

**THOMAS AND ALBERT  
WIGGLESWORTH.**



**RAILROAD BUILDER,  
DOCTOR TO THE  
NAVAJO**

**A MEMOIR**



**Dr. Albert Matthew Wigglesworth  
First Doctor to the Navajo <sup>1</sup>**

(Notes are collected at the end of each chapter.)

**THOMAS AND ALBERT  
WIGGLESWORTH.  
RAILROAD BUILDER,  
DOCTOR TO THE  
NAVAJO**

**A MEMOIR**

**By Dr. A. M. Wigglesworth  
(1872 - 1964)**

**With additional commentary by Russ Wigglesworth, Jack  
Wright and Dennis Jensen**

**Edited by Dennis Jensen**

**2014**

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**Cover photo (detail) from the Wigglesworth Family Collection.**

**Wigglesworth, Albert Matthew (4/22/1872-1963); Russell Wigglesworth, Jack Wright, Dennis Francis Jensen.**

**Thomas Hudson and Albert Matthew Wigglesworth. Railroad Builder, Doctor to the Navajo. A Memoir. By Albert Matthew Wigglesworth, Russell Wigglesworth, Jack Wright and Dennis Francis Jensen. Edited by Dennis Francis Jensen. Published by Dennis Francis Jensen - Ocean View, Delaware. 2015.**

**Subjects:**

**Native Americans - Apache**

**Native Americans - Hopi - Snake Dance Ceremony**

**Native Americans - Navajo**

**Physicians - History - United States**

**Physicians - History - United States - Wigglesworth, Albert Matthew Schwemberger, Simeon (1867 - 1931)**

**United States - History - Railroads**

**United States - History - Southwest**

**Wigglesworth, Albert Matthew (4/22/1872-1963)**

**Wigglesworth, Thomas Hudson (7/31/1835-1909)**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**FORWARD – 2014 -- BY DENNIS JENSEN**

**FORWARD – 1986 -- BY JACK WRIGHT**

**CHAPTER I ----- ORIGINS:  
HOW THE NAVAJO CAME TO NORTH AMERICA**

**CHAPTER II ----- ORIGINS:  
HOW THE WIGGLESWORTHS CAME TO NORTH AMERICA**

**CHAPTER III ----- FOREBEARS**

**CHAPTER IV ----- RAILROAD**

**CHAPTER V ----- KID**

**CHAPTER VI ----- DOCTOR**

**CHAPTER VII ----- PROGENY**

**CHAPTER VIII ----- EASTERNER**

**CHAPTER IX ----- THE EXCURSION TO WALPI TO SEE  
THE HOPI SNAKE DANCE CEREMONY**

**CHAPTER X ----- BROTHER SIMEON AND SISTER KATE**

**CHAPTER XI ----- EPILOGUE**

## **FORWORD - 2014**

**In December 1956, when he was 84, Dr. Albert Matthew Wigglesworth wrote a memoir. In 1986, when he was 73, Jack Wigglesworth, one of the doctor's sons, suggested that Jack Wright, his cousin, create a context for the memoir that would give some perspective on the doctor's life and the contribution he made to the Navajos and to medicine during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It was felt that both the doctor and his father, the railroad construction engineer, Thomas Hudson Wigglesworth (7/31/1835 – 1909), who built the Durango – Silverton Narrow Gauge and many other railroads, had never received the recognition their achievements deserved.**

**Working in 1986 with a Commodore 128 (a very early personal computer) Jack Wright converted the original memoir from cursive script to typed text and added information about the Navajos and the Normans and Thomas Wigglesworth and the Wigglesworth family genealogy. He also, literally, pasted in pictures from the "Wigglesworth Family Collection," put the whole thing in a simple cardboard binder, of which he made a few copies, and gave one to Jack Wigglesworth.**

**Reworking the memoir into its 2015 version has meant often simply reformatting Jack Wright's work so that the paragraphs are shorter and more suited to the modern reader's expectation. I have also split Chapter I into two Chapters, the first addressing the Navajos and the second the Normans. Two chapters have been added: *IX: The Excursion to Walpi to See the Hopi Snake Dance Ceremony*; and *X: Brother Simeon and Sister Kate*. The Epilogue is now Chapter XI.**

**I have tried to identify "hidden" references and allusions that the reader, especially the young reader, is likely to skip over, often unwittingly, not realizing a trove of fascinating information lay on the page buried in unfamiliar words just waiting to be "unpacked." Providing images or explanations for "unpacking"**

**such terms I hope will add a dimension of understanding for readers.**

**I am also adding pictures that illustrate the text. The pictures are drawn from the "Wigglesworth Family Collection" or from the web. Whenever possible the web pictures I have used are pictures from the Library of Congress or other sources that are in the public domain.**

**I have changed or deleted text only for the sake of clarity, brevity and appropriateness, for instance: when the doctor's descriptions are a bit too clinical and graphic for those of us who are not doctors.**

**Another objective is to draw in to this project members of the Wigglesworth family, especially those in the younger generation, so that they will have a better understanding of where and who they come from and so they will perhaps get involved in the work that's needed. So far Sophia and Max Barbieri and Clair Wigglesworth have made a contribution by scanning many of the pictures that you will see. Russ Wigglesworth, the son of Albert's nephew, James Hudson Wigglesworth, has also contributed interesting commentary to this edition in addition to his contribution to the 1986 edition. Andrea Wigglesworth has generously contributed the Schwemberger photos she obtained from The University of Arizona Library.**

**Why me, you may ask, (and I have). Well, a number of reasons: Starting in 1998 I created a website for my own family genealogy and had a lot of fun doing it. You may want to look at it to see for yourself (I'd be pleased if you do: *DennisJensen.us*) Then also I have been a librarian since 1970 and I guess I just like finding information and putting it in order. And, incidentally, I do the website for Ann Wigglesworth Barbieri's artwork: *AnnBarbieri.com*. And then there's the many times Jack Wigglesworth visited our house down here in Delaware and fascinated us with his many stories about growing up in Fort**

**Defiance, Arizona. Sadly, Jack passed on March 11, 2013, just three weeks short of his centenary. So I want to do what I can.**

**Dennis F. Jensen**



## **FOREWORD - 1986**

**This memoir has been compiled mainly from a hand-written manuscript crafted by 89 year-old Dr. Albert M. Wigglesworth at Carroll Manor in 1956, eight years before his death. The manuscript essentially covered the doctor's early years and education, and then focused on his quarter-century medical service to the Navajo and Apache Indians in the southwest USA from 1900 to 1925, when he was also raising a family comprising three young men. This was clearly the happiest and most fruitful period of Dr. Wigglesworth's life, which really continued until the death of his beloved wife, the former Edna Mae Wright, in 1954.**

**To round out the story of their life together resort has been had to other sources, especially the archives of their two surviving sons, Frank and Jack Wigglesworth. Every reasonable effort has been made to credit the published sources used, which include but are not limited to the following:**

*The First Americans.* Time-Life Books, NYC;  
*Here Come the Navajos.* Bureau of Indian Affairs;  
*Annals of the Franciscan Fathers of St. Michaels Mission.* 1918,1920,1922. AZ;  
*Padres' Trail.* Franciscan Fathers;  
*Carrollette.* Order of the Carmelites;  
*Trek Along the Navajo Trail.* Trek, Inc., Durango, CO;  
*Rio Grande Green Light.* 15 Jul 1947, Rio Grande Rail Road;  
*"Sagebrush Metropolis, Durango 1880-1881."* Durango Herald, 1977;  
*Durango Herald Democrat.* 30 May 1948;  
*Silverton Standard & The Miner.* 7/8/1982, 8/26/1982; the 1982 Visitors Guide;  
*Cinders and Smoke.* Western Guideways, Lakewood, CO;  
*Fort Defiance and the Navajos.* Pruett Publishing Co, Boulder, CO;  
*The Smithsonian.* Jul 1986.

**The Wigglesworth family provided the more personal pictures. Fortified with the foregoing material, compilation of this 50,000 word memoir was accomplished May - September 1986. It is sincerely hoped that family members will find the tale as interesting and inspiring as the interlocutor did in its preparation.**

**Jack Wright. 14 September 1986.**

**(As an after-note Jack appended the following in his 1986 edition:)**

**This manuscript was produced by a personal computer rig comprising a Commodore 128 central processing unit - Commodore 1571 Disk Drive - Samsung MD 1251K Data Display - and Sakawa NLQ SC-1200 Line Printer with Cardco *G-Wiz* parallel interface, and using *Paperclip-II* word-processing software. Reproduction was then provided by *Nebel Instant Printers*, Rockville, Maryland.**

