

## THOMAS WINN.

Mr. Thomas Winn is another man who made his home here as early as the spring of 1834, being then a married man, and the father of four sons, all of whom lived to be citizens of Stark county, one of them, Jefferson, serving the county acceptably for a term of years in the capacity of circuit clerk.

Mr. Winn was born in Virginia in 1801; his wife whose maiden name was Mary Anne Johnson, in 1796.

They were married in Switzerland county, Indiana, 1823. The winter of 1831 they spent at Fort Clark, now Peoria, and during the two following years, farmed land near Mossville, on the Illinois river. His removal to Putnam county was brought about in the following manner:

While residing at Mossville he made the acquaintance of a Captain Jack, an eccentric English soldier, who after distinguishing himself to some extent in the campaigns against Napoleon, concluded to bring his family to this new country, and betake himself to more peaceful pursuits. This man hired Mr. Winn and his two yoke of oxen, and another man by the name of Canon, with a four-horse team, to take his family and effects from Mossville to Knoxville. They went by the way of Farmington, were three days making the journey, and had to camp out at night. At Knoxville they found William P. Smith, from the Essex settlement, then a young man, but well taught in the lore of the woods and prairies; he was on horseback, and said he could pilot the teamsters back by a shorter route; said "he could strike a bee line to Spoon river," which he did—they fording that stream near the present site of Rochester, reaching the Essex settlement in good time on the second day. Here they were kindly entertained by the Smiths, and Mr. Winn was so pleased with the locality, as to decide upon making it his future home. So in April, 1834, he purchased sixty or seventy acres of land near the farm of Mr. Josiah Moffitt, which included the site of the "old log fort," built it would seem but to commemorate the "Indian scare" of 1832. For a short time his family lived within the "picketed" enclosure, but he subsequently put the logs to better use by splitting them into rails. Mr. and Mrs. Winn are now growing feeble with age, but their memory of past events is good; they corroborate, in every particular, Mr. Clifford's account of the building of our first school house, and say they think Adam Perry suggested and planned the enterprise. Mr. Winn was at its "raising;" says the neighbors came together early on the 4th of July, 1834, with their ox teams and axes, cut and hauled the logs from the woods around them, and some engaged in splitting clapboards. By two o'clock P. M. they had it waist high, and a very heavy rain coming up, they arranged their clapboards the best they could for shelter, and crawled in and "ate their fourth of July dinner, without toasts," but had a jolly good time, never to be forgotten by any of them.

Mr. Winn remembers the time when the Indians cultivated their corn fields on Spoon river, just above Cox's mill, near the mouth of Camping creek; also has seen the remains of their "council house" in their old village near Mr. Moffitt's farm; the outlines could be distinctly traced and the centre pole was still standing; has also found the wooden troughs in which they enclosed their dead, sometimes hanging in trees.