

THOMAS HULL II  
(1805-1886)

REINTERMENT IN 1986

A Promise Kept - 100 Years Late

Thomas Hull II was born 5 November 1805 and his wife, Mary Benson, 15 June 1812, both in Co. Derry Ireland. With their own 4 children and 3 children: Peggy, Adam, and Susanna from an earlier marriage of Thomas to Mary McIlvenna, they moved to Scotland in 1840-41. Most of the Hulls in Australia are descended from Adam who went with his wife, Elizabeth, to Australia in 1852.

Thomas and Mary joined the LDS Church in Scotland in the fall of 1849. They sailed for America 26 April 1855. They worked in the mines in Pennsylvania and Illinois to get money to travel west. With one yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows and 2 wagons, they crossed the plains and arrived in Utah 17 September 1859. They went with the first settlers to Franklin, Idaho, 14 April 1860. In 1868, they moved to Hooper, Utah. Mary died 16 September 1876 and was buried in Hooper.

Two years later, Thomas married Mrs. Mary Duce. When she died he went to spend the winter of 1886 with his daughter, Bell (Isabell) Smith at Weston, Idaho. Thomas became ill and sent for his son, William, to visit him. The following incidents of this visit were told by William to his grandson, Irvin Hull.

"Thomas felt that his end was near and requested that he be buried in Hooper by his wife, Mary Benson. William promised to take him to Hooper. As they sat there talking, Thomas fell forward. William put out his hand to catch him, but Thomas had died with a heart attack. It was 2 February 1886 and the snow was deep and a storm was raging. William and Bell decided to bury him, temporarily, in Weston and William promised that his family would move him to Hooper in the Spring!" (Quote from Irvin Hull, as told by his grandfather, William.)

Spring came and Thomas was not moved. In the early 1960's some of the family members thought that the wish of Thomas to be buried by Mary should be fulfilled. In about 1961, AC took a photo of the white sandstone headstone that was broken in three pieces and wrote a poem for the family reunion shaming the family for letting Thomas stay so long in Weston.

About 1962, S. Dolores Beckstead, put a marble marker for the family on the grave in Weston. For 25 years, there was talk of moving, but no one wanted to take a shovel and dig. In 1985, Irvin was getting along in years and decided it was time for deathbed repentance. Irvin told AC that if he would get the body out of the ground at Weston that he would have it reburied in Hooper. The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare was slow to respond and required much proof, but finally on 13 February 1986, they issued a permit for disinterment at Weston and reburial at Hooper.

On 25 March 1986, AC met at the Weston Cemetery with Reed Griffith, sexton, and the two Mr. McKays' who would do the digging. The next day, Douglas Webb, Preston mortician, Harold (Tom) and Robert Hull and Willie Moser from Whitney, and Dale and Dan McKay from Weston started either watching or working. "We lifted the headstone into AC's pickup and then started digging with the backhoe. After the top 12 inches of dark soil, it was compacted gravel. At 3½ feet, we found pieces of cedar. We were elated and dug carefully, but still went deeper into the gravel. At five feet, many of us had doubts about finding anything. At six feet we were more dubious. We did not think that anyone in his right mind would dig a temporary grave this deep in the winter. At 6½ feet, we hit wood." Douglas Webb jumped down into the grave and with a shovel, carefully removed

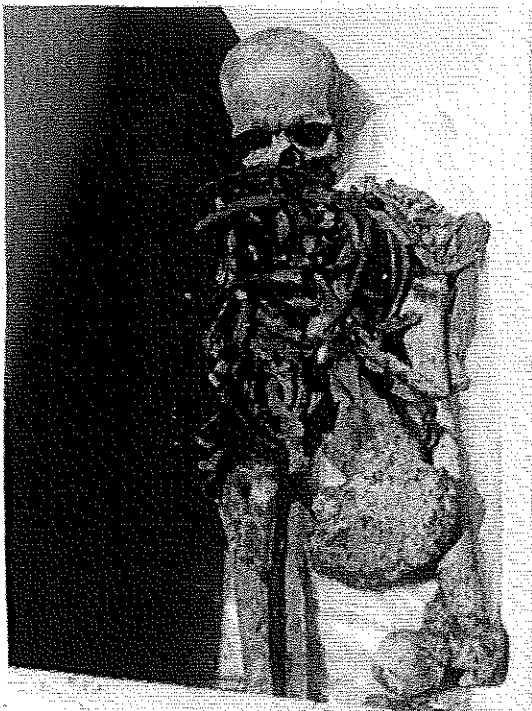
Cemetery by the side of his wife, Mary Benson. Thomas had come home, a promise had at last been kept. "We as family members were happy and we felt that Thomas and Mary were also happy."

Alvin C. Hull  
1986



What do we do now?

Vern - Is it deep enough



Looks good  
After 100 years



Lujan and Elmer look on as  
AC remarks, "He's bald"

gravel from the body. The grave was 7 feet deep. Robert then got down into the grave and took the bones from Douglas and put them in plastic bags and passed them to the surface. When finished, Douglas and Robert could not get out of the grave without help from the top. Burial was in a wooden casket, probably cedar. From the hips down it sloped so that it was narrow at the foot. The lower part of the sides and the ends of the casket were surrounded by gravel and were in place. They were decayed and could be broken by hand. The top of the casket had fallen on the body and was rotted with little remaining. The bones of the body were laying in perfect order in the bottom of the box. There was no sign of clothing or flesh. Douglas started with the upper body and then the skull and the lower body. With Robert's help, they put each body portion in separate plastic bags. The only decay was on the ribs and other small or thin bones. Most of the finger and toe bones were complete. Douglas said, "As I lifted the left hand, all the bones in the hand were complete and in place. When I jarred it, the bones separated from one another." There was no ring. The skull was complete and there was one tooth in the lower jaw. As the skull came up, Tom said, "He's bald." Douglas did not see any more teeth or buttons, but he did not specifically look for them.

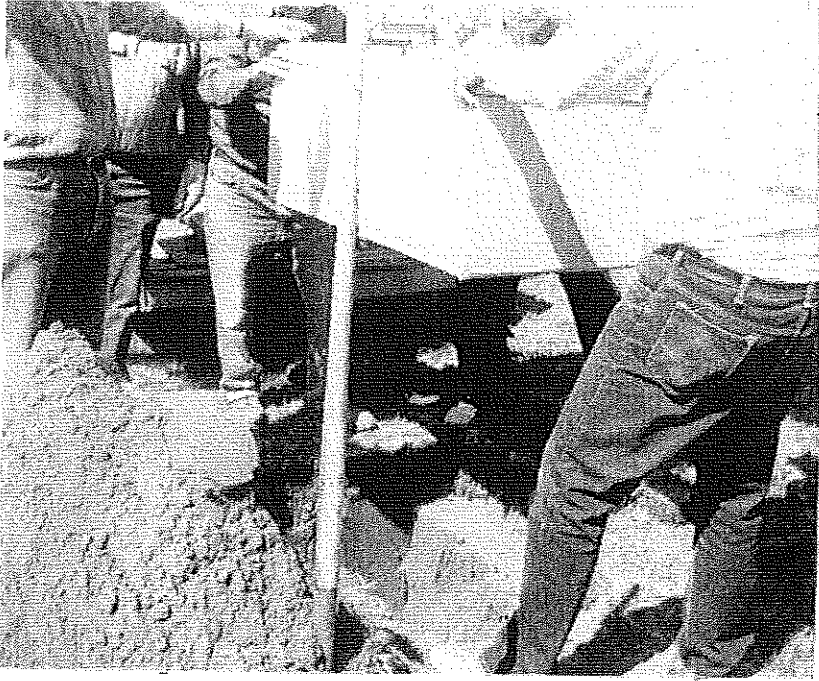
All were surprised at the good condition of the bones. Douglas Webb made the following comment: "I was greatly surprised, as I did not expect that the bones would be so well preserved and that the wooden box would be in such good condition. The gravel soil probably allowed good drainage. Also, I could not imagine a temporary grave 7 feet deep."

AC took the headstone and the bones to Logan. That night, he gave Norman Hull a shock on the phone; "I have a dead man in the back of my truck, where do you want him delivered." Norman, "I don't know what you are talking about." AC, "Irvin said to deliver him to you so I will be down tomorrow at 9:30 A.M." Norman had been on vacation and did not know what had been planned. After more phone calls, things were in order. Most importantly, Irvin had already diplomatically solved the problem with family members and with the sexton for a site where Thomas could be buried. The next day, AC delivered the bones to Norman. Norman and Beth Hull, Elmer and Lujean Hull Isaacson and AC and Mayme Hull visited together and then went to the Hooper cemetery to place the headstone and to arrange with Vern Taylor, the sexton, what time we should be there on the morrow for reburial. To our surprise, Taylor had 2 men and a backhoe to take care of reburial right then. There was nothing to do but get busy. Norman, Elmer and Lujean went to Ogden to get a vault, to call Irvin, and to pick up the bones at Norman's place.

Very reluctantly, Vern Taylor dug the grave. He protested, "I do not agree with moving a body and can quote scripture against it. However, if you insist, I will cooperate." Vern was friendly and later made this remark, "For many years, I have opposed moving Thomas, but now that it is done, it was not so bad."

The vault was cement, 43 inches long, 18 inches wide and weighed 900 pounds. Elmer and AC placed the bones in the vault in proper order with plastic beneath and above. For a tall man, this required some overlap. As the bones were placed in the box, Beth was surprised and said, "I did not realize that Thomas was so tall, look at those leg bones, he must have been 6 feet tall." (History says that he was 6 feet.) Lujean observed, "Greatgrandfather must have been healthy and strong. The bones are so perfect and well developed with no evidence of broken or misshapen bones." The vault and its contents were lowered into the grave. Norman gave a lovely dedicatory prayer. The grave was filled, covered with sod, and the headstone that came from Weston was put in place. Thus, the long winter of 100 years and 51 days came to an end and the remains of Thomas Hull II were placed in the Hooper

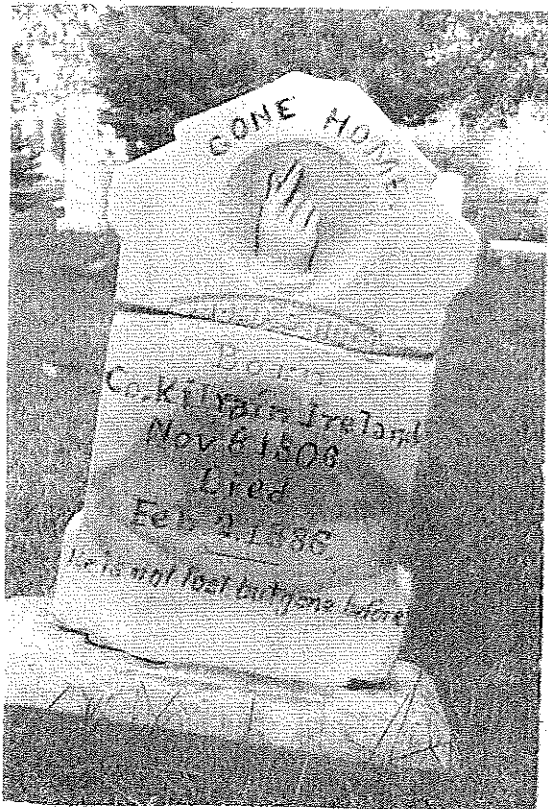
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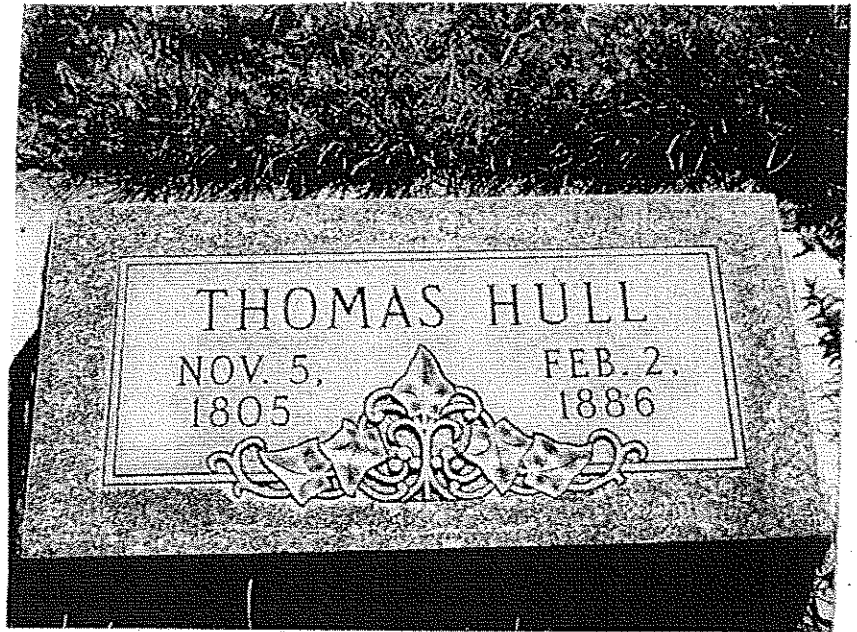
Let it down



They did it  
Norman, Beth, Elmer, Lujean, Mayme, AC



Weston Cemetery - about 1961



Weston Cemetery marker - Now moved to Hooper