

**AN  
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL  
SKETCH OF MY LIFE**

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An autobiographical sketch of my life by Ethelbert Callahan

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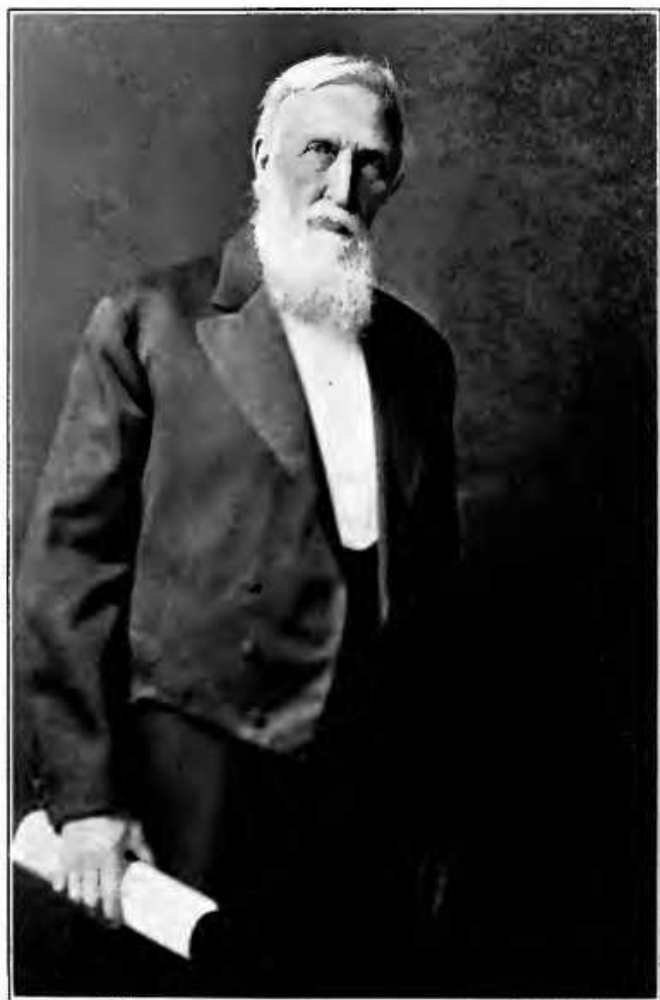
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**ETHELBERT CALLAHAN**

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*ETHELBERT CALLAHAN*

An  
Autobiographical Sketch  
of  
My Life

And also

Some of the Addresses which I  
have made on special occasions  
and which are supposed to be  
of local interest in the county  
in which I have lived during all  
the years of my manhood

*By* ETHELBERG CALLAHAN

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## INTRODUCTORY

“As for man his days are as grass; as a flower of the field he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is not, and the place thereof shall know it no more.”

No rational man or woman desires to pass away and be soon forgotten by those who still live. Often living men and women provide for the erection of monuments to perpetuate their memory when they have ceased to live. They also build monuments to perpetuate the memory of those who have preceded them to the grave. Biographical sketches and books are written and published as a protest against an entrance into the shadows of oblivion. Portraits are painted; likenesses are engraved and printed. Photographs are taken and multiplied to aid memory in holding back from the misty regions of things forgotten, the history, the form and features, and even the thought of those whose biographies are printed, whose portraits are painted and whose photographic pictures are taken.

Again, there are those who, realizing the uncertainty, and unreliability of much of the biographical history that is written, write for themselves an autobiography to be left as a memorial of their life history. Of this number I am one. At the age of eighty-two I retired from practice as a lawyer that I might enjoy the rest and quiet that I had fairly earned by more than half a century of close application to the duties and obligations that came to me as a lawyer and as a citizen. The autobiographical sketch that I shall write will be a short one. It will be supplemented with a few of my public addresses made on



special occasions during the course of my busy life. There will be no connection of one with any other of these addresses. Each one stands by itself and explains the occasion that called it forth. The occasions were mostly local and for that reason they have been selected for publication. The publication of the autobiographical sketch that I shall write, and the address that I shall select, in book form, is made for private circulation only.

× ETHELBERT CALLAHAN. ×

Robinson, Illinois, December 17, A. D. 1915.

*Given to me Oct. 5 - 1916 -  
Camp in Robinson -  
M. D. Wilkin*

× *Gift Made June 19 - 1918* ×

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

My father was John Callahan, who was born near Uniontown, Pennsylvania, on the twenty-fourth day of November, A. D. 1801. His father was George Callahan, who was a soldier in the revolutionary war. After the war he became a Methodist preacher, and while traveling a circuit in the state of Virginia crossed the Ohio river a short distance above Marietta, and preached the first Methodist sermon in the State of Ohio. My father's mother was Mary Wells, a daughter of General Wells of Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

My mother was Margaret Brown, and was born near Bowling Green, in the State of Kentucky, on the thirtieth day of August, A. D. 1805. She was the daughter of Nicholas Brown and Sarah Whitaker Brown.

My father and mother were married in Licking county, Ohio, on the twenty-fourth day of March, 1824, and lived in that county until 1849, when they removed to Illinois. Father entered two eighty-acre tracts of heavily timbered land and built a log cabin on one of the eighties. I have in my possession the patents issued to him by the United States for these lands. One of them has the personal signature of President John Quincy Adams. The other has the personal signature of President Andrew Jackson. Until Jackson's second term the Presidents signed all patents for land in person. In Jackson's second term and ever thereafter they were signed by the President's secretary.

I was born in Licking county, in the State of Ohio, on the seventeenth day of December, A. D. 1829, in a

cabin built of unhewn logs, covered with clapboards and floored with puncheons split from large oak logs and surfaced with a broad axe. The wide fireplace was built of puddled clay, and the chimney that rose above it was made of split sticks and plastered with stiff clay. The door was made of split boards and hung on wooden hinges. Great forest trees stood like sentinels around the cabin and their spreading branches overshadowed it. In my childhood days I saw these trees, one by one, fall beneath the ringing strokes of my father's axe. The area of cleared land was slowly extended. Fields were laid out and fenced with rails. In the first field an orchard was planted and the apple trees grew amid the stumps and corn until they yielded fruit, and gave joy to the family. In a woods pasture a small flock of sheep was kept and was brought into a close sheepfold each night to protect the sheep from wolves that nightly prowled and howled in the surrounding forests. My parents had but little property besides the one hundred and sixty acres of land which they had purchased with borrowed money. The task of clearing a farm and building a home, on heavily timbered land is one that requires much hard labor and many personal sacrifices. My parents and their children, of whom I was the third, tasted the bitter cup of privation and hardship which necessity presses to the lips of the pioneer. I was a small boy when I was drafted into the ranks of the toilers who were engaged in the arduous task of transforming a heavily timbered wilderness into farms and homes.

The national road from Cumberland in the state of Maryland westward through the states of Virginia, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois had recently been built through Licking county on a line several miles south of our home, and the canal from Cleveland on Lake Erie, to Portsmouth on the Ohio river, crossed the national road at the Village of Hebron. Along this road and canal the county was be-