

Historical and biographical annals of Columbia and Montour counties, Pennsylvania, containing a concise history of the two counties and a genealogical and biographical record of representative families

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Historical and Biographical Annals
OF
Columbia and Montour
Counties
PENNSYLVANIA

Containing
A Concise History of the Two Counties and a
Genealogical and Biographical Record
of Representative Families

IN TWO VOLUMES
ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

CHICAGO
J. H. BEERS & CO.
1915

Hixon, and died July 16, 1898 (she is buried in Pine Grove cemetery, Berwick); William R., born June 8, 1881, married Gertrude Phillips, of Danville, Pennsylvania.

AUSTIN L. HYSSONG has carried on a pottery business at Bloomsburg for over twenty years, during which time he has had to enlarge his original plant to accommodate the profitable trade he has built up in stoneware, stovepipe collars, flower pots and similar goods. His father, Elisha B. Hyssong, followed the same calling.

Elisha B. Hyssong was a native of Franklin county, Pa., and was there bound out in boyhood to learn the potter's trade, serving four years as an apprentice. Later he went to Cassville, Huntingdon Co., Pa., where he first worked as a journeyman, and there he married Rachel E. Green, a native of Huntingdon county. When he built a pottery of his own he had to clear the location, and that plant was carried on by the Hyssong family for nearly sixty-five years, Elisha B. Hyssong continuing to operate it until his death, in 1873, after which his son Bruce took it, running the business until the spring of 1912. Mr. Hyssong was a much esteemed citizen of his neighborhood, where he was very well known not only in his business relations but also because of his activity in politics, the administration of public affairs and church work. He was a justice of the peace for over twenty years, a staunch Republican in political sentiment, and a lifelong member of the M. E. Church, which he served officially for over forty years, being deacon, elder, class leader and Sunday school superintendent. In his prime he was a noted singer, and music afforded him one of his chief sources of enjoyment. He died beloved by all who knew him, and his wife, who still survives, continues to make her home at Cassville. Twelve children were born to their union, ten reaching maturity, namely: Annie, who is living in Pitscairn, Pa.; Jennie, now deceased; Martha, widow of Oliver Beaver, of Altoona, Pa.; Bell, at home with her mother; Margaret, married and living in Philadelphia; Austin L.; George, of Altoona, Pa., who became a potter (he is married); Bruce, also a potter, now engaged in the crucible factory at Philadelphia, who married Jennie Horton; Russell, who learned the potter's trade, now employed as a guard in the reformatory at Huntingdon; and Alice, who died unmarried.

Austin L. Hyssong was born Dec. 25, 1851, at Cassville, Huntingdon Co., Pa., where he

acquired a common school education in youth and early commenced to learn the potter's trade with his father, and he has always followed it. Remaining with him until he attained his majority, he then went to Lewistown, Pa., where he was located most of the time for the next twenty years, for several years running the Dipple pottery there. He was at Lewistown for the four years following his marriage, spent the next year at Petersburg, Pa., returned to Lewistown for two years, and then did business in Huntingdon for three years. Going back to Lewistown he formed a partnership with J. & C. Dipple, with whom he was associated four years. In 1891 he came to Bloomsburg and purchased from John Rehm the plant he has ever since operated. During his ownership it has been considerably enlarged, and many valuable improvements have been made in the property. Mr. Hyssong's patronage has been extended steadily, his wares being sold in various sections, and besides manufacturing he deals quite extensively in terra cotta sewerpipe, for which he has found a good demand in the local market. His substantial position in the community has come as a recognition of solid worth. Though his activities have not extended into public life he is well known, and like his father is a staunch Republican and an earnest member of the Lutheran Church, in whose work he is thoroughly interested, helping it along zealously. Socially he is a member of the P. O. S. of A., having belonged to the camp at Lewistown, No. 462, for over twenty years.

In 1875 Mr. Hyssong was married to Anna Margaret Dipple, daughter of John and Margaret (Peters) Dipple, of Germany. The father, who was a potter by trade, settled at Lewistown and operated a pottery there until his death, in 1872. He was killed while crossing the Pennsylvania railroad track, on his way to dig clay. His wife, who survived until 1903, ran the business he established for several years after his death. Mr. and Mrs. Dipple had six children: Anna Margaret, Mrs. Hyssong; Anna, widow of James Irwin, of Lewistown, Pa.; Ida, who married William Miller, of Lewistown; John, deceased, who was a potter and worked with his father; Andrew G. C., who owns the old pottery his father established at Lewistown; and Charles, who was formerly in the grocery and confectionery business, now a mail carrier at Lewistown.

Five children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Hyssong: Charles has always worked as

a potter and is engaged with his father; John, a carpet weaver, now settled in Philadelphia, married Nettie Cashner, and they have four children, Robert, Martha, John and Ruth; Walter, who died when twenty-four years old, learned the trade of potter, but afterwards worked as a machinist at the locomotive works of the Standard Steel Company, at Burnham, Pa.; Irwin, a resident of Bloomsburg, who also learned the potter's trade, married Mary Beagle, and they have three children, Robert, Edna and Esther; Wilbur, who worked with his father in the pottery until twenty years old, and has been a machinist in the government employ at Washington, D. C., for the last two years, married Estella Knepp and has two children, Margaret and Estella.

SAMUEL J. CONNER, farmer and stock raiser of Centre township, Columbia county, was born on a farm in that township, Sept. 29, 1838, son of John and Sarah (Know) Conner.

John Conner, father of Samuel J. Conner, was born in Columbia county, Pa., of Irish descent. Reared to agricultural pursuits, he followed farming throughout his life in Briar-creek and Centre townships, and died at the age of fifty-six years, a successful and highly respected citizen. By his second wife, Sarah (Know), who was of German parentage, and lived to be seventy-seven years of age, he had eight children, as follows: Susan, deceased; Samuel J.; Joseph, deceased; Scott; Theodore; John, deceased; David W.; and one that died in infancy.

Samuel J. Conner, son of John Conner, received a public school education, and was reared to farming, which he has made his life work. He has been successful in his ventures because of his qualities of inherent ability, energy, enterprise and progressive ideas, and because he has at all times manifested a desire to keep his dealings honorable and aboveboard. At this time he is the owner of the finest property between Bloomsburg and Berwick, on the river.

Mr. Conner was married Dec. 25, 1862, to Elmira Fowler, who was born in Centre township, Columbia Co., Pa., daughter of Gilbert H. Fowler, and to this union have been born eleven children, as follows: John G., a lumber dealer of Trenton, N. J., who married Carrie Sciple, of Easton, Pa.; W. Smith, of Madera, Cal., a farmer, who married Carrie Eickoff; Sarah May, wife of Charles Petty, of Medera, Cal., and the mother of three children; Frances C., of Renfrew, Butler Co., Pa., the

widow of Dr. L. Grove, and the mother of four children; Pierce Fowler, a lumber dealer, of Trenton, N. J., who married Lettia Scherr, and has four children; Martha Jane, librarian at State College, Center Co., Pa.; Ada Grace, of East Orange, N. J., wife of George Witmore, connected with the Westinghouse electric works; Susan, who died in infancy; Samuel Ray, a jeweler of Schenectady, N. Y.; who married Katherine M. Wadsworth; Arthur Bruce, who died of typhoid fever at the age of twenty-three years; and Stanley J., engaged in the lumber business with his brothers at Trenton, N. J., who married Genevieve Cole, of that place. The golden wedding anniversary of the parents was celebrated Christmas Day, 1912, when all of the children living were present, and it was also the occasion of the wedding of the youngest daughter. The family is connected with the Methodist Church. The father and all of his sons and sons-in-law are members of the Masonic fraternity.

BRUCE A. KEPNER, one of the substantial and respected citizens of Berwick, whose continuous association with one of the city's largest industrial concerns has covered a period of twenty-two years, was born Dec. 19, 1874, at Wapwallopen, Luzerne Co., Pa., and was educated there and in the Market street school at Berwick, under Professor Smith. His parents were James Harvey and Emma Frances (Frease) Kepner, and he is a grandson of Daniel and Leah (Christ) Kepner.

Daniel Kepner was born Jan. 9, 1825, in Perry county, near Newport, and died at Millerstown, Pa., at the home of his eldest son, in 1900. He was an Evangelical minister at Salem, Mt. Zion and surrounding points, and traveled over much of the country. He married Leah Christ, and their children were: James Harvey; Levi, who married Anna Black, now deceased and buried at Millerstown; Anna, wife of Charles Hass; John C., who married Lydia Myers (deceased) and (second) Ella Stackhouse; Daniel A., a minister, who married Jennie Hoch; Harriet, wife of Nicholas Frey; Norah, wife of Adam Stettman; William, who married Maria Shelley; Jacob, married to Mary Dweffler, and George, married to Mary Seeley.

James Harvey Kepner was born June 12, 1850, in Juniata county, Pa., and died March 4, 1889, in Berwick. After his school days he learned the carpenter's trade and worked in the powder mill at Wapwallopen. In 1882 he came to Berwick and entered the wood car