

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.

Mrs. Helen Brazeau Quinn



MRS. HELEN BRAZEAU QUINN

On November 14, 1858, in the city of Chicago was born a golden-haired, blue-eyed baby girl who came to gladden the hearts of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Brazeau. When she was a few days old she was baptized, Helen Brazeau. She lived in Chicago until twelve years of age, when she moved here with her parents and sister, Margaret, and brothers, Frank and George.

Her father was the first barber here, having been persuaded by his friends, Frank Pomainville, Sr., and Joseph Homier both former Chicago residents, to locate here. Even back in those days it was hard to find a place of residence for newcomers as most of the people owned and occupied their own homes.

Mr. and Mrs. Brazeau and their little family lived for a few months at the Clinton House which was built on the lot now occupied by the W. C. Weisel store. It was very convenient to Mr. Brazeau's Barber Shop in the second story of the Pomainville building just north of Bruderli's Shoe Shop.

Home in Forest

Just as soon as it was possible the Brazeaus moved into their first home, the old Veuve residence just two houses north of the present C. F. Kellogg home. It was in the heart of the forest on the outskirts of Centralia. There was no sidewalk and one had to walk through paths of deep sand.

Mrs. Quinn was homesick for a while after she came here. She missed the big steamboats and many other things to which she had been accustomed and she longed to return to the big city. The first winter after coming here she attended school in the school house just back of Dr. Hurley's lot, now the homestead lot of his daughter, Mrs. Collier. The school was taught by Miss Ella Viola Palmatier, what later married C. B. Garrison. Her father, Francis Palmatier passed away very recently at his home in this city. One of the greatest pleasures in the school was passing the tin pail filled with water. All the pupils drank from the same tin cup. The privilege of slaking the thirst of the pupils was usually given to Ernest Keilner, he being the huskie of the school.

The pioneer women like their more modern sisters, were very fastidious about their head gear. A Mrs. Ellis, the only modiste here, had a millinery store in the lower front room of the L. Kromer residence, located where the beautiful Congregational church now stands. She was very diplomatic, telling her customers they looked just too lovely for words in her stunning creations.

Moved to Grand Rapids

After a residence of two years in Centralia Mr. Brazeau bought the Lafe Buck home in Grand Rapids moving his family there, where they continued their residence for thirty-five years. It was then sold to Joseph Krause who occupied it for a few months and the following year sold it to E. S. Renne who with his wife occupy it now as their home. The house has been enlarged and greatly improved until it bears no traces of its original appearance.

When Mrs. Quinn moved over on the "Grand Rapids Side" she attended school in the "big school house", a small building with only three rooms. But in those days the school was considered very imposing. Her first teacher here was Miss Julia Grace and her last teacher was John A. Gaynor, both of whom passed away several years ago.

Parties at Worthington Hall

Mrs. Quinn's mother was endowed with a witty tongue. Among other things that greatly amused her children was when their meal was nearly finished she would say, "All those born in Chicago may have pudding. The children born in Grand Rapids will have to eat pie." Mrs. Quinn was fond of dancing and being a popular member of the society set rarely ever

missed one of the dancing parties at Worthington Hall.

The music for these delightful occasions was furnished by the Spafford Orchestra which was composed of Seth Spafford, manager and first violinist, Louis Livernash and Henry Martini, second violinists and Ralph Worthington, bass viol. Young Larry Nash was the wit of the crowd and Miss Lillian Blodgett, who later became Mrs. George N. Wood, was the acknowledged belle of the ball. There was always a merry gathering of girls and their admiring beaux.

Married in 1882

After finishing school Mrs. Quinn did sewing at fifty cents a day and through experience became the leading dressmaker of the city. She followed her trade until May 2, 1882 when she was united in marriage to Charles Quinn, manager of the Wood County Drug Store.

During the years 1888 and 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Quinn resided for nine months in Sherry where Mr. Quinn and the late Frank L. Tibbets were employed as bookkeepers for the Sherry Lumber Company. After completing his work there they returned to this city where he re-entered the employ of the Wood County Drug Store, which position held until December 15, 1894. He then moved to Merrill and became proprietor of the City Drug company. Mrs. Quinn lived in Merrill for three years when she returned to this city and to the little home on Eighth Street where she still resides. She is the mother of two daughters, Miss Bell Quinn, supervisor of the Kindergarten City Schools of this city and Mrs. George Peltier of Lincoln, Nebraska who married Prof. George Peltier, who was also born and brought up here.

Mrs. Quinn's parents both passed away many years ago. The older members of the Brazeau family did not

have educational advantages, but realizing the necessity of it, made it possible for the younger brothers to gain the knowledge which has made for them an important place in life.

Member of Large Family

Mrs. Quinn is a member of a family of ten children, two sisters and seven brothers. They are the well known Attorney T. W. Brazeau and Mrs. J. J. Canning of this city, Frank Brazeau, postmaster of Port Edwards, James E. Brazeau, part owner and manager of the Brazeau Mercantile Co. at Nekeosa, Mrs. George Zenier of Asotin, Wash., George Brazeau, a real estate dealer, in Buhl, Idaho, William Brazeau of Spokane, Wash., president of Spokane Valley State Bank at Millwood, Wash., and also travelling salesman for the Inland Paper Co. of Spokane, Wash., and Dr. Stephen Brazeau, also of Spokane, one of the best

known and most noted surgeons in the northwest. The youngest member of the family, Irving Brazeau, a druggist at Spokane, Wash., passed away July 22, 1919.

Mrs. Quinn is a quiet, refined Christian woman, has been a member of the Congregational church of this city for the past thirty-five years and is also a member of the Order of Eastern Star. She is a very well read woman, able to converse on all subjects of interest. She is a lover of her home and very domestic in her tastes, and is another citizen of whom Wisconsin Rapids may well be proud to include among its inhabitants.