

LIFE OF THOMAS DAVIES 1811-1890  
(Written by his step-son, Nephi James Bates)

Ever sacred be the memory of that man who in the face of persecution and trouble could forsake fatherland, home, mother, sister and all most dear, to journey to an unknown land because of his great faith in the work of God as inaugurated by the prophet Joseph Smith.

Born in that land which has given to the church so many staunch defenders of the truth, on the 7th day of April 1811, he grew to manhood under the banner of industry and thrift. By trade, he was a dyer, and later in life taking up that of shoemaker, at both of which callings he was adept. He was married to Mary Devlin in young manhood.'

In 1847, two Mormon Elders found their way into Shrewsbury, his home town, and began promulgating the truths of the gospel among strangers. Those two messengers were Thomas Thomas and Thomas D Brown. Among the hearers of the glad message was the subject of this sketch who was baptized by Thomas D Brown 26 July 1847, being the first in that city of over 200,000 inhabitants to render obedience to God's commands in this age.

The newly baptized members met at the home of Thomas Davies at 4 Canal Building, Shrewsbury; five being present, and held their first meeting and partook of the sacrament. Immediately afterward, a small branch was organized with this man as clerk. He was not left long in the peaceful enjoyment of the blessings he had received as opposition to the truth came from his own house, resulting finally in a complete separation between himself and wife, Mary. With his initiation into the church, that spirit of gathering to the body thereof, which had actuated so many thousands, came to Mr Davies and he left his native land in 1848.

It is not now known on which vessel he sailed but the vessels leaving Liverpool that year were the Sailor Prince, Carnation and Erin's Queen.' One of these carried this man to America's shores, landing at New Orleans after a six week voyage. Here he became acquainted with a lady named Bates, a widow, to whom he was married 6 December 1850. This woman was the mother of this article's author. They went to St. Louis, Missouri, where their first child was born in 1851.

In 1852, 11th of May, the family now consisting of the parents and three children, left St. Louis, Missouri to cross the great plains, driving their own team of two yoke of oxen and two cows, for Salt Lake City. They arrived in September and after a few days rest, the pioneers pushed on south to Fillmore, Utah, the then capitol of the territory, where they arrived the 22nd of September 1852.

The Saints here had built a triangular fort walled on for protection against the Indians. The settlers built their houses inside this fort, facing inward. My mother's son-in-law, George Black had his house near the gate in the southwest corner. A few feet from this house , east, Brother Peter Robinson, had built his house, which left a few feet between. This was utilized by putting a wall in the front, by the new arrivals and used as their house, where their first winter was spent. The roof was of dirt, no floor, and cloth was used for windows.

At the organization of the 42nd quorum of seventy, he was ordained to that office and in later life was ordained a high priest. Thomas was permitted to identify himself with the "school of the prophets" at its organization. He was a consistent and conscientious Latter Day Saint living all the gospel principles as he understood them; true to the faith to the time of his death which occurred 2nd of August, 1890 when he peacefully passed from sleep to death full of years and honoured by all.

He was interred in the Fillmore cemetery without ceremony or public demonstration on account of the family having diphtheria in the house. He had performed some work in the temple

and went to a well-earned rest with a bright hope of meeting his loved ones in a glorious resurrection. Below is a copy of the organization of the Branch at his house in 1847 as taken from the church records. I have thought best to append the copy as also a letter accompanying it, as interesting matter.

List of those in Shrewsbury Branch at its organization: Thomas Davies, late of Fillmore, CC Shaw late of Cache Valley. William Bishop of Logan, Jane Palmer of Logan.

An entry in St Mary's Parish record of Shropshire, England reads as follows: 13 November 1812, Richard Davies married Letitia Davies of Hanwood or Harwood.. Witnesses: Elizabeth Tipton, William Evans.<sup>3</sup> It might be, and I believe, these are the parents of Thomas Davies as the writer remembers him speaking of his mother as Hanwood or Harwood. Thomas Davies claimed that he was born in 1811 and their marriage of 1812 leaves a discrepancy, which is easily explained when it is known that his claim was based on traditional memory entirely. Letitia was not, seemingly a common name.

Mary Davies, sister of Thomas Davies was a dressmaker, living in 1870 in Barker street Shrewsbury.

(Notes by Thomas Glen Davies, Jan 2 1993

The name of Mary Devlin is not correct. Thomas Davies did some baptismal work in the St George Temple in 1873. One of the people for whom he was baptized was John Simmonds. His relationship to this man is listed as son-in-law. His first wife's name was thus Mary Simmonds, daughter of John and Susan Simmonds

<sup>2</sup>-The ship he sailed from Liverpool on was the Lord Sandon

<sup>3</sup>- This is believed now to be in error. All of Letitia`s children were listed as illegitimate.)

#### Patriarchal Blessing of Thomas Davies 1811-1890

Fillmore City, Jan 1 1856:

A Patriarchal Blessing by Isaac Morley on the head of Thomas Davies, son of Thomas F. Davies and Letitia Davies, Born April 4, 1811, in Shropshire, England.

Brother Thomas, in the name of the Lord, I place my hands upon thy head, and by the authority to the Holy priesthood I seal the blessing of a father upon thee. This shall be a principle of promise and of priesthood to continue with thee, for under this seal many seals of priesthood will be communicated to thy mind. Thou art a descendant from Abraham, from the Fathers and Patriarchs whose right it is and will be to hold keys of Priesthood of prudence and power and thou wilt realize under this Priesthood an increase of responsibility resting upon thy mind. Be prudent with thine agency and priesthood and thou shalt enjoy all the seals of the holy ordinances pertaining to thine exaltation and thy future welfare and Priesthood while sojourning here below. Thou hast read of many seals of mystery that thou hast not understood: In thine endowment they will be brought to thy memory and they will illuminate thy mind with wonder - the things thou hast so often read , yet by thee not understood. These blessings will illuminate thy mind, they will comfort thy heart. Therefore, my son, let thy mind be open, quick to receive and to retain the gifts of the everlasting Gospel for thou hast a right to enjoy them by birth and by adoption for by them thou wilt receive keys to exalt thy family, to bless and to save thy posterity. Thou art of Joseph connected with the

promised seed. Thou wilt have a work to do by proxy for thy progenitors whereby many souls will be given thee, as seals of thy ministry. Much will be required at thy hands in the redemption of Israel, thus far the seals of the Priesthood will rest upon thee, and I seal thee up by virtue of this priesthood to be crowned in Glory, immortality and Eternal Lives, Even so Amen and Amen.  
( Scribe: Lenore A Morley)