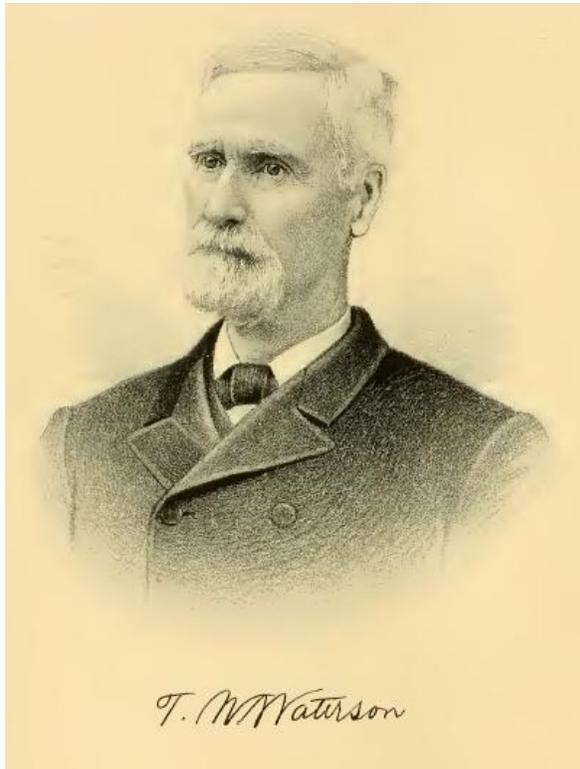


Portrait and Biographical Album of Marshall County, Kansas, Containing Full Page Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County, Together With Portraits and Biographies of All The Governors of The State, and of the Presidents of the United States. Chicago: Chapman Bros. 1889.



Thomas W. Waterson was a few months since regarded as the oldest white settler in Kansas, but he too has now passed to his last long rest, and is numbered with the great majority who were, but are not. He died Sept. 5, 1889, mourned by his friends, and sinking peacefully into the arms of death. At the time of his arrival in Kansas in 1851 he found only a few Government officials, **Mr. Smallwood**, father of Secretary of State **Smallwood**, having come the day before. **Mr. Smallwood** is now dead and extensive inquiry fails to reveal any now living, who were settlers prior to our subject. He was therefore closely identified with the growth of Northeastern Kansas, and his biography in many particulars is a history of this part of the State.

Mr. Waterson was born Feb. 15, 1811, in what is now Perry County, Pa., but was at that time a part of Cumberland County. He lost his mother when he was only three years old. His father remained in that county until 1827, when he removed to Hamilton County, Ohio, living in or near Cincinnati, and at one time near Hamilton City, Butler County. Our subject was early thrown on his own resources, but succeeded in getting a good practical education, by working in the summer to make the money necessary to pay tuition, and in the winter working for his board while attending school. He settled upon a farm in Butler County, and there resided until coming to Kansas.

As before mentioned, he came to Kansas in 1854, settling with his family in Doniphan County. On the 6th day of May, that year, he made a preemption claim by driving a clapboard in the ground and writing his name upon it, and laying the foundation of a home by crossing four poles. He built a log cabin, covering it with clapboards, and during the spring and summer of his first three years' sojourn in Kansas, brought 100 acres of prairie under cultivation without hiring a day's work. He devoted his land to the raising of the great staples, wheat, corn and oats, and cultivated an abundance of garden vegetables. When he first located in Kansas, Indians were plentiful, many of them being treacherous and hostile, but our subject had no personal trouble with them. In 1855 he proved up on his place, of which he continued a resident until 1857. He then removed to Iowa Point, where he engaged in the mercantile business.

Removing to this county in the spring of 1860, our subject engaged in selling general merchandise, he and Gen. Marshall, being among the first who supplied freighter's outfits. His

first store was located on the Big Blue, where the bridge now stands, everyone at that time being obliged to ford the stream. At that point the business of the vicinity was done for three or four years, when the town was started a half mile east. **Mr. Waterson** then removed to Broad Way, where he sold goods until 1870. Then erecting a double brick store, he occupied one part of it until the 1st of January, 1889, when he sold his stock, retaining the building, together with several fine business blocks on Broadway, and other city property. For a number of years he sold agricultural implements as well as general-merchandise. At various times he bought land, much of it being a short distance west in Washington County. For several years he carried on farming, owning one farm of 400 acres near town, and renting 1000 acres.

There was no local government in this section when our subject arrived, as it had not then been declared a Territory. The Kansas and Missouri border war was in progress and there was a great deal of excitement. The Territorial treaty was ratified during the summer of 1854, and the first Congressional election held in the fall. On March 30, 1855, a Territorial election was held and our subject was elected to the First Territorial Legislature. The first session was held in July, 1855, near Ft. Riley, at a place called Pawnee City. This being far west of the center of civilization, the body was thereby greatly inconvenienced, but soon had a good house in which to stay. Our subject arrived on Sunday afternoon and found men engaged in cutting trees, drawing and sawing them. On Monday the Legislature met in the brush for preliminary work, but in the afternoon had a capitol building, 20x30 feet, with doors, roof, windows and floor complete.

Our subject was a member of the committees on Corporation, Judiciary and others. The session lasted only for a short time and but one bill was passed. This bill was to remove the Capital from Pawnee City to the Shawnee Manual Labor School in Doniphan County, that being the only place capable of accommodating the members. The Legislature had a rather boisterous session, as the Governor had been angered by the change in the place of meeting, and he vetoed the first bill passed. **Mr. Waterson** was returned to the Legislature in 1857, the body meeting at the same place. Being personally acquainted with the Governor he was appointed by the Legislature to confer with him in regard to the change of the Capital.

Our subject was the first Justice of the Peace appointed in the Territory, being elected at a meeting of early settlers in Wathena, Doniphan County, and appointed by the Governor. His jurisdiction extended from the Nebraska line to the southern boundary of Kansas, and from the Missouri River to the Colorado line. Subsequently there were two other citizens appointed to the office of Justice of the Peace in that territory. After receiving his commission he asked the Governor what law he should use, as there was none in the Territory. The Governor asked what State he was from, and then told him he could use either the Ohio or the Missouri law. He counseled with Judge Woodson at St. Joseph, Mo., and finally decided to use the old Missouri Territorial law. **Mr. Waterson** served as Justice of the Peace until the State was divided into counties. Having held court he was familiarly known as **Judge Waterson**.

Mr. Waterson was first married to **Miss Jane Moore**, who died while young, leaving two children, both now deceased. One of these, **James**, grew to manhood, married and settled in this State, and at his death left three children. Our subject again married, his second wife being **Miss Caroline Hall**, who accompanied her husband to Kansas. She left three children to mourn her loss. The third wife of our subject was **Mrs. Rebecca M. Boyd**.

The people displayed their confidence in **Mr. Waterson** by choosing him to occupy the responsible position of Mayor of Marysville for several terms. He was not an active politician, but was prominent in Democratic circles, having voted with the Democratic Party from Jackson to Cleveland. He was a man of eminence in Marysville not only on account of his many years of life and service in the State, but on account of his abilities and upright character.

The following clipping from the *Marysville News*, published the day after the death of this pioneer and time scarred warrior, will be appreciated by the readers:

He was very successful in his business pursuits and amassed a very handsome fortune, amounting to well upwards of \$100,000. He was always a liberal public spirited man, and worked for what he believed to be the best interest of the city. He always contributed liberally to charitable purposes, and was always willing to aid and encourage his unfortunate fellowmen. He was a man who carried his age well, and was unusually smart and active for a man of nearly eighty years of age. But for the past year his friends have noticed that his physical strength was failing. He realized this himself, and had his business matters all shaped up according to his desires, so that there would be no likelihood of any complications after his death. On last Sunday while at the dinner table he was stricken with paralysis on the left side, and this was followed Wednesday by another stroke which completely paralyzed his whole body, and he lay in a comatose state until 2:20 yesterday, when he died. The deceased was a man of good moral character, and was always identified with the moral element of the community. His death removes a good citizen, an old land mark. An honest, upright man has gone to enjoy his reward free from the trials and turmoils of this world."

We are pleased to present to the readers of the Album a fine portrait of this honored citizen, whose familiar face and friendly voice will no more greet old and young, rich and poor, with a smile of sympathy or a word of kindness.

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