

JOHN ROWE

John Rowe was the eldest son of Edward and Elizabeth Thomas Rowe. They were natives of Wales. They accepted the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints when it was first preached in that part of the world and soon after joined the church. The father had one son Edward when he married Elizabeth Thomas. Edward came to America and settled in Sorenton, Pa. Here he married and raised a family. Later, when John, too, immigrated to America, he at once located his brother Edward. They enjoyed their visit together but Edward never joined the church nor came to Utah.

Edward and Elizabeth were the fond parents of four sons, John, Thomas, Lewis and Owen and one daughter Ellen. When John was eight years old, his father died after an illness of eight years. With her young family, Mother Elizabeth was left to battle her trials alone. Her desire was to have her sons grow to be good men and her daughter to a noble woman. She encountered many hardships, but she was brave and true and I am sure she will be greatly rewarded for the good she accomplished. Her daughter grew to womanhood and her sons to manhood. They married and their children are some of God's chosen spirits.

Her ambition and great desire was to come to America, which she did in 1866, in company with her son, John. They lived in Carbondale, Pa., until 1876 when they came to Utah. Shortly after they settled in Spanish Fork, she married Phillip Sykes. They made their home with her son John, and both passed from this mortal life in the year 1888.

My father, John Rowe, was born October 14, 1842 in Victoria, Mammothshire, Wales. If all the good things that he accomplished in his life could be written here, it would take many

more pages than are allotted. Suffice to say it will be my only desire and purpose to write some of the various experiences of his life.

As has been stated, his father died when he was eight years old. At this young age, he was obliged to work in the mines to help support the rest of the family. He could not do very much, but, because it was the occupation of his father, he was taken into the mines and drew his fathers wages, and did what little he could do. It was during this time of his life that he met with the misfortune of breaking his arm and leg which resulted in his being crippled for life. Before he was able, it was necessary for him to return to work He did so on crutches. He worked from early morning until late at night. Many times he related the fact that months passed without his seeing daylight because working under the earth is “night” indeed. Thus he worked without complaining to help support his mother and the family. A child so young – taking the place of a father!

Although small in stature, he had a heart and soul equal to that of a king. Kind, loving, true and devoted to his family, his religion and God.

At the age of eight, he was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. His boyhood was not a smooth one. He loved to work and sing, and did so with a light heart, looking to the future to bring him happiness. He endured many hardships, learned what little he could as his own tutor, and was always striving toward the highest goals as ideals of life. He taught and knew that “The Glory of God is Intelligence.” With this moral influence, he continued in life. As a young boy, he attended to his church duties in his native Wales. He acquired acquaintances with young people, many of whom were his friends throughout his entire life.

At sixteen, he became acquainted with a beautiful young girl. This friendship grew into love, and at the age of 22, he married Ann Frances Eames, January 8, 1865. They had a great

deal in common, and, most of all, they loved each other. They loved to sing, plan and work together. They were wise to the strife of life and had the same ambitions desire. Their earnest ambition was to serve God and raise a family that would someday call them blessed.

In the spring of 1866, he decided to go to Utah, taking his mother with him. He was to send for his wife and child later. So, accompanied by his mother, Elizabeth Rowe, they set sail on the "John Bright" and after six weeks of ocean crossing, landed at New York. On this same ship were his old friends Reese and William James and William Davis. They, together, sang songs, told stories and were called the "singing quartet" and received the name of "Jolly Boys."

My father possessed the admirable gift of making others happy. He delighted many people for hours at a time with his comic singing and antics.

They arrived in New York after many long days at sea, and went directly to Carbondale, Pennsylvania, where he again was engaged in the occupation of miner.

Seven months later, he sent for his wife and child. They arrived in December of 1866. The following summer, 1867 they sent the money that made it possible for my mother's mother, Jane Eames Powell, my mother's stepfather, James Powell, and my father's brother, Owen Rowe to come to America. They lived in Carbondale, Penn., until 1870 at which time they all immigrated to Utah in the Pres. Carl G. Maeser company. They landed in Salt Lake City, staying in the old Tithing Office Yard. Later, they moved to Lehi, where they lived for three months. That same year, they came to Spanish Fork which has been their home ever since. They bought a lot on the same corner which now holds their home. Nine children have been born to them, one abroad, 2 in the eastern states and six in Spanish Fork.

His ambition was always to be the first to make any new improvements suggested.

He worked at Cottonwood cutting stones for the Salt Lake Temple for some time. Later he went to Scofield, Castle Gate, and still later to Eureka to work in the mines.

One of the saddest trials of his life was the death of his son Edward in 1888. He looked toward him as one of the shining lights of Zion. They played in the Spanish Fork band together, worked side by side, and were companions in every way.

While in Eureka, he became acquainted with a Mr. Cloveral. Through his advice and persuasion, he took up the trade of shoemaking. He worked at this trade for 20 years at the "Big Co-op."

The outstanding thing in my father's life was the gospel. I will always remember those evening prayers and the faith he possessed. He was an ardent worker, staunch and true to his belief.

As time went on, he was advanced in the priesthood, and with his humble, prayerful spirit, his duties were performed.

During the time when Spanish Fork was one ward, he held the position of ward teacher. "The Old Choir" under the direction of "Billy" William R. Jones, of which he was one of the first members, will go down in history. They were noted for their singing ability and gave many concerts and entertainments throughout the state. When Spanish Fork was divided into wards, in the spring of 1892, he was chosen first counselor to Bishop M. Larsen of the Third Ward. He was set apart by David John. He held this position for twelve years. He taught the parents' class in the Sabbath School. He was prompt, reliable and active to every call asked of him. He always manifested a great pleasure in performing his duties and served untiringly.

He was a real pioneer to his family, a fond, kind husband and loving father.

In the spring of 1907, he contracted pneumonia and died May 7, 1907, having lived a full and praiseworthy life.

When we remembered how his life was spent
In loving service to all mankind,
We'll try to follow in thy simple way
And God will not unto thy worth be blind.

History of John Rowe by his daughter,
By Mary Elizabeth Rowe Evans.