

Phebe Jane Babcock Wait [name is also sometimes spelled Phoebe Waite]

Phebe Jane Babcock Wait, (A.B. 1860, A.M 1869) was born at Potter Hill, RI, September 30, 1838, and died in New York City, January 30, 1904. Her parents were Oliver and Phoebe Babcock. October 27, 1863, she was united in marriage with William Bell Wait, Superintendent of the Institution for the Blind, 34th Street and Ninth Avenue, New York City. Her husband and three children, one daughter and two sons, survive her.

Soon after graduating at Alfred, she joined the staff of teachers at the Institution for the Blind, and served as a teacher until the summer of 1863. She studied medicine in the New York Medical College and Hospital for Women, graduating in 1871, and at once engaged actively in the practice of her profession, devoting especial attention to the study and practice of obstetrics.

In 1875, she was appointed Lecturer in Obstetrics in the New York Medical College and Hospital for Women, and in 1880 she was made Professor of Obstetrics in the same institution: she filled this chair for eighteen years, during eight of which she was the Dean of the College, and she was most of the time on the Hospital staff. After two years of special study at the New York Ophthalmic Hospital and College, she received a diploma from that institution in 1879, and thenceforth gave much attention to the eye and ear in addition to her other work.

In 1889, she resigned her professorship in the Medical College, and retired from college and hospital work. She was a member of the Homeopathic Society of the State of New York, the Homeopathic Medical Society of the County of New York, the American Institute of Homeopathy and the American Obstetrical Society; a member of the consulting staff of the Memorial Hospital, Brooklyn, and an Examiner in Lunacy.

She was an active worker in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, joining Central Union Number One, the original organization of the Society in New York City, and serving as president from 1893 until her death; for one year she was president of the New York County Women's Christian Temperance Union, and for eleven years served as its Treasurer.

She was also active as President of the Society for Promoting the Welfare of the Insane, Vice President of the New York Legislative League, a member of the New York Equal Suffrage League, and for a time member of the Board of Managers of the New York Baptist Home for the Aged. She was president of the Alfred Alumni Association of New York for the year 1892-93.

At an early age she joined the Seventh Day Baptist Church, and continued a faithful and devoted member through life. When the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society established a medical mission in Shanghai, China, she became actively identified with its support and maintenance. She was a prolific writer of papers for public meetings and for the press. Among these papers, mention might be made of "Medicine as a Profession for Women," "The Education of our Girls," "Nippur," a description and history of the ancient Babylonian City.

(Alfred Year Book, 1903-04, page 112-113)