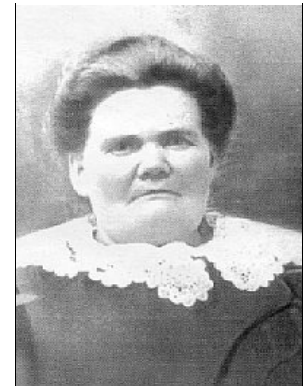


Almeda Harmon
13 April 1862 - 24 April 1915

Medie was born at Providence, Cache, Utah, in the home of Appleton Harmon. He was a cousin to her father who had gone east across the plains as a freighter. She was named for Appleton's wife Elmeda. Her parents divorced when she was three years old and her mother married John Riddle when she was four. The family lived in North Ogden in 1868. The Riddle family appears in Huntsville in the 1870 census. Medie was baptized 1 August 1870 by John Riddle. In 1874 they moved to Kanosh in Millard county located in central Utah. Only a quilt hung across the doorway of the cabin and once a bear walked in on them. In 1875 Medie's older sister died. She learned sewing, quilting and crochet from her mother. Medie remembered her stepfather as a kind and considerate man and she used his name and lived in his home until her marriage.



Medie married Joseph Andrew Moore 7 March 1880 in Fillmore. Joe had a job farming for Andrew Ross so the next day they loaded their belongings in a wagon and moved to Joseph by the Sevier River. The next spring Medie gave birth to a stillborn boy. Afterward she was a wet nurse to the Ross baby. Joseph went with the Wells brothers to look at Castle Valley and she remained at home alone. At night every breeze through the corn patch made her wonder if it were Indians. In 1882 she had a baby girl whom she named Eliza after her mother. That summer they moved to a new house that Medie loved.

During the diphtheria epidemic of 1888-89 they were on call day and night to help others. They did washing and baking for those too sickly to help themselves. Forty-one children in the Joseph area died that year, but none of the Moore children. All public gatherings were stopped and people were afraid to associate with one another. When their boy James was born they couldn't take him to church for a blessing so Bishop Murdock came to their home to help Joe bless him.

Medie was sick in bed for five months of 1892 with 'milk leg'.¹ She lost all her hair and needed a wig until it grew back. Joseph had to sell their cow to buy bread and medicine while she was ill. Their home was on government land and they had to save enough money to file a claim. Twenty dollars was a great amount. In spring 1893 they had to move because someone else had filed first. They took everything that would move including the cabin and the orchard and moved into town. That same spring her children had measles, scarlet fever and whooping cough one after the other and the littlest ones almost died. Eliza remembered what happened when she was twelve. "Ma had been sick more than two days in her room, and I had not seen her, but Pa came out once in a while, looking worried and tired, and would try to swallow a few bites of

¹ "A painful swelling of the leg occurring in women after childbirth as a result of clotting and inflammation of the femoral veins." *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 2nd College Edition.

something. So I worried too. Finally he came out of the bedroom and said, 'You have a new sister but she is dead. I hope your Ma can pull through.' "

The birth of the next baby was attended by midwife Elizabeth Newby. "Aunt Lizzie's baby wasn't well so she brought him with her. The next day he had the measles. One week later so did Killarnia."² The summer of 1897 they rented a farm one mile south of town. Two year old Killarnia loved to run and was so active she had to be tied to someone by an apron string to keep track of her. Eliza was in charge of keeping the babies out of the river and remembering which way the cow went last.

The 24th of July celebration in Joseph began with the boom of a cannon salute early in the morning. The family rushed through their chores and then the girls changed into their new white dresses and their high buttonhook shoes. After going barefoot all summer their feet would soon hurt. They piled into the family's wagon and rode to town. Everyone gathered in the square, then the cannon would boom and the pioneers would march past. Sister Ett Wells sang *The Star-Spangled Banner* and Brother Cliff Shipp read the Declaration of Independence. Stories of church history were told. 'Grandpa' Wells would give a prayer and they could go home to take off those shoes and cry a little.

We did have Indians come to our place and they all knew my mother from Kanosh and they knew my father from Kanosh. They always called to see Grandma Riddle after she came to live with us. The Indians would come over every summer and have a powwow down on the bench by Richfield. They always stopped and they would drive up in front of the gate right, they'd never get off from their horse and come in but they would drive up to the gate and say, "Hello, Medie," they called my mother Medie, "is Riddle there?" or something and Mother'd say, "Yes, come on in." and they'd get off from their horses and come in. And I remember one woman Ring Jane, the woman that used to work for Grandma there in Kanosh, she came one time and we had baked parsnips for dinner. You know a wild parsnip is poison. And the Indians knew that. And Mother had baked parsnips with bacon on it, she just opened the oven door, and we'd had dinner and she invited this Indian woman to come up and eat, as they always did when they came, they'd feed them. She wouldn't taste those parsnips. "You kill me Medie? You want to kill Jane?" And Ma said, "No. We eat them." But she wouldn't taste those parsnips because the Indians knew that wild parsnips were poison.³

² Eliza Rawlinson

³ Medie's daughter Sarah Killarnia Moore Jackman made an audio tape with Don Alsop in August 1973. Editing was necessary to convert oral conversation into a narrative format. The

In 1901 Medie almost died at the birth of her son Joseph Harvey. Her husband was saddling a horse to go for the doctor when the midwife came out and told him she was all right. Her last child arrived in February 1905 with a foot of new snow. She was already a grandmother by that time. In September 1905 Joseph Harvey died.

Killarnia wrote the following. "When my father bought a six-octave Esty organ, one woman said, 'I can't figure out where in the world Joe Moore thinks they will put that Organ'. We only had three log rooms to live in. She also said, 'them kids will have that organ busted to pieces in no time'. When I went home and told my mother what I had heard, she said, 'We'll show her what we will do with it'. Mother wove a brand new carpet and the older girls washed the front room, and when the organ came we were ready for it. With the organ came a . . . free correspondence course for learning to play. Mother would read the lesson, answer the questions, and send them in. When the lessons came back, corrected, she would teach them to us."

She traveled to Kanosh every summer to help her mother dry fruit then bring part of it home. It took two days to make the trip by wagon. Houses in Joseph were so close together their ducks never knew who they belonged to but there was no trouble. When it came time to gather feathers all the children held sacks and all the mothers marked the young ducks and picked feathers from the old ones. The children were under strict orders not to sneeze or laugh because if they sneezed the feathers would scatter and if they laughed they might inhale one.

Medie loved to plant things and be outside. Irrigation water made the rich soil grow almost anything. She grew trees, a garden, and flowers. Her daughter Eliza said, ". . . outside in the sun Ma would warm her back, cook soap, crochet, sing, watch to keep the baby from the canal, . . . and look pleasant—all at the same time!" Her family always grew faster than the house did but Medie made every house she lived in a home and welcomed each child who came along. She would read to her family or tell stories while doing hand work in the evenings. After she taught her husband how to read she could keep her hands busy with knitting or mending. The girls in the family would do the same while they listened to their father. It was hard to get books so they would borrow and trade among the neighbors.

Medie had a loom that she used to weave carpets and drapes. Her daughter Killarnia wrote, "My mother made our long legged underwear out of putting flannel and our stockings were knitted by my mother out of yarn that she had spun. I used to watch my mother cord and spin on a big spinning wheel. She wove carpets and made the most beautiful quilts I ever saw. Her boiled red berry puddings, baked dumplings and molasses cake, and hot soda biscuits were the greatest."

Medie's mother came to Joseph and lived with her family for the last few years of her life. When she died, they buried her in the Joseph cemetery. Not long after her death Medie's father showed up. He too spent his last years with her family and remained even after her death so though neither of them were from Joseph, both are buried close to her.

Eliza wrote the following. "She went quietly through life with her shoulder to the wheel, always ready to help others in need and to do her own share beside, with never a word of

quotes remain authentic.

complaint. She was a woman with high ideals, of sterling quality; faithful and true to her husband and family, working very hard, and would never say quit. She made use for her family every rag of cloth and every bite of food that came her way. Nothing was ever wasted. Not even time."

My mother made cheese all the time, and sold cheese. [Did she make her own cloths?] Oh, you bet. . . Yes, she had an old, old machine, I remember and then when I was still just a child, they bought a new Singer machine, but it wasn't like the new Singers nowadays. But it was a real good machine. And she had to run it with a treadle. No electricity, but my mother was a great sewer and made hundreds and hundreds of quilts and quilted them.

My mother did take a butcher knife and go down on the ditch bank where there was some cottonwood trees and silver maple and dug up little sprouts with the butcher knife and took 'em up home and planted them. And the neighbor who had these trees along the sidewalk said, "Well, Medie, I'll be up some day to sit in the shade of those trees." She said, "All right." And he did too. Those things grow so fast and they just, we would carry water from the canal in little buckets and keep those trees watered and they just grew up so fast, it was only a matter of a few years till we had alot of shade on the west side of the house from those cottonwoods. And she had lilac bushes and she could grow flowers.

I can only remember her coming to our place one time. [Aunt Harriet] And then I can remember when she left to go back to Price. My mother said that's the last time I'll ever see my sister. That was long before Grandma died when she was living in Kanosh. My mother wore a tie apron, we called it, an apron that tied in the back in a bow. I can remember her taking her apron up like this and putting it up to her eyes and crying when Aunt Harriet left. And I think it was my mother crying that made me remember it. And I heard her say, "I'll never see my sister again." And she never did.

They had to travel every way by wagon and team, and it took a long time to go, took two days to go back to Kanosh. And so to go from Joseph to Price was a long ways. Mother did resemble Grandma.

[The house?] It was above the state canal and it was up, well the sage brush started from right behind our place so it wasn't hard to go gather sage brush leaves for the other Grandma. And we herded cows up in those foot hills, we called them. And this Joseph place, and all the kids would come to our place to play because my

mother made them welcome. And she always had Father's brothers and some of 'em. They were scarcely alone any of their married life. They had twelve children, but they always had somebody else living with them too.

Mother was considered one of the best Primary workers in the Stake. She was in the presidency from the time I can remember, as far back as I can remember. And she'd get out on the floor even though she was a heavy-set women, she weighed about a hundred and ninety pounds and about my height, but she'd get out on the floor when we'd have our songs and games and that and she'd get down on the floor with the kids. And they always had the Primary preparation meeting at our home . . .

Its against the rule of the church to raffle anything off now. But it used to be when she was making so many quilts that every young girl in the ward in town nearly that was going to get married had her make a certain quilt, she made what they called a Drunkard's Path, and it was made out of red and white and went like that. And they'd buy the material for two quilts and she'd make them a quilt and then she'd have the material for her a quilt. And then they'd buy the cotton bats and the lining and pay her to quilt this quilt. And she always quilted by the work, and it was just like machine stitching just as even, it was beautiful. And they didn't have stands to put the quilts on like they do now . . . but she had four things up in the ceiling, tie a string on 'em and hang the quilt and when night came she'd wind that string around, put a sheet over it, something over the quilt to keep it clean and draw it up by the ceiling and then when she'd go to quilt she'd let it down. And us kids running through the house you know we'd hit against that quilt and make her shake her fingers. But she was a beautiful quilter, and when my brother was on his mission she made these quilts you know that they'd give her the material for making them one, 'course they'd pay her for this quilting extra, but I think she maybe got a dollar and a half for quilting it where now they'll get fifty . . . and then every time they had a dance or any kind of public gathering Mother'd take one of those quilts to this dance and hang it up and charge twenty-five cents for a chance on that quilt. Everybody bought chances on that quilt, 'cause everybody wanted her quilts. And Grandpa Jackman was just a kid and he had a quarter and he took a chance on it and got one of those quilts. And then that money went to Jim to help keep him on his mission.

And then she knitted and she crocheted big wide lace like this for pillow cases for the girls for their trousseaux.

Mother'd have all of us girls to sew for and I remember when Grandpa bought us her new Singer sewing machine. Mother thought that was great, just wonderful. And we used to stand and lean on the end of the machine—I don't see how she stood it—and say, "Do you think you're goin' to get it done? Will you get it done in time? Do you think you're gonna get it done?" And we were always stuck in anything that the Primary or any program in town, special costumes and things. And Mother'd sit there with lame leg and work that peddle.

And then she had a loom and she made carpets for people. She made the last homemade carpet we ever had and it was down maybe a couple of months before she died.

The next morning father awakened & Mother was unable to breath. he called to us and cried, "Come quick, when we ran to their room mother was dieing. to me father said, run for Jim (my brother & Fern who lived some blocks away. I stopped first at Jim's and then ran two more blocks to Fern's but mother died before we got back.⁴

Medie's youngest daughters were still in their teens when she died. She was only fifty-three years old. They buried her in the Joseph City Cemetery near her mother.

⁴ Sarah Killarnia Moore Jackman, in a journal entry written in 1981.