

Our Family Links

The Groberg/Holbrook Family History Association Newsletter

Issue 11, December 2007

“WE LOVE THY HOUSE, OH GOD”



DELBERT AND JENNIE GROBERG AT THEIR BELOVED IDAHO FALLS TEMPLE

CATHERINE AUGUSTA LOVETT WILKINS

Jennie's maternal great-grandmother, Catherine August Lovett Wilkins, had a love of God, family, and temple work that she inherited from generations of freedom seeking ancestors and that she manifest in her last dying wish. She was born April 25, 1823 in Chelmsford, MA. Her forbears were among the very first settlers in the Massachusetts Colony -- English immigrants seeking religious freedom in the 1600's. Further lessons of the importance of tolerance and the ability to endure religious persecution were passed down from her 3rd great-grandmother, Susanna Rootes, who had been imprisoned for witchcraft in the frenzy of the Salem Witch Trials. Her grandfather was a patriot soldier in the American Revolution. She and others in her family embraced the restored gospel of Jesus Christ when it was presented to them by a young missionary named George Washington Wilkins. A year after joining the Church, Catherine married that missionary, showing her pride in her patriotic parentage by choosing July 4, 1846 as her wedding day.



Temple work and worship are central themes in the history and heritage of the Delbert and Jennie Groberg family. Grobergs and Holbrooks have sought out and received temple blessings from the dawn of the Restoration through the present day. Of deserved note in this regard is the service of Delbert and Jennie (1975-80) and now John and Jean Groberg as President and Matron of the Idaho Falls Temple. In this newsletter, however, we will focus on others of the Groberg/Holbrook rank and file whose temple service and experiences have been of equal (albeit somewhat less conspicuous) significance. As we recall and contemplate the temple experiences and feelings of past and living family members, we can better appreciate how family centered and family centering temples can be. Indeed, we can better comprehend the truth and literal fulfillment of Malachi's prophetic words regarding the return of Elijah: "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Malachi 4:6.

She calmly bore the religious persecution that forced her to leave homes in the East and move West with the Saints. She ignored criticism and prejudice when she lovingly adopted and raised an orphaned Native American baby as an equal with her biological children. She demonstrated her devotion to family and temple when she traveled with her husband from Spanish Fork to Logan, Utah to do the temple work for her parents. She further and finally expressed that devotion when she learned that her daughter Alsina was going to postpone her marriage to George H. Brimhall because Catherine was terminally ill. She called Alsina and George to her death bed and extracted a promise that they would not postpone the wedding. Catherine died on December 5, 1874. Alsina and George were sealed in the Endowment House 3 weeks later. As a wedding gift, George gave Alsina a Bible inscribed with words written by George but equally descriptive of Catherine's legacy: "Please accept this little token, nor is it free from faults, but like the one who gave it thee, it seeks that which exalts."



FAMILY TEMPLE WORK BEGINS IN NAUVOO

It appears that Eunice Dunning Holbrook was the first of our ancestors to participate in latter-day temple ordinances. She and her husband, Chandler, lived near and participated in the early phases of the construction of the first temple in Kirtland, Ohio. Before the temple was completed, however, Eunice and Chandler accepted a call to serve in Zion's Camp and left for Missouri with that group in May of 1834. They were in Far West, Missouri when the corner stones were laid for a temple there. Of that event, Chandler's brother Joseph wrote: "On the 1st day of July, 1838,



Eunice Holbrook

the cornerstones of the temple were laid, they having been hauled to the spot before hand. My team helped to haul them." Again, however, the Holbrooks did not get to see the fruits of those early efforts, as they and the rest of the Saints were forced to leave Missouri before any further work could be done on that temple. Eunice and Chandler were again on hand when work was begun on the Nauvoo temple in 1840. And though they were again forced to flee their home before that temple was finally completed and dedicated in May of 1846, they were able to participate in temple ordinances there before the work was completed. In 1841, Eunice was baptized as proxy for her sisters Almira Phipps and Sally Verry. On December 23, 1845, Eunice and Chandler entered the Nauvoo temple and received their own endowments.

Congratulations to Richard and Rosalee Ballard, parents of the newest DV and Jennie great-grandbaby - Ethan James Ballard, born 11/15/07 in Sandpoint, ID.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO THE IDAHO FALLS TEMPLE by Mary Jane Fritzen

When Dad was released as temple president, he and I worked together to prepare the book, *The Idaho Falls Temple, the First LDS Temple in Idaho*. A few copies are still available for sale to those who contact me. We also have about 40 copies of the book without the cover jacket. If you would like one of these just ask for one when you make your next donation to the Groberg-Holbrook Genealogical Organization.

Dad wrote in his introduction, "The dedicatory prayer by President George Albert Smith is the central message of the book. It is scripture and timely. Elder Mark E. Petersen said of it, 'It was a classic and an inspired document.'" Dad asked his counselor Willis G. Nelson to set the prayer in poetic form, not changing the words. Then Dad had it printed on parchment paper to emphasize its importance in the book.

Among family members who have served as Idaho Falls Temple Ordinance Workers (besides Dad and Mom and John and Jean as Presidents and Matrons thirty years apart) are Dick and Ronda, Joe and Jeanne and Mary Jane. Bonnie also plays the organ at the temple, as did Mother. We sense the universal simplicity of the Gospel, particularly as it prepares our view of eternal families.

DAILY DEDICATION

Delbert Groberg often recalled with reverence the day his maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Susan Burnett Brunt, stood with him on the banks of the Snake River near her home in Idaho Falls and prophetically pronounced that a day would come when a temple of the Lord would stand on that spot. Some years after her death, Delbert was able to play

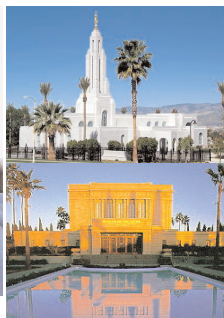


a role in making that vision a reality. However, Delbert's sister Maude (who Elizabeth raised as her own daughter) was able to play a role in allowing Elizabeth to fulfill another temple related dream during her lifetime. It all began with a trip to Salt Lake when Maude was 16 and Elizabeth was 70. As Maude later recounted: "Something happened and all I remember is the thought came to me, maybe you could go to Salt Lake and go to school. I went to Momma and said, 'You know, if we went to Salt Lake I could go to school and you could go to the temple.' She said, "Oh, I can't do that." and I said, "Why couldn't we? We could rent the house and we could rent something in Salt Lake for what we got for our house [in Idaho Falls] and you know you would like to work in the temple'. ... [I]t kind of struck a chord with her and ... that is what we did. She rented the house and we went to Salt Lake. Every morning we would get up and get ready and walk to the temple and the LDS University was right across the street from the temple."

Elizabeth Susan and Maude



Chris and Katie



Jim and Christie

THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN

DVG & JHG great-granddaughter Katie Owens is marrying Christopher Johnson in the Mesa Arizona Temple on December 22, 2007. DVG & JHG great-grandson Jim Powell is marrying Christie Valentine in the Redlands California Temple on January 2, 2008.

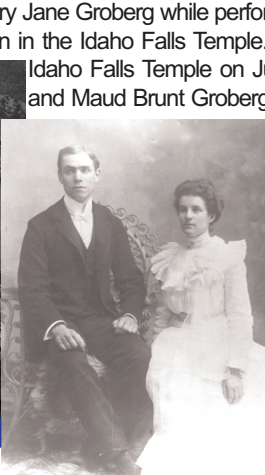
THE HEARTS OF THE PARENTS, GREAT-GRANDPARENTS ...



Bride and Groom Fritzen



Bride and Groom Groberg



Bride and Groom Holbrook

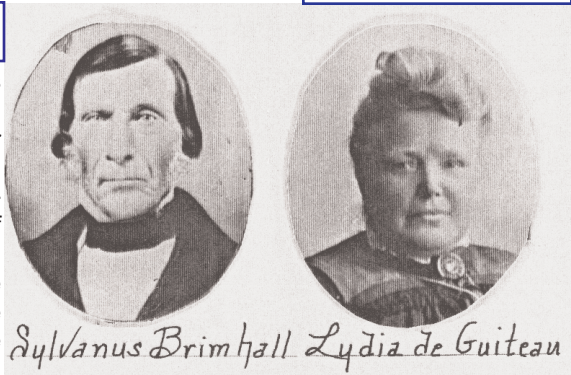


The Brimhalls after birth of 1st daughter -- Alsina is holding the wedding gift noted on p. 1

Achim Fritzen met Mary Jane Groberg while performing ordinances on behalf of his German kinsmen in the Idaho Falls Temple. They were married in the Idaho Falls Temple on June 9, 1970. John Enoch and Maud Brunt Groberg made a long, cold wagon journey from Idaho Falls to be married in the Logan Temple on Christmas Eve in 1902. When Lafayette Hinckley and Alsina Brimhall Holbrook arrived for their marriage in the Salt Lake Temple on May 15, 1901, the clerk pronounced, "Here is a young couple come to start a kingdom." George H. and Alsina Wilkins Brimhall made a long, cold wagon journey from Spanish Fork to be married in the Salt Lake Endowment House on December 28, 1874.

FINDING GUTEAU

What is the link between a U.S. President's assassin and Groberg/Holbrook genealogy and temple work? In a recorded interview with her mother's cousin, Estella Calderwood Marchant, Jennie received this answer: "Research [regarding the parents of Lydia Guiteau Brimhall] got off on the wrong start and left us high and dry for 40 years. [Lydia is the mother of George Washington Brimhall]. One day I was up there studying this Guiteau line and I just told the Heavenly Father we were stopped with Lydia and if they were to be saved, He would have to give someone the brains to do it. Many people had spent many dollars on the line and I know Jennie's mother [and others] spent hundreds of hours hunting this Guiteau line. ... For 40 years they hunted. So I told the Heavenly Father somebody, I didn't care who it was ... but we had to have help in tracking this line."



"[The help came in part with the discovery of] a letter to George Washington Brimhall from one of his brothers who said, 'Good luck to you George. I hope you can find more of the story of the great emancipator while you are traveling in New York, but I hope you don't run into any more of the story of our less illustrious kinsman, Charles Guiteau.' But Charles proves to be our best source of hooking up our line."



In the interview, Estella details much of Charles Guiteau's troubled life and the events leading up to the tragic day when he shot and killed President James Garfield. Estella then notes that "because of this letter from Uncle Norman to Grandfather, we did make this connection then that [Charles] was my grandfather's second cousin and there the line was hooked up so easily." Estella went on to verify her research and eventually was able to submit the names of many Guiteau relatives for temple work. On that topic, she made the following particularly thought provoking comment: "Now many people have said, did you put [Charles Guiteau] on the sheet when you sent the names to the temple. Yes I did! I am no judge in Israel. If God wants to stop that name it will be stopped, but it wasn't for me to make the judgement, so his name went through. Now none of us can be judged." (CD recordings of the complete interview with Estella Marchant are available upon request from Matt Powell.)

JOY AND REJOICING

Delbert's grandfather John Groberg and great-grandfather Anders Groberg both left brief written accounts regarding their first temple experiences. John wrote: "On the 21st of Dec. 1874 I was married to Johannah Larson [in the Endowment House]. The 8th of Sept. 1875 we were sealed to each other in Salt Lake City according to the Church law. On the 22nd of Dec. [1874] my wife and I got our patriarchal blessings ... and on the 23rd we were baptized for 40 persons." John then listed the names of several of his ancestors for whom he was baptized. In May of 1875, Anders wrote: "Went through the Endowment House. Traveled home. John was joyful. We were both joyful."

Missionary Addresses

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President and Sister Joe & Jeanne Groberg
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