

# John James Halpin

John James Halpin was born in August 1843 in New York.<sup>1</sup> He was the oldest of nine children of John Halpin and Elizabeth Ring. He was registered to vote in Sacramento, California, in 1868-1869.<sup>2</sup> On the 1870 census, he was a retail grocer in Pioche, Lincoln, Nevada,<sup>3</sup> and a merchant in Pioche in 1875.<sup>4</sup> He sold his store in Pioche and moved to Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, in November 1876. He started his hardware business again, dealing in copper, tin, iron ware and other hardware items.<sup>5</sup> In September 1877, he sent a note to Levi Savage in St George, requesting peaches, which were duly delivered.<sup>6</sup>

John served on the fire committee organized after the great fire of 1879.<sup>7</sup> He married Margaret before 1880, when they were living in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory. John ran a hardware store in Silver Reef.<sup>8</sup> Their home was on the south side of Boyd Street.<sup>9</sup> They had no children.<sup>10</sup> When the Liberal party met at Rice's Hall in Silver Reef, John (a territorial committee member<sup>11</sup>) nominated Judge Wheedon as chair. But when the crowd called for John to give a speech, he refused.<sup>12</sup>

When the new public school began, John provided a clock, bucket, dipper, hook and other incidentals for the school house.<sup>13</sup> In 1882, John engaged in the hardware business on Main Street in Salt Lake City. He took out a business license for one year for \$90, and hired E C McLeod to assume a "responsible position" in his business.<sup>14</sup> That same year, Harry M Edwards was manufacturing and selling ginger pop in the rear of John's store in Silver Reef, located on Main Street next to Dr. Mantor's office.<sup>15</sup>

His Salt Lake store failed after six months and there was an assignee sale and a call to settle his debts.<sup>16</sup> He petitioned for refund of half of his business license fee, which was referred to the licensing committee.<sup>17</sup> He owned share in the Mammoth Mining Company from 1884 to 1899.<sup>18</sup> He served as treasurer of the Brunswick Consolidated Gold Mining Company with offices in San Francisco; the mines were in the Grass Valley Mining District in Nevada, California. He resigned that position in 1898 and in 1899 he was the transfer agent for the company in New York.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> California Voter Registers, 1866-1898; Sacramento, California, California Biographical Great Books.

<sup>3</sup> United States Census, 1870.

<sup>4</sup> Nevada State Census, 1875.

<sup>5</sup> *Pioche Record*, 1876; A Historical Study of Silver Reef, by Alfred Bleak Stucki, 1966, p. 34; Silver, Sinners and Saints, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, pp. 49, 101.

<sup>6</sup> Diary of Levi Savage.

<sup>7</sup> Silver, Sinners and Saints, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 127.

<sup>8</sup> United States Census, 1880.

<sup>9</sup> Silver, Sinners and Saints, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 75.

<sup>10</sup> United States Census, 1910.

<sup>11</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 23 September 1880, p. 3

<sup>12</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 10 November 1880, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Silver, Sinners and Saints, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 109; Silver Reef School Board Minutes.

<sup>14</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 2 September 1882, p. 5; 28 November 1882, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> *Silver Reef Miner*, 30 September 1882, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 6 May 1883, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 19 December 1883, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 17 February 1899, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> *San Francisco Call*, 16 September 1894, p. 6; 10 March 1898, p. 10; San Francisco Call, 14 January 1899, p. 10.

By 1900, John was working as a merchant and living with his wife in Manhattan, New York City, New York.<sup>20</sup> They continued the business in Manhattan<sup>21</sup> until his death between 1915-1920. Margaret was a widow on the 1920 census, still living in Manhattan.<sup>22</sup> It is unknown when she died.



The Halpin hardware store was located across from the Wells Fargo building and next to the Elkhorn Saloon (Image from "The Archaeology of Abandonment, by Paige Margaret Peyton, 2012, p. 262)

**ASSIGNEE'S SALE**  
The Excellent and well-assorted Stock  
of  
**GENERAL HARDWARE**  
— AT —  
**No. 38 Main St.,**  
**J. J. HALPIN & CO.,**  
Will be disposed of without delay,  
**REGARDLESS OF COST.**  
COMPRISING  
Stoves Ranges, Cooking Utensils, Hay  
and Manure Forks, Shovels, Spades,  
Iron, Steel, Nails, Horse and Mule  
Shoes, Carpenters, Blacksmiths, Tanners  
and Miners Tools and Supplies. Also a  
large variety of Table and Pocket Out-  
lery, Shears, Scissors, Razors, Tea and  
Table Spoons, and almost every article  
which is indispensable in the household.  
N.B.—All indebtedness to the above  
named firm must be cancelled without  
delay to save costs.  
T. V. WILLIAMS, Assignee.  
Office with Z. C. M. I., Salt Lake City.  
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(Image from the *Salt Lake Herald*, 6 May 1883, p. 9).

<sup>20</sup> United States Census, 1900.

<sup>21</sup> New York State Census, 1905; United States Census, 1910; New York State Census, 1915.

<sup>22</sup> United States Census, 1920.