

the farmers during the summer months, while in the winter months he attended school and worked for his board. He later became numbered among the educators of Green and Walnut townships, also teaching in the schools of Argos, and here he was later appointed the deputy prosecuting attorney by the Hon. Charles P. Drummond. After remaining the incumbent of this office for four years, Mr. O'Brien resumed his educational work and taught for two years. In 1891 he began the practice of law, and is now numbered among the leading representatives of the calling in Marshall county.

Mr. O'Brien married Addie Robey on the 26th of December, 1886. She was born in Howard county, Indiana, May 17, 1865, a daughter of James and Jane (Davis) Robey, both of whom also claimed Indiana as the commonwealth of their nativity. Two children were born to them, Laura and Addie, but the elder is deceased. Mr. O'Brien holds membership relations with many of the fraternal orders, including Lodge No. 399, A. F. & A. M.; Warsaw Lodge No. 802, B. P. O. E.; Argos Lodge No. 212, K. of P., and in this order he has held all of the offices and has served as a delegate to the Grand Lodge. His political affiliations are with the Republican party.

THOMAS O. TABER. The specific and distinctive office of biography is not to give voice to a man's modest estimate of himself and his accomplishments, but rather to leave the perpetual record establishing his character by the consensus of opinion on the part of his fellowmen. Throughout Marshall county and this part of the state Mr. Taber is spoken of in terms of admiration and respect. His life was varied in its activity, honorable in its purposes and far reaching and beneficial in its effects, and when he was called to the home beyond his fellow-townsmen mourned the loss of one whom they had come to esteem and honor by reason of his sterling manhood.

Mr. Taber was a native of Center township, Marshall county, born November 25, 1856. His life span covered a half century, his death occurring December 26, 1906. His paternal grandfather was Samuel D. Taber, one of the first settlers of Marshall county. He came here from New York when this was a wilderness and he died at Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1826. He was of English parentage and was a man of many excellent traits of character. By occupation he was a farmer and was recognized as one of the leading pioneers of the early days, leaving the impress of his individuality upon the development and upbuilding of the county. He belonged to the Church of God and his political views were in harmony with the principles of the Whig party. The parents of Thomas O. Taber were Cyrus and Rachel (Plake) Taber, the former born in Center township, this county, June 26, 1833, and the latter near Connersville, Indiana, February 10, 1837. They were married November 15, 1853, the wedding ceremony being performed by Mack Smith at Smith's Tavern, where the town of Argos now stands. The death of Cyrus Taber occurred December 26, 1877, and his widow, who is yet living, afterward married Jonas Miller. She was the daughter of John and Nancy Plake, early settlers and highly respected citizens of Marshall county. Cyrus Taber was the first white male child born in this county

and was widely known throughout this part of the state as Judge Taber. He contributed in large and substantial measure to the early development and progress of the locality in which he lived and furthered many progressive measures for the public good. He opened up the Michigan road and at one time was an extensive land owner here. He held membership in the Church of God and gave his political allegiance to the Whig party. Unto him and his wife were born six children, five sons and a daughter, but only one is now living, John H.

Thomas O. Taber acquired his education in the Jordan school, in the Plymouth high school and in the schools of Valparaiso, Indiana. When sixteen years of age he became teacher of the Shoemaker school and taught in all for about two and a half years. It was subsequent to this time that he attended the Northern Indiana Normal School at Valparaiso and later he went to Plymouth, where he worked for Barnhill & Taber, merchants, in whose employ he remained for some time. He afterward engaged in farming for about two and a half years and in 1883 again went to Plymouth, where he purchased a half interest in E. K. Barnhill's mercantile store. Some time later he bought out his partner and continued the business alone until 1884, when he sold his store. He then spent six years upon the road in the cigar business and during that time he and his father-in-law, William Railsback, established a banking house at Argos, in 1885, under the firm name of Railsback & Taber, bankers. In 1890 they organized the State Exchange Bank of Argos, of which Mr. Taber was the cashier until 1902. In 1888 they also opened a banking business at Mentone under the firm name of Railsback & Taber, which institution became known later as the Citizens' Bank, and was conducted by J. H. and T. O. Taber under the style of Taber Brothers. T. O. Taber also organized a bank at Silver Lake called the Commercial Bank, which was owned by Taber Brothers & Cavender, John C. Cavender being in charge of the business. T. O. Taber likewise organized a bank at Markle, Huntington county, Indiana, in connection with C. D. Chapman, who was in active charge, this institution being conducted under the style of the Farmers' & Traders' Bank, with Mr. Taber as president. In May, 1893, the Columbian National Bank of Chicago failed. It was the exchange house for the four banks which Mr. Taber had organized, and its failure brought on trying times for Mr. Taber, but his characteristic good management and conservative methods enabled him to continue his banking interests in all of these four institutions undisturbed. In 1902 he organized at Marion, Indiana, the Grant Trust & Savings Company, with Harry A. Ford, his son-in-law, as treasurer, while Mr. Taber became secretary. They began business on the 26th of May, 1902, the company being capitalized for one hundred thousand dollars, and the phenomenal success of the business is indicated by the fact that there is today a capital of seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. In 1904 Mr. Taber returned to Argos on account of poor health. At the time of his demise he was president of the State Exchange Bank and had extensive financial interests. He was one of the most successful men of this part of the state, owing not to any fortunate or adventitious circumstances, but to his keen insight, his ready discern-

ment concerning business conditions and his recognition of possibilities for successful accomplishment.

On the 18th of October, 1877, Mr. Taber was married to Miss Melissa Jane Railsback, who was born in Walnut township, this county, March 7, 1858, a daughter of William and Melissa (Brown) Railsback, who are mentioned elsewhere in this volume. Unto Mr. and Mrs. Taber were born ten children, of whom seven are yet living: Stella, the wife of Harry A. Ford; Earl R., who attended the Oberlin (Ohio) College and was graduated from the Indiana State University in the class of 1905 and is at present cashier of the State Exchange Bank at Argos; Charles C.; Gladys; Jessie; Glenna, and William P.

Mr. Taber was a member of the Knights of Pythias and was treasurer of the lodge. From his boyhood days he was a member of the Church of God and loyal to its teachings and precepts. In politics he was a staunch Republican and in matters of citizenship was ever progressive, alert and enterprising. In no sense a man in public life, he nevertheless exerted an immeasurable influence on the communities in which he lived: In business life as a financier, in social circles by reason of a charming personality, in matters of citizenship by reason of his loyalty to the public welfare. In all of his business life he displayed an aptitude for successful management and maintained a reputation for probity and commercial integrity that was above question.

ANDREW J. THOMAS. One of the well improved farms of Walnut township is the property of Andrew J. Thomas, whose labors have wrought a marked transformation in its appearance. In all of his work he is practical, methodical and progressive, and his labors are bringing to him a gratifying and well merited success. He was born in Elkhart county, Indiana, November 27, 1850, his parents being E. P. and Margaret Ann (McConnell) Thomas. The father was born in South Carolina, September 23, 1823, and died in 1905 at the age of eighty-two years, while the mother, whose birth occurred in Elkhart county, Indiana, died in 1864 at the age of thirty-four years. The father carried on farming in Elkhart county until 1854, after which he spent two years in Iowa. He then returned to Elkhart county and in the midst of the green woods built a log cabin and cleared his land, continuing its cultivation until his removal to Kosciusko county, Indiana. He was one of the worthy and valued pioneer settlers of this state, aiding in reclaiming the district for the purposes of civilization and in laying broad and deep the foundation for the present development and progress of the localities in which he made his home. He was a consistent member of the Christian church and in politics was a Jacksonian Democrat. He was married in Elkhart county, Indiana, to Miss Margaret Ann McConnell and they became the parents of seven children, namely: Andrew J.; Sarah J., the wife of Henry Roberts; James F., who married Mary Busby; John S., who married Matilda Hepler; William, who died at the age of eleven years; Catherine, the wife of E. Anglin; and Albert P., who wedded Etta Boggs. After the death of his first wife Mr. Thomas married Zilpha Ramsey, and unto them were born nine children, of whom seven