

(John)

MARY JANE BROWN.

Sixty-six years ago, on April 15, 1837, Mary Jane Brown was born in Somersetshire, Eng., the oldest daughter of John Brown who was so well known in Grinnell during its first forty-five years. She came to Kenosha, Wis., with her father when she was fifteen and to Grinnell in 1854 with the Phelps family. She was in that family more or less till her marriage to her cousin, John Brown, on her birthday in 1860. They made their home near Westfield until 1899. Her last four years were passed in this city, a considerable part of the time in a wrestle with heart disease, of which she died on Wednesday the 16th inst.

Her father's family and she herself were always closely identified with this city and held in highest esteem here. Her sweet face represented her real character and her gracious influence. All who knew her join her husband and the two of her six children who survive her in gratitude for her life and in sorrow for her death.

The funeral service was held at her late residence, conducted by Dr. Vittum and Prof. Parker. She was buried in Westfield cemetery where several of her family rest.

OBITUARY OF MRS. JOHN BROWN.

Mrs. Mary Jane Brown, whose death Sept. 17, noted in a previous issue has brought sincere sorrow to the large circle of relatives and friends, was born in Somersetshire, England, April 15, 1837. Until 15 years of age she had all the advantages that a cultured and refined home in England could furnish. Her educational opportunities were especially fine. In 1852 with her parents, brothers and sisters, she came to America in a sailing vessel to play her part as the oldest child in a life of hardship and sacrifice made necessary in any new country. Two years at Kenosha, Wisconsin where the refinements of civilization had made themselves felt, in a certain sense paved the way for the genuine frontier life endured at Grinnell where Indians, deer and wolves roved at will. As Mrs. Brown's father, our esteemed townsman, John Brown, who died four years ago, came into town two days after Mr. Phelps, bringing his family in state behind an ox-team the common mode of conveyance in those days, with an immense flock of sheep as body guard, the bells were rung and a general merry-making held to welcome the newcomers. From that day to this no family has done more in a quiet way for the development of the community than that of John Brown, and of that family, no individual has been more faithful or more highly esteemed than the oldest daughter, the late lamented Mary Jane Brown. In 1860, she married another John Brown, and lived on a farm near the old homestead five miles south of town until four years ago when they retired and moved to 703 Second Avenue.

Besides her husband she leaves two children, Walter E. Brown, who lives on the home farm, and Mrs. Ella Brownell, each of whom has a

laughter. Among those who will not cease to mourn her loss are her sisters and brothers; Mrs. C. W. Pearce, Mrs. C. A. Ridley, Mr. J. G. Brown of this city, Mr. H. E. Brown, Walla Walla, Wash., Mrs. W. P. Sawyer, Yakima, Wash., Mrs. T. E. Mercer, Pasadena, Cal., and Mrs. C. E. Mears, of Osceola, Wis. Of those out of town only Mrs. Mears was privileged to be present. Other relatives from away were: Mr. Brown's brothers, Mr. Seth Brown of Manchester, Ia., Mr. Edwin Brown and wife of Walker, Ia. His sister Mrs. Myers of Dubuque, his niece, Miss Ethel Hargraves, of Cedar Rapids and Mrs. Emma Ridley Colgrove, of Cedar Falls.

The pall bearers were relatives, Messrs. Seth Brown, Edwin Brown, George Brown, J. G. Brown, C. A. Ridley and C. W. Pearce. The fact that there were forty relatives in attendance at the funeral, nearly all from this vicinity, is an evidence of what this family has been in the making of the community.

The services were conducted at the house by her pastor, Rev. E. M. Vittum and Prof. L. F. Parker, a pioneer friend. She was laid to rest in the Westfield cemetery, a beautiful spot near her girlhood home, accompanied thither by a very large concourse of relatives and friends, each anxious to give this last tribute of love and respect.

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of what Mrs. Brown was to those who knew her. Her sweet face, crowned with such wealth of beautiful white hair made her noticeable anywhere. Strong in body and mind, capable and energetic, yet kind and sympathetic, she held a place in the hearts of relatives and friends which can never be filled.

1908
d. Sept. 17, 1908