

## **BERGER, PETER**

Peter BERGER, the well-known sawmill man and lumber manufacturer at Salamonia, a member of the board of directors of the Farmers Bank of that village, president of the Salamonia Light and Power Company, a substantial landowner of this county and long recognized as one of the leading figures in the industrial and commercial development of the Salamonia neighborhood, is a Pennsylvanian by birth, but has been a resident of Jay county since the days of his infancy, he having been under two years of age when his parents came here in 1867 and established their home in Pike township. Mr. BERGER was born in Berks county, Pennsylvania, October 26, 1865, and is a son of Peter and Catherine ( GROH ) BERGER, both of whom were born in that same state. The elder Peter BERGER was a stonemason by trade. In 1867 he came to Indiana with his family and bought an eighty acre farm in Pike township, this county. There he established his home and created an excellent piece of property, as his affairs prospered adding to his holdings until he became the owner of a quarter section of land. In addition to his farming he also for some years continued somewhat to follow his trade as a stonemason and thus helped in much of the building that went on in that part of the county during the late '60s and during the '70s. He and his wife were the parents of three children, all of whom are living, the subject of this sketch having a brother, Henry BERGER, and & sister, Mrs. Mary SMITH. Reared on the home farm in Pike township, the junior Peter BERGER received his schooling in the Green Hill school (district No. 1) and continued to make his home with his parents, helpful in the labors of the farm, until his marriage at the age of twenty-one years, after which he became employed as a timber buyer for Fred Bimel's wood-working mill at Portland. For twelve years Mr. BERGER continued thus engaged and then he entered business for himself, establishing his present mill at Salamonia. He started in on a modest scale, but the business has developed until now he is employing four times the force originally required to carry on the operations of the mill. In addition to the general manufacture of lumber Mr. BERGER turns out singletrees, handles and other products of the sort and keeps one motor truck and five teams of horses busy. The mill has a capacity of about 6,000 feet of lumber a day besides the side products. In 1915 Mr. BERGER bought an interest in a similar mill at Ridgeville, in the neighboring county of Randolph, this mill being now operated along the same lines as that at Salamonia, under the firm name of Hollowell & Berger. Mr. BERGER buys his timber on the ground and carries the process of manufacture

through to the finished product. In addition to his extensive milling interests Mr. BERGER is the owner of 104 acres of land in Jay County, a part of this lying in Pike township and the remainder in Madison township, is the owner of six tenant houses in Salamonina, is the owner of one of the most up-to-date public garages in this section of the state, the same now being operated by Walter MATCHETT at Salamonina, and has other property interests. Mr. BERGER was one of the promoters of the Salamonina Light and Power Company of Salamonina, and is now president of that concern, whose plant not only provides lighting for Salamonina and the farm houses in that vicinity but carries current to Ft. Recovery and other points along the county line. He also is a member of the board of directors of the Farmers Bank of Salamonina and in other ways has contributed of his enterprise and public spirit to the promotion of the community's general interests. He is a Republican, is a member of the local camp of the Modern Woodmen at Salamonina and he and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal church. On November 25, 1886, Peter BERGER was united in marriage to Harriet PFEIFER, also of this county, and to this union one child has been born, a son Harry, born on October 3, 1887. Harry BERGER received his schooling in the Green Hill school and in 1908 was united in marriage to Vera Miller. To this union three children have been born, Glenn, Evalyn and Ralph. Harry BERGER and his family live on his father's farm, which he is operating. Mrs. Harriet BERGER was born in the village of Salamonina but was reared on a farm in Madison township, her parents having moved from the village to a farm when she was a child, and her schooling was received in the Lockout school. She is a daughter of Peter and Rickey (CUPP) PFEIFER, the former of whom was a shoemaker at Salamonina but later became a farmer and the owner of a forty-acre farm in Madison township. Peter PFEIFER and his wife were the parents of six children, three of whom are living, Mrs. BERGER having two brothers, Lewis P. and Charles PFEIFER. BERGER, CUPP, GROH, MATCHETT, PFEIFER. SMITH SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.180-181. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.