

John Waters 1842-1924

John Waters: 1842-1924; Benton Township, Butler County, Kansas

This is the true story of a simple man (with colorful background) who was another of our true pioneers

John Waters was born at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1842, but he never knew his actual birthday. The early years of his life were spent along the waters of Memphis and the Mississippi River, between New Orleans and Minneapolis and Saint Paul. He succeeded in severing all family ties permanently when he shipped on a river freighter, one of the early side-wheelers, as a stowaway. This boat was bound for Saint Paul, a two month round trip at the time. After making himself known, he was taken on as cabin-boy. He spent a few winters as assistant cook on larger river boats at and near the mouths and tributaries of the Mississippi while the crew cut timber and sawed it up into lumber.

At seventeen, he tired of the river and its sameness and drifted to the plains-of Texas, where he ran into a Confederate conscripting force, that convinced him to do or die. At Vicksburg he jumped to the Northern army camp but they eventually took him to a Northern prison but he eventually got the opportunity to enlist in the US Navy.

After the civil war he drifted to work in a Pennsylvania sawmill, married, came to Kansas in 1870 and with no money began a life as farmer.

With some 350 pages of her testimony as well as that of doctors and friends and fellow Navy comrades and a host of other sources we have pieced together his life of 100 years ago. This 150 page history includes photographs of him and his family and their life particularly in the little community of Indianola, Butler County, Kansas. (see more details at

<http://www.butlercountytimesgazette.com/article/20140109/NEWS/140109453/1994/NEWS>)

