

Miss Eleanor Blanche Rippetoe

Update: Blanche's photo has gone home to her family in the US!

"With love and best wishes, Blanche Rippetoe"



This photo was found in Germany, but it looks like an American RPPC written in English. The dedication on it, handwritten in ink, has almost faded, but it's still readable enough to identify the sitter as Blanche Rippetoe.



So how come this photo ended up in Germany? I might have a theory.

I looked through Ancestry and MyHeritage and found quite a few American family tree links for one Eleanor Blanche Rippetoe, born on November 21st, 1889 in Caldwell, Tennessee. In the 1910 Census she and her family were living in Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana.

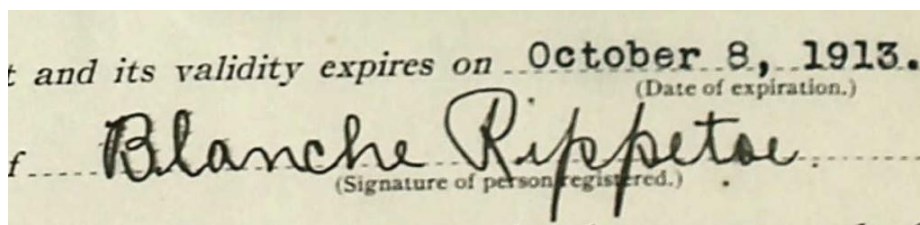
I also found a 23-year-old Blanche Rippetoe on a passenger list of "S.S.Patricia" sailing from Hamburg to the United States in June 1913 (Click [HERE](#)). The destination of that Blanche was also Terre Haute in Indiana, so it is safe to assume that this is the same Blanche as in the several family trees I found. Moreover, I found a Certificate of Registration of an American citizen by the American Consul-General (Click [HERE](#)) in Berlin from October 1912 for that same Blanche Rippetoe. Blanche was staying in Berlin for the purpose of study and resided in Pragerplatz 4 in Berlin. Her visa was due to expire a year later in October 1913.

Interestingly, the Greencastle Herald from Putnam County finds it important to note in the society section of the newspaper on July 24th, 1912, that Blanche Rippetoe was going to make the trip to Berlin to study music together with Maybelle Wright, resident of Greencastle (Click [HERE](#)). Maybelle is also listed on the same passenger list of "S.S.Patricia" as Blanche, both headed to Terre Haute, Indiana, as final destination.



Miss Blanche Rippetoe of Hancock street will leave Wednesday for Greencastle where she will spend a few days visiting Miss Maybelle Wright. Miss Rippetoe will leave about the middle of September for Berlin where she will spend the year studying music. Miss Rippetoe and Miss Wright are planning to make the trip together.—Terre Haute Tribune.

Perhaps that is the link to why this photo was found in Germany? Perhaps she made friends during her study year and sent this RPPC upon her return to the States. The styling of the photographed Blanche is fittingly from around 1913, too. And I think the signature on the Certificate of Registration is identical to that on the photo:



and its validity expires on October 8, 1913.
(Date of expiration.)
f Blanche Rippetoe
(Signature of person registered.)

According to the various Ancestry and MyHeritage family trees that she is linked with, she had 9 siblings and her father William was a Minister of the Gospel in Shelbyville, Bedford, Tennessee.

In the Census of 1910 Blanche was living with her parents and some of her siblings in Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana, and is listed as a music teacher. In the 1920 Census, she is living with her parents and is listed as a music teacher for a private family; according to the 1930 Census she is

renting a room at 1701 North 9th Street and is listed as a music teacher working at her own studio. This is the house as it stands today in that same address:



1701 N 9th St
Terre Haute, IN 47804

Contact For Estimate

Click on [Source](#)

Blanche passed away in 1975 at the age of 85 of heart failure (Click [HERE](#) for her death certificate on Ancestry). She was buried on the Highland Lawn Cemetery in Terre Haute.

This short article from the Society section of the Daily Tribune, Terre Haute, Vigo County, from December 21st, 1915, describes how Blanche and her sister Kate surprised their father on his 75th birthday with a concert at their home (Click [HERE](#) for the article):

Terre Haute Tribune. (Terre Haute, Ind.), 1915-12-21, [p].

Misses Blanche and Kate Rippetoe, of North Eighth street, planned a pleasant surprise for Monday evening in celebration of the 75th birth anniversary of their father, Rev. W. B. Rippetoe. The house was beautifully decorated in flowers, holly and other Christmas emblems. During the first part of the evening a musical program was given by Miss Catherine Brewer, who played a number of violin selections; Mrs. Manford C. Wright, who sang, and Miss Blanche Rippetoe, who accompanied them and also gave a number of solos. The invited guests included the Methodist ministers of the city and their wives and an added surprise to Rev. Rippetoe was the presentation of a handsome easy chair by the ministers. Rev. Manford Wright presented the gift and Rev. T. J. Everett read a clever poem of his own authorship written for the occasion and dedicated to Mr. Rippetoe. At the close of the evening dainty refreshments were served consisting of ices and cakes in the colors of pink and white. The ice cream was molded in pink and white striped bricks and the cakes were iced in white and topped with the number "75" in pink. Little Miss Miriam Monger and Miss Miriam Harper assisted in the serving. Those present were Rev. and Mrs. A. E. Monger, Rev. and Mrs. I. B. Harper, Rev. and Mrs. Ewing, Rev. and Mrs. Manford Wright, Rev. L. S. Smith, Rev. and Mrs. Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Will House, Dr. and Mrs. Hickman, Rev. and Mrs. T. J. Everett, Rev. and Mrs. J. P. Shagley, Rev. Israel Hatton of Rose-dale, and Rev. Hargrave.

There are several newspaper articles that mention her but unfortunately I cannot access them due to subscription restrictions. Perhaps they would give more insight into the life she led and the lives of her many students she touched as a teacher.

Blanche remained unmarried, we don't know if by choice or because society demanded women to choose between family and career at the time. She dedicated her life to music, playing it and teaching it. She is mentioned several times in Tom Roznowski's book "An American Hometown: Terre Haute, Indiana, 1927" as musical inspiration of Terre Haute. I wish we could hear her play the piano one more time...

Photos Without Families, originally shared on www.photoswithoutfamilies.blog