



JOSIAH TAYLOR

1861 - 1907

Josiah Taylor was born 3 November 1861 at Harrisville, Weber, Utah. His parents, Pleasant Green and Sara Jane Marler Lake Taylor, were among the pioneers who crossed the plains in 1850 and settled Utah. Josiah was the second child. The first child, George Allen, died in infancy. His parents accepted the principle of polygamy, his mother being the fourth wife of Pleasant Green Taylor. As a member of this large family, Josiah learned early in life to assume responsibilities and to share in the work around the home. Although his opportunities for school were meager, he learned many things early in life that permanently influenced him for good.

Josiah's aunt, Nancy Jane Taylor Smith, was a sister to Josiah's father, Pleasant Green Taylor. She and her husband, Jonathan Smith, moved their family to Harrisville for a time in the early 1870s. While the Smith family lived in Harrisville, Josiah became well acquainted with their daughter, Abigail Arilla Smith. In the years that followed, they fell in love and were married 10 January 1884. They were sealed in the Logan Temple 30 September 1891. Josiah was called "Sy" and Abigail Arilla was called "Rill" by their close friends in the community.

Josiah was often in charge of the ward dances. One night in early 1883, while attending a dance, a drunken man mistook Sy for another man and attacked him and a fight began. During the struggle, a friend of Sy's called out to him that the other fellow was using a knife. Sy succeeded to get himself free but found that he had received a severe cut completely across his throat. He was given medical assistance and recovered, but he had a scar across his neck the remainder of his life. When the man who attacked him learned the mistake he had made, he was very sorry and apologized to Sy. The man reimbursed him for losses that he had incurred while being unable to work and for other material losses.

On 14 September 1885, Josiah purchased a house and lot from his father across the street from the Harrisville Ward meeting house. He paid for most of it with produce or labor during the next few years. He worked hard to improve this little home (presently located at 565 West Harrisville Road). His sons remember when he would arise at 3:30 a.m. to haul a load of brick for the house before starting his day at other work. Sy and Rill made this their home for the rest of their lives. They were blessed with seven children: Abbie Arilla, born 22 June 1885; Loran Josiah, born 22 July 1888; Junius Ray, born 30 July 1890; George Leslie, born 25 October 1892; Marion Lewis, 6 November 1894; Laura Laverna, born 15 December 1897; and Rulon Smith Taylor, born 16 July 1903. George Leslie died in infancy on 30 January 1893.

Josiah farmed along with his father and brothers, worked at the Harrisville Brick Yard and the railroad company. He also did some carpenter work and was considered a handy man at most any work that he undertook to do.

His oldest son, Loran, remembers helping his father in the hayfield. Josiah always instructed those helping with the hay to put nine loads in his barn, and take the tenth load to the tithing yard where it was donated as tithing. He was a devoted Latter-day Saint and filled several positions in the Harrisville Ward. On 20 September 1896, Josiah Taylor was called to serve as president of the Y.M.M.I.A. (Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association). He also served for some time in the Sunday School.

In April 1891, Josiah and his brother Levi J. Taylor borrowed \$1,200 at eight percent interest and bought a horse together with the idea of using it for breeding to improve the stock of the country. It was a stallion brought from France that weighed about 1,800 pounds and was named Iowa. The horse was no good and their venture did not prove to be successful. In July 1897, W. H. Warren of Missouri came to collect the notes owned on the horse. After hearing the facts, he was reasonable and instead of insisting on the full amount, he accepted the \$400 already received and notes for an additional \$500 to be paid in four years of \$120 each year with interest at eight percent.

On 13 May 1906, Josiah and his wife Arilla were both ill. The skies seemed to weep for them in their affliction. Josiah's brother Levi J. Taylor recorded 26 May 1906, "there was another fine rain and Josiah and his wife are still very sick." On 30 May 1906, Arilla passed away of a heart condition at age forty-five. Her funeral was held at the house on 1 June 1906, because Josiah was not able to go to the meeting house where funerals were normally held. President F. Middleton and Elders J. Harris and Leroy Cowles were speakers offering words of comfort to the grieving family.

Josiah was afflicted with a tumor near his brain and became partially paralyzed for some time. After the death of his beloved wife, it was very difficult for him to carry on. He passed away 15 December 1907, about a year and a half after the death of his wife. He was buried by her side in the Ogden City cemetery, leaving their six children with no parents.

Their youngest child, Rulon S. Taylor, was about two and one half years old at the time Josiah died. The oldest daughter Abbie was engaged to be married to Herman Bell. They were soon married and together lived at the family home and looked after other family members who remained there with them. With the assistance of Grandma Taylor (Sara Jane), Abbie and Herman helped to keep the family together for some time.

SOURCE:

"The Legend," Jonathan Smith Family newsletter, Volume 7, 10 November 1998.

Taylor, Levi J. *Journals of Levi J. Taylor*.

Bell, Herman	Taylor, Junius Ray
Cowles, Leroy	Taylor, Laura Laverna
Harris, J.	Taylor, Levi J.
Lake, Sarah Jane Marler	Taylor, Loran Josiah
Middleton, President F.	Taylor, Marion Lewis
Smith, Jonathan	Taylor, Pleasant Green
Smith, Nancy Jane Taylor	Taylor, Rulon Smith
Taylor, Abbie Arilla	Warren, W.H.
Taylor, George Leslie	