



SARAH JANE MARLER LAKE TAYLOR 1834 – 1927

Sarah Marler was born 12 November 1834, at Port Gibson, Claiborn County, Mississippi, the oldest daughter of Allan and Harriet (Heath) Marler. Sarah Jane enjoyed many of the comforts of the old south prior to the Civil War. She lived in a beautiful spacious home with servants and a lively social life. In 1845, Mormon elders came to her home and preached the gospel. Her father was taken seriously ill, and he had a slave go to one of the missionaries and ask him to come and administer to him. Allan Marler quickly recovered and the entire family joined the church.

In March 1850, her parents sold their land and most of their possessions in order to begin the trek to Council Bluffs to join the Mormon movement west to the Rocky Mountains. With them were their seven children, and Sarah Jane's Uncle Samuel Heath, and his wife and two little boys. The two families traveled by riverboat up the Mississippi and Missouri River, headed for Saint Joseph, Missouri, during the first part of the journey. Before they reached their destination, cholera broke out in the family. Fearing his boat would be quarantined, the riverboat captain insisted the two families leave the boat at once. Within hours all members of the family, except Sarah Jane, were violently ill. For days she doctored her family. People were sympathetic, but so afraid of catching the disease themselves, they did not dare come near her family. She served as midwife for her mother who bore a premature baby girl who died. Sarah Jane's father, three sisters and two cousins died. She made preparations for burial almost entirely alone.

In spite of their condition, those remaining were well enough to continue on to Omaha, Nebraska, where they joined Captain James Lake's Company of 50 and started for the Salt Lake Valley in May 1850. As they journeyed along, Captain Lake's son, William Bailey Lake, and Sarah Jane Marler began to spend as much time together as possible. They arrived in Salt Lake in September 1850. The Marlers traveled on to Pleasant Grove, Utah while William Bailey Lake and his family went to North Ogden. Bailey soon found a way to go to Pleasant Grove where he and Sarah Jane were married on 16 December 1850. They were later sealed in the Endowment House on 13 October 1855. After they married, they went to Ogden and lived the winter in the Lorin Farr Fort due to Indian trouble. The next spring they moved to North Ogden where they began their life farming, making butter and cheese, and selling milk. Three daughters were born to them: Mary (1851), Philomela (1853), and Sarah (1855).

In the spring of 1856, Sarah Jane's husband, William Bailey Lake, was called by President Brigham Young to be a missionary among the Indians in the Salmon River Mission at Fort Lemhi, Idaho. Sarah Jane cared for their family and farm in his absence.

The missionaries in the Salmon River Mission made frequent trips back and forth to Utah with mail and to get supplies. In the fall of 1857, William Bailey Lake was in Utah, but just after he left to return to Fort Lemhi, Sarah Jane gave birth to their first son, William Bailey Lake Jr. A note was hurriedly written and taken by Sarah Jane's brother, Allen Marler, to William who was camped at Willard, Utah. When he received news of the birth, he quickly returned to North Ogden to see his wife and new son. This was the last time his family ever saw William Bailey Lake alive.

Problems developed in the Salmon River Mission and ten men, including William Bailey Lake, left Fort Lemhi to carry mail to Salt Lake when they were ambushed by Indians near the head of the Bannock Creek in the Malad Mountains. Lake was killed and scalped by the Indians, 31 March 1858. The other men had to leave his body in order to save their own lives. His body was discovered three or four days later by men assisting in the evacuation of the Salmon River Missionaries. They packed the body in snow obtained from the north side of a distant hill, and returned it to Utah for burial in the North Ogden Cemetery just before his widow, Sarah Jane, left for the flats west of Provo with others evacuating because of the approach of Johnston's Army. Sarah Jane left her home with straw in the doorway to be torched should the army come into the valley.

Sarah Jane and her four children remained in Utah County for several months. One day Brigham Young, who was a good friend of the Lakes, inquired of Pleasant Green Taylor, William Bailey's brother-in-law, how Sarah Jane and her family were doing. He told Brother Taylor that he should marry Sarah Jane and take care of Bailey's family. Sarah Jane Marler Lake and Pleasant Green Taylor were married by Brigham Young on 20 June 1858 in Provo.

When the saints camped in Utah County they received word that Johnston's Army had passed through the valley, so they returned to their homes. Sarah Jane moved her family into Pleasant Green Taylor's home in Harrisville. Pleasant Green later built a home that she shared with another wife, Jane Narcissus (Shurtleff) Taylor. Almost across the street was the home shared by the other two wives, Mary Eliza (Shurtleff) Taylor and Clarissa (Lake) Taylor. Sarah Jane and Pleasant Green Taylor had six children born to them: George Allen Taylor (1859), Josiah Taylor (1861), Eliza Ann Taylor (1864), Loren Green Taylor (1866), Alexander Taylor (1869), and Walter Taylor (1874). Sarah Jane never forgot some of her ties with the old south, and she is credited with the most successful effort at raising cotton by the pioneers in Weber County. She brought cotton seed with her, planted it, and raised a good crop. After picking the cotton, she separated the seeds by hand, washed and carded it, and then spun it into thread. This she "wove into cloth and made dresses, sheets, tablecloths, and underclothes as well." The climate was not suitable for this becoming a profitable industry, so it was more of a novelty.

Because of several deaths in her family, she helped raise several of her grandchildren. She was short in stature and was affectionately called by some of her descendents as "Little Grandma." At age 87 she fell and broke her hip. In spite of being told by her doctor that she would never walk again, she was able to walk without a cane, and she even danced a jig on her 92nd birthday at which time she had 310 descendants including

ten children, fifty grandchildren, 189 great-grandchildren and 61 great-great grandchildren.

Sarah Jane died 18 March 1927. Funeral services were held in the Harrisville meeting house and she was buried in the north Ogden Cemetery next to her first husband, William Bailey Lake.

SOURCE:

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Jeffrey, Janet Franson, History of the James Lake, Jr. Family, Murray, Utah: Roylance Publishing, 1990, p 145-148.

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Fort Lemhi	Shurtleff, Jane Narsisus
Heath, Harriet	Shurtleff, Mary Eliza
Johnston's Army	Taylor, Alexander
Lake, Clarissa (Clara)	Taylor, Clarissa (Clara) Lake
Lake, James	Taylor, Eliza Ann
Lake, Mary	Taylor, George Allen
Lake, Philomela	Taylor, Jane Narsisus Shurtleff
Lake, Sarahh	Taylor, Josiah
Lake, William Bailey	Taylor, Loren Green
Lake, William Bailey Jr.	Taylor, Mary Eliza Shurtleff
Lorin Farr Fort	Taylor, Pleasant Green
Marler, Allen	Taylor, Walter
Marler, Harriet	Young, Brigham
Salmon River Mission	