

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

Henry Clay Shearer, New Bloomfield, Perry County, Pa., was born July 17, 1843, in Tyrone Township, Perry County, son of the late **Jacob** and **Amelia (McGowan) Shearer**. His paternal grandparents were natives of Frederick City, Md., the grandfather being a farmer of that vicinity. The grandparents on the maternal side were of Cumberland County, Pa.; **Mr. McGowan** also a farmer, and for some years an iron master. **Jacob Shearer** was born at Frederick City, Md.; he learned the business of tanning, and was occupied with it until 1849. The gold discoveries in California now lured thousands all over the country to the Pacific shore, and **Mr. Shearer**, having by this time become a resident of Perry County, set out with a number of other gentlemen of that county for the land of gold.

Establishing himself at Parks Bar, in Yuba County, he remained there nearly eight years, mining and keeping store. During two years of that time, he represented Yuba County in the California Legislature. Returning in 1857 to Perry County, he settled down to farming for a few years, then superintended a steam tannery for three years, and after a few more years passed in farming, retired to enjoy the repose that ought to crown an active and diligent life. **Jacob Shearer** was twice married. His first wife was **Amelia**, daughter of **David McGowan**; their children were: **Alverda**; **Harvey**; **Susan E.**; **Emily J.**; **George L.**; and **Henry Clay**, now the only survivor of the family. The mother died December 25, 1859, at the age of fifty three. **Mr. Shearer** was again married to **Sarah A. Stockton**, daughter of **John Black**. She, too, died in 1868; and **Mr. Shearer** departed this life June 10, 1872, aged seventy years. Both were members of the Presbyterian Church.

The education of **Henry C. Shearer** was begun in the common schools and finished, when he was twenty-three years of age, at the Bloomfield Academy. In the interval of the school term, **Mr. Shearer** assisted his father in the cultivation of his farm. He enlisted for the defense of the country against rebellion, August 11, 1862, in Company G, One Hundred and Thirty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers, for a term of nine months. In the battle at Fredericksburg, Va., December 13, 1862, he received a gun-shot wound, by which he was disabled for three months; he was mustered out at the close of his time of enlistment, May 26, 1863. On February 25, 1864, Mr. Shearer re-enlisted, in Company D, One Hundred and Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania Volunteers, as a Veteran, and served until the close of the war. He took part in the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Cold Harbor, Petersburg from June 18 to 22, and on July 30, 1864; he was also in the fight at Weldon Railroad, August 18 to 21, and under fire most of the time. At the close of this time of perilous and gallant service, he was mustered out as a veteran, August 3, 1865. Having partially learned tanning before his enlistment, **Mr. Shearer**, on his return home, assisted in his father's tannery for a year. He then spent nearly two years in study at the Bloomfield Academy, afterwards working again at the tanning business for about three years, in different places. At the end of that time, his father having died, he began farming the homestead on his own account, and continued eleven years in that employment. In 1883, he was elected to the office of sheriff of Perry County on the Republican ticket, and entered upon the duties of the office on the first Monday in January, 1884. For three years, he filled that important and responsible office with judicial impartiality, and when his term had expired, he

took a year of retirement and leisure. In 1888, **Mr. Shearer** was appointed deputy register and recorder of Perry County, and served until his appointment as postmaster at New Bloomfield, in 1889. He still holds that office. Mr. Shearer was actively interested in the construction of the Perry County Railroad, of which he is a director, and has always been a large stockholder. He is prominent and influential in Sergeant John Jones Post, No. 448, G. A. R. department of Pennsylvania, and has for the past six years acted in the capacity of post commander. For many years he has belonged to the Masonic fraternity.

Henry Clay Shearer was first married in March, 1872, to **Julia C**, daughter of **William** and **Rebecca Powers**; **two** of their children died in infancy, and one, **Edward**, at the age of eight years and a half. Those surviving are: **Mary**; and **Julia**. **Mrs. Julia C. Shearer** died in July, 1884, aged thirty-six years. The second marriage of **Mr. Shearer** was to **Margaret**, daughter of **David** and **Rebecca Eaton**, and widow of **Robert I. Owen**, in July, 1884. Their children are: **Henry**; **Anna Belle**; **James**; and **George Lewis**. **Mr. Shearer** and his family are members of the Presbyterian Church.