

Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania, Volume 1, J. M. Runk and Company, Publishers 1897

Francis Ford Cummins, Orbisonia, Huntingdon County, Pa., is a native of Westmoreland County, Pa., born in Fairfield Township, October 7, 1851. His parents are **Thomas** and **Mary (Henderson) Cummins**. **Thomas Cummins** was born in Tell Township, Huntingdon County, February 22, 1822. When he was ten or twelve years of age, his parents removed to Westmoreland County; there he early learned the practical part of farming, but for a time was engaged in engineering on the old Portage Railroad. During the war of the Rebellion, **Thomas Cummins** served for one year in the Two Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania Volunteers, taking part in the battles of Petersburg, Hatchers Run, Fort Steadman, and a number of minor engagements. He was mustered out in June, 1865. His wife was **Mary**, daughter of **John A. Henderson**, of Westmoreland County. Their children are: **Francis Ford**; **James H.**, blacksmith at Johnstown, Pa., married **Mary** dryers; **George W.**, on the old homestead in Westmoreland County, a man of very great industry, married **Sophia Spyer**; and **Sarah Margaret**, married in 1896 to **W. A. Caufield**, who is in mercantile business at West Fairfield. Pa. **Thomas Cummins** died in 1891; his wife survived him until March, 1896.

The early youth of **Francis F. Cummins** was passed on his father's farm; his education was obtained in the common schools. **Mr. Thomas Cummins** had upon his farm a carpenter shop and a forge, in which his sons learned very valuable lessons, acquiring practical knowledge of two of the most useful handicrafts. With the mechanical skill thus obtained, and the small capital laid up by economizing his earnings as a boy, **Francis** started out hopefully to make his way in the world, and very well has he accomplished his intention. Full of youthful strength and enterprise, he took to himself a helpmate and was for some time a farmer. But his wife's ill health obliged him to leave the farm. She died, leaving him with a little daughter, **Elsie G.**, not quite two years old. After roaming around for a time, **Mr. Cummins** set out for Arizona, in the congenial company of **J. F. Trimble**. At Holbrook, Arizona, **Mr. Cummins** found employment as a carpenter, in building bridges for the A. P. R. R. Co. After six months of faithful service, he was promoted to be bridge inspector, and held that position for two years. He then went to Colorado, his companion remaining in Arizona. **Mr. Cummins** now engaged with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Company, as bridge builder, but remained in their employ only six months, and then returned to his home and to farming. In 1889, he determined once more to seek his fortunes in the wide west, having up to this time made but slow advances towards a competency; his spirit and determination were, however, undiminished. His destination now was Washington. For some time he made Seattle and Tacoma his headquarters, going from those points in various directions, building bridges. Hearing of large finds of gold-bearing quartz, he concluded to try prospecting for a while; so, providing himself with the necessary outfit, he set out to explore the valleys of the White, Green and Black Rivers, and parts of Oregon. But the result was not encouraging; and in 1890 **Mr. Cummins** once more sought the old Keystone State, whose promise, if not so dazzling as that of the great gold-fields, is more sure. He first came to Westmoreland County, and soon after, in partnership with **Harry L. Henderson**, engaged in mercantile business at Newport, Perry County. In August of the same year, buying his partner's interest, **Mr. Cummins** came to Orbisonia and opened a general store, in which he has since carried on a thriving and ever increasing trade. This is due not only to his business

ability, but to his upright and strictly impartial dealing. **Mr. Cummins** has built a fine modern residence in Orbisonia. In the spring of 1896, he purchased a farm of 210 acres in Cromwell Township. He is a Democrat of the Jacksonian type; is interested in politics, but has never been willing to hold office. As a citizen and as a man, **Mr. Cummins** is held in high esteem.

Francis Ford Cummins was married the second time in Westmoreland County to **C. May**, daughter of **Robert Cauffield**, of that county. They have five children: **Georgiana; Mary Jane; Elmer Cauffield; Homer Wray; and Ruth Elizabeth.**

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