

**John Dawson** was a native of Hartford county, Maryland, and a son of Thomas and Margaret Dawson. Thomas came from his native country, Ireland, to Maryland when he was only fifteen years of age. There he married and there his son John was born. The most of the life of Thomas Dawson was devoted to farming. John grew to manhood in Maryland and became a manufacturer of boots and shoes. When war with England was declared, in 1812, he volunteered in a Maryland regiment, serving all through the conflict, and when peace was declared he came home, with health badly impaired. By the advice of his physicians he traveled on horse back through Pennsylvania and into Ohio.

There he met, in 1817, Jane Travis, married her and settled down to manufacturing boots and shoes in Guernsey county, Ohio. For about eleven years he worked at this business and was fairly prosperous. In 1828 his wife died, leaving him children, viz: Rebecca, born August 2, 1818, died at the age of eleven years; Elizabeth, born November 6, 1822, deceased; George, born November 25, 1824, now a resident of Union City; Albert, born December 27, 1826, resides in Petoskey, Michigan.

In 1830 John Dawson married Prudence Travis, a sister of his former wife. To them three children were born, the oldest in 1833, died in infancy; the second died aged eighteen months; Margaret, in 1835; Sarah Jane, the youngest of the family, was born February 2, 1837, and is the wife of Bunyon J. Wells, the subject of his sketch.

In 1838 John Dawson moved his family to Wells county, Indiana, and settled on the farm in Nottingham township, where Lewis Abshire now lives. He secured four hundred acres of land, all in the woods. In winter he worked at the boot and shoe business, sometimes at home, sometimes in Camden, while in summer he attended to his farm. Here he remained until his death, which occurred March 12, 1877. When John Dawson settled in Wells county, Indiana, his nearest neighbor lived four miles away. In her girlhood, Mrs. Wells says, Indians were quite numerous in Wells county, and wolves and bears were also plentiful. One of the Dawson boys shot and killed an old bear and captured three cubs and one of the latter was brought up about the house as a pet. Deer were so plentiful it was not uncommon to see as many as fifteen in one herd and it is told by the Dawsons that they shot deer from the top of their cabin. At that time the state road was the only road and it was merely a trail blazed through the woods. The low ground was then so wet and marshy that they did not pretend to use it. Only the high ground was cultivated.

## NOTTINGHAM TOWNSHIP.

The first settler in this township was Joseph Blacklege, in 1837; Abram Stahl, John Nutter, Jacob Warner, Lyman Bass, Peter Garner, Hezekiah Grimes, Isaac Haynes, Edward Haynes, Robert Smith, William Nutter and **John Dawson** came in 1838, Alonzo Lockwood, John Warner and others in 1840. Blacklege is deceased; Stahl died in 1856; John Nutter was living in Ohio at last accounts; Warner is still living, in this township; the rest have died, most of them long ago. William Stahl, who resides in the extreme southwestern corner of the township, may be now considered one of the oldest settlers.

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### **War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815 about John Dawson**

Soldier: John Dawson

Widow: Prudence Dawson

Marriage Date: 13 Nov 1828

Date Enlisted: 19 Aug 1814

Date Discharged: 18 Nov 1814

Soldier's Death Date: 12 Mar 1877

Soldier's Death Place: Camden, Ind

Pension Number - #1: SC 17254

Pension Number - #2: SC 17254

Pension Number - #3: WO 28892

Pension Number - #4: WC 19474

Bounty Land Number - #1: 16439 40 50

Bounty Land Number - #2: 57246 120 55

Roll Number: 25

Archive Publication Number: M313

**All contributed by Brad & Amanda Collins**