



James Steele RIDDLE

Died January 14, 1902 in Fulton County

Autobiography

James S. Riddle was born at Pittsburgh, PA June 29, 1812; Moved with his parents to Ohio in 1819 into what was then called Coshocton County Hardy Township the county was very new and thinly inhabited. Hardy Township at that time was 12 mile long and 6 wide and in 1820 pooled 24 votes at the state election. Bears and wolves were very plenty it was very common for hunters to kill several bears through hunting season and wolves we could hear frequently at night seen also a plenty. Not a sawmill within 15 or 20 miles of us. Not a grist mill near than the same distance. The first wheat we raised my father cut with a sickle and dried part of it in the sun scraped a place of (off) on the ground and thrashed it with a flale and cleaned it up with a sheet folded at the ends and one at each end and made wind to blow the chaff out.

My father and I took it on horse back up to Jone's log cabbin mill in Wayne Co. 15 miles and when we got there the mill was shut down and the miller (Mr Jones) gone but we went to the house and told Mrs Jones and she came down and ^ the grist (that was John Jones mother and Polly Mikesels mother near Wauseon) We got home after dark and mother baked some cakes for supper we though it was good (as we had lived mostly on potatoes for than a week).

Schools were scarce in those days. My father used to teach in the winter in some log cabbin that they would fix up and the scholars would come from one to four miles to school.

Holmes County was formed (I think in 1825) and was composed of one teer of townships six miles wide off of Wayne County and two teers off of Coshocton County and a strip off of the west side of Tuscarawes County and a strip off the east side of Richland County. Soon after the organization of the county the commisioners divided the townships and made 14 out of 8 and we was struck off into Monroe Township. My father was elected JP clerk at the first election and held the office for several years.

I was married in Wayne County Ohio to Matilda Siddons on the 22nd of November 1833 by Wm Jewell. Served several years as constable and Deputy Sheriff was elected Captain of the Nashvill guards (a rifel company) served 7 years as such.

Moved to Lucas County (Now Fulton) in 1845 had one shilling in my jacket when we landed had no

house had five chickens got my cabin raised and got into it on the 16th of April. Cooked by a log in front of the house (had no stove no money to buy one) Mister Swartzentruber (Switzentruber in 1850 census and Swartzendruber in later marriage records) lent us a ten plate stove to keep us warm had it all summer until we got a fireplace and chimney then we cooked in the fire place for several years.

My neighbors were all good to furnish me provisions but when I was working for them I could not clear land (as my land was all very heavy timberd). I went up to Wm. Richards in chesterfield and cut and split rails for forty cents one bushel and a peck for a hundred rails.

I used to go to old Jacob Wilden's and chop cord wood (hard wood) for 31 cts a cord & pile the brush and board myself and took my pay in denums at 44 cts for yard and sheeting at 22 cts ft.

I used to make lap shingles 28 inches long for \$4 per M find my own timber and board my self. I frequently would ???? (looks like "nive") out 200 and fetch them into the house and shave at night by fire place and made light by burning the ???? (no word there, probably something that means the scrap wood) this line was written up the side margin

In April 1847 I was elected Twp assessor constable and justice of peace and supervision. They nominated me for assessor and Doctor Kendall for JP and asked me if I would not serve as constable as they nominated J J Clark and he said he could not do the buisneys (business). I said I did not care.

Mr Darby and I were at the table as clerks and knew nothing of their plans and when we went to count out the Justice box the 1st ballot was James S. Riddle. We though it was a mistake but the next one was the same and so on for several votes and some for Kendall and when we got through Riddle was 27 votes ahead. Served 4 terms as JP 4 or 5 assessor one as appraiser 6 years as Infirmary Director.

The 3 years after I came here I had a long spell of sicnys (sickness) first the fever then the augue (Ague - Malarial fever) was pretty bad for two seasons (as I never had any sicknes before).

My wife and I celebrated our 50th anniversary in Nov 1883. Our children were all present that were alive (C C having died March 18th 1876). We have 6 children 4 boys & 2 girls. J Q the oldest born in Holmes County Oct 1835 C C Jany 1838 Thos H May 1840 Mary Jane 1842 Louisa Oct 1844 J Irving 1847 (in this county). Thos H has been in Terre Haute IA since 1868 at present land agent for R R Lands and other lands. Also loans money for Eastern firms. J Irving is there since 73 is Insurance agent for the Phenix of Brooklin for the whole state of IA.

