

Otto L. Kirsch.

A prominent and successful representative of the lumber trade of Northeastern Indiana, Otto L. Kirsch, a well-known resident of Decatur, is actively identified with one of the foremost business firms of Adams County, being secretary and treasurer of the Kirsch & Reppert Lumber Company. He was born August 25, 1883, in Belmont, Wabash County, Illinois, of German ancestry. His father, Mathias Kirsch, of whom a brief sketch appears elsewhere in this volume, was born in Germany, and at the age of four years in 1860, came with his father, Christopher Kirsch, to this country. He was a man of eminent ability, and is still actively identified with the advancement of the lumber interests of the great Middle West.

Having completed his early education in the public schools, Otto L. Kirsch spent four years in the Michigan woods, where he thoroughly mastered every detail of the lumber business, becoming familiar with every operation that converted the standing tree of the forest into the marketable building material of the lumber yards. Thus well qualified for business, he became secretary of the firm of Kirsch, Sellemeyer & Sons Company, which was incorporated in 1912, with Mathias Kirsch as president; H. H. Sellemeyer vice president; and Mr. Kirsch, of this notice, as secretary. A change in the firm was made in the fall of 1917, Mathias Kirsch continuing as president, with Mr. Reppert vice president, and Otto L. Kirsch as secretary and treasurer.

This business is one of the longest established of the kind in Adams County, having been started about thirty years ago by Mathias Kirsch and Erastus Fritzingler, who, at the end of two years sold out to Sellemeyer & Company, who managed it until 1907, when another change was made, Otto L. Kirsch becoming secretary of the new firm. In addition to dealing in dressed lumber of all kinds, the firm has a large trade in a variety of building materials and in coal.

Mr. Kirsch married, at Fort Wayne, Indiana, Elma Seeley, who was born, in 1888, in Fort Wayne, and was there bred and educated. Her father Henry Seeley, a native of Germany, came to this country with his parents in childhood, and has since lived in Fort Wayne. As a young man he was there for several years the manager of a candy factory, and later engaged in business as a grocer. His wife, whose maiden name was Maria Boerger, was born in Germany, and when a young girl came with her parents to Indiana and obtained her education in the schools of Fort Wayne. Both Mr. and Mrs. Seeley are members of the German Reformed Church. Mr. and Mrs. Kirsch have one child, Helen Kirsch, born December 20, 1910. Mr. Kirsch is a democrat in politics, and both he and his wife, true to the religious faith in which they were reared, are members of the German Reformed Church.