

# ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MARY SEWARD WRIGHT

I was born Mary Seward on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1861 in Peoria, Illinois. My parents were John Seward and [Cordelia Cooley Seward](#). My mother Cordelia first came to Cadiz, New York with her parents William and Laura Fenton Cooley in 1831. They came in a wagon drawn by oxen from Palmer, Massachusetts. They settled on a farm later known as the Chris McClory farm in Cadiz. They had several children Henry, Caroline, Cordelia (my mother), Hattie and James who was only 1 years old.

Cordelia married John Seward and they moved to Illinois where I was born. When Dad died, my Mother came back to Cadiz with my brother Charles, my sister Nettie and me and bought a house. I remember that I was a little girl when this happened, maybe 5 years old. This was just before the railroad was built in 1866.

In the winter of 1877, I married Melvin Wright who worked in the cheese box factory in Cadiz. Several years later he went west to Omaha, Nebraska and I followed him a year later. We bought a house in Southwestern Blair. There my daughter Lena Eunice was born in March 1883. In December 1887 my son Earl Stewart was born. Then Lena died just before Christmas in 1888. In the fall of 1891, Melvin passed away and Earl and I returned to Cadiz where I lived for the rest of my life. I bought the home that you know today as the Howe-Prescott House.

I worked for many years in the canning factory and generally in the tin shop on a press. I walked along the railroad tracks ever day to work and returned home the same way. Some of the neighbors urged me to put in some kerosene and some of the heavier groceries in the old store. I did and by continually adding to this stock by about 1920 I had quite a little store.

I became the school tax collector for nearly 25 years. Later I sold the store to Harold Howe in 1929 and he ran it for about 3 years. Then built his own store on his own property.

After my Mother died in 1912, I lived alone and had an active and healthy life. I belonged to several organizations and to the First Presbyterian Church.

On Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1955 I passed away at the age of 93. On the Tuesday before, I fell and broke my hip. I left this earth quietly while eating supper and there was no pain. My greatest joy was that I could spend my final years in my childhood home. Today you can find my final resting place at Mount Prospect Cemetery.