

Jesse J. M. LaFollette, mayor of Portland, and member of the firm will Headington & LaFollette, attorneys at Law, is a native of Jay County. A sketch of his parents appears elsewhere in this work. He was born in Pike Township, in September 1845, and reared on the farm. At the age of 17 years, he began attending Liber College during the spring and fall terms, and teaching school during the winter, which he continued, with some interruptions, until the spring of 1870. He taught school in Ward Township, Randolph County, Niles Township in this County, a number of terms. During the summer of 1864, he was in the Army, doing guard duty along the lines of railroad that supplied the army under Gen. Sherman. In the spring of 1870, he tried his hand at selling fruit trees in southwestern Missouri. In the fall of 1871, Mr. LaFollette, began the study of law in the office of Watson and Monks, at Winchester, and being apt for his studies and assiduous in his habits, he completed his course in about a year, and was admitted to the bar, in that County. The ensuing winters, 1872 to 73, he again taught school. During all these years, he participated in teachers institutes and other educational meetings, becoming indeed a prominent leader in the pedagogical profession in this and adjoining counties. In the spring of 1873, he came to Portland to commence the practice of law, in partnership with Joshua Bishop, a shrewd attorney. During his first year in Portland, he was appointed deputy prosecuting attorney by Hon. Joseph S. Dailey, of Bluffton, and resigned the office in 1875. In November, 1874, his partnership with Mr. Bishop had ceased, and he formed the professional relation with J. W. Headington, which has continued to the present. In the spring of 1875, he was elected Town Clerk, and served one term, and since the incorporation of Portland as the city, he has been Councilman one term, and Mayor one term, 1885 to 1887. He has always taken an active interest in the welfare of the community, commercially, politically, morally and socially. It is very seldom, indeed, that one can do that for any length of time and retain so great popularity as Mr. LaFollette enjoys. He has ever been zealous and able advocate of the principles of the Republican Party, being often a delegate to nominating conventions, city, county, district and state. His political speeches are so this passionate and carefully worded as to elicit the praise of all parties. He is well-known as a campaign worker in all this portion of Indiana, and in a considerable portion of Ohio adjoining. Was chairman of the Jay County Central Committee for the campaign of 1876. Is a member of Stephen J. Bailey Post, G.A.R., as Commander and the other official relations. He has "passed all the chairs" in the order of Odd Fellows, becoming a member of the Grand Lodge of the State in 1875. He has been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church since January, 1887.

Mr. LaFollette was married to Miss Annie Wells, daughter of Jonathan R. and Sarah (Mendenhall) Wells, a native of Jefferson Township, this County. In February, 1864, she

came with her parents to Liber, where she obtained an excellent education. She also attended the State Normal School at Terre Haute. Her mental discipline, based upon native equality, is superior, and she has been excelled as a teacher for a number of years at Winchester and in this County; has taught in Portland, since marriage. Her parents died at Liber, her father in March, 1880, age 75 years, and her mother in the spring of 1874, at the age of 66 years. More recently she has been an active member of the Chantauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, since its organization at Portland, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church since January, 1887. The children of Mr. and Mrs. LaFollette are - Nellie Esteline, born January 8, 1878, and Byron Evarts, born June 28, 1881. A model family.

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Transcribed by Jim Cox