

THE POLSON RESIDENCE

103 HIGHLAND DRIVE



The Argus AYP Edition, 1909



Perry and Kate Polson, circa 1904



Highland Drive, 1903



Polson Implement Company, 1904

THE POLSON FAMILY

Perry Polson was born in 1854 in Sweden and immigrated with his family in 1867. In 1871, Perry and his father travelled to California and Portland and then walked to Olympia, boarded a ship to Port Townsend, rode in a canoe to Whidbey Island, and finally, a hired a sloop to La Conner. Perry's father purchased farmland, and Perry's mom and nine siblings soon joined them. Perry became a surveyor before purchasing a large farm outside La Connor.

Katherine Hannah Hinckley was born in 1858 in Shasta City, California, to Margaret, an Irish immigrant, and Joseph Hinckley, an English immigrant and lawyer and judge. After Joseph died in 1869, her mother moved the family to Seattle where she married her brother-in-law, Puget Sound pioneer Timothy Hinckley. The Hinckleys farmed on the shore of Lake Union and Kate studied at the Territorial University; she was hired to teach there in 1879.



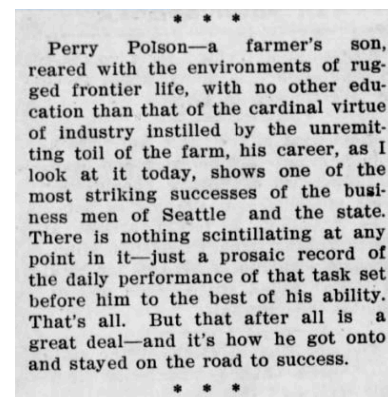
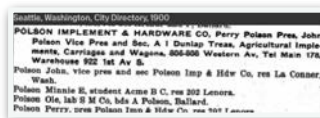
Kate's university examination score, 1878

On March 10, 1881, Katherine Hinckley and Perry Polson were married in the Hinckley home and then returned to the farm outside La Conner. Perry and Kate would have four children: Minnie in 1883; Helen in 1884; Olaf ("Ollie") in 1888; and Harold in 1895.

Perry began selling farm implements in 1885, incorporating as Polson Hardware Company by 1899. In 1890, Perry built a warehouse and dock in La Conner, and a family residence (all still standing). Soon the implement business was one of the largest in the region with branches in Seattle, Spokane, and Portland. Kate, Perry, and the children moved to Seattle in 1896. It was perfect timing — in 1897, a surge in demand for picks, shovels, and other tools for would-be Klondike Gold Rush miners catapulted the company's success.



Seattle Daily Times, 1900



The Ranch, 1902

The Polson family lived at 202 Lenora Street and then moved to the wealthier Seattle streetcar suburb of Capitol Hill to 1807 16th Avenue. But in 1904, it was the prestigious south slope of Queen Anne Hill that beckoned.

Real Estate Transfers.

Mercer's Add.—Stimson Land Co. to Kate H. Polson, lots 5, 6, block 7, December 6, \$5,500.

Architects Josenhans & Allen are drawing plans for the residence of Perry Polson on Highland Drive, opposite the Clise residence. It will cost about \$15,000 and will be a handsome addition to the magnificent residences now on Highland Drive.

Architects Josenhans & Allan were hired; they were especially well-known for their notable residences and buildings on the new University of Washington campus. Their design for Perry and Kate reflected an eclecticism in its blend of Craftsman, Arts & Crafts, and "stick-style" detailing complete with a corner turret harkening back to the Queen Anne style. Their plan captured views extending from Seattle's bustling downtown to the Olympic mountains.

On Sunday, April 12, 1908, the *Seattle Sunday Times* announced that "Perry Polson has recently moved into his new home at First Avenue North and Highland Drive." Perry and Kate, and their four children ranging in age from 12 to 25, moved in, including Helen's husband, Royden Gibson. The newlyweds soon moved to Alki, from which the twinkling lights of their former home were visible across Elliott Bay.



Ollie Polson, 1907
Sealth High School

Seattle, Washington, City Directory, 1908

POLSON IMPLEMENT CO, Perry Polson Pres, Henry North Vice-Pres, J L Briggs Sec, A I Dunlap (LaConner, Wn) Treas, Agricultural Implements, Carriages and Wagons 926 1st Av S, Warehouses 8th Av S cor Connecticut

- " Minnie E b 103 Highland dr
- " Ollie H student b 103 Highland dr
- " Perry pres Polson Implement Co h 103 Highland dr

Seattle, Washington, City Directory, 1908

- " Royden J clk Polson Impl Co r 103 Highland dr



Harold Polson, 1916
University of Washington

The Polsons' custom Seattle home with jaw-dropping views was perfect for hosting gatherings for extended family and friends. Perry was an active member of the Chamber of Commerce and Seattle Merchants' Association, among the organizers of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (1909), and a director and vice-president of the Scandinavian-American Bank of Seattle. Many meetings, parties, and special events were held here, ranging from solemn, like Perry's, then Kate's, funeral, to joyful, like their granddaughter's wedding in 1943. The extended Polson family cherished 103 Highland Drive for 97 years.

CHAIN OF OWNERSHIP

1905

Perry and Kate Polson

1938

Harold and Laura Polson

1989

Robert Polson Kummer

2005

Rajiv and Nanette Hayre

2011

Ken and Rosemary Willman



KEN AND ROSEMARY WILLMAN

Ken, a native Seattleite, and Rosemary, a native New Yorker, moved to Seattle in 2008 after almost two decades in Tokyo, London, and Hong Kong in conjunction with Ken's work in international law and finance. During that time, they did significant renovations of two older homes in London and another after arriving on Queen Anne Hill. After buying 103 Highland Drive in 2011, they commenced a two-year planning and restoration project, their most extensive ever. As with prior projects, Rosemary was integrally involved in the design and project oversight to lovingly safeguard and enhance the legacy of this historic Queen Anne Hill landmark while making it very comfortable for contemporary living and entertaining.

Ken and Rosemary are very involved in non-profit organizations in the Northwest and New York including The 5th Avenue Theatre, the University of Puget Sound, Seattle Children's Theatre, Children's Aid, and Covenant House International. In addition, they've been involved in over 40 commercial theatre productions including COME FROM AWAY (Olivier Award), HADESTOWN (Tony Award), and PARADE (Tony Award).



seattlehousehistories.com

Note: This history is largely an abridged version of *The Polson House, A History* by Marvin Anderson & Megan Meulemans.