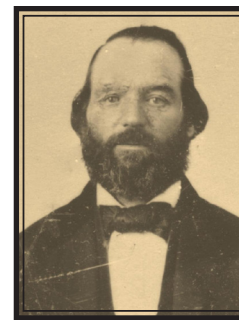


EDWARD MARTIN

Born: 1818 England

Age: 38

Martin Handcart Company



Edward was born in Preston, Lancashire, England, November 18, 1818. He was baptized in the River Ribble in 1837 by Elder Orson Hyde. He and his wife, Alice Clayton, left England and arrived in Nauvoo in April 1841, where they were greeted by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Edward had been apprenticed as a painter in England. His skills were put to use on the interiors of the Nauvoo Temple and Joseph Smith's store. Edward was also a musician and played the violin in the Nauvoo band. On their exile from Nauvoo in 1846, Edward wrote: "We had a very wet spring. There was something like 500 families all out of doors through frost and snow and mud and rain, day after day and week after week, in consequence of which we made very little progress." Edward was one of the Saints called upon to defend his country as a member of the Mormon Battalion in 1846. Of this experience he wrote, "The suffering and privations we had to pass through I say nothing about, but suffice it to say we did it for Christ and the Gospel's sake." By 1856, when Edward was returning from a mission to England, he had been well-prepared to lead the large handcart company to Utah.

The Martin handcart company actually left Iowa City as two companies. Edward Martin was the captain of one and Jesse Haven, a returning missionary from South Africa, was the captain of the other. They traveled separately until they reached Florence, Nebraska, where Elder Haven joined the Hodgett wagon company, and the two handcart companies combined under Martin. Peter McBride, a young boy in the Martin Company, wrote: "We had to burn buffalo chips for wood, not a tree in sight, no wood to be found anywhere. Just dry earth and rivers. We children and old folks would start early so we wouldn't be too far behind at night. A great many handcarts broke down, oxen strayed away, which made traveling rather slow. Quite an undertaking to get nearly one thousand persons who had never had any camping experience to travel, eat, and cook over campfires. It took much patience for the captain to get them used to settling down at night and to get started in the morning."

Josiah Rogerson gave a kind evaluation of Captain Martin's leadership when he said: "If he [Martin] ever gave any thought as to his health or fatigue, we fail to remember it. ... To the end of our fearful journey ... he was everywhere he was needed and responded to every call of sickness and death. When our company was traveling, he was in the front, in the center, and in the rear, aiding, assisting, and cheering in every instance needed."

As the handcart company sought the shelter of the northern mountains in a ravine later to be named Martin's Cove, they had many difficulties. Icy winds blew over a number of tents and many of the immigrants died. One afternoon, Captain Martin, together with two or three other men, set out from the camp at Devil's Gate, when they were surprised by a snowstorm and they lost their way. After wandering about for several hours, the men came near perishing and endeavored to make a fire to warm themselves. They gathered some cedar twigs and struck match after match to light them, but in vain. At length, with their last match and the aid of portions of their clothing, they succeeded in starting a fire. This was seen from the handcart camp, from which, after all their anxious and weary wanderings, they were only about a half-mile distant. Help soon came to the wanderers and the rescuers carried Captain Martin, who was nearly exhausted, back to camp.

With the help of the rescuers, the Martin company arrived in Salt Lake City on November 30, 1856. Edward resumed his painting business for a time, started a photography business, then worked in the real estate industry. Edward died in Salt Lake City at the age of 64, on August 8, 1882. Of his 21 children, 14 or 15 had preceded him in death. Edward fulfilled the promise given in his patriarchal blessing, where he had been told that he would lead thousands to Zion.

Sources: Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; familysearch.org; *Chariots of Hope*, by Darvil McBride and Bruce McBride, 1983; Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website. (See *The Price We Paid*, by Andrew D. Olsen, 2006, for more information about Edward Martin and his family. Olsen included poignant letters from Martin's daughter while he was serving in the missionfield. See *The Mormon Battalion*, by Norma Ricketts, 1996, for good information about Martin's service as a soldier.