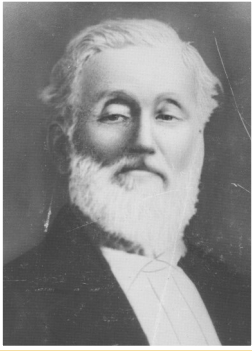


December, 2020



EWING FAMILY NEWS

Descendants of William Alexander Ewing

Cyrus Ewing... The Other Kansas Homesteader

When William Alexander Ewing homesteaded in Marshall county, Kansas, in 1870 he was not the only member of our family to do so. His younger brother, Cyrus, also put down roots in Kansas soil.

Born in Pennsylvania about 1837, Cyrus C. Ewing was one of the younger children of Ralph and Ann Ewing. He would have been in his late teens when the family moved to Boone county, Illinois, in 1855. The 1860 Illinois census shows Cyrus Ewing living with (or very near) William Alexander in Flora township, Illinois, and both were living near their father, Ralph. But the same census also shows a Cyrus Ewing, about the same age, living with their brother Jesse. Either Cyrus got counted twice in that census or he had a cousin, also named Cyrus, who was living one place or the other.

Soon after the Civil War started, Cyrus joined the army, enlisting at Cherry Valley, Illinois, on August 14, 1862. Before mustering into service he married Lurana Grummon on August 26, 1862. Then on September 4 he mustered into Company E, 74th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry at Rockford, Illinois. But his military career would be very short.

By January, 1863, Cyrus had been separated from his military unit and spent the next two months in a hospital, the victim of army food and living conditions. Dysentery, a common malady of many Civil War soldiers, had rendered him unfit for duty and would cause him problems the rest of his life. He was discharged from the army at Gallatin, Tennessee, on March 5, 1863. Cyrus returned to Illinois where his wife, Lurana, died some time that same year.

Editor's note:

Some of this information about Cyrus was first published in a 2005 newsletter. It has been re-created here with a few updates and will be posted on our website:

williamalexanderewing.info

Newsletters online

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On our website you will find previous issues of the newsletter as well as numerous photos and historical information about the family of William Alexander Ewing

Over the next few years, Cyrus worked at farming with his brothers and their neighbors and good friends, the Sabin family. Then, in the fall of 1869, when the Ewings and the Sabins decided to find new land in Kansas, Cyrus and four of the Sabin men made the hardest part of the trip. Leaving northern Illinois in loaded wagons, the men drove their teams nearly 700 miles through an extremely wet season, arriving in Pottawatomie county, Kansas, on Christmas day. The rest of both families arrived a few weeks later by train.

When the Ewings staked their claims on Marshall county land, Cyrus opted for the 160 acres that laid on the east side of William Alexander's 80. Since Cyrus was a Civil War veteran, he was entitled to a larger homestead.

All of the calamities that befell Wells township...drought, fire, windstorms and grasshoppers...also effected Cyrus. But he, like his neighbors, struggled through it and managed to do well. He was known to raise some pretty fine horses. A short item in the *Irving Leader* newspaper noted that a Mr. Hodges had purchased a stallion from Cyrus that was, "a fine looking animal and is quite valuable."

Cyrus grew the usual grain crops that everyone grew at the time, but in addition he occasionally also grew some tobacco. Years later, in his newspaper column, Grant Ewing described how Cyrus would press the tobacco leaves together with molasses and dry them under a board to make chewing tobacco.

The November 21, 1878, issue of the *Blue Rapids Times* carried an item listing the results of the election of "road overseers." In Wells township's district 3, a tie vote between C.C. Ewing and R. Lake resulted in a drawing of lots to determine the winner and R. Lake was elected.

Cyrus married Amanda B. (Betty) Johnson at her father's Blue Rapids home on November 23, 1880. Census records indicate that Betty was born in Sweden (Nov. 13, 1859) and had lived in Illinois before coming to Kansas.

Cyrus and Betty started their family in 1881 with the birth of a daughter, Lurana (is it unusual that they would name their first-born child after his first wife?). Another daughter, Zilda, was born in 1884 and a set of twins, Ralph and Ruth, were born in 1887. Another son, Eric, followed in 1890.

The year of 1893 saw the beginning of a U.S. economic depression that lasted for nearly four years. Cyrus sold his Wells township homestead that year and moved a few miles further southeast, into Pottawatomie county, where he bought a 160-acre farm near Havensville in Grant township. Two more children were born into the family while they lived near Havensville: Elizabeth in 1895 and Iris in 1898.

Cyrus's health had begun to deteriorate in the late 1880s and continued to decline for the next couple of decades. By 1906 he was not able to continue living at home. A short personal item in the November 22 issue of the *Havensville Review* indicated that Cyrus had been taken to the Soldiers' Home in Leavenworth earlier that week by a family friend. It concluded, "Mr. Ewing was placed in the hospital, where no doubt he will be benefited by the treatment and the change."

Two weeks later another newspaper item read, "The people about town were shocked Tuesday on hearing of the death of Mr. Ewing at the Soldiers' Home Friday evening. The body was buried there Sunday and the family did not hear of his death till Tuesday. There must be a big mistake or it is a case of gross negligence or something of the kind. The family should have been advised immediately and given a chance to bring the body home. Everybody will sympathize with the family in what seems a double affliction."

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Cyrus L. Ewing

MILITARY HISTORY.

Time and Place of Birth	Race	Company and Regiment	Time and Place of Discharge	Cause of Discharge	Kind and Degree of Disability	When and Where Contracted
Aug 1st. 1862 Sharon, Vt., U.S.	White	E 7th Ill. Inf.	March 10. 1868 Ballwin, Mo.	Disability	Senile Dementia	

DOMESTIC HISTORY.

When Born	Age	Height	Complexion	Color of Hair	Color of Eyes	Build and Weight	Religion	Occupation	Residence Subsequent to Discharge	Married or Single	Name and Address of Present Relative
Born	69	5.6	Light			He		Farmer	Havensville, Kan.	Married	Betty Ewing, wife Omaha, Kan. R.F.D. #1

HOME HISTORY.

Date of Death	Time of Admission to Institution and Treatment	Conditions of Admission	Date of Discharge and Transfer	Cause of Discharge	Date of Death	Cause of Death
7-10-06	Nov 30. 1906	Senile			Nov 30. 1906	Senile Dementia

GENERAL REMARKS.

PAPERS.	Location of Graves and Remarks.
Discharge Paper, Rec. Station, May 11-1868, Major	Sec 21 - Row 5 - Grave 3610
Army Discharge	Recd Nov 21. 1906
Certificate of Service	Mrs Betty Ewing, wife, Omaha, Kan.
Final Certificate "U.S. 6126"	Notified
	Buried Dec 2. 1906
Cash	Rev James M. Bryan, Chaplain
Funeral Money	
Funeral, Approved at \$ 1.00	
Total	
How Disposed of	



Cyrus died on November 30, 1906. Leavenworth facility records listed “senile dementia” as the cause of death. We will never know what happened in the few days he was there, and why the family wasn’t notified until after his burial.

Cyrus’s health must have severely deteriorated at least a couple of years prior to going to Leavenworth, as Betty sold the Havensville farm in 1904 and bought 80 acres a little further south in Lincoln township...without Cyrus’s signature. She stayed in Lincoln township until the fall of 1908 when she moved into Onaga. That winter, Betty and her oldest daughter both became seriously ill. Betty never recovered, dying on February 27, 1909. She was buried in Onaga cemetery.

The children of Cyrus and Betty Ewing

Lurana — born 1881 on the Marshall county homestead. She is identified as “Loraine” in her newspaper obituary. Apparently Lurana never married, as the obit states that she worked for a number of years for “Mrs. Hattie Caron in her millinery establishment” in Havensville. She was still living with her mother and two youngest sisters in Onaga in the winter of 1908-09, when Lurana and her mother both became quite ill. We don’t know the cause of their illness, but it took the life of her mother and seriously threatened Lurana. If it effected the two younger girls, it evidently wasn’t as serious. Lurana struggled to recover after her mother passed away and she, along with the younger girls, went to western Kansas to live with another sister, Ruth. It was hoped that Lurana might recover there, but she died on May 27, 1909. She was buried next to her mother in Onaga cemetery.

Zilda — born 1884, also in Marshall county. She married Luther Strosnider in 1907 and lived her entire life in the Onaga area. They had two daughters, Arvella (also known as Lucille) and Hazel. Zilda died in 1970 and is buried in Fairview cemetery near Onaga.

Ralph — one of the twins born in 1887. Ralph was born in Marshall county but attended school after the family moved to Pottawatomie county. He served in the military in World War I and went west after the war, where he worked in construction. Settling in Las Vegas, Nevada, in the 1930s he was still in the construction business when he died in 1958. Evidently Ralph never married, as there is no mention of family in his obituary other than his siblings. He was buried in Onaga cemetery next to his mother and sister, Lurana.

Ruth — the other twin born in 1887. She taught a season or two at Brophy school (district 14) in southeast Marshall county before marrying Emil Immenschuh in 1908. They moved to western Kansas, settling in

Logan county near Winona. When their mother died in 1909, the younger Ewing children moved to western Kansas and lived with Ruth. By 1915 Ruth and Emil were back in Pottawatomie county, living in Union township and are shown in the census with three children: Calvin, Boyd and Meta. A fourth child, Keith, would be born three years later. The 1925 census shows Ruth in Wabaunsee county, near Eskridge, where she would live until her death in 1978.

Eric — born 1890 in Marshall county. He lived in western Kansas with Ruth until she returned to Pottawatomie county. Eric stayed in western Kansas and his 1917 draft registration shows him in Lucas, Kansas, with a wife and working as a store clerk. After serving in World War I, Eric returned to central Kansas where he married a second time, to Katherine Turley in 1920 in Russell. They had two daughters, Ruth and Iris (probably named in honor of Eric's sisters). He was listed in a 1952 Salina, Kansas, directory as a driver for Standard Oil. Eric moved to the west coast at some point, as he was listed in Ralph's 1958 obituary as being in Westminster, California. He returned to Salina some time after that and lived there the rest of his life. Eric was described in his 1982 obituary as a long-time Salina resident.

Elizabeth — born 1895 in Pottawatomie county. Not much is known about Elizabeth but she is shown in the 1910 census, living with Ruth in Logan county, Kansas. A couple of newspaper clips from 1911 list her as a student in the schools there, but nothing more has been found and she was not listed as a survivor in Ralph's 1958 obituary.

Iris — born 1898 in Pottawatomie county. Iris never married. She followed her brothers to California where she was enumerated in the 1930 census, living in San Francisco and working in a mercantile as a bookkeeper. Ten years later, she was in Santa Rosa listed as a "sales lady" in the publishing industry. She was shown in Ralph's 1958 obituary as living in Bakersfield. At some point she moved to Las Vegas where she lived the rest of her life. Iris died in 1983.

