

Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania, Volume 1, J. M. Runk and Company, Publishers 1897



William H. Wilson, Barree Forge, Huntingdon County, Pa., was born June 12, 1846, in Wheatfield Township, Perry County, Pa., son of **Isaac** and **Cillinda (Gladden) Wilson**. **Frederick K. Wilson**, his grandfather, was by descent Scotch, but by birth a Virginian, a native of the far-famed Shenandoah Valley, where he was a planter, and owned many slaves. His son, **Isaac Wilson**, was born in Sharpsburg, Md., where his youth was passed. For many years he was an iron moulder; he was employed by the original Duncannon Iron Company in that capacity, and during the time of his engagement with them, he bought the farm in Wheatfield Township, Perry County, to which he afterwards removed, and where he died about 1849. The children of **Mr.** and **Mrs. Isaac Wilson** are: **Robert**, who served in the Ninth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and died of fever in a hospital at Springfield, Tenn., where he is buried; **Moses G.**, married, employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad at Cove Station, Pa.; **Harriet B. (Mrs. William Keyser)**, Logansport, Ind.; **William H.**; **Joseph W.**, at home with his mother; **Jennie**,

deceased, wife of **M. J. Moore**; **George D.**, married, and resides in Duncannon, Pa.

Mr. Isaac Wilson belonged to the Whig Party. He was a devoted member of the Methodist Church. His wife, **Mrs. Cillinda Wilson**, was a daughter of **Joshua** and **Mary (Clark) Gladden**, and was born January 1, 1818, near Halifax, in Dauphin County, Pa. Her paternal grandfather was one of the earliest settlers of Clarks Valley, Dauphin County. **Mrs. Wilson** came with her parents to Perry County in 1835, and was married to **Isaac Wilson** in 1837. She was a consistent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for over sixty years. She was always ready with the hand of charity and words of consolation for those who were sick or in distress. She died at Duncannon, Pa., February 25, 1897, at the venerable age of seventy-nine years, one month and twenty-four days; her death is mourned not only by her family, but by all who appreciated her true Christian character.

William H. Wilson attended the common schools of his native township and of Duncannon until he was fourteen years old. He enlisted during the Rebellion in Company A, Twelfth Pennsylvania Cavalry, as a bugler, but the regiment having its full complement of buglers, he was furnished with full cavalry equipment, much to his satisfaction, as he referred active service to idleness. He was still no more than a boy, and enlisted in opposition to his mother's directly expressed wish, running away from home and going to Harrisburg, when he failed to find a recruiting officer near at hand. During his term of enlistment, which was six months, he took

part in the second battle of Fredericksburg and the first at Winchester, Va. He was also accidentally engaged in the battle of Gettysburg. His command lying at that time at Pine Grove, Pa., he was detailed as dispatch bearer, and sent to Gettysburg. By the time he was within the Union lines, the fight had begun, and he could not return. He fell in with the Fifth West Virginia Cavalry, and, being slightly acquainted with them, he went through one day of the great battle with them. On the evening of the same day he returned to his command at Pine Grove. At the expiration of the six months **Mr. Wilson** re-enlisted in Company A, an independent regiment formed by Captain Sanno, who when the war broke out was a drill master at Carlisle, Pa. The young cavalryman was continually on duty, scouting and skirmishing through Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina. He was in Virginia when the news was received of the burning of Chambersburg, Pa. His command was ordered to intercept the rebel leader, McCausland, who fired that town; they accordingly went at a breakneck pace to Chambersburg, reaching the place without a single halt. Their approach put the Confederate troops to flight. They found the people in great terror and consternation. The day—July 30—was very hot, and its sultriness was greatly aggravated by the heat from the burning buildings; after the hard and exhausting ride, it was almost unendurable. But the gallant regiment soon set out again in pursuit of the raiders, whom they overtook at Hancock, Md., and drove them from their position; following them up, they gave them a severe drubbing at Romney, W. Va.

After receiving his discharge at the close of the war, **Mr. Wilson** went home, and in a short time entered the employ of the Duncannon Iron Company, as apprentice to the trade of nailer. After serving an apprenticeship of three years, he remained with the company two years longer as journeyman, and then worked at his trade in Pittsburg, Pa., for one year, in Bellaire, Ohio, for eighteen months, and at Wheeling, W. Va., for eighteen months. Returning to Duncannon, he worked for his former employers until the spring of 1871, and was then for two years at Scranton, Pa., in the employ of the Hillside Coal Company. During this time, he was for three months attached to the engineer corps, and for the remainder of the time acted as superintendent of the Forest City collieries. He assisted in laying out the town of Forest City, in erecting the first twelve houses built there, and in developing mines.

In the spring of 1873, **Mr. Wilson** went to Des Moines, Ia., and was engaged until 1876 with the Great Western Stock and Produce Company. He then came back to Pennsylvania, and was offered his former position as foreman for the coal company, but declined the offer, and once more entered the employ of the Duncannon Iron Company as nailer. In this position he remained until 1889, when he became freight agent for the Pennsylvania Railroad company at Duncannon. In October, 1891, he entered upon his present position as passenger, express and freight agent for the same company at Barree. His diligence and faithfulness in the discharge of his official duties are well known to the company, and have won for him esteem and confidence. One of **Mr. Wilson's** best known characteristics is his untiring industry. He is a staunch Republican, decided in his opinions on all important principles, but liberal as to minor matters. At Duncannon, he served for three years in the borough council.