

**A sketch of the life of Ada Cook and Marvin Lyman Cook
by their daughter, Ada Sybil Cook Roberts.**



Ada Cook was born December 9, 1866 at Cedar Fort, Utah County, Utah, the daughter of Henry Freeman Cook and Julia Ann Bercier/Rocker. She was the 10th child of Julia Ann.

Her mother had been married 3 times, the first husband, Martin Knapp, was a scamp, and she was but 14 years of age. He ran away with another woman leaving her with a little girl. Then she married David Locklin (Laughlin), who was a wonderful man. They had 5 children. The twins who died at birth, were named Joseph & Jacob, then John S. Locklin (Laughlin), who was drowned at the age of 12, and two other girls, Julia and Harriett.

When Mr. Laughlin died Julia married Bishop Henry F. Cook as a second wife and to them were born Henry (called Hank), Frank Cook, Malinda Cook, and Ada, the youngest.

Ada's mother (Julia Ann) was a midwife and the only doctor in Cedar Fort, who also did all the (laying out) of the dead for years. Therefore the children were left alone a great deal of the time. Julia never charged for her services, but people gave her groceries and flour to eat.

Julia not only (laid out) the dead, but made all their clothes, sitting up all night doing it. Also she brought over 500 babies into the world and usually received \$5.00 for that service, and always cared for them for two weeks and many times did all the washing. By so doing she broke her health, and was not at all well herself. The children were left to care for themselves most of the time, but with their mother's supervision, got along as well as could be during those trying times.

One year there was a terrible epidemic of diphtheria going all over the country, and every one who got it sent for Julia. They didn't have things sufficient for fumigation, sterilization, or anything else, but Julia took every precaution she could to keep from carrying the disease home. She always changed her clothing out in the wood shed and washed thoroughly before she went into the house.

There were a number of deaths during the siege, and she had to care for them all. Finally Ada took down with it and came very close to going, but through constant prayer and work she was saved. She was 9 years old at the time, and when she got better she was unable to walk for months. One day a woman, whom Ada had liked very much before, came to see them and as Ada crawled to a barrel to help herself up, the woman made the remark that it would have been better for all concerned if she too had died rather than be left like that. Ada never quite got over that remark.

Ada's oldest sister Julia lived at Bear Lake, Idaho, and she took Ada up there for the summer when she was about 17 years old. Julia had a son Adrian just a little younger than Ada, and they were very devoted to each other. She remembers when she came home and was so happy to be with her mother again.

Her sister Minnie was going with a young man by the name of Marvin Cook, and when he met Ada he immediately started going with her. They were married October 17, 1884.

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Marvin Lyman Cook (no relative of Ada) was born in Kansas City, Kansas, August 6, 1861. He was the son of Daniel Dean Cook and Sariah Bigelow, who came to Utah in 1850. Brigham Young called them on a mission to help settle Iron County. Three of their children were born there. While there the Mountain Meadow Massacre occurred, and men who claimed that it was Brigham Young who requested it, told Daniel he too was to help. This so infuriated him that he took his gun and broke the stock across two chairs. This turned him so against the Church that he returned to Kansas, not trying to find out the truth of the thing.

Alpheus, their 4th child was born on the way back to Kansas on July 15, 1857 at Blacks Fork, Fort Bridger, Utah. They lived in Kansas for 6 years where 2 more children, Marvin Lyman and Gina Lovina, were born. In the mean time they had lost their first 3 children, and grandmother was so lonely for her folks who were all in Utah, and had never lost her faith in the Church, longed to come back to Utah.

Grandfather Daniel had a government contract for freighting and didn't want to come back to Utah, and still being bitter about the Church as well, so he got Grandmother a new schooner wagon and 4 head of mules to join a company that was leaving for Utah. After 3 days out he became so worried about the family that he gave the contract to another man and with another schooner wagon and 6 head of mules he caught up with the Company. When they reached Heber City, he gave the mules and wagons to Grandmother and took only a wagon cover and his clothes and went to Nevada to freight for Johnnie Williams, where he worked for 7 years.

In the meantime Grandmother's health failed her and Marvin & Alpheus were placed around with relatives. Every one in that time was in very bad circumstances (the boys stayed in bed all one winter, for want of), so the relatives decided to put Marvin & Alpheus out for adoption. A Judge Bean was going to adopt Marvin and a Mr. Sawyer, Alph. Someone got the word to Grandfather, and he rode for 7 days arriving in Provo the day of the Court Action, to stop it. He took the boys with him to Faust Station, the boys riding the horse and he walking beside them. When they came to the American Fork River, it had started thawing and the river was high. He fixed the reigns so the horse swam across and he held its tail to get across.

But he found it too hard to care for them so he sent them to Goshen to live with his father (Henry Lyman Cook) & stepmother. When Marvin was about 9 years old he was herding pigs and found an old pair of shoes which he decided to wear, causing a blister which turned to blood poison. After Marvin's Grandfather died he lived with his Uncle Acy Bigelow (his mother's brother) and Aunt Julia Cook Bigelow (his father's sister) in Provo.

Marvin was suffering so intensely from the poison that the Doctor had decided to take his leg and Daniel felt that it was unnecessary, so he told the Doctor that if Marvin died it would be with his leg on. They saved it, although he always dragged that leg a little when he was tired.

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Daniel had worked for Johnnie Williams now for 7 years only drawing out enough money for his very needs and when he went to draw his pay, Williams had no money so Daniel took a farm at Fairfield as pay. He then married Sophia Bent Crandall. She had 3 children, Spicer Crandall, Charles Crandall, and Irenda Crandall. They lived at Fairfield for a time and in the meantime Daniel bought and paid for a fruit farm on Provo Bench.

While in Fairfield, Alpheus & Marvin owned most of the property in Mercur paying \$1000 for the water rights, so as to have it for their cattle, which they kept there. They sold it for \$500.00. Not many years after it turned out to be one of the richest gold mining districts in the west.

It was while they were up at Mercur that Marvin and Ada were married. They lived up there until their oldest daughter, Sybil, was born. Then they lived in Cedar Fort with Ada's mother. Alph moved in with them also, and from then until he was married 16 years later, he always lived with them.

When Sybil was 2 ½ years old, Marvin, Alph, Will Daw & Royal Daw decided to go to Lyman, Idaho. So they took their cattle and moved. There were a number of their relatives already there. Minnie Cook (Ada's sister), who had married Dave Wilcox, and Mary Dayton Wilcox, who had married Boyd Wilcox. She was Ada's niece. They all had sections of ground and built their houses on the four corners close together. They were two room log houses with dirt roofs and one had a dirt floor. They had all the troubles and trials of any other pioneers.

One day a bunch of Indians were seen coming over the hills, all dressed up in their war paint and feathers. All the women ran to Aunt Minnie's house. She had 2 children at the time and her baby ("guy") was blind. The men saw them coming also and all hurried home from the fields. They made friends with the Indians and were never troubled with them again.

It was while there that Ada took a terrible sick spell and was in bed six weeks. There were no doctors anywhere around, and finally they sent for her mother, Julia Laughlin Cook, to come and care for her. After she got up and around again, Marvin & Alph made arrangements to move back to Fairfield, as their father, Daniel, told them they could have that farm, since he was moving to Provo Bench to his fruit orchard. There was a small mortgage on the place they were to pay off. But it turned out to be all the place was worth & more.

They worked in every way they could to make the payments, and if Mercur had not become a booming center, they probably would never have made it. At that, Ada was the one who did the hard work that brought in the money. She skimmed 30 or 40 pans of milk night and morning, and churned twice a day in a large churn, making 12-14 pounds of butter to a churning, and working it all by hand. Her husband, Marvin, would leave at 4 o'clock in the morning twice a week and deliver this butter to customers. They received the whole sum of 25 cents a pound for it the year around, because the people would sooner pay that much for such good butter. In summer, butter sold for as little as 15 cents a pound.

Ada's health was never good after the birth of her first child, and I am that child. I have seen her faint away many many times (when I was a little girl) standing at that hard work. She'd rest awhile and was right back after it again. There were times when Marvin would have to

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take over, but with all there was to do on the farm, he didn't have the time to help too much. He always carried all the buckets full of water several times a day and between times I could drag what little I could. It was a block away at first, then it got closer, just across the street. But in summer and autumn, Mother never allowed us to drink the creek water, for fear of typhoid, which was ever prevalent, so we would carry a large bucket whether from the head of the spring or from a flowing well, either of which was a mile or more from the house.

There was a large rock cellar with racks (rather than cupboards) made like a cupboard, except they had slats to set the pans on so the air could circulate all around the pans. These pans had to first be rinsed out with cold water, then washed with hot soap & soda, then scalded and then laid upside down on these shelves to air until the next milking. All churn things were treated in the same manner.

After about 8 years of this work, Marvin decided to sell the milk direct and cut out the butter. Then it was large 10 gallon milk cans to be washed and the cooler and everything cared for in much the same way as the milk pans, however it did cut out the churning.

It was during this time that Marvin had a complete nervous breakdown. For two years he was unable to do anything at all. He used to go to a Doctor every 10 days or two weeks. Then when he began to get better he decided it was time for Alph to get married and go to himself.

It used to be that in the fall of the year they would have the threshers as high as 2 weeks and Ada had to cook for as many as 12 men all that time. This was the only time she ever had any hired help. Then Father would go over to Goshen and get a Maria Partrick (Pastrick) to help. She was a very fine woman and Marvin was sure she liked Alph, so he told Alph to go get her.

Before this they had had a separation of the property and Alph received his half of everything just as though he had done half the work, and he even wanted money to furnish his house, which Marvin had helped him to build, and the only furniture mother had worth while was what she had bought with her share of her mother's estate. He never paid a penny for his board & washing & ironing. And Mother made his quilts every year or so, just as she did for the rest of the family. And he never brought 10 cents worth of anything into the home in his life. But he always seemed to hold it against the folks that he didn't have his brand new home newly furnished with my Mother's hard earned money.

When I was from 6 years to almost 12 years I used to lead the horse for the hay stacker all day long too. That helped save him money just as well as it did father. They had stackers to stack the hay that were about 75 feet long, and 25 feet wide. The poles at one end were 90 feet high, at the other 110 feet high. There would be as many as 8 hay wagons to haul all day, so there was 1 wagon at the stack all day long.

Once when an old gray horse was pulling the forks of hay up, he got too big a load and was choked down. Dad & Uncle Alph ran and cut the harness off to keep him from dying right there. Then they decided to put a larger horse to pull up the fork. It would take an eighth of a wagon load of hay at a time. So they put a big sorrel stallion on the fork. Then when the load would get too heavy he would get angry and rare up and squeal. One day he just missed

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me by an inch when he came down with his big hoofs. Dad was away up on top of this huge stack of hay. (He always stacked the hay and you should have seen those gorgeous stacks of hay he built.) Well, he saw the stallion nearly get me so then he put a long rake handle on the bridle so the horse would push me away when he got mad. Uncle Alph got angry with me a time or two when I became frightened, and that's the only time I ever knew Dad to speak back to him.

I shall never forget some of the hired men dad had during the summer. One was named Johnnie Valentine, and he lived there for about 3 months as one of the family. He was a fine looking young man and a hard worker. Dad hated to have to let him go, we all became so attached to him, but when fall came there was no work for extra hands, so he had to go. We learned later he was hiding from the law for some crime he had committed.

Another one I shall never forget was one Sye Robinson. He was about 6 foot 4 inches, and strong as an ox. He did not live with us, but worked there all summer. He boarded at the hotel. He was a very odd one. He would get angry when stacking hay and hit the old cable till it would just ring. When the work was over he hung around and began acting very queer, and one night a fire broke out in the center of town, right close to the schoolhouse, in a barn. There was no fire department so everyone, men, women, & children used the bucket brigade to put it out. It was a total loss. However, they did get the horses out by blindfolding them.

This character, Robinson, worked like a demon for a while, helping to put the fire out, but muttering to himself all the time. Pretty soon he disappeared, and some of the women tried to get the men to follow him, as he acted so queer, but they felt they were needed there, so almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour later they saw flames clear down below town. Then they were sure he was the guilty one, so instead of all running down there, the men figured he'd go round the field so they began the search and quickly enough he had gone around to come into town alone. They took him and he told them the town wasn't built right. He was going to get Carsons, Snyders, all along the line to Cooks and the rest so they could build it over. They took him to Provo where he served some time, then when he got out he went up to the Murray Smelters and somehow he got into one of the ovens there and was burned to death.

There used to be many tramps going through Fairfield, from the mining towns of Mercur, Manning & Eureka & Mannorth, and mother always got her portion. In fact I'm sure they had her gate marked for she had 3 or 4 a day many times. The same with the Indians who used to come and camp by the spring for 2 or 3 weeks at a time. They never missed mother. They remembered her mother in Cedar Fort and always told her what a good squaw her mother was.

Uncle Alph was the Justice of the Peace there for years and there were squabbles over help.