

ALFRED GUTHRIE

Among the successful self-made men of a past generation in Lawrence county whose efforts and influence contributed to the material upbuilding of the community, the late Alfred Guthrie occupied a conspicuous place. Being ambitious from the first, but surrounded with none too favorable environment, his early youth was not especially promising, but, resolutely facing the future, he gradually surmounted the difficulties in his way and in due course of time rose to a prominent position in the commercial, agricultural and financial circles of his community, besides winning the confidence and esteem of those with whom he came in contact, either in a business or a social way, and for years he stood as one of the representative citizens of the locality honored by his citizenship. Strongly in contrast with the humble surroundings of his youth was the brilliant position which he eventually filled in business circles. He realized early that there is a purpose in life and that there is no honor not founded on worth and no respect not founded on accomplishment. His life and labors were worthy because they contributed to a proper understanding of life and its problems. The strongest characters in our national history have come from the ranks of self-made men to whom adversity acts as an impetus for unflinching effort, and from this class came the lamented gentleman whose name initiates this memorial.

Alfred Guthrie was born in Guthrie township, Lawrence county, Indiana, on June 25, 1828, and his death occurred at his home in Tunnelton this county, on June 7, 1913, at the advanced age of nearly eighty-five years. He was the eldest of the eight children born to Daniel and Lucy (Weddell) Guthrie. His father, who was a native of Lee county, Virginia, was brought by his parents to Lawrence county, Indiana, in 1811, at the age of four years, though prior to their coming here they had for two years resided in the state of Kentucky. The father secured a large tract of land in Guthrie township, Lawrence county, and there Daniel was reared and spent his life. He became a gunsmith by trade, not only making firearms, but also gunpowder and saltpeter. Physically, he was a powerful man, was widely known throughout this section of the country and was well liked generally. By his union with Lucy Weddell, he became the father of the following children: Alfred, the immediate subject of this memoir; Mitchell, who lived at Tunnelton, was a farmer and stock man; he was twice married, first to a Miss Walters and then to Judith Hubbard; John D., who was a farmer and lived first at Tunnelton and then at Meringo, Iowa, married Patsy Walters; Hester Ann became the wife of Elisha Lee, of Guthrie township, this county; U. D., who was a farmer and stock man in Guthrie township, married first Malvina Mundell and then a Miss Brooking; Marshall, deceased, who was a farmer and stock man and was engaged in business with the subject of this sketch, married first Susie Cooper and then Maggie Paine, who now lives in Bedford; Miliscent became the wife of A. J. Lee, who was a veteran of the Civil war, and subsequently engaged in farming and merchandising; Eli and Eri were twins; the former died at Duckport, Louisiana, during the Civil war while in the service of his country, while Eri, who also served in the army during that war, now lives in Kansas; he has been twice married, his first wife having been Elizabeth Moody.

Alfred Guthrie was reared on the home farm and received only a meager education in the common schools. However, he was an ambitious student and by his private efforts gained a good practical education, so that he was qualified to teach school.

Most of his time was occupied by the hardest kind of labor, clearing timber from the land and putting it into cultivation, which, under the primitive conditions of those early days, was no easy task. However, the lessons of industry, patience and persistency which he imbibed in those early days were the secrets of his later success and in the free outdoor life he gained a ruggedness of physique which enabled him to maintain a continuous activity of a long business life. By dint of the most persistent industry and wise economy Mr. Guthrie was enabled to open a general store at Tunnelton and then begun what was destined to be one of the most remarkable business careers in this locality. For more than a half century he conducted the store at Tunnelton and commanded the major portion of the trade in his line over a wide radius of surrounding country, his business for years amounting to eighty to a hundred thousand dollars annually. As he prospered, Mr. Guthrie wisely invested his profits in real estate and at one time owned about three thousand acres of excellent farming land, all of which he kept well stocked and carefully cultivated. About four years before his death he gave to each of his seven children a farm of two hundred or more acres. He was during all these years the most prominent citizen of Tunnelton, in the growth and development of which he was deeply interested. He was the second man to erect a house in that town and out of his own means he built the first railroad depot in the town, these being but instances of the many efforts initiated by him for the upbuilding of the town and the welfare of the people. Mr. Guthrie was also a large stockholder in the Stone City Bank, of Bedford, and for many years was president of that institution; later, however, on account of advancing years and declining health, he declined further election to the presidency, though retaining to the end a position on the board of directors. A man of ripe experience and sound judgment, his advice was held invaluable by his business associates. A man of great business capacity and of the highest principles of integrity and honor, he made his influence felt along diverse lines and was long a leader among those men who conserved the general welfare of the community and county. His integrity was of the most insistent and unswerving type and no shadow rests upon any portion of his career as an active business man and sterling citizen. He was especially distinguished for his honesty, firmness of character, piety and intelligence. And he was one of the most unostentatious of men, open-hearted and candid in manner, always retaining in his demeanor the simplicity and candor of the old-time gentleman, and, though his labors are ended, his record stands as an enduring monument.

In public affairs Alfred Guthrie always took an intelligent interest and held several public offices to the entire satisfaction of his fellow citizens. He was twice a member of the board of county commissioners and in 1876 was elected a member of the lower house of the state Legislature, where he acquitted himself with credit. Religiously, he was a member of the Congregational church, in the prosperity of which he ever maintained the warmest interest, giving liberally to its support and contributing in every way possible to its welfare. He gave liberally to all worthy charitable and benevolent causes, though always without ostentation, many of his kindly acts being unknown except to the beneficiaries or his immediate family.

At the time of his death the following beautiful tribute to Mr. Guthrie appeared in the *Bedford Mail*: "He was a power for good in his neighborhood and his county as well. He was foremost in whatever was best and by word and example took the lead in furthering everything that would tend to advance his town, his county, state and country. The world is better because of him. He has left to his children a rich inheritance, the

name, 'an honest man.' He was a good neighbor, a kind and affectionate husband and father a generous, whole-souled friend and, all in all, we shall not soon again see his like. He will be sadly missed by the community and most of all by those with whom in life he was daily associated. If men are judged by the deeds done in the body, if the acts and conduct of life are reviewed in the great hereafter, and the judgment is to be pronounced thereon, then surely, Alfred Guthrie shall not fall 'short of the glory.' but will enter into the life everlasting and be forever at rest."

Alfred Guthrie was twice married, first, on September 6, 1849, to Isabelle A. Hubbard, of Lawrence county, Indiana. the daughter of Austin and Isabelle (Dewey) Hubbard. She was one of thirteen children born to her parents, of whom twelve grew to maturity and three are now living, namely: Harriet, of Oklahoma: Eliza, of Lawrence county, Indiana, and William, of Guthrie township, this county. To Alfred and Isabelle Guthrie were born eight children, namely: (1) Melvin T., of Tunnelton, a successful farmer and stock raiser. He is a Republican in politics and was census enumerator in 1890. On January 28, 1875, he married Jennie Paine, of Kokomo, Indiana, and they had eight children, of whom six are living, namely: Florence, Ernest M., Ralph, Roy, Opal, Alfred B., deceased, Orin R. and an infant. (2) Melvina is the widow of J. H. Malott, of Indianapolis, and their children are Claude, an attorney at Bloomington; Noble, a merchant; Ray, an attorney, and Frank, who is deceased. (3) Lillie married, first, John P. Davis, and then Dr. Frank Collyer, of Louisville, Kentucky. (4) Carrie, the wife of L. A. Crim, of Indianapolis. (5) Ella is the wife of J. D. Moorehead, a farmer at Tunnelton, and they have one child, Ruth. (6) Alfred H., of Nashville, Tennessee, has been married twice, first to Eva Parrett, by whom was born one child, Edwin P., and secondly to Alvira (Miller) Salyard. Mrs. Isabelle Hubbard Guthrie died on June 10, 1890, and on April 1, 1893, Mr. Guthrie married Isabel Isenhower of Owensburg, Indiana, a daughter of George A. and Elizabeth (Caffy) Isenhower. These parents, who were natives, respectively, of North Carolina and Illinois lived in Jackson township, Greene county, Indiana, where Mr. Isenhower successfully carried on farming operations. He died in 1894 and his wife passed away in 1862. By his second marriage Mr. Guthrie became the father of a son, Blaine A., born April 9, 1898, who remains at home with his mother. Mrs. Guthrie is a lady of splendid qualities and is honored and respected by all who know her, because of her gracious personality and kindly relations with those about her.

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