

Justina W. Keeley

Compiled & Written by Jodi B. Kinner
2012

Justina Wooldridge Keeley was born on December 7, 1888, in East Lynne, Missouri, to Robert A. and Mary F. Clement Wooldridge. The cause of her deafness is unknown. She was a member of the Methodist Church.

Justina married a Deaf man named Joseph Goshen Keeley on December 24, 1912, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Joseph's brother and sister, Alfred Charles Jr. and Kate Orr, were also Deaf. This was due to their mother, Viola Goshen, taking quinine during her pregnancies. The side effects weren't understood by doctors in those days.

Joseph entered the Utah School for the Deaf, then housed at the University of Deseret in Salt Lake

City, in 1891. When the Utah School for the Deaf relocated to Ogden in 1896, Alfred and Kate also enrolled in the school.

Joseph's father, Alfred Charles, owned a business called Keeley's Ice Cream Company in Salt Lake City. After Alfred graduated from Gallaudet College in 1916, he worked in his father's business (Alfred Charles Keeley Jr.,



Joseph Goshen Keeley, 1921



Justina W. Keeley
UAD Bulletin, June 1973

Gallaudet University Alumni Cards: 1866-1962).

While Justina lived in Utah, she was noted for her role as an active member of the Utah Association of the Deaf. She became a life member in 1936 (UAD Bulletin, June 1973). From that time on, she served as a member of the board of trustees and as secretary.



**Justina W. Keeley
Golden Anniversary: Salt Lake City
Division No. 56. National Society of the
Deaf. 1916-1966. Prudential Plaza
Auditorium.
October 15, 1966**

Justina was also a member of Salt Lake City Division No. 56 of the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf (NFSD). This division began soon after she visited her home state of Missouri and learned about the NFSD. She brought word back to Utah about a new insurance organization of the deaf, by the deaf, and for the deaf. Subsequently, eight men formed a local division, which led to the chartering of Salt Lake City Division No. 56 on October 24, 1916 (UAD Bulletin, Summer 1966). Her discovery was likely bittersweet, given that women would be denied full membership in the NFSD for another 35

years. It was not until 1951 at the convention in Chicago, Illinois, that the NFSD agreed to give women regular insurance membership (Records of National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, 1900-2006).

Justina passed away in a Salt Lake hospital of natural causes on April 6, 1973, and is buried in Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park alongside her husband in Salt Lake City, Utah (UAD Bulletin, June 1973).

Bibliography

"Alfred Charles Keeley Jr.: B.A., 1916." Gallaudet University Alumni Cards, 1866-1957.
<http://dspace.wrlc.org/view/ImgViewer?url=http://dspace.wrlc.org/doc/manifest/2041/46239>

Gallaudet University Archives. "Records of National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, 1900-2006. MSS 163."
http://www.gallaudet.edu/Library_Deaf_Collections_and_Archives/Collections/Manuscript_Collection/MSS_163.html

"Justina W. Keeley." *UAD Bulletin*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (June 1973): 5.