

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

THOMAS AND FRANCIS M. (FRANK) DAVIS

January 2, 1838-June 9, 1908 and July 7, 1840-September 16, 1937

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Thomas Davis was born January 2, 1838 (possibly 1839 or 1840) in Ohio (some sources say Pennsylvania or Illinois). His brother, Frank, was born July 7, 1840 (most probable year) in Illinois. The boys were orphaned at an early age and grew up with a family in Monmouth, Illinois.

The brothers came to Idaho in 1862, mining in the Boise Basin, then coming to the Boise Valley in 1863. Tom claimed a 160-acre homestead near the new townsite, and later obtained 800 acres across the river and below the bench, the 1,000-acre Government Island (Garden City) area, and a 153-acre pre-emption claim near the foothills. Until 1868, the Davises and George Ellis were partners in growing fruits and vegetables for sale to the Boise Basin miners. Frank Davis later homesteaded land on the "valley road" (State Street), west of Boise.

Tom Davis was successful as a fruit grower; he reportedly made a profit of over \$10,000 on his 1872 apple crop. In 1899, he had 70 acres planted in pears, prunes, and apples. He later purchased land in other parts of Idaho, and raised horses and cattle in Long Valley and Owyhee County.

Tom Davis married Julia McCrum of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, on April 26, 1871, in Boise. Julia had come to Boise in 1869 to live with her relatives, Dr. and Mrs. Augustus Thibedau (he was an Army physician at Fort Boise). Tom and Julia's children were: Thomas J., Harry M., Julia E., Edwin H., Hazel, and Marion. Mrs. Davis died September 19, 1907, in Boise. In her memory, her husband deeded 43 acres to the city of Boise for Julia Davis Park. Davis died June 9, 1908, in Boise.

Frank Davis married Hester Cory of Ohio in about 1865 in Boise. Their children included Charles A. And Laura A. Frank died March 8, 1891, in Boise; Hester died September 16, 1937, in Los Angeles.

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