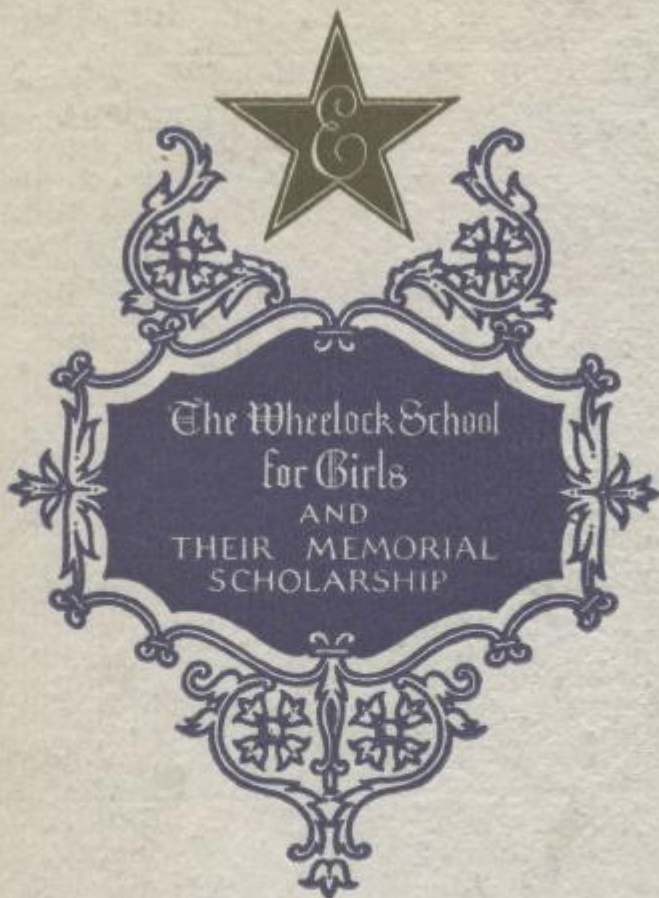


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MISS WHEELOCK AND MISS FANNIE

THE
WHEELOCK SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS
AND
THEIR
MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP

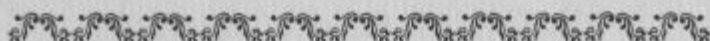


September 1861—September 1926

*This Brief Account
of the
Wheelock School for Girls
is supplied
at the request of the
faculty of
the Milwaukee-Downer
College*



*Compiled by
one of the original six of
the first day—*
SUE GOODRICH FRACKELTON



THE
WHELOCK SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
AND THEIR
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

ILWAUKEE in the year 1860 was a small far-western city. It consisted of a crude pioneer population of divers nationalities, German and Irish predominating, but American holding supremacy.

The public schools of the city were not satisfactory to the young mothers of that period who had been bred in the culture and refinement of the east or south. They foresaw that their young daughters were destined to become a force in the rapidly growing civilization of this new land and required preparation adequate for this future.

They discerned the need of a small select school, one of culture and high ideals. A person of unusual ability must be secured to conduct it; to be its heart as well as its head.

After much anxious search and consideration Miss Martha Wheelock was chosen to fill this important position.

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Miss Wheelock was young, sympathetic, competent, finely educated and enthusiastic. Her ideals of education were clear and advanced. She appealed to these ambitious and anxious young mothers as the ideal person to be entrusted with this truly great work determined upon. She was promised enthusiastic support, both moral and financial.

To accept this undertaking Miss Wheelock refused excellent offers from both the public schools and the Milwaukee Female College.

The tiny Wheelock School was opened in September 1861. The sessions were held in the family home, corner of Jackson and Michigan streets. Six scholars were in attendance the first day, the future number to be limited to twenty-five.

A beautiful spirit of harmony, confidence, and honor took possession of that little group and reigned throughout the many years that followed.

The six original youngsters ranged in ages from ten to fourteen years; being so few, they were given much individual instruction.

The school day was commenced with a brief reading of the Bible by Miss Wheelock and the repetition of the Lord's prayer in unison. There were no rules. "Thou shalt not" was never pronounced. No "rules" were necessary. We were expected to be promptly at our desks at nine o'clock

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in the morning and to behave ourselves. We were there and we always did behave, or conscientiously endeavored to. The rest took care of itself. The spirit of the school was ever loyal and beautiful.

As the number grew it became necessary to add another teacher for the young scholars, that Miss Wheelock could devote herself more completely to those who were more advanced in their studies. Miss Fannie Wheelock, a younger sister, was chosen to fill this place. She was immediately a favorite and remained with her sister until the closing of the school in 1877.

As scholastic requirements demanded, other instructors were added and with advent of these teachers, the number of students were enlarged.

Miss Wheelock always taught the higher English branches, mathematics, drawing, and Latin. We had no Greek. Herr Schmidt was the first teacher of German, followed by Fraulein Guyer and later by Frau Wagner. French was taught for a time by Professor Keursteiner, later by the competent Professor Fabrot. Professor La Bonbarie followed during 1876-77.

We were given calisthenics, also dramatics; little plays in French and German and charming out-of-door plays in the woods which now would be styled "Pageants."

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One of these remembered as especially poetic and lovely was "The Coming of the Wild Flowers" given on the old "Leuderman Farm on the Lake."

Arrangements were made on worthwhile occasions for the German class to attend the German Theatre, then as now the best of its kind in the United States.

But more valuable than all the "Book Learning" was the beautiful moral and spiritual influence which these two remarkable women instilled into the lives of the young girls entrusted to their care, and the strength given to their characters.

These two dear spirits stressed their sweet persistent teaching by atmosphere more than by admonition. They worked so earnestly for our best development physically and mentally, but most ardently, for our spiritual awakening and illumination.

We can but feel that our Mothers were divinely guided in their choice of these leaders of our lives.

Scholars did not come to our school for short periods. Entrance once secured, they remained for the fulfilment of their time.

When the school was finally closed in 1877 Miss Wheelock married Mr. Wm. Trowbridge, one of the pioneer residents of Milwaukee and resided on the "Trowbridge Farm" a lovely old place in the southern outskirts of the city.

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Miss Fannie was also married a few years later to Mr. Henry E. Southwell, a wealthy lumberman of Chicago, a gentleman of culture and fine standing, this to the great happiness of his only daughter. Learning of the marriage, one of the younger adorers of the bride exclaimed "Isn't it perfectly lovely! Think of Miss Fannie wearing a diamond bracelet!"

The home in Chicago was an ideal one. But better for Miss Fannie than the diamond bracelet were the splendid opportunities of travel for which her long teaching had so richly prepared her. Mr. and Mrs. Southwell traveled extensively and in most interesting places; in Panama, during the building of the Canal and in Palestine; from the Scotch Lakes to those of Italy; through the Chateau Country of France, the romantic Rhineland, and in Merrie England. It was a case of "beautiful dreams come true."

Later when so many of the "girls" had married and were living in homes of their own the desire of the presence of their beloved teacher persisted and Mrs. Trowbridge was induced to hold a class in geography for them. Geography, which she realized to be one of the least known and most interesting studies in and of the world. This was a great delight to us.

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The first reunion of the "Wheelock Girls" was held eleven years after the closing of the school, in June 1888 in the Athenæum Building. This reunion took the form of a luncheon. An official body was created consisting of a president, secretary, and treasurer. Sarah Burke Carr, one of the "older girls" was chosen president. The custom of choosing the president from among the older girls has persisted. This reunion gave so much satisfaction and pleasure that it was decided to hold similar meetings yearly; and that the spirit of the school might be preserved it was voted to undertake some form of educational work, small, but worthwhile.

The primary venture was the support of a Kindergarten called the "Wheelock Kindergarten." Here Miss Fannie Burnell was our officiating angel, a dear soul devoted to the cause. This school was later taken over by the city.

A more ambitious undertaking was then given precedence. This plan was to raise a sufficient fund to endow a perpetual scholarship in the Milwaukee-Downer College to be called the "Wheelock Girls Memorial Scholarship"; this scholarship to be used by a meritorious student of the Milwaukee-Downer College; the student to be chosen and appointed by the president of that Institution; used until her graduation when a successor should be chosen.

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To achieve this purpose adequately a fund of \$5000 must be accumulated and this was to be done by voluntary offerings dropped into the "Silver Bowl" at the yearly reunions.

In this year 1926 the amount has been secured and the permanent scholarship is an assured fact. Meantime six young women have been graduated in the Milwaukee-Downer College through the determined enterprise of our association.

The emblem of the Wheelock School was a star, silver or gold according to progress, with the letter "E" (experta) engraved upon it. We see this emblem wrought in fresh golden flowers, suspended high above our heads at each successive reunion.

The motto on each graduation ring, a flat band of gold enameled with a Greek key pattern in black, is "Perge."

As the school years passed the number of the Wheelock Girls increased. The graduates were replaced by new members and we were scattered all over the United States as the duties and the opportunities of life called. The reunions were ever largely attended, members coming from different states and letters from afar. Interest seemed never to lag and old friendships endured.

The numbers are now decreasing. One by one we miss the faces of dear friends who have "changed

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their world" and whom we shall see no more. Times are different now from the old Pioneer days of 1860; but have not the "Wheelock Girls" helped form the procession creditably? By what was acquired in our fine old school, and are we not keeping up with the onward march of progress?

As our members grew less it was decided to accept an invitation which was offered to meet regularly year by year in one of the old pioneer homes, the Daniel Wells Jr. mansion on Grand Avenue. This house embodies the expression of all the hospitality, culture, and elegance of our generation; nothing more fitting to express these ideals could be desired. To go there on these occasions is like being transplanted by a magic wand from today into the days of our girlhood. The old truism stands, "*tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*"

Formerly the two sisters were always present at the reunions. Mrs. Trowbridge's last attendance was June 10, 1912. She was prevented later by delicate health but "Miss Fannie" was with us longer.

"Miss Martha" died April 16, 1913 aged eighty-two years.

Six years later "Miss Fannie" followed her sister into the "Great Beyond."

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Their bodies lie side by side in our beautiful Forest Home. Each year, on the morning following our reunion the gold star of flowers is taken to this lovely spot and laid reverently upon "Miss Martha's" grave; the pink roses over "Miss Fannie's" heart.

They passed from us crowned with love. Their banner of the ideal was nobly borne; their lamp was ever trimmed and lighted. Its reflected glow has encouraged, strengthened and purified many loyal lives.

FINALE



MAY we request that the beneficiary of our scholarship read this account of our school; that she may realize something of the beautiful nature of these two sainted women who have given so rich an heritage to the lives of those of us entrusted to their care. May she too receive inspiration from the light of that ideal lamp which has so persistently illuminated the

STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY.

Names of Graduates of Milwaukee-Downer College who have completed their college work with the help of the Wheelock scholarship:

1. Elva Neff,
2. Gladys Neff,
3. Lucretia Dorward,
4. Florence Boester,
5. Clara Grueber,
6. Leola George.

FOR PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

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