

ONLY NINE MOTHERS OF U. S. SENATORS ARE STILL LIVING

They Are All Unusually Interesting and Forceful Characters and Have Contributed Much to the Successes of Their Distinguished Sons.



MRS. NARCISSE A. OWEN, MOTHER OF SENATOR OWEN OF OKLAHOMA.



MRS. A. I. DANKSIN, MOTHER OF SENATOR FLINT OF CALIFORNIA.



MRS. MAGDALENA MACKLER, MOTHER OF SENATOR DICK OF OHIO.



MRS. GEORGE R. SMITH, MOTHER OF SENATOR SMITH OF MICHIGAN.

By E. J. Edwards.

Of the ninety-two men who to-day compose the United States Senate, just nine, or less than a tenth of the total, rejoice in their mothers' presence on earth.

These fortunate Senators are Flint of California, Beveridge of Indiana, Owen and Gore of Oklahoma, Nelson and Clapp of Minnesota, Keam of New Jersey, Dick of Ohio, and Smith of Michigan.

These nine mothers who live to see their sons members of the most august legislative body that the world has ever known form a group of unusual interest. They average in age considerably more than the threescore years and ten allotted by the Psalmist to human existence, with one, Mrs. Nelson, nearing her ninety-sixth year.

Because they are mothers of Senators they could almost be looked upon as the deans of all living American mothers, just as their sons are the deans, so to speak, of all American legislators.

Practically every one of the nine has a most interesting personality. Their lives cover the history of the country from the pioneer days of the last century down to the present, most of them tasted of pioneer hardships and molded into good Americans by their surroundings; they, in turn, have handed down typical American characteristics to their Senator sons.

The careers of two of the mothers—Mrs. Nelson and Mrs. Dick—embody the manner in which the peoples of all nations are merged into sturdy nephews and nieces of Uncle Sam in the fullness of time.

Then, too—and perhaps for this reason most of all—these mothers are worthy of note because of the fact that their distinguished sons are in the habit of acknowledging that their national eminence is due in no small part to the training to which their mothers subjected them.

"Mother," said Senator Owen, when she recently complimented him on some good political work, "you must take that to yourself. You did it, in a very real way. If I did not rejoice in your endeavoring me with all that I have, all that has made me, you would not be complimenting me to-day. So, mother, it is all due to you and all for you that I have done this thing."

The other Senators, in other ways equally grateful, have repeated the same tender thought.

land or the country that had taken him to his bosom.

It was while the Senator was still hardly more than a baby that the call of the New World came sounding faintly in the ears of John Nelson, in the little inland place of his birth, where his people had lived and died, and where he had started in to make a living for his wife and son.

Insistent was that call, and at last he decided that he would go to America, and when he had got started on the road to the fortune he hoped to make there he would send the necessary money for his wife, and they all would be reunited in the new and better home.

So, after simple preparations and an affectionate farewell, he sailed away from his wife Ingeborg and his son Knute, and they never saw him again; and only dimly now does the son recall his father, as in a dream.

The first word that Mrs. Nelson had from her husband in the new world, gave no hint of the impending tragedy. Contrarywise, it filled her with the belief that John had done the wise thing in striking out so far to the westward across the sea, for he wrote that in a place called Chicago he had found work, money was plentiful, and soon they would all meet there, where already many Norwegians had made their way, and whence many had gone to take up the raw prairie lands of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

After this letter had been received and read there followed another long period of silence, and then, one day an official looking letter, placed in Mrs. Nelson's hands, brought the news that her husband had died, and it gave the day and the date of his death.

For three long years after that the young widow struggled to take care of herself and little Knute, but all the while Norway no longer seemed home to her—her mind was ever turned toward the land in which her husband lay buried.

At last she decided that she, too, would go there and take her six-year-old boy with her. So she bade good-bye to her six brothers and one sister and sailed, and neither she nor Knute Nelson has ever seen them since.

In the years that have intervened all have died, with the possible exception of the sister. "No news has come from her or of her for years, and if she be still with us her age must be up in the eighties," says Knute Nelson, as the dream of the past rises before him.

It was in the Summer of 1846 that John Nelson died in Chicago of the cholera, and it was in the Summer of 1849 that the widow and her son landed in the new world. Thereafter the mother bravely fought her way in her new surroundings, the son doing his part in proportion to his age.

For many years now Mrs. Nelson has lived on a farm at Deerfield, Wis., where Senator Nelson stops to visit her every time he goes to and from his own farm near Alexandria, Minn., in the beautiful lake country, to take his seat in the Senate.

Because he would like to have with him a physical reminder of his mother, it is a matter of keen personal regret for him that for many years he has been unable to prevail on Mrs. Nelson to have a photograph taken. The only picture he ever had of her was loaned and lost, and now he realizes that he will never be able to get another, for his mother, on account of her great age, spends most of her time in bed.

But though her many years have made her an invalid, in a way Mrs. Nelson keeps close track of her son's official life, and she reads the newspapers read to her.

As a child she became skilled in all the domestic virtues of the old school, and for many years she knit socks for her son, even after he took his seat in the Senate of the United States, and he was always proud to wear them. Now, how-



MRS. JANE A. CLAPP, MOTHER OF SENATOR CLAPP OF MINNESOTA.



MRS. CAROLINE GORE, MOTHER OF SENATOR GORE OF OKLAHOMA.

ever, she does not knit or spin or weave, she is only awaiting peacefully and cheerfully the end of a long, well-spent and industrious life.

The Mother of Minnesota's Junior Senator.

Minnesota's junior Senator, Moses E. Clapp, also rejoices in the fact that his mother still survives. Popularly called "Abbie Jane" Clapp, her full name is Jane Abbie van Den Cook-Clapp, and her age is seventy-seven.

Mrs. Clapp's husband, the late Harvey Spaulding Clapp, was of old New England stock, and his ancestors figured prominently in the Colonial and post-Colonial history of the country. He died in 1850, and since then Mrs. Clapp has been living with her son, the Senator, though she has two other children living. Another has been dead many years.

Senator Clapp owes many of his leading gifts to his mother; for example, his unusual memory, which has more than once astonished his Senatorial colleagues.

Mrs. Clapp, in her girlhood, which was spent in Toledo, Ohio, and in Indiana—the latter almost a pioneer country in those days—strengthened her memory by "learning by heart," as the saying is, hundreds of favorite poems, and throughout her life she has been happy in apt quotations.

Her Senator son's memory is so unusual that he never writes out his speeches, but formulates them as he paces the floor of his room. Years after he has made a speech, perhaps, he finds himself in a situation in which he wishes to recall it, and his wonderful memory then serves him as unfailingly as would the printed page. There is no question that this faculty has made it possible for the Senator to win many political victories.

Another of Mrs. Clapp's interesting characteristics is her forehandness in the matter of providing relief for the needy. She makes it a point always to have near her all manner of clothing, household articles, and other necessities, which, in due season, unobtrusively find their way to the point where they will do the most good.

She is also devoted to the work of the Grand Army of the Republic; likewise that of numerous benevolent institutions, and further shows her interest in charitable undertakings by holding the office of Vice President of a needlework guild.

A Link with the Historic Cherokees.

Even were she not one of the last links—if not the very last—with the Cherokees of history and those of the present, Mrs. Narcisse Owen, mother of Senator Robert Latham Owen of Oklahoma, would be interesting for her own sake.

Seventy-nine her next birthday, which falls in early Winter, Mrs. Owen is directly descended from Queen Quasis, lineal successor of the seven original chiefs of Cherokee blood of many years ago, and is herself one-sixteenth Cherokee. Her sons, Dr. William L. and Robert Latham, are therefore one-thirty-second Cherokee, although it has been erroneously stated many times that the proportion of Indian blood in them was as high as one-fourth and one-eighth, respectively.

Practically all along the line, Mrs. Owen can boast of an unusual ancestry. Her

father, Thomas Chisholm, who died about 1824, was a picturesque national character who had dealings with Thomas Jefferson in behalf of the Cherokees, and one of his fact, a family heirloom—is a large silver medal on which her father is described by Jefferson as the last hereditary Cherokee war chief.

Another national character with whom Mrs. Owen is connected was John Wharton, who took a commanding part in the French and Indian war; and still another of her ancestors was John Beaman, a missionary of note.

One of the intimate traits of the members of the Owen family—a characteristic which, by the way, has had much to do with their worldly success—is their indomitable self-will. This comes through Mrs. Narcisse Owen and her ancestors.

"The Owens are courtesy itself in a social way, and none could be more considerate and obliging at such times, but when it comes to yielding a point that seems in any sense an injustice, or will work uncalled-for hardship, the iron hand is most beneath the velvet glove."

There is an amusing story showing this in connection with a bit of family history which Mrs. Owen has preserved in her "Memoirs," a book intended for family use chiefly. It is a book, by the way, that seems to compare favorably with Benjamin Franklin's "autobiography," being keyed in much the same intimate and unpretentious professional writing, she has poured out her heart in a way that will, it would seem, make her book a classic among American autobiographies.

A friend urged that she ought to have her sons "go over it." Her fighting blood would not let her. "What," she replied, firmly, "and have people say I sent my boys to college to correct their mother's writings? No, the book must be printed as it leaves my hand or not at all, imperfections or no imperfections. When my sons write books they can suit themselves, and I will do the same as long as I live."

When you meet Mrs. Owen you stand in the presence of a woman who has tasted of the joys, excitements, and adventures of the pioneer life. She likes to recall the years when, as a child, she rode her ponies over the wide prairies and played by the side of clear streams with fine white stones.

"One glittering Christmas Eve, in 1845, all white with moonlight on the new-fallen snow, the marauders attacked Sister Jane," may be the way she will preface one of her stories of these days. Or, in all modesty, she may tell you how, while riding a wild horse tried to block the pass in the mountains against her, she turned on the human brute with her riding whip and threatened to beat him within an inch of his life if he didn't go along and mind his own business.

But though much of her early life was passed amid pioneer surroundings, Mrs. Owen managed to obtain a splendid education, and among her accomplishments are portrait painting and fine needlework that takes prizes at great expositions. Her forcefulness of character has led her to keep up with the pace of the world, and, despite the fact that she is now in her seventy-ninth year, it would be hard to

find a woman half her age who is better posted on the world's progress or who takes a livelier interest in how that progress is made.

Mrs. Owen's family life has been almost ideal in its deep and abiding interests. When she had been married eighteen years her husband gave her a ring inscribed: "Eighteen years, and dearest than ever."

How Mrs. Gore Studied the Bible.

Like Mrs. Owen, Mrs. Caroline Wing Gore, the mother of Senator Thomas Pryor Gore of Oklahoma, has distinct recollections of pioneer days, and especially she has vivid memories of how the pioneers "would scream o' nights" in the woods of Alabama. Her father settled early in that State, going there from South Carolina, and his daughter Caroline's love of nature, which is strong to-day, was unquestionably strengthened by her early life spent in the southern wilderness, with the virgin forests and clear brooks making their poetic appeals to her day after day and month upon month.

Another of Mrs. Gore's strong characteristics is her piety. In her childhood every American family looked upon the family Bible as the bulwark of life; it had its open place in the family circle and was read with never ending interest by father and mother.

Little Caroline Wing, as the good book was read by her, was used to stand tiptoe on a stool beside the reader and follow the big black letters with her finger, line by line, slowly deciphering the text. In this way she committed to memory many of the Bible's choicest passages, and to this day her stock of texts is unfading and the wisdom with which they are endowed has fortified her in many an hour of poignant and speechless grief.

Even as a little girl, Mrs. Gore could quote with great freedom from Isaiah and Daniel, the prophets generally, the Psalms and Proverbs. Her general reading at that time was also exceedingly serious for one of her years, but it, too, has stood her in good stead all through her maturity.

Not only from the point of view of a highly spiritual nature, but as one who saw her friends suffer the loss of their loved ones and their property, Mrs. Gore knew personally of the awful desolation caused throughout the South by the civil war. Ever since she has had a deep horror of war, and no world-famous advocate of universal peace has ever longed more devoutly for the day to dawn when war shall be no more.

In a real sense, Mrs. Gore was not at all surprised when her son Thomas achieved the signal honor of a seat in the Senate from the new State of Oklahoma. To her it was the most natural evolution in the world. She had trained him from childhood to definite aims and high resolves, and read to him hour by hour along those lines, and had fostered and sustained in both him and his brother Ellis the ambition to lead manly and useful lives. Therefore, when the news was taken to her that her son Thomas, at the comparatively tender age of thirty-seven, had won a place in the most august legislative body of the world, she was pleased that the honor had come to

him—and not one minute did she give to wondering how it had come to him. She knew, if no one else did.

On her father's side Mrs. Gore is English, and though there is more than ordinary interest about the peculiar name, Wingo, the full details regarding its origin have never been traced.

On the maternal side, this Senate mother is of the Hawkins family. It was in memory of Joshua Hawkins that the Daughters of the American Revolution of the State of South Carolina erected an imposing monument. A Virginian, he was noted for his oratory and his patriotism in Colonial days. He settled in Spartanburg, S. C., where his monument stands. All the Hawkins stock known to history has been intellectual and ambitious, and as a rule has had more than ordinary oratorical talent. From the branch of the family of which Mrs. Gore is a member have come college Presidents, preachers and well-known political leaders.

In Caroline Wingo, Mrs. Gore spent much of her childhood in her grandfather Hawkins's library, his large collection of books being the marvel of his locality. And it is undoubtedly from her that her Senator son has inherited the Hawkins gifts for oratory and political leadership.

In much the same way that Senator Gore was reared by his mother, so the mothers of Senator Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana and Senator William Alden Smith of Michigan, brought them up. These two Senatorial mothers are true types of American women whose will power and shrewdness have been passed on to their sons.

Senator Beveridge concedes all his success to his mother, and in his letters calls her "My Darling," while Senator Smith undoubtedly must thank his mother for the will power that never says die, for the smile that wins, and for the persistence that carries one forward over obstacles that wear the ordinary man out.

Her Own Housekeeper at Eighty-two.

No better representative of the plain German people, the sturdy middle-class stock that has done so much for America, could be found than Mrs. Magdalena M. Dick, the eighty-two-year-old mother of Senator Charles Dick of Ohio. She was born in Wurtemberg, a Haendel; her father was a shoemaker, and in childhood she was grounded in all those domestic virtues for which the Germans are famous—virtues that she continues to practice regularly despite her years.

For example, she persists in doing all her own housework, and is proud of the fact that time has not been able to rob her of the power to keep her three-story and basement residence in Washington scrupulously neat and tidy from cellar to garret, after the manner of the traditional hausfrau.

How many women with one-third of Mrs. Dick's years would care to perform a similar task any after day? Yet, in addition to caring for her house, this Senator's mother still finds time to take a lively interest in the work of the Lutheran Church which she attends, and she is always among the first to take part in any plan that is put forth by the church for the good of the neighborhood or the city.

With a daughter, Mrs. Dick makes Washington her home during the Winter in order to be near her son. The rest of the year she spends in Akron, Ohio, where she has lived for well nigh sixty years, and on the anniversary of her fiftieth year as a resident there her friends saw to it that the day was fittingly celebrated. There, she was married when she was twenty-five, and there her Senator son was born in November of 1858.

God-fearing Mrs. Dick has been all her life, and when her Charlie, as she calls her distinguished son, was six he was

set to work every Sunday to learn a verse out of the Bible for Sunday school. Mrs. Dick, who did not know very much English at that time, taught him his first verse in German. A few hours later, when Charlie returned home, he brought with him an English Bible, a gift to Mrs. Dick from her boy's Sunday school teacher. Thereafter, when teaching Charlie his weekly verses, Mrs. Dick used the two Bibles, side by side. She first read the verse in German and then compared it with the corresponding text in English. In this way she taught herself English, which she speaks well to-day.

Personally, Mrs. Dick is one of those delightful souls grown old gracefully, who has the mother lode shining in every line of her face. Besides the big ones of the present, she has known many of Ohio's most famous men of the past, and it is with the sympathy and warmth of a mother's heart that she tells her recollections of McKinley, Garfield, and other national leaders from the State of her adoption. If her Akron neighbors and friends do not affectionately call her "Mother Dick," they have been missing a fine chance to honor her and themselves all these latter years of her life.

Senator Flint's Interesting Mother.

Senator Frank D. Flint of California is another Senator who can boast that his mother has lived to see him clothed in a National toga. Mrs. A. L. Danksin—that is her name—lives in Los Angeles in her own home, and divides her time between her two boys, Frank and Jerry. Both sons are fond of quoting, privately some of their mother's witty replies to their questions and arguments, and each takes a pardonable pride in her alertness of mind, a characteristic which is familiar to all her friends.

Mrs. Danksin is a New Englander by birth, with a vestigial membership in about all of the exclusive patriotic societies of women through her descent from an old Colonial family whose men folk were prominent in helping to throw over the tea in Boston harbor; but thus far Mrs. Danksin has kept away from clubs and club life.

Her interests are divided between the world's progress and her library. As a college woman, she is intensely alive to the important social and political developments of the hour.

An insatiable reader of newspapers and magazines, she also finds time to devote to serious books. For example, she has recently been going over Congressman J. Warren Keifer's work on Shakespeare, and has followed it with critical attention.

Mrs. Danksin is just about the youngest appearing Senate mother seen in Washington in many a day. It is inspiring to hear her declare that by keeping herself interested in the doings of other people she is preserving her own vitality and warding off old age. Her theory certainly squares with her personal appearance and sunny disposition.

The early years of Mrs. Danksin's married life were spent in San Francisco, the Senator's father barely escaped being a "Mer-and," like the good Californian that she is, she is strong in her belief that the far West will yet lead the nation in ideas and ideals. "There," she says, "new blood, new ideas and new ideals are taking form. There is a buoyant feeling prevailing that has long since died in New England. And it is in this spirit that will eventually make the far West the leader in various departments of human progress."

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