

PAXSON, WALTER W

Walter W. PAXSON, one of the best known farmers of Jay county, former overseer of the Indiana State Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, and formerly and for years engaged in the horticultural nursery business in this county, proprietor of an excellent farm on rural mail route No. 2 out of Pennville, in Penn township, was born on the farm on which he is now living, the third of the PAXSON's in direct descent in ownership of that farm, and has lived there all his life. Mr. PAXSON was born on March 5, 1866, and is a son of George and Lydia (MENDENHALL) PAXSON, both of whom were born in Columbiana county, Ohio, and who were but children when they came to this county with their respective parents, the two families having been among the considerable number of families from Columbiana county who found homes here in pioneer days. George PAXSON was but eight years of age when he came here in 1848 with his parents, Benjamin E. and Sarah (MITCHEL) PAXSON, both of whom were born in Bucks county, Pennsylvania. Benjamin E. PAXSON bought an "eighty" in Penn township, the place on which his grandson, the subject of this sketch, now resides and there established his home.

His son George grew up on that place and after his marriage to Lydia MENDENHALL established his home on the place, on which he presently established a "nursery" for the cultivation of garden and orchard plants and became widely known hereabout as a distributor of such products, one of the first persons in this section of the state thus to engage in this business on anything like a proper commercial scale, the PAXSON nursery products attaining a wide reputation throughout this area of distribution. George PAXSON and his wife were the parents of seven children, of whom four are living, the subject of this sketch having a brother, William O. PAXSON, and two sisters, Sarah and Mattie.

Reared on the home farm in Penn township, Walter W. PAXSON received his schooling in the school in district No. 5 of that township and early became associated with his father in the development of the nursery business on the home farm. After his marriage he was for some years engaged in the nursery business on his own account and since abandoning that line has devoted his whole attention to the cultivation of his farm, a well-kept place of fifty-seven acres, a part of the old PAXSON farm, and has done well in his operations. For years Mr. PAXSON has given his do attention to the affairs of the Patrons of Husbandry, one of the most active members of the local grange, and was for four years overseer of the state grange. He is an ardent Prohibitionist and long has been regarded as one of the leaders of that party in this part of Indiana. For more than thirty years he has been a member of the local lodge of the Knights of Pythias and is a past

chancellor commander of the lodge. He and his wife are members of the United Brethren church, and he has for years been an office bearer in the church, for the past twenty years a member of the board of trustees and for twenty years superintendent of the Sunday school.

Walter W. PAXSON has been twice married. In 1893 he was united in marriage to Mattie OGAN, a daughter of Adam and Amy OGAN, and who died leaving two daughters. Hazel and Fay, both of whom also now are deceased. Mr. PAXSON's second wife, Laura JAMES, is a daughter of John and Margaret (LAIRD) JAMES. To this union one child has been born, a son, Lloyd Herman PAXSON.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.327-328. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.