

MILLIGAN, WILSON H.

Wilson H. MILLIGAN, one of Bearcreek township's well known and substantial farmers and landowners and proprietor of a fine farm on rural mail route No. 9 out of Portland, is a native son of Jay county, a member of one of the real pioneer families here, and has lived, in this county all his life, the farm which he owns in Bearcreek township being part of the original tract entered there by his grandfather, Wilson MILLIGAN, one of the pioneers of that township, about the time of the formal organization of this county. Mr. MILLIGAN was born on that farm, as was his father, and has done well his part in carrying on in his generation the work of development started there by his grandfather and continued by his father. He was born on November 11, 1873, and is a son of Samuel Homer and Harriet A. (TOWLE) MILLIGAN, the latter of whom also was a member of one of Jay county's pioneer families, the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (MONTGOMERY) TOWLE, of Liber. The late Samuel Homer MILLIGAN, a veteran of the Civil war, was born on September 22, 1846, and was a son of Wilson and Mary (BLAINE) MILLIGAN, the latter of whom was a daughter of James and Elizabeth (DOUGLASS) BLAINE, of Circleville, Ohio, Wilson MILLIGAN, who became one of Jay county's best known pioneers, was born in Highland county, Ohio, August 27, 1812, and was a son of James and Mary (SILLICK) MILLIGAN, the former of whom was born in Bedford county, Pennsylvania, the son of George MILLIGAN, a native of Ireland, who had located in Pennsylvania in Colonial days. James MILLIGAN married in Pennsylvania and four years later, in 1801, moved over into the Territory of Ohio, that having been two years before Ohio was admitted to statehood, and settled in Highland county, presently becoming one of the incorporators of the village of Greenfield in that county, and there he and his wife reared their family of eight children and spent the remainder of their days.

Wilson MILLIGAN grew up in the Greenfield neighborhood in Highland county and in the summer of 1833, he then being twenty-one years of age, was married. In 1837 he became attracted to the new lands then being opened to settlement over in this part of Indiana and entered from the Government a tract of 240 acres in Bearcreek township, this county, where he put up a log cabin in the forest wilderness and established his home, and there he resided for more than fifty years, becoming the owner of an excellent farm of 320 acres. Wilson MILLIGAN was twice married. By his first wife, Mary BLAINE, he had six children, William Blaine, James Newton, Mary Elizabeth, Hannah Jane, Sarah Amanda and Samuel Homer. The mother of these children died on January 4, 1866, and on August 4, 1867, Wilson MILLIGAN married Jane A. MONTGOMERY, daughter of Reuben and Mary (PEARSOL) MONTGOMERY, and one of the early school teachers of this county. Wilson MILLIGAN was one of the most active forces in promoting schools and better social conditions in his neighborhood, in pioneer days, served for some years as trustee of Bearcreek township and was an earnest worker in the United Brethren church. His youngest son, Samuel Homer MILLIGAN, father of the subject of this sketch, was born on the pioneer home farm in

Bearcreek township and there grew to manhood. He completed his schooling at Liber College and when seventeen years of age enlisted (May 28, 1864) for service as a soldier of the Union and went to the front as a member of Company E, 139th regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry (one hundred days service), and served until he received his honorable discharge. Upon his return from the army he resumed his studies at Liber College and on December 24, 1868, was married to Harriet A. TOWLE, of Liber. In 1870, in company with his brothers, he became engaged in the saw-milling business and was thus engaged for three years, at the end of which time he disposed of his interest in the mill and resumed farming, locating on the old home place, where he spent the remainder of his days, his death occurring there on February 15, 1889. To him and his wife were born nine children, all of whom are living, the subject of this sketch having two sisters, Nina and Mary, and six brothers, Orland B., Edward T., John B., Roydon R., Carlton M. and Scott MILLIGAN.

Reared on the home farm in Bearcreek township, Wilson H. MILLIGAN received his schooling in the Antiville school and from the days of his boyhood has devoted his attention to farming. He was but seventeen years of age when his father died and he remained at home helping to farm the place in his mother's behalf until his marriage at the age of twenty-five when he came into possession of twenty-five acres of the place and there established his home. Since then, from time to time, Mr. MILLIGAN has acquired other interests in the old home place until now he is the owner of 120 acres and has an admirably equipped farm plant. In addition to his general farming he has long given considerable attention to the raising of livestock, with particular reference to hogs, and is doing well. It was on March 18, 1899, that Wilson H. MILLIGAN was united in marriage to Ida MICHAEL, who was born in Darke county, Ohio, but was reared in Bearcreek township, this county, daughter of William and Elizabeth (PHILLIPPI) MICHAEL, and to this union three children have been born, Homer, Milo and Ralph, the latter of whom is still in school, in attendance at the Antiville school. Mr. MILLIGAN is a Republican, as were his grandfather and his father, and he and his wife are members of the Pleasant Ridge Methodist Episcopal church.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.130-131. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.