



THOMAS BURKE FOY 1802--1873

Written by Florence T. Foy



One hundred fifty seven years ago on the 30th of December 1802 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a baby boy was born to Fredrick and Elizabeth Foy. They named him Thomas. You had eleven other brothers and sisters.

The name "Foy" means faith. Your ancestors originated in France. One was burned at the stake for believing in Christianity, one was Napoleon's General, one married King Charles the 5th of Spain. Some of your ancestors went with the French Hugonots into Ireland, some settled in Luxemburg, but your father was more adventurous and came to America.

He drove a supply wagon in the Revolutionary war. In 1619, while the family was living in Center County, Pennsylvania, you and your brother Samuel moved further west to Indiana County, Penn. Here you met your wife Catherine Rebecca Fink who was born 18 October 1809. She was the daughter of John and Sarah Goshorn Fink. Her parents were of German decent. You can trace the Goshorn line back 19 generations into Germany. Catherine was born and reared in Indiana County with eleven other brothers and sisters. Her father was a carpenter and in the 1840 census you are listed with your wife and four children, two males and two females. This was in Wheatfield, Indiana Co., Penn.

Your first son, Thomas Didymus Foy, died at the age of seven. This was a great sorrow to you. Your oldest daughter, Elizabeth, who was born October 30, 1829 in Wheatfield, Penn., married John Boyd Dingsan. She was named after your mother. They had two sons both born at Council Bluff, Iowa. Elizabeth and John and family moved west to Utah. They later settled in Paris, Idaho. Elizabeth died young. She was a good wife and mother, but not strong enough for pioneer life. They have 58 descendants.

In the spring of 1831, (April 4), while you were still in Strongstown, Penn., a baby girl came to brighten your home. She was known as Susan. She was stronger than her sister Elizabeth and as she grew older she was a big help to her mother as there were seven younger brothers and sisters to help care for. It was like having an extra pair of hands for her mother. She went through all the hardships of crossing the plains. She met a young man at Winter Quarters by the name of John Peck Chidester who had worked on the big mill there. He helped ferry the Saints across the Mississippi River. When they got to Utah they were married. This was in 1851. Their first three children were born in Spanish Fork the next two in Salt Lake City and the last four in Washington, Utah. They were called to help colonize Southern Utah. They lived in St. George and Washington, Utah. They did a lot of Temple work. Susan never complained then John spent time trying to build the St. George Temple or over the time he spent managing the Mt. Trumble Lumber Company for the United Order. There was a living to be made besides this. She was left alone in fear of Indians while he helped build the canals and big dams in the Rio Virgin. She was a good daughter, wife and mother and lived to be a good old age. She passed away in 1902 in Washington, Utah. She had nine sons and daughters and we have a record of 503 of her descendants.

Then Thomas, as winter was setting in the year 1835, November 6, another son came to carry the Foy name. By this time you, Thomas Burke Foy, had heard of a strange Religion you investigated and joined the Mormon Church, and the story of how the angel Moroni brought the gold plates to the Prophet Joseph Smith was told you, you decided to name this son after his Grandfather John Kirk and angel Moroni so this son was called John Moroni Foy. He grew to manhood and went west with the rest of his family to Utah. He helped haul stone with an ox team for the Salt Lake Temple. He was full of fun and liked a joke. (This is a Foy characteristic.)

In June of 1856, he married Alice Fost in the Endowment House. They had ten sons and daughters. Most of them were born in Ogden, Utah. They went by way of Bear Lake into Wyoming and then to the Gallatin Valley in Montana. Here he run freight wagons with six horses for four years. The route was between Bozeman and Helena. From there they moved to the Flathead Valley. It was getting late in the season when they arrived. He immediately unloaded the mowing machine and cut grass for the cattle for winter. That winter was hard, the five families there killed and ate 72 deer, their diet was further supplemented with wild chicken and

fish. They settled on a lake which has been named Foy's Lake as one prominent person said because they thought so much of John Moroni Foy and his family. He was the first to have a saw or lumber mill there in the Valley. He made the pulley wheels by hand with hammer and chisel. He was well experienced in this line as his father was a wheelwright as well as a farmer. He then put in the first steam there. His grandsons and granddaughters were the first white children born in this Valley. He had a pair of dentist forceps he brought from Utah and he pulled all the teeth for the early settlers. In addition to this he also run a good farm. His two sons John and Lester called quadrilles for the dances. Coming here from election in 1900 his horse ran away and he was killed. His wife Alice died the following year. They have better than 70 descendants.

Then, Thomas, in the fall of 1837 (Sept. 9) in Indiana Co., Penn., another son was born. He was named after your Brother William. He grew up to be a young man, traveling west with the family. He was thirteen when you arrived in Utah and was a pioneer in the truest sense of the word. Like an untamed mustang of the early west, this adventurous restless plainsman with his family pushed outward and onward. He was a farmer Stockman, freighter, blacksmith, carpenter and horseman. He married Lucinda Bingham in 1862 in Ogden, Utah. They then left for St. George and then to Minersville, Utah. Six of their children were born there. In 1882 he married Lucinda's sister Cedenia in polygamy. The two women got along fine together. They later moved to a ranch just outside of Millford. Here they run a boarding house which was called the "Half Way House." He had good horses and raced many of them. He had the reputation of tackling any adventure that came along. He never boasted about being a good horseman but would ride anything that could be saddled. He didn't know what the word danger meant. The only thing that he was afraid of was the U. S. Marshall as he was a polygamist. He had his eye knocked out while branding a horse. One time he was nearly killed as the horse got frightened as he dismounted and it kicked and drug him until he was unconscious. He had one arm and one leg broke out in the timber one time but set them himself. They had a dairy at Fish Lake. Here they used to make 10 to 30 lbs. of cheese a day then freight it out. He also made barrels from five to fifty gallons in size. He would fill them with molasses to trade for wheat and flour. The wage scale was low. They would work all day for twelve pounds of flour. They moved next to Monticello, San Juan Co., Utah. They drove 50 head of cattle with them across the Colorado river. They arrived the day after some boys had shot up the town. One day the cowboys lined up his wife Cedenia and a group of Primary children and marched them down the street shooting on each side of them. They were the sixth family in Monticello. They would always keep a horse tied to the post in front of the house in case of an Indian alarm. One day they roped Cedenia's daughter Marie and drug her off. From there he moved to Colorado where he remained the rest of his life. He died at the age of 83, the father of sixteen children and a fearless pioneer of the far West.

By this time, Thomas Burke Foy and your wife Catherine, took your family and moved farther west. It was in the winter of 1840 (February 6) at Warsaw, Hancock Co., Illinois that a beautiful brown eyed baby girl was born to you. You named her after Catherine's mother Sarah Jane. She married Thomas W. Jones in 1856 in Salt Lake City and had nine sons and daughters. They had the joy and sorrow of having them as four of them died in infancy. From the looks of her picture and her granddaughters she must of been a real lady. They lived to be 77 years old. We have record of 47 of her descendants.

Thomas and Catherine Foy lived in Warsaw Illinois for six years. The second year there on July 23, 1842 another daughter was born. You named her after the Prophet Joseph Smith's wife. She was named Emma Smith Foy. When she lived in Ogden at the age of 15 she worked in the Isaac Newton Goodall home. One day his wife said "Isaac, you have done everything that the Church has asked you to but one thing." He asked what that was and she said, "You haven't taken another wife." He said he had never thought of it. She had already picked out Emma Smith Foy for her husband's second wife. They were married in 1857 in Brigham Youngs Office in Salt Lake City, Utah. The two wives loved each other. Emma was full of life, fun and very good company. She did beautiful hand sewing. When she was asked why she married an older man she said "I'd rather have an old man with an apple in his hand than a young man with his gold and land." She had six children, four died while babies. Emma passed away one month after her last baby was born in 1869 in Ogden, Utah. She was only 27 years old. She had 87 descendants.

Thomas, you worked on the Nauvoo Temple and you and Catherine got your Endowments there on 22 January 1846. This was a great Blessing to both of you.

This gave you courage to go west with all the trouble and hardships that came to the saints. As the leaves began to fall on October 3, 1846, another son came to be a pioneer with the family. Your eyes were turned westward for the coming Spring and you were thinking of leaving your Father so far behind so you named this boy after him and an Ancient Book of Mormon Prophet. You named him Frederick Lehi Foy. This boy grew to be tall and straight. He was a great horseman. He would place silver dollars along in a row on the ground then he would ride his horse at full speed and pick the dollars off the ground as he went. When he was in his eighties he would be on a high stack of hay feeding cattle. Like so many of the Foy's he was fearless and full of fun. He was county selectman in 1890 School trustee at Slatersville, Utah and a pioneer irrigator. He met Rachel in Slatersville, Utah, which was named after her father. Frederick and Rachel had five children, three died young, and the other two have also passed away now.

In the spring of 1847 you started for Utah. As you got into Iowa you met with trouble and the ones in charge of the company called a halt and asked to remain in there and help raise food and make needed repairs. You were a good wheel wright and were able to render help in building and repairing wagons. It was while at this lay over that your ninth child, a baby girl, was born on the 28th of March. Your wife Catherine had many chores washing for your family on the board, churning, making bread, sewing for the family and knitting their socks. You, Thomas, wanted this baby girl named after your good wife so she was named or called Catherine Rebecca. During this journey everyone suffered many hardships and much sickness from want and fatigue. Your wife Catherine took down with the cholera. She was so sick they didn't think she would live the night through. She recovered and finished the journey. Little Catherine grew up in Ogden and Slatersville. She helped her mother with the carding and spinning of wool. They gleaned the wheat fields and thrashed it by hand to provide the family with bread. She liked swimming and dancing, horseback riding. Then in 1863 her father was called to go to Washington, Utah to settle. Here Catherine and her sister would swim the Virgin River to pick cotton. They spun and wove this cotton into cloth and sewed it by hand into clothes. For lunch they had cane seed bread with sorghum. She never forgot that black sticky stuff. She went to Minersville with her brother William. There she met her husband John Blackburn. They had 11 children. Then she studied and passed the examination for obstetrics from the state medical board of Utah. He read was to long or night to cold and dark for her to go by horse and buggy or horseback to help the sick and suffering. She was loved by everyone. She had in this book 212 descendants.

You finally settled in Salt Lake City. In 1850 the stork found you there in the great Valley and another daughter, Mary Ann, arrived the 13th of December. When she was 17 she ran away and married George W. Richard of Florida. They soon moved to Nevada. She had seven children, four boys and three girls. They had poor health. While they lived there he ran a barber shop. They moved on to the Valley and Homesteaded 1,000 acres. They built the first church and amusements hall there. Here all the dances were held. They had a family orchestra. Most of the children played in it. They furnished the music for the Valley for many years. Later they sold the ranch and moved near Alamo. This little Community was named Richardville after them. Here they ran a General Store built a school and started the Richardville Cemetery, all of the descendants have been buried there since 1929. They sold out here and moved to Calico and bought a Hotel and Motel. She died at the age of 86 in 1937. She was true to the Faith, honest and a good mother and wife.

By 1853 you had moved to Farmington, Utah. You ran a saw mill for Willard Richards. It was while living here that yours and Catherine's last child, Rhoda Maria was born, November 13, 1853. She married Hyrum Jameson. They lived in Minersville, Utah for a while then moved to Rabbit Valley, known as Loa now. In the year of 1887 it was mostly sage brush, rabbits and Indians. They owned a ranch at a Beautiful Valley high in the Fish Lake Mountains. Here they made Cheese all summer and in the fall they would take it to Dixie, Utah and trade for clothes and things. They would make butter and put it down in large crock jars for winter. They would catch fish and dry and smoke them for winter. Their homes were all dirt roofs. The school house was one big long room with a fire place in one end and a dirt roof. The benches were rough lumber. Social life was dancing and meetings at each others places and making home made molasses candy. There dresses were made of calico. Rhoda had twelve children, seven girls and five boys. She died when her thirteenth child was born, due to the lack of good medical care in those days. She was a daughter to be proud of. She gave her life for her family.

She has 35 descendants in our records.

In the fall of 1853 you moved to Weber County, Brigham Fort. In 1858 you moved South then came back to Slaterville west of Ogden in 1860. Here you became engaged in farming and was quite prominent among the men of the community. You assisted much in the development of the country. You helped supervise the building of Harrisville ditch or canal and helped in many other ways. In 1863 you were called on a colonisation Mission by Brigham Young to go to the Southern part of the state Washington, Utah.

You engaged in Farming and decided to take a second wife. By your second wife Louisa Potterill Foy you had eight children. Only three daughters lived to raise a family. We have record in this Book of over 2,051 descendants from you and Catherine. They are living in Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Montana, Washington, California Nevada and Alaska.

This is your life, Thomas Burke Foy, a true pioneer, a good father, good neighbor who lived the Golden Rule. All people taking part on this program were brought here by Ox team, horseback and by the Thomas B. Foy buggy. A party is being given in your honor at Liberty Park today.