

CURRENT, BENJAMIN F

Benjamin F. CURRENT - No name is more familiar to the resident of Jay county, Indiana, than the name of CURRENT, families of prominence and influence having borne that name for years and been associated with all that was good and noble. They were known among the very earliest pioneers in this section of the state and have contributed their full quota to the progress which has been rapid and steady since the first white settler braved the anger of the red man and the ferocity of the wild beasts to carve for him a home in this fertile country. Of all the large number who have been a credit to the name, none have been held in higher esteem or have led more honorable lives than the gentleman whose history it is our pleasure and privilege here to briefly portray, Benjamin F. CURRENT. Born October 12, 1831, near Grafton, Taylor county, West Virginia, he inherited the courtly manner and kindly hospitality for which the south is noted, and his home today is one of the most cheerful spots in all Jay County. His immediate ancestors were John and Mary (NORRIS) CURRENT, while those twice and thrice removed were both known as James. The great-grandfather, James CURRENT, was born in Ireland in 1730, and died in America August 15, 1822, near Grafton, West Virginia. He first came to Maryland and then to West Virginia, where he secured thirteen hundred acres of land, trading therefore a gray horse. He was the father of the following children: William, John, Martin,, Mollie, James and Enoch, most of whom lived and died in Virginia. His son James, the grandfather of our subject, was married in 1796, to Margaret JOHNSTON, who was born in a block- house, in Pennsylvania, August 7, 1777. They came to Indiana in 1835 or 1836, settling in Henry county, where their children had already made homes, and where they both passed away; reaching advanced ages. He died February 2, 1845, and she January 23, 1875. Their children were as follows: Peter, Nellie, John, Susanna, Mary, James, Abraham, William P., George W. and Nancy. George, William, John and Nancy lived in Jay county, and in 1839 first settled here. Peter came later, and afterwards went to Nebraska where he died. His daughter, Rachel, is the wife of Ila T. LAKE, of Redkey, and his son Samuel is the father of William CURRENT, who lives south of Red-key. Oscar, another son, resides in Redkey. George W. died at the age of sixty-two years, leaving a son, John W., and two daughters in Randolph county. William P CURRENT is now in his eighty-sixth year and resides at Wadena, Minnesota. He has two daughters living here, Nancy, wife of Daniel Bird, and Mary, wife of Thomas Dragoo and mother of Del Dragoo, of Redkey. Nancy KEENER is now nearly eighty years of age

and lives in Kansas. John CURRENT was born April 25, 1802, on the old homestead near Grafton, West Virginia, and died July 24, 1881. He was married February 19, 1829, in the Old Dominion, to Miss Mary NORRIS, who was born December 24, 1803, and died January 9, 1875. Five years after marriage, in 1834, they came to Henry county, Indiana, and six years later, in 1840, they came to Jay county and settled on the farm where Jacob DAUGHERTY now lives, his wife being a daughter of John CURRENT. On this farm they spent the remainder of their lives. Nine children were born to them, as follows: Harriet Jane, who married John BOOTS and resides in Randolph county at the age of seventy-one years; Benjamin F., our subject; Henry O., who resides one mile north of Redkey; William M., who resides in Dunkirk; Susan M., wife of Jacob DAUGHERTY; David, who resides in Redkey; Rebecca E., who married George JACKSON and died in early life, leaving two children; Mary E., wife of Abraham SUTTON, of Knox township; and James K., also a resident of Portland. The CURRENT family held their first re-union on October 12, 1895, the birth-day of Benjamin F., on the old homestead in Richland township. There were about two hundred members of the family present, among them William P. CURRENT, of Wadena, Minnesota. This proved to be such a success in every way and was attended with so much pleasure that it was voted to hold these re-unions annually and Benjamin F. CURRENT was made the president of the meeting. The other meetings have been held on the old James CURRENT homestead in Henry county, and on the Jacob DAUGHERTY farm, in Jay county. Benjamin F. CURRENT was but nine years old when his parents came to Jay county, and here his boyhood was passed in assisting his father to clear up the farm. He remained at home until April 3, 1853, when he was united in marriage with Miss Luesa CLORE, a sister of George and John CLORE of Blackford county, Indiana, and daughter of Charles W. and Frances (SNYDER) CLORE. She was born in Madison county, Virginia, December 4, 1830, and was about nineteen years of age when she came to this state, locating near Redkey. After Mr. CURRENT's marriage he first settled in Jay county, and in 1862 moved on a farm in Jackson township, Blackford county, which he improved, and on which he resided until 1864, when he purchased and settled on the farm on which he now resides. He enlisted October 10, 1864, in the Twenty-third Indiana Regiment, joining his regiment in the spring of 1865. The regiment went with Sherman, but Mr. CURRENT was sent to Dalton, Georgia, to do guard duty and was later sent back by way of Nashville, to Moorehead City, North Carolina, and marched to Kingston, where they took part in the battle. The battalion in which he marched also included the Twenty-

fifth Massachusetts, and after joining his regiment at Goldsboro, North Carolina, they remained there until the surrender of Johnston, when they marched to Washington and took part in the grand review, being discharged July 29, 1865, at Louisville. Mr. CURRENT has lived on his present farm since 1864 and has brought it from a meager start to its present splendid condition; He did not have much of a start for a farm when he began here. The house was of logs and the ground was covered with timber. He has cut off the timber, tilled the land and carried on general farming, planting three acres of fruit, which yields him the choicest variety of delicious fruit of all description. His buildings are all good and a credit to the community. He is a Republican and has held minor offices and attended the conventions of the party. He is a member of the Primitive Baptist church, worshipping at the old Mississinewa church in Delaware county, and is deacon and church clerk, taking an active part in all church work. Of the children born to them but five are living. They are as follows: John W., of Portland trustee of Green township; William Sanford, who died in infancy; Isaac Henry, of Redkey; Albert F., a mechanic of Redkey; Laura Ann, who died at the age of fifteen; Mary F., at home; Esther M., at home; and nine grandchildren who are living at this time. SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.--. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.