

## **Life Sketch Of Thomas X Smith As related by himself**

I, Thomas X. Smith, was born January 25, 1884, in Logan, Cache county, Utah, in the home of my grandparents, Thomas X., and Margaret Gurney Smith. My father, Fred Smith, was born June 5, 1859 in Farmington, Utah. My mother, Caroline Mellor, was born November 21, 1861, in Rushlam, Lancashire, England, daughter Joseph Mellor and Dianah Charlton. She was a convert to the L. D. S. Church, in England. Her family disowned her, so when some of her relatives were coming to America, she came with them. When she reached Salt Lake City, November 11, 1881, she got a job cooking for a crew of men that were working on the Logan Temple, my father being one of the crew, met her, and they were married, January 4, 1883, in the Salt Lake Endowment house.

On January 25, 1883, my father was called by President Preston of Cache Stake, to accompany Thomas E, Ricks, to assist in settling and making a new home for our people in Idaho. Until the latter part of March they camped about one mile south of what is now called Thornton. There they spent their time getting out house logs and poles. Then as soon as the snow left they journeyed on to what is now Rexburg. Here they homesteaded and prepared homes for their families. On April 23, 1883, my father and others of the party returned to Logan, and brought their wives and families to Rexburg. When it came near time for my venture into this world my mother returned to Logan, to the home of my Grandparents, where I made my entrance. As soon as she was able, she returned with me to Rexburg. My Mother and Father shared the pioneer hardships of early days, but managed to let their children have the normal childhood of pioneer children. As our house was the first built here, we held our first Sunday School there, and many of my first memories of the church was learned in our home.

On March 11, 1892, when I was eight years of age, my father broke a trail through snow and ice to the river, where he baptized me a member of the Church of Latter-day-saints. When I was nine years of age, I was baptized in the Logan Temple for my Mother's father. He had died soon after she had left England.

My schooling was very meager, we could only go to school, during the three of four months in the fall when all the farm work was finished and before the spring work started. The first school I attended was in the old First Ward Church, located about one half block north of where the pump house now stands. As we got a little older, we went to the old Second Ward Church, located just north of the new building. Then still later, we went to the Ricks Academy where we finished our education.

When I was but eleven years of age, my father was called to fill a mission in the Southern States. My parents had four children, the fifth was born while my father was on his mission. So it was my responsibility to work and help provide means for my family. I worked on our farm and planted the grain helped cut and put up the hay. I got a little extra work driving a team and hand plow for fifty cents a day, I greatly appreciated it, and was glad I could help in that way. When the Stake Relief Society had to make their visits to the different wards, they would call on me, because they felt safe in my care. I was very proud and happy to be of such service. There were

no bridges, and we had to forde the rivers, some times the water was high and it was necessary to cross at a very exact spot, but we never had any serious trouble.

When I was thirteen years of age, I would go with team and wagon to help haul freight for the different business places, from market Lake, now Roberts. Many times I was trusted with the money to pay the freight, at times it was quite a large sum. The roads were very bad especially in the spring of the year, then the mud would nearly reach the hub of the wagon wheel. We had to haul our wood from the timbers, and several men would go in a group to get their wood, I wanted to go with them, but some thought it would be to much work to help me get my load and didn't want to bother with me, but some of the older men thought they could help me. So I went with Brother Alma Larsen and others, they said they never had to help me, that I always had my load ready and helped them. I certainly felt grown up and worked even harder to show them I could do my work just as well as they. I took my responsibility seriously.

As a deacon, I went out to help gather tithing, as we used to get flour, fruit, vegetables, butter or anything the people could give. I was Librarian in the Sunday School. As I was advanced in the Priesthood I served as Counselor in the Elders Quorum and also secretary for a short time.

While I was attending Ricks Academy, I met the girl of my dreams, Elizabeth Ellsworth. And it made me very happy when she consented to be my wife. We were married in the Logan Temple, April 13, 1904. Eight children came to bless our home. They are, Idella Elizabeth, born February 13, 1905. Thomas X. born December 18, 1907, Ada Caroline, born February 2, 1910, Vera Winona, born September 27, 1911, Irene Margaret, born June 13, 1916, The twins, Edwin and Esther born June 2, 1919, and Emily Vae, born October 16, 1925.

With a large family it was necessary for me to work hard, and I had to be away from home much of the time. As I worked with four and six head of horses hauling logs, rock, wool, grain, and many other things that was hauled from place to place. I hauled lumber and rock, and helped to build, the church house, the Tabernacle, the Ricks College buildings and many other of the business houses in Rexburg. I worked on the irrigation system for Rexburg, and helped build the railroad as it went through town.

While a young man, I suffered from a ruptured appendix, I was sent to Salt Lake City for treatment, and it was only through faith and prayers that I was allowed to remain on this earth. In February, 1933, I was operated on for Mastoid, and again the power of the Holy Priesthood was made manifest to me, as the doctors had little hopes for me. I have had many other slight illnesses, in my life but have always had a strong healthy body. As I have never indulged in any tea, coffee, tobacco or any strong drinks, I have always been able to work hard both early and late, and I contribute that to my keeping the Word of Wisdom.

In the spring of 1926, our eldest son was called to fill a mission in the South Sea Islands, with headquarters in Papeeti, Tahiti. That fall we moved to the Teton basin, in the Bates Ward, I felt I could make more money there to support my family, and my missionary son. I hauled lime rock for the Utah Idaho Sugar Company. While in Bates Ward I was sustained as Superintendent of the Sunday School. I worked with a wonderful group of men and enjoyed the work very much. It became necessary for us to move, as the place in which we lived had been sold. We then

moved into the Chapin Ward, here I served as counselor in the Sunday School, and again worked faithfully at my work and we had a very memorable time.

In the spring of 1928, we moved back to Rexburg, and dryfarmed. On February 12, 1939, our father in heaven saw fit to call our daughter, Vera, home. She left two small sons and her husband. Again I was thankful for the Priesthood, as through it, I was able to see reason in all things, and it was alight in our darkest moments.

On November 12, 1939, our second son Edwin left Rexburg to fill a mission in the Northwestern States, with headquarters in Portland Oregon. I had never been able to fill a mission so was indeed thankful of the privilege of sending my sons. It was while Edwin was on his mission, that World War Two was declared. During the course of the war I had one son and two sons in-law in the service, all served over seas, and was very thankful they were able to return to us safe and sound. All of our children are married and have homes of their own.

On February 30, 1949, I was called by the Stake Presidency, to fill a Temple Mission, of fifty endowments for the year. I was very happy in the work and completed more than the assigned amount. I have always enjoyed doing Temple Work.

As our country needs all the young men in the service it is hard to send young men into the mission field, so the Church decided to send older people into the fields to keep the missionary work progressing. So when the Bishop asked if any of the High Priests could go, I told him, my wife and I could go for a short term mission. We were interviewed by Elder Henry B. Moyle, and called to fill a short term mission in the Southern States. We left our home in Rexburg, November 5, 1951, for Salt Lake City, to enter the mission school, this we enjoyed very much. We were taken through the Salt Lake Temple by a guide and each room was explained to us. Even the rooms that aren't used for just Temple Work. We were set apart for our mission November 14, 1951, by Elder Alma Sonne, and left the following day for our mission headquarters at Atlanta Georgia. Reaching there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and was assigned to labor in Central Florida, to be presiding Elder of a little group in Leesburg, Lake County. I spent six months there trying to get the members to be more sincere in their work, also trying to get the ones that held the priesthood to live the word of wisdom, and pay their tithing, and attend their meetings so they could be advanced in the priesthood. I made many very fine friends, and am sincerely grateful that I so lived to be worthy of this calling.

I arrived home May 28, 1952, to resume my farming. I was called to be a stake missionary, and set apart, August 18, by President Orval P. Mortenson, I was also asked to act as Genealogical Chairman of our ward, a work I am very interested in and will do my best to do that which is expected of me. It seems I have always been a ward teacher. I have been called many times to administer to the sick, a service I enjoy very much, as I feel very close to my heavenly Father.

My posterity is one to be proud of, and I certainly am. I have thirty grandchildren.

I am very proud of my pioneer heritage, I have seen southeastern Idaho grow, from sage brush and river bottom to the beautiful farming community it is today. There were many hardships and

hard work on the part of the Pioneers to make it such and I am happy to have had a small part in it. As a child I could never have realized such a change could take place.

Transcribe by: Eileen Andersen  
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