

## MARY ANN GREENING

Born: 17 Jan 1829 Brixton Hill, Surry, London, England

Age: 27

Martin Handcart Company



Mary Ann with daughter, Emily Cluff,  
and granddaughter, Birda Cluff

Mary Ann was reportedly the oldest of 17 children and the only member of her family to join the Mormon Church. Her mother, Mary Elizabeth Twaites Greening, was fearful of the difficulties her daughter would endure during her emigration and afterwards residing in the deserts of Utah. She therefore insisted that Mary Ann take several steamer trunks of clothing and shoes. The family was and continued to be well-off and generous, later giving financial assistance to Mary Ann's grandson when he served a mission in England.

Mary Ann sailed from Liverpool on the *Horizon* in May 1856. Upon arriving in Iowa City, Iowa, the company spent the next three weeks building handcars and disposing of extra property. Fellow traveler in the Martin company, John Jacques, wrote:

“As only a very limited amount of baggage could be taken with the handcars, during the long stay in the Iowa City camping ground there was a general lightening of such things as could best be done without. Many things were sold cheaply to residents of that vicinity, and many more things were left on the camping ground for anybody to take or leave at his pleasure. It was grievous to see the heaps of books and other articles thus left in the sun and rain and dust, representing a respectable amount of money spent therefore in England, but thenceforth a waste and a dead loss to the owners.” (*Salt Lake Daily Herald*, 1 Dec. 1878, 1.)

Of the 100 pounds of luggage and personal belongings that were allowed each person on the sea voyage, only 17 pounds per person would be allowed on the handcart expedition. However, for Mary Ann, this likely did not affect her so drastically as she apparently had the money to pay for her trunks to be freighted, possibly with the Hodgett or Hunt wagon companies. These two wagon companies were the last to leave Iowa City that year, traveling closely with the Martin handcart company across the plains. Mary Ann's biography records that “As others wore out shoes or needed clothing, she gave them their needs from the trunks her mother had insisted upon.”

Mary Ann shared her ocean voyage and the pulling and pushing of a handcart with Sarah Ann Bradshaw Till Jones, her two sons, Albert and Samuel, and Samuel's fiancé, Lydia E. Hooker. Mary Ann later told her children that the journey began as “somewhat of a lark.” But Mary Ann would soon also share the sufferings of the Jones family as they struggled through the early winter storms and lacked adequate clothing and food.

This valiant little band was finally met by rescuers, including Sarah Ann Jones's son, Robert Till. He had emigrated to the Salt Lake Valley previously and was now prepared to help his mother and half-brothers. His assistance seems to have been extended to Mary Ann as well, as she went to Provo with the Jones family and married Robert Till in March of 1857. Robert and Mary Ann pioneered the area called the “Sand Town dugout communities,” later known as Goshen, Utah.

Other rescuers reported to assist Mary Ann were the 18-year-old Hunting twins, Nathan and William. One of Nathan Hunting's granddaughters later married one of Mary Ann's grandsons.

In a blessing given Mary Ann by Patriarch Zebedee Coltrin in Goshen, she was reminded of her rights to all of the blessings, ordinances, powers, knowledge and understanding given in the House of the Lord. She was admonished that she had been “called to do a great work”—as a “cornerstone in the house of the Mothers of Israel”; as “an example to teach the daughters of Zion”; and as a “Prophetess in the Stakes of Zion.” From a life of privilege to living in a dugout—from first embracing the gospel to making and keeping sacred covenants in the temple in her Rocky Mountain “Zion,”—Mary Ann sought and obtained that for which she yearned as a young woman in England.

Sources: Daughters of Utah Pioneer history files; “James Hunting,” Lichfield family history book, courtesy Walter Lichfield; Nathan and William Hunting family histories, courtesy Gayle Hunting; familysearch.org. See Albert Jones sketch in Martin company section of *Tell My Story, Too*.