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[#5]

[#9  
THB]

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4 I have given and advanced to my son Jerome B Baldwin one thousand dollars and one horse 5<sup>th</sup> I have given and advanced to my son Thomas B Baldwin five hundred dollars and one horse I have given to each of my three daughters to wit Amanda S Gibson deceased and to my Ann Bott 3 and Mary N Weir one horse

Taken from a book found @ home of Char + Maud McCrossen. Pinned by J<sup>m</sup> to Baldwin May 1883, he being 74 yrs. of age then

6/1991

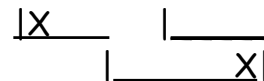
My grandfather, **Edwin Hale Baldwin**, was the son of the third child in the family of twelve, **Francis Marion** and Amanda Jane (Smith) **Baldwin**. He was only six years younger than Mollie, the last child. Mollie took charge of him and walked him to school on his first day. So when he and I spent that week with Mollie, it was a wonderful reunion time for the two of them.

Mollie's large home at 910 E Union Ave in Litchfield was unique in many ways. It faced a block-sized city park. There was a hand pump outside the back door and another hand pump mounted on the kitchen counter next to the sink! Additionally, when the house had been built, it was adjacent to a tree that Mollie loved, so she just had the house built around it! There was an interior

door which opened to the small "room" which housed the tree, so she could open the door and see it without going outside in inclement weather. \*\*\*

Mollie's dining room was lined with built-in bookcases filled with books. When she needed to get something from the store, she went to a bookcase, pulled out a seemingly random book, and extracted a \$20 bill from it. Handier than going to the bank or writing a check!

The master bedroom at the front of the second floor was shaped like two bricks in a building:

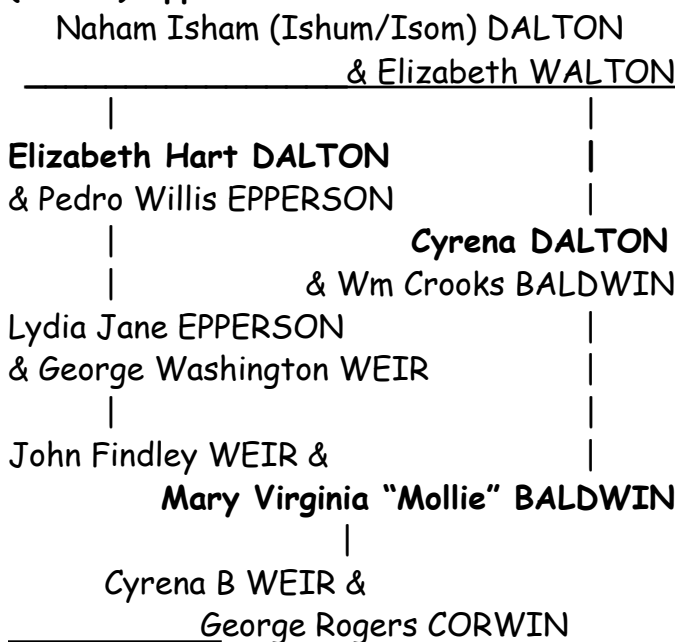


Mollie confided to me that she and her husband, John Findley Weir, slept where

the X's are and often talked into the night from their respective beds. Since they did have one daughter, apparently they didn't *always* spend their nights in their distant corners!

A 1868 letter (see **BFB** I,2,9-10) written by Mollie's father, William Crooks Baldwin, says that he and wife Cyrena "went to Knox Co. to see her sister, as she had not been to see any of her people for thirty years." Note 9, adds that "The sister in Knox County was Elizabeth Hart Dalton, married to Pedro Epperson. . . . Cyrena's youngest daughter Mary Virginia 'Mollie,' who was born in 1860, surely made this trip with her parents; perhaps this trip provided Mollie's introduction to her future husband, the Eppersons' grandson, John Findley Weir."

Mollie and John were first cousins once removed: Mollie's mother, **Cyrena (Dalton) Baldwin**, was the younger sister of John's grandmother, **Elizabeth Hart (Dalton) Epperson**.\*



\* Further details & documentation available upon request; see especially "The Story of David Epperson. . ." by Edna Epperson Brinkman (1933)

## The Lumber Business

Apparently Francis Marion Baldwin (hereafter, **FMB**), my great-grandfather and Mollie's brother, was the first Baldwin to make the transition from farmer to businessman or, more specifically, lumberman. Initially, FMB and WW Eckman had a grain and lumber business in Atwater, Macoupin Co, IL, from 1875 to 1884, although FMB was living in nearby Virden at that time and his son, Edwin Hale Baldwin (**EHB**), had been born in Virden in 1867. In 1884, they sold out and went to Columbus Junction, Louisa Co, IA, and engaged in the lumber business there.

FMB and wife Amanda Jane sold their Atwater lot 7 June 1888. The following year, FMB "of Columbus Junction, IA," returned to Virden to attend the funeral of his father, William Crooks Baldwin. His brother, Thomas Hampton Baldwin (**THB**), of Eustis, NE, also attended the funeral. Then in 1890 THB purchased two 160 acre parcels near Eustis (see **BFB** XI,2,7-8) and John and Mollie Weir had on an adjoining 160 acres! (Interestingly, THB's first son, William Weir Baldwin, was born in/near Eustis 18 Sept 1891; see **BFB** I,1,8) How did John run a lumber business in eastern Iowa and a farm in western Nebraska simultaneously? Summer and winter jobs? Or investor in one and operator of the other?

In 1893, FMB and WW Eckman sold out the Columbus Junction business and went into the lumber business in Memphis, MO, until 1895. Then in 1895, FMB became lumber business partners with his brother-in-law, John Findley Weir, in Farmington, VanBuren Co, IA. The business also had branches in Mt Pleasant, Henry Co, IA, and