

William Lincoln Raudenbush

By Whitney Peterson

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William Lincoln Raudenbush was born in Allen County in 1862, but grew up in Washington Township, Adams County. He was raised and taught how to farm by his dad, and worked for him for many years saving money. Living on the neighboring farm was the Reynolds family, with a daughter named Clara Ardilla. William literally married 'the girl next door'. Clara and William bore two children, Rolla and Alma.

By 1902 Clara and William owned 106 acres. William was known for his quality hogs and excellent crop. He was also well known as a Republican and serving as a trustee on the Blue Creek Township from 1905 to 1909. William served on the Wilshire town council for two years; his name is inscribed on a plaque outside the Wilshire firehouse.

William was remembered by his kindnesses and his sense to know when help was needed. His grandson Don always remembers William helping them farm when times were rough, especially during the 1930's. One day William noticed Don's harnesses were getting in bad shape. "Don, you need new harnesses. Go take this money and buy yourself some new ones. Pay me back when you settle up at harvest." Don agreed to the deal, but when Don got enough money and went to pay him back his grandfather said, "No, keep the money. I just wanted to see if you would keep your word."

On June 1, 1939 William Raudenbush passed away at his home in Wilshire. Ardilla lived on to celebrate her 100th birthday. She struggled with blindness for over 20 years before passing in 1967.

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