

Biographical Sketches of Township Pioneers

(Information contributed by John Oester.)

Matthias Suhre was born in Germany, in 1803; came to America in 1834, and settled Fossilville, Bedford County. In 1851 he purchased four hundred and forty-six acres of land in Allegheny Township, where he still resides. Mr. Suhre is a miller by trade. He is now eighty years of age, and his wife, Mary Louisa, is seventy-eight years old. Francis Shure, son of Matthias, was born in Summit Township. In 1863 he settled on a farm of one hundred and forty-six acres, purchased of his father, in Allegheny Township. Mr. Suhre has held various township offices.

Henry Felton, a mason by trade, was born in Germany, as came to America in 1856. After residing two years in Baltimore and four in Cumberland, Maryland, he removed to Allegheny Township, and purchased a farm of two hundred acres, upon which he now resides. Mr. Felton has held the office of school director for eight years.

Charles F. Smith, a native of Germany, born in 1823, came to America at the age of sixteen, and commenced work in Bedford County, near Mann's Choice. He afterward purchased of his father-in-law, Lewis Wambaugh, the farm in Allegheny Township on which he now resides. Mr. Smith has the best orchards in Somerset County; indeed they will compare favorably with any in this section of the state. He raises all kinds of fruit in great quantities, and ships to local markets as well as to Altoona and other points. Twenty-two years ago, his farm of one hundred and fifty acres, of which eighty are cleared, was a dense forest. Mr. Smith, by industry and careful management, has today one of the finest and most productive farms in this section.

Philip Walker was born in Somerset County. By his own industry and hard labor he became the owner of several farms situated in Summit and Brothersvalley Townships. He died about 1834. He married Elizabeth Bettner, and was the father of George, John, Frederick, Peter, Elizabeth (Hay), and Susanna (Boos, George was born in Brothersvalley Township, and lived on a farm given to him by his father. He met his death on July 11, 1828, at the hands of an Irish laborer named Patrick Burns. Burns got into a dispute with Mr. Walker, and taking up his scythe, cut him across the abdomen so that he died almost instantly. The murderer escaped. George Walker married Elizabeth Miller, and was the father of George G., Joshia, Abraham (deceased), William, Samuel, Rosanna (Barron), and Catherine (Horner). Hon. George G Walker was born on the old homestead in Brothersvalley Township, where he owns a large and valuable farm. Mr. Walker has held various local offices, including that of justice. In 1859-60 he served as a member of the state legislature.

John Ware was an early settler of Allegheny Townships. Among his children were: John, George, Henry, Joseph, and Susanna. John was born in this township in 1807, and died in 1874. About 1846 he purchased the farm of three hundred and sixty-three acres on which his son William now resides. William has held several township offices. He served a short time in the late war.

John C. Reitz, who was born in Stony Creek Township, settled in Allegheny in 1868, on a farm of four hundred and fifteen acres, purchased of Jacob B. Hillegass. In 1877 he erected a planing mill, and in 1882 rebuilt it. He also has a sawmill and a sash door factory. All are run by steam power. Mr. Reitz manufactures all kinds of building lumber.

In 1850 Jacob B. Hillegass, now of New Buena Vista, Bedford County, purchased of John Keff's heirs a tract of fifteen hundred acres of land in Allegheny Township. He has since disposed of about one thousand acres. His son, William H., owns nearly seven hundred acres of the tract mentioned, having purchased it in 1881. He is principally engaged in farming and stock-raising.

John Geiger, a native of Berks County, came to this township in 1834, settling upon an unimproved farm, of which he has since cleared about seventy-five acres.

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