

Member's Name: Nancy Miles Gillfillan

NSDOAF Member's National Number C321

Name: John J. (Joshua) Miles

Born: 2 Oct 1794 Hardin Co., KY

Died: 23 May 1872 Warren Co., IL

My Great Great Grandfather and my first farmer ancestor, John Miles was born in Hardin County, KY in 1794. He was the son of John Miles and Mary Nan Vertrees, daughter of Revolutionary War soldier John Vertrees. The family moved to Indiana when John was twelve. He studied law and was admitted to the Bar in Indiana. He practiced law there and married Sarah Froman. But it changed in 1829 when they moved to Illinois. They ended up in Warren County and built a small log cabin, and after being admitted to the Illinois Bar, he was the first lawyer in Warren County. It has been said that it is probable he was on the same circuit as Abraham Lincoln because of his location and time. No doubt they met more than once.

He served in the Black Hawk War, and when he was discharged he returned to law to a limited extent but mostly he turned to the improvement and acquisition of land. At least one land-grant was signed by President Martin Van Buren.

He was really active in his county and township and was elected the first Justice of the Peace in that part of his county. He was also the first township supervisor. It is said he was very energetic and always accomplished a great amount of other business while improving a large farm and erecting a set of frame buildings on that farm.

John and Sarah had twelve children including my Great Grandfather, Henry Clay Miles—also a farmer. Henry Clay married Theresa Rogers. Her uncle George Washington Brown invented the corn planter. Farming runs deep in the family.