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Alexander C. Bondurant resides on section 31, Franklin Township, where he is engaged in general farming and stock raising, The history of Polk County, with whose interests he has been so long and so closely identified, would be incomplete without this sketch and in recording his life work we place before the youths of the present generation an example which is well worthy their emulation. As all know, he is one of the wealthy citizens of the county, but his possessions came not to him through inheritance, but are the result of carrying out certain resolutions which he formed in early years.

This respected citizen was born in Sangamon County, Ill., on the 1st of September, 1829, and belongs to a family of eleven children. The parents, Joseph and Martha (Tharp) Bondurant, were both natives of Boone County, Ky., and removed in 1828, to Sangamon County, Ill., where the father followed farming until his death, which occurred in 1864. For many years he was a devoted member of the Christian Church and lived a life of uprightness and honesty which won him the respect of all and made him a valued citizen. Late in life he became identified with the Universalist Church. His wife still survives him and is now living with her son Thomas. The record of their family is as follows: John T. went to California in an early day and passed away in that State; Lurcretia is the wife of Joseph Churchill of Piatt County, Ill.; Elizabeth became the wife of William Miller, both are deceased; Alexander C, is the next younger; Thomas is a resident of Piatt County; Samuel died in 1884, as the result of disease contracted in the late war; Margaret is the deceased wife of Thomas Underwood of Sangamon County, Ill., Mary E. is a resident of Deland, Ill.; Martha F. is the wife of William Thornton, a farmer of Crocker Township; Joseph N. is a farmer and stock dealer residing in Ford County, Ill., and Amanda died in infancy.

The early life of our subject was passed in a manner not unlike that in which farmer lads usually spend their time. In the summer months he assisted his father in the cultivation of the farm and during the winter season attended in district school of the neighborhood until he had familiarized himself with such studies as are essential to business success. Years passed along and he reached his maturity and thinking it time that he be no longer dependent upon his father, he started out in life for himself. In all his undertakings he was assisted by his brother Thomas, who was but a little younger than he and together they labored. The history of one, in many particulars, is the history of the other -- a record of prosperity founded upon

industry, enterprise and good management. Many conversations they held in regard to the future. Looking about them they saw that the best people were the churchgoing people and both identified themselves with the Christian Church. They also determined to live temperate lives, to which resolution both have always adhered and in making choice of a business both determined to follow that occupation to which they had been reared. They agreed that as soon as they could save some money they would invest in farming lands and if possible make for themselves comfortable homes. Their hopes have been more than realized and both have been prospered in a degree far beyond their expectations, yet they have not lived for themselves alone, amassing wealth only for their individual use, but in their prosperity have remembered the poor, have given liberally to the church and have aided in all worthy enterprises which are calculated to advance the best interests of mankind.

The brothers started out upon their business career in breaking prairie with ox-teams and as soon as they had earned enough to enter land from the Government, made choice of locations. Thomas Bondurant went to Piatt County, Ill., and entered a quarter section, upon which he at once built a house and began the development of a farm. Week by week saw the amount of broken land increased and improvements added and with the quarter section as a nucleus his possessions have grown until he now owns and operates two thousand acres of valuable land. He has adhered to the noble resolutions formed in his youth, has been an active worker in the temperance cause and is a leading and useful member of the Christian Church, being Elder in the congregation to which he belongs. He gives cheerfully and liberally to its support, considering it only a just return for the blessings which have been showered upon him. In politics, he is an ardent supporter of the Republican party.

The other brother, Alexander Bondurant came to Polk County, where his interest have since been centered. He laid claim to three hundred and twenty acres of land on section 31, Franklin Township, and erected a small house which is still standing as a monument to the thrift and industry of his early manhood. He cleared and plowed the hitherto unbroken fields, built all the necessary barns and outbuildings and in course of time his labors were rewarded with bounteous harvests. His landed possessions now aggregate twenty-eight hundred acres and his beautiful home is surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries which make life worth the living.

Mr. Bondurant chose as a companion Miss Margaret M. Brooks, their marriage being celebrated October 27, 1861. The lady was born in Montgomery County, Ind., and is a daughter of Stephen Brooks, whose

sketch appears on another page of this work. Their home was brightened by the presence of eight children -.Emma B., now the wife of John W\* Redlingeshafer, a farmer of Douglas Township; Fannie, wife of S. C, Perdue of Douglas Township; Martha E. who died at the age of four years; Frank also deceased; Florence, Burton, Nellie and Alexander C. As the children have grown up they have been provided' with good educational advantages.

Mr. Bondurant has made it his sole object in life to be a representative of the noblest type of manhood, ever looking to a higher power to guide and direct his effort and aid him in his deliberations. Although in looking back over the past he sees many mistakes on his part, he has the consciousness of having tried to act for the best. His possessions he has considered as trusts given unto him for a short earthly life and has used his means for the up building of his Master's cause on earth, giving not reluctantly or sparingly but with a bounteous hand. In connection with others, he organized a church at a school house, at which place they worshipped until the completion of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, when they removed to the village of Altoona, where a church building was subsequently erected. This church proved successful and did a vast amount of good in that community. Mr. Bondurant's financial ability and generosity soon put the church in an easy monetary condition. He takes a deep interest in educational matters and to Drake University he subscribed \$500, to be derived from fifty-six acres of land in rental to be collected in three years, to the credit of the institution. Bondurant is a pleasant little village named in honor of our subject who platted the town and during its early existence gave to all those who would build or open a business house in the place, a town lot. He also gave the lots on which the church was built and with a number of other brethren withdrew from the Altoona church and organized the new church, which has now a membership of one hundred and five and is in a good working condition, its pastor being Rev. J. H. Painter. Some years since Mr. Bondurant with other brethren conceived an idea which has resulted in great benefit to the church. For two years has given the use of thirty acres of land which each spring was planted in corn, while the members each gave a few days work to its cultivation during the growing season and when the corn was ready to be gathered, the entire membership repaired to the field, and procured the golden ears. This was followed by a "husking bee's" such as was enjoyed by our grandfathers and a general good time was had while the corn was prepared for sale or storage. The first crop yielded twelve hundred bushels and as the result of last season's labor the church has a surplus of \$250 in the treasury. This forms an important factor in paying the expenses of the church which is now entirely free from all indebtedness and is

accomplishing a good work in the community. To other worthy enterprises Mr. Bondurant is also a liberal supporter, giving freely to the cause of temperance and also educational work. The poor are never turned empty handed from his door but find in him a faithful friend in time of need. He is respected alike by rich and poor, young and old and long after he shall have passed away his memory will be enshrined in the hearts of those who partook of his bounty or were numbered among his friends.