

Heber Manning Wells First Governor of Utah

Heber Manning Wells was born August 11, 1859 in Salt Lake City to Martha G. Harris and Daniel H. Wells, a prominent lumberman, a former mayor of Salt Lake City, and one of the most influential leaders of the Mormon Church. Heber was one of thirty-six children.

He was educated in public schools and graduated from the University of Deseret, now the University of Utah in 1875. After college, he became a tax collector in Salt Lake City and then served as City Recorder from 1882 to 1890. After an unsuccessful bid to become Mayor of Salt Lake City, in 1896 when Utah achieved statehood, the 36 year old Wells became Utah's first governor and the youngest to date. As Utah's first governor, first for a five year term and then for a second term of four years. Although interested in promoting economic development, he recognized the need to protect Utah's natural environment and therefore campaigned to establish forest reserves.

After leaving office in 1905, he became Managing Director of the Utah Savings and Trust Company. From 1913 to 1917 he served as Commissioner of Parks and Property in Salt Lake City and in 1919 he became an editor of the Salt Lake City Herald. He went on to become Assistant Treasurer, and then Treasurer, of the U.S. Shipping Board Fleet Corporation up until his retirement in 1933.

Heber returned back to Utah in 1935 and was Associate Editor of the Deseret Evening News. He died of a stroke on March 12, 1938, he was 78 years old.

Wells married Mary Elizabeth Beatie in 1880; she died in 1888, then he married Theresa Clawson in 1892. Then Theresa died in 1897, and in 1901 he married again, to his current wife Emily Katz. He is the father of seven children, namely: Manning B., Heber D., Mary B., Martha, Florence, John K. and Burton K. Wells. He resided at 61 First Avenue in Salt Lake City.

His success has been due not less to his high qualities of heart and mind than to his engaging personality.

You can find his gravesite in the Salt Lake City Cemetery in Plat J, Block 1, Lot 5, Grave 3, Tier West.



HEBER M. WELLS

