

Walter Lee SKINNER, former mayor of the city of Dunkirk, proprietor of the notable "Skinner Spotted Stock Farm" at the western edge of the city, a former merchant and grain dealer, president of the Square Deal Auto Company of Dunkirk and for years one of the best known men in Jay county, is a native of the old Buckeye state, but has been a resident of Dunkirk for the past thirty years and thus has been a witness to and a participant in the development which has marked that city's progress during this period. Mr. SKINNER was born on a farm in the immediate vicinity of West Salem, Ohio, January 19, 1865, son of Moses O. and Susan (LEE) SKINNER, who were the parents of three children, the subject of this sketch having a brother, Elsworth R. SKINNER, and a sister, Violet. Moses O. SKINNER was born in Orange county, New York, where he was reared. As a young man he went to Ohio and engaged in farming, becoming the owner of a well developed farm in the vicinity of West Salem, where he and his wife spent their last days.

Walter LEE SKINNER was reared on the home farm and received his elementary schooling in the schools of West Salem. He supplemented this by two years attendance at Ashland College and then became engaged as a traveling salesman for the Ely Manufacturing Company of Pennsylvania. In 1891 Mr. SKINNER married and a few months later "left the road" and located at Dunkirk, where he became engaged in the hardware business, a line which he continued for more than twenty years, or until he sold his hardware store in 1911 to McKinney Bros. Not long after locating at Dunkirk Mr. SKINNER also became engaged in the grain business and established a string of elevators, including locations at Dunkirk, Redkey and Mill Grove, and was equally successful in his operations along this line, continuing the same until 1920, when he sold his grain business to Shirley Bros. and retired from that line. In the meantime, in 1909, he bought an eighty-acre tract at the west edge of town, just over the line in Blackford county, and there began to develop his stock farm, gradually increasing his land holdings there until "Skinner's Spotted Stock Farm" now covers 325 acres and is one of the best farm plants of the sort hereabout. Following a fancy which long ago interested him, Mr. SKINNER has nothing but spotted stock on his farm, spotted varieties being carried out even in his dogs, chickens, horses and mules, a fancy which has given more than local celebrity to his stock farm. In addition to his other activities Mr. SKINNER is the principal stockholder and president of the Square Deal Auto Company of Dunkirk and has other local interests, even in his retirement from the main lines which so long occupied his attention finding it impossible to sit idly and watch the world go by. He has from the time of taking up his residence in Dunkirk ever given his interested and earnest attention to local civic affairs and for four years served as mayor of the city. Prior to that term of public service he had served for nine years as a member of the city council and in all his public service kept the best interests of the city constantly in view. Mr. SKINNER is a Republican, a Scottish Rite 32 degree Mason and a noble of the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, an Odd Fellow, a Redman and a member of the Episcopal church. It was in 1891 that Mr. SKINNER was united in marriage to Clarabelle PATTERSON, who was born in Pennsylvania, a daughter of John and Adelia M. PATTERSON, and he and his wife have a very pleasant and hospitable home. Mrs. SKINNER is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church.

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