

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 Swartz, Walnut, Juniata County, Pa., was born near Buffalo Mills, Perry County, Pa., October 28, 1858, son of **David L.** and **Sarah A. (Rice) Swartz**. The **Swartz family** had its origin in Switzerland, from which country the great-grandfather of **William Swartz** came to America. **Jonathan Swartz**, son of this immigrant, and grandfather of **William**, was born in Pennsylvania. He farmed for some time in Adams County, and afterwards upon a large tract of land in Perry County, on the Buffalo Creek, which he purchased, and which is still known as the **Swartz** homestead. His son, **George Swartz**, afterward purchased it of his father for \$7,000, and sold it later to **William Bowers** for \$18,000. After selling his farm, **Jonathan Swartz** lived a retired life in Ickesburg, Perry County. He was married to **Miss Julius**, of Adams County. They had the following children: **John**, of Perry County; **George**, who died in Bloomfield, Perry County; **David L.**; **Jonathan L.**, of Spruce Hill Township; **Frederick William**, died of disease contracted while in the United States service during the war of the Rebellion; **Peter A.**, tanner, Ickesburg, Pa.; **Henry**, a soldier in the late war, now residing in Altoona; **B. Franklin**, of Beale Township, also a soldier in the late war; **Reuben**, a soldier in the war, now residing in Virginia and **Elizabeth (Mrs. John McKinley)**, of Iowa, deceased. The family as will be observed, enjoyed the honorable distinction of sending four sons into the perilous service of the country in her time of need. **Jonathan Swartz**, the father of this family, was a large man, weighing over two hundred and thirty pounds. The German tongue was as familiar to him as the English. Both he and his wife were excellent singers, especially of German words and music. **Mr. Swartz** was for many years an elder in the German Reformed Church and also did his congregation efficient service in the choir. He took a deep interest in all church business, and promoted the organization of the Reformed congregation at Buffalo. He was a Democrat, and very active in politics; he was honored with election to various township offices. **Mr. and Mrs. Swartz** both died in Perry County.

Their son, **David L. Swartz**, was born in Adams County. He attended the common schools, and was educated in the German and English languages. He has been all his life a farmer. He worked on the homestead with his father until he was twenty-seven years old, and then rented a farm for himself near Ickesburg. Here he remained until 1869, when he bought a farm of 110 acres in Spruce Hill Township, a part of the **Milliken** estate. On this farm he made many improvements, building or remodeling the dwelling and barn, planting a five-acre peach and apple orchard, purchasing superior live stock, and in many other ways adding to the value of his homestead. Since 1885, he has lived a life of ease and retirement with his son. **Jonathan R. Swartz** still cultivates the farm owned by his father. **David L. Swartz** was married at Buffalo Mills to **Sarah A.**, daughter of **Conrad Rice**, a farmer and millwright of that place. Their children are: **Amanda J. (Mrs. William Bryner)**, of Tuscarora Township; **Jonathan Rice**, on the homestead farm; **Frederick William**; **Harry A.**, a stockman of Beale Township; **John J.**, farmer of Edgar County, Ill.; **Mahala E. (Mrs. A. M. Bryner)**, of Spruce Hill Township; **Susanna (Mrs. George Hutching)**, of Tuscarora Township; **George R.**, dealer in stock; **David C.**, of Edgar County, Ill; and **Catherine (Mrs. William Harris)**, whose husband is a miller. **Mrs. Sarah A. Swartz** dying in 1876, **Mr. Swartz** married **Kate Sansaman**, of Perry County, who resides with her husband on **William Swartz's** farm. **David L. Swartz** has reached his

sixty-ninth year, and is, as he has always been, noted for his intelligence and sound judgment. He is fond of reading, and well versed in the Scriptures. During the first year of his residence in Juniata County, he was elected elder in the Lutheran Church, and has held that responsible office for more than half his life. He is a Democrat, and was elected on the ticket of his party as overseer of the poor.

William Swartz attended the common schools of Juniata County; but they were only in session during three months of the year, and the nearest school house was two miles from his home. Though deprived of the privilege of regular attendance at school, he educated himself, and despite his limited advantages, is a man of no mean attainments. He remained at home until he was fourteen years old, and then hired out among the farmers, receiving as his wages eight dollars per month. For six years he continued to be employed at farm labor, his wages being at length increased to fifteen dollars per month. Until he was of age, he gave all his earnings to his father, reserving nothing for himself. For three years after reaching his majority, he cultivated his uncle **Jacob Wishcamp's** farm, at the same time dealing in stock to a limited extent. He then leased the **Snyder** farm, in Beale Township, for three years; there he dealt largely in stock, and also sold farm implements, in order to save money for the purchase of the farm; this design he accomplished in a short time. The farm which he bought contained 184 acres; on this tract he made substantial improvements, erecting a house at a cost of \$2,500, building outhouses, planting an orchard, etc. **Mr. Swartz** is still in the stock business, in which he has been very successful, being the largest shipper of cattle, sheep, hogs and horses in the county. He procures some of the cattle personally from the west. He is also a holder of bank stock in Port Royal and Mifflintown, and is a director of the Port Royal bank. **William Swartz** was elected associate judge of Juniata County in 1896, on the Democratic ticket. His popularity in the county is indicated by the fact that he was elected by a large majority, receiving in addition to the support of his own party, a number of Republican votes.

In January, 1879, at the age of twenty, **William Swartz** was married, in Spruce Hill Township, Juniata County, to **Mary E.**, daughter of **John and Sarah (Peck) Gingrich**, who is about his own age. **John Gingrich** was a native of Lancaster County and a cattle dealer of Spruce Hill Township; he died in February, 1890; his widow still resides on the homestead. The children of **Mr. and Mrs. Swartz** are: **Luther D.**; **Olive M.**; **Pearl S.**; **W. Delbert**; these four are attending school; **J. Milton** died at the age of three years; **John R.**; and **Mary M.** **Mr. Swartz** is a faithful member of the Lutheran Church, of which he has been a deacon; he is active in the Sunday school, has been superintendent and teacher.

The name of **Swartz** is widely known throughout the Juniata Valley, and wherever known is held in honor. An upright and prosperous business man, an impartial judge, and a man exemplary in every relation of life, **William Swartz** is esteemed by all who know him. Much of his success is due to his own diligence and enterprise; but much also to the faithful and constant aid of his wife, who from an early age has fought life's battles with him, sharing alike his privations, his labors and his triumphs.