

# Biography of Edward Cook

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*Edward Cook* was born January 9, 1877 in Cedar Fort, Utah to William Cook and Rebecca Rodeback. His parents were children of the early pioneers. His father was born in 1847 in Pottawattamie, Iowa and traveled with the Warren Snow Company to Utah in 1852. His mother was born in 1846 in Nauvoo, Illinois. His parents were married in 1875 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“Ed” grew up in Cedar Fort and married *Nellie Avilda Chamberlain* in the Salt Lake Temple on June 27, 1900. Edward and Nellie were a happy couple and welcomed each of their children, who were all born at home.

Their children are:

<b>Sophonria Avilda</b>	b. 1901,
<b>Marjorie</b>	b. 1903,
<b>Maud Kathryn</b>	b. 1905,
<b>Kenneth Edward</b>	b. 1906,
<b>William Elwood</b>	b. 1908,
<b>Edith Roberta</b>	b. ?1913 <sup>1</sup> ,
<b>James Harold</b>	b. ?1915,
<b>Beda Leona</b>	b. 1918,
<b>Richard (Dick) Lyman</b>	b. ?1921, and
<b>Francis Robert</b>	b. ?1923.

1910 U. S. Federal Census – Enumerated the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1910

Cook, Edward	Head	M	33	Utah		
Nellie V	Wife	F	29	Utah	House Keeping	
Sophonria A.	Daughter	F	9	Utah		
Marjorie	Daughter	F	7	Utah		
Catherine	Daughter	F	5	Utah		
Kenneth	Son	M	3	Utah		
Elwood	Son	M	1	Utah		

1920 U. S. Federal Census – Enumerated the 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 1920

Cook, Edward	Head	M	42	Utah	Farmer	
Nellie Avilda	Wife	F	38	Utah	None	
Avilda	Daughter	F	18	Utah	None	None
Maryane	Daughter	F	16	Utah	None	None
Kathrine	Daughter	F	14	Utah	None	None
Kenneth	Son	M	13	Utah	None	None
Elwood	Son	M	11	Utah	None	None
Roberta	Daughter	F	7	Utah	None	None
Harold	Son	M	4 7/12	Utah	None	None
Beta	Daughter	F	1 4/12	Utah	None	None

1930 U. S. Federal Census – Enumerated the 5<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1930

Cook, Nellie A	Head	F	49	Utah	Farmer	General Farm
Avilda S	Daughter	F	28	Utah	Laborer	Farm
Elwood W	Son	M	21	Utah	None	
Roberta	Daughter	F	17	Utah	Laborer	Farm
Harold J	Son	M	15	Utah	None	
Beda L	Daughter	F	11	Utah	None	
Richard	Son	M	9	Utah	None	
Francis R	Son	M	7	Utah	None	

<sup>1</sup> The birth year of Robert, Harold, Dick and Francis is a guess, based on the information in the Census shown here.

Edward raised cattle, farmed and had a business delivering fresh meat. He provided well for his family. They lived in a home built by Allen Weeks, the first Bishop of the Cedar Valley Ward. This home was on a site where the first settlers in Cedar Fort chose to build their homes. They always had one of the best gardens in town and were always willing to share it with the neighbors.

**Roberta** wrote that her Dad spent many hard hours providing and sustaining an income for his family. The operation of the farm and field was a family endeavor. He not only provided food and income but was a great builder of character.

Ed and his brother Barnes (Barnes Alma) went into a partnership with their father, William, to operate a slaughterhouse. They contracted to furnish meat to the boarding houses and meat markets in Mercur, Toplift and Sunshine (nearby mines). They slaughtered some of their own cattle, but in order to meet the demand, they had to buy more animals from other ranchers and farmers. To accomplish this they would leave home on horseback and travel west into Rush Valley, into Skull Valley and sometimes down into Millard, Juab, and Sanpete Counties.

When the mining camps closed down, there was no longer a market for their meat, so Barnes and Ed tried something different. They turned their efforts to developing the property at Government Creek (which lies about sixty-five miles to the west of Cedar Fort). We know that Ed and Barnes filed a claim on the homestead; however we don't know exactly when they filed it or when they gave it up.

Barnes wrote a letter to his wife, Alice, on April 16, 1918, from the Homestead at Government Creek.

“Today is mail day so I am going to write to let you know we are all well out here and I hope you are all well in there. We have all the post holes dug, the posts scattered and about half of them in. It has been storming considerable and it froze hard here last night.

“The feed is very good on the range here. The cattle are just as full **as they can stick all the time.** They come in here every day for water and even the old sows are bucking and kicking up their heels. I am glad we brought them all out. We dug a hole and got water plenty for watering stock, but we will have to run a cut about 200 feet to get it out, but I think we can do most of it with a horse and slush scrapper. I just picked 12 wood ticks off me yesterday. That's the biggest fault I have with this country. We have 4 loaves of bread left yet and plenty of cookies.”

He also told them he would be home in a week or so, to tell “pa” not to work too hard, kiss the kiddies for him, and that it was five miles to the post office.

**Francis** told me that he and Bernard **(is this Bernard Henry Cook, son of Barnes?)** went to the Ranch out in Skull Valley just a few years ago, and that he didn't know he had been so close to the place, however, he never knew where it was. Bernard showed him the spring and the location of the cabin site. Ed spent a lot of time riding the 65 miles from Cedar Fort. Francis was just a baby when his dad died. He just knows they were proving up on the homestead, and after dad died, they brought the cattle in, and then they

never did have anything else to do with the homestead. **Harold** told him it was a good range site out there.

**Elwood** told Francis, that their Dad would ride his sorrel mare up the canyon, then when he had lunch he would take off the saddle and let the horse graze and after grazing the horse would come back to the saddle.

*Colleen Cook Bair* said her dad, **Harold**, was riding on a sleigh. He saw his dad (Ed) talking to someone on the corner, his sleigh picked up speed and he rode under a horse. The horse raised his foot and took her Dad's ear off. Edward carried him home and called, "Nellie, get some egg white's quick," which they applied to put his ear back in place.

*Deniece*, **Harold's** wife, said Ed was remembered as a super good man, he was helpful in every way. Harold was only 7 when Ed died. It seemed Harold was born on a horse and was always out to the farm. Everyone tried to help Grandma, and Harold had lots of bosses. He was working on the farm and stopped to give his horse a rest and Uncle Jim (who is this?) came along and told him he was a "lazy good for nothin'."

The older boys Ken and Elwood moved away and came back occasionally and didn't stay with the farming.

**Francis** said, "Grandpa Cook was one of the first ones to have a car, an old Model "T" Ford." They could buy a new car then for \$700. Marge and Elias ended up with it. He (?) and Uncle Barnes both butchered beef and delivered to Toplift between Cedar Valley and Bingham, to the mine quarry out there. A white top rig towed by a team was quite a way to deliver fresh meat.

*Lelah Cook* (daughter of **Elwood?**) *Howell* remembers she would never eat deer meat unless her dad cut it up. She said it had a wild taste if anyone else cut it up. Elwood learned to cut meat while butchering with his father when he helped him cut up a beef or a deer.

**Francis** noted "It was quite a thing to raise 10 kids in a two bedroom house". A lot of times when someone came to the house late at night, the kids would wake up in the morning on the floor so someone could have a bed.

*Ann Story* is **Avilda's** daughter. Avilda died at the age of 31 of a heart attack, so Grandma Cook raised Ann, her grand daughter. Ann used to enjoy sitting out on the porch at night and listen to **Uncle Jim and Aunt Jenny** talking. They would visit for hours and talk about the "Good Old Days." They talked about when Nellie was a young girl. She liked Ed and another girl in town also liked him. The other girl had a Valentine's party but did not invite Nellie or her friend so Grandma Hacking cooked up a supper for the two girls to invite their beau's, so they had a party of their own.

After **Kenneth** and his wife, Edna, split up Ken took off and Grandma didn't hear from him for two years. Then **Bertha (who?)** wrote a letter to Grandma and told her they had met and married and that Ken was real sick. They rustled around and got enough money to send Grandma to Oregon.

**Dick** and **Francis** were at home and **Kathryn and Lamar** were coming from California and dropped off **Cy** to stay with them. They would shear sheep in California, work their way up to Utah and into Idaho and finish in Montana in July. Cy was about 8 or 10 years old.

**Francis** said, "They were batching and were able to eat bread, butter, milk and eggs. They had eggs for every meal. They left Cy home when they were taking the horses up on the mountain and when they got home, Cy had boiled eggs and deviled them. It tasted so good and different, he will never forget it.

*Nellie* had a heavy heart on what would have been their 23rd anniversary because Ed was buried the day before and she was left alone to care for her family of 10 children, the oldest Avilda who was 22 and the youngest Francis, only nine months old.

*Edith Pearl Chamberlain* (Nellie's sister) says:

"I loved to go to the homes of my two sisters, Alice and Nell, to help them when they needed me, especially when their babies were born." (this before Edith was married).

"When it came time for my fourth child to be born, we decided to go to Utah, and be with my parents when the baby came. We made the trip and all went well until my husband became ill with appendicitis. We went to Lehi, fifteen miles from Cedar Fort, to the doctor there. He said Dean should be operated on immediately. Being so close to my delivery time, I decided to stay at the hospital, also. In just a few hours my baby boy, Reed, was born and my husband had his operation. We were both in the hospital at the same time."

"When Dean was able to leave, his brother came out from Salt Lake City and took him back to stay with his folks until he was able to return to Idaho. I was left there alone, but my dear niece *Avilda* who is my sister *Nell*'s daughter, came to see me. She was just like an angel from heaven as I just didn't know where I was going until I could get out to my parent's home. But she got busy and found a place for me to go until I could get a way out home. I shall never forget her coming to me when I needed her most. It was certainly an answer to my prayers."<sup>2</sup>

### **Obituary printed in the "Lehi Sun," June 28, 1923:**

Edward Cook of Cedar Fort, father of a large family, died here Thursday from an illness of three weeks. The direct cause of death was abscess of the lung contributory to pneumonia. He had been under a doctor's care since June 1.

Mr. Cook was a farmer in Cedar Fort. He was born there June 9, 1877, the son of

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<sup>2</sup> Edith Pearl Chamberlain, written by herself in 1981; an autobiography, p.8 (See Histories: Edith Pearl Chamberlain, [www.OurCookFamily.org](http://www.OurCookFamily.org)), posted July 2006.

William and Rebecca Rodeback Cook. He is survived by his wife, Nellie Cook and ten children ages 9 months to 22 years.

Funeral services were conducted Tuesday at Cedar Fort with Bishop Hales officiating. Speakers were Pres. A. J. Evans and Senator Edward Southwick. The choir sang, "Oh My Father," and "Through Deepening Trials." Mrs. Belnap sang "Face to Face," and Mrs. George Holmstead, "Absent." Invocation was offered by Orson Hacking and benediction by Ralph L. Dubois. Interment was at Cedar Fort.

### **An Experience of Ed's granddaughter Colleen:**

*Colleen Cook Bair* had an experience when she attended the LDS Business College in Salt Lake City. President Benson, the President of the College, called Colleen into his office one day and said he was impressed during the night to tell Colleen about her grandfather, Ed Cook.

Pres. Benson told Colleen "he had so much respect for her grandfather, he was one of my best friends" (they rode together at Sunshine). He said he was the most honest man he had ever known, and had he lived, Pres. Benson believed he would be one of the richest men in Utah. He bought one of the first cars sold in Utah, and he was a good businessman. He was a good looking man; he loved his family and was proud of his children.

Pres. Benson told of a family that asked Ed to sell a cow for them. They trusted him so much they knew he could do that for them, and when he sold the cow, he received \$5 more than he thought he would get so he rode in the bitter cold all the way to Sunshine to give the man the \$5. He knew the family needed it.

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<sup>a</sup> **Source Note:** When Ron Cook (Ronald Sheldon Cook) asked me to write a biography about Edward Cook, none seemed to have written anything. We had stories about how Grandma Cook was left with ten children to raise and that the only child left is Francis and he was only nine months old when Edward died. So none of Grandpa Cook's grandchildren ever got to know him but it is interesting what has been gleaned by talking to family members. I'm sure there is much more that could be said.