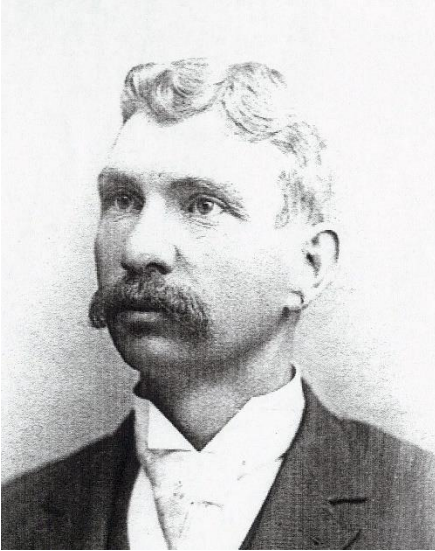


HISTORY OF WILLIAM ALBERT MAXFIELD



William Albert Maxfield was born 23 September 1864, in South Cottonwood, Salt Lake County, Utah, to Richard Maxfield and Artemissa Ann Harris. He was the fifth child in a family of eight children, who were born and raised on a farm in the vicinity of Highland Drive and Vine Street, South Cottonwood. About seven and one-half years after Richard's first marriage, he married a second wife and that family consisted of nine children. William maintained an equal and close relationship with all these children during his lifetime.

His father and his father's brother were the original owners of the Maxfield Mine in Big Cottonwood Canyon. The Maxfield Mining Company was incorporated in 1879. Details concerning this mine are given in the histories of these two founders.

The needs required in raising a large family required that William start farm work at a very early age. With but very little farm equipment, the work was hard, tiring, and difficult. A normal workday was from ten to twelve hours, six days a week.

His memories of early farm life were those of hard manual labor, with little or no incentive. He related his vow then to make farm life more meaningful for his children by having them drive teams of horses and operate farm equipment at an early age. And it became even more interesting when they were permitted to drive a horse and buggy or a team and wagon. He was quick to teach them to do all aspects of what was normally considered to be a man's job on the farm. He was a very good counselor and teacher and one who didn't expect others to do what he couldn't do himself. His methods and teachings provided work incentives, interest, excitement, and everlasting farm life memories for his children.

William's mother was a schoolteacher and taught many prominent people of that time (related in her personal history). This supplemented the farm income and helped put the children through the eighth grade of school, thought by most people to be sufficient for their needs in those days.

With little income to provide more than the basic necessities for a large family, there were occasions when the total gifts for the children at Christmas consisted of but an apple and an orange. On occasion, ice cream was made by placing a bucket with ice cream mix in the snow and ice and then turning the bucket to freeze it. He told of enjoying ice cream so much that once he over-ate and became sick of it. Consequently, He never ate ice cream again during the remainder of his life.

When he was in his late teens, he left home for a job to carry mail by horseback along the route between Green River, Wyoming, and Salt Lake City. Winter weather was extremely bitter and cold. At times, deep snow made it most difficult to find his way, guided only by flag poles along the way to mark the route. He stayed with this job for about two years and then moved to Provo to work on the Abraham Owen Smoot farm. This came about because Abraham Owen Smoot had married his grandmother Harris in her earlier days in Illinois, before migrating to Utah and then Provo to live.

It was while working on this farm that he met Johanna Olsen, who worked in the Smoot household. They fell in love and were married on 29 November 1893, in the Salt Lake Temple.

Upon marrying, they rented a small farm near Utah Lake approximately one-half mile south of Geneva Resort. They remained there about seven years. There the first three children were born: Albert, Tena, and Elton.

They then acquired land, which was undeveloped, starting at the southwest corner of the intersection of the Pleasant Grove-Vineyard and Geneva roads and running west to the next intersecting roads. The east property line extended for one-half mile to crossroads on the south, then on an irregular line west and north to the northwest corner.

This land was covered with sagebrush and required a great amount of hard work to remove the brush, level the land, and then run tile drains through it. A house was built on the northwest corner of the property. It was a frame house and had three bedrooms (but only an outside toilet). It was there that the rest of the children were born: LaVern, Margaret, Arnold, and LeGrande and VerNile (twins).

About 1910, the finest barn in the whole area was built, just east of the house. Also, a milkhouse was built between the buildings, supplied with water from a flowing well to run through the milkhouse tank to keep cans of milk placed in it cool, until it could be delivered or shipped. The water from the well was of a constant temperature both summer and winter, seeming to be warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The well was one of several other wells that provided irrigation water for the farm. The barn required 64,000 shingles and it held

100 tons of hay. It accommodated a herd of thirty cows on one side plus twenty cows and six horses on the other. It was painted a blue-grey color, trimmed in white and was truly a beautiful building.

The Union Pacific Railroad bordered the farm on the east side and the train was flagged down to ship milk to Salt Lake City. Soon William bought milk from other dairies in the area and shipped it as well. Not long after that, he prevailed upon the railroad company to establish a railroad station just across the road from the northeast corner of the farm. It was soon built and became known as the Maxfield Station, where regular stops were then made. It was at the time of a shipment of milk that William got a cinder in his eye while near the train (which used coal for fuel in those days). The injury caused him untold pain and suffering, and the doctor decided that the eye must be removed because of the infection that had developed. He went to his oldest sister's home (Emily), in Salt Lake City, where removal of his eye took place on the kitchen table. He remained there for several weeks during recovery before returning home.

The loss of his eye was perhaps a major factor in his decision to lease the farm and move the family to Provo, where he had obtained a house at about Sixth West near the railroad tracks on the south. The family remained there about four years and then moved to a farm in Grandview. During this period, he sold real estate to supplement income from the farm. The Grandview farm consisted of about thirteen acres, producing most every kind of fruit known, including some ten or more varieties of cherries. The ground was rocky and difficult to work, but it was excellent for fruit. Many bush and vine berries were also raised, along with a large garden. Major fruits marketed were peaches, raspberries, and cherries. A pasture and a three-acre alfalfa field supplied feed for the cattle and horses.

Among a variety of farmyard animals, including six cows and three horses, was a very special horse named Prince. William delighted in fine animals and was most proud of this beautiful riding and buggy horse. On a number of occasions, as he drove to Provo in the buggy, he would run on to another driver and then talk him into a race by offering to give him a head start or by giving him the better part of the road. Prince was not only beautiful but very fast and never lost a race, much to William's greatest delight.

After William's eye operation, sight in his other eye deteriorated and his activities were further limited. He bought an automobile in the early nineteen twenties so that he could be driven around to sell real estate. His first car had carbide headlights and only a crank to start the motor. It was an open touring car, with isinglass side curtains. During this period, he suffered from both frequent and very severe headaches, which lasted throughout the remainder of his life.

In the year 1925, the people to whom he had leased the farm in Vineyard defaulted and he had to take the farm back. Farming and dairying continued there until the Fall of 1927. The remainder of the family who were still living at home moved to Salt Lake City and resided at 1010 South Ninth East, where he continued, although in a limited way, to sell real estate. One of his major transactions was the sale of a large ranch near Vernon, Utah.

Following a severe kidney ailment of several months' duration, he passed away at home, then located at 1978 Windsor Street, on 17 June 1933. He was buried in Wasatch Lawn Cemetery.

William always stressed the importance of honesty and hard work to his family. He was a very devoted husband and father. He was most kind and generous. He would never let a tramp pass by our way without seeing to it that he was fed. He always encouraged and supported his family in Church activities. He had a very keen mind and was especially proficient in mathematics. He was one to always be greatly loved and respected. Patience, kindness, and honesty were not only an important part of his life, but they were highly reflected in his character.

Written by VerNile E. Maxfield