

## Allright, Illinois

By Donna Sanders, Jessica Todd, Becky Bumpus



Allright is a little spot in Clark County that once was a large town. It was home to farmers, housewives, and the occasional gypsy. In Allright there were three general stores, a voting house, a church, and a post office. Allright was a very prosperous farming community.



Allright is in Anderson Township, 10-north range 12 west section 28. It is located eight miles southwest of Marshall, Illinois on Fox Road and ten miles southeast of Martinsville, also on Fox Road. In 1812, the first post office was built on David Nicol's land. The post office was also a store. Mail was sent from Marshall to this post office. This is where all the people of Allright picked up their mail. The postmaster was Elsie Schlosser. The government asked for the name of the post office in Anderson Township. The neighborhood had a meeting to choose a name. Peter Kile was to go to the Marshall Court House and tell them the name. He was nervous because he wasn't comfortable around city people. When he was asked to tell them the name, all he could do was stutter and say, "all right." The court said that's a good name, and that is what it is "Allright."

On the north side of the mud road and west of the post office was Allright Congregational Church. One-quarter mile south of the church, Elimore Schosser built a store, and on the second floor was the Modern Woodmans lodge hall. This became the new post office. Next to the church was another store building for Guy Miller of Martinsville. This ground was bought from Henry Kile.

On the old Marshall to Darwin Road stood the Jackson School. This school was located on Section 20, T 10, N, R, and 12 west in Anderson Township. In 1840, William Jackson donated the land for the school. In the 1850's, before this school was built, there were two log schoolhouses. The first school was burned down. The furniture in the log schools was rough and sparse. Water was carried from houses near the school by buckets. This bucket had one long dipper to drink from. There was one wash pan to wash your hands. There were two outhouses, one for the boys and one for girls. The floors of these places were made from wide boards. There were students sometimes older than teachers. To teach, all you had to do was take an examination after eighth grade. The teachers were very strict. They would use paddles almost every day. Teachers were paid sixteen dollars per month. Winter and summer schools were taught while boys worked at home, and they could only go until they were twenty or twenty-one. A census was taken every year for children from six to twenty-one to see that they were all well educated. The school closed in 1948. When the school closed, the ground was sold for farmland. The building was torn down, and the lumber was sold. The school bell was saved and stored at a member of the school boards' house. The people of Allright rang the bell to announce the end of W.W.I. It now hangs in the yard of one of the families in the Jackson School area.

The Cooper gypsy tribe came to Allright once a year. The men in the tribe were horse traders, and the women were fortune-tellers. They all traveled in wagon trains. The horses that were being traded were tied to the back of the wagons or ridden by young boys. Any horse they had could be sold or traded. Horses were traded mainly for oats.

The gypsies would come around Memorial Day (May 30). In 1920, their queen died. She was buried at Marshall Cemetery in Illinois. The gypsies would decorate her grave for Memorial Day. They set up camp at the Anderson town house; there was a nice shady grove and an outhouse. This is in the center of Anderson township and one half mile from Allright township.

They gypsies visited one family, and the wife said, "I don't believe in fortune tellers, so just be on your way." A gypsy said, "I can tell that you are two months pregnant, and you are going to have a baby in seven months." The lady said, "How did you know? I didn't tell anyone." All that time, the gypsy got the information from a neighbor down the road.

Allright had the first radio in Anderson Township. The radio was kept at the store. The speaker, which looked like a big horn, was set on the topside of the radio. In 1927, the Kannmacher's brought an extra speaker and ran a wire so it could be heard outside the night of the championship fight between Dempsey and Tumey. There were so many in the store that there was no room for all of them. There were people lined up outside, and people from inside would yell outside what was going on. Gene Tumey won the fight.



When Harry Kannmacher was supervisor of Anderson Township, the state gave Allright money to build roads and bridges. After they rebuilt the road and straightened the Fox Hill, it was time for a new bridge. The old bridge had to be torn down. The bridge was narrow, and it was made of steel wide enough to drive on, it had three garters holding a wooden plank floor. The bridge was built at the bottom of Fox Hill, Hurricane Creek. The steel bridge was replaced with a new concrete floor with steel guardrails. It was torn down in 1946.

Allright was once an active farming community. The store was where the community got their resources for life. People also got their entertainment from the radio at the store, and by the gypsies who would tell their fortunes. The children that lived in Allright went to Jackson School. Allright was a great town, and now it is well known.