

**Snow's History of Adams County, Indiana, John Fletcher Snow, B. F. Bowen, Indianapolis, IN, 1907, p. 455 (image 928).**

### **ROBERT D. PATTERSON.**

Few men among those who have contributed to the development of northeastern Indiana are destined to or have left a more indelible imprint on the growth of that section of Indiana than will history show has been the result of the life of Robert D. Patterson, the subject of this sketch. The present commercial, industrial and social life of Adams county reflect the man and are better for his having lived and toiled within the confines of the county. He was born at Saint Mary's, Ohio, October 31, 1838. His father was James Patterson and his mother was Eliza (Peterson) Patterson. Both of his parents were natives of Saint Mary's and came to Adams county, Indiana, in the spring of 1839. The fact that they arrived in this state at the early date noted makes them pioneers of the rugged country to which they migrated. Reaching Indiana, the elder Pattersons chose to make their home in Decatur, where the father engaged for a time in several lines of business, finally settling on what is since known as the old Patterson farm. This tract is now included within the city limits of Decatur and was tilled by the elder Patterson until his death at the age of sixty-six years. His wife survived him some years and died at the advanced age of seventy-nine. The couple were the parents of seven children, of whom Robert D. Patterson was the eldest.

Robert was not more than a year old when his parents removed to Adams county from their former home in Ohio. Consequently he has known no other state and is to all intents a native of the Hoosier commonwealth. His early life was spent on his father's farm, where he learned the lessons of thrift and self-reliance that equipped him for his independent struggle with the world. He was educated in the schools his immediate section of the state afforded and secured the best education the times and opportunities placed in his environment afforded. While still a young man, after finishing his school work, he learned the trade of stonemason and followed this trade for several years, from 1859 to 1862. In this latter year the country was sounding with the call to arms to repel the invading hosts of the southland, and young Patterson was among the first to volunteer his services to meet his country's need. He enlisted in Company H of the Eighty-ninth Indiana Volunteer Infantry and served with this command until the close of the war. He was a model and intelligent soldier and was promoted from sergeant of his company to first sergeant, six months before the close of the Rebellion he was promoted to captain and commanded the company with which he had marched to the front as a simple private. After the close of hostilities Patterson returned to Decatur and began to forget the stirring events of his martial career in the peaceful pursuits of a quiet town.

Casting about for some business in which to expend his energies, he decided to engage in the milling business. To this end he purchased an established property and

commenced to grind flour, corn and similar farm products for the farmers of his neighborhood. In this venture he was singularly successful and he operated his mill and business until 1905, when he retired and sold his mill holdings. But Mr. Patterson found time during his busy life to engage in matters pertaining to the public weal. He was signally honored several times by his friends and associates by being chosen to offices of political preferment. In the fall of the year 1880 he was elected treasurer of Adams county and assumed the duties of his office in September of the following year. He was again elected to this office and served two terms with distinction and credit to himself and to the men who had chosen him. He has been a Democrat in politics all his life and is still one of the staunchest adherents of his party in the entire state. He has also been several times chosen a member of the school board of Decatur and has shown wisdom and judgment in discharging the duties of this important office. In fact, he is a man who has taken an active part in all things that made for the welfare of his community.

Mr. Patterson was married to Miss Sophia Beery, a native of Adams county, in October, 1869. His family has consisted of his wife and seven children: Jennie, the wife of Nelson K. Todd; Eva, the wife of D. French Quinn; Harry, who died in infancy; Harriet, the wife of George Morris; Elizabeth, wife of Charles Myers; Vera, the wife of Frederick Bell, and Glenn M., who died at the age of nineteen months. The religious convictions of Mr. Patterson are cast with the Presbyterian faith and he has been a member of this church and a trustee for many years. He affiliated with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in his twenty-first year. He is now awaiting the final summons at his home in Decatur, satisfied that he has made much of his life and with the certain assurance that his life and efforts have been of benefit to his fellows and that he is held in high esteem by all who know of his sterling qualities, his honesty and his fairness to all mankind.