

Snipped from the article on Frederick Edward Meeker

Frederick Edward Meeker was the son of Norton Augustus and Rachel Hannah (HAWKINS) MEEKER, the latter of whom was a daughter of Judge Nathan B. and Rebecca (SHANKS) HAWKINS, both members of pioneer families in this county and concerning whom further and fitting mention is made elsewhere in this work in a comprehensive review of the HAWKINS family in Jay county.

Norton Augustus MEEKER, an honored veteran of the Civil war and formerly and for years one of the leading merchants of Portland, was a native of Ohio, born in Delaware county, that state, July 7, 1844, a son of Robert and Jane (McDONALD) MEEKER, and was living there when the Civil war broke out, he then being under seventeen years of age. In the next year, on August 8, 1862, he then being just past eighteen, he enlisted his services in behalf of the cause of the Union and went to the front as a member of Company A, 96th regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, with which gallant command he served until honorably discharged on August 18, 1865, the war then being over. During the battle of Arkansas Post, September 11, 1862, he was severely wounded in the neck and in one arm and during his service was in several other hard fought engagements. Upon the completion of his military service Mr. MEEKER rejoined his parents, who meanwhile had moved to Jay county, locating in the immediate vicinity of Portland, where his father became engaged in farming and also for years operated the toll gate on East Main street.

As a boy Mr. MEEKER had learned the rudiments of the drug business and after his marriage on October 4, 1866, at Portland, to Rachel Hannah HAWKINS returned to Ohio and opened a drug store at Spencerville [Allen Co.] in that state. A few years later he disposed of his interests there and returned to Portland, where for some time he was engaged as the local agent for the United States Express Company, but the urge to re-enter business on his own account proved stronger than his desire to continue connected with the corporation and he presently opened a drug store in Portland and was thus engaged in business in that city, first on North Meridian street and then on West Main street, the remainder of his life, his death occurring on May 24, 1890. His widow survived him for more than twenty-five years, her death occurring on April 17, 1918, she then being in her seventieth year.

To Norton A. and Rachel H. (HAWKINS) MEEKER were born six children, those besides the subject of this sketch being Lenora J., wife of H. D. WALTZ, of Portland; Gertrude O., wife of Frank L. BRADEN, former proprietor and publisher of the Portland Commercial-Review and a former city clerk of Portland, now and for years past a resident of Indianapolis, head of the firm of F. L. BRADEN & Co., insurance adjusters; Caroline Adele, who died in 1894 at the age of twenty-two years; Charles M., who died in 1871 at the age of fourteen months, and Franklin Sheridan MEEKER, of Portland.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.328-331. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.