

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 Jefferson Harter, farmer, Millerstown, Perry County, Pa., son of **Joel** and **Elizabeth (Baker) Harter**, was born in Greenwood Township, Perry County, January 22, 1844. His great-great-grandfather, **Frederick Harter**, was of German descent. At a very early day he took up large tracts of land in Pfoutz and Perry Valleys, where he lived after the most primitive style of the pioneers, maintaining himself by hunting and living as best he could until farms could be made out of the wilderness. The name of the great-grandfather of **William J. Harter**, is not known. His grandfather, **Frederick Harter** (2), was born in Perry County, Pa., where he was reared and always continued a farmer. After his marriage he resided in Greenwood Township, where he reared a family. His children are: **Simon**, died at East Salem, Juniata County, had children, a number of whom married and removed west; **Joel**, father of **William J.**; **Catherine**, married **Daniel Frye**, a farmer, who died in Juniata County, Pa., and after his death she married **Jacob Smith** in Perry County, and removed to Juniata County, where she died; **Barbara**, married **David Long**, who died in Greenwood Township, and she died at the home of her daughter at Harrisburg, Pa. After the death of **Frederick Harter** (2), his widow married **Mr. Frye**, and the children born to this union are: **Lydia**, married **Mr. Frye**, who had the same name as herself but was not related; **Susan**, married **Mr. McQuillan**, who had previously been married to her half-sister, the second daughter of **Frederick Harter**.

Joel Harter, father of **William J. Harter**, was born in Cumberland County, now Perry County, in 1794. He learned masonry, and followed that business until the latter part of his life, when he engaged in fanning. In 1841, he bought the farm on which his son, **William J. Harter**, now lives, and in 1852 built the house which his son occupies as his residence. Here he died in 1870, and is interred in St. Michael's Cemetery in Greenwood Township. He married **Elizabeth Baker**, born in America, who died in 1881, aged seventy-six years. **Mr. Harter** was a Democrat, and served in several township offices. He was a member of the Dunkard Church. His children besides **William J.** are: **Caleb North**, a merchant at Covington, Fountain County, Ind., married **Annie Wertz**; **Jesse M.**, married first **Miss Kimports** and resided in Indiana County, Pa., and secondly, **Emma Batchen**, a native of Indiana County; **Absalom B.**, a retired merchant, married **Mary Buckwalter**, and resides in Indiana County, Pa.; **Catherine (Mrs. Harry Long)**, of Greenwood Township; **Mary**, deceased, wife of **Abram O'Brien**, who was a soldier in the late war, and was killed in battle near Richmond, Va.; **Frederick**, died aged thirty-five years; **Lydia**, married **Joseph Hesser**, removed to Iowa, where they both died; **Joel**, died unmarried; **Elizabeth (Mrs. Charles Sly)**, of Andersonville, Pa.; and **Samuel B.**, went to Indiana County, Pa., and thence to Ohio, where he married, removed later to Colorado, and now resides there.

William Jefferson Harter was reared on the farm and attended the schools of his native township. Naturally, he fell into agricultural pursuits, but of late years has worked at carpentry. He remained at home until his marriage, and then settled on the homestead, which he bought at the administrator's sale, and on which he has made many great improvements.

In politics, **Mr. Harter** is active and prominent as a worker in the Democratic ranks, and has served in township offices, as supervisor, tax collector and assessor. In the winter of 1861-62 he was engaged in teaming for the government, hauling supplies for the city of Washington, in which service he often suffered great hardships. **Mr. Harter** was married March 5, 1874, and when on his wedding trip had the misfortune to lose his trunk, and to get in exchange the trunk of an old Irish woman, which upon being opened displayed a lot of dried fruit and some infant's clothing. The children of **Mr. and Mrs. Harter** are: **Pearl Viola (Mrs. Otis B. Ward)**, of Greenwood Township; **Leona May**, at home; and **Jessie Belle**, at home.

www.theperryhistorians.org