

A life sketch of

Ann Mariah Bowen Call

1834 – 1924

Wife of Anson Call

Ann Mariah Bowen Call was born January 3, 1834, in Bethany, Genesee County, New York. In her early childhood she, with her parents, Israel and Charlotte Louisa Durham Bowen, moved to Michigan. Sometime later the Bowen Family moved to Indiana. It was here they met Anson Call and Benjamin T. Cummings who were laboring as missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This was in the year 1839.



This family closely followed the Mormon migration westward and were among the earliest members of this unpopular religious organization. The family suffered the hardships, cruelty, and persecution so vigorously executed against them by their enemies during the years prior to the expulsion of the Saints from Nauvoo.

Mariah's father, being a potter by trade, was asked by Joseph Smith to locate where he could find the best clay to continue his trade. He succeeded in finding a place on the west side of the Mississippi River in the territory of Iowa. The family remained there until after the death of their father, who passed away April 3, 1847, at the age of forty-two. It was here that Mariah was baptized in the Mississippi River in the year of 1842.

As the Saints began to move west, Mariah's oldest sister and brother-in-law, Juliaetta and Charles Dalton, wanted so badly to go with the Saints, but due to Juliaetta's delicate conction, they were afraid to start on this long journey alone. They decided to persuade Juliaetta's mother to let Mariah, a younger sister accompany them to help drive. Mariah was then fifteen years old. Instead of just helping to drive, she drove the entire distance. She drove three yoke of oxen until they were crossing the Missouri River. When the lead team or yoke started to go down stream, she called for help, but none was available so she climbed out on the tongue of her wagon, then on the back of the second yoke, reached down and released the head

team and let them go down stream. Then with the aid of a whip she was able to drive the other two yoke of oxen across and bring her wagon safely to the other side of the river. On the banks of the Sweet Water River in Wyoming, Juliaetta gave birth to a son. The company arrived in Salt Lake Valley in September of 1849 and moved on north to Centerville, Utah.

On April 15, 1851, Mariah married Anson Call, who was twenty-three years her senior. He was instructed by President Brigham Young to leave his first wife, Mary, and family in Bountiful and take his young wife with him to settle Parowan in Iron County, Utah. They left Bountiful a few days after their marriage to perform this mission. They were there only a short time when they had a visit from the First Presidency who ordered them to return to Salt Lake to organize a company of fifty families to go colonize Pauvant Valley.

They arrived at Chalk Creek, Pauvant Valley on November 13, 1851. They found President Young, Orson Pratt a surveyor, and others there who had laid out the city and called it Fillmore after the President of the United States, Millard Fillmore.

Later, this town became the capital of the territory. The state house still stands and is used as a museum run by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. Mariah's picture hangs on the wall of that building as one of the first white women to come into Fillmore.

During their stay at Fillmore they had a lot of varried experiences with the Indians, for they were very hostile. At one time, the two tribes living in and around that country had a terrific battle. The conquering tribe was going to kill off all of the male members and the small children, then take the squaws and young girls into their tribe. President Young instructed the people to go and buy these children to keep them from being killed. The Indians would bury them alive, part way into the ground, pile brush on top of them and make a huge fire.

Grandfather Anson bought two children, a boy and a baby girl – their names being Dan and Ruth. Mariah kept them until she came back to Bountiful. Then the children made their home with Anson's first wife, Mary.

While at Fillmore there were two children born to Mariah and Anson: Vilate on July 27, 1852 and Israel born on July 2, 1854.

Mariah went back to Bountiful in the late summer of 1855 and in the fall she again went north with her husband where he was called by President Young to colonize what is now called Box Elder County. He was instructed to build a fort to protect the people who went with them

and this was called Call's Fort. It was 120 feet square and the walls were 6 feet high and 3 feet thick.

The Call family have since taken the stones that helped to build the fort and have erected a monument to their honor. It stands today on the ground where the fort was built.

The Utah boundary at that time extended to the California line and down into Arizona. Grandfather and Grandmother Call were called in April of 1856 to go and colonize Carson City, Nevada, the capital of that state. In October of 1856, Anson was called back to Salt Lake, leaving Mariah alone again with three small children and a herd of stock to care for. Her log house was just up to the square. She used the canvas wagon cover that had made her a tent during the summer and pulled it over a portion of the house for a roof. There were times when the snow and rain came through in the house. She said many times she awoke to find that the canvas she had over the beds was wet with rain or covered with snow.

In the spring of 1857, her husband sent word for her to sell what animals she could and drive the rest and went back home. She, with a baby in her arms and two small children, started the weary, dangerous trip back to Bountiful. She had a little trouble with the Indians, but nothing serious on her way back, but she did come across the remains of a company that the Indians had destroyed.

Mariah was of medium build with piercing gray eyes, heavy brows, a forehead that denoted character, and a strong and determined jaw. You knew when she started out to do a thing; it would be done to the best of her ability. The word 'can't' was never known to her. If she hadn't been a strong fearless young woman, who could handle a gun and drive horses as good as any man; she could have never made the trip back home. She often told the grandchildren how she would take her children on her horse's back and round up her stock, then tie the horse to the wagon, put the children in and start on her journey once more.

During her stay at Carson Valley, a little incident happened. The men were all out cutting hay and preparing for winter and she, with her little children, were in the tent. She was mixing bread when she noticed her tent became dark and she looked up to see three Indians in the doorway. The middle one had a gun drawn on her while the other two had bows and arrows. One of them could speak fairly good English. When she looked at him he said, "Where is your man?"

She told them that they were out in the fields. He then wanted to know how many men there were and what they were doing. They asked many questions about the men and finally wound up by asking how much flour she had. His next questions were how many guns do you have and about the bullets and caps and powder, but she made out like she didn't understand. She continued with her work while he stood and talked to her making out that she was not afraid. After her bread was mixed, she went to wash her hands. As she went by her cupboard where she kept a pistol, she stopped and picked it up and said, "See, I have a gun too."

The Indians put down their arms laughingly and gave her one half a dollar, took some flour and left. She told her husband from then on she wanted a man left with her or she would go with him out in the fields.

In the spring of 1858, Mariah with the other settlers left their homes in Bountiful with sad hearts, not knowing if they would have a place to come back to or if they would ever come home again. Most of the men had been called to arms to keep Johnston's Army from coming into the valley. A few were left to set fire to the homes and all the buildings. It was a sad group of people who wound their way south onto the banks of Utah Lake, west of Provo. This little settlement was named Shanghi. It was here her fourth child was born, a daughter Viola on the 16th of June 1858. While she was in bed with the new baby it rained so hard they had to jack the front end of the wagon box up so the water could run out the back end. After the scare was over, Mariah returned to Bountiful and on to Call's Fort where she remained until 1860. When she again came back to Bountiful, she put her older children in school.

She buried two little girls in less than two months: Vententia, age six years, died April 19, 1862; and Vilate, age ten years, died June 10, 1862. This left her with her oldest son, Israel and a daughter, Viola. On October 20, 1863, another son, Anson Bowen, was born at Bountiful, and on April 8, 1866, a daughter, Harriet Louisa, was born. When this baby was five months old, due to unpleasant conditions, she took her baby and left on horseback. She made arrangements with Mary, Anson's first wife, to care for the other children. She went to southern Utah where her mother lived and left the baby there. She then taught school. She was later divorced from Anson. When Louisa was five years old, she was returned to Bountiful to live with her father and her brothers and sisters.

Mariah later married William Loyd and two children were born from that union: a son, Albert and a daughter Mary. The son died as a child and Mary lived to maturity, but died a short time before she was to have been married.

During Mariah's life with Mr. Loyd, they made their home in Idaho near and around Downey and Lava Hot Springs once known as Dempsey. After Mr. Loyd's death, Mariah returned to Bountiful to make her home near her children. She had contracted asthma and her health was not very good.

The remainder of her life, she spent in Bountiful doing much to help raise her grandchildren and caring for others less fortunate than she.

Mariah had a wonderful memory. When she was passed ninety, she would sit and tell of her rich experiences. She remembered poems and songs that she had learned in her youth. She loved to piece quilts and knit lace. She was always busy doing the things she loved and keeping up her home, which was located to the side of her son, Israel.

In the few months that she lived in her ninety-first year she pieced eight ocean wave quilts, each containing 2381 pieces.

Mariah passed away July 26, 1924. Her life was one of service and sacrifice, both for the Church and for the people who were to follow after her to make a better place for us all to live. May the memory of this courageous soul be ever in the hearts of her posterity that they would remember her noble deeds and her wonderful accomplishments, and may her name always be held as high as her ideals.

This life sketch of Ann Mariah Bown Call Loyd was written by Leona George Smith and Hilda Mann Condie