

Who's Who in the William Pickett Family --

Agnes M. Coolbrith Smith Pickett and Susanna M. Rogers Sanjiovanni Pickett and their blended families.

-- Compiled and with notes by Merridy Jeffery

----- From Cowans Auctions 2006 Listing -----

Portrait of Two Identified Mormon Children,

Price Realized: \$7,475.00

Auction: [2006, Spring Decorative Arts, June 17 Art- American](#) > [Other](#) > [Other](#)

www.cowansauctions.com archives.



ca 1847, oil on canvas, unsigned. A charming portrait of two children —the boy is seated on a bench beside a trellis covered with grapevines, peeling a piece of fruit, and the girl is kneeling beside him, holding a small bunch of grapes, her left hand outstretched to accept a piece of the peeled fruit. In the background is a river landscape with a wagon train, an allegorical element commonly found in contemporary and historic Mormon art. In its original, gilt frame; 38" x 31" (w/o frame), 44.5" x 37.5" (w/frame).

An old paper label tacked to the back of the frame reads *GGR Sangiovanni Deadwood So Dak*, and the lot is accompanied by an 1821 Italian bible that is inscribed *Susanna M. Sangiovanni A Present From Mrs. Rossetti March 1890* along with two manuscript letters: one providing the history of the bible's ownership; another, a brief statement concerning GGR Sangiovanni's birth and ancestry. The letter specific to the bible bears an additional ink signature by Sangiovanni,

notarized by a Deadwood notary in 1908. That signature and the label attached to the painting appear to be by the same hand and from about the same period.

Genealogical research in conjunction with information gathered from LDS Church archives suggest that the two subject children are Guglielmo Giosue Rossetti Sangiovanni and Agnes C. Smith, painted in St. Louis, Missouri, ca 1847.

Guglielmo Giosue Rossetti (Sanjo) Sangiovanni (1835-1916), the only child from the marriage of Benedetto Sangiovanni and Susanna Mehitable Rogers, was born in London. Susanna was the oldest of eleven children born to David White Rogers and Martha Collins, both early Mormon converts. Martha was running a rooming house in the Battery section of New York when Susanna met Benedetto in 1833. Benedetto, an Italian Revolutionary in exile, sought accommodations at the rooming house where he became attracted to Susanna, persuaded her to marry him and took her to London in search of a better life. There they had a son, nicknamed Sanjo.

Susanna was happy enough early in her marriage, but she grew to fear her husband because he was jealous of the attention she paid to their son. She also believed that he had not abandoned his revolutionary activities. About this time, she and Sanjo were secretly baptized by Mormon missionaries, and shortly thereafter, with the help of these missionaries, she and her son fled England, leaving Benedetto behind. The missionaries had instructed her to take a train to Liverpool, where she could then get passage to New Orleans. Susanna and Sanjo arrived in Louisiana in 1846, and they then made the journey up the Mississippi River to Saint Louis.

While in Saint Louis, Susanna became a plural wife of William Pickett, who has been described as a “lukewarm” Mormon. When Pickett had learned that Susanna was pregnant, he left them [Susanna and Sanjo], moving to California with his other wife, Agnes Coolbridge Smith, their twins, and Agnes’ children from her first marriage. Pickett later became an alcoholic and abandoned his family in 1870. Susanna’s son, Horatio, was born in 1848. She and her two sons then moved west, to Utah, in 1852, to be near her family.

Agnes C. Smith (1836-1873), eldest child from the marriage of Don Carlos Smith and Agnes [Moulton] Coolbrith, was born in Kirtland, Ohio. Don Carlos was a brother of Joseph Smith, founder of the LDS Church. She and Don Carlos had three children (Agnes in 1836, Sophronia in 1838, and Josephine in 1841), two of whom lived to adulthood. After Don Carlos’ death in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1841, Agnes Coolbrith married Joseph Smith, a marriage that was kept secret. After his assassination in 1844, she married to George A. Smith, a cousin of Joseph and Don Carlos. She did not, however, follow Smith west to Utah, and in the spring of 1847, she became the plural wife of William Pickett, and they moved to Saint Louis. About 1848, shortly after the birth of twins, Pickett, his wife and all of the children left the Mormon Church (and Susanna and Sanjo) and migrated to California.

Based on this information, for a relatively short period in Saint Louis in 1847-1848, during the period of the plural marriage between Pickett, Agnes Coolbrith and Susanna Sangiovanni, the children born of Agnes Coolbrith and Don Carlos Smith were living in the same household with Susanna’s son, Sanjo. Also during this time period, Agnes and William’s twins were born [William, Jr and Don Carlos, Jr], and just after this household broke up, Susannah gave birth to Horatio. Within this polygamous household, the two oldest children were Sanjo and Agnes, who were both between eleven and thirteen years of age. Although the children in the portraits look to be slightly younger, these two are the most likely subjects of the portrait offered here.

Sangiovanni was a very active young man and faithful to his church. According to manuscripts located in the University of Utah Marriott Library, specifically the *Eleanor C.W. Jarvis Diary and Autobiography*, he taught school at the Dixie Cotton Mission at St. George, Utah in the winter of 1868 and 1869. He moved to Salt Lake

City around 1870, married to Mary Ann Brown, and fathered two daughters. It is recorded in *The History of Museums in Utah* that he became the first caretaker of the Deseret Museum located in Salt Lake City, which is currently known as the LDS Museum of Church History and Art. Apparently, sometime after 1873, Sanjo had lost the faith and moved his family to Deadwood, South Dakota (then the Dakota Territory), where he became a saloonkeeper. Mary Ann died in Deadwood in 1886. According to the notarized letter included with this lot, Sanjo remained in Deadwood until at least 1908, but sometime before his death in 1916, he returned to Utah. He is buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Salt Lake City.

Since the tag on the frame indicates that Sanjo owned this portrait late in life (having taken it from Utah to Deadwood), and since, stylistically, the portrait dates to the 1840s, it is almost certain that Sanjo is the boy portrayed, and thus the girl is very likely little Agnes, the niece, and step-daughter of LDS founder, Joseph Smith.

Extensive genealogical and historical research accompanies the painting which supports the identification of the children.

Condition: Recently conserved, report available.

May 2017 – Notes by Merridy Jeffery, g-g-grand-daughter of Susanna Mehitable Rogers Sanjiovanni Pickett. I am not a descendant of either one of these children, but descend through her other son, the Horatio Pickett line.

This William/Agnes family has been a little confusing to make sense of since Agnes's full name (the mother) would be Agnes Moulton Coolbrith Smith Smith Smith Pickett – and this Cowans story sets the record straight, showing that **Josephine was not a daughter of Susanna** as is sometimes erroneously stated. Nor was she the daughter of Wm Pickett, but his step-daughter. As shown by her wiki page, as being the first Poet Laureate of California (1915-1928), she was the daughter of Don Carlos Smith. Though un-related to the Hall-Pickett family of southern Utah, Josephina was an interesting person for sure. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ina_Coolbrith

Early life



*Ina Coolbrith was born **Josephine Donna Smith** in [Nauvoo, Illinois](#), the last of three daughters of Agnes Moulton Coolbrith and [Don Carlos Smith](#), brother to [Joseph Smith](#)^[7] Coolbrith's father died of [malarial fever](#) four months after her birth,^{[8][9]} and a sister died one month after that;^[7] Coolbrith's mother then married Joseph Smith, in 1842, becoming his [sixth or seventh wife](#). No children came of the union—Agnes felt neglected in her unfruitful Levirate marriage, the only such marriage of Smith. In June 1844, Smith was killed at the hands of an anti-Mormon mob. Losing her faith and fearful of her life, Coolbrith's mother left the Latter-day Saint community and moved to Saint Louis, Missouri, where she married a printer and lawyer named William Pickett. Twin sons were born to the couple, and in 1851 Pickett traveled overland with his new family to California in a wagon train. On the long trek, the young Ina read from a book of*

Shakespeare's works and from a collection of Byron's poems. As a ten-year-old girl, Ina entered California in front of the wagon train with the famous African-American scout Jim Beckwourth, riding with him on his horse, through what would later be named Beckwourth Pass. The family settled in Los Angeles, California, and Pickett established a law practice.

To avoid identification with her former family or with Mormonism, Ina's mother reverted to using her maiden name, Coolbrith. The family resolved not to speak of their Mormon past, and it was only after Ina Coolbrith's death that the general public learned of her origin.^[10] Coolbrith did keep in touch with her Smith relations, however, including a lifelong correspondence with her first-cousin [Joseph F. Smith](#) to whom and for whom she frequently expressed her love and regard.^[11]

Coolbrith, sometimes called "Josephina" or just "Ina", wrote poems beginning at age 11,^[12] first publishing "My Ideal Home" in a newspaper in 1856, writing as Ina Donna Coolbrith.^[5] Her work appeared in the Poetry Corner of the Los Angeles Star, and in the California Home Journal. As she grew into young womanhood, Coolbrith was renowned for her beauty; she was selected to open a [ball](#) with [Pío Pico](#), the last Mexican governor of California.^[13] In April 1858 at the age of 17, she married Robert Bruce Carsley, an iron-worker and part-time actor, but she suffered abuse at his hands,^[5] and further emotional pain came from the death of the couple's infant son. An altercation between Pickett and Carsley resulted in a bullet mutilating Carsley's hand, requiring amputation.^[7] Carsley accused Coolbrith of infidelity,^[14] and she divorced him in a sensational public trial; the dissolution was final on December 30, 1861.^[7] Her later poem, "The Mother's Grief", was a eulogy to her lost son, but she never publicly explained its meaning—it was only upon Coolbrith's death that her literary friends discovered she had ever been a mother.^[7] In 1862, Coolbrith moved with her mother, stepfather and twin half-brothers to San Francisco to ward off depression, and changed her name from Josephine Donna Carsley to Ina Coolbrith.^{[7][9]} Coolbrith found work in San Francisco as an English teacher.^[9]

Sanjo's step-brother: Horatio Pickett (b. May 1847) Family

Horatio Pickett's family is a little confusing as well. For clarification, Horatio married

1) Harriet Josephine Johnson b. 17 JUL 1850 m. Horatio Pickett 31 MAY 1868 d. 9 DEC 1892

Their children were:

- 1) Horatio, Jr. b. 12 JUL 1869 d. 27 JUL 1870
- 2) Josephine (Doda "Dodie") b. 1871 - m. Charles Workman in 1892 and had 11 children.
- 3) Harriet "Hattie" b. 1873 - m. Arthur Woodbury in 1893 and had 10 children.
- 4) and 5) Twins Martha and Mary b. and d. 29 AUG 1875
- 6) Susanna "Zannie" b. 14 JAN 1877 - m. Henry W. Gubler 1 JAN 1895 and had 12 children
- 7) Leo b. 11 MAR 1879 m. Elizabeth Monk and they had 9 children.
- 8) Blanche b. 15 DEC 1881 d. JAN 1882
- 9) Huron b. DEC 1882 d. JAN 1891
- 10) Henry b 19 JUN 1885 m. Agnes Squire 11 DEC 1907 They had 4 children.
- 11) Ellis b. 4 DEC 1887 m. Ruth Morris 22 DEC 1912 They had 6 children.
- 12) Charles Edgerton b. 5 JUN 1890 m. Jane S. Walkingshaw 21 FEB 1919 they had 3 children.

REF: *In Search of Living Water Biography of Susanna Mehitable Rogers Sangiovanni Pickett Keate* – By Jane Rae Filler Topham, Orem UT



As explained by my mother Alaina Newhart, nee Glenna Hall . . .

"No, they weren't polygamists. After all those children, Grandpa's first wife died, and he married the best friend of his oldest daughter, Josephine. The new wife, my grandmother, Philena Hunt, helped raise the children, then had plenty of her own kids, too. My mother, Ann was part of the 2nd family."

2) Philena Hunt b. NOV 1871 m. Horatio 8 AUG 1895 d. 27 JUL 1939

Their children were:

- 1) Philena "Philene" b. MAY 1896 m. d. 1983
- 2) Ann b. 3 JUL 1897 m. 1917 Alvin Hall d. 1991 They had 9 children.
- 3) Jessie b. 1904 d. 1904
- 4) Laverne b. 1906 m. Malin Cox d. 1989
- 5) Una b. 1911 m. Nolan Anderson (div I think) d. 2005

At the time of the 1900 Census, Susannah Mehitable Rogers Sanjiovanni Pickett was 87, was widowed from her 3rd husband, Keate, and living with Horatio and Philena in St. George.

Her story is well worth reading as she was rubbing elbows with famous people as a child. Her father entertained the brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, she met General Lafayette, and later when married to Benedetto Sanjiovanni, a sculptor, she met many important people in London and in her travels. She led an illustrious life, indeed.

It's no wonder that both her sons were interesting, too. Horatio led the choir for 25 years in St. George, ran the funeral parlor, and still had time to create 17 children.