



## Utah Pioneer, Edward Harding, 1832-1903

Edward Harding was the son of Edward G. Harding of Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England. He was born on November 2, 1832, at Trowbridge. He emigrated to Utah in 1874. **Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah**

The 1851 Census at Trowbridge records:-

Edward Harding, 51, weaver, Mary H, 50, weaver, Ann, 28, dress maker, John, 20, weaver, Edward, 18, weaver, Thomas, 16, weaver, Maria, 14, errand girl.

Edward Harding married Sarah Ann Meeks in the June Quarter of 1860 and is registered in the Bath Registration District.

The 1861 Census at Marsh, Hilperton records:-

Edward Harding, 28, Woollen cloth weaver, born in Trowbridge, wife, Sarah Ann, 23, born in Chesterton Cambridgeshire, 23, a certified School mistress.

The 1871 Census at Chagford , Devon records:-

Edward Harding, 38, manager of woollen factory, Sarah A. Harding, 33, a Woolen draper, children, Alfred W. 8, and Alice, 5, both born in Kingswood, Gloucestershire, and Sidney T, 2, born in Stroudwater, Gloucestershire, and infant son Heber S., born in Chagford, Devon.

The couple had nine children, Edward, William, Alice, Sidney, Heber, Minnie, Rosa, Anna Maria and Mary Maud.

High priest; missionary in England. Foreman of looms in woolen mills at Provo. Died December 11, 1903. **Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah**

"Our Grandfather, John Harding, was born on September 28, 1830, in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England. His Father, Edward Harding and his mother, Mary Offer Harding had been born and raised in Trowbridge,

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as had several generations of his ancestors. This city [town] was a busy woollen mill centre with some forty mills, for the weaving of cloth, established there. John's parents had a family of ten children. They were: Mary Ann born in 1822, Edward born in 1824 (died 1830 at the age of six years), William Offer 1826, Samuel 1828, John 1830, Edward Gilbert 1832, Thomas 1836, James 1839 and another son unnamed (the last two children died shortly after birth). John Harding started school at the age of five.

When he was six years old his parents took him out of school to work in the woollen mills, as child labour was in full swing at that time. At a later date a law was established in England that children who worked, had to attend school for half of each day. We do not know if this law was applicable as far as John was concerned. From the journal of Edward Gilbert Harding we find that their parents were members of the Calvinistic Baptist Society. At the age of about four years, Edward was sent to the Calvinistic Baptist School which he then attended until he was about fifteen. It was likely that at least the younger members of the family received the same kind of education. We do not know the extent of Grandfather's formal schooling. From the same journal we also learn that John would be about seventeen years of age when the Mormon missionaries came into Trowbridge to preach the gospel. John was baptised into the church in November 1849. Edward tells us in his journal that in 1851 when he left home, without purse or script, to preach the gospel all of his brothers and sisters had joined the church but his Mother and Father were very much against the Latter Day Saints. It seems that some of the young men who were converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints were called by those in authority to travel from place to place throughout England preaching the gospel. They endured many hardships and were forced to walk many miles until they found members of the church or friends who gave them money for train fare. They suffered stonings and other mob persecutions which were brought on by the bitterness of the ministers of other churches who opposed the fact that they were converting their members. John Harding spent seven years as a missionary in England, having answered the call to serve as his brother Edward had done.

The following is taken from the church immigration records: John Harding, age forty, sailed on the ship Minnesota, August 9th, 1871. Three of the family had preceded him to Zion. Samuel in 1852, Mary Ann in 1855 and Thomas sometime before 1862. As the railroad didn't reach Utah until 1869, Samuel and Thomas would have had to cross the plains much as the earlier pioneers had done. The rigors of such a journey may have been too much for Mary Ann for she did not go any further west than St. Louis, where she eventually married and made her home. Mary Marie emigrated sometime before 1873. Edward came in 1874 and William in 1896. All but Mary Ann were married before they left England and most of them had growing families. Aunt Marie had no children of her own but she raised her husband's nephew, Will Mortimer, who had been brought to Utah with her brother William's family when he was but nine years old.

**Written in 1966, by Phyllis Harding, Granddaughter of John Harding, (who was a brother of Edward Harding) Familysearch**