

SARAH ANN WOOLF BROWN

Sarah Ann Woolf, oldest daughter and 2nd daughter of John Anthony Woolf and Sarah Ann DeVoe, was born 2 July 1834, in Westchester, Westchester Co., New York, according to most records. However, the Temple Index Card showing her sealing states that she was born in Eastchester, Westchester Co., as do the Hyde Park records. Little is known of the particulars of her childhood and youth, except as they are related in a general way in the biographies of her parents and brothers and sisters. She died 14 Oct 1911, aged 77 years, and is buried in a lonely Mormon Cemetery in Mancos, Colorado.

Sarah Ann's life from birth to death might be likened to a voyage on which one finds himself at sea in an oarless rowboat. He may exercise great skill and ingenuity, he may exhibit great faith and courage, he may have great patience and endurance, yet be swept by the force of wind and waves, the magnitude of which are beyond his control. So it was with Sarah Ann. Great forces of the times, not of her making and beyond her control, played upon her life, drifting her in directions not of her choosing, leaving her the choice only of fighting the good fight, or not, but no choice of winning or not winning the victory. At least, so it must have seemed to those reviewing her life at the time of her death. But today, more than half a century later, her influence on her numerous descendants, their fruitful lives and many good works, declare unequivocally that her good fight was the victory—a victory that becomes more manifest with the passing of time. The forceful events and conditions of her times, like the winds and waves, are but transitory.

The first breeze that wafted Sarah Ann's ship of life was a warm and gentle one. She was born of goodly parents: they were idealists who were talented, frugal, industrious, and in comfortable economic conditions. They lived but a short distance from New York City, where they could enjoy the city's cultural advantages and yet escape its harshness, poverty, and crime. When Sarah Ann was 7, the breeze stiffened and turned colder. Her parents joined the much-maligned Mormon Church, causing a deep gulf between them and their kinfolks, and doubtless subjecting Sarah Ann to snubs, if not outright insults, from some of her companions.

At Sarah's age 9, her family left the pleasant physical surroundings of their Eastern home and moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. Here she first encountered the rigors and strangeness of travel, and the toil of building a new home. But here, also, were new-found friendships with members of her Church, friendships surpassing in warmth anything she had heretofore experienced, except among her own kinsmen prior to their joining the Mormon Church.

When she was 12, cold winds of hatred, bigotry, and greed drove Sarah Ann's family from their newly-built home in Nauvoo. On a raw March day in 1846, the Woolf Family ferried their now greatly-diminished earthly belongings across the Mississippi River into Indian territory. They spent the next winter in a log hut on the Missouri River at Winter Quarters. In the spring, after a hard winter enduring crowing and sickness, they set out across the little known prairies, rivers, and mountains for what was to become Salt Lake City, where they arrived, 1,000 ox-drawn miles later, in Oct. 1847. Sarah Ann was now 13 years of age. For the next 5 years, those normally spent in the school room, Sarah Ann was schooled in the practical school of hard knocks. With little beyond their own bare hands with which to work, the pioneers had much to do making "the desert blossom as the rose."

At the age of 18, Sarah Ann married Homer Brown. They were married by "Father

Smith" in his home in Salt Lake City, 20 Oct. 1852, and were sealed by Ezra Taft Benson in the Council House on 19 April 1853. Since Homer's father was in England on a mission and his mother was alone, it is probably that they made their home with his mother for awhile. Their first 2 children, Homer Manley and Cordelia Sophia, were born in Salt Lake. In July 1857, Home went to Nephi to make a home for the family, and Sarah Ann followed with 2 children several months later. Here 3 more children were born to them: Walter Henry, Mary Edna, and Sarah Francis. 5 years later they returned to Salt Lake, where Harriet, Phebe, Andrew and Frank were born. (Sarah Francis passed away the day before Harriet was born.) They moved next to Hyde Park, where Charles Sidney was born. In 1881 they moved to Taylorsville, Utah.

30 after her marriage, and after raising a large family under pioneer conditions, another bitter wind blew on Sarah Ann's ship of life. In March 1882, she petitioned for a divorce from her husband, Homer Brown. We blame neither party, but leave judgment to those qualified.

On 17 July 1884, Sarah Ann became the wife of Fredrick Baker. This couple moved several times during their marriage. By 1905, Sarah Ann, now in poor health, moved to Salt Lake City, where she was hospitalized. Following her release, Charles Sidney Brown, her youngest child, took her to his home in Mancos, Colorado, where she received tender care until her death in 1911.

Sarah Ann had lived a strenuous life under widely varying conditions. She had borne a strong and vigorous family. Today, a numerous posterity thanks her for life, and wishes her rest from the heavy demands made of her by the strenuous times in which she ably played her part.

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