

Life Sketch of Thomas Poulson Cloward

Author: Madoline Cloward Dixon

Transcription: Lori Weinstein (weinsteinlori@yahoo.com)

Minor Grammar Modifications: Chad G. Nichols (webmaster@cloward.org)

Thomas P. Cloward was a pioneer in every sense of the word. He was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania December 10, 1823 a son of Jacob and Anne Pluck Cloward. His father had two brothers, whose names were Heber and William, and though of Irish descent, all were born in America. His mother was remembered by the grandchildren as a little short woman, very fat, who was of the Pennsylvania Dutch. She smoked a clay pipe. Their family consisted of six sons, and four daughters - Catherine, Charlotte, Daniel, William, Thomas, James, Jacob, Albert, Hannah Jane, and Anne Eliza.

Thomas lived with his parents until he was fifteen years old, and then he was bound out, and apprenticed at the shoe making trade, at which he remained for four years.

In the Spring of 1844 he was baptized into the Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter Day Saints, by William Moore. This same year, he immigrated to Nauvoo, Ill., and received an ordination as an Elder. He was confirmed by a man whose name was Baker. He became acquainted with Prophet Joseph Smith while he lived at Nauvoo. He was in the congregation when the prophet made his last public address.

Remaining in Nauvoo until the fall of 1846, when the great move west began, he crossed the Mississippi, and after traveling 200 miles, landed on the west side of the Missouri River. By this time the immigration from Nauvoo had arrived, and he assisted in building up a settlement there for the winter. During this winter, he became acquainted with a young lady by the name Mary Page. He was married to her on the 25th day of March, 1847.

This same year, a company was organized consisting of 143 persons, of whom Thomas was one, for the purpose of exploring the Rocky Mountains. What a spirit of daring and adventure, and belief in their religion and their leaders these men must have had! The thrill of a whole new country just waiting for courageous men like these to enter and conquer!

Thomas was 24 years old when on the 6th day of April, they set out, 'Westward Ho' to a land where they could build their temples, worship as they pleased, till their own ground, conduct their businesses, without the finger of ridicule always pointed at them, the danger of pilferage and fire forever present. After traveling 1020 miles, they arrived in the Great Salt Lake, with joy and thankfulness in their hearts, looked out over the valley of their dreams as their leader, Brigham Young, said "this is the place."

There was no white population in the valley at this time, for only a handful of scouts had ever before laid eyes on this great territory. After the Indians heard of the white men who had come to live in their desert land, they came from all directions to visit them, seeming to be well pleased.

They had been there only a short time when, as each man turned to the work for which he was fitted, the blacksmith to his forge, the farmer to his plow, the builder to his cabins, and Thomas was not without his work. He knew his job, so, on a hot day, the latter of July, he sat under a bush of scrub oak at the place where the Z.C.M.I. store now stands, and made the first pair of shoes that was made in Salt Lake, little dreaming that his grandchildren and

great-grandchildren would cherish this bit of his life as something to tell and retell, to their children.

He did not stay long in Salt Lake this first time, for on the 1st of September he was called to return to Winter Quarters, situated on the west side of the Missouri River. In the spring of 1848 he crossed to the east side of the river, where he built a house and made a small improvement on government land. By this time some of the presiding elders of the church had returned, among them President Joseph Young, who ordained him as a seventy.

The winter of 1848 he moved to St. Joseph, Missouri, remaining there until 1849, when he returned to his home on the east side of the Missouri River. In 1852 he fitted himself with a yoke of cows (oxen) and a wagon and returned to Salt Lake City. That same year he left Salt Lake and settled in Provo, where he married Mary A. Gardner, daughter of Elias Gardner, in the fall of 1853.

They remained in Provo nine years, then moved to Payson, where he worked as a shoemaker. Brigham Young had sent an order that a shoemaking establishment be set up in Payson, and so, with from seven to twenty men under him, Thomas Cloward opened a place one block west of the old church and amusement hall where the Fourth Ward Church now stands. It was a grey stone building, as will be recognized as the one that is now painted pink. Often as his children returned from school as a block or so north of there, he would talk to them through the window over his workbench. According to a price list of merchandise from the old Townshend Store, a pair of Thomas Cloward's ladies shoes sold for \$7.50. Much of the goods was sold to travelers who were passing through in their mad rush to the gold fields of California, a land where they had heard there was perpetual sunshine, with no snow or ice the year round, and the blue of the Pacific greeted them as they covered the last footscore mile.

A pair of high heeled boots made by this man were to be prized, and there was not a child in the settlement who wore neater footwear, or a young man at the dances who was more proud of his boots, than the boys whose father was Thomas P. Cloward. After the boys were married, he made the wives shoes, and they loved the neatness with which they were cut and sewed. Some of the young boys boots were made of brown leather, with bright red trim around the top.

Thomas Cloward was a gentle man, loved and respected by all who knew him. One of his daughters-in-law said she had never seen a man who was so good and kind as he. One of his wives was a very neat, quiet woman (the first) and gentle. The second wife was a tall, raw boned woman, strenuous, with endless energy, but when her inner feelings gave way, in a fit of anger, she would fly at her husband until with her hands she had torn all of the buttons off his vest, only to sit down in her more penitent hours, and sew them all back on again. And to all of this, he would only say, "Now Mary," very quietly, "Now Mary".

They had hot biscuits every morning and during hog killing time, wieners were made right there in their own kitchen and hung over the granary to keep until the time when they were needed for the table. The second wife was also an excellent butter maker. This writer knows little of the first wife, but it must have been she who made most of the clothing that the family wore.

The Indians were very bad those first few years, and at one time some of the men were called to go on the hill south of Payson, between Payson and Springlake, to protect the town from Indians. Thomas was one of them. His brother William was called to go, but realizing that he had accumulated nothing in a material way, and that Thomas had prospered, he

went to Thomas and said, "Tom, I'll go in your place for if one of us must go and probably get killed, you are more able to care for two families than I am." So William went, but there was no fighting. The Indians did not molest the white men, and they returned to their homes in safety. But Tom always cherished the thought that his brother was willing if need be, to lay down his life for him and their families.

When they first moved from Payson to Provo, they built a cabin on the highway east of town, just west of the property now owned by T. Woodhouse and across the lane. While living here they were on the lookout for Indians at all times. Once an old buck called Curley stopped by and asked for melons from the patch back of the house, but as there was no man at home, they did not want him to enter. Curley was determined to do so. Mary, the second wife, picked up a sturdy chair by its back and held it threateningly overhead, and said to the Indian, "if you come any nearer, I'll break this over your head!" The Indian, though not understanding the words, got the meaning of the upheld chair and the blazing eyes beside it, and retreated.

Later the family built a cabin further to the west a few hundred yards, where we find his brick house still stands. The log house stood in front of this, a little to the west. Some of his married children spent their first few months or years of marriage in this little place, after the father had moved into the fine brick abode.

After the decree came from the United States Government that there should be no more polygamy, there were many of the men who continued to live with their plural wives. Thomas was one of these, and when the civil officials found that the law was not being obeyed, they sought out the men who were still living with more than one wife and took them to Salt Lake to prison. When he returned, along with the others, his family was shocked and amused at his shaven head.

After this, he moved the first wife into a little place on the Dixon property, just north of the cemetery, and when the children who still lived with their mother at the original home tarried too long at Aunt Mary's, and returned as dusk settled over the simple grave markers, how they did make their feet fly, as they scurried homeward where they were safe from the ever expected, but never seen ghosts.

When the Salem Canal was started, he left his shoemakers bench and took active part in the building of the canal. He was very conscientious in his church work, and though they lived a mile out of town, he never missed a meeting. Often he went to Salt Lake for conference.

He was the father of nineteen children, eight by the first wife and eleven by the second. On the first there were: William, Jacob Elijah, George, Amanda, Eliza, Edward, and Francis. His first wife lived with Elijah and wife after grandfather was forced to give up one of his wives. She lived in Sevier County and made several trips down there to visit her. She died August 8, 1909. His second wife was an invalid for eight years before she died, August 8, 1905.

His oldest daughter by the second wife never married and lived with her father and cared for him until his death Jan. 16, 1909. His eighty-six years were well-lived; his sound advice and encouragement did much to direct the lives of his large family.

Recognized as one of the original pioneers, his name is on the Brigham Young monument in Salt Lake City. It is of interest to know when Heber C. Kimball took sick on their journey into Salt Lake Valley, grandfather was asked to drive his team and take over the command of Kimball's company.