

The Saga of Ann Ashcom Clinger Hayes Feavel

George R. Blake
December 1979

The reader may think it surprising to present Ann Ashcom Clinger's life as a saga. She was a typically unassuming wife and mother, who did not influence her husband's travel was tedious. She had her family spend their summers in different places and led her family through various changes in their lives.

The Saga of Ann Ashcom Clinger Hayes Feavel

To our knowledge no one had a comprehensive knowledge of her personality, experiences or traits. We have no photographs or sketches of her, which we know only through the years of her life gleaned from birth, death, census, and Clinger records that have been recorded through tedious genealogical records. The genealogical photographs Ann and Kathryn Deane Blake (these sisters married John Clinger, their mother was Lily Clinger Garrison) have over the past fifty years, placed together what we believe is a complete picture of her life. Starting from family tradition, her life is a story of inquiry, traveled in the places and times, and the inspirations they have been led to.

Anyone who reads Ann's story will find a space in which she will be found living out their own kind of life and the things they did in their lives.

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The first section of the story has a certain tolerance and harmony that is greatly contained in a few places of her life and places where this saga was played out. A full understanding of her life is not possible without a knowledge of her travels to Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin and the rest of the world. It is hard to believe what Ann must have seen and felt. It is a great privilege that I have had the privilege of going to these places and of contemplating what she and her family traveled as they did.

I first presented this biography in 1979 but did not distribute it. We have since learned many more significant details of her life and times. Still there are a few unknown details that others will find in the course of their study of her life.

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My daughter with the name of Ann Blake is a great great granddaughter of Ann Ashcom Clinger.

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The Saga of Ann Ashcom Clinger Hayes Feavel

George R. Blake¹
December 1999

The reader may think it pretentious to portray Ann Ashcom Clinger's life as a Saga. She was a typically uneducated eighteenth century woman who did not influence large numbers of people. She created no organization, left no tangible letters or other memoirs. Yet she was pivotal in a family that participated in significant events spanning the continent at a time when travel was tedious. She lived her long, eventful life amidst vastly notable events, times and places and led her family into six different States, leaving it dispersed in four of them.

To our knowledge no one left a description of Ann's personal characteristics, appearance or traits. We have no photograph or sketch of her. She is known only through the events of her life gleaned from birth, death, census, and Church records that have been exposed through tedious genealogical research. Her great great granddaughters Areta and Kathryn Sumsion Blake (these sisters married Blake cousins; their mother was Lily Clinger Sumsion) have, over the past fifty years, pieced together what has become a fairly complete and coherent picture of her life. Starting from family traditions, they have dug into libraries, written numerous letters of inquiry, travelled to the places she lived, followed hunches and hints. Through sheer inspiration they have been led to documents that tell of her, her family and her moves.

Anyone who ponders Ann's meager history is fascinated by the sweep of circumstances and space in which she and her family lived out their existence. They were churned by well-known historical happenings and became involved in wrenching events that scattered them forever apart.

The final account of her long journey has a certain coherence and harmony that is greatly enriched by a knowledge of landscapes and places where this saga was played out. A full understanding is grasped only if one travels to Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin and Utah and sees and feels for himself/herself what Ann must have seen and felt. I am grateful that I have had the privilege of going to these places and of contemplating where and why this family moved as they did.

I first prepared this biography in 1984 but did not distribute it. We have since learned many more significant details of her life and times. Still there are yet unknown details that others will find as they take up the study of her history.

¹2215 North 1400 East, Provo, Utah 84604. E-mail 104607,2276@Compuserve.com
My deceased wife, Kathryn Sumsion Blake is a great great granddaughter of Ann Ashcom Clinger.

Ann Reader Ashcom began her life in St. Mary's County in southern Maryland². We do not have a birth date though her age in later census, pension and obituary records extrapolates to a birth year of 1788.

Though there were Ashcoms in Jamestown VA as early as 1622, only 15 years after establishment of the Virginia Colony³, the first solid family ties are with John and Winifred Ashcom (Ashcombe) who emigrated possibly from Berkshire England to Maryland in 1650⁴. There John took up a land grant from Lord Baltimore dated 1658 "to said John Ashcom for transporting into the Province, himself, his wife, four sons, and six servants in the years 1650-51". The Ashcom family also acquired land grants in the years after 1650 in adjoining Calvert and Dorchester counties in Maryland. Ann Ashcom's father Nathaniel Ashcom, was the great great grandson of John and Winifred Ashcom.

Facts of Ann's early life come from a typewritten manuscript by W. T. Martin discovered in the Bedford PA Library⁵. This short history of the family written in 1837 gives essential information about the Ashcom family and about Martin's sister-in-law, "Nancy" Ashcom, as he calls her.

Martin states that his wife Amelia's first recollection was that her parents, Nathaniel Ashcom and Susan Reader, lived in St. Marys County in southern MD.

"Mr. Ashcom was then a planter, or farmer, in good circumstances, with negro slaves sufficient to work the farm; but not being accustomed to take 'the laboring oar' himself, and trusting too much to slaves, together with some unavoidable accidents or misfortunes, he became embarrassed, and his farm and slaves were sold from him; and he moved to Hagerstown MD when Amelia was about six or seven years old."

²Genealogical records compiled by Areta S. Blake. Areta, with help from professional genealogist H. M. Hegyessy jr., has been a tireless and determined researcher in finding, compiling and collecting records of the Ashcom family.

³Hotten, John Camden. *Lists of Emigrants to America, 1600-1700*. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore MD. 1962.

⁴A detailed documentary history of the Ashcom family in 17th and 18th century Maryland was supplied to Areta S. Blake in 1997 by Stephen W. Johnson, 229 Hickory Heights Drive, Bridgeville PA 15017. Johnson is presumably the author. Early details of the family cited in this history are from this source.

⁵Martin, William T. *Family Register*, 2 January 1837. This is a 10 page typewritten manuscript found by sheer inspiration by H. M. Hegyessy in the Pioneer Library, P. O. Box 421, Bedford PA 15522. Facts about the family and their moves within Maryland and Pennsylvania are from this vital manuscript.

Since Amelia was born in 1790, we know that this move took place in 1796 or 1797. Ann would have been eight or nine years old.

The Ashcom family moved again after a few years, according to Martin, first to Mercersburg PA 16 miles north of Hagerstown, and sometime later west about 32 miles to Bloody Run PA in the year 1807 or 1808. Bloody Run is a drainage stream running from the north into the Juniata river at present-day Everett PA⁶. Contemporary maps show a town of Ashcom, Providence Twp. PA two miles west of present-day Everett and about five miles east of Bedford PA. The Ashcom parents died at Bloody Run, Nathaniel in 1810 and Susannah in 1814, but at least one of Ann's brothers remained there. Ann would have been 19 or 20 years of age at the time the family moved to Bloody Run.

Ann Ashcom married Henry Clinger about 1812. We have not been able to find a record of the marriage, nor of Henry's birth. We know virtually nothing about his early years except that he, as well as Ann, was born in Maryland⁷.

(George) Henry Klinger and his wife Eva Zoeller living in Williamsport MD near Hagerstown had a son Adam, born in 1784. We believe that our Henry Clinger, born about 1787 was Adam's brother⁸. We need further verification of Henry's parents, and of his birthplace and date.

Henry's mother, Eva Zoeller Klinger died 29 September 1788 in Williamsport and is buried in the Riverview cemetery⁹. (George) Henry Klinger subsequently married Mary Shearer, a daughter of Archibald Shearer who had a large farm just across the Potomac river in Virginia (West Virginia since 1863).

Census records for MD for 1790 show a Henry Klinger with 2 white males over 16 years and a

⁶*Map of Pennsylvania, 1787.* (reprinted 1937). University of Minnesota Map Library.

⁷Henry's son James declared his parents birthplace as Maryland in the 1880 U.S. census for Utah, page 296.

⁸H. M. Hegyessy jr. A.G., concluded, "Progress on the Clinger Family is also possible if we can accept the extremely strong circumstantial evidence seeming to connect the older Henry Klinger of Washington Co. MD and Berkeley Co. West VA. However the loss of probate documents in Berkeley County and lack of church records prior to 1788 in Washington Co. MD, may preclude a final, positive identification even though I, usually skeptical, believe that your Henry was the son of the older (George) Henry Klinger". *Genealogical Research Report of Field Trip, 27 July 1984.* The circumstantial evidence he mentions is found in his report and in the present account.

⁹Evangelical Lutheran Church records for Williamsport MD., Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown Md. Riverview cemetery headstones recorded in 1942.

Henry Clinger with 3 white males and 1 female over 16. The double entry is a mystery. The second could refer to Henry, his two sons Adam and Henry, and Archibald his son by Mary Shearer who was born about 1789. One of these family heads was George Henry Klinger, son of Alexander Klinger who emigrated from Germany to Berks Co PA in 1749. Deeds confirm that (George) Henry Klinger sold his Williamsport, Wash. Co. MD property and moved to Berkeley County Va after 1794¹⁰. where he is shown in the 1800 census. He had additional children with Mary Shearer.

Eva Zoeller Klinger's sons Adam and Henry would have been about four and one year old respectively at her death. There are no records of where or by whom they were raised.

The only other contemporary Klinger family living in that part of Maryland was a Dewalt Klinger, his wife and five children, two males and 3 females, whose farm was near George Henry Klinger's farm, but north across the Conococheague Creek in Maryland. Dewalt and his family appear only in the 1800 census, not in either the 1790 or the 1810 or subsequent censuses.

We do not know where or when Ann Ashcom met Henry Clinger. It may have been in Hagerstown MD when they were in their teen years or in Bedford Co. PA in their early twenties. At the time of their marriage, about 1812, he was serving in the Pennsylvania Volunteers in the War of 1812¹¹ indicating that he had lived in PA before volunteering.

Henry and Ann Ashcom Clinger's first son, James was born in Bedford Co. PA 3 February 1813 soon after Henry's military service concluded. A second son William was born in 1815. A daughter Ann was born about 1817¹².

About 1820 when the children were 3, 5 and 7 years old, the young family moved west to the vicinity of Marietta, Washington County, Ohio¹³. In this migration they followed a well-traveled route used by westward migrating Pennsylvanians as Ohio lands were opened up for settlement in the years following the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Their route took them northwest from Bedford County to Pittsburgh about 120 miles, then further northwest and south on the Ohio river about 150 miles beyond Pittsburgh.

¹⁰Hegyessy Report, 3 September 1984 on file.

¹¹Second Regiment (Piper's), Capt. Solomon Sparks Company, Pennsylvania Riflemen. Service from September 25 to November 24, 1812. Documents from US National Archives on file.

¹²A gap in years between children makes this date reasonable. But we need confirming dates for both William and Ann.

¹³W. T. Martin, Op. Cit.

The Clingers apparently stayed in Ohio about two years, certainly parts of two years. Henry Clinger was shown on the tax roll of Salem Township, Washington County, in 1821. They owned 1 horse and 2 neat cattle¹⁴ valued at \$50. A daughter Martha Matilda Clinger was born in Salem Township, Washington Co. OH, 23 December 1820¹⁵

Tragedy befell Ann and her small family sometime in 1821 when they lost their husband and father... We do not know the date or cause of Henry's death, only that Ann alone is listed on the 1822 tax roll¹⁶. It was a major tragedy for the young widow and four small children to be left alone on the frontier, far from family and freinds.

Ann stayed in Ohio for awhile as she struggled to cope with the tragic loss, provide for her children and reorient her life. She must have sold the horse and one of the cows to sustain her family, for the 1822 tax roll shows she had only one cow valued at \$10..

Ann was now a 33 year old widow with four little ones to provide and care for. What's more she found herself living on the frontier, far from family and friends. In any time or place that is a great burden without the support of family. She had little choice but to return with her small children¹⁷ to her loved ones in Bedford Co. PA. We assume she went to Ashcom PA, where her brother Charles and her sister Betsy, married to John Chamberlain, lived.

A Methodist circuit had been organized in Bedford County in 1809 and Charles Ashcom was the leader¹⁸. Ann's brother John lived ca 35 miles west-northwest of Bloody Run at the base of Laurel Hill in Somerset Co. in 1814; her brothers James and John later lived in Westmoreland Co. still further north and west¹⁹.

About two years after Henry's death, the 35 year old widow Ann Ashcom Clinger married Plynn

¹⁴"Neat" refers to an animal of the ox family; cow, steer, etc., according to Webster's 1957 New World Dictionary.

¹⁵Martha's birthdate was given by her when she received a patriarchal blessing years later. Patr. Bl. 5:176. She gave her birthplace as Ohio several times in her life.

¹⁶William T. Martin, Op. cit., states that Henry died in Ohio.

¹⁷W. T. Martin, Op. Cit. states two children, but his information is incorrect. The 1820 US census for Ohio lists three children, and Martha Matilda was born after the census was recorded.

¹⁸*History of Bedford and Somerset Counties*, p 306. Incomplete and uncertain reference. I had access to a few pages copied by Genealogist H. M. Hegyessy in 1984. GRB.

¹⁹W. T. Martin, Op. Cit.

(Pliny) Hayes at Summerhill, Cambria Co. PA 12 April 1823²⁰. This was the third marriage for the 66 year old widower²¹ who practiced Medicine there. W. T. Martin didn't know Ann's second husband's name, but recalled that he was a Botanic Physician. Plynn Hayes was also a Revolutionary War Veteran, having been born in Russell, Hampden Mass in 1757²².

Ann Ashcom Clinger Hayes' children, ranged in age from three to ten years at the time of her marriage. They undoubtedly lived with her and Pliny Hayes in Summerhill, Cambria County PA. Taking on a family of that size would be quite an undertaking for a second husband, 66 years old, whose own children had grown up and left home.

The 1840 census shows that the girls, 23 year old Ann and 20 year old Martha, were living apart from their mother and step-father by that time, but the boys, James 27 and William 25 were still counted in the household.

Ann and Plynn Hayes lived together for eighteen years until he died in Richland Township, near Salix, Cambria County PA in 1841. We would assume from the long, steady marriage that he and Ann fulfilled each others emotional and physical needs. And now she was a widow again.

Two months after Plynn Hayes' death, on May 7, 1841 Ann's daughter Martha Matilda Clinger married Joshua Helser in Armstrong County PA²³. They both gave their residences as Armstrong Co which is about 40 miles northwest of Cambria County where Ann and Plynn Hayes had lived. Joshua was born in Milford, Pike County PA along the eastern boundary of PA. April 12, 1812²⁴.

²⁰Pension application of Ann Clinger Hayes dated 3 Sept 1858, LDS-FHL film 971236, "Selected Pension files".

²¹His first wife was Priscilla Whipple according to Betty J. Mulhollen, Genealogist in Ebensburg PA and a DAR file on Pliny Hayes, film 233398; He had a son Warren, b 29 Sept 1795, Bedford PA and a daughter Lovina by his second wife whose name Lovina gave as Keziah.

²²Family Group Sheet submitted by Inez Bushnell Allred, 945 Fairview Avenue, Salt Lake City UT.

²³Nauvoo marriages HA 38.13 C65X, p 6; Also *Times and Seasons* 2:453, 7 June 1841.

²⁴Obituary, *The Saints Herald*, 51:606. June 29, 1904. Joshua gave other places as his home. When he received a Patriarchal blessing, he gave Mifflin Co (Film 392658 5:176). Wilfred Helser, told me in 1988 that his grandfather had said that he left his home at age nine, and never returned. The family must have moved to Mifflin Co. at that time In the RLDS Early Reorganization Records of Union Branch WI, he gave Juniata Co. Juniata Co was formed from Mifflin Co in 1831 when he was nineteen years old. Actually Pike Co. was organized from Wayne Co when Joshua was two years old, so unbeknown to Joshua he was literally born in Wayne Co.

The Helsingers came in contact with Mormon missionaries soon after the founding of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Joshua had joined the Church in 1834²⁴ when he was only 22 years old. Four years later, eighteen year old Martha Clinger also joined the LDS Church in Allegheny PA²⁵. We assume that they met in the Church group in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County or in Armstrong County PA where they were married.

There is a nine year period of uncertainty in Ann Clinger Hayes life after the death of her second husband. She could have stayed with her daughter Ann Daniels in Pennsylvania, but there is no evidence of it. More likely she also joined the LDS Church²⁶, and migrated west to Illinois with Martha and Joshua. There is no certain record of her whereabouts until 1850 when she appears with Martha and Joshua in the US Census in western Iowa. And in 1858 she was living with them in Wisconsin. We assume that she lived with or near her daughter Martha Helser for many years after Plynny Hayes' death.

We know, as will be documented, that Martha Helser and her brothers William and James Clinger moved to Nauvoo, Illinois the Mormon city on the Mississippi soon after Hayes' death. We also know that Plynny Hayes' daughter, Lovina Hayes Johnson, by his second marriage was in Nauvoo in 1846, that she had probably joined the LDS Church as early as 1830, and had been with the Saints in Liberty Missouri even before the city of Nauvoo was founded in 1839²⁷. The Helsingers had two children born in Nauvoo in 1842 and 1843²⁸. It is assumed that the family stayed there four or five years. Martha's brother James Clinger and probably also William Clinger and their mother Ann, had come to Nauvoo by the spring of 1842. James was baptized there on April 18, 1842 by William Smith brother of the Prophet Joseph. On August 25, 1845 he received a Patriarchal Blessing under William Smith's hands²⁹.

²⁴LDS Family History Suite 2. LDS vital records.

²⁵Black, Susan Easton, *Marriages in the Nauvoo Region, 1839-1843*.

²⁶Ann's obituary in "*The True Saints Herald*" of April 15, 1875, p. 255, states that "she joined the Church in the days of Joseph, the Martyr". Joseph Smith died in 1844.

²⁷References in Black, Susan Easton. *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 21:995. She had a child near Kirtland, OH about 1830, another in Liberty MO in 1834, and received both a Patriarchal Blessing (Book of Patriarchal Blessings 5:569), and had been endowed in the Nauvoo temple (Nauvoo Temple Endowment Register, 1945-46) 21 January 1846.

²⁸Family records: Lydia Ann, 2 March 1842 and Lovina, 6 March 1843.

²⁹Book of Patriarchal Blessings Index, 5:177.

Ann's daughter Ann Clinger Daniels remained in PA after her mother and brothers left. The 1850 US census of Fairfield, Westmoreland County PA, just east of Pittsburgh shows Ann and Anthony Daniels, blacksmith, and their children Morris P. 5, Mary S. 3, and Alice A. Daniels 1.

After their marriage and move to Nauvoo, Ill. Joshua and Martha Helser were tenants on a Section of land just south and east of the Temple. (Section 6, T6 R 8)³⁰.

While in Nauvoo, both the Helsers and the Clingers undoubtedly knew and saw Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet and Church founder, and also Brigham Young. They must have experienced the deep despair with their fellow members when Joseph was gunned down at nearby Carthage Ill. in June of 1844.

After Joseph's death events came to an accelerating climax for the Latter-Day Saints in Nauvoo³¹ Brigham Young and other apostles returned from missions when they heard of Joseph's martyrdom. Some of the people claimed that Joseph had named his eleven year old son Joseph II to succeed him. In addition there were other claimants, putting his succession in dispute. The various contenders posed a great threat to the unity of the Church.

Two of the several claimants were Sidney Rigdon and James J. Strang. It was partially settled with Rigdon in an open-air meeting on August 8, 1844 when the congregation voted unanimously, after a subtle confrontation between him and Brigham Young, to support the Twelve Apostles as the governing authority of the Church now that Joseph was gone. By early 1846 Rigdon's claim was a minor threat compared to that posed by James J. Strang. Strang, a charismatic leader had organized and lead a congregation at Voree, Wisconsin. Over the next eight or ten years he converted 3,000 to 4,000 members including several outstanding personalities such as Apostles, the Stake President of Nauvoo, and the Joseph Smith's own mother.

There were also mounting threats outside the church. Mobs were burning crops and houses, sacking farms, beating, tarring and feathering the occupants, and threatening assassinations of Mormon leaders. The Federal Government was rumored to be near intervention which Brigham Young feared would prohibit the movement of the Mormons westward.

In the terror-filled and lawless atmosphere in the fall of 1845 and the winter of 1846 it became clear to Brigham Young that the Saints must evacuate Nauvoo. He and an advance Company

³⁰Sectional map of Hancock County, Illinois. From info center, LDS Church, Nauvoo, ILL.

³¹The cataclysmic events are widely recorded in the Church history. I have drawn upon information in Bennett, Richard E. *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846-1852*, Chapter 1; and in Davis, Inez Smith, *The Story of the Church*, Herald Publishing House, Independence MO, 1981, Chapter 36.

began the exodus in the dead of winter in February 1846. Most of the estimated 15,000 others abandoned their homes and lands and settled in temporary shelter outside Nauvoo. The majority followed Brigham westward through Iowa to Council Bluffs. A few remained in Nauvoo, fought a short but heated battle with the mobs in September 1846, before being driven out in what was locally known as "the Battle of Nauvoo".

In the turmoil of late 1845, 33 year old James Clinger married 17-year old Harriet Chapin in Nauvoo on December 7. Soon before that James Clinger was given a Patriarchal blessing by William Smith on the 25 August³².

We do not know whether the Helsers and the Clingers personally suffered the torment of burning and looting. If not, they certainly heard vivid accounts and threats of the depredations. Like all faithful members they probably continued to work one day a week building the Temple during their last years there. There is no record that they were sealed by the Holy Ordinances carried out in the Temple in the last months before the exodus.

Along with virtually the whole population of Nauvoo, about 15,000 people, the Clingers and the Helsers made their departure in 1846. We do not know exactly when they left. What is known is that James and his family had gone some 25 miles northwestward into Van Buren Co. Iowa Territory sometime before November of 1846³³. The Helsers had gone some 40 miles south and were in Adams County ILL by the following April³⁴.

By the early part of 1848 William Clinger was in Garden Grove, a way-station along the Mormon route through Iowa toward Council Bluffs where he signed an acknowledgement of support of the Quorum of the Twelve dated 1847 with Brigham Young as newly chosen President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints³⁵. A few months later on April 6, 1848 he made a contribution to the Church in Garden Grove³⁶.

Garden Grove is located about 120 miles west of Nauvoo and about 50 miles south of Des Moines, IA. It is quite possible that the Clingers and possibly the Helsers, like many others, spent the summer of 1846 and 1847 there farming or clearing land to provision later parties of Saints making the trek from Nauvoo to Council Bluffs.

³²Book of Patriarchal Blessings Index 5:177.

³³Their first child, Martha, was born there 19 Nov 1846.

³⁴Their third child, Harriet, was born there 4 April 1847.

³⁵LDS Family History Library Film 001923. Brigham Young was sustained President of the Church at Council Bluffs on 27 December 1847.

³⁶After nine persons were baptized at the river, two Elders were chosen as "Pioneers of the Camp". William Clinger gave 5 cents to fit out the two brethren. Film 001923.

By early 1848 the Clingers were in the Council Bluffs area in western Iowa where James Clinger's son, James Henry, was born at Pigeon Creek in Pottawattamie County 10 February 1848. By 1849 the Helsers were also in Pottawattamie County in western Iowa. Both families stayed there for three or four years as each had a child born in 1851. William Helser was born in January and Elmira Clinger 25 August of that year. William Helser's son, Wilfred Helser, told me in 1988 that his father, William Helser, was born "on the Plains", but Wilfred didn't know just where he meant.

Both the Clinger and Helser families were living in Pottawattamie County Iowa when the census was taken in 1850³⁷. The Helser children, Lydia and Charles, for unknown reasons, are not listed in the census. It does show Mrs. Clinger, aged 62, (Ann Reader Ashcom Clinger Hayes) living with Matilda and Joshua Helser at that time. It also shows Ellin Clinger, aged 5, living with them. Ellin is unknown to the family at this time.

Sometime in the years 1844 to 1852, Joshua was ordained an Elder in the Church³⁸.

In the spring of 1852 James Clinger and his family started their trek west toward the Great Salt Lake³⁹. Their further story is told in Family Histories and in a recent essay⁴⁰. A record was made of their journey⁴¹. William Clinger went west to Salt Lake City a year later, in 1853⁴².

We don't know when Ann Ashcom Clinger Hays and the Helsers left Council Bluffs Iowa, but it could have been in the same spring of 1852. James' daughter, Martha, born in November 1846, remembered that her grandmother, Ann, and Aunt Martha (Helser) came to visit the Clingers⁴³. It is doubtful she would have remembered that incident before 1852.

The Helsers and Martha's mother Ann journeyed eastward to southern Wisconsin. By that time they had six children. There they joined the Mormon faction under the leadership of James J. Strang whose headquarters were initially in Voree, near Burlington, Wisconsin. By early 1850

³⁷U.S. Census, Iowa. Film 442963; Clingers p. 102, Helsers and Mrs. Clinger, p 152

³⁸Obituary, RLDS *Saints Herald*, 51:606. June 29, 1904.

³⁹Third Company under Capt. Thomas Howell. LDS Journal History, 32 Dec. 1852, p. 15.

⁴⁰Blake, George R., 1995. *James and Harriet Chapin Clinger's Search for Faith, 1840-1860*.

⁴¹*James Linforth's Journal*, Millennial Star 19:27-28.

⁴²Capt's. Daniel A. Miller and John N. Cooley. LDS Journal History, 9 Sept 1853, pp. 2, 9 and 21. In all cases he was with the John N. Cooley wagon.

⁴³Reminiscences of Martha Clinger Boren about 1932 from an interview with Nell Sumsion. Nell was a sister in law to Lillie Clinger Sumsion, the latter being Areta and Kathryn Sumsion Blake's mother

only a few of Strang's followers remained in Voree, the majority having moved, with him to Beaver Island in Lake Michigan in 1848-49⁴⁴ where he established his headquarters.

By 1852 there were about 1700 Mormons on Beaver Island. There was reportedly a "steady tide" of emigrants from Beaver Island southeast to the Michigan Mainland at Pine River (later to be called Charlevoix), Emmett Co. MI in the Fall of 1854⁴⁵. The Helsers sixth child, Martha was born in Plane, Emmett Co. Michigan on 10 May 1854. There is currently no such town as Plane, and there was dispute at that time whether or not Beaver Island was part of Emmett County, so it is unclear whether she was born on the Island or on the Michigan mainland in present day Emmett County..

Two years afterward, in June 1856 forty three year old Strang was fatally shot by two dissident members of his "kingdom" and died 23 days later in Voree, WI where he was taken after the shooting. Mormon colonists on Beaver Island and on the Michigan mainland were driven out that summer, many fleeing to ports on the Wisconsin coast. The Helsers were presumably with them.

Apparently Martha Clinger Helsers was pregnant during that forced evacuation, for she bore a seventh child, Joshua (George Myron), in the Milwaukee Fifth Ward, 29 October 1856⁴⁶. The family settled down in Milwaukee for about 13 years where they had two more children, Stephen in 26 July 1859 and Sarah their ninth and last child in 1863⁴⁷. Though the family had later connections to Burlington, about 25 miles southwest of Milwaukee, as we shall see, it is unclear why Stephen was born in Burlington while the family continued to live in Milwaukee.

In 1858, Ann Clinger Hayes, aged 70, applied for a veteran's pension as Ann Clinger Hayes in Greenfield, Milwaukee Co., WI, a Milwaukee suburb about eight miles southwest of the city center. Witnesses to the pension application were her son-in-law and daughter, Joshua and Martha M. Helsers. They declared that they had known Ann since 1818, and Pliny Hayes for 20 years before his death on 8 March 1841⁴⁸.

Sometime in the next four years (probably 1859 or 1860) Ann Reader Ashcom Clinger Hayes married Thomas Feavel, apparently a widower, born in England 6 January 1783. In 1860 both he and Ann were in their seventies, he 77 and she 72 years. She had been a widow for about twenty years.

⁴⁴Van Noord, Roger, *King of Beaver Island*, 1988. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago Ill.

⁴⁵Van Noord, Roger, Ob. cit. p. 221.

⁴⁶Beloit WI newspaper obituary, 1944.

⁴⁷LDS Family History library, Film 553232, p. 23.

⁴⁸Selected Pension files, R14702. LDS-FHL film 971326.

The circumstances that brought them together were unusual. The Helsers' oldest daughter, Lydia Ann (Ann's granddaughter), had married Thomas' grandson, Stephen Feavel, about 1857⁴⁹. Through that connection the "old Folks" probably met. The acquaintanceship expanded into a romance for the grandparents..

We know that Thomas and Ann were married by 1862, for together with the Helsers they joined the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (RLDS) Church⁵⁰. Thomas Feavel, Ann E. Feavel (sp), his grandson Stephen Feavel and his wife Lydia Ann Helsers Feavel were all baptized on June 23, 1862. Three days later Joshua, Martha, Lovina, Harriet, William and Martha Helsers followed them. All are listed on the RLDS Union Branch record in Grafton WI. Thomas Feavel's son Edward, Stephen's father, and his wife Laura also joined the RLDS Church five years later on 28 July 1867⁵¹. Like the Helsers, and his wife Ann, Thomas had already joined the LDS Church earlier in 1836 in Jefferson County N.Y.⁵²

Thomas and Ann were now united in marriage, but they were also united in a common faith with several of their children and grandchildren. Their marriage lasted for about eight or nine years until Thomas' death 18 April 1868⁵³

Grafton, WI where the RLDS Union Branch was located is about 20 miles north of Milwaukee WI and 28 miles from the suburb of Greenfield where the Helsers apparently continued to live. The trip to Church services must have been a taxing one. And the RLDS record shows that they withdrew from the Grafton record in July of 1863. They appear on an undated list of the Burlington Branch, so one assumes that they either moved there or decided to attend that Branch.

In 1869 Joshua and Martha Helsers bought land in Burlington WI some 25 miles southwest of Milwaukee⁵⁴. Their daughter Lydia Ann Feavel and her husband Stephen and also Martha's widowed mother Ann also lived in Burlington⁵⁵. Ann was now 80 years old. She had moved

⁴⁹They had a child born in 1858.

⁵⁰Early Reorganization Records, 1852-1871, p. 203-204. See also Black, Susan Easton, Membership in the RLDS Church, p. 741-742.

⁵¹Black, Susan Easton, Members of the RLDS Church, 1872-1905. pp. 741-743.

⁵²Black, Susan Easton, *Members of the LDS Church, 1830-1848*. *Op. cit.*

⁵³Black, Susan Easton, *Op. Cit.*, p. 742.

⁵⁴Racine Co. WI Land and Property Deeds, volume 62. LDS-FHL microfiche.

⁵⁵1870 WI census. LDS-FHL film 553232, p. 23..

regularly in her lifetime across seven States.

The Helsers sold their one acre lot in Burlington in 1874. The land, described in Sec 30 Twp 3 Range 19 in Burlington, Racine Co., WI⁵⁶. was conveyed by deed dated 7 February 1874.

Despite her age, Ann was compelled to move once again if she kept up with her family. Her last move was with the Helsers northward 150 miles to Shiocton, Outagamie Co. WI probably in the early spring of 1874.

She didn't live to know that her family was done wandering. She scarcely lived long enough to learn to appreciate the beautiful northern Wisconsin. She didn't even live to see the year end, for she died in Shiocton 6 December 1874 at age 86⁵⁷, "of old age". One must agree, she had a right to her rest!!

Martha and Joshua's family finally took root there, bought farms, joined new communities and settled in.. Ann's only other daughter had remained 600 miles behind in Pennsylvania. And her two sons were establishing themselves 1200 miles to the west in the Rocky Mountain valleys.

This was a sturdy and enduring lady! She had lived a life on the move, walking or riding in bumpy wagons. She had experienced and survived the torments and persecutions that her people had endured in Nauvoo, Illinois. She had traversed the frontier Iowa territory with its muddy roads, scarcity of food and hordes of refugees. So far as we know she never owned a house.

Would she grieve at these privations, this unceasing restlessness her family had shared in? Did she wish she had never left Maryland or Pennsylvania? There is no evidence that she suffered remorse or grief or regret. She had three good marriages, was surrounded by children and grandchildren here and there as her life proceeded. She would undoubtedly have liked to again see those who dropped off and went their separate ways along the journey.

Her life passed as if she had been swept along through life by tides of events, and by winds of time associated with organizations in whose orbits she chanced to come. People of her time accepted God's will for them and didn't fight it. I think it probable that she too was content with her eventful and unforgettable life that ended in peace in beautiful Wisconsin.

I think she would have liked to know that her sons and daughters finally settled down, colonized the States in which they chose to live. I think she would be pleased to read this biographical story of her family and what became of them, written down more than 200 years after her life began. Perhaps she knows already! I suspect she would like to fill in the gaps, clarify the uncertainties we story tellers struggled with. Maybe at some future time she will be able to tell us the whole saga and introduce us to all the dear family and friends she knew and loved. We will surely be eager to meet her!

⁵⁶LDS-FHL film 1398536, p. 318.

⁵⁷The True Latter-Day Saints Herald, No. 8, p. 255. April 15, 1875.

Family Group Record

Husband Nathaniel Ashcom		
Born	Abt 1755	Place , St Marys, MD
Chr.		Place
Died	1810	Place Bloody Run, W Providence Twp, Bedford, PA
Buried		Place
Married		Place
Husband's father	Samuel Ashcom	
Husband's mother	Sarah Cartwright	

Wife Susan (Susannah) Reader		
Born	Abt 1760	Place , St Marys, MD
Chr.		Place
Died	20 Mar 1814	Place Bloody Run, W Providence Twp, Bedford, PA
Buried		Place
Wife's father	John Reader	
Wife's mother	Ann Warren	

Children List each child in order of birth.

1	M	John Ashcom
	Born	Abt 1779 Place
	Chr.	Place
	Died	Abt 1 Jun 1835 Place , Westmoreland, PA
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	
	Married	Place

2	M	Charles Ashcom
	Born	1781 Place , St Marys, MD
	Chr.	Place
	Died	Bef 27 Mar 1871 Place
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	Mary A. Diehl
	Married	Place

3	M	Thomas Ashcom
	Born	Abt 1783 Place
	Chr.	Place
	Died	Place
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	Henrietta
	Married	Place

4	F	Sarah Ashcom
	Born	Abt 1785 Place
	Chr.	Place
	Died	Abt 1801 Place
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	
	Married	Place

5	F	Ann Reader Ashcom
	Born	1788 Place St. Marys County Maryland
	Chr.	Place
	Died	6 Jan 1874 Place Shiocton WI
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	Henry Clinger
	Married	Abt 1812 Place
	Spouse	Plynn Hayes
	Married	12 Apr 1823 Place Allegheny, Summerhill, Cambria, PA
	Spouse	Thomas Feavel
	Married	Abt 1860 Place

6	M	James (twin) Ashcom
	Born	1790 Place , , MD
	Chr.	Place
	Died	Place
	Buried	Place
	Spouse	
	Married	Place

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Family Group Record

Husband	Nathaniel Ashcom		
Wife	Susan (Susannah) Reader		
Children	List each child in order of birth.		
7	F	Amelia Ashcom	
	Born	1790	Place MD
	Chr.		Place
	Died	16 Jan 1885	Place Columbus, Franklin, Ohio
	Buried		Place Greenlawn Cem, Columbus, Ohio
	Spouse	William Thomas Martin	
	Married	27 Sep 1814	Place , Somerset, PA
8	F	Betsy Ashcom	
	Born	Abt 1793	Place
	Chr.		Place
	Died		Place
	Buried		Place
	Spouse	John Chamberlain	
	Married		Place

Notes

HUSBAND - Nathaniel Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by William T. Martin (son-in-law) in the files of Hist. Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of his wife and all of his children. "He moved to Hagerstown when Amelia was about six or seven years old. After residing there some years, they removed to Mercersburgh, Pennsylvania, and from there to Bloody run about the year 1807 or 8."

WIFE - Susan (Susannah) Reader

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 29 Jan 1837, written by Wm. T Martin (son-in-law) in the files of the Hist Soc Pioneer Library, at Bedford, PA which gave information of her.

CHILD 1 - John Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. Inf of him from a letter written by Wm T Martin (bro-in-law), dated 2 Jan 1837, in the files of the Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, Pa. "His wife had died some years before" (referring to her husband's death). "His children, I am not acquainted with, not even by name."

CHILD 2 - Charles Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter written by Wm T Martin (bro-in-law), dated 2 Jan 1837, in the files of the Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of him. Will proved 1871, Probate Records, Bedford Co., PA

CHILD 3 - Thomas Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm T Martin (bro-in-law) in the files of Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of him. He "married a widow worth some property, and has lived probably ever since his marriage either in or near Centreville on the Eastern Shore in Maryland."

The Ashcombe Ped Chart (F985188) gives Henrietta as the name of his wife.

CHILD 4 - Sarah Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm T Martin (bro-in-law) in the files of Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of her. "Sarah (who died at about sixteen years of age)."

CHILD 5 - Ann Reader Ashcom

Field trip made by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr. (A.G. Mid-West) for Areta S. Blake and further research by him. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm. T. Martin (bro-in-law) in the files of Hist. Soc. Pioneer Library, Bedford, Pa., which gave the names of her parents, brothers and sisters, and husband. William gave her name as Nancy, but she was known as Ann. She, her parents and siblings were born in St. Mary's Co MD.

Her birth date is calculated from her pension application, dated 3 Sep 1858, "Mrs. Ann Hayes, who being duly sworn, says she is seventy years of age and resides in the town of Greenfield, County of Milwaukee and State of Wisconsin, that she was married to Pliny Hayes (who was a soldier in the War of 1776) in the spring of 1823, . . . that her name before marriage was Ann Clinger."

Family Group Record

Husband Nathaniel Ashcom

Wife Susan (Susannah) Reader

Notes

CHILD 5 - Ann Reader Ashcom (Continued)

Martha and Joshua Helser sold their land in Burlington in 1874, and moved north to Outagamie Co WI in 1874. . Ann moved with them, but died within the year of 1874 at Shiocton WI Her obituary is in the True Saints Herald, April 15, 1875, page 255. See THE HELSER FAMILY OF WISCONSIN, compiled by George R. Blake, 1990. LDS LDS Family History Library, No. 929. 273 H369 bg. Fiche area 610054.

CHILD 6 - James (twin) Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm T Martin (bro-in-law) in the files of Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of him. "He married and settled in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania." Date and state of birth from 1850 census, Columbus, Ohio (444672 p 72) which gave Amelia's (his twin) age as 60, born in MD.

CHILD 7 - Amelia Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found an original letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm T Martin (husband) in the files of Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of her. He wrote this to his children, Matilda and Franklin, telling them about the Martin and Ashcom families. He writes: Sept 27, 1814, we were married by John Tautlinger, Esq., at John Ashcom's, who was then clerk at Scott's Forge at the foot of Laurel Hill in Somerset Co., PA, and the second day started (in a gig) for Ohio. . . We started again for Columbus and arrived here on the 5th day of April 1815. The town was not then three years old, having been laid out in the summer of 1812." 1850 census, Columbus, Ohio (444672 p 72) gave her age 60, born in MD. Death date from records in the file of James Martin (William's grandfather) which ASB received from the Pioneer Library.

CHILD 8 - Betsy Ashcom

Res by H. M. Hegyessy, Jr (A.G.Mid-West) who made a field trip for Areta S. Blake. He found a letter, dated 2 Jan 1837, written by Wm T. Martin (bro-in-law) in the files of Hist Soc Pioneer Library, Bedford, PA, giving inf of her. "Betsy married John Chamberlain. They lived in the neighborhood of Bloody Run."

Family Group Record

Husband Henry Clinger					
Born	Abt 1787	Place	Maryland	LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened		Place		Baptized	
Died	1821	Place	Washington Co, Ohio	Endowed	
Buried		Place		Sealed to parents	
Married	Abt 1812	Place		Sealed to spouse	
Husband's father					
Husband's mother					

Wife Ann Reader Ashcom					
Born	Abt 1788	Place		LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened		Place		Baptized	
Died	6 Dec 1874	Place	Shiocton WI	Endowed	
Buried		Place		Sealed to parents	
Other Spouse Thomas Feavel					
Married	Aft 1858	Place		Sealed to spouse	
Other Spouse Pliny (Pliney) Hayes					
Married	12 Apr 1823	Place	Summerhill, Cambria Co. PA	Sealed to spouse	
Wife's father					
Wife's mother					

Children List each child in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates	Temple
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1	M	James Clinger				
		Born	3 Feb 1813	Place	Maryland	Baptized
		Christened		Place		Endowed
		Died	6 Sep 1884	Place	Pleasant Grove	Sealed to parents
		Buried		Place	Provo	
		Spouse				
		Married		Place		Sealed to spouse

2	F	Ann Clinger				
		Born	1816	Place	Bedford Co, PA	Baptized
		Christened		Place		Endowed
		Died		Place		Sealed to parents
		Buried		Place		
		Spouse				
		Married		Place		Sealed to spouse

3	M	William Clinger				
		Born	1817	Place	Bedford Co, PA	Baptized
		Christened		Place		Endowed
		Died	Abt 1854	Place	Salt Lake City	Sealed to parents
		Buried		Place		
		Spouse				
		Married		Place		Sealed to spouse

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Family Group Record

Husband Henry Clinger				
Wife Ann Reader Ashcom				
Children List each child in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
4	F	Martha Matilda Clinger		
	Born	23 Dec 1820	Place , Washington Co, Ohio	Baptized
	Christened		Place	Endowed
	Died	27 Sep 1886	Place Appleton, WI	Sealed to parents
	Buried		Place Bovina Cemetery, Shiocton, WI	
	Spouse	Joshua Helser		
	Married	7 May 1841	Place Nauvoo, Hancock	Sealed to spouse