

Goodspeed's History of Southeast Missouri Biographies of Mississippi County, 1888

A B C D E F G H J K L M O P R S T V W Y



Jacob S. Goodin

Jacob S. Goodin, presiding

judge of the Mississippi County Court, was born in Hardin County, Ky., March 23, 1828. His parents, Girard and Lettie (Swank) Goodin, were both natives of Hardin County, Ky., of German descent. The great-grandparents on both sides came from Germany, and located in Hardin County, where they died. The grandfather Goodin was killed by the Indians in Kentucky. The grandfather Swank removed to Mississippi County, Mo. in 1837, and settled near Charleston, on the place now owned by Robert Langsdale, it being a wild, dense forest at that time, abounding in wild animals and game of all kinds found in the Mississippi Valley. Deer went in droves from twenty-five to seventy head. He died in Charleston, having built the first brick house in that vicinity. The place is now owned by James Smith. Girard Goodin immigrated with his family to Mississippi County in 1835, coming down the Ohio River on a flatboat. They landed at Bird's Point, from whence they went to some land near Charleston, upon which they made a settlement, it being the same farm upon which William T. Roberts now lives. A hewed log house had been erected previous to Mr. Goodin's purchase. He lived there until his death in 1849. His widow lived until 1852. To them were born nine children, three of whom are living: Jacob S., Louisa and Oliver M. The subject of this sketch has been a resident of Mississippi County nearly all his life, he being but eight years of age when his parents removed thither. He remained with them until their deaths, when he went to work for himself, choosing farming as his vocation. In 1887 he removed to his present farm, consisting of 160 acres of good land. In 1880 he was elected county judge, taking his seat the next year. He is now serving his fourth term in that office. He is a successful business man, and is one of the prominent citizens of his county. On September 23, 1857, he married Eliza E. Swank, a daughter of John Swank. They have two children living, Arthur S. and William O. Mr. and Mrs. Goodin are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He is a Mason and a member of the Agricultural Wheel.

Franklin S. Goodin

Franklin S. Goodin was born

in Hardin County, Ky., September 8, 1829. He is a son of John and Catherine A. (Swank) Goodin, both of whom were natives of Hardin County, Ky., and were of Scotch and German descent, respectively. The grandfather, Samuel Goodin, was a native of Virginia, and immigrated to Kentucky at a very early day, in which State he and wife both died. The maternal great-grandparents came from Germany and located in Hardin County, Ky. They had several serious encounters with the Indians. At one time they were riding horseback when both their horses were shot from under them. Mr. Swank ran to a cave, but was followed by the Indians and shot. His wife ran to a mill near by, where she was protected and saved. Their son, Jacob Swank, the grandfather of the subject of this sketch, was born in Kentucky, and was in the Indian War in that State. He afterward removed his family to Mississippi County, Mo. (in the spring of 1836), at which time that county was very wild and unimproved. He entered a large tract of land, which he added to by purchase, and at the time of his death was a large land owner. He and wife both died in Mississippi County. The father, John Goodin, was born on March 9, 1803. He was a farmer, and in 1836 he built a flatboat and brought his family and all his goods and stock down the Ohio River to Cairo, when that place had but one hotel and a few old buildings. He removed his family to Big Lake, Tywappity Township, where he made a settlement, there being but three others in that section. The country was very wild and full of game. He owned about 600 acres of land, upon which he built a log cabin with calpboard doors and roof. He afterward purchased a farm in Mathews Prairie, where he resided a few years, and went back to his old place. By many days of hard labor he made a valuable farm, upon which he spent the remainder of his life. His death occurred in 1850, and his wife's in 1868. They had six sons, two of whom are living; Franklin S., and Albert V., a resident of Nashville, Tenn. The ones deceased are Jacob V., Samuel G., John W. and William W. Franklin S. was but nine years of age when his parents came to Mississippi County. He remained on the farm with his father until he was nineteen years of age, when he entered the Arcadia (Mo.) High School, and was just beginning the second session, when he was called away by the death of his father, after which he remained with his mother, helping to educate his younger brothers, until he was married in February, 1857, to Sallie Harned, when he began farming for himself. His wife died in 1860, having borne him one child who is now deceased. He was married again in 1865, choosing for his second wife Jennie E., daughter of Euriel and Catherine A. (Logan) Haw, the former being one of the First Methodist ministers in this section of country. Mr. and Mrs. Goodin have had six children: Mary (deceased), John H., Frank S., Jr., Alice S., Lindsay V. and Alfred W. (deceased). In 1871 Mr. Goodin removed to Charleston, where he still resides. Mr. Goodin is one of the pioneers of Mississippi County, and has witnessed its development from a wild wilderness to a wealthy, thickly settled country. He and wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

Oliver M. Goodin

Oliver M. Goodin, a

successful farmer and enterprising citizen of Mississippi County, was born in that county on January 6, 1838, and is a son of Girard and Lettie (Swank) Goodin, both natives of Kentucky. Thomas Goodin, the grandfather, immigrated to Kentucky from Virginia, dying in the former State. Jacob Swank, the maternal grandfather, was a Pennsylvanian, who immigrated to Mississippi County in 1836, and located near Charleston where he died. Girard Goodin was reared and married in his native State, and was a farmer by vocation. In 1836 he, with his wife and nine children, came on a flat-boat down the Ohio River to Bird's Point, where they unloaded, and taking their teams and wagons went to near Charleston and located. Mr. Goodin lived there until his death in 1840. He and wife had ten children, three of whom are living: Jacob, Louisa and Oliver M. Those deceased are William, Ellen, John, Nathaniel, and three that died in infancy. Oliver M. was reared on a farm. He was but two years of age when his father died, and after the death of his mother in 1850, he lived with his older brother, William, until he was of age, when he began working for himself. In 1878 he purchased 160 acres of land, which is now under cultivation with good improvements. In 1868 he was united in marriage with Ruth Fowkles. She died in September 1874, having borne him three children, two of whom are living, Lizzie and Ollie. The one deceased is Ruth.

James O. Gray

James O. Gray, proprietor of

Gray's Mill, located in Wolf Island Township, Mississippi County, Mo., was born in Marshall County, Ky., October 9, 1837. He is the only one living of five children, born to Harrison and Mary Gray, natives of Kentucky. In the fall of 1859 the family emigrated from their native State to Southeast Missouri, and located in Wolf Island Township, Mississippi County. Harrison Gray was a miller, and followed his trade until his death in 1864. His wife died at the home of J.O. Gray, 1879. Their children who are dead are James B., William H., Bedford and Mary. James O. came with his parents to Southeast Missouri, and engaged in the milling business with George Keiser, of Mississippi County. After a year he began working with his father in the same business at the mouth of James Bayou and continued for six or seven years. In the meantime his father died, and he returned to Wolf Island and purchased his present mill, which he has since managed. He is also engaged in farming. Mr. Gray was first married to Emily Harvell, who died about eleven months after. He next married Anna Eligood, by whom he had four children: William, Mary (the wife of Walter Parker), Naomi (wife of Lewis Husk) and Laura. The mother of these children died in 1869. Mr. Gray afterward married Miss Sidney Roach. Two children have blessed this union, Bettie and Maud.

James S. Green

James S. Green, station-agent

at Charleston, for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad, was born in Benton, Scott County, Mo., on February 7, 1860. He is a son of Levi S. and Jennie E. (Myers) Green, the former a native of New York State and the latter of Sikeston, Scott Co., Mo., her parents settling in that county at an early day. James was reared in his native village, where his education was begun, and afterward attended Cape Girardeau College. At the age of eighteen years he began the study of telegraphy, which he mastered about 1878. His first appointment as station-agent and operator was at Corning, Ark., where he remained about six months. He was then successively at Poplar Bluffs, Allenville, Jefferson Barracks, Cabot, Ark., Charleston for three years, Helena, Ark., and thence back to Charleston in the latter part of 1885, in which place he has since been a resident. In September 1884, he was united in marriage with Miss Bettie Calendar, a native of Louisville, Ky., and a daughter of Moses and Nellie Calendar. Their union has been blessed by two bright little daughters, Florence L. and Mildred J.

James A. Greer

James A. Greer, a prominent farmer residing near Bertrand, Mississippi County, was born in 1825, in Henry County, Tenn., and is a son of Hezekiah. The latter, when but eleven years of age, came with her parents from South Carolina to Tennessee. Her parents located in Central Tennessee, but after the Jackson Purchase went to Benton County, where they died and were buried. Hezekiah Greer lived with his parents until he was married, when he engaged in farming in Henry County, Tenn. Remaining there several years, he removed to Carroll County and remained four or five years, when he went to Humphrey County. When that county was divided in 1836 he was placed in Benton County, in which he lived until his death in 1862, being about fifty-five years of age. His wife was born in 1805 and died in 1864. Both parents' deaths were caused by the war. They had eleven children, four of whom died in infancy: James A., William H. (deceased), John Riley (deceased), Rebecca Ann (Mrs. Harvey Madden), Greenbury, Cynthia J. (Mrs. Dr. J.B. Florence) and Francis Marion. At the time of the father's death, he owned 1,137 acres of land, which was divided equally among the seven children. James A. remained with his parents until he was married in August 1847, to Jemina Rushing, daughter of William Rushing, a native of North Carolina, of English descent. After his marriage Mr. Greer went to work for himself, clearing the woods to make a home for himself and family. He afterward traded farms with his brother, residing on the latter place from the fall of 1859 until 1871, when he sold the farm and removed to Mississippi County, locating where he now resides on December 16, 1871. He now has 240 acres under good cultivation, upon which he has a nice residence. He and wife have had ten children, five of whom died in infancy. Mary Catherine (Mrs. J.T. Childress) died in May 24, 1887, leaving five children. Those living are Sally Ann (Mrs. W.W. Gaty), Martin L., Cynthia E. (Mrs. Thomas Strickland) and Hezekiah D. Mr. and Mrs. Greer have been active members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South since 1842. He is a Mason, to which order his father also belonged.

Martin Luther Greer

Martin Luther Greer, a substantial farmer residing near Bertrand, was born in Benton County, Tenn., on December 9, 1858. He is a son of James A. and Jemima (Rushing) Greer, both of whom are natives of Tennessee, who immigrated to Mississippi County, Mo., in 1871. Martin L. lived at home with his parent until he was twenty-three years of age, assisting on the farm and attending school during the winters, securing most of his education after removing to Missouri. On December 20, 1881, he was united in marriage with Emma J. Jordon, who was born in North Carolina, and is a daughter of Henry Jordon. Her mother died when she was but a child, and her father went to the war, and was never heard from again. It is supposed that he was killed. She was educated by J.C. Yarbrough, of Camden, Tenn., with whom she lived until her marriage. After his marriage Mr. Greer located on the farm upon which he now resides. Three children have blessed their union: Stella, Walker and Jemima. Mr. and Mrs. Greer are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. He is a member of the A.F. & A.M. Lodge No. 330. Although Mr. Greer is a young man, he takes considerable interest in everything that tends to promote the welfare of his community. In politics he is a Democrat.

John L. Greer

John L. Greer, a farmer of Mississippi County, residing near East Prairie, was born in Ohio County, Ky. He is a son of William and Sarah P. (Cox) Greer, also natives of Ohio County, Ky. They reared their family in their native county, and in the spring of 1859 came to Southeast Missouri, and located upon the land where the subject of this sketch now lives. They spent the remainder of their lives on this farm. Mr. Greer dying in 1865, and Mrs. Greer in the fall of 1887. To them were born six children, three of whom are living: James L., William I. and John L. The two gentlemen last named reside together on the old homestead, and James L. resides on a farm near them. Mr. John L. Greer has 120 acres of land, which has been greatly improved since the spring of 1860. Politically he is a Democrat.

Nathan M. Griggs

Nathan M. Griggs, of

Mississippi County, Mo., was born in Meade County, Ky., in February 1842. He is one of three surviving children of a family of nine, born to the union of David Griggs and Martha J. Staples. The father was born in New York, and immigrated to Kentucky when young. His wife was a native of Virginia, and they were both of English lineage. Mr. Griggs was a physician, and practiced his profession in Kentucky until his death in 1855. His wife died three years later, in 1858. Their three living children are Nathan M., Clarence e. and Levantha J. (Mrs. Stephen Smith of New York). Although Mr. Griggs was a physician, his family was reared on a farm. Nathan M. received a good education in the common schools, and remained with his parents until their deaths, when he began working for himself. He followed boating for several years on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, running from Concordia, Ky., to New Orleans. In 1875 he removed to Mississippi County, Mo., locating where he now resides. The farm consists of 160 acres, nearly all of which is under cultivation, with good improvements. He was married in March 1875 to Lydia A., a daughter of John and Jane (Peak) Smith. Mr. Griggs and wife are members of the Baptist Church. They have three children: John D., Alonzo E. and Martha J. Mr. Griggs takes considerable interest in educational matters, and has served as school director. He is a member of the Masonic fraternity, and of the Agricultural Wheel.

W.F. Grinstead

Dr. W.F. Grinstead, a

prominent physician and surgeon of Charleston, was born near that place on October 8, 1853. He is a son of Andrew J. and Rachel A. (Brewer) Grinstead, the former born in Scott County, Mo., and the latter in Christian County, Ky. The grandfather, Edward Grinstead, emigrated from Warren County, Ky., to Southeast Missouri in the thirties, and settled in Scott County. Edward's father was David Grinstead, who was raised in Virginia, thence with his family to Virginia. John had a son Richard, who was a general in Washington's army at the close of the Revolutionary War. He was a farmer by occupation, which he followed until his death in 1848. The father was also a farmer and trader in live stock, in which business he was engaged the most of his life. He removed to Mississippi County about 1850, and remained there until his death in 1861. His wife died in 1875. They were the parents of four children, two of whom are living. Those dead are George D. and Lorenzo M. The two in life are Thomas M. and Dr. William F. The latter was reared on his father's farm until he was nineteen years of age when he entered the Charleston Academy, remaining for two years. In 1876 he began the study of medicine under Dr. J.L. Haw, then of Charleston, but now of Farmington, Mo. In the fall of 1876 he entered the Missouri Medical College at St. Louis, and after remaining there one term, he entered the Vanderbilt Medical College at Nashville, Tenn., graduating in the summer of 1877. During the winter of 1880-81 he held the position of *interne* or house surgeon in the City Hospital of Nashville, and in the meantime took lectures in the University of Nashville, medical department, receiving his second diploma in 1881. He immediately began the practice of his profession at Charleston, which he has successfully continued. Upon locating in Charleston he was appointed local surgeon for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, which position he still holds. He also held the office of county physician for three years. He was elected president of the Southeast Missouri Medical Association in 1885, and held the office one term. He had previously served as vice president of the association for two terms. He has written a number of essays which have been published in the *St. Louis Medical Courier*, viz: "Abscess of the Liver" read in May 1882; "Mother's Marks" read in November of that year, and "A Bad Cold" read in May 1884. The Doctor is a man of enterprise and public spirit, who seeks to promote the welfare of his people and community.

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