

Who's Who In Wisconsin Rapids

The Who's Who column will be run each Saturday in the Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune. It will include a brief sketch of the life of citizens who have helped make history for Wisconsin Rapids.

Clark Lyon



CLARK LYON

Among the earlier residents of Wisconsin Rapids is Clark Lyon, son of Reuben and Esther Jane Hill Lyon. His father came to the Wisconsin "Pineries" from Frankenville, N. Y. early in the year 1845 and his mother came west with her parents from Mansenville, Vermont, the year following.

Clark Lyon was born in South Centralia, December 11, 1853. His father at that time, in company with Ahira Sampson, another of the early lumbermen of the locality, owned and operated a saw mill.

Moved to Centralia

When Clark was three years old the family moved to Centralia, and two years later Clark attended his first term of school. His first teacher was Miss Frances Morrell, who later became the wife of John Edwards one of the leaders in the Wisconsin lumber industry of half a century or more ago. Solicitous for the rapid progress of his son, the elder Lyon told the young teacher that he would pay her \$10 in addition to the regular scholarship fee if she would teach Clark the alphabet within one month's time. Whether she was spurred on by the additional reward, or met success because of the pupil's ability to learn rapidly is not recorded, but at all events Miss Morrell claimed the \$10 after the expiration of the month.

Clark's next teacher, Henry Tyler, taught in the little school house located on what is now the west side market square. Mr. Tyler was fond of playing ball and often during recess would engage in a game with his pupils. Every little while the boys by mistake would pitch the ball over the fence into the garden of Loui Meunier, whose home was located on what is now the Commercial House site. Mrs. Meunier was much annoyed by the intrusion and during one of the games picked up the ball and refused to return it. The enraged school master leaped over the fence and proceeded to recover his property. Meunier grabbed him by the crown of the head, however, and although Tyler apparently emerged the victor in the fray he lost his wig and came forth from the fray with his head as bald and shining as a billiard ball. Meunier had Tyler arrested for assault and battery, and although the latter obtained in his defence all eloquence of the late Charles M. Webb, then a young attorney, he lost his case as well as his wig.

Worked for Father

Young Lyon attended school until sixteen years of age when he obtained his first employment in his father's shingle and planing mill, located on the present site of the Consolidated mill yard. At the age of twenty-six his father sent him down the river to Boscobel with a lumber raft, which he disposed of for \$1,000, and although his father had repeatedly cautioned him to deposit the money in a Boscobel bank, he brought it back safely on his person.

In the year 1883 Mr. Lyon in company with Uriah Hill, George M. Hill, S. N. Whittlesey, John and Martin Conway, Louise La Vigne, and Lucy Sexten left for Falkerton, North Dakota, to take up homestead claims. At the end of three months Mr. Lyon returned to Centralia, and the remainder of the party returned shortly after.

Upon his return from Dakota he went to work at the carpenter trade. Some of the homes and buildings he built included the J. W. Natwick home, the Paul Preston home, (now the Congregational Parsonage,) the Frank Garrison home, the Union Church (now the Masonic Hall) and other structures.

Built Lyon Hotel

In the year 1887 he purchased property at the corner of Grand avenue and Third avenue and built the Lyon Hotel, which he successfully operated

until 1899. In that year he leased it to Jasper Crotteau, who continued to operate it as a hotel until 1904 when it was remodelled and has since been used for stores and offices.

Mr. Lyon has always been an enthusiastic sportsman, and while operating the hotel he found plenty of time to shoulder his gun and take to the woods for game.

He continued to work at his trade as a carpenter, and was employed as a millwright in the South Centralia pulp mill and in the Jackson Milling company mill. Among other work he undertook the remodelling of the grist mill at Hixton, owned by Congressman William Price, and also built the hotel at Vesper and was millwright for a time in the planing mill of John Daly and Henry Sampson near Babcock.

Organized Land Company

Mr. Lyon organized the Lyon Land Company which had planted and subdivided the old Lyon homestead. The land is all located on the west side of the river, and in recent years has been rapidly build up. The Lyon addition is located on the river bank, and the beauty of its location has made it much sought after by home builders.

On April 9, 1888 Mr. Lyon was married to Miss Anna Williams of Amherst. He has three sisters and three brothers, Mrs. Lydia Houston and Mrs. J. W. Natwick of Wisconsin Rapids, Mrs. Esther Hoover of Nekoosa, Reuben Lyon of Marshfield, Ore., Theron Lyon of St. Marie, Idaho, and Dr. Russell Lyon of Wausau.

Mr. Lyon is a member of the E. F. U. and a supporter of the Methodist church. He was candidate for the office of mayor at the last city election, but was defeated by Mayor O. R. Roenius.