

Biographical and Historical Record - Adams and Wells Co. Indiana Lewis Publishing Co. Chicago, IL 1887

ROBERT S. PETERSON is the oldest active member of the Adams County bar. His parents, John W. and Hannah (Smith) Peterson, came to this county in an early day, and were here married in 1840. They were the parents of seven children, five of whom are yet living. John W. Peterson lives in St. Mary's Township, three and one-half miles east of Decatur. His wife died in Benton County, Iowa, in February, 1859. Of their living children Robert is the second in age. He was born February 1, 1845, on section 17, St. Mary's Township, and lived with his parents until eighteen years of age, attending the common district schools and also select schools. March 9, 1864, he enlisted in Company G, Thirteenth Indiana Cavalry, with which he served until the regiment was discharged, November 18, 1865. Returning home he taught and attended school by turns until the spring of 1867, when he began the study of law with Judge David Studabaker. His study was interrupted by teaching school again the following winter. In the spring of 1868 he was admitted to the bar, though he continued his course of reading until the December following before beginning the practice of law on his own account. He has now practiced continuously for nineteen years. Mr. Peterson's long residence in the county seat, and his long prominent connection with all important public movements, have made him one of the best known men in Adams County. He is not a politician, though taking that degree of interest in politics which is the duty of every good citizen. Though a Republican, he was president of the Board of Trustees of the strongly Democratic town of Decatur for the five years preceding the adoption of the city form of government, in 1882. To him belongs the credit of organizing and perfecting the sewerage system of Decatur. He assisted in organizing and pushing the narrow-gauge railroad through this county, and also, though to a less extent, the Chicago & Atlantic. He is a Mason, was a charter member of the Grand Army of the Republic, and belongs to the Presbyterian church. Mr. Peterson was married September 25, 1868, at Concord Church, Root Township, to Miss Fannie C. Kunkel, daughter of Samuel Kunkel. To this union have been born the following children - John S., Dora L., Martha A., Mary G., Kittie C., Lizzie Pearl, Calvin D., Bernice, Thomas E. and one which died in infancy. The first two graduated from the Decatur High School in 1887.