

## Harriet's Story – Sorting Fact From Fiction

### Branch 6

#### Janet Few

*There is a great deal of speculation and contradictory opinion online about Harriet and her family. This article attempts to look at the facts surrounding her life.*

Allegedly, Harriet Jory was born in the Cornish village of Quethiock on 28 January 1818.<sup>i</sup> She was the seventh daughter and eighth child of the eleven children born to Thomas and Mary Jory née Braund (branch 6).<sup>ii</sup> Thomas was an agricultural labourer.<sup>iii</sup> Harriet was baptised at Quethiock on 13 February 1820.<sup>iv</sup> The birth year, 1818, is taken from her first marriage and her death registration. It is more likely that she was born in 1820, as all her siblings seem to be baptised shortly after birth and this accords with her age in the 1851 census.<sup>v</sup>

In 1841, Harriet was living with her parents and younger brother James in Quethiock Village and was working as a servant.<sup>vi</sup> On 2 April 1848, Harriet, a thirty year old 'servant maid', married labourer James Rundle in St. Ives, Cornwall.<sup>vii</sup> James died the following year, at the age of thirty four<sup>viii</sup> and Harriet remarried on 18 November 1850, to William Mitchell,<sup>ix</sup> a twenty one year old mine engineer from Gwennap in Cornwall. They settled in Fore Street, Liskeard and are enumerated there in the 1851 census.<sup>x</sup> Most descendants give William Mitchell the middle name Tremaine and a William Tremain (sic) Mitchell was baptised in Gwennap in 1830,<sup>xi</sup> Tremaine was his mother's maiden name.



**William Mitchell**

William and Harriet's daughter, Mary Jane, was born in Liskeard later on 7 May 1851. A second daughter, Elizabeth Ann, was born in Lambeth, Surrey in 1860. In the 1861 census, Harriet, Mary Jane and Elizabeth Ann can be found living at 25 Florence Street, Deptford, south London. They are in the household of Harriet's brother-in-law, Henry Mitchell. Henry had been baptised into the Bible Christian Church.<sup>xii</sup>

Interestingly, Henry is described as an engineer and a preacher for the Latter-Day-Saints. Henry's wife and four sons are also in the household.<sup>xiii</sup> Some believe that William left for the USA in 1863 on the *City of Washington* but his absence from the UK 1861 census make it more likely that he had already left by then.

The family story is that William Mitchell left for South America, as did many miners at this time, hoping to earn enough to enable the family to settle in America. In 1869, he sent for Harriet and their daughters, asking her to meet him in New York but he never arrived and was not heard of again. Other researchers believe that this is the William T Mitchell who died in Philadelphia in 1898.

It seems likely that, like Henry Mitchell, William and Harriet had joined the Latter-Day-Saints, as Harriet took the girls to Salt Lake City where she remained for the rest of her life. Henry Mitchell and family had emigrated in 1863, later moving to San Jose, California.<sup>xiv</sup> It doesn't seem that Harriet accompanied them and her whereabouts between 1863 and 1869 are unknown. In 1869, Harriet and her daughters departed from Liverpool on the *Minnesota* and called at Queenstown, Ireland, before disembarking at New York.<sup>xv</sup>

There is a belief in online trees that Mary Jane married Andrew Benzon in 1870 in Salt Lake, in which case this appears to be a polygamous marriage for Andrew. The practice of polygamy was not renounced by the Latter-Day Saints until 1890. I can find no documentary evidence that supports this marriage, although a Clarabelle Benzon, born in 1882, is with Mary and her husband John Tippetts as a 'step-daughter' in the 1900 census.<sup>xvi</sup> What is clear is that on 27 April 1899 Mary Jane married John Harvey Tippetts and they moved to Idaho,<sup>xviii</sup> where Mary died in 1917.<sup>xix</sup>

On 28 July 1878 Elizabeth Ann Mitchell was married at Salt Lake to Franklin D. Newberry Morris. After the birth of five children, they moved to Alberta, Canada and the 1901 census makes it clear that the family were members of the Latter Day Saints church.<sup>xx</sup>

Harriet died on 17 October 1883 of old age in Salt Lake. She is recorded as the widow of William Mitchell.<sup>xxi</sup> She was buried as a member of the Church of Latter Day Saints.<sup>xxii</sup>

## Notes

- i. The death registers for Salt Lake available on [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). The 1851 census for Fore Street, Liskeard, Cornwall HO107 1902 folio 188.
- ii. The baptism register of Quethiock, Cornwall.
- iii. The baptism register of Quethiock, Cornwall. The 1841 census for Quethiock, Cornwall HO107 133/8 folio 12.
- iv. The baptism register of Quethiock, Cornwall.
- v. The death registers for Salt Lake available on [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). The 1851 census for Fore Street, Liskeard, Cornwall HO107 1902 folio 188.
- vi. The 1841 census for Quethiock, Cornwall HO107 133/8 folio 12.
- vii. The marriage register of St Ive, Cornwall.
- viii. The death registers of the General Registrar.
- ix. Family Search [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).
- x. The 1851 census for Fore Street, Liskeard, Cornwall HO107 1902 folio 188.
- xi. Index to baptism registers of Gwennap.
- xii. Falmouth Bible Christian Circuit baptism registers.
- xiii. The 1861 census for 25 Florence Street, Deptford, Kent RG9 394 folio 80-81.
- xiv. 1910 census San Jose, California.
- xv. Passenger list for the *Minnesota* via [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).
- xvi. The 1900 census for Preston, Oneida, Idaho, USA. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).
- xvii. Western States Marriage Index 1809-2011 via [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).
- xviii. The 1900 census for Preston, Oneida, Idaho, USA. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).
- xix. Idaho death records via [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).
- xx. The 1901 census for Alberta Canada.
- xxi. The death registers for Salt Lake available on [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).
- xxii. Unsubstantiated family story.