

HISTORY^c
OF
MERCER COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA.

ITS PAST AND PRESENT.

INCLUDING

ITS ABORIGINAL HISTORY; ITS EARLY SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT;
A DESCRIPTION OF ITS HISTORIC AND INTERESTING LOCALITIES;
SKETCHES OF ITS BOROUGHs, TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGES;
NEIGHBORHOOD AND FAMILY HISTORIES; PORTRAITS
AND BIOGRAPHIES OF PIONEERS AND REPRESENTATIVE CITIZENS; STATISTICS, ETC.

ALSO

A CONDENSED HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

ILLUSTRATED.

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1888.

Thomas McBurney brother of John William McBurney Jr. who married Martha McKean. The James mentioned here is brother to John McBurney, Sr.

HON. S. R. MASON, attorney, was born March 1, 1827, in the portion of Mercer County that is now included in Lawrence County, son of Robert and Matilda (McKinley) Mason, natives of Ireland and Washington County, Penn., respectively, and were the parents of seven children, two of whom survive: S. R. and William W. Our subject was educated in the country schools, private instructions by David Martin, a minister of the United Presbyterian Church, and in Allegheny College, at Meadville, graduating from that institution in 1849. He read law with Hon. John Hoge, of Mercer, was admitted to the bar in 1852, and subsequently formed a partnership with Hon. Samuel Griffith, which firm became one of the best known in Western Pennsylvania. He was married in 1853 to Miss Sarah J. Smith, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Smith, one of the pioneer families of Mercer. Mr. Mason's union gave him seven children: Lizzie, Robert, Mary M., Joseph, Samuel R., W. C. and Jennie A. Mr. Mason was elected district attorney for Mercer County in 1854, and was one of the commissioners who built the union schools of Mercer. In 1878 he was nominated and made the race for governor of Pennsylvania on the Greenback ticket. Since then he has thrown his influence with the Republicans. He is one of the trustees of the insane asylum of Warren, was a director of the New Castle & Franklin Railroad, and is now the attorney for the B., N. Y. & P. and Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroads. He and wife are members of the First Presbyterian Church of Mercer.

G. W. McBRIDE, the present district attorney of Mercer County, was born May 15, 1849. His parents were David and Margaret (McCandless) McBride. His father was born in Ireland, and immigrated to this country when a boy, and was married to Margaret McCandless in 1842. After their marriage the parents settled on a farm in Pine Township, this county, where they died some years since. The subject of this sketch was one of eleven children, of whom eight are still living. He was educated in the common schools of the neighborhood where he resided, and also in Grove City Academy and Westminster College. He taught school successfully for a number of years in Mercer and Lawrence Counties, and, after reading law in the office of Hon. S. H. Miller, was admitted to the Mercer County bar in 1882. He was nominated and elected district attorney of this county, by the Republican party, in 1887. He married Maggie J., a daughter of W. H. and N. J. McCoy, of Grove City, by whom he has two children: Quincy A. and Paul A. He is a member of the A. O. U. W., of Mercer Lodge, and has been a member of the borough council. He is a representative of a self-made man, having worked himself up from the position of a country school-teacher to the honorable and useful position which he now occupies.

THOMAS MCBURNEY, stock dealer, was born March 25, 1819, in Ireland, son of John and Mary (Frances) McBurney, natives of Ireland, and who immigrated to Mercer County in 1828. James McBurney, a brother of John, opened up a mercantile store in Mercer in a smoke-house which stood on the site of John M. Magoffin's present residence. This smoke-house was the property of an Irishman named Samuel Thompson, who at that time was conducting a hotel near by, known as the Thompson House. He retired from the business about 1848, and died in 1855 or 1856. He was the father of the following children: Mary J., married Frank Baskin; Celia, married Thomas R. Sheriff; Sarah A., married Rev. John Armstrong; Matilda, married David Mourer; Rebecca, married W. J. McKean. John McBurney engaged in farming when locating in the county. He followed that business in Springfield, Lackawannock and Jackson Townships until 1867, when he died, his wife having preceded him to the grave about two weeks. He was the father of

Thomas McBurney (brother of John William McBurney Jr. who married Martha McKean) married Rosannah McKean daughter of Hugh McKean.

eight children: Ann, died in Erie while the family was on their way to this county; Celia, married Joseph Taylor; Mary, married Rev. Miller Wallace; Sarah, married Theopolus McDowell; Jane, married David Proudfit; Thomas, James and John. Our subject began for himself on reaching his majority upon a rented farm, and later became the owner of land and an extensive dealer in cattle and sheep, buying them in Mercer County, driving and selling them in the eastern markets. He was married in 1841 to Rosannah, daughter of Hugh McKean, and was blessed with four children: Nancy, married B. A. Ride; John F., married Sarah Maskry; Mary, married Fred Squires, and William T. Mrs. McBurney died December 29, 1873, and he was again married, to Sarah Moore, daughter of John and Isabella Moore. Mr. McBurney was nominated by the Democrats for sheriff of Mercer County in 1866, and was defeated by a small majority.

THOMAS W. MCCLAIN, foreman of the *Western Press*, was born in Pittsburgh, Penn., November 27, 1854. His father, David McClain, was born in County Downe, Ireland, in 1826, was a shoemaker by trade, and died August 6, 1877, the father of six children. His mother, Sarah (McKeown) McClain, was born in County Antrim, Ireland, in 1828, and is still living in Sharon. Our subject was educated in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Sharon. He began the printer's trade in the office of the *Sharon Times* in 1868. He was the editor of this paper at the time of its suspension in 1880. He also published a small paper in Sharon for a few months, and was editor of the *Vindicator*, of Hubbard, Ohio, for nearly one year. In 1880 he joined Capt. George R. Guss in the publication of the *Chester County Democrat* at West Chester, Penn. In 1882, a few months prior to the death of Hon. William S. Garvin, he came to Mercer to take charge of the *Western Press*, which in the fall of that year passed into other hands. He has been since then connected with that paper. He was married in Sharon July 5, 1877, to Mary A. Zahniser, born in 1857 in Hickory Township, this county, daughter of John and Ann Zahniser. By this union he has six children: Alice, Mary, John, Lidia, Thomas and Robert. He is a member of the I. O. O. F., K. of P., and E. A. U., and is a Democrat.

S. H. MCCLEERY, county superintendent of schools, was born July 20, 1856, to James and Lucinda (Snyder) McCleery. The father was born in Mercer County in 1834, and his father, Samuel, was a native of Ireland, and immigrated to America, with his parents and brothers and sisters, at the age of eighteen years. Samuel settled near Sheakleyville, where James now resides, and is the father of the following children: S. H.; J. S., a dentist at Beatrice, Neb., who taught school a number of years, read dentistry in Greenville, practiced at Burg Hill and Hubbard, Ohio, married Joanna Calvin and in 1885 went to Beatrice; William E.; Catharine; Martha; Mary E., married Newton Vanmeter; Frank A., Hugh N., John E. and Emma. S. H. McCleery attended the common schools, academy of New Lebanon, Sheakleyville, Grove City College and Edinboro Normal, Erie County, Penn. He graduated at the last named in 1882. He began teaching at the age of nineteen, and followed that vocation for six winters in country schools, one year in Utica, Venango Co., Penn., and one year at Sheakleyville. He was elected county superintendent of Mercer County in 1884, and re-elected in 1887. He was married to Silvia J., daughter of Joseph and Mary Infield, of New Vernon Township. By her he has one daughter, Mary E. He is a member of the Baptist organization of Sheakleyville. Mr. McCleery has worked himself up to the high position he now holds by his own efforts. His father was wounded in the war while serving in Company G, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania

prothonotary of Mercer County, which position he filled with credit. He was deputy under Sheriff McClure, and clerk in the prothonotary office from 1879 to 1882. He enlisted in the Fifty-fifth Pennsylvania Volunteer Militia, and served until the regiment was mustered out. He was married to Miss Mary, daughter of Josiah McJunkin, of Mercer, by whom he has one son, Archibald H. He is a Republican, and he and his wife are members of the First Presbyterian Church of Mercer.

JAMES MCKEAN (deceased).—James McKean was born in Ireland in 1794, and immigrated to America in 1818. He settled for a time in Cumberland County, and in 1820 came to Mercer, bought property and went back for his family, consisting of his mother, brothers and sisters, whose names were: Catharine, married Henry Snowden, of Pittsburgh; Margaret, married James McClure; Jane; William, who studied law with Hon. John Banks, was associate judge one term, justice of the peace five years, started the independent Democratic paper mentioned elsewhere, and died in Meadville; Samuel, who went to Ohio soon after 1821, and there died, and John, the youngest, died recently in Mercer. Archibald and Sarah McKean, the parents of the above named children, are dead, the former passing away at Newville, Cumberland County, and the latter in this county. They were Presbyterians and of Scotch-Irish extraction. James, whose name heads this memoir, when he located in this borough engaged in the manufacture of spinning-wheels, which he discontinued in 1836, and took contracts on the construction of the Erie & Pennsylvania Canal. He built the dam that raised Conneaut Lake and constructed many aqueducts and locks. In 1843 he was elected treasurer of Mercer County, and in 1848 was chosen sheriff, and served in these important offices with credit. He was appointed postmaster of Mercer by President Grant, and served eight years. He married Elizabeth Simpson, daughter of James Simpson, who settled about the year 1796 on the farm in Cool Spring Township now owned by S. H. Miller. By this union he had seven children: Prudence, married George Lyon, and died in California, whither she moved in 1850; A. J., Catharine, married John P. Sheriff, and died in 1887; Rebecca J., married James R. Reed, a jeweler of Pittsburgh; The others died in infancy. He associated himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ireland and was a member sixty-five years. He died in 1884. His wife, Elizabeth, was received into the United Presbyterian Church by Rev. Dinwiddie. He was married a second time, to Eleanor Canon, of Columbiana County, Ohio. By her he had three children: James, Caroline and Ella. James was first lieutenant of Company G, One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers, and was killed at Cedar Creek on the day of Sheridan's famous ride; Caroline married A. C. Ray, of the editorial staff of the *Dispatch* and *Republican*; Ella married Thomas Moore, and died in Colorado.

W. J. MCKEAN, insurance agent, was born September 3, 1834, in Lawrence County, Penn. His father, William McKean, was a native of the same county, and was a son of Hugh McKean, who was born in Ireland and immigrated to what is now Lawrence County, then Mercer County, about the year 1774, and died in his ninety-eighth year. Patrick Rice, the father of Anna Rice, the mother of W. J. McKean, emigrated from Scotland and settled in what is now Findley Township, this county, in 1785. He was a cabinet-maker and died a farmer. William McKean was one of nine children: James, John, Hugh, Furgeson, Elizabeth, Muncy, Jean, Jane and William. Patrick Rice was the father of the following children: Robert, John, Templeton, Samuel, Anna, Rebecca, Margaret, Maria, Esther, Eliza and Mary. William and Anna McKean were the parents of: Hugh, a farmer in Iowa; Esther, married

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