

VINCENT M. CUNNINGHAM, a thorough-going and successful business man and the proprietor of one of the oldest and leading general mercantile establishments of the enterprising borough of West Indiana, is a son of John H. and Mary P. (Thompson) Cunningham, and was born in Armstrong township, Indiana county, Pennsylvania, August 23, 1852. His American paternal ancestors came originally from Ireland, and his grandfather, Archibald Cunningham, was born in the latter part of the eighteenth century in the western part of this State. He followed farming in Indiana and Westmoreland counties. He married Rosanna Hutchinson and reared a family of nine children: Jane, married Andrew Patterson; Elizabeth, wife of William Cochran; Mary, married to William McAdo; George, Ruth, wife of John Lucas; John H., Archibald, Jr., Martha, married to rev. Mr. Chapman; and Rosanna, wife of L. E. Freet. The second son, John H. Cunningham (father), was born September 11, 1817, in Young township and removed to Armstrong township, where he followed farming until 1864. In that year he returned to White township and purchased a farm.

In 1867 he engaged in the general mercantile business in the room now occupied, for the same purpose, by the subject of this sketch. He was a republican in politics, a member of the Methodist Episcopal church and a man of good business ability. He had held several township and borough offices, was highly esteemed in the different communities in which he had resided and passed away December 17, 1871, at fifty-four years of age. He married Mary P. Thompson, daughter of James Thompson, a native and farmer of this county, a relative of Judge Joseph Thompson, and member of the United Presbyterian church. He died at Indiana in 1872, at seventy-eight years of age. Mrs. Cunningham was member of the M. E. church, and died January 29, 1874, aged fifty-three years. Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham had twelve children, six of whom are living: A.S., John M. Vincent M., Joanna M., wife of J. T. Gibson; Phebe J., married to W. W. Lockhard, and Laura C., wife of Charles Wood.

Vincent M. Cunningham was reared until eleven years of age on his father's Armstrong township farm, and then came to the site of West Indiana. He received his education in the common schools of Armstrong and White townships. Leaving school, he assisted his father in the store and on the farm till 1872. From 1872 to 1875 he was engaged in farming in White township. In 1877 he embarked in merchandising at Cookport, where he remained for five years and enjoyed a good trade. He closed out, however, in 1882, at that place in order to remove to West Indiana, where he had effected the purchase of his father's store. He refitted the entire premises, put in a new and general stock of goods and entered upon his present successful career as a leading merchant of Indiana.

He united in marriage, on September 19, 1877, with Mary E., daughter of Isaac McHenry, of Clearfield county, Pa., Their children are: John Simmons, Charlie V., Laura B., Edwin B., Mary E. and Joanna M.

V. M. Cunningham is a member of Clymer Lodge, No. 28, Knights of Honor, William Penn Council, No. 305, Royal Arcanum, Indiana Conclave, No. 180, Improved Order of Heptasophs, Local Branch, No. 341, Order of the Iron Hall, and Indiana Methodist Episcopal church, in which he is now serving as steward. He is a republican, has served as auditor of West Indiana and is now treasurer of the borough. He has carefully followed the laws of commercial progress and prosperity, and as a natural consequence has won mercantile success and an extensive patronage.