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family, from the State of Maryland, and settled in Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1776. He was a practical land-surveyor—in which capacity he became very useful to the new settlers then filling up that part of the State—and held the command of a company of Mounted Rangers, who rendered much service to the Government in the savage Indian wars so relentlessly waged during and after the Revolution, in the West. He married a Miss Foster, of Irish descent, and, with a family of four children, moved to Trumbull County, Ohio, in the year 1798, where he settled upon lands he had selected in previous excursions as an Indian hunter. He was a first settler in the section known as the Connecticut Western Reserve, which became rapidly populated, from that date, by emigrants from the New England States and Western Pennsylvania. Here he opened up a fine farm, built mills, and, in conjunction with Robert Montgomery, constructed a small blast-furnace, the product of which was moulded into pots, kettles, cauldrons, and such other articles of cast-iron ware as the necessities of new settlers required. On this farm, in 1803, his son Thomas was born, and trained in the mysteries of farming. His common school education was not unattended to; but such times were selected for it as could be best spared from the farmwork, viz., the winter months, when, to make most of the opportunity, a competent teacher was employed by the month, a school-room furnished near the family residence, and the business of education made the attraction and the entertainment of the season. To the rudimental education thus obtained was added the usual academic course (in a school organized on the same plan) preparatory to college; and, at about seventeen years of age, he entered Jefferson College. In consequence of misfortune in business, his father could render him no assistance from this date, but, having resolved to perfect an education fitting him for professional life, the young man applied himself attentively to studying and teaching, and worked his way through college. He then entered the office of the late A. W. Foster, Esq., an eminent lawyer at Greensborough, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, as a student; and, in January, 1827, was admitted to the bar. In December, 1828, he located himself in Warren, Pennsylvania, where he has ever since resided. He was induced to select this location, in part, by several important agencies tendered him by owners of large bodies of wild lands in this and adjoining counties—but principally because he believed the best thing a young man, without means, could do, was to cast his lot with the pioneers of a new settlement (there were only about five hundred

THOMAS STRUTHERS.

JOHN STRUTHERS, the father of the subject of this sketch, was of Scotch lineage, and imbued with the spirit of adventurous enterprise which characterizes that race, moved, with his father's

voters in the county at that time, and a still less number in the counties east and south), and endeavor to rise with the growth of improvements. He entered actively upon the practice of his profession, and with much success, but found his land agencies most remunerative. His strict attention to the suits of clients, and fidelity to the interests of land proprietors intrusted to him, soon established for him a credit which served as capital for a large business. His first efforts were so successful in disposing of lands and introducing settlers, that he was encouraged to purchase large tracts on time, and pay for them by the proceeds of resales, at moderate advance. He found, however, a great difficulty in the way of drawing the attention of emigrants to these lands—the want of railroad facilities to reach them. Here was a broad expanse of almost unbroken forest-lands, partly in the State of New York and partly in the State of Pennsylvania; probably one hundred and fifty miles north and south, by two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles east and west; not penetrated even by good wagon roads; and, in some directions, one hundred and fifty miles without any roads. And this, too, in the direct line between New York City and the West, and Philadelphia and Lake Erie. The State of Pennsylvania had left it intact by her line of canals and railroads on the south, whilst the Erie Canal passed around to the north. To secure the opening up of that great wilderness, first attracted the attention of Struthers to the consideration of questions relating to railroad organizations and the construction of railways. Whilst he preferred a railroad from Philadelphia, by the route now occupied by the Philadelphia and Erie (originally the Sunbury and Erie) Railway, and a branch by the Catawissa and Lehigh Valley to New York, he found the projectors of the New York and Erie Road first in the field, and hastened to give them all the encouragement he could, attending many of their primary meetings, held along the line, aiding to get the right necessary for them through Pennsylvania, etc. In 1836 he hailed with delight the announcement, through the press, that Philadelphia, beginning to realize the importance of reaching out, by the most direct route, for a share of the great trade of the Lakes, had resolved upon a convention to be held at Williamsport. As a delegate from Warren County, he met the other representatives in that convention. Here was projected the scheme for the Sunbury and Erie Railroad, and Struthers, with others, appointed to lay the subject before the Legislature, and secure, if possible, the necessary legislation. A bill was accordingly prepared, and introduced early in the

session of 1836-37. But the scheme was regarded as so chimerical and absurd that, at first, it met with no favor at the hands of a large majority in either house. This opinion, so unfavorable, seemed to proceed, not from an anti-improvement feeling, but from a lack of knowledge of the character of that wilderness portion of the State and of the business on the Lakes. It was thought best, therefore, not to urge precipitate action on the bill, but take time and endeavor to educate and interest the southern and eastern members in the geography and natural wealth and resources of that great section and the importance and value of the lake trade, and thus gain their approval. Struthers, on account of his more intimate knowledge of the country and proposed route, as well as of his great zeal in the cause, was selected by the Philadelphia gentlemen who were acting with him for this service. He remained, and succeeded in securing the passage of the bill, although he did not dare to bring it to a vote until April, 1837. In the organization of the company Struthers was chosen a Director, the others being of Philadelphia and east of the mountains, with the accomplished financier and enlightened statesman, Nicholas Biddle, of the United States Bank, as President. Elaborate surveys were made in 1838-'39, the line located, and the work of grading commenced in 1840, when a relapse of the financial distemper which had caused such wide-spread ruin in 1837 silenced the last palpitations of life in the United States Bank and many others, and thus crushed the hopes of a speedy prosecution of this great work. It languished and struggled for the next ten years, the Philadelphians deserting it in 1847, and transferring their means and influence to the Pennsylvania Railroad project. But Struthers, and a few like spirits on the western part of the line, adhered to it through all these calamitous and discouraging times, and finally effected a resuscitation of the company and the work in 1851. Municipal subscriptions were made all along the line, and Philadelphia again fell into rank. The eastern part of the work was put under contract and pushed with vigor; and to prevent the subscriptions of the west from being taken to the east, Struthers associated a party at Warren—himself its principal—whilst a few enterprising gentlemen of Erie formed a like association, and took contracts covering eighty-six miles of the western division, receiving the municipal bonds of their several localities and stock of the company for their principal pay, and a very small percentage in money. These were the parties of energy and efficiency in carrying through the work. They not only had to raise money on bonds and stocks for the major part of their own con-

tracts, but, whenever it became necessary to appeal to the Councils of the city of Philadelphia, and the Legislature, for assistance in carrying on the whole work, they were always summoned to the rescue, and rendered most efficient aid. The financial operations of the Warren party were managed altogether by Struthers; and, whilst the prosecution of the work on the remainder of the line was suspended nearly two years for want of means, they went steadily forward on their job, trusting to events for that part of their pay which they were to receive in money—a misplaced confidence, as Struthers realized in a loss of more than all the profits of the contract. Still, under a new arrangement, he took an individual contract for the completion of part of the work, and carried it through. The road was finally completed 1862. In addition to what is contained in the foregoing, prepared by another, a friend and former partner* of Mr. Struthers has furnished the following items in his history, and some views of his general character and characteristics from his own personal knowledge: The summer of 1834 found him in Warren, Pennsylvania, at the head of the legal profession, pursuing it with that persistent industry that characterized him through life and secured him success. He had then become enamored with land speculation (having previously purchased 25,000 acres), which soon became the ruling passion of his life, and mainly occupied his attention for the next twenty years or more. During this time he bought and sold about half a million acres of wild land in the western part of Pennsylvania and New York. The writer formed a professional copartnership with him in 1834; but he became so absorbed in land operations that, in 1840, he entirely abandoned the practice of law, and never resumed it as an occupation. As one of the originators of the Sunbury and Erie Railroad scheme, he clung to it when all others despaired, procured the necessary legislation to keep its charter alive, and made frequent efforts to revive the interest of Philadelphians and others in its behalf. His faith in its ultimate success never failed, and actuated by that sentiment, about 1851, in company with A. S. Diven, of Elmira, he undertook to resuscitate and construct the Cattawissa Railroad, connecting with the Sunbury and Erie road at Milton, and running to Tamauqua. Considerable grading and bridging had been done on this road in 1835-'36, when the company became bankrupt, and the work was suspended for fifteen years. Struthers threw his energy and industry into it, and they completed the work in 1852 or '3, with funds raised entirely upon the credit of the road, as

* Hon. S. P. Johnson.

a link in the line of the Sunbury and Erie Road, and an extension of the Williamsport and Elmira Road. This, at the time, was properly considered a great achievement under the discouragements that surrounded it. It was the resurrection of a defunct corporation that had died deeply insolvent many years before, and out of its decayed assets paying off its old debts, and constructing a first-class road of seventy miles, over one of the most rugged and mountainous parts of the State, with four tunnels, several high trestle structures, and a bridge spanning the Susquehanna River. Near the same time Mr. Struthers was connected with General Wilson in the construction of the first railroad in California, from Sacramento to Folsome or Negro Bar. This, too, was an unending enterprise when he took hold of it, and, by his superior tact and financial ability, procured the rails and equipments complete for forty miles of road, in Boston, to be delivered in San Francisco without money or other securities than the bonds of the company, and his own and Wilson's guarantee. Soon after this he embarked with others in the enterprise of constructing street railways in the city of Cincinnati, procured a grant from the City Council for half the city, and subsequently sold out his interest. About the same time, in company with O'Reilly, Brooks, and others, having procured an Act of the Iowa Legislature for the purpose, containing valuable land grants, he undertook the improvement of the Des Moines River for steamboat navigation; but after locating their dams and several towns and cities on the donated lands, the Legislature repudiated the grant. All this time Mr. Struthers, with but limited means at his control, was carrying large bodies of wild lands, seeking purchasers, and spending a great portion of his time in Philadelphia, New York and Boston. His interest in the last heavy purchase of 130,000 acres from A. M. Jones, of Philadelphia, he finally disposed of in 1857, when he immediately became a large contractor in the then Sunbury and Erie Railroad, as already stated. Upon the completion of that job, in the settlement of which he was badly used by the company, he procured the passage of a law by the Pennsylvania Legislature, incorporating a company to construct a railroad from any point on the Sunbury and Erie—then changed to the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad—in Warren, or Erie County, to Titusville, and down Oil Creek and the Alleghany River to Franklin. In 1862 he organized the company, located the road from Corry to Titusville, twenty-eight miles, and then performed the extraordinary feat of making the road build itself in the short space of one hundred and twenty working

days, without subsidies from any quarter, and almost without stock. At this time the oil developments about Titusville and down Oil Creek were rapidly progressing, and there were several thousand teams engaged in transporting the oil to points on the river and railroads. Yet, so little confidence was felt in the enterprise or the permanence of the oil production, that no stock could be obtained on the route, or at either end. He and his assistant, Dr. Streater, of Cleveland, took nearly all the stock themselves, and then built and equipped the road upon its own bonds. This was the crowning success, the great winning venture of his long and laborious life. In all his previous adventures, some of which were disastrous, he had only succeeded in acquiring a respectable subsistence for himself and family, and often carried heavy loads of indebtedness. From the start this road was crowded beyond its capacity, with both freight and passengers. For several years it had a monopoly of the business to and from the oil regions. Mr. Struthers remained its President and chief financial agent until 1866, realizing large profits from its earnings, when he sold out his interest, and with his entire family spent a year and a half in traveling through Europe, Asia and Egypt. Before this, however, in concert with Dean Richmond, he had come to appreciate the importance of forming a direct connection with the New York Central Road, and procured the legislative incorporation of a company to construct what was called the Cross Cut Railroad, connecting with the Oil Creek Road at Corry, and running north to the State line, then to connect with one in New York State, leading to Dunkirk. He organized that company, became its President and a large stockholder, fought it through a lawsuit with the Philadelphia and Erie Road in the Supreme Court at Philadelphia, and made arrangements for its final completion during his absence in Europe. Both ends were finally completed and consolidated, when, having found a foreign field for his unabated enterprise, he resigned the Presidency. He had a peculiar affection for all railroad projects. Actuated by this feeling he spent considerable time at Harrisburg, and rendered valuable assistance to the New York and Erie Road in procuring the right of way through Pennsylvania, and at one time had secured their promise to run a branch of it down the Alleghany River, through Warren and Crawford Counties, into Ohio. While running the Oil Creek Road, he got up the Corry National Bank, of which he was President. A few years ago he severed his connection with the bank. This is one of the most prosperous institutions of the kind in Western Pennsylvania. In 1863 he sought out and pur-

chased the farm of over four hundred acres, once owned by his father, and on which he was born, in Trumbull County, now Mahoning County, Ohio; and after his return from Europe in 1867, in company with two or three associates, erected on it the largest, best, and most successful furnace in the State—laid out and built up quite a village, called "Struthers," having a station on the Lawrence Railroad, post-office, saw-mill, church, hotel, store, and other appurtenances of a thriving village. In connection with this, he purchased a large interest in a valuable coal field, a few miles off, to which he, with others, constructed a railroad thirteen miles long, with the double purpose of supplying their furnaces and rolling mills, and those of others in their vicinity—thirteen in all—with cheaper fuel, and ultimately extending it to Lake Erie, at Painesville, or Ashtabula, and thereby greatly cheapen the transportation of their ore and metal. These furnaces consume one thousand tons of coal per day and yield nearly half that amount in metal. The filial sentiment that induced him to purchase the place of his birth, and which his father had lost forty years before, has been amply rewarded by its greatly enhanced value since its purchase, and the monument which his industry and enterprise has there erected will perpetuate his memory for many generations. Immediately on his return from his foreign travels, in '67, he purchased a large interest for himself and son in a flourishing foundry and machine-shop in Warren; since which he greatly enlarged its buildings and increased its machinery. It is now known as Struthers' Iron Works. This is one of the most prosperous institutions in Western Pennsylvania, and its engines and mills can be found from Florida to Muskegan. Mr. Struthers has always been an earnest and active politician, of the Whig and Republican faith, and a zealous friend of a protective tariff system. In the sessions of 1857 and '58, he represented his district in the Legislature, and was generally recognized as one of its most able and upright members. He was one of three in that body who managed affairs so as to bring about the election of General Simon Cameron for the first time to the United States Senate. Mr. Cameron had previously been appointed by the Governor to fill the unexpired term of James Buchanan, who had been elected to the Presidency. When the time came to elect for the full term the Whig party on joint ballot was in the minority and lacked three votes to elect. It was through Mr. Struthers' energy in committee work that a sufficient number were drawn from the opposing side to secure the election of General Cameron. During his legislative career he acquired the confidence

of his fellow-members and the people of the State, and the following year many of them insisted on his becoming their candidate for State Treasurer; to this he reluctantly consented, much against his personal inclinations. During the canvass for a nomination the following tribute to his worth, one of many published throughout the State, appeared in a paper more than a hundred miles distant from the district he represented:

"Among the Republican gentlemen named as candidates for the responsible office of State Treasurer, the Hon. Thomas Struthers, of Warren County, stands conspicuous. His sterling integrity, business capacity, and the efficient services he has rendered to the political cause upheld by the great Republican party, render him, in our opinion, by far the most suitable and available candidate. The West we think is now entitled to this office, more especially when one so capable and trustworthy is presented. During the sessions of 1857 and 1858 Mr. S. represented in the State Legislature, first the counties of Warren, Venango and Mercer, and afterwards Warren and Crawford. Those who served with him during two sessions can testify to the important character of his services to the State and to his party. We agree with the *Reading Journal* when it says to the members of the present Legislature, let us for once have a State Treasurer upon whom we can look without suspicion or distrust; in whose past life and freedom from evil financial associations the people can have some guaranty of future honesty. There are such men before the people. Give us one of them, if only for this once. Give us a man of pure and spotless honesty, not one whose name has been dragged in the mire. Give us a man whom we can hold up before the people as a servant worthy of their confidence, as a servant of the kind in whom they will be well pleased."

Neither his business nor inclination permitted him to give the canvass the attention necessary to secure the Legislative caucus nomination. He was not a political aspirant. To aid in developing the resources of the country by public improvements was always his highest ambition and greatest pride. His interest in the place of his adoption is still unceasing, as has been proved by many acts of liberality on his part within the past few years. Among the many may be mentioned the liberal gift of a free public library named for him and erected in the year 1883 at a cost of ninety thousand dollars. The building is commanding in its architecture and stands on one of the most eligible sites in the town of Warren, and only a block from the residence of the donor. The building is of brick, seventy-three feet front on Third Street and one hundred and sixty feet deep on Liberty Street. It is three stories high, besides the basement, and contains a large and commodious library room seventy feet by sixty-four feet, with large, well-lighted offices attached. The Post Office and a large store-room occupy the first floor. The entire third story, which is elaborately

furnished, is occupied by the Masonic Fraternity. A grand hall, known as "Library Hall" extends from the library room proper to the north end of the building. It contains an auditorium seventy feet by sixty-four feet, and a stage, twenty-seven feet deep. It has a seating capacity for one thousand persons. The hall is well and comfortably furnished, and is one of the neatest of its kind in Northern Pennsylvania. *All rents and income* accruing from the entire building are given to the trustees for the use and benefit of the library. Mr. Struthers purposed in making the gift, that the library, in order to be kept up to a high standard, should be free from embarrassment. Hence this arrangement. The library is provided with all standard periodicals and newspapers and five thousand volumes of choice literature. Its doors are open throughout the day to citizens and strangers, and the munificent gift stands as a monument to the noble generosity of the donor. Another of the latest acts of his life was the erection of a monument to the memory of his grandfather, father and mother, two sisters and two brothers, in Poland Township, Trumbull County, Ohio. One of the brothers whose memory is so cherished, died in the service of his country during the War of 1812. Many other acts of his love for advancement and the spirit with which he cherishes the memory of loved ones might be mentioned. Mr. Struthers still resides in the old homestead at Warren, Pennsylvania, which has been sacred to him for so many years, and the stranger, as well as his friends, is ever welcome. In conversation he is very interesting, relating much of interest pertaining to years ago, calling up memories of men who were prominent in National as well as State affairs. He keeps well posted on the current events of the day, displaying an earnest interest in all events tending towards the advancement and prosperity of his country. Mr. Struthers is a man of a large and comprehensive mind, that canvasses a subject in all its bearings, immediate and remote. His predominant mental characteristic is concentrativeness. He would always become totally absorbed in the project or enterprise in hand, and pursue it with an avidity and pertinacity that admitted of no diversion or interruption. His mental resources, in extricating himself from embarrassment, and in combining agencies to accomplish his purposes, have always proven sufficient for all drafts upon them, and seem inexhaustible; and his power for attracting both men and capital, and enlisting them in his adventures, is wonderful. His temperament is over-sanguine, producing too favorable estimates of future results, and would often have led him into serious difficulties, except for his indomitable will and perseverance. He never surrendered, and,

consequently, was always victorious, or made a draw-game of it. He has always shown himself to be emphatically what Carlyle said of Cromwell, "an earnest man." Whatever his hand has found to do he has done with his might. Bold, apparently to rashness, and hopeful to enthusiasm, whatever he has undertaken he has carried through with an earnestness and energy that surmounted all obstacles. These elements in his composition induced him sometimes to venture too much, perhaps, and take risks which the timid prudence of less resolute men would have avoided. He would buy, on time, far beyond his income from other sources to pay, trusting to sell at an advance before the liability matured. Yet no protests came. He would spread more canvass, and run farther out to sea than larger crafts dare venture, yet his frail bark, through calm or storm, always made the voyage bravely, and returned to port safely. His industry has ever been as indefatigable as his will indomitable. Had he not enjoyed perfect health and great powers of endurance, he would often have overtaxed his energies and broken down. Although his travels and associations with the business world have been such as to subject him to frequent and strong temptations, his habits have ever been temperate and free from dissipation of any kind. He, indeed, attributes much of the vigor, both physical and intellectual, which he enjoys at his present advanced age, to the fact that such years ago he abjured the use of spirituous liquors altogether. He says its use defiles the stomach, vitiates the appetite, destroys the sensitive organs, and results in intellectual stupidity, physical grossness and deformity, and total unfitness for business or society. The medicated wines generally in use he considers equally obnoxious, and to be avoided. But paramount among his virtues, it may be affirmed that he is an honest man. In his immense and complicated business transactions, no one was ever found to charge him successfully with a dishonest or dishonorable act. Naturally a little credulous, although usually cautious, he has sometimes been overreached and involved in litigation. But he has lived through sixty years of trials without a tarnish upon the escutcheon of his manhood, or a stain on his integrity as a citizen. During all that time he has been the recognized leader, and often the originator, of measures calculated to benefit the county and borough in which he has lived, and still enjoys the confidence and esteem of the present, as of the past, generation. Now, in the evening of a laborious and most active life, he can look back without regret upon a past that has been prolific in results alike progressive and beneficent.