

**SOMETHING ABOUT THE MILLS
FAMILY AND ITS
COLLATERAL BRANCHES WITH
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL
REMINISCENCES**

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Something about the Mills family and its collateral branches with autobiographical reminiscences by Frank Moody Mills

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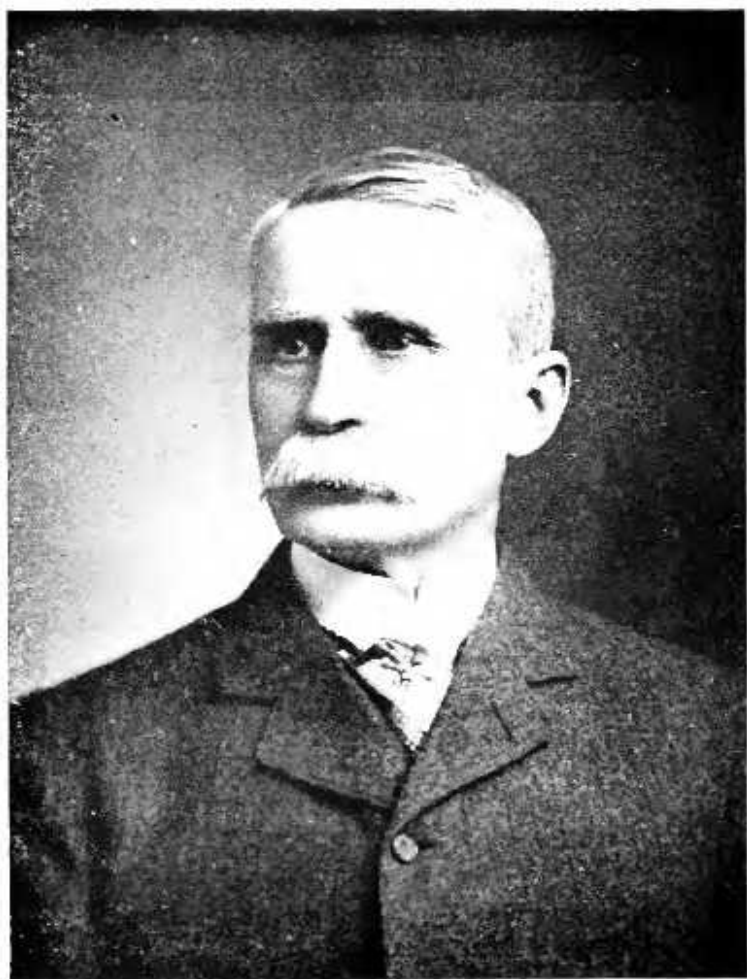
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The Mills Family

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Autobiographical Reminiscences

COMPILED AND PREPARED

BY

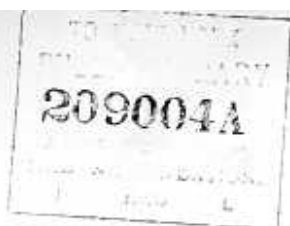
Frank Moody Mills

(APRIL 4, 1911)

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

1911

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*This Book of Fact, Tradition
and Reminiscence is Lovingly
Dedicated to My Descendants.*

—F. M. Mills.

Des Moines, April 4, 1911.

INTRODUCTORY

A short time ago my children at Des Moines and my good wife concluded that as many of the family as could conveniently arrange it, should meet together at our old home, Des Moines, to signalize my forthcoming anniversary. We are rather too widely separated to make it unanimous, but most of the children and their children have signified their intention to be present. It is my hope that it will be entirely informal and that we will have a good little visit together.

I have always intended to put together what I knew and might be able to gather in regard to our family history and when this gathering was decided upon, although the time was short, I determined to write up what I had at hand. Unfortunately the documents, the letters and papers and some things I had written from time to time were at Benton Harbor and there has not been time since I thought of it to get them and make proper use of them. If I am not called hence too soon I will endeavor to supplement this sketch with fuller details. This is hurriedly written and poorly put together, but it will serve, perhaps, to satisfy in a degree, the anxiety you have expressed from time to time to get something of the family history.

I am regretting as you all are doubtless, that, while there was opportunity to secure more information about our ancestors, that we neglected to do so. I have heard my father and mother and other relatives

tell of their early days and adventures and of their parents, their grandfathers and great grandfathers, and the traditions of the family far back, but no record was made. Letters that would seem worth their weight in gold to us now, were lost or destroyed. Although I have heard many times the names of far back ancestors, I do not know now the first name of my mother's grandfather and not back of my great grandfather on my father's side.

I will now or at some future time give you the full data as far back as I have it and I ask each one of you to make it a point to set down all the incidents of note in your lives and families that they may be handed down to your descendants, and each one of the youngsters as they marry and start out in life for themselves should make it a point to get as full a history as possible of the ancestors of their wives' or husbands' families and make a record of it.

This may strike you as a matter of but little importance now, but the time will come when you will be as interested in it as I am now. when you will be glad to know of your ancestry and the beginning of your family history. As one grows older and things of the present lose their immediate importance, we want to know where and whom we came from.

What's in a name? The nomenclature of the world is a matter of mystery and of growth. As people multiplied on the face of the earth, they had to be designated in some way and their personal characteristics and some times incidents, served to distinguish them, their location, their occupation, or their parentage, served to supply them with a name, which afterwards attached itself to them and to the families that came after them.

The Whites and the Browns and the Blacks were so

called from their complexions, the Smiths, the Carpenters, the Wrights, the Painters, the Coopers, the Millers were named from their trades. The Mills family were doubtless originally the men who ground the grain for their bread, and who accommodated their neighbors, who came to their mill with their grain, with the grist in one end of a bag and a stone or the jug in the other end, which went back to the home with the liquid encouragement which from the time before Noah was used to brace up the early man for his struggle with life's difficulties. So the Mills' were amongst the first of the world's people to embark in the big enterprise of milling, in its various ramifications. The miller and the blacksmith and the different variety of Smiths were the first real lords of the country, the Aristocracy of the early world, and today the big captains of industry are the millers. The steel Mills, the flouring Mills, the lumber Mills, the cotton Mills are not only the lords of the money world and the connecting link between labor and capital, but are behind all the world's work, the background of royalty, the producer of labor for the poor and of luxuries for the rich; the stability of society and the security of the governments of the world, and the assurance of the world's progress and prosperity. So we Mills can justly claim that there are none who can claim superiority over us. While we do not claim to be better than other people, there are none who are better.

THE BEST OF LIFE

To my boyhood chum, T. D. Brown of Crawfordsville, Ind., who sent me Richard Henry Stoddard's poem, "Three Score Years and Ten."

"The Best of Life went long ago,"
The poet says, Old friend, not so!
For everything we've had of worth
Is with us yet. The glowing earth
Has present joys, while of the past,
All that was good will ever last.

For memory lives and nothing's lost,
We've had our day and paid the cost,
And it is ours to realize
That we still hold the things we prize.
Though they have passed beyond our ken,
There's nothing lost that's ever been.

The early days we may recall,
And live them over one and all
And the dear ones of the long gone days,
Their charms and all their dear sweet ways
Come back to us and once again
We hear and sing Life's glad refrain.

—Frank Moody Mills.