

Seth Dustin

Mormon Pioneer - Man of God

By

Brenda Dustin Young

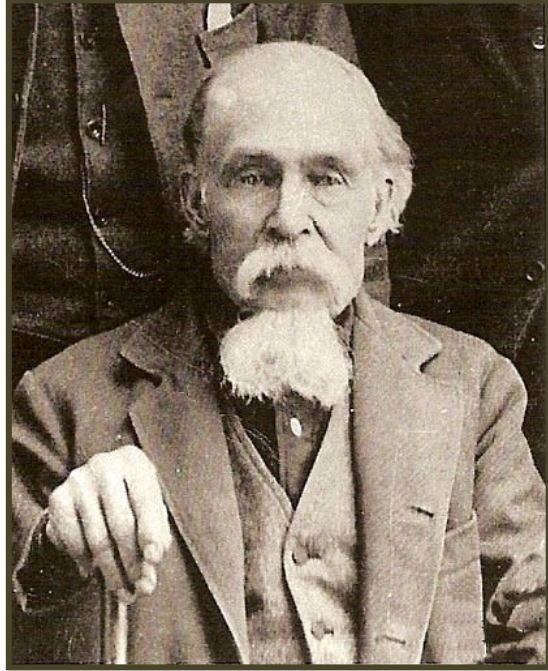


Front Cover Photo by Robert L. Young

The cover photo is of an old church building in Ovid, Idaho, constructed by early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The building is located north of the Bear Lake – Garden City area and is similar to most Mormon Church buildings erected during the era when the Dustins lived in Garden City, Utah.

With gratitude to Jill Dustin Cox, Virginia Murri, Christi Pauline, and my daughter, Deanna Young Forester, for many hours of editing. Also with appreciation to my husband, Robert Young, for his wonderful photographs that are included in this book. The photographs of the Transcontinental Railroad were obtained from the Utah State Archives. The photographs of the Salt Lake Temple are from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church History Library.

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Preface

In September of 2005, I began a course entitled *The Family and the Law in American History* through BYU Independent Study. One of my assignments was to find any existing US Federal Census data for every individual in two generations. I chose the William Henry and Sarah Mariah Dustin family and the Seth and Hannah Dustin family and discovered a story in miniature exists within the censuses. With my interest peaked, hours of research followed as I pieced together bit by bit this history for my great-grandfather, Seth Dustin. He lived during an era of dramatic change in America. The First and Second Great Awakenings set the stage for the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Dustins came to New England before 1640. They fought in the Revolutionary War. The Dustins enter the wilderness of western New York in the early 1800s and lived in settlements among the six nations of the Iroquois in Genesee County. Caleb Dustin, Seth Dustin's uncle, was among the first Methodist ministers in New England. The Dustins lived just miles away from Palmyra, New York. Certainly Caleb attended the large Methodist Genesee Conference revivals. Caleb Dustin preached to John Young, father to Brigham Young.

Peter Dustin was the first member of the Dustin family to join The Church of Jesus Christ on June 9, 1830, a little over a month after the Church was organized on April 6th. Bechias Dustin and his niece, Cyrena Dustin, soon followed.

Hannah Loveland Dustin and her brothers, Chester and Levi, gathered to Missouri and forged their faith in the fires of persecution. Seth witnessed with his father-in-law, Chauncey Loveland, the death of the prophet Joseph Smith.

My gratitude for the privilege of recounting this story is beyond expression. I have come to love these ancestors with a deep and abiding love. That is the blessing of doing family history research. It is my hope that every person who reads this story will feel that love permeate through this small book and find their hearts knit to our ancestors in appreciation and love for our kindred dead.

Brenda Dustin Young (2010)

Meridian, Idaho

Prologue

The Dustins in Early America

The Dustins came to Massachusetts prior to 1640, and at that time the surname was Durston.

“ . . . we find the name of Thomas Durston among the signers of a letter to the governor of Massachusetts, dated Northam, and (Dover) March 4, 1640. They subscribe themselves. “We, the inhabitants of Northam.” We also find the name Tho[mas] Durston among those admitted freemen at Kittery, in November, 1652. ¹

Thomas Durston was named as a soldier in the King Philips War with Lieutenant Benjamin Swett and his men as of June 1676. This is likely Thomas Durston born 1652, rather than his father or grandfather. To quote George Wingate Chase in reference to the name Durston: “It was originally written Durston and changed to Duston about the time of the above-named Thomas Duston. This is shown, not only by our Town Records, but by Duston’s petition to the General court, in June 1697.”²

Because of the notoriety of Hannah Duston/Dustin (1657-1738), wife of Thomas Durston/ Duston (1652), much is known about this generation of Dustins. However, many noble ancestors have been a part of this family, though their histories remain unwritten. Seth Dustin was likely raised hearing stories about these ancestors, especially Thomas and Hannah Duston. His grandfather, Ebenezer, and his great-grandfather, James Dustin, were Revolutionary War soldiers.

Ebenezer Dustin – Patriot and Father

Ebenezer Dustin was born April 4, 1761, according to the Daughters of the American Revolution Patriot Index. His daughter, Susan Dustin Kimball testified in court on January 23, 1852 in Grafton, New Hampshire. She was applying for her father’s benefits afforded by the Pension law for Revolutionary War veterans. She stated that her father had been serving as a Private in the Revolutionary War of the United States, when he returned home in 1777, and then he was called-out again in 1778, in the Company of Sepe Page and Colonel A. Drake, Regiment E. After another short stint at home he served out the remainder of 1778 under Captain Raynold in Colonel Peabody’s Regiment. She stated he was called out once more and he:

Was in service in Rhode Island and was discharged there upon its expiration and then returned home in the 1779—that in 1780 he was again called out into service as one of the men to serve six month and was always ready to serve when called upon, that the various periods of time he was out was at least much as two or three years that he endured great privations and hardships during service.³

¹ Everett S. Stackpole, *Old Kittery and Her Families*, Press of Lewiston Journal Company, Lewiston, ME 1903.

² George Wingate Chase, *History of Haverhill, Massachusetts*, 1861, 24.

³ Probate Court Records, State of New Hampshire, County of Grafton, Susan Dustin Kimball.

Ebenezer married three times and fathered at least fifteen children! First, Ebenezer married Lois or Eunice Hunt and from that union Ebenezer Dustin Jr. was born on the 19th of February 1781. The second son, Caleb Dustin, was born the 17th of June 1782, which indicates that his mother may have died in childbirth, or soon after, as Ebenezer married Susanna Stevens in November of that year.

Ebenezer Dustin and Susanna Stevens were married on 1 November 1782, and from that union eleven children were born, among them Seth's father, Bechias. The children were: Lydia (1784), David (1786), Betsey (1788), Seth (1791), Chandler (1792), Bechias (1793), Sabrina (1794), Ruhanna (1795), Dorothy (1796), and baby Susanna (1798), named after her mother.

Susanna and Betsey – Women of Strength and Fortitude

In July of 1798, when Seth's father, Bechias, was not quite five years old, his mother, Susanna, died.⁴ Baby Susanna was just over a month old when her mother died. Seven months after Susanna died, Ebenezer married Betsey Smith. Betsey Smith was twenty-nine and still single. She may have considered herself a spinster.

Ebenezer must have been a handsome or charismatic man to attract the brave-hearted Betsey. She entered into the marriage and willingly rescued the brood, as well as Ebenezer, a man desperate for help with his large motherless family. Ebenezer was only 37 years old at the time! During this era, children of a very tender ages cared for younger brothers and sisters with some degree of skill, but Ebenezer certainly felt overwhelmed with this lone responsibility of 13 grieving children! The eldest, Ebenezer Jr., was just seventeen.

Ebenezer and Betsey were married on 22 February 1799. Betsey bore two children in the short time they were married! Nehemiah Dustin was born in 1802, and Abigail Dustin in 1804. In 1805, one year after Abigail was born, Ebenezer died leaving Betsey with fifteen children. Ebenezer Jr. was the eldest child and became the father figure even though he was a young man of twenty-four.

Caleb Dustin – Methodist Minister

Caleb was twenty-three when his father died, and like Ebenezer Jr., Caleb was probably father figure to Bechias and the entire family. Caleb's devotion to God was manifest when he joined the Methodist ministry in 1803, at the time he was twenty-one years old. No doubt Caleb's relative Paul Dustin influenced that choice. Paul was born in 1775; he dedicated his life

⁴ (There are five documented dates for Bechias' birth.)

Nauvoo Temple Endowment Register 1845-46 lists Bechias Dustin's birth date as: 5 October 1793.

US Federal Census of 1850 lists the age of Bacclines Dustin (sic) as "56" making his birth year 1793 or 1794.

Selections from "*Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1830-1848*," has the birth of Bechias [Bechiar] Dustin as 5 Oct 1795.

A Patriarchal Blessing given by William Budge upon the head of Bechias Dustin." The blessing lists Bechias' parentage, and states his birth date as 5 Oct 1796, and his birth place as Enfield, Grafton, New Hampshire.

The obituary from *The Deseret New* states that Bechias "aged 77 and 1 month" at the time of his death in 1874—making his birth year 1797

to his beliefs. He was among the first to begin churches in Vermont and New Hampshire. Paul had joined the ministry for the Methodist faith around 1802, one year earlier than Caleb, as recorded in: *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1773-1828, Volume I*. These men became circuit-riding preachers, as were most ministers in that period.

In 1803 Paul Dustin was stationed in Vershire, Vermont. Caleb Dustin was listed “on trial.” Young men were approved for the ministry after a setting-apart trial period of usually two years. It was during this trial period that young men became licensed to preach.

In 1803 Caleb Dustin and Phineas Peck preached to John and Abigail Young, parents to Brigham Young, who was two years old at the time. While living for a brief period in Whitingham, Vermont, the Young’s were members of the Methodist Episcopal faith, but became Reformed Methodist when they moved to New York, then a short time afterward converted to Mormonism.⁵

In 1804, while on their assignment in Whitingham Circuit in Vermont, Caleb and Paul Dustin were are “admitted into full connection.”

Caleb Dustin married Mary Hodges in 1805 and the next year, on the 6th of December their daughter, Mary Dustin, was born. Just twelve short days after Mary Dustin’s birth, her mother, Mary Hodges Dustin, died. On the 21 December, 1806, the grieving father was left to care for his solitary infant, his younger siblings, and a flock of Methodist followers. His wife, Mary, died in Enfield, Grafton, New Hampshire, where Bechias, Dorothy, and Susanna were born, verifying his close proximity to his brothers and sisters.

The year Mary died, 1806, Caleb and Paul Dustin were ordained to the New England Conference of the Methodist Ministry. In 1807 Caleb was ministering in the New Hampshire District of the New England Conference. (A “Conference” designates a geographic area of ministry in the Methodist faith.) Perhaps the assignment was made by the Church so that Caleb could be of more help to his family.

Caleb Dustin married for the second time about 1808. He married Ethana Moore. Two children are listed in cemetery records: Mandana Dustin and her sister, Ethana L. Dustin. Mandana Dustin died on 30 July 1813 at the age of 4 years, 3 months, and 12 days. Ethana L. Dustin was born in 1811 and died when she was 16 years old on 10 September 1827. The “ancient cemeteries” in the town of Claremont showed Ethana (Moore), wife of Caleb, died on 28 March 1865 at the age 73 years.⁶

Paul served as a minister in Marlow, New Hampshire. This story was written in *The Granite Monthly*.

The Methodist Church, also, originally stood on old Marlow Hill. Before its erection, there were quite a number of Universalists in town, and not agreeing in regard to a minister, a committee was

⁵ Kent P. Jackson and Andrew C. Skinner, *A Witness for the Restoration, Essays in Honor of Robert J. Matthews*. (Religious Studies Center, BYU, 2007) 250.

⁶ Charles B. Spofford, *Gravestone Records From the Ancient Cemeteries, in the Town Claremont, New Hampshire—West Part Church Yard*, 19.

chosen—one from the Baptist, one from the Congregationalists, and one from the Universalists—to procure a pastor; and in order to have one that would unite them, they employed the Rev. Peter Jacobs. . . Mr. Jacobs was succeeded by Rev. Paul Dustin, a local preacher of the M. E. Church, and he organized a Methodist Society. . . Mr. Dustin preached for the Congregationalists at Alstead, where he died. . . and was buried in the cemetery at Alstead Centre.⁷

Caleb Dustin, the circuit rider, rode horse-back from settlement to settlement preaching the word of God. Many preachers died at an early age due to exposure to the elements with little cover or warmth during the coldest seasons. They met, taught, and converted hundreds of faithful followers.

The New England conference was severed from the New York conference in 1804. It embraced the New England States, except the part of Connecticut west of the Connecticut River. At the same time the New Hampshire district was organized With Rev. John Brodhead presiding elder. Rev. Lewis Bates and Caleb Dustin were appointed to the Bridgewater circuit, including Plymouth. The Methodist of this town remained in the same circuit district and conference until the close of the year 1825, when Plymouth was severed from the Bridgewater circuit and many hallowed association were interrupted. The preachers on the Bridgewater circuit were earnest and zealous men, and several are prominent in the annals of the church.

Rev. Elijah Hedding, D.D . . . rode many miles each day preaching constantly. He was unable to endure the self-imposed hardship, and was an invalid several weeks in New Chester. He rode to Plymouth, and while in this town he was prostrated with inflammatory rheumatism and was kindly attended in the home of Elder Ebenezer Blodgett, where he remained four months.⁸

This example of the hardship in the ministry explains why both Caleb and Paul died early. The rigors the faithful ministers faced, took their toll. As early as 1809 Paul Dustin was listed among “the supernumerary preachers.” This indicates that Paul’s health was an issue at the young age of thirty-four. Supernumerary was a suspended period of time when the preacher’s health made it necessary for him to take temporary leave of his service. Paul never recovered from his ill health. Paul died at 36 years of age, on 10 February 1811.

Caleb continued his ministry until his death on 20 August 1822. He was only 40 years old when he died. Adversity can purify and enlarge the heart. Perhaps this was the reason the Reverend Caleb Dustin was referred to in the Claremont, New Hampshire history as one who “was beloved by all who knew him.”⁹

Caleb Dustin undoubtedly influenced the life of his younger brother Bechias and his many siblings.

⁷ *The Granite Monthly*, 62.

⁸ Ezra S. Stearns, *History of Plymouth, New Hampshire Volume I*. (The University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1906) 257-8.

⁹ Edwin A. Charlton, *New Hampshire As It Is*, from Part II: A Gazetteer of New Hampshire, George Ticknor, Tracy and Sanford Publishers, Claremont, N.H., 1855 in reference to Claremont, Sullivan county, New Hampshire. Retrieved from the internet in February, 2009 at USGenWeb Archives - <http://www.usgwarchives.org>.

Peter Dustin – Man of Faith

Talk of Joseph Smith, the young boy prophet, and his “Golden Bible” reached the ears of Bechias Dustin and his family. The Dustin family became members of The Church of Jesus Christ early in the history of the Church. The Book of Mormon was published in Palmyra and many conversations about this newly restored religion were undoubtedly held at hearth-side in the Dustin household.

The earliest member of the Dustin family to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was Bechias’ second cousin, Peter Dustin, appropriately named. Peter was born in Grafton, New Hampshire, 19 April 1781 to John Jr. and Sarah Webster Dustin.¹⁰ John was a first cousin to Ebenezer. Ebenezer’s father James was a brother to John Sr. and Paul. John Sr. was Peter’s grandfather.

Peter Dustin joined the Church of Christ on 9 June of 1830¹¹, shortly after the organization of the Church on April 6th of the same year. Peter’s wife was Azuba Tubbs, cousin to Lucy Mack Smith, mother to the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. Azuba’s mother was Hephzibah Mack, sister to Solomon Mack—Lucy’s father. Peter and Azuba were childless.

The quotation below describes the day of Peter’s baptism with some early church members named.

By Jun 1830 the Saints in New York were located primarily in, Fayette, and Colesville. The membership of the Church at this point was about thirty-people. Following revealed instruction (see D&C 20:75), the Prophet called them together for the first conference of the Church on 9 June 1830, at Fayette. Many people attended who already believed or were eager to learn. Those assembled partook of the sacrament several converts were confirmed.

Shortly after this conference twelve people were baptized in Seneca Lake by David Whitmer. They included Joseph Smith's sister Katherine and his brothers William and Don Carlos.¹²

Peter was ordained an Elder on 6 June 1831 in Far West, Missouri, and a High Priest on 5 October 1832 in Jackson County, Missouri by Oliver Cowdery and John Carrol. A second date is given as 10 December 1833 for his ordination to a High Priest.¹³

Peter was called to be Branch President and served on the High Council in Blue River, Jackson County, Missouri.¹⁴

¹⁰ Early Church Information File, Card number 561. Microfilm # FHL US/CAN Film [1750673].

¹¹ Printed from LDS Collectors Library 97: Early LDS Membership: Dustin, Peter and Temple Index Bureau

¹² The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Church History in the Fullness of Times, Student Manual* published by, Salt Lake City, Utah. 70-71.

¹³ Early Church Information File, Card number 561. Microfilm # FHL US/CAN Film [1750673].

¹⁴ Retrieved from the Internet at: http://mormonhistoricsitesfoundation.org/publications/nj_1991/Platt.pdf, *Early Branches of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1830-1850*, May 2010.

The minutes of the council are contained in the *Far West Record*, page, 36. The names of the presidents of the branches and the number of the branch each preside over respectively are given as follows: Newel Knight, Branch No. 1; Daniel Stanton, Branch No. 2; David Whitmer, Branch No. 3; John Corryll; Branch No. 4; Thomas B. Marsh, Branch No. 5; Peter Dustin, Branch No. 6; Lyman Wight, Branch No. 7; Parley P. Pratt, Branch No. 8; Simeon Carter, Branch No. 9; Calvin Beebe, Branch No. 10.¹⁵

Peter served as a missionary in Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana in 1832.

In September of 1831, Elisha Groves records that he first heard the message of the restored gospel from two missionaries, Samuel H. Smith (brother to the Prophet Joseph), and Reynolds Cahoon. Elisha believed their message and began sharing this message with his family and friends through that fall and winter. Elder Calvin Bebey baptized Elisha Groves on March 11, 1832 and he was confirmed by Elder Peter Dustin. Five days later he was ordained an Elder by these same two missionaries and continued to preach the gospel to all who would hear. Elisha said that his friends thought he was becoming deranged through his study of the restored gospel and that they used every means possible to "recover" him from "the supposed delusion." They sent for Ministers of every denomination from as far away as 50 miles! Elisha writes that his wife and friends became his enemies and he felt his life was threatened. He gave a horse and wagon to a church member, John Lemmons, to move to Jackson County, Missouri and Elisha then left on foot with his valise to preach the gospel. Sarah filed for a divorce, which was granted. Elisha then moved to Jackson County to join other church members that had relocated there.¹⁶

Peter Dustin served with James Emmett in 1834 and in Upper Canada in 1835.¹⁷

James Hendricks was born 23 June 1808 to Abraham Hendricks about 8 or 10 miles east of Franklin, Simpson County, Kentucky. Married Drusilla Dorris both were baptized in March, 1835 and confirmed by James Emmett and Peter Dustin. A branch of the church was organized with 22 members. The family started for Missouri, 1 May 1836 "in company with Mother Buttler, J. L. Buttler and families, Thompson Kimball and families. . . .we reached Clay County, Mo. We soon bought fifty acres of land there and there were six families living on it. We went in the house with a man by the name of Jerome Benson. I put my beds upstairs. . . . We all gave up our land and agreed to go to Caldwell County. We were to be let alone there so we were glad to do so and not be mixed up with. Our leading brethren worked day after day to accomplish this move. We were among the first to go and Bro. Emit and family, (the Elder who baptized us) went with us."¹⁸

The Elders are constantly coming and going. Last week, Elders Simeon Carter and Solomon Hancock started for the East. Bishop Partridge and Councillor Isaac Morley will start soon: Elder Amasa M. Lyman came in last week. Elders Peter Dustin and James Emmett arrived last week and Elder Oziel Stevens this week.¹⁹

Peter Dustin was given a Patriarchal Blessing on 7 June 1835 by Joseph Smith Sr. in Kirtland, Ohio.²⁰ He was given a second blessing by John Smith in Salt Lake City on 6 December 1850.²¹

¹⁵ *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Period 1*, History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet by Himself. And Introduction and Notes by B.H. Roberts. The Deseret Book company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1967. (Special Collections BYU Harold B. Lee Library)

¹⁶ Retrieved from the Internet at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nwa/wheeler.html>, *The Life and Times of Elizabeth Case Milam Wheeler*, May 2010

¹⁷ Compiled by Susan Ward Easton, *Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, Vol. XIV, DIB-EAR. (Special Collections BYU Harold B. Lee Library)

¹⁸ Retrieved from the Internet at: <http://www.jwha.info/mmff/bcrpar.htm>, May 2010

¹⁹ Retrieved from the Internet at: <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/Phelps-letters.html>, May 2010

²⁰ *Early Church Information File*, Card number 559. Microfilm # FHL US/CAN Film [1750673]

²¹ *Early Church Information File*, Card number 563. Microfilm # FHL US/CAN Film [1750673]

The following brethren were chosen to fill the places of absent member:--Zebedee Coltrin for Parley P. Pratt; Hazen Aldrich for Solomon Hancock; Elias Higbee for Newell Knight; Isaac Higbee for William E. M'Lellin; Peter Dustin for Orson Pratt.²²

That Peter Dustin was a missionary contemporary with Parley P. Pratt is mentioned in Pratt's journals.

Peter filed for damages in *The Mormon Redress Petitions* when church members were forced to flee Missouri upon the 1838 Extermination Order. This petition shows that Peter living in Missouri from 1831-1838.

A bill of damages against the state of Missouri

1831	For moving to the State	\$300.00
1833	For the loss of property taken and two years labour in Jackson Co.	\$500.00
1836	For the loss of property and thee years labour in Clay County Mo.	\$500.00
1839	Loss of property in Land & Stock in the County of Caldwell Mo.	\$200.00
	For moving from the State	<u>\$100.00</u>
		\$1,600.00

Deprived of citizenship in Jackson County Mo., 1833 by lawless mob, also in Clay County Mo. 1836 by the same mob, and last of all by an exterminating order of the governor.

I do herby certify that the above bill of accompts are correct according to the best of my knowledge.

Peter Dustin

[Sworn to before C.M. Woods, C.C.C., Adam Co., IL, 6 May 1839.]²³

Peter Dustin was one of the witnesses to the Book of Commandments. His signature can be viewed in the recently published *Joseph Smith Papers*.

Peter Dustin also served as the first Counselor to Bishop Joseph C. Kingsbury of the Salt Lake Second Ward beginning 13 July 1851. Moses Clawson was ordained second Counselor. Peter was a faithful and enduring member of the Church. When he came West with the Saints, he continued to spend his life in service to the Lord.

²² *Extracts from the minutes of High Council of Zion, assembled in Clay County, September 10, 1834.* 164.

²³ Clark V. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict, Individual Affidavits from the LDS Historical Department A–F*, 220.

Dedicated to our forefathers – Bechias and Seth Dustin

Grandfather,
you moved mountains!
Born in the rugged land
that was Western New York,
what urged your father's brave heart
into the wilderness,
Where the six nations of the Iroquois
mapped out their days in
their longhouses?
What drew this man to the land
of the Genesee,
"Beautiful Valley"
and then west to Ohio?
Where your firm-hearted father,
made vows to our God,
with a baptism
that set our course
eternally.
Then Westward
again
to the beautiful city
that is
Nauvoo

Where your solitary Father
made covenants alone,
and endowed by the fire
of those covenants
with power from on high
in the Temple of our God,
held on with firm desire!
Then you and your Father
turned Westward
again!
Bold in your conviction to
serve Jesus Christ
unshaken
and
sometimes alone.
Like Seth,
Son of
Father Adam,
you took upon you
the image
of your Father's countenance.
Faith!

Brenda Dustin Young