

WASHINGTON STEELE, farmer, section 35, Washington Township, is the owner of 200 acres of land. He was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, April 20, 1830. In 1837 he was taken by his parents to Richland County, Ohio, and in 1838 removed to Kirkland. When he had reached his majority the family came to this county and settled in the wild woods, where the father built a hewed log house. Here our subject lived three years, then went to work in a saw-mill for Samuel L. Rugg, for whom he worked three years sawing plank for the roads, Mr. Rugg having the contract for sawing and furnishing the plank for the road between Fort Wayne and St. Mary's.

Mr. Steele was married April 3, 1853, to Miss Polly Zimmerman, who was born in Fayette County, Ohio, in 1832. When she was two years old her parents and six other children settled in an old log house up the river, about half a mile from David Studabaker's. The father bought a squatter's claim, besides entering land from the Government, and kept adding more land, until at his death he had 900 acres in a body. He also owned 700 acres in Mercer County, Ohio. He could neither read nor write, but could cast interest and make a good bargain. He was born near Harper's Ferry, Maryland, March 19, 1802, and when a young man went to Fayette County, Ohio, where two of his brothers were living, and was married there September 2, 1823 to Miss Polly Smith. In 1834 they came to Adams County, bringing with them four children. Four more were born after they came here. The father died October 29, 1878, lamented by all who knew him. The mother was born in Fayette County, Ohio, in 1804, where she was reared and married. She died in 1872, and both were buried in Decatur. She was a very industrious, frugal woman, and in early life was a regular attendant at church; but in later years she became crippled from a fall, and could only walk a short distance.

Mr. Steele's father, George Steele, was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, April 6, 1799, where he was reared and married, and where five children were born. They removed to Richland County, Ohio, where they lived until they came to this county in 1848. The father died in Kirkland Township February 3, 1878, and is buried in Steele's cemetery. The mother was also born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, in September, 1802. She is now living at Pleasant Mills, with her son Henry. The parents had eleven children, nine of whom are living.

Mr. and Mrs. Steele have four children - Mary F., born June 27, 1854; Eli W., born March 11, 1857; John D., born January 27, 1860, and Elizabeth E., born June 23, 1862. All are married except Eli, who lives at home. In politics Mr. Steele is a Democrat, and in religion a member of the Methodist church. He has been a Mason since 1872, and belongs to Decatur Lodge, No. 571. He had three brothers in the late war; John and James were volunteers, and Samuel was drafted. James died in hospital, of chronic diarrhea, at St. Louis. Mrs. Steele remembers when her father had to go to Fort Wayne to mill with an ox team, and sometimes in a keel-boat down the St. Mary's River. When building his first house he bought his hardware at Piqua, Ohio, going for it with an ox team. Before his death he gave his son Eli 900 acres of land. He left an estate valued at \$50,000.

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