

## Thomas Hull II

### 1805-1886

Written by Margaretta (Gretta) Hull Rallison  
granddaughter of Thomas Hull II &  
daughter of Robert McClelland Jr.

Thomas Hull II was born in Antrim County Ireland 4 November 1805, the son of Thomas I and Elizabeth Millar, and the grandson of Richard Hull, Tergoland, Derry County, Ireland. There were 7 brothers and 3 sisters. Thomas was the 4th child. Little is known of his boyhood, except to say they lived in rugged country. The family was considered to be fairly wealthy, owning three Woolen Mills in Northern Ireland. He married Mary McIlvenna of Portglenone, Ireland in 1824 when he was only eighteen years old. They had three children: Adam, Susanna, and Peggy Jane (whom they called Peggy). In the 1831 Dungiven Census they were living in the Magheraboy Townland area, and listed as members of the Established Church of Ireland. In 1833 Mary McIlvenna died leaving Thomas, at the age of 27 years, a widower with three small children. At that time he was an established weaver, especially of linen. Within a few months of the death of Mary McIlvenna, Thomas married Mary Benson in early 1834. It is thought that she could have nursed Mary McIlvenna through her illness, as she was a trained nurse, and the Benson family also resided in the same congregation with the Hull family. Mary Benson took care of his children as if they were her own.

In 1836 his father died. By 1839 he and Mary Benson had 3 children of their own: Elizabeth, Thomas, and Robert McClellan. After the death of his father trouble began developing in the Weaving Mill. He and his brothers could not agree on division of their properties, so they took it to the law. It was held up in the courts for 7 years. Besides this weaving problem there was the potato famine in 1840, which led to a third of the population in Ireland moving away. There was no work to do. Thomas became discouraged, and in 1841 he moved his wife and 5 children to Dalry, Scotland then to a mining town close to Dalry called "In the Den" where he and his older sons worked in the mines. Here the family

resided in a three-room house made of peat with a thatched roof for the next twelve years.

Two missionaries of the Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter Day Saints, or Mormons, came into the Dalry area of Scotland in the summer of 1849 telling of the Restoration of the Gospel. This caused quite a stir in the area. Mary Benson Hull was a leader of the women in "In The Den" area. She organized the women and attended the Elders' meeting which was to be held in a wooded area. The women armed themselves with rotten eggs, potatoes and cabbages, and at a given signal from Mary were to bombard the Elders. The signal was never given because she became interested in their message and became converted on the spot. She went home and told her husband, Thomas, she had found the True Church. He investigated and was the first to be baptized on the 19th of August 1849 in the River Garnet by Elder William Sterrett. Mary Benson Hull was baptized 25 September 1849. The Scottish Mission baptism records show various family members being baptized at different times. This was probably done because of the heavy persecution and probable loss of jobs if they were known to be members of the so-called Mormon Church. Baptisms were usually held secretly. After Thomas accepted the gospel he would have lost his job had the mine boss found out they had joined the Church. They were advised by Church Authorities to come to America to find work and better pay so in time they could come to Utah. To this end they made a great effort to save enough money to come to America.

Greatly blessed, they finally came to America on the William Stetson Sailing Vessel, sailing from Liverpool and landing in New York July 1854. They had buried a girl and a boy in Scotland. There were about 1000 people on the ship; half were LDS. On their journey they suffered through a terrific storm which lasted for days on end. The ships officers fenced off the LDS from the rest of the people, treating them as though they were a bunch of cattle. They were 31 days on the water before reaching New York; when they did they were happy, but broke financially.

The family moved to Peoria, Illinois 70 miles from Chicago. They found work and better pay. They worked in Illinois for a period of 5 years before they had saved enough money to buy oxen, wagons, food, and clothing; provisions needed for their journey to Utah to join with the Saints. In March 1859 they began this journey with a span of oxen and a wagon to carry their provisions. The family all walked 750 miles to Omaha, where they joined up with others to continue onto Salt Lake. While in Omaha, Thomas was appointed under the direction of Brigham Young, the Prophet, to learn the Indian language and be an interpreter for the Saints as they were crossing the Plains. Thomas also brought with him from Scotland, a widow Henry and her family of 8 children, whom he looked after all the while in the east, and then brought them with his own family to Utah.

When they arrived in Salt Lake City, Thomas was very ill with mountain fever. Mary and the boys started out to find work, for they, especially Thomas, was very much in need of food. Mary walked all over Salt Lake and the outskirts to get any kind of work for her and the boys in exchange for food. Her daughters Ann and Isabell (Bell) tell of these incidents: "She would come home every night very much discouraged, gather the children around the wagon, kneel down by the wagon tongue (their only home) and offer up a petition to her Father in Heaven that someone might give her work for food. One evening before she was through praying someone laid a hand on her shoulder and said, "Arise sister, your pleadings have not been in vain; come with me". She went with him and he loaded her and us two girls down with food to eat, fruit and milk for father. This lasted us until the boys got some work to do. We learned afterward that this man was Heber C. Kimball. Our father was still ill when we moved to Kayscreek into a two-room log house of a man named Mr. Pecks. It was here that a very faith promoting incident occurred. Mother was in very much fear that Father would die, although he was getting better food now for we were milking some cows, yet he was not improving. One evening Mother had been out milking when she came to the

door and looked in she saw two men in the act of administering to father. One of them turned poured out a spoonful of olive oil and put it upon his head then placed their hands on his head. When mother looked again, they had disappeared. Father improved rapidly after that night."

That fall, through Peter Lowe, they learned of the wonderful Cache Valley. At this time the two older boys, Tom and Robert, had been called to quarry rock for the Salt Lake Temple. Mary was moved back to Salt Lake and left on the public square with a covered wagon box for her home with her three sons and two daughters while Thomas, with his son William and daughter Mary, left for Cache Valley. With the remaining gears of the wagon in company with Peter Lowe and his mother who had a good wagon and team. Mary was Peter Lowe's sweetheart, so Mary rode in the wagon with their food and clothing. They were joined at Kayscreek with William Cornish and John Frew and family who also were traveling northward for Cache Valley, arriving there on 13 April 1850.

That first summer Thomas, in order to see to the rest of his family and to provide flour for William and Mary, made several trips to Salt Lake carrying back with him 50 to 75 pounds of flour sacks on his back (as William was using the only span of oxen they had planting and getting timber out for a home). At the end of that summer, Thomas returned to Salt Lake and moved the family (with the exception of Tom and Robert, as they were still quarrying rock) to Franklin, Idaho. He and his family were among the first six families to settle in this area. Thomas began to grow flax and he also was able to purchase some sheep for wool and meat. He made all kinds of fine linens, having built the first loom in Franklin, Idaho, including pillow cases, sheets, shirts, towels and other things of cloth value.

In the year of 1869, Thomas and Mary moved to Hooper, Utah to pioneer that settlement. In Hooper they had a large herd of cows; Mary made butter and cheese all the time in a cold damp cellar. From an illness she contracted from performing this task constantly, she died in the year was 1876.

Thomas married for a 3rd time, Esther Higginson Duce, whom he met on a visit back to Cache Valley in 1878. Mrs. Duce was wounded at the same time James O. Garfield was shot. They lived in Hooper until her death in 1880. After her death he went to live with his daughter Isabelle at Weston, Idaho. He was instrumental in opening up the "work for the dead" for his family at the Logan Temple. He did the baptisms for his father, grandfather and others. He died 2 February 1886 and was buried in the Weston Idaho Cemetery (has since been removed to the Hooper Cemetery).

Thomas was made a High Priest by L. Hatch in 1866 and died in full fellowship of the Gospel. He stood 6 feet tall, his weight was 170 pounds, his eyes grey and piercing, and his hair dark brown. He was an expert weaver (having learned his trade in Ireland), was very healthy, strong, a very hard worker, busy at something all the time. If he were not in the field working he was weaving cloth. He was a kind father, good husband and a splendid provider for the comfort of his wife and family. Thomas's two children, Susanna and Adam of his first wife, joined the Church in Scotland.

*Most of this history is woven into the History #10 of Thomas Hull II with a few interesting items so even though there is some repetition I think it is important to include this history. Dan Hull*