

**SEVENTY-FIVE  
YEARS ON  
THE BORDER**

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Seventy-Five Years on the Border by James Williams

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**JAMES WILLIAMS**

**SEVENTY-FIVE  
YEARS ON  
THE BORDER**





Yours truly, JAMES WILLIAMS

# SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON THE BORDER

*By* JAMES WILLIAMS



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

KANSAS CITY:  
*Press of Standard Printing Co.*

1912

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## PREFACE.

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In presenting this little work to the public, I lay no claim to literary merit from a scholarly point of view, as that would be a travesty on the good sense of the higher education of the present time. However, I was born in Central Missouri, and have lived on its western border for seventy-six years, and have seen the things I tell about in my native Missouri way of telling it, and believe it will be as interesting to the many as though it were told in nicely rounded periods of classical English.

Be that as it may, I trust that some one of these many stories may strike a responsive chord in the breast of the young, the old, the matron, the maid, the grandfather, the baby boy, to the end that my name shall go down to posterity as having done my part in blazing the way for our grand Civilization.

Midway Place, Cameron, Missouri,  
February 16th, 1912.

JAMES WILLIAMS.



## CHAPTER I.

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### MY PARENTAGE.

I trust my readers will not think me egotistical if I first mention my parentage, also a short sketch of my life work of 70 years at Midway Place, where I now live.

My father, Luke Williams, and my mother, Louisa Beatty, were natives of Kentucky and came to Missouri early in the 19th century. They were married in Cooper County, at Boonville, Mo. They moved to Van Buren County, now Cass County, Mo., to where my first memory goes back—and removed to “Midway Place” April 30th, 1842, which I have ever since called my home.

Luke Williams is a family name reaching back as far as we can trace our family—and the Baptist religious faith is a heritage we claim to trace to the historic “Roger Williams.” We claim to be lineal descendants of Roger Williams. My father was a hard working farmer, but found time to preach of the faith that was in him on Saturdays and Sundays, riding horseback frequently twenty-five miles home after services on Sunday.

He fought the good fight and kept the faith, and has the promise in the Good Book of a great reward. He departed from us at the age of 38 years, on Nov. 2nd, 1848, leaving us in the wilderness in a double log cabin, two brothers, two sisters, and a weakly mother, with little to live on after the doctor bills and burial expenses were paid.

See Chapter on going to mill.



## SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON THE BORDER

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Language fails me to describe the privations, the suffering, the cheerless gloom of that long terrible winter of '48 and '49. Chilblains, corns and bunions are yet painful reminders of it. I yet had a good, courageous mother and an overruling Providence decree that I should live to tell the painful story to my grandchildren, 63 years afterward.

In the next chapter I will take up the thread of my own life, mentioning frequently that good mother, who laid the foundation of honesty, probity and fair dealings with my fellow men, which has served me so well through my long business career.

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### CHAPTER 2.

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#### AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JAMES WILLIAMS.

Taking up the thread of my life after my father's death, that brother Alex and I did not go to the bad (as nearly all of our surroundings were calculated to lead in that direction), I attribute to a good pious mother, and an overruling Providence. "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will."

For a time I thought the backwoods cabin shindig, hoe-down dance was just the place for a young man to have a good time, but I soon found that the young men who attended those midnight revelries seldom had any money and frequently had a bottle of whiskey, and usually were exceedingly popular with the class of girls who attend those dances. Guess I was envious. So, in the early stage of the game, I decided that was not the kind of company I wanted to be found in by decent, respectable people, and I got out of that crowd, and stayed out.

Those who lived here sixty or more years ago, will remember what a struggle it took to make ends meet at the end of the year. I've seen the time when eggs



1854  
CALIFORNIA

MY MOTHER

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