



SABRA LAKE DIXON

1824-1908

Sabra was the eldest child of Philomela Smith and James Lake, Jr. She was born 17 July 1824 in Emestown, Upper Canada (Ontario). Sabra's father had come to Emestown as a child with his father who was a United Empire Loyalist since he had served in the Revolutionary War. She was the oldest child of her parents. Her father, James Lake, Jr. had six living children by his former marriages and her mother had four living children by her previous marriage.

Sabra was eight years of age when her parents accepted the gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Brigham, Joseph, and Phineas Young, along with Eleazer Miller taught the family. Sabra sat with the family listening to the story of the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith. She was baptized in July 1832. From that point she had unfaltering faith, devout observance of the laws, and a desire to promote the welfare of the Kingdom of God. Her faith helped her to endure several trials in her life.

Soon after they were baptized, the family had a desire to be among the Saints. Brigham Young returned to Canada to help them make the trip to Kirtland, Ohio in the spring or summer of 1833. Her father bought a lot in Kirtland in 1834 where they remained for the next four years. While there, the family sacrificed and helped to build the Kirtland Temple.

On 28 March 1838, Sabra's family moved with other saints to Missouri. Sabra's mother, Philomela Smith Lake, was expecting her ninth child. The family stopped and rented a farm just west of Springfield, Illinois, where they remained until 1844. During this time, Sabra grew and developed into a woman. Her mother was frail and delicate, so early in her life Sabra had to help care for the home and small children.

In 1841, William Wilkinson Dixon became closely associated with Sabra's family. Mutual interest quickly developed into affection between Sabra Lake and William Wilkinson Dixon, and they were married in Scott County, Illinois, 16 August 1842, shortly after Sabra's 18th birthday.

Sabra gave birth to Henry, the first of their 15 children, on 1 June 1843. The church re-established its headquarters in Nauvoo, Illinois after the saints had been expelled from Missouri. The Dixon family, as well as the James Lake family, moved about 15 miles from Carthage, Illinois, in order to be closer to church headquarters. They rented a farm to help provide food for their families. Sabra was expecting their second child, Harvey, born 12 September 1844.

Three months before Harvey Dixon's birth, the Prophet Joseph Smith was killed in Carthage. After the death of the prophet, Sabra's father and mother moved their family into Nauvoo.

The Dixon's stayed behind until after Harvey's birth and the harvest was in. They then joined the rest of Sabra's family in Nauvoo. While William and Sabra lived in Nauvoo, William worked on the temple and the Nauvoo House.

Nearly from the time Sabra and William Wilkinson Dixon were married, they lived close to and traveled with the James Lake family. They endured persecutions, and were driven by the mobs that were determined to destroy the church and its people. While they lived in Nauvoo, the persecution became more intense. The mobs harassed the saints, burned homes and barns, destroyed property, and even turned to murder.

Driven by this persecution, Sabra and William Dixon began making preparations for their journey west. In February 1846, both the Dixon and Lake families crossed the frozen Mississippi River and arrived in Council Bluffs, Iowa in the fall. On 1 September 1846, Sabra gave birth to their first daughter, Emma Jane Dixon.

Members of the Church had a difficult time earning money for supplies for their trip west while living in Council Bluffs because of the thousands of saints living in the area. In 1848, the Lakes and Dixons moved to Holt County, Missouri where Sabra's brother and sisters had found work. They worked for two years to accumulate means for traveling west to join the other saints in the Salt Lake Valley. Two daughters were born to the Dixons while living in Holt County, Lydia Ann, born 22 October 1848 and Mary Lucy, born 12 April 1850. During those two years they had gone from destitute to being well supplied for their journey.

In the spring of 1850, the two families went to Florence, Nebraska, where church authorities appointed James Lake to be the captain over a company of fifty. Then, they began their trip west. While traveling along the Platte River, Sabra suffered a severe attack of cholera, but through faith, her life was spared. The family completed the trip successfully, and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in the fall of 1850. The Dixon and Lake families were asked to move north, and they built homes in what would become Harrisville. They spent some time in Lorin Farr Fort, in 1850, and in Bingham's Fort, in 1853, because of Indian uprisings. William Wilkinson Dixon and Sabra Lake Dixon were sealed in the Endowment House on 3 November 1855.

In her quiet unassuming manner, Sabra filled her calling as wife and mother in her service to her family. Birth and death seemed to walk hand-in-hand with Sabra throughout her life. Seven of her children died before they reached maturity. In December 1865, Sabra and William lost three children in three weeks. They also saw three grown daughters die, leaving their families: Mary Lucy Dixon Rawson died at the birth of her eighth child. Emma Jane Dixon Chase died on 30 Aug 1863 after being married for only three months. In April of 1891, Sabra was called from the bedside of her dying husband to bid farewell to her daughter, Electa Philomela Dixon Skeen, who left behind ten now motherless children. Sabra then returned to her beloved companion who passed away a few weeks later. William Wilkinson Dixon died 10 June 1891 in Harrisville, Weber, Utah.

Sabra Lake and William Wilkinson Dixon were devout in their worship, sincere in their belief and faithful Latter-day Saints. Sabra, early in life, learned the joy of bringing comfort and happiness to others. She loved to serve. She was affectionately called, "Aunt Sabra." Thirsty travelers on the Harrisville Road paused for a cool, refreshing drink from the old oaken bucket that hung in the well beside the kitchen door. From her storehouse she gave food and clothing. Her fireside radiated warmth, cheer, and hospitality. Her deep mother's love cemented the bond of sympathy between her and those in distress. Her presence gladdened the hearts to those with whom she associated as she faithfully performed her duties in the church organizations where she labored.

The children of Sabra Lake and William Wilkinson Dixon were Henry Dixon (1843 – 1908); Harvey Dixon (1844 - 1906); Emma Jane Dixon (1846 – 1863); Lydia Ann Dixon (1848 – 1853); Mary Lucy Dixon (1850 – 1882); Electa Philomelia Dixon (1852 – 1891); Esther Ann Dixon (1854 – 1865); William James Dixon (1856 – 1862); Sabra Elizabeth Dixon (1857 – 1865); Bailey Dixon (1859 – 1865); Sarah Ellen Dixon (1861 – 1924); Dudley Dixon (1864 – 1864); John Lake Dixon (1865 – 1872); Riley George Dixon (1866 – 1918); Alfred Dixon (1869 - 1937).

Sabra Lake Dixon passed away at the home of her son, Riley George Dixon, in Rigby, Idaho, on 2 July 1908 at the age of 84. She was buried in the Ogden Cemetery beside her husband and children.

SOURCE:

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McMillian, Clalud Nelson, Notes on the Lake Family of New York and Upper Canada, SLFH Lib., Call No. US/CAN 929.271 A1 no.77

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Chase, Emma Jane Dixon	Dixon, Sabra Elizabeth
Dawson, Mary Lucy Dixon	Dixon, Sarah Ellen
Dixon, Alfred	Dixon, William James
Dixon, Bailey	Dixon, William Wilkinson
Dixon, Dudley	Lake, James Jr.
Dixon, Electa Philomela	Lake, Philomela Smith
Dixon, Emma Jane	Miller Eleazer
Dixon, Esther Ann	Miller, Artimus
Dixon, Harvey	Skeen, Electa Philomela Dixon
Dixon, Henry	Smith, Joseph
Dixon, John Lake	Smith, Philomela
Dixon, Lydia Ann	Young Phineas
Dixon, Mary Lucy	Young, Brigham
Dixon, Riley George	Young, Joseph