

Life and History of Fred Smith.

Fred Smith son of Thomas X. and Margaret Gurney Smith was born at Farmington, Davis County, Utah; on June, 5, 1859.

While I was still a very young baby my parents moved to Logan, Cache County, Utah.

My early schooling was very meager, at that time there was only a school held for a few months each fall; due to the lack of money warm suitable clothing for the children could not be obtained. Many times we smaller children did not have any shoes, I remember my first pair of shoes was had when I was eight years of age. The first school I went to was conducted by a Mr. Smith, the next was under Ida Cook. As time went on the School system improved and I went as much as was possible but I was only one of a large family therefore had to help all I could on the farm.

At twelve years of age I started to haul lumber from my Father's mill which was located in Logan Canyon, the haul being from the mill to the town of Logan which was a distance of about eight miles.

At the age of fifteen I left this work and started to herd cattle for the church, which at that time had quite a large herd as the people paid their tithing in products of their farms or what ever they had. We brought them into the country west of Soda Springs to feed and herd.

Then at the age of seventeen I in company with Davie Reece Arron Farr and others drove a herd of cattle by overland from Logan, Utah to Omaha, Nebraska. We followed the Old Oregon Trail for many miles, at the place where the saints coming west divided into two companies and from that point we followed the North Platte river for some distance. While on this trip we ran short of provisions and went over to the Black Hill mining camp for supplies it was just at the time of the Indian War in which General Custard was killed so the people in seeing us on the hill became alarmed thinking we were some of the Indians come back to make more trouble. And by the time we got in the valley to the camp all the men were armed ready to protect themselves and families. We reached Omaha and here the cattle were sold, we remained there for a few days returning home on the same trail. On this trip we were very fortunate in not having any dangerous encounters with the Indians. We saw a tribe of the Shoshones at Green River in full dress and this was of keen interest to us.

Then for a number of years I worked on the farm with my Father. The Logan temple was at this time started and my Father desired to furnish a man to assist in the construction of it, he sent me to do this work for him. I worked at this every day for three years two of which was donation work while the other one spent there I received some pay. At this time my Father was called on a mission to Great Britain greater responsibility was mine to shoulder being one of the oldest members of the family. While my father was thus engaged in the work of the Lord my Mother died which added to our many hardships.

On January the fourth 1883, I was married to Caroline Mellor of Lancashire, England at the old Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah, by Daniel H. Wells. We then came back to Logan where I helped my father settle tithing, he then was Bishop of the fourth ward of Logan.

On January the twenty-fifth, 1883 in answer to a call from President Preston of Cache Stake I was to accompany Thomas E. Ricks, Brigham, Heber, Joe, and Willard Ricks and assist then in settling and making a new home for our people in Idaho. At Weston Idaho we waited several days for some of the brethren from Wellsville, Utah which were to meet us there. They were Francis Gunnell, Dan Walters, Leonard Jones and Tom Thorpe. We then resumed our journey together traveling all the way by team, at Eagle Rock, now known as Idaho Falls we were met by Bishop T. E. Ricks Sr. and James M. Cook who came on the train to this place and waited for us. From there we continued our journey to about one mile south of what is now Thornton, here we camped on the dry bed until the latter part of March. While stopping at this place we busied ourselves getting out house logs and poles, and hawling them about seven miles north of where we were now camping for at that place we contemplated making our settlement.

The latter part of March we took up camp and moved on farther north and camped on the Teton River one block east of the main highway of today, then with the logs we had previously hawled here we started to build homes, my home was the first house built and lived in, in this settlement which was latter named Rexburg. It was Located on the same lot my present home now stands and was made of logs with a rough lumber roof and floor.

On April the twenty-third Joe, Williard Ricks and myself left for Logan arriving there on the twenty-seventh, and on May the third with Aunt Jane Ricks and her family, my wife and others we started back for Rexburg. We made the trip by team as before arriving back here on May the eleventh but not without many hardships. In the winter we were able to cross the river on the ice and in the spring of the year we built the ferry.

I then started farming my twenty acres located where the home of James M. Cook now stands. I also had a good garden and was successful in raising tomatoes and cucumbers. In the fall of 1883 I homesteaded the farm one mile east of town and that I owned until recently.

In the year of 1884 we had a great deal of trouble with horse thieves some of them coming in from Montana, the sheriff and posse were after them, one of their number was killed in Brigham Rick's summer kitchen. This trouble lasted for a year or so and during this time we had to herd our horses by night.

During those early days I was actively engaged in the various organizations of the church serving as first counselor and President of the Elder's quorum, counselor in the Sunday School and in my home the first Sunday School was organized, I also acted as one of the first home missionaries.

I was a trustee of the school board for two terms, served as city councilman and as city watermaster for one term. I ran the grist mill for a couple of years.

The first year the Ricks College was opened I attended and there studied under the able leadership of Brother Spori.

On June the twenty-eighth I left for a mission to the Southern States, here I labored for twenty-seven months with much success along with the grave difficulties every missionary is familiar with. But with all of those things throw in I will say it was a very pleasurable time for me and one long to be remembered. On my return I resumed my farming work as I was previously engaged in. I then had the opportunity several times of acting as a home missionary for from three to six months.

We have been blessed with the following children, all of which are alive today, Thomas X. Joseph Fred, Elizabeth, Ariel M. Margaret, Orson Guy, and Emily M.

Dear Old Dad, I am thinking of you
Of all youve done and all you do,
And every day it makes me glad
To know I have such a Dear Old Dad.
And today above all days,
I think of you and the many ways
You've helped me along and made me glad
So here's health and a long life to a
Wonderful Dad.

Transcribed by: Eileen Andersen
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