ties, but had enough unusualness or historic value that I found them interesting and hope others may also.

NOAH WILLIAMS & HATTIE (MAMITA) KINSEY WILLIAMS
Ft. Pierce, Florida c.1952

Chapter 1

ANCESTRY

At the time of Admiral Penn's death the king of England owed him a large sum of money. To settle the debt, the king gave his son, William, a large tract of land in the colonies which he named Pennsylvania.

William Penn was not only a Quaker, but an energetic business man. He promptly set out to colonize his land among oppressed people in England, Wales, Holland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. One condition he put in every Charter was the right of the individual to religious liberty. Furthermore, while he accepted this land as the payment of a debt owed to his father, he felt that the king had no right to convey it since the rightful owners were the Indians. Consequently, before colonizing each piece of land, he purchased it from the Indians and he signed a treaty with them which has gone down in history as the only treaty never sworn to and never knowingly broken by either side. The story comes down by tradition in our family that a pioneer, well out on the frontier, had to leave home to be gone several days. There were savage Indians all around. The wife was afraid, so the first night of his absence she pulled in the latch string, something Quakers never did. She rolled and tossed and just couldn't sleep for hours, and finally got up and put the latch string out. She went back to bed and slept soundly. That night there was an Indian massacre. A day or so later she saw a big bunch of Indians approaching the house in war paint and was very much frightened. One Indian who could speak some English advanced and said all they wanted was some water, which she gladly gave them. While they were drinking the same Indian said, "You are Quakers, aren't you?" The question frightened her and not realizing its import she stalled by asking, "Why do you ask?" "We came here the other night to burn your house, and found the latch string out."

The amount Penn paid the Indians was not great,

but it was what they asked and it turned out to be one of the best investments ever made, financially speaking, in what it saved in so called "defense". Besides, it saved thousands of lives, both white and Indian. Had other colonizers used the same method the whole history of the U. S. would have been different; no Indian wars nor massacres.

In 1681, Penn sold a "Barony" of forty thousand acres to a committee of Welsh Quakers. Incidentally, the name Quaker is not official. George Fox organized "The Society of Friends" and that is still the official name. This summer (1953) while in Pennsylvania I stopped at a farm house and inquired for the Goshen Quaker Church. A woman with a decided foreign accent said, "Oh! You mean the Friends meeting house!"

There are at least two stories as to how they got the name Quaker. One is, it was applied by their enemies who said they "quaked with fear" under the persecution they had to endure. The other is that they themselves preached "quake and tremble for your sins". Be that as it may, the name stuck and is far better known than "Society of Friends".

Getting back to our Welsh Quakers, they proportioned their land out to the individuals of the committee in 5,000 acre tracts for which they paid 100 pounds sterling with the further condition they should pay "a shilling a year per hundred acres forever". This price figures about 10 cents an acre our money. These members of the committee acted as agents to sell the land to individuals. The first ship load of Welsh Quakers cast anchor in (or tied up to a tree on the bank of) the Schuylkill River in August, 1682. This was just one year after the first English Friends landed, and two months before Penn made his first landing. The place where they landed was in Merion Township, now in the city of Philadelphia. They, at once, ran into trouble among those who had bought land "sight unseen" before they left Wales. Even Quakers have disagreements sometimes. Everyone wanted his land in the rich bottom lands along the river. Tho' the argument was warm for Quakers, in the end, in true Quaker style, they settled it justly—tho' in this case not conveniently. Each one who had purchased land was given half his land in the fertile valley, and the other half in

Goshen Township some 20 miles to the west where the land was quite rolling, and less fertile, and to which there was no transportation. Who could run a farm with the two halves 20 miles apart and no transportation in between? That was the settlers' problem.

On this first boat load of Welshmen, among the second class passengers, was one Robert William, who just happens to be my ancestor, seven generations back. Somehow he had managed to raise the fifteen dollars and thirty cents to pay for 153 acres of land, but either didn't have enough to buy first class tickets for himself and family or was too "Scotch" to spend it. Be that as it may, he was among the first, if not the first, to solve the problem of divided land. He promptly sold or traded his 76½ acres on the river. "Early Welsh Quakers in Pennsylvania" says he was the first settler in Goshen Township. He very soon had acquired more than 300 acres of land there. As soon as other settlers came in, he organized a Friends Meeting in his log house. Tho' his family grew, his log cabin didn't. So in 1702, he began building a stone house. In view of the fact that he had been so good to hold meetings in his house, the Monthly Meeting voted that they would assist him, and appointed members of the various preparative meetings to solicit funds. A total of 16 lbs., 9 shillings, and 8 pence was collected.

After Robert's death, his oldest son, Ellis, acquired, by inheritance and purchase, the entire estate. The house has been owned and occupied by Williamses, descendants of Ellis, until quite recently when it was sold to a foundation. They have modernized it to the extent of making a bathroom of one of the rooms, and installing steam heat and electricity. Aside from that they have changed it as little as possible. Even the latch strings are still on the doors. The foundation bought it and turned it into a rest house for nurses. Robert's family was large. So is the house. It is 2½ stories high, has a fireplace clear across the west end of the living room, and smaller fireplaces in some, but not all, of the other rooms. There is a hall through the middle, both upstairs and down, and there are two stairways. I didn't think to count the rooms, nor did I get up into the attic. I visited the house both in 1945,

before the foundation took it over, and again in July, 1953, when they were operating it. At Goshenville, on U. S. 202, is the old Meeting House and Cemetery. This is a mile and a half or two miles southeast of Goshenville. Robert's son, William, and his grandson, John, both lived out their full-life spans right there in Pennsylvania, but his great grandson, Henry, went to Virginia in his early twenties. He remained there 13 years and during that time the Revolutionary War was fought. A first cousin of my father's, Belle Pennington Reeves, did a lot of research to find out if he was a soldier, but failed. She wanted to join the D.A.R. Friends disapproved of war and disowned many who went, but many others went and were not disowned. Belle found, from army records, that there were several Henry Williams from Virginia, and one of them joined the Pennsylvania Militia because he said he was from Pennsylvania. She found no way to either prove or disprove that he was a soldier. The fact that he remained 13 years in Virginia and did not marry, at least lends thought that he might have been. In 1787, he moved to Wrightsborough, Georgia, and 3 years later, married Zilpha Morris. (Zilpha's Mother, Mary Ansley Morris, is an ancestor of both President Jimmie Carter and myself—GLW 10/22/79).

When James Oglethorpe founded Georgia, one of the conditions he laid down was that the colony was to have neither liquor nor slavery. That condition, together with the mild climate, attracted many Quakers. Both liquor and slavery crept in, very much to the disapproval of the Quakers, and many of them left. A law had been passed that there should be no slavery north of the Ohio River. So, in 1804, both Henry Williams and his brother, Robert, loaded their families into covered wagons and migrated to Ohio. They stopped just across the Ohio River, in Belmont County, where all four of the parents finished their days.

In 1826, Henry's third son, Isaiah, took a walk back to the old homeland near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Whether he went just to see where his father grew up, to visit his cousins, or just for the walk is not recorded. Anyway, he didn't stay long, but returned home and married Hannah Way. She didn't live long and had only one son, Elias. Isaiah's

second wife was Anne Peele. She was my grandmother and I remember her.

In 1844, my father, Nathan, was born. About 1856, the family moved to Howard County, Indiana, where the six boys grew to manhood or nearly so. Nathan left home at 15 and went to work out. He worked in summer and went to school in winter, till he got a license to teach school. His first school was a place called Hen Peck in the N. W. Corner of Hamilton County in the fall of 1868. His second school was in a Quaker school at Chester, 2 miles north of Westfield, Indiana, also in Hamilton County. The Quakers have long been interested in education, so they held a private, or subscription, school in the Chester meeting house for several years.

In 1869, they built a school house and Nathan had the honor of being the first teacher in the school house. There he met Lydia Tomlinson. Several of her brothers and sisters went to school to him. The summer of 1870, he went to school at Union High School, a Quaker School in Westfield. That fall he entered Spiceland Academy in Henry County, another Quaker School. One of the years he was there at Spiceland he, Irvin Stanly, of Westfield, and Absalom Rosenberger, of Thorntown, rented a room and kept batch together. The subsequent history of these three and their benefits to the next generation reads like fiction.

Irvin Stanly graduated and got an appointment as photographer on two "Transit of Venus" expeditions 8 years apart. One was in Tierra del Fuego, the extreme point of South America. The other was on Kerguelen Island off the coast of South Africa. After his return he set up a photograph gallery in Westfield, but the life was too tame. So, he migrated to Kansas, and mixed farming and school teaching and was eventually elected County Superintendent of Schools, which position he held for many years. Finally, as his parents were getting old and he was the only living child, he returned to Indiana to care for them. Union High was just at that time looking for a principal and he took on the job. While he was principal, my half-brother, Lloyd, went to school there and graduated with honors. Father was in North Dakota teaching at that time and wrote Lloyd that if he would go up there where teachers were scarce he

would get him a school. He went and Father got him a school. He went before the County Superintendent and passed an examination with flying colors for a temporary license. All went well till he took the state examination. Then word came back that he was too young to teach in the public schools of N. D. He just didn't know what to do then, so returned to Union High for some post-graduate work. In the spring, Irvin almost begged him to take a competitive examination for a scholarship at Haverford, Pennsylvania, another Quaker School. He took it and won. It was that push that set him off on a real career. At the end of his sophomore year at Haverford, he returned to North Dakota. By that time he was old enough to teach and had no trouble in getting both a license and a school. He was so successful that at the end of his year they begged him to take a place in their city schools. But he wanted to finish college so refused; but, while he was there, he took the examination for the North Dakota Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford, England. He came out a close second. Two years later when he was graduating from Haverford there was another scholarship open in North Dakota. He wrote up to the scholarship board and got them to let the Haverford professors give him an examination on the subjects he was low on. He won and graduated from Oxford with honors. He taught a few years in Miami College, Ohio; Gettysberg, Pennsylvania; William and Mary in Virginia, and Cornell University in New York, then went to McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where, after a few years, he became head of the whole mathematical department, which position he held until his retirement this year, 1953.

Absalom Rosenberger didn't finish at Spiceland but went on to Earlham College, also a Quaker School. After his graduation there he went to Union High as principal and was there for several years, then went to Ann Arbor, Michigan, and studied law. After graduation as a lawyer he went to Wichita, Kansas, and hung out his shingle. Wichita was just collapsing after a boom, and there just wasn't much business for a lawyer. So when he was offered the presidency of William Penn College at Oskaloosa, Iowa, another Quaker College, he accepted. I am not exaggerating when I say he was the most beloved president Penn ever had, and held the position

the longest and did the most for building up the school. He was there 20 years. During that time my brother, Robert; sister, Luella; and I went through College there. I will give more of that under my personal story.

In 1870, there was quite a migration from Indiana to Kansas. Whole neighborhoods migrated together. Anne Peele Williams with her three younger sons, Henry, Isaac, and Jim, loaded their earthly possessions into a covered wagon and took the trek with the others. They came to a halt a few miles west of Parsons, in Labette County, and all the boys took up homesteads. Henry made a home for their mother on his homestead.

In the spring of 1873, Nathan graduated from Spiceland, and at once went out to Kansas to join his family. He taught school the following winter about half way between Parsons and Oswego, where Altamont now stands. The fall of 1874, found him back in Indiana teaching school at East Branch, southeast of Westfield, and on January 2, 1875, he married Lydia Tomlinson, daughter of Noah Tomlinson. They were married in Lydia's parents' home.

Robert Lancaster, a member of East Branch Monthly Meeting, had a son, Elwood, living at Ridge Farm, Illinois. Elwood's wife died about the time Nathan finished his school at East Branch, so Robert negotiated a deal for Nathan and Lydia to go to Illinois, and care for Elwood's two motherless boys. They lived there three years, Lydia keeping house, and Nathan teaching school in winter, and working on the farm in summer. During that time two children, Ruth Anna and Robert, were born.

In the spring of 1878, two things happened approximately simultaneously. Elwood Lancaster remarried, and Henry Williams became so badly drawn out of shape with arthritis that farming was no longer possible. So Nathan and Lydia went to Kansas, bought Henry's homestead and took over the care of Nathan's mother. There, on June 12, 1879, I was born, their third child, the first born in Kansas.

TOMLINSONS

The earliest date we can find in the Tomlinson family is the birth of William, March 27, 1749.

in Ireland. He and two brothers, Josiah and Samuel, came to America. We have no record as to the date they came, the boat they came on, how long they were in crossing, or where they landed. The next date we find is the marriage of William Tomlinson to Martha Coppock of Fredericksburg at Bush River Monthly Meeting, South Carolina, on December 30, 1771. Martha was a survivor of an Indian massacre. When she was quite small, her father and all of her brothers but one, who succeeded in hiding, were killed. She, together with her mother and three sisters, were taken prisoners by the Indians, and wandered with them for five years. Then they came in contact with white folks who bought them from the Indians. The above two statements are all I find about Martha and her family, and they are from widely different records, but a few deductions are in order. The Coppocks were not Quakers at the time of the massacre, for Indians didn't knowingly murder Quakers. If they did so unknowingly, they freed the prisoners as soon as they found it out, and other Quakers most certainly would have told them of their error. Martha was a Quaker at the time she married William Tomlinson, or the Monthly Meeting record would have read "William Tomlinson was disowned for marrying out of union". Instead, the marriage certificate is recorded. With no record whatsoever we conclude that the people who bought the family back from the Indians, were very likely Quakers, and that they promptly applied for membership and were accepted. The next record of interest is the removal of William Tomlinson and family to Deep River, North Carolina, March 4, 1782. There, Robert Tomlinson was born March 6, 1793.

Now, we jump for a brief space to Noah Kellum, for whom I was named. We have no record of when or where he was born. Our first record of him is when he joined the Friends Church, at Springfield Monthly Meeting, North Carolina, on September 29, 1792. About a year later he married Esther Hiatt, and on November 19, 1798, their daughter, Lydia was born. In October, 1819, Noah Kellum and family removed to Newberry, Ohio. That is what the Monthly Meeting Minutes said, but young folks, even Quakers, sometimes have ideas of their own. Daughter Lydia and Robert Tomlinson suddenly decided to get married. It took any where from five to nine weeks to get

married by Quaker regulations and the Kellums were leaving for Ohio. So, the young folks went to a justice of the peace and were quietly married; but they were promptly kicked out of church for "marrying out of union". However, they were both reinstated a year later. Noah, with his wife and the rest of the family, proceeded to Ohio as planned, but evidently they did not find Ohio the Garden of Eden they had hoped for, for only two years later they moved to Hendricks County, Indiana, where they both ended their days.

Early in life Noah Kellum turned to teaching, and was so successful at it that he adopted it as a life calling, teaching in winter and farming in summer. In those days pupils sat on slabs with wooden pins inserted for legs. Teachers made shift as best they could. In 1823, Noah designed, and had a carpenter build for him, a combination chair and desk that was both comfortable and convenient, and far better than anything ever invented up to that time. After his death his children and grandchildren in the neighborhood apparently had no regard whatsoever for it, neither as a piece of furniture nor as an heirloom. Several years later my grandfather, Noah Tomlinson, visiting with his cousin, one of the Brister boys, found it out in his workshop getting very rough treatment. He asked for it and got it, gave it a coat of paint, and set it in his living room where it remained through his life and his son Asher's.

After Asher's death it went to his son Morris. Knowing I wanted it very much, and, as he said, in payment of a debt money could not pay for, he not only gave it to me, but personally delivered it to me here in Fort Pierce, Florida, in April, 1952. It had had very rough treatment. It looked like someone had sharpened fence posts on the desk. I went to work on it with paint remover, wood rasp, plane, sandpaper, and varnish and now have a genuine and unique antique. It is made of four kinds of wood. The seat and desk are yellow poplar; the legs are sugar maple; the left arm is black walnut and the rounds are split hickory. It is not only antique, but beautiful and very useful. Being made of light wood, it is easily moved to any part of the house and always has writing material in the desk. The carpenter who made it really knew his stuff. It is now one hundred and thirty-three years

old, and despite very rough usage, there is not a loose or shaky joint in it. I am very proud of it both as an antique and an heirloom. As the saying goes, "I wouldn't take a farm in Dixie for it."

As was said in connection with the Williamses, the pressure of slavery drove many Quakers north. So, less than two years after their marriage, Robert and Lydia Tomlinson moved to Newberry, Ohio, and, a year later, to Hendricks County, Indiana, where they lived and labored for fifteen years. There, in 1824, their son, Noah, was born. There are various stories as to why they became dissatisfied there. One is that there was too much malaria there. Be that as it may, in the fall of 1836, Robert Tomlinson and his brother-in-law, a man named Brister, mounted their horses and started north and east in search of a new home. When they reached where Indianapolis now stands Brister said,"This is good enough for me." He bought a farm and returned home. With the growth of the city, that land made him and his sons quite wealthy. Robert said the land was too flat; it would require too much ditching; and that is hard work. So he rode on alone for another twenty miles to Westfield, in Hamilton County. Two miles north of town he bought two hundred acres of rolling land, and February, 1837, he moved his family there. Now, after 119 years, his great-grand daughter, Hazel Tomlinson Hill, still owns 60 acres of the original farm. In 1845, Robert's son, Noah, married Abigail Davis, and, in 1846, their daughter, Lydia, my mother, was born.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Tho' it happened many years before my time, since so many of my ancestors were involved in it and it is of great historical value, I think it quite appropriate to say something about it here. As has been said before, while there were some Quakers who owned slaves, by far the large majority of them were unalterably opposed to it, and left the South on account of it. A few years later, some of the prominent ones decided to do something about it. They formed a great organization that extended across Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, known as the underground railroad. It's purpose was to help runaway slaves get to Canada, which was definitely against the law. The Quaker Church is, and always has been a law abiding

organization. This new organization put them on the spot and caused many a bitter debate in the Church. It was finally decided that they must obey the laws of the land and they disowned all members who were known to have helped any slaves to escape, including Robert Tomlinson and all of his sons. Men with sufficient energy, vision, and principle to organize as big an organization as the underground railroad didn't let a little thing like being disowned from Church bother them for long. They said,"The Quaker Church is indeed a law abiding church; but whose laws? The laws of God are higher than the laws of man." And they proceeded to organize another Quaker Church. They began by taking in without acknowledgement all who had been disowned for helping slaves to escape, and the newly organized Church was, in a very short time larger than the original. While Quakers were the organizers, and the moving spirit, of the underground railroad, many others joined who had little in common with Quakers, except a sense of justice and love of their fellow man. In fact, in many localities there were more non-Quaker than Quaker members. The organization was so thorough that when a slave crossed the Ohio River, if he was lucky enough to contact a member, he was taken right on to Canada, traveling by night and hiding by day. It would be untrue to say that slaves were never retaken after contacting the underground, but the occasions were very rare. The slave's great danger was in not being able to contact a member. All members were operating outside the law and if apprehended they were subject to fine and imprisonment. In many cases their next door neighbors were sympathetic to the South and would report them if they knew, hence they had to operate with extreme caution. Consequently, the slaves found no R. R. signs on any doors. After all his trouble in getting through the slave territory, across the Ohio River, and into free territory, he was far from free. A man must eat, so must procure food, and in so doing, he must see people. Near the Ohio River there were as many, or more, Southern sympathizers as members of the underground. If he contacted one of them he was promptly turned over to the slave catchers. To use the gambler's expression, "the cards were all stacked against" the poor slave. Fortunately for him, the farther he got from the

River, the more friendly were the people. Thus, the longer he could hold out, the better his chance of contacting friends. Westfield, Indiana, a center of Quakerdom, early became a very prominent station on the underground railroad. Difficult as communication was in those days, it's fame spread far into the South. It was reported among the slaves that if they could just get to Westfield, they had a sure passage to Canada, and the report wasn't far wrong. They would have run away by the thousands had it not been for the known difficulties in getting to Westfield.

Whether Robert Tomlinson worked on the underground railroad while living in Hendricks County I do not know, but he became very deeply involved soon after he reached Westfield. All the slaves brought to him one night, he hid during the day and passed on to another station next night. He hid them in the loft of his cabin, in the woods, in his hay stacks, and covered them up with hay in the hay mow. As time went on the hunters became more thorough in their search, even to running pitch forks down through the hay in the hay mow, so new means had to be found for hiding them. His cabin had no cellar, so he cut off two floor boards at the first sleeper away from the fireplace, and dug a cellar big enough to hold a bed and two chairs. After moving the furniture in, he replaced the boards and covered it with a heavy rug to hide the joint. The cats found that rug to be a very comfortable place to lie before the fire. Their presence there added to the camouflage, so they were seldom disturbed.

Robert Tomlinson, just as most Quakers of his day, followed the Scriptural command "if thyne enemy hunger, feed him". No one, whether friend, foe, or passing stranger, ever left Robert's place hungry. And so it happened many times that slave hunters asked and received night's lodging while slaves were hidden on the premises. If the slaves were outside the house, while the family and hunters ate supper Son Milton would take the slaves across the Dismal Swamp to another member, who would either hide them or take them on to another station. If the slaves were in the cellar they simply had to stay another day. This Dismal Swamp was very large and impassable, about a mile and a half north of Robert's home. The bottom was a peat bog, so soft that many times horses

and cattle grazing in the edge of it bogged down so badly that they lay there and perished, unless they were found and dragged out. It was about two miles long, and a quarter of a mile wide in the widest place. Near the west end, in a narrow place, the Tomlinsons fixed a private crossing. I am not quite clear whether they found a place where the peat was not very deep and could be waded, or if they cut trees and laid them end to end as foot logs. Be that as it may, they so successfully concealed the entrance that no stranger ever found it, and once a slave crossed it he felt fairly safe from his pursuers, and the pursuers had no choice but to turn back. At one time, while slave hunters were quartered in the house, little daughter Esther got up in the morning and started looking for her shoes with considerable noise about it. Her mother quickly got her aside and whispered to her that she had given them to a little colored girl who needed them worse than she did. That the little colored girl was going to the far north, where it was very cold, with lots of snow and ice, and she would have no chance to get any shoes, but Noah would make her a new pair. Noah, Robert's second son, had been apprenticed for a time to a shoemaker in Westfield, and had learned the trade sufficiently well to become the family shoemaker. He, in turn, taught me enough of the trade, that I half-soled all my own and my children's shoes for many years.

Sometime about the 1840's, there occurred one of the strangest events in the history of the underground railroad. A negro named John Rhodes arrived in Westfield with his wife, and bought a small farm about six miles north of town. His neighbors advised him to take the underground to Canada. He said it wasn't necessary because they were free; his master had given him his freedom, and he had worked for his wife's owner until he had paid for her freedom, too. He built a log cabin, cleared some land, and went to farming. He was honest, industrious, and well respected by all his neighbors. I have no record of how long he lived there, but one morning a neighbor saw some men, horses, and dogs around the cabin. He naturally went to see what was going on. The men told him they were slave hunters, that these people had run away from their master in Kentucky, and that

they were going to take them back. Evidently they hadn't heard of the underground railroad, or, like most criminals, thought they could outsmart it. They laid their plans well. They arrived at the cabin between nine and ten at night and expected to take the negroes by surprise, and by daylight, they would be many miles on their way back to Kentucky. At that time their business was strictly legitimate. They could stop at any hotel at night and have the negroes put in jail for safe keeping. Whether by accident, or by foresight, Rhodes had built his cabin without windows, and with only one door. When the men started to break in his door, he opened it and stood in it, ax in hand, and he stood right there all that night and until help came next day. There was plenty of opportunity to shoot him, but dead or wounded negroes had no value whatsoever. It was live, sound ones that brought the money. When Rhodes and his wife heard them planning to go up onto the roof, and come down the chimney, she raked up the fire in the fireplace and kept it going all night with the little furniture they had, making it impossible for them to come in that way. The neighbor who first appeared, promptly spread the news, and soon other neighbors appeared, in great numbers. They asked the slave hunters what they intended to do with these people.

"Take them back to Kentucky."

"How are you going to take them?"

"They supposedly walked up here, they will have to walk back."

After some consultation, a spokesman for the neighbors said, "This man says he has never seen Kentucky; he is from Missouri. So you can't take him to Kentucky without a legal trial at Noblesville, the county seat. Furthermore, you can't make them walk anywhere. You will have to haul them."

That was something new to those slave drivers. They were used to running everything with an iron hand, and trampling on the rights of everyone. But when they looked at the number of men here and sensed their temper, they decided they had better do as they were told. Right there began the most gigantic job of "stalling" ever seen in Hamilton County. Of all that bunch of farmers, not one would admit that he had a team, harness, and wagon available to haul the negroes to Noblesville. One farmer, living miles a-

way had one horse; another living in another direction, had another horse; harness for the two horses was at widely different places, and the wagon was somewhere else. By the time all was assembled and ready to load, it was late afternoon. Finally the procession started for Noblesville, the driver and two negroes in the wagon, the others following, some on horseback, others on foot. The footmen didn't have to run. The driver was in no hurry.

Shortly before dark, they reached a fork in the road, one fork going to Westfield. The driver turned into the Westfield road. A slave hunter rode in front of the wagon with drawn pistol, and told the driver to take the other road. There, everything came to a standstill. There are two stories as to how the dead-lock was finally broken. One is that a hard bitten frontiersman went up to the driver and said, "If you are afraid, give me the lines. I am not afraid of God, man, nor the Devil."

The other story is that it was a soft spoken but determined Quaker who approached the driver. He said, "If thee is afraid to drive, give me the lines." Comfortably seated, and the lines well in hand, he called out to the slave catcher, "If thee don't want to get thy horse hurt, thee had better get him out of the way, for I am going down that road." The slave catcher saw by the look in the driver's eye, that he meant exactly what he said. He also knew how easily and how quickly, those stiff-tongued Indiana wagons could break a horse's leg. He moved his horse and the wagon proceeded toward Westfield. Some may ask why he didn't shoot the driver as he threatened. The answer is he didn't dare. Tho' all the slave catchers were armed, and there wasn't another fire-arm on the job, those guns were single shot pistols. Once he pulled the trigger he would be helpless in an irate mob. While there were a lot of peace-loving Quakers in the bunch, there were also a lot who were not so peace-loving, and well he knew if ever he killed or wounded the driver, he wouldn't live to see Kentucky again. All bullies are cowards. No matter how much they bluster around and trample on the rights of others, they all have a strong desire to keep on living. These slave catchers were no exception.

The wagon moved on down the road toward Westfield. A mile or so from the fork, the road entered

very dense woods. By the time they reached it, it was pitch dark. The road was very rough, and so narrow it was impossible for anyone to ride beside the wagon. Slave hunters did ride both in front of and behind it. The wagon did not stop, but when it emerged on the other side of the woods, Rhodes and wife were not in it. The driver knew the road was rough, but seemed very much surprised that it was so rough as to jolt his passengers out of the wagon. Naturally the slave catchers were furious, and threatened dire things they would do if the neighbors didn't help them find their niggers. The neighbors were very conciliatory and assured them the negroes would be found, but also they would be tried in a court of law before they could be taken to Kentucky. The slave catchers were not happy but there wasn't a thing they could do about it. In the meantime, the Rhodes were led to Robert Tomlinson's cellar, and the very next morning two men started for Missouri on horseback. They went to the County seat that Rhodes told them to go to. At that time, in slave states, there were recorded deeds of slaves, just as we have of land today. At the Missouri Court House they got a certified record of John Rhodes and wife. On their return, some of the neighbors got the court to set a day for the trial, and the slave catchers were notified to be present. Somewhat to their surprise, when they arrived at the Court House, there sat their would be victims, but they were well guarded. When court was called, the slave catchers were put on the stand as complainants. All they had was their unsupported statement that these were runaway slaves from Kentucky. At that time a white man's word in slave states was accepted as true unless disputed by another white man, while a negro's word had no value whatever if disputed by a white man. They were hoping the same condition existed in Indiana. They had another surprise. The defense called no witness at all. Instead they had the transcript of the Missouri Court read. That said, just as Rhodes had told them, that Rhodes' master had freed him and he had bought his wife. "Case dismissed", said the judge. Rhodes stayed around just long enough to dispose of his property, and took the underground to Canada.

NOTE: The six years I lived in Indiana, I

lived with my Uncle Robert Tomlinson, grandson of the original Robert Tomlinson. At the same time his father-in-law, Jonathan Inman, also lived there. He told me many stories of pioneer life. Among them was the John Rhodes story. He told it to me about fifty years after it happened, and it has now been a full sixty years since he told me. The above is as nearly like he told it as I can remember. He was not an eye-witness, and I very much doubt if an eye-witness account of the affair has ever been written. The men who were there were pioneers, men of action, not of literary talents. He lived at Westfield, six miles away, which was too far away to get the word and get in on the party. But he personally knew John Rhodes, many of the men who were present, and the two men who rode to Missouri. He had the story first hand from them.