

Newspaper article given to James Dille several years ago. I do not know what newspaper this came from, but I suspect it is either an Andrews, IN or Huntington County, IN local paper. I also do not know the date of the paper, however Mrs. Willets was born in the late 1880's and she is 82 years old at the time of the article, I would assume the article to be written in the late 1960's or early 1970's.

Transcribed by James Dille from copy, December 5,2000.

The Village, by Howard Houghton

Mrs. C. A. Willets of 144 Terrel Street in Andrews is the former Pearl Eleanor Dille. Born 82 years ago on a Polk Township farm cleared by her grandfather in the 1850's, she is the last of her family in Huntington County.

The name has been a prominent one in the county and in this city for more than 100 years. It has been borne by many persons who have contributed to the life and progress of the community in agriculture, business and the professions.

While but one born to the name remains in this country, the Dille family has been in America for more than 300 years and the numbers living in every state, and including many others in Indiana, are proof that the name is far from extinction.

A genealogical record compiled by members of the family and titled "The Dille Family: Three Hundred Years in America, 1664-1964" is testimony to the family's durability. The book says the surname comes from the root "dil," and apparently was formed during the 100 years between 1150 and 1250. The name dil was given to a plant used in divination by ancient Druidical priests. Today "it is one of the celebrated flowering plants of the world, being noted for its fragrant, savory, and medicinal properties."

After established in England, the name was carried to France, Holland, Flanders and Germany. In the 17th century it was brought to America and from the eastern coast has been carried by descendants of early immigrants to all of the 50 states. Its men have been soldiers in all the country's wars, and many have died in them.

Whether spelled Dille, Dilley or Dillie, all come from the same source. The extra letters have been added to make plain that the name has two syllables. "On the whole," the book says of the Dille tribe, "the early Dilles were landowners... but they produced a goodly group of professional and business men: doctors, lawyers, judges, engineers, educators, ministers, publishers, writers, musicians, financiers, soldiers."

In Huntington are two who have the name of Dilley, Mrs. Erma E. and Miss Doris L., of 342 Oak Street.

The migration that led to Huntington County began with Ichabod Dille. He was born in New Jersey in 1783, crossed the mountains with his father, Aaron, in 1790 and settled at Dillie's Bottom in Ohio. He married Ruth Mary McCain of Washington County, Pennsylvania, and in 1829 moved to Grant County, Indiana, settling on the Mississinewa river where he "kept a store and was a squire for over 20 years." He later moved to Huntington, and died in 1868 at Champaign, Ill.

Ichabod's son, Ichabod Dille, Jr., came to Huntington County in the 1850's to buy and clear 160 acres on the Polk Township side of the line with Dallas. Later he bought 100 acres about three-quarters of a mile down the road in Dallas Township.

Ichabod Jr. was twice married. His first wife was Rachel Gaskill. Their children were Eli, Jonathan, Mary Elizabeth, Aaron, Jehu and Lovina Ann. Children of the second marriage, to Rebecca Havens, were Jesse Brooks: John Ichabod and Viola (Mrs. John Rinearson). Most of the children were born in Grant County and all grew up on the Huntington County farm. All of the children were sent to Valparaiso University.

Eli and Jonathan were Union soldiers in the Civil War. Eli was killed in fighting at Champion Hill in Tennessee. His

name is on the monument that used to stand in Monument city and is now in the relocated cemetery. Jonathan returned from the war and was living in Andrews at the time of his death in 1883.

Jehu E. Dille was Mrs. Willets' father. He enlisted for the war, too, but because he was only 16 his father obtained his release and kept him home to work on the farm. He was called "Jay" or "Jake?" practically never by his first name, and his signature was always "J. E. Dille."

J.E. Dille married Nancy Mote. Their children were Lovina, Jesse B., Jonathan I., and Pearl E. (Mrs. Willets). The family lived on the home place, which his father, Ichabod, Jr., owned as long as he lived, while the children were growing up. Later J. E. bought a 100-acre farm of his own.

When his father moved to Huntington in 1888, J. E. Dille came to Andrews. He and a partner engaged in stick buying and he had a meat shop in the town. For a short time he had a rest- (this part of article is illegible), but she turned down the gift.

J. E. Dille and his son Jonathan went to Valley Springs, Ark., in 1910 where they took out a land claim. The father died there in 1922. Jonathan went to Kansas and later to California where he became owner of a highly successful motel. He and Mrs. Willets' husband died within days each other in 1969.

Ichabod Dille, Jr., lived on Etna Avenue when he came to Huntington. He owned several properties in the city and the Dillie Addition to Huntington bears his name. He died here in 1905.

His son, John Ichabod Dille, also was a prominent citizen of Huntington, having his residence on Etna Avenue, too. For several years he was a partner of James B. Kenner in the practice of law. Mrs. Willets remembers seeing a picture of a group of Huntington lawyers in which her uncle was identified as "the quiet one." John I. Dille taught school at the age of 15. He attended normal school at Valparaiso and studied law at Indiana University, graduating in 1877.

"Mr. Dille always has a wholesome respect for his profession, " it is written of him in Sumner Bash's History of Huntington County, " and would never advise a client to go to law unless he had a just case for action. Courteous and dignified, he occupied a high place among lawyers of Huntington County."

President Benjamin Harrison appointed Mr. Dille registrar of the land office at Guthrie, Okla., where he remained for several years. From there he went to Des Moines, Iowa, as counsel for a railroad company, and served also as dean of a law school. Later he removed to Minneapolis to be counsel for one of the great railway systems of the northwest.

His son, Chester, who practiced with him, disappeared while on a big game hunt with friends, and was never found. Not long afterward his father died at his home in Minneapolis.

Mrs. Willets' uncle Jesse Brooks Dille became greatly interested in Dille genealogy, compiling much family data over a 30-year period. He began a notable career in education by teaching at Largo, going on to become a professor and later president of Northern Illinois State Teacher's College at Dixon.

His son, John Flint Dille was founder of the John F. Dille National Newspaper Syndicate in Chicago, distributing "Bringing Up Father," "Buck Rogers" and other comic strips and newspaper features. John Flint Dille, Jr., is an editor, publisher and broadcasting executive at Elkhart. He is president of Communications Corporation of Indiana, which publishes the Daily Truth at Elkhart and the Mishawaka Times and operates several radio and television stations.

Mrs. Willets prizes a copy of ' Department of Agriculture Special Report No. 34," inscribed to her uncle John I. Dille, with the compliments of Congressman George W. Steele, dated March 20, 1882.