

SPRINKLE, WILLIAM R.

William R. SPRINKLE, a well-known public service contractor at Portland, particularly concerned in road, street and sewer construction, is a native Hoosier and has lived in this state all his life. He was born on a farm in Lancaster township, Huntington county, July 24, 1862, son of Absalom and Elizabeth J. (HEFNER) SPRINKLE, the latter of whom was born in Jefferson township, that same county, a member of one of the pioneer families of that section of the state. Absalom SPRINKLE was born in Polk county, Ohio, and was eighteen years of age when he came to Indiana and began working in Huntington county, where he presently married and established his home. He was the owner of an eighty acre farm in Lancaster township and was also extensively engaged in gravel road contracting, his first work in that line having been the construction of the Huntington and Lancaster gravel road, the first such road constructed in that county. He and his wife were the parents of six children, those besides the subject of this sketch being John J., Milton O., David F., Chester L. and Estella, wife of Oscar SWANK.

Reared on the home farm in Huntington county, William R. SPRINKLE received his schooling in what then were known as the Stringtown school and the Center school, and worked with his father until he was twenty years of age. Although but twelve years of age at the time. he aided in the construction of the Huntington and Lancaster gravel road, above mentioned, and has ever since been engaged in similar public work. When he was twenty years of age he secured his first contract this being for the construction of a 20-inch sewer system in the town of Warren, Ind., at a contract price of \$2,500. His success in that first venture decided his course of life, and since then he has carried out public contracts over a wide territory in Indiana, his headquarters having long ago been established at Portland, where he helped lay the first cement sidewalk laid in that city. Several of the streets in Portland have been paved by Mr. SPRINKLE, including the paving of Arch, Walnut and East High streets. Mr. SPRINKLE is a Republican and has ever given his thoughtful attention to local civic affairs. He is a member of the local lodges of the Knights of Pythias and of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. Mr. SPRINKLE has been twice married.

On October 20, 1891, he was united in marriage to Sarah MINTON, who also was born in Lancaster township, Huntington county, a daughter of Nathan and Abigail (ROGERS) MINTON, and to that union were born two children, Ralph C. and Mamie, both of whom died in infancy. The mother of these children died, and in January, 1900, Mr. SPRINKLE married Minnie A. WILKINSON, who was born in Pike township, Jay county, October 23, 1869, daughter of John H. and Maria (HILTON) WILKINSON, and who died on July 14, 1920. On February 25, 1916, Mr. and Mrs. SPRINKLE welcomed into their home Melva M. GIBSON, who was born in Portland on August 20, 1908.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.192-193. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.