

## John William Martin and Isabella Porter Martin History

Extract from Arthur and Ella Martin Family History, by Ruth Martin Call, 2006. Ruth is the daughter of Arthur and Ella Lords Martin.

My grandfather, **John William Martin**, was the second son and fourth child born to **Thomas Martin and Martha Prudence Thompson**. John William was the first child born in Dorchester, Illinois, on January 1, 1836. John William married **Isabella Porter** on May 19, 1863, at Gillespie, Macoupin, Illinois. Isabella's brother, **George Porter**, was born at Gillespie in June 1851; therefore, Isabella was living in Gillespie at the time of her marriage to John William. Isabella was age 19 and John William age 27 when they were married.

After their marriage they lived in Dorchester where their first two children were born; (1)**William Thomas Martin** was born on March 20, 1864 (died September 10, 1865), and (2)**George Fredric Martin** was born on October 15, 1865. It would be heart wrenching to lose your first child just five weeks before giving birth to a second child. Their third child, (3)**Martha Susanna Martin** (named after her two grandmothers), was born on October 17, 1867, at Pana, Christian County, Illinois. Pana is close to where Isabella's father and mother are buried in Oconnie Cemetery.

John and Isabella with their two children, George and Martha, moved to Butler, Bates County, Missouri, where all but their last child was born. John William's mother (Martha), brother and sister moved at the same time and lived next to them. In Butler nine children were born; (4)**Henry David Martin** Born December 12, 1869 (died November 18, 1871), (5)**Albert Theodore Martin** born November 25, 1871 (18 days after brother's death), and Albert died February 6, 1875, one year after his sister (6)**Minnie Florence Martin** was born on February 7, 1874. They had six more children in Butler: (7)**Mary Henrietta Martin** born March 10, 1876 (died April 22, 1978), (8)**Earl John Theron Martin** born February 3, 1878, (9)**Arthur Eugene Martin** born December 6, 1879 (our beloved father and grandfather), (10)**Pearl Ethea Martin** born December 4, 1881). They lived in Butler for about 16 years where nine children were born and four died plus one that died in Dorchester, Illinois. They had 13 children but only raised 8 to maturity.

When I showed Dad (Arthur Martin) the Bates County 1880 Federal Census, he was really happy. Apparently there had been some discrepancy about his year of birth because it was in December. He wasn't sure his year of birth was 1879 or 1880, but it stated that Arthur Eugene Martin was six months old when the census was taken on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> day of June 1880, therefore, proving he was born in 1879.

Aunt Minnie said that when they left Missouri they were sad to leave Grandma Martin in Missouri. John William and Isabella moved with their family to Seneca Nation, Indian Territory, Oklahoma, before 1887 where their last child (11)**Harold Lester Martin** was born June 6, 1887. Note: After Oklahoma became a part of the United States with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, it was included in the Indian Territory. In 1812 it was combined with the Missouri Territory. For several years, most of Oklahoma was included in what was called the Indian Territory, which continued until about 1893 when the section was divided into the Indian Territory and the Oklahoma Territory, the latter being thrown open to white settlements.

There are few relatives that I remember from my childhood, but I will never forget Uncle **George Martin**, Aunt **Matt Martin Mock**, and Aunt **Minnie Martin Lutz**. I remember how Uncle George treated me like a person of worth not just a child to be ignored. This impressed me so much that I have never forgotten him. Nora (Ruth's sister) said that Uncle George during the depression in Salmon, Idaho, managed a CCC Camp (Civilian Conservation Corps established in 1933 by President F.D. Roosevelt) where 200 men ages 18-22 per camp were paid \$1.00 per day \$30.00 a month which \$25.00 was sent to

their families plus maintenance and medical care. Most camps were supervised by military officers, but some were by local teachers and well-trained civil-service personnel. Among other things they constructed thousands of public facilities such as picnic tables, benches, fireplaces, and shelters, and many more facilities too numerous to mention. When you use one of these facilities in our national parks, think of the CCC camps and great Uncle George.

**Aunt Matt** was very special to me because she treated me the same way she did her own grandchildren; in fact, when I was about six years old, I asked her if I could call her grandma. She graciously accepted my request. I must have felt left out because I didn't have any grandmothers. It must be a Martin trait to be kind and gracious. I remember visiting with my parents at Aunt Matt's home in Rexburg and fixing me and her grandchildren slices of bread spread with thick cream and sprinkled with sugar. It was a real treat for me to be treated like her grandchild. When Aunt Matt moved to Arizona, she sent me a postcard not long before she died in Arizona on January 31, 1939. I still have the postcard as one of my treasures.

I remember visiting **Aunt Minnie** with my parents in Teton, Idaho, where she lived. She was so gracious and kind, such a sweet person. I also remember visiting her in the rest home next to the Idaho Falls Hospital not long before she died at age 94. Until just a very few years before her death, she was very alert, not plagued with dementia as so many others her age.

#### *History of John William and Isabella Porter Martin by Minnie Martin Lutz*

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*[Thanks to Aunt Minnie we have the following history of John William Martin and Isabella Porter Martin, written in 1959 at age 85 while she was staying with her daughter Rose. I (Ruth Martin Call) am including the life history of Aunt Minnie because there is much information about Grandfather John William Martin, Grandmother Isabella Porter Martin, and their children that I haven't found anywhere else. I feel this history is very reliable. As you read this history, keep in mind that Arthur Eugene Martin was only 5 years younger than his sister Minnie, and he would have been involved in many of the incidents mentioned by Minnie even if not named by her as she relates her history. The only change I have made is to write it in first person instead of third person. I will at times insert some notes that Sarah Mock Clements wrote about her Grandmother Martha Martin Mock in the hope that we can get a feeling about our wonderful grandparent's lives.]*

We lived near the mountain in **Butler**, a small town. My father worked as a stone mason building rock and stone houses and fireplaces. Father had a large family and worked hard to provide for them. When I was about four years old, I would run up the hill to meet Father, and he would carry me home on his back. At the time I didn't realize how tired he was. We had two horses, Beck and Charley, and we would ride them to my Uncle Dan's place. Sometimes Father would take my sister, Mattie, me, and George all on one horse. I would ride in front and Matt and George behind Father. We would ride across the creek called **Mound Branch** and up the hill to the old mill, where we used to grind our corn meal for bread. Then we went through the hazel nut patch where we would gather sacks full of nuts for winter. In the winter we would sit on the big hearth in front of the fireplace, eat nuts, and tell stories of the early days of **Daniel Boone, who was related to Father's mother, Martha Thompson Martin.**

I would rock my little brother Johnny in my little red rocking chair that my father had bought for me. One day I tied myself in the rocking chair and couldn't get out until my sister, Martha, came home from school. My other sister, Henretta, didn't live long. When I was old enough to go to school, I wouldn't go without my cousin, Ester Porter. *[Ester, the daughter of Daniel Cribbs Porter, a brother of*

*Isabella Porter Martin, was born in 1873 (a little older than Minnie). He was living in the same place at the same time, 1880, as John William Martin which was **Mt. Pleasant Township, Butler, Bates County, Missouri.** Daniel was a stone mason the same as John William.] We would play all the way home until dark when my sister would come to get us. Sometimes we would sit under the plum trees and tell stories or slide down Sam White's store banister until he would send us home.*

My parents sold our house and move to another place where we lived close to a **big rock quarry.** Father and brothers sold the big rocks for building homes. They built us a nice home a **mile from town.** We would walk barefoot until we reached the sidewalk, and then we would put on our new shoes so we could be clean to go to Sunday School.

We didn't have a well at this place, so we would go to the creek for water, some distance away. It was usually night when we went for water, and it was dark in the forest. The owls would hoot, "Who are you?" and we would say, "Martin children going after water." Then the owls would say "Ha! Ha! I hardly knew you." It was such great fun and also scary. Then we would run home as fast as we could.

We love the mountains where there were many animals – possum, wild pigs, which were very mean. We loved our new home; it was such a pretty place. We had a playhouse in the back of the house. Wild fern, some 18 feet long, grew there. We build swings and would play all through the woods where we would find beautiful flowers, honeysuckle, a few palm trees, tame grapes, pears, pecan, hazel and hickory nuts. We gathered the nuts by the bushel and put them out to dry on a canvas. We then put them in sacks for winter.

There was a big plateau of stone. We didn't know what it had been, but it was almost buried in the dirt which indicated it had been there for many years. Later when I came a Mormon, I knew it must have been some kind of altar as we lived close to **Adam-ondi-Ahman,** 200 miles away where Adam and Eve were buried. It also had stones piled up as if it may have been an altar where some early settler had made sacrifices to the Lord. Perhaps even the Nephites or even Adam and Eve. I was so inspired later to know this could have been.

When I was eleven years old, we moved to **Deep Water** to the Boston Mountains, [Ridge 1,000 to 2,000 feet in the Ozark Plateau in NW Arkansas] Indian Territory now Oklahoma where my father and brothers could find work splitting logs. On the way we camped at a place where the four great Indian nations joined each other. Two of them were the Cherokee and Chickasaw nations. We moved down to just about the Arkansas border. I worked for an Indian for four years. I loved the Indians. They, the men, grubbed brush and planted corn. We had to have dogs to keep the wild pigs away. One wild pig kept Jack and Johnny up a tree all night.

**[Sarah Mock Clements** wrote that she remembered her mother, Martha Martin Mock, telling her about Martha Martin meeting John Mock on Easter Sunday in 1889. They were married on Christmas Day, December 25, 1889. Their first child, Lelia Myrtle, was born September 23, 1890, Indian Territory, Cherokee nation. Finis Lester was born April 2, 1892, same place. The same Indian woman helped bring both babies into the world. They gave her a bucket of molasses for one birth and a slab of bacon for the other birth. Martha's brothers (which included Arthur) liked to hunt panthers. The little children picked grapes and had fun swinging on the grape vines. They also watched the big gray timber wolves catch the wild pigs. One wolf would run by a pig, and when the mother chased the wolf, the other wolves would get the little pigs left behind. The folks were friendly with the Indians going with them to hunt opossum, raccoon, and wild turkey. There was always plenty of food to eat: berries of all kinds, meat of all kinds, and many kinds of nuts. There were lots of snakes there: rattlesnake, copperhead, cottonmouth, black, and whipcord snakes. Mother hated them along with the deadly spiders. John and Isabella's home was on the banks of the **Arkansas River.** Their house was made out of logs nestled in a valley surrounded by hills. Isabella and Martha washed their clothes in the Arkansas River that was so muddy they couldn't tell how deep it was. The family gathered turtle eggs on the river bank.]

[Now back to Aunt Minnie's history.] I am so thankful for the **Mormon Elders** coming to that area. I was working in a hotel at that time. These young men were so clean compared to most of the young men who came into the hotel, and this drew my attention to them. After talking to them about the church, I became very interested, and I knew it was true. I was so inspired I couldn't wait until I could tell my mother about the missionaries. She finally consented to go to their meetings and listen to their message. I was 18 years old (1892) when I was baptized in the Arkansas River by Elder George Labrum and confirmed by Elder Lester Stott. The missionaries were from Murray, Utah. Father was very hesitant; even though, he was a spiritual man and loved the Bible. Father finally let the missionaries come and we sat up all night discussing the gospel principles. At first it was difficult for my parents to accept the gospel. Mother was baptized on April 29, 1892. We purchased a *Book of Mormon* and that is what finally convinced my father. He was baptized June 16, 1892.

After my parents joined the church, the Elders lived in our home. We loved the missionaries. My father was so happy, and it seemed as though he had been looking for something like the gospel all his life. Orson Kimball was president of the mission at the time. The mission headquarters was in **Minard**. We were all very happy; I knew there couldn't be a more perfect knowledge of the gospel in any other church. After we joined the church, one night we found a loaf of bread and venison meat on the path. We were so hungry. We lived in the place we first moved to for about 10 years. Then we moved to **Minard**.

After joining the Mormon Church, we visited our old church, the Methodist, to see some of our friends. The minister invited anyone to stand who wanted to accept Christ and go to heaven. We didn't stand up, and he made the remark, "Some people have chosen to follow Satan." As soon as the meeting was over, we left and never went back. The people were so bitter and mean to us, and they said that Joseph Smith was a horse thief.

My own family was the only one of my relatives to join the church. This was sad for my parents not to be able to discuss the gospel with their families. In their extended families, there were so many feelings of bitterness and hatred for the Mormons. They couldn't see anything good about them. I am glad we were born later when some of the bitterness had died down. Father was afraid to trace his ancestry back very far because he might find someone who had participated in the Prophet Joseph's death. [Not one of our ancestors was even in Illinois and Missouri at this time, so none of them participated in the Prophet's death.]

The family decided to come west to Arizona, but a cousin, Thomas E. Rick, (son of Eleanor Ricks, a sister to Thomas Martin) and also a friend of the missionaries, begged us to go to Idaho. He said he would help us, and we would be close to the saints and would be treated more kindly. My parents never saw their families again; even though they corresponded with them, they never dared mention the church. I did their temple work, and if they accept the gospel, they will be reunited in Heaven.

I have corresponded with my aunts and cousins over the years. My Aunt **Abby Porter Brill** came to see us in Idaho. She was a lovely lady. I never met my Grandmother **Susanna Cribbs Porter** because they lived in Ohio. They had a lot of trouble during the Civil War. My Uncle **Dan** went to war and my Uncle **Nuet** came to live with us. Uncle Dan Porter's daughter, **Ester**, was my favorite cousin. They were the only one of Mother's family we knew. Father's folks were very nice people. I didn't know Grandfather **Thomas Martin**, but Grandma **Martha Prudence Martin** taught me how to cook and sew. Uncle **Thomps** took me on his knee and said my eyes were bugging. We left all of our folk's kin in **Butler, Missouri**. My Grandmother **Martha Prudence Martin** was old, and we hated to leave her. She was born in Kentucky, and she said **Daniel Boon** was related to her. My mother knew somewhat of Utah because her uncle deserted the army and told of being high above the clouds in the mountains of Utah and Idaho, so this made it exciting to go west.

My parents had purchased a dry farm in **Moody Creek** which they had to give up later because of my father's health. While we were preparing to come to Idaho, my sister, Pearl came down with a

fever. We called the Elders, and they administered to her. She was better the next day. My father, brother, **George**, and his wife **Lillie**, and sister **Martha (Matt)**, were the first to go west. **John (Jack)**, **Pearl**, and **Hurley (Harold)**, and my youngest brother, came west with me later. Mother and Arthur came west even later. *[When you read the part about Minnie and siblings coming west, keep in mind that Arthur and his mother probably came the same route on the train, and even though there is no written record of Arthur's journey, we can visualize his journey being the same as his sisters' Minnie.]*

I was so worried I wouldn't have enough money to make the trip, but when I counted the money, I had more than enough. I don't know for sure, but I think the missionaries must have given us some of their money. We finally made it to the railroad station to buy our tickets. I had a strong feeling someone was watching us, and I felt so responsible for the children and the money. We could not get second class tickets, so they told us to come back in the morning, and they would give us first class. So we went back to the hotel. Johnny had a gun in his suitcase, but we still put the money under my pillow. About midnight somebody looked in the window, and Johnny jumped up with his gun and frightened him away. We got dressed and sat in the lobby until time to leave the next day. We asked a policeman to escort us to the train station.

We stopped in **Kansas City**, one of the largest cities near our home. It was such a large place and we crossed many tracks before reaching the station. We had to stay there until the next day. The traffic was so busy that I couldn't sleep and I was also worried. A group took us to the depot the next morning and our next stop was Denver.

We arrived at Pike's Peak, it took two engines to pull us over and I shall never forget how scary it was. When we arrived in Ogden, Utah, we had to wait another day. We met an older man, a Mr. Smith, who took us to Salt Lake City and showed us the temple and a few more things. Then he and his wife traveled with us to Rexburg. All we could see was sagebrush and if I hadn't had a strong testimony, I would have gone back home. By now I was pretty homesick.

I met my husband soon after arriving in Rexburg, and we were married in the old Endowment house. Later we traveled in a white top buggy to Logan Temple where we were sealed. At the same time Mother and Father were sealed to each other and their children were sealed to them on September 25, 1895. Father didn't live long after we moved to Rexburg. His health and stomach were bad. About two years later Father passed away on June 11, 1989 (age 60). This left Mother and the boys on the farm. They lived there for ten years until one of my older brothers married. Then they had to leave the farm and move to Rexburg where Mother wove carpets with my help. Mother died on March 12, 1915, at age 71 at my home in Hibbard, Idaho, eleven years a widow.

*[Thank you, Aunt Minnie, for writing all that you could remember about your parents, and my grandparents, John William and Isabella Porter Martin. It would like to end John William and Isabella's history with excerpts from their patriarchal blessing; first, I will quote from John Williams Martin's blessing – No. 131 recorded in Book b, pages 156-157, January 1, 1895.]*

"...Every gift and blessing shall be thine necessary for the accomplishment of thy work. Thou shalt have joy and peace in (thy) habitation and be pleased in the work of thy children. Thy strength shall be as they day and thou shalt have faith to accomplish all that is expedient for you to do.

The angel that was given thee as thy protector at thy birth shall continue to watch over thee until thy work is completed. The Holy Spirit by its still small voice shall whisper to thee – this is the way – walk ye therein.

Thou shalt receive an inheritance in Zion, with the tribe of Ephriam, and upon the earth when it is celestialized. No good shall be withheld from thee. They name shall be honorable among men and the Saints..."

*[Second, I will quote from Isabella Porter Martins' patriarchal blessing – No. 132, recorded in Book B, pages 157-158, January 1, 1895.]*

“...Thou shalt be able to discern that which is right and eschew the evil, and teach thy children the principals of life and salvation that they may overcome the evil influences that are cast about them from time to time. Thou and thy household shall never want for bread, many that are hungry shall be fed at thy table, and those that are destitute shall be clothed within thy habitation.

Thee and they sons and descendants shall be numbered among the faithful. Thou shalt live long upon the earth and they days shall be full of joy.

The Holy Spirit shall be thy companion. Thy guardian angel shall watch over thee and protect thee from all harm. All gifts and blessings shall be thine that will be for thy benefit and salvation...”