

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

Lewis Barnett Kerr, Saville, Perry County, Pa., was born March 19, 1830, in Juniata Township, now Tuscarora, on the farm now owned by the heirs of **McClelland Kerr**. He is the only son of **William** and **Eliza (Postlethwaite) Kerr**. The **Kerr** family is of Scotch-Irish descent. **Mr. Kerr's** great-grandfather, **Matthew Kerr**, was probably born in Ireland; he came to this country accompanied by two brothers, who settled and lived for the remainder of their lives, in western Pennsylvania. **Matthew Kerr** settled in Perry County, within the present limits of Tuscarora Township. His family consisted of two daughters, **Mrs. Carson** and **Mrs. Nelson**, and five sons: **Matthew, Jr.**; **John**; **Alexander**; **William**; and **Robert**. His son, **Alexander Kerr**, was a farmer, and resided on the farm afterwards owned by his son **William**, father of **Lewis B. Kerr**. **Alexander Kerr** and three of his brothers held over 300 acres of land in Raccoon Valley, in Juniata County. On this farm he resided until his death, which occurred in 1852, when he was about sixty years old. His wife, **Ruhamah (McCall) Kerr**, lived to be about eighty. Their children were: **William**; **Robert**, died at Shirleysburg, Huntingdon County, Pa.; **James**, died young; **Alexander, Jr.**, farmer, Raccoon Valley; **John Nelson**, died in Juniata County; **Thompson W.**, died in Raccoon Valley; **Elizabeth (Mrs. Robert Work)**, died in Juniata County; **Margaret (Mrs. Daniel Long)**, died in Tuscarora Township, Perry County; **Letitia**, deceased; **Mary Ann (Mrs. William Frantz)**, died in Saville Township; and **Ruhamah (Mrs. Peter Reisinger)**, died in Tuscarora Township. The eldest son, **William Kerr**, born October 26, 1803, lived and died on a part of the farm on which he was born. He was both farmer and blacksmith. He was a man of active mind, and interested himself in public affairs—an old line Whig. He was first married about 1828, to **Miss Postlethwaite**, who became the mother of **Lewis B. Kerr**. She died July 5, 1841, when scarcely thirty-two years of age; she was born July 9, 1809, in Juniata Township, Perry County. **William Kerr** was again married, in 1843, to **Ann L. Frankenberger**, born in Saville Township in 1822. They had fourteen children, who are all deceased but three daughters: **Elizabeth Ellen (Mrs. James Kreamer)**, of Tuscarora Township; **Elmina Jane (Mrs. John Rouse)**, of Ickesburg, Pa.; and **Lucinda Mahala**. **Mr. Kerr** was a member of the Presbyterian Church.

The youth of **Lewis B. Kerr** was passed on a farm adjoining the one on which he was born. He was educated principally in the common schools, but attended the Airy View Academy, Port Royal, Pa., under the principalship of **Dr. David Wilson**, for one summer, and the academy at Bloomfield, then conducted by **Charles A. Barnett**, afterwards **Judge Barnett**, for three terms. Every dollar paid for his tuition **Mr. Kerr** earned himself. From his twenty-second year until 1880, he was in one way or another engaged in the business of education. For seven years of that time he was county superintendent of Perry County. During three summers he taught at Mt. Dempsey Academy, Landisburg, Pa. It has always been his aim to advance the cause of education as far as might lie in his power, and to promote improvements in methods, etc. He has during his experience seen many changes in the common school system. In 1878, **Mr. Kerr** turned his attention to farming, having purchased a tract of 122 acres. He still, however, taught for two winters after making this purchase; but since that time he has devoted all his energies to the work of tilling the soil, and has been very successful. He has greatly improved his farm, in various ways; most conspicuously, by the erection of fine and convenient buildings. The first

cost of the land was \$6,100. **Mr. Kerr** is a Republican; he was on the school board of his township for three years. He is respected as a worthy and useful citizen.

Lewis Barnett Kerr was married, April 12, 1860, to **Eliza J.**, daughter of **Samuel** and **Elizabeth (Tressler) Wagner**, born in Juniata Township, Perry County, September 10, 1836. Their children are: **Rev. David Wagner Kerr**, born February 6, 1864, now a Reformed pastor in Jefferson County, Pa.; **Annie Gertrude**, born October 1, 1865, teaching in a school in Steelton, Pa.; **Samuel William**, born December 5, 1866, a man of fine mind, a professor of German, Latin and mathematics at Franklin and Marshall College; **Rev. Frank Lewis**, born September 14, 1869, a pastor of the Reformed Church, in Dauphin County, Pa.; **Elizabeth Jane**, born April 7, 1872, married August 21, 1895, to **David E. Rimer**, of Clarion County, Pa., has one child, **Paul Eugene**, born August 18, 1896; and **Elmina Mahala**, born September 25, 1878, a student of Smith College, Northampton, Mass. One son, **Alvin**, died in infancy. **Lewis B. Kerr** is an elder and an active member in the Reformed congregation at Saville.

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