

## *Descendants of Eliza Smith Hibben and David M. Cummings*

### *Generation No. 4.3*

**ELIZA SMITH<sup>4</sup> HIBBEN** (*Samuel Entri<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>*) was born April 01, 1840 in Hillsboro, Highland Co., OH, and died December 03, 1896 in New York City, NY. She married **DAVID M. CUMMINGS** February 07, 1871 in Hillsboro, Highland Co., OH. He was born March 29, 1824 in Utica, Oswego Co., NY, and died January 25, 1878 in Peoria, Peoria Co., IL.

Children of **ELIZA HIBBEN** and **DAVID CUMMINGS** are:

- i. **SAMUEL HIBBEN CUMMINGS**, b. January 18, 1872, Peoria, Peoria Co., IL; d. September 12, 1932, East Peoria, Peoria Co., IL. He m. **HELEN HENE<sup>3</sup>BERY** June 14, 1898, Peoria, Peoria Co., IL; b. August 01, 1873, Peoria, Peoria Co., IL; d. May 12, 1958, Peoria, Peoria Co., IL.
- ii. **MAY GALLO<sup>3</sup>WAY<sup>5</sup> CUMMINGS**, b. August 22, 1873, Peoria, Peoria Co., IL; d. June 11, 1957, Columbus, Franklin Co., OH.

**ELIZA SMITH HIBBEN 1840 - 1896**  
**and**  
**DAVID M. CUMMINGS 1824 - 1878**

*We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial;  
We should count time by heart-throbs.  
He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.*<sup>1</sup>

In Memoriam—David M. Cummings

**Early Days In Hillsboro, Ohio**

Eliza Smith Hibben, the sixth child of Samuel Entriken Hibben and Margaret Galloway, was born April 1, 1840<sup>2</sup>, the day of her father's thirty-sixth birthday. Of her older siblings, only Thomas and Samuel II had survived childhood. Thomas and Samuel II were 11 and 8 years old, respectively, at the time of her birth. Eliza's education and "*training was the conscientious care and thought of Dr. Jas [Jos.] McD Matthews<sup>3</sup> and Grandgirard<sup>4</sup>, two educators whose lives were devoted to the training of mind and morals and religious sensibility.*"<sup>5</sup> The latter also nurtured Eliza's interest in the French language and travel to Europe later in her life.

Several letters written by Eliza when she was in her twenties confirm her interest in literature and demonstrate her ability to express her thoughts well. Most of the letters were sent to Thomas Hibben. Her close friends mentioned in the letters were Emilie Grand-Girard, daughter of Rev. E. Grand-Girard; Jennie A. Nelson, who later became a missionary in India; her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Grier Hibben, who was just Eliza's age; and her siblings. Her letters are filled with social chatter typical of the local twenty-year-old set. However in one letter to Thomas at Peoria written during the Civil War, she dismisses the war excitement and focuses on her needs: "*Don't forget those books.*"

*Almost every one here seem to be wild with excitement wrought up to such a pitch as to be prepared to hear and credit almost anything. We sent off one company this morning and had a dispatch this evening to send another down tomorrow morning to be sent on to Louisville, and while I am writing the drum is beating most furiously to rouse the people in town and the cannon firing to rouse those in the country as upon the first report those within hearing distance rush in to learn the news.*

*But I cannot speak longer of those things for I write tonight particularly to tell you not to forget to bring me Summers French Dictionary when you come home. I want it very much because Sammie gave it to me when he was home last. Don't forget it. Father tells me to ask you to bring with you also, Websters Unabridged Dic. which he gave Samuel and for Joe, Bullion's Greek Reader.*<sup>6</sup>

**David M. Cummings, A Worldly Man**

Most of the information about Eliza's life after marriage has been found in documents pertaining to her husband, David M. Cummings. He was born at Utica, Oswego County, New York, March 29, 1824. When he was 16, his mother died and he set forth on his own to support himself. He found employment with a farmer for nine dollars per month. When not fulfilling his

## THE SAMUEL HIBBEN LINE

commitment to his employer, he devoted himself to self-education. At the age of 23, he found a teaching position in Waterville, New York. Two years later he moved to Peoria, Illinois and opened his own school. But then news spread that gold had been found in California and “Everybody was singing some one of the many new versions of Stephen Foster’s—Oh, Susannah!

*I’ll scrape the mountains clean, old girl,  
I’ll drain the rivers dry.  
I’m off for California. Susannah, don’t you cry.”*<sup>7</sup>

David joined the adventurous young men.

*For one year he followed mining, but with indifferent success. His quick eye perceived that money was to be dug out of the earth in other forms than those of yellow metal. He planted a garden and fed the men who labored in the mines. He avoided speculations, being content with modest profits on his risks and labors. During his four years in California he accumulated between five and six thousand dollars, and in 1854 returned to Peoria to enter into trade.*

*His first venture in trade was with P. C. Bartlett, Esq., in the grocery business, in which he continued until 1857. . . .In 1858 he undertook a hotel in Springfield, Illinois, and lost every dollar he had made in the preceding seven years. Penniless, he found his way back to Peoria, turning his hand to whatever offered a living, but finding nothing permanent.*<sup>8</sup>

After the fall of Fort Sumter and the commencement of the Civil War, David enlisted as a Private in the 11th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Cavalry on September 30, 1861.<sup>9</sup> He took part in the battle of Shiloh and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. He also commanded a portion of his Regiment in the fight at Davis’ Bridge, Tennessee and was adjutant at Lexington, Kentucky when his Regiment colonel, R. G. Ingersoll, was captured.<sup>10</sup> He resigned April 24, 1863 and returned to Peoria. David was then employed as a bookkeeper for the *National Democrat*, followed in a short time as the clerk of the Metropolitan Hotel. Then in October 1867 he went into the iron merchant business with a partner, M. E. Stone.

### Business Prosperity And Marriage Vows

In 1867, after his return from the Civil War, David built a four-story brick commercial building<sup>11</sup> which served to warehouse the iron, steel, heavy hardware and carriage wood stock which he sold. He bought out M. E. Stone and profitably operated the business alone until just before his death when he took Mr. George F. Emerson as partner.

It is probable that Eliza Smith Hibben met David M. Cummings in Peoria when visiting her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Grier Hibben, and nephew, John Grier Hibben. David was 16 years her senior when they were married February 7, 1871 by Rev. J. W. McSurely in the Presbyterian Church of Hillsboro, Ohio.<sup>12</sup> David’s worldly experiences and business ventures had diverted his attention from marriage until he was 47 years of age. On March 5, 1871, shortly after Eliza and he had returned to Peoria, he wrote a thoughtful letter to Eliza’s mother, Margaret, in Hillsboro in which he said:

*You are now to me a Mother and by this endearing title I want to call you. It has been many—very many years since there has been one I could call such and this feeling as it comes back to me seems delightfully strange particularly after having been so long a lone wanderer on the face of the earth deprived of a mothers love and affection—a mothers council and prayers. . . .I have lived on and have had*

*frequent occasion to say to myself “what am I living for”? Often would think for no good purpose surely and again would try and console myself with the thought that it might be for some good purpose, but the good purpose was never fully revealed to me until you gave me your lovely daughter to be my wife—then all seemed clear to me and I was happy perfectly happy. That which I had thought before to be all wrong I must now admit to have been all right and necessary to the education—the preparation necessary to enable me to assume what I now have. Now I have a wife and we are very happy together and the more I know of her the dearer she is to me and I can begin to realize how dear she was to you and the great sacrifice you must have made to give her up to me.*<sup>13</sup>

### Two Children Are Born And Death Claims David

Samuel Hibben Cummings was born January 18, 1872 in Peoria, Illinois and his sister, May Galloway Cummings, was born just over a year later on August 22, 1873.<sup>14</sup> (Plate 20) David responded to his father-in-law’s letter in regard to the birth of Samuel:<sup>15</sup>

*Dear Father Hibben*

*Peoria, Illinois, Feb. 25th 1872*

*Your valued and highly acceptable letter of February 6th was rec’d in due time and perused with deepest gratifying, satisfying interest. I feel highly honored, as well as truly grateful for the complementary expressions of confidence you seem to have in me and hope in after life nothing will occur to cause this confidence to wane or become the least disturbed. . . .With me business for the last year has been good—much better than I had any reason to hope for—paying at least a net profit of from nine to ten thousand dollars and added to all of this we have had perfect health and unalloyed happiness. . . .Not one word, thought or deed and in fact nothing has occurred to weaken in the least one link of the chain of love that binds us. But on the other hand, a link has been added—a precious one, to that chain, binding the love and affection of a father & mother, husband and wife, closer and closer together. The added pressure [business] makes life still dearer—love still purser—affection more tender—the future still brighter. . . .I leave here in the morning for Indianapolis. Will be in Cincinnati Tuesday & Wednesday and would like to drop down to Hillsboro and see you all, but must hurry through my business and return here as soon as possible.*<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after the birth of May, the family moved into a new home. “About five years ago he built a very fine residence on the bluff, which is one of the most attractive of all the many fine residences in that part of the city.”<sup>17</sup> Then, all was well until 1876 when David was treated for several small tumors on his lip and chin. When a larger tumor formed on his neck he submitted to several cancer treatments, performed by medical specialists in Chicago and Aurora. The treatments failed. He returned home and suffered for six months before dying just after midnight on the morning of January 25, 1878.

*DIED. At his residence on Illinois Avenue, at 12:10 a.m., January 25, 1878, DAVID M CUMMINGS, aged 53 years, 9 months, and 27 days. Funeral services at his residence, Sunday, at 2 o’clock p.m. Friends of the family are invited to attend.*<sup>18</sup>

*His sufferings during the [last] two months were most intense. . . .He endured his pain with a christian fortitude, and died with an unclouded hope of a better life*

## THE SAMUEL HIBBEN LINE

*beyond the grave. Always a man of the strictest integrity, it was not until within the past two years that he turned his attention to religious matters and embraced the christian faith.*

*He was universally honored and esteemed. Society has lost an upright man, and Peoria a valuable citizen. His funeral will occur tomorrow afternoon at two o'clock, from the residence. A few days before his death he requested that in case the weather should be fine, he be buried with military honors, but on account of the uncertainty of the weather, this will probably not be done. The National Blues, it is understood, will attend the funereal in a body as a mark of respect to their old comrade.<sup>19</sup>*

### Eliza Returns to Hillsboro

At the age of 37, Eliza became a widow with two young children. As David had no family in Peoria, she returned to her own in Hillsboro, Ohio. She acquired a new home at 241 East Main Street and proceeded to provide for the education of her children. In 1880 she was sharing her home with her brother Thomas,<sup>20</sup> and after her parents died, sister Lavinia moved in. Eliza became involved in, and generous to, many church and social projects. She traveled extensively in Europe with daughter May.

*She, with her children, Samuel and May, came to Hillsboro and made her home, and endowed it with beauty and taste and comfort. In this home was exhibited the love of family, the regard of friendship, the cheer of association, a Christian affection, devotion and correction. Out of it went tokens of benevolence to the poor, whose wants were filled, whose hearts were cheered.<sup>21</sup>*

Eliza was also active in several of the ladies' clubs. She and her sister, Lavinia, were charter members of the Friday Club, and Eliza hosted the christening meeting of the Greystone Literary Club. The latter was the forerunner of all the ladies' literary clubs of Hillsboro.

*The Ladies Literary Society of Hillsboro was formed in April, 1889, under the sponsorship of Nannie O'Hara Beecher, in her beautiful home, "Greystone" at the eastern edge of town. They met in various homes for a year before Mrs. Eliza (Hibben) Cummings invited the 20 members, their husbands or escorts, to her lovely home on E. Main, for an anniversary dinner and the christening of the club. The meetings had been informal, but harmonious, and were purely literary in nature. "At the christening party, 41 members and guests were seated at one table in the large double parlors of the Cummings' home. At the head of the table the hostess presided, amid a profusion of flowers and colored lights. The long table, loaded with china, silver and crystal, made a lovely appearance, which was heightened many fold by the magnificent costumes of the guests." One member used this bit of rhyme to describe the club's activities:*

*"As the sunshine lights the heavens,  
Bringing health and joy to all,  
So the Greystone Club enlightens;  
Thus it blesses hearth and hall."<sup>22</sup>*

### Eliza Is Afflicted With Mental Illness

In the summer of 1894 Eliza was taken ill with a "nervous chill."

*For weeks she was very ill and her illness seemed to take the form of a great fear that her mind was disordered. She recovered, and for a months was seemingly well. Then came the relapse, which terminated in the death yesterday.*

*Everything that could be done was done. Famous physicians were in attendance. The disease grew in violence. A constant watch was kept to prevent her frequent attempts at suicide from being successful. The attempts were so frequent that the physicians finally ordered the patient to a sanitarium. She was removed to College Hill, but brought back in an improved condition. She was then taken East and has been under treatment. Her sister, Mrs. L. H. Dill, has been with her constantly and a few weeks ago her daughter, Miss May, joined her in New York. Her health then seemed to be returning and the relatives were hopeful until the end that she would eventually recover her faculties.*

*She was taken to New York and placed in quarters in the Empire. Her brother, Thomas Hibben, was with her, and her sister, daughter and a trained nurse were ever by her side. Yesterday morning, while the relatives were at breakfast, she eluded the watchfulness of the nurse, raised the window and jumped.*

*Mrs. Eliza H. Cummings killed herself in New York yesterday by jumping from the fifth story of the Hotel Empire into the yard. She was insane.<sup>23</sup>*

Eliza's last letter to her son, Samuel, was written from College Hill, Cincinnati, Ohio on August 12, 1896.

*My own dear son,*

*I did enjoy your good long letter and have wanted to write you before but haven't felt quite so well, and couldn't make the effort. It seems very strange to me not to be able to write as I once did, but the time will come, the Dr. assures me when it will be easy for me again. I found it was impossible for me to stay here alone without anyone of the family, and now Aunt Venie is with me. . . .I trust I will not have to stay very long but I can't tell, as the improvement is very slow and I am still very nervous. . . .Goodby my dear son. You never can know how I enjoyed your little visit. . . .Write me soon. Perhaps it may not be very long before I can write to you from home. With dearest love, Mother.<sup>24</sup>*

Eliza died December 3, 1896. Her remains were returned to Hillsboro where she was buried in the Samuel Hibben lot. Her grave is marked by a small stone with initials E H C.

### Generation 4.3 End Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Memory card, (Press of J. W. Franks & Sons, Peoria) in possession of Patricia Anne<sup>7</sup> Cummings (Powers) (*David Henebery<sup>6</sup>, Samuel Hibben<sup>5</sup>, Eliza Smith<sup>4</sup> Hibben, Samuel Entriken<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>*).

<sup>2</sup> *News Herald*, Hillsboro, Highland County, Ohio, December 10, 1896.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. Joseph McDowell Matthews, founder of the Oakland Female Seminary, 1839; first President, Hillsboro Female College, 1857.

<sup>4</sup> Miss Emilie L. Grand-Girard, Principal of the Highland Institute, 1857.

<sup>5</sup> *News Herald*, [Note 2].

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Eliza Smith Hibben at Hillsboro, Ohio to Thomas Hibben at Peoria, Illinois, dated September, 1862. Letter in possession of Craig Rittenhouse<sup>6</sup> Hibben (*Samuel Galloway<sup>5</sup>, Joseph Matthew<sup>4</sup>, Samuel Entriken<sup>5</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>*).

<sup>7</sup> Robert Samuel Fletcher, *From Cleveland By Ship To California, 1849-1850*, 1959, Durham, North Carolina,

## THE SAMUEL HIBBEN LINE

- (Duke University Press), page 44.
- <sup>8</sup> Memory Card, [Note 1].
- <sup>9</sup> Military Records, National Archives and Records Administration.
- <sup>10</sup> Newspaper, (unknown), Peoria, Peoria County, Illinois, obituary, January 26, 1878.
- <sup>11</sup> American Institute of Architects, Architectural/Historical Survey Committee, Peoria Section, Central Illinois Chapter, unknown date and publisher, page 20. "The 1867 Cummings and Emerson Building was a forerunner of later Peoria warehouses. Typical details of this well preserved commercial loft are limestone window lintels and a dramatic pressed metal cornice. . . .The early cast iron first floor front entrances and display windows of the Cummings and Emerson Building are virtually intact. This is one of the last cast iron front buildings remaining in Peoria."
- <sup>12</sup> David N. McBride & Jane N. McBride, *Marriage Records of Highland County, Ohio, 1805-1880*, 1981, Hillsboro, Ohio, (The Southern Ohio Genealogical Society), page 55.
- <sup>13</sup> Letter from David M. Cummings at Peoria, Illinois to his mother-in-law, Margaret Galloway Hibben at Hillsboro, Ohio, March 5, 1871. Letter in possession of Patricia Anne Cummings (Powers).
- <sup>14</sup> Patricia Anne Cummings (Powers), Family Group Sheet; Hillsboro Cemetery Records of the Harsha Monument Company, Hillsboro, Ohio.
- <sup>15</sup> See Chapter XI, Generation 3.9.
- <sup>16</sup> Letter from David M. Cummings at Peoria, Illinois to his father-in-law, Samuel E. Hibben, at Hillsboro Ohio, dated February 25, 1872. Letter in possession of Patricia Anne Cummings (Powers).
- <sup>17</sup> Newspaper, (unknown), [Note 10].
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> US Census 1880, T9-1033, enumeration 45, page 10, line 18, Hillsboro, Liberty Township, Highland County, Ohio.
- <sup>21</sup> *News Herald*, [Note 2].
- <sup>22</sup> Elsie Johnson Ayers, *Hills of Highland*, 1971, Springfield, Ohio, (H. K. Skinner & Son), pages 855-56.
- <sup>23</sup> Newspaper, (unknown), December 3, 1896.
- <sup>24</sup> Letter from Eliza Hibben Cummings at Cincinnati, Ohio to Samuel Hibben Cummings at Peoria, Illinois, dated August 12, 1896. Letter in possession of Patricia Anne Cummings (Powers).