

Biographical Annals Lancaster County Pennsylvania. A Biographical and Genealogical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens and Many of the Early Settlers, Illustrated, Publishers: J. H. Beers & Co, 1903



**Samuel F. Frey**, senior member of the well known firm of **S. F. Frey & Son**, furniture dealers and undertakers, at Marietta, is one of the most successful merchants and prominent citizens of Lancaster County. Many of the most prominent citizens of America, today, are self-made men - men who through, poverty and obscurity have fought their way to prominence and honor. A volume of the biographies of representative men of Lancaster County would indeed be incomplete without a sketch of **Samuel F. Frey**, who strikingly illustrates the force of well-directed energy, steadfast purpose and persistent effort for the accomplishment of noble results, and the overthrow of those obstacles that beset the progress of the young man who, unaided and alone, combats with life's stern realities.

The **Frey** family has been long and honorably connected with the history of Pennsylvania, whither the original representatives came from France. They were identified with the Huguenots as early as 1629. Originally the home of the family was in Switzerland, Cantons Aargau and Fribourg having been the ancient cradle of this race. In the old town of Fribourg there are documents proving beyond a doubt the origin of the name of **Frey**. These records tell that because of the bravery displayed by the chief and his clans of Aargau, and the prominent part they had taken in the victory over Charles the Bold, at Morat, 1476, they were declared "**Free**" (German "**Frei**"), were authorized to adopt the name of **Frey**, and were constituted a free and separate principality in Switzerland.

**Abram Frey**, great-grandfather of **Samuel F.**, was an ordained clergyman of the Evangelical Association, and was for many years connected with the itinerary service, continuing thus in the Master's cause until called to his reward, at the age of seventy five years.

**Samuel Frey**, son of **Abram**, was born in Union County, Pa., and became a farmer by occupation. In his religious views he followed the faith of his father, joining the Evangelical Association. In politics he was a supporter of the Old-line Whigs. He married **Anna Bowman**, and they became the parents of two sons, **Abram** and **Samuel**, and one daughter, **Anna**, who married **Abram First**, of Harrisburg, Pa.; all are now deceased. **Samuel Frey**, the father, died in Union County at the age of forty-nine, and his wife passed away at Florin, this county, Jan. 7, 1879, aged seventy-four years.

**Rev. Abram Frey**, son of **Samuel**, and father of **Samuel F.**, was born in Union County, Pa., Nov. 14, 1823. He was a man of superior intelligence, and in early life engaged in teaching public school. Feeling called to consecrate his life to the work of God, he became a minister of

the Evangelical Association, and filled pulpits at various points in Lancaster, Lebanon, Berks, Montgomery and Dauphin Counties, continuing thus for eight years, or until his death, from typhoid fever on April 23, 1859, at the age of thirty-six. Besides his ministerial labors he had been extensively engaged in the manufacture of coverlids and counterpanes, and in dealing in wool at Mt. Joy, Lancaster County. These enterprises were managed by **Joseph Classley**, and were very prosperous until the panic of 1857. The heavy losses sustained then had not been overcome when **Rev. Mr. Frey** died, so that practically his wife and six children were left with nothing except a small home. On July 3, 1845, **Rev. Abram Frey** was united in marriage with **Miss Mary Fauby**, and this union was blessed with three sons and three daughters, as follows: **Martha**, wife of **Joseph Heineman**, of Philadelphia; **Abram**, an artist of note in Washington, D. C.; **David**, who died at the age of eleven years; **Samuel F.**, whose name opens this sketch; **Lizzie**, wife of **Dr. N. A. Saylor**, of Philadelphia; and **Emma**, wife of **O. G. Hull**, of Kansas City, Mo. In his political faith the father was a Whig until the disintegration of that party, after which he affiliated with the Republicans. **Mrs. Mary (Fauby) Frey**, the beloved mother of this family, entered into rest, in New York City, May 5, 1898, at the age of seventy-five.

**Abram Frey**, son of **Rev. Abram**, and mentioned in the foregoing as an artist of note, made a trip abroad in 1878, sailing from Philadelphia, on an American Line steamer, April 18, 1878; he made an extended tour, and passed much time in France, and while in Switzerland saw the papers proving the origin of the family name.

**Samuel F. Frey** was born near Bloomfield, in Juniata Township, Perry Co., Pa., Dec. 16, 1852. For some years he was a student in the public schools of Mt. Joy, and for one year was under the instruction of **Christian Engle**, a most capable instructor, near Mt. Joy. The condition of the family finances made it necessary not only that he support himself, but also that he assist in the care of the family. At the age of sixteen he left school and faced the stern realities of life for himself. On Feb. 1, 1868, he apprenticed himself to **Henry S. Myers**, of Mt. Joy, to learn the trade of cabinetmaker and undertaker, remaining thus employed for three and one half years. On Jan. 3, 1872, he went to Marietta and, finding a suitable opening, at once embraced the opportunity of embarking in business. Through close economy and hard work during extra time allotted him during his school days and apprenticeship, he had been able to save \$800. Renting a small cabinet shop and wareroom in the Welchans building, he bought a stock of furniture and funeral supplies. Success rewarded his efforts from the start, and he was obliged to move to larger quarters. In 1887 he purchased the Roath property, in the heart of the business district, and, after tearing down the old buildings, erected a substantial brick structure 50x80 feet, three stories and basement. This commodious building inspired **Mr. Frey** to hold religious services in it before using it for business purposes. With him, to think is to act, and he at once made known his intentions to the best citizens. His project met with great favor, and after the seats had been arranged a large number of people assembled to consecrate, as it were, the building to the services of God. **Rev. A. B. Saylor**, pastor of the United Evangelical Church of Mt. Joy, preached the sermon, assisted by **Rev. Mr. Hickman**, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Marietta.

**Mr. Frey** now conducts the business under the firm name of **S. F. Frey & Son**, his son **Samuel L.** having been admitted as a partner. As a business man **Mr. Frey** has not confined his interest to his store alone. He has been largely interested in real estate, and owns considerable property

in Marietta and Columbia, also being interested in farming in the northern part of the county. With others he started the Marietta Manufacturing Company, and is one of its board of directors, as well as a stockholder in the Marietta Silk Mills, using his efforts to secure the location of same in Marietta. He is an owner of stock and president of the Home Building & Loan Association, and is a director of the First National Bank of Marietta.

Education has no warmer friend in Lancaster County than **Samuel F. Frey**. In 1897 he was elected school director, and is now serving his fifth year. In 1898 he served as president of the school board, and he was one of the prime movers in the erection of the present modern school building, which is a credit to the town. **Mr. Frey** has held many positions of trust, and has frequently been called upon to settle up estates, acting as executor and administrator.

In religious affairs the name of **Samuel F. Frey** is written high as a zealous and disinterested worker in the cause of Christ. He, with a few others, made it possible, in 1896, to build Columbia Grace United Evangelical Church, corner of Locust and Walnut Streets, and was the advisory member of the building committee, and the one who helped them bridge over the financial part of the question. They moved forward with undaunted trust and courage, never giving a thought of failure with a man like **Mr. Frey** by their side, until they were able to make other arrangements and help themselves, and had established confidence in their community and elsewhere, proving that they were a truly devoted, loyal Christian people, and could, and certainly would, accomplish their purpose by the grace and help of their Divine Master. It was a success. The church was completed, and today there is not a more thriving congregation. **Mr. Frey** is not narrow in his religious work, his sympathies being broad enough to embrace all denominations, and he has assisted financially and otherwise in the up building of a number of other churches. As an example of his untiring efforts may be detailed the establishment of the United Brethren Church of West Marietta, in 1879. **Rev. J. M. Leshner** (afterward sent as a missionary to Africa) called upon **Mr. Frey**, and said, in substance: "I am looking for a place to hold services to preach the Gospel, and I think there is room here. I have been informed West Marietta is a very wicked place, and has room for missionary work; that the harvest is ripe, and laborers are needed. I understand there is an M. E. chapel in that part of the town that is seldom used. This is just what I want, if I can get permission to use it. I was directed to you, being a member of the United Brethren faith, and as I need a place to stay when here to preach." **Rev. Leshner** was misinformed as to **Mr. Frey's** religious connection, inasmuch as he had been reared in the Evangelical Church, but that was immaterial. He welcomed him into his home, enthusiastically entering into all his plans, and agreeing to assist him as much as was in his power. Those two men, armed with faith and led by the Master, wrought wondrous changes in the locality unto which they ministered. Success crowned the cause in the salvation of many precious souls rescued by the routing out of sin and wickedness; the homes were thoroughly changed and sanctified, where the praises of God are now sung. A more radical change was never witnessed, and there are many witnesses living today who will be happy to testify to this. Thirty-eight were converted, and united with the church. Not only had **Mr. Frey** assisted **Rev. Mr. Leshner** in the spiritual part of this work, but there had to be a place provided for these people to worship regularly undisturbed. They were rich in courage, and in the spring of 1880 arrangements were made to purchase the M. E. chapel, **Mr. Frey** giving his own personal obligation as security for the payment. After a few years the debt was wiped out, and the church marched triumphantly forward without the aid of outside help. The following was contributed

by **Rev. William Yenser**, pastor of Zion's Reformed Church. Marietta: "In church work **Mr. Frey** is as active and thorough as in business, and his activities are not confined to any particular part of church work, but embrace all its departments. This activity in church life is supplemented by an unstinted generosity, which is exercised not only in behalf of his own denomination and congregation but which is as freely given to Christ's church of other denominations, he having very generously aided other congregations in their need, one of which was our own congregation, and especially at this present time, in the building of our new church." In religious faith, as noted above, **Mr. Frey** clings to the faith of his fathers—the Evangelical Association,—now known as the United Evangelical Church.

On Sept. 5, 1876, **Samuel F. Frey** was united in marriage with **Miss Anna H. Longnecker**, eldest daughter of **Rev. John B. Longnecker**, of the Old Brethren in Zion, now located in Florin, this county. Five children blessed this union: **Samuel L.**, who was educated in Albright College, and now, fully equipped for business, is his father's partner, and is adding a strong progressive spirit to the firm; **Anna** and **Myra**, both students at Albright College; and **Cora** and **Wilbur**, at home. Politically **Mr. Frey** is a Republican. The success that has attended his efforts has been richly merited, and his industry, integrity and perseverance make him an example well worthy of emulation.

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