

ALBERT J. FIELDS

There are individuals in nearly every community who, by reason of pronounced ability and force of character, rise above the, heads of the masses and command the unbounded esteem of, their fellow men. Characterized by perseverance and a directing spirit, two virtues that never fail, such men always make their presence felt and the vigor of their strong personalities serves as a stimulus and incentive to the young and rising generation. To this energetic and enterprising class the subject of this sketch very properly be longs. Having never been seized with the wanderlust spirit that has led many of Lawrence county's young men to other fields of endeavor and other states, Mr. Fields has devoted himself to his adopted profession and to the public duties to which he has been called, and, because of his personal worth and his accomplishments, he is clearly entitled to representation among the enterprising and progressive men of his locality.

Albert J. Fields is the scion of a long line of sterling ancestry. His paternal great-great-grandfather, Jeremiah Fields, who was a native of England, came to America in 1765, locating in Virginia or North Carolina. He sided with the colonists in their contentions with the mother country and was a soldier in the war of the Revolution. His son, Robert Fields, who was born in Virginia or North Carolina, fought in the war of 1812. Absalom, son of Robert Fields, came to Lawrence county, Indiana, in 1817, settling near old Port William, and was one of the earliest settlers in this county, securing his land from the government. His son, Joseph, grandfather of the subject of this sketch, was born in Lawrence county, and married Elizabeth Green, by whom he had eight children, among whom was George Fields, father of the subject. George Fields was born in Martin county, Indiana, but moved to Lawrence county in 1878. Some time later he moved back to Martin county, but in 1907 he again became a resident of Lawrence county and now resides in Bedford. During his active years he followed farming pursuits, but is now practically retired from active affairs. He married Mary Sheeks, the daughter of David L. and Susan (Horse) Sheeks. Her father was one of the prominent and wealthy citizens of Lawrence county, and served at one time as county commissioner. At the time of his death he was the owner of four thousand acres of land. To George and Mary Fields were born five children, namely: Addie, who remains at the old home; Albert J., the immediate subject of this sketch; Lizzie M., the wife of Willis Kilburn, of Indianapolis; Laura M., the wife of William Lynch, of Martin county, this state; and Mary Fern Fields, who remains at home.

Albert J. Fields was born in Lawrence county, Indiana on August 26, 1879, and his elementary education was received in the public schools of Martin county, graduating from the high school at Shoals. Having determined to make the practice of law his life work, Mr. Fields then entered the law department of the State University, at Bloomington, where he was graduated in 1904, with the degree of Bachelor of Laws. In September of that year he entered upon the active practice of his profession at Bedford and was soon in command of a good share of the legal work in the local courts. Natural aptitude and rigid training have qualified him for the most intricate phases of legal practice and he has been eminently successful in the practice. Of marked force of character and strong personality, Mr. Fields was, in 1909, elected by the citizens of Bedford to the chief magistracy of that city, a choice the wisdom of which has been abundantly verified since he assumed the position. During his term as mayor the city of

Bedford has made remarkable strides as a municipality, the notable improvements consisting of extensive and valuable additions to the water works system. a new electric lighting contract, much more favorable to the city than the former one, an increase of more than twenty-five per cent. in the number of street lights, and the installation of the pedestal cluster light system for many of the streets, and, notwithstanding all these improvements, more than twenty-five thousand dollars of city indebtedness has been paid off, certainly a record of which any administration would have a right to be proud. Mr. Fields is a Democrat in politics, and the second mayor of that political faith to be elected in this city, while the last city election was the first in the history of the city when an entire Democratic ticket was elected. Mr. Fields. by his sound business methods and wise judgment in the handling of public affairs, earned the commendation of, his fellow citizens and in 1913 he was again placed in nomination by his party for the mayoralty. He has in mind several other extensive improvements, which he will endeavor to make if successful in re election, notably in the fire department. He is entirely unselfish in the various efforts he has made to advance the welfare of his city, in which he takes a pride, and he has earned the confidence of all who know him.

Fraternally, Mr. Fields is a member of the Free and Accepted Masons, the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and the Loyal Order of Moose. Religiously, he is a member of the Christian church. Personally, he possesses to an eminent degree those characteristics which gain friendships and he is deservedly popular in the community.

(History of Lawrence and Monroe Counties Indiana , 1914 B. F. Bowen & Co. Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana pgs 560-562)