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Biographical Sketch

of

Christina (Kirsten) Peterson Kelly

by Eleanor Kelly Nicholes, her daughter

Pioneer Year 1854

Born: 3 Aug 1837, Lkyyhurst, Denmark.

Married: William Kelly, 2 Feb 1856, Endowment House, SLC, Utah

Died: 28 Apr 1914

It is a privilege to give a biographical sketch of my mother. For this I am indebted to the Daughters of the Pioneers.

In the year 1850 when the Gospel was first preached in Denmark, that far away “wooden shoe” land, by Erastus Snow, my mother with her parents, brothers and sisters were living there a very quiet, peaceful life, attending the Lutheran Church. But, when they heard the principles of Mormonism expounded they could not rest till they emigrated here to Zion, in America, which they afterwards did, one at a time.

My mother, Christena (Kirsten) Peterson, was born in Lkyyhurst, Denmark, August 3rd, 1837. She was the fourth child of a family of five (three girls and two boys). Her parents were Peter and Anne Christensen Brudahl. They used to attend conference of the L.D. S. Church at Aalborg.

The whole family were sought out and persecute because of their religious belief. At one time the mob came in search of her father. He ran into his workshop and hid under a work bench covered with shavings. He was a wheelwright by trade.

Mother joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the age of 12. When only 16 years of age she left her home, father and mother, to come to Zion for the Gospel's sake. She, with other converts, started across the ocean in October, 1853, but the ship became disabled and caught on fire, so it was impossible for them to journey on. They had to return to shore for repairs. In all they were on the ocean eleven weeks and did not arrive in Salt Lake City until September, 1854. Mother used to jokingly say that she left the old country, having left there in October and arrived in September the following year.

They stopped in St. Louis, Missouri, for six weeks waiting for a train of emigrants to get ready to cross the plains. She walked most of the way, waded Green River, but said she was as happy as could be although she had left her parents and relatives behind. She sang the songs of Zion and felt a firm conviction that she was doing right.

On arriving at Salt Lake City she was taken to the home of William Kelly and wife with his little family of four. Then it was that

she felt rather blue, as the brother and family with some she came left her. She could not speak one word of the English language but she soon learned a few words and was able to understand what they said. They were very kind to her and in a few years they all moved to American Fork.

She married William Kelly February 2, 1856, in the Endowment House, Salt Lake City. She, with father, and the rest of his family, passed through a lot of trying scenes incident to pioneer life, fighting grasshoppers and crickets, tending cows, making butter and helping in every way to make a living for their children.

At one time while milking a cow, her first born was playing around the yard and before she knew it, one saucy cow hooked the little fellow leaving a scar across the top of his head.

In those days women made lye out of wood ashes, putting the ashes in a barrel, covering them with water, let settle then dip it out. Mother used to sear the wool of the sheep's back, wash it, card and spin it into yarn, then color it with logwood, weave it into cloth and make clothes for the little ones.

In the year 1863 mother with Mrs. Joshua Adams spent the summer over Jordan near Pelican Point. I have often heard them both tell about being there with no white men near other than one had hired to herd the cattle, when a band of Indians came riding up to their door on horseback, holding aloft a white man's scalp on a long stick, demanding food. These poor women were nearly frightened to death but they remembered that Brigham Young had advised the Saints to feed the Indians and avoid trouble, so they gave them every bit of food and bread they had cooked and hurried up and made pancakes for them. When their stomachs were filled the Indians left without harming anybody.

Mother had one very dear friend, Sister Hannah Wild, who lived near her on a farm south of American Fork City, commonly called the "Bottoms." These two were the only families within a mile or so of each other. They knew what privations were and shared their joys and sorrows together. They could not afford sugar or tea very often in those days. A quarter's worth of sugar did each of them one

month. They would send one of their children to gather leaves from the wild rose bushes and make some tea from them. They had no very bright house lights in those days. Each made her own candles or had a lamp made of a rag in a saucer of grease, to see to sew by, and were so very saving with it they took turns going from one home to the other in the evening to sew after putting their children to bed. They often sat sewing until midnight. Oh, but they were bound together by the truest kind of friendship. Sister Wild died several years before mother. On that occasion mother said she could not have felt worse had one of her own family died.

In the year 1866 mother's parents left the old country to come here. Her father died crossing the plains and was buried in a lonely grave. Her mother and one sister arrived here. One brother, James, came as far as Wisconsin. The other brother and sister died before that time.

Grandmother lived in Pleasant Grove and later with us, here in American Fork, Utah. She died here in 1888.

Mother's grandson, Joseph Kelly Nicholes, went on a mission to Denmark in the year 1911. He gathered genealogy of her people to the extent of 500 names. Joseph and his wife, Olive Maiben Nicholes, were baptized for 150 of them in the St. George temple in the winter of 1912. Her children and grandchildren are beginning to do the Temple work for her people.

Father and mother moved into their home near the First ward meeting house in 1898 where they remained for the remainder of their lives. She oftentimes compared her electric lights for brightness with the tallow candles of early days. Father died in 1899.

Mother had a very cheerful disposition, although she suffered many of the trials of pioneering. Yet she always looked on the bright side of life and was loyal to the testimony of the Gospel and gave thanks to our Father in heaven for blessings with her for, ten healthy children, 36 grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. She died April 28, 1914, at the age of 77 years.

