

Hostetter, L. W.

In 1870, L.W. Hostetter, from Ladoga, Indiana, arrived in Wellsville on one of the first trains to run on the newly completed railroad. His family and household possessions arrived later by covered wagon. He purchased a 1200-acre tract about three miles south of Wellsville which had prairie bluestem pasture and an abundant supply of water provided by over a mile of Hickory Creek to raise and feed cattle.

Fencing and barbed wire had yet to be invented and small enclosures were made of stone, split rail or wood; so Mr. Hostetter immediately began the task of growing fences by planting Osage orange seeds for hedge. Until the hedges were large enough, it was the duty of his ten-year-old son, A.D., to keep the grazing cattle from wandering away from the home farm. The cattle operation was a large one for that time and provided a market not only for the grain raised on his farm, but also a market for the neighbors' surplus grain.

Mr. Hostetter was active in community affairs and served two terms in the State Legislature. In 1875, the northwest corner of the farm was given to the community as a cemetery and was known as the Hostetter Cemetery for many years. Later it became known as Walnut Creek Cemetery.

Descendants of Mr. Hostetter who remained in this area are: A.D., Josephine and Lucky.