

Edward Peas Duzette

Written by his great-granddaughter, Edith Louise Wire

(Transcribed and edited by his third-great-grandson, Jesse S. Crisler, 1 December 2003)

They arrived in Great Salt Lake City, called Mormonville, Great Basin, Mexico, Territory of Deseret, with the Heber C. Kimball Co., 23 September 1848.

He went back many times and guided other companies out here – the Missouri Co. and others.

His picture, but incorrect data, is in *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*.

He owned a grant of land given to him by Brigham Young, twenty by twenty rods, on the northeast corner of Main and 4th South. The streets Exchange Place and Cactus Street are now on part of it. The Newhouse Building, Grand Hotel, etc., are part of it. It was in the famous old Eighth Ward Square in Pioneer Ward. Among the first settlers of the ward were Addison Everett, Edward Peas Duzette, Absalom Free, etc. Addison Everett was the first bishop; he was ordained to that position 22 February 1849. Among his counselors were Priddy Meeks, Edward P. Duzette, and Absalom Free. They were set apart 25 March 1849.

It was here the baby Mary Emma, called Emma, was born 16 October 1848, and where Eliza Ann Cowan Duzette died 24 November 1850. She was the first woman to die in Salt Lake, Territory of Utah, and the first person to be buried in the City Cemetery. She died of erysipelas. She who had often dried the tears of orphans and performed uncounted acts of benevolence and kindness left her own little girls as orphans. The little wooden headstone remained in the cemetery for a century and was found by her great-grandchildren, Lester and Edith Wire. There is now a granite marker placed there by Edith Wire.

His sister, Clarissa Duzette, and her husband, Lewis Robison, owned the property adjoining his, reaching to State and 4th South. This was also a grant of land from Brigham Young, and where Eliza Ann Cowan, called "Lida" Duzette, died. She was called the "sleeping beauty" as she slept for many weeks before her death.

He was chief of music of the Heber C. Kimball Co.

The Nauvoo Brass Band was the first of its kind to cross the Great Plains, and the trials of the journey were eased by the band's music and the evening entertainment it provided. They not only gave life and color to the camp struggles but were dauntless scouts as well.

His music was consoling to the pioneers as they moved further into the desolate prairie wilderness. It lifted their spirits when mid-winter clamped them in its freezing grip, as it had during balmy October days when they picked hazel nuts along the brushy stretches.

His drumming was legend. He made the drum a solo instrument and could imitate anything, even any birdcall or birdsong on his drum.

When they hunkered around the evening campfire, he stimulated their drooping spirits with his exhibitions of skill on the drum, then helped them to carefully plan to move forward to meet the challenge of the next day.

He composed his own music, and one of his original drum scores is in the Brigham Young University.

He was set apart and given a commission by Brigham Young for his efforts to advance musical appreciation in early Utah. Brigham Young made him colonel in the Nauvoo Legion and Chief of Music of the Territory of Utah. A copy of the commission, originally written in beautiful penmanship, follows:

Brigham Young  
Governor of the Territory of Utah

To all to whom these presents shall come:

Know ye, that Edward P. Duzette, having been duly appointed to the office of Chief of Music in the General Staff of the Nauvoo Legion, and of the Militia of the Territory of Utah, I, Brigham Young, Governor, for and on behalf of the people of said Territory, do commission him Chief of Music in the General Staff with the rank of Colonel of the Nauvoo Legion, and of the Militia of the Territory of Utah, to take rank from the 12th day of April 1852, being the time of his appointment to office.

He is therefore, promptly and diligently, to discharge the duties of said office, by doing and performing all things thereunto belonging; and I do strictly require all officers and soldiers under his command to be obedient to his orders; and he is to obey all such orders and direction, as he shall receive from time to time, from the Commander-in-Chief, or his superior officer.

In Testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of said Territory to be affixed at Great Salt Lake City, this eighth day of March, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the seventieth.

Brigham Young

By the Governor  
A. W. Babbitt  
Secretary

He played at the groundbreaking of the Salt Lake Temple.

He organized in the early fifties and was the instructor of the famous old Pioneer Martial Band. It was also called Duzette's Band and Duzette's Martial Band, a band that in the first years of the Territory added spirit and enthusiasm to many an occasion. He played at the groundbreaking of the Salt Lake Temple in 1853.

He was music master, dancing master, and fencing master and traveled among the different communities, giving instruction in these arts to help advance culture in Utah.

In June 1855 he called the musical talent of Salt Lake together and organized the Deseret Philharmonic. He also helped established a music hall. This became the famous old Social Hall on State Street below Brigham Street or South Temple and the first little theatre in America. Years later the little theatre movement started from this.

He was called by President Brigham Young to help colonize and settle "Dixie" in Southern Utah. In the wild colorful land of the south with its fertile valleys he first founded and colonized the towns of St. George and Toquerville in Washington County and Rockville in Kane County. He established forts at each settlement. "The first settlement in Washington County was made in May 1857," according to Bancroft's *History of Utah*. Only one survivor of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, a small child, was raised by a family from this community.

In St. George he organized a Fife and Drum Corps of 120 men, a group trained to be in readiness to give the alarm in case of an Indian attack. This group answered roll call each morning at sunrise.

His large bass drum is at the daughters of the Utah Pioneers Museum.

At the time of the invasion of Johnston's Army the Utah army had gone to Winter Quarters at "Old Fort Bridger." The Nauvoo Legion was called in and concentrated at Camp Weber situated at the mouth of Echo Canyon. The army was brought up from Fort Bridger and joined them there. This was called the Echo Canyon War.

Many journals and diaries of the time, now yellowed with age, mention him. The journal of Amasa Lyman's wife says, "Brother Duzette and family just drove up." She was a cousin of the Hurst family at Blanding.

His artistry always gave him much acclaim.

He died of consumption. The *Deseret News* said, "Major Edward P. Duzette, celebrated drummer of the Nauvoo brass band, died at Rockville, Kane Co., Wedn. Dec. 9, 1874."

He had a black tin box in which he kept money, jewels, family papers, and his will. He kept it locked and carried it with him everywhere. When he died, Adeline's grandson, Edward Petty, and his wife burned and destroyed most of the things before the rest of the family arrived. Neither the box nor its contents were ever found.

This many-daughtered man was anxious for a son to carry on the name of an illustrious race but had nine daughters. His joy knew no bounds when his tenth child was a son.