

Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania, J. M. Runk and Company, Publishers 1897

Thomas Preston Cochran, retired, Millerstown, Perry County, Pa. **Thomas Cochran**, father of **Thomas P. Cochran**, was born at Londonderry, Ireland, in 1776. He and his three brothers, **Samuel**, **Robert** and **William**, were Protestants, and were possessed of considerable property, but were compelled to leave their property behind them and flee to this country. A priest of the Catholic Church was a true friend to them, and took charge of their property interests in Ireland.

The **Cochran** brothers bought land in Chester County, Pa., laid out a town which they called Cochranville, and which still bears that name. The three brothers of **Thomas Cochran** remained in Chester County, where they reared families and died, but he moved, in 1801, to Millerstown, where he taught school, and afterwards engaged in mercantile business; here also he kept the first tavern opened in the town, in the building now owned by **Mrs. Goodman**, and continued in the management of both branches of business until 1813. Being postmaster during the war of 1812, he could not enlist in the army. In 1813 he disposed of the hotel, and continued his mercantile pursuits until 1835, when he was succeeded in the business by his son, **Thomas P. Cochran**. He and his wife were the principal promoters and supporters of the Presbyterian Church at Millerstown, whose house of worship was built in 1831. Giving up his business to his son, **Thomas Cochran** retired from active pursuits and died in 1847. His wife died March 29, 1852. Her maiden name was **Sophia Maria Porter**, and she was born near Londonderry, Ireland, October 16, 1776. She came with her parents to America when she was seventeen years old. Her father, **Robert Porter**, an uncle of **Governor Porter**, of Pennsylvania, settled at Lewistown, Pa., where he engaged in mercantile business. During the war of the Revolution, he loyally supported the cause of the colonies; having enlisted as a private and being shortly promoted to the rank of colonel, he was assigned to Washington's army, then on the Brandywine, and was a participant in the famous battle of that name.

The eldest son of **Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cochran**, **William Cochran**, died in Boone County, Mo., in 1886. He was a Presbyterian minister, and was sent as a home missionary to that State in 1831, to labor among the slaves. For some time he was engaged in this philanthropic work at Palmyra, Mo., when one of the slave owners welcomed him to his house, and showing him to his room, told him he might occupy that room as long as he desired to stay, and pray all he wished inside of that room, but not outside of it. The other members of their family were: **Robert Bolton**, resided in Franklin County, Pa., where he died; **Eliza Jane**, married **Robert McDowell**, an attorney, of Chambersburg, Pa., where they both died; **James Madison**, resided at Liverpool, Perry County, Pa., and there died; **Mary Ann (Mrs. Charles Thompson)**, of Mexico, Juniata County, Pa.; and **Thomas Preston**.

Thomas Preston Cochran was born at Millerstown, Pa., April 10, 1813. His primary education was received in the common schools of his native town, which he attended until he was ten years of age, and then for two years pursued studies preparatory for college, at West Nottingham Academy, near Port Deposit, Cecil County, Md. After a three years' course at Cannonsburg College, now Washington College, Washington, Pa., he was graduated, after which he studied medicine for eight months with **Dr. McClellan**, at Philadelphia, but on account of failing sight

was obliged to give up preparation for professional life and return home. This enforced change in his plan of life did not deter him from forming plans for activity and usefulness. He became a clerk in his father's store, where he soon mastered the details of mercantile business, and on his father's retirement in 1835 succeeded to the establishment, and was successful as a merchant. Later in life, **Mr. Cochran** disposed of the store and bought a farm in Greenwood Township, where he busied himself in agricultural pursuits, in the course of time coming into the possession of several farms. In 1846, he gave up farming for a short time, but afterwards resumed it, and continued in this occupation until 1864, when he permanently retired, and took up his residence at Millerstown. He has since sold five of his farms, but still retains possession of two. He also owns the property built by **Isaiah Clark** in 1818. **Mr. Cochran** is a genuine Democrat of the Jeffersonian school; he was county commissioner from 1842 to 1845, and has also served in borough and township offices.

Thomas Preston Cochran was married February 12, 1835, to **Miss Jane Patterson**, of Juniata County, daughter of **John Patterson**, merchant. She died in 1836, leaving one son, **Robert P.**, who resides in Millerstown, Pa. In 1839, **Thomas P. Cochran** was married to his second wife, **Rebecca**, daughter of **John Black**, of Tuscarora Township, who died about 1884; their children are: **Mary Ann**, married **William Mann**, resides at Mifflin, where he died, and she is now the wife of **Thomas Prow**, of Mifflin County, Pa.; **Josephine**, married **Robert Cathcart**, of Carlisle, Pa., removed to Chicago, where he died, and she is now the wife of **Thomas Cluck**, of that city; **John, Thomas** and **William**, triplets, **John** died when six months old, **Thomas** at the age of eight years, and **William** aged eighteen years. In his third marriage, March 16, 1886, **Mr. Cochran** was united to **Hannah Maria Kauffman**, widow of **David Vincent**, and daughter of **Samuel Kauffman**, of Juniata County, Pa. For many years he has consistently maintained his membership in the Presbyterian Church, in which also he has long served efficiently an elder.

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