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Etta Mae Allison.

Pioneers of Coles County Illinois.
(1942)

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Pioneers of Coles County ILLINOIS

Published January, 1942

Written by Etta Mae Allison

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"PIONEERS OF COLES COUNTY"

PART I.

When David Dryden started to Illinois from Farmington, Bedford County, Tennessee, he put my grandmother, Hannah Eveline Dryden on one of the horses, not hitched to the covered wagon, to help drive the cattle they were bringing to a new and strange country they had never seen before.

This was June 10, 1834 and when my grandmother was 98 years old, she told the story of their journey northward as follows:

"Ninety-eight years ago my folks and myself lived in Bedford County, Tennessee, near a small town called Farmington which consisted of a few houses, a small store, saddler's shop and my father had a blacksmith's shop.

"Farmington was situated on a small branch fed by a monstrous spring. The spring was 20 feet across and was on a slope. The water boiled up continually in the middle and poured over the side making a stream of water large enough to run a water mill for grinding grain one-half mile below the spring. The water from this spring was very cold and every one in the village went there to get drinking water.

"We lived eight miles from Shelbyville, Tenn., and 18 miles from Nashville, the capital, but I was never in either place for children stayed at home then instead of going with their elders as they do now. We had no stores to go to and buy everything we wanted as we do now. Almost everything was hand made, such as plows, shears, nails, pots, pans, harness, saddles, in fact a hardware store wasn't thought of and there wasn't much money in the country those days.

I H

"I was born June 7, 1822, and in 1827 we moved to a small farm on the banks of a creek called Sugar Creek. My father built a mill and blacksmith's shop and done all the blacksmithing for the people for miles around.

"When I was old enough I was sent to school and went until I was 12 years old. My first teacher was Amos Balch who served in the Revolutionary War.

"In school we had no seats or desks—only rude boards with pegs driven in them which served as seats and desks both.

"After my father got his shop fixed up, my younger brother Bill was called 'Billy Nail, the Shoe Toter' because he carried nails and shoes for my father to shoe horses.

"The country was beautiful around Sugar Creek. Trees and bushes grew everywhere. Wolves were plentiful and it was almost daily we saw deer running away through the trees.

"We children never were remembered with presents at Christmas, but if it snowed we thought it the best present of all for it very, very seldom ever snowed. We would often go down to the creek to play, taking the baby and setting it in the sand while we dug wells and waded in the water. If we got our clothes wet we got a good spanking when we returned to the house.

"When the great slave question arose, my father did not know what to do for he did not believe in owning slaves. Our closest neighbors owned slaves and sometimes my father would hire a negro boy to help with the work. Sometimes when the work was done this negro boy and my older brother, Nat, would build a huge bonfire in front of the house and with all of us sitting around this negro boy would tell ghost stories.

"Finally, land became so high and the slavery question so hot, my father decided to move to the new state of Illinois, where land could be entered for \$1.25 per acre.

"About a year after we began to start planning to go north, we broke up our home and began our long journey June 10, 1834. There were father, mother, four sisters, five brothers and myself. We had two teams of oxen, four horses and 40 head of cattle, our bedding and several cooking utensils. We came through Princeton, Ky., where there was a fine college.

"Our supply of food was getting low by the time we came to the Ohio river. We crossed the river at a place called Ford's Ferry, on a ferry boat. When we got across we caught some fish out of the river and cooked them on the bank. We started with a five-gallon jar of honey, but it was broken on the way.

"As we came on it got hotter and hotter but we saw more timber. The wolves howled more frequently. Finally, we came to Equality, a small town. A few miles this side of Equality we came to an old camp where salt had been made. Great kettles were lying around and one which was about 10 feet across was broken. For almost a mile around this old salt camp the timber had been cleared off and small trees and brush had grown up so thick a person could scarcely get through. My father had to cut a way for the wagon to pass through. It was so dense and dark in there that we lost two head of cattle and stayed over a whole day looking for them but had to go on without them.

"Several miles farther on we came to the open prairie. It was so hot and the flies swarmed so bad around the cattle that we stayed in the shade all day to let the cattle rest. At dusk we would move on and

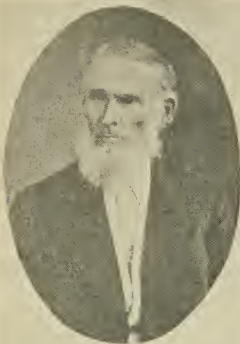
drive the cattle many miles while it was cool. We were all barefooted and the snakes were thick for the grass was thick and tall. We could hear the whippoorwills which scared me at first but I soon liked to hear them and would lie awake at night listening for them.

"After many hardships and much suffering from the heat, we came to a settlement called Paradise, near Etna in Coles County, Illinois, on July 8, 1834, lacking two days of being a month from the day we started, a distance of over 400 miles.

"From Paradise we traveled east to Muddy Point where we were neighbors of Tommy Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's father, and stayed with Billie Dryden and family who had come to Illinois in 1829. When Uncle Billie heard we were at Paradise he came to meet us riding a white horse.

"The following year, 1835, we moved three-fourths of a mile east of the village of Farmington, which was named for the village we left in Tennessee. My father built a brick house there in 1849. While we lived there we were again neighbors of the Lincoln's. I remember well one year we lived there. Abe's father had a watermelon patch and every evening my younger brother and sister carried water from their well. One evening they were coming slowly along the edge of the melon patch. First my brother would thump a melon and say "I'll bet this'n ripe," then my sister would say, "I'll bet this'n ripe," and just as she pulled it Tommy Lincoln came out. They were very much frightened at first but when he told them to take all they wanted they were so tickled they ran all the way home and always held Tommy Lincoln in high esteem.

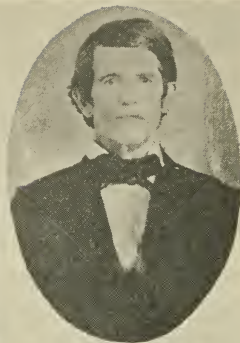
"When my father built the brick house there were only a few houses in Farmington and it was not



David Dryden



Mary Ellen Hughes



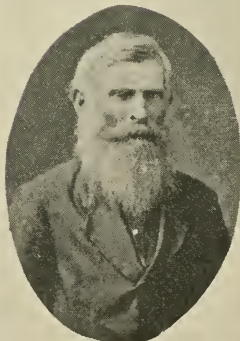
Joseph Allison



Louisa V. Ewing



W. J. Hughes



Jeff Adams

known by any name. My younger sister, Caroline, gave it the name of Farmington after Farmington, Tenn.

"Some years later a new house was built and a family lived there by the name of Hall. Mrs. Hall was a step-sister of Abraham Lincoln.

"My father owned a blacksmith's shop and Thomas Lincoln assisted him when more work came in than he could do himself.

"After Abe was elected president of the United States, before he went to Washington to live, Mrs. Hall and Sarah Bush Lincoln gave a dinner in his honor in this new house. Everybody who knew he was coming came to this house to see him. He was eager to speak to everyone and no one felt he had had such an honor and responsibility bestowed upon him."

The Dryden's were of English extraction being descended from Sir Richard Baxter.

David Dryden was born in Ireland in 1718, and came to America in 1740 immediately after his marriage to Barbara Berry. His wife's brother, James Berry, was killed at the battle of Horseshoe Bend during the Revolutionary War. Nathaniel Dryden, a brother of David Dryden, was killed at King's Mountain.

David and Barbara had eight children. The second son, Jonathan, was born in 1770 and he married Hannah Duff in 1793. To these were born 12 children, the eldest, David, born Sept. 25, 1793, in Washington County, Virginia.

David moved to Tennessee in 1808 or '09 and was married to Mary Appleby, Dec. 25, 1817. He served in the War of 1812.

To David and Mary were born 10 children, the oldest daughter, Hannah Eveline, born June 7, 1822.

Mary, his wife died Sept. 6, 1857.

at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Eliza Bovell, in Coles County, Illinois, only a few miles from Farmington, where she lived after coming from Tennessee.

On Nov. 18, 1859, he married Harriet Miner. In 1865 he moved to Madison, Wis., living near his sons, Nathaniel and William. In 1869 he moved to Charleston, Ill., living there until 1872 when he moved to Farmington where he died Jan. 16, 1879.

He was an elder in the Presbyterian church at Indian Creek for many years and served as justice of the peace. He was school treasurer at the time Thomas Lincoln bought his farm near Farmington which was a part of the school land and was paid for in installments. When the payments came due and Thomas Lincoln could not meet them, often Abe Lincoln would call on David Dryden and make arrangements for paying the amounts.

David Dryden was a man thoroughly respected for his sterling integrity and of decided positive opinions. His interest in public affairs never waned and at the time of his death he was a wide reader.

These characteristics were very noticeable to the fourth generation. My grandmother, Hannah Evelyn Dryden lived to be over 101 years old. When far in her 90's I remember visiting her to find her with three volumes of "A History of the Jews," reading them carefully.

She was married to Andrew Henry Allison, Dec. 30, 1845. To them were born eight children, the oldest, Mary Ann, living almost 91 years. My father, Henry Cathy, was born Aug. 27, 1860, and is still living.

My grandfather died in November, 1864, at the close of the Civil War. It took an unusual woman to shoulder the responsibility of raising eight children, working in

the field in the daytime and knitting, patching, baking corn pone on the fireplace at night. She never borrowed trouble and calmly lived each day as it came. She never hurried through her meals, ate slowly and was always careful to cook her food well—no “raw” biscuits were served at her table. Her oldest son, Tom, still owns and lives on the farm that grandfather bought from the government when he married in 1845.

This land was known as “Goose Nest Prairie” and was covered with ponds where the wild geese nested in the spring. My father helped drain those ponds by digging ditches and putting in slabs of wood to hold the dirt and let the water run off. Later tile was put in which still serves to drain the land.

Two or three years after David Dryden's death friends and relatives began holding a reunion on the Saturday nearest Sept. 25, his birthday. They met at Indian, Muddy Point and Long Point churches but finally decided on Lower Muddy church where shade and water were plentiful. For over 40 years this gathering was known all over the country. Relatives came from Indianapolis, Ind., Chicago, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Arizona, Arkansas and many other parts. Great kettles of coffee were made and long tables of food were the delight of our lives. Sometimes as many as 200 were served.

This church was located by the Clover Leaf or Nickel Plate railroad and we as children enjoyed seeing the engineer and fireman wave when the trains went by and we were eating all that food, feeling sure they wanted some too, for they usually blew the whistle long and loud.

After the food was gathered up and put away in boxes, baskets and tubs everyone went into the church

for the program. Hymns were sung, a report read of all the marriages, births and deaths since the last meeting. Talks were made by those from a distance or some one prominent in the community. My uncle, W. D. Allison, of Indianapolis, Ind., would play the old church organ and sing. His songs were beautiful and can never be forgotten, such as “My Mother Told Me So,” “If the Waters Could Speak as They Flow Along,” and “The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane.”

On Aug. 14, 1849, Jonathan Thomas Dryden, son of David Dryden, died of cholera at Mineral Point, Wis., after a few hours sickness. He died at the age of 19 years, 9 months, 7 days. Geo. B. Balch and Billy Scott were with him and traveled with the body at night when brought home for burial. Mr. Balch wrote the following poem about the incident:

“Ho, guardian angel pray draw night
Thy all prevailing powers to lend,
While I in notes of sorrow sing
The memory of a departed friend.

He was kind and generous in heart,
A wrong he scorned to do—
Was honest, virtuous and sincere,
Was also just and true.

But now he's left this wicked earth
And gone to worlds afar,
We hope the crown upon his head
Shines like the morning star.

Oh! sad and lonely was the scene
Around his dying bier,
But one other friend and I were
there
To shed a mournful tear.

No weeping brother round him stood
No sister smoothed his dying bed,
No father, no! Nor mother there,
To cry, “Alas, my son is dead.”

When David Dryden's oldest son, Nathaniel, moved to Wisconsin he saw his children settle a new state

for the second son, William, moved there too. Nathaniel married Emma Balch in Coles County, Illinois. They settled near Mt. Horeb, Wis., in 1845 and on Sept. 29, 1861, his daughter, Elizabeth Ann, married James Forsyth.

The Forsyths lived in Illinois, Iowa and finally settled in New Helena, Custer county, Neb., in 1874, where seven children were raised to manhood and womanhood. This was five years before David Dryden died.

Two of these children were educated for the ministry and the following is the memorial address by Bishop Francis J. McConnell at the annual meeting of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, Syracuse, N. Y.:

"David Dryden Forsyth was born in Wisconsin in 1864. About 1868 the family moved near Mason City, Ia. Moving again four years later about 20 miles north of Broken Bow, Neb.

Here David Forsyth lived until he went to the University of Nebraska, where he graduated in the Class of 1889. Among his classmates were Dean Roscoe Pound and Prof. Holmes.

During his senior year he was taken desperately ill with pneumonia, so ill that the doctor knelt by his bedside and promised the Lord to do all possible to persuade the young man to abandon the study of law and turn to the ministry if restoration of health were granted.

The prayer for recovery was fulfilled and Dr. Paine told David Forsyth of the promise at his bedside. His reply was "It seems to me you are very generous in disposing of other peoples lives," but after careful reflection he went to Garrett Bible Institute for two years and then joined the Northwest Nebraska Annual Conference.

In a notably brief period David Forsythe reached the foremost pulpit of his conference at Kearney, Neb., the home of his grandfather, Nathaniel Dryden. Later he served charges at Cheyenne, Wyo., Delta and Grand Junction, Colo.

The late Bishop Quayle did not boast much of his own administrative ability but he occasionally showed positive genius in appointment making. Holding the Colorado Conference in 1910, Bishop Quayle became convinced that all the Methodist work should be so arranged as to put it in one district. In the face of considerable protest he reshaped the district and put David Forsyth at the head of it.

To the objectors the Bishop said, with his inimitable drawl, that he had put on the district a man who could handle it as easily as a school-boy could make and throw a snowball. The years have proved the soundness of Bishop Quayle's judgment.

In the six years of his administration, the Denver district built up and turned over to Dr. Auman, his successor, the best co-ordinated, best unified, the most smoothly working city district that I have ever known. In those six years were revealed also the great abilities which Dr. Forsyth manifested from 1916 to 1926 as the corresponding Secretary of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension.

Prof. T. J. Turner of Harvard, has written a remarkable book on the "Significance of the Frontier in American History." Prof Turner points out that following the foundation of the Republic, the growing life of the young nation showed itself most uniquely in the conquest of the western wilderness and that all the more important policies of the U. S., both domestic and

foreign, for 100 years, take their distinctiveness from the activity and the thinking and the character of the frontiersman who was a new and peculiar type in the history of humanity.

Now for 15 years I have thought of David Forsyth as the establishment of the frontier spirit at its highest and best. Permit me in just a few words to hint at some of the experiences which make him in fact a man of the frontier.

As I have said above his earliest recollections were of their movement westward from Wisconsin to Iowa, then to Nebraska as a child in a frontiersman's family. It has been my privilege in these recent years to travel extensively with Dr. Forsyth. At rare moments he would tell enough of his early life to give swift but vivid glimpses of the old pioneer days—of plowing the prairie in his boyhood with a man walking ahead of the horses with a rifle cocked and ready for instant use—of the day in 1876, when, because of the Sioux uprising, the pioneers, the Forsyth's among them, traveled together 100 miles to Loup City to face the winter in a settlement too strong to be attacked; hostile scouts hanging in the flanks of the marching company—of the hundred mile journey to a doctor with the sick from widely scattered homesteads. I have heard him tell of being sent to hold a legal claim to land against the protests and threats of a notorious bad man, who had threatened to kill any Forsyth who insisted on defying the edict against the Forsyth claim. At night time the youthful David would see the bad man's dog nosing around the entrance of the Forsyth shack, the man himself not quite daring to venture through the doorless opening and thus make a target of himself.

I have also heard him tell of his

first appointment. Sent by the Bishop to a little church where preaching had been intermittent for years, he tried without avail to find a boarding place, when a gaunt, silent, giant of a man sought him out, took him to his house and kept him through the winter. The benefactor attended church every Sunday during his stay, always sat on the front seat and looked out absently through the window and across the plains. Some months after his pastorate closed there, David Forsyth learned that the man who had befriended him had shot and killed an uncle in a frontier quarrel years before, and presumably was thus working out an expiation of kindness to the nephew.

The position to which Dr. Forsyth was elected in 1916, I repeat, made demands upon the qualities developed on the frontier. At the 1916 conference the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension was reorganized throughout. The scale on which the Board worked and the multitudinous variety of its activities made the situation for the secretary unparalleled in our administration history. Moreover, the period of our national life was itself without parallel. The General Conference of 1916 closed just 11 months before our entry into the World War. The war brought unprecedented problems, with its distribution of industry and its redistribution of mass population into training camps and into wartime manufacturing centers.

Night after night, till far toward morning, Dr. Forsyth worked away on plans on which the past history of Home Missions and Church Extension could throw no light at all. Then came the Centenary, likewise creating new paths. Then the declining interest on the part of the church in the Centenary and World Service program, a decline for

which no individual was responsible, a decline coming in part out of disillusionment after the war, in part out of the moral lassitude which followed the psychological overstrain of the five years following 1917.

By the time the General Conference met in 1924, practically all the official heads of society responsible for the Centenary movement had passed out of official position or were working in other fields.

To Dr. Forsyth more than any other individual was left the task of salvaging the physical and spiritual results of this vast program inaugurated by the Centenary. The task called for inevitable patience, good humor and firmness. Churches in wealthy communities, abundantly able to take care of their own material needs, came clamoring, often angrily, asking for missionary funds to complete purely local enterprises and blaming him because the funds were not available, and yet in practically every case the complainant went away satisfied with the explanation of Dr. Forsyth.

After long intimacy with David Dryden Forsyth, who like Abraham Lincoln, lived through severe pioneer conditions. I never saw in him any trace of roughness or coarseness. He was at times frank to the point of brusqueness, but only in cases where such frankness was the part of kindness. He was fine by nature, and the pioneer lost nothing of its exquisite quality by the stern experiences through which he lived.

When the word came to the Bishop's meeting in Denver that David Dryden Forsyth had passed away, there came at once to my mind certain lines Edward Markham's poem on Lincoln, phrases as applicable to our fallen leader as to the great Lincoln himself:

"So came the captain with the mighty heart,

He held his place — held his long purpose like a growing tree . . .

Held on through praise and faltered not to blame—

When he went down, he fell as when a lordly cedar, full of boughs goes down, with a great shout upon the hills—

And leaves a lonesome place against the sky."

Thus we see the remote influence of a great grandfather, such as David Dryden upon the making of a great nation. David Dryden and his family to the third and fourth generation, represents only one of many, many families who have helped to make the United States of America.

PART II.

Joseph Allison was born in Mecklinburg County, North Carolina, Feb. 11, 1796 and died Aug. 20, 1862, in Coles County, Illinois, near the village of Farmington.

He married Margaret Ann Cathy, July 13, 1800 and she died Oct. 26, 1878, near Farmington, Coles County, Illinois.

In 1828 or '30 they left North Carolina and moved to Gibson County, Tennessee. Two children were born in North Carolina, three in Tennessee and two in Illinois.

My grandfather, Andrew Henry and his sister Sarah Caroline, were born in North Carolina, he having been born Oct. 19, 1823, and moved to Illinois from Gibson County, Tennessee in 1836. They settled on a farm near the Nickel Plate railroad between Lerna and Trilla near the Lower Muddy cemetery. After a few months they moved to a farm a mile north of Farmington which land he entered from the government. They were neighbors of the Drydens and Lincolns.

Joseph Allison was a hatter and made coonskin caps, blacksnake whips, saddles and harness.

For many years he was clerk of the session of the Presbyterian church at Indian Creek and was a devout worker in the church. The Sabbath was kept very strict and nothing was done only that which was absolutely necessary on that day.

He was very much opposed to slavery. When they left North Carolina, his wife's father gave her a slave. This slave was a boy 16 years old. One day grandmother found him stealing sugar out of the sugar bowl so she got a strap and gave him a whipping. Grandfather saw her and sent the slave back to North Carolina. Later he refused to take money the slave brought when sold and told his owner to give it to the slave.

A letter from a brother of Joseph Allison who lived in Sumner County, Tennessee, written Dec. 22, 1843, expresses some of the views current at that time on slavery:

"In regard to the principles mentioned there has been no material change, since I first found any principle on the subject.

"No, my brother, the principle difference between brother William and myself is, that I believe the principles of the Abolition party are erroneous and their measures have been most disastrous to the interest of the colored race, and the cause of liberty. I believe, further, that if their principles and practices were correct in themselves, the prominence they give to the subject, making it everything, would be a radical objection against them.

"Such views as these are sufficient to identify me, in the mind of every thorough abolitionist with robbers and manstealers.

"I know further on this subject that when the Savior and His dis-

ciples were here on earth, slavery existed in the Roman Empire in a much more cruel form than is known in any of the American states. Yet, how did they oppose it?

"By preaching the pure principles of the Gospel, and in no one instance can it be shown that they ever directly attacked this or any other political institution of that day, bad as many of them undoubtedly were. Much less did they lay aside their appropriate work."

Another brother, John Allison, from Rutherford County, Tennessee, writes July 11, 1837:

"I have an anxiety to know how the churches in your region will act in reference to the discussion of the last General Assembly.

"Yours is called a new school region, and I have been apprehensive that they would all join with those who are now exerting every nerve to raise a new Assembly and call itself the real Assembly and appeal to the laws of the land to confirm the title. I do not feel disposed to endorse for everything that the late Assembly have done but I do think that the course that the defeated party are now taking is the most inconsistent with the profession of Christianity of anything I have witnessed of late years.

"May the Lord have mercy upon our beloved Union and speedily hush all her contentions to peace."

The first church established in Coles County was Presbyterian and located on Indian Creek about three miles northwest of Farmington. This is verified by Albert B. Balch as follows:

In searching among some old records I find that the first church built on Indian Creek was in 1832. Two years before, Aug. 30, 1830, the Presbyterian church was organized

by the Rev. B. F. Spillman with the following members:

Thomas Myers, Agnes Myers, Theron Balch, Ann Boyd, Thomas McCracken, Nancy McCracken, James Ashmore, Cassandra Ashmore, Rachel Ashmore, William Wayne, James Logan and Elizabeth Logan.

They met at the cabin of Theron Balch for organization.

The next summer, June 1, 1831, the members met and agreed to donate so many days work each in building a church of logs 24x30 feet in size. William Barnett subscribed 26 spikes, William Wayne 30 bushels of lime. That fall the church was raised and covered. The flooring was sawed out by a whip-saw, the studding and roof were made of slabs, split out with a maul and wedge and dressed with an adz. The seats were made of long slabs placed on tressels, and the church remained in an unfinished condition about two years.

The member who had subscribed lime, having failed to make good his donation, Rev. John McDonald, the pastor who possessed energy in world matters as well as spiritual, with the aid of Patrick Nicholson, proposed to remedy the deficiency.

Lime rock was found on Indian Creek, logs were hauled and placed on end around it set afire and the rocks reduced to lime. Rev. McDonald with the aid of his parishioners made the plaster and with his own hands the worthy minister plastered the church. It being cold weather the floor was partially taken up and on a bed of sand a fire was built which was kept burning until the plaster was thoroughly dry.

In 1834 the congregation secured the services of Rev. James H. Shields of Indiana to preach one-half time but this arrangement did not last long and he sent word

resigning his pastorate. The Rev. Isaac Bennett was then called to fill the vacancy and he remained for several years. Finally, Rev. McDonald became the permanent pastor. Andrew H. Allison and Hannah Eveline Dryden were married by Rev. McDonald, Dec. 30, 1845.

Archibale Allison, Joseph's grandfather was born in Ireland in 1733. Andrew Allison, Joseph's father was born in Donegal County, Ireland in 1770, coming to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina around 1790, bringing his father with him.

Joseph Allison had one son, John, in the Civil War who later married Belle Ewing, my grandfather's sister.

My grandfather, Andrew Henry Allison, looked after the families who were left during the war and died from exposure and overwork at the close of the war. Men who knew him well told how he would start the oxen to the field, and he would cut some wood to use for cooking while they went on, then he would run and catch up with them before they got to the field. He was a good stock man, keeping cattle and horses to sell to others.

When Lincoln made his last visit to see his step-mother, grandfather was in the road near his home. When he saw the carriage coming he got on his horse, raced to Farmington and had someone fire the anvils and beat the drums when the carriage drove into Farmington.

Had he lived, many predicted he would have been one of the largest landowners in Coles County. He was only 41 years old when he died November, 1864.

Grandmother seldom mentioned his passing so soon but she said she was always lonesome whenever he went away, so we know how lonesome she was for almost 60 years without him.

PART III.

When William Ewing started on horseback from Grayson County, Kentucky in 1828 to look for a new home, he was accompanied by two or three neighbors who were on the same mission. They came up into eastern Illinois as far north as Kankakee.

Not liking that part of the country he started southwest near the present site of Bloomington, then into Sangamon County, near Springfield, then south and east until he came to Coles County. He settled some five or six miles north and west of Farmington and 1½ miles northeast of Lerna.

In 1829 he brought his family, which consisted of his wife and four children, to this place. My grandfather, William McAfee Ewing, was born at this place April 21, 1832.

When they reached this country they could not find a cabin to live in so they cleaned out a sheepshed and lived in that until logs and timber enough could be cut to build a house to live in.

Being a very hard working and industrious man, he began clearing off timber and brush for planting corn and vegetables and soon had a small crop growing. Then he made rails for fences, set out fruit trees and built other buildings for use around the farm.

Cedar trees were still standing 80 years after he planted them there, for my sister, Carrie Allison Ashbrook, started housekeeping in the very house he built, used water out of the same well and her boys played under those trees until they were six and nine years of age. But all that he made has been torn away now and only a memory of it all is left.

The Ewings originally came from Scotland to North Ireland in the vicinity of Londonery for some

years, and then three brothers came to America, settling in Pennsylvania in the early part of 1700. It was here that Samuel Ewing, father of Judge William Ewing lived.

Judge William Ewing came to Grayson County, Kentucky, in 1794. He settled near Litchfield and improved a farm there. His only son, William, was born there in 1797. Judge Ewing came to make his home with his son in 1831 in Coles County, Illinois, and died Jan. 11, 1834, and was buried in the Indian Creek Cemetery.

A copy of a letter written by Judge Ewing to his son April 22, 1831, shows he was making plans to come to Illinois, reads as follows:

Dear Son:

By this opportunity I would inform you that we are at present enjoying tolerable health, with hopes that you and your family are also favored.

I rec'd your letter by the hand of Samuel Williams which gave us the satisfying account of your welfare. We heard some very distressing accounts from your state, which made us the more anxious to hear from you. We heard that there were a good many people perished with cold, and their stock froze standing up. We had the hardest winter here that I have ever seen in Kentucky, and the snow something like 18 inches deep and I was very ill prepared for a hard winter, having but a very short crop of corn but I got as much of Charles Wortham's, rent corn as I needed, and have not lost any stock except some young pigs that come in cold weather.

I would be willing to move to your country if I could sell my place for money, but that is what I do not expect, and I have an idea that a man has no business in your country except he has some money to

help himself. I have offered my place at \$300.00 paid down. Samuel Wortham sent me word that he would give my price, if I would take \$70.00 in money and a new wagon and the balance in horses or other property at cash price. But I do not think that kind of pay would answer my purpose.

I have collected the \$50.00 that was due from Benjamin Rogers and have sent it to you by Samuel Williams. I also gave him the horse I rec'd from Rogers last fall and he has been trying to sell him, but I am afraid he cannot sell him for the money before he starts home. The other horse and saddle that is coming from Rogers will not be due until the last of October next. He says if it would suit you better to take the balance, all in saddles, he would pay it in that way by your giving him notice in time to have them made. He will pay one horse agreeable to bargain.

Charles Wortham's family is well. John Jamison's family is also well.

No more but a request to be remembered to all enquirers.

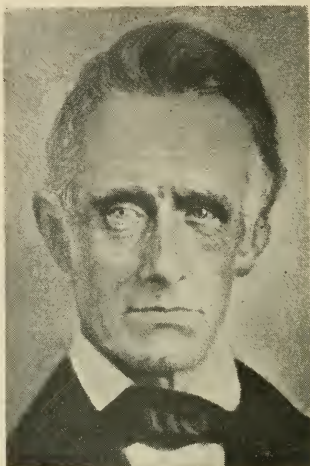
Your affectionate father,

Judge William Ewing.

William Ewing married Louisa Villars Williams in Grayson County, Kentucky, and 14 children were born to them, four of which came with them to Illinois.

Louisa V. Williams was born in 1803 in Kentucky and died near Arcola, Douglas County, Illinois, in September, 1897. Her father was a slave owner in Kentucky and he gave her one when she married which she sold for \$900.00.

Samuel Williams, her brother, settled in the same neighborhood in Coles County, Illinois. Those who remained in the south were southern sympathizers during the Civil War and still owned slaves. Two of



William Ewing II

her sons, Joe and Tom, went back to Elizabethtown, Ky., with another brother, Cap Williams, where they took horses to sell just before the war. Uncle Cap had trouble with another man over politics and Tom Ewing had to rescue him at the point of a gun to keep him from being hurt. This was shortly after "John Brown's Raid."

Grandmother could remember the soldiers marching home from the War of 1812.

Three of her sons, Joe, Tom and William fought in the Civil War. Tom was taken prisoner at Andersonville, but was released and finally discharged as a first lieutenant. Joe and William, my grandfather, belonged to 5th Cavalry, 121st Illinois Regiment, and served three years.

The vivid descriptions my grandfather told of the many incidents that happened during the Civil



UPPER LEFT: Home of Andrew H. and Elveline Allison, 1860-64.

UPPER RIGHT: Cabin on Kickapoo occupied by Henry C. and Ella Allison, 1883.

LOWER LEFT: Ewing Homestead—1830.

LOWER RIGHT: Cabin where Nancy Allison Nicholson lived, 1876.

War will never be forgotten.

He married Sarah A. Hughes, Oct. 2, 1855, and my mother was the second of three children. She was born Feb. 1, 1861.

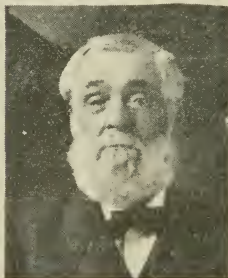
When grandfather came home from the Civil War she did not know him, which probably made him feel very badly.

During the war he was taken very ill and sent to a Hospital at Cairo, Ill. Grandmother took my mother, who was a babe in arms, my uncle and grandfather's youngest brother, Robert Ewing, and went to see grandfather. He cried when Uncle Dan went running to him in the ward. After talking things over with grandmother and Uncle Rob-

ert, grandmother got a suit of citizens clothes, put them on grandfather and got him out of the hospital. It did not take long for him to recover and he went back and served the remainder of the war in his company.

In 1851 he went to California to seek his fortune in the gold fields. He often told of the journey across the plains and the desert in Nevada, how their tongues were so swollen from thirst they could not talk. How they ate so many buffaloes he never could tolerate beef, butter or milk. He came back on board ship around Cape Horn and South America to New York. While enroute he contracted ship fever and would have

Sons and Daughters of Pioneers.



Sarah A. Hughes *Ewing* Hanna Eveline Dryden *Allison*
Andrew Henry Allison William McFee Ewing

been detained either on board ship or in a government hospital had not some of his friends helped him walk off the boat.

About 1873 several families, including my grandfather's, went in covered wagons to southwest Missouri to live. Three years of poor crops and bad health sent most of them back to Illinois.

He bought the farm we now live on about 1878. When my father and mother were married grandfather bought a small farm in the north edge of Lerna and sold the farm to my father. After living there six or eight years they moved to Mattoon where grandmother died

April 7, 1900. Grandfather developed cancer of the throat about that time and suffered for six years but never made others feel his trouble was more than others were enduring. He lived with us those years and we always enjoyed his stories about the war and his journey across the plains. He died Jan. 16, 1906, and was buried at Indian Creek cemetery where both his father and grandfather were buried. His love for horses and ability to care for and train them for farm work was known throughout the neighborhood. He often told us grandmother was the prettiest girl and the best cook for miles around.

We could vouch for the cooking for her cookie jar was never empty when we went to see her.

Thus, we see another family who helped develop Coles County, and help made it a good place in which to live.

PART IV.

William J. Hughes was born near Richmond, Va., Nov. 15, 1807, and died in Coles County, Illinois, Sept. 10, 1884.

He and his brother, Samuel, left Virginia and settled about 15 miles north of Chillicothe, Ohio. He married Ellen J. Martin in 1833 and 10 children were born to them, my grandmother Sarah Hughes Ewing, being the oldest, was born in Ross Co., Ohio, May 3, 1836. Grandmother Hughes was born March 17, 1817, and when 16 years of age she married William J. Hughes. She died in Coles County, Illinois, July 11, 1886, both she and her husband are buried at Indian Creek cemetery.

They settled two or three miles east of Charleston, Ill., when they came to Coles County, then moved north of Farmington about five miles and three miles east of where Lerna is now.

He had an apple orchard, built a granary, apple house and other buildings most people did not have. He also played the violin and no one enjoyed anything more than he did than for his children to dance the Virginia Reel while he played the music on his violin. His farm was known throughout the neighborhood for its clean fence rows, neat buildings and well-kept premises.

His children all grew to manhood and womanhood in Coles County but some of them moved to other states. One son, James, married Lucretia Ewing. Their son,

Walter is a lawyer in Chicago, Ill. A daughter, Lide Hughes Edman, died in California Dec. 15, 1928, and her son, Charles, is a real estate man at Monte Vista, Colo. The youngest daughter, Meck Hughes Balch, died at Greeley, Colo.

The Hughes were known for their hospitality, and no one could leave their home without being served to apples and cider when in season.

Grandfather had the best tools for doing carpenter work of any one in the county. He could make furniture and in Ohio was recognized as a cabinet maker. His ability as a livestock farmer was not as good as for grain and keeping everything in good repair.

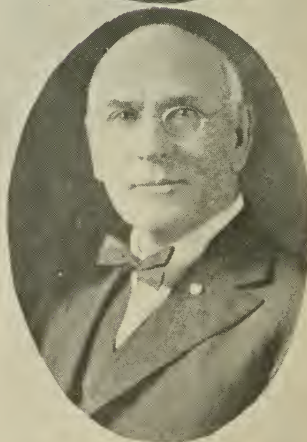
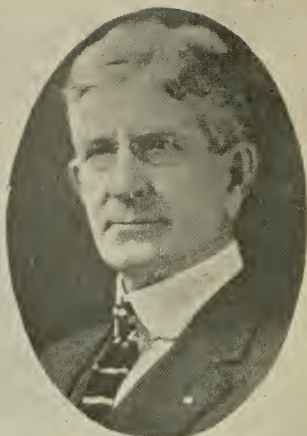
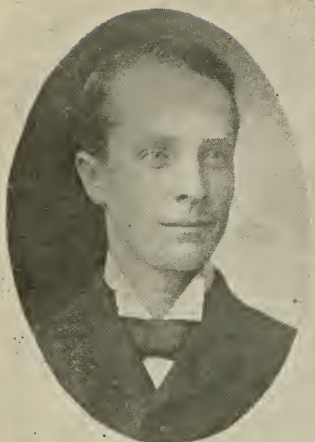
We have no record of his having been prominent in religious or political affairs. Whenever they attended church it usually was at the Indian Creek Presbyterian church.

Honesty and right living was the rule he lived by and no worthier thought than that can any man have.

Thus the Hughes family lived and helped make Coles County a good place in which to live.

THE FARMINGTON HOME-COMING

The village was all astir. Every one was up when the sun rose over the Ambraw hills. When the children assembled on the playground before school, women were seen scurrying toward a humble frame cottage on the outskirts of the village with buckets, pans and aprons bulging with food, all talking in excited voices. Soon it was learned what it was all about—President Lincoln was coming to see his step-mother before going to Washington to assume the responsibilities of the nation.



Walter Hughes
Chicago

Dan W. Ewing
Mattoon

W. D. Allison
Indianapolis

John Dryden
Kearney, Neb.

GRANDSONS

And what a Homecoming it was! The dinner was cooked and served in his aunt's home — "Old Til Moore" as the school children called her, for she was a tall, thin, grouchy woman who treated children as a sort of pest she should not be bothered with.

All the pretty girls came to wait on the table and assist in any way his kind old step-mother. The table was decorated with glass dishes from the entire village and snowy white sheets were used for table cloths.

The school children all came over to shake hands with this tall, kind son of Aunt Sarah's. Many of the children were too bashful to approach him but those who did received a kind word and loving smile they never forgot. One little girl was carrying her hand and arm in a sling due to an accident at a sorghum mill, and he stopped and kissed her asking how the accident happened.

When he entered the village one of the farmers nearby overtook President Lincoln in his carriage and as he was on horseback he hurried on to Farmington, got out the drums and had men fire the anvils when Lincoln entered the village.

During the day he visited his father's grave at Shiloh Cemetery and later drove back to Charleston, the county seat, to make his way to Washington.

The sun rose Sept. 25th, 1932, over the same Ambraw hills, not many were moving about the village, an occasional motor car stopped for fuel near the little frame cottage where Abraham Lincoln ate dinner with his step-mother for the last time.

Later in the day as the noon hour approached, more cars came and parked on the playground by the

schoolhouse. Boxes, baskets, pails and pans were carried to long tables in front of the building and by one o'clock dinner was served to all who cared to eat. Another Homecoming, it was, in Farmington!

After all had eaten and baskets were packed and returned to the cars parked around the grounds, all journeyed to the little church across the road from the Moore cottage and listened to the many people who had formerly lived in that community and had returned to see their friends perhaps for the last time.

When the program was well over a modest little lady rose and told about her grandfather who gave the land for this little village of Farmington. "Uncle Jeff" Adams as he was known came to this part of Illinois before the Lincolns, Drydens or Allisons. When his wife died he married Caroline Dryden and she gave this village the name of Farmington.

"Uncle Jeff" fought with Abraham Lincoln in the Black Hawk War and when Lincoln called for volunteers in the Civil War, he with his two sons, answered the call. He was made a Lieut. Colonel of the Fifth Cavalry.

This little lady, Uncle Jeff's granddaughter, told how he came to Coles County together with 15 grown people and 11 children from Tennessee, traveling in three wagons taking 24 days to come 400 miles.

"Uncle Jeff" had not been married but a year or so but he had lots of courage and left Tennessee to find a home for his wife and baby, who was only a few days old. This baby was this little lady's father. The hardships were many but fortune was kind to him and he became the owner of many acres of land.

When will the next Homecoming be?

Soon those boys and girls will all be gone who shook Lincoln's hand and saw his pleasant smile or knew "Uncle Jeff" who rode his prancing horse away to war and gave the ground on which we worship and receive the knowledge we must have to make his memory bright.

When will the next Homecoming be? Every year, I hope, in Farmington but every day where Abraham Lincoln and Uncle Jeff have gone to dwell.

A WILD RIDE.

Way back when apple parings, square dances and barn raisings were the chief amusements for the young folks, my uncle saddled two of his best riding horses late one evening and went to the little village of Farmington to take one of the "fair" ones of the village to one of these parties.

Farmington, as you may know, is that village made famous by Abraham Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln and his step-mother, Sarah Bush Lincoln. At the time this story takes place, over 60 years ago, it was a thriving village compared to what you see there today. They had a mill for grinding grain, a blacksmith's shop, store, drug store, hat shop, doctor's office, post office, school and church.

The horse, my uncle took for his companion to ride, was known throughout the community as above the average farm horse for speed. My father had tried out its gait on several occasions and was always delighted when he could exercise him driving up the cows.

The young lady in question came out and seated herself in the comfortable side saddle. Not realizing the energy that her charger pos-



Hannah Eveline Allison - 100 yrs.

sessed, she started putting on her gloves, not touching the reins or giving a thought to the management of such a docile animal, when away he went, flying down the road with my uncle following on his horse in hot pursuit, but barely keeping in sight of such a race horse.

After flying through the village and down a lane he whirled and came back with his companion still clinging to the side saddle. My uncle went to meet them and succeeded in grabbing the rein, riding along side of the fractious steed. He tied the rein to his horse's bridle after which the ride to the party was uneventful.

When running down the street, my uncle yelled at two men standing out in front of the store to stop the horse but they made no attempt to do so. They told the story saying that my uncle yelled "stop them calves." Of course the

rider's skirts were flying high and the public do not notice such things nowadays with so many short skirts on parade.

My uncle is 89 years old now and still tells this story with much glee.

MOTHER ALLISON

(Written by Pearl Polk Dungan, Indianapolis, for the 100th anniversary of Mrs. Hannah Eveline Allison, Charleston, Ill., June 7th, 1922.)

A century of life;
Has the way seemed long,
Or the pathway dreary,
Have things gone wrong,
Or the heart grown weary?
Ah, no—
Looking back through the years
I think you must see
The smiles but not the tears,
And I think you must see—
Only flowers on the path
Where the thorns used to be.
In the dim distant past
I think you have known
Why days over cast
Have much brighter grown
Where you heard a Voice say
"My love shields my own."
I think you have worked
That others might live
And given of yourself
As only "Mother" can give.
A century of life
As the sunset approaches
With its soft golden gleams
No shadow will darken
But to us it just seems
That a rare precious jewel
Has been loaned for a time
To show us and teach us
That life is sublime.

A poem written by Geo. B. Balch in memory of Thomas Lincoln may likewise be read for all the pioneers of Coles County, Illinois:

In a low, sweet vale, by a murmuring rill,
The pioneer's ashes are sleeping,

Where the white marble slab so lonely and still,

In silence their vigils are keeping.
On their sad lonely faces are words of fame,

But none of them speaks of his glory;

When the pioneer died, his age and his name,

No monument whispers the story.
No mystle, nor ivy, nor hyacinth blows,

O'er the lonely grave where they laid him;

No cedar, nor holly, nor almond tree grows

Near the plebian's grave to shade him.

Bright evergreens wave o'er many a grave,

O'er some bow the sad weeping willow;

But no willow tree bow, nor evergreens wave

Where the pioneer sleeps on his pillow.

While some are inhumed with honors of state,

And laid beneath temples to moulder,

The grave of the father of Lincoln, the great,

Is known by a bullock and boulder.

Let him take his lone sleep and quiet rest,

With naught to disturb or awake him,

When the angels shall come to gather the blest,

"To Abraham's bosom they'll take him."

This poem was written and read by Geo. B. Balch when a shaft was erected at Thomas Lincoln's grave at Shiloh Cemetery near Farmington, Ill., in 1876.

Since then the Lion's Club of the State of Illinois has erected a monument for both Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln and the shaft was placed near the entrance to the cemetery.



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