

---

## NICHOLSON TOWNSHIP.<sup>1</sup>

---

NICHOLSON lies south of German and north of Springhill township. Its area is over twenty square miles, and its topography is similar to that of all the western portion of the county. Along the river, from the mouth of Georges Creek to that of Jacob's Creek, the river-bluffs crowd close upon the river, in many places leaving scarcely enough space to form a road. From Jacob's Creek down to Catt's Run are the broad flats known as "Provance's Bottoms." The principal stream, next to the river, is Jacob's Creek, near the centre. Georges Creek receives several considerable affluents on the south, and Catt's Run several small ones on the north. The soil is generally very fertile, being for the most part heavy limestone. Wheat, corn, oats, and other grains are produced in great abundance.

Nicholson township was formed of territory taken from the old townships of Springhill, German, and Georges. The first movement (unsuccessful) towards forming a new township from parts of these townships was made a little more than forty years ago, as follows:

At the September term of court, 1841, a petition was presented "of divers inhabitants of Springhill, Georges, and German townships for a new township, to be composed of parts of the aforesaid townships, to be called 'Gallatin.'" Thomas Boyd, of Bulls-

George Craft, of Redstone, and George Dawson, of Brownsville, were appointed commissioners. A favorable report was made, and approved Dec. 11, 1841. On the 11th of June, 1842, objections were filed, which were confirmed by the court on the 2d of January, 1843, and thus the proceedings of Dec. 11, 1841, were rendered void and of no effect.

The effort was renewed with success in 1845. At the June session of the court in that year, "On the petition of divers inhabitants of Springhill, George, and German for a new township, to be composed of parts of the aforesaid townships, to be called 'Nicholson,' James Paull, James H. Patterson, and Jacob Murphy were appointed commissioners. . . . to lay out a new township to be called Nicholson out of parts of Springhill, George, and German townships." On the 19th of August, 1845, these commissioners reported,—

"That a new township should be made within the following boundaries, to wit: Beginning at the mouth of Georges Creek; thence up the same to Robert Long's fulling-mill; thence along the Morgantown road to a point at or near Rev. A. G. Fairchild's; thence by a road as far as Bonaparte Hardin's; thence by a straight line to the northwest branch of York's Run to a stone-pile near a white-oak; thence [by various courses and distances] to a stone in Catt's Run, westwardly of Jacob Emley's, and on land of George Defenbaugh, about three perches from a spring-house; thence down Catt's Run to the land or farm of John Poundstone, where the road crosses said run; thence by

<sup>1</sup> By James Ross.

said road, running north of said Poundstone's house, nearly due west to the Monongahela River; thence up said river to the place of beginning."

On the 19th of December, 1845, this report was approved and confirmed by the court, and by this action Nicholson was erected a township with the above-described boundaries.

In the December session of court, 1846, a petition was presented "to change part of the boundary line between George and Nicholson townships." An order was issued and viewers appointed, viz.: John Robinson, Isaac Core, and Jeremiah Kendall, who made a report on the 26th of February, 1847, favorable to a change in the line between Nicholson and Georges townships, the effect of which was to include the petitioners, John Harris, James Abram, and Henry Bowell, in the township of Nicholson. The report was approved and confirmed by the court June 12, 1847, making the change of boundary as prayed for by the petitioners.

The name Nicholson was given to the township in honor of James Witter Nicholson, a noted citizen of New Geneva. He was the second son of Commodore James Nicholson, U.S.N., who became senior officer in the navy October, 1776, and who died in New York, Sept. 2, 1804. His mother was Frances Witter, a native of Maryland, as was also her husband. James W. Nicholson was born April 20, 1773, his parents residing on Nicholson manor, near Nicholson Gap, Md. His wife was Ann Griffin. He was employed by Albert Gallatin to manage the financial affairs of his glass-factory on Georges Creek, one mile east of New Geneva, which he established in 1794. Nicholson died at his residence, Oct. 6, 1851, aged seventy-eight years. His property was known in the early land titles as "Elk Hill;" title dated June 26, 1770. He was a brother of Albert Gallatin's second wife. Charles N. Nicholson is his grandson.

One of the earliest settlers within the territory now Nicholson township was George Wilson, who came to this section about the year 1765, and settled on Georges Creek. From the time of his first settlement here he appears to have been a notable man among the pioneers of the Monongahela Valley, and he, with Thomas Scott, of Dunlap's Creek, were marked by Lord Dunmore, and arrested by his order, in 1774, as chief among the Pennsylvania adherents in the territorial controversy between this State and Virginia, which was then at its height. It was at the house of George Wilson that the Rev. John McMillen stopped when he first preached to the Mount Moriah congregation in 1775. On the breaking out of the Revolution Wilson entered the Revolutionary army in the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment, and became its lieutenant-colonel. Referring to him, and to his honorable career, Judge Veech says,—

"Col. George Wilson is a historic character. He was a Virginian, from Augusta County, where he had been

an officer in the French and Indian war of 1755–62. He came to the West about 1768–69 [Mr. Veech has the date about three years too late], and settled on the land where New Geneva now is, owning the land on the river on both sides of Georges Creek, to which it is believed he gave the name, and being from a locality in Augusta called Spring Hill, he caused that name to be given to the township in which he resided.<sup>1</sup> He was a Pennsylvania justice of the peace there while it was a part of Bedford County, and his commission was renewed for Westmoreland. Pennsylvania had no more resolute officer than he was in all the boundary troubles. . . . He died in the service of his country as lieutenant-colonel of the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment, Col. Enos McKay, at Quibbletown, N. J., in April, 1777."

His family received the first intelligence of his death from his black servant, who returned from New Jersey with the colonel's horse. Of the children of Col. George Wilson little is known with certainty, except that William George, John, and Jane were three of them. Jane married, for her first husband, a man named Bullitt, who proved a spendthrift and ran through his wife's patrimony. She was at one time the owner of the farms now owned by Jason Woolsey and Daniel Sharpnack, as also of many acres of other lands. After Bullitt's death she married Mr. Hawkins, an excellent man of the Friends' Society. By him she had children, among whom the most widely known was the Hon. William George Hawkins, of Pittsburgh. After a few years Mr. Hawkins died, and his widow married, for her third husband, Gen. John Minor, of Greene County, by whom she had two children,—Lawrence L. Minor, Esq., of Greensboro', Greene Co., and Minerva, who married John Crawford, of Greensboro', and who died in 1864, aged about fifty-six years. Her son, Lieut. John Minor Crawford, served in the war of the Rebellion in the Eighty-fifth Pennsylvania Regiment, and is now a resident of Greensboro', Greene Co., Pa.

When the Rev. John Steele and other commissioners were sent to the Monongahela country, in 1768, to ascertain what settlements had been made here, they reported to the Governor the names of those found settled in this region, and among them were mentioned as living "near Redstone," "John Wiseman, Henry Prisser, William Linn, William Colvin, John Vervalsen, Abraham Teagard, Thomas Brown, Richard Rodgers, Henry Swatz, James McClean, Jesse Martin, Adam Hatton, John Verval, Jr., James Waller, Thomas Donter, Capt. Coburn, John Delong, Gabriel Conn, George Martin, Thomas Down, Andrew Gudgeon, Philip Sute, James Crawford, John Peters, Michael Hooter, Daniel McCay, Josiah Crawford, one Provence." Of these, several can be located. Gabriel Conn was an early settler in the Monongahela Valley, where many of the descendants are

<sup>1</sup> The place where he settled being in Springhill township until the erection of Nicholson.

found to-day. The Crawfords were located in what is now Southwestern Luzerne; Abraham Teagard, on Big Whiteley Creek, in Greene County, where the name is common, several residing in Jefferson and other places in the same county. The "One Provance" evidently means John W. Provance, who resided on the river bottom between Jacob's Creek and Catt's Run, in Nicholson township, and who settled there in 1767.

William Yard Provance was also one of the very early settlers on the Monongahela in the same section. In the early years of their residence here an old Indian chief named Bald Eagle lived in or frequented the valley of the Monongahela. He was on the most friendly terms with the white settlers, and in passing up and down the river on his hunting and fishing expeditions never failed to stop to visit the Provances. Finally, while hunting at some point up the river (supposed to be near the mouth of Cheat), he was murdered in cold blood by three white men named Jacob Scott, William Hacker, and Elijah Runer, who after doing the deed thrust a piece of corn-bread into the mouth of the dead chief, and placed the lifeless body in an upright position in the canoe, which was then sent adrift on the river. It floated slowly down the stream, and finally came close in shore opposite the residence of Mrs. Sarah Provance, who saw it, and wondered that the Bald Eagle maintained his motionless position in the canoe, making no movement to land. Going down to the bank she made a closer observation and learned the truth, that he was dead. She procured assistance, had the body brought ashore, and buried in a Christian way. The Indians were greatly enraged when they learned of the unprovoked murder, but they were as deeply grateful to Mrs. Provance and her family for the respect they had shown to the remains of the murdered chief. The bones of Bald Eagle still rest in an unmarked and unknown grave by the Monongahela, near the place where the old Provance house stood more than a century ago. The Provances were noted for their size and muscular powers as well as for their love of all athletic sports. Many of the descendants of the family still reside in Fayette County. By some of them the name has been changed to Provins, one of them being Jacob Provins, of Masontown, who is a representative in the State Legislature from Fayette County.

The brothers John Hardin and Martin Hardin have already been mentioned as among the first settlers in the Monongahela Valley. All of Martin Hardin's family afterwards removed to Kentucky, and became prominent citizens of that State. They are mentioned in Marshall's "History of Kentucky," in which it is stated that Martin Hardin, who was the father of the somewhat famous Col. John Hardin, of Kentucky, emigrated from Fauquier County, Va., to Georges Creek, in Fayette County, Pa., within what is now Nicholson township, when his son John was

twelve years old. That was in 1765. Not long after their arrival on Georges Creek there came Indian troubles, and the situation of the settlers became precarious and alarming, but they held their position and did not abandon their possessions, as was the case with many other settlers.

The location of John Hardin, Sr., was upon a tract of land which he called "Choice," containing three hundred and nineteen and a quarter acres and allowance. The warrant for this tract was dated April 17, 1769. It was surveyed May 22d of the same year. On this tract he made his residence, and lived on it until his death. Martin Hardin located a tract named "Harbout," of three hundred and seventeen and a quarter acres and allowance, warranted April 17, 1769, and surveyed on the 22d of May, 1770. He emigrated to Kentucky in or soon after the year 1780. His son John (afterwards Col. John Hardin) went to Kentucky in that year, and took up lands for himself and friends in Nelson County, afterwards Washington County, in that State, but returned to Fayette County, and remained here six years longer before he finally removed to Kentucky. In Dunmore's war of 1774 he (John Hardin, Jr.) served with a militia company as an ensign. In the Revolution, in the year 1776, he joined the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment, and became a lieutenant in one of the companies. In December, 1779, he resigned, and returned home to Georges Creek, declining the proffered promotion to the rank of major in a new regiment. In 1784 he received the nomination for sheriff of Fayette County, and was returned to the Executive Council as one of the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes. On that occasion and under those circumstances Gen. James Wilkinson asked the Council to commission Hardin as sheriff in a letter addressed to President Dickinson, of the Council,<sup>1</sup> dated November, 1784, and running as follows:

"... On the present return of the Election for Fayette County, Major John Harden stands second for the Sheriff's Office; permit me briefly to state to your Excellency this man's merit without detracting from that of his competitor. Mr. Harden served in the alert of the Army under Generals (then Colonels) Morgan & Butler, in the Northern Campaign 1777. His rank was that of a Lieutenant, and I can, as the Adjutant General of the Army of Gates, assert that he was exposed to more danger, encountered greater Fatigue, and performed more real service than any other officer of his Station. With Parties never exceeding 20 men, he in the Course of the Campaign made upwards of sixty Prisoners, and at a Personal Rencontre in the rear of the Enemy's position, he killed a Mohawk express, & brought in the dispatches which he was conveying from Genl. Burgoyne to the Commanding Officer at Ticonderoga with the loss only (indeed) of a Lock of Hair, which the Indian's Fire carried away. It is sufficient for me Sir to testify his merits; the Justice which characterizes your administration will do the rest."

In 1786 he removed his family to the new settlement in Kentucky, where his father and brothers had

<sup>1</sup> Pa. Arch., x. 610.

preceded him. In the same year he volunteered under George Rogers Clarke for the expedition against the Indians on the Wabash, and was appointed quartermaster. He was afterwards engaged in the succeeding Indian campaigns in Ohio and Indiana, and rose to the rank of colonel. He was killed in the campaign against the Miami villages in the fall of 1792. A son of his was killed Feb. 23, 1847, at the battle of Buena Vista, under Gen. Taylor, in Mexico.

Miss Martha Hardin, a granddaughter of John Hardin, Sr., now living in Nicholson township in her eighty-sixth year, gives the following account of the family of which she is a member: The Hardins, she says, came originally from France. John Hardin, Sr., Martin Hardin, and Lydia Hardin (who became Mrs. Tobin) were brothers and sister. John Hardin, Sr., married Isabella Shubbranch, by whom he had eleven children, viz.: John, Absalom, Henry, Nestor, George, Cato, Hector, Mary Ann, Miriam, Matilda, and Alice. He died in Fayette County, and his wife survived him many years. Martin Hardin married Elizabeth Hoagland, by whom he had seven children besides Col. John. He (Martin) emigrated from Fayette County, as before mentioned, to Kentucky, and lived in the latter State until his death, though he revisited his old home in (then) Springhill township, and the narrator recollects that when she was a little girl she saw him here on one of those visits. All the Hardins of Kentucky, she says, are his descendants.

Lydia Hardin, sister of John and Martin, married Thomas Tobin, from which marriage came the family of Tobins of Fayette County.

Robert McLain was a Scotchman who settled in Nicholson township, south of the mouth of Catt's Run, on the bank of the Monongahela River. He was an elder of the Mount Moriah Presbyterian Church of Springhill, which was organized by the Rev. James Power in 1774. Among the early settlers he was highly esteemed and respected. He was so unfortunate as to be compelled to kill a fellow-being to save himself and family from being burned to death. The region along the Monongahela was infested by a band of robbers, called "Bainbridge's Gang," with headquarters at a high bluff of the river, now owned by Jesse E. McWilliams, and known as the Robbers' Den. McLain was the owner of a very valuable stallion, which they resolved to take. McLain having been notified of their intention, stabled his horse in the kitchen of his house. When they arrived they soon discovered the whereabouts of the horse, and commanded McLain to bring him out. Receiving no reply, they warned him that unless he did as they bade him his house would be fired. Still receiving no answer, Bainbridge commanded some of his men to get straw, and he would show the d—d Scotchman whether his commands were to be disregarded. Seizing the straw and advancing to execute his threat, McLain fired, killing him instantly. He

was then carried off by some of the gang, who wrapped the body in a bed coverlet, with stones, and sunk it in the Monongahela. Mr. McLain, in the later years of his life, was greatly troubled in mind by the recollection of this justifiable homicide. Mr. John Bowman (deceased), grandfather of Morgan H. Bowman, Esq., of Uniontown, told the writer that Robert McLain frequently visited his father's house, and that he had often heard him express his deep regret for having killed the desperado Bainbridge. The date of Mr. McLain's death has not been ascertained. His remains lie in the McLain burial-ground, in Nicholson.

Isaac Griffin was one of the pioneer settlers, as well as one of the most prominent men in public and private life for many years in what is now Nicholson township, owning a large amount of land here, a part of which is known as the Morris farm. He was a native of Delaware, being born and reared in Kent County in that State. Although wild and reckless while young, he won the heart of a young Quakeress, named Mary Morris, whose family were strict Friends. She was locked in a room up-stairs to prevent her union with the young worldling. He found out the situation, obtained a ladder, put it to the window, and she climbed down and eloped with him. This bit of romance has been handed down in that neighborhood to this day. A meeting of the Friends was called, when she was notified that "If thee will say thee is sorry that thee married Isaac, thee can stay in." But as she would not say it she was expelled from their membership.

Isaac Griffin was a captain in the war of the Revolution, and had a great deal of trouble with the Tories, who were very numerous in Delaware. He was mainly instrumental in capturing their leader, Chany Clow, who was executed. When Clow came home from the Tory camp, Capt. Griffin with his company, and accompanied by Maj. Moore, surrounded the house. It was dark, and in attempting to reach the door Griffin stumbled and fell. Maj. Moore got ahead of him and was shot dead by Clow, who said he was sorry it was not Griffin. The adherents of Clow hated Griffin intensely, and after the close of the war his personal safety was endangered. This in part caused him to change his residence. He bought his first lands in Springhill (now Nicholson) township, Fayette Co., Pa., of the Hardins, but the Indians lingering near, his wife feared to move there. He then traded his Western lands to his relative, Charles Griffin, for a farm in Delaware, where the town of Clayton now stands. His wife having lost her health, and his enemies constantly harassing him, she finally consented to go to Western Pennsylvania. He again visited the West and bought land of the Evans'. He afterwards bought several farms, and became one of the most successful stock-raisers on the Monongahela.

Mr. Griffin owned a few negro slaves that he brought

with him to Fayette County. Soon after he became a citizen of Pennsylvania the Governor appointed him justice of the peace, in 1794, in which capacity he served several years. In 1807 he was elected to the Legislature, and re-elected until he served four successive terms. In 1809 there were six candidates for the office, but Mr. Griffin ran far ahead of all the others, receiving the entire vote of Fayette County with the exception of about two hundred votes. Although living in the opposite end of Fayette County from Mr. John Smilie, Mr. Griffin was appointed by that gentleman one of the executors of his will, and at his death in 1812 Mr. Griffin was elected to Congress as Mr. Smilie's successor. It is related of him that upon being notified of his election he brought cloth of home manufacture to Thomas Williams, Esq., of New Geneva, for the purpose of having him make him a suit of clothes. He informed the persons present that "he raised the sheep, carded, spun, dyed, and wove the cloth on his own premises." At a mass-meeting in Uniontown he was nominated for Congress by acclamation. At the election his competitor was Gen. Thomas Meason, a prominent member of the Fayette County bar. He defeated Gen. Meason by a large majority, and was once re-elected without opposition. He served in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Congresses. In 1812 a gloom was cast over him by the death of his favorite son, James Morris Griffin, who was killed in battle in the war with England.

Mr. Griffin voted to sustain Mr. Madison in all his war measures, and ever enjoyed his confidence, as well as that of his constituents. For no vote that he gave during the ten years that he was in public life was he censured, but for a vote that he did not give he was blamed. It was said that when the vote was taken to increase the pay of members of Congress he was not in the house. He felt stung by the comments of a writer in his home paper, and would not allow his name used as a candidate for re-election.

In 1824, Mr. Griffin was the Crawford electoral candidate for the Fayette district, but was of course defeated, as the State went largely for Jackson. Mr. Griffin could never be induced to make a public speech, but his conversational powers were of a high order, and these made him a general favorite. The ablest men of the nation would with pleasure listen to hear him talk. His personal dislike to Gen. Jackson was caused by the hanging of Alexander Arbuthnot and Robert C. Ambrister in Florida after they were cleared by court-martial. This opposition to Gen. Jackson caused Mr. Griffin to lose his great popularity among his neighbors, where Jackson was a great favorite.

Mr. Griffin had features of the Roman type, with black hair and deep-blue eyes. In height he was six feet two inches, and had a powerful physical organization. Although he was modest and retiring he possessed a chivalric nature, and he was not slow to resent an insult. While in Congress he had a diffi-

culty with a member from South Carolina, which would have been a serious affair but for the timely interference of other members. At a public dinner in Uniontown an Englishman, who was an officer of the old Uniontown Bank, spoke of Mrs. Madison in the most disgraceful terms, and for this act of ill-breeding Mr. Griffin knocked him down at the table, an act for which he was greatly applauded at the time.

Soon after he settled in his new home in Fayette County his wife joined Father Woodbridge's Seventh-Day Baptist Church, and remained a consistent member until her death, which occurred in her eightieth year, although she had been an invalid for fifty years. Her husband, although not a member, gave his support to the regular Baptist Church. This caused them to have a Sabbath and a Sunday in their house for about forty years, but this occasioned no jar, for everything moved on smoothly, and they traveled life's pathway harmoniously, although differing widely in most things. After Mr. Griffin retired from public life he remained on his farm until his death, at the age of seventy years, occasioned by a fall from a loaded wagon. The Rev. John Patton, of the Baptist Church, who performed the funeral service, said, "Mr. Griffin did not attach himself to the church for reasons best known to himself, but he was an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile." His wife survived him several years. They had ten children, four sons and six daughters, all of whom survived their father except the sons James M. and Isaac. One of the daughters, Ann, married James W. Nicholson. She resided during her life near New Geneva. Charles Nicholson is the only representative of this branch of the family remaining. Mary Griffin married Andrew Oliphant. Joseph E. Griffin was formerly a member of the State Legislature from Fayette County, and is now living in Texas. William P. Griffin is of the original stock, a descendant of Isaac and Mary Griffin.

Robert Ross was an early settler. It does not appear that in the early part of the Revolutionary war he was reckoned among the adherents of the patriot cause, but in June, 1779, he took the oath of allegiance to Pennsylvania, and afterwards served to the end of the war under Gen. Anthony Wayne. At the close of the struggle he, like thousands of others, was paid the arrears due him for services in Continental money, which was depreciated to one-fortieth of its face value. He afterwards served in the various Indian campaigns in Ohio and Indiana, rising to the rank of captain. In the Whiskey Insurrection of 1794, Capt. Ross was on the side of the insurgents, and commanded a company of about one hundred men of the western and southwestern parts of the county, a part of the (supposed) available force of the insurrectionists to be used in opposition to the government. At the head of this company Capt. Ross marched to Uniontown in August, 1794, to raise the

"liberty poles" in the town, and two miles south of it at Gaddis' place. When Gen. Lee came in with his army to suppress the insurrection, a squadron of cavalry was sent towards the Monongahela for the capture of Robert Ross as insurgent leader, but the expedition was unsuccessful. The powder-horn and other Revolutionary accoutrements of Capt. Ross are in the possession of his grandsons in Iowa. Another of his grandsons is the Hon. Moses A. Ross, of Somerset County, Pa.

In Nicholson, on the road leading from Masontown to New Geneva, *via* the "Goose Neck," is a tract of land on which was the settlement of a Mr. Graham, who came there from Washington County, Pa. On this he erected a mill and distillery, some vestiges of which are still in existence, located on Jacob's Creek. Graham having become heavily indebted to Jesse Evans (father of Col. Samuel Evans, now living near Uniontown), sold this property to one Haught. The buildings were destroyed by fire soon afterwards. Graham emigrated to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he became engaged in the manufacture of paper. It has been said of him that he was a brother-in-law of President William H. Harrison, but this is not known to have been a fact.

The first white men who visited the place where now stands the village of New Geneva were William Childers, John Pringle, Samuel Pringle, and Joseph Lindsey, soldiers belonging to the garrison of Fort Pitt, who deserted from the post in the year 1761, and traveled up the Monongahela to this place, at the mouth of Georges Creek, but before the stream had ever been known by that name. They remained here but a short time, however, and not liking the location moved eastward to the upper waters of the Youghiogheny, where they lived in the "Glades" region for about a year, and then moved southward into Virginia, and lived for some years on the waters of Buckhannon River.

These men, however, could not in any sense be regarded as even temporary *settlers* on the Monongahela, the first person who actually settled at or in the vicinity of the site of New Geneva being Col. George Wilson, who, as has already been mentioned, came there about 1765, and gave to the creek his own name,—Georges,—and thus to the township, when it was formed (embracing the south part of what is now Nicholson), the name of Springhill, from his former home in Virginia. His residence on Georges Creek, however, was not directly at the mouth, but a short distance above it, and his first purchase of land here did not include to the bank of the Monongahela, where Geneva village stands. This was warranted to Col. Wilson's sons, Sept. 15, 1785, eight years after their father's death. The title afterwards passed to Albert Gallatin.

The first actual and permanent settler within the town limits was Thomas Williams, a native of Dela-

ware, and a tailor by trade. The precise date of his settlement here is not known, but it was not far from the close of the Revolutionary war. On the 19th of February, 1793, he married Joanna Phillips, daughter of Theophilus Phillips, who was one of the earliest settlers in this section, but on the south side of Georges Creek. Thomas Williams became a somewhat prominent man, and was one of the most highly respected citizens of the township. He received the appointment of justice of the peace in or about 1797, and served in that office satisfactorily to the people and creditably to himself until his death in 1837, a period of forty years. His son, Joseph G. Williams, also filled the office of justice of the peace in Nicholson for thirty-five years.

From the time when Thomas Williams settled here a few other settlers gathered round him from time to time, until a number of straggling dwellings had clustered on the river-bank and on the bluff above it, and in the early days, before the present name had been given to the village, these little groups of houses had received the names of "Wilson Port" and "George Town," applied respectively to the settlement on the river margin and to that on the bluff, the two embracing the two names of the early proprietor of the neighboring lands, George Wilson.

The title to lands embracing the site on the river being purchased by Mr. Gallatin, as before mentioned, he laid out upon it the town of New Geneva, so named by him from Geneva, in his native Switzerland. The "charter" was acknowledged by Mr. Gallatin before Justice Isaac Griffin, Oct. 31, 1797, the town plat bearing date the 28th of the same month.

The building of the old glass-works in the vicinity by Gallatin and his partners, and the establishment of the gun-factory, together with the residence of Mr. Gallatin and some other persons of note in the vicinity, gave to New Geneva (as the post-town of the surrounding country) a considerable growth and much prospective importance, which latter, however, has proved to a great extent delusive. In 1797 the impending danger of a foreign war and the passage of an act to procure twenty thousand stand of arms for the State, as also similar action in other States and by the general government, led to the establishment of gun-factories in various parts of the country, and among these was the one established by Albert Gallatin and Melchoir Baker near New Geneva in 1799, for the manufacture of muskets, broadswords, and other arms. It was located in that part of Springhill township which is now Nicholson, on land now or recently owned by Philip Keefover. The establishment employed from fifty to one hundred men. In 1800 the State contracted with this establishment for two thousand muskets, and about the same time the firm received an order from the general government for a large number of arms. In 1801, when Mr. Gallatin was about being called to the head of the Treasury Department, he came from Washington to New

Geneva, and closed out his interest in the factory of his partner, Mr. Baker, because his prospective position as Secretary of the Treasury would render it improper for him to be privately concerned in contracts to which he would of necessity be a party on behalf of the government. Mr. Baker continued the business for several years and with some success until the government armories at Harper's Ferry and Springfield, Mass., were established, when he abandoned the gun-works in Fayette County and removed to Clarksburg, Va.

A memorable event in the history of New Geneva was the visit, in 1825, of the Marquis de Lafayette to Albert Gallatin, at the residence of the latter, at "Friendship Hill," on the south side of Georges Creek, in Springhill township. To reach that place he would pass through the town of New Geneva, and the time of his arrival had been announced a sufficient time in advance to give an opportunity to make preparations for a fitting reception.

"The streets were swept perfectly clean, the dwellings decorated, and the inhabitants, dressed in their best, patiently awaited the arrival of the distinguished foreigner. For the purpose of escorting the General to Gallatin's they had raised a company of men, who were commanded by Captain Joseph Wood, with James W. Nicholson as first lieutenant. These men escorted the General and his suite through the town, he the while standing uncovered in his carriage, responding to the salutations of the citizens. Having arrived, he was conducted to Gallatin's house, where the speeches of welcome and reply were made. Lunch was served to all upon the ample grounds. After the speech-making and dining, several survivors of the Revolution were called for by the Marquis. Frederick Eberhart, who assisted in bearing the wounded General from the disastrous field of Brandywine, was there. The meeting between these old comrades was most affecting; they embraced and wept like children." After the ceremonies and festivities were concluded, Lafayette and suite, accompanied by Mr. Gallatin, returned to Uniontown, from whence the Marquis proceeded on his way to Pittsburgh.

Manufacturing has always been carried on to some extent in New Geneva, though the high hopes that were indulged in that direction on the establishment of the old glass-works and gun-factory, more than eighty years ago, are long since dead and almost forgotten. In 1837, Andrew Kramer, Baltzer Kramer, Theophilus P. Kramer, and Philip Reitz established a glass-factory here. The style of the firm was Andrew Kramer & Co. The brand was the same as that of Albert Gallatin and the Kramers, who established the first factory on Georges Creek in 1794, viz., "New Geneva Glass." The last glass made in this factory was by John C. Gabler and Charles Kramer, in 1857. The sheriff had sold the works. Alexander Crow be-

came the owner, and sold to William H. Sheldon, and he to Isaac P. Eberhart. Mr. Eberhart has demolished the factory, and the lot is cultivated for garden produce, which pays better than a glass-factory so far from the needful material.

In 1840, William James established a foundry here. After running it for a season, Shealor & Merryman bought it and began making the celebrated cook-stoves known as "Drum Stoves." The patent was granted to J. J. Anderson, Aug. 17, 1843. These stoves had a large sale and were considered perfect. The foundry has not run since the war of the Rebellion. Just on the river-side of town stood the "Old River Mill," of whose erection none can tell. It belonged to a class of mills now only found far up the head-waters of the Monongahela. During dry seasons it did all the grinding for miles around. Daniel Hough has the only mill now. The French Mills were located on Georges Creek. They now belong to Warwick Ross' heirs.

The town of New Geneva is located in the extreme southwest corner of Nicholson township, having Georges Creek on the south, and the Monongahela River as its west line. Its site embraces the river bottom, the bluff above, and intermediate levels. The streets, except along the river and creek, are in most parts steep and difficult. There are few pretentious buildings here, either business structures or residences. The town is antiquated, and has little of the modern look, yet a considerable amount of business is done from this point, chiefly on the river, this being practically the head of slack-water navigation on the Monongahela. The fine steamers "Geneva," "Germania," and "James G. Blaine," belonging to the Pittsburgh, Brownsville and New Geneva Packet Company, make daily trips from this town to Pittsburgh, compensating in a great degree for the lack of railroad facilities.

Among the buildings, institutions, and business of the town are included a post-office (established before the year 1800), signal service station, two school buildings, six stores, a grocery, warehouse and commission business, three eating-houses, wagon-shop, blacksmith-shop, a merchant tailor's establishment, two physicians, two pottery-works, a saw-mill and grist-mill (built by A. B. & M. Eberhart in 1837), three religious organizations,—Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist,—and two hundred and eighty-six inhabitants, according to the United States census of 1880.

The only places in Nicholson township besides New Geneva which can claim any approach to town or village importance are Anderson and Woodward's Cross-Roads. The former has a post-office, two stores, and a blacksmith-shop, and is the polling-place for the township. Woodward's Cross-Roads has a store and several dwellings.

The township contains a number of saw-mills and grist-mills. Among these are the Gray grist- and saw-mills, Poundstone grist- and saw-mill, and Hon-sacker's saw-mill. Many years ago Peter Johnson



carried on a foundry on Jacob's Creek, which is now abandoned.

#### LIST OF TOWNSHIP OFFICERS.

The names of the persons elected to the principal township offices in Nicholson from the time of its erection to 1881 is given below, viz.:

#### JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

1845. Joseph G. Williams. <sup>1</sup>	1863. James Woolsey.
John Schnatterly.	1864. John Hague.
1846. John Schnatterly.	1865. ———.
Joseph G. Williams.	1866. Joseph G. Williams.
1851. Joseph G. Williams.	1867. David R. Gans.
George Beatty.	1868. George Beatty.
1856. Joseph G. Williams.	1869. ———.
John Weltner.	1870. Joseph G. Williams.
1857. Francis Fast.	1871. ———.
1858. Jacob Cover.	1872. ———.
1859. Jacob Bowers.	1873. George Beatty.
1860. Ephraim Walters.	1876. Jos. Gordon Williams.
1861. Joseph G. Williams.	1878. George Beatty.
1862. John F. Gans.	1881. John C. Schnatterly.

#### ASSESSORS.

1846-47. William P. Griffin.	1864. J. B. Johnson.
1848. John Poundstone.	1865. William P. Bowers.
1849. Andrew Davis.	1866. Ephraim Walters.
1850. Philip Gans.	1867. Joseph Longanecker.
1851. Samuel Franks.	1868. Jacob Easter.
1852. John Gans.	1869. William Deffenbaugh.
1853. Henry B. Maleby.	1870. Henry L. Shank.
1854. Andrew J. Walters.	1872. Peter Johnson.
1855. James Vanderslice.	1873. James R. Dils.
1856. Francis Fast.	1874. Joseph Meredith.
1857. John T. Blackford.	1875. Jacob Bowers.
1858. Michael Schnatterly.	1876. Andrew J. Walters.
1859. Joseph Longanecker.	1877. Alfred O'Neil.
1860. Samuel Franks.	1878. James L. Crow.
1861. John Jaco.	1879. George W. Hager.
1862. James Woolsey.	1880. Joseph Heath.
1863. Andrew J. Walters.	1881. John A. Walters.

#### AUDITORS.

1846. Thomas W. Nicholson.	1866. John F. Gans.
1847. James Davenport.	1867. Jacob Cover.
1848. John Moore.	1868. Michael W. Franks.
1849. Isaac Franks.	1869. William Parshall.
1850. Squire Green.	1870. David R. Gans.
1851. James Davenport.	1871. ———.
1852. John Cunningham.	1872. L. W. Schnatterly.
1853. Peter Johnson.	1873. A. B. Johnson.
1854. Samuel Robinson.	1874. Michael Baker.
1855. John Weltner.	Henry L. Shank.
1856. Michael Franks.	Harvey F. Jaco.
1857. Isaac R. Franks.	1875. Henry L. Shank.
1858. Henry L. Shank.	A. B. Crow.
1859-60. Meredith Mallory.	1876. Jacob Cover.
1861. Harvey Jaco.	1877. Peter H. Franks.
1862. Andrew J. Walters.	1878. Samuel Johnson.
1863. John F. Gans.	1879. John F. Gans.
1864. Jacob Cover.	1880. D. R. Anderson.
1865. Michael Schnatterly.	1881. Lorenzo D. Ramsey.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph G. Williams, a grandson of Col. Theophilus Phillips, who served thirty-five years as a justice of the peace. He is a resident of New Geneva.

#### SCHOOLS.

Before the passage of the common-school law of Pennsylvania, schools in this section, as elsewhere, were supported by subscription, but they were few and of low grade, and were generally taught but a few weeks in the year. In 1811 a school was taught here by the Rev. James Dunlap, a Presbyterian clergyman, who had among his scholars at that time James Nicholson, Thomas Nicholson, Jr., David Bradford, Jr., and Samuel Evans, who is now living, an octogenarian, on his fine estate near Uniontown. Under the free-school system, inaugurated by the law of 1834, the following-named school-houses have been built, viz., two in New Geneva, and one in each of the following-named districts: "Woolsey's," "Griffin's," "Robinson's," "Dogwood," "Pleasant Hill," and "Valley." Following is a list of school directors elected in Nicholson from the erection of the township to 1881:

1846.—John Robinson, William P. Griffin, John Moore, Rev. James Quinter, James Hamilton, Samuel Ache.
1847.—Peter Johnson, Bonaparte Hardin.
1848.—Samuel Ache, Alexander Crow.
1849.—Joseph Baker, Jacob Bowers.
1850.—Peter Johnson, Thomas Campbell.
1851.—John Poundstone, Alexander Crow.
1852.—Samuel Robinson, William Watkins.
1853.—David Sutton, Francis Fast.
1854.—John Ache, John F. Gans.
1855.—Thomas Campbell, John Summers.
1856.—Jacob Bowers, Benjamin Dils, Michael Schnatterly.
1857.—George M. Woolsey, Lot Coleman.
1858.—Michael Franks, William Zerly, Eph. Walters, Nicholas Johnson.
1859.—Henry B. Maleby, J. Harvey Green.
1860.—Joseph Longanecker, Henry Franks.
1861.—William Zerly, John F. Gans, John J. Cover.
1862.—Nicholas B. Johnson, Michael Baker.
1863.—Alfred B. Eberhart, Joseph High.
1864.—William Zerly, Ephraim Walters.
1865.—John Hayne, Phineas West, Harvey Jaco.
1866.—A. B. Eberhart, James Hamilton, Jacob Fast.
1867.—Henry Dils, J. B. Johnson.
1868.—John Poundstone, Henry Franks.
1869.—Joseph David, Samuel Dillinger, Jacob Bowers.
1870.—Henry Franks, John Henry.
1872.—John Poundstone, Ephraim Walters.
1873.—G. W. Hager, Joseph Longanecker.
1874.—Michael W. Franks, Andrew J. Allebaugh.
1875.—John Z. Whetstone, Isaac P. Eberhart.
1876.—William L. Miller, Jacob J. Johnson.
1877.—Samuel Robinson, Silas R. Provance.
1878.—Amadee M. Franks, James Richey.
1879.—Ross Anderson, D. R. Gans, Michael Baker.
1880.—James Hartley, David R. Anderson.
1881.—Amadee Franks, James Richey.

#### CHURCHES.

##### MOUNT MORIAH CHURCH.

The records of Fayette County show that a Presbyterian Church was building in Springhill township as early as 1773. The land upon which the church



was erected (about four acres) was purchased of Joseph Caldwell.<sup>1</sup> The following is taken from the records of the church:

"The congregation was organized as a church by Rev. James Power, of New Castle Presbytery, in 1774. The elders were Robert McLain, James Pollock, Theophilus Phillips, Thomas Ramsey, William Hill, Abram Crow. Rev. James Power in 1776 settled with his family on Georges Creek, where he continued to reside for some years. In 1778, Rev. James Dunlap preached for the congregation. Many important changes took place about this time, the most notable being the organization of the Redstone Presbytery. The Georges Creek or Mount Moriah Church divided in 1781, the members north of Georges Creek organizing the 'Old Frame,' thus becoming the principal church and assuming control of the mother or Mount Moriah Church, the whole congregation being known as the 'Mount Moriah Church.' Rev. James Findley preached the regular sermon, and Henry Robinson, Joseph Caldwell, Robert Richey, Robert McLain, David Frame, and William Hill were ordained elders. This was in 1788. The church was without a regular pastor. The supplies were Revs. Thaddeus Dod, James Hughes, Joseph Patton, James Dunlap, Samuel Porter, and others. In 1789 they purchased of Richard Brown a log house twenty by twenty, which answered their purpose. It was used as a church in winter, but during the summer the congregation worshiped in an adjoining grove. Robert Findley preached as supply in 1790-91, the church adding to their ground by a purchase made of Isaac Phillips, Esq. By alterations the house (now a frame) was enlarged to forty-eight by thirty-six, and to Robert Findley were added as supplies Revs. William Swan, George Hill, George Mercer (president judge of Washington County, Pa.), Jacob Jennings, and David Smith. In 1793 the church united with Union or Tent, and in September, 1794, Rev. David Smith was regularly installed pastor (the first of this congregation). He continued in charge a little over three years.

<sup>1</sup> The following, having reference to the purchase of the church land from Joseph Caldwell and the erection of the church building upon it, is found in the recorder's office at Uniontown:

"Know all men by these presents that whereas the members of the Congregation of Mount Moriah have fixed with my free will & consent on a spot of the land I claim to erect a prsbaterian church upon that I do hereby bind myself my Hairs Ext. & Adm. & every of them firmly by these presents to John Swearingen & George Wilson Trustees & to their successors for ye standing use of that congregation to give grant and bequeath & a good legal title to make to 4 acres of land & the benefit of ye spring joyning the same where ye meeting house is now a building for ever as soon as it shall Be in my power to make it To the just performance Here of For and in consideration of One Shilling to me in hand paid by ye said Trustees for ye Congregation the Receipt Whereof I hereby acknowledge I bind me my Heirs Ex. Adm. & every of us and them in the just sum of one hundred pounds as Witness my hand & Seal July ye 1st 1773.

"JOSEPH CALDWELL.

& in Presence of

"THEO. PHILLIPS.

"JOHN FORSHEY."

In 1798, Georges Creek, Muddy Creek, and Union or Tent united, with the Rev. James Adams in charge, he being the second regularly installed, Oct. 16, 1799. He resigned in 1808. The members having nearly all emigrated West, the church was suffered to fall into decay. An occasional sermon was preached by the Rev. James Dunlap to the remnant. He was at this time teaching school in New Geneva. This state of things continued for some years. In 1816 the house was thoroughly repaired, and in the following year Ashbel Green Fairchild, a licentiate of New Jersey, preached for the members. This he continued to do in 1818, and in July, 1819, was ordained and installed as pastor. The membership at this time was ten, with Henry Jennings as elder. In a few months the membership was increased to ninety persons. In 1822 he was in charge of Georges Creek, Morgantown, and Greensboro', Greene Co., Pa., congregations, with a salary of \$333. In April, 1827, he resigned the charge of Morgantown and Greensboro' congregations and took Union or Tent Church. The Old Frame was under his care until 1854, a period of thirty-six years. This justly celebrated divine continued in charge of the Tent Church until his death, June 30, 1864.

The great addition to membership was made from 1829 to 1832, when it reached one hundred and eighty. Eighty joined during the year 1829.

In July, 1854, the "Mount Moriah Church" called H. O. Rosborough, who on June 5, 1855, was ordained and installed the fourth regular pastor of this church. His salary has been increased several times. Georges Church agreed to pay him \$600 alone in September, 1872, the remaining portion of his time, one-third, being in the service of Mount Washington, twenty-four miles distant. The property of Ashbel G. Fairchild was purchased of L. S. Hough, executor of his estate, March 31, 1866, for the sum of \$2188, consisting of seventeen acres and buildings. This is now attached to Mount Moriah, Old Frame, or Georges Creek Church, as a parsonage. Rev. H. O. Rosborough, the minister in charge, resides here, a short distance south of Smithfield.

The parsonage property was paid for and freed of incumbrance in less than two years.

The ministers in charge since the organization by Rev. James Power in 1774 have been the following: Rev. James Power, 1776; Rev. David Smith, August, 1794; Rev. James Adams, 16th October, 1799; Rev. Ashbel G. Fairchild, called 1817, regular from July, 1819, to April, 1854; Rev. H. O. Rosborough, called July, 1854, and remained from 1855 to the present time (1881).

Membership of the church in 1788, 50. Membership in 1819, 10; in 1832, 180; in 1881, 160.

#### GERMAN BAPTIST (FAIRVIEW) CHURCH.

The German Baptists in this section worshiped in school-houses and barns in early times. The first

church edifice built by this denomination in this part of Fayette County was "Fair View," in the year 1835. Ephraim Walters donated the lot upon which the church stands. John Debolt sawed the lumber, and Joseph Mosier was one of the contractors to build the house. The trustees of the church were Ephraim Walters, Samuel Aughey (now written Ache). The ministers or bishops were Rev. James Kelso, James Fouch, Letherman Sphon, Rev. James Quinter, Jacob Mack, succeeded by Elder Joseph I. Cover, the bishop having it in charge at present. Its membership at present is about two hundred.

The Baptist Congregation in Geneva is a branch of the Greensboro' Church, and cannot be considered as belonging to Nicholson.

#### METHODIST CHURCH AT NEW GENEVA.

The history of Methodist worship at this place and vicinity prior to 1853, and the various efforts for the establishment of a church of this denomination, belong to the religious history of Springhill township. In the year named a congregation was gathered here, and a frame building erected as a house of worship, mainly through the efforts of the Rev. I. C. Pershing. The church building stands on land formerly belonging to the estate of Miller Denny, and sold by his executor, Jonathan Monroe, Esq., to the church. Trustees, Isaac Crow, Frederick Eberhart, David Franks, Alexander Conrad, and Joseph Provance.

The present membership of the church is thirty-five. Pastor, Rev. S. W. McCurdy.

#### BURIAL-GROUNDS.

There are in Nicholson the following-named burial-grounds, most of them being the last resting-places of old settlers in the township, viz.: One at the stone school-house, New Geneva; one at McLain's, Provance Bottoms; one at Provance's, Provance Bottoms; one at Fair View (German Baptist); one at Young's; the Debolt ground at Rise's; the Cover and Aughey ground at Woolsey and Cover's; and the old Frame Church burial-ground. The last named, as also the Fair View and the burial-place at Young's, are well kept and cared for. The same can hardly be said of the others.

#### NICHOLSON SOLDIERS.

In the Mexican war of 1846-48 a number of men from Nicholson entered the United States service, among whom were Albert G. Nicholson and William Fairchild Nicholson, the latter of whom died of cholera on his way home from Mexico.

In the war of the Rebellion, 1861-65, Capt. William West enlisted many men in this part of Fayette County, and had them mustered into the service as West Virginia troops. Capts. Thompson and Leaseure, of Morgantown, also did the same. The length of time elapsed since the war has caused the names of many to be forgotten. The following persons were among the number who enlisted in Virginia regi-

ments: Joseph G. Provance, Jesse Poundstone, Harrison Mack, John Knife, Martin Stoneking, James Wood. In Capt. George W. Gilmore's company, which was mustered to the credit of West Virginia, were the following-named men from Nicholson: Joseph Provance, John Debolt, John Gilmore, James W. Nicholson, Albert G. Sandusky, Johnson J. Mallory, Abijah Farmer. Following is a partial list of Nicholson men who served in Pennsylvania regiments in the war of the Rebellion:

In the 85th Regt., Capt. I. M. Abrams, John McDonald, William Pratt, Ashbel Pratt, Isaac Pratt, James Gray, Alfred O'Neil, Hugh O'Neil, Henry O'Neil, James H. Core, James Sturgis.

In the 168th Regt., Capt. Joseph Stacy, Henry Miller, William Harrison, Peter Bricker, Robert Armstrong, John Hill.

In the 112th Regt., Capt. Amzi S. Fuller, A. Turner Dougherty, David L. Provance, Harmar Denny, Hugh T. Davenport, Nicholas Honsaker, Warwick H. Ross, John Campbell, sub.

In the 14th Cavalry, Capt. Duncan, William Conn, John Wesley Poundstone, Joseph E. Dilliner, John Beatty, William Abram.

In the 16th Cavalry, Capt. Fisher, John Dugan, sub., Adolph A. Eberhart, Isaac P. Eberhart, Henry Blair, Andrew J. Dunham, Albert G. Dougherty, Abraham Dunham.

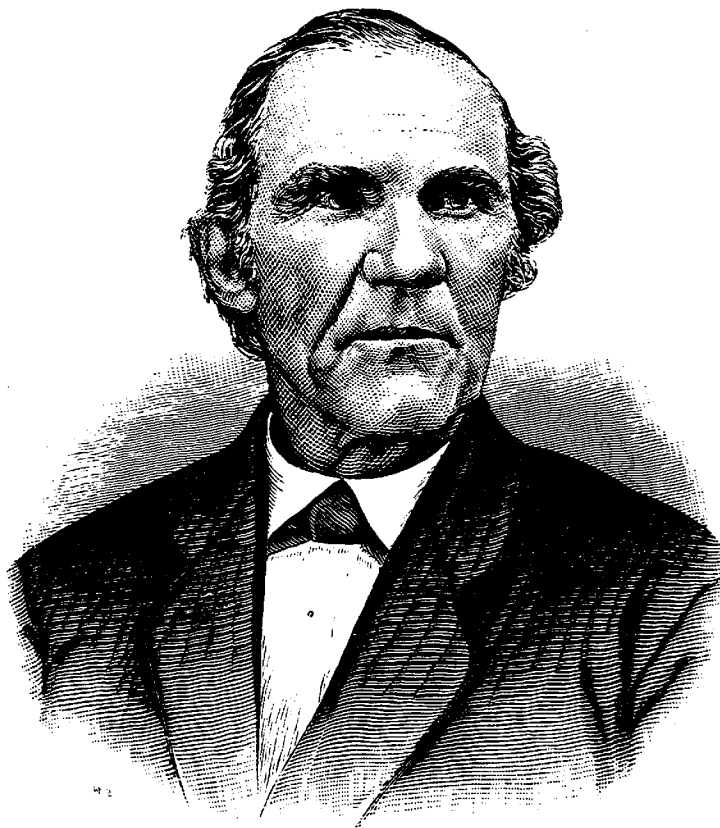
Other regiments which cannot now be designated contained the following-named soldiers from Nicholson:

Martin L. Blackford, Josiah Honsaker, Calvin Malaby, John Ross Summers, John Jaco, William Jaco, Henry K. Atchison, Samuel Davis, John Davis, John Whetstone, Asa O. Cooley, William Eberhart, Henry Huhn, Doc Arnold, William Patterson, John Mallory, Miller Dunaway, William Franks, Wesley O'Neil, Benjamin F. Huhn, Isaac P. Huhn, William A. Stewart, Charles Nicholson, James Mallory, Morgan Kefover.

#### MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.

The Catt's Run Coke-Works are located on Provance Bottoms, nearly two miles south of Catt's Run. They were built by a company of Uniontown capitalists in 1877, the first coke being made in October of that year. The style of the company was Ewing, Kendall & Co. Having erected sixty ovens, the works were leased to a Pittsburgh firm, Messrs. Charles H. Armstrong & Son. At these works the coal is crushed and thoroughly washed before being placed in the ovens. The entire product of these works is sold to the Ironton Manufacturing Company, of Ironton, Ohio, at three dollars per ton.

The minerals of Nicholson township are the same that are found generally in Fayette County. Iron ore has been mined and shipped to Wheeling from Fred's Run (a tributary of Catt's Run), but the cost



*John P. Rindstone*



*M. W. Frank*



W. Greave

of transportation is found too great for the profitable working of the mines. Petroleum has been obtained at a depth of five hundred feet on Jacob's Creek in this township.

The manufacture of stone-ware from clay found in Springhill township has become the most important industry of New Geneva. The manufacture consists of milk-pans, jars, jugs, fruit-jars or "jugoos," also chemical pots and piping. Two firms are now carrying on this business, viz.: Isaac P. Eberhart & Co. and Alexander Conrad, each producing about forty-eight thousand gallons of ware per year.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

### JOHN POUNDSTONE.

John Poundstone, of Nicholson, is of German descent. His grandfather, Philip Poundstone, came from Germany and settled in Nicholson township at an early day. Nicholas Poundstone, father of John, was born in Fayette County, and spent his life here as a farmer. He married Elizabeth Everly, and they had eight children. Their son John was born in Nicholson township, Aug. 30, 1804, and was educated at the public schools, and growing up learned the trade of cabinet-making, and followed it for about four years in Masontown. In 1830 he moved to where he now lives, and has ever since "farmed it."

Aug. 12, 1827, he married Susanna Rider, of German township, who died in June, 1869. They had ten children, seven of whom are now living. June 4, 1871, Mr. Poundstone took to himself another wife in the person of Barbara A. Hunsaker. Of his children, one, a son, is living in California, another son is a hotel-keeper, and the others are farmers. He has but one daughter living, Louisa, who married a farmer by the name of — Law.

Mr. Poundstone has held important township offices, that of school director, etc., and is a member of the Lutheran Church, in which he has held the office of elder for many years. His possessions consist chiefly of lands. Mr. Poundstone is a gentleman of unassuming modest manners. His neighbors speak highly of him as an honest, honorable man, whose life is gentle, and whose good deeds, quietly done, are numerous.

### MICHAEL W. FRANKS.

Michael W. Franks, of Nicholson township, the late popular treasurer of Fayette County, is of German lineage. His father, Michael Franks, was born and raised in Fayette County, upon the farm whereon he, Mr. Franks, our subject, now resides. He was a farmer, and married Charity Kendall, of Nicholson township, by whom he had seven children. Michael W. (the third, for his grandfather as well as father bore the same Christian name) was born April

29, 1832, and was educated in the common and select schools, learned the business of farming, and since his marriage, in 1864, has resided where he now lives, except for three years, during which time he held public office and resided at Uniontown.

He was elected treasurer of Fayette County by a very large majority in November, 1878, and performed the duties of his office from Jan. 1, 1879, to Jan. 1, 1882, giving universal satisfaction. It may be added here that he was nominated by his party for that office over more good men, probably, than were ever before beaten as aspirants for the same office at the same time in Fayette County.

It is generally conceded by his political opponents that Fayette County never had a better treasurer than Mr. Franks, and there are gentlemen of standing in the county who declare it never had so good an one as he. He is popular in all parts of the county, generous, and gentlemanly.

Mr. Franks and the family of Franks are distinctively Democratic in politics.

May 17, 1864, Mr. Franks married Martha J. Bell, of Greene County, and has three children,—Emma B., Charles O. B., and Estella R.

### DR. WILSON GREENE.

Dr. Wilson Greene, of New Geneva, Nicholson township, was born in Greene County, Dec. 1, 1829, and is of Puritan descent on his paternal side, but on his maternal of German extraction.

His grandfather, William Greene, was born in New England. He migrated to Greene County, Pa., at an early day, and settled on Whitely Creek, near "Willow Tree." He married Rebecca La Rue, and their issue were five sons and three daughters.

Henry Sycks, his maternal grandfather, was a native of Virginia, but while quite young removed with his father to Greene County, Pa., and settled on the waters of Dunkard Creek, in Monongahela township. They were among the pioneers that first permanently located west of the Monongahela River. Young Henry participated in the Indian wars of the period, and endured the privations and hardships incident to border life. He was united in matrimony with Barbary Selser, a daughter of a contemporary settler, and ten children were the fruits of their marriage.

Matthew Greene and Rachel Sycks, the parents of Dr. Greene, were married in 1828, and reared four children, of whom the subject of this notice was the only son, born on the farm his great-grandfather located, where his mother was born, and where she died, and where his father still resides.

Dr. Greene is eminently a self-made man. His advantages for acquiring an education were very limited. Supplementing his scant public school opportunities by several terms of select school, which he was enabled to attend through the summer by teaching district school through the winter, he succeeded

in obtaining a very liberal and thorough English education. In like manner he earned the means that supported him at Cleveland Medical College, Cleveland, Ohio, where he completed his professional studies.

March 23, 1859, he formed a propitious matrimonial alliance with Pleasant M., second daughter of Evan Evans, who owned an adjoining farm. He was of pure Welsh lineage, both parents having been born in Wales. Mrs. Greene's mother, Nancy Myers, was a granddaughter of the historic Rev. John Corbly, whose wife and several children were massacred while on their way to church, Sunday morning, May 10, 1782, by the Indians, near Garard's Fort.

They began their married life at Bristol, Perry Co., Ohio, where he soon acquired a lucrative practice. Having pursued his profession here for five years, he returned to Pennsylvania and located in New Geneva, where he now resides. Here, too, he soon attained to an extensive practice, which he still retains. Personally he is eminently popular, having merited the esteem of his fellows by being instant in good words and works. Professionally he has been signally successful, and is held in high esteem by the medical fraternity. At present he is vice-president of the Fayette County Medical Association, and holds the appointment as delegate to the National Medical Convention, to be held in St. Paul, Minn., in July next.

Dr. Greene is the father of two children,—Isa D. and Willie W. Isa is an accomplished young lady, educated at Monongahela College, and a graduate of Dana's Musical Institute, Warren, Ohio. She possesses a rare talent for instrumental music and enjoys a sweet and delicately-cultured voice. Willie is at present pursuing a course of study at Monongahela College.

The doctor has for a number of years been a prominent and influential member of one of the leading Evangelical Churches, of which also his wife and children are all communicants.

Though not luxuriating in unbounded affluence, he has accumulated much valuable property, which consists of houses and lands and moneys at interest, etc. He is one of the solid and useful citizens of the county.

#### WILLIAM P. GRIFFIN.

Mr. William P. Griffin, of Nicholson township, is of Welsh stock. He is the son of William and Rhoda Griffin, who, coming to Fayette County, settled on Georges Creek, in Springhill township. He was a miller. They had a family of eight children, of whom William P. was the seventh, and is the only one living, and was born Sept. 2, 1809. He was educated in

the common and select schools, and has been engaged in farming all his business life. He has resided upon the farm which he now occupies for fifty years.

In August, 1837, Mr. Griffin married Ann Gans, of Springhill township, by whom he has had thirteen children, eleven of whom are living. Mr. and Mrs. Griffin were for many years members of the Baptist Church, but about 1868 they united with the Christian Church, of which they are honored and useful members, Mr. Griffin being an elder thereof. He was once a lieutenant in the State militia, and two of his sons, William L. and Charles A., served in the war of the Rebellion, the former of whom is a physician, the latter a general trader. Mr. Griffin's third son, Newton, is a farmer; the fourth son is a grocer; and all the sons have left the old homestead and the county, living in various parts of the Union.

Mr. Griffin is a substantial, excellent farmer, an honest, hard-working man; and Mrs. Griffin has contributed to their success in life her full share of management and hard work. They command the respect and esteem of their neighbors. Mr. Griffin has held important township offices.

#### HENRY DILS.

Henry Dils, of Nicholson township, who was born July 3, 1816, in what was then Springhill township, is descended from good old Dutch stock, it is believed. His father, Philip Dils, married in Springhill township Mary Hager, and located in the same township about 1807. They had five children, of whom Henry was the third. Three are yet living,—Henry, Peter, and Mary Core. Mr. Dils' father passed most of his life as a farmer, and was successful, leaving each of his children a good farm.

Mr. Dils received a limited education in the common schools, but is a man of observation and intelligence, and has held the position of school director and other offices. He has been a member of the Old Frame Presbyterian Church for many years, and has for several years been an elder in that church. He was first married Dec. 28, 1843, to Martha Vander-vort, of Nicholson township. They had eleven children, eight of whom are living. His wife being deceased, he married again Nov. 10, 1870. Six children were the issue of this latter marriage, four now living. Mr. Dils has resided in his present home thirty-eight years. Here his children have been reared, and he has assisted his grown-up children to a start in life. His sons are all farmers. Mr. Dils is a gentleman of excellent moral character, without reproach as a business man. His possessions are chiefly lands.





Wm P Griffin



Henry Dill