

WILFORD WOOLF, M.D.
1882-1963

Wilford Woolf was born 1 Oct. 1882, in Hyde Park, Cache County, Territory of Utah, the 8th of 12 children of John Anthony and Mary Lucretia Hyde Woolf. In 1887, Stake Pres. Charles O. Card called by John Taylor, Pres. Of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to find a place in Canada where some of the families living in the Logan area could find new homes. This was in keeping with the Church's policy to expand into adjacent land areas in order to make room for the following generation, as well as to diminish or avoid the legal problems confronting its polygamous members. As soon as the weather was suitable, John Anthony took his first wife and children, leaving behind his second wife, Celia A. Hatch, and her children, and started his northward journey. Wilford was then under 5 years of age, or about the same age that his father had been, when in sep. of 1847 the Woolf Family arrived in the Salt Lake Valley as part of the Bishop Edward Hunter Company of pioneers.

The family covered about 800 miles of wagon roads and poor trails arriving at the Canadian border. After leaving Montana they pushed on for about 15 more miles and finally halted on the bank of Lee's Creek near where it joins the St. Mary's River, thus concluding a difficult 6 week journey. This location was chosen by Pres. Card because of its water and fertile land and was named Cardston in his honor. Although the Cochrane Ranch was using the surrounding lush prairie grass lands to run cattle, the newcomers were allowed to stay and homestead quarter-sections of farm and ranch land. The ranchers mistakenly believed the fierce winters and rugged frontier conditions would soon drive out the new settlers.

Wilford enjoyed growing up on the family ranch, riding the ranch herding cattle, breaking horses, and performing various other tasks of a ranch hand. One of his early riding companions was Jim Austin, who later became known as "The Montana Kid." When his older brother, John, obtained a beef contract with the Canadian Pacific Railroad, they drove cattle as far west as Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Although Wilford loved ranch life, he had an even greater desire to get a good education. Since there was no high school at that time in the immediate vicinity, he and a good friend, J. Walter Low, took the train to Regina to commence their higher education in the fall term of 1902. They both continued on to graduation, but along with their studies, found time to engage in sports, particularly ice hockey, soccer, football and bossing. They competed against the local Northwest Mounted Police and other teams. Wilford's brother, John, was elected to the legislature of the Northwest Territories, which was housed west of Regina. This made it possible for Wilford to visit with him in the nearby Parliament Building. Although John represented the southern Alberta area, it was not until 1905 that Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces.

After graduation from the Regina High School, Wilford attended normal school for 6 months in order to obtain teaching credentials, then accepted the principalship of the school in Magrath at a salary of \$720 per year. However, he moved back to Cardston for the school year of 1906-7 in order to teach at the newly-completed high school there.

In 1907, Wilford was called on a mission to New Zealand along with Owen Brown, brother of Hugh B. Brown. They proceeded to Salt Lake City, but on the way, Wilford stopped off to see relatives and friends in Logan, among whom was Franklin S. Harris. Upon arriving in Salt Lake City, he spent Thanksgiving Day with his aunt and uncle, the Matthias F. Cowleys. After going through the temple and receiving their mission instructions, they traveled by train to

Victoria, B. C. Arriving in time to sail on the “S.S. Aorangi,” which made stops in Hawaii and the Fuji Islands before arriving in Auckland 7 Jan. 1908.

Although Wilford engaged in some proselyting, his main assignment was to edit and manage the mission paper, “The Messenger.” After receiving an honorable release 7 June 1910, he left to visit Tasmania and Australia. He returned to Salt Lake by way of Victoria. He was met by his father and they traveled to Wells, Nevada, to visit with John, who had recently purchased a ranch there. Upon returning to Cardston, Wilford and 2 of his brothers re-purchased a ranch formerly owned by John from James Kearl by giving him \$15,000 down and a note for the balance.

His ranching activities were cut short when in September he was asked to teach at the Knight Academy in Raymond. This was a new LDS Church school named after Jesse Knight, who had been largely responsible for getting it built. One of the other faculty members was Pearl Wright from Richfield, Utah, who had also accepted a teaching assignment at the Knight Academy after graduating from the Brigham Young College in Logan.

In the summer of 1911, both Wilford and Pearl was interested in home economics. She also took the opportunity to stay with her sister, Ruby, and her husband, David Henderson, who was at the university studying medicine. A romance blossomed and after returning home, the couple became engaged. The marriage took place the following 20 June 1912 in the Salt Lake Temple.

Instead of returning to Alberta, Wilford joined his brothers, who had formed a real estate firm in Salt Lake City. However, they attempted a land development near Wells, Nevada, which failed when a government water project was abandoned. Wilford stayed in the town of Metropolis for a year as the school principal, during which time he considered the possibility of carrying out a long-held ambition to study medicine. Finally, the decision was made and the couple returned to Salt Lake so that Wilford could enter the University of Utah.

During the summer of 1914, Wilford worked on a family-owned farm near Green River, Utah, and returned to the university again in the fall. On 23 Jan. 1925, Wilford and Pearl became the parents of their first child, Anthony DeVoe.

Wilford obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1916, after which the family again moved to Nevada, where Wilford taught school to earn money for further studies. He then completed the 2 years of medical school offered by the University of Utah. Their 2nd son, Wilford Wright, was born in Brigham City 22 March 1918, delivered by Dr. David Henderson, who had begun his medical practice there.

Wilford was accepted by the Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, for his remaining 2 years of medical studies, from which he graduated with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1920. Pearl and the 2 boys had remained in Richfield, where she taught school in 1918-19; but the family was together in Cleveland for the 1919-20 year. Wilford served his internship at the Latter-day Saints Hospital in Salt Lake, receiving \$10 per month.

The new doctor heard of an opportunity to purchase the Salina, Utah, hospital in partnership with Dr. Leo Merrill. They drew patients from surrounding counties of Wayne, Sevier, and Sanpete. After one year, Dr. Don C. Merrill, Leo’s brother, withed to join him, so Wilford agreed to sell his interest. Also, Pearl mentioned that she would prefer to live in Logan.

At about this time, Pores. Edward J. Wood of the Alberta Stake had written to Wilford informing him that a doctor was needed in Cardston and asking if he would consider a call to serve in this capacity. Wilford traveled to Cardston to look into the opening. He also consulted

with his brother, John, who thought that it might be a good move financially because of the high wheat price that had prevailed since the end of the war. (However, as Wilford said, this proved to be the last good year in over a decade.) After sending for his family, he took the provincial medical examination held in Edmonton and obtained the license to practice in Alberta.

On 8 Sep. 1923, Lois, the first daughter and the last of the 3 children, was born. During the next 9 rather austere but happy years the family enjoyed the country life offered by the Rocky Mountains to the west and prairie to the east. They were located only an hour's drive from Waterton Lakes and Glacier National Parks. The nearby fishing and hunting were outstanding.

Dr. Woolf became the town physician. In addition, he was busy in civic affairs. During his term as chairman of the school board, a new high school was built. Although Wilford was born in the United States, he had also acquired Canadian citizenship because of the family's homesteading activities and the laws which permitted one to hold dual citizenship.

In 1928 he was ordained a High Priest by Apostle Orson F. Whitney and about the same time Pearl was called as stake Primary President.

In his medical practice, the doctor delivered over 1,000 babies and had many calls for his services in the surrounding rural area. He often found it necessary to battle the elements-rain and snow and mud-on unsurfaced roads. More than once he was compelled to spend the night at a farm or ranch house until a blizzard had spent its force.

In the summer of 1931 Pearl attended the funeral of her mother, Henrietta W. Wright, who had moved from Richfield to Salt Lake in order to do temple work. During this trip, she heard that Dr. J. W. Aird planned to retire and move to California, leaving an opening for a surgeon in Provo, Utah.

By 15 Sep. 1931, the family had moved to Provo and rented a large house on University Avenue. Two of the rooms were converted into a doctor's office and waiting room with a separate outside entrance. This was satisfactory at first, but about a year later Dr. Woolf moved his office to West Center Street, next door to the office of Dr. Cullimore, who had engaged him to do his surgery.

Although Dr. Woolf belonged to the Rotary Club in Cardston, there was no opening in his classification in the Provo Club, so he became a charter member of the Provo Lion's Club. He enjoyed the association of many friends in this organization and held several offices. He also enjoyed attending the state conventions and 6 international conventions. He served as club president, zone chairman, and was chosen to be District Governor for the year 1946-7.

Wilford continued to be active in his church and held several positions, including superintendent of the 4th Ward Sunday School, alternate high councilor in the Utah Stake, and high priests group counselor in the University Ward. He was also appointed to the Timpanogos Scout Council and gave numerous free medical examinations to Boy Scouts and departing missionaries. He also found time to perform tonsillectomies and other minor operations for groups of indigent children, for which he was paid \$10 per operation by the Relief Society or City Welfare Dept. During the war years, he examined inductees for the armed services and from 1942 to 1946 was Provo area medical examiner for second and third class pilots. In 1945 he was awarded a letter of commendation with a lapel medal for this service.

For recreation, Wilford turned to golf as a year-long activity and enjoyed duck and deer hunting in the fall. He joined the Timpanogos Golf Club, where he served 1 term as president.

In 1933, Dr. Aird decided to return to Provo and resume his practice. He asked Dr. Woolf to join him in a surgical partnership and in the operation of the 20 bed Aird Hospital.

This lasted until 1939, when they agreed to close their hospital in order that a larger one might be built better serve Provo and the surrounding area. The hospital was completed with the financial aid of the Commonwealth Foundation of New York City. The Foundation also sponsored a refresher course in surgery for the hospital staff members. Dr. Woolf took advantage of this opportunity to take post-graduate classes in surgery and surgical gynecology during the winter of 1941-2 at the University of Wisconsin. Between the years of 1941-46, he was secretary and later president of both the Utah County Medical Assoc. And the Utah Valley Hospital staff, as well as a vice-president of the Utah State Medical Assoc.

In the summer of 1946, while performing an operation to plate a fractured leg, the doctor suffered a serious heart attack. He was placed immediately in an oxygen tent and after a few days recovered sufficiently to be released from the hospital, but it was necessary for him to undergo a slow recuperation lasting for the next several years. Part of this time was spent in St. George, Utah, and part with his brother, John, who lived then in Los Angeles.

To bring family events up to date, Anthony graduated from Brigham Young University in 1936 and was called on a mission to Germany. Wilford was called to the same mission in 1938, and by coincidence, Lois was also called to the German Mission in 1955. During the war years, Anthony served as an artillery officer with the 7th Infantry Division in the Pacific and Wilford piloted a B-17 bomber from an English Base. After the war, he entered the University of Southern Cal., from which he graduated with a medical degree. Lois graduated from Brigham Young University in 1945 and went into the field of medical technology. Anthony started out in pre-medical studies, but later changed to business management.

Although the doctor had resumed a limited practice in 1950, his health did not warrant such a rigorous life. In 1951, he accepted a position at the Brigham Young University Student Health Center, where he worked on a part-time basis until 1957. He spent the following year visiting children and relatives in California. In 1960, Wilford and Pearl decided to move to California in order to enjoy the milder climate and lower altitude.

They moved into an apartment in Albany near the El Cerrito home of son, Anthony, daughter-in-law, Olea, and 7 grandchildren. Although their activities were necessarily restricted, they lived fairly comfortably at this location until Wilford's final heart attack on 25 Sep. 1963, and Pearl's death which occurred 27 June 1967, while visiting in Seattle with Lois and her husband, Dr. Henry C. Savage. So ended the career of a man who devoted his life to serving his fellowman. Anthony D. Woolf, son, from an Autobiography, 1963

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