

LIFE SKETCH OF ADA ALICE McDUFF RAMPTON

In the little village of Brampton, near the city of Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England, where stands the old historic church with its crooked spire, Ada Alice McDuff was born on November 15, 1850. She was born in a plain stone and brick two story cottage, roofed with tile, such is common in the country districts of England. A large fireplace and built in oven with old fashioned andirons and kettle suspended threw a cheerful glow and warmed and partially lighted their combined kitchen and living room, for it was before stoves were in common use, and candles were the only means of lighting.

A little garden and meadow with a brook running through it was in the rear and here she spent many happy hours of her childhood. The brook, a little lower down, widened out and became deeper making a splendid place for baptisms. Mother recalled that many times they went in the evening and held lanterns while this sacred ordinance was performed. The reason for holding the baptisms at night, was that it was close to a busy highway, and during the day many people passed by there.

She was the daughter of John Robertson McDuff and Ellen Hancock. They had five children born to them, namely:

Mary Ellen	who married	William Varley
Malcolm	who married	Jane Lord
Sarah	who married	Thomas Hancock
Ada Alice	who married	Henry Rampton
(Subject of this sketch)		
Jane	who married	William Butler;

When Grandfather McDuff met his future wife, Ellen, he was a widower, having had the misfortune to lose his wife and three children with black small pox, which was very virulent at that time. They all died within a few days of each other. Grandmother was a widow, with a little son Charles. Her former husband's name was Joseph Burns. He had been dead for about nine years before she met Grandfather. Charles Burns grew to manhood and came to this country and lived in Bountiful many years before his death. He was the Father of a number of sons and daughters and has numerous posterity.

Mothers' Father and Mother had joined the Church early in life and were active in its service. Their home was always open to missionaries and scores of elders partook of their hospitality. Among those were John Nicholson and the late President of the Church, Joseph F. Smith.

Grandfather McDuff was ordained a local elder and was, for some time prior to their coming to Utah, president of the branch at Brampton. While residing in Brampton, he worked in the mines as a collier, going to and from his work on the cars, a distance of about five miles. The hours of labor then were very long and few were the daylight hours he spent at home. Nevertheless, Sunday was the Lord's day and he spent it in the service of God, sometimes holding street meetings with the elders. On these occasions the family attended and rendered helpful service with their beautiful singing.

Grandmother McDuff as well as her children had beautiful voices, and had trained themselves to sing together. Meetings and socials, in the old country as well as when they came to this country lacked nothing in the way of a musical program when they were present.

“Oh ye mountains high,
where the clear blue sky,
Arches over the vales of the free”.

Was ever the goal for which their hearts yearned, and for which they were ever striving. Consequently, it was necessary that all should work to get the means. Grandfather was well educated for that time and was especially trained in bookkeeping and accounting. By this time he had made his worth known to his employers and had been given a position in the offices of the company. When his company learned that he

was intending to go to America they offered him many inducements to stay with them but nothing could swerve him from his purpose of gathering to Zion. To be nearer his work, they had moved into Chesterfield, where he was also active as a local elder and branch president.

Mother went to work early in life. When she was still a child, she worked in a pottery factory and then in a bobbin factory. There were no child labor laws there then. While working there she was subjected to the sneers and jeers of her associates because of her faith in an unpopular religion. She would tell of the time when she was a few seconds late for work and the man who closed the gate of the factory saw her coming but he closed the gate and would not let her in.

Her days in school were few: but she made the best of them. She learned to read and write partially at home, and with this small beginning made her well informed. She was a deep reader and thinker: music and drama were especially dear to her, and she never missed the opportunity of seeing and hearing the best that her opportunities would allow. She was especially fond of Shakespeare, Scott, Burns and Dickens and the best of the English Classics as well as the operas, knowing many of the lines by heart.

Together with her parents and younger sister Jane, she immigrated to Utah in 1864. They crossed the ocean in an old sailing vessel, The George B. McClelland, named after one of the generals of the north in the civil war, which was then near its close.

To avoid possible molestation by vessels of the south, they took a northern course and ran into fields of icebergs. Whichever way they looked they could see these great mountains of ice as they wended their way southward, there to be melted by warmer waters of the Gulf Stream. There was great danger of running into them, especially when they were nearing the foggy banks of Newfoundland, and extra caution was used to prevent it.

But suddenly one night, after the passengers had retired to their bunks below, there was a grating and a tremendous lurch of the vessel, which threw many from their beds and spread confusion everywhere. Twice more this was repeated: then the vessel gradually sank back, rolling from side to side as though she were about to turn over.

Women and children were crying, men were hurrying to and fro, and the greatest of confusion prevailed. The thing they had feared most had happened. The ship had struck an iceberg and it was feared that a rent had been made in her that would let in the icy water and send her to the bottom of the sea.

After the confusion had been somewhat allayed, the mate of the vessel was sent with a lantern to examine carefully all parts of the ship for a possible leak. He passed the bunk where the little girls Ada and Jane were. They were peering through the curtains with their white faces resting between their hands. "Little girls", said he, "Aren't you afraid?" And almost in unison they said, "No we aren't afraid. The Lord didn't bring us here to be drowned in the sea." Then the mate, in a burst of joy, swung his lantern round and round and cried out as loud as he could, "Hurrah! This vessel won't sink. There is faith enough here to save any ship".

She didn't sink: a company of God's people were aboard, going to the place divinely appointed to them, and his watch care was over them.

The next year while The George B. McClelland was making a voyage across the ocean, she was caught in a storm and went down, carrying all on board.

After a six weeks voyage the ship landed in Castle Garden, New York. It was near the end of the Civil War. Just before their arrival a great battle had been fought and the sick and wounded were being brought from the front. Mother remembered vividly the feeling of gloom and scenes of sorrow that were occasioned by these sad home comings.

Previous to their emigration, her sister Mary Ellen and husband, William Varley, as well as her brother Malcolm came to Utah in 1866. Charles Burns and his wife Martha came in 1868 and Martha died in 1878.

After arriving in New York they traveled by cars and steamboats for about two weeks before they reached Winter Quarters. They stayed there six weeks, waiting for the ox teams to come from Utah to take them to their destination: this being the Salt Lake Valley. Their captain was Brother Warren who afterwards lived in Parowan, Iron Co., Utah.

It took eleven weeks to cross the plains and come from winter quarters to Utah. Because of the Civil War most of the Indians were on the war path. Frontier settlements had been plundered and burned and many settlers had been killed. More than once they had come upon ranch houses that had been pillaged and burned and the settlers massacred.

One she especially remembered was a place in which a whole family had been murdered. Evidently the Indians had been frightened away by the approach of the Mormon emigrant train and had fled in haste. Around the table, where they had evidently just been seating themselves to their midday meal, were their bodies scalped and shot through with arrows: while on the table was the meal untouched.

Because of the danger from the warring Indians, the companies of Saints at that time were especially large in order to protect themselves. At one time a company of men joined them with ten or twelve teams. They were gold seekers going to California. The Mormons and gold seekers traveled together for a number of days and finally becoming tired of the slow pace that the oxen were able to make, the gold seekers forged ahead. The next day the Mormon train came to a place where the California emigrants had all been massacred, their wagons burned and mules stolen. Not a man, woman or child lived to tell the story. There they lay pierced with arrows, horribly mutilated and rotting in the sun.

Such scenes as these made a lasting impression on her mind. But not all were horrors. She remembered seeing great herds of buffaloes as they grazed on the plains. At one time their train was stopped for hours waiting for the buffalo to pass as they wended their way down to the river for water.

At night even though they had been walking weary and footsore, fording the streams, and picking up buffalo chips to use as fuel for their evening meal, they surrounded the camp fires and sang:

“Come, come Ye Saints,
No toil nor labor fear
But with joy, wend your way”.

Music, dancing and other merry makings were often in but promptly at nine o'clock a prayer was said thanking God for the blessings bestowed during the day, and invoking his aid on the morrow. Soon the fires died down and the camp, save for a few pickets left to guard the cattle, was wrapped in slumber.

The next morning the camp bugle was sounded and everyone was up preparing for the day's trek. The first wagon to arrive the night before was the first out in the morning. So large was this train that as much as an hour lapsed between the departure of the first and last wagons.

Arriving in the valley at the age of fourteen, mother was stricken with mountain fever: a disease which often attacked the emigrants before they became used to the climate. They were in a new strange country and a living was to be made, consequently the girls had to find employment. They worked in the fields gleaning, picking up potatoes, and at housework for those better situated in life than they were.

Most of the time Mother worked at the home of one of the Walker Brothers, the pioneer merchants of Salt Lake City. Here she was treated almost as one of the family. Mrs. Walker took a personal liking to her, often taking her to the theater and other places of amusement.

At the age of nineteen she was married to Henry Rampton of Bountiful, and to this union nine children were born. They are:

George Albert	March 15, 1870	married to Emily Walker	died	
John Robertson	May 16, 1872	married to Fr	died	
Jane Maud	April 30, 1874	married to Paul Hinnman	died	
Thomas	July 19, 1876	married to Retta Campkin	died	1953
Nellie Eliza	Oct 14, 1878	married to Trueman Barlow	died	
Malcolm Macduff	May 4, 1881	married to Martha Rampton	died	
Elizabeth	March 17, 1883	married to George Rollins married to Trueman Barlow	died	
Sarah Anna	May 17, 1885	married to Mark Holbrook	died	
Laura Olive			died	

All were born in Bountiful, Utah

Henry and Ada's Children and their Grandchildren

George

John

Jane: Ada, Allen

Thomas: Ferna, Doyle, Leone, Maggie, Jay

Nellie

Malcolm: William Henry, Nessie Izabelle, Ruth, Eugene, Mildred, Evelyn, Lowell,, Barbara

Elizabeth: Leone, Iva

Sarah: Merrill, Lillian, Dell, Mark, Alta, Reed, and Ada Jean.

After her marriage she lived in Bountiful until 1885 when she moved to Syracuse. Here she lived for 20 years, working as first councilor to Sister Miller in the Primary Association for twelve years. She was also an active worker in the Relief Society. She was also a member of the Bountiful Choir while living there.

Her younger child Olive died while still a child of black canker.

George lived at Syracuse, Utah

John at Bountiful

Jane at Garland and Bountiful

Sarah at Bountiful

Thomas at Garland, Utah

Nellie at Pocatello and other parts of Idaho

Malcolm at Syracuse, Garland, and Ogden, Utah

Elizabeth at Centerville, Utah.

After Father's death, which occurred in 1903, she returned to her home in Bountiful with all of her children except Elizabeth and Sarah because of their being married. Here she resided three years before her death. In the meantime Sarah and Elizabeth were married. Mother's health was good up to a year before her death but she was never bedfast.

She died Sunday September 11, at the home of her daughter Elizabeth Rollins at Centerville, Utah. Her posterity, living at the time of the present writing is four sons, four daughters, and forty-two grandchildren. One child and ten grandchildren have died.

She was a true Latter Day Saint, believing in the principles of the gospel with a sincere and trusting faith. To her and her husband, it was the biggest thing in life and held the most glorious promise for the life to come. She never failed to impress its truth upon her children and she encouraged them to read and know for themselves. Its poetry and music especially appealed to her. She knew and loved to sing the songs of Zion and taught them to her children. By precept and example she endeavored to implant in their hearts a sincere faith in the mission of Joseph Smith and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Surely she deserved to be numbered with our pioneers: those noble men and women, who giving up all for the gospel's sake, and enduring privations and hardships, built up by patient toil a great commonwealth in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.

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by Richard R. Smuin
using Microsoft Word '97.
5057 Taylor Avenue
Ogden, UT 84403-4356
801-479-5167
Email: Smu2002@aol.com