

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

**William B. Gray**, Blain, Perry County, Pa., was born in Jackson Township, near Blain, September 20, 1836, son of **Hugh** and **Isabella (Bower) Gray**. His grandparents were **James** and **Emily (Walker) Gray**. **James Gray** was born in Scotland, and came to America with his parents, who settled in one of the counties of Eastern Pennsylvania, probably Montgomery. He was a weaver. He married **Miss Walker** in 1800, and in the following year, settled within the present limits of Perry County, in the Sandy Hill district of Madison Township. He was a pioneer settler, and a very active business man. Besides carrying on the weaving business, he also conducted a still. He was not only a just man, and reliable in all his transactions, but was liberal to persons in need of assistance, and to the church. He contributed largely to the erection of the Presbyterian Church at Centre, one of the earliest church edifices in Shermans Valley. His children were: **Fanny**, unmarried, lived to pass her eightieth year; **Hugh; James**, married **Elizabeth Graybill**, of Centre County, had seven children: **John**, married **Sarah Bower**, had four children, one of whom, **James A. Gray**, was elected sheriff of Perry county in 1878, on the Democratic ticket; **Mary (Mrs. David Adams); Jane (Mrs. William A. Morrison)**, has six children; **William**, married **Eliza Elder**, of Franklin County, Pa., had three children; **Thomas**, married **Catherine Crisplip**, of Cumberland County, Pa., had four children; and **Ellen (Mrs. Benjamin Norton)**, of Newton Hamilton, Pa., had four children. **James Gray** died aged about forty-seven; his good wife survived, to reach the venerable age of eighty-six.

Their son, **Hugh Gray**, received the limited education then ordinarily obtainable by farmers' boys, worked with his father both at the loom and in the still until he married, in 1835. After that event, he turned his attention to farming, and cultivated a tract in Toboyne Township for ten years. He then removed to Madison Township, continuing to follow the same calling, which he did with good success. He was progressive in his methods, and of a disposition and character that won him many friends. His wife also was highly esteemed for her many virtues and consistent life; she was a very kind and hospitable woman. **Mr. Gray** was a Presbyterian, and his wife a Lutheran. **Mrs. Isabella Gray** was a daughter of **Solomon and Magdalena (Fosselman) Bower**; she was born in 1811, and married to **Hugh Gray** in September, 1835. Their children are: **William B.; Solomon**, married **Lydia A. Garber**, and died May 21, 1895, leaving two children. **Mary Aurelia** and **William Musser; Emma Susan (Mrs. S. W. Bernheisel)**, has three children living, **Harry G., Charles W. and May**; and **John G.**, married **Mary Smith**, has three children, **Delia, William H., and Grace**. **Mrs. Hugh Gray** died in February, 1868. **Mr. Gray**, who was born March 7, 1801, died December 31, 1876.

Passing his boyhood in Madison Township, **William B. Gray** attended the common schools of his neighborhood, and resided at home, assisting his father in the management of the farm, until he was twenty-five, at which time he was married. He was very successful as a farmer. He began on his own account on the farm of his father-in-law, **John Stumbaugh**, the place on which he now resides. In 1805, he bought the homestead at public sale. He has made many judicious improvements, such as erecting farm buildings, in addition to his spacious and comfortable residence, constructing fences, etc., besides so managing the cultivation of the land as to render the farm highly productive. He has been actively interested in local political affairs,

and public improvements. He is of the same political party as his father, who was in early life a Whig, and afterwards became a Republican. He was nominated on the ticket of that party in 1890, for the office of county commissioner, and elected by a view flattering majority. He was chosen president of the board of commissioners, and was instrumental in making many improvements; among these were the annex to the court house, and the improved fixtures and facilities in the various offices in the building. During the administration of **Mr. Gray**, seven new iron and steel bridges were built in the county, and one stone arch bridge, at Montgomery's Ferry, besides three covered wooden bridges along Shermans Creek. In 1892, the famous bridge across the Juniata at Millerstown was rebuilt. Taken altogether, **Mr. Gray** may congratulate himself upon having had a very useful and popular administration. He has also served in various township offices. He is a member of Lodge No. 706, I. O. O. F., at Blain.

**William B. Gray** was married in 1801 to **Margaret Jane**, daughter of **John** and **Nancy (McKee) Stumbaugh**. Their children are: James H., conductor on the Northern Central Railroad, between Marysville and Baltimore, Md., married **Ella Mann**, has one child, **Lena**; **Scott M.**, of Kingston, Cumberland County, Pa., married **Annie Freman**; **W. Frank**; and **Arthur G.** The family attend the Reformed Church at Blain.

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