

Biography of Susanna Aroline Wadsworth

Source: Cox, Elnora Arave. Taken from "Sketch of My Mother's Life. Abiah Wadsworth: His Wives and Family, 1810-1979. 1979. 112c-112d.

Susan Aroline Wadsworth Arave was the daughter of Abiah and Eliza Ann Hardy Wadsworth. She was born September 16, 1836, in the state of Maine.

She was a little past three years of age when her parents joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1839, and was with them as they joined a company of saints leaving Maine for Nauvoo, Illinois, in May 1841. At the time of the martyrdom of the Prophet, her father and uncles were among the first to reach the scene of the tragedy.

She experienced and endured the privations and disappointments of those troubled years in Nauvoo and the move west with the saints. She moved with her family from Nauvoo to Montrose on the west side of the Mississippi River, on to Salem for one year, then on to Council Bluffs in 1847. In 1851, her parents received a call from President Brigham Young to join a company of saints leaving for the Salt Lake Valley. They left Council Bluffs May 10, 1851, in Abraham Day's company of 50.

She was now a girl of fifteen years and well remembered the hurry and worry of getting ready for the long journey across the plains. Her father and mother and older brother each drove a wagon, but she walked much of the way driving two cows that were not in the yoke. She said many of the other women walked most of the way. They arrived in Salt Lake City September 17, 1851. Brigham Young advised them to join a colony of saints at the mouth of Weber Canyon, a place called Uintah, which they did the following day.

While living at Uintah, her older brother, Joe, was sent twice to help emigrants coming to the Salt Lake Valley. She was especially saddened by his report of helping to bury an ill-fated hand cart company which arrived in November. Her brother told of helping to bury 4 children and several old people, also of children whose feet and hands were frozen so as to cripple them for life, and of men and women frozen almost to death when they reached them. These and other experiences left a deep impression on Susan and on the lives of her children as she related to them experiences she knew so well and felt so keenly.

Susan Aroline's daughter, Elnora, says this of her mother:

"My Mother learned to spin and weave and knit and do all kinds of pioneer women's work. She was married to Nelson Arave the 18th day of February, 1865, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. Her father and Mother were endowed the same day that she was married, after which her father was put in as Bishop for several years. He served as Bishop in Morgan, Utah and Mountain Green.

"My Mother had 7 boys while living in those three places; buried two baby boys while living there after which they moved to Hooper about the year of 1870. Her first girl was born 1871 in Hooper after which she had four more making her a family of 12 children: 9 boys and 3 girls.

"I, Elnora Arave Cox, was the first child born and the first girl after my parents moved to Hooper. While a small child, I well remember when women first received

their franchise to vote. I heard my Mother explain it several times, so I always remembered it. 'Our Prophet Joseph Smith turned the key for women, so not many years after, women commenced to have a few rights along with their husbands.'

"Abiah had homesteaded 160 acres in Hooper, Utah. My Mother, Father, another 2 sons and some daughters and their husbands settled on this land and each took so much for a home site. They all raised a very large family and all were so united. Grandfather had two families; first wife - 6 and second wife 10. My Mother's oldest brother had 2 wives, one had 12 and the other 13. My Father's first wife had 12, second wife 11. All the others had large families and all were very near and dear to each other. Grandfather built a molasses mill and they all made their own molasses every year. They had very little sugar. All cakes, cookies and doughnuts were made with molasses. The children all took turns having candy pulls at each others home and oh, did we enjoy each others company. I never remember that any ever fell out. Most of them lived there until their families were raised and most all married off."