

Alvin Adkins was born in Wayne county, Kentucky, September 19, 1822, and died at his home in Rook Creek township, Jasper county, January 9, 1901. Uncle Ad, as he was familiarly known, came to Jasper County, Iowa, in 1845 and for awhile lived at the Adkins Grove, just west of the present site of Kellogg. In 1852 he went to California but returned after an absence of six years. He entered from the government the farm where he resided until his death. January 16, 1860, Mr. Adkins united in marriage with Mary Ann Young. He was the father of eight children, five sons and three daughters, one son and one daughter having preceeded him to the Spirit World. The fact that he was upright, honest and a good neighbor is emphasized by his many neighbors and his wide circle of acquaintances. He never solicited positions of trust yet he was for many years honored by the most important township offices. By the exercise of industry and economy he secured a goodly competence of this world's goods. His last illness began Saturday and ended Wednesday evening. At one o'clock Sunday, January 13, the funeral exercises were conducted at the home, the home where many pleasures of life were enjoyed in years ago, by P. A. Whitcomb. The interment was in Liberty cemetery. There was a large gathering of friends to take part in the sad rites. The bereaved wife and other relatives have the sincere sympathy of all in their deep sorrow.

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AN OLD TIME FAMILY

Among the early timers who came to this section of Iowa while it was still a territory and who left a distinctive impress on the character of the people, we may readily select the name of Alvin Adkins. He was the first of the Adkins gens who took an active part in organizing and developing Rock Creek township. The Adkins family are of Scotch descent and came from eastern Kentucky. Alvin Adkins, Sr., first came to Iowa in the fall of 1841, at the age of 19, landing at Keokuk.

He spent the winter there, returning to Kentucky the next spring. In the fall of '42 he again left his home in Kentucky and came to Wapello county, remaining there all winter. The next spring, 1843, he came to Lynnville, Jasper county, where he hired out to work for Matt. Matthews and afterward to Johnny Sparks, where he worked for a few years. This was before the city of Newton had been located. While there the county seat was to be located; he helped to mark out the streets, and build the first log house in the town of Newton.

Later he and his brother Martin secured a farm each about 2½ miles southwest of where Kellogg now stands, long before that town was thought of. He owned a lot in the now beautiful and prosperous city of Newton just where the court house now stands. For several years purchasers tried to buy it from him, but he did not sell for some time, until at last he was induced to part with it for the sum of \$400. The lot now of course is worth away up in the thousands.

The farm southwest of Kellogg in the edge of what was known as Adkins grove, was then worth about \$1.25 per acre; now it is worth at least \$250 or more per acre.

Besides being the first to settle in this location and very fond of hunting and fishing, he spied out the land for many miles around. He chased large game such as elk, deer, bear, etc., which were then abundant up the Des Moines river as far north as Fort Dodge and the Iowa river as far as Eldora. He named the streams and groves west of Grinnell, such as Sugar Creek, Rock Creek, and the two Skunk rivers, Black Oak grove and Wild Cat, etc., etc.

He liked his farm, but the location did not please him, as it was so level all about him that he knew the land would all be occupied in a few years, so he decided to trade his 160 acre farm for a yoke of oxen and locate in Rock Creek; five miles west of this

He selected this farm of 160 acres because he said it was so hilly in every direction that as long as he lived there would be plenty of wild prairie pasture for his stock. But this proved not to be a correct prophecy, for with the advent of the C., R. I. & P. railway, came the rapid settlement of the country, and many years before he died every foot of land in the township and Richland to the south was fenced by actual settlers.

Mr. Adkins kept bachelor's hall for several years in a log cabin just south of where the homestead stands now, nearly a quarter of a mile. His nearest neighbor, whose farm joined his on the west, was James Elliott, one of the very early settlers who came from Indiana. Mr. Adkins was living here when gold was discovered in California. The state road passed through his farm from east to west, and he used to see train after train of emigrants, with all sorts of teams, oxen, horses and mules, with covered wagons, on their way to the land of wealth. So it came to pass in '52 that he had such a severe case of "gold fever" that he felt compelled to join the procession also and seek his fortune in the Golden State; so he rented his farm to his neighbor, Mr. Elliott, and

began the overland journey in a company or train of 75 men, besides women and children, gathered from the surrounding settlements. But this story would form another interesting chapter by itself.

After returning from California in '59 he was married to Mary A. Young of Wayne county, Kentucky. To this union were born eight children, five boys and three girls; three of whom have passed on into the home beyond, two girls, Alice Polk and Lola M., and one son, N. D. Five are still living, J. D., a Congregational minister, a graduate of Grinnell in the class of '85, who has been a successful pastor since '88, having served three churches in Iowa—Montour, Onawa, and Okaloosa. He married Mary E. James of Middleburg, Vt. They have three children living and one granddaughter,—Horace J., now living on the old farm west of town, Kitchel F., and Helen A., and Ruth S., who died in infancy.

Another son is Chas. E., who has eight children living: Harry B., who will graduate from Grinnell college next June; M. Lucinda, in the graduating class of the high school; Mina E., G. Leroy, A. T., C. A., Ines W., deceased, Wilma L., and Lloyd.

The next son, T. B., has five children living and two deceased, Olin R., Elma A., in the graduating class of high school; Irene E., and Lela L., the son and daughter who died are Leona and Hannon, and Baby Dale; E. Lee, who lives in the Ezra Grinnell place in southwest part of town, and the youngest daughter, Margaret L., who lives with her mother at 921 Pearl street, this city.

As long as Mr. Adkins lived the latchstring was always on the outside to his many friends and the stranger as well. Many a pilgrim found a resting place and a home there. All who came from the Cumberland mountains of Kentucky sought the Adkins homestead in Rock Creek, sure of a warm welcome. Many a young man made his stake in his service and not a few were loaned money and seed when they began farming for themselves. His brothers, Martin, Jas., Calvin and Wyatt, came first, none of whom are now living; but many of their children are. France Adkins, a cousin, came from Kentucky fifty-one years ago, in '65, and worked for Mr. Adkins for about a year before he returned for his wife in Kentucky. They recently celebrated their golden wedding here at their home in this city. France owns an excellent farm just east of Sugar Creek.

As late as '59 Mr. Adkins brought the lumber for his frame house by ox teams from Iowa City, and this part of the house still forms a part of the home in Rock Creek.

In those early days neighbors were few and far apart; and a visit from any of them was a great treat. There were settlements on Timber creek south of Marshalltown; also at Lynnville. Relatives or friends from either place going back and forth always made it a point to stop both ways at the Adkins home. Sometimes they were so interested and had so much to talk about that very little sleep was enjoyed until the wee hours of the morning.

Mr. Adkins increased his farm until he owned nearly 500 acres at one time. He held many offices of trust and responsibility in his community. Always public spirited and interested in the progress and welfare of state and nation, he died in January, 1901, loved and respected by a large circle of friends and relatives.

Mr. Adkins was ably seconded in all his efforts by an efficient and loving wife, who gave gladly of her time and strength to make others comfortable. She survives him and in the enjoyment of health now lives in Grinnell.