

## JAY, MILTON

Milton T. JAY, M. D., of Portland, editor in chief of this History of Jay County, for years one of the best known physicians in eastern Indiana, a specialist in diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat, former president of the Delaware District Medical Society, formerly and for years secretary of the Jay County Medical Society, former president of the Indiana State Board of Optometry, formerly and for years secretary of the Jay county board of health, a former member of the school board for the city of Portland, a member of the draft board for Jay county during the time of America's participation in the World war and in other ways for years an active and influential factor in local civic and social affairs, is a native son of Jay county, a fact of which he never has ceased to be proud, and has been a resident of this county all his life save for the period spent away in college.

Doctor JAY was born one mile east of the village of Bryant, in Bearcreek township, this county, October 25, 1867 and is a son of Dr. James C. and Ann ( CONKLIN ) JAY, both natives of Ohio. the latter born in the vicinity of Tippecanoe City, in Miami county, that state, in 1827. The late Dr. James C. JAY, an honored veteran of the Civil war and in his generation one of the best known physicians in this region, was born in the vicinity of Laurel, in Darke county, Ohio, in 1824 and his professional education was received at the Eclectic Medical College at Cincinnati. He married in Ohio and not long afterward, in 1854, he then being thirty years of age, came over into Jay county and established himself in practice in the Bloomfield neighborhood in Bearcreek township, later moving to a point one mile east of Bryant, where his last days were spent, and was living there when the Civil war broke out. In 1863 he enlisted his services in behalf of the cause of the Union and was appointed a hospital steward, but shortly afterward was commissioned assistant surgeon of the 119th regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry, which afterward was mounted and became known as the 7th Indiana Cavalry, Col. John P. C. SHANKS commanding, and with this gallant command served until the close of the war. Upon the completion of his military service Doctor JAY returned to his home in this county and resumed his practice in the Bryant neighborhood, where he died, as is noted in the chronicles of the time, from disease contracted in the army, April 9. 1881, leaving his widow and five children. His widow followed him to the grave within less than a month, her death occurring on May 2, 1881. When the veterans of the Civil war living in the vicinity of Bryant presently (in 1887) came to organize a post of the Grand Army of the Republic in that village they named it James C. JAY Post, No. 448, in honor of their comrade's memory, for they had loved him well.

Milton T. JAY was but thirteen years of age when he and his four sisters were left doubly orphaned and by force of circumstances he thereafter was compelled to rely pretty largely upon his own resources for a livelihood. He, however, maintained his attendance in the local schools and during his youth was variously employed, working in factories, on the farm, or clerking in stores, and presently entered upon an apprenticeship to a wagon maker and for a year after completing this apprenticeship worked at the trade of wagon making. Meanwhile he had been pursuing studies with a view eventually to following in his father's footsteps as a physician and preliminary to a medical course was in good time enabled to enter DePauw University, where for two years he pursued the scientific course preparatory to entrance on his final medical studies and in September, 1888, was matriculated at the Ohio Medical College at Cincinnati. In that same month he was married and thus had a valued

helpmate during the time of his college course. On March 6, 1890, Doctor JAY was graduated from the Ohio Medical College and on the day following, March 7, 1890, opened an office for the practice of his profession at Portland, he having made arrangements in advance for this step. For two years the Doctor continued engaged in general practice and then took up the special practice upon which he since has been engaged, this having particular reference to the treatment of diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat. In the spring of 1901 he took a post-graduate course in the Post-Graduate Medical School in New York city. Doctor Jay's service as an optometrist has given him a much wider than local reputation along that line and from April, 1909, to May, 1913, he served as a member of the Indiana state board of optometry, during this period of service serving twice as president of the board and one term as secretary. He became a member of the Jay County Medical Society in March, 1890, and for ten years served as secretary of that society. He also is a member of the Delaware District Medical Society, of which he was president in 1920, and is likewise affiliated with the Indiana State Medical Society and the American Medical Association. Doctor Jay is a Republican and has long been regarded as one of the leaders of that party in this district. For four years (1894-98) he rendered public service as secretary of the Jay county board of health and from June 20, 1906, to April, 1909, served as a member of the Portland city school board. During the time of America's participation in the World war Doctor Jay rendered conspicuous local service. In July, 1917, he was appointed a member of the local draft board for Jay county and until March 15, 1918, served as president of that board and thereafter until the work of the board was closed on April 1, 1919, served as member and chief clerk of the board, as is set out more fully in the report of the activities of this board in the World war history section of this work in Volume I. The Doctor has long given his special attention to matters involving local historical research, for years one of the most active members of the Jay County Historical Society, and it was a matter of much local congratulation when it was announced in the spring of 1921 that he had undertaken the critical and not wholly un-trying duty of acting as editor in chief of this History of Jay County, a service for which it is believed future generations in this community will hold him in pleasant remembrance. In this connection and in deference to the Doctor's innate modesty, it is but proper to say that this brief review of his life was not written by him, but is the work of a friend who knows how ardently the Doctor is interested in questions pertaining to the history of this section of Indiana and particularly of Jay county and how deeply he is concerned in all movements having to do with the compilation and preservation of local historical data. The Doctor is a member of the Indiana State Historical Society and his contributions in that behalf in the archives of the Indiana state historical commission are regarded as valuable.

It was on September 5, 1888, that Dr. Milton T. JAY was united in marriage to Mary E. HARRIS, who was born in the vicinity of Lynn, in the neighboring county of Randolph, a daughter of Jesse C. and Sarah E. (BOWEN) HARRIS, and whose acquaintance with the Doctor was begun while she was a student in the old Eastern Indiana Normal School at Portland, and to this union one child has been born, a son, James C. JAY, now a law student in the legal department of Butler College at Indianapolis.

James C. JAY, who bears the name of his honored grandfather, was born at Portland on August 29, 1899, and following his graduation from the Portland high school took a course in the International

Business College at Ft. Wayne, from which he also was graduated. In the meantime he had been giving his serious attention to the study of law and thus equipped by preparatory study entered the law school at Indianapolis and in the following year was admitted to the bar of the Jay Circuit Court. In 1915 James C. Jay served as a page in the House of Representatives of the Indiana General Assembly and has since taken an interest in practical politics that has caused him to be recognized as one of the junior leaders of the Republican party in this county and he is now serving as committeeman for that party for the Eighth precinct of Wayne township. When under the sponsorship of the Mississinewa chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution at Portland in 1920 a compilation, under the general editorial direction of Dr. Milton T. JAY, of the history of the various war activities in Jay county was undertaken, the task of typing the manuscript of this huge compilation was performed by James C. JAY. One copy of this work (substantially bound) is in the archives of the Indiana Historical Commission at Indianapolis, a second copy is on file in the law library of the Jay Circuit Court at Portland and a reproduction of this invaluable service to the people of Jay county is carried in Volume I of this present work. Portraits of Doctor Jay and of his son are carried in Vol. I, facing page 269, the beginning of Part III of that volume.

SOURCE: Milton T. Jay, M.D., History of Jay County Indiana, Historical Publishing Co., Indpls. 1922, Vol. II, pp.324-327. Transcribed by Eloine Chesnut.