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Jacob Claypool, A Founding Father of Grundy County

The following biography/obituary of Jacob Claypool comes from the Morris Daily Herald of August 25, 1879. It appears here thanks to WGGGS member Lea Sharp. Jacob Claypool's contribution of the Claypool Graveyard to the "People of whatsoever clime or country" later expanded to become today's Evergreen Cemetery in Morris.

In the town of Wauponsee, Grundy Co., Ill., on the morning of 17th inst., Jacob Claypool passed away. He was born in Randolph County, Virginia, August 23rd, 1788, and if he had lived but six days more would have been 88 years of age. He moved from Randolph County to near Chillicothe, Ohio (then Northwestern Territory) in 1799. He served in the War of 1812 in the First Regiment of Ohio Volunteers. On his return from the war he settled in Brown County, Ohio, where he remained until 1834, when he removed to Grundy County, Illinois, accompanied by his two sons, Perry A. and Lawrence W., his wife having previously died. Perry A., his older son, died in 1846. Lawrence W., his other son, still survives his father and resides near the old homestead.

Mr. Claypool was one of the earliest settlers of this county and resided on the farm where he died forty-two years. When he came here the vast prairies lay untouched by the hand of man, and Indians were more plenty and better than white men. He took a deep interest in the organization of Grundy county, and in having the county seat located at Morris. He was one of three of the first Board of Commissioners elected in this county, at the election held on the 24th day of May, 1841. Henry Cryder, another of the trio, died some years ago, and James McKeen, the third, still resides in this city. He has held many offices of honor and trust to the satisfaction of all. Probably no man in the county was more deeply interested or connected with the organization and welfare of Grundy County, unless it be the lamented George Keirstead. He was a man of large frame, had an iron constitution, hardly ever experienced a day of sickness. His honesty and integrity were never doubted; extraordinarily peculiar and eccentric, and rough in character and habits, he withstood the hardships of a pioneer life, which just suited him, for 88 years and was "gathered to his fathers like a shock of corn, fully ripe."

Jacob Claypool was the possessor of a fund of good common sense, fully acquainted with life and the ways of the world. He was very original and independent in his thoughts and actions, as a deed conveying the ground known as the Claypool Graveyard, dated June 14, 1841, will show.

"To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Now, know ye, that I, Jacob Claypool, citizen of the United States of North America, by birth a Virginian, and resident of Grundy County, State of Illinois, have given, granted, donated, conveyed, and quit claimed, and by these presents do give, grant, donate,



"convey, and quit claim, unto the people of whatsoever clime or country, faith or creed-- either religious or political-- the following described lot, piece or parcel of land, for or as a burying ground or place of interment of the deceased of the human race, to be used as such together with appropriate enclosures, head, foot or tombstones to perpetuate the memory of the deceased therein interred, agreeable to the liking or will of the surviving relations or friends, and for no other purpose, forever -- without money and without price. (Here follows a description of the ground.) The said Jacob Claypool, to and with the people aforesaid, stipulates and agrees that they may henceforth and forever for the use and purposes herein mentioned and named..."

The document is duly subscribed and sworn to.

In that yard was buried his son Perry A. in 1846, and shortly thereafter Mr. Claypool had a tombstone erected bearing the following inscriptions:

First side:

Perry Amos Claypool
Born in Clermont, now Brown County, Ohio
June 15, 1815, emigrated to this county 1834
Died October 15, 1846
Erected by Jacob Claypool

Second side:

Son of Jacob and Nancy Claypool, late Ballard
Grandson of Abraham and Elizabeth Claypool, late Wilson
Great-grandson of James and Margaret Claypool, late Dunbar
Great-great-grandson of William Claypool of Virginia,
whose forefathers emigrated from Germany by way of
England to America

Third side:

Tell us, ye dead, will none of you in pity
disclose the secret?
What 'tis you are, we must shortly be--
'tis no matter.
A little time will make us learned
as you are.

Fourth side:

From the Original
"You will find me out, you need not doubt
While I'm in time and place.
For now it seems my name is James,
And of the Claypool race."
Lost River, Hardy Co., Va., Dec 17, 1870.

Mr. Claypool was the possessor of a cream colored horse, now 35 years old, which for the past 25 years has been his constant companion. It was his request that at the time of his death the old horse be clothed in mourning. The request was complied with, and old "Nudge" at the head of the procession of 176 vehicles followed his old master to his final resting place.

The funeral took place on Friday of last week and was the largest

ever held in the county. Rev. Montgomery of the Congregational church of this city officiated. The remains were interred in the grounds as set apart by the above deed, there to remain until the resurrection morn. We cannot better close this notice than by the deceased's favorite quotation:

"All things that have life are subjects of death;
All things haste on to decay.
Creation is treading destruction's wide path
And to ruin is hasting away."

In a subsequent notice in the Morris Daily Herald of April 4, 1911, it was stated that the Daughters of The War of 1812 had placed on the graves of three veterans of that war bronze markers commemorating their service. They were Lawrence Wilkes, Jacob Claypool, and Herman Pangborn, all buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Morris.



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Information from NARA, via Prairie Roots, Peoria Co. Genealogical Society, Summer 2001.

Alumni of Lockport High School

Class of 1888

Abbie DeWitt
 Ulysses Kempf
 William W. North
 Julia Scheibe Brinckerhoff
 Mary Norton Frey
 James A. Hurn
 Fred W. Walter

Class of 1889

Edward L. Milne
 Catherine Ingraham Davis
 Minnie Turner Baker
 Arthur M. Godfrey
 Margaret Johnson Hawley
 Albert C. Phelps
 Grace Quinn
 Georgia Hopper

Class of 1890

Harriet Sager Chamberlain
 Minnie West Blodgett
 Roy S. Godfrey
 Emma Hills Enz
 Henry W. Sisson
 Jennie S. Kellogg
 Guy R. Godfrey
 Anna Fitzgerald Smith
 Mary Hills Schell
 George N. Lotz
 Matilda Kellogg

Class of 1891

Healy H. Alexander
 Halbert H. Gaines
 Josephine Wallace
 Samuel C. Fiddymont
 Carrie M. Tilsy
 Lewis T. Lotz
 William P. Jones
 Nellie Dow Orrell
 Herbert M. Johnson

Class of 1892

Jennie A. Walter
 Carrie Lynd Phelps
 Adella Savage Paddock
 Bessie Shields Walter
 Mary Damm Cornell

Class of 1894

Sara Parr

Class of 1895

Jennie Johnson Paddock
 May Cook Murphy
 Mary I. Beegan
 John R. Lotz

Class of 1897

John N. Pitts
 Earle St. John
 Charles W. Norton
 Bert Gilmer
 Mary Parr

Class of 1898

Laura Alexander Johnson
 Alice Hays Butler
 Jane Osgood Dowse
 Eva Chamberlin Holyoke
 Anna Bretz Bruce
 Flora Korrell
 Emma Osgood Miller
 Nora Wallace
 Julia Murray
 Leila Gaines Beck
 Lillian Freeman
 Emma Johnson Specht
 Ella Kirkton Bush
 Clara Johnson Pine
 Mamie Nicholson
 Robert C. Bruce
 Clyde Silliman
 Lawrence P. Ryan
 Harry Cook

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