

## PHOEBE ARABELL WOODRUFF



**Born:** 30 May 1859, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah,

Daughter of Wilford Woodruff and Sarah Brown

**Died:** 7 Sept. 1939, Smithfield, Cache, Utah

She was named after her first step-mother, a woman she always admired; but she was always known as Arabell, or Belle. Her first remembrances were of living in the Valley House. Her mother's family lived in the northwest corner with one room upstairs and one down. In 1866, the family moved to the southwest corner of the Valley House and then shortly thereafter out to the farmhouse on 5<sup>th</sup> East near 17<sup>th</sup> South. She remembered helping her father, Wilford Woodruff, graft buds on the fruit tree at age 9. She was 12 when the family moved to Randolph, Utah. The family lived in a tent for the first 6 months. They moved into the only two-story home in town that fall. In about 1872, Jesse Tilden Moses, of Cottonwood, Utah moved into Randolph. He was 24 and wanted to be a stockman. He bought a small home in

town and some grazing land. The winter was so tough that most of the cattle died. however, he did succeed as a farmer. He spent the next 2 or 3 years in Randolph. He courted Belle. They were married on June 14, 1875 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. He was 27, she 16. They lived in Randolph for one year. Their first daughter, Sarah Eliza, was born there, unfortunately living less than a year. In 1876, the family moved to Cottonwood and farmed there for three years. Their second and third children, Jesse Tilton and Sylvia Arabell were born there in 1878 and 1880. In Nov.1880, the family moved to Arizona. They had 3 more children, Wilford Newton (b. 1882), James Julian (1884) and David Courtney (b. 1886). James died at age 2. They lived on the Salt River in a village called Jonesville in an adobe cabin with two holes for doors. They were rained out, and moved to a cabin with two doors, but no floor along the road to Mesa. While in both of these places, Belle had many experiences with the Indians that were always nearby. She often had to rely on her own wits, as her husband was gone for several days at a time with his freighting business. One time a young Indian came in her home uninvited. Belle picked up a hatchet to deter him; he left but drew his bow and arrow on one of the children. Belle took the loaded pistol off the mantel and pointed it at him. He ran off. Some Indians later told her husband that his wife was a "he squaw". The family moved to Mesa in Dec. 1881. Their first home in Mesa was a willow shed for a bedroom with a small tent and cook stove for a kitchen. One morning the tent caught on fire. The fire was extinguished with water from a nearby canal. In the summer of 1882, they built a comfortable home consisting of a large room with fireplace and a boarded-in back porch for a kitchen. Moses planted ten acres of land with grapes, figs, peaches and small fruits. They contended with insects, lizards and snakes. Disease was ever present. The family survived two epidemics, one of small pox and another of typhoid fever. They all had the sickness but survived. They determined to move back north, settling in Smithfield in 1890. They build a comfortable home of seven rooms in 1891, having their first meal in the home on Thanksgiving. It was here that the balance of their children was born; Clarence Fredrick in 1891, Elmer Woodruff in 1894, Ethel Woodruff in 1894, Phoebe Esther in 1896, Harry Brown in 1898, Mary Woodruff in 1902 and Brigham Woodruff in 1903. Ethel and Brigham died as children; the rest grew to maturity. Smithfield became the family home for many years. Belle's mother Sarah Brown spent the last five years of her life in their home. The Daughter of the Utah Pioneers was organized in Smithfield in 1908 and Belle became the chapter's first President. She also served as a Relief Society teacher for 20 years. Her children married and scattered throughout the West. In 1925, Belle lost her eyesight. Her daughter, Mary and family moved into her home and cared for her. Her devoted husband passed away in 1928. In 1934, her daughter, Mary and her family moved to a comfortable brick home in Cornish, Utah and they took Mother, Belle to live with them. Belle was diligent in writing her own life history with help of her granddaughter, Pearl White. Her daughter Mary may have moved to Clearfield, Utah or perhaps, Belle visited others in her family. Her obituary state that she died, "Thursday [Sept.7, 1939] at 12:30 p.m. at her home in Clearfield of causes incident to age" She left a large posterity.

[Alan J. Hill, 7-28-20]

## SOURCES

Briggs, Phoebe M. W., History of Jesse Tilton Moses, Pioneer of 1861. Written by his daughter, 1964. From Daughter of Utah Pioneer Collection.

Obituary of Phoebe A. W. Moses, for Daughter of Utah Pioneer Collection.

Moses, Phoebe Arabell Woodruff, History of Phoebe Arabell Woodruff Moses, Native Pioneer of 1859, as told by herself. Transcribed by Granddaughter Pearl White for Willow Valley Camp, Cache County, Utah.

Family Group Sheet, Wilford Woodruff and Sarah Brown and FamilySearch

Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, p. 1048.

LDS Vital Records.

Daughter of Utah Pioneers had photo family group sheet of Wilford Woodruff and Sarah Brown and Phoebe Arabell's story, both of which are now on FamilySearch