

### George Riedesel.

born Jan. 12, 1825. Died Jan. 11, 1901.

The death of George Riedesel, occurring so near upon the day of publication, allowed merely of a simple notice of the fact in the last issue of the GAZETTE, but few as were the lines they were enough to signify the removal of another member of that fast diminishing group whose acquaintance with this community dates back far enough to include the memory of its very beginning and of the times before when what is now converted into valuable farms hereabouts was Government land spreading its fertile soil to empty hither those who possessed the foresight to see, and the industry to gather the stable rewards that it promised. This was the attraction, reaching through relatives already located in the newly organized township of Spring Rock, that drew Mr. Riedesel on his first trip to this vicinity, and it has been told how, in the winter of 1850, he and his brother set out afoot from Crawford Co., Ohio, and for almost two months tramped sturdily westward over the snow covered wastes and frozen streams to the new state of Iowa. It was a wild country he beheld from the "claim" he "took up" before starting on his return journey to Ohio—eastward, the timber-fringed Wapsipinicon, in all other directions, the unbroken prairie with a solitary log cabin the sole sign of settlement. But when he came back with his family in 1868 the village of Wheatland, enterprising and thriving in the seventh year of its growth, lay a quarter-mile south-westward of the claim whereon he proceeded to establish his home. That sound sagacity which afterwards his fellow townsmen so often availed themselves of, was indicated in the selection of his claim. It was in the following years proven by his retention of it and additions to it—a course that in 1894 enabled him to retire with a secure and comfortable competence to a residence in this town, of which he thenceforward became one of the most substantial and trusted citizens.

The esteem in which his judgement, integrity and ability were held by his fellow townsmen is sufficiently demonstrated by the many responsible positions they conferred upon him. Only a few days before his death he was re-elected President of the German Farmers Fire Ins. Co. He was an influential member of the City Council, to which body he was repeatedly re-elected. He had served many years as a township Trustee, and since its organization has been a leading member of the local German Reform Church. These places came to him in recognition of his neighbors' confidence in his thorough trustworthiness and reliable judgement. He was an excellent advisor, and a type of the solid, sturdy man who progresses with that degree of slow but safe conservatism that makes sure of a sound footing at every step—but never moves an inch backwards. In building up themselves, such men as he add to the welfare of the community that is fortunate enough to include them among its citizens. It is he and others like him employing such methods that have gradually but with unfailing certainty converted the wilds of fifty years ago into the prosperous and well-to-do country of today. He was well disposed towards everybody and he leaves only those who were well disposed toward him.

The deceased was a son of Ludwig and Flora Riedesel and was born in the village of Wunderhausen, Germany, Jan. 12th, 1825. The family emigrated to Crawford Co., Ohio, in 1845. It was there that he met Miss Elizabeth Gerhardt, a native of the county, and the two were married in February, 1859. When he removed to Iowa in 1868 he was accompanied and preceded by three brothers and a sister who became residents of this vicinity. For the following thirty years he dwelt upon his farm, improving and enlarging it to the end that in 1894 he felt qualified to retire from active work. He purchased and moved into a house in town, and thenceforth resided there to the time of his death.

The deceased leaves surviving, a wife and the following children: Mrs. Mary Kramer, Mrs. Annie Dieckmann, Mrs. Lizetta Ott, Mrs. Louisa Ott, and sons Edward, Theophil and Albert. One son, John F., died in infancy. Two brothers, John and Ludwig and a sister, Mrs. Franz Homerighausen also survive him. The funeral was held on the afternoon of the 16th inst. at the German Reform Church. An exceptionally large attendance testified to the wide acquaintance of the deceased and to the high regard in which he was held. His remains were buried in the church cemetery bordering the farm whereon the chief portion of his active life was spent.

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This extensive obituary recounts his deep involvement in the community. Elizabeth was actually his first cousin (daughter of an aunt) but they only met in Ohio, where she was born.

Notes by Dr. Paul Riedesel