

Thomas Ferris

Birth date and place 28 Sept 1851, Lee County, Iowa

Death date and place Feb 1894, Salem, Utah, Utah

Father Joshua Lorenzo Ferris

Mother Elizabeth B. Gardner

Who Married and date Lavina Tabitha Ostler, 18 May 1878

Year Arrived in Utah 1852

Name of Company Independent

Who wrote history and date Dixie B. Gremlich, February 1990

Submitted to the DUP



Thomas Ferris

Thomas Ferris was the second son of Joshua Lorenzo Ferris and Elizabeth B. Gardner. He was born Sept. 28, 1851 in Lee County, Iowa. Some family members say he was born in Keokuk. His father had lived in the 29th District since 1846. His parents were married the 26th of Jun 1849 in Lee county, by Justice of Peace Jesse Hough. Their first child, Wilson W. Ferris, was born in July 1850 in Lee county. This child appears on one record, the 1850 Federal Census for Lee county. It is assumed that he died as an infant.

Thomas's parents were members of the LDS church. Joshua was born in Landaff, Grafton, New Hampshire. Elizabeth was born in Ohio and nothing is known of her family.

This was Joshua's third marriage. He had a son, Samuel, by his first marriage to Elizabeth Odell. He also had a daughter, by his second wife. The daughter, Mary Louisa, was born Sept. 4, 1848, and her mother, whose name is unknown, died on the 15th of Sept. 1848 when Mary was 10 days old.

In 1852 a call came from Salt Lake City for church members still in Iowa to go to Salt Lake. Joshua's family does not appear on the crossing the plains records, but as Joshua was a freighter by profession, they probably came independently in their own wagons. They settled in West Jordan where Thomas's mother Elizabeth Gardner Ferris died about 1853.

About May 1854, the father Joshua married Emma Phoebe Ann Beckstead. She was born in Williamsburg, Dundas, Canada on the 18th of July 1829 to Francis Beckstead and his 2nd wife Catherine Lang. Emma's mother had 10 children and the first wife had 11 children (total 21). Emma and most of her family were pioneers to Utah in Sept. 1848. They had also settled in West Jordan.

Joshua and Emma became the parents of two children, a boy Joshua Lorenzo Ferris Jr. born 2 Mar 1855 in West Jordan, and a girl Emma Ferris, born 4 Mar 1858 in Provo.

The Ferris family moved about 1856 to Payson and then to Provo. In 1858 their were difficulties in the home. Joshua would arise early to leave for his work and would take his son Samuel with him. If Thomas, age 6 and Mary age 9, were not awake and up when Joshua ate his breakfast, Emma would not see them. She made them stay outside all day until Joshua returned. In cold weather the two children would huddle next to the fireplace to try to keep warm. One day a relative of Thomas came for a visit and discovered the two children outside in the cold. He took them into the house to get warm and then told Emma they were to be fed. When Joshua returned there was a great argument. The next day when he left, he left orders about feeding Thomas and Mary Louisa. But, when he returned that night he was met by irate neighbors who told him that Emma had taken everything and left. This included Mary's baby clothes made by her mother. They wanted him to go after her and get his belongings, but he said no, he was grateful that Thomas and Mary were all right.

Emma married Richard Pool Middleton in 1859 and had two more children, a girl Lucy Ellis Middleton born 15 Aug 1860 and died 4 Oct 1932, married to Jacob Heber Griffith; and a boy Richard Francis Middleton born 20 July 1868 or 69. He died 8 Feb. 1946 and was married to Hilda Marinda Johnson.

For about five years there was no mother in the home. Mary worked for neighbors and Thomas worked with his father.

Joshua's oldest son Samuel John Ferris married Martha Isabell Scott and was living in Provo about 1863. They hired Dorothy Sarah Jennison to work for them. Joshua met her and they decided to marry. She needed a home for her three children and he needed a mother in his home. It was no love match, but a marriage of necessity for both. They married in May 1864 in Provo. Thomas was then 13 years old. He began to help his father in the freighting business.

Thomas married LaVina Tabitha Ostler in Nephi on the 18th of May 1878. They became the parents of 7 children.

1. Eliazbeth Lavina born 9 Mar 1879 in Nephi, Juab, Utah
Married Wellington Wood Jr. 23 Nov 1898
Died 29 Apr 1944
2. Mary Ann Ferris born 5 May 1881
Died 16 Sept 1882
3. Joshua Lorenzo Ferris born 26 Apr 1883, Silver City, Juab, Utah
Married Daisy Gardner 16 Nov 1915
Died 7 May 1941
4. Jonathan Ferris born 22 Aug 1885 Salem, Utah, Utah
Died 2 Apr 1902
5. Martha Isabell Ferris born 26 Sept 1887 Salem, Utah, Utah
Married 12 Dec 1908 James Arthur Williams
Died
6. Eliza Ferris born 3 June 1890 Salem, Utah, Utah
Married Franklin Eldon Fullmer

7. Daniel Charles Ferris Died
born 24 Oct 1892 in Salem, Utah, Utah

LaVina Tabitha Ostler was born in Southhampton, England on the 5th of May 1859 to Jonathan Ostler and Ann Mounster Croom.

Thomas worked as a freighter and would freight between Salem and Pioche, Nevada. He had a leather wallet and would return from Pioche with the wallet filled with 20 dollar gold pieces. He also had a photograph taken of himself and put into a gold frame. He gave the picture to his wife. Later when the marriage was breaking down, he gave the picture to Mary Louise Ferris Tryon, my great grand mother.

Thomas's wife LaVina found that husband, home and children restricted her social life. Her behavior was very difficult on Thomas and the children.

In the late 1893 or early 1894 oldest daughter Lizzie was with her father when he was in a canyon cutting trees. Thomas became exhausted and asked Lizzie to get him a drink of water. He drank the water and asked for a second drink. After the second drink, he had suffered a stroke. When he was home ill, his wife would not take care of him, but continued her social life. Thomas died in February 1894 and is buried in Salem, Utah.

After his death, the mother LaVina went to court and had her four surviving children put up for adoption. The oldest daughter Lizzie, age 14, was old enough to pick the family she would live with. The mother continued to live in Salem and would not acknowledge that they were her children.

Notes from Ethel Wood's genealogy book

Elizabeth LaVina Ferris was baptized at Salem, Utah, Utah 1889 by P. A. Pederson, confirmed by S. P. Christensen at Salem, Utah, Utah 1889. The clerk has failed to put down the date and the month when the above took place. Signed by D. R. Taylor Bishop

Samuel E. Ferris - Nancy Smith

15195 Film Vital Stats 1783-1827 Landaff parents John Smith, Surey Mason, Grafton, Hanover.