

to New Orleans on a flat boat, as he did also in 1841, that being the usual method by which in those days the farmers of the Wabash valley disposed of their surplus produce. He was married on the sixth of March, 1842, to Naomi Gould, who was born in Lewis (now Upshur) county, West Virginia, March the fourteenth, 1820. Her father, whose name was Daniel Gould, died in Virginia. Her mother, whose maiden name was Margaret Strange, married a second husband, and moved to Indiana with the family, and settled near Terre Haute in the year 1829.

In the spring of 1850, Mr. Peck came to Christian county. During the summer of the same year he entered a quarter section of land in section thirteen, of township thirteen, range one west, and at the land sales in 1852 secured eighty additional acres. When he first came to this county the prairie in May township had not begun to be improved. On his first journey to this part of the state he rode eighteen miles without seeing a house. He went back to Indiana in the spring of 1854, but returned to this county in the spring of 1858, and has since been a resident of May township. Since 1864 his home has been on section thirty-six. He has one hundred and ninety acres of land. He is a gentleman in whom the people of May township seem to have every confidence as to his business ability and personal integrity. On the adoption of township organization, he was chosen collector of the township, and served in that capacity for seven years. Since leaving the collectorship, from 1873 to the present time, he has been assessor. In his political sympathies he was a whig, and cast his first vote for president for General Harrison, in the celebrated log cabin and hard cider campaign of 1840. He has been a republican since the organization of the party, though in county and township elections, he has often voted independently of party affiliations. For twenty years he has been a subscriber and reader of the *New York Tribune*, and has kept himself well-informed on the topics of the day.

THOMAS SMITH

Among the old settlers of May township, was Thomas Smith, whose portrait appears at the head of this sketch. He was born in England on the sixth day of June, 1811. He emigrated to America in June, 1844, and soon afterward came to Christian county. He settled on a farm on the edge of the Flat Branch timber, in section 15, May township, where he lived till the time of his death. He came to this county poor, and by dint of hard work and rigid economy, he managed to become the owner of a valuable farm, and to accumulate a competence. He was full of energy, and had excellent business capacity. He filled the office of justice of the peace for twenty-six years, and the good common sense and sound judgment he displayed in this position, gave the people of the township confidence in him as an able business man, and an impartial magistrate. He also, for a long number of years, filled the office of township treasurer. He was a man very reserved in his disposition, and said little about his own business affairs, event to those with whom he was best acquainted. As far as his dealings with his fellow-men were concerned, he was scrupulously honest, and no imputation was ever breathed on his integrity. He was an ardent democrat in politics. He died in January, 1877.

JOHN SMITH

John Smith, who now lives on the farm in May township, on which his father formerly resided, was born at Stoke, Lancashire, England, on the 18th of April, 1838. The maiden name of his mother was Elizabeth Jane Cooper. John was next to the oldest of a family of four children. He came to America in 1844, and was raised in the neighborhood of Griggsville, in Pike county, in this state. From the time he was eight years old he was obliged to work for his own living. For a year and a half, he had his home with a man named Wm. Pine, in Pike county. In the fall of 1849, he went to Naples and was employed in a hotel there for some months. His home was in the vicinity of Jacksonville from 1850 to 1855. During 1852 and 1853, he carried the mail between Jacksonville and Brighton. He was then a boy of fourteen or fifteen. The distance between the two places was fifty-five miles, and he made the round trip once a week, most of the time on horseback. His route was through Greenfield, Rhoads

Point (where is now the town of Medora) and Piasa. He was often obliged to ride late at night to reach his stopping places, to cross streams when they were dangerous from being swollen by recent rains, and altogether the duty was not so pleasant as might be imagined. When he first went to Jacksonville he worked for six bits a week, and when he carried the mail he received eight dollars a month. For two years he worked on the farm of Anthony Thornton, ten miles south of Jacksonville.

In 1855, he went to Brown county. He was then seventeen. He there learned to chop. He mastered the art of handling an axe as well as most men. He principally followed getting out rails and staves. One of the first contracts he made was to clear and fence a ten-acre tract of land and to pay fifty dollars cash for a horse. The other party to the arrangement had, of course, the best of the bargain, but Mr. Smith went to work, cleared off the timber, and got out twenty-nine hundred rails. He already had thirty dollars, and the remaining twenty, with which to make the cash payment, he earned by chopping cord wood in the Illinois bottom. The horse was dearly earned, but it was the first step in the way of making his own living. The next summer he earned a second horse by working for an uncle. In January, 1858, he had two horses clear, but not a nickel in money, and only clothes enough to keep him warm. He next arranged with another man to rent land and raise a crop in partnership, but this agreement was not carried out, and Mr. Smith worked from March to June, receiving for his labor only fifteen dollars. In 1859, he raised a small crop, but was principally employed in making staves. He rented land in Pike county, in 1860, which he farmed for two years, and then leased an adjoining farm. By January, 1864, he had saved three hundred dollars in money and owned besides four head of horses, sixteen head of cattle, and other stock farming utensils. He then determined to buy land, and paid down for eighty acres which he purchased for six hundred dollars. Only eighteen acres were cleared; the rest was timber. He had it all paid for at the end of the year.

On the 10th of April, 1864, he married Ruth Jane Kaylor, who died on the thirteenth of April, 1875. In 1866, he bought an additional 160 acres. When not busy on the farm he was hard at work in the timber, getting out rails and ties, hauling them sixteen miles to the railroad, and working all day and sometimes late into the night. As soon as he had means, he bought another 110 acres. By hard work he managed to accumulate considerable property, and was known as an industrious, energetic and prosperous man. His second marriage was on the 7th of November, 1875, to Sarah E. Lane, who was born in Adams county. In April, 1878, after his father's death, Mr. Smith moved on his father's old farm, in May township. He is now the owner of 710 acres of land—360 in May township, and the balance in Adams county. He is a man who has made his way through the world by his own energy. He began life with nothing, and by industry managed to place himself in comfortable circumstances previous to his father's death, and to show that he was competent to make his own way in the world. He has had seven children, five by his first and two by his second marriage. Two by his first marriage are dead, one of whom, Ellen Catharine Jemima Smith, was eight years old when she died, and a child of unusual brightness, whose death made a vacant place in the family circle hard to be filled. The other, Arthur, died in infancy. The names of the children living are Lydia Elizabeth, George Thomas, John William, Orpha Myrtle, and Virgil Arnold. He has always been a democrat in politics.

WILLIAM M. LEACH

Was born in Stafford county, Virginia, within twelve miles of Fredericksburgh, July 9, 1832. His grandfather, James H. Leach, came from England, and settled in Virginia, before the Revolutionary war. He had been a sailor, and during the Revolution, served in the American navy. Philemon M. Leach, the father of the subject of this sketch, was born in Prince William county, Virginia, and during the war of 1812, was one of the force raised to defend Washington City from the attack of the British. After returning from the army, he married Mary, daughter of George Curtis, of Stafford county, Virginia, who was an Englishman by birth, and had been a soldier of the Revolution. Mr. Leach was the seventh of a family of ten children. In 1830, his father moved to Perry county, Ohio. There Mr. Leach was principally