

JOHN MEIBERS, proprietor of the Meibers Opera House, and general insurance agent at Decatur, where he is ranked among the leading citizens, is a native of Germany, born in the Kingdom of Hanover, January 6, 1822. In his seventeenth year he immigrated to America, landing at Philadelphia in July, 1839, and a few days later started over the Allegheny Mountains for Cincinnati, Ohio, where he remained two weeks. He then went to Minister, Ohio, but not being able to find employment at that place, he went to St. Mary's, Ohio, where he was employed for one year on the reservoir then being constructed. In 1840 he went to Salina, Ohio, and found employment on the reservoir then being constructed at that place, remaining there until 1841. In the spring of the same year he came to Adams County, arriving at Decatur April 4, where he was principally engaged in farming until 1845. He then bought property in Decatur, and soon after purchased the mills, which became known as Meibers & Shearer Saw-Mills, which he operated until 1847. In that year he returned to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was employed as clerk in a wholesale grocery until June, 1849, when he returned to Decatur. In the meantime he had disposed of his interest in the mills, and on his return to Decatur engaged in contracting and building, which he followed until 1858, and during this time he had again invested in property in Decatur. In 1859 he engaged in the grocery and dry goods business, which he followed at Decatur until 1866, when he sold out his business and became associated with William G. Spencer in the hardware business, this partnership existing until 1868, when, being elected treasurer of Adams County, he sold his interest to attend to the duties of his office. In 1870 he was re-elected to the same office, and served as treasurer two terms of two years each, with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of his constituents. In 1871 he again engaged in the hardware business, forming a partnership with James H. Stone, with whom he was associated for three years under the firm name of Meibers & Stone. On retiring from the firm in 1874, he went to Geneva, Adams County, where he was engaged in general merchandising for two years, and from 1876 until 1877 he was associated with his son-in-law, Joseph H. Voglewede, in the boot and shoe business, when he engaged in farming. He now devotes his attention to his insurance business, and attending to his property. In 1883 he erected the Meibers Block and Opera House on Second street, of which he is still proprietor. In 1868 he purchased his present farm of eighty acres, adjoining Decatur, a part of which is Meibers' addition to Decatur. Mr. Meibers was married in February, 1843, in the Catholic church at Fort Wayne, by Rev. Father Rodolph, to Miss Catherine Hideman, who was formerly a resident of St. Mary's, Ohio. She died at Decatur in 1856, leaving four children - Elizabeth, now the wife of Benedict Uhl, of Toledo, Ohio; Christine, now the wife of George W. Archbold, of Pleasant Mills, Adams County; Mary, now the wife of Joseph H. Voglewede, of Decatur, and Henry G., now living in Michigan. Mr. Meibers was again married February 17, 1859, at St. Mary's Catholic Church at Decatur, by Rev. Father Meyers, to Miss Margaret Smith, a daughter of Ludwig and Catherine (Miller) Smith, of Decatur. They have six children living - Ettie, wife of Joseph Tonellier, of Decatur; John W., of Chicago, and Anna, Charles, Rosa and Michael still at home. Mr. Meibers commenced life with a capital of \$600 given him by his father, and from this small beginning he has by his persevering industry and excellent business management accumulated a large and valuable property. He is one of the public-spirited men of Decatur, and gives liberally of his means toward any enterprise which he deems of benefit to his town or county, and by his fair and honorable dealings and genial and accommodating manners he has made many friends, and gained the confidence and respect of all who know him. In 1874 he became a stockholder in the Adams County Bank, and soon after was chosen one of its directors, a position he still holds. Both Mr. and Mrs. Meibers and their children are members of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Decatur.

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