

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WILCOX FAMILY

BY

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I remember, I remember the house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in the morn
It never (in those days) came a wink too soon
Or brought a day too long

In those joyous days of youth, I was ever looking forward towards the future - to the roseate glow of every sun, that sent its beams into "my little window" with the birth of each day. The "ever present" was enough for me, and I felt no interest in the past, or family records, or genealogical tree.

Could I have foreseen the day that I should be willing to pay any price in my power for knowledge I then so carelessly ignored, I should today know more of the history of my forefathers than the fragmentary, legendary, folklore stories that now make up the narrative of my family. I can only exclaim with Whittier, as in "Legendary."

Yet whereso'er his steps may be,
The wandering child looked back to thee,
Heard in his dreams the river's sound
Of murmuring on its pebbly bound,
The unforgotten swell and roar
Of waves on thy familiar shore.

The loved and lost arose to view,
Remembered graves in greenness grew,
Bathed still in the childhood's morning dew,
Along whose bowers of beauty swept
Whate'er memory's mourners wept.

Sweet faces, which the charnel kept,
Young, gentle eyes, which long had slept,
And while the gazer learned to trace,
More near, some dear familiar face,
He wept to find the vision flown, -
A phantom and a dream alone.

Thus it is that I can principally recall, only by the narration of events, that befell it, either from hearsay, or from own recollection.

My knowledge of ancestry extends no further back than to the fourth generation on both of my father's and mother's side of the house. As I have said before, they were people who had no written history, as their names were only recorded in the short and simple annals of the poor, but they were all honorable men and bore their part manfully in the field assigned them. They were men whose watchword seemed to be, "Westward, ever westward!" and their accomplishments were of the sort that fitted them for the life of the pioneer, for

such they were, being foremost among those who wrested the soil from the Indians, and cut out homes from the wilderness for themselves and families.

In "Bashaba," Whittier describes the early homes of these ancestors cabins.

Thru whose chinks the sunbeam shines.

Tracing many simple lines on the ample floor within.

They knew more about the use of the rifle and the ax, than they did of ethics; instead of emblazoned shields decorating their walls, the rifle hung above the door ready for any emergency, the Family Bible lay upon the rude mantle above the huge fireplace, and the ax lay at the generous woodpile before the door.

Among these early pioneers were both my great grandfathers on both sides of the family. My great-grandfather Richard Williams was one of the first settlers of Cincinnati, having built one hundred and ten cabins, which was the beginning of that city.

My great-grandfather Wilcox emigrated from Scotland before the Revolution and settled near New London, Connecticut, how many years before I do not know. He had a brother John, who also lived in Connecticut. My great-grandfather, whose name was Joel, and his brother John were both soldiers in a Company of Connecticut riflemen and helped to secure the freedom of our country.

After the war ended, great-grandfather moved farther west, eventually following his son Joel (my grandfather) into the then new state of Ohio, and settled at New London, the county seat of Madison County. In Scotland, great-grandfather had been a fine linen weaver and brought some money with him to America. When he moved into Ohio, he lost his eyesight, becoming totally blind. He could no longer work and became a pensioner. He had a large family, of whom my grandfather - a namesake - was the youngest of three sons. The eldest son, Loamis, moved to New York where he married a very wealthy young woman, whom I knew in my childhood as Aunt Hannah Wilcox and who made a visit to my grandfather Wilcox's family in 1848. In my recollection I had never seen so grand a lady, as she then, and none since grander. Her husband was dead and she was a widow. She had two sons, Edward and Joel, and one daughter, Caroline, who was said to be a very beautiful and accomplished young lady. I remember that Aunt Hannah brought a trunk full of nice presents to her western brother-in-law's family, leaving the empty trunk with my father. It was hair-covered and studded with brass-headed nails and initials in the same, showing that the trunk had belonged to "C.W." (Caroline Wilcox). This trunk was taken to Iowa afterwards and remained in the family as a sort of an heirloom as long as we lived, in Iowa. Aunt Hannah and her two sons moved to Joliet, Ill., and the sons engaged in the jewelry business. The mother was one of the original stockholders in the Rock Island and Pacific Railway, holding twenty-four shares. Caroline died young. What finally became of them I do not know. Grandfather's second brother, Alvin Wilcox moved to Pella, Iowa soon after we did, and was engaged in farming. He had several sons and daughters, but I never knew or heard much about them. I remember of Uncle Alvin's coming to

see us, and of a visit from his son Isaac Wilcox also. The latter's right hand was badly crippled by having been bitten when shocking wheat by a rattlesnake. He had a sister, Elizabeth who married a man by the name of Glotfelter, a photographer living at Signourney, Iowa. Their finale is shrouded in darkness to me.

One of my grandfather's sisters, Aunt Ruth Wilcox (great aunt), married a British officer garrisoned at Quebec, P.Q.C., and had one son named Peter Muir, who came to visit his cousin (my father) when I was a very small girl. I can plainly remember him tho, and the remark mother made saying, "He was all Englishman."

In those early days we could not keep the threads together as we can in these days of railroads everywhere, and their powerful adjuncts, - the telegraph, telephones, etc. In 1887 Grandfather Wilcox moved from Madison County into the wilderness with plenty of bear, and wolves, and Indians. He bought large tracts of land, having over four hundred acres in the home tract. He was a man of great firmness and determination of character. He was also energetic and industrious and had extraordinary financial ability, and out of the wilderness he carved a home - the finest farm on Blanchard River in those days - seventy-eight years ago - and a fortune in gold and silver. In 1847 he was the largest landholder and taxpayer in the county. I have heard my mother say (his daughter-in-law) that she has seen him count his money on rainy days, laying the money in piles in the order of their denomination, as twenties, tens, fives, etc., in gold, and the silver in its order likewise. He kept the money in heavy wallets, which she could not lift with one hand. He did not trust his money to banks for they were not the convenient institution they are today. He was a great stock-raiser, and he would start with two or three men to drive a hundred steers to the market at Cincinnati. He helped to organize the first Militia Company in his county, of which he was the captain. In politics he was Whig. In religion, he was Methodist. He was considered a leading man in his vicinity and foremost in helping to develop his county and neighborhood. His house was the home of the circuit rider on his rounds and the schoolmaster always put in all the extra "boarding around" at grandfathers.

Grandfather built the first frame house between Defiance and Lima, Ohio. Very many anecdotes are told of this ancestor of mine. His early with the Indians with whom he traded buying their pelts, etc., and a great many amusing ones. He was always the ruling spirit wherever he was. There was a very large sugar camp on the farm from which a great number of barrels of sugar were made every year. In "stirring off" he always allowed the hands and everybody engaged to eat all the sugar they wanted till they had to drink, but as soon as they drank, they could eat no more sugar. Do you see the philosophy?

For a man, who bought his time until the age from his father, and started out for himself at the age of sixteen to hew out for himself, he was not an ordinary man. It is impossible for me, in this small book, to tell the many sayings and doings of my grandfather Wilcox (Joel). I wish to add here, however, that grandfather was

the third white settler between what is now Ottawa, Ohio and three miles from the junction of the Blanchard and Auglaize Rivers. They followed what was called the "Wagner Trace" - a blazed trail from Wapakoneta and Fort Jennings to the location. Ottawa at that time was only a large Indian encampment called Tawatown from which the little creek that flows thru it gets its name of Tawa Run.

For many years Kalida was the county seat and chief town of the county, where grandfather paid his taxes and where his old militia used to muster, grandfather using a rusty old sword which had done service in the Revolutionary War. The first cabin was bark wigwam like the Indians around them had and in which they lived all that first summer while they cleared and planted a crop. They prepared their food by cooking it on the open fire built of logs before the wigwam. However, before the snow fell Grandfather had built a substantial dwelling - a large log cabin with an ample loft above for the boys, as a bed-room, and also for a store-room for household stores. In this cabin he lived for many years. The fireplace was so large, that they sometimes used a horse to draw the back log to the fireplace, when an extra one was required. By these huge fires my father and his brothers studied their lessons, having no light except the firelight, which filled the cabin with its glow. I wish I had space here to tell you some of the amusing things that happened during these hours of firelight study under the eye of the stern old man. Suffice it here to say that he often tried to assist them, and his decisions proved to be wiser than what was written, but they were forced to be accepted.

When the first orchard was planted in 1828, one apple tree was planted each for Aunt Mary and father who always claimed them and anxiously watched them grow to bearing time. The first tree in the orchard, and, I believe the only one that year, was father's tree, which bloomed early. The children were overjoyed at the prospect of having apples to eat. One morning father inspected the tree, and, thinking it too young to bear fruit, took out his knife and clipped the precocious blossoms. That was a great blow for father's hopes, and he broke into a loud wail, which would not be subdued until his father told him that a certain cream-colored colt should be his own. Ever afterwards the tree was called the Johnny Cry Tree and it bore fruit as late as 1891 for I ate apples from it that year.

Copying from a speech made by my father in 1881 at a pioneer meeting held in Putnam County, he says (speaking of those early days).

My father being a successful farmer and a skillful hunter, his cribs and granaries were generally well-filled, and his lards with wild game and wild honey. Fine bolted flour was a rarity in those days, and grater and hand mills supplying our bread (johnny cake) and buckwheat flour which, with an abundance of money, maple-sugar, venison, and bear meat we made life passable. Our marketing, except porkers and fat steers driven on foot was done at Defiance by porogue down the Blanchard and Auglaize in the springtime. It consisted of grain,

strained honey, maple sugar, furs, and peltries, which was exchanged for salt, merchandise, and cash.

No less fitted from her pioneer station than her pioneer husband was my grandmother, who had been Sarah Williams, the daughter of Richard Williams. She was born at Cincinnati, April 18, 1800. Born the daughter one pioneer, she easily slipped into the position as wife of another. And nobly did she discharge the duties of her lot. Many entertaining stories are told of her. One of these being an event which occurred soon after moving into their new home in the wilderness. Their horses strayed away starting to go back to their old home. Of course there was no other way to do, but for grandfather to go after them, leaving grandmother and her two small babies, with no protection against the bands of prowling savages, and herds of prowling wolves, and bears stealing upon one, but the rifle which she knew how to use, and the faithful dog called Bounce.

During the night there came a flood, and the Blanchard spread itself all over the adjacent valley. Grandmother heard the fire quenching, and arose from her bed, and, gathering it up, put it into a pot out of reach of the water. In the morning nothing but a sea of water confronted her. She took her ax and pot of fire (matches were then unknown) and started for higher ground, wading thru deep water a quarter of a mile where she came to dry land, where afterwards the cabin was built, and made a fire. She then returned to the wigwam and got her children, bringing them to the impoverished home. Here a neighbor, who was in search of her, came to her relief, and that evening grandfather returned with the horses, they have been "taken up" as strays before they got very far.

It is said that many poor Indian got a good meal at her table. She was very unassuming and quiet in her manner, very much like the goodly woman whom the apostle Paul describes. It is safe to say she never attempted to usurp authority over her husband. She spun and wove the cloth that was used in her family. Every Sunday morning - after the times grew better - she baked biscuits for breakfast in a tin-baker, which was placed before the open fire. My father said these were the most delicious biscuits he ever ate. These with fresh honey were their regular Sunday morning treat. She was a model wife and mother. The incense of her memory lingers in the old settlement to this day, tho it is fifty-eight years since she died.

RECORD OF THE WILCOX FAMILY

Great Grandfather, Joel Wilcox, born in Scotland, immigrated to this country prior to the Revolutionary War, served as a soldier in a Connecticut regiment during the War. Afterwards moved to Madison County, Ohio, and died as a pensioner, old and blind. He was the father of ten children, two of whom died in infancy. The living were Loami, Alvin, Joel, Ruth (the eldest of all), Cynthia, Lucinda, Nancy, and Susan. My great-grandmother's maiden name was Elizabeth Cowen. She died of cancer. The daughters were all married and I used to know their whereabouts, when a girl at home, but now they have passed beyond "my

ken" Great Aunt Cynthia, Mrs. Warbington, lived near Sidney, Ohio, Lucinda, Mrs. Shaw, lived a near neighbor too. Nancy died when a young woman at home. Susan, Mrs. Worley, lived near Pella, Iowa.

My grandfather, Joel Wilcox, was born in Connecticut, January 10th, 1800, died November 10th, 1847. Grandmother Wilcox was born April 18th, 1800, died October 18th, 1847. My grandparents, Wilcox, had eleven children whose names were as follows: Mary, John, Loami, Elmira, George, Clarissa, William, Emiline, Edmund, Hannah, and Edward. I have copied their names from father's record book in which he says there are written in the order of their arrival. Aunt Mary and father were born in Madison County, Ohio, and all the others in Putnam County. Edwards was just three months to a day than I am. All of the sons and daughters lived to manhood and womanhood, but Edmund and Hannah who died in babyhood. All were married but Uncle Loami, who died at nineteen of brain fever. Mary Wilcox married Elijah Stonaker; John Wilcox married Jemima Hopkins; Elmira Wilcox married William Chatfield; Emiline Wilcox married Charles Allen. Clarisa Wilcox married Hiram Fellows. Uncle Edward married an Iowa girl. I do not know to whom George and William were married. Mary Stonaker died at Logansport, Indiana, as did her husband. She raised a large family, one of whom was Elmira Kirk who was at your Uncle Fremont's funeral. Elmira Chatfield died at Portland, Oregon more than fifty years ago leaving two little sons of whom I have no account. Clarisa Fellows lived at Salem Oregon a few years ago. Emiline Allen lived at Seattle, Washington the last I heard of her. Edward Wilcox lived at Clatskanie, Oregon a few years back. He and I corresponded for a short time.

John Wilcox, my grandfather and Jemima Hopkins were married November 9th, 1843, by Rev. John McKnabb, a Methodist preacher, at Kalida, Ohio. There is a little romantic story connected with this marriage. My mother was a young schoolteacher and was teaching at Ottawa, then a small village just rising out of the ruins of the Old Indian town of Tawatown. She was boarding at old Judge Cox's, who had two merry daughters, who were very lively and fond of the company. They made a party and among the guests was my father, then a young student home from Norwalk, Ohio. Of course he met the young teacher and fell violently head-over-heels in love with her, and appointed another meeting before he went home. They met several times, he going up to Ottawa once every week. Before many visits ended he proposed for her hand, and she, thinking him too premature, refused the proposal thus ending his visits. He was very young and very ardent, and it was a great blow to him. He went home and went to bed shutting himself in his room and refusing to answer any and all questions, excepting to say that he wanted to die. This alarmed my grandfather, who was going at once for the doctor, thinking that something was terribly the matter with John. He got his son-in-law, Elijah Stonaker to go in and see, if he could introduce John to tell what his trouble was. My Uncle Stonaker shrewdly guessed what the trouble was and soon got father to confess it. Coming out he got his favorite saddle-horse, a large roan, and



mounting it rode over to the girl's parents, who lived at Kalida at the time. He not only found the parents at home, but the young lady herself. She had come home on a visit. This delighted the old Scotchman, and he at once stated his errand and placed his son's cause so warmly and eloquently, - interlarding his sentences with just enough flattery to win the girl's heart, and her mother's goodwill, that he gained permission for his son to visit her at her own home. The girl's father was not so pliable as the mother, who became a staunch supporter of the young man's cause. However, he gave permission for the visit, and the old gentleman Wilcox went home elated over his success. The next day, being the Sabbath, the plan was formed for the young man to go to Kalida to church that day and call upon his sweetheart at the same time. That morning his toilet seemed of unusual importance. As he stood before the glass tying and untying his neckerchief not getting it to suit his taste, his father sat watching him. Finally he sprang up with the exclamation, "John, let me tie that choker; it's time you were off, if you are going to do any courting today." The tie was made in a very short time, which was followed by another. (You know the sequel).

After the marriage of my parents, they moved to an eighty-acre tract of land given to them by Grandfather Wilcox. He also built them a neat hewed log house, a barn, etc. and set them up in good style for that day and time. But Father was restless. Except for a couple of terms at Norwalk and a trip to Cincinnati, he had always been there in the backwoods, and, like a caged bird, he was beating his wings against the bars of his environment, and longing for something new. He was dissatisfied with his new home - didn't like the location, and never rested until he had traded the farms with Brockman Brower, who had just such a farm across the river as that which his father had given him. This trade made both the old gentleman wrathful and brought down loads of strong threats upon their heads of disinheritance, etc. It was on this farm your mother was born. Joe Shank lived here afterward, and does yet, I think.

Father traded in 1846, and in 1849 sold it and moved to Mercer County. This was indeed in the wilderness, for I have never seen such gigantic trees anywhere as I saw here. Father bought a quarter section of land covered with this dense forest. Very many interesting events occurred here. I here developed from babyhood to childhood and "all went merry as a marriage bell" to me.

Father built genuinely Buckeye cabin here in which we lived two years. Then he built a new house out on the road that led from St. Mary's to Fort Recovery. It was the old Wagon (Wagner or Wayne?) Trace that General Wayne cut thru the woods in his march on the Indians. There was an old Indian graveyard just across a large creek called Big Beaver near us. In this graveyard father had found the bone of the forearm of an Indian and a burnt clay-pipe. He brought them home and laid them on the mantel. He and mother were invited to a wedding leaving us children at home alone. I was so afraid of those Indian relics I would not go near the fireplace myself, nor let my brother Almon.

It was while we lived here that our home was made the stopping-place of the underground railway system then in vogue. One morning early, seven strapping

Negro men came up to our gate and asked for food. Father and mother heard their story, and the former conducted them to the barn, where they ate their breakfast and then crawled into the haymow, where they stayed all day. It was not very long afterward that a band of men on horseback booted and spurred came galloping along, and, stopping at the gate asked father if he had seen any "d??d runaway niggers." As you can readily surmise, the answer was in the negative, and, saying, "They knew they were on the wrong trail," they galloped off. Fearing they might return to investigate further, father took the Negroes across the field to a man's house by the name of Burch, who hitched up his wagon and carried them to the next station. In a few days the posse of men returned and stopped again at our gate cursing their luck that they had lost the trail and the darkies had escaped them. About this time "Uncle Tom's Cabin" fell into my hands, and I wept as I read of the horrible wickedness of slavery.

Our house had now become the home of the circuit rider also. Brother Hibbard rode the circuit two years and preached at our house every two weeks until the new schoolhouse was built in the district. He was one of the best most precious mentors. Another preacher, whose name was Love, was on the circuit a year. He was an adept in drawing. He used to delight my heart with the pictures. One of these which he drew for me and which I had for many years, was a little head covered with curls, which he said looked like me. I had it up to my removal from Iowa. It was while living here that I was deeply interested in reading the Bible and began to read it thru. This pleased the preachers and I often read to them, especially to Brother Hibbard. It was here I first went to school, reading well in the Fourth Reader at eight years.

When the bones of the soldiers killed in St. Clair's defeat by the Indians at Fort Recovery were finally gathered up for burial from where they had lain so long, I went with father to see the burial. It was a Wonderful day for me - a girl of eight years.

We continued to live in Mercer County until the spring of 1854, when we moved to Iowa. During the five spent in Mercer County but one child had been born to my parents, and this was your Aunt Martha. She was born December 26th, 1850. Your mother was just two years and ten days older. It was at this period I began an apprenticeship of nurse, which I found to be a very irksome task. Mother would make me get into the foot of the cradle and rock for hours it seemed.

During your mothers babyhood she was almost a helpless invalid, learning twice to walk. She was constant care, and mother cared for her almost exclusively, for the little girl objected to much attention from anyone else. She especially did not want my assistance. If I ever rocked her cradle, I had to lie down on the floor where she couldn't see me, or I had to vacate the job. Once when mother was sick, the cradle was drawn to her bedside and rope attached, one end of which lay near mother's hand on the bed, while I lay on the floor and rocked.

She could never join us at play until she was five or six years old. She was six when we moved to Iowa. I can see her yet, in memory, sitting in her little chair at



mother's side - always at mother's side - while mother sewed and sang to her. She early learned to sing hymns herself. One of the old-time songs had a chorus, "We're going home, we're going home to die no more." This was a favorite of hers. I believe it was the close confinement, and being always with (I want to say) my mothers divine influence constantly with her, that instilled such deep and lasting principles of religion into her mind and heart. After we went to Iowa she grew healthy and enjoyed life pretty much, as did other children. But she never grew out of her religious inclinations, and when only a child joined the

Methodist Episcopal Church henceforth to live a consistent member. Nothing could shake her faith, nor no persuasion cause her to forsake the church of her adeption. After her marriage there were strong persuasions and arguments brought to bear to gain her consent to join the Presbyterian Church, by your grandparents, Wright, and I believe Mother thought it might be her duty to do so in the interest of your father, who had said he never wavered. Believing, as St. Paul says, in "doing all things for the conscience sake" she steadfastly continued her way and lived and died a perfect Christian. I never talked with anyone who had built as firm a foundation as she. I shall never forget my visit to her in 1898, nor the afternoon we spent in Lindenwood Cemetery. As we sat under the trees and talked, she revealed herself to me as she had never done. While I listened to her, I thought, her mind is like refined gold seven times purified. She said to me, "Lyde, something tells me we shall never meet again, and I want to tell you now, that if I die before you, I want to be buried here. It seems as if I could rest so peacefully here, it is so beautiful."

We did meet again, but only as her beautiful spirit was just ready to depart to that county of rest, which she had prepared all her life to enter. Today (Sunday), clothed in white raiment, as was the company John saw, she is worshipping in that upper temple not made with hands. "Fred, I admonish you as did Paul, that you persevere in your mother's example, when he was sending Timothy forth." Sec Epistle, Chapter 1, Verse 5. I think the whole chapter beautiful.

My father was a very impatient man and of a roving disposition and, finally overcoming my; mothers objection to going west he wold his farm, and the 13th day of May 1854, we landed at Eddyville, Wapello County, Iowa. After very tedious and tiresome journey of thirteen days, for we had left the old home on Big Beaver the first of May. I was then a girl of nearly ten years, and fully awake to everything transpiring around me, and I remembered every incident distinctly, tho it is fifty-two years ago.

We made the trip by various conveyances. There were no connection railroad lines with the West at that time and it took us two weeks to accomplish what we could do in two days at the present time. We went in carriage from our home to St. Mary's, Auglaize County, where we took a canal-boat for Dayton, which was

then the terminus of the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton Railroad north. Here I saw the first train of cars, but very different looking from a train on the same road now, as I was able to note in 1898, when I went from Cincinnati to Ottawa. We went to Cincinnati where we took the steamer for St. Louis.

Let me mention one little incident here. As we entered the depot at Cincinnati there were posters on the walls saying, "Beware of Pickpockets!" Of course I had no clear conception of what that was, but felt sure it was something to be feared, and I kept very close to father. Soon a uniformed group of some organization came into the depot. I felt sure they were the pickpockets that were strutting around with their plumes in their hats, and I warned father to keep out of their way.

At Cincinnati, as I said, we went on a great steamer called The Lady Pike. Steamers were elegant affairs in those days and there is not a more luxurious mode of travel than on one of these boats, as they were before the Civil War.

Ah! That trip on the Ohio River, I have never forgotten it nor a single incident connected with it. The opposite shores afforded an ever-entertaining panorama of beauty and change to me, who spent nearly every waking moment on guard. On the old Kentucky shore Negroes were hoeing corn and working in the fields. Abraham Lincoln had not yet made proclamation, and having read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" shortly before, my heart was filled with indignation that these darkies had to work. Everywhere we could see the white overseer riding around on horseback.

One day another steamer overtook us and soon there was a race in progress. The boats were so close together at times, one might have stepped across from one to the other. Finally, our boat struck a snag, and the other went on with its passengers shouting and waving their handkerchiefs because of their victory. A feature of the trip was the presence of several wealthy southerners with their families on board and their servants. An old mammy was there who carried an ill-natured infant on her hip. I remembered that her shoes were very much worn down at the heel, and her head was done up in a red and white spotted bandanna. We had such fine dinners on the boat and it was fine for me who had never had much waiting upon, to have a darkie with a shining apron say, "Honey, what's you want?" and then pile my plate full of goodies and great lumps of sugar into my cup.

Despite my early teaching and dislike for slavery, I think I got an incipient impression then, that it wasn't so bad after all. It seemed very nice to have an old mammy to take care of the babies and a waiter at the table to be so nice to one. The memory of this trip forever dispelled my antipathy for slavery in a great measure.

We spent the first Sunday, May the 18th, 1854, in St. Louis, arriving there just before daybreak. All the bustle of landing and the strange scenes awakened every power of my perceptive facilities. But the St. Louis of 1904, as I saw it, and the St.

Louis of 1854 are as different as two cities are different. There were no railroads of any kind. The great Union Depot where Charles and I spent the greater part of a day in 1896 had not been dreamed of. It was a sorry place in those days.

We took another steamer called Albemarle, and went up Keokuk. From there we went to Eddyville by stagecoach. I think I can shut my eyes and see every foot of the ground traveled on the journey from Keokuk. Saturday night - thirteen days after leaving the home in Mercer County, Ohio, we landed at Eddyville, and the eventful journey was over.

At first we stayed at Uncle John Knox's house until father could look around and purchase a farm to suit him. John Knox had married my mother's sister Martha and the sisters had a most joyful meeting for they had not met before in ten years. My Uncle and Aunt were married one day and the next they started on their wedding tour to the Territory of Iowa. He was twenty-four and she was sixteen having been wed on her birthday. She never returned to her old home again and never saw any of her relatives but mother and Aunt Jane, another sister who had accompanied us to Iowa intending to return in the Fall.

There are many interesting events in Aunt Martha's life away back in the '40's. At first they lived in a cabin without a door, except the opening, over which hung a blanket. The wolves used to come in packs at night. To keep them away Uncle John would sit up all night sometimes and beat on a tin pan to frighten them away and keep them out of the cabin. Once while rocking the cradle of her first baby, Aunt heard the rattle of a snake, and, looking up, saw a large rattlesnake coiled and just ready to spring into the cradle. She quickly seized the heave fire-shovel; such as they used with the fireplaces in those days, and, striking it a blow, killed it. The snake had crawled up thru a crack in the rough board floors. They had had many experiences as thrilling as the two mentioned, but they had overcome their difficulties to a great degree and were living the life of the comfortable farmer.

However Aunt Martha died that coming fall in October and left a young babe two weeks old and two other children. They had lost two children previously. Aunt Martha's death was a great blow to my mother. Just the day before her death when she knew that she must die she bade farewell to all her friends and relatives, giving them charge to meet her in heaven. On her sick bed she often asked mother to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John. She said to mother one day after the reading, "That has always been such a comforting chapter to me." And repeated the third verse. Then raising her hands and looking at them, she spoke, as if to herself, "Poor old hands!" You never looked so white before, your work is nearly done." The day she was buried was one of the darkest and gloomiest I ever saw. They buried her in a grave near the house. At the grave mother fainted - one of two times in her life.

Aunt Martha had made Aunt Jane promise to be a mother to her children and she fulfilled her promise by staying, and in due time she took Aunt Martha's place as Uncle John's wife, and a mother to her little children. The little babe was

named Martha for its mother. After growing to womanhood, she married a man by the name of Peatman and lived in Nebraska the last I knew of her.

Aunt Jane and Uncle John are long since dead. Aunt Jane died in 1868, and was buried in Chillicothe, Iowa, as was Uncle John. In 1902 I visited their graves and went to the place where Aunt Martha was buried, but the grave was gone and not a visage of anything was left to show that there had ever been a grave. Her two children had been laid there too. All was gone; the half-century had obliterated every mark.

In the summer farther bought a farm and we moved there the first of September, and lived on it twelve years. It was a fine farm with extremely fertile soil and well timbered for that country. It was an excellent stock farm being well watered by a creek called Rocky Branch flowing thru it. This creek was tributary to the Des Moines River and in a freshet became almost a river itself.

At first we only had a hundred and ten acres, but father added three hundred and twenty more to it, so that it became a respectable sized farm. Here we three sisters grew to womanhood. We lived the lives of healthy active country girls and indulged in the pleasure afforded in our neighborhood. We began our education by attending school in an old log schoolhouse, with benches into which pegs were driven for seats, and I know of nothing that will make one's back ache sooner or surer than such benches. The teacher's desk was an improved model of the seats and the writing desks (two) were slabs placed on long pegs driven into the walls. The scholars took turns at writing, and only the grown-ups wrote. Children were strictly confined to the spelling book - "Webster's Old Blue-back" which made more good spellers than any of the modern books or methods have done. Pupils took pride in being good spellers, for there were always the neighboring school to contest the position held by the best speller in the county. When the master called out "First Class, spell" the boys and girls soon lined up along (perhaps) three sides of the wall and taking their places (for they followed the system of spelling down) the teacher opened his book at "immaterially" and the lesson was soon in full blast. Every ear was strained to catch the word and everyone was ready to get a chance to "go up." Someone leaves out an I or a T or an R and "Next" is roared out by the teacher and the two change places with no very pleasant looks however on the part of the one who is spelled down. When the last word was pronounced the numbering began: the Head became the foot and got the headmark for the day. The boy or girl who got the greatest number of these marks was the champion of the school, and at the end of the term was entitled to a highly colored and ornamented card upon which was written the words, REWARD OF MERIT and some suggestive stanza. I have one now received in that first Iowa school I attended. I haven't looked at it for some time, but it runs along as follows:

REWARD OF MERIT
Presented to Sarah E. Wilcox by her teacher
James E. Coffee

Now is the time each child should try
In life's bright sunny morn,
To lay rich stores of knowledge by,
E'er Winter' age comes on.

This old log schoolhouse was called the Lingcove Schoolhouse. It was finally torn down, and a new one built at another point, which was called the Rock Schoolhouse. This became the leading rural school of the county and woe was the teacher who attempted the instruction of it if he didn't know the "Rithmetic," for, if he didn't, we soon could "do him up" and he had to seek greener fields in which to exercise his talents.

One of our teachers was James Hackworth of Otumwa, now the County Judge. The large boys called him Jimmie Hackworth, which he did not resent, as he no doubt thought discretion the better part of valor, there being about twenty of these boys. Several of our teachers were young lawyers, some of them being more bent upon their own development than that of their school. But at least Henry Heacock, a young student from college who was studying for the ministry taught our schools for two successive terms. He classified and taught us as we had never been before. At the close of his last term I had progressed so much that father sent me to the High School at Eddyville, which I attended for two years. It was in the first year that the Civil War began.

While eating dinner at my boarding house one day, the man of the house came in and began to talk of the new company they were forming to send to the Army, and naming some of those who had volunteered that morning. Among was my father. The Company soon went to Keokuk to be mustered into the service as Co. I. 7th Vol. Iowa Inf't. Those were sad, anxious, lonely days for us after father went away. He participated in several hard battles, namely, Belmont, Fort Henry, Fort Donaldson, Shiloh, Inka, and Columbus. He volunteered as a private, but came home as a commissioned officer.

He raised a company of a hundred men and entered a regiment then being mustered in at Davenport, as Co. B. 7th Iowa Vol. Cav. He seemed to get the number seven each time. He was commissioned Captain of this company and the regiment was sent to quell the uprising of the Indians on the plains in the West. He came home as the commander of his regiment with the rank of Major, and by brevet, a Colonel. He had been a brave officer and had won the love of his men and of the soldiers generally.

After the war he settled at Eddyville and was the Postmaster there for many years. He also edited and published a paper called The Eddyville Gazette. He died at the Soldiers Home at Dayton, Ohio, and is buried there.

In 1866 I left Iowa and went to Michigan to live with my mother's youngest sister whose namesake I was. The winter of 1866 I taught school at LaSalle, Michigan and the following year your mother taught a country school a few miles below Vienna. After completing the school at Eddyville, I went to Oskaloosa to attend the college there and your mother went with me. After finishing her school at Vienna your mother went to Putnam County, Ohio where she taught school two or three years, the family in the meantime having moved back to Ohio, before her marriage to your father, whom she had met soon after her arrival in Ottawa.

April 18th, 1867 I was married to Staley Brower of Putnam County, Ohio. The ceremony took place at Dr. T. J. Thompson's (an uncle) in Vienna, Michigan. March 1869 your mother was married to your father, Samuel Prescott Wright at Ottawa. April 14th, 1872 your Aunt Martha was married to Charles Woodward at Ottawa. So we all, practically, married Putnam County men.

In the winter of 1868 I went to Evansville, Indiana to meet Mr. Brower, who had preceded me, and there we made our home for five years. In the fall of 1873, we moved back to Ottawa, wintering at Ottawa and moving to Deshler, (Ohio) in the spring. In 1877 we moved to Berlin, Worcester County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It was here your cousin Lulu was born. IN 1881 we moved to the state of Arkansas, where we continued to live until 1904, when we again pulled up stakes, and moved to Washington, where I expect to be until I go to a Better City.

You see I have been a great wanderer and indeed feel that I'm a pilgrim and a stranger, and that in this world there's no abiding home. One day in that Country will make up for all footsore steps I have traveled in this land of lights and shadows. I have revisited my old home in Iowa twice within forty years since I left it. The first visit was thirty-five years after leaving it.

On that occasion I went from Van Buren, Arkansas, to chaperone two Indian girls to Columbia College in Missouri. These young ladies were nearly white. Their father was a white man from Dayton, Ohio, - he is now dead - and their mother was a half-blood Cherokee Indian. They had an elegant home in the Indian Territory, eight miles from Van Buren and lived, as do the wealthy white people. Their father had come there in an early day, and, marrying a rich Cherokee girl, had become a millionaire, as the guardian of these girls told me, who, himself, was a banker, at Van Buren with the complete control of the Statler hundreds of thousands.

When we took the train for St. Louis on the way to Columbia, he went to the car with us, and taking a large roll of bills from his pocket handed it to me, saying, "Be good to the girls and young Mrs. Brower." I had never before had so much money with which simply to be good to myself.

The habits of a lifetime are not easily overcome and mine had been very abstemious from my youth up, and I assure you that Mr. Meyer received a large share of the roll back, for which I was censured. He made me take \$20 as pay

for my services, saying that he was the best judge as to what my remuneration should be. He had bought three tickets for us and telephoned to Little Rock for the best berths on a sleeper for us, so that when we arrived a porter awaited us at the train and helped to make the change to the sleeper. Supper had also been ordered for us and was a fine one. After that our meals were served on the train until we reached Columbia, where I left my charges, of whom I had grown a little weary. It is not in my disposition to wheedle or coddle, and this is what these young ladies expected as due their position and wealth.

So much for the Columbia trip. As I was so near Iowa, after leaving the girls I proceeded on my way again to see the dear old home on Rocky Branch. I arrived in the morning and went to a livery stable, ordered a carriage and driver to take me down into the old neighborhood. The driver - a boy of sixteen drove to the son of one of my old schoolmates at the Rock Schoolhouse. He knew everybody, and we stopped everyone we met going into town and renewed their acquaintance, they getting out of their wagons or buggies to greet me. I stopped at many of the houses on the way, but the people I had known were nearly all gone and strangers occupied their places. At one house I got out and asked the woman if I could get a drink at the old pump by the kitchen door, explaining my wish for so doing. She went to the pump with me and began to draw the water. I said to her, "let me draw the water, for I want to take hold of this handle once more." Looking very sympathetic she said "This is not the old pump of '62; that is gone long ago." When I relinquished the handle, but as I drank from that dipper, I said to her, "Well, it looks just like the same pump, and this dipper hangs just in the same place, and I know that this water is from the same old fountain."

Going two miles further thru familiar lanes shaded by the same old trees, we reached the old farm, I wanted to see if I could once more live over again the past - the years of my happy childhood and girlhood. As we drove up to the house, a new house, the boy said, "This is the place." My heart was in my throat as I got out of the buggy, and without replying to the boy, started down the familiar road that led to the old house, the dear old house, I had known. But alas, only a mound of earth marked the hallowed spot where once had stood our home. It was all that remained of the hearthstone, and all that I could find to show where the house had been. Crumbled bits of brick here and there mixed with the earth were all the marks left of the location of the fireplace.

As I stood there looking at the ruin that weed-covered mound became an attraction again. It was a fireside where mother had gathered her children, while she read from the leather covered Bible that always lay on the mantelshelf above. Mother's voice reading the Psalms - there on bended knees invoking God's blessing on her dear ones clustered around her, and the soldier husband, who away in the Southland was periling his life in the cause of his country, all this I heard and saw again.

Breaking down the weeds with my hands and kneeling down - time rolled back his scroll to the years almost of my babyhood - away back to the building of the

house, and the careless happy years before the War, and then the sixties and the War, which so long cast its pall over our land filling it with graves and its homes with empty chairs - lonely years for those who stayed at home and wept and prayed for the absent loved ones.

As I lay there I felt as if I should like to die there, that life was too full of bitterness, and I could go no further, that my strength had failed me, and to die there on that mound consecrated by my mothers prayers would be a real happiness, a fit ending to a life so full of strange vicissitudes as mine had been.

Of the trees and shrubbery planted by loving hands nothing was left but a few old gnarled willows that stood as sentinels guarding the sacred memories of the past. Retracing my steps thru field and orchard, I went to brother Almon's grave and the little baby sister's grave. They are buried on a hillside overlooking the Des Moines River. It is many years since they were buried there, and the stones were so gray and moss covered, I could scarcely read the inscriptions. My brother was buried in 1859. He died of typhoid fever November 10th 1859, and if he had lived until the 27th of the month he would have been thirteen years old. The last time he ever went anyplace, he and I went over to the Rock Schoolhouse to church to hear Mr. Nye preach. Coming home that night he undressed and went to bed saying "I'm not well." He was never up again. Henry Heacock who had taught our school the previous winter said that Almon Wilcox was the brightest boy in school. He was very quiet, studious disposition and rather serious. He was much like his mother. When on his deathbed he often asked his father or mother to sing the hymn - especially the stanza, -

To Jesus I fled for rest,
He bade me cease to roam
And lean for support on His breast,
Till he conduct me home.

The first snow of the winter covered the ground the next morning after they laid him away and it broke my heart to think that while we were sitting by a good warm fire he was lying out in the cold. His was the first death in the family, and now nearly all are gone - father, mother, Almon, Fremont, Elmira, and the baby sister, who died of croup. She was eight months old and died March 8th, 1864.

I felt that I am fast slipping into the shadows along the Borderland, which divides us from the country beyond where they need no light save the glory of God. Standing at the foot of the graves I repeated myself, "Oh how scattered, how scattered, was that once happy household!" Only these two will ever rest there within the sound of the old river which perpetually means a requiem for the home so desolated as ours has been. Kissing the stones at their feet I went back to the buggy, and, making a circle of the neighborhood including the old Rock Schoolhouse, which too, is gone - a frame standing in its place. I went back to Eddyville and took the night train for the South. I never can repeat the visit and live.

THE HOPKINS

Of my mother's family I know even less than of my fathers, he having written a short story of his. The first members of the family of whom I have any knowledge are my great-grandparents, Joseph Hopkins and his wife Olivia (Howard) Hopkins. My grandfather Hopkins was born at St. Mary's corner's Vermont, and just prior to the War of 1812 he moved to Michigan and was among the early settlers harassed so ruthlessly by the Indians allies of the British. Just before the Battle of the Raisin River my grandfather with others sought refuge for their families at Fort Meigs, while they went to meet the enemy. At the Battle of Raisin River he was killed and scalped by an Indian. I do not suppose he ever received any burial. He left a family of six children of whom I have no account. Uncle Howard was seventeen and my grandfather (Dan) was twelve. Uncle Howard became the mainstay of the family after his father's death. They had lost everything by the war, and it was almost impossible for them to live.

My grandfather, Dan Hopkins, being a very delicate boy was not able to perform hard labor, if there had really been any for him to have done. A friend of the family, a merchant of Detroit, whose name I cannot recall, adopted him and thus he became separated from his family and never saw his mother or any member of his family until he became a man. Such incidents were very common in those days when a few miles separated people further than hundreds do now. The names on the family record are; Howard, George, Almon, Dan, Harris, and Sarah.

The man who adopted grandfather treated him as a son and educated him well. Why he did not leave him more wealth I cannot say. After leaving Detroit at twenty-one years of age grandfather tried various vocations, teaching, merchandising, etc., without much success until after his marriage to Sarah Carter, of Hardin Centre, Shelby County, Ohio in 1824.

He had been especially educated as an engineer, and after his marriage to grandmother, he followed his profession more or less. He surveyed the road that was used (and may be now) for the Bellefontaine and Indianapolis R.R.. He surveyed other roads and land in Logan County. Surveyor for successive years in the twenties, he also surveyed a part of the Miami Canal and I think almost laid out the city of Bellefontaine. He did surveying in other counties and as late as 1843 surveyed in Putnam County. It was because he failed of election to the county office of Surveyor that he moved back to Bellefontaine where he had lived nearly all his life after his marriage. He was a devout Christian gentleman and all my information concerning him serves to elevate him as a superior man in every vocation in life. He seems to have been a highly educated, refined and polished man. He never accumulated wealth, but built a very substantial two-story brick dwelling and lived in comfortable circumstances. I remember the house distinctly, for Mother took me there to visit twice.

There are several little incidents connected with these visits which space forbids relating. My grandparents had a family of fifteen children, of whom my mother

was the eldest. The order of their advent I think was as follows (Mother used to have a written record of the family); Jemima, Almon, Martha, Ann, Hester Jane, Elizabeth, William, Mary, Addison, Newton, Sarah Eliza, Owen Johnston, Livingstone, Mourtie, and Frank. There was a pair of twin boys and another son, who died in infancy.

Grandfather died of pneumonia in Bellefontaine in 1847, and was buried there. I remember of seeing his grave and the headstone, and hearing Mother read the inscription on it. I was with mother also when she, finding a coat of his hanging in a closet, put her hand in a pocket, drew out a hymnbook, and cried over it. It proved to be the coat he last worn to church and the hymnbook was left where he had put it, two years before. Mother kept it, and it was yet in the old Iowa home the last I knew of it.

After Grandfather's death grandmother remained in the old home until she married Judge McClish of Putnam County. He died four years afterwards, and she then went to Toledo to live, to be near Uncle Almon, who was then a prosperous businessman and a member of the Board of Trade. He was President of the Board at one time. If you ever go to Toledo again, hunt up his old place on Monroe Street. He was a prominent shipping and commission merchant and his warehouse was at the foot of Monroe on Walter Street. I've been in his office many a time. Grandmother fell and broke a limb in her old age, and was forced to give up housekeeping, and finally went to live with her daughter, Sara Eliza (Mrs. T. J. Thompson) at Otterbein, Indiana, where she died and is buried.

She was an extraordinary woman for her time. She was renowned for her good housekeeping and as a cook. She was also a very fine needlewoman. She raised a family of honorable sons and daughters, who followed their fathers and mothers example of becoming, and living, members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1872 I received a letter written with her own hand, which I prize highly. In it she admonishes to be a Christian. In referring to mother's death she quoted the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. I am sure she is now one of that great company.



CARTER FAMILY

Stephen Carter killed by Indians in BlockHouse, Cincinnati Ohio. My great-grandfather, David Carter, was born in New Jersey and had no record other than that of an honorable Christian man and prosperous farmer. I do not know when he moved west, but it was at an early date. I have been told that it is from him we get our "Hopkins Pride," tho that was thru his daughter, who became the wife of Dan Hopkins.

He had great pride of birth and treated those around him with great condescension. I remember that on my visit to Bellefontaine once as a child, I

was taken to my great grandparent's farm near Hardin Center - nine miles from Sidney, Ohio. He was not living, but my grandmother was, and she played with us as children, trying to catch us as we ran by her chair, expressly for that purpose. She was a helpless paralytic in her feet and couldn't walk a step. It was at her house I ate so much cherry pie, I got sick and I have never liked it since.

I can remember this house also. It was large one-story brick with dormer windows in the attic seams, and had porches back and front. We ate on the back porch for it was summertime. It had a large fireplace and a tall chimney at either end. I remember how a large orchard slipped towards the road. It was full of large green apples which I was forbidden to eat under penalty of severe punishment.

My great-grandmother was also from New Jersey and her name before marriage was Jemima Hathaway. As was the custom in those days she had been the mother of numerous sons and daughters. They are named as follows: Abraham, Elizabeth, Sarah, Ann, Jane, Maria, Rachel, Phebe, and Abner. There is one dead, a baby, whose name I have forgotten. There were seven sisters that were all considered beauties, and every young man for miles around was ready to draw a lance to win their favor, so the story goes. I can remember three of them besides grandmother.

Aunt Ann Johnson was a widow with one child, John, and took care of grandmother until she died. Aunt Rachel also was named Johnson, her husband being a brother of Aunt Ann's husband. Aunt Phoebe married a man named Thomas Richardson, a farmer living near there. Aunt Maria married a tailor by the name of Gillispie, and the last I know of her, she died at Huntington, Indiana. Aunt Rachel lived at Delphos, Ohio.

That is all I know of them. I think that great-grandmother and father Carter were buried on their farm, which was the custom in those days. During the war my father met two of Aunt Phoebe's sons in the Army. They belonged to an Ohio Infantry Regiment; I have forgotten the number. Aunt Ann remarried and her last name was Van Horn. She lived in Mercer County, but I do not remember the locality. I haven't forgotten however, when she died, and that father and mother went in a sleigh (called a jumper) to her funeral and how sad I felt over her death for I yet had not forgotten how nice she was to me at great-grandmothers when I visited there. I never knew what became of her son.

Aunt Rachel had two sons and a daughter. The sons were Clay and Frank. I did not know the sister's name. When I knew Aunt Rachel she lived at St. Mary's, Ohio, where she and Uncle William, her husband, kept what was called in those days, a tavern. They called their place The Ohio House, and in theirs was the final starting place when we moved to Iowa. We went from their house to the canal boat, and as Uncle William bade me goodbye, he put a package of candy into my hand, which did much to alleviate the pain at parting from him.

Once these people formed a part of my life and I knew them as I know people I meet now, but long since they have passed out of my life, and even knowledge. Is it because I am getting old and ready to pass away too? In Arkansas I accidentally learned one day that a pupil's mother had been raised in St. Mary's Ohio, but he knew nothing else. A few days afterwards I met his father, who was cashier of the Citizen's Bank, and he said to me, "Mrs. Brower, Linzee (his son) tells me you have been at St. Mary's Ohio." "Yes." "Did you know the Reely's?" I then explained to him my acquaintance in St. Mary's. It turned out that they knew Uncle William and Aunt Rachel well and had been at The Ohio House. As soon as Mrs. Reely from Pine Bluff came up to see her daughter, she was brought to see me, as they remarked, to renew old acquaintances. See what time had wrought! Thru the inventions of railroads, telegraphs, and telephones, the distance, the thousands of miles is shortened to a few hours, or even to a few minutes. There was poor grandfather, when he went to Detroit, was farther from his mother than we are from St. Petersburg today!

Thus ends my narrative of events connected with my family, as I recollect them, or gleaned them from folklore stories to which I listened when a child. A great many of them seem fit to receive the name of lamplight stories of my family tree as it was while we sat around at night that most of these tales were told. There are some events, which I did not relate here. I only told those which would give you an idea of the character and standing of your forefathers, as far back as I knew. There are skeletons in every closet and one in every generation builds a glass house. None of those have I opened, nor have thrown any stones at.

It is not in years, but in deeds we live. You must conclude the history in your own way. Every man writes his own history, by noble deeds, or utter failure.

I have made many errors in composition, and you will not look for any of the elegant phrases or colorings of rhetoric, I hope. It is a plain story told without frills or adornments of any kind, by a plain old woman. If you revise it, or rewrite it send me a copy. Remember, I came in with the telegraph, and before the telephone, and hundreds of other modern necessary inventions was I. With much love I bequeath to you the only written history of your mothers family.

Affectionately,
Aunt Lyde

Dare to have a purpose set,
Keep it; and do not forget
You are monarch of your own,
Dare pursue against the stream,
Your Ideal and your dream;
Keep your soul a King supreme ON HIS THRONE

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