

JOHN WILLIAM WOOLF  
1869-1950

John William Woolf was born in the village of Hyde Park in northern Utah 27 Nov. 1869. His ancestry is known for 5 generations back. Starting with the earliest, his paternal ancestors and places of birth are as follows:

Wilhelm Wolff 1676-1743  
Zornheim, Mainz

Anna Barbara Brotmann 1644-1748  
Zornheim, Mainz

Johann Jacob Wolff 1721-1795  
Zornheim, Mainz

Anna Maria Meyer 1721-1791  
St. Stephen, Mainz

Peter Anton Wolff (former Hessian soldier known in America as Anthony Woolf)  
1761-1795 St. Quinton, Mainz

Anthony Woolf 1761-1829  
St. Quinton, Mainz

Phebe Weeks 1765-1829  
New York City, New York

John Anthony Woolf I 1805-1881  
New York City, New York

Sarah Ann Devoe 1814-1905  
Fordham, New York

John Anthony Woolf II 1841-1928  
Pelham, New York

Mary Lucretia Hyde 1848-1915  
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Anthony Woolf (Anton Wolff in Germany) was a former Hessian soldier who came to America from Germany with his regiment to fight for the British in the American Revolution. He deserted, joined the American cause and remained in America making his home in Westchester County, New York.

John Anthony Woolf I, son of Anthony Woolf (Anton Wolff), was born in Westchester County, New York 1 July 1805. He married Sarah Ann DeVoe April 1831. This couple listened to the Mormon Elders, joined the Mormon Church, migrated to Nauvoo, Illinois, and joined the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo, crossed the Mississippi River, wintered in Winter Quarters, continued their journey the following spring and arrived in Salt Lake City in Oct. 1847. After establishing a successful farm in central Utah near Mona, where they had been called by Brigham Young, they were compelled to leave because of Indian hostility. They then spent a few years in Nephi. Following crop failures due to drought & rodents they migrated to Hyde Park, Utah, in 1861.

The principle of plural marriage had been introduced into Church doctrine in Nauvoo, but its practice was minimal until the Saints reached Utah. Federal anti-polygamy laws which followed were ineffective; but when a law was passed prohibiting cohabitation of a man and his plural wife, polygamists were arrested, tried, found guilty and imprisoned. The harsh prison sentences prompted migrations of polygamists into Canada and Mexico.

John William Woolf's parents were polygamists who fled with others to Canada. They traveled in covered wagons, the lead one driven by John, the other by his father. The roads generally were mere trails with steep hills, mud holes, and swift and deep rivers to cross. In

meeting the demands of such travel, the youth, agility, strength and courage of Johnny (as he was called) were invaluable. Most of the men who made the journey were polygamists in their mid-to late-forties. Johnny's courage and strength were invaluable and won him a place of respect, gratitude, friendship and love such as exists among equals. He was no longer a youth but a man; and so he was to remain during the pioneer years to follow during which hard hand labor converted a raw prairie into a village with homes, streets, stores, churches and schools.

In June of his 19<sup>th</sup> year, John married Lucinda Marie Layne (he called her Cindy), also a Cardston pioneer. They moved into a 1 room log house which Johnny had bought and which Lucinda's father had erected for a price of \$75.00. That fall, the young couple journeyed back to Utah to be sealed in the Logan Temple. On returning to Cardston the following spring, Johnny established a ranch 8 miles south of Cardston; starting with 160 acres and adding thereto until the ranch contained about 900 acres, all fenced and divided into separate pastures. This was his main base of operation as long as he lived in Canada.

In 1890, their son William Layne Woolf was born in Cardston & was to be their only child.

Shortly after moving to the ranch, a Montana man undertook to drive 600 ranch-raised wild horses from Montana to Alberta to sell to the incoming settlers. He left the horses south of the Canadian boundary line and proceeded to Edmonton, a Canadian port of entry about 60 miles north of the Canadian border, to pay import tariff on the horses. While there he inquired where he might find a competent man who knew the Canadian rivers to help his crew drive the horses into Canada. He was referred to Johnny Woolf. He employed Johnny and paid him a five dollar gold piece for his services.

That fall the man returned. The horses had not sold and he offered to sell them to Johnny. Johnny replied that he had no money. The man said he needed no money and sold the horses on time, taking Johnny's notes in payment. This called for bronco busters to come to tame the horses. Johnny employed Jim Austin, who became a famous bronco rider, and breaking horses became a major activity on the ranch. With it, of course, Johnny was kept busy selling horses.

The next fall Mr. Christi, a cattle rancher, came to Johnny saying he was through with Alberta winters and offered to sell Johnny his 1200 head of cattle. Johnny again had no money, but bought the cattle on time, giving his note in payment. With the help of the banks, his bills were paid and Johnny was busy selling and buying both horses and cattle.

He established a good record with the local banks. One time while in Montana he was offered a band of horses at a very low price. He wired the bank, which was wired from credit, and he bought the horses for several thousand dollars, paying for them with a check written on a piece of paper torn from a paper sack.

Johnny was now well known over all of southern Alberta. Anyone wanting to buy or sell from 1 to a herd of horses or cattle could do business with Johnny. During the Boer War he was able to furnish the British with the horses they needed.

When the Alberta Territorial Government was formed in 1902, Johnny was well and favorably known. He was elected to the Territorial Legislative Assembly. When the territorial government was converted into a provincial government, he was elected to the Provincial Legislature and reelected at each succeeding election until he left Alberta.

In the fall of 1910, Johnny bought a home in Salt Lake City preparatory to moving back to Utah. Soon after, he resigned his legislative office and opened a real estate office in Salt Lake City. In 1913 he was greatly saddened by the death of his wife Lucinda. They had had happy

years together.

He later married Quina Austin, sister of the Austin Boys. Quina had come to Cardston in 1902. That year Johnny had built a new rock house, the first home he had owned in Cardston after his 1 room log house. The rock house was one of Cardston's 2 finest homes, the other one being a brick house built about the same time by Pres. Card. Johnny's new home became Cardston's most active social center. Lucinda's parents had both passed away and her brother, Frank, Cardston's most versatile musician, came to live with them, making Johnny's home more or less Cardston's music center where practice for vocal and instrumental musical events were almost daily occurrences. Quina Austin lived at Johnny's and Lucinda's house for quite an extensive period in 1902 and later. "It is now quite clearly evident that she became my father's plural wife at that time," states William L. Woolf. "Apostles John W. Taylor and Matthew Cowley were frequent visitors to Cardston in those days. My belief is that Apostle Taylor married Quina and my father polygamously about 1902 or shortly thereafter.

A Protestant minister, Reverend Hamilton, who lived in Cardston, made it his business to gather all data he could find concerning infringements of the Canadian laws on Polygamy by Mormons in Alberta and furnish this data to Alberta Provincial Government officials. A government official and friend of Johnny's turned this information over to him. It appears that this is the reason he left a useful and productive life in Alberta and returned to the United States.

In his Real Estate operation in Salt Lake City, Johnny sold some properties on commission but often bought properties outright, operating and improving them before reselling. Among the latter was a 5,000 acre ranch 12 miles south of Wells, in Elko County, Nev. He owned and operated this ranch for some years. He also contracted with a firm known as the Pacific Reclamation Co. To sell 15,000 acres of raw land to settlers. This land, 15 miles north of Wells, was to be watered from water to be stored in a million-dollar dam then under construction. By the time he had sold a few thousand acres of this land in small tracts to settlers from Utah, the Pacific Reclamation Co. Had established a town site called Metropolis with a 2 story brick hotel, and the settlers had built a 2 story brick school house in the town. His son William L., who had a civil engineer's education but no experience, began to suspect that the water supply was insufficient to fill the reservoir behind the dam. Johnny felt William L. Must be mistaken, but took him seriously enough to confer with Wm. Beers, Utah State Engineer in charge of water filings in Utah. After study, Mr. Beers confirmed the belief that the water supply was deficient. Johnny notified the Pacific Reclamation Company of these findings, informing them that unless they could prove there was adequate water he would feel constrained to stop the further sale of land. 2 or 3 months later the Pacific Reclamation Co. Declared voluntary bankruptcy. They were owing J. W. And W. L. Woolf \$82,000 in unpaid commissions. While earning these commissions, J. W. And W. L. Woolf had borrowed \$36,000 from the National Copper Bank in Salt Lake City.

Shortly after reading of the bankruptcy of the Pacific Reclamation Company, the manager of the National Copper Bank asked Johnny to drop in and see him. W. L. Accompanied him on this visit. After a few pleasantries and a reference to the failure of the Pacific Reclamation Co., the bank manager put his hand on Johnny's knee and asked, "John, is there any reason I should be worried about your account?"

To which Johnny replied, "I will not be able to meet the payments when they come due, but if you will be patient you will not lose penny on my account."

The manager said, "That is all I wanted to hear," and the conversation changed to more pleasant matters.

In the spring of 1918 John sent W. L. To the Uintah Basin to look after an 80 acre piece of land obtained in a real estate deal. The land was fenced, had been farmed and had a water right. They needed to get a farmer on to the land and have it put into crops. Out of this trip grew connections resulting in W. L.'s employment in the Uintah Basin until the end of 1924, at which time he joined his father in a radio related business he had established in New York City.

In 1922, W. L. Had taken up short-wave as a hobby, and suggested to his father that this new thing had a future. He looked around to see what might be going on in the field of radio that would be of business interest to him. The only thing he found was Baldwin headphones. He visited Baldwin and contracted to sell Baldwin phones not only in Canada, but in all the world except the United States. He then set up a sales office in Toronto to sell phones in Canada and an office in New York to handle export business. Shortly thereafter, the Baldwin Co. Went into involuntary bankruptcy and the Nation Copper Bank was appointed receiver. Thus, the receiver was the same bank to which was already owed \$36,000. They immediately appointed Johnny the sales agent for the entire world at the time radio was just coming into existence. There was no such thing as a loud-speaker in existence at that time; so all radio listening was done with earphones, and the Baldwin earphone was the best on the market.

John needed his son's help, so William L. Resigned his position in Roosevelt and joined him in New York by the end of 1924. With the aid of a mechanical engineer, William designed a loud-speaker with a horn, actuated by a Baldwin earphone. Enough Baldwin "99" loud-speakers were sold during the winter of 1925-1926 to make a net profit of \$56,000. By the next winter, the cone-type speaker had come on the market. It was both better and cheaper than the horn-type and the Baldwin "99" speaker was obsolete.

In supplying them with the large number of phones they had sold, the receiver of the Baldwin Co. Had made enough money to pay off Baldwin bills and accumulate a million dollar surplus; and the Baldwin Co. Owners were petitioning the court for the return of the company to its owners. It was apparent that the firm of J. W. And W. L. Woolf would soon lose the Baldwin agency and soon began looking for another line to sell.

The Amplion Corporation of America was owned by a parent company in England. They made a variety of products in the radio family of equipment. After a series of negotiations, J. W. And W. L. Took over the Amplion Corp. Of America with its assets, by agreeing to pay \$35,000 to its preferred creditors and to protect the English company against its remaining creditors. Johnny was a masterful negotiator in making this deal. They then called the American creditors together and negotiated the number of cents on the dollar J. W. And W. L. Woolf would pay the creditors. Here again, in a room full of angry creditors, Johnny's strength as a negotiator together with his natural friendliness, were major factors in reaching an agreement.

The firm of J. W. And W. L. Woolf then formed a new corporation, Amplion Products Corporation, under which name they did business. In addition to the manufactured products received in this deal, they received some very good shop machinery, lathes, stamping machines, grinders, and so forth; making a small, but complete, machine shop permitting them to make almost anything they could conceive in their own shop. Among other devices made by Amplion was a loud-speaker unit; which, when fitted to a horn of proper design, was not only loud enough to fill a large auditorium, but was superior in quality to any loud-speakers then on the market. Sound was just being added to movies, so Amplion made amplifiers and supplied sound to a

number of movie theatres. In the midst of this growth and activity, J. W. And W. L. Woolf were sued by Bell Telephone Co. For violating 13 patents. On examining a loud-speaker unit supplied to a movie theatre by the Bell Telephone Company, J. W. And W. L. Were shocked to find that the loud-speaker they had purchased in the Amplion deal was not only similar in construction to the telephone company's speaker, but was identical to it in both essentials and non-essentials. They were embarrassed and apologized to the telephone company, then applied for a license under their patents. It was soon evident that the telephone company was not only taking steps to protect its patent rights, but was trying to do so in such a vigorous manner as to make Amplion a lesson to any others who might be tempted to violate their patents.

With his independent Canadian background, John didn't appreciate being made the example of a bad boy, so secured an attorney and filed a defense. 6 years of litigation followed in the U. S. And Canadian courts, at the end of which Telephone Co. Received not one penny from them. In the meantime, a patent had been granted to W. L. Upon which the telephone company was now infringing. In the settlement of the litigation, the telephone company paid the Woolfs for a license. W. L. Was a pleasant & friendly man, but didn't take well to being pushed.

During those busy days an Austrian inventor asked them to take over his invention, a machine which recorded sound on motion picture tape, rather than on a platter. The machine had evident merits; while the quality of recording was poor, 8 hours of recording could be stored on a 4 or 5 inch roll of motion picture film. W. L. Saw what he thought would be a very simple change that would greatly improve the quality of the sound. John arranged to have the inventor, a highly-skilled machinist, make the suggested changes, which improved the quality beyond what was then standard quality of phonograph records. They formed a corporation named Recordgraph Recording Corp., sold stock, made some handmade samples and licensed a firm to manufacture the machine. During the war years, this firm paid the Recordgraph Recording Corp. \$67,000 in license fees. The many successful negotiations essential to achieve all these results were accomplished, again, through Johnny's successful negotiating skill.

As the years passed, Johnny and Quina had grown apart. After they had been separated for some years, Johnny obtained a divorce and married Faith Young, who made him a good and devoted companion to the end of his days.

The time came when Johnny needed to slow down. W. L. Bought his stock in their activities and Johnny and Faith retired to Los Angeles, where they bought an apartment house, living in one apartment and renting the others. After some leisurely years there, Johnny sold the apartment house and he and Faith moved to Spokane, Washington where Faith's daughters lived.

In 1948, W. L. Moved to Salt Lake at the invitation of the University of Utah. As soon as he could find a house to live in, arrangements were made for Johnny and Faith to move in with them. The house was remodeled to make a comfortable apartment, with only a door between them and W. L.'s family

Needless to say, Johnny and W. L. Spent many hours together in happy reminiscence for the next 2 years. John William Woolf died on Washington's birthday, 22 Feb. 1950 at the age of 81. His funeral was held in the beautiful University Ward Chapel, where W. L. Had been installed as bishop the week before. He was buried in Salt Lake City Cemetery beside his loving wife Lucinda. One of God's great friends of man had returned to his maker.

William L. Woolf, Son

Typed into the computer 25 Oct. 2002 by Kathleen Jardine Woolf Idaho Falls, Idaho  
Information from book JOHN ANTHONY WOOLF FAMILY Publ. 1986

1841-1928  
Pelham, New York