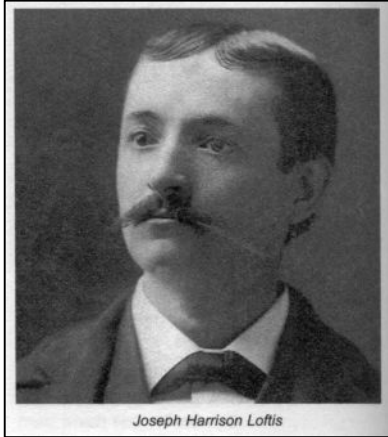


JOSEPH HARRISON LOFTIS (#765)

Source: Heritage of Putnam County Tennessee – 2008 by Putnam County Heritage Book Committee and County Heritage Inc.

Pg. 278 – Joseph Harrison Loftis was born in Putnam County August 3, 1874, the son of Benjamin Lloyd



Loftis and Celia Francis West. He was the great, great grandson of Laban Loftis who settled on Morrison Creek in 1816. His mother died when he was a toddler and he was raised by his loving Uncle William Harrison Loftis and his wife, Landonna West, in the Spring Creek community of “Little Putnam”. They instilled him with a love of education which he eagerly pursued. He graduated from Peabody Normal Teachers College in 1894 as valedictorian of his class. In his valedictory oration, he noted that man might someday fly. He subsequently taught at Popular Springs in Overton County, the Arbor School on the Roaring River in Jackson County, McMillen Chapel on Blackburn Fork, White’s Bend on the Cumberland River, Monroe Academy and Beauvoir College in Wilmar, Arkansas.

While teaching at Monroe Academy, he met and later married on September 17, 1895, Hassie Anna White, the daughter of Reverend Samuel Andrew Jackson White, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister, and Sarah Hassie Forshee. Her grandfather, Reverend Joseph Forshee, a Methodist minister in the Holston Conference, was one of the four founders of Hiwassee College at Madisonville, Tennessee in 1849. Joseph and Hassie loved each other and honored their wedding vows till death did them part nearly 71 years later.

A bout of typhoid fever resulted in a hearing loss that brought an end to Joseph’s teaching career. He then occupied himself with several positions. He was the first mail carrier (on horseback) at Waterloo, Tennessee and was community correspondent for the Jackson County Sentinel under the pen name of Bowser II. He owned and operated the J. H. Loftis Mercantile at Netherland, Tennessee at that time. He made his way to “Cork Town”, the Irish settlement of Detroit, and later settled in Birmingham, Michigan. Trouble again befell them in the form of the Great Depression. They lost their Birmingham home and then settled in Berkley, Michigan where they had land sufficient to allow him to garden which he so loved to do. Finally, the difficulties of old age caused them to live the remainder of their lives in the care of their daughter, Francis, in Allen Park, Michigan. Joseph passed over August 16, 1966 at age 92. Hassie joined him December 16, 1976 at age 96. They are buried, along side of their children, Latta Conway Loftis, Alton Taylor Loftis and Francis Alsman in the Oakland Hills Cemetery at Novi, Michigan. *Story submitted by: John R. Loftis, 5301 Roosevelt, Dearborn, MI.*

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