

EDMUNDSON, WILLIAM

William EDMUNDSON, a well-known and substantial farmer and landowner of Penn township, now living retired at his well-appointed farm home in that township, on rural mail route No. 4 out of Bryant, is a member of one of the real pioneer families of Jay county and has lived here all his life. He was born on a pioneer farm in Penn township on October 5, 1856, and is a son of John and Rachel Ann (PUGH) EDMUNDSON, the latter of whom was born in Harrison county, Ohio, and had come to this county with her parents in the days of her girlhood, the PUGH's having been among the early settlers of Penn township. John EDMUNDSON was born in the state of Maryland and was thirteen years of age when he came to Indiana with his parents, Thomas and Elizabeth EDMUNDSON, the family locating in Penn township, this county, in 1837, on a tract of eighty acres of land in what later came to be known as the Balbec neighborhood that Thomas EDMUNDSON had "entered" from the Government in that township the year before the year in which Jay county was organized as a separate civic entity. At the same time Thomas EDMUNDSON entered this tract his two elder sons, William and Thomas EDMUNDSON, entered similar tracts in that same section and thus the EDMUNDSON'S started here with quite substantial landholdings, which they quickly brought under cultivation after the first and difficult work of, clearing and draining had been accomplished. The EDMUNDSON'S were members of the Society of Friends and from the beginning" were influential factors in the considerable colony of Quakers which effected settlement in Penn township about that time and which has remained a continuing force for good throughout that region to this day. Upon leaving Maryland, Thomas EDMUNDSON and his family tarried for a while in Ohio, but when the new lands over here in Indiana began to attract attention he saw the possibilities of the situation and wisely decided here to establish his family. The elder Thomas EDMUNDSON was one of the leaders of the new community and did much toward promoting the development of proper social and economic conditions in the new country. He and his wife spent their last days on that place and their descendants in the present generation form a quite numerous connection. John EDMUNDSON, one of the younger children of this pioneer pair and the father of the subject of this sketch was (as noted above) but thirteen years of age when he came here in 1837 and he grew to manhood on that pioneer farm. After his marriage he established his home on a part of the place and began farming on his own account, at the same time becoming a dealer in buggies and farm

implements and also starting a broom factory. It is said that he sold the first mower used in this county and he also introduced other new farm machinery to the use of his neighbors. His broom factory was developed into quite an important industry for its day. As he prospered in his operations he increased his land holdings until he became the owner of more than 300 acres of excellent land and was accounted one of the most substantial citizens of that community. He and his wife were the parents of nine children, five of whom are now living, the subject of this sketch having two brothers, Elwood and Lewis W. EDMUNDSON, and two sisters, Elizabeth and Marietta. Reared on the home farm in Penn township, William EDMUNDSON received his schooling in the schools of that neighborhood, in the development of which schools his grandfather and his father had been such valuable factors and from the days of his boyhood has given his attention, to farming. After his marriage he began farming on his own account, as a renter, but presently became engaged with his father in the operation of the broom factory and was thus engaged for fifteen years, or until his father's death, after which he located on the farm of 120 acres on which he is now living and has since made that his place of residence. Upon taking possession of that place Mr. EDMUNDSON began a series of improvements which gradually brought about the creation of one of the best farm plants in that part of the county and he has a very pleasant home. In addition to his general farming he for years was quite actively engaged as a buyer of livestock and in his operations did well. Though continuing to keep a supervisory eye on things, Mr. EDMUNDSON has been living practically retired from the active operations of the farm since 1920. He is an ardent Republican, a past chancellor commander of the Pennville lodge of the Knights of Pythias and a past master of the local grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, to the affairs of which organization he has for years given his earnest attention. William EDMUNDSON married Elizabeth Sophia PAXSON, also a member of one of the old families in the Pennville neighborhood, daughter of Benjamin F. and Sarah Ellen (WOOD) PAXSON, and to this union six children have been born, namely: Daisy, who married Forest BRADSHAW and has one child, a daughter, Anna BRADSHAW; Clarel V., who married Valley ROMANS and has five children, William, Miriam, Robert. Jesse and Nelgean; Dell, who married Margaret SELL and has six children, Mary Elizabeth, James William, John, Barbara. Ellen and Lillian; Jessie Fay, who married William GEAR; Frank, who married Meda SCHNICKOLS and has two children, Cecil and William, and Nila, who married Howard IRWIN.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana,
Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.290-293.
Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.