

1884 HISTORY OF AUDRAIN COUNTY

History of Audrain County, Missouri: written and compiled from the most authentic official and private sources, including a history of its townships, towns and villages; together with... biographical sketches of prominent citizens

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CHAPTER VIII

PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP

Boundary - Early Settlers - Voters of 1839 - By An Old Stager- Laddonia - Its History -Business Directory

George, Abraham, Richard and William Talley were born and raised in England, but settled in Halifax county, Virginia, at a very early date. George and William came to Missouri in 1817, and settled in Howard county, where they remained two years, and then moved to Boone county.

William settled in Audrain in 1829, and George in 1831. The latter married Martha Wilson; their children were William, Jr., Sally, James, Martha, Harriet, George, Boswell W., Wiley and Judith. William Talley, Sr. married Judith Wilson, of Virginia, and they had Elizabeth, John, Daniel, Wiley, Berry, Jennie, George, William and Lethe.

Hugh Stephenson, of Ireland, settled in Pennsylvania, and fought under Washington during the Revolutionary War. His children were John, Hugh, Richard and Marcus. The three latter also served in the Revolutionary War. Marcus married Agnes Hinkson, and they had Polly, Elizabeth, Hugh, Nancy, Marcus, Peggy and Garret. Mr. Stephenson removed to Missouri in 1807, and died in 1814, while on his way to Howard county. His widow afterward married Thomas Reynolds, of Kentucky, and died in 1865. Garret, son of Marcus Stephenson, married Effie A. Blue.

Duncan Blue, of Scotland, married his cousin, Effie Blue, and came to America and settled in North Carolina before the Revolution. He joined the American army when the war began, and served during the struggle for independence. After the war he removed to Christian county, Ky. His children were Daniel, Neal and Peggy. Neal was in the War of 1812. He married Elizabeth Galbreth, of North Carolina, and they had Duncan, John, Sally, Effie A., Peggy, Flora, Eliza, Emeline, Caroline, and Charlotte E. Several of the children died young, and in 1831 Mr. Blue and the rest of his family came to Missouri and settled in Audrain county.

Gideon Canterbury, of Canterbury, England, emigrated to America and settled in North Carolina. He served three years and a half in the Revolutionary War, and afterward married Nancy Franklin, by whom he had Reuben, John, Nimrod and Benjamin. Reuben and John settled first in Virginia, and afterward removed to Kentucky, where they died. Nimrod married Mary Franklin, and settled in Monroe County, Mo., in 1835. Benjamin married Susannah Hooser, of Tennessee, and settled in Audrain county, Mo., in 1836. His children were Franklin P., Reuben M., John C., Benjamin F., Narcissa, Mary, Susan, Nancy J. and Elizabeth. Mrs. Canterbury died in August, 1875, in the 94th year of her age.

Thomas Hubbard was a Hard-Shell Baptist preacher. He bought a Bible that was published in London in 1708, for which he paid \$100 in Continental money. The Bible is now in possession of his great grandson and namesake, Thomas Hubbard, of Audrain county, and it contains the genealogy of the Hubbard family from 1718 to the present time. Thomas Hubbard had a son named Thomas, who also was a Baptist preacher. He was born in 1722, and learned the ship carpenter's trade, he married Anna Brent, of Pennsylvania, and they had one son, James. Mr. Hubbard was married the second time to Anna Yerby, and they had Gilbert, Thomas, Hill and Estell. He was married the third time to Anna Yarp, by whom he had Jabez, Mary, Asap, Ebenezer, Nancy, Hulda and Harriet. James, the eldest son, settled in Kentucky.

Gilbert settled in Howard county, Missouri, in 1807. Thomas settled in Washington county, Missouri. Hill died while he was a boy. Estell married St. Clair Ledger, of Kentucky. Jabez was a member of the Legislature from St. Charles county in 1823-24. He died from the effects of intemperance. Asap settled in Howard county in 1808, and participated in the Indian War of 1812. He was a carpenter, and a Hard-Shell Baptist preacher. He married Mary Stephenson, who was living in New Madrid at the time of the great earthquakes. She was, a granddaughter of Col. Hugh Stephenson, of Revolutionary fame. The children of Asap Hubbard were Henry C., Thomas J., Agnes E. and Fannie F. he settled in Audrain county in 1830.

James Peery and his wife, who was a Miss Jameson, were natives of Ireland. They settled in Tazewell county, Virginia, and had Thomas, James. John, William, and Samuel. Mr. Peery and his son Thomas were both soldiers in the Revolutionary War. The former was wounded severely, and the latter was killed. Samuel Peery married Sarah Cartman, by whom he had John, William, Joseph, Thomas, Martha, Elizabeth, Althamira and Matilda. Thomas married Narcissa Canterbury, and split rails at 50 cents per 100 to get money to pay the parson. He paid his first taxes in Audrain county in 1837 to Jack Willingham, who was the first sheriff. His taxes amounted to two wolf scalps and half a pound of powder. Mr. Peery is a devoted Methodist, and loves to attend camp-meetings. He was present at a camp-meeting a good many years ago, when a violent rain and wind storm came up and broke the ridge pole of the large tent, which let the canvas sink down in the shape of a funnel, into which a large quantity of water gathered, when some

one cut a hole in the canvas and the water rushed out with such violence that the preachers were washed out of the pulpit and the women away from the altar.

In addition to the names of the old settlers above mentioned, we give another short list of names, which includes the name of every man who was living in the township in 1839. In August of that year an election was held to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Hon. A. G. Harrison, member of Congress from Callaway county. At that election the following votes were cast J. C. Canterbury, D. Galbreath, R. M. Canterbury, J. Speery, David Martin, Thomas Peery, Calvin M. McCarty, D. G. Blue, R. L. Thompson, N. Blue, F. P. Canterbury, B. Canterbury, Solomon Peery, B. McCarty.

HISTORY OF CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIP 52, RANGE 7

[By An Old Stager.]

The first settlement was made about the year 1850, by Jacob Harlinger, who had but a short time before laid down his arms in that little "unpleasantness" of the United States against the Mexican government. Jacob took up his claim on the north-east quarter of section 2, now known as the Allison, or Moss farm. But little is known of this man beyond this: After building a cabin and fencing a small field, he offered his claim to one Abner Smith for the sum of \$300. Abner was a mighty hunter, and called himself the modern Esau. His reply to Jacob, who from his name we might suppose was a lineal descendant from Israel, was, that he would not give \$300 for all the land within the sound of a bugle blown from his cabin door on a calm morning. Abner afterwards changed his mind, first taking a trip to Texas. Harlinger sold out finally to Jas. Allison and Frank Wicks. . When James Allison and Elizabeth, his wife, first moved to what was then known as the "Lick Creek Country" it was a dreary looking place indeed, especially so to one who had been used to the cultivated and well improved farms further east. But it was a paradise for the hunter and sportsman. Nothing but grass as far as the eye could reach. As Mrs. Allison stood in her cabin door and watched the teams that had brought a portion of their household goods slowly returning after more storage, winding their way over what seemed to be a boundless sea of grass, and at last fading out of sight ,she sometimes thought " farewell."

James, or " Jim," as he was called by all who knew him, lost no time in getting to work with his ax and maul in making rails to enclose his farm. Hard labor drove dull care away during the week, and Sunday was his hunting day. He was seldom if ever out of meat. Many an old buck stopped short at the crack of his gun, and many an old gobbler gobbled his last gobble to grace Jim's table.

If a stranger came to Jim's cabin, he was sure to find the latch-string on the outside, and upon entering, he always found good cheer and hearty welcome. He was hospitable to strangers, good to his friends, but had no love for his enemies. He could tell a good story, and in this way often entertained his friends. The writer heard him relate the following: One Sunday Jim wounded a large buck, which doubled up and started for the creek (which was out of its banks), the dog and Jim close behind it. As the deer plunged into the water, the dog caught it by the tail, and Jim, seeing that the deer and dog were having a lively time, and believing that his dog needed his assistance, he also plunged into the water and caught the deer by the horns, getting the animal between himself and a sapling. The deer fought desperately, but Jim and his dog proved too much for him in the end. Just as the deer was about to give up the battle, Bill Ellis who had just settled on what is now known as the Asher farm, came by. Jim seeing him, said, "Hello, Bill, got him, by jingo! Come in and cut his throat, and I will give you half of him." Bill said he did not have any meat at home, but would not spoil his Sunday clothes for all of the deer. Jim finally managed to cut the deer's throat, by opening his own knife with his teeth, and then pulled him to the shore. After the deer had been brought to the shore, it proved to be so large and fine that Ellis asked Jim to give him a part of it.

Whereupon Jim told him to go to that country where he would not need any Sunday clothes.

When the war broke out Jim went with the Union, and made a good and faithful soldier. He died at Pilot Knob, and was buried in the cemetery one mile south of Perry, in Ralls county, Mo.; a marble monument marks his last resting place. His widow married Thomas Rice, and they now reside in the Indian Nation.

Next to claim our attention is F. C. Wicks. He and Allison were brothers-in-law, Wicks having married Allison's sister. He owned and improved the Moss place, but not having room enough, he sold out to Henry Norris and went to Louisiana, where he tried keeping hotel, but not making money as fast as he desired, he erected a steam mill six miles north of this township. This investment, like the other, was a failure, for one day the boiler "busted," and blighted Wicks' hopes. In 1859 we find him again a citizen of the township, and living on a place on West Lick, now owned by Joel Moomow. He then moved to Santa Fe, Monroe county, before the war, where he again commenced the mill business. He was a Union man.

There is a story that the militia were dressed in citizens' clothes; the only thing to distinguish them from the rebels was a white band on their hats. Wicks was one of the militia, and being out one day buggy riding with his wife, he neglected to take off his white hat band. A squad of "Rebs" saw him and stopped him, and wanted to know why he was wearing a piece of his shirt on his hat? Wishing to have a little fun, they gave Wicks his choice, to either eat his hat band, or go with them. He preferred to do the former thing, and actually ate and swallowed the hat band.

After the close of the war, Wicks went into the claim agency business at Salisbury, Mo., and from that place he went to St. Louis, where he again engaged in hotel keeping. Henry Norris remained long enough to plant and raise one crop, but taking the Kansas fever, he sold to Abner Smith and left the country. Abner was originally from Virginia, and came to Missouri in 1834, and settled in the village of Bowling Green. He came to this township in 1854, and was the most noted character that ever settled in this section. He was

fond of fishing and hunting, liked a good joke, and was an excellent judge of pure whisky. He told the following story on W. P. Cook: Cook was like a great many other Eastern boys. He stopped a few weeks at Uncle Abner's house, hearing him tell his hunting stories. William concluded to go hunting, and accordingly he and Uncle Abner started one morning to try their luck. They had not gone more than a quarter of a mile from the house when three deer jumped up in about 20 feet of William, who yelled out, "There they go, see!" "Why don't you shoot?" shouted Abner, at the same time firing his own gun and killing one of the deer. "Why didn't you shoot?" said Abner. "Oh! I'm hunting snipe, I am; a deer looks too innocent to be shot down in that way."

In the fall of 1856 the Martinsburg and Ralls county road was laid out. The county court appointed Abner Smith road overseer, to open said road through this township. He was instructed to go before a justice of the peace and get his allotment of hands. The nearest justice was Strahan Erp, who lived about ten miles away, on a straight line. Upon his arrival at the justice's, that dignitary inquired of Smith what township he lived in. "Township! why I live on Lick creek." The justice told him that, he lived in either Prairie or Cuivre, and Abner returned without getting his allotment of hands.

Abner went back the second time and got his allotment of hands, and a few days thereafter put them to work cutting out the road. The northeast corner of section 2, on the Ralls county line, was the starting point. John Canterberry, Jonah Hutton, and a Scotchman by the name of Ruff were the viewers and locators. Abner Smith, we believe, erected the first frame house in the township; the writer of these sketches did the carpenter work.

A boy by the name of Fike, or Pike, about twelve years old, thinking that he was badly treated at home, concluded he would run away. He left his home at the head of Spencer creek one afternoon to cross the prairie to reach the head of Cuivre creek, and from there he intended to go to Loutre creek. This was about 35 years ago. Somewhere on the prairie between the present villages of Vandalia and Farber, he saw the sun go down. The country around him was one vast prairie, with no objects to attract his eye other than a few scattered trees near by, which it is supposed then stood near the present railroad pond, on the headquarters of Hickory creek. The boy struck out for the tree highest up on the prairie, thinking that he would rest there for the night. When he reached the tree it was quite dark. He could occasionally hear a kind of scratching noise among the limbs, but would pound upon the tree at such times when everything would be quiet. He became so excited that he could not sleep, and wished a thousand times that he was at home and that he had never started away. As the light began to dawn in the east he stepped a few feet out from under the tree, and upon looking up he saw a large panther that looked like it was sleeping. This of course frightened him badly, and seeing the timber away in the distance, on Spencer creek, whence he had started, he struck a "bee line," and if ever a boy made good time he did it. It is supposed that the boy never left home any more with the intention of running away. If, however, he did, we are sure that he never went by the way of the tree, among whose branches he saw the panther.

During the war, and being in St. Charles county, I heard some men telling hunting stories. One of the men said he knew one Abner Smith to kill eleven turkeys at one shot. Seeing Abner afterwards, I asked him how he did it. He said he did not know how many he had killed at the time spoken of at one shot, but got as many as fourteen. He said he found where the turkeys roosted; near by was a big tree which had been blown down with the leaves on.. He cleared off a small spot of the ground and shelled off some corn. This he did for several days until the turkeys would come and eat of the corn every morning. He then cut two straight sticks, fastened them close together on the ground, and put some wheat between them. He had an old United States musket which he loaded with slugs, and fastened it securely in the forks of two sticks, in range with the baited place between the poles. He tied a string to the trigger, and then concealed himself in the branches of the fallen tree to await the coming of day-light. When daylight came the turkeys began to fly down from their roost, and when about as many had trust their heads down as could well do so between the poles, Smith pulled the string and fired his gun. It was a clear, still, frosty morning, and the report of the gun sounded and reverberated like the noise of a forty-pound cannon. Smith killed so many turkeys that he could not carry them; he went home and hitched his horse to his sled and returned, and then piled on until he had counted fourteen, which was a good load for his horse to pull.

A wolf is a very cowardly, cunning, sneaking animal. A wolf had lost one of its fore feet. The farmers had tried many ways to trap it; they had tried steel traps, but with no success. The wolf would throw their traps, by digging under with its paw, and turning them upside down. They finally gave up the idea of catching it, and sent for Uncle Abner (of whom we have been speaking) to come and try his skill. He came and began operations at once. There had been a light fall of snow, and Abner went out to lay plans to trap the wolf. As he was walking along through the timber a deer jumped up near the head of a ravine, when Abner shot and killed it. He took the best part of the deer and returned to the house. Next morning he went back to the place where he had killed the deer. He saw the tracks of the wolf in the snow, and knew that he would return again in the evening to the carcass. Abner took his trap, put it into the water which was near the place where the deer was killed, and then took the carcass of the deer and hung it up over the spot where the trap was secreted. The apron of the trap was just out of sight under the water. Abner procured some moss and put on the apron of the trap, just so as it would show on the top of the water. A wolf never wets his feet if he can prevent it. The next morning Abner made a visit to his trap, and was greatly elated to see the wolf had been caught.

One day I killed eleven deer, and sat down on a hog at night to rest. Presently I heard a wolf howling to the right of me, and in a moment another cue answered it to my left. It was not long before I heard them all around me, and they were constantly coming nearer and nearer I became alarmed and did not know just what to do. I thought of climbing a tree, but concluded to fire off my gun, which I did, and then gave three

tremendous whoops. Afterwards everything was as still as death, and I heard no more wolves.

Abner sold to Luther Moss, who still resides on the place. Abner is now in Alabama. Luther is a native of Gallatin county, Kentucky and came to Missouri in 1865. He has made several trips to California, and is now the proprietor of a butcher shop in the town of Laddonia.

The first school meeting was held late in the fall of 1856, in a house known as the "Jackson House." All the citizens of the six miles square, who were legitimate voters, attended. C. E. Smith was made chairman of the meeting; Jonah Hatton, secretary. The work of the meeting was the formation of a school district. Some three years after, a meeting was called to meet at Henry Beal's to divide the district, to be known as East and West. Beal was the chairman, and F. C. Wicks, secretary. At this meeting a motion was made to divide the district by a line running north and south, through the center. The district stands this way now, excepting the south half of it has been formed into another district, known as district No. 3, and a school established in the town of Laddonia.

Lawrence A. Hudson taught the first school in district, No. 1, which was a subscription school. It was taught in a cabin, near the present site of Jesse Asher's house. Hudson was a citizen of Pennsylvania, and a good teacher. A man by the name of Young taught a school about the same time in district No. 2, on the farm now owned by Levi Poor, on the West Lick. Hudson and Young went to see the same young lady; her name was Delia Read. Young went to see her, and arranged for the wedding day. Hudson saw her afterwards, when she told him that if he would come over the following Sunday he would come to her wedding. Hudson was so surprised and chagrined that when parting with her, he said: "Let me tell you something you won't forget. I have been around this world a good deal and have seen a good many boys, but very few that did not have tails; this Pennsylvania dog may not show his tail for some time." With this speech he bowed out of her presence, and he was last seen wending his way across the prairie.

The next teacher to take charge of district No. 1 was James Gilliland, who is still a citizen of the township. The following persons were living in the east part of Prairie township at the beginning of the war: Jacob Harlinger, James Allison, Elizabeth Alison,* William Ellis, Abner Smith, Milton Cheatwood, Thomas Grimes, James Roach, Curtis E. Smith, John Thomas, James Corbett, John J. Smith, W. T. Cook, W. R. Cook, Charles Cook, W. H. Beal, G. W. Hoffman, J. J. Suter, T. C. Hudson, R. P. Safferns, Jesse R. Gililand, James Gililand, Philetus Stone, Wm. Beshears, James Carman, Tina Shultz, F. C. Wicks, Jonah Hatton, Dr. Roe, James Shell, Wm. Stuart, Thad. Stuart, Jno. R. Smith, Luther Moss, F. B. Manuel. The first sermon that was delivered in the township, was preached by Allen Gallagher, a Cumberland Presbyterian, a native of Tennessee. The same prayer that he opened his school with he used also at the beginning of his religious services. He went to his reward years ago. The Baptists came to the township about the same time; James Allison and wife, James Carman and wife, J. J. Suter and wife, were among the early members of the Baptist church.

James Gililand taught the first school in the new house of worship, which was erected in 1858. Gililand started also the first debating society that was organized in the township. The first question that was discussed by the society was - "Which has the greater influence over man, women or money. David Crocket and Buck Gililand were the chief disputants.

About the year 1853 Congress passed what was known as the Graduation Act, which produced a wonderful change in Audrain county. All lands that had been opened for sale and remained unsold at the time of the passage of the Graduation Act; were sold to actual settlers for the nominal sum of 12 1/2 cents per acre. Each person who was 21 years of age could enter 320 acres. The same land is now (1884) worth \$40 per acre. The first dance in the township took place at Bill Ellis' house, now the kitchen used by Mrs. Asher. Bill had a wood-chopping and rail-splitting just before Christmas in 1856; there was also a quilting party at the same time and place. Late that fall, three boys - Guss Beal, Abe Jackson and Jake French, came from Indiana; these boys were invited to the dance. They attended, and while there introduced the cotillion, which had never possibly been known in this part of Missouri. Jackson had been attending a dancing school before coming West, and French was a musician. Bill Ellis could play the fiddle, but could play only one tune -the Arkansaw Traveler.

Tom Grimes took a squatter's claim on the land now owned by Mrs. Dr. Mitchell and Mrs. B. Tutton. James Shell entered the place now owned by Frank Akridge. The place that Amos Morey now lives on and the farm of Benjamin Canterbury were entered by James Roach. Jonathan, his son, entered the 80 acres where Mr. C. C. Smith now lives.

* Now Mrs. Rice, in the Indian Nation.

LADDONIA

This town was laid out in July, 1871, by Amos Ladd and Col. Haydon, on the north-west quarter of the south-west quarter of section 36, township 52, range 7.

Jasper Judkins erected the first house in the place, which was occupied as a hotel by Mrs. Judkins. It is now a part of William Bybee's hotel. The first business house was opened by Jacob Todd. Daniel Dustman was the first post-master. The first school was taught by Mrs. Julia T. Benton in 1873. The first lumber yard was started by Moore & Benton in 1875. Dr. Freeman was the first physician. The first church was erected by the Baptists. J. R. Gililand was the first blacksmith and was known as the Laddonia joker. Peter J. Pierce opened the pioneer drug store. R. C. Graham shipped the first car load of stock. The first load of corn was unloaded on the morning of December 31, 1883, by Green Smith.

Thomas Able, live stock; Ernst Ahlfeldt, corn sheller manufacturer; Elder W. G. Barker, (Christian); Rev. W. V. Briggs, (Methodist); Mrs. Ollius P. Benning, milliner; Walter Boyd, lawyer; D. C. Bridgeford, coal mine, six miles north; A. L. Bruton & Bro. (Andrew L. and William S.), grocers and notions; Benton & Gililland (James T. Benton, James A. Gililland), real estate, loans, insurance and collections; James G. Bruton, notary public and postmaster; Wm. M. Bybee, proprietor Laddonia House; Lon D. Clark, live stock; J. W. Cox, physician; Cummings House, John T. Lewellen, proprietor; DeLaporte, Ward & Co. (J. C. DeLaporte, A. & J. Ward, Frank Barr), hardware and machinery; Marion L. Eastham, barber; Coleman Dass, boot and shoe-maker; W. L. Moss, meat market; Robert C. Graham, live stock; Hisey & James (Rufus Hisey, J. B. James), elevator; Wm. W. H. Jackman, editor and proprietor Laddonia Enterprise; Wm. B. Johnson, harness-maker; Archie G. Leet, agent C. & A. R. R., W. U. Tel. Co. and U. S. Express; Henry Leet, coal mine, two miles south; W. H. Logan, drugs; Moore & Kennen (David P. Moore, Edward C. Kennen), drugs and lumber; Myers & Pierce (Albeit B. Myers, Joel L. Pierce), furniture; J. H. Orebaugh, shoe-maker; Pendleton & Co. (J. A. Pendleton, James Landrum), grocers; Benj. F. Proctor, livery; People's Elevator Co. (W. D. Hughes, Joel L. Pierce), grain dealers; John H. Reighley, grocer; Reed & Gililland (J. W. Reed, J. A. Gililland), blacksmiths; S. V. Scanlan & Sons (Sarah V., Wm. H. and Edward E.), general merchants; Christopher A. Smith, livery; Rev. G. B. Smith, (Baptist); Miss Ida Spencer, milliner; C. C. Stevens & Co. (Curtis C. Stevens, John M. Mitchell), general store; H. W. Tramp, harness; Julian O. Terrill, physician; Samuel W. Welch, physician; Wilder & Son, (Barnabas H. and C. Arthur), general store.

PROGRESS

formerly known as, Littleby, is located in Prairie township, about seven miles north-east of Mexico. It has a population of 30, a Baptist church and a district school. Shipments from this point are live stock and grain. Mail stage to Mexico and Santa Fe semi-weekly.