

Biographical Annals of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania; Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens and of Many of The Early Settled Families. Illustrated. Chicago: The Genealogical Publishing Co., 1905.

Christian Long. Few citizens of the Cumberland Valley were more widely known than the late **Christian Long**, and few deserve more admiration for those sterling traits of character which enabled him, unaided and alone, to rise from poverty and obscurity to where he dictated measures to legislative bodies, ruled corporations and owned land in a score of States.

Christian Long was born in 1814, on the old **Long** farm, midway between Millerstown and Liverpool, in Pfoutz's Valley, Perry County, Pa., and he died at Shippensburg, Jan. 16, 1892. His parents were **Christian** and **Mary (Gable) Long**, the latter being of German descent. His earliest American ancestor was **Isaac Long**, but prior to him the family history consists principally of traditions more or less contradictory. According to some old records the **Longs** originally came from Baden, Germany; others indicate that they came from Normandy, in northern France, while still others show that they were of Scotch-Irish descent. All three traditions may, in some sense, be correct, and may be reconciled on the theory that the **Longs** were of Scotch origin, and to get away from religious persecution migrated across the English Channel to Normandy, and thence to Baden, and thence to Switzerland, where they espoused the cause of the Protestants, and finally emigrated to America. As the **Longs** were found in the Mennonite communities of Lancaster County prior to the Revolution this explanation seems plausible. The family has furnished a number of names prominent in public affairs. **Henry D. Long** was for many years presiding judge of the Lancaster courts, and presented Lancaster City with a beautiful park bearing his name. He also established an asylum for women at a cost of more than half a million dollars. **Charles D. Long** was for many years a member of the Supreme Court of Michigan, and **Chester I. Long** a representative in Congress from Wichita, Kansas.

In 1754, six miles northeast of Lancaster City, **Isaac Long** erected buildings that became historical through the great meeting held there in 1777, at which the United Brethren Church was organized. These old buildings are still standing and in good repair. They are of stone, and the one in which the great mass meeting was held is a perfect square, 108 by 108 feet in size. The dwelling is also a large structure and built on the old fashioned colonial style. In Berger's "*History of the United Brethren Church*," reference is made to these buildings and the masonry described as being "of a high order." Their original thatched roofs long ago gave way to more modern coverings.

Isaac Long had a son **David** who was educated for the ministry, and in 1811 settled near the Juniata River in the sparsely populated region of Cumberland County, from which Perry County was afterward formed. There he established a church, and acquired a farm that was afterward distributed to his children, the mansion falling to the son **Christian** who married **Mary Gable**.

Christian Long, son of **Christian** and **Mary (Gable) Long**, and the subject of this sketch, passed his boyhood and early manhood at his home in Pfoutz's Valley. Starting out one day with his grain cradle slung over his shoulder, and in his hand his stock of worldly effects bound up in a handkerchief, he made his first break into the world and success. Obtaining employment in a

harvest field on a neighboring farm, he earned a few dollars with which he bought a nice fat calf. This he killed, and, peddling out the meat, made several dollars by the venture. Encouraged by his success he came into the eastern end of the Cumberland Valley, and went into the butchering business in earnest. He bought a horse and wagon and sold to the farmers, delivering to them fresh meat three and four times a week. About this time he met at a farmhouse a stranger who was selling a mantel clock, which was cheaply gotten up, but which kept good time. After some dickering with the stranger he accepted a proposition to sell clocks on commission. The clock sold readily, and he found the business so profitable that he promptly gave up butchering and devoted himself exclusively to the selling of clocks. In this new business of selling clocks he became acquainted with many prominent citizens who owned of the original stock of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, which had depreciated so heavily that they were willing to part with it at a mere nominal figure. Being confident that the Cumberland Valley railroad was a valuable property, and that its stock was bound to recover, he took it in exchange for clocks, allowing for it from ten to fifteen cents on the dollar, and managing to receive in addition as much cash as the clocks cost him. In this way he quietly accumulated enough stock to entitle him to a share in the management of the road, and to enable him to dictate to its directors and other officials. He never sold any of his holdings, and the subsequent rise in the value of the stock made him a very rich man. This stock transaction demonstrated that he possessed natural business sagacity and foresight of a high order. It gave him reputation and influence, and when the Pennsylvania Railroad Company began to reach out for alliances with other corporations they sought **Mr. Long's** services, and it was he who secured the right of way for the Philadelphia & Erie railroad for a large part of the distance between Harrisburg and Erie. He was a stockholder in the Cumberland Valley, in the Pennsylvania and in the Northern Central railroads; and through the sale of his interest in the Somerset railroad, became a bondholder in the Baltimore & Ohio. Being always faithful to the corporations in which he held stock he was entrusted with some of their most important business, and he successfully negotiated and adjusted matters, which ordinarily would have been entrusted only to astute and experienced corporation lawyers.

In many ways he was eccentric, a permissible condition with those who are able to control great interests and one of his eccentricities was his pride in being able to keep intact the confidences reposed in him. One of the incidents related of him was, that to perfect some secret arrangements he, upon one occasion, traveled thousands of miles without once stopping at a hotel, where suspicious lawyers would have had opportunities to interrogate him, and all the food he needed upon the entire trip he carried in his pocket. Upon another occasion, when past three score years old, he made a trip from Harrisburg to Parker's Landing to settle a claim against the Allegheny Valley railroad. On arriving at Parker's Landing he learned that the party who held the claim lived at a place nine miles from the station, which he reached through the mud, made a settlement of a twenty-five thousand dollar claim for eight hundred dollars, secured a release and in less than twenty-four hours was on his way home. His life was full of incidents illustrating his close calculation and wonderful business foresight. He bought land, and it turned out to be valuable oil fields; he invested in small enterprises and they developed into great corporations. Business was his occupation and delight, but occasionally he interested himself in politics sufficiently to demonstrate that if he chose he could likewise be a potent factor in that turbulent field.

As is not always the case **Mr. Long** had an entirely different side to his character. He was devoted to the welfare of his family, and he loved his modest home, which with its familiar surroundings was most comfortable to him, although his great wealth would have permitted much display had he cared for ostentation. He made warm friends and kept them, and by his closest kindred was simply adored.

1837 **Mr. Long** married **Hannah Ellen Atkinson**, a native of York County, who survived him, but passed away Oct. 28, 1895. One son, **Ira**, died in the West, July 6, 1881, but the following of his children still survive: **Mrs. Anna E. Geiger** and **Mrs. Ella M. Barner**, of Shippensburg; **Mrs. Laura R. Loh**, of Harrisburg; **Mrs. Fannie A. Williams**, of Los Angeles, Cal., and **Christian, Jr.**, of Shippensburg. Until the very last **Mr. Long** retained the bodily vigor and mental strength of one of but half his years, and had not a neglected cold prostrated him, and finally closed his activities, it is quite possible that he would have undertaken other and still larger enterprises and probably have carried them to successful completion. His associates in business were men prominent in great affairs, who were not slow to testify to the high esteem in which they held him. For some years his son-in-law, **John L. Barner**, a prominent citizen of Shippensburg, had been associated with **Mr. Long** in the management of his multitudinous interests.

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