

PERSONAL SKETCHES.

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were to be \$4.50 per week, barely sufficient to pay for his board and washing. He was found to be industrious and competent and, shortly after his engagement, was directed to look up an error in the general ledger, which had occurred some months previous, and had baffled the skill of the book-keeper, as well as that of a professional accountant and expert. It was his good fortune to find it in the second day of his search, which so pleased his employers, and demonstrated his ability, that they advanced his wages to \$450 per year, and gave him employment in the office. At the end of six months, he was appointed assistant book-keeper, at a salary of \$600 per year, and before the close of the year, was made first book-keeper. He remained with the firm (Jones & Cummings) two years and a half, working from 7 o'clock in the morning to 6 at night, and, in the busy seasons, until 10 and 11 o'clock, yet never complained of overwork. He then accepted an engagement with Reigel Brothers, a large retail dry-goods firm, in order to become acquainted with that business and, in February, 1862, returned to Warsaw with a capital of \$700, and engaged in business for himself, occupying his father's building on Center street. In 1863, at the earnest solicitation of his friends, he became the Democratic candidate for the office of Clerk of Kosciusko County. He made a vigorous canvass, and ran more than 400 votes ahead of the State ticket, but was defeated by a few votes.

March 11, 1863, he gave his hand and heart in marriage to Miss Mary A. Johnson, the accomplished daughter of Prof. D. T. Johnson, who, for a long time, was Principal of the Warsaw Public Schools. They have a son (Albion) who bids fair to follow in the steps of his father as a business man; and a daughter (Miss Clara) who emulates the virtues and graces of her mother.

Mr. Beck's business, small at first, rapidly increased. The prestige of his father's reputation, coupled with his own knowledge of business and men, now filled his store with customers; and, in 1867 and 1868, he sold over \$200,000 worth of goods.

Always a hard worker, he was stimulated by success, and for seven years worked almost night and day. In 1869, in company with his father, Met-calle Beck, he took a trip to Europe, and spent the summer in recuperating his health and supplying his mind with images to occupy his leisure hours, when he could find time for reflection.

In 1870, he purchased a store-room on Buffalo street, east of and opposite the Court House, to which he removed his stock of goods. In 1871, becoming tired of being confined to the store-room, and desirous of an adventure, he sold his stock of goods to Edward Moon, and, in company with John A. Bitter, took an extended tour through the Southern States. They finally purchased a large tract of land in Northern Alabama, and, in 1871, accompanied by twenty-five families from this county, located thereon to try the experiment of farming. The surroundings were not congenial to the tenants, and, although he spent a year very pleasantly, the fact was demonstrated to him that as a money-making enterprise, it was not a success. They sold their land and returned to Warsaw, where Mr. Beck formed a partnership with Edward Moon, and again engaged in trade at his old stand. They continued in partnership until 1875, conducting a successful business, when Mr. Beck withdrew from the firm, and assisted in the organization of the Lake City Bank. He was elected President, which position he still holds.

During his busy life, he has found time to read good books, and keep himself well posted, not only on general news, but on the current literature of the day; and he is the owner of one of the finest private libraries in this county. He is a Mason and an Odd Fellow, as well as a consistent Christian gentleman.

Of a commanding and fine appearance, with pleasant and affable manners, he invariably makes friends wherever he goes. Although still a comparatively young man, he has accomplished a work of a life-time; and for his success is indebted solely to his untiring industry and good management.

H. I. STEVENS, MONROE TOWNSHIP.

Herman I. Stevens was born March 1, 1818, in Cayuga County, N. Y. His father, Timothy Stevens, was a millwright, and, in 1826, removed with his family to Huron County, Ohio, where he died soon after. The family then returned to Cayuga County, N. Y., where the mother died in 1833. Their son Herman was sent to the common school in the neighborhood of his home, where he acquired a good English education. One of his early desires was to become a successful farmer, and, in later years, this desire was realized. In 1839, he was united in marriage with Miss Henrietta Ingraham, in Seneca County, Ohio, and, in the same year, removed with his wife to Kosciusko County, Ind., and purchased his present home, then a wilderness. His work was hard, and his experience was that of all pioneers. But soon his labors began to bear fruit; the heavy timber disappeared from his farm, and the growing crops revived his hopes. In the meantime, five children came to bless his home, viz., Ulysses, Cornelia, Amelia, Henry and Oscar, of whom two died when quite young. In despite of the trials incident to pioneer life, his cabin home was happy until the year 1855, when his loving wife was separated by death from all that was dear to her on earth. In 1857, he was married a second time, giving his hand and heart to Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Spencer, in Wayne County, N. Y. Four years later, death again entered his household, and his victim was the wife. Two children—Willie and Jennie—blessed this second union. In December, 1861, Mr. Stevens was united in marriage with Miss Julia R. Adams, his present companion. The ceremony was performed at the residence of her father, Reuben Adams, in Wayne County, N. Y. Four children crowned the happiness of his third marriage, viz., Charlie, Kittie, Frank and Fannie.

In 1851, Mr. Stevens became a member of Kosciusko Lodge, No. 62, I. O. F., and was one of the charter members of Hackleman Encampment, No. 37, and subsequently represented both bodies at the session of the Grand Lodge, at Indianapolis.

As a man of business, he has been successful. Starting in life under circumstances not the most favorable, he has battled persistently against the obstacles in his path, and gained a signal victory. He is regarded as one of the substantial farmers of his township; and his fine estate bears many evidences of his skill as a tiller of the soil. He is a man of upright character, and few possess the confidence and respect of their fellow-men in a more marked degree.

SOLOMON NICHOLS, FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP.

Solomon Nichols was born September 16, 1816, in Montgomery, Ohio, and removed, with his parents, to Wayne County, Ind., in 1817. In 1821, the family removed to Henry Co., Ind., and were among its earliest pioneers. They resided in the latter county nine years, at the end of which time they removed to St. Joseph County, Ind.

Their son was reared amid scenes of pioneer life, and the localities in which he resided were nearly always characterized by the absence of schools. He first attended school at the age of eleven years, and improved all his

leisure time in study. As the school term was confined to the winter season, and the course of instruction very incomplete, he is indebted more to his own exertions than any other cause for his education.

September 3, 1837, he was united in marriage with Miss Sarah A. Wilson, in St. Joseph County, Ind. In the winter of 1838, he removed, with his wife, to Fulton County, Ind., where he remained until the following fall, at which time he came to Kosciusko County, Ind., where he has since continued to reside. Like many of our pioneers, he settled upon a heavily-timbered tract of land, which, after the usual amount of hard labor, he reduced to a productive farm. He was reared to farm life, and in the pursuit of that occupation, has been very successful, having now fifty acres of cultivation, after having sold a large portion of his farm, from which he derives annually a handsome revenue. His merits have been recognized by his neighbors, by whom he has been called to fill various positions of honor and trust. In the spring of 1841, he was elected one of the Trustees of his township, which position he held three years. In 1844, he was elected Clerk of the township. In 1845, was elected Justice of the Peace, which office he held for two terms. In 1850, he was appointed Land Appraiser for Franklin and Harrison Townships, and, in 1863, was appointed Enrolling Officer for Franklin. In 1870, he was elected one of the Commissioners of Kosciusko County, for a term of three years, and has been twice re-elected to the same office.

He has acted and voted with the Republican party since its organization, prior to which he was identified with the Whig party.

As the private citizen and public servant, he has proven himself a man of firm principles, and enjoys the confidence and good will of his fellow-citizens.

JAMES T. WEBB.

BY COL. J. B. DODGE.

James T. Webb was born on the 2d day of June, 1840, about two miles south of Warsaw, in Wayne Township, in this county. His father, Daniel Webb, was born in Harrison County, Va., December 25, 1794, and came to this county with his family May 10, 1835, and was one of the first settlers in this county south of the Tippecanoe River. Mrs. Webb, Daniel Webb's first wife, was the first person buried in what is known as the "Old Cemetery," at Warsaw. The opportunities for acquiring an education were very limited during the boyhood of this sketch, aside from the necessity that existed for every member of a family to contribute his quota toward improving the land and providing for the maintenance of all; the consequence was that he was a graduate of one of the old-fashioned log school-houses that were the "halls of learning" in this county at that time, the terms of which were limited to three months during the winter season; to an early age, the disposition to follow the advice of Horace Greeley, "to go West and grow up with the country," developed itself with him; and, accordingly, in the spring of 1859, he left the old home and went to "Pike's Peak," which was then looming up as the new El Dorado; he remained there two years engaged in mining part of the time on Cherry Creek, on the present site of the city of Denver, and from there down (or up) to the present location of Golden City; after two years of constant and unremitting labor, for which he received a fair reward, he returned to this county satisfied that although he might not reap as large a reward for his labors here as he would there, that he would be certain of what he got—a little matter that was very uncertain in that country at that time. On the 20th of December, 1862, he formed a partnership for life with Miss Mary Weiss, daughter of Daniel Weiss, one of the oldest citizens of this county; they have three children—two boys and one daughter; he at once commenced clearing up a farm, having purchased a part of his father's old farm, and he has been adding to it since until he now owns 160 acres of as good land as there is in this county, a large portion of it finely improved and well cultivated; as for his buildings and grounds, they speak for themselves. Mr. Webb is just in the prime of life, a man of the strictest integrity and honor, and a credit to his family and the community in which he resides.

JAMES CURRY.

BY COL. J. B. DODGE.

James Curry was born in Jefferson County, in East Tennessee, February 5, 1821. His father was a farmer, and the locality in which he lived being a poor agricultural country, and having at that time no accessible markets, he took his family and emigrated to Lexington, Ky., in 1826, and, in 1830, moved again to Fayette County, in this State, and from there to Henry County. In 1841, the subject of this sketch came to this county, and commenced life for himself. During his boyhood, schools were not as abundant as they are now, and the efforts of every one were necessary in order to raise provisions to eat and procure the necessaries of life, so that the amount of education he received at schools was limited. On his arrival in this county he immediately commenced working as a farmer, which has been the employment of his life with the exception of about three years. In 1864, he took the "golden fever" and went to California, crossing the plains with an ox team. The journey occupied almost as many months then as it does days now. He remained there a little over three years engaged in mining, at which he was fairly successful in accumulating money. He then returned home, and has since lived on his farm, two miles east of Leesburg. He was united in marriage with Miss Margaret Leaznby on the 30th of January, 1851. Her parents came to this county in 1839. They have six sons and one daughter living. Mr. Curry has been a member of Leesburg Lodge, No. 181, Free and Accepted Masons, for over twelve years. He has never held or aspired to any public position, preferring to live a quiet, industrious life, and contented with the respect and esteem of all who know him.

JOHN L. MERRITT, SEWARD TOWNSHIP.

John L. Merritt, son of Timothy C. and Elizabeth Merritt, was born in the year 1834 at Union Springs, Cayuga Co., N. Y. In 1842, he came with his parents to Kosciusko County, and settled in Seward Township, from which place he subsequently removed to Logansport, Ind., and returned to Kosciusko County in 1857.

In 1856, he was united in marriage with Miss Rachel Garvin, daughter of Hon. James Garvin, who was among the pioneers of Seward Township, and represented this county in the State Legislature. His wedded life was blessed by three children—Lillian Prudence, Timothy C. and Lucius, of whom all are now deceased save Timothy C.

In 18—, Mr. Merritt embarked in the grocery trade with his father, but after a few years retired from that enterprise and engaged in farming upon the estate where he now resides. He has been persevering in farming efforts, and has acquired a comfortable fortune. He is one who, by his genial disposition and upright character, has always gained friends, and wherever he is known he is remembered with kindness.

His political principles are in harmony with those espoused by the Democratic party, with whom he acts and votes. He has never coveted

political honors, and has never consented to fill any public office, excepting the position of Township Supervisor. He is a member of the New School Baptist Church, and an active worker in behalf of its interests.

ANDREW J. BAIR, WARSAW.

BY COL. J. B. DODGE.

Andrew J. Bair was born in Wayne County, Ohio, June 21, 1816. His father, one of the pioneers of Wayne County, was Surveyor of that county for a number of years.

The subject of this sketch enjoyed only such educational advantages as the common schools of that early day afforded, but eagerly improved every opportunity for acquiring knowledge. Upon arriving at manhood, he entered the office of Levi Cox (then a prominent lawyer at Wootter, Ohio), as a student, and was admitted to the bar at Steubenville, Ohio, in 1841. In September, 1843, he came to Warsaw, which was then a mere hamlet, containing about two hundred inhabitants, and began the practice of his profession. In 1845, he was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Kosciusko County, but only served one year, the office not being congenial to his tastes.

In October, 1846, he purchased the Kosciusko *Republican*, the first newspaper published in this county, previously published at Monroeville, by Hon. Charles Murray, now of the South Bend *Herald*. He removed it to Warsaw, and after publishing it about five years, was glad to part with it as it had absorbed not only the entire receipts, but his original capital as well, and left him to make a new start in life. In January, 1849, Malton Davis, Treasurer of Kosciusko County, died, and Mr. Bair was appointed by the County Commissioners to fill the vacancy until the ensuing fall election. In March, 1849, he married Miss Eliza Hazzard, and had a new incentive to acquire property.

Although probably, as well read a lawyer as we have, the practice was always distasteful to him, and, in 1851, he engaged in the sale of drugs and medicines. In this business he met with good success, and continued in it until October, 1868, when he was elected County Treasurer, and re-elected in October, 1870, retiring from that position in October, 1872, with the respect and good wishes of all. He has since been engaged in the sale of boots and shoes. His wife died August 26, 1853, and he was re-united in marriage to Miss Mary E. Boulton, of Bourbon, Marshall Co., Ind.

Mr. Bair is one of the most upright of men—unassuming and retiring, almost to excess, in his manners, he is one of the few who has always been measured for less than he is worth, and no man can say that he was ever wronged by him to the value of a cent. A member of the Presbyterian Church, and a Christian gentleman in every respect, he has always been known as one who was "firm as a rock" in whatever he believed to be right, and bitterly opposed to what he believed to be wrong.

HON JOSEPH A. FUNK.

BY COL. J. B. DODGE.

Hon. Joseph A. Funk was born October 16, 1824, in Wayne County, Ohio. Having a natural aptitude for learning and love of study, he had acquired a good academic education before the completion of his twentieth year, and, in October, 1843, he arrived in Warsaw with his father and his family, where he has resided ever since. Although quite young, he at once became identified with almost every movement that was calculated to advance the interests of the town and county in any respect. He was one of the first school teachers in Warsaw, teaching a school here in 1844. In 1846, he was appointed County School Examiner, which position he held until 1858. On the 25th of August, 1853, he was united in marriage with Miss Salome Swihart, of Warsaw, a union that has been blessed with long years of peace, pleasantness and prosperity. Until 1851, Mr. Funk had been engaged in selling goods part of the time, varied by teaching three or four terms of school and the settlement of his father's estate, who had died in 1846; but at that time he formed a copartnership with Elijah Hayes, for the sale of general merchandise, which was continued until 1854. In October of that year, he was elected County Auditor, and was re-elected to the same position in October, 1858, his term of office expiring in 1862. In May, 1863, Nelson Baker, the Treasurer of this county, died, and Mr. Funk was appointed by the County Commissioners to fill the vacancy until the next election. In October, 1864, he was elected as Representative in the Legislature from this county. From 1854 to 1860, he was one of the School Trustees of Warsaw (serving without pay), and during that time was laid the foundation of that excellent system of public schools with which the town is now favored, and the first high-school building—standing on the site of the present one—was erected. Mr. Funk has been an enthusiastic Odd Fellow ever since the introduction of that Order into this part of the State. He was one of the charter members and founders of Kosciusko Lodge, No. 62, I. O. O. F., instituted January 9, 1849, and of Hackleman Encampment, No. 37, I. O. O. F., instituted January 16, 1854. Salome Lodge, No. 27, Degree of Rebekah, I. O. O. F., at Warsaw, is named in honor of his estimable wife. All of these organizations owe to him more than any other one man their present prosperity and high standing in the Order at large. Mr. Funk was elected Most Worthy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of Indiana, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, in November, 1866, and served one year, when he was elected Representative to the Grand Lodge of the United States, and he attended the session of that body, held in Baltimore, Md., in September, 1868, and in San Francisco, Cal., in September, 1869, in that capacity. He is, and has been ever since he came to Warsaw, a zealous worker in the cause of religion. With nothing like cant or hypocrisy in his nature, he is a splendid specimen of a full-grown, robust, aggressive Christian. Religion, with him, is the same thing all the week through that it is on Sunday. While he is a firm believer in the doctrines and usages of the M. E. Church, he has never been known to quarrel with those who profess a different creed. His money and time have always been at the service of his Church, and the prosperity of the Methodist Church in Warsaw is owing largely to his exertions. The Sunday-school work has always been his especial delight, and one of the pleasantest memories indulged in by many of those who have grown to manhood and womanhood in Warsaw consists in recollections of him in Sabbath-school exercises, having been Superintendent of the M. E. School for twenty-seven years. In 1866, in company with Messrs. S. W. Chipman and H. W. Upson, he again became engaged in the business of selling goods, which partnership was dissolved January 11, 1879. In 1874, he and his brother, W. B. Funk, were less to say that they have been successful, and that, with their business qualifications and their upright manner of dealing with all, they will continue so. Mr. Funk was one of the original organizers of the Kosciusko County Agricultural Society, and was connected with it for years, either as Secretary or President. In fact, there is hardly an organization of any kind in this county that is calculated to advance the interests of the people, either socially or morally, that he has not been directly interested in, and there certainly is none that he has not encouraged by every means in his power.