

EMMA MINILLA WOODRUFF



Born: 4 July 1860, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah,
daughter of Wilford Woodruff and Emma Smith

Died: 29 Nov. 1905, Vernal, Utah.

She was known as Nellie. She married Henry Azmon Woodruff, her cousin, on Jan. 15 1880 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake. Henry was the son of Azmon Woodruff, Wilford Woodruff's brother. They were the parents of seven children. Their first child, Wilford Azmon, was born in Salt Lake in 1881. Henry and Nellie moved to the Ashley Valley of Eastern Utah in 1882. They were some of the first settlers in the Vernal region. All the rest of their children were born in Vernal (except the 2nd to the youngest) between 1883 and 1895. All of their children lived to maturity and married except the last two. Ellsworth, the 2nd to youngest (born in Salt Lake) lived to the age of 21. Clara Margaret, the youngest died as a child.

In 1886, while living in Ashley, Nellie's family served as hosts and base camp for Wilford Woodruff and the rest of Emma's family to have a family vacation in the nearby Uinta Mountains. Wilford Woodruff was eluding U.S. Marshals at the time. They were trying to arrest him on charges of polygamous cohabitation. Henry served in the bishopric of the Vernal Ward for 18 years. He was also a pioneer to the Big Horn country in Wyoming. In 1891 he filled a mission to Great Britain. This would have required his leaving his family to serve his mission. He also aided in opening the coal mines in Wyoming when he was sent there as a missionary by Joseph F. Smith. He also served assessor of Park County, Wyoming.

Apparently, sometime between 1895 and 1898, Nellie and Henry divorced. Henry married Mary Salt on Sept. 14, 1898. How long that marriage lasted is not known. Henry's widow, at the time of his death in 1939 was Martha Ann Harrop. Nellie Woodruff passed away in 1905, several years before her ex-husband. She was 43 years old. She died in Vernal, Utah about a week after undergoing an appendicitis operation; her remains were taken to Salt Lake City for interment.

[Alan J. Hill, 12-9-01]

SOURCES

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Builders of Uintah: A centennial History of Uintah County 1872-1974 by Daughter of Utah Pioneers (Springville, Ut., Art City Publishing, 1947.)

Cowley, Matthias F., Wilford Woodruff, History of His Life and Labor as recorded in his daily journals. Bookcraft, Salt Lake City, Ut. C. 1964. 7th Printing 1978.

Deseret Evening News, Salt Lake City, Friday, Dec. 1, 1905, page 1. (Obituary for Emma Minilla Woodruff)

The Deseret News, Salt Lake City, Friday Feb. 3, 1939 (Obituary for Henry Azmon Woodruff.)

Family Group Sheet, Wilford Woodruff and Emma Smith, Henry Azmon Woodruff and Emma Minilla Woodruff