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REGIONAL ROOM
FILE FOLDER
NO. 988

Local

PONY EXPRESS RIDER

History of William Smith Martin
Born May 4, 1854 at Goshen, Utah
Died-
Written by Blanch Hardy and sum-
mitted by Camp Buena Vista, Uin-
tah County, Utah. 1960

My Father as a Pony Express Rider By Blanch Hardy

William Smith Martin was born May 4 1854 in Goshen Utah to Isabell Smith and John Martin. He moved with his parents to Beaver Utah and later to Meadow Utah.

When he was 18 years old he entered the government service of the Pony Express to carry mail from Riverside on Beaver River, to Thompson Station 50 miles north East of Reno, Nevada. He made the trip of 85 miles every other night changing horses 4 times on the trip.

He carried a .45 with extra cylinder full of cartridges, his food was a handful of navy biscuits (Hard enough to break false teeth) a few strips of bacon and a canteen full of cold tea.

The saddle was light but strong with their machila over the back of it attached to this was four cantinas (four hard leather boxes with padlock + blanket) for holding the mail. This all weighed 40 pounds.

When Martin applied for the service he was told he was not old enough yet he looked it, as he was tall and slender weighing 130 lbs. which was in his favor + made him acceptable.

The requirements were a man should be strong healthy, good moral character + could read and write a good rider having had experience with horses + weighing 130 pounds.

The riders were to cover from 40 to 100 miles ^{in a night} over rough paths + rocky roads, through all kinds of storms etc without any rest. On one occasion he was in a bad blizzard, the horse refused to go ahead. after several hard trials he decided

"Pony Express Rider"

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to give the horse its head. the horse took him back to the station. It was very dark & stormy couldnt awaken the people at the station so went to the barn & laid in a manger pulling hay over him for cover. got up real early and made the trip.

Another time his horse stopped & didnt want to go ahead so he went behind some bushes. Pretty soon a group of Indians passed him. They never knew when they would meet enemy Indians or friends. Wasnt long until he was on his way.

The Pony Express was like a relay race, each rider assigned a certain stretch which he rode back and forth, They were supposed to cover 400 miles a week. being a lot to ask. anyone not able to do so was considered too soft for the job.

They were all taught to take good care of their horse and as they were told to treat it like they would their mother as their life might depend on it.

Their wages were \$35⁰⁰ a month and board & food considered a very good wage at that time,

VE

Oct 22, 1942



WILLIAM S. MARTIN

Services Held for Pony Express Rider Saturday

Funeral services were conducted for William Smith Martin Saturday at 1:30 at the Vernal First ward chapel under the direction of Bishop Pontha Calder.

A ladies double duet consisting of Mrs. Wallace Calder, Mrs. Glen Lambert, Mrs. Robert Livesy, and Mrs. Ernest Caldwell accompanied by Mrs. Mable Stagg furnished all the musical selections. Their opening number was "I'll Go Where You Want Me To Go". Jesse A. Haws offered the opening prayer.

Harmon S. Sowards was the first speaker followed by the selection, "Jesus Is Calling", by the duet. Fred G. Bingham was the next speaker. Closing remarks were offered by Bishop Calder. The closing number "Abide With Me" was sung by the duet. Charles P. Fok offered the benediction.

Interment was at the Vernal Memorial Park with Ashley Bartlett dedicating the grave.

Pall bearers were Robert Martin, James Martin, Lester Martin, Clifton McCoy, Kenneth Snow and Eliza Hardy.

Mr. Martin was one of the last survivors of the famous Pony Express, and rode from Gooshen, Utah to Salt Lake every other night.

Mr. Martin died in a Provo hospital of causes incident to age, and his body was brought to Vernal for burial, his home town since 1910.

He was born at Gooshen, Utah county, May 4, 1854, a son of John and Isabell Smith Martin. His family moved to Meadow in 1880.

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Services Held for Pony Express Rider Here on Saturday

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When he reached the age of 18 he entered the government service as a pony express rider and rode 80 miles every other night between Thompson Springs, Utah and Pioche, Nev., carrying the U. S. mail. He left the government service and moved to Manassa, Colorado, where he entered the sheep business. In 1884 he married Laura Daniels of Manassa. She died a year later leaving a daughter named Isabelle.

In 1898 he married Emmeline Pidcock of Ogden. They moved to Vernal in 1910, where he farmed and had lived since. He filled a mission in the LDS church in the southern states in 1896 to 1897.

Besides his widow seven daughters and sons survive, Mrs. Blanche Hardy, Calpet, Wyo.; Maude Martin, Price; Mrs. Olive Barrett, Nampa Idaho; Mrs. Lois McCoy Vernal; Robert McQuarrie, Midvale, Lester Robert and James of Vernal

and seventeen grandchildren.

OCT 20, 1958

WILLIAM MARTIN



Vernal Man Looks Back on Pony Express Day

Nearing his eightieth birthday, William Martin one of the last survivors of that celebrated group of horsemen the Pony Express Riders looks back sixty-five years for a bit of reminiscence about adventurous rides with America's first stream lined mail system. Although only a boy at the time not more than eighteen years old Martin carried the mail between southern Utah and Nevada stations. He is now one of a very small number who lives to tell the story.

Mr. Martin resides at Vernal and has lived here for many years. He has spent the years in a quiet but industrious way on a small fourteen acre farm. His home faces U S highway 40. The daily passing of mail trucks and other vehicles of express serve as a constant reminder of his own past experience and the forward march-

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section to Camp Thomas. One horse could not make that trip at the speed we went. I rode three different horses each night in covering the distance. But it wasn't a bad trip. We had plenty of substantial food. We had lots of good warm clothing. There was about thirty-five dollars a month in it. We thought that was good wages."

At the time the route was changed from the camp on the Beaver river, to Minersville, Utah, Mr. Martin quit the service and entered into ranching. He spent twenty years in Colorado living in Conejos County. From there he came to the Uintah Basin where he has since resided. His eightieth birthday will be in March. We wish him many happy returns and many pleasant memories of bygone days with the pony express.

VERNAL MAN LOOKS BACK ON PONY EXPRESS DAYS

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ing strides of time. From lathering and puffing steed leaving only hollow echoes as it pranced over the arid turf to the incessant hum of airplane motors, the constant click of telegraphic signal or electrified voices speaking out of the air, this man the last of the pony riders has glimpsed progress as few ever do.

But those were great days back there in the seventies, says William Martin. "There was an eighty mile ride through rain or shine that had to be made regularly. The people were depending on the mail going through. The ride began on the banks of the Beaver river at Riverside camp. The journey was eighty miles in a westwardly dir-

WILLIAM MARTIN BURIES TEN YEAR OLD SON

April 29, 1921

On April 13, occurred the sad death of Joseph Hyrum, the ten year old son of Mr. and Mrs. William Martin. The little fellow had been seriously ill for twelve days when it was decided that an operation would be the only means of prolonging his life.

On Wednesday morning the operation was performed for a complication of bowel trouble. It was found that the case was much more serious than anticipated. The little fellow just did rally from the anesthetic and passed away in a short time. When placed upon the operating table he fully realized there was very little chance for his recovery.

Joseph Hyrum Martin, was born in Vernal and had he lived until April 23, would have been 10 years old, His father being William Martin and mother Emmeline Pibcock. He is survived by his father and mother, four sisters, Blanche, Maude, Olive and Lois; three brothers, Lester Robert and James. Blanche and Olive came from Casper, Wyoming for the funeral.

Funeral services were held on Friday April 15 at the home, for quietness, on account of the grief stricken mother. There was no music at the service for the same reason. Wilbur Sowards first counselor in the Vernal First-ward was in charge. The opening prayer was offered by A. A. Hatch and the closing prayer by George L. Woodbury. The speakers were Harmon Sowards, Wilbur Sowards, Harmon S. Sowards and E. H. Belcher.

Interment was made in the Vernal cemetery, Wilbur Sowards dedicating the grave. The sympathies of the entire community go out to the grief stricken family.

Oct 15, 1940

William S. Martin Vernal Stockman, Dies At Provo

William S. Martin, 83, Vernal stockman and farmer died in a Provo hospital Tuesday evening after a lingering illness incident to age.

Mr. Martin was born May 4th, 1858 in Millard County, Utah. He was a resident of Vernal for thirty years.

Funeral services will be conducted Saturday at 1:30 pm at the Vernal first ward chapel, with Bishop Calder presiding.
