them home and we'll eat them" A kind official convinced him to enter them in the State fair. Delbert questioned whether they would do better at the larger fair, but decided he might as well try. A few weeks later, he received a letter contain-

ing a blue ribbon and a check for first prize. He learned that it is the final judgement that really counts.

He attended school in Weber County and graduated from Odgen High School in 1925. When he was a young boy and his friends "wanted to sneak off and do something out of sight of their parents, he could never participate because he knew, unlike his friends, he could never hide from his parents.". Grandpa would later tell us grandchildren that often he would climb high in the apple tree to talk to his parents. He could feel their love and concern then and throughout his life. He knew the veil between this world and the next was very thin.

Delbert was called and served a mission to the Eastern States. His time there was a time of spiritual growth and leadership development. His mission President was B.H. Roberts, one of the great historians of the church. Delbert had a life long love and appreciation for history and record keeping. He saw many benefits of serving a mission-gaining wider experience, meeting people of other places, and building a strong testimony of the Church.

It is impossible to separate the events of Delbert Groberg's life from the attributes he possessed, they are intrinsically connected. I have chosen three characteristics which defined and governed the many decisions and achievements of Delbert's life.

The first is a desire to "do what's right" He wanted to be a good boy. His reputation was pure and all who knew him respected him and knew his standards. His son Richard recalls "When I was in California at a priesthood meeting in Oceanside, a man who had known Dad back in the '40's, introduced me to the priesthood group. He said I was the son of Delbert Groberg, who lived such a perfect life



Missionary on the Hill Cumorah 1926

that he would go directly to the Celestial Kingdom without even going to the Spirit World to be judged!

Another time when Dad was Realtor of the Year for the state of Idaho, he and I went to a real estate convention in Northern Idaho. A very prominent real estate leader was introducing Dad to one of the National leaders. She said that she had already met Delbert in the east and had coffee with him. The man said, 'you didn't have coffee with Delbert Groberg because he would never drink coffee!' She said 'oh, I didn't mean it that way. I just meant that I met and visited with him during a social hour.' I thought it was interesting that this prominent man was so interested in Dad's standards that it was important to explain to this lady that he was strictly obedient to the gospel standards."

The next characteristic is his gift of perspective which extends beyond the normal view of things. He had the ability to connect

the past to the present and the present to the future. A simple example of this happened several years ago when our young family paid a visit to Grandma and Grandpa. As we were leaving, Grandpa shook my sons hands and told them to "always remember that they shook the hand of a man who shook the hand of the Prophet Joseph Smith."

The third strength of Delbert Groberg is his sincere and immense love of people. He was interested in, thought the best of, and brought out the best in all



Siblings DV, Maude, LeRoi, 1928



Newlyweds, 1930



Devoted Father - 1945 (pre-Lewis, Gloria, George)

those he met and worked with. Each of us here today have a full heart because of our loving association with Delbert Valentine Groberg.

Now back to the events of Delbert's life: Following his mission, he and brother LeRoi enrolled at BYU. It was New Year's Day in 1928. Looking for information, he found some students working at College Hall. In his words, "In one of the offices was a young girl working. I walked into the office myself to ask some questions. This girl was very knowledgeable and helped me; but I didn't know her name. When my brother and his friend came looking for me, then his friend introduced me to Jennie Holbrook. Truly, my purpose in going to BYU was to find a wonderful girl to be my wife, and I married the first girl I saw."



Devoted Grandfather (1972 with Delbert J. Groberg)

Jennie and Delbert were married on June 11, 1930 in the Salt Lake Temple. That began a long and beautiful relationship, even an Eternal one. Delbert always courted Jennie who loved him deeply in return. He often said "with her, everything; without her, nothing." And "We loved the Lord, we loved our work, we loved our family and each other."

They started their life together in Idaho Falls. These were depression years, the children began arriving. Work was scarce. Delbert accepted the nomination to run as a Republican candidate for Justice of the Peace. He was defeated in the primary. Another friend urged him to put his name on the



Devoted Great-Grandfather and Great-Great-Grandfather (1985 with Jim Powell)

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1000

December 7, 2004

The Family Delbert V. Groberg
c/o Elder John H. Groberg
1188 South Sunset Drive
Bountiful, UT 84010

Dear Friends:

We were indeed saddened to learn of the passing of your dear father, Delbert V. Groberg. He lived a long and fruitful life and we rejoice with you in a life well lived and express to your family our heartfelt and sincere condolences.

Brother Groberg set a high standard of service, faith and achievement for his family to emulate. We are confident that your family members will take comfort in the quality of his life. He lived in such a way that all those who knew him recognized his abiding love for our Savior, Jesus Christ, and we acknowledge with gratitude the example your father set for his posterity.

Brother Groberg was a great patriot who demonstrated love for his country and his fellowman through his community service in various capacities. As a businessman he made significant contributions and is remembered as a man of integrity and thoughtfulness. His Church service as bishop, patriarch and president of the Idaho Falls Idaho Temple reflects his love of the gospel and we appreciate his dedication and devotion to the building up of the Kingdom.

Your father has returned home to a loving Father in Heaven. There, he is happily reunited with your dear mother and with other loved ones who preceded them in death. Although there is no substitute for the love of dear parents, we pray you will be blessed with peace and the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit.

With love and kind regards.

Sincerely yours,

Anderson & Lindsey
Thomas J. Merson
James E. Farnsworth
 The First Presidency

Devoted Temple President and Matron 1975

Democratic ticket for the final election. He did so and won the election. He was re-elected several times.

Delbert tells of purchasing, on contract, a new 1930 Chevrolet Sedan which cost \$650. He recounts " Before we got it paid for, we went to the garage and asked them to take it back-we owed \$250. They said no, they had too many they'd already taken back. When we got it all paid out, we traded it on a house. That was our start in the real estate business. We traded the car for down payment on a house and got an old car to boot."

As their family grew, they moved several times. The house at 255 12th Street was the family home for 25 years. It was there more children joined the family, missionaries went out and returned, and life was lived. Delbert and Jennie had eleven children, four daughters and seven sons. All seven sons and one daughter served missions for the Church. For nearly 20 years missionary letters were an important part of their life. As each of the missions was completed, either Delbert or Jennie or both would meet the missionary in

the area of service and then tour on the way home. This took them far and wide and fostered in the family a deep love and appreciation of all countries, cultures and people of the earth. Even today younger generations of the family travel and live abroad. Many missionaries have served with the encouragement and blessing of Grandpa and Grandma Groberg.

With a large family to raise, Delbert worked hard at his business. He sold insurance, he dealt in real estate, and he became an appraiser. He enjoyed working and had a deep rooted belief in the destiny of the community of Idaho Falls. Delbert served his



Devoted Community Servant

DELBERT VALENTINE GROBERG - handsome & loving at all ages



Delbert--LeRoi Groberg



All who have ever received one of Grandma's mass mailings will recognize her handiwork here. Thus this collage is not only a fitting tribute to a man "handsome and loving at all ages," but a memorial to the love and devotion of his dedicated wife. (It also provides a nostalgic peek at the days before politically correct scrapbooking -- when free-hand, scissor-cut pictures fused with strapping tape and rubber cement to acid laden paper were state of the art. For you modernists interested in copies you can put behind a themed trim or patterned border, we are in the process of restoring and preserving all we can. Just let Matt Powell or Tom Groberg know what you want and we will do our best to get you a good print.)

* While Grandma obviously believed this baby picture to be of Grandpa, copies of the same photo elsewhere in the family collection identify the baby as Grandpa's brother LeRoi.



Devoted Eternal Companions, 1998. The note to the right is typical of many Delbert wrote to his "Dearest Jane" over the years. His life was a testament to the lasting sincerity and depth of his love and appreciation. And to his apt praise of Jennie's "mothering" we must add that his fathering is an equal "blessing to us all and will add to the lives of each generation."

5/11/68
Dearest Jane -
It is wonderful to have you home after such an eventful "mission" to Tonga - Your mothering is a blessing to us all and will add continuously to the lines of each generation. Because you are
YOU MEAN EVERYTHING TO ME,
DARLING Love Delbert

community through organizations such as the Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, United Way and other special committees and commissions. He was a true pioneer in this area. Each of his business ventures was designed to bring progress and growth and value to the community. He, along with others, founded several businesses which continue to serve this community today. He truly felt that everything that was necessary and desirable in life could be had here in the Snake River Valley.

Delbert was chairman of the Bicentennial Commission for Bonneville County. He solicited help and participation from the entire community. He led with the ideal of inclusion, that everyone has something to contribute to the success of a project, or in building the community.

He was a Patriot through and through. He, in every sense of the phrase "lived the American Dream" and therefore encouraged and inspired those around him to appreciate this great country and the principles upon which it was founded. Delbert was generous in giving of himself and his substance. After their first child was born, Delbert

was called to serve in the bishopric of the Idaho Falls First Ward. He recounts "we went to stake conference. Elder David O. McKay was there. He asked 'will all the members of the First Ward stand' he explained that Bishop Johnson's first counselor had moved away. 'We'd like to submit the name of Delbert V. Groberg as Bishop Johnson's first counselor. There we stood with the ward and heard it for the first time.'"

He later served as Bishop of the Third Ward and in 1955 was called as a Stake Patriarch. In over four decades of service as a Patriarch he blessed more than 1100 lives, including several of his own children, most of his grandchildren and a few great-grandchildren. In 1975 Delbert Groberg was called to serve as President of the Idaho Falls Temple. Jennie was called as Matron. For five years they devoted their time and energy to this great work. The Temple was the House of the Lord whom they dearly and deeply loved. They considered their service the highest worship they could give.

The Idaho Falls Temple had special significance in Delbert's life. In the early 30's when business was slow, Delbert found himself spending time at the county courthouse researching ownership of land along the Snake River Bank. This area was where he had played as a child visiting his Brunt relatives. It was always a special place and he now felt, along with several others, that a Temple should one day stand on that ground. Through research and negotiation and involvement of many, including the Chamber of Commerce chaired by Don F. Kuglar, preparations were made and proposals given to President Heber J. Grant. The community offered to contribute the land and the church accepted that offer.

On December 19, 1939, the day of the groundbreaking ceremony, Delbert wrote in his journal: "I bot (sic) three of four lots from the county and worked up an entire map of the plot along the river and when Pres. Grant told of the tentative decision to build a temple in Idaho Falls, I was given the job (along with John Homer) of buying the lots. Sometime I must write the history of each case..." Nearly

50 years later through much effort and much appreciated help from friend and publisher, Walt Coyne, Delbert published a book of the history of the Idaho Falls Temple.

In recent years, Delbert and Jennie have spent their time recording events and feelings. They have expressed love to all and shared their substance, both spiritual and temporal with many. They have received multiple awards and recognitions for their lives of service. These were much appreciated, but they understood their greatest reward was that of their family. They have encouraged regular family reunions which have bonded the generations together. Their favorite response when asked what they are doing these days was "we are having joy and rejoicing in our posterity."

And so we are here today to bear witness to the world and the heavens that Delbert Valentine Groberg, son of Maude and John Enoch Groberg, husband of Jennie Holbrook, Father to 11 proud sons and daughters, 12 loving sons and daughters-in-law, Grandfather to 63 adoring grandchildren, and Great-grandfather to scores of children, was a "good boy and a Great man."



The Champ in 2002 -- "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." 2Timothy 4:7

Missionary and Military Addresses
Elder Daniel Blair
Aichi-ken, Okazaki-Shi
Tatsumi-Kita, 1-5-2
Kopo Eiwa #302
T444-0876 Japan
SPC Tyler Hubble
Medics, HHt 1-7 CAV, 5th BCT
APO, AE 09310
tyler.hubble@us.army.mil
Andrew Jensen Groberg
P.O. Box 3027
USAF Academy, CO 80841-3027
Elder Jim Powell
Korea Seoul West Mission
Song Pa, PO Box 31
Seoul 138-600, Korea
Elder Ben Tingey
MTC Mailbox 96
RUS-ROS 0418
2005 N. 900 E.
Provo, UT 84604-1793
Richard and Ronda Groberg
Helsinki Finaldn Mission
Neitsytpolku 3 A 4
00140 Helsinki FINLAND

Don't forget to send your tax deductible contributions to the Groberg/Holbrook Family History Assoc. c/o Joseph Groberg 1605 S. Woodruff, Idaho Falls, ID 83404. Also, please send updates on family information (e.g. marriages and new babies), new addresses, and any other information requests that you may have to Matt Powell mmpowell9@msn.com or Tom Groberg tom@govirtuoso.com.