ELDER THOMAS DAY.

Brief Sketch of a Long, Useful Busy Life.

Editor Deseret News:

CIRCLEVILLE, Piute county, Utah, Jan. 1893. It is with a sense of loss and loneliness that we hereby inform the readers of your periodical of the death of Elder Thomas Day, whose wide circle of friends are doubtless numbered among your most faithful readers. He has been so faithful and zealous in laboring for the Church and spread of the Gospel that we cannot feel it a usurpation to beg for a little space in which to record a brief sketch of his career.

Thomas Day was born near Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, England, Sep. 2nd 1814 and his demise occurred Jan. 6th 1893. When quite young, his father took him out for a walk one Sabbath day, on the green hillside near their home and in the old church yard. Pointing to the church, the father remarked, "My son, I shall never enter that building before I am carried thither; I do not believe in the creed taught there, nor, indeed, in that of any other church. I believe however, that the true Gospel of Jesus will be given to the world in the future."

The young man became somewhat given to convivial companionship and contracted the usual habits, though to no excess. But low wages in the factory in which he worked, the strike of his fellow laborers in which he became unwillingly involved, the care of a widowed mother and three sisters, the anxiety of government officials to enlist him in the army, (for he was unusually tall and straight,) the final bankruptcy of his employers and at length a serious illness, all smoothed down the rough diamond to gentle and sober thought. His wild companions, in a fit of extraordinary jollity, took down a fence and laid it in the way of the stage. The daring revellers were apprehended, tried and sent to prison. Thomas Day had escaped the fun and its consequences through a spell of illness, but a sense of the evil that "might have been," became a medicine; he forsook tobacco, whisky and his chums, and turned away from every wayward habit of which he had been guilty. He began to search among the various sects for the truth—dear, bright, beautiful Truth, whom many have loved and sought,

——and lavished life's best oil,
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she had left behind her.

Our subject at first believed that he had found her among the American Methodists and became at first exhorter, then local preacher in that church. He met, loved and married a young widow of quiet, loving, lovable ways, named Ann Andrus Danks. Having heard the new doctrine restored through Joseph Smith, which had, at its first sound, penetrated their hearts, the husband desired to embrace the new faith, but the gentle, shrinking wife became alarmed at the persecution and proscription that she saw would follow. Her persuasions disarmed him and he faltered. But one evening the Spirit's voice became too strong for resistance; he quietly slipped through the back door lest "wee wifie" should take notice, and lest her gentle persuasions and sad tears should again unman him, he was baptized (Sept. 4, 1842) without her knowledge. After long conversations and prayerful forethought she followed his example ten days later. The happy zeal that kindled in their hearts brought forth fruits of salvation to others of their friends.

Now followed the fruits of obedience to Christ; persecution borne with meekness; healing by administration from sickness that almost threatened death; and that peace that flows from God to the forgiven soul that honestly and zealously strives and hopes to remain faithful. He was soon ordained to the priesthood and then followed a call to preach the Gospel. Few have responded to a similar call with greater alacrity. During this mission he labored in Leamington, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. He raised up numerous branches and was frequently very successful in making converts. Sometimes challenged to discussions, he came off with flying colors and with added followers; sometimes shunned as a Mormon and suffering all the evils of persecution; now befriended by some kind soul (for he traveled without purse or scrip) and again turned away in a stormy night, hungry, cold and weary. Distress reached him in the death of his wife and only child. But he labored on and brought many to the fold and performed miracles of healing in His name.

When released, he had spent seven years as a missionary—from the year 1842 until December, 1849. Of these, four years were spent in and around Rugby, where he was presiding Elder, and he left there a branch of seventy-six members.

On boarding the Josiah Bradlee on Feb. 1st, 1850, he was ordained by Orson Pratt to preside over the Saints that were to emigrate on that vessel. The landing was made in safety at New Orleans, April 18, 1851. When he came to the states, he made his home in Iowa. Having married again, he settled in Springville branch where he was ordained counselor to the president. He also filled there the office of home missionary in five branches. He enjoyed the smiles of fortune and was becoming comfortably situated when Ezra F. Benson called him to remove, with a number of other Saints, to Utah. He responded promptly and on September 9, 1852, waved his hat and shouted, "hurrah for Salt Lake!" as he entered the valley. His wife queried, "where is the city?" He replied, "don't you see that little white house on the hill?" He was present on the 14th of Feb., 1853 at the ceremony of breaking the ground for the laying of the foundation of the Temple, and afterwards worked a great deal on the preparation and foundation of that glorious edifice.

The next chapter in his life was the Salmon river Indian mission of which the NEWS published an account nearly two years ago. We will pass over the trials and sufferings of that period, which was followed by the move south at the threats of the approaching army in 1858. He did not return to Salt Lake after the danger was dispelled but remained in Spanish Fork where he was called upon to study and follow horticulture and fruit raising. He set out a nursery and offered his young trees to his neighbors. They replied that they would soon be going to Jackson county and would plant out orchards there. They were subsequently glad to buy fruit and trees from him, and to his efforts were largely due the beautiful orchards of that region in the earlier days of Utah. While in Spanish Fork he served as teacher, school trustee, member of the city council, ward teacher, water master and in other positions useful to society. He organized a gardener's club and was an interested member of a county agricultural society.

He was now the husband of two wives, one of whom died in 1883. Volunteers for the Muddy Mission were now called for and Elder Day resolved to sell out his comfortable home and risk the hardships of another frontier. Here he worked with unwavering zeal through the sufferings and discouragements of that effort at colonization. His story is full of interest but space forbids its rehearsal. A general fire stripped the little colony of all its earthly possessions. This and the loss of a child, with all the other hardships they had endured, unsettled his wife's mind and she became a victim to the worse of all human maladies, insanity. She remained in this condition until her death, twenty years after.

Elder Day with the greatest difficulty (for he was destitute) made his way back to St. George with his wife and six young children.

He now found employment as a sheepherder in Kanarra and was so faithful and intelligent in his employment that his employer found his lagging interests revive surprisingly and his employe indispensable. He now married a widow and made his home in St. George where he was called to perform the labor of the ordinances in the Temple.

His health could not endure the sultry climate of the South and he removed to Circle Valley, Piute county, in 1877. Here he found himself in rough society. A resident gang of thieves terrorized and intimidated all who desired to be decent or honest and swayed the reins of government pretty much according to their own lawless will. Elder Day's will was equal to theirs. He determined to destroy the power of robbery, blackmail and general lawlessness that existed here. A lawsuit in which he was taken to Beaver under false charges, resulted as completely in his defense and the overthrow of the complainants that they felt their evil power broken. From that time the robber gang dispersed, many of them going into Colorado and adjacent districts. Having set his face as a flint against the wrongs they were perpetrating, they became his bitter foes and harrassed him on every hand. But heaven helped him to win the battle for the right.

When Circleville was organized as a ward in the Panguitch Stake of Zion, Elder Day was appointed as presiding Elder, in which position he remained until he left for a temporary sojourn in Gunnison. He was a member of the High Priest's quorum at the time of his demise.

His journal ends with these remarks: "Through life I have enjoyed prosperity at times but I have sustained many losses. God has seen fit to guard me against riches. For this I sincerely acknowledge His hand and believe that it has been for the best. Many of my loved ones have crossed over to the other side and now, at the advanced age of seventy-seven, I am calmly and hopefully waiting for the change that shall re-unite the broken bonds. I have had my faults with other men, but I have tried to serve the Lord, and my record has never been stained by crime or dishonor. I trust that the blood of the Redeemer will wash me white and that God will save and exalt me in the end."

He was faithful and zealous to the end, and with his dying breath exhorted his survivors to do all the good that lay in their power. He called out the names of his wife, sister and children who had gone before him as if he were talking to them; and to his daughter he made this peculiar remark: "I have done all the good I can and will continue to do so. I am only losing time while I remain here, for there is work waiting for me beyond the veil."

A wife, six children and five grandchildren survive him and countless friends sincerely mourn and miss him. Yes, "a feeling of sadness comes o'er me" at the contemplation of so long and faithful a life now completely numbered with the phantoms of the past. But it shall bloom again when "Time shall be no more" to sap its strength with his scythe. Until that day, sleep well, departed friend, and may we meet again where happiness and love can never die.

RUBY LAMONT.

Boarded by a Monster Tarpon.

A day or two ago the schooner Flour Bluff, Andrew Anderson, captain, and John Anderson, mate, was passing through Flour Bluff channel some eight or ten miles down the coast from Corpus Christi. Everything was running along smoothly when suddenly the smoothness was broken by a 6-foot tarpon landing on deck.

The big fish at once began making things interesting on the boat, and for a few moments the sailors contemplated seriously leaving their vessel and "taking to the woods." They finally regained control of their nerve and decided to have it out with the fish, so one of them seized an ax and the others handspikes and at the tarpon they went. The struggle was long and fierce, and one of the sailors (there were three of them in all) was knocked overboard by coming in contact with the tarpon's tail. A rope was thrown him and he was pulled back on deck. At last the fish succumbed to the repeated blows of the ax and handspikes and lay along the deck as dead as a mackerel.—Cor. San Antonio Express.

The Boundaries of Oxford.

The custom, which is only observed at rare intervals, of perambulating the boundaries of the city of Oxford, England, was followed this year, and was of more than usual importance owing to the fact that the boundaries had been largely extended since the last occasion, when a tour was made six years ago. The mayor and other members of the corporation in their robes left the city buildings at 8 o'clock in the morning, preceded by a band and the city mace bearers.

During the day many amusing incidents took place, some of which might have proved dangerous. At Wolvercote there was a dispute about the boundary, and a clergyman who opposed the city forces was somewhat roughly handled. At the Cherwell punts were used, and the one containing the mayor, the sheriff and several members of the corporation and the mace bearer, with the mace, was upset in the middle of the stream.

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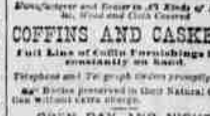

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