

FINAL
~~Draft 2~~

MILWAUKEE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

An application fee of \$25 (cash or check) is required with this application

1. Name

Historic: Beulah Brinton House

and/or Common: _____

2. Location

Street & number 2590 South Superior Street, 2594-2598 South Superior Street

Aldersperson(s): Tony Zielinski

District Number(s): 14

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Present Use			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> park	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> structure(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> cemetery	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> object(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum	

4. Owner of Property

Name: Bay View Historical Society

Address: 2590 South Superior Street

City: Milwaukee State WI Zip 53207

5. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory: BAY VIEW INTENSIVE SURVEY

Date: 1990 federal state county local

Depository for survey records:

Organization City of Milwaukee

Street & number 841 N. BROADWAY ROOM B-1

City MILW. State WI Zip 53202

Previous historic designation:

National Register Date 8/23/1982 Historic Name BAY VIEW HISTORIC DISTRICT
 City of Milwaukee Landmark Date _____ Historic Name _____
 Other Name of Program _____ Date designated _____

6. DESCRIPTION

Condition:

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins

- altered
- unaltered

Location:

- original site
- moved, date: _____

Walls:

- clapboard; brick; stucco; stone; wood shingle; slate; terra cotta; asphalt siding;
- asbestos tile; aluminum siding; artificial stone; other _____

Building form:

Number of stories 2

Foundation

- stone brick concrete block concrete
- other _____

Roof

- gable (flank; end; cross)
- gambrel (flank; end; cross)
- hip mansard flat
- other _____

Written description: (Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

SEE ATTACHED

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Areas of significance:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | Home of Bay View educator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | and community advocate,
Beulah Brinton |

Date built or altered: 1872-1873

Builder/architect:

Unknown

Written statement of significance: (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

SEE ATTACHED

8. Major Bibliographical References

- Gurda, John. "Brinton: still a role model years later," Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, October 6, 2012.
- Korn, Bernard C. The story of Bay View. Milwaukee, 1980, p. 92, 94, 108-110.
- Kurtzsch, Daisy Estes. "Beulah Brinton of Bay View," Milwaukee History, Summer 1987.
- Pagel, Mary Ellen and Virginia Palmer. Guides to Historic Milwaukee: Walker's Point and South. Milwaukee, 1968, p. 28-29.
- Winkler, Ron. Bay View (Images of America). Mount Pleasant, S.C., 2011, p. 25.

9. Property Description

Acreage: 0.35

Obtain from <http://assessments.milwaukee.gov/>

Legal property description:

2590 South Superior Street:

Legal Description

PHILLIP M PRYOR'S ADD'N IN NE 1/4 SEC 9 & NW 1/4 SEC 10-6-22 BLOCK 3 LOT 7 & LOT 1 BL 3 W J PRYOR'S ADD'N

2594-2598 South Superior Street:

Legal Description

WM J PRYOR'S ADD'N IN NE 1/4 SEC 9 & NW 1/4 SEC 10-6-22 BLOCK 3 LOT 2

10. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Jane Taugher/Board Member, Bay View Historical Society

Organization: Bay View Historical Society

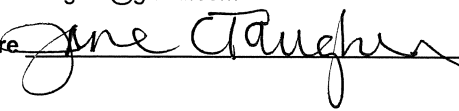
Street: 2590 South Superior Street

City: Milwaukee State: 53207 Zip: 53207

Telephone (days) (414) 481-8305 (evenings) SAME Date: 4/16/2018

Email jane.taughner@gmail.com

Signature



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Taughner", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and extends slightly above and below the line.

Return to: **Historic Preservation**
 Common Council/City Clerk
 200 East Wells Street Room B-4
 Milwaukee, WI 53202
 (414-286-5722)
 HPC@milwaukee.gov

INTERIM HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

I. NAME

Historic: Beulah Brinton House

Common Name: Beulah Brinton House

II. LOCATION 2590 and 2594-2598 S. Superior Street

Legal Description - Tax Key No.: 500-0724-000-4 and 501-0204-000-4

III. CLASSIFICATION Building

IV. OWNER Robert G. Quinsey

ALDERMAN Ald. Tony Zielinski, 14th Aldermanic District

NOMINATOR Ald. Tony Zielinski

V. YEAR BUILT 1872-1873¹

ARCHITECT: Not Known

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Beulah Brinton House is located at the northeast corner of S. Superior Street and E. Pryor Avenue in what is known as the Bay View neighborhood, approximately three and a quarter miles from the Central Business District, along Lake Michigan. The property is approximately 152 by 101 feet in dimension and consists of two parcels, each with its own tax key. Each parcel is approximately 50 by 152 feet in dimension. The frame, L-plan, Gothic Revival Style house is located on the north parcel and fronts west/southwest, sitting approximately 30 feet back from the sidewalk behind a grassy lawn planted with shrubs. The south parcel along Pryor Avenue is vacant, bordered by shrubs and serves as a side yard for the house. The surrounding neighborhood is residential in character with mostly one and two story frame houses of varying 19th and early 20th century styles including Italianate, Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts.

The Beulah Brinton House is clad in horizontal wood clapboards and sits on a brick foundation. The roof is sheathed with asphalt/cement asbestos shingles laid in a diamond pattern. Two chimneys rise from the roof, one at each wing of the house. The north chimney retains its original corbelling while the south chimney had been shortened. A small one story wing with hipped roof is located at the rear or east elevation. Windows are arranged to conform to interior spaces and consist of two-over-two sash on the first story and one-over-one on the second. A modern picture window with smaller sidelights is located on the rear wing.

¹ Town of Lake Tax Rolls, P. M. Pryor's Addition (Platted March 6, 1871) and Wm. J. Pryor's Addition (Platted May 2, 1872), 1872-1873.

The main or S. Superior Street façade is the most elaborate. The short wing of the L-plan is located to the right or south and parallels Pryor Avenue. It's gable end fronts the street and there is a three-sided bay at the first story. The long wing of the L-plan is located on the left or north and parallels S. Superior Street and has its gable end fronting north. A Colonial Revival Style porch with fluted Ionic columns is nestled along the long wing and features a simple frieze and cornice articulated with modillions. It is topped with a wood balustrade consisting of turned balusters and square posts. The porch is skirted with wood and metal grates fill in the openings. The entrance is located in the middle of the façade, in the crook of the L, and is brought flush with the plane of the short wing. It is framed by two free standing and two engaged fluted Ionic columns. The door itself is a fifteen or eighteen light door (the storm door obscures the bottom of the primary door) and is framed by five-part sidelights and a three-part transom. Gothic detail is concentrated on the front gable face of the south wing. It consists of bargeboard trim, a bracketed hood with saw tooth trim above the paired second story windows and saw tooth trim at the cornice framing the three sided bay at the first story.

The north elevation continues the same ornamentation as the main façade. A bracketed hood is located above paired windows on each story. The brackets are elaborate and feature turned drop finials like the front of the house. The same saw tooth trim is used as well.

The south elevation is simpler in design. The two first story windows feature small hoods with a cut out ornament at the center of each. Upper story windows are stacked directly above those on the first and feature no ornament.

The rear elevation is utilitarian in character. A door is located at the north face of the wing and opens onto a small open porch. A small skylight is located at the apex of the hip roof. Bulkhead doors to the basement are located below the large picture window.

At the rear of the property is a 25 foot by 38 foot garage built in 1983 and set back about 10 feet from the alley.² The structure features a side gable roof and vinyl siding. Two large flush garage doors are located at the east or alley side of the structure. A pedestrian door and three windows are located on the façade that faces the house. The side gables feature rectangular openings in the ends that mimic the appearance of closed hayloft doors.

Alterations to the house have been minimal over the last 132 years. A historic photo from the c. 1904 picture book, Some Homes of the Evening Wisconsin, at the Milwaukee County Historical Society shows that the front porch was originally Gothic in detail with elaborate trim and chamfered posts. Short wing walls once framed the steps. Numerous historic photos at the Milwaukee County Historical Society show that the current porch was put in place before Beulah Brinton's death in the 1920s. The c. 1904 photo also shows that the two second story windows on the south elevation were originally smaller and oval in shape, a very characteristic feature of Milwaukee houses of the 1870s. Changes to the windows were made prior to Brinton's death as well. A third chimney once graced the roof of the short south wing, and was located above the line of the west windows on the south elevation. It appears to have been removed by

² Milwaukee City Building Permit records, 2590 S. Superior Street, permit number 483018, dated August 2, 1983.

the 1920s. The second, remaining chimney on the south wing has been altered in more recent years. Finials once graced the apex of the gables and pinnacles enlivened the gable ends. The c. 1904 photograph also shows an interesting use of color. In keeping with the late 19th century interest in polychromy, the house was clearly painted in a three-color palette with medium color body, light trim and dark sash. By the time of Brinton's death the house had attained its current white color. Historic photos also show that striped awnings once graced the front porch.³

VII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Beulah Brinton House is significant for both its history and architecture. Beulah Brinton was the most well known and beloved of the early residents of Bay View. She opened her home to the immigrant workers of the Bay View Rolling Mill and taught sewing, reading and other skills to several generations of residents both adults and children. Her home and grounds served a place of recreation and social center for the community. Although Beulah considered her efforts to be simple Christian neighborliness, they paralleled the pioneer settlement house movement in the country, which sought to acculturate new immigrants to American ways and provide life skills for needy residents. Beulah's activities actually preceded the establishment of such famous settlement houses as the University Settlement in New York City (1887) and Hull House in Chicago (1889) and led to the creation of a formal social service center in Bay View that was named in her honor in 1924. The Brinton home is likewise the most intact remaining residential example of the Gothic Revival Style in Milwaukee. We know from historic photographs that the style was once popular in Milwaukee from the 1850s through the 1880s but virtually all known surviving examples have been significantly altered. The Brinton House retains its hooded windows with the elaborate brackets and spiky trim, as well as ornamental bargeboard at its gable ends. It is a contributing building in the Bay View Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 23, 1982.

VIII. HISTORY

Beulah Brinton has long been recognized as the most significant woman of Bay View. Her efforts to assist community residents over the course of thirty years earned her the respect and gratitude of generations of Bay Viewers. Her residence is still known under her name and there is to this day a social center and playground named in her honor. Born Beulah Tobey (her first name was changed later to reflect the popular spelling of the day) on December 12, 1836 in upstate Jay, New York, in a log cabin, Bay View's first lady had a hard childhood. Just short of her 18th birthday, Beulah married Warren Brinton in Westport, New York on November 27, 1854. Warren was a native of Salisbury, Connecticut who had been born there August 12, 1825. Brinton's work as a foundryman took them to a variety of locations during the first decades of their marriage including Pittsford, Vermont, and Pilot Knob, Missouri. In 1862 the family moved to Wyandotte, Michigan, the location of the Eureka Iron Works owned by Beulah's cousin Eber Brock Ward. Ward lived in nearby Detroit and it is thought that Warren Brinton secured work at the iron works. After the Civil War ended, cousin Ward decided to establish an iron works in Wisconsin, just south of the City of Milwaukee. In 1867 he purchased 114 acres and set

³ Milwaukee County Historical Society, Historic Photograph Collection, Bay View and Superior Street.

aside 27 acres for the site of a large iron mill and platted 76.5 acres into residential lots under the name "Bay View". This was the first large industrial complex in the Milwaukee area and hundreds of workers poured into the new community. The Milwaukee Iron Company, as it was first called, was the pivotal development that led to Milwaukee's rise as an industrial city.⁴

It seems likely that Eber Brock Ward had something to do with the Brintons move to Bay View around 1870. Warren secured work at the new mill, and although written accounts describe him as the mill superintendent, the city directories list him as a machinist (1872-1873), laborer (1878, 1880), bookkeeper (1879), timekeeper (1891) and weighmaster. Warren is most consistently listed as a weighmaster after 1881.⁵

It is interesting to note that the Milwaukee Iron Company did not build a company-controlled town like Pullman, Illinois, when it established its huge plant and set aside lots for its workers. Rather, as an incentive to keep good workers and establish a settled community, the Milwaukee Iron Company encouraged its workers to build houses although, for those who could not afford to build, the company erected numerous small cottages for families to rent. Many of these rentals were sold to workers within a decade or two. The Milwaukee Iron Company did initiate deed restrictions on its property, however, that prevented the sale, manufacture and dispensing of alcoholic substances as well as controlled other noxious enterprises within the community. Although considered paternalistic today, the restrictions were rooted in the need to have sober workers handling the blast furnaces and other dangerous functions at the factory complex. This was an attempt to curb the long tradition of alcoholism associated with industrial communities that tended to have negative consequences on both the workers and their families. In Bay View, as in other dry towns, however, saloons soon opened outside of the area controlled by the Milwaukee Iron Company.

When it came time for the Brintons to build their house they chose two parcels located at the northeast corner of S. Superior and E. Pryor Avenue, just two blocks from the mammoth factory complex. The parcel known as 2590 S. Superior Street today (roughly 50 feet by 152 feet) actually straddled two subdivisions, the P. M. Pryor's Addition and the Wm. J. Pryor's Addition. The Milwaukee Iron Company had purchased the south part of the lot from William J. and Elizabeth M. Pryor on May 15, 1872 for \$437.12 and presumably purchased the north portion of the lot from P. M. Pryor at the same time.⁶ The Milwaukee Iron Company conveyed the property to Warren Brinton on December 13, 1872, the day after Beulah's 36th birthday.⁷ The adjacent parcel, known as 2594-2598 S. Superior Street today (the side lot to the south of the house) was purchased by Warren Brinton from William and Elizabeth M. Pryor at a cost of \$400 on May 4, 1872.⁸ Interestingly, the Town of Lake Tax Rolls show that Warren Brinton (spelled "Brentan") was already paying taxes on the fractional part of 2590 S. Superior in 1871 but that the parcel had no improvements. Some improvements were begun at 2590 S. Superior in 1872, coinciding with Brinton's purchase of the land, and then a big jump in assessment

⁴ Daisy Estes Kursch, "Beulah Brinton of Bay View," *Milwaukee History*, Summer, 1987, pp. 38-39.

⁵ *Ibid.*; Milwaukee City Directory, 1870-1895; Jerome A. Watrous, ed., *Memoirs of Milwaukee County*, Vol. II, p. 838.

⁶ Milwaukee County Register of Deeds, Vol. 127, p.4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 131, p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. 124, p. 495.

from \$500 to \$1,000 occurs in 1873 when their house was completed. The \$1,000 valuation remained constant after that year.⁹

The house that the Brintons built was quite a bit different from the Italianate houses and workers cottages that were rapidly being built in the shadows of the giant industrial complex. As befitting his higher-level status at the rolling mill, Brinton's house was larger and more elaborate than most of those around it although a few substantial masonry houses would be built by mill officials in the vicinity. The Brintons chose the Gothic Revival Style for the design of their house, and their house had decidedly more intricate detail than their neighbor's. The L-plan house features dramatic gable ornamentation, bracketed hoods at the second story windows at the front elevation and bracketed hoods above the first and second story windows of the north elevation, fringe-like saw tooth trim, three prominent chimneys, and a large porch extending across the north portion of the front elevation. Compared to the dirt-floored cabin the family had occupied while in Pilot Knob, Missouri, this house would have been a veritable mansion, filled with the latest conveniences. It is evident that the Brintons always intended the side lot to remain undeveloped and it was said to have been lined with apple trees.¹⁰

The Brinton family would maintain the ownership of this property through a number of generations and it was here that Beulah Brinton's public life flowered. The Brintons had five children, three of whom lived to adulthood. It is not known if daughters Beulah (b. March 4, 1864) or Addie (b. June 24, 1856) spent any time in the Bay View house. Daughter Emily (b. February 4, 1861) and son Warren Dillon (b. February 20, 1868) grew up here as well as the last child born to the Brintons, Daisy (b. August 16, 1876).¹¹

Beulah was an intelligent, well-read, spirited woman with strong religious convictions. Her interests were far ranging. She published two novels about the Civil War, Man is Love (Lippincott and Co., 1873) and Behold the Woman (Bay View Herald Publishing Co., 1887) that carried "mystical religious themes." She and her son Warren were also publishers of the Bay View Herald in the mid-1880s.¹²

It was for her role as a community leader that Beulah is most remembered today. An interviewer from the Milwaukee Journal stated that "Like Ruskin, she pictured the working man as the hope of the world, and living as she did close to the steel mills, she saw him as a mill worker."¹³ When Beulah saw that the mill workers' wives, mostly immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and, later, Italy, were lonely and homesick and in need of education, medical care and recreation, she opened her home to her neighbors and taught them English, cooking, sewing and child care. She even served as a midwife. Reading sessions were also an important aspect of her activities. Her own library was made available to mill workers who congregated at the Brinton home to listen to Beulah read to them. Her collection of books numbered at least 300 and circulated out of the parlor of her house as the community's first library. They eventually were housed in the Dover Street School and moved to the Llewellyn Library on E. Russell St. in 1914. Brinton's efforts received no municipal or foundation support, but were conducted informally as part of what she considered "being neighborly." Her efforts paralleled the

⁹ Town of Lake Tax Rolls, 1871-1876.

¹⁰ Kursch, pp. 39-40.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 39.

¹² Ibid., p. 43; Milwaukee City Directory, 1886.

¹³ Kursch, p. 43.

activities offered later by settlement houses but preceded the University Settlement in New York City (1887) and Hull House in Chicago (1889).¹⁴

Beulah Brinton also saw recreation as an important activity for the community. She set up a tennis court in her side yard to teach Bay Viewers the sport, which was new to the U.S. in the 1870s. The tennis rackets were kept in a box on the back porch. Beulah also encouraged theater and dancing and played the piano for couples to dance.¹⁵

It appears that husband Warren Brinton was supportive of his wife's efforts. We do not know a lot about him. He was known as a "kind, gentle man with a warm smile hidden under his beard." He is said to have died suddenly of a heart attack while resting in his favorite armchair on December 31, 1895 at the age of 70.¹⁶

Beulah continued to occupy her S. Superior Street home for some years after Warren's death. Daughter Emily had married Albert E. Pickard on August 16, 1883 and lived at least part of her married life in Bay View, running a candy store on Kinnickinnic Avenue with her husband Albert, who also worked as a clerk or insurance agent. For a brief period in 1898 it appears that the Pickards lived with Beulah Brinton on Superior Street. Their son Charles also lived with grandmother Brinton in 1908.¹⁷

Beulah's youngest daughter Daisy married William Worcester on August 15, 1901 and moved to Washington D.C. She visited home in 1902 and while in Milwaukee died of walking typhoid in 1902 at the age of 26.¹⁸

Son Warren Dillon attended the local public schools and then attended Ralston University in Washington, D.C. At the age of 16 he began work at the Illinois Steel Company (later owner of the Milwaukee Iron Company) and worked his way up to superintendent. He was sent to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for two years. He then became auditor of accounts for the International Harvester Company of Chicago in 1904. Although he resided in Chicago he considered the S. Superior Street house to be his legal residence and city directories show him listed here through 1910. Great granddaughter Daisy Estes Kursch indicated that Beulah would close up the Superior Street house for part of the year to winter in Chicago with her unmarried son.¹⁹

In 1907 granddaughter Mabel Pickard scandalized the family by eloping to Waukegan, Illinois with Ira Ray Estes, the grandson of Bay View pioneers Elijah and Zebiah Estes whose house once stood where South Shore Park is now located. Grandma Brinton forgave them and Mabel and Ira would come to live in the Superior Street house starting around 1910. It is about this time that Beulah relocated to Chicago to keep house for her son. The Milwaukee homestead, complete with furnishings, books and records, was left to the younger generation.²⁰

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 43; Milwaukee City Directory.

¹⁷ Wisconsin Register of Marriages, Pre-1907. On microfiche at the Milwaukee Central Library; Milwaukee City Directory.

¹⁸ Wisconsin Register of Marriages; Kursch, p. 43.

¹⁹ Watrous, pp. 838-839; Kursch, p. 44.

²⁰ Kursch, p.44.

Beulah Brinton's work in the community had been completed by this time. The early needs of the workers had been met and formal, municipally run social centers were in place to assist families. In 1924 the community she worked so hard for honored Beulah Brinton by naming the neighborhood's first community center after her. The Milwaukee School Board, in charge of the social centers, had determined that the oldest portion of Bay View, the neighborhood east of the Chicago North Western tracks and closest to the factory complex, was the most congested section and warranted a center where recreational and educational activities could take place. In an early example of adaptive reuse, they chose a decommissioned firehouse at 2455 S. St. Clair Street to house the center. A gymnasium, showers and classrooms were added and the building was formally dedicated on October 19, 1924. The center soon became a second home to many members of Bay view's Italian community where they studied English and homemaking and participated in the Marry Playmakers. Beulah Brinton came up from Chicago for the event and presented a flag while a number of speakers summarized her accomplishments including establishing a home for newsboys in Detroit and shipping food to the survivors of the 1871 Chicago Fire in addition to her work in the Bay View community.²¹

After a stroke in 1926, Beulah returned to Milwaukee to live with her granddaughter Mabel Pickard Estes at the S. Superior homestead. Her last years were filled with numerous visitors who came to reminisce and thank her for her assistance. One visitor recounted that Beulah gave temporary shelter to a family named Tracy whose rented flat was damaged by a fire. Their son Spencer, then about 5 years of age, is said to have turned photos and "played havoc with the furniture." No one dreamed he would become a famous actor. Beulah Brinton died at the age of 92 on March 18, 1928 and was buried in Forest home Cemetery.²²

Granddaughter Mabel Pickard Estes and her husband Ira Ray Estes would occupy the S. Superior house for many years. It was probably under their occupancy that some of the known changes were made to the house. A book entitled Some Homes of the Evening Wisconsin, published c. 1904 and located at the Milwaukee County Historical Society, shows a view of S. Superior Street with the Brinton house in the foreground. The original porch with its Gothic detail and chamfered posts is just visible behind a bush that obscures part of the house. Oval windows were located at the second story of the south elevation facing Pryor Avenue. Finials and pinnacles enlivened the roof. These more blatant Victorian features were removed or replaced before the time of Beulah's death and reflect the change in taste away from the more elaborate forms of the late 19th century. A new porch with classical fluted columns replaced the original, lending a touch of Colonial Revival character to the otherwise Gothic structure. In keeping with the times, a flat roofed garage was built behind the house sometime in the early 20th century. There are no permit records to document these changes.²³

Although Daisy and Ira Estes lived in the house, Warren Dillon Brinton continued to own the property. He remained in Chicago for many years and then moved to St. Petersburg, Florida where he set up residency. Finding his health improved after spending time back in Milwaukee, Warren Dillon changed his residency back to Milwaukee as of October 30,

²¹ Les Vollmert, Carlen Hatala, Paul Jakubovich, Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources Survey, City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, 1990, pp. 286-288; Kursch, pp. 44-45.

²² Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 25, p. 161; Kursch, p. 42.

²³ Some Homes of the Evening Wisconsin, c. 1904, catalogued as Album 19 at the Milwaukee County Historical Society, p. 12; Milwaukee City Directory.

1944 and moved back into the family homestead on S. Superior Street. The homestead, complete with furnishings, pictures, books and household property, was left to Mabel Pickard Estes when Warren Dillon died on December 10, 1948. Mabel's children, Daisy Estes Tucker (later Kursch) and Albert W. Estes were also beneficiaries as were, Arthur Roderick Emery and Warren B. Emery, the children of a deceased niece.²⁴

Mabel Pickard Estes was widowed between 1956-1960 but city directories show her at the house into the 1970s. She sold the property to Robert G. and Audrey Quinsey on July 17, 1974. The Quinseys have been the owners ever since. They made some changes to the property during their stewardship of the house. A gabled roof was added to the rear, flat roofed garage. That structure was later demolished and the current garage was built in 1983. Permit records show that they converted one of the front bedrooms into a bathroom in 1995.²⁵

Beulah Brinton's legacy has continued to the present day. The original Beulah Brinton Community House in the former fire station was demolished around 1979. A new larger facility was begun in 1980 at 2555 S. Bay Street, on the west side of the Chicago North Western tracks and just about opposite to the site of the earlier center. The facility is now called the Beulah Brinton Community Center. There was also a playground named in her honor on Wentworth Avenue but it was abandoned and the current Beulah Brinton Playground, constructed in 1978, is located between E. Potter, S. Bay and E. Conway Streets adjacent to the community center.

Note: Alderman Tony Zielinski submitted this nomination in response to the pending sale of the Beulah Brinton House. The Quinseys are offering their property as two parcels, one portion containing the historic house and the other containing the side yard. There is an option to buy both parcels together. Bay View residents are concerned that development might occur on the side yard and dwarf or diminish the Brinton House or that the house itself could be demolished and one big development occur on the site.

The Gothic Revival

The Gothic Revival had many manifestations in the 19th century. It followed in the wake of the Greek Revival, a form that for many years had well represented the ideals of the new republic. Classical temple forms and fluted columns were now supplanted by irregular plans and dramatic massing and spiky Gothic detail. The Gothic Revival looked back to what was considered a more naturalistic era during the Middle Ages when buildings were ornamented with forms taken from nature and were part of their picturesque landscapes rather than dominate them. It was a shift away from the rational toward the romantic. In the wake of the religious revivals of the era, the Gothic Revival was also viewed as a more "Christian" form and a style more appropriate for churches than classical temples.

Gothic details had been used as decorative motifs in the 18th century on random structures and whimsical garden follies but serious recreations of the English rural medieval church began with the spread of the ecclesiastical movement from England to the United States in the 1830s. A rural Gothic style evolved here as well for residences and "had no real

²⁴ Deeds, Vol. 2755, p. 518.

²⁵ Milwaukee City Building Permits, 2590 S. Superior Street, permit number 1153426 dated November 30, 1981, permit number 483018 dated August 2, 1983, and permit number 246580 dated March 7, 1995.

architectural model, but was loosely based on the English country cottage of the same period and popularized by a rash of very popular architectural pattern books aimed at the middle-class home-builder."²⁶

English writers and designers such as A.W. Pugin and John Ruskin promoted the Gothic through publications beginning in the 1830s and the American reading public and designers took their principles to heart. American based publications likewise were popular. Alexander Jackson Davis' Rural Residences (1837) and The Architecture of Country Houses (1850) as well as Andrew Jackson Downing's Cottage Residences (1842, reprinted numerous times) were the runaway bestsellers of their generation and the images of small and large houses with Gothic ornament, set into romantic landscapes, soon spread the style from coast to coast. As late as 1878, pattern books like S.B. Reed's Village & Country Residences and How to Build Them showed examples of the Gothic Revival, a testament to the enduring popularity of the style.²⁷

The Gothic Revival was not a static form and residential styles in wood varied from the more elaborate masonry houses and public buildings and churches. There was even a later form, known as the High Victorian Gothic, popular in the 1870s, that took its design cues from the medieval buildings of Italy. Trained architects turned out very skillful renditions of the Gothic, based on travels abroad and publications on the historic buildings of England and Europe. Local carpenters relied on Davis and Downing and the numerous pattern books published on the subject. Many clients and carpenters alike saw the Gothic Revival not as a philosophical statement but as a series of design motifs that were attractive and more modern than the columned porticoes of the Greek Revival.

Elements of the style that are often seen in wood frame houses included steeply pitched gable roofs with an emphasis on the vertical, pointed or Tudor arches, gables with bargeboard trim showing Gothic motifs (cusped forms like trefoils and quatrefoils, collar braces, collar ties, king posts), ornamental one story porches supported by posts that have chamfered edges and with spandrels having lace-like cut-out designs, prominent corbelled chimney tops, finials, drop pendants, hood moldings over windows and doors, bracketed hoods over paired windows and vertical board and batten siding. Windows frequently held diamond paned leaded glass sash. Larger masonry houses often included square or polygonal towers with battlements and large pointed church-like windows with leaded or colored glass.

In Milwaukee we know that the Gothic Revival had arrived at least as early as 1855 in residential design when the Russell Bennett House was built in the style at 3317 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue. Other examples appear later, into the 1870s and 1880s. Historic photos indicate that the Gothic Revival manifested itself mostly as ornamentation on frame L-plan houses and small cottages where spiky and curvilinear detail was applied to gables, window hoods, trim and porches. Over time, the lack of skilled carpenters to replace damaged features as well as changing taste and the efforts to clad houses in substitute siding, have resulted in the loss of virtually all examples in Milwaukee.

²⁶ James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, "Gothic Revival", The Old-House Journal, November/December 1988, pp. 33-34.

²⁷ Ibid., 34; S. B. Reed, Village & Country Residences and How to Build Them, originally published by Orange Judd Company in 1878, reprinted by The Lyons Press, 2000, p.92.

The Beulah Brinton House is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival and our most intact frame example of the style. Despite the Classical Revival porch that was added in the early 20th century, the Brinton House still reads as Gothic. While using traditional horizontal clapboard siding and an L-Plan form, the house was dressed up with elaborate bargeboards, elaborate bracketed hoods over windows, spiky trim, and chimneys elaborated with corbelled tops. It seems unlikely that the house was architect designed since that information would have been well publicized over the past century. It is more likely that the house was built by one or more of the many talented carpenters who poured into Bay View following the establishment of the Milwaukee Iron Company's great rolling mill complex. We will never know whether the Gothic Revival just an attractive form for the Brintons or if they chose it out of associations connected to their deep religious conviction.

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IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Beulah Brinton House at 2590 and 2594-2598 S. Superior Street be given interim historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Structure as a result of its fulfillment of criteria of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 308-81(2)(e) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

- e-3. Is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City of Milwaukee.

Rationale: Beulah Brinton remains the first lady of Bay View. Her tireless service to several generations of community residents included education and medical care as well as instruction in sewing, childcare, cooking and reading, all done in her home on S. Superior Street. She mobilized neighbors to assist the survivors of the 1871 Chicago fire, helped her local church and played piano for the residents so that they could enjoy some culture and recreation. Beulah Brinton even introduced the new game of tennis to the community with a court set up in her side yard. Her personal library became the nucleus of Bay View's first lending library. Her efforts brought culture, education and needed skills as well as an identity to a burgeoning factory town that later became its own village and then became part of the City of Milwaukee.

- e-5. Its embodiment of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

Rationale: The Beulah Brinton is Milwaukee's best and most intact remaining residential example of the Gothic Revival. The house retains all the hallmarks of the style including its ornamental bargeboard, decorative hoods above windows and spiky, sawn ornament that literally drips from the house.

- e-9. Its unique location as a singular physical characteristic which represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city of Milwaukee.

Rationale: Sited at a prominent corner at the intersection of S. Superior Street and E. Pryor Avenue, the Beulah Brinton House is one of the most visible residences in Bay View. The side yard allows full appreciation of the house's style and character and gives it an estate like quality that is missing from other properties in the Bay View neighborhood.

X. PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or the restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

A. Roofs

Retain the roof shape. Skylights or dormers are discouraged but may be added to roof surfaces if they are not visible from the street or public right of way. The existing skylight at the rear one-story wing may be retained. Avoid making changes to the roof shape which would alter the building height, roofline or pitch. If replacement is necessary, duplicate the appearance of the original roofing as closely as possible. Locate mechanical systems and vents on portions of the roof not visible from the public right of way and paint them out to minimize impact. Retain ornamental ridge caps when re-roofing. Retain existing chimneys.

B. Materials

1. Masonry

- a. Unpainted brick, terra cotta, or stone should not be painted or covered. Avoid painting or covering natural terra cotta or stone. This is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date.
- b. Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. See the masonry chapters in the books, As Good As New or Good For Business for explanations on why the use of a proper mortar mix is crucial to making lasting repairs that will not contribute to new deterioration of the masonry. Replaced mortar joints should be tooled to match the style of the original. Avoid using mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed.
- c. Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting or high pressure water blasting or the use of other abrasive materials on limestone, terra cotta, or cream brick surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the

use of acid on limestone. Work should be done by experienced individuals.

- d. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed.

2. Wood/Metal

- a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance such as the front porch, three-sided bay, bargeboard trim, bracketed window hoods, smaller window hoods, and the saw tooth trim at the hoods and bay window.
- b. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering architectural features with new materials that do not duplicate the appearance of the original materials. Covering wood with aluminum or vinyl is not permitted.

C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain the existing configuration of panes, sash, surrounds and sills, except as necessary to restore to the original condition. Avoid making additional openings or changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash. Use storm windows or protective glazing which have glazing configurations similar to the prime windows and which obscure the prime windows as little as possible.
2. Respect the building's stylistic period. If the replacement of doors or window sash is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design and material of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements. Avoid the filling-in or covering of openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block. Avoid using modern style window units, such as horizontal sliding sash or casements, in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building. Any original windows should be retained and repaired if at all possible. Vinyl or metal clad prime window units are not permitted. Glass block basement windows are not permitted, except on elevations where they will not be visible from the street.

3. Steel bar security doors and window guards are generally not allowed. If permitted, the doors or grates shall be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible.

D. Trim and Ornamentation

There should be no changes to the existing trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Replacement features shall match the original member in scale, design, color and appearance. Given the level of detailing on the building, the intricate saw tooth trim, brackets with large pendants, bargeboard trim, etc., it is recommended that existing trim be repaired with epoxies or consolidants or by inserting matching species of wood rather than entirely removed and replicated.

E. Additions

No additions will be permitted on the west (front) or south elevations, as this would destroy the character defining features of the building. Any other addition requires the approval of the Commission. Ideally an addition should either compliment or have a neutral effect upon the historic character of the building. Approval shall be based upon the addition's design compatibility with the building in terms of window size and placement, building height, roof configuration, scale, design, color, and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principal elevations or is visible from the public right of way. Additions must be smaller than the house and not obscure the historic house.

F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

The installation of any permanent exterior sign or light fixture shall require the approval of the Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign or light with the historic and architectural character of the building. Plastic internally illuminated box signs are not permitted.

G. Site Features

New plant materials, paving, fencing, or accessory structures shall be compatible with the historic architectural character of the building if visible from the public right of way.

H. Guidelines for New Construction

It is important that new construction be designed to be as sympathetic as possible with the character of the structure. No principal dwelling shall be constructed on the side yard, otherwise known as 2594-2598 S. Superior Street. This parcel played a significant roll in the history of the community and served as a recreational area and gathering spot for residents of the

Bay View community. It is important for the interpretation of the property as it functioned during Beulah Brinton's lifetime. This section does allow for the recreation of the original tennis court on the site or the construction of a secondary outbuilding such as a shed, summer house, and the like, located at the rear or east end of the grounds, near the alley. The garage behind 2590 S. Superior Street was built in 1983 and has no architectural or historic significance. It may be removed and replaced with a new accessory structure.

1. Siting

New construction must respect the historic siting of the building. It should be accomplished so as to maintain the appearance of the building from the street as a freestanding structure.

2. Scale

Overall building height and bulk, the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof, and individual building components, such as overhangs and fenestration that are in close proximity to a historic building must be compatible to and sympathetic with the design of the commercial building.

3. Form

The massing of the new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the building as a freestanding structure. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and receded from the main block should express the same continuity established by the historic building if they are in close proximity to it.

4. Materials

The building materials which are visible from the public right-of-way and in close proximity to the building should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials used on the building. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

- I. Guidelines for Demolition

Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The following guidelines, with those found in subsection 9(h) of the ordinance, shall be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

1. Condition

Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety and is beyond hope of repair.

2. Importance

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.

3. Location

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.

4. Potential for Restoration

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

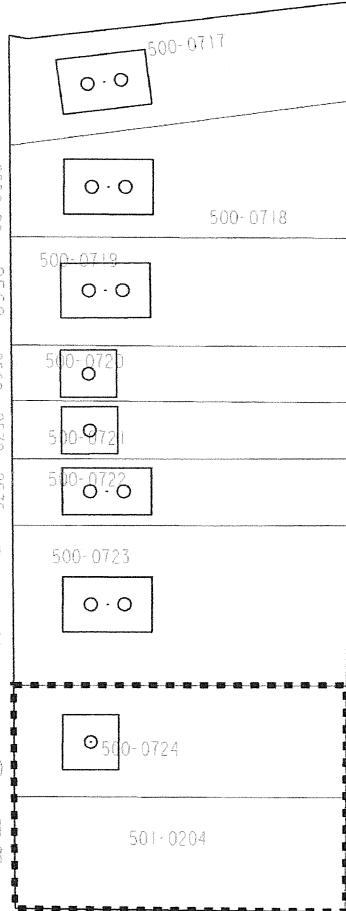
5. Additions

Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.

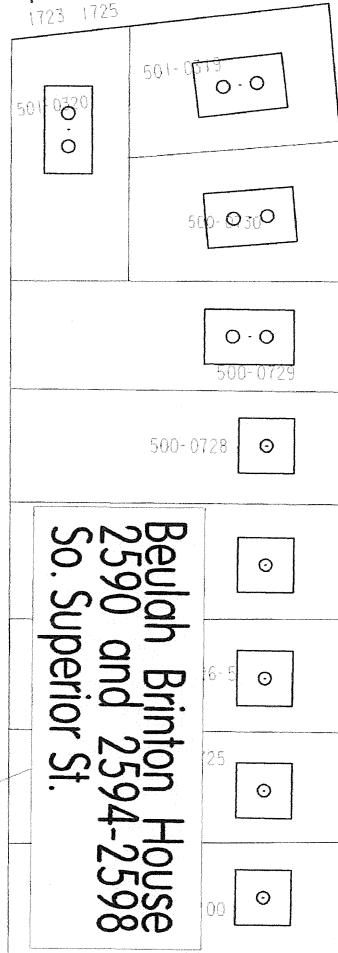
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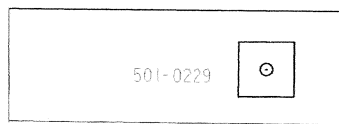
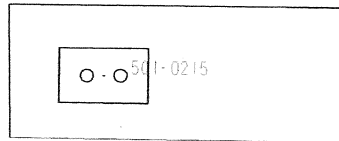
**Beulah Brinton House
2590 and 2594-2598
So. Superior St.**

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Beulah Brinton of Bay View

By Daisy Estes Kursch – great-granddaughter of Beulah Brinton (1987)

A pioneer of Bay View, Beulah Brinton left her mark on the community with her compassion and humanitarianism and was the 1987 inductee into the Halls of History Museum at Forest Home Cemetery.

She had a free spirit and strong notions about duties to her fellow men, and she carried them out. She was determined and dauntless. It seems that everyone who knew her, admired and loved her for it. I did. She was my great-grandmother.

When I was nine, Beulah Brinton came to live with us. My mother, father, brother, and I occupied the old homestead that she and her husband Warren built in 1870 at 370 Superior (now 2590 South Superior and designated by the Bay View Historical Society as its first historic landmark in 1983). Grandma was living in Chicago, keeping house for her son Warren, but she suffered a slight stroke, and he brought her home to be with us. The year was 1926.

Dressed in black, she seemed rather tall and fragile. "you'd think I was an old woman," was her caustic comment as she crossed the threshold. She was ninety years young and hated to give up her independence. From that moment on until her death two and a half years later, our lives changed. Everything revolved around Grandma Brinton. Like a magnet, she drew us to her. Even at nine, I felt the power of her personality and religious faith.

People came in droves to welcome Grandma home. Our house was filled with laughter and memories. One couple from Michigan said Grandma had been the only woman with any medical knowledge in their small town. Her kind, soothing hands and prayers had healed the sick. She had been midwife, doctor, and minister to them.

I looked at her veined hands that were shriveled and thin. They appeared to rest comfortably in the lap of her challis dress as she rocked in her old maple rocker. But according to mother, they had also known hard work in the hills of upstate Jay, New York, where she was born on December 12, 1836 and given the name of Bulah Tobey. (The spelling of her name was changed later to Beulah due to popular usage.)

About her childhood, Grandma was once quoted by a reporter for the Milwaukee journal (August 1924) as saying, "In those days people were interested mostly in hard work and making money. They had to be. They didn't have time to devote to humanity, or to getting acquainted with their fellowman and learning to love the beautiful spirit that lies beneath the flesh. My childhood was not like yours, nor

the kind of childhood I would have chosen. I was born in a log cabin and spent much of my early life looking forward to the time when my spirit might be free.”

It was after she met and married Warren Brinton that her dream was realized. Warren was born August 12, 1825 in Salisbury, Connecticut. He was a kind, gentle man with a warm smile hidden under his beard. They were married in Westport, New York on November 27, 1854.

One way to trace their frequent moves to various towns were Warren found work is to know the birthplaces of their children. They were recorded in the family Bible. Their first child, Addie, was born June 24, 1856 in Pittsford, Vermont. After moving to Pilot Knob, Missouri, the Brintons were blessed with another little, Emily, who was to be my grandmother. She arrived on February 4, 1861. At this time they lived in a little dirt-floored cabin, and Grandma kept a garden. Mother told me her hands had known the roughness of the rocky Missouri soil; but when I studied them, they seemed soft, smooth, and comforting, and showed no sign of hard work and blisters.

Better offers and new jobs kept the Brintons on the move. Sometime in 1862 they moved to Wyandotte, Michigan. There another daughter, Beulah, arrived on March 4, 1864, and a son, Warren Dillon, on February 20, 1868. Wyandotte was the seat of the Eureka Iron Works. The company, situated twelve miles from Detroit, was owned by Grandma's cousin, Captain Eber Brock Ward, who lived in Detroit. It is possible that Warren Brinton was employed at Eureka, for it was Ward who instigated their next move which was to Milwaukee, where Warren became superintendent of the rolling mills in Ward's Milwaukee Iron Works in Bay View.

Although the Brintons were well-established in Bay View in 1876, their last child, Daisy, was born that year on August 16 in Leland, Michigan, probably while Grandma was visiting relatives. Of their five children, Addie and Beulah died very young; Emily, Warren and Daisy lived to maturity.

Grandma's first cousin, Captain Eber Brock Ward, not only played an important role in the Bay View community but in the Brinton family as well. He was an industrialist and philanthropist and the wealthiest man in the Midwest of his time. When Ward decided to build on of his steel rolling mills in Bay View, he offered Warren Brinton not only a job but also land on which he could build the family home.

The mill land was purchased from John Ogden in 1866, and Ward acquired other property nearby on which to build houses for the skilled workers he had imported from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The Italian population was to come later.

By 1870 the fiery blast furnaces were lighting up the evening skies along Lake Michigan. The pulsating flames formed the heart of Bay View. That year Beulah and Warren moved into the colonial-styled home they built on the lots Ward had deeded to them. Within easy walking distance of the mill, it stood tall and impressive with its white pillared porch.

Nearby were the cottages built for the workers, puddlers who were skilled in converting or puddling pig iron into wrought iron. Many of these people brought wives and children when they emigrated from Europe. They were lonely and homesick. There was a need for education, medical care, and recreation. For some there was a language barrier. It wasn't long before Grandma Brinton noted this and decided to do something about it. Making the rounds from door to door, she invited the woman and children to come to her home. She became a familiar figure, a young matron in her thirties, with snapping black eyes, long black hair parted in the middle, and a strong commanding voice. The settlers did as they were bidden and apparently never regretted it. This became clear to me later when those who were still in Bay View, or those who returned to visit, filed into our parlor to greet her and show their gratitude.

Grandma taught them how to cook, to sew, to speak the language, and to care for their babies. Some of the babies she delivered. In her yard, lined with apple trees, she marked off a tennis court and taught the young people to play. Tennis had been introduced in the United States in 1874 and was still new to the City of Milwaukee. Rackets were kept in a box on the back porch. On summer evenings Grandma played the piano while couples danced. Grandma was a staunch champion of youth and their pleasures. She was quoted in the Milwaukee Journal as believing in encouraging pleasures such as theatre attendance and dancing "even in the days when the theatre was considered a den of iniquity and dancing was called the work of the devil."

At the age on ninety-one she remarked to another reporter, "The young folks are a better lot than their parents or their grandparents if you ask me."

Guests were always welcome; Grandma's doors were never locked. On hot, summer days they were invited inside while she read to them. Everyone looked forward to this treat, for there were no books in their homes, no library nearby. One of the visitors who came after Grandma moved in to live with us recalled, "Sometimes as she read to us, she would look up from the page to tell about the wonderful things she believed would come about in the world of science in our lifetime. We thought of these as fairy tales, but they all happened as she had prophesied. She was a century ahead of her time." (Milwaukee Journal, August 1924.)

Some former mill workers who entered smiling and grateful remembered that Grandma furnished the first library for them, stocking the mill office with her own collection of books. On one occasion when her cousin Ward visited his mill,

Grandma apprised him of her need for more books. The lake captain, a shrewd bargainer told Grandma that if she could raise a certain sum, he would double it. It didn't take long for this determined woman to raise her share. In 1874 her parlor became the first public library in Bay View. The three hundred volumes were in circulation for several years; but as they grew in number it became necessary to transfer them in 1880 to the Milwaukee Library. Then because of duplication, they were shipped back to the site of the present Dover Street School at 619 East Dover Street in Bay View. This building then became the first branch of the Milwaukee Public Library and the first neighborhood library in the city. In June of 1914 they were moved again to the new Llewellyn Library at 907 East Russell Avenue.

Although she called it being neighborly," Grandma's work was identical to what was offered later in the settlement houses. It was the forerunner of the University Settlement in New York City founded in 1887 and Hull House, which opened in Chicago in 1889.

Old friends and new friends kept coming, and with each visitor there was always a story to tell. One former neighbor described a fire that had badly damaged a neighborhood flat rented by a family named Tracy. When that happened, around 1905, Grandma was wintering in Chicago. She wrote to the Tracys and urged them to move into her home until their place could be restored. They did. While there, their mischievous little son Spencer (who was born in Milwaukee on April 5, 1900) turned all of Grandma's pictures to the walls and played havoc with the furniture. I also learned that Spencer Tracy, later to become my screen idol, had been assigned to the bedroom I eventually occupied.

Some of the stories they told resembled small miracles. One time, an old friend related, Grandma gathered the children of Bay View, declaring it was time the community had a park for them to play in. She commanded them to march to the land she had selected. Like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, she strode down the street, children skipping and singing behind her. When they reached the site, they planted a flag and "by faith" took the land from the city as a park. Miraculously, soon after, the City of Milwaukee purchased 15.82 acres and named it the 17th Ward Park. A year later it was renamed South Shore Park. It officially opened in 1910 and several expansions followed.

Another time, explained a visitor, Grandma attended a Ladies Aid meeting at the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church located at 2772 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (now named Bay View United Methodist Church.) The ladies were discussing a thread-worn carpet on the church aisle. There was no money with which to buy a new one. Grandma, who had been silent, suddenly arose and told the ladies to come with her. She led them into the church and announced, "We are going to tread upon the new carpet 'by faith.'" Up and down the aisle she trod, the women catching her happy spirit. They dispersed filled with a strange satisfaction. From everywhere the money miraculously rolled in. In a few months the new carpet

was laid. (In 1984 this same church was designated by the Bay View Historical Society as the second historical landmark of Bay View.)

Grandma Brinton believed in marches and miracles. She was a Methodist by birth but had gleaned what she felt was the best from all religions and developed one of her own. It was joyous, not sanctimonious or solemn.

She was known for her religious verse. But most of her songs and poems also had a philosophical twist. One *Milwaukee Journal* reporter's comment was, "Like Ruskin, she pictured the working man as the hope of the world, and living as she did close to the steel mills, she saw him as a mill worker." Grandma was also the author of two published novels about the Civil War that carried mystical religious themes, *Man Is Love* (Lippincott and Co., 1873) and *Behold The Woman* (Bay View Herald Publishing Co., 1887). Besides this, for a short time, she served as editor of the Bay View Herald.

Some of her visitors were men who remembered working for Grandpa Brinton, who was a stocky man with a dark beard and a generous smile. Mother told me he died suddenly of a heart attack in 1895 while resting in his favorite arm chair. After his death Grandma remained in their home but later began to spend the winter months in Chicago with her bachelor son. Warren graduated with honors from Ralston University and was employed by the International Harvester Company. Later he was to be promoted to assistant comptroller of the Chicago office. Her younger daughter Daisy attended Milwaukee-Downer College, became a writer, musician, and teacher, married William Worchester, and moved to Washington, D.C. In 1902, at the age of twenty-six, she came home for a visit. She died there of walking typhoid. Emily, who graduated from Whitewater Normal School, was a teacher, librarian, post-mistress, and, of course, my grandmother. She married Albert Pickard and raised a family. In 1907 her daughter Mabel Pickard eloped to Waukegan with Ira Ray Estes, grandson of Elijah and Zebiah Estes, Bay View pioneers. When their secret marriage was discovered, it was Grandma Brinton who forgave them, told them, "You two young people should be together," and let them make the Brinton home their own. They were my parents. And that is where my brother Albert and I grew up.

By the time Grandma began to close her home on Superior Street for the winter months to move to Chicago, the desperate needs of the mill workers' families had been met. Social centers were springing up all over the country. By 1924 there were eleven in Milwaukee alone. That year the recreation department of the public schools decided to turn an old fire barn on St. Clair Street into their twelfth social center. It was situated conveniently in the midst of the foreign settlement near the mills. The apparatus room became a gymnasium and auditorium. Rooms for teaching household arts, cooking, washing, and the care of infants were provided on the second floor. Horse stalls became marble showers.

The people of the community named the center. Headed by the director, Henry H. Otjen, a Bay View attorney, they asked that it be called Beulah Brinton after their benefactor.

Grandma Brinton came from Chicago to attend the opening ceremony and to present an American flag. At eighty-nine he spoke in a clear voice, her black eyes still sparkling, her white hair still parted in the middle and worn in a neat bun in back. Her good friend, Dorothy Enderis, then head of the recreation department, told of many wonderful things Grandma had accomplished, such as establishing a newsboys' home in Detroit and organizing the women in Bay View after the Chicago Fire of 1871 to bake and cook and collect clothes. Theirs had been the first shipment to arrive to that destitute city.

Others spoke of Grandma's loyalty to the Methodist church and how she took the minister's place when he was absent. One said, "She could preach a sermon as well as she could bake a pie."

Someone commented on having attended Grandma's classes. "Today when I hear of some supposedly new point of view with relation to thought transference or the conscious and subconscious mind, I realize that Mrs. Brinton had told us about it years ago. When I was a girl, her philosophy seemed remote and vague. Today I know that she simply was advanced."

Everyone agreed that Grandma Brinton believed the solvent for the ills of creation to be love. Love and goodness and beauty were her constant themes. I was there for the ceremony. I remember feeling proud when the audience applauded and applauded.

Besides the Social Center, which was torn down years later and replaced in 1981 with the new beautiful Beulah Brinton Community Center at 2555 South Bay Street, there were other namesakes, Beulah Avenue (now South Shore Drive) and the Beulah Brinton Playground on Wentworth Avenue (now gone). Her dedication to the community she loved was memorialized in these landmarks in Bay View. The work of this lady with a social conscience and a generous heart has not been forgotten by the citizens of the area.

It was Grandma who first taught me to enjoy writing. At her bedside, while mother unpinned and combed her long white hair, she and I would compose verses to hymns such as "Jesus Loves Me"

Grandma was becoming blind. Sometimes we would sit on the swing on the front porch, rocking gently as I read to her. The selections were often from the Christian Science Journal or the teaching Baha'u'llah. Grandma never complained about my stumbling sentences, or mispronounced words. Sometimes we just talked; most of the time, she listened.

My playmates loved to visit Grandma. Once we gathered for a lively discussion of what we would like to be when we grew up. Some said "a movie star," "and opera star," "a cow girl." When she finally got to me, I said, "an ordinary woman like my mother," and Grandma smiled a pleased smile.

On Sunday evenings, we gathered in the parlor, family, neighbors, and other friends for prayer meetings. After songs and prayers, Grandma recited whole chapters from the Bible. At the end as we sang "God Be With You 'till We Meet Again," we sent a silent blessing to the world. Grandma believed if enough people would pray for peace simultaneously, our prayers would be answered. It was the unity of minds theme which would bring about the unity of peoples. A letter from her friend, Congressman Victor Berger in 1924 read, "If there were only enough Mrs. Brintons there surely would be 'Peace on Earth Good Will To Men.'"

One noon we were seated around our carved oak kitchen table. Grandma was drinking coffee. The amber beads around her neck had gathered the sunlight and appeared warm inside. Suddenly Grandma's left arm dropped, the cup fell from her hand and crashed on the floor. For the first time I saw Grandma look frightened. "What have I done?" she said. Her mouth was slanty. I sat frozen.

Mother reached across the table and tugged at Grandma's left arm. It swung back limp and lifeless. She cried, "Grandma, don't forget your faith"

Grandma stopped trembling. The fingers of her left hand began to curl inwards. The wrist bent up. The arm moved below her elbow. Little by little through the sheer faith of Grandma Brinton, the whole left arm began to raise. Up it went until it stood straight as a die, fingers pointing to heaven. Grandma said, "By faith, I lift up my arm to God." Then it fell back to her side useless. I knew I had just witnessed one of Grandma's little miracles.

It was 1928. Grandma died a few months later in the bed set up for her in our dining room. It was evening. Everyone was gathered around her bed except me. It was late and I had been sent upstairs. I lay there lonely and frightened. Tears kept running down my cheeks. I loved her so.

It was a long time before I finally fell asleep. And when I awoke the house was silent. From then on there was an emptiness that never entirely went away. But I am so grateful for those precious moments I shared with my great-grandmother Beulah Brinton.