

About the yellow Ringling Home on Eighth Street

In April of 1898 it appeared that another old landmark in Baraboo was soon to be a thing of the past. Mr. W. A. Warren had made a contract with Chicago parties which for the removal of the hill to grade on Ash Street between Eighth and Ninth streets. The Chicago parties were to begin as soon as possible and prior to grading would have to move the old stone house from the hill and place it on the southeast corner of the property next to the residence now occupied by H. W. Battlin.

The stone house was constructed by P. A. Basset, possibly as early as 1852, for Nathaniel Powell. Powell sold the property to T. M. Warren of Dane County in 1867. Warren lived in this house for many years until he purchased the Warren farm homestead. The stone house then came into the hands of his son, W. A. Warren.

When it came to the removal of the hill, it was estimated that about 15,000 loads of dirt would have to be moved. The plan was to then divide the tract into lots, three of which would face an extended Ash Street.

Charles E. Ringling then purchased the now vacant lot on the corner of Ash and Eighth streets from Will Warren in March of 1899 with plans to construct a modern residence there beginning about July 15th.

By April, the following month, the Isenberg Brothers had a contract to erect a new house on this site for Ringling. It was reported that it would be a structure of "modern excellence and beauty" and would cost about \$9,000. In December Charles Ringling formally accepted the house.

In July of 1901, Ringling purchased from Will Warren the lot to the rear of the new residence. Ringling planned on having the lot leveled which would obtain more yard space and eventually for stables. By May of 1903 plans and specifications had been prepared for a new barn to be erected that summer along with an addition to the residence.

It was reported in November of 1904 that the property had been greatly improved the laying of a new sidewalk and the planting of trees. Also, Ninth Street between Ringling and A. Reinking had been paved.

In February of 1908, the stone house belonging to W. A. Warren on Eighth Street, just east and adjacent to Ringling's property at 213 Eighth Street, was sold on the courthouse steps by Sheriff Stackhouse to C. E. Ringling, who was the highest bidder at \$3,925. It will be remembered that this house for many years stood on the hill where Ringling's barn and greenhouse were located at the time of this auction. *It is thought by the author that an attempt was then made to move the stone house from the 200 block of Eighth Street but the job proved to be too difficult and expensive so the house was razed where it stood.*

Ringling's next move was made in May of 1911 when he purchased the house on Eighth Street just to the east of his residence from the First National Bank. The newly purchased building was erected over twenty years prior by Alfred J. Carrow. Among the people who had lived there besides the builder were H. W. Battlin and family, Charles E. Ringling and family and the present tenants, A. Hook and family. As soon as the house could be moved it was planned that the land would be parked by Ringling which would add materially to the beauty of that section of the family owned property. Floyd B. Newell then purchased the house from Ringling with plans to move it to his lot on East Street next to A.J. Carrow. It was a large house and was expected to make a fine residence.

At about the same time, Ringling purchased the two lots at the corner of East and Eighth Streets which had recently been sold to J. C. Royer. Mr. Royer had begun operations for a new residence but was willing to build elsewhere. Ringling planned on leveling off the ground and the two lots would also be parked. Before the purchase of

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these two lots Mr. Ringling owned about one-half of the land in that block.

It was reported in June of 1917 that W. H. McFetridge had purchased this home from Ringling when in fact McFetridge was only residing in the home while Ringling's were away.

December 9, 1926 (BNR, excerpt)

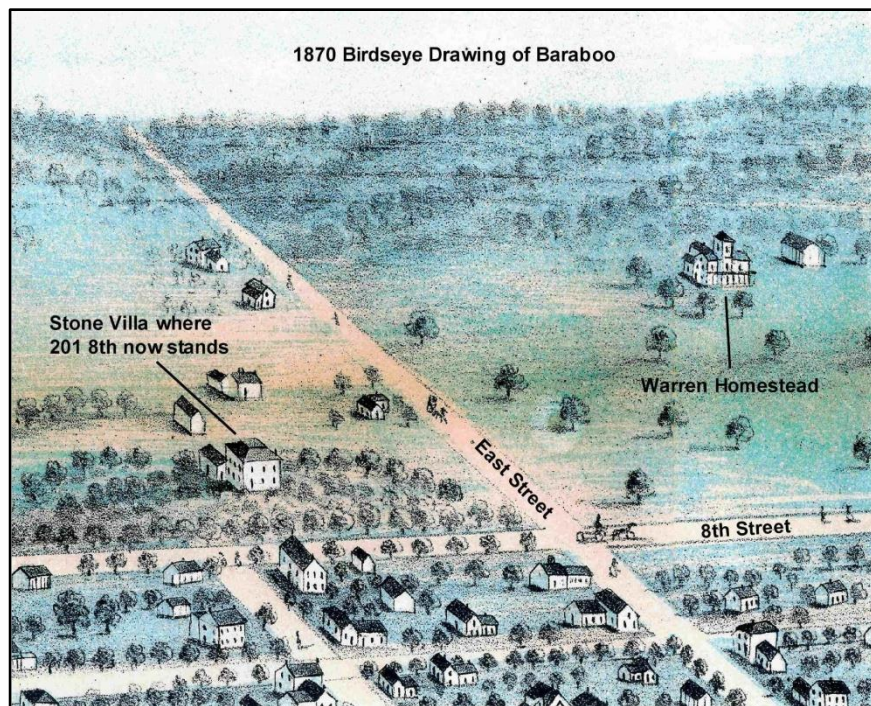
SHOWMAN DIES FRIDAY EVE IN SARASOTA

A fitting tribute to the deceased is paid by A. C. Clas, Milwaukee architect. "He was a great showman, a true friend and public spirited citizen. said Mr. Clas. "I have designed three homes for Charles Ringling" Mr. Clas declared. The first in Baraboo, the second in Evanston, Ill. and the last his winter home in Sarasota, Fla. The home in Florida is of pink Georgian marble in the Italian style. It cost nearly \$1,000,000." Clas lived with the Ringling's in Florida for several months while planning their new home. Often while bent over his drawing board in the upstairs of the house he used to pause in his work and listen to Mr. Ringling playing his violin in the music room, with his wife accompanying him on the piano. "Charles Ringling did not make many intimate friends." Clas said, "but those that he liked he could not do enough for."

Addendum of Special Interest

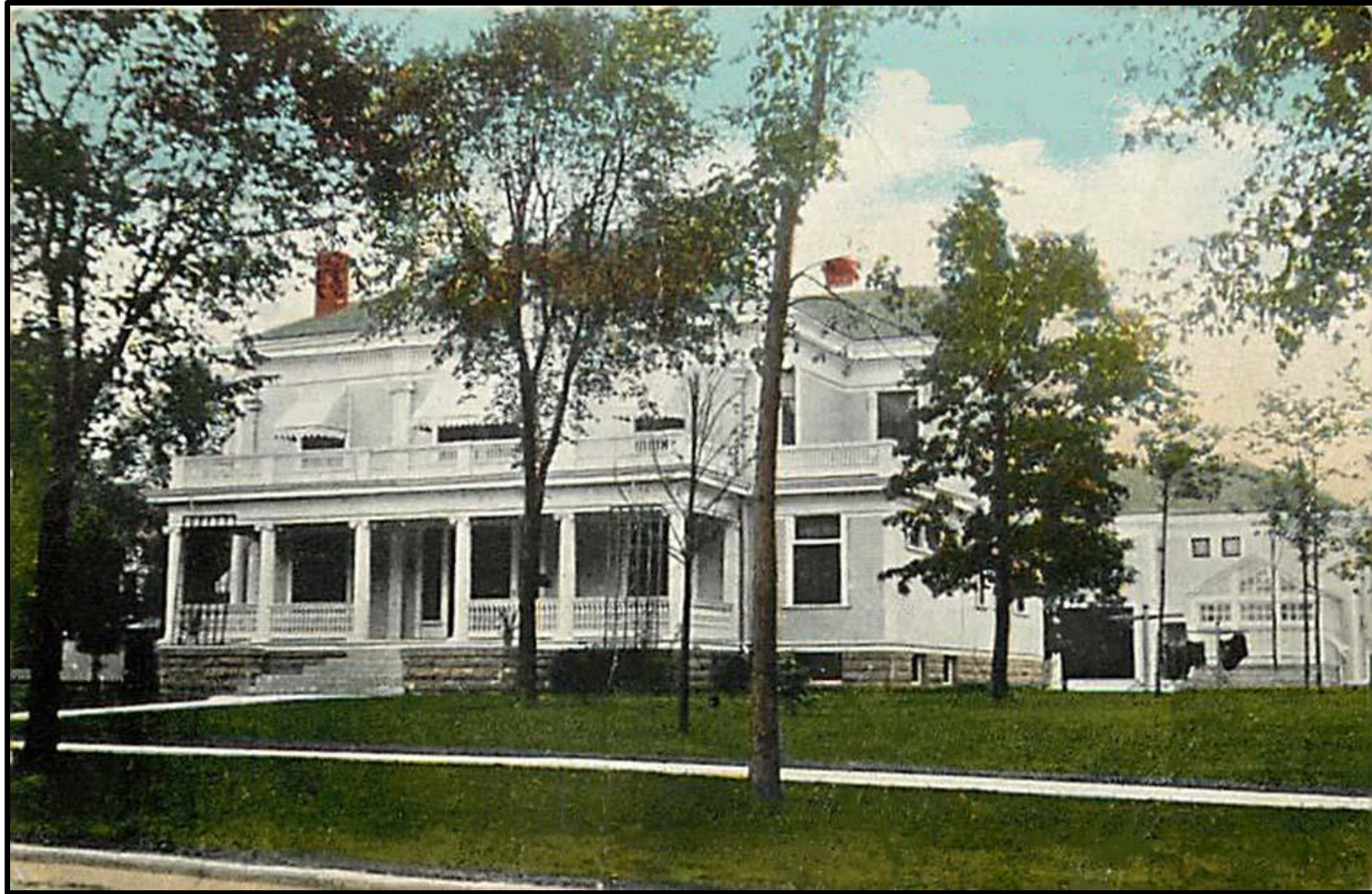
After having been on the road for six weeks, the old Warren residence was finally placed on Newell's foundation at the corner of East and 11th. Streets. Only part of this time, however, had been spent in moving this structure, as it was impossible to budge the large building except when the ground was dry.

Bird's Eye view of Ash & Eight Streets and Warren Stone House Being Moved



About the Yellow Ringling House, Illustration #1

The "Yellow" Ringling House when it was White



About the Yellow Ringling House, Illustration #2

The "Yellow" Ringling House prior to Changes (circa 1903)

