

FERRON SETTLEMENT AND JOHN C. LEMON

Many contributions were made by the early settlers of Emery County demonstrating their endurance, tenacity and helping to mold the fabric that makes Emery County a unique place. They built a culture that is well worth emulating as troubles are faced by later generations of new and old settlers to draw strength from our marvelous history and its settlers.

I would like to focus on the community of Ferron and its settlers who braved the hostile environment of the late 1800's. Some of the earliest people to arrive left Ephraim on the 7th of December and 21 days later reached Ferron Creek. They had provisions hauled in wagons of flour enough to last a year, bacon, dried peaches, currants, apples, ground cherries, along with cabbages, onions and carrots. A Mrs. Larson brought a big crock of butter which lasted all winter. They had Helena Larson and her husband who kept the spirits high by singing for their entertainment after a long hard day of traveling to their new home.

Upon arriving here, the company of six set to work immediately digging a pit to keep the potatoes from freezing. Then they began gathering logs for dug-outs, finding needed items laying up and down the creek brought down by flood waters. These dug-outs were made by digging in a bank by the creek and walling it up on the front and sides with logs. The cracks were filled with mud with no windows only letting light in by cracks left between the logs. The door was of logs hewn down to three or four inches thick and five inches wide fastened to cross pieces with wooden pegs hanging on hinges which squeaked until a little bacon grease was added. The cooking was done outside over camp fires and grub boxes were used for tables. The stools were three legged with a bed made of four posts driven into the ground and stabilized by poles nailed lengthwise with willows and limbs laid in opposite directions. So much for comfort!

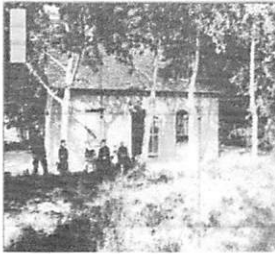
One such enterprising new citizen named John C Lemon gives us the vision of how these early settlers were making the best and making life as comfortable as could be at that time. Most of the people settled in the flat lands called Molen. In 1879, John Lemon along with his three Brother's in law, Hyrum, Andrew and 10 year old Chris Nelson, decided they liked the higher ground instead, but were laughed at for settling in the "Rockies". They planted crops but their yield was scant because of the lack of water. John surveyed and leveled with self made tools miles of ditches to bring in the water for the thirsty land. He found that after watering the soil, it was rich from the silt of mountain flooding. The crops were more than they expected but along with the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley grasshoppers invaded soon after they were growing well. John took a wagon to Manti to purchase chickens and brought them back to eat the menacing insects. The trip took two weeks and when he returned the crops were well devoured. So hunger was not unknown to these hardy settlers.



Illustration 1: Picture of a dugout

Whoever built a new home, the community would gather for a house warming party and dance to help smooth the dirt floor. The music was usually provided by a fiddle and accordion.

Gatherings were typical of those days and many activities were centered around needs of the people such as quilting bees, and rag bees. They depended upon each other for support in social needs, spiritual and entertainment to make life fulfilling.



After living in a dug-out with his wife's brothers for a year he brought over his wife Emma and child from Manti. Together they built an adobe home made from the clay and fired in their homemade furnace. John wanted more for their first home and decided to make shingles from red pine logs which were hewn by hand with a broad ax cut 1 ½ or 2 feet pieces. The adobe house was well utilized until John wanted to build his family a much more elegant place to live.

By 1900, the home of their dreams was ready to move into, and John being the visionary that he was wanted a two story house made of real bricks, with a fireplace in each room and a flushing toilet upstairs, set off by a spiral type staircase. The beautiful stained glass windows



John obtained by traveling to Pennsylvania. The house was started when they quarried the rock for the foundation from the canyon and hauled it down on skids. The bricks were made by building a kiln next to where the house was to be erected. He wanted the home to be down a lane surrounded by a grove of trees lining the lane. He had fruit orchards on both sides which made the house very picturesque. His goal was to take Brigham Young's advice and not

to plant just pumpkins, but to diversify his farm with sheep, cattle, horses and orchards and when one thing did not do well the income was there from the other things making a comfortable living.

John and Emma enjoyed entertaining their friends and neighbors, and their home was open to everyone. Their place was like a big plantation, employing many and feeding and housing them. The Lemon Grove was a favorite place in the summer time with gatherings and picnics along with the fourth and 24th of July celebrations. Peach Days, celebrated today was started by John because he wanted to share the delicious fruit with everyone as well as creating a market for his crop. There were horse races, dances along with bands, story telling and games for the children. The settlers enjoyed life to its fullest.

Today that visionary house of John's is being remodeled by a Lemon Great Great Grandson. He is meticulously shoring up the foundation and restoring the original height of the ceilings and generally is strengthening his Ancestor's dream home. The lane is still welcoming by all the trees that were planted years and years ago. He and his family are planning on carrying on the traditions of the Lemon family.

I was told that Emery County carries a spiritual bonding for those that live here, whether newly arrived or generational decedents. I too feel this love and bonding for this wonderful area and the decedents who still carry on the valued traditions of its customs and culture.

Written and compiled by Dixie Thompson
Early Ferron History – with contributions of many
History of John Carid Lemon – with contributions of many
Any more research information desired can be obtained at
emerycountyarchives.com