



# **HISTORY OF JORDAN TOWNSHIP WHITESIDE COUNTY IL**

**From Bent-Wilson 1877 Page 257-264**

Jordan is the northeastern township of Whiteside county, and marked in the Government survey as township in north range 7 east of the 4th principal meridian. The township is square containing thirty-six sections of land. The soil is generally of great fertility, and except along the courses of the Buffalo, Elkhorn, Sugar, and other creeks, is undulating prairie, and under a high state of cultivation. The streams are usually fringed with growths of forest trees, and present numbers of valuable table mill sites. Inexhaustible stone quarries are found in Jordan, which are more fully mentioned in the chapter upon geology. Previous to township organization Jordan was a part of Elkhorn Precinct. After township organization was adopted, the Board of Commissioners appointed for the purpose defined the boundaries of the township, and denominated it as Jordan.

The first settlement was made on sections 32 and 34, on the 10th day of April, 1835, by S. Miles Coe. Immediately upon his arrival he built a log cabin, broke 20 acres of prairie, sowed oats, and planted corn and vegetables. Soon after the arrival of Mr. Coe, James Talbot came, erected a cabin, broke prairie and put in a crop of sod corn, potatoes, and garden vegetables. At this time game, such as deer, wild hogs, wolves, bears, raccoons, otter, muskrats, and wild fowls, was abundant. Buffalo were seen occasionally. Joseph M. Wilson and family came next, and settled July 3, 1835. A large number of settlers arrived in 1836, among them Albert S. Coe, Vernon Sanford, James Deyo, Garrett Deyo, Jacob Deyo, and Howard Deyo. In 1837, the memorable "panic year," there were more arrivals Becker Miller, James Wood, Harry Burlingame, and Captain

**Manoah Hubbard, who settled at a grove still known as ‘Hubbard’s Grove.’ in 1838 Simon M Coe and family arrived and made their claims at a grove which still bears the name of “Coe’s Grove.” Mr. Coe built his cabin at a spring in the grove. at once erected a saw mill, by which he sawed up the surrounding timber in sufficient quantities to supply the settlers for purposes of building and fencing The same year John Brookie, a Mr. Bush, Henry Bolton and family, a Mr. Goodchild, John, Thomas and Caleb Plummer, came into the settlement. The year 1839 witnessed quite an influx of settlers; Jabez Gilbert and family, Geo. Stull, Benj. Davis, Horace R. Mack, Theo. R. Mack, Chas. H Miles, and others, came this year. Chas. S. Lunt settled on the site of Dr. Pennington’s property about this time, but after a short stay removed to Fulton.**

**Henry Bolton broke the first prairie on the west side of time Elkhorn creek and built a cabin, but it was burnt, either by accident or design, and he made another claim on the east side of the creek, and built a cabin on a stream then called Dote river. A Mr. Knight jumped his claim and built also a cabin but before Knight had time to occupy it Mrs. Bolton concluded it was a nuisance and abated it. She arose in the night and alone, harnessed her father’s horse, and taking with her a log chain threw down Knight’s cabin by hitching the horse to each log, and not only pulled the cabin down, but at the same time hauled the logs and dumped them into Dote river, and returned to her home before the morning came.**

**The first marriage in Jordan was that of Simon Fellows-then a resident of what is now Palmyra. Lee county, now a respected citizen of Round Grove Mt. Pleasant township, in this county-to Miss Elizabeth Deyo, the marriage taking place July 10, 1836, in a log cabin without any floor, situated in the northeastern part of Jordan township.**

**One of the greatest necessities of the new country was mills for grinding the grain, and when Joseph M Wilson settled in Jordan his first movement was to erect a mill. His log mill was built and in running order in May, 1836. It was the only mill then in the county, and the people within a circuit of forty miles brought their grain to it to be ground. At first the grain was ground in the open air, and when the rain fell the grain was emptied from the hopper, which was inverted over the stone, and a large chip placed over the hopper vent. Under all these disadvantages good flour was made, and even to this day the old settlers speak enthusiastically of the good flour ground by Uncle Joseph Wilson at the old log mill. A large frame mill has taken the place of the log structure, which is now managed by James S. Wilson.**

**In 1836 a town was laid out in Jordan township by Col. S. M. Bowman, and known as "Burwick". Some ten houses were built in the town. "Burwick" was laid out and built upon Government lands, and the plat never recorded. By the time the land was entered, Burwick, like hundreds of other western towns and cities, was a thing of the past. Col S. M. Bowman, who was a partner in the mill at the start, bought out Mr. Wilson's interest after a year or two, and run the mill alone for one or two years. During this time Mr. Wilson had a store and sold goods in Burwick.**

**One of the early enterprises in Jordan was the erection, in 1839, of a carding machine, which was located on Sugar creek. Mr. Thomas Plummer was the builder, and Mr. Samuel Emmons managed the machine for several years. It was the only one in a large territory and the farmers came from great distances to have their wool carded. Mr. Plummer lived in a 10 by 12 house, and there being none other upon the prairie, the accommodations for the customers were necessarily limited, therefore many of them camped out while waiting for their wool to be carded. Near the carding machine a frame was erected for a grist mill, but never finished. Mr. Plummer also built a saw mill, which after being run a short time was abandoned for want of water.**

**The following is a list of the pioneer settlers of Jordan. as near as we can ascertain:**

**S.M. Coe, James Talbot, Joseph M. Wilson; 1836-Albert S. Coe, James Deyo, Garrett Deyo, Jacob Deyo, Hiram Deyo, Vernon Sanford; 1837-Becker Miller, Manoah Hubbard, Harvey Burlingame, James Wood; 1838--John Brooks, Bush, Simeon M. Coe and family, Henry Bolton, Henry Goodchild, John Town, Caleb Plummer; 1839 - Horace R. Mack, Theo. R. Mack, Charles H. Miles, Jabez Gilbert, Benjamin Davis, George Stull. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan was organized November 4, 1871. The church edifice was erected at a cost of \$2,600. 'The house and cemetery occupy one and a half acres of land. The first Elders were Wm. Jacobs and Daniel Wolf. The Deacons- Godfrey Mentz and George Sheer. John Stoll was elected Pastor in 1871 and still continues in that office. There is a Sunday School in connection with the church conducted by the Pastor as Superintendent, and six teachers. About fifty pupils are in attendance. The German and English languages are used in the Sunday School. The church services are held in the German language The entire membership is about 150. The first meeting of the citizens of Jordan as a township was held at the house of Isaiah C. Worrell. It was then voted that stock should run at large under liability to impounding. It**

was voted that board fences should be four feet and three inches in height, and no space between boards to exceed six inches, rail fences to be four feet three inches in height. Liberal bounties were voted to soldiers during the war. The township was divided into school districts in 1853, and a school house built in 1853 in Coe's district. There are now eight school districts in the township, with a fine school house in each, district.

**Supervisors:-1852, James Talbot; 1853-54, S. M. Coe; 1855-56 J. F. Coe; 1857, James Talbot; 1858, J. F. Coe; 1859-60, S. M. Coe 1861. P. N. Foster 1862, James Talbot; 1863, J. F. Coe 1864-65, Becker Miller; 1866, James Talbot; 1867-76, Lot S. Pennington; 1877. Chalkley John**

**Town Clerks: 1852-54, James Woods; 1855, I. C. Worrell, 1856 James R. Park; 1857, Abram Detweiler; 1858, James Woods; 1859 -62 Charles Diller; 1863, Martin Bare; 1864, Henry G. Brown; 1865, Martin Bare 1866 Mark Compton; 1867, A. C. John; 1868-69, J. Y. Westervelt; 1870-74 Flida John; 1875-77, George B. John. Assesors - 1852 '53. Lemuel Sweeney; 1854, L. S. Pennington. 1855, James Talbot; 1856, I. C. Worrell; 1857, E. D Smith; 1858, Becker Miller; 1859-63 C. C. Alexander; 1864, Vernon Sanford; 1865, D N Foster, 1866-67, C. C. Alexander; 1868-73. Osmer Williams; 1874-76, Charles Diller 1877, Thomas Biller.**

**Collectors: 1852-'53 M. H. Snavelly; 1854, J. H. Snavelly, 1855 J A. Morgan; 1856, J. H. Snavelly; 1857-59. Charles C. Rippley; 1860 Eli Eshleman; 1861-63, Lorenzo Holly; 1864, Mark Conipton; 1865, D N Foster 1866 J.P. Furry; 1867, Edwin Wolcot; 1868-'69, Oliver Talbot; 1870 - 71 S. Stocking; 1872'73, George D. John; 1874-75, Jos. Pfunstine; 1876-77 E H Haines.**

**Justice of the Peace: 1852, Charles Diller, S. M. Coe; 1856 Charles C. Rippley, James Woods; 1857, Lot S. Pennington, Becker Miller 1859, O. Williams; 1860, Lot S. Pennington, O. Williams; 1864, L S. Pennington O. Williams; 1865, I. D. Smith; 1868, D. N. Foster, O. Williams; 1872 Williams, D. N. Foster; 1873, D. N. Foster, O. Williams; 1877, L. S Pennington, D.N. Foster.**

**According to the Assessors' books for 1877, Jordan contains 21 856 acres of improved land, and 1,140 unimproved; 828 horses; 2,148 cattle, 7 mules and asses; 100 sheep; 3,544 hogs; 339 carriages and wagons; 100 sewing and knitting machines; 28 pianos, organs and Melodeons; assessed value of personal property and lands, \$523,998. The census returns for 1870 places the population of Jordan at 1,196, of which 904 were of native birth and 292 foreign. In 1877 the estimated population of the township is 1,400. In November 1876 the township polled 182 votes.**