

Life History of Thomas Tew Jr.

I left my home Jan 1st, 1851, with Walter Bird, when 12 years of age, for the land of Zion. I embraced the Gospel October 21st, 1849. Set sail for New Orleans, was on the ocean 9 weeks and 3 days, had been shipwrecked by a schooner and had to put into port in Cardigan Bay for repairs, then set sail again and after a serious time of sea sickness, had a good time for a while. God blessed us and brought us safely to land.

Our trip up the river to St. Louis was truly delightful. Peach trees were in blossom, oranges on the trees and everything to make us feel happy. We stayed a little while at New Orleans. While we were staying over night at Schot Hotel on 3rd Street, we engaged with Brother Lewis, President of the St. Louis Branch to drive team across the plains to Utah and was promised 30 dollars for the trip. We left for Palmyra Missouri from St. Louis, 150 miles up the Missouri River. Here we were introduced to some wild cattle to yolk up and break them and get them ready for the plains. We stayed here five or six weeks, and the first day after leaving Palmyra I fainted away. I was taken down with Mountain Fever and was brought down to a mere skeleton. I was hauled 450 miles in an empty wagon to the Bluffs and after staying there several weeks waiting for our luggage we then started to ferry across the Missouri River. Having no control over my oxen, when starting they broke the tongue of a wagon, another was replaced and I started again and in a few minutes I fell down. I was pulled out from under the wheels of my wagon. This was through weakness from my sick spell. We were finally across the Missouri River and again started on our way.

Just before going through the Pawnee village of Indians, my cattle ran away from me and broke my hind axle. This was a stumper. We stayed here for the night with the understanding that I was to leave next morning for some other camp. During the evening another axle was replaced in my wagon and next morning nothing was said about my leaving and I assure you I was glad. We continued on our way, having no more bad luck on the way. My health and strength returned and I was like a new man. Crossing the plains was not all a drudge and trouble all the way, but the sunshine of hope and gladness would peep through the clouds and shine upon us on our journey, and we had many good times on the way.

I remember one grand sight that we said was worth seeing and that was a herd of buffalo, some 10 or 12 thousand of them were at midday playing on the bottoms and in the Platte River...so many that the herd was divided to give us room to pass between them. We finally arrived in Salt Lake City on the 30th day of August, 1851. A brother by the name of Frank Pullen took us in, and we went to work making adobies, staying with him through the winter until the following March the 14th, at which time we left Salt Lake City and traveled with our pack on our back for Sanpete Valley. We changed our minds and stayed at Springville for the scenery was so enchanting to our view, we could not help doing so. We stayed with brother Hyrum Clark that night, and next day we made arrangements to board and work for him and made adobies in the summer, and all that season went barefooted because no clothing was to be had.

In the middle of the summer I met with an accident, stepping on a stone across a ditch caused a stone bruise as I was barefoot. This laid me up for 16 weeks. During this time I had it lanced 11 times. This was very painful indeed. A little after this, the 51st quorum of the Seventies was organized and I was ordained a Seventy, clothed with power and authority to go and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of the earth...which I did not do for many years.

The year previous to my coming to Springville, the brethren built a small fort to protect them from the Indians. Some 15 or 20 families were all that lived at Springville at that time. Walter Bird and myself

were the first English brethren that came to Springville to live. After this, other forts were built in obedience to counsel given by the authorities of the Church to protect us from the Indians. The next year, 1853, the Indian War began and in this way, on Spring Creek, an Indian was found beating his squaw. Two of our brethren took the squaw's part, then both the Indian and his squaw turned on the brethren and the war began. Joseph Kelly and James Ivins was the two men who commenced this war. This same year another war broke out which was a grasshopper war that made sad havoc and destruction on our crops. The crickets came also.

Tiem passed on and 1854 we sent to England for our parents by the aid of the Immigration Fund, but for some reason they did not come. In 1853 we commenced to build our meeting house and early in the spring we got a recommend from our Bishop, and presenting the same to President Brigham Young, our parents were again sent for from England. They arrived late in September of 1855. This year we were again visited by grasshoppers, but I was one of the lucky ones. The Lord blessed me with a good crop and enough to spare for others.

On the 22nd of January 1856 I married Rebecca Bird, the daughter of John and Ann Bird, late from England as the result of that union we were blessed with two sons and 7 daughters.