

JOHN ANTHONY WOOLF II
1843-1928

John Anthony Woolf II was a product of his family background and the times in which he lived. He was born Westchester County, New York, 27 Feb. 1843, 6th child of John Anthony Woolf I & Sarah Ann DeVoe. Between that year and 1861, his father with his family had moved from Westchester to Nauvoo on the Mississippi, to Winter Quarters on the Missouri, to Salt Lake City, to Iron County, Provo, Mona, Nephi and then to Hyde Park in Cache County, Utah. At each of these locations they had built a house, and each move, except that from Westchester to Missouri (which was by canal and river boat), required an overland trek by horse or ox-drawn conveyance. These wilderness migrations, totaling thousands of miles over prairie, mountains, and desert, demanded strictest discipline in order to preserve horse and ox power, obtain and preserve a food supply; avoid infection from insects, rodents, and reptiles while traveling and sleeping out of doors; protect life and limb in crossing rivers and traversing canyons, and hunting deer and buffalo; maintain health on a restricted diet, and avoid accidents, where they were common and the death rate high. Such was the environment in which he found himself from his earliest years until manhood. During that period there was constant danger of Indian depredations, and during many of those years there was actual hostility and organized fighting. There was also need for constant lookout to protect livestock from theft by renegade whites.

When, in 1861, the family settled in Cache Valley to lessen strenuous Indian problems and obtain an abundant water supply, John was 18 years of age. His older brothers, Absalom and James, were married with families of their own. John and his older brother, Isaac, then 20, were needed to provide the muscle that would convert virgin land into a productive farm. John devoted himself to this task for a period of 5 years, by which time his parents had completed a comfortable home and a producing farm.

By the time John was 23, there were few phases of pioneer life which he had not mastered. Clearing, plowing, cultivating, planting, canal surveying, ditch digging, irrigating, reaping, threshing, storing, gardening, and stock raising had all been learned by this apt scholar. He was a good horseman, good judge of horseflesh, sat easily in the saddle, and was reliable with a gun—all attributes of the highest value in pioneer life. He was friendly and affable; he could meet Indians preferably as friends, but when circumstances dictated, as enemies whose talents were respected. He was mature, disciplined, able, and a good catch for any young woman.

In 1866, John married Mary Lucretia Hyde, daughter of William Hyde, founder & bishop of Hyde Park. In 1876, with her approval, he married the lovely Celia Ann Hatch, daughter of Lorenzo Hill Hatch, a noted leader in the Northern settlements. By 1886, through industry & good management, his 2 families were comfortably housed in their own homes; their 10 children were abundantly fed and adequately clothed. There was school for the children during the winter months & church for them on Sundays. While acquiring this material success, John had not neglected the spiritual, but had taken time out during his married years to fill 2 Church missions, thus preparing himself for effective Church leadership.

This pleasant degree of well-being, however, so long denied the previous generation, was not to last for John. The United States Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of anti-polygamy laws and John was vulnerable. Charles Ora Card, Pres. Of the Cache Stake, acting under the direction of Pres. John Taylor, explored Western Canada in 1886 in search of a suitable place where polygamous families could settle outside the jurisdiction of the harsh, retroactive

American Polygamy laws. Having found a place, 40 tried and selected families were called to establish the new colony.

John Anthony Woolf II was a natural choice for this mission. Because Pres. Card himself was in hiding, he selected John to bring the Card family, as well as John's own family, northward on this trek. When the town of Cardston was formed, John Anthony Woolf II became its mayor, the first bishop, & later, first counselor to Pres. Card when the Alberta Stake was formed. At the request of Pres. John W. Taylor, John built and operated the Woolf Hotel inn Cardston, where he became host to Cardston's early travelers. Through his friendliness and knowledge of the scriptures, he succeeded in replacing suspicion with good will & fostering admiration for the new settlers with their much-maligned religion.

John was active in all early community movements in Cardston. He was an organizer, director and stockholder in Cardston's first industrial enterprises, including a creamery, sawmill, gristmill, & cooperative general store; he was a leader in Cardston as long as he lived there.

He returned to Utah in later life, making his home in Logan, where he devoted his remaining years to genealogical & temple work, & served as a patriarch. He died in Logan, 20 Feb. 1928, having seen most of his children married, all in comfortable circumstances, & all active contributors to the Church or communities in which they lived. He set a good example in his lifetime and was rewarded with a large family that has honored him by emulating his example.

Typed into Computer 14 Oct. 2002 Kathleen Jardine Woolf, Idaho Falls, Ida.