

JOHN WISE.

John Wise, a retired merchant of Butler, was born in what is now Ashland county, but was then a part of Wayne county, Ohio, on the 26th of April, 1827. His father, George F. Wise, was a native of Wittenberg, Germany, and came to America in 1804, when about twenty years of age, crossing the Atlantic in a sailing vessel, which dropped anchor in the harbor of Philadelphia after a voyage of three months. He was a tailor by trade, completing his apprenticeship in London, England. He worked in a sugar refinery in order to secure money for his emigration, and on board the ship was employed as a half sailor, thus meeting the expenses of the voyage. He had only seventy-five cents when he landed in Philadelphia, and he gave that to a beggar.

For a time he was employed at the tailor's trade in Philadelphia, the city of Brotherly Love, and later engaged in the same line of business in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but subsequently secured a position as a farm hand. After aiding in the labors of the field through the day time he would devote his evenings to his trade. After his marriage he engaged in chopping wood and worked on a farm. In 1815 he came to what is now Ashland county, Ohio, a distance of three hundred miles from his old Pennsylvania home. Three times he made the trip on foot in order to make payments

upon his farm, which he entered from the government, and to which he removed in 1820. It was covered with a tract of heavy timber, and in the midst of the forest he erected a log cabin. He then began clearing the land, transforming it into highly cultivated fields. Upon that place he spent his remaining days, dying at the advanced age of eighty-eight years. During the war of 1812 he enlisted in the service and started for the front, but peace was declared ere he reached the scene of hostilities. In politics he was an active Democrat and in religious belief a Lutheran. His wife, who bore the maiden name of Christiana Weaver, was a native of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but her parents were of German birth. She, too, was a member of the Lutheran church, and she lived to be ninety-one years of age. Unto Mr. and Mrs. Wise were born fourteen children, thirteen of whom reached years of maturity.

In a typical pioneer home on the western frontier John Wise was reared. Much of the land in that section of the state was in its primitive condition and the work of civilization and progress seemed scarcely begun. He assisted in the task of developing the home farm and in the public school acquired his education, being there a schoolmate of Senator Allison, of Iowa. At the age of twenty he went to Ashland to learn the trade of wagon and carriage making, serving an apprenticeship of two years, during which time he received fifteen dollars per year in compensation for his services. On the expiration of that period he went to North Liberty, and there, forming a partnership, engaged in business on his own account. After nine years the partnership was dissolved and Mr. Wise removed to Iowa, where he remained for three years, working at his trade. In 1862 he came to Butler and established a wagon and carriage repair shop, which he conducted until 1868, when he opened a hardware store and tin shop. A few years afterward he sold the latter, but continued to conduct the hardware store until 1896, when he disposed of that business and has since practically lived retired. He owns seventy acres of land, a part of which is within the corporation limits of Butler, and two store buildings.

On the 21st of August, 1851, Mr. Wise was united in marriage to Miss Amity Armentrout, who was born in Newville, Richland county, January 19, 1833, a daughter of Jacob and Mary (Hammond) Armentrout, both of whom were natives of the Shenandoah valley of Virginia, in which locality they were married. The father was born in 1800 and became a farmer and cabinetmaker. He brought his family to Richland county, but in 1854 removed to Iowa, locating near Tipton, where he died, at the age of seventy-seven years. In politics he was an active Democrat. His wife

belonged to the Baptist church and died at the age of eighty-five years. They had twelve children, all of whom reached mature years and are still living. Mrs. Wise has spent her entire life in Richland county, and by her marriage has become the mother of four children: Cromwell, who is engaged in the dry-goods business in Butler; Milton, a dealer in shoes and harness in Butler; Oscar, who is engaged in the telephone business, building a line to Arlington, Ohio; and Flora, who died at the age of sixteen years.

In his political views Mr. Wise is a Democrat and takes great interest in the success of his party, keeping well informed on the issues of the day, as every true American citizen should do. He served for several years as a justice of the peace in Knox county. He belongs to Thrall Lodge, No. 170, F. & A. M., of Frederickstown, and he and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal church, while two of their children belong to the Methodist Protestant church.

In business Mr. Wise has attained a desirable success. Dependent entirely upon his own labors, he has surmounted the obstacles in his path, and the difficulties which he has encountered have served as an impetus to renewed labor. In this way he has advanced steadily to a plane of affluence, and now, having acquired a handsome competence, he is enjoying a well earned rest.