

Abraham Lincoln Arrendell and Emma Virginia Greer

Abraham Lincoln Arrendell was born in 1863, the year that Nashville fell to Union troops. He was a toddler when General William T. Sherman marched through Chattanooga and overtook Atlanta in fall of 1864.

Hamlin's father, William, left home to serve as a private in the Union Army, the 4th Tennessee Infantry, where Civil War Service Records show his name was spelled Arrendiell.

Trade, Tennessee has always been a remote, sparsely populated hamlet whose natives still live on a tight budget (in 2002, its resident's yearly income was half



Emma Virginia (Jennie) Greer Arrendell, about 1900.

the national average), as it was when Cad's grandparents lived there, more than a century ago. Abraham Lincoln Arrendell was called "Hamlin" for short, and is listed in the 1880 federal census in District 3 of Tennessee, living on his father's farm and working as a farm hand. His father, William, was forty-six at the time, and his mother, Mary, was thirty-six. The other family members were Thomas Todd, nineteen; Hamlin, eighteen; Francisco, fourteen; Schuyler, twelve; Edward, ten; Alice, seven; Sarah, two; and little James, one month old.

Hamlin married Emma Virginia Greer, who was ten years his junior and went by "Jennie." Jennie was one of the few folks around who could read and write. Like their neighbors, James and Eliza Mast and their family, Hamlin

and Jennie pulled quartz and granite rocks from the earth to accumulate enough dirt for a garden and scratched out a living raising their own potatoes, corn, and beans and kept a few chickens: only a wealthy man would have a dairy cow.

The Civil War had just ended five years earlier: thirty-eight of those battles had been fought on Tennessee land, far more than most states.

Cad Walder Arrendell

The train never went through Trade, but it ran through the larger towns near Trade: Bristol and Johnson City. Hamlin worked for the railroad; we are not sure what jobs he performed but he was an able carpenter.

As the family lore goes, Hamlin Arrendell had badly damaged his leg on some broken bars on the train. When he was examined by a country doctor who announced that the leg would have to be amputated, the determined young Hamlin refused to accept the fate that had just been ordered for him. Instantly, he decided to seek a second opinion. "Just bandage it up," he said, and managed to find a learned physician whose first name was Cadwalder. The doctor examined the bloody appendage, salvaged the leg, and Hamlin went home with the doctor's name imprinted on his heart.

Hamlin and Jennie Arrendell's first and only child was proudly named Cad Walder Arrendell. (Although he was known as Cad for the early part of his life, to avoid confusion in our story, we'll refer to him as "C.W.")

C.W. Arrendell was a husky boy with dark black hair and brown eyes who loved playing the games of early American children: jump rope, relay races, rolling a cheese hoop with a stick.

He had been born on a wintry day, January 19, 1881, and spent his early childhood in Trade.

C.W. was eleven years old when his father's brother told Hamlin about a grain elevator operator job in Arkansas City, Kansas. Hamlin jumped at the chance. While he was interested in improving his family's living conditions, he was also a prudent man and so he built a one-room shack on the family's farm to store the family furniture in Trade, Tennessee until they could discover what the Midwest would hold for them.

It was an arduous trek, more than a thousand miles westward, either by train (whose schedules were extremely undependable) or by wagon (where Indians might



Abraham Lincoln (Hamlin) Arrendell about 1900.

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Ponca City's First Dr. Arrendell

The proud holder of a medical degree in 1914, C.W. practiced a while in Bliss, Oklahoma, then returned to Ponca City. Although American automobile manufacturers were just cranking up in the northeast and a car was considered quite a luxury for most Americans, it was a necessity for C.W., who drove a used Model T across dirt roads or open fields to reach the little clapboard farmhouses where anxious relatives were waiting for his arrival.

Hospitals were still rare in the United States: military hospitals had been established during the Civil War but abandoned afterwards because they were considered dangerously infected. Many babies were delivered at home by a midwife, but doctors were needed for the inevitable surgical and obstetric complications, and the tireless Dr. Arrendell worked many days and nights delivering babies into a weary mother's arms.

Because doctors were few and far between and their care was considered expensive, folks treated what they could on their own, and the doctor was usually summoned only when circumstances were dire, which meant that the doctor was always "on call." Many of the country's early physicians supplemented their income by farming or some other job. In the West and Midwest, frontier physicians cared for both settlers and American Indians. The country faced epidemics such as cholera, malaria, pneumonia, smallpox, diphtheria, tuberculosis and influenza.

At five foot nine and a hundred seventy-five pounds, C.W. Arrendell was not a large man but his physical stamina was impressive as he cared for the sick and wounded whenever they called, stitching gashes made from farming, hunting and fighting; amputating limbs and removing bullets; pulling teeth; delivering babies and pronouncing death for those who couldn't be saved. He was at home in every family and was respected by everyone. His physician's bag would have held a stethoscope and forceps for delivering babies. Opium was the most popular treatment for pain, and many physicians incorporated remedies from the Indians: St. John's-wort was a popular cure for many ailments, calamine was applied to skin irritations, cinchona bark for fevers.

C.W. and Edna were married in Foraker, Oklahoma on May 15, 1916. The happy couple spent their first year in the town of Bliss, a fact that their son, Cad, would retell and chuckle over for almost ninety years. Bliss was the recipient of many funds from E.W. Marland, the politician-oil magnate, and would later be renamed after him.

