

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

Isaac Zellers, Liverpool, Perry County, Pa., was born March 9, 1836, in Susquehanna Township, Juniata County, Pa., son of **Michael** and **Mary (Huffer) Zellers**. His great-great-grandfather left England in 1747, bringing his wife and children, three girls and five boys, to America on the ship "Howard." After a voyage of seven weeks and two days, during which the vessel contended for two days and a night with a heavy storm, they landed September 7, and for three months remained in Philadelphia. They then went to Reading, Pa., where **George Zellers** bought of **Jacob Hoffer** 300 acres of land for £400. He died in Reading. His son, **John Zellers**, was born in Lancaster, England, July 8, 1742, and was therefore a child of five when the family emigrated from the home land. His boyhood and youth were passed in Reading, and there, on June 8, 1776, he married **Mary Fisher**. Before his marriage, he had worked in Juniata County, then included in Cumberland, for two years. He bought in that county about 900 acres of land, which he divided into eight farms. Leaving his wife after but a few months of wedded life, to fight in the cause of his adopted country, he enlisted in the Continental Army, October 9, 1776. Four of his brothers were also serving under General Washington. His brother, **Tobias**, was taken prisoner, and shot. **Jonas** was captured, and died of starvation on board of a prison ship. After nine months in the service, **John Zellers** obtained a month's leave of absence, to see his first-born child, and to attend the bedside of his wife, who was very ill. At the close of his furlough he returned to the army; but obtaining another month's leave at a later time, she died during his visit. He served until the end of the war, taking part in seven battles and nine skirmishes. Sometime after his return to his home, he married **Maria Fisher**, a cousin of his first wife. His eldest son, the child of his first wife, was **John**, who resided in Sugar Valley, Centre County, Pa., where he died; the issue of the second marriage were: **Henry**, of Snyder County, Pa.; **Margaret**, married **John Wilt**, inherited part of the homestead; **Mary**, married **John Hoopes**, resided on a part of the homestead in Juniata County; **Benjamin**, of Snyder County; **George**, resided in the State of New York; **Mary Magdalena**, married **George Wilt**, resided in Snyder County; **Tobias**, resided on the old homestead; **Susan**, married **Solomon Karstetter**, lived in Snyder County; and **Derickson**, died at the age of fourteen. One child died in infancy. **John Zellers** died December 17, 1808; his wife preceded him in death by two years.

Benjamin Zellers, grandfather of **Isaac**, who was born June 14, 1781, on the homestead in Juniata County, inherited a part of that property, and lived and died where he had first seen the light. He married **Barbara Shetterley**, born in 1783. Their children are: **Abraham**, born March 8, 1812, resides at Silver Lake, Mich.; **Frances (Mrs. Peter Goodling)**, born April 14, 1814, lived and died in Juniata County; **Michael**, born March 10, 1816; **Barbara**, widow of **William Portzline**, born May 9, 1818, resides in Snyder County; **Susan (Mrs. Jacob Brooker)**, born December 6, 1821, lived and died in Juniata County; and **Rachel**, born May 11, 1826, married, and removed to Missouri, where she died. **Benjamin Zellers** died May 2, 1840; his wife survived him until January 6, 1847. They were members of the Lutheran church. Their third child, **Michael**, learned farming in his boyhood, and made it his vocation throughout life. After his marriage, he bought over 200 acres in Susquehanna Township, Juniata County, but he met with reverses, and lost all his possessions. His children by his first wife, **Mary (Huffer) Zellers**, are: **Isaac**; **Jacob**, born July 10, 1838, was a soldier in the late war, resides in Juniata County;

Catherine (Mrs. Jacob Tressler), born October 20, 1840, lives in Juniata County; **Johanna (Mrs. Benjamin Franz)**, born July 4, 1844, resides in Perry Township, Snyder County; and **Rachel (Mrs. Daniel Brown)**, of Juniata County born April 7, 1847. His first wife died July 13, 1851. **Mr. Zellers**, on February 14, 1853, married **Eve Kreps**. Their children are: **Mary (Mrs. Simon Fugleman)**, born December 14, 1853, resided in Juniata County, where she died; **Sarah**, born March 14, 1855, died at the age of fifteen; and **Michael, Jr.**, born March 14, 1859, died aged twenty-seven. **Mr. Zellers** died September 12, 1873, aged fifty nine years.

At the age of nine years, **Isaac Zellers** went to live with his maternal grandfather, **Jacob Hoffer**, of Union, now Snyder County. He remained there three years, but had not begun to go to school. He then lived three years with **Michael Shetterley**, in Susquehanna Township, Juniata County, and attended school thirty-six and one-half days. He was kept at work on the farm and in the saw-mill. His next place of abode was the house of **Jacob Weiser**, for whom he worked five years, at farming, and on the canal. In 1856, he undertook to learn carpentry with **Daniel Moyer**, of Snyder County, and was under his instructions for a year; but **Mr. Moyer** giving him the business, in order to devote his attention to farming, there was an interval when **Mr. Zellers** was unemployed, and which he very wisely made use of to attend school. After this he worked one year with **Jacob Showers**, millwright, of Snyder County; then was employed for two years and a half by **John C. Burns**, of Juniata County; but during most of the time, **Mr. Zellers'** work lay in Seneca County, N. Y. By this time, his diligence and economy had enabled him to save about \$1,000; and in 1862, he began business on his own account in Juniata and Snyder counties, as a contractor for the construction of saw-mills, grist-mills, houses and barns. Since that time, he has built twenty-eight barns and as many dwellings. During the winter of 1863-64, **Mr. Zellers** was at Washington, D. C, for John E. Smith, who was employed by the United States Government. This engagement lasted eleven months; but **Mr. Zellers** was at the end of that time obliged to go home on account of illness. After his recovery, he worked for the United States Government in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Pennsylvania and Ohio, on various structures, but principally on repairing bridges. On March 29, 1858, he bought a part of the place on which he now lives, and has added to the original tract by successive purchases. In 1859, he bought the Samuel Rhodes tract; in 1863, the Dillman tract, and in 1864, part of the Lyter tract, making in all 300 acres. In 1865, he bought the Isaiah Seaman tract, in Juniata County. In 1874, **Mr. Zellers** lost all of his possessions by bailing officers. It was in 1862 that he and his wife began housekeeping on the farm which is still their home. **Mr. Zellers** began at an early age to vote with the Democratic Party, and has never changed his mind or his custom. He has never been prevailed upon to accept any public office. He is still a contractor, as well as a farmer.

Isaac Zellers was married in 1861 to **Sarah Sechrist**, a native of Snyder County. Their children are: **Frederick**, married **Susan Fahnstock**, resides in Liverpool township; **Amelia**; **Henry**, married **Miss McMichael**, resides in Liverpool Township; **Isaac**, of Dauphin County; **John**; **Elizabeth (Mrs. James Feister)**, of Liverpool Township; **William**; and **Jacob**. **Mr. Zellers** is a member of the Dunkard Church. He owns and prizes as a relic, the Bible that belonged to his great grandfather, printed in England in 1742.