HILL FAMILY HISTORY

This history was taken from a book written by Annie Hill, the sister of our grandfather Robert James Hill. It is mostly about her father (our great grandfather) and their family.

Joseph Hill

Joseph Henry Hill (the uncle of our father Joseph Raymond Hill) was at one time the president of the Normal school at Emporia. He also was the first president of the Normal school at Pittsburg -- this was a combined job as president of the two Normal Schools at the same time (Pittsburg and Emporia). Bessie Hill

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Robert James Hill

This history of Grandpa Hill's family was taken from the book written by his sister Annie Hill and was prepared by Bessie Hill Windes several years ago. Unknown commentator.

Penciled annotations by descendent Andrew Thomas Murphy (me) in the late 1980s or early 1990s.

HILL HISTORY

WRITTEN BY AUNT ANNIE HILL, SISTER OF OUR GRANDFATHER, ROBERT J. HILL (1851)

Year-- 1929

Father (Joseph Hill) was the 6th of a family of 14 children. His mother's maiden name was Ann Burdess. Mother's (Betsy Moffat) father was Scotch. His name was James Moffat. Grandma Moffat's maiden name was phebe Hetherington. Was English. Mother (Betsy Moffat) was born in the county of Cumberland. She had one sister, Mary, whose married name was Dixon. She (Mary Moffat) had two sons. The name of one was Ralph, and I do not remember the other. Mother (Betsy Moffat) had two brothers, Christopher and James. Mother used to tell us about them while she lived, and I have the pictures of Aunt Mary and her sons, but after her death we lost track of them. Grandma (Ann Burdess) Hill lived to be a very old lady. She died not very long before Father (Joseph Hill). Father (Joseph Hill) used to write to her and receive letters from Uncle George"s wife. We have not heard from any of our English relations since Father's death.

Father will begin the story:

EXTRACT FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MY FATHER, JOSEPH HILL:

According to the record in the old family Bible, I was born in 1820 at West Rainton, County of Durham, England. West Rainton is situated near the Durham and Sunderland Turnpike, four miles east of the city of Durham. It was in the midst of a vast mining country. Large villages not more than 2 miles apart made the country look like a vast city, and I never remember being more than 9 miles from my native village until I was 32 years of age, when I left England and came to America. My earliest recollections carry me back to a village 7 miles northeast of Rainton situated on the banks of the river Wear. Its name was Falfield. As railways were not very common in these days, the river Wear was a great thoroughfare for the transportation of coal to Sunderland a large seaport town 12 miles east of the city of Durham. How long my parents lived at this place I cannot tell, but I have some faint recollections of going to a school. Here I must mention the school privileges of these days. There were no public schools at that time. The government had not learned that in the intelligence of the people is the strength of the nation. Village schools were generally taught by some widow who took the children into her own house, and the girls were taught to sew and knit, the boys to say their ABC. Every morning we took two or three pence to pay for the schooling.

The next place I remember was Shiney Row, about 4 miles north of Rainton. Here I had another spell at school. My parents were not religious at this time, but were very particular about sending their children to Sunday School. This was my first experience in a Methodist Sunday School, of which I have been a member more or less ever since. I have some pleasant recollections of this Sunday School. When the day came for the superintendent to give us prizes, we felt as big as life, though they might not be worth more than a penny apiece, yet by us they were highly prized. I do not remember the exact dates of our removal from place to place, but I think we lived in the vicinity of Shiney Row 6 or 7 years . . . . . .

. . I think Father must have been 12 or 13 when he left Shiney Row. He says, "Not withstanding the lack of school privileges, I had a thirst for learning and could read very well." Starting with other boys in extreme youth to toil, they seemed to have reached out after and appreciated knowledge more than some of the blys do now. He gives the name of one boy more advanced than the others who used to set copies for them and so taught his companions to write.

About this time night schools began to be established and the hours of labor were made less, thus giving an opportunity for study and thus to prepare for future usefulness. At the age of 21 he was converted and united with the Wesleyan Methodist church. Here he found friends who encouraged him to read and study and guided him in the search for knowledge. Along with other books the writings of Wesley and Dr. Adam Clarke and other leaders in church work made a lasting impression on his life and character; but most of all he began a life-long study of the Book which was to be his guide and inspiration through a long life of service for the Master.

In March 16, 1845, he was married to Miss Betsy Moffat, and together they set up the family altar and founded a Christian home. Mother had joinde the Primitive Methodist Church, of which her mother was a member in early girlhood, and as the local society to which she belonged was active and zealous and very much alive, he joined that church with her. From the time of his conversion he was active in Christian work wherever he was, and at the time of his death he had been 40 years a class leader and 35 years a local preacher.

Betsy Moffat
Mother was born in the County of Cumberland, February 17, 1818. Her father
James Moffat
was a Scotchman. He died when Mother was quite young. Grandma Moffat made her
Phebe Hetherington
home with Father and Mother from the time of their marriage until her death. She was blind for some time before her death.

My twin sister and I were born at East Rainton May 19, 1846. Phebe and Annie (Hill) named for our two grandmas. She died when one year and 11 months old, just one month before the birth of another little girl, Phebe Moffat (Hill) born May 16, 1848, at Middle Rainton. Grandma Moffat died when Phebe was 2
Phebe Hetherington
years old and I was 4. Robert James was born at Middle Rainton, April 15, 1851. When he was presented for baptism at the Primitive Methodist chapel, the minister took him in his arms and talked 15 or 20 minutes comparing the little life just begun to a ship starting on a voyage, and when in less than a year our folks started for America, the neighbors said Brother Matphen's ship had sailed.

I have a few recollections of these early days, a faint remembrance of
Ann Burdess
Grandma Hill, and I distinctly remember going to pick cowslips with my Aunt Anne
Joseph Hill's sister
when we were about to leave. We children were too young to understand what it meant to our parents to say goodbye to home and friends and go among strange faces. The story of the trip has been told by Father.

SKETCH FROM MY DIARY by Joseph Hill

After taking leave of our friends, we came to the city of Durham and took the cars for Liverpool. We paid 13 shillings each for our tickets. AB (Ann Burdess?) and Phil got a ticket for 6 shillings and sixpence. RJ (Robert James) came free. We got two insurance tickets, one penny each, so our fare from Durham to Liverpool was one pound twelve shillings and sixpence.

When we arrived, we found that on account of the vast number of emigrants for America, the passage money had raised considerable, and the ship in which we expected to sail was all taken up, so we had to stop in Liverpool a week. The name of our host was Ramson, a man of good reputation; anyhow, his treatment of us was honorable and respectful. On Sunday morning we were directed to a Methodist chapel, but being strangers, we failed to find it. We resolved to enter the first place of worship we came to, and hearing singing, we followed the sound and went in, but to our great disappointment the gospel was preached in an unknown tongue. It was very strange to us, never having heard anything of the kind before. It was a Welch church.

We engaged a passage in a splendid looking ship named the continental, which was to sail the first of April. Our tickets for the voyage were 17 pounds. We went on board March 31 and lay in the dock until April 2. While there we had a letter from Richard Armstrong. When we set sail it was a very fine day, and we sailed very pleasantly across the Irish Sea. All on board seemed cheerful eating, drinking and making merry. As the mate passed by the galley, or cooking room, noticing the passengers eating freely, he said, "You will pay for this tomorrow." April 3 we entered the channel with a fair wind, but nearly all on board were seasick, vomiting and groaning on every side. The mate knew what it would be on the second day. We came through the channel in two days. April 6 was a very fine day. The sun was hot but very little wind. We were thankful we had got the better of our sickness. The next four days we had a rough sea. On Sunday, the eleventh, it was a very fine day, but we had no public worship and nothing particular took place during the week. On Sunday the eighteenth we were rather alarmed to hear that there was a death on board of the ship. An old Irishman going to his family in New York. I suppose he was over 80. He was put into the sea at 7 o'clock in the evening. We now came to the banks of Newfoundland. It is considered a dangerous part of the Atlantic. It is always foggy and misty. We could not see 20 yards from the vessel. About 12 o'clock at night it got 12 degrees colder in 10 minutes. The water was freezing on the deck. All were on the lookout for fear of meeting with ice, but we had a fair several days. On Wednesday the 21st there was another death on board, a little boy. These were awful scenes to see them put overboard into the sea that evening. This night was very stormy. The lightning flashed, the wind blew, the rain fell in torrents. We were tossed about wonderfully. We had

more deaths before we reached New York, making 5 in all. The first sight of land was very pleasant to the eye. When we got into the river, they cast anchor, and the ship lay in quarantine. We were taken to New York in steamboats. We were 28 days from Liverpool to New York. We were in New York from Saturday until Monday, when we started via Philadelphia to Tamaqua. Then we took the stage to Janesville, Luzern County, Pennsylvania, where we began our first work in America.

J. Hill

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We were considered to have had a very quick voyage, as most sailing vessels at that time took six weeks for the trip and some more. It was a wild country to which we had come. Everything was strange and different to what we had been accustomed. Janesville was a small mining village. It was part of the Beaver Meadow Circuit, East Baltimore Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church. The preacher came once a month. Stewart McFarlane, a Scotchman, was superintendent of the Sunday school. If there was a local preacher there, he preached; if not, Stewart read the sermon. We stayed there one month and then went to Crystal Ridge a very small place. I do not remember much about it except that we all had scarlet fever and I nearly died. We stayed there one year and then moved to Rhinehart Run, one mile from Tamaqua. Father and Mother joined the Primitive Methodist Church in Tamaqua, but we had a good Sunday school at Rhinehart's Run, with a library, and we had some preaching services. Father (Joseph Hill) and some other English local preachers used to preach at different places in the country round. I remember going to Tamaqua to church Sunday evenings. I remember Phebe and I going with Father when he went to preach at Tuscarara. I remember the big red stage coach that used to pass our house every day.

On July 31, 1853, a baby sister came to us and they named her Mary Elizabeth She stayed with us 15 months, then died. We laid her to rest in the Primitive Methodist cemetery in Tamaqua. After her death we moved to Tamaqua. In January 1855, a brother was born, but when 6 months old he died. Father enjoyed the church services in Tamaqua. Tamaqua was a good sized town with several churches and a good graded school with several teachers. It was in Schuylkill County. Our next move was to Stockton, Luzerne County, two miles from Hazelton. I think it was in 1856. As I recall it, the people who lived in Stockton were very largely English. The coal operator, William Carter, came from Cornwell, and a good many were Cornish, but there were also several from the north of England, and Father found here congenial companions. There was a small society belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Father and Mother put in their letters from the Primitive Methodist Church, and Father was made class leader of the little band. They had class meeting every Sunday morning. Sunday school in the afternoon, and preaching in the evening in the little frame church. I think the preacher

came every 2 weeks, and the local preacher held forth when he was not there. They had good singing, and as there were several musicians, they had quite an orchestra to help in the services. That had prayer meeting every week. There were several live, active workers, and they grew to be a strong society. There were a schoolhouse and two teachers, a gentleman and a lady. We all went to school. I do not remember how long the term was.

May 21, 1858, another little brother came to us and was named Joseph Henry. He was very welcome. I think more so because we had all missed the little ones who had left us. Robert especially was delighted to think he was no longer the baby.

Father always had prayers in the morning before he went to work, but as he often had to leave when it was too early for the little ones to get up, Mother used to get us together before we went to school, and I can distinctly remember her holding up the little baby in long clothes and asking that he should be a preacher. I think that was always her wish and Father's for him, though they wanted that God should guide him.

There are many pleasant memories of the Stockton friends. One sad one, while living there, Father had his face badly cut while blasting coal, and he carried the scars to his grave.

Our next move was to Mount Pleasant, a little village about 3 miles from Hazelton. I do not recall the exxact date of our removal, but it was about the beginning of the Civil War. It was completely surrounded by woods, and I remembe: a big fire. When the men had to fight to keep it from reaching the powder house where the powder was kept for blasting in the mines, and the tall pine trees ablaze clear to the top were a wonderful sight.

I remember Mother going to see them present a flag to a company of soldiers who were going to the war. There was a schoolhouse, but no church. We had Sunday school. Mother, who was always ready and helpful in taking care of the sick, was often called upon for her services.

One of the most thrilling experiences we had was the visit of about 300 Molly McGuires, an organization something like the Klu Klus Clan. They came in broad daylight to drive away an inside boss who had displeased them. They marched through the place and out to the mines. Mother and another woman followed them. They were so anxxious about their husbands they forgot to be afraid. It was the custom of the Molly McGuires when they wanted to punish anyone to send someone from a distant place so they would not be recognized, but Mother saw a man she had known at Stockton in the crowd and asked him if he had seen her man, but he never answered her a word. She went to the mines and looked all around, but could find no trace of Father, so she came home again and we waited anxxiously for some time. At last about nightfall he came, much to our relief. He had gone to Hazelton to see about cars, and was in a store when the Molly

McGuires marched through Hazelton. Somebody asked who that crowd of men were that had just gone past, and the answer was made that they had gone to Mount Pleasant to drive away the coal shipper. He listened to them awhile, then said, "I am the coal shipper." They looked at his curiously. He went out, got on the train again and rode to Mount Pleasant, passing through the crowd both times. He was not the one they were seeking, but did not know that. He had only been home a little while when some of the family of the inside boss came. His name was Mr. Mercer. The leader of the Mollies had found him and told him to leave or take the consequences. He very quietly said, "I'll go, men," and started off for Hazelton. On the way he met someone and sent a message to his folks that he was going to Hazelton, and they should try to send him some clean clothes as he was dressed in his dirty work clothes, they brought the bundle to Father, and he started, alone in the darkness, and we waited all night in suspense. wondering if we would ever see him again. In the mmiddle of the forenoon he came and Mr. Mercer with him. Mr. Mercer had gone to a hotel and got in touch with the coal operator and the leader of the Mollies, and after they investigated, it was found that an under boss was responsible for the trouble that had given offense, so he was discharged, and Mr. Mercer stayed. Only Mr. Mercer's self-possession prevented a real tragedy. It took as much courage and skill to hold a position of authority in the mines as it did to go to war.

With the exception of Tamaqua and Rhinehart's Run, the places where we had lived were owned by the coal operators. The houses were all alike, except any extra porches or fixings that had been added by the tenants. There was a company store where everyone was expected to trade, a company doctor for whose salary every workman was expected to pay so much a month, and everything was controlled by the coal operators. As far as I can recollect, the most of the people we came in contact with were from Great Britain--all the different counties in England, Welsh, Irish and Scotch.

Our next home was entirely different. Beaver Meadow was an old American village. It had been the place where the stage coaches stopped for rest and refreshment on their way to Berwick. The old toll gate was still there when we moved. Most of the people owned their own homes, some of them very pretty, with their white paint and green blinds. There were 3 hotels, but one of them with 30 rooms was vacant. The railroad had taken the place of the stage coach, then for a time they had the round house and the machine shops, and it was the market town for the surrounding country, the only important town for miles around and there was every prospect of its becoming a large place. But as the country was settled and developed, other towns sprang up that were more successful. The roundhouse and the machine shops were taken away, property grew less valuable, many moved away, but there still were a number of old settlers who clung to their old homes and traditions. It was a peaceful country residence, and we made many

pleasant friendships. Beaver Meadow was in Carbon County, 11 miles from Mauch Chinck, the county seat, and 4 miles from Hazelton. Luzerne and Carbon Counties joined each other and part of the time we lived there Father worked in Luzerne and lived in Carbon. There was a church, owned by the Presbyterians, but used by the other churches, as they did not have services all the time. The Methodists had a small society. Father was appointed class leader and Sunday school superintendent. The society grew. The Methodist preacher came once in 2 weeks, and the Presbyterian preacher came about as often, and Father and some of the local preachers from Stockton and nearby filled the rest of the time.

As the Beaver Meadow mine developed, the empty houses began to fill up, many who were interested in the mine living in Beaver Meadow and going back and forth. William Carter, who was our superintendent when we moved to Stockton moved to Beaver Meadow with his family. We had a good Sunday school, but we wanted a library, and Mr Carter said he would give two dollars for every one the school raised, and they promptly raised $100. which meant more than that amount does now. The response may have surprised him, but he kept his promise, and we had a fine and well-selected library.

The Civil War still went on, and daily we watched for news. We took the Philadelphia Inquirer, and its daily arrival was the great event of the day. The little boys shared the enthusiasm and drilled with wooden guns and pine for bayonets. In their play room with their blocks and spools and the aid of the maps in the Philadelphia Inquirer, Robert and Joseph fought over all the battles of the war and took Richmond several times before Grant got around to it.

Then the rebels entered Pennsylvania, there was great exxcitement, as it was feared they would destroy the pumps at the anthracite mines. These pumps were kept working night and day. If they were stopped for a few hours, it would throw the men out of work for weeks, and their destruction would have meant flooding the mines, and that would have brought ruin, not only to the miners, but the entire anthracite region, so the victory at Gettysburg was a great relief. As so many of the men enlisted and went to war, the Molly McGires became bolder and were a terror to law abiding citizens. One of their number was guilty of a crime, was arrested, and lodged in the jail in Mauch Chunck. One night I went out the back door alone. I heard the steady tramp of feet coming down the railroad, which was just a little way off. I listened, and still they kept coming. I called Father and he went to tell the authorities. They told him it was the Molly McGuires going to Mauch Chunk to get the prisoner out of jail. There were so many of them they had the road picketed all the way to Mauch Chunk, and no one was allowed to pass. They surrounded the jail, overpowered the guards, took out the prisoner, and the next morning in broad daylight marched through Beaver Meadow with the prisoner. The government sent a regiment of soldiers to enforce order, and one company of them was quartered in the old

Hotel in Beaver Meadow that had been vacant so long. The citizens served a big supper to welcome their arrival.

The soldiers surrounded the mines and arrested the men who were accused of being guilty as they came up, and once more they marched through Beaver Meadow. under guard in their dirty mining clothes, their wives following behind, wailing and weeping, with bundles of clean clothes. It was a pitiful sight. The real ring leaders had escaped, and many of the men arrested were not responsible for the trouble, but a number of them were sent to jail.

The soldiers belonged to the 10th New Jersey. Some of them were Methodists and came to the meetings and were invited to our home. They took quite a fancy to Joseph, and he became quite a favorite among the soldiers. Someone had given him a pair of Lieutenants shoulder straps. The little fellow accepted the commission seriously and went to the quarters with the shoulder straps on. One of the guards failed to salute, and he said, "Why don't you salute your superior officer?" The guard saluted.

There are many memories of these past days. The death and burial of Lincoln when the citizens met and marched to the church to hold memorial services, during the time of the funeral, was a scene never to be forgotten. Just across the mountain there was a settlement of Pennsylvania Dutch farmers, and their quaint ways and the old style church with its high pulpit interested us greatly. My parents were teatotalers before they came to this country, and our home was always run on temperance principles. They found everywhere the open saloon. Drunkenness and its attendant vices prevailed to an extent impossible to realize by those who have lived only since the days of prohibition. Temperance workers organized a band among the boys of the village which was carried on by the boys themselves and no doubt kept many of them from the evils of intemperance. The sons of temperance was also organized to help along the work.

The Civil War had ended. The old hotel that had sheltered the soldiers had been divided up for tenants. We were comfortable settled in our own home in a pleasant part of the village, surrounded by friends when there fell the heaviest blow of all. After a long illness from cancer, Mother (Betsy Moffat) went to her heavenly home, Dec 15, 1867. Her care was for the future of her boys, and her last request that they should each be given a Bible to be kept in memory of her and its precepts made the guide of their lives. We laid her to rest in the cemetary at Beaver Meadow. Just before Father poined her in 1884, I heard him talking to a friend. He did not know I heard him. He said, "I have always missed Mother so. The children have taken care of me just the same as if she were here. I have missed no care or comfort, but when I used to come home from work, my first thought was 'Where's Mother?' I always wanted her to be there."

Three years passed away, when Father decided to go west. We had read much of Kansas, and some acquaintances had gone there, and in the Spring of 1870 he decided to come and see how he liked it. Joseph was afraid he might come back and he would not get to see Kansas, so he coaxed Father to take him along, and on May 30 they started. They decided to stay, and on Sept 19, Phebe, Robert and I started to join them.

Williamsburg was a small place, but the country was well-settled around and we were surprised to see the crowd of people, mostly in lumber wagons, that came to the schoolhouse on Sunday. They had a strong church and a good Sunday school, some fine singers, and it was a real live community. Father was appointed one of the class leaders. Later a literary society was organized, and we had a young people's meeting on Sunday evening. Our little home circle was drawn very close together in the two years we were at Williamsburg, the last we were to spend together. We started a little home paper to which each member of the family contributed, and all the events, both home and foreign, were reviewed on its pages, and the habit of writing there formed laid the foundation for the future opportunities for service and was the preparation for the life work to come. We read together, talked together, and lived together. We were well supplied with reading.

In the spring of 1871 the Rev Rhodes was appointed presiding elder of Emporia District. There was a good school in Williamsburg, but at the close of the two years, Joseph was ready for advanced work, yet too young to leave home. Elder Rhodes, who had taken a great fancy to him, proposed that he apend the winter in his home and go to the Emporia High School. He said his wife was so much alone in his long absences, and Joseph could be quite a help to her, and they would care for him as if he were their own, which they did. It was hard to let him go, but it seemed like a wonderful opportunity. We fitted him out with clothes, and he entered the high school.

Oct 15, 1872, we moved to Osage City. Father was appointed class leader in the Methodist Church there. We lived first on Holiday street east of where the telephone office is now. The house was owned by Thomas Marriott, and he afterward moved it to the corner of 9th and California and built an addition to it. In the spring we moved to the corner of 7th & Main. In the fall we moved to Elinwood St east of 6th, the place where the Craig family lived as long. Here Sept 3, 1873, Joseph Warren Leighty and Phebe Moffatt Hill were married. After my sister's marriage we moved to the east side of 6th street north of Main. There were no business houses between Main and the alley. Jacob Hunsicker was on the corner where the Strand is now, and the house we lived in about where Lundholn's store is now.

In 1874 Mr. Leighty built a house on the corner of 5th and Lincoln, and Father bought a house and moved south of it. We all had typhoid malaria except

Father and Mr Leighty. We had drouth and grasshoppers and had to pay 30¢ a barrel for creek water and bring our drinking water from the country a couple of miles away. But the rain came and the dark days passed.

In the fall of 1876 Joseph Hill Father bought an acre lot on Prospect St. We moved our house ;and remodeled it, and Father, Robert and I went there to live. On June 15, 1878, Robert James Hill was married to Miss Bessie May. They built a house just west of ours. There seven children were born to them.

Brother Joseph spent his vacation with us in Osage City the first summer we were there. After that he had employment during the vacations and only made us short visits. He graduated in the State Normal class of 1875, took an advanced course and graduated again in 1876. He taught in Oswego, Labette County, one year, Americus one year, Emporia public schools 2 years, journalist 1 year student at Northwestern University 5 years, graduated June 24, 1886, student at Garret Biblical Institute. In the fall of 1885 he joined the Reck River Conference and was student pastor at Maywood, Ill, for 2 years. In 1887 he accepted a position in the State ;Normal school to teach Latin.

Children of Robert James and Bessie May Hill:

Albert Edward Hill	b. Sept 13, 1879	d.	June 23,1899
Nellie May Hill	b. Nov 1880	d.	June 1884
Clyde Hill	b. Jan 5, 1883	d.	m 1945
Frank Clinton Hill	b. Nov 29, 1884	d.	Jan 3, 1957
Walter Hill	b. June 24, 1886	d.	Feb 10, 1960
Joseph Raymond Hill	b. Feb 7, 1888	d.	Mar 4, 1919
Effie ~~May~~ GERTRUDE Hill	b. Aug 8, 1890	d.	Dec 1962

June 4, 1884, Joseph Hill died, age 64 years. After my father's death I lived with my sister until the fall of 1885, when I went with my brother Joseph to Evanston and remained with him until 1887, when we moved to Emporia. In 1892 Joseph Henry Hill and Frances Meldrum were married. After some time spent in Chicago and Kansas City I came back to my old home on Prospect St in the latter part of 1893.

In Jan 1899 Robert moved to Pittsburg with his family. In 1896 Albert Edward Hill graduated from the Osage City High School. April 18, 1899 he was married to Miss Lula Baker. June 23, 1899, just 10 weeks after his marriage, he was accidently shot at Pittsburg, Kansas. His remains were brought to Osage City for burial. Lula died in California a couple years later.

Joseph Henry Hill died 1927, funeral services by Rev. Harry A. Gordon in Kansas City. Annie Hill's writing

Robert James Hill (our grandfather) died June 9, 1935.
Phebe Moffat Leighty (grandpa's sister) died 1927

written by Bessie Hill Windes