

HISTORY  
OF  
Kane County, Ill.

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VOLUME II.

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ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS AND VIEWS

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CHICAGO  
THE PIONEER PUBLISHING CO.  
1908

Their family numbered seven children, five sons and two daughters, George, Peleg, N. S., Helen M., Joab, F. L., and Marcella Young. The last named is Mrs. Norris and the only one now living. The family was conspicuous in the pioneer life of the county and its members were prominent in promoting the growth and substantial upbuilding of this part of the state. Some of those named lived in Kaneville, while others were residents of Blackberry township.

Nathan S. Young, brother of Mrs. Norris, was a prominent citizen of Batavia, Illinois. He was born in Strafford, Vermont, August 20, 1818, and died December 2, 1907, when almost ninety years of age. He was at one time president of the First National Bank of Batavia, was for many years a member of the Batavia Board of Education and was a member on the first board of library directors. He read extensively and was a great student of history, also delighting in collecting old books and manuscripts, his library containing many valuable volumes and articles on the early history of Kane county. He kept a daily journal and weather record from 1840 until his death, more than fifty-seven years later. He was highly esteemed for his intelligence, his sound judgment and integrity, and few men have been assigned so many public trusts by their associates and neighbors. In his journal are found many interesting accounts of events of state and national importance. On the 8th of April, 1841, he wrote, "News was received by the passengers on board the stage of the death of William H. Harrison, president of these United States. As no papers were received to confirm the news, the report is doubtful." On the following day, April 9, he wrote, "Received today a confirmation of the news of the death of the president by a slip from the watchman's office containing the declaration from the heads of the department at Washington, stating that he died April 4, twenty minutes before ten o'clock a. m. Afflicting news this will be to a majority of the people, though many a loco will chuckle to himself at the result." In 1843, Nathan Young sold his interests in a store in Vermont to his partner, Justin S. Morrill, who was afterward Senator Morrill, and then came to the west to join other members of the family in Kane county.

Marcella Young spent her girlhood days under the parental roof and came with the family to Kane county. Here, on the 27th of April, 1853, she gave her hand in marriage to Hiram Norris, who was born in Erin, Chemung county, New York, November 23, 1828, a son of Mathew N. and Julia (Van Duzer) Norris. He attended the public schools and worked upon his father's farm during the period of his boyhood and youth. In 1844 he came with his father to Kane county and settled in Blackberry township, becoming connected with agricultural interests here. In 1850, attracted by the discovery of gold, he went to California and engaged in mining in that state and in Oregon. In December, 1851, he returned to Illinois and on the 27th of April, 1853, was married to Marcella Young. They became the parents of four children: Helen M., the wife of Joseph Slaker, a prominent farmer of Aurora township; Frank Y., of Evanston, Illinois; John, of Crandon, South Dakota; and Mathew Norris, who died December 25, 1896. Mrs. Norris now makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. Slaker.

Following their marriage Mr. Norris turned his attention to general agricultural pursuits and as the years passed successfully carried on the work of the farm. As his financial resources increased he added to his original holdings until he became the owner of a large and valuable farm of four hundred and fifty acres, in Blackberry township. For many years he carefully tilled the soil and was one of the most progressive and enterprising farmers of the locality. He was the first to introduce Hereford cattle into Kane county and was the owner of the famous bull Success, the sire of much fine stock in this county. Mr. Norris became well known as a prosperous agriculturist, and as a breeder of thoroughbred cattle his reputation extended far and wide. His business interests were always capably and honorably conducted and all who knew him entertained for him warm regard and high respect by reason of his upright life and many good qualities. He died March 25, 1904. Mrs. Norris has remained a resident of Kane county since her husband's death and is most highly esteemed in the community.

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#### H. A. BERTHOLD.

H. A. Berthold, whose constant powers are manifest in his connection with business interests which have been a source of general business progress as well as individual success, was born April 28, 1878, in Aurora, his parents being Anton and Elizabeth Berthold. The father for many years was identified with the business interests of Aurora and occupied an enviable position in commercial and industrial circles from the fact that he was always prompt, energetic and notably reliable. He was connected with the South Broadway stone quarry and with the lumberyard on Water street, but sold that property to the Street Railway Company for a power house and became connected with the brewing business, being associated with others in 1889 in the organization of the Aurora Brewing Company, of which he was elected secretary and treasurer. He thus remained in active connection with one of the large productive industries of the city until his death on the 13th of August, 1893.

At the usual age H. A. Berthold became a pupil in the public schools of Aurora, where he passed through the consecutive grades and eventually he entered the Metropolitan Business College of Chicago, from which he was graduated with the class of 1894. On putting aside his text-books he at once entered the office of the Aurora Brewing Company, leaving school at the early age of fifteen years on account of his father's death. In 1899 he was elected secretary of the company and was closely associated with J. Knell, Sr., in managing the business until he retired from active partnership in January, 1908, at which time Mr. Berthold was elected secretary and treasurer. He still continues in that dual position, bending his efforts to administrative direction and executive control. His keen business discernment and enterprise are factors in the success which is attending this industry. A man of resourceful business ability, however, he has not confined his attention to one line, but has been active in the successful conduct of other interests. In

1903 he was one of the original promoters of the Aurora Coliseum Company, which erected the largest and most complete auditorium in this city. He was also the original promoter of the Sulphur Springs Park, a health resort at Wedron, holds a large block of stock and has been active in developing this into one of the state's prominent health resorts.

Mr. Berthold manifests a contagious enthusiasm in his support of the democratic party, putting forth every effort in his power to promote its growth and secure its success. He belongs to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, to the Electric Aerie of Fraternal Order of Eagles and to the Western Catholic Union. Having spent his entire life in Aurora he is well known here and the readiness with which he dispatches business and the sound judgment which he displays in the control of important and complex business problems have gained him recognition as one of the representative young men of his native city.

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#### CONRAD F. ACKEMANN.

Conrad F. Ackemann as a member of the firm of Ackemann Brothers needs no introduction to the readers of this volume, for those who know aught of Elgin are familiar with its extensive mercantile establishment, which is the most important department store of the city. It has reached its present extensive proportions through a process of greater development and extension resulting from the well defined and carefully executed plans of Conrad F. Ackemann and his associates in business. He seems to see to the very center of things and from the center to the outmost circumference of possibility and has wrought along lines which are in keeping with the spirit of modern progress.

Mr. Ackemann was born in Winzler, Hanover, Germany, May 24, 1864, his parents being Henry and Minnie (Walbaum) Ackemann, who made two visits to America after their sons crossed the Atlantic and in 1892 came to the new world to remain. The father passed away in Elgin, but the mother is still living. In their family were seven children, the five sons, Henry, William D., August W., Conrad F., and Fred H., all being partners in the store. The two sisters are: Minnie, now the wife of L. H. Bower, of Elgin; and Lena, the wife of W. F. Bultmann, who is superintendent of the Cable Organ Company at Elgin.

Conrad F. Ackemann spent the first sixteen years of his life in the land of his nativity and in 1880 came alone to the United States, joining his brothers, William and August, who were then clerking in a dry-goods store in Elgin. He found no suitable employment until the 17th of September, after a residence here of nine weeks, when he accepted a position in the Chicago Clothing Store at a salary of five dollars per week, of which he paid four dollars and a quarter for board and room. He there continued until after the holidays, when he returned to Elgin in the spring of 1881. He



then went to work for the firm of Wilkins & McClure, proprietors of an exclusive crockery house. He continued with them for a year, working for twenty-five dollars per month. He first secured a situation in a general store in Lyons, Iowa.

In the meantime his brother William had entered business as the senior partner of the firm of Sauer & Ackemann and when Conrad F. Ackemann stepped into the store to say good-bye to them they determined to keep him and employed him. In May, 1882, his brother sold out and then purchased the store of Grott & Etna, proprietors of a dry-goods, boot and shoe business. Conrad F. Ackemann went with his brother and worked with him until a year after he married. He then purchased the Yondig Clothing, Furniture & Undertaking Store on River street and in 1889 removed to Douglas avenue under the National Hotel, in the same building in which his brother William was carrying on the dry-goods business. In 1891 their eldest brother, Henry Ackemann, of Germany, came to this country for the benefit of his health and in the spring of 1892 purchased the interest of Conrad F. Ackemann's partner and the firm of Ackemann Brothers was thus formed. This was the beginning of the present extensive establishment, now the property of the firm. In 1893 their brother Fred purchased a third interest in the furniture and undertaking business and established a house furnishing store. In 1893 the firm began the erection of the present building two stories in height with basement. On the 1st of February, 1894, the firm formed a partnership with William D. Ackemann, then in the dry-goods business, under the firm style of Ackemann Brothers, and on the 1st of April, 1894, they removed into their present building. They were also joined by their brother-in-law, W. T. Bultmann, who put in a line of pianos, organs, sewing machines and small musical instruments. They rented the basement until the panic of 1894. In May, 1894, they bought the C. J. Schultz stock of carpets, etc., which they opened up on the second floor. In 1897 the growth of their business justified the erection of a third story and they put in a passenger elevator and enlarged their freight elevator. The second floor was then converted into a department of millinery and ladies' garments. In the same year August W. Ackemann purchased an interest in the firm and at the present time the five brothers are associated in the business and are the only owners of this extensive department store, which is conducted under the firm style of Ackemann Brothers. Their main building is thirty-four by one hundred and forty-two feet, with a side building twenty-two by one hundred and thirty-two feet. Both are three stories in height with basement. This is the only store of its kind in the city, that is it handles more lines, the departments including dry goods, ladies' ready-to-wear garments, millinery, carpets and rugs, furniture and undertaking supplies, crockery, glassware and household hardware. The establishment has ever been governed by the most honorable principles. They have aimed to sell only goods of trustworthy quality, have originated and maintained the lowest possible prices, have aimed at perfect store service and delivery, and in fact have followed methods which should at once commend them to the patronage and the confidence of the general public.

On the 12th of October, 1897, Conrad F. Ackemann was married to Miss Millie Mutzelburg, a native of Elgin, and a daughter of Charles Mutzelburg. They are prominent socially in the city and they hold membership in St. John's Lutheran church, to the support of which they contribute generously. Since becoming a naturalized American citizen Mr. Ackemann has voted with the republican party and for one term represented the second ward in the city council. He was one of the organizers of the Elgin Commercial Club and takes an active and helpful interest in all those things which pertain to the city's development and upbuilding along political, social and moral lines. He certainly deserves classification with those men whose enterprising spirit, firm purpose and laudable ambition constitute the basis of their success, and in his business relations has made a most honorable name, while his labors have been crowned with gratifying prosperity.

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#### J. MICHAEL LIES.

J. Michael Lies is the owner of a farm of one hundred and fifty acres in Aurora township and only two miles from the city of Aurora. Here his entire life has been spent. He was born March 10, 1862, upon his farm, which became his father's property more than a half century ago. He is a son of John and Anna (Neu) Lies, both of whom were natives of Haller, Luxemburg, Germany. The father was born in 1818 and emigrated to America in 1851, at which time he took up his abode on section 11, Aurora township, Kane county, which property has since been the old family homestead. He always followed the occupation of farming both in Germany and in America, and was an enterprising, energetic man who met with fair success in his work in the fields. In December, 1844, he was married to Miss Anna Neu, whose birth occurred in Luxemburg, February 18, 1824. For more than a half century they traveled life's journey together and were then separated by the death of Mr. Lies, who passed away May 29, 1895, at the age of seventy-six years and seven months. His wife survived him until December 14, 1907, and was eighty-three years of age at the time of her death.

They were the parents of ten children: Susan N., the wife of Nicholas Frieders, a resident farmer of Aurora township; Susan, now the wife of Michael Daleiden, of Aurora; Mary, the deceased wife of Frank Fabrizius; Elizabeth, the wife of John Reines, living in Virgil township, Kane county; Margaret, whose home is in Batavia, Illinois; Peter, living in Batavia township; J. Michael; Susan C., the wife of Peter Petit, of Aurora township; M. John, who died in 1896; and Angeline, who died at the age of two years.

J. Michael Lies was a pupil in the district schools to the age of fourteen years, after which he gave his undivided attention to assisting his father in the work on the home farm until twenty-three years of age. He then rented the farm and in 1894 he purchased fifty-seven acres on section 3, Aurora township, but never lived upon that place. He has always continued to reside on the homestead where he was born and which has been in the family

possession since 1852. It comprises one hundred and fifty acres of land which is naturally rich and productive and responds readily to the care and labor bestowed upon it. It is pleasantly and conveniently located near Aurora and within sixty rods of the Aurora and Chicago electric line. Everything about the farm is kept in good condition, the buildings are substantial, and gratifying crops are gathered annually.

On the 10th of February, 1885, Mr. Lies was married to Miss Mary K. Petit, a daughter of Michael and Katharine (Deville) Petit, both of whom were natives of Luxemburg. Her father was born August 9, 1832, and came to Kane county, Illinois, in 1851. In 1860 he married Katharine Deville and then lived upon a farm in Aurora township until 1894, when Mr. Petit retired from active life and took up his abode in the city of Aurora. Mrs. Lies was born October 24, 1864, on her father's farm in Aurora township. By her marriage she has become the mother of eleven children: Katie C., born May 11, 1886; Michael F., December 8, 1887; Susie F., March 9, 1890; Peter A., March 2, 1892; Margaret L., June 15, 1894; Joseph J., March 13, 1896; Carl Peter, February 1, 1899; Aloysius, June 19, 1901; Arnold, August 15, 1903; Maria, June 14, 1905; and Loretta, August 9, 1907.

In his political views Mr. Lies is a stalwart republican and has held the office of highway commissioner in Aurora township for thirteen years, being the incumbent in the office at the present time. Both he and his wife are members of the Annunciation Church of Big Woods in Aurora township. He has recently completed a fine new residence on his farm, with a big barn and outbuildings providing ample shelter for grain and stock. The house is modern in every particular, being supplied with bathroom, private system of water works, furnace and all modern equipments. The older children of the family assist the father in carrying on the farm and in addition to the work of the fields he operates a dairy. He has made steady progress in agricultural circles and is acknowledged the owner of one of the finest farm properties of this portion of the state.

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#### DORR BROTHERS.

Marshall and Haskell Dorr are well known as prominent farmers of Sugar Grove township, residing on Section 8, where they have about three hundred acres of rich and highly cultivated land. They were born upon this farm and it has since been their home. Their parents were natives of New Hampshire. The father, Solomon Dorr, came to Kane county in 1835, and settled on land in Sugar Grove township. He was a pioneer and of that rugged New England stock which has been an element not only in the development of New England, but in other sections of the country to which the sons of New Hampshire have removed.

Removing to the west in pioneer times Solomon Dorr cast in his lot with the early settlers of Kane county. Only three years before had the Black Hawk war occurred and there were still many evidences of Indian occu-

pancy in this part of the state. The city of Aurora was a little village of no industrial or commercial importance, and upon the site of various towns of the county, which are now thriving and enterprising places, there was at that time not a single house. The greater part of the land was still unclaimed and uncultivated, the timber was uncut and the streams unbridged, but even though the work of development had scarcely begun here Solomon Dorr recognized the fact that the natural resources and advantages were greater than were offered in New England, and he therefore established his home in Sugar Grove township. As the years passed he carried on general agricultural pursuits, and continued to reside upon the farm until his death, which occurred May 22, 1888. For only a few months had he survived his wife, who died February 20, 1887. She bore the maiden name of Elmira Gurler and came with her parents to Kane county in her girlhood days. Here she gave her hand in marriage to Solomon Dorr and they began their domestic life upon the farm which continued to be their home until they were called to their final rest. Here they reared their children to lives of usefulness and honor, instilling into their minds lessons of industry, diligence and temperance. In addition to the two sons whose names introduce this review there were two daughters in the family: Felicia F., who remains with the brothers upon the old home farm and manages the household duties; and Emogene, the wife of W. H. Baker, occupying a farm adjoining the old homestead in Sugar Grove township.

The birth of Marshall Dorr occurred May 10, 1839, while Haskell Dorr was born on the 22d of March, 1844. The latter was a pupil in the district schools until he reached the age of eighteen years, after which he assisted his father in carrying on the work of the home farm for a few years. In 1865 he visited some of the western states, largely spending that period in Iowa, however. He engaged in various occupations, but after looking over many agricultural sections of the west decided that there was no district more favorable for farming than Kane county, Illinois. Its soil is naturally rich and productive and responds readily to the care and cultivation bestowed upon it. Haskell Dorr, therefore, returned to Sugar Grove township and joined his brother Marshall in the operation of the home farm. This is a valuable tract of land of three hundred acres which they have brought under a high state of cultivation, and which is improved with many of the accessories and conveniences of a model farm of the twentieth century. Everything about the place indicates the careful supervision of the owners, who are men of well known business ability and enterprise and have led active and useful lives.

At the time of the Civil war Marshall Dorr responded to the country's call for aid and enlisted in the Union army as a member of Company E, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois Infantry. He remained at the front for three years and did active duty in defense of the old flag and the cause it represented. He has served as collector of Sugar Grove township, but both brothers have always preferred the quiet life of the farm to active participation in public affairs, although they have never been remiss in the duties of citizenship. They exert their right of franchise in support of the men



and measures of the republican party, and have cooperated in many movements that have proved of benefit to the community. During the years of their residence here Kane county has undergone a remarkable transformation as the work of development and improvement has been carried steadily forward, and all of the advantages and opportunities of the older east have been introduced. Their lives have been quietly passed in the active work of the farm, and they have contributed to the agricultural development of the county, making their place one of the productive farms of the community, the well tilled fields constituting an attractive feature in the landscape.

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### JAMES ALBERT YOUNG.

James Albert Young, the manager of the Aurora Nursery Company, and also well known as a scientific landscape gardener, was born in Nashville, Brown county, Indiana, July 30, 1872. He is a son of Rufus K. and Jane (Myers) Young, both of whom were natives of Belmont county, Ohio. At the age of ten years he removed with his parents to Hutchinson, Kansas, where his father conducted a stock ranch until his death, in August, 1891. The mother is still living at the age of seventy-six years and makes her home with her daughter near Hutchinson, Kansas. She had six children: David W., now living at Nickerson, Kansas; Margaret, the wife of Jonas Milhon, of Hutchinson, Kansas; Dora, the wife of F. T. Sellers, who is living near Hutchinson, Kansas; Mary, the wife of C. O. Howe, of Helena, Oklahoma; James A.; and Joseph Young, a resident of Onago, South Dakota.

James Albert Young, following the removal of the family to the west, pursued his education in the schools of Hutchinson, Kansas, until seventeen years of age, after which he engaged in teaching for four years. Desirous, however, of promoting his own education by further study, he pursued a four years' literary course in Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas, providing the funds necessary through his previous work as a teacher. In the fall of 1897 he went upon the road as a traveling salesman for a large confectionery house of Kansas City, and was thus engaged for three years, after which he turned his attention to the nursery business in Pawnee City, Nebraska.

On the 26th of December, 1901, Mr. Young was united in marriage to Miss Maud Bobst, of Pawnee, who was born in Pawnee county, Nebraska, July 20, 1881. Her father, George T. Bobst, was a native of Pennsylvania and of German descent. He followed the pursuit of farming and died at his home in Du Bois, Nebraska, in 1883. His wife, who bore the maiden name of Mary Taylor, was a native of Massachusetts and in the early '50s went to the west with her parents, who settled in Kansas. She is now living in Du Bois. Mr. and Mrs. Bobst were the parents of the following: Robert W., of Du Bois, Nebraska; Mattie, the wife of James Wheeler, of Du Bois, Nebraska; Mary Jane, the wife of Walter Pierson, of Nelson, Nebraska; Emma, the wife of M. L. Roby, of Pawnee City, Nebraska; Minnie, the wife of C. L. Morris, of Lexington, Missouri; Grace, the wife of Charles Lucky, of Du

Bois, Nebraska; Edward S. and George T., of Du Bois, Nebraska; and Mrs. Young, who, with one exception, was the youngest member of the family. After acquiring her preliminary education in the village school, Mrs. Young spent six years as a pupil in the schools at Fairbury, Nebraska.

For about a year and a half after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Young continued to reside at Pawnee, and in April, 1902, came to Illinois, settling in Aurora. For two years he engaged in selling nursery stock and since the spring of 1904 has been manager of the Aurora Nursery Company, owning and conducting the only nursery in Aurora township. Under his capable control this business has grown and extended until at the present time a large force of workmen are employed and the nursery has been developed to such an extent that practically everything known to the trade is carried in stock. Mr. Young is also a landscape gardener, with scientific as well as practical knowledge of the business, and has an extensive patronage in that line. He has laid out the grounds of many of the beautiful homes not only of Aurora but of other cities as well, his ability in this direction gaining him much more than local prominence.

Mr. and Mrs. Young have become the parents of one daughter, Ruth, who was born June 9, 1903. Mrs. Young is a member of the Galena Street Methodist Episcopal church and also of the Woman's Relief Corps, in both of which she takes an active and helpful interest. Mr. Young is a republican in his political views but does not seek nor desire office. He is a man of domestic tastes, preferring to give his time and attention to his family outside of business hours. The success which he has achieved has come as the result of his carefully managed business affairs and his undoubted enterprise, and shows what may be accomplished when one has the will to dare and to do.

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#### W. P. SHERMAN, M. D.

The success and prominence which Dr. W. P. Sherman has gained as a medical practitioner of Aurora is attributable to no fortunate combination of circumstances or to any influence strongly exerted in his behalf, but has come as the result of his thorough preparation and his marked ability in the administration of remedial agencies. He was born in Newark, Wisconsin, July 22, 1861. His father, James D. Sherman, was a native of Oswego county, New York, and in early manhood went to Wisconsin, where he engaged in farming for a few years. He afterward removed to Minnesota, where he remained for a number of years, but on account of the Indian troubles there he returned to the Badger state, where he lived for some time and then again went to New York. He was connected with agricultural interests in the Empire state until 1871, which year witnessed his arrival in Kendall county, Illinois, where he was connected with agricultural pursuits until his death. His wife, who bore the maiden name of Catherine Chase, was a native of Wisconsin.

Dr. Sherman was educated in the public schools of Kendall county, Illinois, and then assisted his father in business for a few years, but thinking to prefer a professional to an agricultural career and believing that he might find the practice of medicine congenial he began studying, and in 1889 was graduated from the Rush Medical College of Chicago. He then began practice in Leland, LaSalle county, where he continued for four and a half years, when he took up his abode in Chicago, where he practiced for five years. In 1897 he came to Aurora, where he has since been located, and a liberal patronage has been accorded him, for he soon demonstrated his power to check the ravages of disease and restore health. He maintains a high standard of professional ethics and this and his ability have gained for him the high regard and respect of his professional brethren. He belongs to the Illinois State Medical Society and also to the Fox River Valley Medical Society and in his practice keeps in touch with the most advanced methods of the profession.

Dr. Sherman was married to Miss Belle Misner, and following her death he wedded Miss Addie B. Solfisburg, a native of Aurora, and a daughter of Chris Solfisburg, an old settler of this state. Dr. Sherman belongs to the Masonic lodge, No. 254; to Sandwich Chapter, R. A. M.; to Aurora Commandery, K. T.; and to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. He has ample opportunity, and embraces it, of exemplifying in his practice the spirit of Masonry and on many occasions has shown his belief in the principles of brotherly kindness and mutual helpfulness. He possesses a spirit of friendliness and a genial manner which have gained him many friends and made him a popular citizen of Aurora. In his professional career he is making steady progress and now enjoys an excellent practice of a remunerative character.

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#### EDWARD C. WHILDIN.

Edward C. Whildin, filling the office of supervisor of Big Rock township, is numbered among the pioneer settlers of the county and relates many interesting incidents of the early days when the work of civilization and development had scarcely been begun here. He was born on section 18, Sugar Grove township, December 26, 1844. His paternal grandfather was a native of Wales and remained a resident of the little rock-ribbed country throughout his entire life. His two sons, Edward and Richard Whildin, however, came to the United States in 1834, while three other sons, Jeremiah, John and Robert, crossed the Atlantic a few years later, Robert settling in Wisconsin. The other four brothers came to Kane county, Richard taking up his abode in Sugar Grove township, while Edward, Jeremiah and John settled in Big Rock township. Nearly all reared large families and the Whildins of the second and third generations in Kane county are now quite numerous. In 1905 a family reunion was held in the grove near Big Rock, upon which occasion more than fifty members of the family were present.

Richard Whildin, father of our subject, was born in the north of Wales and, as previously stated, came to America in 1834, arriving in New York. There he made his home for several years and in 1838 he married Miss Louisa Benjamin, a native of the Empire state. They afterward came to Kane county and settled on land in Sugar Grove township. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Whildin became the parents of the following: Mary E., the wife of H. P. Swan, of Saunemin, Illinois; Harriet A., who is the widow of Charles L. Taylor and resides in Big Rock township; Edward C., of this review; Theron J., who died in 1860 at the age of ten years; and George F., who lives in the village of Big Rock.

It was upon the old homestead farm that Edward C. Whildin was born and reared, continuing there until he reached the age of twenty-four years. In his boyhood he attended the district schools and assisted his father in the work of the farm, early becoming familiar with the best methods of tilling the soil and caring for the crops. When he had reached the age of twenty-four he started out in life on his own account and for a few years cultivated a rented farm.

Edward C. Whildin made further preparations for having a home of his own by his marriage on the 28th of May, 1873, to Miss Mary G. Taylor, of Big Rock township, who was born and reared upon the farm where she and her husband now reside. Her father, Percy Taylor, was a native of Vermont, but in his youthful days removed to the state of New York, where he became acquainted with and married Rebecca Lawrence. She was a native of Waddington, New York, and on the 7th of August, 1831, gave her hand in marriage to Mr. Taylor. In 1837 they came to Kane county and entered the land which is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Whildin. At a later date Mr. Whildin purchased this property from the other heirs and has since continued to live thereon, transforming the farm into a valuable and well improved district. He has built a fine residence, together with substantial barns and other outbuildings and through his persistency of purpose and untiring energy he has largely added to the value of the farm, which is now one of the best in Big Rock township, its fields being very fertile and returning to him a gratifying income. Many changes have occurred here since the pioneer days. He remembers hearing his father tell of early experiences here, including the hauling of grain to the Chicago market, at times making two trips each week for six successive weeks and bringing back provisions for the family, while occasionally he hauled some lumber for needed improvements upon his land.

In his political views Mr. Whildin has always been a staunch republican and cast his first presidential vote for General Grant in 1868. He served as assessor of Big Rock township for four years and in 1887 was elected supervisor of the township, which position he has filled continuously since, covering a period of twenty-one years. No higher testimonial of his capability and fidelity could be given than the fact that he has so long been retained in this office. He has also served as chairman of the board of equalization and as a member of various important committees in the county. Over the record of his official career there falls no shadow of wrong or suspicion



of evil, for his duties have ever been discharged in a manner creditable to himself and satisfactory to his constituents. Undoubtedly he is one of the best known and most highly esteemed citizens of Big Rock township. His farm comprises one hundred and eighty acres, nearly all of which is rich prairie land. He has rented this property since 1893, the second dwelling upon the place being occupied by a tenant, while he reserves for himself and occupies a fine modern residence that contains all the conveniences of a city home. A well kept lawn and fine garden denote that he has not altogether put aside the activities of life, yet the more arduous work of the farm is left to others and the rest that he is now enjoying is well deserved. In his business relations he has ever been found reliable as well as energetic and persevering, and he bears an unsullied reputation, enjoying the respect of all and the good will of the great majority of those with whom he has come in contact.



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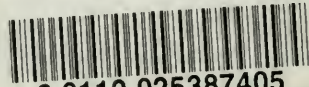


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