

Brooklyn Saints Leaving California

1848-1857

By Norma Baldwin Ricketts

The Brooklyn passengers landed in San Francisco July 31, 1846, after a five-month journey around the Horn. With only a few sailors and natives besides the Brooklyn Saints in residence, San Francisco was primarily a Mormon community during 1846 and 1847. It was two years before the Brooklyn Saints started leaving California with companies for the Salt Lake Valley. There were three companies in 1848, one in 1849, and the fifth in 1857.

Holmes-Thompson Company

Left California July 4, 1848. Arrived Salt Lake Valley September 28, 1848. 6 Brooklyn in company

When the first group of soldiers of the Mormon Battalion were discharged in Los Angeles in July, 1848, they traveled north through Sutter's Fort continuing into the Sierra. It was near Donner Lake Summit where they met James Brown with a message from the leaders of the Church in Salt Lake City. The ex-soldiers were advised to return to California for a season and then in the spring to bring supplies with them. The pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley were destitute since they had only been in the valley about three weeks, and with no crops to harvest, did not have enough food for themselves.

About half the battalion men went on and half returned to Sutter's Fort to work in September 1847. Those who went back to California sent their supplies and animals to their families and the church in Salt Lake Valley, and worked a season at Sutter's Fort. In the spring of 1848, after working a winter as Brigham Young requested, this group, known as the Holmes-Thompson Company left California with 45 men and one woman (Melissa Coray). They left Pleasant Valley, July 2nd and started over Carson Pass, still covered by deep snows. Among the men were four who had not belonged to the Battalion or the Brooklyn: É James Dimond, a non-Mormon, Francis A. Hammond, a convert in San Francisco, Addison Pratt, a missionary returning from the Pacific Islands, and Philo Behunin, twenty-year old Mormon.

John Eagar of the Ship Brooklyn, with this company, is the first known Brooklyn passenger to leave California. Shortly after, a company of thirteen to sixteen, and still later a party of four men and one woman, also Brooklyn passengers, Franklin Weaver, his wife Rachel Reed Weaver, John Reed, and two others whose names are not known, caught up and traveled to Salt Lake Valley with the first two groups - Making sixty-five men and two women who participated in building the historic road over Carson Pass.

This group divided into packers and a wagon company on

August 12. The packers, one of whom was John Reed of the Brooklyn, went ahead and arrived in Salt Lake City September 24, 1848. The main wagon group arrived September 29, 1848. A few stragglers arrived October 6, 1848.

Ebenezer Brown Company

Left California August 10, 1848. Arrived Salt Lake Valley October 1848. 44 Brooklyn in Company

This group was the next to leave California from Pleasant Valley on August 10, 1848. They followed the Holmes-Thompson Company by several weeks, but made better time, benefitting from the road building efforts of the advance group. This company included ex-battalion veterans, including Phebe Brown who was the last of the three women to leave California who had traveled with the battalion the entire trip from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego, and families from Ship Brooklyn.

There were twenty-five ex-Battalion Soldiers and their families in this company (names are available to anyone interested). The Brooklyn Saints were: Julius Austin, wife, Octavia Lane, children, Louise Marie, Newton Francis, and Edward N.; Newell Bullen, wife Clarissa Atkinson, children, Andrew, Herschel and John Joseph (born in San Jose after arrival); Charles Clark Burr (brother to Nathan), wife, Sarah Sloat, children John Atlantic (born aboard ship), Nathan Jr. (born in California after arrival); Nathan Burr (brother to Charles), wife Chloe Clarke, children, Amanda, Charles Clark Jr.; John S. Hyatt; Emmeline Lane; John Philips; Christiana Gregory Reed (widow), children John Reed, Hannah Reed Jamison, grandson, John Jamison; Issac R. Robbins, wife Ann Burtis Shin, children Joseph, Margaret, and Issac R. Jr.; Orrin Smith, 2nd wife Mary Ann Daud Hopkins, children Eugene and Elizabeth (both born in California); Werthy Smith, children Eliza, Henry M., Francis and Amelia; Mary Ann Hopkins, children Ellen Marie and Emily Marilu; Daniel Stark.

Marcus Shepherd Company

Left California October 1848. Arrived Salt Lake Valley November 1848. 1 Brooklyn in Company

This was the third group to leave during 1848. They left with Shepherd as captain of a twelve man company. He had a pack animal, nine horses, five mules, a stock of groceries and clothing. The name of the twelve men traveling with him are not known although four men (bit Brooklyn) arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on the same day so they probably traveled with him. Tommy Tomkins (Brooklyn) went to Utah in the fall of 1848 and could have traveled with either Ebenezer Brown or Marcus Shepherd.



Thomas Rhoades' Gold Train

Left California July 14, 1849. Arrived Salt Lake Valley October 1849. 22 Brooklyn in Company

In 1847 Thomas Rhoades, his wife Elizabeth, and their large family settled on Dry Creek in the Cosumnes Valley. The family were farmers and they also built a flour mill and worked with Captain John Sutter as he was building his empire. They were in Cosumnes Valley when gold was discovered and sent their Indian hired hands to work the gold fields for them. They were extremely lucky in their search because they were there in the beginning before the Forty Niners rushed in.

Thomas' wife became ill, and with no medical treatment available at the fort, Sutter provided a barge on which they put bags of grain so Elizabeth could lie down on her way to the Bay Area where she could get medical attention. But when the barge reached Benicia, Elizabeth died. She was buried on a gentle slope by the side of the river. Thomas paid two strangers to mark her grave. They took the money, but did not mark the grave and he later could not find the grave.

Thomas was lonely and decided to go to Utah. Elder Amasa Lyman organized the company and Thomas was appointed the captain by "unanimous voice". The Gold Train left Sacramento July 14, 1849. He took his two youngest children with him, Caleb Baldwin and Lucinda, who was four. An Indian named Sam also went with them. Thomas was fifty-five years old. The names of those in this company were not known until recent years when the company members were identified along with numbers of wagons, horses, yokes of oxen, cash, cows, and mules.

Although the exact amount of gold Thomas gave to Brigham Young is not generally known, many references are made to a forty-pound sack of gold nuggets. In return, Brigham Young gave Thomas a choice plot of land among the church authorities near the temple. His lot was located where the Salt Palace and Sports Center now stand. The gold aided the Church greatly at the particular time

Families from the Ship Brooklyn in this company are: Ashbel Green Haskell, who died enroute; Silas Aldridge and wife Prudence Clark; Alondos De Lafayette Buckland, wife, Nancy Laura Aldrich, his mother, Hannah Daggett Buckland, and his brother James; William Glover, wife Jane Cowan, children Jane Ann, Catherine, and Joseph Smith Glover; Zelnora Sophronia Snow; William Kittleman, wife Eliza Hindman, children, Elizabeth Jane, Mary Ann, James, George, and twins Sarah Emma, and Hannah Melinda; Susan Eliza Savage. Names of other members of the Thomas Thoades Gold Train are available to anyone who may be interested (contact editors of this newsletter).

Zacheus Cheney Company Left California August 28, 1847.

Arrived Salt Lake Valley November 3, 1857

12 Brooklyn in Company

This group of LDS Church members from the Alameda-Santa Cruz area left San Francisco for Salt Lake in response to Brigham Young's request for all church members to come to Utah. Zacheus Cheney (Battalion) was captain of the company which consisted of fourteen wagons, sixteen men, seven women, and fifteen children. His first wife, Mary Ann Fisher and his second wife, Amanda Evans were both of the Brooklyn, as was Hannah Evans, mother of Amanda.

Other Brooklyn members were: Rinaldo Mowry, his mother Ruth Walkup Mowry; Issac Harrison's wife Catherine Smith and her two children by first husband Robert Smith, Daniel Clark and Hyrum Joseph. Other members of the company are also available to those who may be interested.

On August 27th, the day before their departure from the Bay Area they held a meeting at which George Q. Cannon spoke and there was a "unity of feeling".

Acknowledgments:

*Lorin Hansen, Historian, The Ship Brooklyn Association
"The Rhoades' Gold Train" Courtesy of Janet Ann and
Bernie Lee Rhoades Collection
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