
Isabella Clarrisa McKay Town Hunter (1813-1908)

Southeast Wisconsin Territory was a hotbed of social reform discussions during this time, and Isabella Hunter heard about the newly forming Wisconsin Phalanx. Since divorced women were allowed in the Phalanx, Hunter believed this group would offer a good way of life for her and her two boys.

- Early Phalanx records show she was the first unmarried woman to be admitted.
- Isabella Hunter came with other families from Milwaukee by ox-team. It took them a week.
- Isabella was quickly assigned as manager of the culinary department.
- Phalanx members had to raise all their own food because Ceresco was so isolated and there were times dinner consisted of a bowl of onions and sage tea.
- Isabella later married Phalanx member Nathan Hunter (1820-1894) in 1845, and their daughter Arabella Hunter Maxwell (1847-1914) was the first baby girl born in Ceresco.
- By 1848 the Hunters built and moved to their own home south of the Phalanx in the vicinity of what is now the Hillside Terrace Apartments. After Nathan's death Hunter moved in with her daughter who lived on Watson Street.

*"A lovelier sight I never saw."
-Isabella, upon arrival in the valley*



*Years later, Margaret Maxwell Lay,
Isabella's Great Granddaughter, reminisced that Isabella's
years at Ceresco were "the happiest days of her life."*