

BONIFAS, JOHN

John BONIFAS, former auditor of Jay county, who is now manager and cashier of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Bryant, this county, one of the best known business men in the county, is a native son of Jay county and has lived here all his life. Mr. BONIFAS was born on a farm in Wabash township on November 8, 1874, and is a son of Jacob and Pauline (REINHART) BONIFAS, the latter of whom was born in Seneca county, Ohio. Jacob BONIFAS was a European, born in the grand duchy of Luxemburg, who had come to America when twenty-two years of age and had located in this county, establishing his home in Wabash township after his marriage and developing there a fine farm of 150 acres. He and his wife were the parents of thirteen children, all of whom are living save Henry, the others besides the subject of this sketch being Peter, Mary, Regina, Edward, Joseph, Clara, August, Philip, Ludvena, Frank and Ursula. Reared on the home farm in Wabash township, John BONIFAS received his early schooling in the district schools of that neighborhood and supplemented this by a course in the old Portland Normal College, after which he began teaching school and was thus engaged for ten years, his service in that connection mainly being rendered in the schools of his home township. While thus engaged Mr. BONIFAS continued his studies during summer courses, and attended variously the Ohio Northern University at Ada, Ohio, a business college at Nashville, Tenn., Valparaiso University, and finished the scientific course at the Tri-State College at Angola, Ind. In the meanwhile he had been giving a good citizen's attention to local civic affairs and after ten years of teaching was appointed deputy county auditor by W. Lee Smith, then auditor of the county, and served in that capacity for eight years, at the end of which time he was elected county auditor and in the succeeding election was re-elected, thus serving two terms as auditor. On January 1, 1920, Mr. BONIFAS entered upon his present service as manager and cashier .of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Bryant. This bank serves a wide territory in the northern part of Jay county and in the neighboring county of Adams and since its organization has proved a great convenience to the community it thus serves. The bank is capitalized at \$25,000 and its surplus equals its capital. Its officers are as follows: President, H. W. HUCKREIDE; vice-president, J. F. ARNOLD; cashier, John BONIFAS; assistant cashier, Emma BONHAM, the directors, in addition to Messrs. HUCKREIDE, ARNOLD and BONIFAS being W. S. FRANK, Joseph MINCH, Charles E. SCHWARTZ and James R. FLEMING. Mr. BONIFAS is a Democrat and he and his family is members of the Catholic church at

Portland. He also is a member of the Union City council of the Knights of Columbus, the New Corydon court of the Order of Foresters and the Portland aerie of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. In May, 1898, John BONIFAS was united in marriage to Helena BRICHER, of this county, and to this union have been born seven children, namely: Urban, who is a member of the class of 1922 of the law school of Georgetown University, Washington, D. C.; Beulah, who was graduated from the Portland high school with the class of 1921; Pauline, who is a member of the class of 1923, Portland high school, and Charles, Helen, Mary and John, Jr. Mrs. BONIFAS was born in Wyandot county, Ohio, and was twelve years of age when she came to this county with her parents, Henry and Mary (DELL) BRICHER, the family settling in Wabash township. Henry BRICHER and wife were the parents of seven children, six of whom are living, Mrs. BONIFAS having two brothers, Charles and Nicholas BRICHER, and three sisters, Rose, Gertrude and Stella BRICHER. SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.245-246. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.