

STEED, JAMES F.

James F. STEED, a member of one of the pioneer families of Jay county and proprietor of a well-kept farm in Pike township, where he and his family are living, rural mail route No. 12 out of Portland, is a native son of this county and has lived here all his life, with the exception of a period from April, 1917, to November, 1919, which he spent in Michigan. Mr. STEED was born on a farm in the township in which he is now living, November 10, 1862, and is a son of Robert and Leah (KUNTZ) STEED, the former of whom, a Virginian by birth, came to Jay county with his parents, John STEED and wife, from Ohio in 1836, the year in which Jay county was organized, the STEED's establishing their home on a tract of Government land in Jefferson township, where John STEED, the pioneer, became one of the influential and useful pioneers of that section, as it set out elsewhere in this work. Robert STEED was about sixteen years of age when he came to this county with his parents and he grew to manhood on the home farm in Jefferson township. He married at the age of twenty-one and then started farming on his own account on a forty-acre farm in Pike township, which as his affairs prospered he increased until he had more than 300 acres and was accounted one of the substantial men of that neighborhood. There he and his wife spent the remainder of their lives. They were the parents of eleven children, of whom five are still living, the subject of this sketch having two sisters, Rebecca and Emma, and two brothers, William W. and Elmer STEED.

Reared on the farm on which he was born, James F. STEED received his schooling in the district schools of Pike township and from the days of his boyhood has given his attention to farming. He married at the age of twenty-seven and for four years thereafter carried on his farming operations on a rented farm in Pike township, after which he returned to the home farm and was engaged in farming there in his father's behalf for one year. After his father's death he inherited a tract of forty-seven acres of the home place, and has continued to make his home there. To this tract he has added until now he has eighty-seven acres and has also a well-equipped farm plant and an excellent home, he and his family being very comfortably situated. Mr. STEED is a Republican, as are the other members of his family, and he and his wife are members of the United Brethren church.

It was on September 14, 1890, that James F. STEED was united in marriage to Linna FINCH, who also was born in this county, daughter of Thomas and Margaret (ALLEN) FINCH, both members of pioneer families here, and to this union have been born five children, Ralph W., Leah N., Noel A., Oliver K. and Ruth E., the first named of whom, Ralph W., the first born, married Bernice BOWER, of Michigan, and has one child, a son, Ivan. Ralph W. STEED is a veteran of the World war. Upon responding to the call to service he was sent to Camp Custer (Mich.) and thence to Camp MacArthur, Texas, from which latter camp he was sent to France with the outfit to which he was attached, the vessel landing at Brest. He was attached to the 107th Engineers, a unit of the 32d Division, and with this command he rendered service in Alsace and later with the Army of Occupation, continuing in service for eighteen months, and was mustered out as a corporal.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.386-397. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.