

SAMUEL HARRIS. The agricultural districts of this great commonwealth are the homes of many worthy men whose lives have been spent in such a manner as to win the respect of their associates, while their well directed efforts have resulted in comfortable homes and valuable properties. In Randolph County representatives of this class may be found in large numbers, and one of them is he whose biographical record is outlined in these paragraphs. His home is located in township 6, range 5, where he has a thoroughly tilled farm, improved by such buildings as are made necessary by the extent of his work.

Born in Randolph County, Illinois, October 1, 1856, our subject is the fourth surviving son of John and Amanda (Threlkel) Harris, natives of Kentucky, who, coming to Illinois in an early day, settled five miles west of Steeleville, Randolph County. Mr. Harris became one of the most prominent farmers of the county, and his death in 1872 was universally mourned by the people of this community. His wife passed away December 31, 1883. Members of the Harris and Threlkel families were among the very earliest settlers of Randolph County, and east of Kaskaskia, near Percy, there still stands a building erected by Mr. Threlkel that has the distinction of having been one among the first structures built in Randolph County.

Alternating attendance at the district school with work on the home farm, Samuel Harris passed the days of boyhood. At the age of fourteen he enjoyed the privilege of attending school for one year at Chester, and two years later he entered the college at Lebanon, Illinois, where he prosecuted his studies for about two years. While at Lebanon his health failed, and for four years he was an invalid. Hoping to regain the vigor of former years, he went to Colorado and spent one year recuperating. Then he returned to Steeleville and with E. M. Harris embarked in the meat business, which he followed for five years. Later he engaged in the grain and feed business for one and one-half years.

On account of ill health Mr. Harris was once more obliged to seek the western part of the United States, and for a year he traveled and ultimately succeeded in regaining strength. In the spring of 1883 he settled on the farm where he has since resided, engaged in mixed farming and stock-raising. He is one of the moneyed men of the county, and is prominently identified with many of the most important enterprises of the community. In politics he is a Democrat, but has never aspired to office, although he has been chosen to serve as School Director and Constable. Socially he is connected with Alma Lodge No. 497, A. F. & A. M., at Steeleville.

In the spring of 1883 Mr. Harris married Miss Elizabeth Hoke, who was born in Washington County, Illinois, and for some time prior to her marriage engaged in teaching school in Washington and Randolph Counties. Her parents, George T. and Rebecca (Fulton) Hoke, natives respectively of Indiana and Illinois, are both living, and will in October 1894, celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. The Fulton family came from New Hampshire, while the Hokes were residents of Pennsylvania for several generations. Mrs. Harris is a member of the Methodist Church, and her two children, Samuel L. and Murray Hoke, are attendants at the Sunday-school.