

[Noted Personalities]

Interview [Do files?] [?]

[Genevieve?] Chapin

About 1040 word S-254. NOTED PERSONALITIES DURING TIME OF DEVELOPMENT.

Here, in the beginning of this article, we wish to pay tribute to tho'se self-styled "common-place" lives which lie as the foundation of our national well-being. Not all of us [?] [are?] called upon to occupy places in the limelight of stirring events; in every [?] of our history there have been tho'se quiet—sometimes seemingly monotonous lives which, [nevertheless?], furnished foundation timbers for the structures of county state and nation.

And so, we sing the "glory of the plodder;"—tho'se men and women whose lot it has been to keep up the grind of day after day, month after month, and year after year tasks that make up the round of the average settler in the west.

How many times in the past week have we met with something like this—"O—I didn't do anything worth writing up—just stayed out on the place and raised a few chickens, 'n some cattle, 'n frijoles."—Well, some one had to raise the chickens, and cattle, and frijoles—so why was that not just as important as killing a few Indians and chasing a few buffalo?

So we are recording a few of tho'se more recent—perhaps more "commonplace"—biographies, with a full sense of what we owe to much lives. [C. 18 6/?/41 - N. Mex - ??]

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Personalities. cont. MRS. MARY E. BLAKELEY.

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In March of 1911 came the family of Mrs. Mary E. Blakeley, of Clayton, New Mexico, from Oklahoma. The family at that time consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Blakeley, Francis Blakeley, Hazel Blakeley and Donald Blakeley, who was at that time just a small baby.

The Blakeleys came directly to Clayton, in Union County, which at that time was considerably smaller than at the present. Mrs. Blakeley recalls that of the firms still doing business in Clayton, only a few of the original number remain. The [?] Hotel, Issac's Hardware Company, the Big Jo Lumber Company and [Herzstein's?] Store were among those here when she came, also the Tixier store. Among the professional men, lawyers [Toombs?] and Easterwood remain, of the early number.

The only church building now standing that was in use as such at that time is the Masonic Lodge Hall on 2nd and Maple Walnut streets, while the oldest portion of the North building of the East Ward school, on the square between 1st and 2nd, and Oak and Pine streets was the only school building. Part of the present [C. & S.?] Depot was in use then, and there were only a few sections of old board sidewalks, here and there about town.

After about a year's residence in Clayton, the Blakeleys fixed on a claim [6?] miles west and 2 miles South on what is now the Springer Highway, and Mrs. Blakeley and the children moved onto it. Mr. Blakeley remaining in town at such work as might be had.

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Personalities. cont.

And for the next thirteen years ensued for Mrs. Blakeley [?] the round of "raising chickens, 'n frijoles"—schooling the children, and the mixture of hardships, simple pleasures and monotony that go to the making of the average pioneer farm family's life.

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When asked concerning the spectacular side of it—any dangers encountered, for instance—Mrs. Blakeley only recalled the time when Donald, then aged five, was knocked flat in the garden by a Union County Jack rabbit, fleeing for life from the dogs that pursued it!

During these years on the farm, the Blakeley twins, Clyde and Clarence, were born. Later, in order to have better school advantages, Mrs. Blakeley and her family moved back into Clayton, where by means of the help of one grown son, she managed to school the younger members of the family, graduating them all from High School, and being rewarded by seeing them all making useful citizens of themselves.

Mrs. Blakeley, during this time, operated one restaurant for seven years—first, for Mrs. Blanche Jenkins, who sold it to Mrs. Clara Johnson. Then Mrs. Blakeley later bought it herself. Concurrently with her restaurant work, Mrs. Blakeley has been caretaker at the Wade Hall the past eight years, and, in spite of these many calls upon her time and strength, has always, [as?] now, found time to extend a helping hand and a lift to the other fellow.

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Personalities. cont. MR. AND MRS. E. L. LEIGHTON.

Another worthwhile family is that of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Leighton of 411 Walnut St. Clayton, New Mexico.

These substantial citizens recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with appropriate festivities and the good wishes of their many friends, and, despite their years, which have dealt kindly with them—Mrs. Leighton at the steering wheel, or Mr. Leighton in the saddle, is no uncommon sight in our midst.

The Leighton family came here from Woodward, Oklahoma, locating in Union County 4 miles South East of Clayton, on the Perico Creek.

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Here, in 1914, Mr. Leighton bought from A. L. Ratcliffe some 1320 acres of land, which he used as a nucleus for his holdings adding to it from time to time till at the present he controls 9000 acres, deeded land, besides the 2000 acres which he has leased.

He drove his cattle thro" from Woodward—a herd of 200 range cows—making the trip in 21 days and arriving at his place on November 15th, 1934.

Mr. Leighton and his family are primarily "cattle men,"—having at present only some 140 acres in cultivation.

Careful and conservative metho'ds and hard work have helped them "hold their own" better, perhaps, than many of the old time ranchers. Shall we say fortune smiled on them—or call

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Personalities. cont.

it luck—or the reward of watchfulness and hard work? —but it is a significant fact that the blizzard of 1918, which dealt many of the cattlemen so much grief, meant to the Leighton herd the loss of only one yearling, altho" the cattle walked out over the snow which covered the tops of the five-board fences and drifted, blinded and lost, with the storm.

During the recent drouth years, the range became so [depleted?] that for two seasons they shipped their cattle outside the state for pasture. In the spring of 1934, the Leightons shipped 400 head to [Pawhuska?], Oklahoma, and it took the proceeds from the sale of 100 of these cows, at \$15 per head, to pay the expenses on this move.

In 1928, Mr. and Mrs. Leighton moved into Clayton, which has been their home ever since except for one summer spent on the ranch near [Clapham?]. From this point Mr. Leighton

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still keeps up an active interest in his cattle business, in connection with his sons and sons-in-laws sons-in-law .

Bibliography

Interview; Mrs. Mary E. Blakeley, Clayton New Mexico

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