

Dr. Theodore F. Kerr

Theodore F. Kerr was the son of Alexander and Harriet (Hammond) Kerr. His father was born in New Jersey, and his mother in New York.

He was born May 29, 1846 near Owosso Lake, Cayuga, New York. In 1856 he moved with his parents to a farm near ~~Cayuga~~ Ann Arbor Michigan. He was a graduate of High School, the University of Michigan, College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York City in 1874. He taught Latin and Mathematics in the Military Academy in Oakland California 1869-71. He was

Principal of Schools of Buffalo New York in 1872. In 1874 he ~~begin~~ practiced as a doctor in Detroit Michigan 1874 to 1881 when he came to Griggs County.

Dr. Kerr was married in 1874 to Miss Eliza Hill, daughter of Fitch and Martha Hill of Washtenaw Co Michigan, near R. C. Cooper's old home. They had two sons who died in infancy before they came to Cooperstown.

Dr. Kerr served as County Superintendent of Schools in Griggs County from 1882 to 1894. He organized the first schools of the county.

With only surveyor's posts to guide him he went anywhere he was called to the sick. Many stories are told of these trips. On some he went alone, and others with drivers. One such story tells of how he stopped when he got to where he thought the sick person was, but could see no house. There he saw smoke coming out of a snow bank, and discovered that a drift covered the sod house completely.

On another time he was called into Nelson County not far from Red Willow Lake. While he was there the man died. ^{At that} time a blizzard came up, so severe, that he was kept there for three days with the dead man.

Dr. and Mrs. Kerr were both interested in

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the local activities of Cooperstown. He called a Republican County Convention for Griggs County for Oct 20, 1883 to nominate County officers for the first election after the division of the county. The Doctor was also a member of the first Commercial club in 1888, and Mrs. Kerr worked in church activities.

Mr. and Mrs. Kerr left Cooperstown in 1905 because of the poor health of the Doctor, and returned to Michigan

THEO. F. KERR, M. D.

From "Compendium of N.D."

This gentleman is the pioneer physician and surgeon of Griggs county and has built an extensive practice throughout that region, and is widely known as an exemplary citizen and skillful practitioner. He has resided in Cooperstown since the early days of its history and has been liberal in rendering aid to all public projects. He is intelligent and progressive and therefore popular as a physician and social friend of his fellows. He has always labored for educational advancement and is one of the promoters of the school systems of that region.

Our subject was born near Owosco Lake, in Cayuga county, New York, May 29, 1846, and was the fifth in a family of eleven children, four sons and seven daughters, born to Alexander and Harriet (Hammond) Kerr. His father was a native of New Jersey and was married in Cayuga county, New York. A brother of our subject, John F., was a soldier in the Civil war, enlisting during 1864, and he was killed at Kinston, North Carolina, March 8, 1865.

Our subject remained in his native county until ten years of age, when he removed with his parents to a farm near Ann Arbor, Michigan. He attended the city schools and graduated from the high school, and then entered the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where he took a degree in literature and art. He then went to California and accepted the chair of teacher in Latin and mathematics in the Military Academy at Oakland, which position he filled from 1869 to 1871, and during the next year he was principal of one of the public schools of Buffalo, New York. Here he began the study of medicine in the office of Dr. Thomas Lothrop, a prominent physician of that city, and then returned to Ann Arbor and took a course of lectures, and afterward pursued his studies in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City and later in the Columbia University, graduating in the medical class of 1874. He then began the practice of his profession in Detroit, Michigan, and continued there until he went to North Dakota in the early '80s. He located in Cooperstown before the railroad was built through that locality and experienced many hardships in the practice of his profession through that county. On one occasion he traveled about twenty-five miles to visit a sick man and upon his arrival found him in a dying condition in a sod hut, where Mr. Kerr was stormbound three days. The patient died, and a young man, who was his partner, and the Doctor were forced to stay with the corpse and subsist on meager rations three days before the storm broke sufficiently for the Doctor to return, and when he did he made the journey through a foot of snow the entire distance. Such experiences are of the past and Mr. Kerr now enjoys an extensive and remunerative patronage.

Our subject was married in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1874, to Miss Eliza Hill, a native of Washienaw county, that state, and a daughter of Fitch and Martha Hill. Mrs. Kerr's father was a farmer and contractor and builder. Two children, both of whom are deceased, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Kerr, named Kenneth and Theo. Mr. Kerr was the first superintendent of schools of Griggs county and held the office until 1894, and he is one of the foremost men of the county from an educational as well as professional view. He has always affiliated with the Republican party in political faith.