

is a member of the Greenland Lodge, No. 665, A. F. & A. M., and Beecher City Lodge, No. 690, I. O. O. F. He holds to the Protestant religion. He has been identified with the Republican party since its organization, and adheres strictly to the principles of the same. He has

always been averse to office, and has attended to his profession, which he likes, and consequently is successful. He has for a long time given some of his personal attention to rural pursuits, and ranks among the very best as a farmer and stock grower.

WEST TOWNSHIP.

JAMES BECK, farmer, P. O. Welton, was born in Harrison County, Ohio, January 11, 1818, to William and Amelia (Ford) Beck. His father was born in Delaware; after his marriage, removed to Ohio, and settled in Harrison and afterward Knox County, and in 1850 removed to Effingham County, Ill., where he died in 1857, aged seventy-eight years. He was a farmer. He served in the war of 1812. The mother of our subject was born in Delaware, and died in Effingham County, Ill., in 1861, aged eighty-eight years. She was the mother of twelve children, of whom John was the fourth child. His early life was spent in assisting to till the soil of his father's farm. He left home when he was twenty-two years old, and spent four years in boating on the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio Rivers. In 1843, he married, and settled down at farming in Ohio. In 1850, came to Effingham County, Ill., where he is still actively engaged in farming. He is the owner of about 500 acres of good land in the county, and is considered one of the most practical farmers of the county. He first married Miss Maria Van Winckle, who died in 1852, leaving three children as the result of their union. Sarah, wife of John Leonard is the only surviving child. In July, 1853, he married Miss Susan Hardsock, who has borne him six children, of whom five are now living, viz., William, Maria, Margaret, Hester L. and Susan A. Mr. Beck is an active member of the Masonic order at Altamont. Politically his sympathies are with the Democratic party.

HENRY BESING, deceased, Altamont, was born in Hanover, Germany, June, 1822; when quite young, went on a sailing vessel as cabin boy, and followed the same for some time. His education was principally received while on the ocean. In 1852, he married Miss Louise Votmer, a native of Hanover, Germany. She is the mother of five children—Charles, Frank, William, Rosa and Alvina. Mr. B. after arriving in America, made his first settlement in Cook County, Ill., in 1852, where he remained until 1865, when he came to Effingham County, and located on 240 acres of prairie and twenty timber. He died November 18, 1872. He commenced life poor, and by hard work and economy succeeded in accumulating a good property. He was a member of the German Lutheran Church, and an active worker for the Republican party. Mrs. B. and family are all members of the German Lutheran Church.

JOHN BIRCH, farmer, P. O. Edgewood, was born in Lancashire, England, 1843, to Henry and Alice (Houth) Birch, both natives of England. He was a teamster and engineer in his younger days, and is now farming in West Township. His wife, and mother of our subject, died in 1879, aged fifty-nine years. She was the mother of two children—John, our subject, and Mary Ann, wife of I. Flaharty, a farmer in Mason Township. John was brought to America by his parents in 1856; they located in Rhode Island, where he attended the common schools. In 1859, he was brought to Effingham County; his parents lo-