

THOMAS MANATT.

With the history of public development and progress in Poweshiek county the name of Manatt is closely identified, the family being established in this locality at an early day, since which time representatives of the name have been connected with various pioneer enterprises and also with the subsequent growth of the community. Of this number Thomas Manatt has been prominent and successful, not only along agricultural lines, but also in commercial circles, and he is now living retired.

He was born in Somerset county, Pennsylvania, July 10, 1830, a son of Robert and Sarah (Pedlar) Manatt. The parents were born in Ireland, about fourteen miles from Belfast, and were there married. They came to the United States about 1812 with one child, then about six months old, and took up their abode

in Somerset county, Pennsylvania. About 1831 they removed to Holmes county, Ohio, where the mother passed away, and there the father remained until 1847, when he brought his family to Poweshiek county, Iowa, and here cast in his lot with the pioneer settlers of this region. He drove the entire distance from the Ohio home and thirty-three days were passed ere he reached his destination. Upon arriving in this county Mr. Manatt entered land from the government, his claim being located on the present site of Brooklyn. This was still a frontier district. There were only three families in the neighborhood at the time of his arrival and on every hand were to be found evidences of pioneer life. During the first season the family resided in Washington county, while a clearing was made and a house erected on the claim in Bear Creek township. For a number of years Mr. Manatt's attention was given entirely to the development and improvement of his land and throughout his whole life he was actively connected with agricultural pursuits. In 1851 or 1852 he brought the first threshing machine into Poweshiek county and later, in 1853, introduced the first harvester. It was the McCormick reaper, which at that time was becoming very popular throughout the Mississippi valley, and everyone within a radius of many miles came to see the new invention working in the fields. Success followed closely upon his efforts and as the years passed he invested extensively in property, entering or purchasing farm land for almost all of his children, while he became the owner of about one thousand acres.

Later he platted a part of this land and erected the second hotel in Bear Creek township, which he operated in connection with his agricultural pursuits. He conducted that hotel during the last eight or ten years of his life, and there entertained probably all of the first settlers of this district. He became one of the prominent, substantial and influential residents of Poweshiek county and left a most enviable record at the time of his demise. He passed away in 1864, when he had attained the age of seventy-two years. By his first wife, who passed away in Holmes county, Ohio, in 1837, he had ten children. Of this number the eldest, Eliza, became the wife of William Scott, and at her death left two children. Robert, the eldest son, was married, and at the time of his death in 1863 left a widow and eight children, five sons and three daughters. This number included: Professor Irving Manatt, of Brown University; Sampson, who passed away leaving a widow and one child; Sarah, the wife of Eugene Mason, of Warren township; Mrs. Ellen Martin, a widow, living in Warren township; Rebecca, deceased; Albert, of Brooklyn; Robert, and John. John, the third child of Robert Manatt, Sr., died leaving a widow and five children; William has also passed away, leaving a widow and family; Susan married Jesse Gwin and passed away, leaving three sons and three daughters; James is a resident of Brooklyn; Thomas, of this review, is the seventh in order of birth. Sarah Jane, now de-

ceased, married John Talbott, by whom she had five children; Irving passed away, leaving a widow and four daughters; and Scott, the youngest, is also deceased. For his second wife Mr. Manatt chose Miss Margaret Mitchell, the ceremony being performed in Holmes county, Ohio. Mrs. Manatt was a native of Ireland and her death occurred in Brooklyn, Iowa. Unto this union were born four children, as follows: George, a resident of Grinnell; Margaret, the widow of John McBroom, of Indiana; David, a resident of Brookiyn; and Alex, deceased,

who met his death while serving in the Civil war as a member of the Twenty-eighth Iowa Infantry.

When but six months old Thomas Manatt, whose name introduces this review, left his native state of Pennsylvania and was taken by his parents to Holmes county, Ohio. There he spent the period of his boyhood and early youth and was but a lad of seventeen years when the long and tedious journey was made to the new home on the Iowa prairies. With the other members of his father's family he aided in the arduous task of clearing the land and developing a new farm, and he continued to give his father the benefit of his assistance until his marriage, when he started out independently on his own account. His first step in the business world was as a farmer, and for twenty-three years he was engaged in agricultural pursuits with constantly increasing success. At the expiration of that period he removed to Brooklyn, and for a number of years was engaged in the furniture and hardware business. His efforts along that line were equally successful and when he retired from business some years ago it was with a competency which ranked him among the substantial and well-to-do residents of Brookiyn. His realty holdings include seven hundred acres of land, located near the town, and all of this land can be seen from his attractive home in Brooklyn.

It was on the 12th of April, 1855, that Mr. Manatt was united in marriage to Miss Clarissa A. Winchester, who was born in New York November 3, 1836. In 1854 she came to Iowa with her parents, Cornelius and Chloe G. Winchester, natives of New York, both of whom passed away in this county. Unto Mr. and Mrs. Manatt have been born seven children, as follows: Robert Francis, of Des Moines, Iowa; Sarah Chloe, the wife of William Sutton, also of that city; Ida A., who married F. P. Shrader, a druggist of Brooklyn; Effie G., the wife of F. E. Stiteley, of Dixon, Illinois; Laura, residing in Des Moines; Albertus E., of California; and Thomas B., who passed away at the age of three years.

Mr. Manatt holds membership in the Presbyterian church, and his political support is given to the republican party. He has held all of the township offices and has ever been a loyal, public-spirited citizen, to whom the public welfare of the community has ever been of deep interest. He has resided within the borders of Poweshiek county for sixty-four years, and during that period has watched its gradual growth and development and at the same time has done his share toward the work of improvement.

He readily remembers when, as a lad of seventeen years, he drove with his father from their home in Ohio to the new home on the Iowa frontier, and recalls a remark made by his father as they drove through the timberland of this district to the effect that "There is timber enough here for about one hundred families," believing that to be about all this section could then support. They could not then foresee the time when that timber should all be cleared away, the vast prairies be converted into fields of grain and the commonwealth of Iowa should become one of the richest and most productive agricultural states of the Union.

At that time mail was carried twice a week on horseback from Iowa City to Des Moines, and the nearest mill was located at Oskaloosa. It required some time to drive to the mill and when the water was low it often took a week to

make the trip. But with the westward march of civilization pioneer customs have given way to new and more progressive methods and none has taken a greater interest and pride in the growth of the county and state than has Thomas Manatt, whose own growth has been simultaneous with that of the community and whose career has exemplified the same spirit of progress. The success which has come to him has been well merited and is a matter of gratification because of the comforts he has been able to provide for his family. He has traveled to some extent and spent one winter in Europe for the purpose of visiting his father's birthplace. For the past seven years Mr. Manatt has spent the winter seasons in southern California.

MANATT, Thos., b. Somerset
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