

De Soto Village.

De Soto was first known as Winneshiek's Landing, from the chief by that name, who came here to trade his furs for supplies with the French traders at this point. Two French families by the name of Godfrey, located here not long after the close of the Black Hawk War. They were induced to come through efforts put forth by Col. Dousman, of Prairie du Chien. This was occupied as a trading post for about twenty years. Moses M. Strong made the original entry of the plat of the village.

Dr. Euclid B. Houghton purchased it of Mr. Strong. Dr. Simeon D. Powers, Dr. Houghton and Dr. James Osgood laid out the village in 1854. These gentlemen came hither from Port Washington. Dr. Osgood built the first house on the village plat, which was occupied in 1884 by Charles Lyttle as a residence. Dr. Houghton opened the first store.

The first building of any importance was erected by Carlyle, Dowse & Co. The lumber with which this house was built came from Black river falls, the nearest available point for obtaining lumber at that time. The first blacksmith in the village was William N. West, who afterward moved to Minnesota.

The first cooper shop was operated by Ambrose De Lap.

The first shoemaker was Henry Fosdick. In the fall of 1855 Mr. Adam Carlyle purchased for Mr. Fosdick a side of sole leather and other stock for his shop of Ulysses S. Grant, of Galena, Ill.

The first saw mill was built in the fall of 1855 by A. B. Clapp and George Meade. This mill and others at this point were operated by steam power. It was destroyed by fire in 1864. N. S. Cate & Co., built a saw mill in 1857. This firm was composed of Messrs. N. S. Cate, H. M. Chamberlain and Emery Houghton, who came from the State of Maine. They operated the mill until 1862, and did an extensive business, employing sometimes as high as fifty men. The mill cut upon an average 50,000 feet of lumber per day, besides shingles, lath, etc. This company also built a grist mill adjoining the saw mill, which was propelled by steam power. In 1862 these mills went into the hands of H. M. Chamberlain & Co., who in 1864 sold to John C. Davis. The stock was closed out and the mill lay idle for several years. This failure was caused in part by the failure of the New England Glass Co., of which Mr. Houghton was the financial manager. On the completion of this mill, when they had a three months' supply of logs on hand, the stock of this concern amounted to \$100,000.

A shingle mill was built by C. M. and A. R. Worth, about 1865. They also sawed some lumber. After running this about four years it was converted into a grist mill and the Worth Brothers then occupied the Cate & Co's mill for about five years, during which time they manufactured large amounts of lath, shingles and lumber. In 1884 this mill was used for cutting staves and heading.

An establishment for the manufacture and cutting of files was started by A. Miller, who run it for a year or so and enlisted in the army to "suppress the rebellion," which had then just commenced. He was killed in the battle of Gettysburg.

In 1857 Capt. William Plummer & Co. engaged in the manufacture of lime and connected with their business the manufacture of hard wood barrels. They did an extensive business, although it was continued only about a year.

The De Soto brewery is owned by Charles E. Reiter, who purchased it of George Eckhardt in 1882. Mr. Reiter makes about 400 barrels of beer per annum. The building was erected by Cate & Co. in 1858 and used by them as a store. George Eckhart first utilized it for brewing purposes.

The first school in the village was taught by Mrs. Catharine P. Stevens in the winter of 1855-6. This was a private school. The first school house proper was built in the summer of 1856, in which James McDill taught the first school the winter following. This house was in use as a residence in 1884, a new school house having been built in 1872. This building was a frame structure, two stories high. The cost of this house was \$3,500, and, excepting the one at Viroqua, was the best in Vernon county.

The first physician in De Soto was Dr. G. S. Sperry, who came from St. Paul in the summer of 1856. He was an excellent physician. He died in 1873.

Other physicians were Dr. G. W. Brooks and Dr. Worth. The physician in 1884 was Dr. Orlando Ewers. Others who have borne the title of doctor, though not educated physicians, were Dr. E. B. Houghton, the original proprietor of the village, who moved from this place to La Crosse, and later to St. Louis, where he died in 1862. Dr. James Osgood came in 1854 and assisted in laying out the village and finally became the owner of one-fourth of the town plat, and died in 1863. Dr. Simeon Powers, a dentist, was also owner of another fourth interest in the town site of De Soto. He afterwards removed to Sparta, where he was at the time of his death. Capt. C. B. Worth came in 1854 and remained till his death in 1875. He was also owner of a fourth interest in the village plat. His son Addison made the first lumber wagon in De Soto.

The first lawyer who practiced at this point was Addison A. Hosmer, a graduate of the Harvard law school at Cambridge, Mass. He came in 1857 and returned to that State in 1860. From there he went into the army, and before the war closed became quite distinguished. After the close of the war he was made judge advocate, and it was he who passed sentence on the notorious Wirz, of Andersonville infamy.

Tolbert C. Ankney came here as an attorney in 1865, though he had been here previous to the war. He was associated with George McDill, who was also an attorney here at that time.

H. W. McAulley began the practice of law in 1866, continuing for a number of years.

The present attorney is George L. Miller.

The first hotel in this village was known as the Winneshiek House. It was a log house and among the first built in the place. The Bay State House was erected in 1856, by Seth Crowell and Jonathan F. Porter, who ran it for several years. Other parties who have from time to time operated this house, are: C. H. Allen, Thomas Lawrence, who had charge of the house in 1862-63, and was succeeded by Benjamin Trott; who improved the premises and who operated it till his death, in December, 1879. In 1884 it was owned and conducted by his widow, Mrs. Hannah Trott. This hotel was, without doubt, the finest in the village in 1884. It was a three story frame building, 32x45 feet, and finished in good style. The first cost was \$7,000. Mrs. Hannah Trott, proprietress of the Bay State House, De Soto, is the widow of Benjamin Trott who came to De Soto in 1859. He was born in Shuncook in the British Province, in 1816. He was brought up in the State of Maine. He came here in the milling interests of Cate & Co., and had charge of the manufacturing of shingles in the mill of this company. In February, 1864, he rented the Bay State House, which he conducted for several years, then purchased it, and continued in charge of the same, till his death, which occurred Dec. 15, 1879. He was a man highly respected in the community in which he lived, as an upright, honorable citizen. His wife still owns and conducts the hotel. Her maiden name was Hannah Bean. She was born in Perry, Washington Co., Maine. She has two children --- Barbara, wife of Mr. Steele, of Viroqua, and Rebecca, wife of Robert Rice.

The next hotel was the De Soto House, built soon after the Bay State House was erected. It was built by Kurtz & Hale for a hotel and boarding house, but finally was used for a carriage and wagon shop.

The second hotel, called the De Soto, was formerly a store building and was changed to a hotel, by Edward Sweeney. This house, in 1884, was being operated by Mrs. Ann M. Miller.

The postoffice at De Soto, was established in 1855. Dr. S. D. Powers was the first postmaster, and Adam Carlyle acted as his deputy. The next to hold the office was Dr. Osgood, with J. C. Kurtz as his deputy. Dr. Osgood was succeeded by C. B. Whiting, whose deputy was Fred Carr. In 1884 the postmaster was J. H. Rogers, who was appointed in 1865. This became a money order office in July, 1878. The first order was issued to J. H. Hinds, for \$38.32. The first order paid, was to Mrs. John Babcock, and was dated July 22, 1878.

The business interests of De Soto, in 1884, were in the hands of the following:

C. Lyttle & Co., general merchants, also dealers in lumber and grain.

Fred Eckhart & Co., grain dealers.

J. A. Cooper, manufacturer of wagons and carriages, also dealer in farm machinery.

Charles L. Woodbury, general merchandise and farming implements.

Adam Carlyle, agent for the Diamond Jo steamboat line.

C. Lyttle, agent for the North Western line of steamers.

J. H. Rodgers, general merchandising and drugs.

Charles H. Upham, general store, also hardware and farm machinery.

D. A. Steele, furniture.

Charles McDowell, blacksmith shop.

J. F. Allen, wagon maker.

Mrs. A. H. Wareham, millinery and furnishing goods.

Miss M. L. Porter, dress-maker.

C. L. Ingersoll, flour and feed.

Louis Stinseng, boots and shoes.

Patrick De Lacy, boots and shoes.

John Devlin, meat market.

Fred Schmidt, drugs.

Mrs. J. A. Cooper, millinery and dress-maker.

Mrs. H. Carpenter, dress-maker.

N. E. French, grocery and restaurant.

Orville D. Pulver, restaurant.

Charles E. Reiter, brewer, and owner of the Lansing and De Soto ferry.

Mrs. Hannah Trott, owner and proprietor of the Bay State Hotel.

Mrs. A. N. Miller, owner and proprietor of the De Soto House.

William Waldron, fish dealer.

W. F. McMastress, fish dealer.

H. E. McMasters, cooper.

C. L. Mueller, stave and heading factory.

O. Ewers, physician.

G. L. Miller, attorney.

James H. Rogers, postmaster.

D. Abbott Steele came to De Soto, Oct. 5, 1855, in company with his brother, Alvah Steele, who remained about three years, and returned to New Hampshire. D. Abbott Steele was born in Georgia, where his parents, who were natives of New Hampshire, were then living. He has been variously engaged since coming to De Soto; in 1884, he was engaged in the furniture business.

John W. White came in the spring of 1855, and located just northeast of the village, where he still lived in 1884.

Edmund Houghton came to De Soto, April 1, 1855. He is now the earliest present resident on the village town plat. He was born in Harvard, Mass., in 1808. Served an apprenticeship in New Hampshire, to the trade of a machinist; and came here from that State. A friend of Mr. Houghton's, R. P. Waite, came with him, but returned to New Hampshire. Mr. Houghton made a location on section 10, town 11, range 7 west, where he made a claim which he still owns, but he has always made his home in the village. His wife was Nancy Bryant, a native of New Hampshire. They have one daughter --- Ellen, the wife of Woodbridge Dyre.

Other early settlers of the town were: Samuel Pike, who came from Massachusetts in 1855 and remained until 1873, when he removed to Iowa. He was a painter by trade; C. B. Stevens, who was a tinner, came into the village of De Soto, in the spring of 1855, and continued to live there until 1882, when he moved to Dakota. Also, Dennis Powers, Sidney R. Gage, Hugh McDill, R. F. Lemen, A. McDowell and Anthony Valle, a Frenchman, who enlisted in the United States army, and died at Andersonville prison.

The first meeting of the Congregational society in this locality was held Feb. 15, 1856. The society was organized at this meeting. The minister present was the Rev. L. L. Radcliffe, of La Crosse district convention. Among the number who joined the society at this time were: Charles Houghton and wife, Fannie Houghton, Mrs. Mary E. Roach, Mrs. Abbie W. Tobey (the last two were daughters of Mr. Houghton), Daniel D. Fuller and wife, Mercy P. Fuller, Alexander Young and wife, Wilton E. Roach and J. F. Tobey. The first pastor was Rev. L. L. Radcliffe; the first officers were Charles Houghton, deacon, and Daniel Fuller, clerk. Rev. L. L. Radcliffe was succeeded by Rev. Alexander Parker, in 1863, and he by Rev. Peter Valentine, in 1865. The next pastor in charge was Rev. L. Bridgeman, who came in 1868 and remained till his successor, Rev. James Mitchell, came in 1871; the Rev. S. H. Thompson came in 1874, and was succeeded by Rev. William Houghton, in 1879; Rev. Charles Vaile was pastor in 1881; then came Rev. William Houghton to his second pastorate.

A church building was erected in 1859; it was built in the Gothic style of architecture, and cost the society about \$1,800. The society has been supported by a good Sunday school since the time of its organization in 1859. D. Abbott Steele, who was elected superintendent of this school in 1862, was still its superintendent in 1884, having served continuously for twenty-one years. This school averages about thirty-five pupils.

The first services of the M. E. Church were held in a building built of railroad ties for a wagon and blacksmith shop, in the year 1855.

The first class was formed by Rev. T. C. Clendenning in the year 1858. The members, as near as can be ascertained, were as follows: James Lawrence and Mary, his wife; William Hemmingway and wife, and his son, George, and daughter, Mary Hemmingway, and William Wyburn.

The first minister of the M. E. Church who preached in De Soto was Rev. John Whitworth, now of Viroqua.

The M. E. Church was built in the year 1859, and removed out in the country in the year 1875, being now known as the Central Church.

The pastors of the M. E. Church in De Soto circuit have been as follows: Revs. John Whitworth, T. C. Clendenning, Mr. Lane, Mr. Smith, S. D. Bassenger, J. E. Irish, W. P. Hill, C. Bushby, Thomas Manual, H.

J. Walker, D. L. Hubbard, D. Clingman, H. D. Jencks, W. W. Hurd and the present pastor, Rev. I. F. Nuzum.

The De Soto Baptist Church was organized at the house of Dr. James Osgood, Jan. 11, 1855, with a constituency of sixteen members, who adopted as theirs the New Hampshire articles of faith and covenant. The Church was duly recognized by council on the 9th of the following February. A. B. Hubbard, a member of the Church, served as its pastor with acceptance for six months, after which Rev. D. Mulhern became pastor. For a while the Church gained in membership, both by baptism and letter. In 1857 serious trouble arose which resulted in the exclusion of quite a number of members. The aggrieved, with others, holding letters from other Baptist Churches, called for a council, which was attended by delegates from the La Crosse and Winona, Minn., Churches. Although the Church was represented in the council, it refused to comply with the recommendation to reconsider its action. The council further recommended that, should the Church refuse to reconsider its action, a new Church should be formed. This was done soon after by the union of about twenty members. The new Church was admitted to the La Crosse Valley Baptist Association at its next annual meeting. Rev. D. Mulhern served as its pastor, and a few were added by baptism. Through removals its membership was reduced and its meetings discontinued, and were never revived. The first Church held occasional meetings at De Soto. In March, 1861, its place of meeting was changed to Brush Creek. Here it was prospered, at one time numbering thirty-one members. Removals and change of residence led the Church in 1868 to again make De Soto its place of meeting. Concessions were made which resulted in those living in the neighborhood, members of the second Church, uniting with the old Church. The following year Rev. S. E. Sweet became pastor and was ordained. He preached here and at other points, one of which was Harmony, where a Baptist Church was organized the following January. Rev. Sweet served the two Churches one year, when, in order to pursue further study, he went to Beaver Dam, Wis. In 1872 Rev. William Houghton became pastor, serving the Harmony Church also. He remained about eighteen months. From this time regular monthly meetings were held, with occasional preaching, till February, 1875, when Rev. N. L. Sweet became pastor. Quite a number were added to the Church by baptism. Rev. Sweet's pastorate continued four years. Since his resignation the Church has been declining. Although twenty-eight names are reported now, but very few are active members.

Societies.

Ancient Order United Workman Lodge, of De Soto, was organized June 10, 1878. The charter members were: James Lyttle, Fred Schmidt, William Davis, Philip B. Peters, George Eckhardt, B. D. Jenks, D. A. Steele, Fred A. Schlottman, Jacob Eckhardt and Woodbridge Dyre. The first officers were: James Lyttle, P. M. W.; Jacob Eckhardt, M. W.; P. B. Peters, foreman; B. D. Jenks, recorder; D. A. Steele, financier; W. Dyre, receiver; George Eckhardt, guide; F. A. Schlottman, overseer; F. Schmidt, I. W.; William Davis, O. W.; P. B. Peters, George Eckhardt, and James Lyttle, trustees. In 1884 this lodge had a working membership of thirty-two, and was in a flourishing condition. In 1884 there was both a lodge of the Odd Fellows and Good Templars at De Soto, each in a flourishing condition.

Disastrous Fires.

The steam mill of Whiting & Carr was burned in July, 1865, involving a loss of over \$20,000. In March, 1879, occurred the worst conflagration that ever visited the place. The cause of this fire has always remained a mystery. It originated in the general store of L. C. Larson. Eight buildings were consumed. Mr. Ingersoll sustained the greatest loss, which included two buildings occupied as a wagon and blacksmith shop, together with a fine stock of general merchandise. His total loss was about \$10,000. Among those who sustained quite heavy losses were: L. C. Larson, John L. O'Kre, J. F. Allen, Fred Schmidt and John Delvin. This fire was a serious blow to De Soto, from which it never fully recovered.

The Oldest Shoemaker in America.

In 1884 the village of De Soto boasted of a resident, who came to the place at an early date, and who by careful investigation was found to have been actively engaged more years, at the shoe bench, than any other man in the country. This gentleman's name is Patrick De Lacy, who has been constantly engaged at the bench since twelve years of age, or a period of seventy-one years. And strange to say, after these long years of stooped shouldered work, he is as erect as most young men of today.

Biographical Sketches.

Thomas Lawrence, although a resident of Freeman, Crawford Co., Wis., was with his father, an early resident of Vernon county, owning a farm near Liberty Pole, which was first occupied by John McCulloch, the first settler of Vernon county. His father, James Lawrence, located at Liberty Pole, July 5, 1851, and settled on the farm now owned by William Clawater. James Lawrence was born in Monmouthshire,

England, in 1809. He emigrated to the United States in 1851, making his first settlement at Liberty Pole, where he remained until the spring of 1854, then removed with his family to the town of Freeman, Crawford county, being the first settler in the neighborhood, and where he resided until his death, Aug. 23, 1883. In 1832 he was married to Mary Williams, who still survives him. Father Lawrence, as he was called, was a member of the Bible Christian Church in England. When he came to the United States he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and remained a firm believer until his death, being a member of these churches for over fifty-five years. He was an earnest and sincere Christian and his memory will long be cherished and his name remains a prominent one in the pioneer history of Crawford and Vernon counties. His surviving children are Thomas, Mary, wife of Nathan Coe, of Viroqua, Vernon Co., Wis.; Julia, wife of L. J. Miller, of Wheatland town, Vernon county; James W., Mathew E. and Jane E. Thomas, the eldest child, was born in England, in 1834. He resides in Freeman, Wis., at present, but was for several years a resident of De Soto. He kept the Bay State House in 1862-3, and a meat market from 1874 until 1877. His wife was Mary Coffin, a daughter of Peleg Coffin. She was a native of Massachusetts. They have three children --- Ellen J., William and Alice Z. They lost their eldest daughter.

Dorsey P. Ames, came from Ohio, in the fall of 1854, with John Rutter, Samuel and Amon E. Davis. Samuel Davis made a location near the village of Viroqua, Vernon county, but the other two, and our subject settled in town 11 north, of range 6 west. Mr. Ames selected his new home on section 27, where he entered 280 acres of government land, which he still owns with the exception of ten acres. He was born in Guernsey Co., Ohio, in 1820. When about nine of age, his parents removed to Morgan county, in the same state, where he was reared. He married Rachel Davis, a daughter of Samuel Davis, who died at Viroqua, in 1871; her mother died in Ohio, in 1844; her father married the second time. Mr. and Mrs. Ames have eight children --- Margaret, Samuel, Clarence M., Sarah Ann, Absalom, Mary S., Rachel and Hannah E. The three oldest were born in Ohio; the remainder in this town. Mr. Ames' parents, Absalom and Margaret Ames, were natives of Washington Co., Penn. They came to Crawford county in 1859, and lived there till their deaths, which occurred at an advanced age.

John Rutter resides on section 28, where he settled in 1855. He came with his family, however, in the fall of 1854, in company with Dorsey P. Ames, Samuel and Amon E. Davis, and located at that time. His farm now consists of 320 acres, and Mr. Rutter is one of Crawford county's most honored pioneers. He was born in Green Co., Penn., March 14, 1812. When seventeen years of age, he accompanied his father, Ebenezer Rutter, to Ohio. The following year (1830), the father settled in Athens county, where he lived till his death. John remained in that county until the date of his removal to Crawford county. He married Mary Ann Bell, a native of Washington Co., Ohio, born in 1813. She died July 29, 1883. Fourteen children were born to them --- eight sons, and six daughters, five sons and two daughters are still living. Thomas C., Elizabeth, wife of Thomas De Lacy; Maria, wife of Cornelius C. Tower; James R., George W., William H., and French E. The latter is the only native of Crawford county. George W., who occupies the homestead farm with his father, was born in Athens Co., Ohio, in 1847. He was married July 11, 1837 (1867?), in Athens Co., Ohio, to Harriet, daughter of Jesse Davis, an early settler of Vernon Co., Wis. They are the parents of four children --- Minnie M., Pearl E., John R., and Martin E.

Joseph E. McCrillis is one of the early settlers of Crawford county. His present location is on section 29, town 11, range 6 west, where he settled in 1874. This farm he exchanged the previous year with Eric Johnson, of the town of Utica. Mr. McCrillis settled in the town of Utica in the fall of 1855, where he entered eighty acres of land, which now forms part of the farm of Thomas Adams, of that town. Mr. McCrillis was born in the town of Topsham, Orange Co., Vt., in 1808. In 1831 he went to Massachusetts, where he worked at the trade of a shoe-maker. He removed to Providence, R. I., in 1857 (1837?), and in the fall of 1838, went to Taunton, Mass. During this period he was engaged in shoe-making and peddling. From Massachusetts he removed to Vermont. In 1855 he came to Rock Co., Wis., and in October of the same year came to Crawford county, and entered land as before stated. He was married in Massachusetts in 1832, to Abigail Rist, who died in August, 1835. His second and present wife was Elmira Swift, to whom he was married in Providence, R. I., in 1837. She was born in Corinth, Vt., Jan. 6, 1809. Mr. McCrillis had one son by his first wife --- Joseph, who was killed near Mt. Sterling, Sept. 7, 1880. He has five children by his present wife, three sons and two daughters --- John H., who resides in Vernon Co., Wis.; Sally A., wife of Elisha Moore; Robert E., a resident of Hampton, Iowa; Hannah E., wife of H. H. Whaley; Isabella D., wife of J. M. Dennis, of Hot Springs, Dakota. Neither of the children were born in this State. Mr. McCrillis' farm contains 240 acres.

Alexander Young resides on section 36, town 11, range 7 west, which he entered in 1856. Mr. Young was born in County Derry, in the north of Ireland, in 1818. He emigrated to Massachusetts with his family in

1847. In 1855 he came to De Soto, and settled on his present farm the following year. His wife was Anna M. McMillan, also a native of County Derry. They have five children --- Jane, widow of William McDonald, of this town; Mary, wife of Richard McAuley; Margaret, wife of Arthur James; Martha R. and Sarah, unmarried. They lost three children by death --- John, Alexander and Anna. Mr. and Mrs. Young were among the hardy pioneers of Crawford county who have made for themselves a pleasant home in this now beautiful region, which, but a few years since, was in a state of wildness. Their recollection of the early times, when they and a few others located here, and shared each others trials and sufferings, will ever be remembered by them; nor are they ungrateful for the many blessings which have been bestowed upon them. They have a pleasant home and are passing their declining years in peace and plenty. Mr. and Mrs. Young have been for many years members of the Congregational Church, at De Soto.

Elind T. Bishop entered a piece of land on section 23, town 11 north, of range 6 west, in the fall of 1855, which farm now comprises 140 acres, with excellent improvements. He was born in Berkshire Co., Mass., Dec. 15, 1808. His father, Bohan Bishop, was a native of Stockbridge, in the same county. His maternal grandfather was a brother of the grandfather of the eminent showman, P. T. Barnum. Mr. Bishop resided in his native county until he was seventeen years of age. He then engaged in the manufacture of combs, which he continued until the spring of 1855. At that time he went to Grant Co., Wis., and a year and half later came to the town of Freeman. He has been quite successful in growing an excellent apple, both for quantity and quality. He planted the seed while a resident of Grant county, and removed and transplanted the young trees in his present orchard. Mr. Bishop married Eliza Higgins, who died in October, 1874. Four children are living --- Jared, Virginia, wife of Jerry Burger, now living in Dakota Territory; Annis, wife of J. B. McClurg, now living in Vernon Co., Wis., and Clarence C. The latter was born in Massachusetts, in 1848, and married Rosa Jordon, whose father was an early settler in the town of Sterling, Vernon county. They reside on the old homestead, and have three children --- Clinton R., Grace and Charles. Mr. Bishop is a member of the Congregational Church at Retreat.

Henry Helgerson resides on section 21, town 10, range 5 west, where he settled in 1860. He purchased his farm of Emanuel George, but the land was entered by A. C. B. Vaughn, now of Mt. Sterling. Mr. Helgerson has, however, been a resident of the town of Freeman since 1857. He is the son of Helger Helgerson, a native of Norway, and came to the United States in 1856, and the same year to the town of Sterling, from Dane Co., Wis. In 1857, he entered land on section 29, town 11, range 5 west. He is now a resident of the town of Utica. Henry Helgerson was born in Norway, Feb. 17, 1832. He came to the United States in 1857, the year following his father's emigration to this country. He lived two and a half years with his father, and then settled where he now lives. His farm contains 160 acres. His wife was Betsey Olson. They have ten children --- four boys and six girls. Mr. Helgerson is one of the prominent citizens of the town of Freeman; is a successful farmer and an intelligent gentleman. He is now (1884) serving his eighth term as treasurer of his town. He has also assessed the town several times.

Henry T. James has been a resident of Freeman town since 1856. He resides on section 23, town 11 north, of range 6 west, where he owns a farm of 160 acres. Mr. James was born at Bristol, R. I., in 1812. When a child, his parents, Samuel and Phebe (Kempton) James, removed to New Bedford, Mass., where both died. Henry T. there learned the painter's trade, and subsequently drifted out to Kansas. In September, 1855, he went to De Soto, Vernon Co., Wis. In 1856, he entered eighty acres of government land. In 1862 he purchased eighty acres of his present farm of Charles Crawshaw, who entered it from the government. Mr. James was married in Massachusetts to Phebe A. Akin, born in Dartmouth, Mass., in 1815, and a daughter of Abram and Rebecca (Eldridge) Akin, also natives of the "Bay State." Eight children have blessed this union, five living --- Edward, Ethelbert, now residing in Wisconsin; Henry T., a sailor; Adelaide, who lives in Iowa; Arthur A., who resides on the homestead; Albert F. and Arthur A. (twins) and a daughter, Emeletta, are deceased.

Henry Eitsert resides on section 9, town 10, range 5, west, where he settled in 1860, purchasing his farm of Herman Hulce, who entered the land June 25, 1855. He is the son of Michael Eitsert, who was born in Saxony, Oct. 6, 1794; came to the United States with his family in 1844, first to New Orleans; thence to St. Louis; thence to Belleville, Ill., where he resided for a period of seven years; thence to Freeport, Ill., removing to Prairie du Chien in April, 1855. In October of that year he entered a farm in the town of Freeman, section 15, town 10, range 5 west. He resided here till April, 1866, when he returned to Prairie du Chien, and died Feb. 8, 1879. He was twice married; his first wife died in Illinois, his second is still living in this county. Henry Eitsert was born in Prussia, in 1835. He came to this country with his father, with whom he also came to Prairie du Chien in 1855. In 1857, he purchased a farm on Sugar creek, in this town, where he resided till he settled where he now lives. He married Marion C., daughter of Herman Hulce, the

latter of whom was born in Delaware Co., N. Y., in 1811. He removed to Platteville, Grant Co., Wis., July 4, 1854. His wife was Mary J. Thompson, a native of Scotland. As previously stated, he entered the farm which Mr. Eitsert owns in 1855. He died here Nov. 6, 1872. His wife died May 11, 1865. Mr. and Mrs. Eitsert have three children; all natives of this town --- Mary C., born in 1862; Francis Henry, born in 1866; Albert N., born in 1871. They have lost four children; their first born died Nov. 15, 1861; their third child died Sept. 18, 1864; their fifth child, born May 30, 1868, died Dec. 2, 1870; another child was born April 9, and died May 20, of the same year. Mr. Eitsert's farm contains 320 acres. He is one of the most successful farmers in the town of Freeman.

Tosten T. Sime, chairman of the town board of Freeman for 1883, is the son of Andrew Sime, who settled on the farm which Tosten now owns, on section 16, town 10, range 5 west, in 1861, purchasing the farm of J. H. Jewell. Andrew Sime was a native of Norway, born in 1830; came to the United States at the age of twenty-seven years, and died here in the fall of 1864. He came to Crawford from Dane Co., Wis. His wife, also a native of Norway, resides at the homestead with her son. Tosten L. Sime was born in Norway in 1855, and came to this county with his parents. The family contained five children of whom Tosten T. was the eldest. He was elected a member of the town board for 1882, and owing to the serious illness of the chairman for that year, was appointed to that position and at the following election was elected chairman for 1883. Mr. Sime is a young man of ability and intelligence. He made a competent executive officer, and possesses the confidence and respect of all.

Veranus E. Akin resides on section 23, town 11 north of range 6 west, where he settled in 1861. He was born in Dartmouth, Mass., in 1821, and when seventeen years of age went to sea, and followed a sailors life for twenty-three years. He was first engaged in the whaling trade, but sailed for many years in a merchantman. He made three trips around the world, twice sailing eastward and once westward. In 1859, he entered a tract of land in the town of Freeman, and two years later severed his connections with his vessel, and settled down to a farmer's life. He subsequently purchased an "eighty" of Lewis Ehrle, and his entire farm now comprises 122 acres. During the late war, he enlisted in September, 1864, in the 42d Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, and served till the rebellion was crushed. Mr. Akin has been thrice married. His first wife was Marinda Bourne, to whom he was married in 1849. She died in 1856, leaving one daughter, Fannie, now the wife of William Bates, of Kansas. His second wife was Juliette Defield. They were married in 1861, and Mrs. Akin departed this life in 1881. His third and present wife was Maggie Seymour, a native of New York, to whom he was united in 1882.

Peter Bartholomew, proprietor of a livery stable at De Soto, is a native of Ohio, born in 1837. In 1848 he moved with his parents to Highland, Iowa Co., Wis. In 1861 he came to De Soto, Vernon county. In 1862 he enlisted in the 25th Wisconsin Infantry, and served three years, after which he returned to De Soto, where he has since resided.

Ralph Copper has been a resident of Crawford county since 1856 (when he located in Utica town), and a citizen of the town of Freeman since 1862. His farm is located on section 31, town 11, north of range 5 west, and was first entered by a man named Sweeny, father-in-law of Henry Sifrit, both of whom were early settlers of Freeman town. Mr. Copper's brother, Charles, came several years later, resided here for a time, then removed to Des Moines, Iowa, where he died. His two cousins, Joseph and Abel Copper, were well known early settlers of Freeman town. Another cousin, George Copper, came with our subject, and settled at Ferryville, where he lived till his decease. Ralph Copper was born in 1814, in Beaver Co., Penn., where his mother died shortly after. He removed with his father, Ralph Copper, Sr., to Licking Co., Ohio, where his father resided till his death. Mr. Copper then went to Van Wert Co., Ohio, and from thence to Crawford county in 1856. He entered a tract of government land in the town of Utica, where he resided until his removal to the town of Freeman. He married Mary Ann Williams, a native of Crawford Co., Penn., born in 1821. She is the only one of her father's family, that became a resident of this county. Nine children have been given to these parents, seven living --- Diana, wife of D. N. Ames; Oscar B.; Mandane, wife of John Valentine, a resident of Wadena Co., Minn.; Anna, wife of E. G. Lees; Emma, wife of Lysander Rounds; Alice and Ralph W. The deceased children are Marcus T. C., who was a member of company D., 31st regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, and died at Murfreesboro; and Mary, wife of H. H. Lewis. Mr. Copper is a gentleman of genial tastes, and his hospitality is noted far and wide. He has served many years in different official positions; was justice of the peace, in the towns of Utica and Freeman, for fifteen years; town clerk of Freeman for two years; chairman of town board, and member of county board of supervisors three years, and for the past six years has been deputy sheriff of Crawford county.

Mrs. Jane McDonald resides on section 24, near De Soto. She purchased the farm of 160 acres on which she resides, of George Coffin. It was entered by his father, Peleg Coffin. Mrs. McDonald is the widow of

William McDonald, and a daughter of Alexander Young, of this town. Mr. McDonald was a native of the north of Ireland, where he was born in 1833. He followed the sea as a sailor, from his boyhood till 1862, when he located in Wisconsin. He came to De Soto the same year, and afterward settled on a farm in the town of Genoa, Vernon county, where he resided till his decease, which occurred Oct. 18, 1881. Mrs. McDonald was born in the north of Ireland, Dec. 31, 1845. She has six children --- Jane, Willie, Maggie, Alexander, John and Mary. She also lost two children. Mrs. McDonald's farm, which she purchased for a homestead since the death of her husband, contains 160 acres. It is a valuable farm, with good improvements.

John H. Tower is a representative citizen of one of the best known families in the northern part of Crawford county. His father, John H. Tower, Sr., was born in the town of Hingham, Mass., in 1793; his ancestors were of English nativity, and among the earlier settlers of New England. John H. early learned the trade of a shoemaker, in the meantime acquiring a good English education. When twenty years of age, he went to Albany, N. Y., and for three years was employed as a school teacher in the near vicinity of that city. During the War of 1812, he volunteered his services in the Plattsburgh expedition, but before he reached the field the battle had been fought, and he returned to his school. The district authorities on school matters were not in sympathy with the American cause and refused him further employment. In consequence of this unforeseen circumstance, he returned to Massachusetts, and at North Brookfield resumed work at his trade. He there married Phebe Poland, of Vermont, and subsequently removed to Underhill, Chittenden Co., Vt., where he was engaged in the mercantile pursuits until the fall of 1853. The year previous, one of his sons, J. P., had gone out to Wisconsin, and laid claim to a tract of land in what is now Utica, Crawford county. He settled on this land, and in 1853 was joined by his father and brothers, John H. and Thomas, and their families. John H. Sr., entered land in 1854, and with the assistance of his two sons, John H. and Thomas, laid out and platted the village of Towerville. This was in the spring of 1855. Previous to this, they had erected a grist mill, on what was then the most modern plan, and it was started Dec. 15, 1854. John H. Sr., died in April, 1856, and his loving and faithful wife departed this life at Towerville, in 1860.

John H. Tower, Jr., was born at Underhill, Vt., in March, 1819. He was reared in the mercantile trade, and his present success is due in a great measure to the valuable business training he received in his father's store. He married Jane Woodruff, a native of Fairfield, Vt., born in August 1822. After coming to Crawford county, he was associated with his father in the erection of the grist mill, but about the time of its completion disposed of his interest, and engaged in mercantile pursuits. He continued in trade until 1860, when he was elected sheriff, and served two years. In 1866, he came to the town of Freeman, and purchased the grist mill on section 27, town 11, north of range 6 west, which he still owns. Since coming to Freeman town, he has served as town clerk thirteen years, chairman of the town board, one year, justice of the peace ten years, and is highly esteemed as an upright, honest citizen. He has two sons --- Cornelius P. and William H. The former is part owner and miller in the aforesaid grist mill, and the latter is a farmer of this town.

William Davis was born in Knox Co., Ind., in 1826. When twenty-five years of age he went to Stillwater, Minn., for three years, and in 1854 went to Vernon Co., Wis., entering land on section 4, town 11, range 5 west, in Sterling town, which he improved and on which he resided until 1872. He then came to Crawford county, settling on land which he purchased of Mrs. Joanna T. Wightman, situated on section 16, town 10, range 6 west, Freeman town. Mr. Davis enlisted in February, 1862, in the 19th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, serving until the close of the war. He participated in many of the most important battles, including Butler's operations in the vicinity of Richmond, siege of Petersburg, etc. He married Martha A. Heavrin, a native of Kentucky. Mr. and Mrs. Davis have had seven children, six of whom are living --- Mary A., William N., George G., Alice E., Charles F. and Edwin A. Mr. Davis has been a justice of the peace of Freeman town for several years. He also filled the office of town treasurer in the town of Sterling for three terms.