

Her Spiritual Hegira Ends in His Divorce



Mrs. E.H. CHENEY

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CHENEY DIVORCES WIFE WHO ELOPED

Oak Park Man Given Custody of Children She Deserted to Flee Abroad.

AFFINITY TIRED OF HER.

Frank L. Wright Received by His Spouse After "Spiritual Hegira."

Edwin H. Cheney of Oak Park has secured an absolute divorce from his wife with custody of the children. The decree was entered yesterday by Judge Brentano.

Thus ends a peculiar marital tangle. Mrs. Cheney, it will be remembered, eloped with Frank Lloyd Wright, architect, about two years ago. Wright deserted his wife and babies. Mrs. Cheney left her husband and family. The two departed for Europe on what they called a "spiritual hegira."

Wright, builder of bungalows, tired of the escapade and returned to Chicago. He was taken into the bosom of his family without any stir.

Mr. Cheney's suit was filed July 28 in the Superior court, but he did not name Wright or make any charge except desertion.

Mr. Cheney appeared before Judge Brentano with Eugene G. Fassett, his counsel; Mrs. Armilla A. Cheney, his mother, and Attorney Walter S. Holden, the latter two appearing as witnesses for him.

Mr. Cheney Testifies.

"About June 28, 1909, Mrs. Cheney left me, stating that she was not going to return," testified Mr. Cheney. "She also stated three days prior to that time that she was going away and would not come back.

"Since then she has not returned, neither has she offered to return. While we lived together I conducted myself kindly toward her and showed her every kind attention possible in a husband and supported her to the best of my ability."

"Did you give her any occasion to leave you?" Attorney Fassett asked Mr. Cheney.

"No, no occasion at all."

"And have you at all times had the care, custody, and control of your children?"

"Yes, sir. There is an agreement between us that the children are to remain in my custody."

His Mother Tells of Desertion.

Mrs. Cheney, his mother, testified that her son's wife left him without cause and since then has not returned. Mrs. Cheney lives with her son at 520 North East avenue, Oak Park.

Attorney Holden took the stand and testified that he was a neighbor of the Cheneyes and that he had not seen Mrs. Cheney at or near her husband's home for the last two years.

Mrs. Cheney's entanglement with Wright was not referred to in the bill of Mr. Cheney or by the witnesses.

In October, 1909, social life of Oak Park was cast into tumultuous disorder by news that Architect Wright, designer of two-tenths of the houses in the suburb, had fled to Europe with the wife of President Cheney of the Electric Manufacturing company and the Fuel Engineering company of Chicago.

The family has been good friends. No intimation of a closer relationship between Mr. Wright and Mrs. Cheney had been suspected by social associates. Each was the parent of several children.

Mrs. Cheney Goes from Colorado.

Talk did not begin until it was discovered that in early October Mr. Wright had sailed for Europe, and that about the same time Mrs. Cheney had disappeared from the residence of a friend whom she was visiting in Colorado. Then gossip began to note trivial little incidents which, in light of the double disappearance, assumed new and enlightening proportions.

A careful tracing of Wright's movements disclosed the fact that he had registered. Mrs. Cheney and himself as wife and man in German hotels. Some sort of retribution from the injured parties on both sides was expected. It did not come. Mrs. Wright expressed herself as believing that her husband was under the influence of the other woman and that he would shake it aside as soon as possible. She assumed the attitude of a Griselda, waiting patiently with her children for her husband's disillusionment and return. She said nothing bitter, nothing reproachful—she loved him and her love would bring him back.

Husband Comes Back.

Her faith was vindicated. A year later her husband tired of his new love, tired of a life without good ties, and returned to his family. It was reported at the time that Mrs. Cheney had also repented and begged to be taken back, but to this extent her husband's love did not go.

At the Cheney residence in Oak Park a woman answered the telephone at night and said Mr. Cheney had left during the day for Minneapolis. The woman said she was the housekeeper. She said the Cheney children were out camping, but said she did not know where. She said Mr. Cheney would not be back in the city until Thursday.