

A History of the Juniata Valley and its People Under The Editorial Supervision of John W. Jordan, LL.D.; Librarian of Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Illustrated; New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company; 1913; Volume II

The founder of this branch of the **Beers** family in Pennsylvania was **Andrew Beers**, a native of Ireland, where his early life was spent. After his marriage he came to the United States, settling near Concord, in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, there engaged in farming. After the death of his wife he returned to Ireland, where he married (second) a **Miss Anderson**, whom he brought back to Franklin County with him. He had issue by both wives, and founded a numerous influential family.

(II) **Joseph B.**, youngest son of **Andrew Beers** and his second wife, was born near Concord, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, in 1816, died in Marysville, Perry County, December 2, 1889. He attended the common schools of that neighborhood, and grew to manhood on the home farm, and learned the art of tanning leather. After his marriage he moved to Horse Valley, Toboyne Township, Perry County, where he purchased a tract of three hundred acres, seventy-five of which was cleared. He remained on his farm until 1863, cleared the balance of his acres, erected new buildings, and prospered. In 1863 he moved to New Bloomfield, Perry County, where for one year he was engaged as a tanner with **S. A. Peale**. In 1864 he moved to McVeytown, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, where for about three years he engaged in the tanning business with **Samuel Myers**. He then became owner of some excellent medical formulas, and for eighteen years was successfully engaged in the manufacture of "patent medicines." His best-known preparation was "**Beers'** Famous American Liniment," widely known in the Juniata and Susquehanna Valleys as a sovereign remedy for colds, headaches, etc. Later in life he retired and spent his declining years with his son, **John W. Beers**, in Marysville, Pennsylvania. Both he and his wife were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In politics he was an ardent Republican, but never accepted public office.

Mr. Beers married, in Perry County, **Anna Kelley**, born in Franklin County, July 23, 1817, died at the residence of her son in Marysville, March 1, 1895, daughter of **John** and **Margaret Kelley**. **John Kelley** was born on the Isle of Jersey, one of the group of islands lying in the English channel off the northwest coast of France. He came to the United States, settling in Horse Valley, Perry County, Pennsylvania, where he became a landowning farmer. He was a strict member of the Presbyterian Church, and every Sunday walked the five miles from his home to the nearest church of his faith. His wife, a **Miss Scyoc**, bore him eight children, all now deceased. Children of **Joseph W.** and **Anna Beers**: 1. **Andrew Jackson**, born October 19, 1846, now residing near McVeytown, Mifflin County, a farmer. 2. **John Wesley**, of whom further. 3. **Margaret E.**, born March 26, 1851, died August 29 following. 4. **Joseph Alexander**, born March 1, 1853; a tool sharpener with the Pressed Steel Car Company, now residing at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania. 5. **Sarah E.**, born September 13, 1855, died September 18, 1856. 6. **Cambridge Graham**, born November 2, 1857, now residing in Sunbury, Pennsylvania; a railroad engineer.

(III) **John Wesley**, second son of **Joseph B.** and **Anna (Kelley) Beers**, was born in Horse Valley, Toboyne Township, Perry County, Pennsylvania, December 27, 1848. He was educated in the public schools of the township, and Bloomfield Academy. About 1864 he began business

life as a newsboy on the trains, then became interested in telegraphy, but, after learning that art and working for the Pennsylvania railroad for a time, abandoned it for a clerkship in a general store at Mattawana, Mifflin County. In 1869 he entered the employ of the Pennsylvania railroad at Altoona, first as a laborer, but soon becoming foreman in the maintenance of way department. On July 5, 1870, he was transferred to Marysville as foreman of the quarry owned by the company. In 1872 he was sent to Bedford, Pennsylvania, as foreman, but soon afterward was made conductor of a construction train. On March 1, 1873, he was returned to Marysville as foreman of subdivision No. 4, a position he filled until his resignation, January 1, 1881. In November, 1880, he was elected sheriff of Perry County for a term of three years. At the expiration of his term of office he entered the employ of the Bell Telephone Company, at Marysville, being connected with their suit for patent rights for three years. In 1887 he engaged in the flour, feed and grain business in Marysville, as senior member of the firm of **Beers & Heisley**. In 1891 he sold his interest in that business, and until 1903 was successfully engaged in lumbering operations in Perry and Dauphin Counties. He did a large business, the timber from his mills being largely disposed of to railroad companies. In 1897 he was appointed postmaster at Marysville, and has served under successive appointments until the present time, his present term expiring March 4, 1916. During this period the office has advanced from fourth to third class, and is headquarters for several rural delivery routes.

In July, 1895, **Mr. Beers** was, with **H. M. Horner**, one of the incorporators of the Marysville Water Company; was elected its first treasurer and still holds that position. In 1897 he again joined with **Mr. Horner** in the organization of the Marysville Electric Light, Heat & Power Company, was elected its treasurer and still serves in that capacity. Later **Mr. Beers** purchased **Mr. Horner's** interest in both companies. In 1906 he assisted in the organization of the First National Bank of Marysville; was chosen first vice-president, and now holds that office. In 1908 he was one of the organizers of the Eastern Perry County Telephone Company, and since 1909 has been president of that prosperous, growing company.

During his useful, busy life, **Mr. Beers** has not only been the successful business man, but in public life, in fraternal life, and in the church has borne well his part. In 1877 he made his entrance into public life as the Republican candidate for sheriff of Perry County, losing the verdict at the polls by only nine votes. In 1880 he was again the nominee of his party and was elected. He filled the office well and faithfully, retiring with the good wishes of the judges and court officials with whom much of his business was necessarily transacted. As postmaster for sixteen years he has given abundant satisfaction, both to the patrons of the office and to the department at Washington. His public service also includes several terms as school director, where his interest in the cause of education has been of value. His fraternal orders are: Perry Lodge, No. 458, Free and Accepted Masons; Newport Chapter, Royal Arch Masons; Beulah Lodge, No. 269, Knights of Pythias; and both he and his wife are active members of the Lutheran Church.

Mr. Beers married, in Lewistown, Pennsylvania, September 16, 1873, **Rebecca E.**, daughter of **Samuel** and **Martha Kauffman**. Children: 1. **Joseph C.**, born November 27, 1874; now a plumber and electrician of Marysville; he married (first) **Mattie Rupley**, who bore him **Leah** and **John Wesley** (2); he married (second) **Jennie Sellers**, and has a son **Ernest**. 2. **Pearl**, born December 4, 1876, who resides with her father, the widow of **H. C. Hipple**; children: **Victoria**

and **Theodore**, the latter deceased. 3. **Walter B.**, born October 14, 1879, now living in Conneaut, Ohio, in the employ of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad Company; he married **Virginia Ellenberger**, and has a son. 4. **Albert W.**, twin of **Walter B.**, also resides in Conneaut, in the employ of the Nickel Plate railroad; he married **Edna Groninger**.

www.theperryhistorians.org