

Dr. Robert P Davis, of Portland, one of the leading physicians of Jay County, is a native of Lawrence County, Ohio, the date of his birth being November 12, 1836. His father, Hugh M. Davis, was also a native of the Buckeye State, born in Greene County, of English descent, and when a young man settled in Lawrence County, where he married Martha Silliman, who was of Irish origin. Of the ten children born to them, six sons and two daughters grew to maturity, all of whom are yet living but two sons and one daughter. Two brothers of our subject are residents of Indiana, living at Farmland, Randolph County; James, a merchant, and Lewis N., a physician, who read medicine with our subject, and graduated at Cincinnati, Ohio. The father was a stone mason by trade, which occupation he followed in connection with farming through life. When Robert P. was two or three years old the family removed to Clark County, Ohio, and about the year 1850 they again changed their residence, removing to Randolph County, Indiana, where they settled on a farm. In 1857 our subject began attending school at Liber, where he remained three years, occasionally teaching a term to defray his school expenses. While at Liber he made a specialty of physiology and anatomy, having at that time the medical profession in view; at the expiration of his three years at Liber he engaged in teaching school, and at the same time pursued his medical studies until the summer of 1862, when he enlisted in Company A, Eighty-fourth Indiana infantry. Immediately after the organization of the regiment it was ordered to Cincinnati. His knowledge of medicine procured for him at once a position in the regimental hospital, where for three years he faithfully performed the duties of his position. He accompanied his regiment until the close of the war, being present, as his duties required, on many a bloody battle-field, including Chickamauga, and those of the Atlanta campaign, and was also in General Thomas' Nashville campaign. He was discharged at Nashville in June, 1865. He was united in marriage March 23, 1866, to Miss Annie Peoples, of Randolph County. She was born in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, April 16, 1844, a daughter of Jonathan and Mahala (Norris) Peoples, both of whom died when Mrs. Davis was a child. Mrs. Davis is a sister of Captain Norris Peoples, who was killed at the battle of Resaca. He was Captain of Company E, Twelfth Indiana Infantry. The circumstances attending the death of this gallant officer were peculiarly sad and remarkable. He long had a presentiment that his death would occur in the first 'battle in which he should participate. As he was leading his regiment just before encountering the enemy's fire he said to Sergeant B. F. Pierce, "I shall be killed in this battle, but I am ready." The line moved forward into the open field, and the Captain and the Sergeant lay down together to protect themselves from the fire of the enemy, and while in the act of raising his head a ball struck him in the forehead, passing entirely through his head.

The Sergeant with others took him from the field, and at the solemn hour of midnight a grave was made ready for him, and not unlike the burial of Sir John Moore, the body of the gallant soldier was consigned to its narrow bed amid the broken utterances of grief from his comrades, and a heartfelt prayer for the loving wife who in her far-off home would wait in vain for the coming of her loved one. Dr. Davis, the subject of this sketch, has been a member of the medical profession of Jay County since the winter of 1866-1867, at which time he located at Redkey, and began the practice of medicine. Although Dr. Davis began his professional life in 1866 his preparation for his life work was by no means completed. In 1869, after attending a course of lectures at Cincinnati he received from the medical college the degree of M. D., and in 1873 he attended another course of lectures at Cincinnati, and in 1884 he went to New York, where he took a course at the Post Graduate College, thus preparing himself in the best schools the country affords, for the practice of his chosen profession. He came to Portland in 1880, where he has since built up a large and lucrative practice, and gained the confidence and esteem of all who know him. Beginning life a poor boy he has by his own unaided efforts attained a high rank in his profession, and has now a beautiful home, one of the finest residences in Portland. He has succeeded in spite of many obstacles, not the least of which the result of a severe injury that he received from his horses running away, from which he has never recovered. Politically the doctor is a Republican. In 1878 he was elected by his party to the office of county auditor, which position he held for four years, discharging the duties of the office with ability and fidelity. He was the only Republican elected on the ticket. He has been a prominent Odd Fellow for many years, being at present Deputy Grand Master of District No. 222, I. O. O. F., of Indiana, and is also a member of the Knights of Pythias.