

HISTORY

—OF THE—

GRAFF * FAMILY

—OF—

WESTMORELAND CO.

BY PAUL GRAFF.

PHILADELPHIA:

1891.

IV.—WILLIAM GRAFF.

WILLIAM GRAFF, the second son of John and Barbara Graff, was born Oct. 1st, 1798, died Nov., 1882. He married Sarah Reed, who was born March 8th, 1804, and died Aug. 24th, 1881. Both buried at Pleasant Unity, Westmoreland county, Pa. They had no children.

He was one of the brothers, who, after his father's death, continued with his mother on the farm, doing the principle farming, after his marriage which occurred February 26th, 1826. He then took charge of the Poor-man farm about one-half mile south of Pleasant Unity. After his mother's death he purchased it, and lived on it until his death.

Wm. Graff was a devoted Christian and an active member of the M. E. Church for fifty-four years. His wife was converted and joined the church first. She insisted on her husband seeking an interest in Christ, but he said he could not pray. She told him to get down on his knees and she would pray for him. They both knelt down; she prayed and he cried unto the Lord until his cries were heard. He was a man of great energy of character, and this appeared in his Christian life. He prayed much both at home and with his brethren. Once when returning home from a visit to his brother's, and waiting at the R. R. Station, he went into the room and found a number of men playing cards. He stood and looked at them a moment and then said: "Men, do you

know the Lord sees you," and then turned away. At another time a friend riding with him in the country ; said Bro. Graff, "we will stop here a few minutes." At this he called for a Bible, read a long chapter and prayed a long prayer. He stopped and prayed twice at least, and they did not get home until late at night. He paid a visit to his minister and after the usual greeting and inquiry about church matters he said : " Brother, give me a Bible and I will read a chapter and pray before leaving." These may be called eccentricities, but they indicate the earnestness of his religious life.

The following obituary was published after his death :

OBITUARY.

The death of Wm. Graff on Saturday, Nov. 18, 1882, at his home near Pleasant Unity, removes the last of a very remarkable family from among the citizens of this county. Wm. Graff was the second born of seven sons and four daughters, all of whom lived to be married.

John Graff, the father, owned and lived on the farm on which Mr. Blank now resides. He also owned the farm on which Wm. lived and died. The father died Dec. 31, 1818, aged 57 years.

Barbara, the mother, died March 12, 1841, aged 66 years. She is still remembered in this community as a woman of extraordinary piety. Many remember to have heard her voice in prayer, in the night, as they passed her house. Her habit was to take her children in order and by name present their case to God, wrestling with Him for each until she felt she had prevailed and they would be saved.

No wonder that a family on whose childhood descended the

baptism of such prayers from such a mother, should be prominent among men and useful in the church.

Henry Graff, deceased, began business as a merchant, in Pleasant Unity, but removed to Pittsburg, where he was a prominent "forwarding merchant." His family are among the leading business men of that city to-day.

John Graff also began as a merchant in our town, but removed to Blairsville, where he still lives a hale old man, never sick an hour in his life, a patriarch in the town, and one of the fathers of the M. E. Church. His sons are among the solid men of that community.

Peter Graff is a very successful business man of Armstrong county, Pa., and an officer in the Lutheran Church. His sons bid fair even to surpass their father as wealth getters.

Jacob Graff, at one time a hatter in this town, again a mill owner near Derry, is now a mill owner in Illinois, and a member of the M. E. Church.

Matthew Graff is a merchant near Alliance, Ohio, and an elder in the Presbyterian Church.

Paul Graff, the well known wholesale shoe dealer of Philadelphia, is also an elder of the Presbyterian Church. Of the daughters, Mrs. Lose and Mrs. Barnes have been dead for years, but their offspring may be found somewhere near Johnstown, Pa., and many in different parts of the west. Mrs. Colleasure, widow of an elder of the Presbyterian Church, and Mrs. Armstrong are living in Illinois.

Wm. Graff was born October 10th, 1798, died November 18th, 1882, and was married to Sarah R. Read, February 26th, 1826, by Rev. N. P. Hacke. She died August 24th, 1881. Though they were never blessed with children of their own during their life together, several found a home with them and a place in their

hearts. They lived a quiet, happy life together for 55½ years. They died a little more than a year apart, rejoicing in the Christian's hope.

Bro. Graff was a zealous member of the M. E. Church, of Pleasant Unity, for 54 years. His religious convictions were very positive, and he was very free to express them. He was in the habit of visiting his neighbors and praying with their families. Many who in health thought him fanatical, were glad to have him sing and pray with them when sick or dying.

Brother Graff was kindly nursed by Miss Mary Wyand, who has been in the family for over ten years, and his nephew, Mr. Reed, of Kansas.

An interesting and impressive funeral service, conducted by Rev. McCurdy, his pastor, assisted by Rev. Ferrer, of the Reformed church, was held in the M. E. church, Tuesday Nov. 21st, at 11 a. m., before a very large congregation of the friends and neighbors.

While the casket was being placed before the altar, a choir of young girls, led by E. G. Walter, sang softly "Asleep in Jesus." The pastor then read the ritual and Rev. Ferrer offered prayer. The congregation sang, "We Know by Faith We Know." After reading Second Corinthians 5th, 1-7, Rev. McCurdy spoke for thirty minutes of the religious convictions and life of the departed. The congregation then sang a hymn. The remains were then taken to the old Bethel church yard, by the side of his wife.