22 October 1865, in Hyde Park, Cache County, Utah, the family of Absalom and Lucy Hambleton Woolf was excited and happy over the arrival of a new baby girl. There were already 2 little girls: Chelnecha, age 7, and Lucy Ann, age 5. A baby brother, John Anthony, had died at the age of 3 years. The new baby was given the name Phebe Almira.

Absalom had 2 wives, Lucy Ann, a midwife. And Harriet Wood Woolf, a school teacher. Each wife had a home of her own near the other and each raised 9 children who intermingled to the extent that, when young, they would sometimes wonder which was their real mother. Absalom was a good and wise man who never showed any partiality. He was a good provider, and whatever produce was raised or otherwise obtained, was always equally divided.

As the girls grew older, they were taught the frugal ways of their pioneer mothers: they could help churn rich, thick cream into butter, make cottage cheese from clabbered milk, pick or gather fruits and vegetables and help prepare them for eating or storage. Water for drinking and household purposes was carried in buckets from a spring some distance away.

During the summer, large kettles of grease drippings were made into soap, and tallow was melted and poured into molds to make candles to furnish light at night. Later, when coal-oil lamps could be purchased, they had to be refilled, and the glass chimneys cleaned and shined at least once a week. Lanterns, used for outdoor and barnyard lighting, also had to be cared for. Each Saturday, the stove was blackened and polished, and the knives and forks scoured with wood ashes.

In all of these tasks, whether pleasant or not, Phebe did her share. Compensation was sometimes had when evening came and could be spent cooking and stretching honey candy, made from honey produced by several colonies of bees kept on the premises.

The family washing was done by hand, piece by piece. It was soaped and scrubbed on a washboard in a large wooden or galvanized tub partly filled with hot water. The white clothes were then boiled in a weak lye solution in a large boiler made for the purpose, with a lid to cover it. After that, they were thoroughly rinsed and wrung out by hand before they were hung on a fence, branches of a small tree or bushes, or spread on the grass to dry.

The ironing was done with heavy “sad” irons heated on the top of the wood or coal stove. Phebe later became proficient in the art of spinning wool into yarn to be used for knitting stockings, weaving a cloth called linsey, or to be made into clothing and bed sheets or blankets. She also made straw hats for herself and others, learned to crochet, tat, and net, and during her life made many beautiful doilies and yards of lace.

When it became possible to buy other finer materials, the girls learned to sew and make their own clothes. As they became too worn out to wear, the better parts were torn into strips, sewn together and wound into balls to be woven into carpets. Lucy Ann wove many yards of this for herself and others. When enough had been made to cover the floor, the strips were sown together by hand and tacked to the floor over a layer of freshly-threshed straw. This was real luxury and the feel of walking on it was to be long remembered by both young and old.

Each fall, the bed ticks were emptied and refilled with new straw or with the fur from wild cattails that grew in the swamps west of town. Lying on these ticks was an interesting experience. The home which her father, Absalom, built and in which Phebe and her 6 sisters and
2 brothers were raised, was on the south side of the road leading from the town to the main highway. This adobe house no longer stands. There were 2 rooms on the ground floor, one an all-purpose kitchen, dining, and living room, the other a bedroom. Above were 2 more sleeping rooms. The living room furniture consisted of a wood-burning stove, a table and chairs, a 4 door cupboard, a high bureau, and later, a sewing machine.

Phebe attended school to the extend that she became a good reader, in her later years she spent considerable time reading church books and magazines, as well as the newspapers. She could write fairly well and found much joy and satisfaction in keeping the genealogical records of the family.

As a young lady she was well liked and had many friends. This led up to the occasion when one evening she was escorted home from a gathering by young Charlie England, who had made a ten-cent bet with a friend, James W. D. Hurren, that he could and would take her home. He won the bet and later gave her the dime that had been minted the year she was born (now in the possession of Ada E. Morrell.)

Charles had been a good student, and after finishing the schooling he could obtain in Hyde Park, was encouraged by some of his teachers to go on to higher education. Consequently, he attended the Brigham Young College in Logan and then went to the University of Deseret in Salt Lake City until he graduated in May 1885. He was honored by being chosen valedictorian of the class. The following winter he taught school in Newton, Cache County, Utah.

On 10 June 1886, Charles and Phebe, along with their friends, James Hurren and his sweetheart, Margaret (Maggie) Ashcroft, were married in the Logan Temple by Apostle Mariner W. Merrill.

6 weeks later, in a spring-seated covered wagon drawn by 2 horses, one of which belonged to Charles and the other to Hurren, the 4 of them went on their honeymoon trip. They went north and east around through the Bear Lake Valley and clear up to Soda Springs—an extended trip in those days—returning through Logan Canyon. This trip took several days.

The next Charles and Phebe moved to Newton, where he taught school for another year. On 9 April 1887, their first child, a daughter, was born at the home of her grandmother Woolf in Hyde Park, Cache, Utah. She was given the name of Ada Eliza.

In the fall of 1887, they moved to Franklin, Oneida, Idaho, where Charles taught school for a year, after which he accepted a position as bookkeeper for a mercantile company.

On 21 Aug. 1888, their first son was born and named William Charles after his father and Grandfather England.

Charles had a good job and had saved $400 toward a home, when he was called to fill a mission in England. He accepted the call, resigned from his church duties and his position with the mercantile company, moved Phebe and the babies to Hyde Park where they would be near both his and her folks, rented 2 rooms in the Duce home for them, and with the $400, left for Great Britain in August 1889. Phebe, who was left in rather poor circumstances, managed somehow while he was gone, but when he returned was $125 in debt.

He returned from his mission 1 Oct. 1891, too late to obtain a teaching position; but it wasn’t long before he was asked to be the bookkeeper for the Logan Journal, a newspaper in Logan. He accepted the offer and on 1 Nov. 1891, moved the family into the house south of the Presbyterian Church on Second West.

About 1900, Charles and Mr. Jesse Earl, who was foreman of the mechanical part of the newspaper business, had acquired ownership and most of the stock, and later became sole owners
changing the name of the paper to the Journal.

On 1 March 1892, Charles purchased a small 3 room house at 430 West First South Street, across the street south from the Second Ward meeting house. (The little frame house is gone, but a brick home stands there.)

Now all was well. Phebe was happy in the performance of her role as an excellent housekeeper, dutiful wife, and kind and loving mother, always busy and always available when needed.

Pioneer days and ways were now fast disappearing and a better and easier way of life was coming in. A few steps outside the back door was a hydrant from which pure mountain water could be had for drinking and household use. They bought a cow, a pig, and some chickens to add to their food supply. How excited everyone was when the first electric lights were turned on in the home. Later, an organ was purchased which brought much joy to the family. Here 3 more children were born. Della, 5 Dec. 1892, State 4 Jan. 1896, and Eva Almira 19 March 1899.

Sometime during the following summer, they purchased and moved into the Robert Murdock home on the corner east of them at 408 West First South. Here, added luxuries were enjoyed. In the kitchen there was a sink with running hot and cold water, later on, fixtures were installed in the bathroom. Later, one of the first telephones in town was acquired. There was a horse and buggy and Charles owned and rode a bicycle to work.

In 1901, Charles was again called to fill a mission, this time to the South Western States, with head quarters at Kansas City, Missouri. He left Logan 4 March and Phebe was once more left to care for the growing family. L This time she was pretty well provided for financially and when he was released, she went to join him. Together they spent about 2 months visiting different places throughout Eastern and Central United States. They returned home 23 June 1903, and began living normally again.

During the ensuing years, 3 more sons were born: Milton 5 March 1904; Harold Woolf 16 Nov. 1905; and Clarence Absalom 29 Dec. 1909. Over the years, each of the 5 sons spent their 21 birthday while serving as a missionary in England.

Ada and Della had now grown to be young ladies and were able to help with more home duties, as well as attending school. Consequently, Phebe became more active in the Church. She was a teacher in Primary and a Visiting Teacher for Relief Society. At different times during the years, she was sustained as secretary-treasurer, counselor to 2 different presidents, and president of Relief Society. Later, she enjoyed going to the temple, where she performed the ordinances for more than 100 women.

As time went on, newer and better furniture and appliances were added to the home. There was a washing machine, the large wheel of which was turned by hand. Then came an electric iron, a clock that would run for 8 days without rewinding, a sewing machine, a typewriter and a phonograph, a piano, and later, a radio for home entertainment.

Charles purchased a “Haynes” automobile with removable side curtain, in which going 15 miles per hour seemed like going with the wind. He drove it to and from their summer home in Logan Canyon; as they neared the curves in the road, Phebe would loudly honk the unattached horn, much to the amusement of others (especially the younger folks.) Later he bought a used 1932, four-door Packard for $65, in which he and Phebe, with other members of the family, made many trips to Salt Lake City and to the Southern Utah and Colorado Parks.

Probably their greatest enjoyment of it came from their continued trips to the canyon home where they often entertained numerous groups of friends and associates. Phebe had a good
sense of humor in all of these things she was the willing help-meet, always seeing to the enjoyment and comfort of others.

On 26 March 1932, she passed away in Pocatello, Idaho following a heart attack while visiting at the home of her son, Milton, and his family. The children were all married except Clarence, who was then filling a mission in England. Funeral services were held 30 March in the 2nd Ward Chapel, after which, she was buried in the Logan City Cemetery.

Ada England Morrell, daughter.

Typed into the computer by Kathleen Jardine Woolf 20 Oct. 2002  Idaho Falls, Idaho
Information from JOHN ANTHONY WOOLF AND FAMILIES Published 1986