

A CENTURY AND A HALF
OF
PITTSBURG AND
HER PEOPLE

GENEALOGICAL MEMOIRS OF THE LEADING FAMILIES
OF PITTSBURG AND VICINITY, COMPILED
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VISION OF

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George M. Hosack attended the Dunbar and Connellsville public schools, graduating from the high school in Connellsville in 1886. Upon his graduation he entered the employ of Messrs. Wood, Morrell & Company, at Wheeler, with whom he served as a clerk until the autumn of 1887, when he entered the department of literature, science and the arts at the University of Michigan and spent several years in the special study of history and political science. Later he entered the law department of the same institution, graduating with the degree of Bachelor of Laws in 1891, and was admitted thereon to the circuit and supreme courts of Michigan. The same year he went to Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and there entered the law office of Hon. S. Leslie Mestrezat, now a member of the supreme bench, finished his legal studies and was admitted to the Fayette county bar, where he practiced one year and then removed to Pittsburg for a wider field in which to follow his profession. He was then admitted to the Allegheny county bar, the supreme court of the state and the United States district and circuit courts. Prior to his entering the public schools at Connellsville his early years were spent in working on the farm during the summer months and attending school in the winter. He also clerked for a number of years in a store at Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania. The first money he remembers of earning was while acting as water-boy for Fred Gwinner, an Allegheny contractor, who was then building the Atlas Coke Works at Dunbar. During Mr. Hosack's legal practice he has devoted his time and energy largely to the solution of corporate problems and has made a special study of corporate taxation. Unlike many another of his profession, he has sought the right, though often antagonizing the great railroad and other corporate interests of his commonwealth, but whom he has never feared, ever preferring to vindicate the rights of the people at large. In the case of the Clyde Coal Company against the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad Company, he secured a verdict in mandamus proceedings to compel the furnishing of cars to prevent discrimination.

In his political views Mr. Hosack is an unbending Republican. Immediately after leaving college he took an active part in politics, allying himself with the late Hon. Frank M. Fuller, former secretary of the commonwealth, and Hon. John R. Byrne, then chairman of the Fayette county Republican committee. He became secretary of that committee and held the same until his removal to Pittsburg, where he at once became active in political affairs, affiliating with the Allegheny county Republican committee, serving on city, ward and county committees at various times. Inside of three years after his removal to Pittsburg he was appreciated, in a political sense, sufficiently to receive the nomination for member of the house of representatives, to which office he was duly elected from the fifth district of Pittsburg by a majority of over thirteen thousand. He was subsequently re-elected, serving in the sessions of 1889-1901. During his first term in the legislature he was recognized as a useful and influential member. As chairman of the oleo investigation, he brought about a reorganization of the office of dairy and food commissioner, and added to his reputation by his courageous act in refusing to accept mileage from the state for serving upon a legislative investigating committee on the ground that the practice which had long been in use was unconstitutional, and further that he had been put to no expense, for while attending to the duties of the committee he was riding on a railroad pass. This act alone saved the state fifty thousand dollars that session and caused the discontinuance of the practice.

In the session of 1899 he was appointed chairman of the ways and means committee, which position at that time was one very difficult to fill in a proper manner, for there was a deficit at the time of four million dollars and a movement was on foot to erect a new state capitol, the old one having been burned two years before. He introduced a number of measures, one of which is the bonus act relating to foreign corporations putting them on an equal footing with home corporations, which act has brought hundreds of thousands of dollars into the state treasury. His activity was honored by the passing of appropriate resolutions, including these:

"Mr. Hosack has shown himself well equipped for the position, with a broad and comprehensive knowledge of the subject of taxation, and has been uniformly consistent and fair to all parties—that we, the Committee of Ways and Means of the House, tender him our thanks for his effort and the results accomplished at the present session."

This resolution was signed by Quay, anti-Quay and Democratic members alike. During the same session, as well as that of 1901, Mr. Hosack was a member of the corporations committee and assisted in securing legislation of great importance to the industrial and corporate interests of this state and of lasting benefit to the people.

Since his retirement from the legislature he has applied himself to the ever increasing legal practice which his ability has brought to him. While holding no political office he maintains an active interest in party affairs, his services ever being at the command of the Republican organization. In business affairs he is vice-president of the Carnegie Coal Company, a director in the Republic Bank Note Company and various other institutions of Greater Pittsburg. He is a member of the East Liberty Presbyterian church, a director in St. Francis Hospital, and always takes an interest in worthy charitable works. In 1906 he was a candidate, subject to the state Republican con-

vention, for the office of lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania, but Robert Murphy, of Johnstown, was chosen and elected. The platform upon which Mr. Hosack stood was one which advocated the abolition of the ten dollar excess charged upon thousand-mile tickets in Pennsylvania; a uniform two-cent per mile fare; the establishment of a state railroad commission; that street railroads be allowed to carry small freight; construction and maintenance of good roads, etc.

In his social relations Mr. Hosack is deservedly popular, because genial and generous, to which may be added sincerity, and these traits have won for him a wide circle of friends and admirers throughout the state. He is a member of the Duquesne, University, County, Press, Americus, Tariff and Colonial Republican Clubs of Pittsburg, and of the Harrisburg Club. He is advanced in the Masonic fraternity, belonging to the Knights Templar and Shriners. He belongs to the Alpha Tau Omega college fraternity, which he highly prizes.