

Ewing Settlers of Southwestern Pennsylvania Part 2: William, Grandson of Squire James Ewing

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Squire James Ewing (1733-1825) – a grandson of James Ewing of Inch Island – migrated West from Cecil County about the time (1773) that Westmorland County, Pennsylvania, was created from Bedford County. He was accompanied by his wife, Mary McKown, and first son, William. It is probable that he first settled land along Montours Run, near its mouth with the Ohio River, in the area that became known as Ewing's Mill. His 1814 will refers to "land on Montours Run adjoining David Smith, William Holland and a second parcel held by patent on which are both a Grist Mill and Saw Mill lying (together, my whole claim on the waters of Montours Run)." He subsequently homesteaded – with the assistance of several slaves to help clear his land and erect improvements – some 680 acres in the area near Walker's Mill in Collier Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. His considerable impact on the Walker's Mill area included having a still on his land, providing a fort to which people could retreat during Indian raids and being one of the Founders and, for many years, Elders of the Montour Presbyterian Church.

One of Squire James' nephews, Alexander, followed him to the area. Prior to moving to Allegheny County, Alexander lived in Adams County, Pennsylvania. He was a teamster and hauled goods back and forth between Eastern Pennsylvania and the Allegheny County area. He moved to the Allegheny County area about 1779 and settled in North Fayette Township on land to the west of land owned by Isaac and Gabriel Walker (and which he probably purchased from the Walker's). He was accompanied by his wife, Jean Anderson, and his first two sons, John and Thomas. Alexander died in the late 1790's, and his progeny and their descendants had an impact on the area similar to Squire James' impact.

Inter-marriages were common among the families in the church-based communities of the time. Squire James' descendants belonged to the Montour Presbyterian Church and Alexander's descendants belonged to the (physically quite close but philosophically quite distant) Union Presbyterian Church. Primarily because of this, Squire James' descendants tended to inter-marry with different families than did the descendants of Alexander.

There were cross-overs. One was the cross-over between the descendants of Squire James and Alexander themselves: James William Ewing, a great-grandson of Squire James, married Ida May Ewing, one of Alexander's great-granddaughters. The genealogical records regarding the one- to two-generation ancestors of James William and Ida May are quite confused, and often flat-out wrong, because of the appearance of many men named William: James William's father and grandfather were both William's; one of James William's first-cousins-once-removed was named William; Ida May's grandfather was a William; and, to top it all off, James William was born William James and didn't change his name to James William until shortly after the 1880 Census.¹

Particularly confused and error-full is the genealogical record for the father of James William Ewing: William Ewing (~1810~1875). The purpose of this article is to sort out and correct this record through a biographical sketch and timeline for William Ewing (~1810~1875).

¹ To reduce confusion in this article, James William is *never* referred to as William James.

William Harvey the Cousin was also a next-door neighbor. His father, Samuel the Uncle, died in 1822. Samuel the Uncle's widow, Letitia Ann, kept the family together, and they continued to reside in Fayette Township until at least 1830. Sometime during the 1830's they moved— "lock, stock and barrel" — north to Kiskiminetas Township in Armstrong County. However, William Harvey the Cousin didn't move with them. Instead, he moved in with the family of William the Father, his uncle, perhaps as an apprentice to learn some skill or maybe just to provide another set of hands to farm the land. So, when William was approximately 20 years old, William Harvey the Cousin and William became "brothers" living in the same household; William Harvey the Cousin was slightly older than his "brother" William.

When William the Father died in 1845, he gave William Harvey the Cousin part of his land. This land was separated from William's by a conditional line that had, somehow, been established before William the Father prepared his will and is cited in his will. Around 1850, William Harvey the Cousin married Sarah the Cousin and decided to join his family. William Harvey the Cousin sold the land he had received from William the Father, and William Harvey the Cousin and Sarah the Cousin moved north to live near either William Harvey the Cousin's brother, James, in Beaver Co, or his mother and brothers in Kiskiminetas Township, Armstrong Co.⁴ When Sarah the Cousin died in 1855, William Harvey the Cousin brought her body back to Robinson Township to be buried in the Montour Presbyterian Church cemetery.

After the death of his parents, William first married Jane (Hoey Nobel) Ewing the First Wife. The Hoey's and the Ewing's lived next to each other, so William had grown up living next to Jane. They were certainly acquaintances and possibly playmates. Sometime before 1853, Jane (Hoey Nobel) Ewing the First Wife lost her first husband, a Mr. Nobel. Shortly after the birth of William and Jane (Hoey Nobel) Ewing's children — Lizonia D. in 1854 and Robert B. in 1856 — Jane (Hoey Nobel) Ewing the First Wife died. The late 1840's and early 1850's was a bad time — health-wise — in the area and this may have contributed to her death. Alternatively, she may have died during childbirth.

William then married Jane (Nesbit) Ewing the Second Wife, a relative of William's sister, Mary E., who had married David E. Nesbit. At the time, it was common for widowers to re-marry, often quickly, to provide a mother for his infant and underage children. William and Jane (Nesbit) Ewing's first child was James William Ewing, born in 1858. Shortly thereafter, William and Jane had a child who died at birth in 1861. There was possibly a different-sex sibling, a twin, who also died at birth in 1861. Jane (Nesbit) Ewing the Second Wife died in 1861, perhaps coincident with the birth of these children.

William lived out his life — accompanied by his children Lizonia, Robert and James William — near the families of his brothers James and David K. Ewing. After William died in 1875, two of his children — Lizonia and James William — continued to live together on the family homestead. By the time of the 1880 Census, Robert was 23 or 24 and had married and left home. Lizonia and James William, however, were living together in 1880; she was 25 years old and the housekeeper identified in the census record, he was a 22 year-old student. James William Ewing subsequently married Ida May Ewing who was a descendent of Alexander Ewing, a nephew of James Ewing. James William Ewing and Ida May Ewing were third-cousins-once-removed.

⁴ Alternatively, it's possible that William Harvey the Cousin moved to Pittsburgh and became a lawyer.

Timeline Summary

The table on the following pages provides a timeline summary of the life events for William and his relatives. Census records are a primary source for this table's information, and census data are given exactly as they appear in the census records, including, for example, the misspelling of names. The shaded rows provide the census data and the other rows indicate other life events. Inferred ages at the various end-of-decade census points are also included using a special notation.⁵

William Ewing Riddle is a great-great-great-grandson of Squire James Ewing (s/o Alexander who was s/o James Ewing of Inch Island). Squire James settled, during the 1770's, in Chartiers Township immediately to the west of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Bill is the Web Master for Clan Ewing's web site and Editor of the Journal of Clan Ewing. Outside his genealogy work, he helps organizations certify that their software development procedures lead to high-quality results and meet regulatory constraints. He holds advanced degrees from Cornell and Stanford and has worked in academia, industry and government.

⁵ Notation:

- (x) indicates an age appearing in a census record
- {x...y} indicates an age range resulting from a Census Profile
- [x] indicates a hypothetical age, or age range, resulting from going backwards from an age appearing in a census record or forwards from an age range resulting from a Census Profile

	William the Father	William	Jane (Hoev Nobel) the First Wife	Jane (Nesbit) the Second Wife	William Harvey the Cousin	Sarah the Cousin
1820	{55...59}: ...liam Ewing; 2 Males 10<>15, 1 Male 16<>18, 1 Male 45<, 1 Female 10<>15, 1 Female 26<>44, 1 Female 45<	{9...10} living at home (see census record for William the Father)	[?]		{10...15} living at home: Samuel Ewing; 2 Males 0<>9, 2 Males 10<>15, 2 Males 19<>25, 1 Male 45<; 2 Females 16<>25, 1 Female 45<	
				1824: born	1822: his father – Samuel the Uncle – writes his will and dies	
1830	{65...69}: William Ewing; 1 Male 15<>19, 1 Male 20<>29, 1 Male 30<>39; 1 Male 60<>69; 1 Female 10<>14, 1 Female 20<>29, 2 Females 30<>39, 1 Female 60<>69	{19...20} living at home (see census record for William the Father)	[?]	[6]	{20...25} living at home: Letty Ewing; 1 Male 0<>4, 1 Male 10<>14, 2 Males 15<>19, 2 Males 20<>29; 1 Female 20<>30, 1 Female 40<>49	[0] [newborn]
					before 1840: moves into the household of William the Father when his family moves to Armstrong Co	
1840	{75...79}: William Ewing; 1 Male 10<>14, 1 Male 20<>29, 1 Male 30<>39, 1 Male 70<>79, 1 Female 20<>29, 1 Female 70<>79	{29...30} living at home (see census record for William the Father)	[?]	[16]	{30...35} – living in the household of William the Father (see census record for William the Father)	{5...9} living at home: Rebecca Ewing; 3 Males 5<>10; 2 Females 0<>5; 1 Female 5<>10; 1 Female 10<>15; 1 Female 30<>40

	William the Father	William	Jane (Hoey Nobel) the First Wife	Jane (Nesbit) the Second Wife	William Harvey the Cousin	Sarah the Cousin
	1841: files petition ⁶ 1842: buys the land ⁷ 1845: writes will and dies ⁸					
1850		William {39}: Dwelling 46, Family 46; Real Estate Value 3000; William Ewing, 39, Farmer	[?]	[26]	no census record found	no census record found

⁶ The petition concerned a small piece of land Squire James bought after preparing his will in 1814. It asks for the land to be evaluated.

⁷ William the Father elected to buy the land at its determined value.

⁸ In his will, William the Father leaves William his home and most of the land on which he, William the Father, was living. In this will, William the Father also leaves William Harvey the Cousin some of the land on which he, William the Father, was living.

	William the Father	William	Jane (Hoey Nobel) the First Wife	Jane (Nesbit) the Second Wife	William Harvey the Cousin	Sarah the Cousin
		<p>circa 1853: marries Jane (Hoey) Nobel</p> <p>1854: daughter Lizonia is born</p> <p>1856: son Robert is born</p> <p>1856/57: loses his first wife</p> <p>circa 1857: marries Jane Nesbit</p> <p>1858: son James William is born</p>	<p>before 1853: widowed by the death of her first husband</p> <p>circa 1853: marries William</p> <p>1854: daughter Lizonia is born</p> <p>1856: son Robert is born</p> <p>1856/57: dies</p>	<p>circa 1857: marries William</p> <p>1858: son James William is born</p>	<p>circa 1850/55: at age 40-45, marries Sarah the Cousin and moves "north" with her</p> <p>1855: present at the filing of a partition regarding his father-in-law's land</p> <p>... <i>nothing further known</i></p>	<p>circa 1850: at age 20, marries William Harvey the Cousin and moves "north" with him</p> <p>1855: dies</p>
1860		<p>William {36 [sic]} : Dwelling 134, Family 132; Real Property 8720, Personal Property 1126; William Ewing, 36, farmer; Jane A - 36, Robert B (attending school) - 4, Lizona D (attending school) - 6, William J - 2; Robert Symms (laborer) - 36</p>		<p>(36) in husband William's record (see census record for William)</p>		

	William the Father	William	Jane (Hoey Nobel) the First Wife	Jane (Nesbit) the Second Wife	William Harvey the Cousin	Sarah the Cousin
		1861: one or two additional children are born and die as infants		1861: one or two additional children are born and die as infants; died (perhaps in childbirth)		
1870		William (60): Dwelling 20, Family 20; Real Estate Value 15000, Personal Estate Value 100; Wm Ewing, Farmer, 60; Lazona (House Keeper) - 15, Robt B - 13, W J - 11				
		1875: writes will and dies				
1880		William's daughter Lizonia (25): Dwelling 126; Family 133; Lizona D., 25, Keeping House; W. James (brother), 22, Attending School				