

SWHIER, W. WALTER

W. Walter SWHIER, a well-known bridge and road contractor of Portland, whose public work has been carried on in every township in Jay county and who thus has long been one of the best known contractors in his line hereabout, is a native son of Jay county and has lived here all his life. He was born on a farm in Jefferson township on November 12, 1884, and is a son of Adam W. and Catherine (RACER) SWHIER, both of whom also were born in this county, members of pioneer families here. Adam W. SWHIER, who owns a farm in Jefferson township, was formerly engaged in the manufacture of tile there and is widely known throughout the county. He and his wife have four children, the subject of this sketch having two brothers, Charles and Jesse SWHIER, and a sister, Nellie.

Reared on the home farm in Jefferson township, W. Walter SWHIER received his schooling in the Bell school (district No. 5) and after leaving school continued farm work for about three years, at the end of which time he took employment with the farm implement firm of Andrew & Addington at Redkey and for a year was engaged in delivering and setting up farm machinery. He then for a year or more was employed with John Hayes & Co. in the construction of traction lines and in the following summer worked on public contracts for Luther Manor. By this time Mr. SWHIER had gained a pretty practical experience in public work and in 1903 set up for himself as a bridge and road contractor, a line he has ever since followed and in which he has been quite successful. Mr. SWHIER has erected bridges in every township in Jay county and has also constructed numerous roads, including the Wilson Frank brick road out of Portland and the Edmondson and Robinson cement road out of Pennville. In his political views Mr. SWHIER is "independent." He is affiliated with the local aerie of the Fraternal Order of Eagles at Portland.

On December 3, 1913, W. Walter SWHIER was united in marriage to Barbara COONS, who was born in Kansas, but who was reared in Parke county, Indiana, daughter of William and Isabella COONS, and to this union two children have been born, Evelyn and William. Mr. and Mrs. SWHIER have a pleasant home at Portland and take an interested part in the city's general social activities.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.145-146. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.