

Andrew White

One of William Jessee's nearest neighbors was Andrew White, who preceded the Jessee family by about eight months. The White family, unlike other settlers in the Bloomington precinct, came from the proslavery state of Missouri. Testifying to Governor Reeder, Andrew said:

I came into the Territory and selected my place, where I now live, on the 5th of June 1854. I came from Missouri. I was formerly from Morgan County, Missouri. I moved my family out here in the fall, after having built houses on my claim here. I was at the election in Bloomington on the 30th of March 1855. I got there about nine or ten o'clock, going up with the Missouri company who was passing by at that time. I was acquainted with some of them, though I do not know as any of them came from Cass County. I knew Claiborne Jackson, and had known him since he was a boy. I lived in Missouri for thirty-five years. I do not know how many there were in this company I went up with. They had been passing by the house for an hour, and the road was full as far as I could see, back and before. They said they were going to vote at the election. I had not much conversation with them on the road, but I talked with them right smart after I got up there. I asked some of them their reasons for coming up in our country to vote. They were young men I was talking [to]. They said they were hired to come up, and got a dollar a day. I stated that perhaps they would not be allowed to vote. They said they had come to vote, and they would vote, or die there. Those I was talking with, judging from their conversation, were from Jackson County, or from the edge of the county seat . . . I had no conversation with Claiborne Jackson.

I heard his speech. He got up and said that they had come there to vote, and he thought they had as much right to vote when they had been there five or ten minutes as a man who had been there four or five years, and they would vote before they left there, or die. The crowd cheered him when he got through speaking. I think he ordered them to form into companies of fifteen or twenty, and form around the window, and let no man vote who was willing to swear. They did so. I heard Steely's name called more than any other man's there. I should know him if I should see him again.

Andrew's testimony coincided with the testimony of the other settlers. He continues:

They had some flags, but I did not notice them very particularly, except they were common flags, such as armies have. It was from these men [that] I learned their residence. I inquired of a dozen or so; all I talked with told me they were from Missouri. I should think there were five or six hundred altogether. Some of them I knew by sight, but not by name, as I lived in Missouri for a year and had seen them near Westport and Independence. They spoke it out publicly in conversation. There was no public speaking except by Claiborne Jackson.

I was well acquainted in the district (Bloomington). I do not think there were more than half a dozen - there might have been a dozen - in this company who were residents in the district.

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ANDREW X WHITE

mark

Lawrence, K.T. April 28, 1856

In Martha Parker's book *Angels of Freedom*, she has included Andrew White and his family along with the William Jessee and Col. James C. Steele families as being very involved in the early settlement of Bloomington because of their strong beliefs, principles and actions during this turbulent period in our history. Andrew White's claim was on the Wakarusa River located on the southwest half of Section 18 (adjoining William Jessee's claim) near Yate's Crossing.

When the "Wakarusa War" broke out, Andrew and his older son Absalom fought with the free-state forces and Absalom's arm was shot off at the siege of Fort Titus. The youngest son, George, had stayed

at home looking after the farm and stock. George had been born in Anderson County, Texas, on July 5, 1844, so was only ten years old when his family came to Bloomington. But by the time the Civil War broke out, he was a young man of 18, and when Quantrill raided Lawrence in 1863, George was not content to stay at home but was anxious for a piece of the action.

During the drought year, 1860, Andrew moved his family back to Sedalia, Missouri, but he returned with them to Kansas in the spring of 1861. After the Civil War broke out, George, by then eighteen, enlisted in the militia and drove government teams most of the time. He was at home in the early morning of August 21, 1863, and while his mother was making a fire to prepare breakfast, Amos Spittler drove up to the gate and announced that Quantrill and the secessionists were burning Lawrence and killing everybody. George, the first one downstairs, called the other boys. After hurriedly eating breakfast they started for Lawrence. Riding down the University Hill, the party saw Quantrill and his men crossing the Wakarusa bottom where a house had been set on fire by the raiders. Arriving in Lawrence the men went directly to the Durfee House hotel where two cousins of the Whites were working. A family by the name of Stone was living at the hotel, and Mr. Stone told them that their cousins had escaped across the Kansas River. They went to the riverbank and hollered away, securing the attention of the cousins who rowed back across the river.

Upon returning to the hotel, they discovered that Stone had been shot. They remounted their horses and took after Quantrill. They rode past the young recruits on New Hampshire Street, where they met a party which had captured one of Quantrill's men named Skaggs. Dr. Hennell had Skaggs by the arm and intended to turn him over to the civil authorities, but Austin White and George Black drew their revolvers and shot Skaggs, who ran a short distance, threw up his arms, and fell down. Frank White Turkey, a Delaware Indian, then shot Skaggs through the mouth with an arrow. White Turkey then put his foot on Skagg's head to pull out the arrow, pulled off Skagg's new boots, mounted his pony and started after Quantrill.

At the Wakarusa bottom, James (Jim) Lane and several men caught up with the White party and decided to go with White Turkey. *[Past research and tape-recorded interviews with descendants of other settlers reveal that Andrew Baldwin and Ira Steele were among those who joined Lane in pursuit of Quantrill.]* When the combined forces reached the top of a hill south of the Wakarusa, two of Quantrill's men were seen setting fire to a house and riding away. The raiders entered the road about two hundred yards ahead of their pursuers, who fired several shots at them but did not hit anyone. Quantrill was followed beyond Baldwin City, the farmers hanging on to the flanks of the retreating assassins and harassing them with one squirrel rifle, a few pepper box pistols and such small arms as the pursuers had, but these had little effect. Major Plum and his forces by this time had joined in the chase, and after a conference with Lane decided to pursue Quantrill several miles further, finally catching up with him. But when the soldiers and farmers came too close, Quantrill whirled away and escaped. At sundown the pursuers turned back, White stating that he got home at 2 o'clock the next morning.

In the fall and the spring following the raid, George drove teams for the government. He campaigned with the 9th Kansas in Missouri and Arkansas and was discharged at Fort Scott in July 1864. He later drove teams from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott and from Kansas City to Fort Dodge. In the fall of 1864, he received his final discharge.

The Lawrence Journal World reported the death of George White:

George White, one of the oldest and most highly esteemed men of Douglas County, died on Tuesday, November 15, 1932. The funeral was held at his home in Clinton, the services conducted with military honors by Rev. Hall of the Clinton Presbyterian Church.

Both George and his father, Andrew, are buried in the Clinton Cemetery. The old home built by Andrew White stood northeast of Bloomington near the Wakarusa River for years. The farm later belonged to George Washington (former slave). The entire claim now lies beneath the waters of Clinton Lake.