

Jane Hendryx (1818- 1914)

Jane Frankeberger was born in Champaign County, Ohio on September 4, 1818 to Jesse and his second wife, Rosanna (Rhinehart) Frankeberger.¹ There Jane lived with her family for eight years near Urbana, Ohio. When her mother Rosanna died when Jane was about eight years old, she and a sister went to live with their grandmother. Jane was an eager learner and received some education. But by the time Jane was 11, her grandparents felt learning the New Testament, the catechism, Old English Reader, and the New Old Noah Webster spelling book was enough education for a young girl growing up in a booming agricultural community.²

Her father, Jesse, was born on May 16, 1791 in Pennsylvania.³ He eventually moved to Virginia and then to Ohio where he enlisted in the War of 1812.⁴ He was only involved in the war for about three months and served as a Lieutenant in Capt. Abner Barrett's Company of the Ohio Militia.⁵ He married his first wife, Rachel Cheney, on February 3, 1814. Before her passing three years later, they had two children. Jane's parents married on June 3, 1818, and they had four children, including Jane.⁶ After her mother, Rosanna, died in 1826, her father, Jesse, joined the Ohio Methodist Conference and preached with them for two years.

The Methodist faith travelled with the pioneers in the rush to the West after the Revolutionary War. The General Conference, which was the governing body of the Methodist Church, formed six conferences that were designed to "embrace the entire territory of the Church." The State of Ohio was first part of the Western Conference, which encompassed most of the territory west of the Appalachian Mountains. In 1812, the Ohio Conference was formed out of the Western Conference, which included territory in the State of Ohio.⁷ These lands

¹ Frankeberger has also been found to be spelled Frankenberger, Frankerberger, Frankeburger; "Reunion on Aged Woman's Birthday," *The Pantagraoh*, September 6, 1910, p. 1; S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, *The Biographical Record of McLean County, Illinois* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1899), 290.

² "In the Good Old Times," *The Bloomington Daily*, March 28, 1899.

³ "Rev Jesse Frankeberger (1791-1870) - Find A Grave..." Find A Grave - Millions of Cemetery Records, accessed July 10, 2018, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/76931139/jesse-frankeberger>.

⁴ "An Old Resident Gone," *The Pantagraph*, January 11, 1870.

⁵ War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815 for Jesse Frankeberger, Ancestry.com, accessed July 1, 2018.

⁶ 1850 United States Federal Census for Jesse Frankeberger, Ancestry.com, accessed July 10, 2018, <https://search.ancestrylibrary.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=1850usfedcenancestry&h=16408766>.

⁷ The General Conference is a body of delegates that set official policy and speak for the denomination. Conferences, like the Ohio Conference, hold annual meetings where a delegate is voted to attend the General Conference. United Methodist Communications, "General Conference – The United Methodist Church," The United Methodist Church, last modified July 5, 2013, <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/general-conference>.

formed a circuit where preachers, like Jessie, spread the Methodist faith.⁸ At the age of 14, Jane felt her call and joined the Methodist church at Mechanicsburg, Ohio.⁹ Her faith greatly influenced her life, and became a part of her for which she was remembered at the time of her death many years later.

In 1829, Jane's father moved to Illinois. According to early settlement records, he settled near Old Town Timber in Padua Township (today known as Dawson Township).¹⁰ He left Jane and another one of his daughters in the care of the girls' grandparents. It was in Illinois that he married his third and final wife, Eliza A. Sheeley.¹¹ The winters in the Midwest were hard for the early settlers. The low temperatures, chilling winds, and deep snow created dangers and difficulties. Jane recalled later in life that her father told her about the early frost of 1830 that killed the corn crop. To survive, her family ate cornmeal, made from dried frostbitten corn, which was pounded into meal in a mortar. During the winter of 1832, her 10-year-old brother died.¹² Conditions that winter were extreme, with six feet of snow on the ground. This created a substantial obstacle for the family to bury her brother. In order to dig a grave for her brother, the family would have had to scoop the snow and build a fire upon the grave site in order to defrost the ground enough to bury the lad. With no cemetery available to bury him in, he was laid to rest at the family farm, now known as Frankeberger's Cemetery.¹³

In October 1836, Jesse returned to Ohio to bring his girls to Illinois. Jane, her sister, and father trekked across Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois for nine days by a "covered spring wagon." She described the journey as "overall pleasant" besides the rough travels through the "backwoods of Indiana."¹⁴ Upon their arrival at her father's farm, Jane considered their new home to be "a very wild home."¹⁵ At this time, McLean County had been established only six years prior and the town of Bloomington (formerly known as Blooming Grove) was still getting used to its new

⁸ *History of the Central Ohio conference of the Methodist Episcopal church* (Cincinnati: Press of the Methodist, 1913), 50.

⁹ "Mrs. Jane Hendryx is 95 Today," *The Pantagraph*, September 4, 1913, 1.

¹⁰ U.S. Census for 1840 and 1850, Ancestry.com, date accessed July 18, 2018; *The History of McLean County, Illinois, Illustrated*. (Chicago: Wm. LeBaron, Jr., & Co., 1879) p. 648-650; William LaBounty, *McLean County Combined Indexed Atlases*. (Bloomington: McLean County Historical Society, 2006) 9 and 37; Padua Township was renamed Dawson Township on June 4, 1891 in honor of the early pioneer settler, John Wells Dawson; John H. Burnham, George P. Davis and Ezra M. Prince. *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society, Volume 1*. (Bloomington, Illinois: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co., 1899) 248.

¹¹ "Will Honor 90th Birthday," *The Pantagraph*, August 31, 1908, 6.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ "In the Good Old Times."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

name.¹⁶ By 1836, 450 people had made the growing prairie town their home.¹⁷ Jane's future husband, Allen Hendryx, recalled that native groups still inhabited land towards the east end of Old Town Timber, deer and wolves lived in abundance, and thick prairie grasses covered the terrain. Houses were made of hand hewn logs. Sawed lumber was not available because saw mills were too far away. There were no stores between Bloomington and Danville, and settlers traveled anywhere from 30 to 60 miles to mills to grind grain or buy provisions. Tea made from sassafras or prairie root was common, and clothes were homespun. Provisions consisted of mostly pork, some game, and hominy (a lye-soaked and dried corn which was ground into grits).¹⁸ Like most settlers of the era, Jane established a new life in an unfamiliar land, and she never returned to her hometown in Ohio.

Jane frequently joined her father on his trips to preach in neighboring towns. On the early and crude roads she traveled with him on horseback. Her father, and their numerous journeys, helped Jane grow in her faith. Jesse built a new log cabin, which was used as a Methodist meeting house until a actual meeting house could be built. Historically, Class Meetings were established as a key element to connect Methodists with other Methodists. The Meetings were considered mandatory for members, and a proper meeting consisted of eight members being present. This was difficult at the time because travel on the prairie could be challenging and their closest neighbors were eight miles away.¹⁹

Jane and her family were very proud of the construction of their new double-hewed log cabin and log barn. The cabin was roofed with shingles and had puncheon floors made from split logs, with the flat side up. The floors were so rough and uneven that, at most, only three legs of a

¹⁶ McLean County was formed out of portions of Tazewell County. The citizens who lived in Blooming Grove felt that their county seat of Mackinawtown was too far for them to travel to (a distance of 25 miles) for them to easily participate in local politics. Between 1828-1830, residents of the area around Blooming Grove began to circulate the idea for the formation of their own county. They wished to be more involved in local government and wanted their voices heard at all levels of government. Local resident James Allin helped promote this idea and brought forth the proposal to the Legislature of Illinois that land should be designated to become a new county. The legislation was approved on Christmas Day, 1830 and the county was named for U.S. Senator John McLean, who was a late friend of the Speaker of the House, William Lee D. Ewing. Bloomington (renamed by James Allin himself) was chosen as the county seat most likely due to the fact that Allin offered 22 ½ acres of his own land if the county seat would be located in Bloomington; Emily Swartz and Candace Summers, "Biography of James Allin," 2011, 1-3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Hendryx has also been found to be spelled as Hendrix and Hendricks; "Early Days of McLean County," *The Pantagraph*, December 20, 1872, 4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*; United Methodist Communications, "How's Your Spiritual Life? The Class Meeting for Today – The United Methodist Church," The United Methodist Church, last modified August 12, 2015, <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/hows-your-spiritual-life-the-class-meeting-for-today>.

chair would properly rest on the floor.²⁰ Doors and a porch were also added to the home. After moving in, Jane's father hosted a two-day Meeting for the members of their class. She fondly recalled the memories of the Meeting in their new log barn. She remembered the smell of freshly cut hay and horses on one side of the barn, and preaching and the congregation on the other. On that particular Sunday, she noted, "several children were sprinkled"—referring to a form of baptism in the Methodist faith.²¹

Less than a month after her arrival, Jane married Allen Hendryx on November 3, 1836.²² They were both 18 years old.²³ Allen was born to John and Mary Jane (Flynn) Hendryx in Richland County, Ohio on July 7, 1818.²⁴ Allen came to McLean County with his family when he was about 15 years of age. His family settled on a large farm about three miles west of the Frankebergers'.²⁵ According to early settlement records, the Hendryx farm was located on north-eastern edge of Old Town Timber in Padua Township (today known as Dawson Township). The newlyweds made their home in the same area, which today would be about three miles west of Moraine View State Park.²⁶ Allen, like his father, took up farming as his occupation.

Allen and Jane had 10 children; six boys and four girls. Eventually, they had 55 grandchildren, 37 great-grandchildren, and at the time of Jane's death, two great-great-grandchildren. In an interview with Madame Annette, a columnist for *The Daily Bulletin*, Jane recalled that as newlyweds, she and her husband had few possessions at first. Jane said that before leaving Ohio, her grandmother gifted her a feather bed and "good bedclothes," which were articles "once a necessary part of every bride's outfit." Because furniture was too costly for the young couple to purchase, Jane bartered with a man who was a cabinet maker. She did some sewing for him, and in return he made a bedstead, corner cupboard, and a large square dining-

²⁰ "Pioneer Farming - Life in a Log Home," Welcome to the CampSilos Home Page, accessed July 10, 2018, http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/teachers/r3_part5.shtml.

²¹ "In the Good Old Times;" "What is a United Methodist," COMMUNITY CHURCH: An Ecumenical and Inclusive Fellowship of the United Methodist Church, accessed July 10, 2018, <http://www.ccaop.org/templates/System/details.asp?id=48224&PID=938494>.

²² "Marriage record for Allen Hendrix and Jane Frankeburger, November 3, 1836," McLean County Marriage Index microfilm, Volume A, 59.

²³ S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, *The Biographical Record of McLean County, Illinois* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1899), p. 362; "Death, the Destroyer, Allen Hendryx, an Old Inhabitant, Called to His Reward," *The Pantagraph*, March, 17, 1890, 4.

²⁴ "Allen Hendryx," accessed July 11, 2018, <http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?>

²⁵ "Early Days of McLean County," *The Pantagraph*, December 20, 1872, 4.

²⁶ "Death the Destroyer, Allen Hendryx, an Old Inhabitant, Called to his Reward;" "Early Days of McLean County," *The Pantagraph*, December 20, 1872, 4; *The History of McLean County, Illinois, Illustrated*, 651-652; *Official Plat book and Farmer's Directory of McLean County, Illinois*, 1953, 29.

table from black walnut timber. Jane also made an overcoat for a man by the name of Uncle Elias Gibbs. In return, he gave her an ax, which Jane recalled as “a necessity article” found in every early settler’s household of the time.

Largely active in politics, Allen was a Whig and voted for William Henry Harrison in the presidential election of 1840. Later, Allen became a staunch Republican after the party’s formation in Illinois in 1856.²⁷ According to *The Pantagraph*, “he was also one of the first and strongest Abolitionists.”²⁸ Allen was connected to the Underground Railroad and was a friend and coworker of Owen Lovejoy.²⁹ Lovejoy was an Illinois Republican Congressman, abolitionist, and personal friend to President Abraham Lincoln.³⁰ After the Civil War, Allen was heavily involved in the Temperance reform movement. Followers of this social movement promoted abstinence from alcohol. In 1875, Allen contributed to the movement by establishing a Good Templars Lodge in Padua.³¹ The International Organization of Good Templars (IOGT) is a fraternal society advocating sobriety from alcohol and drugs.³² *The Pantagraph* described Allen as “an advocate who believes in temperance in all things” and was “strong and vigorous in body as well as mind.”³³

According to Jane, Allen focused most of his energy on politics and community affairs, rather than agriculture. She recalled, “My husband was not much of a farmer, so he sold his 80 acres of land that he had secured for \$1.25 per acre and we moved to town.”³⁴ The couple moved to Bloomington in 1881, first residing at 214 E. North Street.³⁵ They moved around town quite frequently before finally settling at 204 E. Washington around 1887. They continued to live at this address until Allen’s death three years later.³⁶

Allen died on March 16, 1890. He had complained of being ill for four or five weeks, and two weeks prior to his death became deathly ill. His illness began with the "grip" (today often

²⁷ “Death, The Destroyer, Allen Hendryx, an Old Inhabitant, Called to his Reward.”

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, *The Biographical Record of McLean County, Illinois* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1899), 362.

³⁰ “The Preachers: Owen Lovejoy (1811- 1864),” The Lehrman Institute, accessed June 24, 2018, <http://www.mrlincolnandfriends.org/the-preachers/owen-lovejoy/>.

³¹ “The City,” *The Pantagraph*, January 12, 1875, 3.

³² “The History,” IOGT International, accessed July 16, 2018, <http://iogt.org/about-iogt/the-iogt-way/who-we-are/the-history/>.

³³ “Death, The Destroyer, Allen Hendryx, an Old Inhabitant, Called to his Reward.”

³⁴ “In the Good Old Times.”

³⁵ *Bloomington City Directory 1882*, 81.

³⁶ *Bloomington City Directory 1887*, 257

attributed to influenza) and resulted in brain trouble. He passed away peacefully in his sleep early in the morning. His funeral was held at the family residence on East Washington Street. *The Pantagraph* reported that the house was “crowded with friends of the family, many coming from Padua,” where he had lived for almost 50 years. Dr. J. I. Pitner, pastor of the First M.E. Church conducted the services, and Allen was buried the next day in the Frankeberger Cemetery.³⁷ Jane continued living at their home until about 1899 when she moved in with her daughter Mrs. Clara Padgett, who lived at 1411 S. Main Street in Bloomington.³⁸ Jane outlived Allen by 24 years.

Every year since at least 1900, Jane’s large family (the Hendryx and Frankeberger families) hosted a reunion for her birthday. In 1910, about 50 members of the two families from all over the country were present in celebration of her 93rd birthday. The reunion took place on 704 S. Center Street, where Jane resided with her daughter, Mrs. Hannah Cline. It was at this reunion that a permanent family reunion organization was established, which continued to meet annually on the occasion of Jane's birthday until at least her death in 1914.³⁹

On March 4, 1914, at the age of 95, Jane passed away. While she had been frail in health for several years before her death, she had been fairly active. About a month before her death, she fell and broke her arm. This resulted in her developing pneumonia, which ultimately led to her death some five weeks later.⁴⁰ Up until her death, Jane was involved in the church and the Old People’s Picnic Program in the community—an annual social event where members who were early settlers gathered for a picnic and to reminisce about earlier times.⁴¹

Jane’s funeral was held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Clara Padgett, at 1415 S. Main Street on Saturday, March 7, and she was laid to rest at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington.⁴² She was remembered in *The Pantagraph* as being most famed for “her charity and kindness and her beautiful Christian character, [which] was reflected upon all about her.”⁴³

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³⁷ “Funeral of Allen Hendryx,” *The Pantagraph*, March 19, 1890, 3

³⁸ *Bloomington-Normal City Directory 1899*, 241

³⁹ “Reunion on Aged Woman’s Birthday,” *The Pantagraph*, September 6, 1910, 6.

⁴⁰ “Mrs. Jane Hendryx Died Wednesday,” *The Pantagraph*, March 5, 1914, 7.

⁴¹ “Old People’s Picnic Program Completed,” *The Pantagraph*, August 18, 1914, 7.

⁴² “Funeral Notice,” *The Pantagraph*, March 6, 1914, 8; “Mrs. Jane Hendryx Died Wednesday.”

⁴³ “Early Days of McLean County.”