

# AMELIA LEICHT KEMPLE MORE

1856 - 1946

A Biography

By James E. Kemple

**Note:** Although we do not have an autobiography of Amelia, we have some information which is included here. Some information about her is included in the biography of Mary Ann Hunt, Amelia's mother. I remember Amelia very well although I was only about 10 years old when she died. I will include my observations of this remarkable women in this section.

Amelia was born in West Bromwich, England on February 8, 1856. She died on December 14, 1946 at the age of 90. Her early childhood was spent in England until her family, having been converted to the Gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, emigrated to the United States. Her father had died sometime earlier, but her mother, Mary Ann Hunt Leicht, had a desire to join others who were going to Utah, to live in the newly established "Zion" in the mountains. So on May 20, 1864 she sailed, with her four little girls for America. Arriving in Salt Lake city in the fall of 1864, after a dangerous and eventful trip across the great plains of the United States, the family continued on to St. George. Amelia had a new stepfather, John Cornwell, and they hoped to make their home in Southern Utah. As Amelia grew to adulthood, there were many experiences with the Indians on the frontier, who were a constant threat to her safety.



On the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 1874 Amelia married John Kemple in Middleton, Utah which is located just east of St. George. There were many moves for Amelia and John as they made their way through life and raised their family. They lived in Silver Reef and the South Star Mining district near Beaver, in Utah. Los Angeles, California, and Chloride, Arizona, Yellow Pine Mine and Goodsprings, Nevada.

**John Orson Kemple writes:** Grandmother of Mary Ann Hunt was Esther Freeman Smith. Grandfather George Leicht, born in Germany (no dates) moved to England where he married Mary Ann Hunt (Miles). He died there leaving her a widow. Mary Ann Leicht emigrated to America, and married John Cornwell on board ship just leaving England. Left England May 20<sup>th</sup> 1864 bringing with her a step child, Mary Leicht, and her own three children, Sarah, Amelia, and Elizabeth, arriving in America some time in the latter part of June. They crossed the plains in 1864 by Ox team, under the command of Captain George Warren, arriving St. George that same fall.

**James Edward Kemple and George B. Kemple writes:** We remember Amelia very well even though we were just small children when we were around her. She lived

with grandfather and grandmother, John Orson and Kate Kemple, in St. George, Utah. We always called her “Grandma More”, but we never knew or had any information about her second husband, Mr. More. As she grew older, probably just a year or two before her



death, she had a hard time understanding simple things. On one occasion, we were riding in a car on our way to “town” in St. George. Grandma More was in the car along with our mother, Mabel Whitney Kemple, who was driving, and our Grandmother Kate Kemple. As we turned onto the street by the U & I Sugar Beet plant, the engine on the car stopped. Mother said that she thought the car was “vapor locked”, which was a common occurrence in cars of that vintage. We recall Grandma More saying, “The car is on fire, get the children out.” The car wasn’t on fire.

Grandma More was usually very quiet and didn’t say much when we visited. Shortly before she died, she became quite ill, and the problem seemed to be associated with what we know as Cancer. As I remember it, she developed a growth on her neck that was sore, and always wore a scarf or towel around her neck. It was probably cancer, but in those days there was very little known of cancer.

**John Raymond Kemple Jr writes:** I remember her mostly in Goodsprings, as a very pleasant and happy lady who loved to tell us boys about her experiences as a young girl crossing the plains, and their encounters with unfriendly indians. Later memories in St. George are of a more subdued old lady, probably due to her illness.

I also remember that there was a problem with her baptism. Children who were 8 years old or older had to be baptised before they sailed for Zion, and her 8th birthday was very close to sailing time. As I remember she was baptised about a month or so *before* she turned 8, so all the paperwork could be completed and she could emigrate with her family. When our dad found that out he insisted that she needed to be baptised again. I believe that the problem was compounded because they could not find any written record of her earlier baptism. I remember her arguing with him that “the Lord knows I was baptised, and there is no need to do it again.” Dad prevailed, though, and baptised her again when she was 90 years old, just a short while before she died.

**Clifford Leon Kemple also remembers “Grandma More”.** She was always kind and loving with the children. When one of the children would get hurt, she would gather him into her arms and mumble something, that seemed to be a “charm” or “cure”, because the hurt would soon go away.

Amelia lived in Chloride, Arizona for a while. She may have gone there while

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still married to John Kemple, or perhaps with her son John Orson Kemple. She was indeed a smart business woman and ran a restaurant in Chloride. The picture here is of an advertisement that appeared in the "Arizona Arrow" newspaper on November 8<sup>th</sup> 1902. The Advertisement specifies "all white help" which is one of the signs of the times, that some were interested in while she was in business. She also operated a Café in Goldroad, Arizona in 1936.