

Thomas Jefferson Butterfield 1811 – 1890

Thomas Butterfield was born June 17, 1811 in Farmington, Maine to Zachariah Butterfield and Martha Hiscock. He married Mary Jane Parker on February 15, 1835. He is remembered as being a rather large man, weighing about 180 pounds, dark hair and blue eyes that reflected his kind nature and sense of humor.

Thomas Butterfield joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1835. He then moved to Kirtland, Ohio, was ordained a member of the 3rd Quorum of Seventy, and served a mission. In 1839 he had to leave Missouri because of mobs and persecution and later had to leave Nauvoo for the same reason. After many hardships he entered the Salt Lake Valley in 1849 with the Allen Taylor Company.

In 1850 Thomas Butterfield was living in West Jordan. In the spring of 1851, while searching for fresh water and a place to raise their livestock and families, he and Samuel Egbert found a small stream of water flowing from a canyon. He later returned and further explored the area, then moved his family, sheep, cows, oxen, horses and bees to the site he had chosen. With the help of his family, he plowed a ditch, erected a cabin, planted crops and cut firewood to prepare for the coming winter.

In the next few years the Thomas Butterfield family was joined by others. The area became known as the Butterfield Settlement. After Henry Harriman, Thomas Butterfield was called to be the second presiding authority of the area until he left on a mission to the Salmon River area in 1855. After coming home, he married his second wife, Mary Farmer. When the Young Men's Improvement Association was formed in 1879, Thomas served as its first President.

Thomas Butterfield was a very industrious man. As the years went by, he added to the variety and amount of crops planted until the family produced most everything they needed or cared for. His herds grew large and prosperous. He was known for his generosity, always giving to those in need or less fortunate. He was a friend to the Native Americans in the area. He gave them food and a place to camp.

Thomas Jefferson Butterfield left a legacy of community, family, faith and kindness. He was the father of 12 children, 60 grandchildren, 174 great-grandchildren and 21 great great grandchildren. Many families in our community can trace their heritage to this honorable man.