

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.

John Roberts



JOHN ROBERTS

John Roberts, the subject of this sketch, was born on Feb. 8, 1881 on the farm of his parents in the town of Courtland, Columbia County, Wisconsin, and is of Welsh descent, his mother being born in Wales, England, and while his father was born in this country, his father's father and mother were born in Wales. His father's name was Richard S. Roberts who was the son of Samuel Roberts, one of the pioneer settlers of Columbia County, who took up a Government homestead in the year 1849. On his mother's side, Mr. Roberts is descended from men who acquired considerable prominence in the Welsh ministry.

Shortly after John Robert's birth, his parents moved to Portage, Wisconsin, where his father entered railroad work, was a railroad conductor up to the time of his death in 1902. John received his early education in Portage, was graduated from the High school there in 1900, and thereafter engaged in several lines of work, including working in manufacturing plants, railroad work. The death of his father in 1902 caused Mr. Roberts to return to Columbus, Wisconsin where he taught school for one year. He then entered the University of Wisconsin, at Madison, taking a year's work there, and then took a year's work at Milwaukee State Normal School from which he was graduated early in 1906. He taught the remainder of that school year in the Milwaukee school, and then followed three years work as school principal at Gratiot, Wisconsin.

Entered Law School in 1909

While teaching school, Mr. Roberts began the study of law at Madison, during the summer sessions, and attended three summer sessions, securing one year's credits in this way. He then entered the law school in the regular course in 1909 and received his law degree and was admitted to practice in the state and Federal Courts in June 1911. During part of the time Mr. Roberts was at the University he was employed in the statistical department of the railroad rate commission.

Mr. Roberts came to Wisconsin Rapids on July 5, 1911, very shortly after his graduation, and was employed as assistant attorney in the law office of Attorney D. D. Conway of Wisconsin Rapids, with whom he remained until the spring of 1913, at which time he opened a law office of his own in the Wood County Realty Building. He has maintained his office in that building since that time.

Named District Attorney

In the fall of 1914 Mr. Roberts was the Republican nominee for the office of District Attorney of Wood County, and in the election following he was elected to the office, after a spirited contest with D. D. Conway, his former employer, who was the Democratic nominee for the same office. Two years later in 1916, Mr. Roberts was re-elected for the second term over C. B. Edwards of Marshfield, Democratic nominee, by a substantial majority.

During the war, Mr. Roberts was Chairman of the Speakers Bureau for the eastern half of Wood County, and had charge of the Speakers Bureau during all of the campaigns for the various Liberty loans for the same section of territory.

He is a member of the Congregational church, is a Rotarian, an Elk, a member of Bull-Eye Country Club. He is alderman from the Third Ward and is president of the Common council.

Mr. Roberts was married on June 2, 1917 to Mary Daly Pomainville, and four children have been born to them, three sons and one daughter.