

HISTORY OF FERRON BY DAUGHTER OF JOSEPH SMITH THORNTON.

Some of the history of the early pioneers coming into Ferron. They were called by the Church of Latter day Saints. Joseph Smith Thornton, Wm. Taylor, Sr., Wm Taylor, Jr., Mass Larsen, Mike Molen, Joseph Wrigley, Hyrum Cook and R. P. Rasmussen came with their families and what few things they could. They were full of faith and enthusiasm and were anxious to make new homes. Joseph Smith Thornton, the first Emery County School Supt., in 1880 was also one of the first school teachers came to Ferron the fall of 1878. Along with his wife, he cared for the sick and the dead. The brand he used for his cattle was TX. There were no sawmills for the pioneers. Therefore, they had to use the logs gathered from along the creek.

Their first home was a one room dugout. They lived there about four years. The floor was bare dirt, but covered with a carpet. Willows were used as lath nailed to the logs and then plastered. The roofs were made of brush and then plastered with mud, sometimes leaking when the heavy rains came. Window frames and doors were hand sawed from logs. There were no coal mines opened so they had to haul a supply of wood for the winter. All root vegetables were stored in cellars and pits. Rows of peeled squash were hung to dry. Wild berries were gathered and dried. Strips of meat were dipped in boiling brine and hung to dry. All work out clothing was used for rugs to cover the rough board floors. Cat-tails were used as filling for pillows and bed ticks. They were very comfortable. The first harvest of grain was cut with scythes and thrashed with a flail broom made from willows and bush. Mother had a oil lamp, but it was kept for company. Home make candles were used .

Pioneers always shared their food with each other. Every home had its spinning wheel. Mothers was a small one. You could sit down nd spin. The spinning wheel was used for spinning yarn for stockings and clothing. The Indians taught the white women how to make dye from sage brush, red berries and rabbit brush.

The settlers of Ferron and Molen built a log one-room house to be used as a church, school and gathering place of the settlers. it was half way between Ferron and Molen. It was used for 6 years. Father would write short plays and put them on. He did this for many years. He told about the first how it would take most of the settlers for actors. Not many left for inspectors.

Father taught school here, but books, paper and pencils were very scarce--everyone giving what they had. As the years rolled on more settlers came. Some stayed and others moved on.

Isolated as they were, the settlers on each other and a bond of warm true, fellowship grew up among them. A stretch of ground north of the creek was chosen for the township of Ferron. This was their third summer (about 1882.) One brave man after another cleared a place and made ready to put a log room on it, which made everybody very happy. I can remember many of the first ones. They fixed a bowery for the summer by the little school house. Father, Joseph Smith, was the first school teacher and supt. but he did enjoy getting up little plays. he would write them out, but it would take most of the people. When different ones started to build new homes they would put the plays on there. Billy Hiking announced once they would now have a bridal scene. The curtain went up and he had a horses' bridle on a chair. He liked to do tricks on people.

He must, therefore, be heir to the promised blessings. What blessings and privileges do we inherit because of our birthright? What responsibility goes with that birthright? Purpose of the birthright, Abraham was told, "And in thee, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." God rewards men according to their works and not even an Abraham would have received from Him an honor that was unmerited. (Alma 13:3) (Abraham 3;22-23 to 28.)

At the first organization in heaven we were all present and saw the Savior chosen and appointed and the plan of Salvation made, and we sanctioned it. (Joseph Smith Compendium p. 288). In that "Council in of the Gods" Jehovah was chosen to be the Savior. He is represented as making at that time the following request, "Give me to lead to this bone world." We were all partakers of the Glory that was in heaven, when we walked and talked with God, our Father in Heaven. And we all stood the great test that was gi ven us. So gallently and with such favor that our spirits were held back until the last and gretest of all dispensations of the fullness of times. When the Gospel of jesus Christ has been restored to earth for the last time. I am greatful for the 6,000 years that I waited for this great opportunity to be counted one among the noble and great ones. Israel was a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. To build temples, "Tested and Tried". A lineage provided for them by the Lord. That lineage is the House of Israel. The lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their posterity. Through this lineage were to come the true and tried souls that had demonstrated their righteousness in the spirit world before coming here. We came through his son, Ephraim. I am indeed greatful for this privilege of having such staunch ancestors, that my grandparents were found true descendents and were strong enough to give up their homes, parents, and loved ones all for

the Gospel. My father's parents joined the Church through Elder John Taylor. They joined the saints soon after. Elder John Taylor converted many in Ontario, Canada and baptized them. Many of our folks were converted and baptized by him. He was later made 3rd president of the Church.

My grandparents crossed the plains in John Wimmer's Company in 1852 and settled in American Fork. Father was 2 years old. Grandpa Thornton had good horses and wagons to bring his family and the few things they had to have. A few days after their arrival they were busy in erecting a log room. Their hearts were made happy by the arrival of a baby boy. They called him Nathan. Grandpa Thornton took up a homestead between American Fork and Pleasant Grove. He soon had it under cultivation. He planted an orchard and had horses and cattle. Grandmother died in 1858 leaving a family of small children. Grandpa then got a housekeeper. She had two girls, Mary and Dinnar. I remember visiting them when a small child. Grandpa would go out under the apple trees to gather up those that had dropped and he would let me ride back in the empty wheelbarrow. He wore a long white beard.

I remember hearing my father tell how he loved to watch the chickens and one night Grndma had brought in a little duck. It was the first one hatched. In the night it got to chirping and he felt so sorry for it all alone in its box. So he got up and got it and took it to bed with him, cuddled it up in his arms. He went to sleep and forgot all about the poor duck. Next morning he found it dead. He was so frightened he didn't dare tell, so he hurried and put it back in its box.

I have heard him tell how they used to bury their coals of fire at night and sometimes they would die out. Then they would have to take a kettle and go to the neighbors to borrow "fire". Matches were very scarce. Grandpa built a dobie house that had two large rooms. They had a deep well of lovely water at the back. Later he built two rooms at the back enclosing the well.

Grandpa died January 21, 1891. He was a faithful servant of our Father in Heaven, held the priesthood. Grandpa's son, Oliver bought the homestead and raised his family there. He has been dead several years now, but Aunt Rettie Phillips still lived there. (Aunt Rettie Phillips has been dead for a long time now. 1956. She has passed on now 8 Aug, 1955) We have had many good times there.

Now I will pass on to my mother's parents. They heard the glorious truths away off in Denmark which was taught by our good Elders. They accepted the Gospel and were baptized. The family

wer Lutheren before. They wre soon planning on how to get to America -- to "Zion". They left Denmark June 6, 1873 on my mother's 14 birthday. They had a family picture taken and I remember hearing mother say how mad she was because Uncle Chris' sweetheart had to be in it. The sweetheart cme to Utah and they were married. It was very hard for them coming to a new place and not being able to speak English. They stayed with some Danish folks by the name of Peter lund of Pleasant Gove. Later they moved by themselves, but mothr stayed with them until she was married. I remember hearing mother tell how rough the waves on the ocean were. They "looked like mountains."

Uncle Chris was just a young boy and a good swimmer. He would dive off the ship and it would be a long time before they could locate him. Sometimes Grandma would be frightened thinking a shark had got him. After landing they got on the train to cross the United States for Utah. Uncle Chris was anxious o get off and run to a store to buy something to ea, as they were running short. Finally, they came to a stopping place and he went to find a store, but while he was gone the train left. They were all quite excited, but he got on the next train and caught up with them. They were a happy family.

How thankgful I am for such valient grandparents. My father and mother were married in February 19, 1876. They had a home on the west side of Pleasant Grove. They went through the Endowment house in Salt Lake City in obedience to the teaching they had received, which gave them new life and better understanding. Lqater I'll write a short sketch of their lives. Now I will write a few things that I can remember.

In the spring of 1880 on a homestead in the Castle Valley country, in a little place called Ferron, one could have seen a man lqboring with shovel, urging the water through the dry soil. Along about noon his good wife called to him. It was necessary to hitch the horses to a wagon and go after the midwife. This being the 27th day of April and they were looking forward for the arrival of a baby to gladden their hearts. The dear little mother so brave, going in to the shadows of death for the little spirit that was anxious to come to this earth. No doctor was there to ease the pains. No one could do more than this, but she felt more than paid for the blessing that came to her. A little brown eyed and brown haired baby girl came to dwell with them in their little home which was a one room dugout. A very humble home but a happy one. How happy the little sister, Rettie, was to have a baby in the home.

I remember hearing my mother tell of an incident that happened before I came, of some Indians coming down in the dugout

and she was alone with her baby Rettie, who was then about 2 and 1/2 years of age. They wanted "biscuit". She gave them freely of what she had and then they wanted her papoose. They tried to get her and finally they left, but said they would come back for her baby. She was so frightened that all she could do was to pray. In those days out there they had no locks on the doors, so she put e verything moveable against the door. There were no close neighbors. Father had gone to American Fork for provisions. She was alone for 6 weeks and never saw a white person during that time. Just a few Indians going along the trail. Father brought a sack of white flour and some coal oil get on it. So mother spread it out in the sun on sheets and finally it was alright. A friend, Sister Conover, told me what lovely biscuits my mother could make and how they enjoyed them, being made from the white flour.

Another incident comes to my mind. This happened soon after, but her parents had moved out there and was living close by, about 2 blocks away, with just a trail between their homes that went through the tall brush. One night she awoke with a start. She had been dreaming. She jumped up with her hand clasped to her wrist thinking there was a scorpin there. She didn't dare to let loose for fear of being stung and she couldn't get her shoes on so she had to go bare footed over to Grandpa's. Imagine going through this trail at night and alone and barefooted. Well, when the piece was cut out and had fallen on the floor, to their great surprise, there wasn't anything at all. What an awful scare. Just the week before she had killed a scorpin in her wood box.

She also built what they all liked to call, "Aunt Elise's parlor". This was some posts set in the ground and then wove willows in and out. Something like a basket. Then she plastered it with mud. She made some stools to sit on. it was nice and cool to sit in the summer and it was up out of the ground.

This morning as I am writing this I seem to see it all. I was real small when Father built a small house of logs in the town that had been laid out. But I can remember the dugout. How hard father had labored to get his land cleared and under cultivation and help the other men keep the canal in good condition. Once they got it made, it was called the King Ditch. It watered our farms. Then there was a ditch called the Molen Ditch that went down to a small place called Molen. Then they took out another canal north of town that watered the town lots. Then there were roads to make and keep up. There was a foot bridge built across the creek. Finally a large bridge was made. I remember one morning early, Jane King and my mother were walking out to see Sister Rasmussen, who lived a long ways from

our farm. Jane had two boys, Willie and Warren, and mother had the two girls. I can remember us crossing over this foot bridge. Brother Rasmussen brought us home and crossing the Creek, the water was high. He was driving two mules. I can remember us singing, "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone" and I felt so sorry for the little dog. I remember another time going out one Sunday morning. This time in a wagon. They had two seats (spring seats). Edison King and father were sitting in front and Jane and mother in the back with a guilt between for us children. We had been going quite a ways when the horses started quick and the back seat tipped back. The women's feet went up in the air and they almost went out backwards. Stopping the horses the men got out as quickly as they could to help their ladies. They always enjoyed their visits out to Bro & Sis. Rasmussen's. And no wonder, for she could make such lovely "starch cake." She would grate her potatoes and make her own starch as all the women did there at that time and for a long time after.

This being the 19 of February, 1933 being 57 years since the marriage of my beloved paents. This being Sunday. I am not feeling very well, so have been home all day. Most of the time being spent in bed. But I felt like I wanted to write a few lines. Yesterday was my dear sister, Lydia's birthday. I wrote her a letter and sent a nice birthday card. These are hard times--no money to buy presents. (1933)

I remember the in old dugout there was a long window with small panes of glass. The window didn't stand straight up, but laid sideways. The door was at the side of the window. There was a small window in the back. The steps were dug out of the earth to go down. It faced the east. I remember a large tree that grew in front. Every trip that Father made into American Fork, he would bring some fruit tees and berry bushes and flowers back with him. More of this will be in the history of my parents.

I remember when I was about four years old we went down to Pinto, a place in Southern Utah, to visit my father's brother, Amos, and his families. He had two wives, Mary and Charity. They were two lovely women. That is the first I remember of seeing Indians. Uncle Amos had been called there to labor with the Indians. He raised an Indian. He took him when he was a baby and kept him until he was married. Uncle Amos was a carpenter for he was building a house. They sent me after him to come to dinner and I got lost. Some ladies found me asleep. Of course they knew whose child I was. It was just a small place.

Ver. 1st Ut. abt 190-



Anni & May THORNTON

my grandma



Joseph S. Thornton
grand daughters
Loua - Retta - Elise



Thornton Home in Ferron UT

G. O. Anderson. (Spring Tilled & Sp. VISH FORK)



Joseph Smith Thornton



Father was so fond of his big horse Lamont, little boy also liked horses out to Smith's Lake on the farm



Elise



Joseph + Elise

