

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

Joseph A. Wright, farmer and stockman, Newport, Perry County, Pa., son of **William** and **Rebecca H. (Nipple) Wright**, was born in Howe Township, Perry County, April 9, 1843. His grandfather, **Charles Wright**, was born in Germantown, Philadelphia County, Pa., November 17, 1781, his father having died three months previous to his birth. He was reared in Greenwood Township, his mother having removed thither after her marriage to **David Mitchell**, an Irishman.

Charles Wright married **Deborah Van Camp**, settled in Greenwood Township, and spent his life in farming; he died in Millerstown, Pa., March 27, 1868, aged eighty-six years, four months and ten days. His son, **William Wright**, was born in Greenwood Township, Perry County, Pa., June 12, 1809. He grew up on the farm, and also learned shoemaking, which, however, he did not follow. About 1829, he married **Rebecca H. Nipple**, and shortly afterwards settled on a farm in Howe Township, where the remainder of his life was spent. In 1855, he bought a farm on the river and there he died, June 7, 1882, aged seventy two years, eleven months and twenty-five days. He was active in politics, as a decided Democrat. In 1863, he was elected county commissioner, and served until 1866. He also served in every township office, and for thirty-five years was justice of the peace, in which office his administration was so wise and just that he enjoyed the unusual distinction of never having a case appealed from his docket. In youth he joined the Presbyterian Church, and held to the faith and worship of that denomination during life, an honored communicant in the church at Millerstown. No man in the community was better known than he, and none more highly esteemed. His upright character and blameless life were conceded by all who knew him, and his record for fair dealing and cordial bearing was without exception. His friends were a host, and his death was universally lamented. His wife died August 15, 1861. She was at one time a communicant in the Presbyterian Church. In all relations of life she was exemplary, and sustained the character of a devout Christian. Both are interred in Wright's Cemetery, in Perry Valley. Their children are: **Amos**, of Howe Township; **Mary Jane (Mrs. Lease)**, Greenwood Township; **Deborah A. (Mrs. Daniel Hilbert)**, Tuscarora Township, Perry County; **John L.**, of Howe Township; **William W.**, was accidentally killed by the cars on the railroad crossing in Newport, Pa., January 3, 1893; **Joseph A.**; **Cyrus K.**, died in Howe Township; **George T.**, died at Harrisburg, Pa.; and **Wesley N.**, who has been absent about twenty-five years, and when last heard from was at Perry, Oklahoma. In 1862, **Mr. Wright** was united in his second marriage to **Mary Jane Asper**, who still survives. Their children are: **Elmira M. (Mrs. Perry Grubb)**, of Howe Township; and one **daughter**, died in infancy.

Until he was seventeen years of age, **Joseph A. Wright** was under instruction in the common schools, attending three months each year at first, and in later years, four months. Before the war, he served a two years' apprenticeship at carpentry. He enlisted, September 23, 1861, at Harrisburg, Pa., in Company H, Forty-seventh Pennsylvania Volunteers. This regiment was at once ordered to the front, and was among the first to cross the Potomac and invade Virginia. It was here assigned to picket duty, and also employed in building fortifications; it was at the same time subjected to severe military training, which sometimes occupied as much as eight hours per day. About January 27, 1862, the regiment was transferred to the Department of the Gulf, and stationed at Key West, Fla., and for six months was engaged in garrison duty; the next six months were spent in active military duties at Port Royal, S. C, during which time several

expeditions were sent up the Savannah River. In the first of these, the rebels were met at Pocotalgo, by six hundred of the Forty-seventh, and two companies of the Sixth Connecticut, in an engagement in which the loss fell heavily upon Company H. From Port Royal, the regiment was returned to Key West and Fort Jefferson, where it remained for fourteen months, doing garrison duty, after which it was ordered to New Orleans and went thence under General Banks on a cotton expedition up Red river. On April 8, 1864, in an engagement with the rebels at Sabine Cross Roads, the Forty-seventh regiment lost one hundred men, and was compelled that night to fall back to Pleasant Hill, and take a new position, where on the following day another fierce fight occurred, and large losses were sustained. Another backward move was then made, to Grande Core, thence to Alexandria, and thence to Morganza on the Mississippi River, where they went into camp and remained until July 1. The regiment was then ordered to New Orleans, and thence to Washington, D. C, which they reached July 14, 1864. Having remained there one night, the regiment was next sent to Snicker's Gap, on the Shenandoah River, in the department under the command of General Wright, whom General Grant shortly afterward removed, placing General Sheridan in command of the department. From Snicker's Gap, the regiment fell back to Washington, moving by way of Leesburg and Chain Bridge, and from Washington advanced by way of Frederick City to Harper's Ferry, and thence proceeded with General Sheridan up the Shenandoah Valley. They were in the battle at Cedar Creek, and **Mr. Wright** here witnessed the famous ride of Sheridan down from Winchester. After this battle, the regiment gradually advanced up the Valley, but was not again engaged in any battle; in the winter of 1864-65, it was again ordered to Savannah, Ga. **Mr. Wright's** term of service having expired, he was ordered to Harrisburg, Pa., where he was honorably discharged, March 17, 1865. After reaching home, **Mr. Wright** resumed his unfinished apprenticeship and completed it in one year, after which he worked at his trade as a journeyman until July, 1880, and then turned his attention to farming. In the spring of 1875, he bought his present place of sixty acres, on which he erected a house and other buildings.

Mr. Wright is past commander of Lieut. Arnold Lobaugh Post, No. 297, G. A. R., at Newport, Pa. He is an extensive reader, and is a strong advocate of the free coinage of silver; he has always been strongly Democratic in his political views. He was elected to the office of justice of the peace, but he did not take up his commission. He has served three years as school director; as judge of elections, one term; and as supervisor, one term; he was re-elected judge of elections for 1897.

Joseph A. Wright was married, March 19, 1867, to **Isabella**, daughter of **George Shull**, of Howe Township. She died April 15, 1889, aged thirty-nine years, three months and twenty-five days, and her remains are buried in the cemetery at Newport. She was a devoted Christian, and left a memory fragrant with good deeds and loving service. Their children are: **George F.**; **William H.**; **James C.**; **Wesley N.**; and **Emory E.**; all at home; and one **daughter**, who died in infancy. In his second marriage, **Mr. Wright** was united, November 24, 1892, to **Elizabeth Bohner**, widow of **Peter Chubb**, born in Perry County. In his religious views **Mr. Wright** is ardently nonsectarian, believing that denomination strife and differences are an injury to the cause of humanity, for which reason he has never united with any church, but in heart and life is a true Christian.