

Adam Barnett Eller

by Lauren Eller Liggett

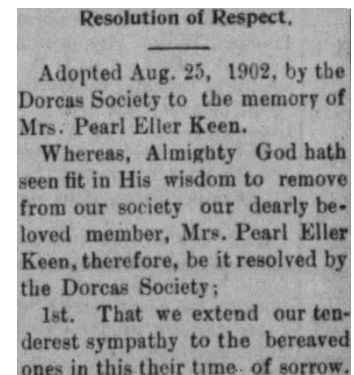
Dan and I moved to McKinney, TX about 3 years ago. At the time I didn't know there were some Ellers in the area. Sometime during our first year here I received a check from Linda Eller to renew her EFA membership and noticed that she lives in McKinney, TX. EFA records only listed her e-mail address so I didn't know that she lived in McKinney. Since then, we have gotten together a few times. After doing a little research in the first John Jacob Eller book, I learned that she is my 6th cousin.



When Steve Eller was working on the new edition of the John Jacob Eller books, he noticed that there are some Ellers buried in the Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney, TX. Dan and I did some exploring and found their graves there. Adam Eller, along with his wife, three of his children and a daughter in law are all buried there.



A few weeks ago, my cousin Linda Eller (not a descendant of Adam Eller) contacted me and said she would like to see the Eller graves in McKinney. We met at the cemetery and Linda noticed from the dates on the tombstone, that Adam died when he was 58. She wondered what he had died from. After having lunch in downtown McKinney, Linda and I went to the library to try to find any information on Adam Eller. We were not able to find anything in the history books of McKinney on the Ellers. However, the library has free access to Newspapers.com, so we tried to search that avenue. I couldn't find anything on Adam there but did find mention of a Pearl Eller that graduated from McKinney high school in 1899. I also found an article that was from the Dorcas Society of young ladies, a "Resolution of Respect" extending sympathy to the family of Mrs. Pearl Eller Keen in 1902. Knowing that she had just graduated from high school in 1899, I wondered what she might have died from at such a young age. Also knowing that she was a newlywed I suspected that she may have died in childbirth. Eventually I was able to find her obituary. It told a sad story. Pearl was a member of the Dorcas Society that was part of the Methodist church. The organization was raising money to build a new sanctuary for the local church in McKinney. Pearl had hoped that her wedding would be the first wedding in the new church building. However, for various reasons the building was delayed and was not ready in time for her wedding. She had to hold her wedding elsewhere. However, it turned out that her funeral was the first funeral in the new building. She died from typhoid fever on August 7, 1902. She had been married for 10 months and was 20 years old.



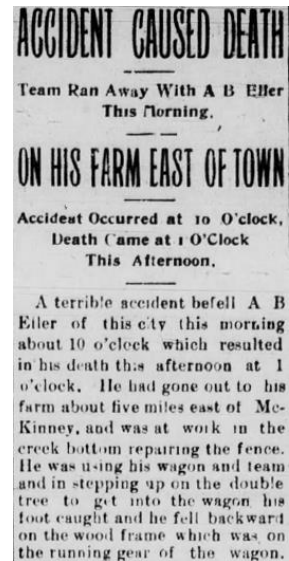
Later that evening I remembered that Pearl's obituary mentioned that she was the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. A.B. Eller. I had done all my searching under Adam or Adam Barnett Eller, not A.B. Eller. Dan and I went back to the library the next day and were able to find Adam's obituary by searching for A.B. Eller. It told that Mr. Eller was born in Weaverville, NC, but spent 5 years in Tampa, FL from 1870 to 1875. He returned to NC where he married Miss Rena Buckner in 1877. Their union was blessed with five sons and one daughter. They moved to Commerce, Texas in 1879, where Mr. Eller

taught school for 2 years. The family then moved to Collin County, TX and bought a farm 4 miles south of McKinney where he taught school at Wetsel School and Forest Grove School. He moved to McKinney, TX in 1892 where he lived until his death. The newspaper obituary mentioned that Mr. Eller has four brothers living in Asheville, NC and three sisters in Weaverville, NC. The obituary concluded with this paragraph: "He was a kind, devoted husband and father. He and his wife have reared a family of good, excellent, children. His four boys all possess splendid business qualifications, and are occupying lucrative and respectable positions, and are all moral and religious."

I thought it was interesting that his obituary stated that he was a soldier in the Union Army serving in the Civil War from 1863 to 1865. We had found a previous mention in the local paper of Adam's nephew, Mr. Abb Eller, of Asheville, NC coming to visit his uncle and that they had attended a reunion of Confederate veterans together, which was held in Dallas in April of 1902.

Then we found a front-page article about the tragic accident that claimed Adam Eller's life.

Mr. A.B. Eller was working on his farm, 4 miles east of McKinney, mending fences. He was using his wagon and team of horses there. In stepping up to get into the wagon, his foot caught and he fell backwards. This spooked his team which began to run. Before Mr. Eller could regain his position, the wagon struck a tree and Adam was caught between the tree and wagon. His back was terribly smashed and he sustained internal injuries. He died a few hours later. Mr. Eller was survived by his wife, Rena Buckner Eller, and sons, Cary, who is engaged in the grain business at Houston, Philetus, a passenger conductor on the M K & T railroad, Jerome, who is manager of the Telephone Exchange at Pittsburg, and his youngest son, Otho, still at home. One of the final paragraphs of the story reads: "The news of the accident which befell Mr. Eller, and his death so soon afterward, came as a great shock to his hundreds of friends in McKinney, and cast a gloom over the entire town, and great sympathy goes out to his grief-stricken wife and sons."



One of those sons, Horace P. (Philetus) Eller and his wife Mary are buried near his parents. I will have to do some further research to see what became of Cary, Jerome, and Otho Eller.

After checking in the first edition of the John Jacob Eller book, I learned that Adam Barnett Eller is my 2nd cousin 4 times removed. He was a 2nd cousin to my Gt. Gt. Grandfather, Hardy Washington Eller. It's often a challenge to figure out how all these Ellers are related!

