

James S. MAYS, one of the well known and substantial farmers and landowners of Pike township and formerly and for years engaged in saw milling in that township, is a native son of Jay county, a member of one of the pioneer families here, and has lived here all his life. Mr. MAYS was born on a farm in Pike township on May 29, 1864, and is a son of George and Charlotte (STEWART) MAYS, the former of whom died while in the service of his country as a soldier of the Union during the time of the Civil war. George MAYS was a Virginian by birth, born in that section of the Old Dominion now comprised in West Virginia, and was but a lad when he came to Jay county with his parents, John MAYS and wife, back in pioneer days, the family settling on a quarter section of land which John MAYS had entered from the Government in Pike township. John. MAYS was a good manager and came to be the owner of right around 500 acres of land in that part of the county, where he and his wife spent the remainder of their lives, useful pioneers of that neighborhood. They were the parents of eight children and the MAYS connection of this line in the present generation is a considerable one. George MAYS grew to manhood on his father's farm in Pike township and after his marriage established his home in that same township and was living there when the Civil war broke out. Despite the considerable family obligations he had assumed meanwhile, he was drafted for service and sent to the front. He never came back, his death occurring in a military hospital at Nashville, Tenn., and his widow was left with four children to look after. Of these children the subject of this sketch now alone survives, the others having been John, Margaret and Sarah Ann.

James S. MAYS was but six or seven months of age when his soldier father died and he early began to assume mature responsibilities about the home. He received his schooling in the Green Hill school in Pike township and was married at the age of twenty-one. He then began farming on his own account on a farm of forty acres which he owned in Pike township, a part of the place on which he is now living, and there established his home. He also presently became engaged in saw milling on that place, that having been in the days when "timber was king" hereabout, and for eighteen years he operated the mill, or until the timber became too scarce to permit further profitable milling in that neighborhood. Mr. MAYS from time to time added to his land holdings, once by the purchase of an adjoining "eighty," of which he later sold forty acres, and now has a well improved farm of 100 acres, which he continues to operate. He and his wife are members of the Boundary Reformed church and he is a member of the local lodge of the Modern Woodmen at Salamonia.

James S. MAYS has been twice married. In 1877 he was united in marriage to Fannie WRIGHT, who also was born in Pike township, and who died leaving one child, a son, Perry, also now deceased. On July 20, 1898, Mr. Hays married Hannah DEGLER, who was born in Pennsylvania, and to this union three children have been born, a son, Basil, and two daughters, Minnie and Leila. Basil MAYS married Perfenia ELLIS and has three children, Velda, Violet and Leon. The MAYS have a pleasant home on rural mail route No. 10 out of Portland and take an interested part in the social activities of the community.

Unknown Source