

GLADYS LINDSAY BRIGGS DUKE

1892-1970

Wasatch County Treasurer and Deputy County Assessor

Biography by Ann Engar

Gladys Lindsay Briggs Duke was born October 13, 1892, in Center Creek, Utah, five miles southeast of Heber City. Her parents, James and Agnes Watson Lindsay, had both been born in Scotland and crossed the American plains as children when their families joined the Mormon church. Gladys, the youngest of ten children, was very close to her older sister Hazel: they dressed alike, milked and cared for the cows, fed chickens and pigs, filled the mangers with hay for the horses, and walked over a mile to meet their father coming home from the canyons. Their father James, a farmer and miner, was politically active, serving twice as justice of the peace, and visionary: he helped bring telephone lines and a culinary water system to Center Creek.

Gladys married a local boy, Archie Alonzo Briggs, on February 13, 1912. For a time they lived in Evanston, Wyoming, but returned to Heber City. Tragedy entered Gladys's life as her almost two-year-old daughter died in March 1917; her husband Archie died in April 1918; and her 1 1/2 -year-old son died the following month. With her remaining daughter, she moved in with her parents in Center Creek and three months after her husband's death gave birth to twin boys.

A single mother, Gladys had to go to Heber City for employment. It was a six-mile roundtrip, so she would often stay in town and return to her children and parents on the weekend. Her son Maurice said that his Aunt Hazel and her husband Albert Giles raised him. In October 1920, Gladys ran as a Republican against Millie Witt for County Treasurer and won. She served as treasurer for only one term, after which she was unseated by Geneva Cliff. She went on to become Deputy Wasatch County Assessor, a position she served in for 48 years.

On January 4, 1923, Gladys married Guy Duke, a disabled veteran of World War I. He had been shot in the Battle of Argonne Forest; afterwards one arm never functioned properly, and he fought constant infection. He and Gladys, nevertheless, became parents of four children. Gladys was active in the American Legion Auxiliary and served as president of the Lockhart Post. She died October 7, 1970, in Heber City.

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