

BONHAM, FRANCIS M

Francis M. BONHAM, formerly and for years a well-known timber buyer of this county and former assistant postmaster at Bryant, where his death occurred in the spring of 1900, was widely known throughout this section of Indiana and at his passing left a good memory. Mr. BONHAM was a "Buckeye" by birth, but a Hoosier by adoption and choice, a resident of Indiana from the days of his boyhood, and had done well his part in the common life of the community. He was born in Perry county, Ohio and was but a lad when he came with his parents to Indiana, the family settling in Blackford county, where he was reared and where he received his schooling. He was reared on a farm and after his marriage began farming on his own account, renting the old home farm in Blackford county from his father's estate. For ten years he was thus engaged and then he moved to Grant county, where he operated a general store for five years, at the end of which time he moved to Upland (Grant county, Indiana) and opened a drug store. That was in 1871 and he continued in business at Upland until 1879, in which year he moved back to Blackford county and resumed farming. Two years later, in 1881, Mr. BONHAM came to Jay county and located at Bryant, where he became engaged as timber buyer for this section for Hoffman Bros., of Fort Wayne. That was in the days when the timber industry was the big thing throughout this section and Mr. BONHAM became one of the best known timber men hereabout. He continued in that line until the timber was pretty well worked out through this section and then he was variously engaged until 1897 when he was appointed assistant postmaster at Bryant. In this latter capacity Mr. BONHAM served until his death, which occurred on April 28, 1900, he then being sixty-three years of-age. His widow is still living at Bryant, being now in her eighty-fourth year. She and her husband had seven children, four of whom are still living, namely: Luther BONHAM, of Warren, Ohio; Mrs. Clara SISK, of Bryant; Charles W. M. BONHAM, of Vicksburg, Mich., and Miss Emma BONHAM, assistant cashier of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Bryant. The late Francis M. BONHAM was a member of the Masonic order during the time of his residence at Upland and was a past noble grand of the local lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows at Upland. By political inclination he was an ardent Republican and had ever given a good citizen's attention to local civic affairs. Mrs. BONHAM and Miss Emma BONHAM are members of the Lutheran church at Bryant. SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.190-191. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.

