

A Centennial Biographical History of Crawford County, Ohio, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1902

Benjamin F. Allen, of this biography, has been one of the leading business men of Crawford County for the past twenty years, and is now one of the largest buyers and shippers of lumber in this part of the state of Ohio. The birth of **Mr. Allen** was in Concord, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, on September 23, 1849, and he was a son of **Walter** and **Barbara (Emery) Allen**, who had a family of ten children born to them, six of these still surviving. These are: **Priscilla J.**, the wife of **Samuel Beaston**, a farmer of Perry County, Pennsylvania; **Benjamin F.**, the subject of this sketch; **John**, a resident of East Waterford, Juniata County, Pennsylvania; **George**, on the old home farm; **Walter**, a resident of Cambria County, Pennsylvania; and **Anna**, the widow of **A. Channing**, of Plymouth, Ohio.

Walter Allen was born in Boston, Massachusetts, about 1822, and he was nine years old when he started with his parents for the frontier. Upon reaching Baltimore both parents were taken ill and died there and the father of our subject was taken to the home of a wealthy tanner named **McClelland**, of Strasburg, Pennsylvania, while two other kind families furnished homes for the other two children, **Benjamin** and **Priscilla**. **Mr. Allen** never heard from either. He knew that his parents were people of means, but was never able to learn anything more of his family.

With **Mr. McClelland**, **Mr. Allen** found a good home. He was a man of large means, owning a tannery, farms and stores and controlling much of the business then carried on in Strasburg. **Mr. Allen** was afforded the advantages of a good common-school education, and was taught the trade of tanner. At the age of twenty-one he left the care of his foster-father and started out for himself, well equipped, for he had an education, a trade and good health and friends. Going to Concord, Pennsylvania, he began work as a journeyman, and so well performed his duties that he was soon made foreman of the tanning yards, and continued in this line of work until 1872. Then he retired to his farm of one hundred and seventy acres near Concord, this property having belonged to his (our subject's) grandfather. Here he lived until the time of his death, in 1896. In his political convictions he was formerly a Know-nothing, then became a Whig and later a Republican, but he was never a seeker for office. During his later years he was an active member of the Methodist Church and was unusually well informed on all Bible literature.

The mother of our subject was born near Concord, Pennsylvania, on April 16, 1824, and she was a daughter of **William** and **Jane (Steward) Emery**. This was one of the old and influential families of Franklin County. The honored mother still resides on the old home farm, where she was married and where she took up her residence after the death of her parents, **Mr. Allen** having bought the property from the heirs.

Benjamin F. Allen, of this sketch, was brought up in a good home under the care of a just father and an excellent mother. His education was acquired in the common schools, and at the age of twelve years he entered a tannery and under his father's instruction learned the trade at Spring Run. Here he worked for five years; eight months in the summer and four months in the winter were given to attendance at school. In 1866 his apprenticeship was finished and then he went to "Horse Valley," where he worked as a journeyman until 1870, going from there to Liberty Valley, Perry County, Pennsylvania, where he was employed at his trade until 1875. From there

Mr. Allen went to Elmwood, Illinois, and became identified with the stock interests of **J. P. Ryner**, remaining with him one year. Then he returned to Perry County and formed a partnership with an uncle, **James Emery**, in farming but eighteen months later sold his interests there to his uncle and came to Shelby, Ohio. Here he was employed by **B. F. Lash** on a farm for some three years, leaving there to embark in the lumber business.

From the start **Mr. Allen** has been successful in this business, buying and selling great quantities of timber. In 1881 he came to Tiro, and since then has been one of the leading factors in industrial trade. His operations in lumber are very large, and sometimes he has as many as eleven mills engaged in cutting for him. For many years he has conducted the sawmill in this place and is one of the largest shippers in this county of ash timber.

The marriage of **Mr. Allen** was on October 13, 1873, to **Miss Fannie E. Snyder**, who was the daughter of **Francis** and **Mary A. (Swartz) Snyder**, the former of whom was a miller by trade, but later entered the mercantile business, and for twenty-two years he was postmaster of Honey Grove, Juniata County, Pennsylvania, where he died. He had given the name to Honey Grove and he was one of the well-known and highly esteemed citizens of the county. Three children have been born to **Mr.** and **Mrs. Allen**, the two survivors being.—**Ray** and **Ethan**. In his political belief he is a staunch Republican, but is better known as a business man than as a politician. His standing in the county is high and his circle of both business and personal friends is large.

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