

Joseph McKee who owns and operates a farm of one hundred and twenty acres in Deep River township, has made his home on this place for the past twenty-eight years and is today classed among the well known and prominent farmers of Poweshiek county. He was born in Washington county, Maryland, April 16, 1843, a son of Samuel and Susan (Parks) McKee, the former a native of Ireland. Their family numbered five sons and four daughters, of whom our subject was the fifth in order of birth. The father died when the latter was a small boy but the mother survived for many years and died at the home of her son Joseph in 1880.

Joseph McKee pursued his studies in the common schools of his native state and was there reared to maturity. He then went alone to Ogle county, Illinois, and for three years worked as a farm hand by the month. He was then joined in that county by his brother John and together they operated a farm for two years, after which they came to Poweshiek county, and here continued farming together for fourteen years. Mr. McKee was then married and engaged in farming on his own account, renting the place on which he now lives for a period of three years. During this time he prospered in his undertakings so that he was able to purchase the land. He has here one hundred and twenty acres, on section 15, Deep River township, which is as rich farming land as is to be found in the entire county. Since becoming owner of this place, Mr. McKee has made many improvements in the way of good and substantial buildings, for when he took possession there was only a small house and a little stable on the farm, but he has built a good country residence and substantial barn and today has a valuable property.

Mr. McKee was married in Iowa county, November 21, 1882, to Miss Laura Jane Cole, who was born in Madison county, Indiana, February 25, 1852. Her parents, Crossman Jacob and Catherine (Eaton) Cole, were both natives of New York, the former born April 7, 1827, and the latter October 24, 1828. They were married in Madison county, Indiana, in 1851, and in 1856 removed to Keokuk county, Iowa, where they resided until the death of the mother. The father followed farming and harness-making throughout his business career and died while on a visit to Indiana, June 23, 1886, when fifty-nine years of age, while the mother died in Keokuk county, Iowa, February 28, 1870, at the comparatively early age of forty-two years. In their family were six children, of whom Mrs. McKee is the eldest, the others being: Cynthia Ann, deceased; Martha Ellen, the wife of John Sigler, of Virginia; William T. A., a resident of Montezuma; Ida Viola, who became the wife of John Garber but is now deceased; and Lucy Elizabeth, the wife of Carney Henderson, a resident of Oxford, Iowa.

Mrs. McKee accompanied her parents on their removal to Iowa and attended the schools of the school district near which they resided, but she received the major part of her education at Sigourney, Keokuk county. She eventually engaged in teaching, and before and after her marriage taught forty-eight terms in the district schools. She holds a life certificate to teach in the state of Iowa. For the past few years she has devoted her time to the raising of fancy poultry, making a close study of this line of work. From the time of its organization to the present she has acted as superintendent of the poultry department of the Poweshiek County Farmers Institute and ever takes an active interest in its development and work. Mr. and Mrs. McKee have no children of their own but have reared a nephew, Charles Joseph Garber, who is now engaged in farming in Deep River township.

Mr. McKee is a republican in his political views and his wife is a member of the Methodist Protestant church, in the work of which she takes an active part. They are both well known in Deep River township as well as other sections of Poweshiek county and Mr. McKee has a reputation for fair and honorable dealing which is surpassed by no man in his locality.

McKee, Joseph, Deep River twp., b. Washington county, Maryland in 1843, s. of Samuel and Susan (Parks) McKee. Mr. McKee m. in Iowa county Nov. 21, 1882, Laura Jane Cole, dau. of Crossman Jacobs and Catherine (Eaton) Cole. They were m. in Indiana and removed in 1856 to Iowa. POP 2, p. 672