

J. O. PIERCE, one of Pike township's well known and substantial farmers, was born at Ridgeville, in the neighboring county of Randolph. April 6, 1884, and is a son of James O. and Susan (BOWERSOX) PIERCE, the latter of whom, born in Darke county, Ohio, a daughter of John H. and Diana (HARTER) BOWERSOX, who later became residents of Indiana, is still living, making her home at Portland, where she has resided for the past thirty years and more. The late James O. PIERCE, who died at his home in Portland on December 4 1920, and of whom further and fitting mention is made elsewhere in this work, was born in Ohio, a son of Orange and Caroline (SELBY) PIERCE, who later became residents of Jay county. Upon coming to this county Orange PIERCE bought a tract of 120 acres in Pike township and there made his home until his retirement from the farm at the age of sixty years and removal to Ridgeville, where he spent his last days. As is noted elsewhere, James O. PIERCE completed his schooling in Ridgeville College and then was for eight years engaged as an instructor in that institution. He then was called to accept the position of superintendent of the public schools of Redkey, this county, and was thus engaged for five years, at the end of which time he was made principal of the East ward school at Portland and in 1891 moved to that city. Three years later he was made secretary-treasurer of the Bimel Manufacturing Company at Portland and was thus engaged with that company until his retirement in 1913. He and his wife were the parents of four children, the subject of this sketch having two sisters, Mrs. Inez VAIL, of Michigan City, Ind., and Mrs. Mabel HULL, of Oshkosh, Wis., and a brother, Earl PIERCE, who is living with his mother at Portland.

J. O. PIERCE was but a babe in arms when his parents moved to Redkey and he was about six years of age when they moved to Portland. He was graduated from the Portland high school and then entered Purdue University, where for two years he pursued the mechanical engineering course and then for a year thereafter was engaged on a Southern trip in behalf of the Bimel Manufacturing Company. He then went to Los Angeles, Cal., where for six years he was employed in the technical department of the gas company at that place. At the end of this period of employment he returned to Portland and not long afterward took up farming on the tract of eighty acres on which he is now living in the Bluff Point neighborhood and after his marriage established his home there, where he and his family are now very comfortably situated.

It was on December 15, 1911, that, J. O. PIERCE was united in marriage to Bessie FLESHER, of this county, daughter of Daniel Vinton and Flora FLESHER and a member of the pioneer FLESHER family which has been represented here since 1835, and to this union two daughters have been born, Marian and Mary Louise. The PIERCE's have a pleasant home on rural mail route No. 8 out of Portland and take an interested part in the general social activities of the community in which they live. Mr. and Mrs. PIERCE are Republicans and are members of the Methodist Episcopal church at Portland.

Unknown source