

ELKIN FAMILY

WILLIAM ELKIN, late of West Mahoning township, may be said to have been the head of the family in Indiana county. He was born in County Tyrone, Ireland, Feb. 3, 1804, and died at his home in the above named township May 28, 1896, aged ninety-two years, three months, twenty-five days. He was twice married, and raised two families. He was first married to Martha Beattie, who died in Ireland in 1849. Her children were: Francis, intermarried with Elizabeth Pratt; William, with Mary Elkin; James, with Jane Elkin; Henry, with Agnes Potter; Eliza, with John Bond; Anne, with Spencer Barrett, and Sarah, with James Chapman. Four years after the death of his first wife William Elkin married Jane Rippey, in 1853. The children of the second marriage were: David, intermarried with Etta Lowe; Martha, with Thomas Ralston; and John, with Emma Sprangle. All of these children lived in western Pennsylvania, where many of them with their families still reside.

In 1850 William Elkin made a visit to his son Francis, who lived in Pittsburg, Pa., and who had preceded his father to this country. After remaining here nine months William returned to Ireland and two years later came back to Pittsburg with his family. In 1854 he purchased the old homestead in West Mahoning township, upon which he spent the remainder of his life.

Martha Beattie, first wife of William Elkin, was the granddaughter of Joseph Hill, who died in Ireland in 1844 at the ripe old age of 107 years.

Francis Elkin, eldest son of William and father of Hon. John P. Elkin, died in Smicksburg, Pa., Dec. 12, 1882, leaving to survive him a wife, Elizabeth (Pratt) Elkin, and six children: Elizabeth Caroline, intermarried with William Elkin; James Henry, with M. Ella Oberlin; John Pratt, with Adda P. Prothero; Martha Cordelia, with W. D. McHenry; William Francis, with Ersie C. Maugans; and Margaret Alicia, with Robert McKibben.

Martha (Beattie) Elkin, grandmother of Hon. John P. Elkin, had several brothers and sisters, but none of the old stock emigrated to America. Her brothers, Henry, Robert, and John, were men of literary ability and became distinguished scholars. Henry was graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1847. He won several scholarships during his university course in competitive examinations, and was graduated with distinguished honor. He took a theological course and became a clergyman in the Church of England. He married the daughter of a bishop and resided near London, his children still living there. His brothers, Robert and John, followed in his footsteps in the matter of acquiring an education, but did not become clergymen. They prepared themselves for the profession of teaching and for many years were leading instructors in the Queen's naval schools. The Beattie family was inclined to intellectual pursuits and its members took high rank in the various callings and professions in which they became engaged. Many of the younger generation are in professional life in England at the present time.

The authorities on genealogy hold widely dissimilar views regarding the origin of the surname Elkin. In "The Domesday," generally regarded as an authoritative record in England, the name is said to be a combination of "Ella" and "kyn" and was used to designate the followers of Ella, the leader of a band of

Saxon invaders who landed in south Britain about the year 514 A.D. He became king of the South Saxons and with his three sons and followers ruled those people for a long term of years. He was universally conceded to be the head of all the subsequent settlers in Britain—the first Bretwalda. In the history of the Northmen we find that “Ella” and “Alla” were used as interchangeable words and had the same meaning. Frequently the words “Ellakind: and :Allakind: were used in the sense of being synonymous with “Englishmen.” According to a slightly different view the name Elkin, which used to designate an Englishman, is a modification or corruption of “Alehen,” a Shropshire land holder in the reign of King Edward the Confessor, the last of the Saxon kings of England. There can be but little doubt that the name Elkin is of Saxon origin and that it was used to designate the people who followed the fortune of King Ella. According to Ferguson, a recognized authority on the origin of names, “Ella” is derived from the Gothic words “Alius” and “alja,” meaning a person from another country, a foreigner, or a wanderer. In this connection there appear in the old German language “alja,” “Ello,” and “Ella,” and in the alter German these words appear in their diminutive forms as “Alikin” and “Elikin””; while in the Anglo-Saxon these words appear as “Alchen” and “Elkin:.” From these words and their derivatives we learn two facts: 1. That the Saxon kings and their followers where inhabitants of the Continent before they became invaders of Britain. The name Elkin is therefore of Teutonic and not of Celtic origin. 2. That the original name was “Elkin” and not “Elkins,” because in all of the derivatives and roots there is no indication of the addition of the letter “s,” which was probably added in England at a much later date. The two forms are used interchangeably and mean the same thing. Both branches of the family belong to the old Saxon stock.

The members of the Elkin family who settled in western Pennsylvania belong to the branch that emigrated from England to Ireland in the seventeenth century. The exact date of the settlement of the Elkin families in Ireland is not known. The best authenticated tradition is that in the seventeenth century some members of the graham, Ramsey and Elkin families emigrated from England to County Tyrone, Ireland, and settled near Omagh. Among those who thus settled in Ireland was a certain James Elkin, of whose subsequent history little is known. Robert Elkin was the head of the chief branch of the family in Ireland. He came from England about the middle of the eighteenth century and settled near Omagh. He married Marjorie Woods, of County Fermanagh, where some of her relatives still reside. There is no definite information concerning this Robert Elkin, but he had brothers and sisters and no doubt was closely related to the James Elkin mentioned above, who also came from England some years before. It is also very probable that he was a member of the family of William Elkin mentioned in English history as an alderman of London, and also of John Elkin, one of the subscribers to the London Company’s Colonies in America, 1609, and a merchant of London, where many members of the Elkin family of England lived.

The history of the second generation in Ireland may very properly start with the children of Robert Elkin and Marjorie Woods, his wife. They were five in number: Robert, David, Francis, William and Mary, and were born at Mullinatomagh. The parents were stricken with fever and died when the children

were comparatively young. They were taken into the family of William Smith, a neighbor, whose daughter Catherine afterward married David Elkin, the second son of Robert. David and his wife by their industry and thrift were soon able to purchase the farm known as Kilbuck, which has remained as a homestead in the Elkin family from that time to the present.

Robert Elkin, the eldest son of Robert and Marjorie (Woods) Elkin, came to America in 1794 and made his first settlement in Brushvalley township, Indiana Co., Pa. He was the first of the Elkin family to emigrate to America from Ireland. He was a farmer in Ireland and evidently decided to follow the same occupation here, and no doubt selected a farm in that section of Indiana county for this purpose. For many years he wrote an occasional letter to his friends in Ireland, but nothing was heard from him later perhaps than 1825, except that he had moved from Indiana county to the central part of Ohio. In the history of Indiana county published in 1880, it is recorded that Samuel S. Stephens, who lived in Brushvalley township, married a Rebecca Elkin in the early part of the nineteenth century. This Rebecca Elkin was no doubt the daughter of Robert Elkin, who settled there soon after coming to this country. William Elkin, a nephew of Robert Elkin, emigrated from Ireland and settled here in 1853. He made a visit to Ohio for the purpose of locating the family of his uncle Robert, but found they had left there and moved to Missouri. It is known that Robert Elkin had a large family and numerous descendants, who no doubt live in different States of the southwest, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee and southern Illinois. There is a large Elkin family in that section of the country and no doubt many of them are the descendants of Robert Elkin, the first of the family to settle in this country.

Francis Elkin, the third son of Robert and Marjorie (Woods) Elkin, was born at Mullinatomagh—the exact date of his birth is not definitely known, but was perhaps in the year 1784. He married Nancy Park, and to this marriage three children were born, William, Mary and Sarah. He died in 1864 and was buried in Lower Langfield cemetery, where his brothers David and William were also buried. In 1905 Hon. John P. Elkin, while on a visit to Ireland, caused a monument to be erected in the cemetery at Langfield to the memory of Francis Elkin, who was his great-grandfather, and also in memory of his grandmother, Martha (Beattie) Elkin, who was buried at Cappah in 1849. Francis Elkin had the reputation of being industrious, thrifty, intelligent and loyal to friendships, principles, convictions and faith. He was a man of affairs and had the respect and confidence of his neighbors, relatives and friends. He lived a long and useful life and died contented and happy at the old homestead in Ireland. It was a matter of regret to him that most of his immediate family had emigrated to America, but he was reconciled because he thought they had greater opportunities here than they could have in the old country. He lived and died a member of the Church of England, the faith of his fathers.

William Elkin, familiarly called "Orange Billy," was the fourth son of Robert and Marjorie (Woods) Elkin. Mary Elkin, the fifth child, was intermarried with a Mr. Hunter, and many of the descendants of this family live in Canada.

That members of Elkin family were engaged in various occupations and professions appears from the fact that in 1559 a certain George Elkins was

graduated from Oxford and became a clergyman of the Church of England; and a William Elkin was made vicar of the parish at East Cloyden, Buckinghamshire, in 1405. Another William Elkin is mentioned in connection with his daughter Ursula, who married Sir Roger Owen, a prominent member of Parliament from the County Salop. The widow of this William Elkin afterward married Thomas Owen, father of Sir Roger, and a judge of the court of Common Pleas during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The members of the original Elkin family lived in the south and east of England, especially near Cheltenham and in London. In the "Munimenta Gildhalae Londoniensis" there is a reference to a Robert Ellkyn, thus retaining a part at least the early form of spelling, a combination of "Ella" and "kyn." He was an office holder during Sir Richard Whittington's mayoralty in the sixteenth century. In 1547 a coat of arms was granted to Richard Elkins, and in 1593 another coat of arms was granted William Elkin, who was an alderman of Cripple Gate, London. About the same time the family coat of arms was authorized to be registered and is still adopted by the English branch of the family.

In western Pennsylvania the Elkin people are very generally engaged in agricultural pursuits. They are industrious, frugal, thrifty and reasonable prosperous. They are loyal to friendships, devoted to their families and maintain correct standards in the domestic relation. They pay their debts, keep their contracts and save their earnings. They live the simple life and find recreation and enjoyment in wholesome things.