



## GEORGE LAKE 1838-1898

George Lake was born on 15 September 1838 in Scott County, Illinois, to James Lake, Jr. and Philomela Smith. He was the sixteenth child of his father and the fourteenth child of his mother. They had both been married previously. His parents had left Kirtland, Ohio because of persecution.

They rented a farm near Springfield until the saints gathered in Nauvoo. They then moved to another farm about fifteen miles from Carthage. After Joseph Smith was killed in Carthage, George's parents moved to Nauvoo to be with the saints. George began attending school at the age of 6. The Saints formed the Nauvoo Legion for protection and the children had their own "wooden gun and paper cap company" that George was a member of. His father and brothers helped build the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House just as they had helped build the Kirtland Temple.

George suffered from rheumatism his entire life. At the age of seven, John Smith, uncle of the Prophet Joseph Smith, gave him a special blessing.

In 1846, mobs drove the Saints from their homes. "On 24 February 1846 the temperature dropped to twelve degrees below zero, freezing the Mississippi River and permitting great caravans to cross on the ice." The family was part of a company of over six hundred wagons that crossed the ice of the Mississippi River. They traveled over 500 miles and settled in the fall in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

George's father was called as bishop in Council Bluffs. There was sickness and hardship. George and his brother, William Bailey, were both "prostrated with fever and ague" during the winter. Other family members and George helped pound the corn into flour for them to eat.

In 1848, his family moved to Holt County, Missouri. They moved there "for the purpose of gathering the necessary means to [prepare for our] journey westward as we were very much reduced in finances caused by being robbed and driven from our possessions."

In the spring of 1850, the family traveled to Florence Nebraska. George's father was appointed a captain of 50. The family had "some forty cows and loose stock, over one hundred sheep, six yoke of oxen, three brood mares [and] two good wagons well laden with supplies." The trip was 1200 miles and took four months.

The company arrived in Salt Lake in the fall. George's father attended general conference and a few days later the family "continued our march to Ogden where we soon set about preparing for winter." They settled in Ogden Fort (Lorin Farr Fort) for the winter. They

built log hut and stayed in the fort because the Native Americans had made raids on the saints.

In the spring the family moved to Four Mile Creek which later became the 8<sup>th</sup> District and then Harrisville. They moved their cabin from Lorin Farr Fort and rebuilt it in Harrisville. This was about 16 September 1850, around the time when Urban Stewart accidentally shot Shoshone Chief Terikee. Local leaders avoided a war with the Native Americans by acting quickly.

Thelma Brown Hardy's history of Harrisville states that "the first homes built in Harrisville were of logs brought from North Ogden and Garner Canyons. The roofs were of dirt, and the cracks were filled with mud. In the spring the rains and the sunshine made the grass grow on the roofs, and it looked as if lawns had been planted there. These houses were one-room at first; but as the family grew and became more prosperous, more rooms were added."

Because of the Native Americans, in July 1853 President Brigham Young told the people to band together in forts for safety. They moved two miles south of their farm to Bingham's Fort. One hundred ten families gathered there. They continued to farm their land, even though they were living in the fort but would always take their guns with them. George's father had a large herd of sheep, so George herded sheep until the winter of 1855 when they sold all of their sheep.

In October 1853, the family attended General Conference in Salt Lake City. During the conference George's father was called to be the first patriarch of the Weber Stake. George received his patriarchal blessing while in Salt Lake, and his parents were sealed.

In July 1857, Johnston's Army headed towards Utah. George enlisted to go with the men of the Utah Militia. During the campaign they took 50 prisoners and went with 50 other men to escort these prisoners out of the territory about 150 miles away. When they returned, the Saints had moved south with only a few men left to guard their possessions, and they were told to burn their fields if necessary. George was one of the few who remained until fall.

Before George left for the regiment he had planted his wheat. He relates that "in the fall I harvested near 300 bushels of fine wheat—double what I ever had raised from the same sowing and without rain or irrigation." After the trouble was over, George went to Spanish Fork and moved his father's family back to Ogden, making two trips with an ox team.

On 13 May 1860, George married Louisa Ann Garner Lake, the young widow of his brother William Bailey Lake. Louisa Ann was the mother of eight of his children: Olive Ann, James Bailey, Emma Jane, Chauncey William, David Edmond, Rachel Louisa, George Ephraim, and Hyrum. In the fall of 1861, he received his endowments and his wife Louisa was resealed to her first husband, with George acting as proxy. President Young saw that George was sad because his wife could not be with him in eternity and he told him, "You have done

your duty my boy and your reward shall be greater than though this woman were your own wife but go to now, and be here in two weeks with two more for yourself.” George relates that he “pled for a little more time stating that ‘I wished to make wise choices.’ So as not to have to trouble him for divorces this he thought would be a good plan but said he, ‘do not delay.’”

On 4 October 1862, George married Sarah Jane Hill. She was the mother of 13 of his children: George Amasa, (Jr.), James Richard, Rhoda Jane, Esther Ann, Sarah Ellen, Joseph Alvin, Harvey, Clara, Barnabas, Benjamin Franklin, Alonzo, Lydia Catherine, and Cyrus.

In the spring of 1865, George was called as Sunday School Superintendent. He held the position until 1869. In April 1866, the Harrisville District was reorganized and George was a counselor to President Daniel B. Rawson. In the spring of 1868, the Harrisville Relief Society was organized and his wife, Louisa Ann Lake was appointed as president.

On 7 December 1868, George married for the third time to Mary Edda Foster. They were married in the Endowment House. They made quite a couple as she was 5'1" tall and he was 6' tall. She was the mother of eleven of George's children: Philomela, Samuel George, Moroni Charles, William Bailey, Jacob Alma, Mary Ellen, Sabra, Willard, Ida May, Nephi, and Ammon.

In the spring of 1869, George attended general conference, and church leaders called him on a mission to England. He traveled to Liverpool, England. He served in the Nottingham, Durham, and Newcastle Conferences. During his time as a missionary he baptized over 200 people. He returned to America in June 1871. Instead of going home, George Lake took a train to Canada to fill a short mission to Canada. He visited his father's relatives in Ontario, Canada. He tried to preach the gospel to them, but found “that their hearts was to (sic) strong to receive the truth.”

George arrived home in Ogden on 4 August 1871 after being away for almost 2 ½ years. In the fall of 1871, George and his family were called to move to Oxford, Idaho. In November of that year, he was called as bishop of the Oxford Ward. In the summer of 1872, he moved his aged parents to Oxford. In January 1873, he was elected Selectman for Oneida County.

At the end of 1874, the U.S. Marshals had an indictment for George's arrest for plural marriage. This forced him to camp out and leave his family for three months, then come back and have to leave again. Finally he traveled to Salt Lake where he was assigned to go to the Little Colorado Mission in Arizona. Mary Edda accompanied him while his first two wives stayed behind. Sarah Jane joined him in December 1877 with her children. Louisa Ann never left Oxford.

Life in Arizona was hard. The people were trying to live the United Order. The settlers abandoned Obed, their first camp in the fall of 1877, because of crop failures and malaria.

They next settled in Brigham City and soon leaders called George as bishop. In 1879, he served a short mission to Verde Country.

In 1881, he moved his large family to the Gila River country. Malaria struck again and so the Lakes moved to Forest Dale in the Mogollon Mountains to improve their health. They were blessed temporarily while they were living there. However, in April 1883, they left because they were living on the Indian reservation. They finally settled in St. David, Arizona, in August 1884. George purchased a farm and built two nice houses.

In January 1885, George was called to go to Mexico. In 1885-86, the family arrived in Asension, Mexico. They lived in Casas Grande. Once again illness came to the area and three of George's children died. Erastus Snow set George apart as a doctor sometime during this time period. He served as a doctor to the Lamanites and the Mexican people.

In 1889, George returned to Utah with Sarah Jane and was sealed to his parents along with his siblings in the Logan Temple. On their way back, they met Sarah Jane's mother at the Manti Temple and she was sealed to her parents.

In 1888, George bought a farm in San Francisco about 5 miles north of Casa Grande. This farm became the nucleus of Colonia Dublan. By August 1896, it had 40 families and over 300 people. It included a flour gristmill and a large cooperative department store.

On 23 Mar 1898, George Lake died of pneumonia at the age of 59. He had been called Dr. Laguna by the Mexicans because he served a mission as a doctor to the Mexican people and the saints in the Colonies. He was buried in Colonia Dublan, Chihuahua, Mexico. He was the father of 32 children, with only 16 living to marry.

#### **SOURCE:**

Jeffrey, Janet Franson. *History of the James Lake, Jr. Family*. Murray, Utah: Roylance Publishing, 1990, 247-274.

Bingham's Fort	Lake, Louisa Ann
Chief Terikee	Lake, Louisa Ann Garner
Foster, Mary Edda	Lake, Lydia Catherine
Four Mile Creek	Lake, Mary Edda Foster
Garner, Louisa Ann	Lake, Mary Ellen
Gheen, Esther Ann Pierce	Lake, Moroni Charles
Hill, Sarah Jane	Lake, Nephi
Johnston's Army	Lake, Olive Ann
Lake, Ida May	Lake, Philomela
Lake, Alonzo	Lake, Philomelia Smith
Lake, Ammon	Lake, Rachel Louisa
Lake, Barnabas	Lake, Rhoda Jane
Lake, Benjamin Franklin	Lake, Sabra
Lake, Chauncey William	Lake, Samuel George
Lake, Clara	Lake, Sarah Ellen
Lake, Cyrus	Lake, Sarah Jane Hill
Lake, David Edmond	Lake, Willard
Lake, Electa Snyder	Lake, William Bailey
Lake, Emma Jane	Lake, William Bailey
Lake, Esther Ann	Lake, William Bailey
Lake, George	Lorin Farr Fort
Lake, George Amasa (Jr.)	Pierce, Esther Ann
Lake, George Ephriam	Rawson, Daniel B.
Lake, Harvey	Smith, John
Lake, Hyrum	Smith, Joseph
Lake, Jacob Alma	Smith, Philomelia
Lake, James Bailey	Snow, Erastus
Lake, James Jr	Snyder, Electa
Lake, James Richard	Stewart, Urban
Lake, Joseph Alvin	Utah Militia
	Young, Brigham