



LEVI JAMES TAYLOR

1851-1935

Levi James Taylor was born in Kaysville, Davis County, Utah, on 20 May 1851, the son of pioneers Clarissa (Clara) Lake and Pleasant Green Taylor. He was the second child in a family of eleven children: Harvey Green, Alfred William, Clara Elizabeth, Julie Ann, Lydia Almeda, Pleasant Lake, Amasa Lyman, Joseph Lake, Warren Clancy, and David Riley. When Levi was a small child, the family moved to Harrisville.

After a courtship of four years, he married Nancy Jane Gates, daughter of Samuel Gates and Lydia Downer on 13 November 1871. A little daughter named for her mother was born to them 18 October 1872. The mother survived only eight days after the birth of her child and the baby lived less than two weeks and died 21 October 1872. The death of his beautiful wife Nancy was an overwhelming loss to Levi. Their lives had been in perfect harmony and they were devoted to each other. In his deepest sorrow he wrote, “[they] left this world of sorrow, left me in this wide world alone.” Levi cherished and hallowed the memory of Nancy all through his life. In his hours of greatest trial, discouragement, and sorrow, her sweet spirit seemed near, comforting and encouraging him.

During Nancy’s last illness her niece, Flora Genet Bingham, was a faithful attendant at her bedside. Through her kind services and gentle thoughtfulness, she endeared herself to Levi and on 3 February 1873, she and Levi were married. She bore him twelve children, seven girls and five boys: Levi James Jr., Willard (died young), Parley Pratt, Clara Genet, Florence Ellen, Alice Mattie, Julie Amanda, Nancy Vilate, Esther Mary, Amos Moroni, Flora Belle, and Warren Lyman.

About two weeks after Levi was married to Flora, he was called to go on a colonizing mission to Arizona. It was not a success, the Little Colorado River had gone dry and the missionaries were released. He returned in July of the same year.

After returning from Arizona, Levi decided to go to school again. By expert management of his farm work and the generous assistance of his loving wife Flora, he succeeded in making a living and attending school for about three years. He walked from Harrisville to Ogden and then back in the evening each day. He finished a three year course of study under Professor Moench and graduated from Weber Seminary. He then taught school off and on for a period of ten years.

On 30 November 1874, Levi married Flora’s sister, Josephine Bingham as a plural wife. She bore him ten children, seven girls and three boys: Samuel Green (died at 6 years), Ida Josephine (died in infancy), Lucetta Jane, Ruby Rosetta, Jessie Levi (died at 1 year), Wilford Joseph, Grace Lucinda, Mary (died at birth), and Ada May. These two women, Flora and Josephine, were daughters of sturdy pioneers; Willard Bingham and Genet Gates. The

daughters were from a family of fifteen children. They entered into this polygamous marriage as a religious principle and devoted their lives to their kind husband and their large families. Levi married each of his three wives in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, and each time their marriage ceremony was performed by Daniel H. Wells.

In 1887, he endured nine months imprisonment in the Utah Sate Penitentiary for plural marriage, rather than disown a part of his family. During those nine months, he read the Bible and completed a course in double-entry bookkeeping under Rudger Clawson.

All of his life, Levi was engaged in church work in the LDS ward and in the stake. In 1865, the first Sunday School was organized in Harrisville, he was one of the first twenty pupils. After completing the grades and teaching in practically every grade, he was made superintendent and served in that position for eight years. The first Mutual Improvement Association was organized in 1875. He presided over this organization for seven years before going on a two-year mission to the Southern States in October 1882. After he returned, he was made president for ten more years. He was clerk and later senior president of the Seventy's Quorum. His father, Bishop Pleasant Green Taylor selected Levi has his second counselor in the Bishopric. They worked harmoniously for two years. When his father was made Stake Patriarch, Levi was chosen as Bishop of the ward and worked untiringly in this position for fifteen years. For over fifty years he labored faithfully as a ward teacher. In 1910 he became Stake Patriarch. He was given permission to go to Nevada to give blessings. He was in the presidency of the North Weber Stake Genealogical Association.

In November 1912, he left for a six-month mission to Nevada, but because of the serious illness of his wife, Josephine, he returned home in three months. After her recovery, he was determined to complete his mission so he returned for a few weeks at a time about six different times before he finished the work to his own satisfaction. This shows how faithful and persistent and conscientious he was in the performance of his religious duty.

Levi's wife, Josephine, was somewhat frail in health for a number of years, and 11 July 1920, she passed away at the age of sixty-three.

He was always clean and well-kept in appearance. He had a quiet dignity of manner that commanded the respect of everyone. Levi was orderly in all his work. He kept accurate records of all the important events in his life. He was thrifty and he worked hard to stay out of debt and his farm was never mortgaged.

In November 1922, Levi was called to work in the temple. One of his prized possessions was a letter he received from Heber J. Grant, president of the L.D.S. Church. He sent congratulations to Levi for his record as a temple worker. He also stated that it was marvelous for a man of Mr. Taylor's age, and living 40 miles from the temple, to have accomplished so great a work.

Levi and Flora celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 3 February 1933, at their home in Harrisville. Levi died on 28 December 1935, after a three day illness at the age of 84. At

the time of Flora's death, she was the oldest living resident of Harrisville. She passed away at the family home on 9 August 1940 at the age of 86.

SOURCE:

Hoggan, Lella Marler. *A Brief Sketch of the Life of Levi James Taylor*, 1933.

Taylor, Levi James. *Journals of Levi James Taylor 1873-1935*.

Bingham, Flora Genet	Taylor, Grace Lucinda
Bingham, Josephine	Taylor, Harvey Green
Bingham, Willard	Taylor, Ida Josephine
Clawson, Rudger	Taylor, Jessie Levi
Downer, Lydia	Taylor, Joseph Lake
Gates, Genet	Taylor, Josephine Bingham
Gates, Nancy Jane	Taylor, Julie Amanda
Gates, Samuel	Taylor, Julie Ann
Grant, Heber J.	Taylor, Levi James Jr.
Lake, Clarissa (Clara)	Taylor, Lucetta Jane
Moench, Professor	Taylor, Lydia Almeda
Shrtliff, Luman A.	Taylor, Mary
Taylor, Ada May	Taylor, Nancy Vilate
Taylor, Alfred William	Taylor, Parley Pratt
Taylor, Alice Mattie	Taylor, Pleasant Green
Taylor, Amasa Lyman	Taylor, Pleasant Lake
Taylor, Amos Moroni	Taylor, Ruby Rosetta
Taylor, Clara Elizabeth	Taylor, Samuel Green
Taylor, Clara Genet	Taylor, Warren Clancy
Taylor, David Riley	Taylor, Warren Lyman
Taylor, Esther Mary	Taylor, Wilford Joseph
Taylor, Flora Belle	Taylor, Willard
Taylor, Flora Genet Bingham	Wells, Daniel H.
Taylor, Florence Ellen	