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JESSE NIBLICK, senior member of the firm of Niblick, Crawford & Sons, of Decatur, is a native of Ohio, born in what is now Carroll County, August 12, 1826, a son of James and Anna (Carter) Niblick. His father was a native of Ireland, born January 19, 1803, and brought to America by his parents, and was reared to New York City and Tuscarawas County, Ohio. He was a cooper by trade, which he followed until coming to Adams County, Indiana, in November, 1836, when he engaged in farming in Washington Township, near Decatur. In 1869 he removed to Warrensburg, Missouri, where he died a few weeks afterward at the age of sixty-nine years. He was a consistent Christian and at his death a member of the Presbyterian church. In politics he affiliated with the Democratic party, and at different times filled minor offices. The mother of our subject was of English ancestry, born in the State of Maryland, and reared in Carroll County, Ohio, where she was married to Mr. Niblick. She died near Decatur, August 12, 1838. She was an earnest member of the Methodist Episcopal church. Of the eight children born to the parents, four still survive - Robert, a farmer of Kirkland Township; Jesse, our subject; Adaline, wife of James Daily, of Wells County, Indiana; Mary Jane, wife of Sigmond Openheim, of Bluffton.

Jessie Niblick was but ten year of age when brought by his parents to Adams County, and here he has since lived with the exception of one year which he spent in Fremont, Ohio, attending school, and here he received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he learned the shoemaker's trade, and in 1846 engaged in the boot and shoe business for himself. October 16, 1851, he was married at Decatur, to Miss Catherine Closs, who was brought from her native country (Germany) by her parents, John and Catherine (Sougadiffer) Closs, in her girlhood. Eight children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Niblick, seven of whom are yet living - William, cashier of the Adams County Bank; John, a member of the firm of Niblick, Crawford & Sons; James K., clerking in a mercantile establishment; Mary; Amelia; Charles, a bookkeeper in the Adams County Bank, and Daniel, attending school at Decatur. Mr. Niblick dealt in boots and shoes until 1866, when he engaged in general merchandising with John Crawford, under the firm name of Niblick & Crawford, which business they have since continued, the firm name being changed to Niblick, Crawford & Sons, a son of each having been admitted as partners. In 1871 Mr. Niblick, in company with J.D. Nutman, engaged in a private banking business in the name of the Adams County Bank, Niblick & Nutman, bankers. David Studabaker and R. B. Allison afterward became associated with them, when the bank was duly organized under the State laws, and Mr. Niblick was elected a director and its first president. He was succeeded by R. B. Allison as president, Mr. Niblick being elected vice-president. Being one of the organizers and a stockholder in the Eagle Manufacturing Company of Decatur, Mr. Niblick was elected one of its directors. Politically Mr. Niblick casts his suffrage with the Democratic party. In 1848 he was elected clerk of Washington Township, and from that year until 1865 he was either clerk or trustee of that township, and sometimes held both offices at the same time. In the fall of 1865 he was elected treasurer of Adams County, and re-elected in 1867, serving in that office four years to the entire satisfaction of his constituents, and since 1870 has held the office of village trustee or councilman. He is one of the prominent and public-spirited citizens of Decatur, and is always ready to aid in any enterprise which he deems of benefit to his town or county. Mrs. Niblick and her children, with the exception of William, are members of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Decatur.

JESSE NIBLICK.

Inseparably connected with the history of Decatur and Adams county is the name of Jesse Niblick. Through a long and useful life devoted to business, but untainted by selfishness, Jesse Niblick rose from humble beginnings to be the leading financier of his section of the state and a man who did more, perhaps, than any other for the development and commercial interests of Decatur. He was born in Carroll county, Ohio, August 12, 1826. His parents were James and Anna (Carter) Niblick. His father was born in Ireland, January 19, 1803, and coming to this country as a youth, was reared in New York city and in Tuscarawas county, Ohio. He was a cooper by trade. In November, 1836, he settled on a farm in Washington township, Adams county. He removed in 1869 to Warrensburg, Missouri, where he died at the age of sixty-nine. His wife was of Maryland parentage and a descendant of a long line of English ancestors. She was reared in Carroll county and was married in that county. She died near Decatur August 12, 1838. Of the eight children born to Mr. and Mrs. James Niblick four are living. These are: Jesse, Robert, a farmer; Adaline, wife of James Daily, of Wells county, and Mary Jane. Jesse Niblick was ten years of age when his parents came to Adams county. He learned the shoemaker's trade. In 1846 he opened a boot and shoe store. This business he conducted with profit for several years.

In 1851, October 16, he was united in marriage to Miss Catherine Closs, a daughter of John and Catherine Longandiffer) Closs. His wife was born in Germany and came to this country in her girlhood, settling in Indiana. To her father is ascribed the credit of being the first tavern keeper in Decatur. When the family came to this country it originally settled at Maumee, Ohio, in 1836. The removal to Decatur was in January of the following year. Mr. Closs opened a tavern that stood on the corner now occupied by the bank and store of Niblick & Company. This tavern was well known in its day and was a favorite stopping place for travelers of the period. The founder of the business died in 1874, at the advanced age of seventy-four years. His wife survived him a few years and lived to be eighty-six.

To Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Niblick were born eight children, of whom seven are living. These children were: William, who was president of the Adams County Bank at the time of his death; John, the senior member of the firm of Niblick & Company; James K.; Mary; Amelia; Charles, president of the bank, and Daniel, a member of the firm of Niblick & Company. Mr. Niblick continued in the shoe business until 1866, when he associated himself with John Crawford in the general merchandise business in Decatur. The firm became Niblick & Crawford and later Niblick, Crawford & Sons, a son of each partner being added to the firm. In 1871 Jesse Niblick, in company with J. D. Nuttman, established a bank under the partnership name of Niblick & Nuttman, bankers. Later R. B. Allison and David Studabaker became associated in the banking business and the institution was organized as a state bank. Mr. Niblick was a director and the first president of the bank and was succeeded in this office by R. B. Allison, although he retained his membership on the board of directors and was elected vice president. He had other business interests and was a director of the Eagle Manufacturing Company of Decatur.

The mercantile business with which Mr. Niblick was identified was conducted for a number of years under the firm name of Niblick, Crawford & Sons and then the Messrs. Crawford severed their connection with the partnership and the business was taken over by Mr. Niblick and his son. This brought about another change in the firm name, and this time it became Jesse Niblick & Son. He continued in his mercantile business until his death, October 6, 1895. The death of Mr. Niblick came as a distinct shock to the community in which he lived. He was one of the prominent business men of his community and one of its most respected and esteemed citizens. His funeral was the largest and

most imposing ever held in Decatur. The pall-bearers who bore the body of the aged financier to its last resting place were his old business associates: R. B. Allison, David Studabaker, deceased; John Meibers, deceased; John Shane, deceased; Conrad Brake and Ezra Lister, deceased. These men had been associated with Mr. Niblick in various enterprises covering a period of more than a half century. The interment was at Saint Joseph's cemetery.

In addition to being an active business man Mr. Niblick was a public-spirited citizen. He was an active mover in all things destined to promote the general welfare of his community and was continually aiding in increasing its commercial importance. In politics he was a Democrat and served a number of times in a public capacity. He was trustee of Washington township and in 1865 he was elected county treasurer and reelected in 1867. He served for many years as a village trustee and in its council. He was a member of Saint Mary's Catholic church. He was a Democrat in politics. He left an estate of large proportions.