

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

James B. Leiby, merchant, Newport, Perry County, Pa., son of **Samuel** and **Eve (Smith) Leiby**, was born at Newport, May 11, 1836. The great-grandfather of **Mr. Leiby** was a prominent citizen of Berks County, Pa., a man of reputation and influence, and at one time possessed of much property. At the close of the Revolutionary war he sold much of his property and received his pay in Continental scrip, the depreciation of which caused him much loss and left him in comparatively straitened circumstances. **Frederick Leiby**, grandfather of **James B. Leiby**, was a native of Berks County, and resided there for many years, but eventually purchased a farm in Juniata Township, Perry County, Pa., upon which he passed the remainder of his life, dying about 1845, aged between sixty and sixty five years. To develop a farm in the new county demanded great exertion, industry and energy, and sometimes great courage as well; because, as in **Mr. Leiby's** case, the pioneer farmer must sometimes rise at midnight and go out with torches to rescue the sheep from the wolves and other wild animals. **Mr. Leiby** was a devout member of the Reformed Church. His children are: **John**, resided for a time in Perry County and afterwards removed to Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pa., where he died; **Sarah**, married **Jacob Bird**, and resided at Middle Ridge, Perry County, where they both died; **Samuel**, resided in Newport; **William**, lived on a farm three miles west of Newport, Pa., where he died; **Mrs. Weary**, died at Green Park, Perry County, Pa.; **George**, settled after his marriage in the neighborhood of Scranton, and died there; **Jacob**, lived first at Carlisle, and later at Middletown, Dauphin County, Pa., where he died; **James**, a musician, married and went to Lawrence, Kas., where he was engaged in the practice of his profession until his death. **William Leiby**, mentioned above, had three sons who served in the late war; **Benjamin**, a gunner on a gunboat, was captured and died in Libby Prison; **Alexander**, served in the Pioneer Corps, was seriously wounded and died at Middletown, Pa.; **Samuel**, the third son, also rendered valiant service in the war.

Samuel Leiby, father of **James B. Leiby**, was born in 1804 on the old homestead in Centre Township, Perry County, Pa. while he enjoyed very limited educational advantages in his youth, he had bright native talents and secured at least a practical education. He learned plastering and bricklaying and followed these occupations in Perry County. For two seasons he was at Geneva, N. Y., walking thither in the summer and returning in the autumn, there being no public means of transportation in those days. Upon becoming of age he built a hotel in New Bloomfield, and before it was completed, exchanged it for store goods at Newport, where he finally settled and remained in business until about 1850, at which time he sold out and retired to his farm, which included the grist-mill owned now by **Mr. Eshleman**. He cultivated his land, and also conducted the mill and continued farming until his death, in 1867. **Samuel Leiby** married **Eve**, daughter of **John** and **Catherine (Lesh) Smith**. They first met on an occasion when **Miss Smith** rode on horseback from her home to New Bloomfield to attend a class for catechetical instruction; **Mr. Leiby** assisted her from her horse, and from the intercourse there begun their marriage resulted. Their children are: **Catherine**, married first **F. Roller**, second, **Dr. R. S. Brown**, and third, **Dr. J. P. Fishburn**; **Margaret**, widow of **Dr. William Howe**, resides in Newport and has two daughters, **Annie**, married **Rev. W. B. Glanding**, who has a charge at Ashland, and **Catherine**, married **Horace Beard**, resides at Newport; **James B.**; **John**, died an infant; **Joshua S.**; **Samuel**, merchant at Marysville; **Elias B.**, a lumberman at Marysville, Pa., and one child who died in

infancy. **Mrs. Samuel Leiby** died in 1876, aged sixty-five years. **Mr. Leiby** was a Democrat. He was one of the oldest members of the Reformed Church in that region and was highly esteemed for his many virtues. **James B. Leiby** received his education in the public schools and at the Cumberland Valley Institute, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

He entered his father's store at the age of ten years and was employed there until the business was closed out in 1850, when he became a clerk in the general store of Demaree & Frank. Later, he held the same position with **Mr. Demaree**, until the spring of 1861, when he opened a small general store in a large modern structure on the corner of Market and Canal Streets, and conducted it until he sold out to his brother **Joshua**. He remained out of business one year, after which he bought his present property, which he remodeled and refitted. The brothers, not wishing to antagonize each other in business, formed a partnership under the firm name of **J. B. Leiby & Brother**; this partnership continued for several years, after which **James B.** bought his brother's interest, and has since continued alone. Owing to an increase of trade, demanding larger accommodations and new facilities, he has been compelled to construct substantial additions to his store room, and has also erected a large modern brick residence adjoining his store. **Mr. Leiby** was a director in the Peoples' Bank until it was reorganized as the National Bank.

In his political preferences and actions he is a staunch Democrat, but having large business interests which demand his entire time and attention, he has never sought any public or political office.

While a clerk for **Mr. Demaree**, **James S. Leiby** was married, January 22, 1861, to **Catherine A.**, daughter of **Henry L.** and **Mary A. (Ickes) Smith**. Their children are: **Annie (Mrs. J. L. Butz, Jr.)**, of Newport, Pa.; **William H.**, resides at home; **John S.**; **Mary**, died in infancy; and **James Edgar**.

Mr. Leiby has been a liberal contributor to the Reformed Church, in which he is a consistent member and in which he has held the office of elder since 1881. He is also secretary of the congregation, and served for several years as deacon.

www.theperryhistorians.org