

## History of Thomas Torrance Grant

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Thomas Torrance Grant, son of Robert and Susan Hamilton Grant was born 18 July 1838 at Airdrie, Old Monkland, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the 7<sup>th</sup> child in a family of 8 children. His father died when Thomas was a young boy.

Soon after his mother heard the gospel, as taught by the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, she joined the Church and came to America with her youngest son Thomas and daughter Elizabeth. They came in the sailing vessel Enoch Train that left Liverpool, England March 23, 1856. They had to travel in the steerage and the voyage was long and hard. They crossed the plains with ox team in the John A. Hunt's company, which arrived in the valley December 5 to 15, 1856. Their first home was in Salt Lake. Later they moved to Willard.

From a general affidavit by himself, Thomas wrote: "I had done Indian service before the years 1857 and 1858, but not until then was I enlisted into the service. During the year 1857, Brigham Young, being the governor of Utah, thought it best to organize into companies. We did so in 1858, but before 1857 the Bishops of each fort, being Commander in Chief, called out such men as they thought fit to do Indian service. When Johnston's Army came in 1858, we were discharged. As I had no settled home, I joined Johnston's Army. I stayed with them as a teamster and scout and stayed with them until 1860, when I was honorably discharged."

While serving in Johnston's Army he had the misfortune to slip while getting off his horse. His rifle discharged and the bullet went through his left hand, leaving it crippled.

In the spring of 1861, Thomas went to Omaha, Nebraska, as a teamster in Captain Horne's company to meet the Saints coming from the Old Country. It was his privilege to bring the family of John and Helen Cameron Adamson and children to Utah. The children walked all the way across the plains. Thomas fell in love with their daughter Margaret. She was a beautiful girl with blue eyes and auburn hair, and was a professional Scottish dancer. In the evenings when the pioneers were camped, Margaret and her brother Andrew often entertained the company by dancing. They wore beautiful Scottish costumes.

On October 19, 1861, Thomas and Margaret were married at Sessions, now Bountiful, Utah. They moved to Gunnison, San Pete County, where he acted as interpreter for the Indians, helping to settle their difficulties with the white people. They lived in a dugout until Thomas could build a log house.

Before their first child was born, Thomas went to the nearest town to get food and clothing for the new baby. While fording the Sevier River on his return home, his horse stumbled, the wagon tipped over and all the supplies went down the river. He was able to get the horses and wagon out of the river but that was all.

Their first child, a girl they named Ellen, was born 23 of August 1862. The Indians were very troublesome. When the baby was a few days old, Thomas left his wife and baby alone for a short time to help settle some trouble the Indians were having. While he was gone, an Indian went into their home and snatched the baby out of bed and ran out with her. Thomas returned soon after and had to go to the Indians and get the baby back. As soon as Margaret was able to travel he took her and the baby to Wellsville in the Cache Valley to visit her family.

Margaret was so afraid to live among the Indians that she refused to go back to Gunnison. Thomas built her a one-room log house with straw and dirt for

a roof and went back to Gunnison to sell their home and get what furniture they had. He was unable to sell their home and was told that several of the men he worked with had been killed by the Indians. Margaret felt their trip to Wellsville had saved his life.

They lived here several years, then took up a homestead three miles north of Wellsville. Thomas built a two-room house, one room was built of logs with a dirt roof. This was the living room and kitchen. The other room was frame with a board roof, this was the bedroom. When it rained the living room would leak. They would set pans around to catch the water.

Their closest water supply was over a mile away at a place called Thurston's Dam. They hauled water from this dam in barrels for their needs. The family was living at the homestead when the crickets and grasshoppers were so bad. Thomas would plow a furrow, put straw in it and the children would drive the crickets in and burn what they could.

A few other families took up homesteads around there so they held meetings at different homes. They lived here for four years. Margaret had poor health so they moved back to Wellsville to be near Margaret's parents and the children could attend school. Margaret's mother was ill so they lived with her parents until her mother died. Then they bought a home in the south part of Wellsville.

As a young boy, Thomas had worked in the mines in his native Scotland. After he settled in Wellsville he often explored the surrounding mountains looking for minerals and promising ore. In 1891 a Mr. John P. Coburn discovered a marble mine on the Wellsville side of the mountain which produced a very high quality marble. It was an extension of the marble claim located on the other side of the mountain, which was discovered by Thomas.

Thomas was a skilled veterinarian and a great help to the farmers. He was always taking care of their horses and cows. William Darley of Wellsville, a friend, had this to say about Thomas. "He was an honorable man, was honest in all his dealings and he as the best veterinary in the West. People came from far and near to have him care for their animals."

In the early days, every settlement was instructed to enlist the men between ages 18 and 45 into a company of militia to protect the people against Indian raids. Thomas was a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon, company E, Third Battalion in Wellsville. Problems in Cache Valley were pretty well over by the time they were organized.

Thomas had always had friendly relations with the Indians. His Indian friends often came to visit him. They would bring their families and stay several days. They would pitch their tents by his home and he would feed them and their horses, and when they left he always gave them a sack of flour.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1911, his wife Margaret passed away and Thomas went to live with his oldest daughter, Ellen Bird, at Mendon. He lived with her for three years, then he married his wife's sister, Jannett Hutchison, a widow, and went back to Wellsville to live.

On November 24, 1918, Thomas passed away. This was during the bad flu epidemic and there were no public gatherings allowed. His family and a few friends were permitted to hold a graveside funeral and he was buried in the Wellsville Cemetery. He was the father of 13 children, five of whom preceded him in death.