

RICHARD RALPHS, MY GRANDFATHER'S BROTHER

by
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While in the process of seeking out information about my own grandparents, I have found some items about Richard Ralphs that were most interesting to me. I will enumerate my findings chronologically.

- 1812 September 8, Richard Ralphs was christened at Hodnet, Shropshire, England, a son of Benjamin Ralphs and Mary Edwards of Wollerton.
- 1842 Baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.
- 1842 On record as a member of the Marylebone Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.
- 1842 Spring - Emigrated to America with three of his brothers, Joseph (christened 8 January 1810), William Benjamin (born 16 May 1816), and Thomas (born 22 July 1819). It is likely that other relatives emigrated with them -- probably Elizabeth Brooks Ralphs emigrated with her husband, William Benjamin. The couple had married May 10, 1841. Also my grandmother, then Miss Sarah Johnson emigrated at this time.

Thus far, we've been unable to place Elisha and Eliza Ralphs who crossed the plains in the same company as Richard and Mary Ralphs and their two children Martha and George A. Also Eliza was listed last with the Family Group in the San Bernardino Co. 1860 Census. Letters have been sent to England for further information. In view of fact that Eliza was eight years older than Martha, we're wondering if Richard had married twice.

From correspondence to England, we have a marriage record of Richard Ralphs and Mary Cooper June 13, 1839, at Wem, Shropshire, England.

Search has been made in Sexton's Records and other Nauvoo Records trying to find a Death Entry for a Mrs. Mary Ralphs but the search was fruitless. Presently, we're awaiting word from England through correspondence to solve the problem.

- 1842 April 16 - An interesting article from "The Wasp," a Nauvoo Newspaper headlined, "Emigration" follows:

"The emigration to our city is daily increasing. Some three or four weeks ago, it will be remembered, some hundred and fifty or two hundred emigrants arrived on the AERIAL from England accompanied by Elder Lyman Wight and eighty or ninety, more from Mississippi. This was the first company of English emigrants that landed here this spring. Since that time, there has been daily accessions made of our population, both from England and the Eastern States. Last Wednesday, nearly one hundred fifty English arrived on the LOIZA --- the AMARANTH, on the same day, we understand brought sixty more. We witness the tide of emigration with feelings of satisfaction. It speaks well for the prosperity of our city."

The AERIAL, the LOIZA, and the AMARANTH were Mississippi River Boats. At this time, and for a time before and after the above sailings, it was customary for ocean-going vessels to disembark the Saints at New Orleans and then the Saints would embark on Mississippi River Boats for the trip to Nauvoo. It is likely that the Ralphs were passengers on either one of these three River Boats.

The fact is well established that they arrived in Nauvoo in the Spring of 1842; my uncle Ephraim Ralphs made note of it in his record wherein he, also, stated that the four Ralphs brothers arrived together. Then, too, my grandparents, Thomas Ralphs and Sarah Johnson were married in Missouri May 10, 1842.

- 1845 October 26 - The 31st Quorum of Seventy was organized at Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois. Richard and Thomas Ralphs were members of that Quorum. In a 31st Quorum Record after their arrival in Salt Lake City, Richard's Baptism Date was given as 1842. He was baptized by J. Robinson. He was here listed as living in San Bernardino, California.
- 1845 June 4 and in each issue of the Nauvoo Neighbor (a weekly newspaper) for a period of six months appeared the following advertisement: "The Potters Association"
- "The undersigned would inform the citizens of the city of Joseph and the public generally that we are now manufacturing of the best material and have on hand a large assortment of Earthenware, a few yards east of the Temple on Knight Street,

such as Pitchers, Bowl, Plates, Dishes, Cups and Saucers, Chambers, Peppers and Salts, Nappes, Mugs, etc., which will be sold wholesale and retail for Cash or Country Produce, cheaper than can be purchased on the Mississippi, of the same quality. We boast of the best material and best workman the United States can afford, being English Potters and having worked in the most extensive manufacturies in England.

Elijah K. Fuller, Pres.	Joseph Ralphs
Richard Taylor Steele	Thomas Ralphs
William Box	Alfred Cordon
Richard Ralphs	John Bourne, Clerk
	June 4, 1845-5-6m."

"The manufacture of China and Earthenware, in the Northern part of the County (Staffordshire), is the most extensive and important in the kingdom; the district called the Potteries consist of numerous scattered villages occupying an extent of about ten square miles, and containing about 20,000. It is crossed by Trent and Mercy, or Grand Trunk Canal."

--- Lewis' Topographical Dictionary

"Near Coalfort (Shropshire) on the Severn, colored china of all sorts and of exquisite taste and beauty, is made and at the same newly-formed town is a manufacture of earthenware, in imitation of that made at Etruria (Staffordshire) commonly called Wedgewood ware."--- Lewis' Topographical Dictionary p 83

1848 Martha, daughter of Richard and Mary Ralphs was born at Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri.

1850 September 23, George A. son was born at Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri.

1852 Westward Ho The parents and these two children are listed on the roster of the Second James J. Jepson Company of Pioneers -- Journal History, supplement to December 31, 1852, pages 7-11.

After the above four listings appeared the names, Elisha and Eliza Ralphs. All these Ralphs names (Elisha excepted) were found in the 1860 Census of San Salvador Township, San Bernardino County, California, Eliza's given age was 20 years. This fixes her birthdate as 1840 and she was probably born in England.

"Second Company of James J. Jepson
 Captain James J. Jepson Company consisted mostly of Latter-Day Saints from St. Louis, Missouri, many of whom had crossed Iowa with teams, in order to avoid the dangers of the Missouri River. The Company was 12 miles from Kanesville (Iowa) May 29, 1852. Under date of June 10th, 1852, D---J. Sutherland, Capt. of 2nd Ten wrote as follows from the Loupe Fork of the Platte River: 'Capt. Jepson's St. Louis Mormon Camp arrived here yesterday and is crossing to-day. The members of the Company are all well and getting along as well as can be expected. Good feelings and order prevails in the camp.'

Part of the Company arrived in Salt Lake City September 10th (Sketch of John Woodhouse, Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, Page 1260)." Copied at Church Historian's Office.

1853 John C., son of Richard and Mary Ralphs was born in Utah, perhaps Provo 2nd Ward, as Richard was indexed as being a member of that Ward.

1855 Walter B., Also a son, was born in San Salvador Township.

1857 Mary, daughter was born in San Salvador Township.

1859 August - Oscar Newell, son, was born in San Salvador Township.

1862 William, son, was born in San Bernadino Township, San Bernardino County, California.

1865 Priscilla, Daughter was born in San Bernardino.

Richard Ralphs, christened 8 September 1812 was listed as a Brick Mason on the San Bernardino County Census of 1860 and 1870. His death occurred between the taking of the 1870 and 1880 Census, as his wife, Mary, was listed as a widow in the 1880 Census. Through correspondence, his death date has been established as September 15, 1874.

Copied from San Bernardino County Census 1870. Children of Richard and Mary Ralphs:

Name	Occupation
George A.	Brich Mason
John C. & Walter B.	Work on farm
Mary & Oscar N.	Attending school
William & Priscilla	Attending school

FROM SAN BERNARDINO TOWNSHIP, SAN BERNARDINO CO. CALIF. CENSUS 1880

	NAME	SEX	AGE	OCCUPATION	BIRTHPLACE	BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER	BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER
RALPHS	Mary	F		Widowed Keeping House	England	England	England
	Newell	M	20	Farmer	California	England	England
	William	M	18	Farmer	California	England	England
	Mary	F	23	Milliner	California	England	England
	Priscilla	F	15	At school	California	England	England

"Latter-Day Saints called from Salt Lake City settled in San Bernardino in 1851, purchasing a great ranch there. A Stake was organized July 6, 1851 with David Seely as President. This colony flourished until 1857 (autumn) when church members were recalled to Utah as problems with the Federal Government developed." --

Improvement Era May 1964, Page 417

"San Bernardino was originally a Mormon Colony. In 1851, one hundred and fifty families were sent from Salt Lake to found a colony or a Stake of Zion. The object of locating a colony at this point was to keep open a line of communication with some seaport. San Bernardino was near the old Spanish Trail which led out through Cajon pass. Goods could be transported to Salt Lake from San Pedro at all seasons of the year, which could not be done to Salt Lake over the Central route westward or eastward, during the winter. The leaders of the Mormon Colony, Lyman and Rich, bought the San Bernardino rancho from the Lugos(a family name). A portion of the land was subdivided into small tracts and sold to the settlers. The Mormons devoted themselves to the cultivation of wheat, of which they raised a large crop the first year and received as high as \$5.00 per bushel. The colony prospered for a time, but in 1857, the settlers, or all of them that would obey the call, were called to Salt Lake by Brigham Young, to take part in the threatened war with the United States. The faithful sold their lands for whatever they could get and departed. The gentiles bought them and the character of

the settlement changed. The city of San Bernardino has an extensive trade with the mining districts to the east of it. Its population in 1890 was 4,012; in 1900, 6,150." --

History and Biography-Central Coast California, Page 248

As I ponder the life of this Great Uncle of mine, I cannot help but think of the hardships that he and his good wife, Mary Newell, must have endured. They, undoubtedly, had mixed feelings as they bade good-bye to loved ones and friends in England to set sail for America. In their new home in Nauvoo, they assuredly shared the hardships and persecutions heaped upon the Saints during those tempestuous days prior to and after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum. They must have felt sorrowful at leaving their home together with leaving an established Pottery Manufactory in Nauvoo, The City Beautiful, under duress.

Their refuge was Joplin, Jasper County Missouri, where they lived for five years or thereabouts. Then the family was again on the move - this time with a Company of Pioneers Utah-bound. From Spring 1852, to September 10, 1852 or shortly thereafter, they wended their way across the plains. Then after a stay of one or two years in Utah (Provo), the family moved to San Bernardino, California.

Wouldn't it be interesting to have a chat with Uncle Richard? He could answer the questions that have arisen in my mind as I try to fill in the void between the foregoing facts.

How I regret that I didn't lend a listening ear to my mother before her demise November 2, 1924. She could have told much about her Uncle Richard, for she had the close companionship of her mother (Mrs. Thomas Ralphs) until her passing in 1896. Now I have been searching for days and months - yes, even years to get a little information here and there. However, it has been fascinating and rewarding.

Records involving Richard Ralphs substantiate that he was a hardy, noble Utah Pioneer, and also an enterprising Pioneer of San Bernardino, California.

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The following items refer to Richard's brother, Joseph.

"Killed by lightning - A man by the name of Ralph was killed by lightning this morning on Parley Street. The shaft struck him on the head and passed off at his feet, as he was walking the street." - -

"The Nauvoo Neighbor" August 20, 1845

From Sexton's Weekly Report, reported August 24, 1845 the following: "Joseph Ralphs, 35 y. 6 m.; struck with lightning." - - Nauvoo Neighbor

Joseph was buried in the old Mormon Cemetery in Nauvoo.