

# William Draper Sr. and Lydia Lathrop

## A Biographical Sketch

(Estelle Draper Mangus)

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*This biographical sketch is a composite of two separate versions of this history I have in my possession, both of which were written by Estelle Draper Mangus, a great-granddaughter of William Draper, Sr., and a member of the Emerson Camp of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers. The first (presumably original) version contained several spelling errors that were corrected in the second version. The second version was subtitled "Pioneers from Canada," which is true but a bit misleading. They were both born in the United States, and later moved to Canada. To avoid confusion with William Draper, Jr., their son who was born in Canada, I have not retained that subtitle in this composite. All footnotes are mine, as are comments within the text that are placed within brackets ([ ]). I am a great-great-great grandson of William Draper, Sr., and Lydia Lathrop, through William Draper, Jr.*

—Randal S. Chase, 22 Oct. 2000

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William Draper Sr. was born September 6, 1774, the son of Thomas Draper and Lydia Rogers Draper, in Wyoming, Susquannah [Susquehanna] Co. Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> He was fond of reading the scriptures and was early convinced of the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins. He desired to join the church that believed in such baptism and was baptized into the Baptist church, which he considered the best, according to his convictions at the time.

In 1796 he married Lydia Lathrop, daughter of Isaac and Lucy Pike Lathrop and third great grand-daughter of Reverend John Lathrop who was exiled from England and came to America because of his break with the Church of England seeking religious freedom in 1623. Lydia was born November 5, 1775, in Norwich, New Haven, Connecticut[ sic].

A poem was written by [their granddaughter] about the trip that William and Lydia took when they moved to Canada.<sup>2</sup> There [in Canada] a child was born. He was William Draper Jr., the fifth child.<sup>3</sup> [Estelle Draper Mangus' grandfather] Zerima, was born February 27, 1812.

After being in full Baptist fellowship for fifteen years, he began to be criticized for believing and teaching that the scriptures were to be understood in accordance to their obvious purport, that the prophecies of the Bible were going to be fulfilled [sic], and that the Isrealites [sic] would be gathered. He continued to believe as his conscience dictated, however.

In 1833 William heard Brigham Young preach Mormonism and as soon as he heard it he recognized the truth that he had been searching for all his life. William was baptized and confirmed on the 25 of March 1833 by Brigham Young. Joseph Young assisted with the confirmation. This was in the township of Laborough, Canada. William was ordained to the priesthood in June 1833 and made an Elder in the same month by Brigham Young.

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<sup>1</sup>*The Mormon Drapers* book lists William Draper, Sr.'s birthplace as New York, but that is an error.

<sup>2</sup>A copy of that poem, written by Artemessia Anderson, a granddaughter, appears at the end of this history. She wrote it on the occasion of the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William Draper Sr.'s birth, 6 September 1884.

<sup>3</sup>The above described poem mentions only three earlier children. This is an error.

In 1835 he emigrated to Kirtland, Ohio. In 1836 he went back to Canada on a mission in company with John E. Page. Many persons were baptized and a large branch of the church was organized. In June 1837 William was ordained a High Priest under the hands of Don Carlos Smith and his counselors. On January 2, 1837 he joined two thirds of the Saints in forming the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-banking Company.

On March 13, 1838, according the Journal History, he was one of the Seventies that met to form the resolutions to govern the saints on their proposed move to Missouri. Each Seventy listed the members of his respective family that would be going. William Sr. listed two members, which would have been himself and his wife. His son Thomas listed one and Zerima listed six. This exodus was called the Kirtland Camp.<sup>4</sup> [They eventually] left Kirtland for Missouri, but the Drapers did not go all the way at that time. They stopped at Sangamon County, Illinois, until the fall of 1839, then moved to Pleasant Vale, Pikes County, Illinois, where he helped build up a large branch of the church. In 1841 they moved to Green Plains, Hancock County, Illinois. They were driven from there in 1845 and then sought safety in Nauvoo.

All this time, his wife Lydia had traveled along, accepting the hardships but not accepting the Church, but after moving to Nauvoo she asked for baptism. She was baptized and confirmed on December 25, 1845. [She was] also endowed in the [Nauvoo] temple on this same date.

In 1846 the persecution became so severe that most of the Latter Day Saints left their homes in the winter or early spring. William had hopes of being able to stay until later. In the records we find:

"In the summer of 1846 hostilities were renewed against the members of the church who still remained in Nauvoo. The great body of the Saints had left and only a remnant remained, composed of the poor, the weak, the aged and the afflicted who had been unable to get away. They were all anxious to depart and were exerting all their energies to obtain means for that purpose. President Young and the Apostles were doing all in their power to aid them to depart."

The Drapers left Nauvoo on September 17, 1846 and crossed the Mississippi River when the mob forced them to leave. They had to stop as soon as they had crossed to safety [probably near Montrose] because of the frailty of Lydia who was nearly 71 years of age. The exposure and difficulty was more than she could endure. She died and was buried on the banks of the Mississippi River in a brown dress and a calico apron.<sup>5</sup> In 1847, William continued his westward journey and went as far as Council Bluffs, where he married his brother's widow.

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<sup>4</sup>The Kirtland Camp consisted mostly of the economically poorest of the Saints, which Church leaders were attempting to assist in leaving Kirtland to join the main body of the Saints in Missouri. The Drapers' participation in this group is most likely an indication of their relative poverty at the time.

<sup>5</sup>The location of this grave is not known. It would likely have been in the general area on the banks of the Mississippi River where most of the Saints camped after crossing from Nauvoo. From that spot, these pioneers had a full view of their beautiful city and temple on the other side of the river.

In 1848, William was ordained a Patriarch of the branches of the church in the Pottawattamie Lands of Iowa under the hands of George A. Smith by the orders of the First Presidency.<sup>6</sup> From then until 1852, at each conference of the Church in Iowa he was sustained as the Patriarch of the Pottawattamie Lands. At this time there were only two Patriarchs mentioned: John Smith as Patriarch of the entire Church and William Draper in Iowa.

As he got older he desired to come to Utah to be with his sons and their families, so in April 1851 he wrote to the authorities and his letter was read in conference:

"Elder William Draper Sr., Patriarch of the Pottawattamie Branch, desires to go to the Valley and he wishes those who are indebted to him to pay him with as little delay as possible. He is ever ready to attend to the duties of his calling and those who may wish his services had better secure them while he is still in their midst and by so doing may secure the virtue and benefits of his office, while he may gain favor from you to an extent that he will be enabled to provide himself with the means and comforts necessary for his long journey."

He left Iowa in July 1852 in the Robert Weimer Company and arrived in Salt Lake City on September 15, 1852. He moved to Draper where his sons were established [and made his home there]. He united with the High Priests in Great Salt Lake City. After arriving in Utah he continued his calling as Patriarch and gave about 250 blessings in the Valley.

Notwithstanding his age and the many severe scenes he had been called to pass through, he continued to work with his hands to within a short time of his death on December 24, 1854, at age 80 years, 3 months and 18 days.<sup>7</sup> He left a numerous posterity. His children, grandchildren and great grandchildren numbered about 150 at the time of his death.

His obituary<sup>8</sup> closed with these words:

"He went calmly to his rest as only the faithful can and his works will follow him and his spirit is rejoicing and operating in a wider sphere of intelligence preparatory to receiving a glorious body in the morning of the resurrection."

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<sup>6</sup>This call and ordination came at the conference of the Church held at Kaneshville, Iowa, on April 6, 1848.

<sup>7</sup>He was buried in the Draper City Cemetery, where his grave can presently be found just inside the main entrance. The city of Draperville, originally called South Millcreek and now called Draper, was named in his honor.

<sup>8</sup>A copy of the obituary, published February 22, 1855, in the *Deseret News* is attached to this history. When reading this obituary, it becomes obvious that most of the facts contained in Estelle Draper Mangus' account were taken from the obituary, or perhaps the obituary was taken from her account. Either way, one is fundamentally a re-telling of the other.

## A Tribute To William Draper Sr.

*(Written by Artemesia D. Anderson, a granddaughter,  
on the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William Draper Sr.'s birth)*

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Descendants of a noble sire,  
This is the anniversary of your father's birth.  
If you know not, I will tell you  
What he oft told me.

His parents lived in Pennsylvania.  
In February 1807 to Canada they crossed over.  
A mother dying sent a message  
With an Indian strong and brave,  
"Come my children, I long to see you before I pass into the  
grave."

In a sleigh the son put his wife and three children<sup>9</sup>  
And with the red man as his guide  
On the ice of Lake Erie they crossed over,  
There were air breaks long and wide.

When they got to the Canadian shore  
The Indian sped on before  
To tell the Puritan pale face mother  
That her boy was coming near.

Reward and food they gave the red man  
And he went to his forest home.  
The father was watching by the rail fence so high,  
Heard the bells as the sleigh was passing by.

Halt, halt my boy, this is the gate (clasping hands)  
I thank the Lord you are not too late.  
The mother blessed her son, his wife and children  
And bid them trust in God and have no fear.

For nights and days they nursed her  
Then from the forest home  
A grave could be seen, with branches waving o'er her  
And the sod was turning green.

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<sup>9</sup>This reference to three children is in error. There were four before the birth of William Draper Jr., whose birth is mentioned a few stanzas below in this same poem.

The wind did howl, the rain did pour  
And the ice flows broke  
All streams were deep and wide  
And the Americans must remain on the Canadian side.

Thus two months had passed away  
It was April 24, 1807,  
The night was dark, lightening flashed  
The thunder roared and rain in sheets did pour.

That night a babe was born in the forest home,<sup>10</sup>  
Near by the beasts and Indians wild,  
But God protected the parents and their child.  
The storm passed, the sun rose, all nature smiled.

The child grew, he<sup>11</sup> could remember the War of 1812  
And the British Red Coats as they passed the door.  
In 1848 across the great western plains he came  
Both whites and Indians knew his fame,  
And no stain shadowed William Drapers name.

Hardships he endured as a pioneer  
For the future life, he had no fear  
Nearly eighty years he lived with honest pride,  
Then worn out with toil and suffering  
He lay down at Freedom, Utah and peacefully he died.

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<sup>10</sup>The child mentioned here is William Draper, Jr., born April 24, 1807.

<sup>11</sup>The account from this point on makes reference to William Draper Jr., who died at Freedom, Sanpete County, Utah, on May 28, 1886, and was buried in the Freedom Cemetery.

**Obituary Notice of**  
**William Draper Sr.**  
**(Deseret News, Feb, 22, 1855)**

William Draper, son of Thomas Draper, was born Sept, 6, 1774 in Wyoming Susquannah [sic] Co., Penn. Being fond of the study of scriptures and being early convinced of the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins, he yielded to his convictions and according to the best light that he had then, was baptised a member of the Baptist church.

In 1796 he married Lydia Lathrop, in the state of New York and removed from that state to Upper Canada in 1807. After being in full Baptist membership for 15 years, he began to be criticized for believing that the Scriptures were to be understood in accordance to their obvious meaning (purport), that the prophecies would be fulfilled and Israel gathered. He continued in this frame of mind until 1833 when he heard Brigham Young speak and preach the Gospel and was, by him, baptised, confirmed, and ordained into the lesser Priesthood in June 1833 in Township Laborough, and was ordained an Elder before the month [of June] ended.

In 1835 he emigrated to Kirtland, Ohio and in 1836 went in company with John E. Page on a mission to Canada where they baptised many persons and organized a large branch of the Church. He received his endowments in the Kirtland Temple and in 1837 was ordained a High Priest under the hands of Don Carlos Smith and his counselors.

In 1838 he started to emigrate to Missouri with the Kirtland Camp but stopped in Sagamon Co., Ill., until the fall of 1839 when he moved to Pleasant Vale, Pike's Co., Ill. where he assisted in building up a large branch of the church.

In 1841 he moved to Green Plains, Hancock Co., Ill., and was driven from there in 1845 and sought safety in Nauvoo. But in 1846 was again driven by a ruthless mob, and in Aug. crossed the Mississippi River in search of a peaceful asylum in the West. Soon after crossing the river, his wife, borne down by the hardships attendant upon a relentless persecution, fell asleep in the triumph of Latter Day faith and her body was laid to rest on the right bank of the Mississippi River, there to wait a glorious resurrection with the just.

In 1847 Father Draper resumed his westward march and reached Council Point, Iowa where he married the widow of his eldest brother, and in 1848 was ordained a Patriarch under the hands of Elder Geo. A. Smith, by order of the First Presidency.

Having by his industry accumulated an outfit, he started for and arrived in these valleys in 1852 [according to Church record it was Sept. 19, 1853], and in April 1854 united with the High Priests in Great Salt Lake City, and since then has administered about 250 Patriarchal blessings.

Notwithstanding his age, and the many severe scenes he had been called to pass through, he continued to labor with his hands to within a short period of the time he was summoned to pass behind the veil which happened in Draperville in Great Salt Lake Co. on the 24 Dec 1854 at the advanced age of 80 yrs., 3 mo., and 18 days.

He went calmly to his rest as only the faithful can, and his works will follow him and his spirit is rejoicing and operating in a wider sphere of intelligence, preparatory to receiving a glorious body in the resurrection.