

Matthias Elmore celebrated his 91st birthday Wednesday at his home in Ripley township. Although so old, he is still splendidly preserved, and can see, hear, and work remarkably for his years. He was a caller at the Journal a few days ago and gave the following story of his life here.

I was born in Warren county, Ohio, September 26, 1809 and I came to this county with my father Jacob Elmore in 1825, just four years after the first settlement by William Offield. We settled across the creek from Offield's place, near where the Hibernian Mill stands, in that same bottom and you can bet we had a hard time getting along those first few years. Life was no joke then. My father owned 160 acres of land, entering it in old Ripley, and I still own 80 acres of this. We had a hard time at first, as I said, and I remember that for six weeks once we had nothing to eat except potatoes and an occasional half-starved rabbit that we could knock over in the snow. We could have had corn meal, but the creeks were frozen up so that they couldn't grind. I came clear to Crawfordsville to get a bag of corn ground, there being a mill then at the foot of the hill where the Monon station now stands. The hillside was covered with sleet so that I had to slide the sack down, but even then I couldn't get it ground.

I tell you, Crawfordsville wasn't much of a town then, just a few log houses. I remember when it was all woods about here, and all north of Main street was a big deadening, with fallen timber all over it. I was here when they burned it off, and it surely made a grand sight. The first stores were pretty tolerably poor. They didn't have anything in them hardly except a few tools, some ugly prints and a few other things. The sugar was poor and mighty little was sold, because we could make better tree sugar. Whisky was the best thing sold in town by a long shot, and it was not only good but cheap. They don't make such good whisky now.

There were some mighty good men here then and I can remember half a dozen old Revolutionary soldiers. I knew them well, and used to love to listen to their tales of George Washington with the feather in his cap and his prancing war stud horse. There were Sims, Warren, Miller, Weir, Fruits and some others. Old man Fruits lived to be way over a hundred years and was a perfect giant of a man.

Do I remember the first election at which I voted? Well, I rather guess I do. I wasn't old enough to vote, but I did it anyhow. You see, General Jackson-the great General Jackson-was running for President, and I was a great big overgrown boy looking to be twenty-one. I went over to George Fruits house where the Ripley township election was and I plunked her straight for Andrew Jackson. This was in 1828 and I voted for the general again in 1832. Elections were different then from now. At the first election the members of the board sat around in the house watching everything but the ballot box and talking and playing. Old Jim Gilkey was there sitting on a box and he wrote out the ballots with a goose quill pen and pokeberry ink for everyone that came to vote. Jim was powerful handy with his pen and a mighty accommodating man. I wasn't of age the first time I voted but as it was for Andrew Jackson I thought it was all right. Later on I went back on the general because he knocked out the United States bank, and I turned out to be a Whig, but then I got to be a Democrat again before war times and I'm one now. I'll be one as long as I live unless the Democratic party dies first, and don't you go to calculating on that.

I claim to have been the first banker in Montgomery county and my bank was a hollow beech stump. I was working for twenty-five cents a day and I got my pay every week in

silver half dollars. These I tied in an old sock and hid in the stump until I got two hundred of them. Then I bought me a farm. Yes, farms were cheaper then than now because we bought them at the land office.

There were lots of snakes about here and at the old rock meeting house on Sugar Creek (the meeting house is a ledge of rock overhanging Sugar Creek on the Joseph McMaken farm) there were thousands of snakes of all kinds that wintered there. From there they crawled out over all the adjoining country in the spring. One spring the farmers all pitched in and hired dare devil Sam Havens to go down to the wintering place and kill them as they came out. The first warm day he was there with a long hickory pole and he just mowed them down. I went down one day in a boat and saw piled up on the bank three piles of dead snakes, each pile as big as a large haycock. The snakes were of all kinds, mostly copper heads and rattlers. Sam got a dollar a day for his work, high wages then, but he cleaned the snakes out and some people called him St. Patrick for driving the snakes out of Ripley.

There were many bears about then and I saw one good fight. J. Watson Ramsey and Miah McKinsey went after a bear that had crawled in a hole in a big poplar and I went along to see the fun. Miah cut the tree down and it burst open when it fell and the bear walked out. Ramsey fired but missed and then the dog rushed in. The bear hugged him tight and while it was doing so Miah grabbed up his axe and rushed up. He hit the bear across the back and simply uncoupled him, the axe clean into him and severing the spine. The bear started to run but fell and they killed him. These same fellows were out deer hunting in a boat one night and wounded a big buck that jumped into the dugout and upset it, mighty near drowning both men.

There were Indians here too, and when we first came here there was a little Indians grave down at Indian Ford where they picnic now. It was an odd grave. A big poplar had been cut down and a section cut out. Below this the wood was hollowed out and the dead baby was put in and the section returned, closing the tree trunk. The Indians used to come in big crowds from up about Thorntown down to where Jim Hankins lives now to make sugar in the spring.

In 1826 I helped make the first road from where Yountsville now is, to Crawfordsville. It is the road used now. I also subscribed to build the Yountsville bridge and got mighty angry when the county gave the Toll company the privilege to use it.

2 Lane Bridge
Built 1848
Replaced 1948
I crossed this bridge

1

Ripley - Almost the Elmore's the Cap. of Ripley

Ripley was named after Eleazer W. Ripley,
as Plan has pointed out, was a hero
of the War 1812.

Commanded the 21st INF Reg,
took part in several battles,
Wounded in one of those battles
1814 promoted to Brigadier General
to command the 2nd Brigade,
Sept. 14, 1814 was wounded again
After the War he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal
for his Wartime service.

Organizer of Mont. Co, some were probably Vet.
saw him as a HERO and named this Twp, Ripley

Yountsville Woolen mill was a very successful Business
in the 1800's

also In the SW corner is the Northern part of
the Shades State Park.

My Mother, Edith Elmore

her father - my G. father, Albert Elmore

Albert's father, My Great G. father, James B. Elmore
Farmer author + poet.

his father Matthias Elmore, My GG grandfather.

and Matthias father, Jacob Elmore, My GGG grandfather
came to Ripley 1825. Born in S.C. lived in Ohio till 1825
and bought 160^{ac} 1826 ^{from gov't}. Lived on that land with his wife
Mary McKinsey till they died 1849 + 1850.

Both buried in Stonebraker Cemetery.

2

Jacob + Mary had 4 children

Mathias, Sarah, Thomas + Appleton

Mathias gave an account of those early years about Ripley to the Journal newspaper in 1900.

Account: → 3

In 1852 his first wife having died,

Mathias married Mary Ann Willis.

Her father, Abner Willis + her grandfather

Benjamin Willis had also bought land in Ripley from the Gov.

Mathias + Mary Ann had 7 children, the 2nd was James B. Elmore, my Great grandfather, Farmer, author + poet.

James B. Married Mary Ann Murray from Missouri.

They had 5 kids. Maud died at 13 yrs old. Then

Roscoe, farmer, teacher + inventor, then Grace, Nora and Albert, farmer my grandfather.

Albert married Lula Seitz of Waveland.

They had 5 kids, James, Margret, Lemoxae - Edith + Ethel, twins.

Albert got the first car; Jame B. said he was going to kill his family!

When Edith, my mother was 10, Lula her mother got sick, All 5 kids went to live with James B.

and Mary Ann. JB 71 + MA 65, Quite a Job 5 Teens! Lula died a few Mo. Later.

1945 My Dad Took over farming for Granddad Albert. Granddad, having free time, bought an Airplane.

In the 40s, field in back of our house, made run ways, corner to corner, Dad probably wasn't too happy farming out the Triangles.

2 miles SW of Crawfordsville

Matthias Elmore celebrated his 91st birthday Wednesday at his home in Ripley township. Although so old, he is still splendidly preserved, and can see, hear, and work remarkably for his years. He was a caller at the Journal a few days ago and gave the following story of his life here.

I was born in Warren county, Ohio, September 26, 1809 and I came to this county with my father Jacob Elmore in 1825, just four years after the first settlement by William Offield. We settled across the creek from Offield's place, near where the Hibernian Mill stands, in that same bottom and you can bet we had a hard time getting along those first few years. Life was no joke then. My father owned 160 acres of land, entering it in old Ripley, and I still own 80 acres of this. We had a hard time at first, as I said, and I remember that for six weeks once we had nothing to eat except potatoes and an occasional half-starved rabbit that we could knock over in the snow. We could have had corn meal, but the creeks were frozen up so that they couldn't grind. I came clear to Crawfordsville to get a bag of corn ground, ther being a mill then at the foot of the hill where the Monon station now stands. The hillside was covered with sleet so that I had to slide the sack down, but even then I couldn't get it ground.

I tell you, Crawfordsville wasn't much of a town then, just a few log houses. I remember when it was all woods about here, and all north of Main street was a big deadening, with fallen timber all over it. I was here when they burned it off, and it surely made a grand sight. The first stores were pretty tolerably poor. They didn't have anything in them hardly except a few tools, some ugly prints and a few other things. The sugar was poor and mighty little was sold, because we could make better tree sugar. Whisky was the best thing sold in town by a long shot, and it was not only good but cheap. They don't make such good whisky now.

There were some mighty good men here then and I can remember half a dozen old Revolutionary soldiers. I knew them well, and used to love to listen to their tales of George Washington with the feather in his cap and his prancing war stud horse. There were Sims, Warren, Miller, Weir, Fruits and some others. Old man Fruits lived to be way over a hundred years and was a perfect giant of a man.

Do I remember the first election at which I voted ? Well, I rather guess I do. I wasn't old enough to vote, but I did it anyhow. You see, General Jackson-the great General Jackson-was running for President, and I was a great big overgrown boy looking to be twenty-one. I went over to George Fruits house where the Ripley township election was and I plunked her straight for Andrew Jackson. This was in 1828 and I voted for the general again in 1832. Elections were different then from now. At the first election the members of the board sat around in the house watching everything but the ballot box and talking and playing. Old Jim Gilkey was there sitting on a box and he wrote out the ballots with a goose quill pen and pokeberry ink for everyone that came to vote. Jim was powerful handy with his pen and a mighty accommodating man. I wasn't of age the first time I voted but as it was for Andrew Jackson I thought it was all right. Later on I went back on the general because he knocked out the United States band, and I turned out to be a Whig, but then I got to be a Democrat again before war times and I'm one now. I'll be one as long as I live unless the Democratic party dies first, and don't you go to calculating on that.

I claim to have been the first banker in Montgomery county and my bank was a hollow beech stump. I was working for twenty-five cents a day and I got my pay every week in

4

Albert had to go to Danville Ill. to get his pilot license. No other pilots around, He flew himself To Danville.

Another day he had been somewhere. We were watching him come in to land.

He ran out of runway. Turned into plowed ground and Turned the Plane OVER. Nobody hurt + just minor damage.

About the Underground railroad.

The Dwellap north of Alamo, built in the late 1940's or early 50's belonged to Don Ellogwood. I was in that House and saw the wide walls.

I can't talk about Alamo without saying something about the Joe Willis Monument.

He was a cousin to Mary Ann Willis Matthias's 2nd wife.

Joe's body was cremated, per his will. Not common in those days. It had to be sent to St Louis at a cost of \$35.

The rest of his money was to pay for the Monument \$2600. 60 tons of granite, the Base 9'3" square. IT sets on 5' deep concrete.

Brought to Waynetown by rail road. and on To Alamo by horses + wagons. IT would have been something To see being set up.

And in closing The 40a That Matthias bought from the Gov. My cousin Bob Elmore still owns.