

## **BENJAMIN T. HILL**

Among the enterprising agriculturists of DeWitt County is the gentleman above named who has become known as a man of strict probity in the various relations of life, energy in any pursuit to which he gives his attention, and pleasing social qualities. He is located on section 3, Texas Township, which has been his home since his infancy. His earliest recollections are of the log house which was the first home of the family in this county and of the primitive condition of the surrounding country, which was but sparsely settled and was still in haunt of various kinds of wild animals. As he grew older he took a part in the work of improvement and when he looks about him can see the results of his own labors on every hand.

Mr. Hill is of Southern birth and ancestry. His father, George L. Hill, was born in Caroline County, Va., near Fredericksburg, and lived there until he was about seventeen years old. He then went with his widowed mother to Kentucky and after attaining manhood was married in Henry County. His wife, Louisa V. Hickman, was born about twelve miles from the city of Lexington and grew to womanhood in Henry County. After their marriage George Hill and his wife remained in the same county on a farm until October, 1837, when they came to this State. Their journey was made with an ox-team and fifty head of fine sheep, horses, milk cows and oxen were driven through.

Mr. Hill bought six hundred and forty acres in DeWitt County, comprising a quarter each in sections 2, 3, 10 and 11. A few acres were fenced and a log house had been built; these constituted the improvements. He built a substantial log house on section 3, and began the labor required to reclaim the land and make it a fit habitation for civilized people. For fifty years he resided there and then entered into rest November 30, 1887, at the age of ninety years, ten months and eighteen days. The faithful and efficient wife passed away September 25, 1886, at the age of eighty-three years, nine months and eleven days.

The parental family includes five sons and three daughters, our subject being the youngest. The others are Egbert O., now living on a ranch in Christian County, Mo.; Mrs. Phebe L. Beatty, whose home is in Havana, this State; Mrs. Sarah L. Blaikie who died in 1867; Lewis S., a farmer in Douglas County, Minn.; John H., deceased; Emily H., wife of Edwin Weld whose home is near that of our subject, and Rodney P., who is living on section 2, Texas Township.

The subject of this notice was born in Fayette County, Ky., June 18, 1836, and was eighteen months old when brought by his mother on horseback to this county. He attended the old fashioned log schoolhouse with slab benches, puncheon floors and stick and clay chimney, and in the intervals of study worked and played as did other lads in pioneer settlements. June 24, 1860, he was married to Diana, daughter of Morgan and Esther Reese. This lady was born in Wales September 12, 1837, and in 1840 accompanied her parents to Oneida County, N.Y. In

1858 she came to this county to attend the wedding of her sister and Rodney P. Hill and two years later was herself married to a member of the same family.

Mrs. Hill is the fifteenth child of her parents and has three sisters and two brothers living. Richard occupies the old homestead in New York; John lives in Vermilion County, Ill.; Mrs. Elizabeth Ellis resides in Independence, Mo.; Mrs. Maria Hyatt lives in the same city; Mrs. Ellen Hill lives in this county. Thomas Reese, a brother of Mrs. Hill, was a minister in the Baptist Church, in which several of the relatives of Mr. Hill on his mother's side had also been preachers.

Soon after his marriage Mr. Hill was given an interest in the homestead and took up his residence with his father on the place where he now resides. He and his wife have had six children; they lost one daughter in early infancy, and Freddie L., died at the age of eleven months. The surviving members of their family are Benjamin F., Superintendent of the Oakland School No. 2, in Chicago; Herbert W. who is teaching in Science Hill District, and Lillie May who is attending her brother's school in Chicago. The sons were graduated at Clinton and are well informed and equipped for the duties of life.

The first vote cast by our subject was for Abraham Lincoln and he continues to support the Republican principles. His brother Lewis was a private and Egbert a Captain in the Thirty-first Missouri Infantry during the Civil War; both were wounded, Egbert at Vicksburg, and Lewis at Ft. Donelson. Mr. Hill has held the offices of Road Master, School Trustee and School Director, in the last-named capacity having served twelve years. He belongs to DeWitt Lodge, No. 84, F. & A. M., and Goodbrake Chapter, No. 59 R.A.M. He and his wife belong to the Missionary Baptist Church and he has been a Deacon for twenty years. For twelve years he was Superintendent of the Sunday-school in the church at Clinton and he is still engaged in Sunday-school work now as a teacher. All of the children belong to the Baptist Church, three having been baptized at one time when the youngest was eleven years old.

[Source: Portrait and Biographical Album of DeWitt and Piatt Counties, Illinois. Chicago: Chapman Brothers Publishing Company, 1891]

### **RODNEY P. HILL**

Among those who are cultivating a portion of the soil of DeWitt County with good results and securing thereby many comforts and enjoyments, is the gentleman above named. His home comprises a portion of section 1, Texas Township, and his occupation is that of a general farmer, wisely dividing his attention between diversified crops and such a number of domestic animals as can be well kept and easily cared for. His estate consists of one hundred and fifty-seven and one-half acres of well-improved land all under cultivation, and indicating in its appearance that it is controlled by one who understands his business.

Mr. Hill was born in Henry County, Ky., April 20, 1837. The ancestral history will be found in the sketch of his brother, B.T. Hill, on another page of this work. The temple of learning in which he studied during boyhood had but one window and was built and furnished in a primitive fashion. However, he was able to acquire a practical knowledge of the principal branches of study, and having an active mind and a desire for information he has added to his knowledge in various ways from year to year. He remained with his parents until his marriage, when he at once settled where he now resides. But little clearing had been done on the land and he now sees around him the fruits of his labors in the many comforts of modern life.

In 1858 Mr. Hill led to the hymeneal altar Miss Ellen Reese, a sister to the wife of B.T. Hill, and a lady of fine character, domestic knowledge and social nature. The happy union has been blest by the birth of four children, of whom we note the following: Ester Ann, who was graduated

from the Clinton High School, is with her parents; Joseph B. is farming in Nebraska; William M. is married and living on a farm in the same State and Frederick C. is attending the High School in Clinton and will be graduated this year.

Mr. Hill was never farther west than Springfield, until two years ago, when he visited his sons in Nebraska; he has traveled East several times however. He never belonged to any society except the Union League. His first vote was cast for J.C. Fremont and he has staunchly adhered to Republican principles since that time. He has been School Director twenty-five years and has ever shown deep interest in the cause of education and other civilizing and elevating influences. The entire family holds membership in the Baptist Church and Mr. Hill was a Sunday-school teacher for many years.

[Source: Portrait and Biographical Album of DeWitt and Piatt Counties, Illinois. Chicago: Chapman Brothers Publishing Company, 1891]

Mrs. R. J. McNeil

Mrs. Robert J. McNeil, who for many years has been a resident of Alexandria, died suddenly in Washington, D.C., last Thursday, and funeral services were held Tuesday from the Congregational Church of which she had long been a member. Death came very suddenly, the deceased having been ill for only a day. Her whole life was one of service and devotion to family, and her passing was mourned by a large circle of friends both in Alexandria and Washington.

The funeral was largely attended and there were many beautiful floral offerings. Rev. A. A. Secord preached the burial sermon. He spoke of Ms. McNeil's in Alexandria, emphasizing especially her life of service and helpfulness which has been hers. By her death the family has suffered the loss of an unselfish and affectionate friend and mother. With the family, many friends and acquaintances have a sense of personal loss. Messrs. Anderson, Raiter, Carlson, Ward and Stevens, friends of the family acted as pall bearers. Internment was in Kinkead cemetery.

Mrs. McNeil, Miss Alice Elizabeth Hill, was born December 9, 1859 at Clinton, Illinois. She was married to Robert J. McNeil of this city, on May 24, 1879. She is survived by three sons and two daughters. These are Dr. Walter H. of Minneapolis; Major Edwin C., now somewhere in France; Edna L., now Mrs. R. E. Wickham of Salmon, Idaho; Nina L., now Mrs. D. W. McMahan of Blanchard, N. Dak.; and Serg. Robert L. of the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. Dr. and Mrs. McNeil, Mrs. McMahan and Robert were present at the funeral. They were accompanied here from Minneapolis by Miss. M. E. \_\_\_itcomb, an old friend of the deceased. Wm. McNeil of Grand Forks was also in attendance.

[Source: Alexandria Post News, Alexandria, Minnesota, June 20, 1918. Portions of the photocopy of the obituary that this was transcribed from were cut off. The transcription may be slightly different from the original.]

#### PROMINENT CITIZEN DIES AT HIS POST IN WASHINGTON "Bob" McNeill Dies at Capital After Quarter Century of Service There

Robert J. McNeil, for many years a resident of Alexandria, but since 1900 an employee of the Capital, passed away in Washington Jan. 8 of pneumonia.

Mr. McNeill was born in Canada in 1856, but moved to Minnesota in 1867, settling at Alexandria. He was the pioneer harness maker here, opening the first harness shop where the Golden Rule is now located and later occupying the building now used for the same purpose by Billy Thoreen. He later serviced as deputy sheriff and deputy coroner and for three years as alderman.

When the late Knute Nelson was chosen senator Mr. McNeil was appointed to Washington later serving for several years as secretary to former Senator Moses E. Clapp. After Senator Clapp's retirement he was again placed on the Capital payroll by Senator Nelson and at the time of his death was the doorkeeper of the Senate.

His wife died in Washington in 1918 and he remarried several months ago. He is survived by this wife and three sons and two daughters. One son, Edwin, is a graduate of West Point, holding the rank of Major, and is now an instructor at law in the United States Military Academy; Walter and Robert are both dentists, the former living in Milwaukee. Both daughters are married, Edna living in Salmon, Idaho, and Nina in Seattle.

The remains were shipped here for internment at Kinkead cemetery. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday at 2:30 from the Congregational church, Rev. Blunt and Rev. Secord officiating.

All three sons and Mrs. McNeil besides a brother of the deceased, William McNeil of Grand Forks, were in Alexandria for the funeral; neither daughter was able to attend.

[Source: Alexandria Post News, Alexandria, Minnesota, January 15, 1925]

## A GOLDEN WEDDING.

Mr. and Mrs. L. S. Hill Celebrate, Their Fiftieth Anniversary.

The following account of the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. L. S. Hill, formerly of Alexandria, is taken from the Puyallup, Wash., Tribune. Mr. and Mrs. Hill are the parents of Mrs. R. J. McNeil. They were for years residents of Alexandria and have hosts of friends here. The following is the account:

“Seated beneath a bower of Autumn leaves that glowed with the soft and mellow tints of rich and beautifully sunset, and surrounded by many relatives and friends who extended their warmest congratulations upon the happy event, Mr. and Mrs. Louis S. Hill celebrated their golden wedding Tuesday evening in the hall of the Grand Army of the Republic. The occasion was a memorable one not only to the two chief participants, but to all who had assembled to pay their tribute of homage and respect to the distinguished couple whose years sat so lightly upon them. Social converse, music and a tempting diner were the order of the evening, all present were made to feel at home and take a personal interest in the success so signally achieved.

“Fifty years ago, on the evening of October 6th, 1873, Louis S. Hill and Miss Anna E. Wray were married in Clinton, Ill., the groom being a native of Kentucky and the bride of Pennsylvania. [This is an error. They were married October 6, 1853.]. At the breaking out of the civil war Mr. Hill obeyed his country’s call and enlisted in Company C, Forty-first Regiment of Illinois Volunteers. At the battle of Fort Donelson he was severely wounded in the leg and had to be sent home, but as soon as the injury healed sufficiently he re-enlisted, though unable to sustain the fatigue of the long marches. Because of this fact, Mr. Hill was finally compelled to quit the service.

“Mr. and Mrs. Hill remained in Illinois until 1866, when they moved to Minnesota, residing in that state thirty-seven years. [Some of the preceding sentence may be slightly incorrect. The copy of the article this was transcribed from was hard to read.] A little over a year ago they came to Washington to visit married daughters who reside in . . . Puyallup . . . the county and . . . doubtless abide here during the remainder of their appointed days [portion unreadable].

“Nine children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Hill, of who eight survive, one son being dead. Five daughters were present at the golden wedding celebration, the other three children being still in the east. Those present were Mrs. Walter Scott, Mrs. Allan Scott, Mrs. J. W. Blackwell, Mrs. James Seely and Miss Catbaryn Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Seely were here on a visit, but the others are permanent residents of the valley. Three grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. Hill were also present.

“To the strains of a selection from Faust the aged couple, followed by their descendants, marched to the bower arranged at one end of the hall. There Rev. W. H. Gibson of the Baptist church and Rev. M. A. Covington of the Methodist Episcopal church, on behalf of the many guests assembled, extended warmest felicitations upon the anniversary so few wedded couples live to celebrate. Handsome presents were also bestowed upon Mr. and Mrs. Hill in commemoration of the occasion.

“Mrs. Wray, the mother of Mrs. Hill, is still the only person in Puyallup valley who was present at the wedding fifty years ago. She resides with Mr. Walter Scott, here grand daughter, but could not be present Tuesday night because of her feeble condition. Mrs. Wray is not 94 years old.

Hill ObitsFrom: Hill, Ed [Ed.Hill@mercerc.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 12, 2005 1:14 PM

To: ed@hill-ky.org

Subject: Hill Obits

BEATTY, Isaac

June 03,1887

ISAAC B. BEATTY

Died on Wednesday morning, of cancer of the stomach. For more than a year past he had been in failing health, and finally he was compelled to give up business. He was born near Xenia, Ohio, on the 10th of December, 1817, and at his death was in the seventieth year of life. When but ten years old he was converted at a camp meeting, and during his life he was a consistent and devout Christian. On August 29, 1838, he was married in Ohio to Elizabeth CROWL, and to them five sons and one daughter were born. Three of the sons are dead. His wife died in 1849. In February, 1852, he came to Clinton, and with the exception of about five years that he lived in Normal for the purpose of educating his children, he has made this city his home for more than thirty-five years. In 1853, he was again married to Mrs. Phebe L. MAHAN, a daughter of Mr. George HILL, and to them two sons and one daughter were born, who still survive him. Father Beatty had five sons who served their country in the army during the war of the rebellion. During the greater part of his life in Clinton he was engaged in the saddlery business, and ranked as one of the oldest business men in the town, and as a mark of respect to his memory all of the stores in town were closed on Thursday afternoon during the hour of the funeral ceremony. He was a man of generous impulses and gave liberally of his means to his children and to the church. Such men do not leave large fortunes behind them, but it is gratifying to know that he leaves his wife in comfortable circumstances with enough to provide for her during life.

BEATTY, Frances (CONKLIN)

January 26, 1920

Clinton Daily Public

Mrs. Thos. Beatty passed Away Today

After more than a year's illness of complication of diseases the death of Mrs. Thomas O. BEATTY occurred at 7:10 o'clock this morning the family home, 715 North Monroe Street. Mrs. Beatty had been in very good health up until about a year and a half ago when she began to fail. In August last year she was taken to Bloomington where an operation was performed in the hope that she would be better. She never gained any strength after the operation and from then on her condition gradually failed. She was a most patient sufferer through all her sickness and was never once heard to complain. Frances Arabella CONKLIN was the daughter of James and Sarah CONKLIN and was born in Wellington, Kansas, May 21, 1860. In infancy her parents moved to Illinois settling in DeWitt county. Her father died shortly after moving here and her mother was remarried to Louis B. WILLIAMS, who was well known in Clinton. Her marriage to Thomas O. BEATTY occurred in Clinton, May 18, 1881, and with the exception of two years spent in Arkansas they made their home in Clinton. To Mr. and Mrs. Beatty were born three children, as follows: Mrs. Walter B. SCHMITH, of this city; Mrs. Walter D. CREWS, of Portsmouth, Va., and a son who died in infancy. Besides the husband and two children there are surviving one sister, Mrs. Vina FULLER of Clinton, a step-sister, Mrs. S. E. BURKHART, of Chicago. One sister, Mrs. M. E. CUNNINGHAM, died about 30 years ago. Three grandchildren survive: Uba Frances and Louise Winifred SCHMITH, children of Mr. and Mrs. H.B. SCHMITH, and Paul Beatty CREWS, son of Mrs. W.D. CREWS. Deceased was a member of the First Methodist Episcopal church of Clinton and always attended the services when her health permitted. She was not a member of any social circles of the city but always took an active part in church affairs.

HILL, George L.

December 02, 1887

Death of One of the Early Pioneers of DeWitt County

Fifty years ago last October George L. HILL came from Kentucky to this county, and settled on the farm on which he died last Wednesday. He was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on the 12th of January, 1797, and when he was a young man moved to Kentucky. Since the death of his wife, Father Hill has waited patiently for the summons which was to

reunite them in the better land. He was ninety-one years, ten months and eighteen days old. The funeral services will be held in the Baptist Church this afternoon, at two o'clock, and his body will be buried by the side of his wife in Woodlawn Cemetery. Next week we will publish a sketch of Mr. Hill's life. It was impossible to get the data in time for this week's issue.

Submitted by Judy Simpson

HILL, George L.

December 09, 1887

#### SKETCH OF GEORGE L. HILL

One of the Pioneers of DeWitt County

George L. HILL was born January 12, 1797, in Caroline county, Virginia, near Fredericksburg. He was left fatherless at the age of twelve years, and with his widowed mother moved to Kentucky in 1815, and there took charge of her business, at the age of eighteen years. He then rented land of Lewis HICKMAN, whose daughter, Louisa V., he married October 20, 1822. While a renter in Fayette county, there were born to them three children, Egbert O., Phoebe L., and Sarah L. In the year 1827 he returned to Henry county, Ky., where the remaining five children were born, Lewis S., John H., Emily H., Rodney P., and Benjamin T. In Henry county he purchased 104½ acres of heavy timber which he cleared himself.

In those early days when settlers were few, it was the custom for the neighbors to band together and assist in clearing their farms. At such times it was customary to furnish whisky for the crowd. Mr. Hill noticed that his children began to like the sugar in the bottom of the glass and to ask for a little dram. This set him to thinking seriously of the fate that might be in store for them if they learned to like their dram. He and one of his neighbors made a firm resolve to do away with whisky, and concluded that if they could not get help to roll their logs without it, they would do their rolling themselves. At first they were obliged to do their work alone, but their neighbors found them in earnest and at last joined them in their good work.

In the year 1828, he professed religion, and with his wife joined the Baptist Church at New Castle. Being ambitious, Mr. Hill was not content to stay on a small farm, so in 1835 he started out on horseback on a prospecting tour, and while passing through Illinois was delighted with the country. After returning to Kentucky he could think of nothing but Illinois, and in 1836 made a second trip to the State and purchased the farm of 640 acres on which he lived and died, and for which he agreed to pay five dollars per acre. He moved his family to his new home in October, 1837. While in Clinton attending to the purchase of this farm, he assisted in raising the third house in town. It was on the west side of the square where the Masonic hall now stands, and was called the Macon House.

He could not immediately sell his farm in Kentucky so he borrowed from an old friend the money to pay for the Illinois farm. He made thirteen trips to Kentucky on horseback during the following twelve years to settle up his own and his mother's estate. As Illinois was then a new State he with his family had to endure many hardships and privations, which were cheerfully borne. To sell his grain he was obliged to haul it to Chicago (then a village) with an ox team, and returning brought with him groceries and salt for the coming year. When his bacon was ready for market, he would start for St. Louis, that being the best market for bacon and lard. For breadstuff he had to go to Springfield and Mechanicsburg. When the roads impassable, they had to do without until they were better, and at one time they were six weeks without breadstuff in the house. The next best thing was hominy beaten on a block, and the children did this, taking turns. The finer was sifted out for corn bread and the coarser boiled for hominy. When a doctor was needed, they had to send to Decatur. That was also the nearest point from which they could get their mail.

One of the hardest privations that he and his wife had to endure was that of having no church privileges, so in his home, on the 1st day of February, 1839, was organized the first Baptist Church of Clinton, and for the following two years meetings were held there.

About the year 1846 he gave twenty acres of land to William McPHERSON, a Baptist minister, for a home, and then he built the first Baptist Church in Clinton, furnishing the timber himself, hauling the logs to mill, and doing the work at his own expense. He was deacon of the church for twenty-two years, and faithfully did his duty. For years he furnished the fuel for the church, cutting the wood and hauling it himself. At the time of his death he was the only constituent member of the church he helped to organize, and to which he was tenderly attached. He was the oldest

pioneer settler known in the county. He was a man of sterling integrity, and was often heard to say that "his word was as good as his bond," and it was never known to be otherwise. He was never sued in his life. His ambition for himself and children was for them to be honest and Christian members of society. Mr. Hill's sympathies were with the South in the troubles preceding the war, but when the first gun was fired on Sumter he said, with tears in his eyes, that he could not hold with those who fired on his country's flag, and was after that until his death a strong Republican, casting his last vote for Blaine and Logan. He was an intimate and personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, who often visited him at his home. His wife preceded him to the better land a little over a year ago. He leaves six children, thirty-one grandchildren, and fourteen great-grandchildren.

He was sick about two months before he died, and little could be done for him but to give him tenderest care, which his children lovingly did. His disease was just a breaking up of the system, and he suffered terribly, but through it all his hope and trust in a risen Savior shone clear and bright and sustained him. He did not murmur but said he was ready and anxious to go, only waiting his Master's call. And at the last, when his feet touched the cold stream, his Savior took him gently across, and the peaceful look on his grand old face showed that for him indeed death had lost its sting.

Submitted by Judy Simpson

HILL, Louisa (HICKMAN)

October 01, 1886

ENTERED INTO REST

Death of Mrs. Louisa V. Hill

On last Saturday afternoon, at the closing hours of the day, Mrs. Louisa V. HILL passed from death unto life eternal, in the eighty-fourth year of her age. Mrs. Hill was a remarkable woman for one of her years, and till the hour of her death she was in full possession of those keen, sharp faculties for which she had always been noted. Forty-nine years ago, with her husband and children, she came from Kentucky to this county and settled upon the farm where she spent her last days. Mrs. Hill's maiden name was Louisa V. HICKMAN. She was born in Madison county, Kentucky, on the 14th of December, 1802. When she was but a child, her parents removed to Fayette county, where her childhood and the early years of her married life were spent. On the 20th of October, 1822, she was united in marriage to George L. HILL, of Fayette county, Kentucky, and in the same county three of her children were born. In March, 1828, they removed to Henry county, Ky., and in the following November she was converted and united with the Baptist Church. During the following nine years their five remaining children were born. On the 2d of October, 1837, they left Kentucky for their new home in Illinois, and on the 19th of the same month, they reached this county and settled on the farm where they have lived for nearly forty-nine years.

Mrs. Hill was an earnest Christian woman, and in her home the present Baptist Church of Clinton was organized on the 1st of February, 1839. During the following three years all the services of the church were held in their home. From the time of her conversion in November, 1828, till her death, Mrs. Hill was a faithful and consistent Christian. Her death, peaceful and calm, was but the triumph of a noble and useful life. The prayer of her life was for the salvation of those around her, and it was a gratification to her to know that all of her children and quite a number of her grandchildren have made a profession of religion. Mrs. Hill was a woman of positive convictions, and was always ready to express and defend what she considered to be the truth.

Mrs. Hill was the mother of nine children, three of whom preceded her to the better land. She leaves her aged husband and six children to mourn the death of a loving wife and mother. Her surviving children are: Egbert O. HILL, of Ozark, Mo.; Lewis S. HILL, of Alexandria, Minn.; Mrs. Phebe L. BEATTY; Mrs. Emily H. WELD; Rodney P. HILL; and Benj. T. HILL. Among her descendants are thirty grand-children and twelve great grand-children.

Submitted by Judy Simpson

HILL, Louisa (HICKMAN)

October 01, 1886

SKETCH OF MRS. LOUISA V. HILL

Some Incidents in Mrs. Hill's Life

When Mr. and Mrs. Hill first went to house-keeping in Fayette county, they lived in a small house on her father's farm. Having no furniture, their bedstead was built in the side of the house. Their first meal was eaten from Mr. Hill's



clapboard, with a skillet, a tin cup and a shoe-knife (Mr. Hill being a shoe-maker) as cooking and eating utensils. The way she managed to cook their food was, first she baked her corn-bread, and having no lid to the skillet she had to turn the bread to bake it; then she cooked her meat; and then, washing her skillet, she boiled the water and made her coffee, and having but one cup, they drank their coffee together.

When they moved to Henry county, the place they bought was rough timberland, with no improvement save a small cabin containing one room. While there they improved and cleared the farm, raising cotton and wool, Mrs. Hill doing the carding, spinning and weaving from which the clothes for the family was made. The way she got a start for clothing her family, she spun for a neighbor and got two ewes, and the following spring these ewes had twin lambs. Before she was married she lived with an uncle and took charge of his weaving house, managing one loom and overseeing five others. When her uncle heard what she had done, he sent her six pure Merino sheep, and from these she brought fifty to this county.

One morning her uncle said to his niece and daughters, "Well, girls, I have just driven in sixty milk cows to the pail; now if any of you have any claim on me I want you to make it known." No one spoke but his niece, who said, "Uncle, I don't know as I have any claim on you, but when I am married you may give me a cow." And sure enough, after moving to Henry county, her uncle coming to visit her, brought with him a fine-blooded cow and calf, and from these came the 30 head she brought to DeWitt county with her. Before she was married she was very noted as a weaver. Twice, cloth of her weaving took the silver mug at the State fair in Kentucky. To the present day there is in the family a quilt and many other articles of her own manufacture. For many years after moving here she continued the manufacture of all the clothing for her family.

Never believing in slavery, having been taught from infancy that it was wrong, for her father never would own slaves, she has often said while living in a slave State that she felt like Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, and his warning appeared to apply to her, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city," and when they left Kentucky she made a solemn vow, "If the Lord would let me live to reach a free State never will I make a track on slavery's soil." And she never broke it. Often has she said she never had a desire to visit her native land, and she never would visit her brother or son in Missouri until it was a free State.

They started from Kentucky October 2d, 1837, in a "Pennsylvania scow-boat wagon," Mrs. Hill riding on horseback, carrying her youngest child, Bennie, in her arms. In their wagon was household goods, 50 pounds of wool carded ready for the wheel, a large amount of linen, cotton, and woolen cloth of her own manufacture; and having a thought of the coming winter she also brought 13 bushels of peaches and 6 bushels of apples of her own drying. Her oldest son, Egbert, walked and drove their cattle. When evening came they would pitch their tent and cook their suppers, also food enough for the next day. At one time they stopped two days and washed, baked their bread, and prepared other food for the remainder of their journey.

On the evening of the 19th of October they landed in DeWitt county and stopped a few days with Mrs. Hill's father, a portion of which is now owned by Hickman Mills. Mr. Hill previously bargained for his place, 640 acres, where the home now is, in the preceding fall after going to Missouri with the intention of buying. The place they bought had a little log cabin containing one room with a dirt floor, a slat door and no window. The fire-place, with a wooden back plastered with mud, the place for the fire being dug out and lower than the floor. The children, to keep warm, used to sit around the edge of the fire-place and hang their feet over next to the fire. Mr. Hill immediately went to work to improve the house. He made a puncheon floor, sawed out a log about as large as three small panes of glass, and tacked a greased cotton cloth over it for a window light. After a time another improvement was made by putting in an oiled paper in place of the cloth. From time to time the house was improved until it had six rooms on the lower floor, two upstairs, and a cellar—as it now stands. After being here several years she got word that her brother-in-law was coming from Kentucky to pay them a visit. Being too proud to have him come and see her puncheon floor, she and her daughter went to work, cut rags, sewed and wove them into a carpet before he reached here. This was the first carpet ever used in a house along Salt Creek, and was regarded as a great curiosity.

When Mr. Hill used to go to Kentucky on business, making 12 trips on horseback in 13 years, she used to manage the farm. At one time while he was away the horses all sickened and died, except a two-year-old colt, which, to use her own words, "never peeped through a collar." Mrs. Hill said, "Leaving my girls to manage the house I took my bonnet

and gloves and went to the field with my boys, and by hiring a horse when I could, and borrowing when I could, we broke the ground, planted the grain, and had the corn plowed and laid by when Mr. Hill returned." When out of bread-stuffs, when the day's work was done, she would have the children pick out the corn, and by turns they would pound it on the "old hominy block," sieve out the fine for bread, and use the coarse for hominy.

Her home was used as a place of worship for many years. She would never turn a minister from her door, no matter to which denomination he belonged. When a minister arrived word would be sent to all the neighbors that there would be preaching, and they would always come. Her house was known far and near as the "Baptist Tavern."

She was always a dear lover of flowers, and her garden, the seeds and bulbs of which were brought from Kentucky, was the wonder of the country round.

Many times has she repeated, and she always made it a point to tell, her three principles: "I am an Abolitionist but not an Amalgamationist, a Republican and a Baptist, and I have brought up all my children in the same way." And they have never departed from her teaching, for she has not a child or grandchild who is not loyal and honors her words.

She was always a great reader and always took great pride in informing herself on questions pertaining to her country, which she loved. But above all else she loved her Bible, having read and re-read it many times. During her last days her Bible was her greatest comfort, for she retained her intellect till the very last. She kept up a large correspondence with her numerous relatives and friends, and until only a few weeks before her death she did her own writing.

Suffering as she did in her last illness, and for many years she has been afflicted, not a murmur or complaint ever passed her lips. Always a prayer for the Lord to give her strength to bear her burdens. She was ready to go and was only waiting her Maker's call. Her last days were a constant prayer for the Lord to relieve her sufferings. Her last words spoken to her daughter, Mrs. Emily WELD, were, "Oh, my child! I shall soon be to the Golden Gate. Jesus is by my side and is leading me across the River of Jordan, and all is bright. Tell all my children to meet me in Heaven."

She was always a thorough-going, earnest, consistent Christian woman, always free spoken on any subject, always ready in the hour of sickness and trouble to minister to the wants of her neighbors—a kind, indulgent and affectionate mother and friend.

Agreeable to her request, the Rev. D. Mac ARTHUR conducted the funeral services, which were held in the church she helped to establish and build up in Clinton. A large number of the old settlers united with her family and friends in paying the last tribute to her memory.

BLAKIE, John  
January 22, 1892

Away back early in the fifties John BLAKIE came from the east with Ed. WELD and R. W. SWEENEY to work a steam shovel in the construction of the Illinois Central road. He worked on some of the contracts of the Magill Bros. From that time his life was spent in the service of railroad companies. His first wife was a sister of Benjamin and Rodney HILL, and his second wife was a sister of the ADAMS brothers, who live south-west of Clinton. Shortly after the war John Blakie moved away from here, but came back about the time the Gilman, Clinton and Springfield road was being built, and after the machine shops were opened he ran the stationary engine for a time. Since then he has lived in Missouri and in the southern part of Illinois, always a railroad man. For several years he had poor health. John Blakie was one of the early members of the lodge of Knights of Pythias in Clinton, and during all his years of absence he kept his membership here. Yesterday a dispatch came that he had died in Southern Illinois and that his body would be brought to Clinton for burial. A committee of the Knights will meet the remains at the depot and take charge of them till tomorrow, when the lodge will escort them to Woodlawn Cemetery.

WELD, Edwin Sr.  
June 19, 1908

Clinton Register

EDWIN WELD, SR., CALLED TO REST.

Leading Resident of Texas Township Dies Suddenly After an Illness of Several Months.

Edwin WELD, Sr., living one mile south of Clinton, had been sick several months, most of the time being confined to his bed. For about a month he had been able to sit up, and some of the pleasant days last week was out of the house in his invalid chair. He seemed much better and Saturday the family felt more encouraged. About 12 o'clock that night he took malted milk nourishment, and soon afterward became much worse. A doctor was called but he could do nothing to give relief and death came about 3 o'clock.

Edwin Weld was born in Boston, Massachusetts, December 30, 1825, and lived 82 years, 5 months and 14 days. His father was a farmer and he remained on the farm until he was 18 years old when he engaged in the commission business which he followed three years. He then began contracting, and had charge of the work of filling in 70 acres, which are now a part of Boston. He continued in this work there until 1863, when he came to DeWitt county and bought land in Texas township which became the homestead where he spent the rest of this life.

He brought to Illinois a steam shovel; the Illinois Central main line was being built through this county and he took a contract to cut through some of the Salt Creek hills. He then contracted to fill in at the end of the bridge over the Illinois river in LaSalle county. He quit this kind of work in 1858 and began farming. He added to his landed interests until he owned 490 acres in Texas township, part of which is northeast of Maroa, and about 20 acres just south of Clinton. The homestead has two of the best farm residences in the county, one being occupied by his son.

In September 1855 he was married in LaSalle, Illinois, to Miss Emily HILL, daughter of George HILL, father of R. P. Hill of Clinton. To them one son and seven daughters were born, of whom the following, with their mother, survive: Mrs. Clark ALLIS of Medina, New York; Mrs. J. E. HARTSOCK of Dayton, Ohio; Mrs. C. S. BOGARDUS of Clinton; Misses Frances and Nettie at home. Ann died when six years old; Edwin lives near the old home.

Mr. Weld was a member of the Presbyterian church. His first vote was cast for Henry Clay, the Whig candidate, and he had been a Republican since that time. He had held several township offices, among them supervisor, highway commissioner and school treasurer, the latter many years. He was a member of DeWitt lodge No. 84, A. F. and A. M., and Goodbrake Chapter No. 58, R. A. M. He had also taken the Eastern Star degree and was a member of Mystic Chapter No. 131.

Such, in brief, has been the life of a man who sought not, and cared not for the praise of the world. He was unassuming, and was attached to his home from which he was seldom absent, except on business. Perhaps no man ever attended more strictly to the business that was his own, and left the affairs of others to them. His life had been one of usefulness, and he had so lived that seldom, if ever, had he a real enemy. As a neighbor he was accommodating; as a friend he was true; as a man he was honest. His life is worthy of example.

Funeral services were held Tuesday in the home at 2:30 o'clock, conducted by Rev. Charles Davies of Fairbury. The Masons conducted the usual rites of the order at the grave. The pall bearers were John Killough, Jacob Ziegler, C. W. McCord, J. E. Johnson, E. Sylvester and E. Thiebault. Burial was in Woodlawn cemetery.

-----  
This e-mail and any attachments may be confidential or legally privileged. If you received this message in error or are not the intended recipient, you should destroy the e-mail message and any attachments or copies, and you are prohibited from retaining, distributing disclosing or using any information contained herein. Please inform us of the erroneous delivery by return e-mail. Thank you for your cooperation.  
-----

FE01