

DAVID BIXLER

David Bixler has the distinction of being the pioneer jeweler of Berne. He opened the first store of its kind in this section of Adams county in 1872 in his father's home in French township. He began his trade with a relative who had been in the same line of business in Canada. Possessing a natural fondness for mechanics, he proved an intelligent apprentice and is today one of the most skilled men in his business in northeastern Indiana. He was born in French township, Adams county, May 29, 1854. His parents were John and Maria (Basinger) Bixler. The father was born in Wayne county, Ohio, in 1828 and came to Indiana in 1853. The elder Bixler purchased eighty acres and cultivated this tract and improved it until 1893, when he moved to Berne and lived a retired life. His death occurred March 15, 1905. His wife is still living with her son, the subject of this sketch.

David Bixler lived on his father's farm during his youth and early manhood. His youth differed in no respect from that of the other boys of his community. He attended the schools of his neighborhood and secured as good an education as was possible under the conditions. At an early age he showed an aptitude for mechanics and began learning the watchmaker's and jeweler's trade under his relative. He made rapid progress and set up a small establishment at his father's home. He repaired the watches of the farmers of his neighborhood and as his fame as an accomplished workman grew he was patronized by many from a distance. He enlarged his little business and added a stock of jewelry to his equipment as a watchmaker. He continued to conduct his business at the home farm until 1880, when he removed to Berne and established himself in business there. His store was the first of its kind opened in Berne. Today it is one of the best equipped in the county. Mr. Bixler is a skilled optician, being a graduate, as well as a jeweler, and he enjoys a large and constantly increasing patronage. Of an inventive turn of mind, Mr. Bixler has invented and made a number of the more delicate tools he uses in his work. He has built two fine regulators and a balance that will respond to the two-hundredth part of a grain.

He has two sons, Frank and Noah, who are also of their father's inventive turn. The former of these is an assistant in his father's establishment and the other is studying the same trade. Mr. Bixler was married in 1875 to Miss Anna Luginbill, a daughter of Peter and Barbara (Steiner) Luginbill. Her parents were natives of Switzerland and came to Adams county at an early date. They settled on a farm and were successful tillers of the soil. Eight children came to bless the union of Mr. and Mrs. Bixler. These children are: Clara H., the wife of Dr. Amos Reusser; Mary A., the wife of T. M. Huffman, connected with the telephone company; Franklin G., Noah A., a student at Toronto, Canada; Laura H., in Chicago; Emma M., Esther E. and Erwin D., at home.

Mr. Bixler is considered one of the best citizens of Berne. He is a thoroughly modern and progressive man. In the sense of possessing a competence he has proved a successful business man, but he has not neglected his civic duties in accumulating his possessions. He has always taken an active and aggressive part in municipal and county affairs, and served for fifteen years as treasurer of Berne. He is a Democrat in politics and is a staunch adherent of this party. He owns real estate in Berne, a fine farm of one hundred and sixty acres near Lisbon, North Dakota, and is interested in several financial enterprises.

There is no family more highly esteemed than his own in the whole of Adams county. He has led an exemplary life and has contributed his full share to the happiness and welfare of his fellow men. He is a consistent member of the Mennonite church and with his family gives his support to the aims and ambitions of this denomination.

Snow's History of Adams County, Indiana, John Fletcher Snow, B. F. Bowen, Indianapolis, IN, 1907, (image 567).