



# EWING FAMILY NEWS

Descendants of William Alexander Ewing

*A major part of the family's history ....*

## Ewings in the Reserville Community

Like many others in the early years of Kansas' statehood, John B. Reser came to Marshall County in search of new land and a chance to carve a prosperous living from the native prairie. His first visit in 1869 convinced him that the fertile soil offered the opportunity he sought. So he returned to his Illinois home and persuaded his entire family to make the move to the "frontier".

In addition to John's parents, Anthony and Phylecta Reser, there were his brothers Alanson and Charles; sisters and brothers-in-law, Elmira and James Shedden, Armenia and Loyd Lathrop,

and Marilla and Charles Lewis. There were also three younger sisters still living with the Reser parents. In all, seven families made the transition to Kansas to establish homesteads, close together in southern Marshall and northern Pottawatomie counties.

They built a small log school that became the center of activities, as was common, and the area became known as "Reserville". The intersection at the school, about 8 miles southwest of Frankfort, became known as Reserville Crossroads. When they outgrew the small school, a new one was built on the oppo-

site corner to the southwest on land donated by Ceph Owen.

The Reser families endured the hardships of the prairie until the end of 1898, when most of them decided to return to Illinois. Only John Reser, his wife Phoebe and children Myrt and Mettie remained. George Shedden, son of Elmira and James Shedden, also stayed in Kansas, but chose to live in Frankfort, where he fostered a newspaper career instead of continuing on the farm.

Only two years after the Reser families left Kansas, the community they had established became the home of a Ewing relative. Gus and Nancy Coxley sold their Wells Township farm that neighbored the Ewing homestead just prior to the marriage of their daughter, Salome, to Ira Ewing. Near the end of 1900 the Coxleys bought 400 acres very close to the Reserville school and made it

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Reserville School - District #65

*A heart-felt "Thanks" to Diana Shedden Peppersack (great-granddaughter of Elmira and James Shedden) and her husband Carroll Peppersack, for their help with the Reser history and the school photo at left.*

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their home the following spring. A year later, in March 1902, Gus Coxley purchased 80 adjoining acres from Elmira and James Shedden, who lived in Illinois by then.

The Reserville community would be the center of much of the Ewing family history well into the next century (see map on page 3). The following is a time-line of family events in Reserville:

**1905** - Alex Coxley, youngest son of Gus and Nancy Coxley, dies suddenly of ruptured appendix.

Ira and Salome Ewing move into an old house on the back side of the Charles Fea farm.

Ray Ewing, second son of Ira and Salome Ewing, is born at the Coxley home.

**1907** - Ira and Salome Ewing move to the "Reynolds place", north of Reserville school.

**1908** - Ira and Salome Ewing's daughter, Nellie, is born.



Ezra Coxley

**1914** - Ezra Coxley, middle son of Gus and Nancy Coxley, also dies suddenly from complications of a ruptured appendix.

**1917** - Dean Coxley, oldest son of Gus and Nancy Coxley, marries Ila Mills, daughter of a Reserville neighbor.

Gus and Nancy Coxley retire from farming and move to Frankfort.

Dean Coxley and his new wife move into the Coxley farm home.

Ira and Salome Ewing move into a rented house on the "Hopkins place" south of the Coxley farm, after having lived on the Ewing

homestead in Wells Township for the past seven years. Their family now includes seven children.

**1919** - Dean Coxley buys an adjoining farm, about 115 acres.

Dean and Ila's son, Leo, is born.

Ira and Salome Ewing's youngest daughter, Mary, is born.

**1920** - Ira and Salome Ewing move onto Dean Coxley's newly purchased farm.

Dean and Ila Coxley's daughter, Opal, is born.

**1922** - Ira Ewing is forced back into the hospital at Topeka. Salome Ewing dies suddenly from complications of childbirth. The Ewing children continue to live on Dean Coxley's farm.

**1924** - The Ewing children are separated by the court. Frank and Ray, the oldest boys, stay with Dean Coxley. Forrest is taken in by O.T. Pritchard and Mabel is taken by George Raymond, both are Reserville families. Eldon lives with three different families before ending up with Perry Morton



Dean and Ila Coxley

in Bigelow Township. Nellie and Dean are wards of the court in Marysville before being taken in by families there. Mary, the youngest, lives with Gus and Nancy Coxley in Frankfort.

Over the next few years, the older Ewing boys would work for numerous Reserville farmers.

**1927** - Frank Ewing marries Cordelia Harrison and they start out farming on the Frank Hula farm north of Reserville. Forrest lives with them for a while.

**1931** - Frank and Cordy Ewing move onto Dean Coxley's farm, where Frank's family had lived in 1922.



Dean Ewing holding his nephew, Bill Ewing. That's Wilma, Bill's sister, peeking out behind Dean.

**1932** - Bill Ewing, first son of Frank and Cordy Ewing, is born on the Dean Coxley farm. Frank's sister, Nellie, lives with them for a while; and the next year, Frank's youngest brother, Dean Ewing, lives with them on the farm.

**1936** - Eldon Ewing marries Virginia Anderson, a Reserville girl.

Frank Ewing has a farm sale while on the Dean Coxley farm, selling all his machinery, livestock and part of their household goods. He and Cordy move from the area.



**1943** - Eldon and Virginia Ewing move onto the Charles Fea farm. They would buy it a few years later and raise their family there. John, Barbara and David, their last three children, would all be born while the family lives there.

**1950** - Dean Coxley dies. Ila and Leo move to Frankfort, but the farm remains in the family until after Nancy Coxley's death in 1953.

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The barn on the Dean Coxley farm (photo c.1933).

## 1922 Plat of Reserville community

The "Reynolds place", where Ira and Salome moved in 1907 and where Nellie was born in 1908.

Parents of Ila Mills, wife of Dean Coxley

The Ewing kids lived here in 1922 when their mother died.

Dean Coxley bought this place (prox. 115 acres) in 1919



Mabel lived with the Raymonds after the Ewing kids were separated.

Gus and Nancy Coxley bought this place (prox. 400 acres) in 1900 and moved there in March, 1901.

The Coxley house

The "Shedden place" (80 acres) that Gus Coxley bought in 1902

Reserville school

The "Hopkins place", where Ira and Salome moved in 1917 when they left the Ewing homestead in Wells Township. They lived here when Mary was born in 1919.

Where Forrest lived with O.T. Pritchard after the court separated the Ewing kids.

This part of the Charles Fea farm is where Ira and Salome lived in 1905 when Ray was born. This quarter-section was sold in 1928.

Eldon's farm today is this half-section of the Charles Fea farm.

Township line - Clear Fork to the right, Bigelow to the left

County line - Marshall above, Pottawatomie below

Butch Ewing  
900 N. Lakeview  
Derby, KS 67037

Wishing all  
a very Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year

Anthony Reser was born and raised in Pike County, eastern Pennsylvania.

The preceding parallels illustrate the movement of people as the United States grew and developed westward. All were subject to the same influences, looking for the same opportunities.

## Reunion Survey

*Thanks to all who responded to the survey in the last newsletter. Although the response wasn't as large as I had hoped, everyone's input is greatly appreciated. Most who responded were those who have been regularly attending... was hoping for more input from those who haven't, but guess we can't expect miracles. The majority of response was in favor of pretty much leaving things as they have been, with the exception of perhaps going to an every-other-year schedule.*

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**1988** - Virginia Ewing dies. Eldon continues to farm his Reserville land until 1991, when he retires from farming and moves to Frankfort. What was once part of the Charles Fea farm is still Eldon's today.

From 1900 to 2011... for 111 years the Reserville area has figured into our family history. Sometimes in a minor role, other times in a very major way. Today, the "community" is a sparsely

populated, very rural area and all that remains of the school are a few weathered scraps of debris on the lot where the building once stood.

It should be noted that there are other parallels between the Reser family and the Ewings, in addition to their Marshall County locations. The Ewing and the Sabin families came to Kansas at the beginning of 1870. It was later that same year when the Reser families established their homesteads here. The Ewings and Sabins came to Marshall County from northern Illinois, near Cherry Valley and Belvidere. The Resers had lived near Udina, Illinois, northwest of Chicago, and only about 40 miles from where the Ewings had lived. Prior to living in Illinois, the Ewing family had been in south-central Pennsylvania for over 130 years.



The Dean Coxley family:  
Dean (left), Leo, Opal (front, center) and Ila.