

## JOHN GILGER.

Through more than six decades John Gilger has been a resident of Richland county and its progress and upbuilding are a matter of deep interest to him. He takes just pride in its advancement and has done what he could to promote its growth. He is numbered among the native residents of this locality, for his birth occurred in Blooming Grove township on the 16th of October, 1836, his parents being Jacob and Phoebe (Dick) Gilger. The parents were both natives of Germany, where they were reared. The father learned the weaver's trade in early life, and in 1832 he crossed the briny deep to the new world, locating a mile east of Rome, in Blooming Grove township, Richland county. There he followed his trade for seven years, during which time he was married.

A year after he had come to the new world his wife crossed the Atlantic, and a year after her arrival they were married. They began keeping house one mile east of Rome, where they remained for about twelve months and then located in the village of Rome, where they spent two years. In 1839 they removed to a place a quarter of a mile east of Richland, now Planktown, where Mr. Gilger followed the weaver's trade and also acquired a small farm of forty acres, which was conducted by his sons after they had attained a sufficient age to assume its management. About 1860 the father purchased the old William Tucker farm, one mile north of Planktown, after which he largely devoted his energies to agricultural pursuits, making his home on that place until his death. In early life he was a member of the German Reformed church, but later he became identified with the Lutheran church, for the distance between him and the church of his own choice was too great to permit of his attending services there regularly. He died March 30, 1875, at the age of sixty-nine years, eight months and twenty-

four days, and his wife, who survived him until January 24, 1888, passed to her final rest at the age of seventy-six years. Of their nine children seven are yet living, namely: John, Daniel, David, Catherine, Jacob, Joseph and Mary. One of the sons, George, was a member of the Union army during the Civil war and died on the train while en route to Columbia, South Carolina.

John Gilger spent his youth at home in the midst of surroundings such as were familiar to pioneer settlers but are unknown at the present stage of our advanced civilization. He pursued his studies sitting on a slab bench in an old log schoolhouse. After reaching his twentieth year he went to Kansas and took up a claim near Osawatomie, that state, but being told that that part of the country was not good he sold his claim, after a sojourn there of six months, and returned home. The following winter he followed shoemaking, in a room of his father's home, and in the succeeding spring he built a shop in Shiloh and worked at his trade. He never served an apprenticeship to the business, but possessing considerable mechanical ingenuity he picked up the trade after his return from the west. For seven years he conducted a prosperous business in Shiloh, at times employing two or three assistants. While there he was appointed to the position of postmaster under President Buchanan. In 1864 he purchased his present home of twenty nine acres, adjoining a tract of seventeen acres, of which he had previously become the owner, and upon the place he has since resided. In 1883 he engaged in the furniture and undertaking business, which he conducted profitably until 1898, when he disposed of his store and has since given his entire attention to the farm.

On the 27th of December, 1860, Mr. Gilger was united in marriage to Miss Eleanor Douglas, a native of Richland county and a daughter of David and Anna (Kirkland) Douglas. Their marriage was blessed with four children, three of whom survive, namely: Jennie, the wife of T. A. Vaughn, of Shelby, Ohio; Myron M., who is engaged in draying in Shiloh; and Delbert W., who is a resident of Shiloh. The mother died May 22, 1874, and on the 30th of March, 1876, Mr. Gilger was again married, his second union being with Miss Margery Latimer, a native of Blooming Grove township and a daughter of William and Nancy (Wilson) Latimer. They now have two children: George A., a painter and public-school teacher, and Ella E. Relis, at home.

Through an active business career Mr. Gilger has so conducted his interests as to win a comfortable competence. He served for three terms as township trustee and was postmaster under James Buchanan's administra-

tion. He was one of the first three voters to give their support to the Prohibition ticket in Cass township. At that time he was compelled to vote a written ticket. He did this to indicate his opposition to the saloon and to aid in saving the boys of the nation. He attended the Prohibition state convention at Columbus on the 6th and 7th of June, 1894, as a delegate, and was also a delegate to the convention at Findlay, Ohio, April 21 and 22, 1896. After the meeting of the national Prohibition convention in 1896 he became convinced that he was not acting wisely in allying himself with the political parties. He believed that it was God's will and since that time he has not voted. At the age of twenty-three he was converted and became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran church, with which he was identified for more than thirty-six years, and during most of the time held office in the church. He then left the church, for, after careful study of the Bible he came to believe that as God's children we must not be contentious and that the organized churches of the day are not in harmony with the will of the Creator as expressed in Holy Writ. In his life he closely follows the teachings of the holy Nazarene, endeavoring daily to exemplify in his life the true spirit of Christianity.