

Peeping Into General John J. Pershing's Past

Confidence is the word that expresses the feeling one has in Gen. Pershing from either meeting or studying the man. And a real man is he who came out of the sturdy American west; a man of strict discipline, but of kindly heart; a man for fun in its season, but of firm soldierly determination when set to the soldier's task.

Laclede, Missouri, is proud of being the birth city of John J. Pershing, and Lincoln, Nebraska, is equally proud in claiming him as one of her citizens, so far as any army man has a home. His parents lived in Lincoln at the time he graduated from her University, as do his only surviving child and two sisters today.

In 1882 John F. Pershing, father of Gen. Pershing, moved to Lincoln to give his family the educational advantages which Lincoln even then possessed. The elder Pershing had been engaged in the wholesale clothing business in Chicago.

To dwell on the military career of John J. Pershing is unnecessary. His rapid advancement from the West Point Second Lieutenant in 1886 to Brigadier General in 1907 was won on a strictly military basis in recognition of his splendid service in the Philippines and in Mexico.

In the early 90's Pershing went to Lincoln as Commandant of cadets of the University of Nebraska and lived with his parents at 17th and R Streets. During his service there he entirely reconstructed the Military Department, obtained new equipment and put it upon a strict military basis. He took an active part in social affairs, instructed in mathematics, and graduated from the Department of Law in 1893. The name of Pershing lingered long after he had left Lincoln in the "Pershing Rifles," the crack company of the University cadets.

Pershing was married Jan. 26, 1905, to Helen

Frances Warren, daughter of Senator Francis E. Warren, of Wyoming and ranking minority member of the U. S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. The tragic death of Mrs. Pershing and their three little girls in the Presidio fire at San Francisco three years ago, brought horror and grief to the soldier Pershing, than which war has none greater to offer.

The only survivor of Gen. Pershing's family, the nine year old son, Francis Warren, makes his home with the General's sisters, Miss May Pershing and Mrs. D. M. Butler in Lincoln. Warren is a real boy, popular with his playmates, and very much like his father in appearance and disposition.

On Aug. 9th, the Lincoln Rotary Club cabled Gen. Pershing as follows:

General Pershing, Somewhere in France.
We have today elected you to honorary membership in the Rotary Club of your home city, Lincoln, Nebraska.

President Rotary Club.

To which the General cabled August 17th:

Pres. Rotary Club, Lincoln, Nebraska,
Many thanks for the honor you have done me which I accept with pleasure.

Pershing.

Thus has been added another tie between the names Pershing and Lincoln, altho this honor must be shared with the Rotary Club of San Antonio to which Pershing was first elected honorary member.

And so out of the West comes Pershing, born in Missouri, home in Nebraska, and married in Wyoming. But we share the honor with the country that knows no East or West, North or South, when duty calls.—*Roy V. Pepperberg, Rotary Club of Lincoln, Nebr.*