

QUINN SISTERS

Mary Ann (22), Harriet (18), and Elizabeth (17) of St. Heliers, Jersey, Channel Islands Willie and Martin Handcart Companies



Mary Ann Quinn (Taylor)



Harriet Quinn (Douglas)



Elizabeth Quinn (Stevenson)

William W. and Mary Ann Hosking Quinn brought their seven children to America in 1856. They sailed from Liverpool aboard the *Thornton*. Anna Tait, who was also traveling on the *Thornton*, recorded on June 11: “This has been such a day of rejoicing. Brother Quinn was called on to sing a song which he had composed about the voyage.” The Quinn family joined the Willie handcart company at Iowa City, Iowa. When they had traveled as far as Council Bluffs, Iowa, they left the Willie company. Some of the story comes from the obituary of George Quinn, the 14-year-old son in the Quinn family:



George Quinn

Quinn, George, saddler and harnessmaker, and notary public, son of William and Mary A., was born in St. Heliers, Isle of Jersey, England, May 28, 1842. [His] father was a furniture dealer and cabinet and chairmaker. [His] parents joined the Mormon church and came to this country in '56, fitting up handcarts at Iowa City to cross the plains. He tired of the work and stopped to play marbles and was lost from his parents, they stopping at Council Bluffs, where they remained four years.<sup>1</sup> In '60 they came to Utah in Joseph W. Young's company, an ox train, and located in Ephraim, Christmas, '64. His parents died here. During the Black Hawk war George was a member of the martial band and made saddles. He was a member of several theatrical companies, being a comic singer and comedian. [George] was postmaster for seven years and interested in many enterprises. [He] was five years in the firm of Quinn, Larsen & Co., that did a business of \$25,000 annually. In '94 he opened his present place of business, manufacturing harness and saddles and dealing in wagons, buggies, agricultural implements and real estate and loaning money.

Soon after the family stopped at Council Bluffs, the 3 older girls, Mary Ann (age 22), Harriet A. (age 19) and Elizabeth (age 17), decided to continue without their parents. When the Martin handcart company came through a few weeks later, the sisters joined that group. No personal experiences of the girls are known, but an entry from Redick Allred, a rescuer, states: [Upon continuing west from Allred's camp, Nov. 18, 1856]: We then set out for the City with this half starved, half frozen and almost entirely exhausted Company of about 500 saints. But from that time on they did not suffer with hunger or fatigue, but all suffered more or less with cold. As well as I was provided I even lost my toe nails from frost. I had a good tent & took in 5 Bretheren—including Capts. Tyler & Martin, and the 3 sisters Quinn to do our cooking.

Mary Ann married George Taylor on May 27, 1859.<sup>2</sup> They settled in Ephraim, where they raised 7 children. George was mayor of Ephraim from 1868 to 1874.

Elizabeth married a young widower, James Vickers Stevenson, on January 4, 1860. Their first baby was born shortly after Elizabeth's parents arrived in the valley. They also moved to Ephraim and raised a family of 11 children, 7 of whom lived to adulthood.

Harriett married Graham Douglas before 1862. She died in 1878 in Manti, the day after giving birth to her 8th child, Edwin Douglas. Edwin grew to manhood and married Mary Ann Green, whose mother, Betsy Mee, had also been in the Martin Handcart Company with her sister, Charlotte Mee. Their mothers' stories were very similar.<sup>3</sup>

William and Mary Ann Quinn, with their children William, George, Isabella, and Joseph Hyrum, came to Utah in October 1860 with the wagon train of Joseph W. Young.

Sources: Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; family histories in files of Jolene Allphin; familysearch.org; Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website.

<sup>1</sup>It appears that George's father found employment after locating George, which contributed to the family's decision to remain in Council Bluffs. In the meantime, the Willie handcart company moved on.

<sup>2</sup>Mary Ann was first sealed to William Cameron Dunbar on February 13, 1857. They did not have any children, but both had large families with their other spouses. Mary Ann may have been worried about her survival and sought the sealing ordinance for this reason. She had known Dunbar before, as he was the president of the French Mission from 1854 to 1856. He was the Elder who baptized her sisters, Elizabeth and Harriet. Like Mary Ann's brother, George, Dunbar was an entertainer, actor, singer, bagpipe player and one of the best known comedians in the west.

<sup>3</sup>See biographies for Betsy and Charlotte Mee in Allphin, *Tell My Story, Too*, Martin handcart company section.