The Tompkins Family

The Tompkins family name has been spelled variously as Tomkins and Thompkins. The family consists of the father Thomas King Tompkins, his wife Jane Elizabeth Rollins Tompkins, and their two daughters Amanda Tompkins and Jane Elizabeth Tompkins. Jane is the daughter of Henry Rollins, who also sailed aboard the Brooklyn.

Thomas King Tompkins is the son of John Tompkins and Elizabeth Blow and had been born on 15 August 1817 at Walcott, Lincolnshire, England, a small village northeast of Nottingham, England. Nothing is known of Thomas’ ancestry or of his early years in England. He probably helped on the farm and herded cattle to and from their feeding grounds as well as attending what schooling he could as a youth. When he reached the age of eleven, his parents and family left England and came to America on the ship Hugh Johnston, arriving in New York on 11 June 1828. The family settled in Dansville, Steuben county, New York located south of Rochester. Unfortunately his mother, Elizabeth died soon after their arrival in Dansville, apparently the extensive travel had been too exhausting for her. This left the father John with ten children to care for and raise!

Here Thomas received the bulk of his education as a young man in the middle schools of New York and then worked in the fields and orchards when not in school. He grew especially fond of a young lady that had come to America on the same ship as himself. Her name is Jane Elizabeth Rollins, daughter of Henry Rollins and Ann Weatherhogg Rollins who were also on the immigrant ship. He courted her for a few months and they were finally married in Dansville, New York in 1839. Jane Elizabeth Rollins had been born 1 May 1821 at Boston, Lincolnshire, England; fair sized town near the east coast of England and not far from the North Sea; straight east of Nottingham.

Their lives were brightened when their firstborn, a girl they named Amanda Tompkins, arrived on 17 November 1841 at Dansville, Steuben county, New York. With the new mouth to feed and care for Thomas worked even harder on the farm he and Jane were homesteading. They next had another little girl on 11 January 1843 that they named Jane Elizabeth Tompkins, after her mother. This is about the same time that Thomas and Jane joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When they heard the Orson Pratt message to leave America, and start a new colony in the West, Thomas and Jane signed up for the voyage on the Brooklyn, along with Jane’s father Henry and brother Isaac of the Rollins family. They made their home at Mission Dolores after they arrived in Yerba Buena and Thomas helped his father-in-law in black smithing to earn food for his family. He learned to speak Spanish from the locals and felt grateful for the beef they gave him for his children.

When gold! Gold! GOLD! Had been shouted by Samuel Brannan, Thomas heard his words and immediately tried his hand at the mines. He found the work very hard and
discouraging and so he returned to farming land he had homesteaded in the San Joaquin valley. He found a ready market for his vegetables and made a good amount of money. When he heard that the Saints of the Brooklyn and Battalion were leaving the gold fields for Great Salt Lake City, Thomas and his family joined in the party. They were part of the Ebenezer Brown company that left on 27 August 1848 and arrived on 7 October 1848. This group mostly traveled by wagon and they covered the distance more easily that the first wagon train. They went through the Carson Pass and valley and up the Humboldt until they reached Ruby valley. Traveling north to City of Rocks they turned southeast and followed the shores of the Great Salt Lake until they reached Salt Lake City.

Thomas Tompkins made his home near Centerville in Davis County and commenced farming again. Thomas King Tompkins well remembered Addison Pratt from his days at New Hope in California and when Addison’s family asked for help he responded with love.

Addison Pratt’s wife is writing about her problems in the Great Salt Lake Valley while her husband was on his Mission to the islands. One time her household was without fire wood in the cold winter and brother Thomas Tompkins sent wood some sixteen miles to aid her.... ... brother Tompkins had offered to take us to California in case the church decided to send us to the Islands.... April 6, 1850 – Brother Thomas Tompkins was appointed to go to the Islands and take Addison Pratt’s family.¹

Six months after arriving he had received a call from Brigham Young to travel to the Pacific coast with Charles C. Rich and others.

President Young met with several and the following was reported: ‘It was voted that Chauncy W. West, James S. Brown, John Eager and Sidney Alva Hanks go on a mission with Addison Pratt to the Pacific Islands, and Tompkins, Benjamin F. Johnson and Francis M. Pomeroy go to the Pacific coast with Charles C. Rich. The appointments of some of these brethren were afterwards countermanded, owing to the heavy migration of the gold-diggers to California. President Young advised those who had families, to leave them on the coast, at some rendezvous and afterwards send from the islands for them. He also said that when the First Presidency ordered a thing they need not ask any questions, but do just as they were told, and that ended it right off.²

Apparently Thomas is one of those whose orders were rescinded because we find another calling being made at April Conference in 1850.

At the general conference held in Salt Lake City on this date it was moved that Thomas Tompkins, and four others, go to the Society Islands to assist Addison Pratt in preaching the Gospel.³

This time Brigham Young didn’t rescind his calling request and Thomas got his orders a week later.

The Elders who had been selected for missions at the previous conference were called to the Bowery, at the request of the Presidency, and were set apart for their missions. Thomas Tompkins was one of eight who had been called to the Society Islands. They were set apart by

¹ Carter, Kate B., *Heart Throbs of the West*, compiled by Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1947, Volume Eight, page 250-251.

² *Journal History* 10 June 1849

³ Ibid, 7 April 1850.
Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Ezra T. Benson and Newel K. Whitney.  

Caroline Barnes Crosby and her husband Jonathan Crosby were one of the families called to the Society Islands, and it is from her journals that we glean some details of the journey.

Caroline notes in her journals that on 7 May 1850 they traveled a mile north of Sessions settlement, [Centerville] and found the Tompkins family packing for the journey to California. The Crosby family stayed there that night and they all left the next morning on their journey.  

There is little of any substance about the trek across Nevada until they reach the Sierra Nevada mountains. Here the Crosby’s had trouble with their wagon.  

4 July 1850. Set off about 7 found the roads very good for awhile, we had not however proceeded far until we came to a stream which was rather difficult to cross, and our forward axle broke, we were obliged to stop where we were, just out of the mud until my husband went on and got the brethren to come to our assistance. Br. Tompkins came back with Padro a yoke of cattle and two forward wheels to bring us up to camp which we found waiting for us a mile ahead in a very pleasant place. [Ascent up the Sierra Nevada Mountains].  

Once they crossed over the Sierra’s and reached Sutter’s Fort Thomas Tompkins felt he no longer needed his team and wagon so he sold it for a tidy sum of $1075 on the 21st of July 1850. He then engaged the services of a Barque to take them down the Sacramento River to San Francisco but there were complications.

One writer describes the conditions they encountered as soon as they went on board the sailing vessel that would take them to San Francisco.  

...The missionaries, preparing to embark on the bark Alden, were visited by some of their ‘gold digger’ companions of the trip west. All were saddened by the dirty appearance of the ship. They boarded the bark looking forward to a good night’s rest but found their quarters filled with ravenous mosquitoes. They fled to the decks, but in vain. There was no escape. Louisa wrapped herself in a thick blanket but the insects were unhindered, her ankles and feet becoming swollen and inflamed. To find relief she wrapped them in vinegar soaked bandages. To make matters worse, the bark, a sailing vessel, could not leave the harbor because of contrary winds. The captain sent to town several times for a steamer to tow his vessel out but to no avail.  

Caroline Crosby writes more of these troubles in getting to San Francisco.  

3 August 1850. [The group had been waiting to get up enough wind on the barque they had engaged to make it down the river but could not. Mosquitoes were driving them nearly mad.] Accordingly deputed Tompkins to go back to Sacramento for that purpose [of engaging a steamer vessel], he started off on the first steamer that came along.  

4 August 1850. Towards noon the steamer Hartford hove in view rang her bell and gave us a call, inquiring of the Capt if he wanted steam, the Capt answered in the affirmative, concluding that Tompkins had of course engaged her assistance. We all rejoiced at our apparent good fortune, expecting very soon to be taken beyond the reach of the musketoes [sic]. She hitched onto us and for a few minutes took us along finely, but immediately to our surprise her

---

4 Ibid, 13 April 1850.

5 Lyman, Edward Leo; Payne, Susan Ward; Ellsworth, S. George, No Place To Call Home - The 1807-1857 life writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby - Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities, Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah 2005, page 95.

6 Ibid, page 106.

Captain came on board and enquired for passengers saying that bro Tompkins had engaged him to take some sixteen or seventeen of us, that he, Tompkins was detained at the city on business would be down the next night, he was in a great hurry to get baggage on board, accordingly men went to work getting baggage out of the hole without stopping to ask questions. The women folks also flew about in the greatest confusion all except myself. I had just got my hands in dough was going to make up some fried cakes consequently did but little towards picking up my things. My husband in the meantime began to mistrust that all was not right. He could not see the propriety of bro Tompkins’ sending a stranger here to take us off and himself stay behind, knowing also that he settled all his business before he left that place. And furthermore if he the cap of the steamer intended as he said towing the Bark down, why should he take away the passengers? After a few minutes reflection he told them his things should not be taken off the Bark. Bro Dunn, Tompkins family, Sis Pratt and family, the whole consisting of twelve persons, went on board the steamer Hartford. No sooner had he got the passengers than he dropped the Bark saying he would take us no further then but would hitch on to us again when we got through the slough or the next time he came down; and some were left on the worst place for musketoes in the whole route. Our Capt did not seem to discover the trick in getting the passengers untill he found himself left in the rear... In the night Tompkins returned with the Star, a boat he had engaged to take us down. She was rather a weak sister could do but very little with us especially when the wind was high. In calm weather she took us along finely... 10 August 1850. Tompkins was quite surprised to find his family gone, said he had made no such arrangement with that capt, only asked him his price for taking passengers, told him that if he could not get the bark towed down he should be under the necessity of taking off the passengers, he staid with us until the week following he got a little lonesome and left for San Francisco.8

After just a few days in San Francisco, where they met their old friends from the ship Brooklyn, like Fanny Corwin and Lucy Eagar, the Tompkins family prepared to sail to the Society Islands. John M. Horner gave them the passage money they needed to make the voyage. What an adventure it must have been for most of them as they sailed further and further south. Temperatures increased and became most comfortable, and every evening the night skies had changed from what they had grown up to recognize as the Milky Way to a blazing display of the Southern Cross.

The ship Jane A. Hersey, Captain Salmon, sailed this day from San Francisco, California, with a company of missionaries bound for the Society Islands. There were 21 souls, namely Jonathon Crosby, wife Caroline and son; Joseph Bushby and wife, Thomas Tompkins, wife Jane and two children; McMertry and wife, and child; Alvarus A. Hanks; Simeon A. Dunn; Julian Moses; Louisa Pratt (wife of Addison Pratt) and her four children, Eline S. Pratt, Frances S. Pratt, Lois B. Pratt and Hiram E. W. Clark a fourteen old boy that went with the Pratt family. (He was a brother of Emmeline B. Wells.) After a successful voyage this company of missionaries landed at Tubuai, one of the Austral Islands, South Pacific Ocean, Oct. 21, 1850.9

Thomas Tompkins, along with sister Pratt and the McMurray family, had been very uncomfortable during the trip from seasickness, something that plagued him the entire journey. After finally reaching the islands his stomach settled down and he regained his strength. Jane Elizabeth Tompkins gave birth to a healthy baby boy in October 1850, soon after they landed. The boy received the name of Isaiah Tompkins. Jane and Thomas didn’t understand the French

---

8 Lyman, Edward Leo; Payne, Susan Ward; Ellsworth, S. George, No Place To Call Home - The 1807-1857 life writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby - Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities, Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah 2005, page 114,115.

9 Journal History, 15 September 1850.
language used by the ruling class on the island and had a harder time with Tahitian. After months of practice and instruction from Addison Pratt they were able to just get by. Jane did take this time to listen to Sister Louisa Barnes Pratt when Louisa taught Jane to read and write.

Thomas increasingly heard the natives, who were being rapidly converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wanting to travel to Zion and be with the Prophet of the Church. He began to be more upset with the French rules and talked about returning to America and seeing if he could establish a colony in southern California as a way station for those traveling from the Islands to Zion. He and Addison and Pomeroy and Jonathan Crosby talked long and hard about the possibilities. Finally, Thomas Tompkins and his family embarked for California and undertook to convince others that a colony must be established on the southern route to Utah and to see what he could do to improve the financial support so desperately needed in Tahiti, not just for the missionaries but also to pay passage for those that couldn’t afford it themselves. Caroline Crosby wrote:

10 May 1851. Br Tompkins as he was unwilling to subscribe to the restrictions laid upon us by the Governor was counseled to return to California to make inquiries concerning the intended location for the Saints in the lower country, and also to raise some means to assist the mission in these islands.10

---

Lyman, Edward Leo; Payne, Susan Ward; Ellsworth, S. George, *No Place To Call Home - The 1807-1857 life writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby - Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities*, Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah 2005, page 127.
Undoubtedly Thomas experienced seasickness for another month or two as the family returned to San Francisco. Here he met with Charles C. Rich and Amasa Lyman and told them of the plan that had been developed in the Society Islands by the missionaries. Rich and Lyman seemed to agree and so the first steps were taken to get approval for a Church sponsored community in southern California. This eventually led to the development of San Bernardino, but not with Church funds. Rich and Lyman made the purchase on their own and had the backing of Brigham Young, but not financially. Rich and Lyman then tried to get as many as possible to join them in the new colony.

Thomas King Tompkins took his family to San Bernardino along with several others of the Saints from northern California and helped to settle the Rancho San Bernardino.

Along with the unauthorized Latter-day Saints filtering into the area, members continued to arrive from northern California and the foreign missions, as well as a few from Utah who traveled with permission. In November and December 1852 the families of Theodore Thorpe, Isaac Goodwin, Thomas Tompkins, and Addison Pratt, and others arrived early, mostly overland from the San Francisco Bay area and added to the consistently faithful. A Mexican War veteran, Colonel Alden A. M. Jackson, and his friend, former Brooklyn emigrant Caroline Joyce, joined the community and were among the three marriages performed there that season. Soon after, three others from northern California—William Stout, George Winner, and Quartus S. Sparks—arrived, all of whom would serve the community in the first years but would eventually oppose church authorities.

A contingent of forty permanent settlers came from Salt Lake City. This company was led by Henry G. Sherwood, a prominent churchman who had recently been released as senior high councilman of the Salt Lake Stake. As the man who had actually surveyed and laid out Salt Lake City, his skills were recognized to be essential. But over a period of time Sherwood would become increasingly disaffected.¹¹

NOTE: The following Brooklyn Saints eventually moved to San Bernardino: Thomas Tompkins, wife, and two children; Isaac Goodwin and six children; Carolyn Joyce and two children; William Stout, wife, and one child; George W. Sirrine and child; Abraham Coombs, wife, and three children; George K. Winner, wife, and six children; Horace A. Skinner; Quartus S. Sparks, wife, one child, and mother-in-law, Sister Hamilton; Daniel Stark, wife, and two children, John Philips, wife and three children.

Thomas made a living on the ranch property that he had purchased and developed a fine farm there. Thomas even brought the first threshing machine to southern California and would contract with others on shares of the harvest. Everything had been going very well when the San Bernardino Saints received word from Brigham Young to come to Utah and help defend against the invading force of the United States that had been rallied against them. Thomas sold his property, purchased a wagon and took off for Utah with many of the other faithful.

They stopped for the winter in Beaver City. Here Thomas joined with the other pioneers in defending against Indians when necessary. A strange crossing of paths occurred there in August 1857.

The Second Division of Captain Fancher’s emigrant train, traveling from Arkansas to California, was attacked by a band of Indians, in the fall of 1857. The ‘Minute Men’ of Beaver went on horseback to their rescue and gave battle, wounding several Indians and driving them back

¹¹ Lyman, Edward Leo, San Bernardino - The Rise and Fall of a California Community, Signature Books, Salt Lake City, UT, 1996, page 103-104.
toward the north. The rescuing party included James Farrer, Orson Tyler, Samuel Kershaw, Thomas Tompkins, Ross Rogers, and others. The emigrant train was escorted to Beaver and camped on the Beaver River, south of town.\textsuperscript{12}

This wagon train they just saved is the same that fell victims at Mountain Meadows on 11 September 1857, just a couple of weeks later. Imagine how Thomas and Jane felt as they continued their journey to Salt Lake City in the spring of 1858 and heard all the rumors of who had been responsible for the massacre. After they arrived in Salt Lake, Thomas and Jane were shocked at the number of polygamous families that had been started by Brigham Young. Thomas felt strongly against polygamy and didn’t like the way things were being run here. He and Jane made a decision to return to San Bernardino in the fall of 1858. They passed by Mountain Meadows where the bodies were still laying about without having been buried, and they felt shame against the people of Cedar City that had let this happen.

When they returned to San Bernardino they were able to purchase their ranch back at the same price they had sold it, and they settled into a happier life there. Thomas became involved with Spiritualism through William Stout but soon dropped out of the popular belief. He became active in the local politics against the Mormon control of San Bernardino, but this generally died down after the Mormons left the area.

Life seemed much better for Thomas as the ranch produced abundantly, and the family became fairly wealthy. He could afford to hire much of the harder work to be done by others and began enjoying his leisure days, when his wife of twenty-six years, his traveling companion and lifelong friend died. Jane Elizabeth Rollins Tompkins passed away on 16 February 1865 at the ranch in San Bernardino, at the age of just forty-four. She had been buried in the old Pioneer Cemetery. Her remains were transferred on October of 1917 to the Mountain View Cemetery where she now lies in the Sequoia Lot 4 Grid 7, by her husband.

After Thomas lost his wife unexpectedly, he courted and married a woman named Artemesia Floradona Perry, a woman much his junior at the age of just twenty and younger than his own daughters. Thomas had reached the age of forty-eight at the time they were married. The marriage took place 6 August 1865 at San Bernardino. She had been born 6 October 1845 near Camden, Benton, Tennessee and is the daughter of Jeremiah Perry and Jane Merrick. His own daughters had married in 1857 and 1862 and they seemed to approve of the marriage.

Thomas found himself a new father the following year when a child they named Thomas Perry Tompkins had been born on 13 May 1866. He and Flora continued having children until a total of eight had been born to them. Lambert Tompkins in July 1867, only living until 26 September 1867; Henry Tompkins on 28 September 1868; Walter John Tompkins on 3 December 1870; Rhoda (Birdie) Tompkins in February 1873; Daisy (Flora) Tompkins in January 1878; Violet Mima Tompkins on 16 January 1881, and Mabel Tompkins on 24 March 1884. All the children were born at San Bernardino, California.

There could have been more children possibly born to the couple but Thomas caught pneumonia and died 14 January 1885, leaving a widow and ten children in the two marriages. His obituary reads:

\footnote{Merkley, Aird G., \textit{Monuments to Courage - A History of Beaver County}, published by Daughters of Utah Pioneers of Beaver County, Utah, 1948, page 17.}
Died – Tompkins - at his residence Mt. Vernon, January 14 of pneumonia Thomas Tompkins, aged 66 years.

The news of the death of Mr. Tompkins will be received with feeling of the deepest regret by his many friends. Mr. Tompkins was one of the pioneers of the coast, and one of the earliest settlers in this valley. He came to the coast in the summer of 1846, coming by way of Cape Horn and was six months on the voyage. He spent some time after his arrival in San Joaquin Valley and up and down the Sacramento. At the time of discovery of gold by Marshall, Mr. Tompkins was engaged in hauling provisions for General Sutter from Sutter’s Fort on the Sacramento river to the mill at Coloma. After the discovery of gold he made three trips across the plains, bringing back with him each time large parties of immigrants who were coming to make homes and fortunes in the new El Dorado. Mr. Tompkins came to this valley in 1852, where he has resided continuously up to the time of his death. On his arrival here Mr. Tompkins embarked in farming and stock raising, out of which he acquired considerable of this world’s goods, at the time of his death being the possessor of a model farm in the beautiful suburb of Mt. Vernon. Mr. Tompkins leaves a wife and sons and daughters to mourn his death, besides innumerable friends scattered all over our broad land.

Uncle Tommy as he was familiarly called, was one of Nature’s noble men; generous to a fault, always ready to assist the worthy; with kind and cheery words for every one he will be truly mourned. Thus every day are the Old Pioneers who gave to us this Grand Empire of the Pacific leaving to pioneer the Great Beyond. Each time we chronicle the departure of one we are lead to exclaim ‘Who will be next?’

Thomas King Tompkins had been buried near his wife Jane Elizabeth Rollins Tompkins in the old Pioneer Cemetery but his remains were removed in October of 1917 and now rest in the Mountain View Cemetery at the location of Sequoia 4, Grid 7.

Amanda Rollins Tompkins
Amanda Rollins Tompkins had been born 17 November 1840 at Dansville, Steuben county, New York, the eldest daughter of Thomas and Jane Elizabeth Tompkins. She had just turned six years old when the Brooklyn sailed for California.

After reaching Yerba Buena Amanda received a little instruction in school until the gold rush started, and then her family went to the mines and then San Jose, California where she continued her basic education. This proved to be short lived as they then went with the Ebenezer Brown company to Salt Lake City. They were here only a short time and then traveled back to San Francisco and then Tahiti with the missionaries. John M. Horner had been generous to her father and the others, giving them $6000 to pay for their passage to the Society Islands. She enjoyed her stay in Tahiti and even learned a few words of the native language. It is here that she started to learn to read, along with her mother, who received help from Louisa Pratt.

She then traveled with her family from the Society Islands back to San Francisco and then to San Bernardino. She loved San Bernardino, and when her father decided to move to Utah in 1857, Amanda decided to remain behind. She had been receiving the affections of a young man who wanted to marry her and wanted to make a home of her own in this pleasant location. She promised her father she would marry soon after they left for Utah and she did indeed get married on 15 November 1857 to Benjamin Franklin Garner.

Benjamin Franklin Garner had been born near Quincy, Adams, Illinois on 5 March 1835 to George Garner and Elizabeth Hedrick. His father had been a farmer by trade and after being

13 The Sun, about 16 January 1885
converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the family moved to Nauvoo in 1845. They were forced to evacuate the city starting on 4 February 1846 and crossed the Mississippi into Iowa. After spending the winter in Iowa they traveled slowly during 1849 across Missouri to St. Joseph and took a ferry across the river in 1850. The oxen team, that had become the responsibility of fifteen year old Benjamin, bolted and jumped into the Missouri River, still under their yoke. The animals swam to shore safely, much to the joy of Benjamin’s father. Benjamin drove this ox team and wagon in 1850 and 1851 to Salt Lake City and then all the way on to San Bernardino, arriving in June of 1851 at the age of sixteen. The train they had joined had been so large that cholera had broken out and several had died. Benjamin’s father decided to push on by themselves in a group of ten wagons and left the other fifty wagons behind. By so doing they only had two or three die of cholera instead of the large number that died in the rest of the train.

Amanda Rollins Tompkins

Upon arrival in San Bernardino they lived for a time in the old Fort that had been constructed for protection from Indians. Benjamin’s father homesteaded a large plot of nearly one hundred acres and Benjamin decided to try his hand at mining for gold in the Northern mines. He traveled there and spent several years chasing the rainbow and doing some farming, returning to San Bernardino in 1857 when he proposed to Amanda Garner.

After their marriage they acquired property of their own, built a house, and soon a family had been started with the arrival on 5 October 1858, a son that they named Thomas Franklin Garner. He had soon been followed by seven others. Jane Elizabeth Garner, 29 June 1860; Amanda M. Lavina Garner, 23 July 1862; Charles Henry Garner, 20 October 1864; Andrew
Addison Pratt Garner, 16 February 1867; Lewis Edwin Garner, 9 August 1869; Jessie Maybelle Garner, 13 August 1875 and finally Irene Harden Garner on 22 January 1879, all born in San Bernardino. All the children survived to adulthood and were married except Lewis who died single on 23 July 1898 from pneumonia.

Benjamin Franklin Garner built up his farm and ranch for many years and felt strongly about his family, especially loving the many grandchildren in his older years. In 1851 he contracted cancer and suffered terribly until he died on 12 May 1891. His obituary reads:

An Old Citizen Gone
Mr. Frank Garner Dies This Morning After a Protracted Illness

Mr. B. F. Garner, an old and respected citizen of this place, and one who has long been identified with the city and county, died this morning at 6:10 o’clock, after a protracted illness. The malady was cancer of the chest. Mr. Garner was 56 years, 2 months and 7 days old, and was a native of Quincy, Ill. He came here in June, 1851, and has ever since been engaged in farming and stock-raising. In 1857 Mr. Garner was married in this city to Miss Amanda Tompkins, who, with eight children, four sons and four daughters, survive him. Mrs. Geo. Evans and Mrs. Harry Hagan, two of the daughters, reside in this city, and two other daughters residing at home and the two younger sons. The two other sons are married, one living at Peach Springs, Arizona, the other residing here, being a brakeman on the Santa Fe overland from Los Angeles to Barstow. Mr. Garner was very successful in his business pursuits, and leaves his family well provided for. He was a member of the Legion of Honor. The funeral will be at 3 p.m. tomorrow, and the burial at the old cemetery.14

Amanda continued living at the ranch until an illness forced her into the county hospital. Here she died on 21 October 1897. Her obituary reads:

Death Claims Another Victim

Mrs. Amanda R. Garner Passes Quietly Away After Enduring Months of Suffering

Death claimed another victim last night and Mrs. Amanda R. Garner passed quietly away, leaving a large number of relatives and a wide circle of intimate friends to mourn her loss.

The deceased has been a sufferer for many months, but it was only within the past few days that a fatal termination to her ailment was feared. During the latter portion of her illness her case became so critical that after a council of local physicians had been held, friends sent to Los Angeles for further medical aid, but it was all in vain, for the sufferer was beyond all human help.

Mrs. Garner was nearly 57 years of age at the time of her death. A native of New York, she came to San Bernardino 40 years ago with her parents and has made this her home since that time. Her husband died five years since, leaving eight children, nearly all of which are now residing in this city. Of these, Frank Garner is in Arizona and Charles Garner, Addison Garner, both of whom are married, reside here, and also Louis, Lavina and Irene Garner.

Although suffering from an incurable ailment - cancer of the stomach - the deceased kept up bravely and only on her return from the seaside ten days ago did she succumb to the inevitable and take to her bed, from which she was destined never to arise.

The funeral will take place from her late residence on Mt. Vernon avenue, between Sixth and Seventh streets, tomorrow afternoon at 2 o’clock.15

Her funeral had been a large and well attended event as described in the following news article:

14 The Weekly Times Index, Friday, May 15, 1891.

15 The Sun, 22 October 1897. Furnished to author by researcher and author Sue Payne of San Bernardino, CA.
In Memoriam

To the editor of The Sun – The largely attended funeral of Mrs. Amanda R. Garner, held on Saturday afternoon last, attested to her popularity among the large circle of her acquaintances, and the obituary notice of her death, already published, was too brief for one who has resided in this valley so many years and enjoyed the love of all who knew her, and yielding to a general desire to have gathered more detailed statement of her history, and now furnish the same to her family and numerous friends.

Mrs. Amanda R. Garner was born in Steuben county, New York, on the 17th day of November, 1840, and in 1846 started with her parents Thomas Tompkins and Jane Elizabeth Tompkins, for California on the famous sailing vessel Brooklyn. When rounding Cape Horn, encountering a severe storm, the captain ordered all passengers below decks, where two anxious days and nights were passed among ice bergs and angry waves, which threatened to crush the vessel every moment. Favored by good fortune the passengers reached San Francisco without further trouble.

In 1850 Miss Amanda Tompkins went to Salt Lake with her parents, traveling by team all the way. Returning to San Jose, California soon thereafter. In 1852 they came overland to San Bernardino, where she continued to reside up to the time of her death.

On November 15th, 1857, she married Benjamin Franklin Garner, a son of that well known citizen and pioneer Uncle George Garner, who crossed the plains from Illinois to Salt Lake, using rafts to cross the Missouri and Platte rivers, and overcoming all obstacles, continuing their way through Southern Utah and across the Mojave desert, being captain of one of the pioneer wagon trains, until he reached San Bernardino through the Cajon Pass, and was thus one of the first settlers of the valley.

Frank Garner and Amanda Tompkins appeared before Samuel Hoffman, Justice of the Peace at Agua Mansa, and were joined in marriage.

About five years ago B. F. Garner died, leaving his widow to care for eight children, Frank Garner, Jane Evans, Lovina Hagan, Charles Garner, Addison Garner, Lewis Garner, Jessie Garner and Irene Garner, five of whom are married, and all residents of San Bernardino, except Frank, whose home is in Arizona.

In July last Mrs. Garner was taken ill, and suffered more or less from that time till her death. The best medical skill was procured, a specialist from Los Angeles being in consultation, but without success. On October 21st, 1897, at her home on Mt. Vernon Avenue, in the presence of all her children, she passed away from the journey of this life to join those who have gone before to a brighter world, where pain and sorrow are unknown.

Her life, as an obedient daughter, a faithful wife, an indulgent mother and a true friend, is worthy of emulation. On Saturday afternoon, all the family and a large assemblage of old friends, attended the last ceremonies at the residence and at the cemetery, the casket being covered with beautiful flowers, the offerings of affection. Rev. James Healey, pastor of St. Paul’s M. E. Church, South, officiated. Joseph Hancock, R. T. Roberts, Amos Bemis, John Henderson, John Marshall and O. H. Kobl acted as pall bearers. The beautiful casket was lowered through and into a bed of roses by the side of her husband, thus typifying the repose of a mother who had performed all the relations of life faithfully, and who was the object of the devoted attention of dutiful children who had spared no pains in contributing to the comfort of mother and alleviating all her wants as far as was possible to do. They performed their duty well and are blessed with an approving conscience. They desire to express their gratitude to all kind friends for the many acts of kindness which have in measure strengthened them to endure the irreparable loss of a mother’s love.

Oh, you have a mother dear
Let not a word or act give pain,
But cherish, love her, with your life,
You ne’er can have her like again.
A FRIEND

Amanda Rollins Tompkins Garner is buried next to her husband Benjamin Franklin Garner in the Pioneer Cemetery, 211 East 9th Street, San Bernardino, California.

Three scenes of the Pioneer Cemetery

16 The Sun, dated October 1897
Jane Elizabeth Tompkins

Jane Elizabeth Tompkins had been born on 11 January 1843 at Dansville, Steuben county, New York, the daughter of Thomas Tompkins and Jane Elizabeth Rollins. She had just had her third birthday when she sailed on the ship Brooklyn with her parents and older sister. Little is known of her early experiences in California until she finally came to San Bernardino in 1852 at the age of nine. Her father had been very successful in his farming activities and had the first threshing machine, the first reaper, the first mower, the first fanning mill, and the first stand of bees and he planted the first vineyard in San Bernardino valley. It became the duty of Jane Elizabeth and her sister Amanda, along with a friend named Calvin L. Thomas to carry pails of water to the young vines twice a week, a half bucket to each vine. Her mother would watch from the shade of a tree to see that the work had been completed without nonsense.

When her father Thomas decided to travel back to Utah, and had agreed to let Amanda remain behind to marry, Jane Elizabeth demanded the same. Her father refused and so she eloped with a man named Joseph Milam. Thomas denied his daughter the right to remain with Joseph and took her with him to Utah; the marriage never legally dissolved.

Thomas returned to San Bernardino with his wife and daughter in late 1858 and were able to buy back their old farm and ranch from John Rains at the same price Rains had purchased it from Thomas Tompkins. Jane Elizabeth worked on the farm, tended chickens, helped her mother with household duties and visited her sister Amanda Garner.

One day she met a man named Jesse Divined Hunter and he courted her. After a few months they were married in Los Angeles on 3 July 1862. They made their home in Los Angeles, and Jane operated a boarding house at 327 South Broadway.

Jesse Divined Hunter had been born at Hopkinsville, Christian county, Kentucky to Samuel Hunter and Lydia Devenny on 5 July 1806. Hopkinsville is located in the western portion of Kentucky, just north of Fort Campbell. He courted and married a woman named Kaziah Brown in December 1827 at St. Louis, Missouri and made their home with the Saints in Missouri. It is not known exactly when they joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but they had been converted by Hyrum Smith, brother to the Prophet. Jesse had once been arrested and held in jail with the prophet Joseph Smith at Richmond, Missouri.

A criminal court of inquiry was commenced before Austin A. King, judge of the Fifth Judicial Court in the State of Missouri, at the court house in Richmond, Ray County, Missouri. The title of the suit brought before this court was ‘State vs. Joseph Smith, Jun. and 53 other defendants including Jesse D. Hunter who were charged with the several crimes of High treason against the State, murder, burglary, arson, robbery and larceny. The first thing the court did was to send out a body of armed men to gather witnesses.17

He had also been forced to flee Missouri with the rest of the Saints and made his home in Nauvoo, Illinois. Here he and Kaziah had six children born to them by 1843. He had been given the rank of a Major in the Nauvoo Legion and here he learned the principle of polygamy from Joseph Smith. Taking a second wife on 2 February 1846 named Lydia Ann Edmunds, just two days before being driven from Nauvoo by angry mobs. Lydia Ann Edmunds had been born 22 January 1824 in Hanover, Chataqua, New York, not far from Buffalo.

The families traveled west to Council Bluffs and were present when Captain Allen came

17 Journal History, 1 November 1838.
to Brigham Young and made the call for volunteers to form the Mormon Battalion. Jesse talked it over with his families and they decided that he would join. Jesse had concerns about taking Kaziah and the children on the march and decided to leave them in Council Bluffs but took his new wife Lydia Ann Edmunds along with him. Lydia Ann became one of the laundresses for Company B and Jesse Hunter had been appointed Captain of Company B by Brigham Young. Jesse also took his oldest son, William, age 16, to be the drummer for Company B.

Lydia Ann Hunter, Melissa Coray, Phebe Brown, Susan Davis and Nancy Davis were the only five women to complete the march, two of the five, Melissa and Lydia were pregnant on part of the march, giving birth after reaching California. One can only imagine the hardships these women endured on the nearly 2,000 mile march across the wilderness of America. The lack of water for basic necessities and drinking always a constant problem during the march, as well as little wholesome food to keep them alive. The battalion arrived at the Catholic Mission at San Diego on 29 January 1847. Here they climbed a bluff and were able to see the Pacific Ocean for the first time. The tears that they must have shared as they realized their long march, would finally be over. A few weeks later:

The following orders were issued by Col. Cooke, of the Battalion; (Order No. 3) “(1) Captain Hunter, in command of Company B, Mormon Battalion, will march this morning for San Diego. Arrived there, his company will constitute the garrison for the protection of the town, and he will take charge of all defenses of the place. (2) Brevet Lieutenant Stoneman, 1st dragoons will march from San Diego with his detachment of company C 1st Dragoon, for this post, on the 17th inst. (3) 2nd Lieutenant Clift will proceed without delay to San Diego. He is appointed to receive there such ordinance as shall be turned over to him by officers of the Navy. Lieutenant Clift will perform the duties of assistant commissary of subsistence and assist the quartermaster at San Diego, and receive such subsistence and other property as will be turned over to him by Major Sword, quartermaster, U.S.A. Signed P. St. George Cooke, Lieut. Col. Commanding.”

Lydia Hunter and Melissa Coray went hand-in-hand the few miles to San Diego, both were pregnant, with Lydia expecting any time. The baby finally arrived on 13 April 1847 and the little boy had been named Diego Hunter, the first white child to be born in San Diego of Anglo parents. Lydia became very ill after the babies birth, and Doctor, John S. Griffin, did all he could to help her recover. John Strother Griffin, M.D., had been the assistant surgeon with the dragoons of Gen. Stephen W. Kearney, who came to California two months ahead of the Mormon Battalion. He wrote in his journal of Lydia’s death:

27 April. Last night the wife of Captain Hunter died of Typhoid Fever - or rather I think a malignant form of Quotidian Fever. The attack was issued in with severe rigors, some six days ago - with great difficulty of breathing and oppression, followed by a high fever.

About 11 a.m. each day the same attack came - with cramps and irregular nervous twitching’s - serious diarrhoea - mind affected - purgative of Calomel, Massa ex Hyd &c given until slight ptyalism produced - her breasts became inflamed, and before death suppured.

The nervous twitching’s were stopped by the use of small doses of morphia & Asafetida. The chill checked by Quinine - her brain became very much excited.

Delirium for two days previous to death - and deafness -. She finally died last night about 10 p.m. in great pain.”

18 Journal History, 15 March 1847.

Lydia Hunter and Albert Dunham gravesite.
Point Loma Military Cemetery, San Diego, Calif.

Lydia Hunter died 26 April 1847, being buried in a grave near the beach at Point Loma, where three others were already buried, including two Russian sailors who had died in a shipwreck. In 1877 her remains were moved to the Rosecrans Military cemetery at Point Loma and Private Albert Dunham is buried beside her. They are marked by a beautiful white marble memorial stone, placed 24 July 1999 by members of the historical Mormon Battalion of San Diego. Diego Hunter, the little boy, had been taken by the midwife, Juanita Michado Wrintington, and raised into adulthood. Diego apparently never lived with his father.

Jesse’s first wife, Kaziah, had received several letters from Jesse and William Hunter during the march of the Battalion and with the money that had been included she brought the family overland to California, settling in Monterey to await Jesse’s discharge. She would be disappointed when she found that Jesse had been appointed as an Indian Agent over Mission San Luis Rey and the Pala Farm on 1 August 1847. It is also apparent that the remaining members of the Battalion that had joined in the Mormon Volunteers didn’t know yet that Salt Lake City had
been designated as the gathering point of his church. Jesse Hunter wrote a letter to Brigham Young:

San Louis Rey
Feb 20th 1848
President Brigham Young & Counsel,

Dear Sirs:

Esteeming it my duty as well as privilege to let you know the precise situation of the country at this time both as it regards its Gov. and local situation as well as the feelings of the people towards our people. The only Troops now in this country is Col. Stevenson [sic] Regiment of N. York Vols. and one Company of Dragoons besides Capt Davis [sic] Company at San Diego. The Vol. will be discharged at the close of the War. But the trouble is, They or some other Troops are called upon to go to the South. And the Gov. is very anxious that the Mormons should raise another Battalion to Garison [sic] this Country. I have conversed with him upon the Subject in Aug[u]st last and have received Communications since expressing his wish that we would settle in California. He said we should have the privilege to garison all upper California and would be in a short time the only forces left in this Country. As regards the feelings of this people with the exception of a few about the Bay— there is not a Man Woman or Child, but would rejoice at the very idea of our settling in this Country. It has a fine climate and fertile soil, Though the Land is mostly owned by individuals yet it can be purchased on reasonable terms. I am well aware that we will have to have a trading point on the Coast and from all I can learn the Gov. is willing that we should have the entire control of this Country. I have not heard from you since I arrived here. I wrote to you when the Battalion was discharged but have received no answer as yet. I am still acting as Agent for the Indians, having also the charge of San Louis Rey and the Pala Farm which keeps me very busy. I am in hope I will hear from you soon. When Brother [Asahel] Lathrop and his party arriv’d here and delivered unto us the Epistle of the [Stake High] Council at the Lake. We gladly received their Council. But as Circumstances always alters Cases, and since we have been so strongly solicited to use our influence in favor of raising another Mormon Force to defend this Country, we have not only consented to this, But have Concluded to try and influence Capt. Davis and his Company to remain in service until they can hear from you.

I have an extensive influence among the Indians here, my word is their law, but if I should be left here alone without any backing, I am aware that jealousy would arise and that Influence which we have gained in this Country would be lost. I believe also that if we should refuse to help them at this time that jealousies would arise and perhaps we may be troubled or interrupted in our trade upon the Coast, if it should be garisoned by them instead of us. These are the feelings of my mind and after laying these things before you, I will leave it with you believing that it will all work right.

Remaining Yours as Ever,

Pres. Young

J. D. Hunter

Here again is a letter from a leader in California to Brigham Young extolling the virtues of the country and requesting guidance concerning his next actions, the same as Samuel Brannan had done from San Francisco. Brigham Young obviously had things on his mind that were more important than the fate of a few Saints in California.

On 2 March 1849 Jesse had been released as Indian Agent and traveled to Monterey to meet his family. He built the first fired brick house in Monterey and then he went to the gold fields for a time. Returning, he took his family to San Bernardino and made his home among the Mormon Battalion and Brooklyn Saints in building up the community. He again received an

---

appointment as Indian Agent over San Luis Rey and took Kaziah and the children with him.

Now to get back to the subject of our story, Jane Elizabeth Tompkins. Jane had been living with her parents in San Bernardino since her families return there in 1858. She met Jesse D. Hunter at some of the Church functions and also saw him about town but didn’t know that he had a wife named Kaziah and children. She knew about the death of his wife Lydia at the end of the Mormon Battalion march and so she entertained his courtship and advances. When Jesse proposed marriage she accepted and they were married on 3 July 1862 in Los Angeles.

They worked closely with each other and even started a freighting business in 1866. They traveled between Los Angeles and Helena, Montana, down the Missouri River to get another load of freight and bring it back to Helena and then brought the profits and more freight to Los Angeles. They were able to make enough to build a boarding house in Los Angeles, which Jane operated for their mutual benefit. When Jesse took ill in 1878 he deeded the property they owned to his wife Jane and then he recovered from his illness without changing the deeds back.

Jane found out about Kaziah and the rest of the children that belonged to Jesse. She filed for divorce in 1882 and hired as her attorney Judge Waldo York. The divorce got to be an ugly affair but Judge York succeeded in getting the divorce granted and retaining for Jane Elizabeth the properties. Jane had no money to pay the attorney fees and so she made an agreement that if the Judge would let her continue to live at her home, the judge could have he property when she died. The judge agreed.

Jesse countersued in 1884, stating that Jane also had a previous husband.

\textbf{Two Husbands And But One Wife}

\textbf{Romance That Began Years Ago Revived by Recent Litigation}

\textbf{Story Told by a Los Angeles Man Seeking To Retain His Property}

\textbf{One Marriage That Was Legal}

\textbf{Matrimonial Entanglements of a Woman Who Came To California From Utah and Did Not Want To Return}

LOS ANGELES – March 30, A romance that commenced in San Bernardino in 1858 is being brought to an end in a litigation over property as shown in the suit of Jesse Hunter vs. Elizabeth Milam, now pending in the court here, the property being valued at $50,000.

The story in brief as set forth by Hunter in his allegations is that in June 1862, he was married to Jane Elizabeth, and that up to 1883 he believed himself to be her lawful husband. In 1878 he was taken ill and believed he would die, so he deeded to his wife the property now under contention. Ten years later he alleges that she confessed to him that before marrying him she was the lawful wife of a Joseph Milam, who was then and still is alive. Hunter soon sued for divorce, and a decree was granted in 1884, the deed he made to her of the property in question being set aside by the court and a new one recorded giving her simply a life estate. Now Hunter wants both deeds annulled on the ground the late Mrs. Milam is trying to claim the land under the first deed.

Mrs. Milam tells a different story. In 1858 she, with her parents, moved with a Mormon colony from Utah to San Bernardino. Her people were dissatisfied with California and wished to return, but she desired to stay, and, thinking that if she were married she could do as she pleased, made a match with young Joseph Milam and lived with him two weeks, when her parents found out what had happened and compelled her to leave Milam and return with them to Utah. She did not return to California until four years later, and on being wooed by Hunter married him, but first told him of the episode with Milam, and says that Hunter, as well as herself, believed and considered their marriage legal. Milam is said to be living now in Santa Cruz, but seems to have made no
effort to claim the bride of his early youth.\textsuperscript{21}

Jane Elizabeth and Jesse never had any children so Jane took delight in her nieces and nephews that belonged to her sister Amanda Garner. When Amanda died in 1897 Jane drew very close to the children and loved them as her own. Her ex-husband had died in Los Angeles in 1892. There are several records that indicate he had died 27 August 1877 but he had still been married and in litigation in 1884.

Jesse D. Hunter had learned the brick-making skill while serving in the Mormon Battalion and after a few years of being an Indian superintendent he and his son Diego traveled to Los Angeles and started a brick making business. He was selling brick for $25.00 per thousand and soon had acquired a fortune. He purchased a 2200 acre estate and shortly afterward added an additional 300 acres. His death date is still not exactly known but he is buried in the Rosedale Cemetery in Los Angeles, where Kaziah and three of their children also rest.

Jane Elizabeth lived out the rest of her life in Los Angeles, traveling to San Bernardino to visit Amanda’s children, becoming a member of he San Bernardino Society of California Pioneers and a charter member of the Los Angeles Pioneers. She started to have a problem with her health about 1916 and contracted the pandemic influenza in 1919, never fully recovering from its effects. She died at her home in Los Angeles on 5 May 1920. Her obituaries read:

\textbf{Death of Former Resident Who Was Also a Missionary}
Mrs. Jane Hunter, until a few years ago a resident of San Bernardino and for several years

\textsuperscript{21} Undated newspaper article from Sue Payne of San Bernardino, March 9, 2002.
a well known missionary in the Society Islands, and a daughter of Thomas Tompkins, whose whole family for years carried on missionary work in the South Sea Islands, passed away Wednesday in Los Angeles.

Mrs. Hunter was born in New York in 1843 and was 77 years of age at the time of her death. She came to San Francisco in 1846 with her parents and moved with them to Salt Lake City in 1848. With her parents she went to the Society Islands in 1851. She came to San Bernardino for the first time in 1852.

At the death of her father in this city a good many years ago, she went to Los Angeles where she lived until the time of her death. Funeral service will be in charge of the Mark B. Shaw Company and funeral service will be held from their funeral parlor at 2 o’clock Saturday afternoon. Interment will be in Mountain View.22

And:

Jane Elizabeth Tomkins Hunter

Jane was born 11 January 1843 in Steuben county, New York. She was about three years old when her parents took their family on the ship Brooklyn. She must have heard these tales of the voyage many times for she was the historian of the family. She came to San Bernardino 17 December 1852. The family made plans to join the ‘Recall’ of 1857 but Jane was reluctant to go. To avoid this she married Joseph Milam. When her parents found out, they compelled her to leave Joseph and accompany them. Later she was wooed by Jesse Hunter and married him in Los Angeles on 3 July 1862. Jesse and Jane made their home in Los Angeles. Jane ran a boarding house located at 327 S. Broadway in Los Angeles. Unhappy with Jesse she filed for divorce in 1882 and hired as her attorney Judge Waldo York. York was able to obtain her property for her and as she had no money to pay him, he agreed to wait and take the property in settlement. He no doubt made her will out. Jane died 5 May 1920 and was buried in Mt. View Cemetery in San Bernardino. Her property was valued at $100,000. Judge Waldo York was to receive it all. It is unfortunate as her sister Amanda’s children really needed it.23

Jane Elizabeth Tompkins Hunter is buried in the Mountain View Cemetery, 570 East Highland Avenue, San Bernardino, California. A large stone with the word HUNTER marks her grave.

22 From an unknown newspaper article.

23 Ibid.
Judge York finally received his payment for the legal services he performed for Jane in 1884. An unknown newspaper article states his reward.

**Former Judge Gets Big Estate by Will**

By the Will of Jane Elizabeth Hunter, which was on file in the probate court today, real estate on Broadway, valued at $100,000, was left to Waldo M. York, former judge of the superior court, as his fee for conducting Mrs. Hunter’s divorce case nearly twenty years ago. Mrs. Hunter was granted a divorce from Jesse Hunter and the property was transferred to Judge York, Mrs. Hunter retaining a life interest in the property. Mrs. Hunter died May 5 [1920]. A small amount of property in addition to the Broadway real estate was bequeathed to relatives.24

Another article also details the Judges fortune and the loss to Jane’s family:

**Hunter Property Awarded Lawyer**

San Bernardino heirs of the late Jane Elizabeth Hunter are practically cut off in her Will, filed in Los Angeles and leaving $100,000 in real estate to her attorney. The heirs are given approximately $1800.

Mrs. Hunter was buried here, her pioneer day home, a few days ago. To one of the relatives in San Bernardino she gave her diamonds before her death. She had a monument erected at the cemetery here in anticipation of death.

Judge Waldo M. York is bequeathed the real estate worth $100,000. He is well known here. Judge York represented her in a divorce action nearly 20 years ago. The judgement is often quoted in court cases. The Will conveys the property to Judge York as a fee.25

---

24 Materials supplied by Alice Sorenson, St. George, UT 84790, age 84 years, March 2002.