

JAMES THOMAS MERRYMAN, attorney, a member of the firm of France & Merryman, Decatur, Indiana, was born in Washington Township, Adams County, Indiana, October 1, 1854, a son of Charles Wesley and Mary Ann (Archbold) Merryman. His father was born in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, July 2, 1827, a son of Zachariah and Mary Merryman, of English-Scotch extraction. He obtained a good common-school education by his own efforts, having been left an orphan before the age of ten years. He came to Indiana in 1836, when he obtained employment, and when not at work devoted his time to study until twenty years of age, when he began teaching school, which he continued until August, 1862, when he enlisted in the defense of his country and was assigned to Company H, Eighty-ninth Indiana Infantry. He served nearly three years, when he was discharged at Nashville, Tennessee, the war being ended. He participated in many severe engagements, among the more important being those at Bull Run, Chickamauga and Nashville. After his discharge he returned to Adams County and engaged in farming until his death, which occurred February 5, 1870. In politics he was a Republican. He was married October 18, 1848, to Mary Anu Archbold, a native of Ohio, daughter of James L. and Malinda Archbold, of Irish and German descent, who came to Adams County in 1836. To them were born six children, but four of whom are living - Jonathan and Zachariah, farmers of Washington Township; Susie and James T. A daughter, Eliza J., died in July, 1878, aged twenty-six years, and a son, Henry L., died June 5, 1884, a few days before he would have graduated from the Normal School at Valparaiso, Indiana. The mother still lives in Adams County, making her home with her children. She has been a member of the Methodist Episcopal church since her girlhood, her husband being a member of the same church. James Thomas Merryman was educated in the schools of Decatur, and when sixteen years old began teaching, following that vocation during the winter until manhood. In 1876 he was deputized clerk of Adams Circuit Court, by Byron H. Dent, and also served under his successor, Henry Krick, until 1880, when he was employed as clerk in the Adams County Bank. In the meantime he devoted his leisure time to the study of law, and was admitted to the bar at Decatur in 1881. In 1882 he was elected the first mayor of Decatur and served one term. In January, 1883, he became associated with John S. France in the practice of his profession. Mr. Merryman is a member of St. Mary's Lodge, No. 167, and Decatur Encampment, No. 138, I.O.O.F., and has received all the honor's of both. He has been a representative to the grand lodge and also to the grand encampment of the State of Indiana. He is also a member of Decatur Lodge, No. 511, A. F. & A. M. In politics he is a Democrat. He was married August 29, 1878, to Miss Louisa P. Albers, a native of Willshire, Ohio, daughter of August L. and Eve C. Albers. She was reared in Adams County, and educated in the Decatur schools. Mr. and Mrs. Merryman have had three children - Matie June, Iona Dale and Charles August. Iona died September 15, 1884, aged three years. Mr. and Mrs. Merryman are members of the Methodist Episcopal church.

If Charles Wesley Merryman, the father of the subject of whom this sketch directly concerns itself, had left no other legacy to his children than the example of his sterling life and the memory of his strong character they would have been richly provided for. He was born in Tuscarawas county, Ohio, July 2, 1827. His parents were Zachariah and Mary Merryman, of Scotch-English ancestry, and possessed the hardy characteristics of these races. They were born near the city of Baltimore, Maryland, their ancestors having settled in that territory in the seventeenth century. Charles W. Merryman was left an orphan at the age of ten years and from that time was dependent upon his own efforts. He secured a good common school education and in 1836 came to Indiana, settling in Adams county. When he was out of employment he read and studied, and in this manner constantly added to his store of knowledge. When he was twenty years of age he began teaching and continued in this work until the outbreak of the Civil war. In August, 1862, he enlisted in Company H of the Eighty-ninth Regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry, and served with this command until the close of the war. He took part in many battles with the army to which his regiment was attached and won merited commendation for gallantry. He was present at the memorable battles of Bull's Run, Chancellorsville, Nashville and others, and was finally discharged from the federal service at Nashville, Tennessee. Some years before he enlisted he was married in Adams county to Miss Mary Ann Archbold, the wedding occurring October 18, 1848, and after his discharge he returned to his family and took up his work of farming. His wife was a native of Ohio and a daughter of Thomas and Malinda Archbold, of Irish-German descent. She came to Indiana with her parents in 1835. They became the parents of six children, viz : Jonathan, Zachariah, Susie, James T., Eliza J., who died in July, 1878, when twenty-six years of age, and Henry L., who died June 5, 1884, a short time after he graduated from the Valparaiso Normal School.

James T. Merryman is the third in order of birth of his father's children. He was born in Washington township, Adams county, Indiana, October 1, 1854, and received an excellent common school education in the district schools and attended two years preparatory school under Professor Wright, who was a graduate of Yale University. When sixteen years of age he began teaching and followed this work during the winter seasons until he reached his majority. In 1876 he was deputized clerk of the Adams circuit court by Byron H. Dent, the incumbent, and served three years. He then served a term as deputy sheriff under the Hon. Henry Krick. In 1880 he entered the employ of the Adams County Bank as a bookkeeper. In the meantime he had taken up the study of the law and after a year's service with the bank was admitted to practice in the Adams circuit court. The city of Decatur was incorporated in 1882 and Mr. Merryman was elected the first mayor of the city. He served one term. In 1881 he took up the active practice of his profession. He first formed a partnership with Edgar N. Wicks, and this relation existed until April, 1883, when he entered into partnership with the Hon. John T. France. This relation continued for one year, when they joined in the practice of the law with the Hon. William J. Vesey, who at the expiration of one year withdrew from the firm, moving to Fort Wayne, Indiana, when the former partnership of Mr. France and Mr. Merryman was renewed, and from the beginning of this partnership the firm took a prominent part in the legal affairs of the county. The ability of the partners soon won for them a large clientage and their standing at the

Adams county bar became exceptional and enviable. Business increased with each year and produced a handsome income. After the dissolution of this partnership in June, 1898, Mr. Merryman, in 1903, associated with him Jesse C. Sutton, Esq. In November, 1906, Mr. Merryman was elected judge of the Twenty-sixth judicial circuit, which position he still holds. He is a member of the State Bar Association and a member of the bar of the supreme court of the state and of the circuit court of the United States. He has attained a high rank among the attorneys and judges of the state and his accomplishments have won unusual recognition for him as a jurist.

Judge Merryman was married August 29, 1878, to Miss Louisa P. Albers, a daughter of August L. and Eve C. Albers. She was born in Willshire, Ohio, and when four years of age came with her parents to the city of Decatur, where she attended the schools and secured an excellent common school education. Judge and Mrs. Merryman are the parents of five children, namely: Matie June, Iona Dale, Charles August, Frances Mildred and Robert Albers. The second mentioned child died September 15, 1884, when three years of age.

Aside from the position he occupies in the political life of Adams county, Judge Merryman is accounted one of the leading citizens of the county and one of the most progressive men of northeastern Indiana. He takes a live and active interest and part in all movements that are designed to better Adams county and his immediate community and is a hearty worker for all causes that are uplifting. Fraternally he is a member of Decatur Lodge, No. 571, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, and of Saint Mary's Lodge, No. 167, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and of the Order of Elks. Both Judge and Mrs. Merryman are consistent and valued members of the First Methodist Episcopal church of Decatur and are numbered among the most highly esteemed people of the city. Their home is one of culture and refinement and around it centers much of the social and intellectual life of the city. Whatever measure of success Judge Merryman may have obtained, he attributes chiefly to his wife and mother.