

ROOK, JOHN T.

John T. ROOK, a well-known real estate dealer and auctioneer at Dunkirk and a substantial landowner of this county, is a native son of Jay county, a member of one of the pioneer families here, and has lived here practically all his life, the exception being a period of several years during which he was engaged in the mercantile business at Albany, in the neighboring county of Delaware. Mr. ROOK was born on a farm in Richland township on June 7, 1855, and is a son of Jacob and Jane (SHRACK) ROOK, who were among the well-known pioneers of that township. Jacob ROOK was born in Virginia, where his youth was spent, he having been well grown when he came here with his father, Samuel ROOK, who had entered a tract of land in Richland township, this county, where he built a cabin and proceeded to clear the land. Jacob ROOK presently bought a forty-acre farm, which he proceeded to develop on his own account, but when the railroad came along sold the place to the railroad company and for some time thereafter was engaged in general activities until he bought a farm of forty acres in the immediate vicinity of Pennville, where he established his home and spent the remainder of his life, his death occurring on November 18, 1897. He and his wife were the parents of nine children, of whom the subject of this sketch is the only present survivor, the others having been William, Margaret, Catherine, Samuel, Price, Daniel, Charles and one who died in infancy.

John T. ROOK completed his schooling in the local schools and continued engaged in farming on the home place until he was twenty-one, when he became engaged in cutting and making headings, staves and ties, that being in the days when this was an important industry here in the timber country. In 1877 he bought a tract of forty acres in Knox township and proceeded to develop the same, continuing thus engaged until after his marriage in 1881, when he established his home at Albany, Ind., [Delaware Co.] and opened there a grocery store. For three years Mr. ROOK continued engaged in the mercantile business at Albany and then he returned to this county and took up his residence on his Knox township farm, where he remained until 1895, in which year he moved to Dunkirk and has since then been engaged in the real estate business, in which he has done well. Mr. ROOK also for years has rendered service in the community as a crier of public sales and is widely known hereabout in that connection. He has a tract of 160 acres where he now lives, two and one-half miles from Dunkirk, and besides this has in the neighborhood of 800 acres elsewhere, having other land interests in this county and in the states of Michigan and Washington. Mr. ROOK is a Democrat and is a member of the local lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows at Dunkirk.

It was on February 27, 1881, that John T. ROOK was united in marriage to Mary J. WRIGHT, who also was born in this county, daughter of Peter and Eliza (WINTERS) WRIGHT, pioneers of the county, and to this union one child has been born, a daughter, Pearl, who married Dr. Erastus HENLEY and is now living in Seattle, Wash. Mrs. Henley completed the course in the Dunkirk schools and then was graduated from Franklin (Ind.) College, after which she was for four years engaged in teaching school at Dunkirk.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.381-382. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.