

BLOOMINGTON'S MARRYIN' JUDGE

William B. Hendryx was born November 3, 1841, in Old Town Township, McLean County, Illinois, to Allen and Jane Frankeberger Hendryx.

William's father, Allen, was born July 7, 1818, in Richland County, Ohio, and his wife was born September 4, 1818, in Champaign County, Ohio. Allen's parents were John and Mary Flynn Hendryx; Jane's were Jesse Frankeberger and his second wife, Rosanna Rinehart Frankeberger. Both the Hendryx and Frankeberger families were eastern McLean County pioneers.

Grandfather John Hendryx was born in New York City about 1788. He came to Old Town Timber from Huron County, Ohio, in 1836. In 1854, he moved to Padua, where he died January 30, 1856, leaving a good deal of property. He and Mary had six children.

Rosanna Rinehart Frankeberger, William's great grandmother, was born September 26, 1792, and died March 10, 1826, before the family moved to Illinois. Jesse Frankeberger was born in Pennsylvania on May 16, 1791, and came to McLean County from Ohio in 1829. He was a preacher for the Methodist Episcopal Church and held services all over this area as well as in his barn. He lived on his farm until 1858, then moved to Bloomington. He died there January 11, 1870, at the age of 80. He was married three times and had eighteen children.

According to Milo Custer's *Old Family Records #4*, Allen and Jane were married November 3, 1836, and their children were William B., Hannah Cline, Clara Padgett, A. G. (Gussie in one story), Jesse, Frederick H., Dolly Padgett, Lewis, Eliza A. Yetman and George. Both Allen and Jane died in Bloomington: he on March 16, 1890, and she on March 14, 1913.

According to his obituary, W. B. was among the first to enlist in the Civil War. He joined Company A, First Illinois Cavalry, under Captain (later General) John McNulta. When that regiment was mustered out a year later, he joined the 145th Illinois Infantry and was made a lieutenant for gallantry in action. (The Illinois Adjutant General's Report lists him as a sergeant in Company I of the 145th when he was mustered out September 23, 1864.)

On March 16, 1871, in McLean County, William B. married Maggie A. Kendall. She was born in about 1845 in Perry County, Ohio, a daughter of Ephraim and Bathsheba Snodderly Kendall.

They had five children. Lila (or Lela) W. married Ralph Sellman, a blacksmith, on September 3, 1891 in Bloomington. Margaret and Edward E. Pierson went to Peoria, Illinois, to be married in June, 1894. He was a well-known local newspaper man, writing for the old Bloomington *Bulletin* and the *Pantagraph*. Clara D. and C. J. Adams, a barber, were married June 18, 1901, in Bloomington. The two sons, Will and Rollo, died as young men. Mr. and Mrs. Adams later moved to Dallas, Texas.

William's career, covering almost fifty years, included stints as deputy sheriff, coroner, justice of the peace and police magistrate. He became known as the "marrying justice". By his own count, he had married 5,000 couples. His obituary spoke of his performing one ceremony down in the coal

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mines, one at the top of the standpipe of the Bloomington waterworks, one in a balloon and one in a den of lions. Most marriages, however, were probably performed in his "proper marriage parlors" at 113 ½ West Jefferson Street (as advertised in the 1913 Bloomington city directory).

A cartoon of Judge Hendryx, which appeared in a 1914 Pantagraph, shows an attorney pleading a case before him while a bridal couple waits to the left and Cupid sits on his bench saying, "Hurry up Judge, I got another job for you." The verse accompanying the drawing says:

A terror to lawbreakers, he;
Whether thieves, crooks, or in from a spree;
But man's frailties he knows,
And in some cases shows
Justice tempered by mercy may be.

Maggie died March 24, 1889; William B. died October 2, 1914, both in Bloomington, Illinois.

(Most of this information came from various Pantagraph articles. Other sources were McLean County Marriage Records, Bloomington city directories, Milo Custer's *Old Family Records*, Wm. LeBaron's 1879 *History of McLean County, Illinois* and the Illinois *Adjutant General's Report*. Names and dates are taken from these sources and may contain errors.)

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