

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

Charles A. Widle, Loysville, Perry County, Pa., was born in Butler County, Pa., May 15, 1860. His early youth was raised on a farm, and his elementary education received in the common schools, after which through his own effort he became a student of Grove City College. His curriculum finished, he taught school for eight years, and during the same years took a course of instructions at Duff's Commercial College, Pittsburg, Pa. In 1888, **Mr. Widle** was chosen superintendent of the boys' department in the Soldiers' Orphans' School at McAlisterville, Pa. After serving there for one year, he was transferred to the same position in the Chester Springs School, Chester County, Pa. When that institution was closed, he was transferred to the school at Harford, Susquehanna County, Pa., with the same duties; and after serving there for about a year, he was appointed, in July, 1890, to his present position, serving for the first year as superintendent of the boys' department only, and on the retirement of the general superintendent in 1891, succeeded to his vacated office, that of general superintendent of the Tressler Orphans' Home.

This noble institution, an outgrowth of the Christian benevolence of the Lutherans of the General Synod of the United States, occupies the building originally erected and owned by Col. **John Tressler**, of blessed memory, as a home for the Loysville Academy. Here, in 1865, a primary school for soldiers' orphans was founded by his son, the late Rev. Prof. **David L. Tressler**. As first organized, the institution was successively under the care of **Mr. William Minnich**, **Mr. G. V. Tressler**, and **Rev. J. Kistler**. In 1866, after examination of the property by **Rev. Philip Willard** and **Daniel Eppley**, Esq., it was decided to secure it as a home for orphans of the Lutheran Church. In this enterprise, the Synods of East, West and Central Pennsylvania and Allegheny became the charter Synods; many besides these are now interested in its support and represented in its management. The delegates of the above-named Synods, except West Pennsylvania, organized and adopted a constitution at Loysville, in October, 1867; and an agreement was entered into on February 20, 1868, for the purchase of the academy building, at the sum of \$5,000 for the house and its five-acre campus, **David L. Tressler**, then an attorney-at-law in New Bloomfield, giving his share of inheritance in the academy, \$500, as his subscription towards the purchase. Twenty-five acres were added to the land pertaining to the academy building, at a cost of \$90 per acre; and thirteen acres more have since been purchased. The amount necessary for the original purchase and for the equipment of the building for its destined use was apportioned by the members of the board upon the four Synods which they represented; and **Rev. Mr. Willard**, who was appointed by them as the first superintendent, immediately started out to obtain subscriptions. The school was leased for a year to **Mr. P. Bosserman**, of Newport, Pa.; and when, on June 1, 1869, **Mr. Willard** assumed the duties of the superintendency, he had received subscriptions to the amount of about \$4,000. His efforts in behalf of the Home were not relaxed until the entire indebtedness was paid. The building has since been enlarged, so that it has accommodations for 225 children. Its situation is charming and salubrious; it enjoys an abundant supply of pure water, from a spring on the property; has a very thriving orchard and a farm, small, but fertile and well cultivated. The Tressler Orphans' Home has been adjudged by the State inspectors as one of the finest, most complete and best equipped institutions of its kind in the country. Care is exercised to make it really a home for its

wards; a place where not only their physical needs are supplied, but where provision is at hand for the harmonious development of every part of their nature. To religious training and intellectual culture is added the formation of habits of industry, with such instructions in handicrafts suited to their age, strength and varied capacities as tend to prepare them for the practical duties of life. The number of children now inmates of the Home is one hundred and fifty. Its officers are: **Rev. W. H. Dunbar**, D. D., president, 667 W. Franklin Street, Baltimore, Md.; **Rev. A. S. Hartman**, D. D., secretary, 1914 N. Carrollton Avenue, Baltimore, Md.; and **J. H. Wolf**, Esq., treasurer, Carlisle, Pa.

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