

HISTORY #7

A HISTORY OF JANE (HUNTINGTON)  
AND JOHN EASTHAM TELLING ABOUT  
THEIR CONVERSION TO THE CHURCH,  
THEIR TRAVELS TO GRANTSVILLE,  
AND LIFE THERE.

WRITTEN BY GRACE LAMBOURN

EDITED BY CYRIL KEARL

## History #7 - Jane (Huntington) and John Eastham

Histories of Jane (Huntington) and John Eastham written by Grace Kearn Lamborn.  
Combined and Edited by Cyril M. Kearn.

Long ago and far away in the village of Chaddesly, Lancashire, a daughter was born on March 22, 1817 to Jeanette (Holden) and Robert Huntington. Her parents were well to do, owning their own home and a row of cottages as well as other property that they rented. They named the infant Jane.



Jane (Huntington) Eastham

Also in Lancashire a son was born on February 3, 1820 to Roger and Margaret Ogden Eastham. They named him John. These children would not know each other for a number of years. After approximately fourteen years had passed, John went to work for the railroad and Jane went to work as a cook's assistant in the home of some very wealthy residents. There she learned all the rudiments of plain and fancy cooking which, combined with her natural aptitude, made her quite famous and she was much in demand to plan and supervise banquets on special occasions for special guests.

At first John was a sort of errand boy. A "Lackey" he was called. However, he watched and worked and listened and at twenty years of age he was a full fledged engineer.



John Eastham

In the meantime, John and Jane had met, fallen in love and were married. When John was given a position with the railroad as an engineer he made a daily run from Liverpool to Longridge, the young newlyweds went to Liverpool to make their home. They lived there for several years.

Then John was transferred to Derbyshire where they lived for a few more years. I haven't the dates of their comings and goings nor of the five little girls born to them - only the order in which they came: Edith who died and was

buried in Derbyshire, Emma, Lucy, Kate, and Marentha. It was during those years in Derbyshire that Jane heard for the first time the word "Mormon", or of a church called the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints".

One day she joined a small crowd assembled on a street corner and heard a Mormon Elder speaking. She liked what he said and when she heard where he would be holding a service, she made it a point to be there. She told John about this but he was not very interested. Also his working hours probably kept him from attending any of the meetings but he could tell that Jane was very much interested. Then he investigated for himself and felt as she did - that this Mormon religion had more to offer than most he knew about. So, while he was not yet ready to join, he made no objections to Jane's joining if she wished.

It was in 1839 that Jane was baptized into the Mormon church and from that moment she had a burning desire to gather with the Saints in Zion. At this time, John was transferred once more - this time to Rotherham, Yorkshire. Rotherham as a large shipping center and John was given day work as supervisor. They owned a furniture store and Jane and the girls took care of the store while the John was away. The family settled in a small village, Masborough, just across the River Don from Rotherham.

Four more children were born there. Two little boys who both died at birth and two girls - Merlin, my mother, and Lenora - which made a family of nine children. There was no Latter-Day Saint Church there, but there was a little church of some other sect or religion. Jane sent the children there since as she

said, "Any church was better than none" and they could at least learn to sing and pray.

John had now been baptized into the Mormon Church and they had hopes of going to Zion. But try as they might they could not seem to be able to save the money to make the venture.

Then one day John came home from work and told Jane that he had been asked to go to the West Indies where the English government was just finishing building the first railroad in that part of the world. They needed experienced men and John's salary would be almost doubled and his expenses paid. However, he must have his wife's consent and must sign a contract to stay for four years. I imagine this left them with a very hard decision to make. It would mean the difference between emigrating to Zion in four years - or probably never. They talked and prayed and decided to make the move. Jane and the children moved to Leeds where there was an LDS church and better schools. John went to the Indies with faith that things would be for the best.

Somehow the years passed and then John was home again. I am sure they must have been very lonely at times. But Grandma's house was "home away from home" for many young missionaries; and she was the kind of person who could comfort and advise.

In 1864, two of the Eastham girls, Emma and Lucy, married young men, converts, and emigrated to Utah. So, when John came home he retired from railroading, took his severance pay, and immediately the Eastham family began planning to leave for Zion. On April 29,

1865, they sailed from England on the Belle Wood under the direction of William H. Sherman. I am sorry I didn't ask mother more questions about their trip, but this I know: it took four weeks to reach Castle Gardens, New York, a port of debarkation, arriving there on May 29. It seems that the people on board were mostly families. Each family had a certain place on the ship allotted to them where they slept, prepared and ate their meals.

When they arrived in the United States, the Easthams and others also, I suppose, began gathering things together to go by rail and boat to a place on the banks of the Missouri River where those bound for the west waited until there were enough wanting to go to Utah to make traveling across the plains safe. The Indians would not attack large wagon trains. It was six weeks before there had been enough people to start the trek westward in Captain Henson Walkers Company. John Eastham was made captain of the 1st company, Robert Pixton was chaplain and John Hammer was captain of the guard.

John had bought two wagons and teams and since he knew nothing whatever about horses, he found two young men who, for their food and transportation, we were willing to do the driving and take care of camp chores. These were young men, not necessarily LDS, who were anxious to go West. This plan worked fine for everybody.

The Captain of the company they were in on the trip across the plains was Miller Attwood, One wagon was fitted for the family, the other the luggage, bedding and so on. I can imagine what it must have been like mile after dusty, weary mile. It was July and most of them slept

out in the open. When they came to a river, they would camp for a few days so that the women could wash and dry their clothes by hanging them on the bushes. Everyone would go for a swim, if possible. Mother said there was much singing and besides - they were on their way to Zion.

At the rivers and waterholes they would fill barrels and canteens to last over the dry miles until the next waterhole. The also had to carry water for the horses and livestock.

The weeks went by. No one was ill. All seemed happy and suddenly on the evening of November 6, they were camped in Emigration Canyon by what is known as Little Mountain.



Merlin when she was a young girl of sixteen.

This was Merlin's thirteenth birthday, and Grandma made for her what she called "roly-poly pudding." Mother never forgot that.

The Easthams, along with the others, were thousands of miles from the land of

their birth. I expect everything seemed strange to them and doubt that they slept much that night.

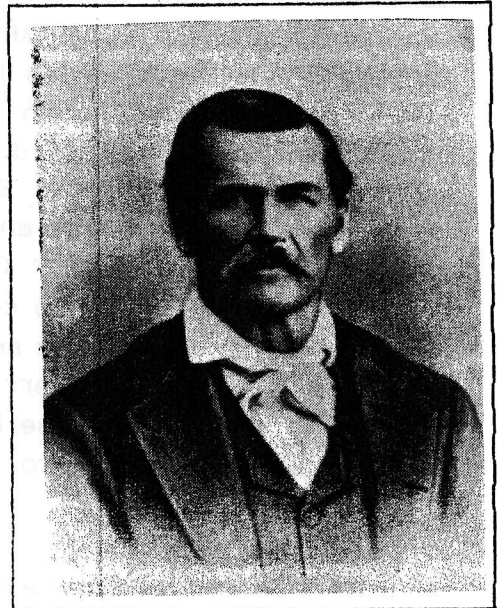
And so on November 7, 1865, the wagon trains came into the valley and gathered on Washington Square (where the City and County building now stands.) They were greeted by friends or relatives here. Immigrant most often located in areas where they had friends or relatives and since two of the Eastham girls were living in Grantsville this is where they had decided to settle.

Naturally Emma and her husband, James Ratcliff, and Lucy and her husband, Andrew Milward, were there. It must have been a joyful reunion. The Easthams went right on out to Grantsville with their daughter and son-in-laws. It was most too late in the fall to start building so they lived with the daughters and got along very well. Some of the girls slept in one of their wagon boxes. I think they enjoyed that also.

John sold the wagons and teams since he had no use for them, and then early in the spring of 1861, with the help of James and Andrew and the girls and good neighbors, the Easthams built for themselves a comfortable little home - the first one they had ever owned. Melvin Brim now lives in their house. They started a little general merchandise store and kept it for a number of years and they had quite a nice business.

Grandfather John helped build the first ward meeting house still in use. Jane was president of the Relief Society for years. The younger girls grew up and married and went away. Marentha married James Stoddart and went to pioneer in Idaho where they raised their family and

lived and died. Kate married Edward Milward, brother of Andrew.



James Kearl - Merlins new husband.

Merlin married James Kearl and they went, at President Young's suggestion, to pioneer the south end of the Bear Lake Valley. They raised their family there - and passed away there - and are buried in the Laketown Cemetery.

Lenora married Hyrum Sevier and went to pioneer in Idaho. They had a large family. Many descendants survive them. I have always been glad that three of the Eastham girls stayed near their parents.

John's work was so different from what he had known before and was very interesting, I am sure. He was now a tiller of the soil. There was much to be done - a well to be dug, a garden to plant, a beech tree in the front yard and peach trees in the back. He would have received some help and much advice, I am sure.

Grantsville was just a little country village - everyone knew everyone. They

worked together, rejoiced together, and sometimes mourned together. John and Jane and the girls were taken into the fold as if they had always lived there. They worked in the Church and helped plan the future of the ward. When Jane was president of the Relief Society they made overalls and jumpers and sold them to the Coop Store. Sister Clark would come to her home and help cut them out and then other would come and help sew the. They planted Mulberry trees in Grantsville to carry out the instructions of Pres. Brigham Young to have a silk industry in Utah.

Jane was most kind hearted, genial and hospitable. Her Grandchildren remember her Pancake Tuesdays (an old English custom). We would eat and eat our fill. They were the best ever, my mouth waters now to think of the. Sometimes when we went to her place and stayed extra long she would say, "Now children you had better nip off for your home. Your mother will need you." Many times we have gone to her place to help cut the fruit and dry. We children would climb up on the shed and lay out the fruit on nice clean cloths for it to dry.

Grandmother brought some lovely pieces of silk goods over from England with her and she always had a silk dress for best wear and a paisley shawl and pretty little bonnet made of lace and ribbons that tied under the chin. She always looked so nice even when she was ready for bed. She always wore a long sleeved white night gown and a white night cap to match. She looked so pretty with her white hair.

But the years take their toll and so after a long and useful life, on June 22, 1889, Jane Huntington Eastham passed

quietly away, and left all who knew her to mourn.



Janes grave in Grantsville.

Grandfather John was completely lost without her. And then one day he suddenly decided he would be happier if he went back to England to live where they had lived in his youth. His children and grandchildren did not discourage him, and so he settled his affairs, bade them all goodbye, and returned to England. After a few months he came back to Grantsville. He said that things had changed so much over there that it was not the same. They hadn't, really, it was John who had changed. He couldn't live for twenty-five years in the sun, clean air, starry nights and wide expanses of land without noticing the dews and damps of England; the houses built almost attached to one another, the gloomy and sunless days. He settled down and was as content as he would ever be without Jane beside him.

On the 16th day of December, 1893, he passed peacefully away and was laid to rest beside his beloved wife. And with his passing the Eastham name is gone from the church membership rolls.

There are no more Eastham names. But

there are hundreds of descendants from Canada to the most souther location in the U. from the east to the west coast, reaching into the eighth generation and into all walks of life.



John's grave om Grantsville.

Many of these descendants have served on missions - many are out there now. Many more will be as years go by.