

William Grier, (28 Dec 1830 – 20 Dec 1919), Newspaper Clipping, The Perry Historians

Hon. William Grier, Bloomfield's oldest resident and one of the most widely known citizens of the county, died at his home in this place, on Monday evening about 7:30 o'clock at the advanced age of 88 years 11 months and 24 days.



Death came to him not as the result of any disease but simply from a gradual weakening of the physical forces, super induced by old age and up until a comparatively short time ago he was both physically and mentally active to a wonderful degree for a man of his years.

The announcement of his death, while not unexpected, was nevertheless received with a sense of deep regret throughout this entire community.

Willaim Grier was born December 28, 1830, in Spring Township, this county. When a boy he worked on a farm in the summer and attended district school in the winter. In the summer of 1850 he became a student at Tuscarora Academy, Port Royal, Juniata County and in 1853 attended the summer term at Airy View Academy, Juniata County. Like many of the successful men of his generation he began his business career as a school teacher and taught for five terms, first as a teacher of the Elliotsburg School the winter of 1850-51. The winters of 1851-51 and 1852-53 he taught in Little Germany School and 1853-54 the Milltown School, Spring Township. As a teacher he was very successful and popular with both patrons and pupils. Between terms he clerked in a store, his first experience in mercantile business being as clerk in the store of Charles Ogilby, in Elliotsburg, in 1849. Mr. Ogilby was a leading merchant of Carlisle at that time and had branch stores in several other places. The Elliotsburg store was under the management of the late James B. Hackett, Esq., a relative of Mr. Ogilby. In 1854 the store was moved to New Bloomfield, to the room now accepted as the telephone exchange in Bloomfield. It was too much for Mr. Hackett to handle alone and **Mr. Grier** was sent here to assist hm. In these days high wages it may be interesting to note that he was paid only \$50 a year for his services as a clerk. He continued with the Ogilby stores until 1854, when he moved to Sandy Hill and engaged in the mercantile business on his own account.

It was very natural that a man of Judge Grier's disposition and popularity should have gotten into politics. He was a Democrat, and before the Civil War the Democrats had a large majority in this county. In 1862 he was elected Register and Recorder and re-elected in 1865. In 1872 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the nomination for Congress. In 1878 he was elected Associate Judge of this county, filling the position with honor for the full term of five years. He was Deputy County Treasurer during the term of the late Thomas J. Clark, of Newport, and was also Deputy Register and Recorder for four years and Deputy Sheriff for several months. He filled the office of Chairman of the Democratic County Committee for three years and was also secretary of the committee for one year. He was appointed postmaster of Bloomfield during the second administration of Grover Cleveland, filling the position with entire satisfaction from 1897 to 1901.

For many years he was owner and proprietor of the Bloomfield Academy, now the Carson Long Institute, and many a young man and woman were helped to an education through his generosity,

for if he believing them to be deserving he took them in with the understanding that they should pay him after graduation, when they were able to do so. His benefactions in this respect were blessings and God sent to many and today there are men and women who have risen to places of prominence and success who owe their start in life to Judge Grier.

His services in settling estates were greatly in demand and he was administrator, executor and assigned of more estates than probably any other man in the State, and was guardian of more than half a hundred minor children during his life, all of which attests to the confidence and esteem in which he was held by the public.

Early in life he connected himself with the Bloomfield Presbyterian Church and for many years was an elder and trustee of the church. He was also a member of Adams Lodge, No. 319, F&AM and of Mackinaw Lodge, No. 380, I.O.O.F., having joined the latter order in 1858. In both church and lodge affiliations he showed the same devotion to duty and obligation that he exhibited in his every walk of life.

Judge Grier was married in 1860 to **Nancy Gruver**, daughter of **Elias** and **Isabella (Taylor) Gruver**, of Academia, Juniata County. She died February 23, 1907. **Mrs. Grier** was a woman of character, an amiable and loving wife, and her death was a great blow to the Judge. They never had any children, but this was in a great measure compensated for by the love and devotion of their niece, **Miss Emma Morrow**, who came to make her home with them when she was a young girl, and who was ever like a daughter to them. In the declining years of Judge Grier's life she has been as devoted to him as any daughter could have been, ministering to his wants with loving care.

Judge Grier's success in life and his rise in the scale of social and political standing was due to his own exemplary habits and force of character. As a young man he had nobody to push him forward, and it was by his own energy, ability and patience that he won his way to success. His active, useful life is ended, but his good deeds and the fine example he set will live on. His numberless of kindness and charity will never be forgotten, and it can be truly said of him that the world is better for his having lived.

The funeral was held at his home, and conducted by Rev. I. Potter Hayes, his pastor. Burial was made in Bloomfield Cemetery.

Pallbearers; Hon, Jas. W. Shull, John W. Tressler, Jas. M. Barnett, Hon. Jas. W. McKee, H.E. Sheibley and Jas. S. Magee.

A lodge of sorrow was held in the Masonic Lodge room prior to the services at the house. The members of Mackinaw Lodge also attended the funeral in a body.