

Wheeler Ashcraft, attorney for the Hawkins Mortgage Company of Portland and for the past fifteen years and more a member of the bar of the Jay Circuit Court, a resident of Portland since 1905, is a native son of the old Buckeye state but has never regretted the choice which led him over into the Hoosier state. Mr. Ashcraft was born on a farm in Muskingum County, Ohio, July 19, 1878, and is a son of Jacob and Helen (McDonald) Ashcraft, both also natives of Ohio, the latter born in Muskingum County on May 21, 1856, and both of whom are still living in that county. Jacob Ashcraft was born in Coshocton County, Ohio, January 12, 1844, and was reared to farming. He married in Muskingum County and there established his home. He is the owner of a farm of 160 acres and he and his wife are the parents of six children, the subject of this sketch having a sister, Lucy Belle, and four brothers, Mansfield, Robert, Wendell J. and Jennings B. Ashcraft.

Reared on the home farm in Muskingum County, Wheeler Ashcraft received his common schooling in the neighborhood schools and supplemented this by attendance at the Conesville (Ohio) High School and the normal school at Ada and in the winter of 1903-04 taught school in Coshocton County. In the meantime he had been giving his serious thought to the study of law and pursued the course of study along that line laid down by the Sprague Correspondence School, remaining at home until in 1905 when he entered the law office of S. A. D. Whipple at Portland and under Mr. Whipple's preceptorship was prepared for admission to the bar. In the following year (1906) Mr. Ashcraft was admitted to the bar of the Jay Circuit Court and then entered into an association with Mr. Whipple in the practice of his profession. This association continued until 1909 when Mr. Ashcraft opened an office of his own at Portland and was thereafter engaged in practice alone, carrying on a general practice but making a specialty of corporation law, until December 1, 1921, when he entered upon his present connection as attorney for the Hawkins Mortgage Company of Portland and is now giving his whole attention to the affairs of that extensive corporation.

Mr. Ashcraft is a Republican and ever since he became a citizen of Indiana has given his thoughtful attention to local and state political affairs. On July 27, 1912, Wheeler Ashcraft was united in marriage to Mary Nelle McFarland, former superintendent of the Portland Hospital, and to this union three children have been born, namely: Anna Helen, born on November 8, 1913; Wheeler, Jr., February 6, 1916, and Hale Harlan, March 28, 1920. Mrs. Ashcraft is a member of the Presbyterian Church. She was born at Millgrove, in the neighboring county of Blackford, July 9, 1882, and is a daughter of Dr. John E. and Anna (McFarland) McFarland, who are still living at Millgrove and who have one other daughter, Josie. Mrs. Ashcraft was reared at Millgrove and completed her schooling at the Marion Normal College, after which she entered the school for nurses conducted in connection with the Protestant Deaconess Hospital at Indianapolis and in due time was graduated from that institution, after which she entered upon her duties as a professional nurse and was so occupied until her marriage to Mr. Ashcraft, and for one year (1908-09) served as superintendent of the old hospital at Portland. The Ashcraft's have a very pleasant home at Portland and take an interested part in the general social and cultural activities of the city.