

with her this past week, and the only request she made was not to flatter her when I wrote this little sketch, so I can't say half what I think about her.

During these years a fortune was accumulated by these pioneers. Mr. Truax died March 18, 1909. The past fifteen years Mrs. Truax has given thousands of dollars to various organizations, and has the great privilege of knowing the joy and pleasure it is giving to others. She is a member of the First Congregational Church where her greatest interest lies and which has received large gifts from her, also the Endeavor Academy near Portage, Northfield Academy and College at Ashland. Every Protestant church in this community has received a substantial gift as well as the Luther Hospital and Young Men's Christian Association. Her gifts range from one thousand to twenty-five thousand dollars at one time. Mrs. Truax will be ninety-four years old March, 1924.

Mrs. Truax died ten days after she gave the interview for this paper.

MRS. JOHN F. JOHNSTON  
Author—Her son, W. H. Johnston  
Appleton

Mrs. John F. Johnston, pioneer, and first white woman to arrive and settle in Appleton, Wisconsin, was born June 7, 1826, at Jay, Essex County, New York; daughter of Isaac and Martha Finch.

Her father was one of the prominent men of that section, a state senator and member of congress. She came west to visit her sister, Mrs. O. P. Clinton, at Menasha, Wisconsin, where she met and married John F. Johnston, March 26, 1846, at Neenah, Wisconsin, in the old council chamber, by the Rev. O. P. Clinton. It

had been intended to perform the marriage ceremony under the famous old council tree, it being the first marriage to occur in Neenah but a storm came up and the wedding party was compelled to adjourn to the old council chamber. Governor Doty, the few whites living in that vicinity and a number of friendly Indians were present at the ceremony.

In July, 1848, Mr. Johnston came down the river in his canoe, landing near where the Lake Street bridge now stands, selected a site and began clearing a place for a home. There was a trail to Duck Creek which with the help of a few Indians made it possible to haul the lumber with an ox team for the erection of the first house in Appleton (more properly called a shanty). It was located on what is now called Johnston Street, between Morrison and Durkee.

Mr. Johnston left his wife and infant son at Menasha with her sister, with the understanding that she would remain there until he had completed their cottage and came for her. She became tired of waiting and learning that a barge, or roughly constructed boat was being loaded with furniture to be taken down the river for their cottage she decided to surprise her husband, and, with her baby, embarked on the boat. It landed near what was later called Pierce Park, where a road had been cut to the river. An ox cart was there waiting; she and her infant son were loaded in the cart with the furniture. All went well until they were climbing one of the hills, when the contents of the cart were dumped on the ground. Mrs. Johnston refused to ride any farther and waited until her husband came for her. His first words were, "Why did you come, Nettie? Our house is not ready; the roof is only partly on." She said, "I wanted to be with you." In cooking their first meal they held an umbrella over the stove to keep things dry.

That was the entrance of the first white woman to what is now the beautiful and prosperous city of Appleton. This cabin was the nucleus around which gathered the old settlers. It was the bright spot in the dense

forest that gave rest and hope. None were turned away from their door; if the wayfarer could recompense, it was well, if not, it was all the same. Their cabin was hotel, hospital and post office, church and Sunday school room. Elder Sampson arrived October 8th and as soon as Mrs. Johnston learned he was a minister, she arranged for religious services.

She was largely instrumental in organizing the Methodist church in Appleton and was very active in church and temperance work, considering it her duty, as well as pleasure to call on all new settlers and help them in every way possible.

The Indians were frequent visitors, and generally friendly, and it was not surprising to find some of them lying on the floor when she got up in the morning.

After her husband's death, which occurred August 18, 1893, she continued to live in her home on Morrison and Atlantic Streets for several years and then went to Ishpeming, Michigan to live with her son, W. H. Johnston, until her death at the age of 81 years. Her remains were taken to Appleton and buried beside those of her husband.

Mrs. Johnston was a devout christian from early girlhood. Later when Appleton had grown to be quite a village and even after its incorporation as a city, she continued her custom of calling on all strangers, no matter to what denomination they belonged.

IMOGENE ST. JOHN McCAFFERTY

Author—Mrs. McCafferty, Columbus  
Janesville Chapter

Revised by Mrs. Frances Grant

Daughter of the first white settler in Janesville.  
The following narrative was written by Mrs. Mc-