

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.

Sam Church



Sam Church, county clerk and prominent Wisconsin Rapids business man was born in Flamboro, Ontario, Canada, December 18, 1868, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Church. He received his early education in the country schools in Canada and finished his high school education at the age of 17 years in the Watertown, Ont., high school. Following his graduation he returned to the family farm for two years.

Became Telegrapher

While at Iona, Ontario, Mr. Church learned telegraphy and was employed as railroad telegrapher on the Michigan Central lines, later becoming a "tramp telegrapher operator" going from place to place with the Michigan Central, Grand Rapids and Indiana, and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, Soo, Big Rapids, Pere Marquette, South Pacific and Colorado Midland railroads. His travels took him throughout the western states and to the Pacific coast and provided him with fine experience to meet and know people.

Returned to Michigan

After spending one year at Hagerstrom, Colorado, with the Colorado Midland, Mr. Church returned to Midland, Mich., where he was united in marriage to Lucetta C. Hitchcock. They spent the following winter in Pomona, Cal., returning to Baraboo, Wisconsin in May, 1893, when Mr. Church entered the drug business as a clerk in the C. H. Evenson drug store where he remained three years. Later he went to Rhinelander to accept a similar position with the A. H. Marek's drug store in that place, where he remained eighteen months, later to leave for Oconomowoc where he remained a year at the C. F. Kellogg drug store in that city.

Came Here Stranger

On Sept. 11, 1898 when the west side of the city of Wisconsin Rapids was Centralia and the east side was Grand Rapids, a stranger came to town. He was Sam Church, looking for a location for a drug store. He did not know a single resident but he soon found his place and started out in business in the MacKinnon building, later moving his store to the present location in the Siewert building on the corner of Grand and Third avenues. Since coming here he has built up a splendid business.

Elected Clerk Three Times

Mr. Church has made a host of friends in Wisconsin Rapids since coming here in 1898 and his friends and all the people have expressed their confidence in his ability to serve them not only in the retail business in which he is engaged, but he was elected to serve as city treasurer for four years and in 1916 he was chosen county clerk by a large majority, being re-elected again to two more terms in the elections of 1918 and 1920. He has filled his offices in his characteristic efficient way and his clean cut business

like methods have won for him a large following throughout the city and county as evidenced by the splendid majorities he has received when running for public office. He is a faithful public servant.

Is Lodge Man

Besides caring for the office of county clerk and managing his drug business, Mr. Church has found ample time to devote to several lodges of which he is a member. He is prominent in the social and lodge affairs of the Masonic lodge, where he has held the position of head of the lodge, of the Elks where he served as secretary for several years, in the Order of Eastern Star and the Rotary club.

Mr. and Mrs. Church have been active in the lodge and other social affairs of the city. They have one daughter, Mrs. George Bronson of this city.

Likes Outdoor Life

In spite of the confining duties of his office and his business, Mr. Church finds time to be a devotee of the out-of-doors, spending time in hunting and fishing and is an enthusiastic member of the Crooked Rift rod and reel club.

"Sam" is the only way Mr. Church is spoken of. The name "Mr. Church" is seldom heard, for he is Sam Church to everyone. He is a keenly democratic fellow, of cheerful and sunny disposition and of pleasing manner. He is an ardent follower of athletics among the high school and amateur teams here and enjoys the man's kind of a man's game. His patriotism and Americanism is of the highest calibre and he sticks by what he believes is right. He is of conservative nature, a good substantial booster, a hard worker and a loyal friend.