

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THOMAS HUSKINSON GILES

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*Utah Pioneer of 1856*

by

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A FEW IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF  
THOMAS HUSKINSON GILES

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Thomas Huskinson Giles was the oldest son of William and Sarah Huskinson Giles. He was born August 6, 1821 at Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, England. We know but little of his early life. However, his parents were considered highly respected citizens of the community in which they lived. He received a fairly good common school education. When his school days were over, he worked in the brick and tile yards and followed that line of work up to the time he left England. He was married to Elizabeth Susanny Moore, February 13, 1845.

In 1849 his wife's sister got them interested in the doctrines taught by the Latter-day Saints, gave them some of the Church books to read and invited them to visit their home where they were going to hold a Mormon meeting. The sister's name was Mrs. James Goodwin. They attended a meeting where an Elder named Beecroft preached on the principles of the Gospel and became convinced of the doctrines by comparing them with the Scriptures, and were baptized about the 23rd of December, 1849.

His parents had joined the Church earlier in the year. Joseph E, Taylor baptizped most of the family.

He was soon ordained an Elder and baptized a number of

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persons before leaving England.

They had only a few hour's notice as to the time the ship was to leave Liverpool, and as his parents were not living near him, they came near getting left behind. They sailed about the fifth of March, 1854 on the ship "Old England." They reached New Orleans April 28th, having had a fair trip with the exception of some sea-sickness and other inconveniences that all emigrants had to put up with on sailing ships in those days. They settled in Quincy, Illinois, where they lived nearly two years, working at anything and everything they could find to do to get means to purchase an outfit with which to cross the plains.

In the spring of 1856, they had procured a team of oxen and cows, a wagon and other things necessary and made the start for Utah.

Quincy is about three hundred miles from Florence, Nebraska, the regular outfitting point for crossing the plains.

They started about the 12th of April. It was a very rainy season. The roads were soft and muddy, and not being used to handling a whip and driving oxen, they surely had a very hard time; getting fast in the mud, breaking wagons and sometimes losing their teams. The company and teams were nearly worn out before reaching the real starting point for crossing the plains. About the 5th of June, 1856, they started on their journey in an independent company, consisting of 60 wagons, and got along real well. They had two stampedes and some of their cattle were never found. They saw hundreds of buffalo and killed a number for food for the camp. They arrived in Salt Lake

in August and left in two days for Provo. They were taken in and treated very kindly by John B. Milner and family. They had been old friends in England. Thomas Giles and his brother, John Giles, soon began to make adobies to sell and also to build a home for themselves. He soon had a home built and were very happy after all their troubles and trials. He purchased some land and raised some grain. They found ready sale for their adobies. They made and sold 60,000 in one year.

Late in 1857, he was one of that noble band who went to Echo Canyon to prevent Johnston's Army from coming into Utah. They suffered much from cold and exposure, had very little to eat, and were poorly dressed; but they accomplished their purpose. They were out until the spring of 1858. In 1859 he went to what they called Provo Valley, now called Heber City.

They immediately took up some land and started to build a fence. At that time each man who claimed land were required to put up a rod of fence for each acre claimed.

Thomas H. Giles moved his family to Heber and started to farm in the spring of 1860. He built a log cabin and soon became a leading citizen in all enterprises for the benefit and building up of the country, both morally and spiritually. He was the first Sunday School Superintendent in Wasatch County, and held the office for a number of years. In 1868 he was chosen as a counselor to Bishop Abram Hatch. In 1877 he was chosen counselor to the Stake President, which office he filled until 1902.

He was assessor and collector of taxes, Probate Judge,

and a member of the Legislature. He held the office of County Clerk and Recorder for a number of years. He was an honest, earnest worker in the Church and in everything he undertook to do and was loved and highly respected by all the people for his quiet, humble, unassuming disposition.

He reared a good, honorable family, who also became useful and valuable members in the community. He was ordained a Patriarch some years before his death by A. O. Woodruff.

His wife died January 2, 1888.

A few years later he married Jane C. Hanks Taylor and she was living at the time of his death. He passed away June 5, 1903.

Written by a grand-daughter,  
Elizabeth Giles Moulton.

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