

**John A. Smith.**

Throughout his entire life **John A. Smith** has resided in Crawford County and therefore his record is well known to many of its citizens, by whom he is regarded as a man of sterling worth, his industry, energy and reliability having won for him the merited regard of his fellow men. He was born in Jackson, now Jefferson, Township, July 24, 1837, his parents being **George and Hannah (Chisholm) Smith**. His paternal great-grandfather, **John Joseph Smith**, was born in Baden, Germany, November 8, 1736, and there resided until late in life, when he came to America, but he was not long permitted to enjoy his new home, his death occurring soon afterward, on the 16th of November, 1813, when he had attained the age of seventy-seven years. His wife, **Mrs. Catherine Smith**, was born August 8, 1736, and died November 11, 1819. Their son, **John Joseph Smith**, grandfather of our subject, was born in Baden, Germany, July 25, 1767, and just before attaining his twenty-first year of was married. To avoid military service he came to America in the spring of 1788 and purchased a small farm in Perry County, Pennsylvania. To this he added in later years until his landed possessions were quite extensive. By occupation he was a weaver. His death occurred July 9, 1836. He was an ardent member and a local preacher of the United Brethren Church and was a man highly respected for his many virtues.

The father of our subject was born in Perry County, Pennsylvania, January 10, 1803, and was a son of **John Jacob and Elizabeth (Fisher) Smith**. In his native county he was reared and there learned the shoemaker's trade, which he followed through the winter months while in the summer season he assisted in the cultivation and improvement of his father's farm. In his native county he married **Miss Hannah Chisholm**, who was born in that county, September 28, 1806. Her parents being **John and Margaret (McBride) Chisholm**. Her father was born near Glasgow, Scotland, while her mother was a native of Perry County, Pennsylvania. Three children were born unto **Mr. and Mrs. Smith** in Perry County, and in the spring of 1836 the family came to Crawford County, Ohio, the father entering from the government forty acres of land in Jackson, now Jefferson Township. He soon afterward purchased an adjoining tract of ten acres. All was wild, his farm being covered with a dense growth of forest trees, in the midst of which he erected a log cabin. When he had thus provided shelter for his family he at once began clearing away the trees, the woodman's ax awakening the echos in the forest. His labors in this direction were followed by the track of the shining plow, and he continued the work of developing the fields up to the time of his death, which occurred April 23, 1852. In the winter months he also worked at the shoemaker's trade until about 1850. He was a Whig in his political affiliations and served for a number of years as township trustee, while for a considerable period he filled the office of a member of the school board and did all in his power to promote the cause of education in the community. He was an ardent worker and consistent member of the United Brethren Church, taking a leading part in its work, was one of its officers and was a liberal contributor to all charitable and benevolent purposes. His wife died in February, 1864. Her many excellent qualities and true womanly character had won her the esteem and friendship of all with whom she had been associated. She had seven children, but only two are living, **John A.** and **George B.**, the latter a resident of North Baltimore, Wood County, Ohio.

**John A. Smith** spent his boyhood days on the home farm and in the common schools he mastered the English branches of learning usually taught in such institutions. He was only fifteen years of age at the time of his father's death and three years later took charge of the home farm, which he operated for his mother until the spring of 1864. On the 28th of May, 1863, he won as a companion on life's journey **Miss Jemima Modderwell**, a native of Liberty Township, Crawford County, who was born on the farm which is now her home and where she has resided continuously since her birth, with the exception of one year. Her parents were **James W.** and **Mary (Peterman) Modderwell**, the former a native of Virginia and the latter of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. With their respective families they came to Crawford County, Ohio, becoming its first settlers. In the spring of 1864 **Mr. Smith** removed to his father-in-law's farm, which he operated as a renter until 1875. He then purchased the farm of eighty acres in Liberty Township and twenty acres in Sandusky Township and in later years he has added twenty-one acres to the tract in Sandusky Township. He is diligent, persevering and energetic in his farm work and the well tilled fields return to him abundant harvests for his labor. In 1864 he purchased a thresher and for twenty-four consecutive years he carried on the threshing business and also operated a wood-saw. He became one of the expert threshers of the county and secured a very liberal patronage, his services being in demand throughout the harvest season.

Unto **Mr.** and **Mrs. Smith** have been born two children: **Anna W.**, now the wife of **J. S. Keller**, a hardware merchant of Sulphur Springs; and **Nessie F. S.**, who married **Y. C. Charlton**, who operates her father's farm. The parents have a wide acquaintance in the county and the hospitality of many of the best homes is extended to them. In political views **Mr. Smith** is a stalwart Republican. For thirteen consecutive years he served on the school board and is at present acting in that capacity. He has also served repeatedly as supervisor and in 1900 he was appointed census enumerator. He is now secretary of the Crawford County Pioneers' Society, and is one of the most highly respected men of the county. For more than sixty-three years he has resided in Crawford County, and his memory forms the connecting link between the primitive past and the progressive present. Where are now seen richly cultivated fields once stood the forest trees and the intersecting roads had not been laid out. The pioneer homes were widely scattered and the work of progress and improvement was in its primitive condition. He belongs to that class of substantial citizens who have aided in the work of improvement, and well does he deserve mention among the honored pioneers.

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