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MS 76
BX 20
NBK 7

Charleston Records
Sketches from Prominent
Men of West Virginia.

MS 76
BX 20
NBK 7

1
Thomas Thornburg

() Wm. Sidney Laidley

Cameron Lewis Thompson

Kellian V. Whaley

Eustace Gibson

Wm. J. Thompson

Wm. Jordan Waugh Crowder

✓ Charles Page Thos. Moore

Joseph Jacob Woods

James Henry Brown

John D.^{S.} Witcher

Johnson Newlon Camden

James Harvey Ferguson

James Madison Laidley

Granville Parker

✓ Lura J. Mc Ginnis.

Personal Accounts from
Vol. 2, "History of the Upper
Ohio Valley, p. 382

J. L. Adams.

~~Charles Page~~ Thos. Moore

H. M. Adams

M. L. Akers

L. J. Ashworth

John Morgan Beale

A. J. Beardsley, M. D.

J. N. Blackwood.

W. H. Bowles, M. D.

Garland Buffington

Capt. Thos. J. Burke

L. H. Burkes

Frank Diehl

Robert Diehl

Frank L. Hoolittle

W. P. Honahol

Jas. R. Hudley

E. F. Houtch

L. W. Enmons

H. C. Everett

J. S. Garland

Richard A. Goodwin

Col. Robt. T. Harvey

W. H. H. Holswade

R. A. Jack

James H. Jarvis

Wm. Keefe

B. F. " "

W. S. King

Rev W. Wark King

Geo. F. Klinge

James I. Kuhn

Edmund Kyle

James Mc Millan Lee (Supt)

L. L. Love, M. D.

R. A. Mathews

S. V. " "

F. F. McCullough

G. E. McDonald

Judge Ira J. McGinnis

Geo. R. Mc Intosh

Geo. F. Miller

C. F. Millinder

Jos. H. Myers, M. D.

G. H. " "

C. F. Parsons

N. C. Pelit

Samson Roberts

E. T. Saunders, M. D.
Joseph R. Shelton
Wm. Simpson
J. F. Stewart
Charles H. Snider
A. M. Thompson
J. L. Thornburg
Jno. W. Valentine
E. C. Van Vleet
Z. T. Vinson
W. P. Walker
Wm. F. Wallace
J. L. Wellman
B. C. Wilson.

All

4

THOMAS THORNBURG.

Thomas Thornburg was born October 6, 1818, in Barboursville, Czbell County, Virginia, where he resided all his life, long. He received a common school education, and his main occupation has been farming and merchandising. In his County he has been selected to fill the Office of Constable, Justice of the Peace, President of the County Court, Commissioner of Revenue, and in Chancery.

He represented the voters as a Member of the General Assembly of Virginia before the formation of the new State west of the Blue Ridge in 1857-8; was County Supervisor in West Virginia in 1866 to 1870. President Andrew Johnson appointed him in the United States Internal Revenue service for the Third District of West Virginia in May, 1865, in which responsible position he served four years. In 1872 he served as a Member of the Convention to revise the Constitution of the State from Cabell and Lincoln Counties; and was County Commissioner from 1881 to 1887.

2

WILLIAM SYDNEY LAIDLEY.

When the laws were in process of adaptation to the revised Constitution of 1872, one of the faithful members of the Legislature from Kanawha County was Wm. Sydney Laidley. He was born June 27th, 1839, in Cabell County, Virginia. His paternal ancestors who originally spelled the name "Laidlaw", emigrated from Scotland to America in the year 1774, almost at the dawn of the Revolution. He was educated in Marshall College at Huntington; and in September, 1863 moved to Charleston, Kanawha County and read law with the very able George W. Summers, and at the death of his Judicial Instructor in 1868, was his partner in legal practice. Then he formed a professional partnership with the late Col. Wm. H. Hogeman, and continued the business relation until the latter's demise, in January, 1885. He was a valuable working Member of the House of Delegates in 1872-3; has been, for the past fifteen years, connected with the Municipal Government of Charleston as Councilman and City Solicitor, and has done much toward the adornment and prosperity of the State.

4

CAMERON LEWIS THOMPSON

Capt. Cameron L. Thompson was born April 22, 1842 at the mouth of Coal, more recently christened St. Albans, Kanawha County. His education, as that of most natives of the ~~County~~ locality was by private tutors at home for fundamental training; then in the Academy at Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, to round off into broader views. In April 1861, when Virginia took position with the South he entered the Confederate Army and served until the close of the contest. He enlisted as a private in the 22d Virginia Infantry, and was promoted to the rank of Captain for gallantry at Baker's Creek, Mississippi. He was captured at Vicksburg, and with General Lee, was surrendered at Appomattox. He is a journalist of influence and capacity, having published for years the Mountain Herald, at Hinton, Summers County. A few years ago he disposed of the Herald and now edits and manages the Advertiser, a leading Democratic newspaper published at Huntington, the seat of Justice of Cabell County, and a thrifty and growing city on the banks of the Ohio.

7

KELIAN V. WHALEY.

Kellian V. Whaley was the first member of Congress under the new State, from the southernmost counties--the then Third District. He was born in ^{Orandaga} ~~Orandaga~~ County, New York May 6, 1821. His opportunities for even a common school education were limited. He removed with his father, to Ohio, then to Virginia in 1842 and engaged in the lumber and timber trade. He was sociable, frank and energetic and was, in consequence soon drawn into public view and was elected Representative from Restored Virginia to the eventful Thirty-~~Seventh~~ Congress, as a Unionist, serving from July 4, 1861 to March 3, 1863. He was in the Union Army, and Colonel in command at the Battle of Guyandotte in November, 1861 ^{*} and was captured, but made his escape. As a Union Republican he was elected to the Thirty-Eighth Congress, receiving 2748 votes against 2184 for Daniel Frost. To the succeeding the Thirty-Ninth Congress, he was elected almost without opposition, thus serving from West Virginia from December 7, 1863 to March 3, 1867. He was a delegate to the National Republican Convention, which met in Baltimore in 1864 and nominated the now immortal Lincoln for a second term. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the tall President from Illinois, and one of the most persistent attenders upon the departments in the interests of his constituents. He always made applications as if he had faith in the success of his petition. He was appointed Collector of Customs at Brazos de Santiago, Texas, in 1868, and departed this life several years ago.

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* I believe the story of his capture and escape is found in "The Rending of Virginia".

EUSTACE GIBSON.

Eustace Gibson, who was the first Congressman from the Fourth District of West Virginia, after the re-districting under the 1880 census, was born in Culpepper County, Virginia October 4, 1842. He received a common school education; studied law and began practice in the spring of 1861; enlisted in the Confederate Army in June of that year, as First Lieutenant; was promoted to Captain in 1863, and returned on account of wounds received in the "line of duty". He was a Member of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia in 1867-8; located in Cabell County, West Virginia, in 1871; was elected to the House of Delegates from that County in 1876, and therein was chosen Speaker; and was a Presidential Elector on the Democratic ticket in 1880. In November 1882, he was elected to the House of Representatives for the Forty-Eighth Congress; and in 1884 was re-elected to the Forty-Ninth as a Democrat, receiving 16,445 votes against 16,445 votes for Andrew R. Barbee, Greenback-Republican. He now resides and practices law in Huntington, W. Va. Mr. Gibson is a man of great energy. He stands at the top of his profession in his section of West Virginia. As a Representative in Congress he was able, efficient, and attentive to duty.

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WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

Hon. W. T. Thompson, the present State Treasurer for West Virginia, was born at Hurricane Bridge, Putnam County, Virginia. His father, Hon. R.N.B. Thompson was a member of the General Assembly of Virginia, in the House of Delegates, for the sessions of 1856 and 1858. The son entered the Confederate Army when quite young, and was in the Battle of Scary, under Colonel A. R. Barbee. He was in the campaign in the Valley of Virginia, under General J. M. Jubal A. Early, also in the winter campaign around Norfolk, under General Longstreet. He was paroled after the war, in 1865 in Charleston, Kanawha County, by the late Major William Gramm; attended Wytheville College, Virginia and graduated therefrom in 1867. He subsequently read law under Judge James W. Hoge, of Putnam County, and began law practice in August, 1870, at Barboursville, Cabell County. He was elected Prosecuting Attorney of that County in 1876, and was re-elected in 1880, thus serving eight years in that position. Mr. Thompson was next called from County to State official responsibility, and in 1884 was nominated by the Democratic party and elected as Treasurer of West Virginia. In 1888 he was re-elected for another term of four years.

In 1878 he married Lola L. daughter of Wm. Briggs, Sr. of Greenup, Ky, who died in 1882, leaving a daughter. In 1888 he wedded Nannie S., daughter of Judge W.H. Hagan, of Huntington, W. Va.

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WILLIAM JORDAN WAUGH COWDEN.

September 7, 1871, a young man of medium height and of rather stout build came from Western Pennsylvania to West Virginia, and took up his residence in the City of Wheeling. He at once began the study of law in the office of W.P. Hubbard, Esq. Possessing a well disciplined mind and steady habits, he pursued his legal studies with great diligence, and October 6, of the following year was admitted to the bar. in his adopted home. Like all young lawyers he had to struggle to build up a practice, the returns of which would yield him a living. He, however, was equal to the task. He toiled on, and was faithful to every trust. When the people became acquainted with him, they entrusted business to his care until, by and by he became the possessor of a paying practice

which made him comfortable and independent. Always painstaking and honest, he won the confidence of both lawyers and people. An attorney like that never wants for clients or friends. Such a man is W.J.W. Cowden, the subject of this brief sketch. Mr. Cowden was born May 1, 1846, in Lawrence County, Pennsylvania, and was educated at Westminster College, in his native State, from which he graduated June 29, 1871. Prior to graduating, he spent several years teaching, most of the time in academies, where he gave instruction in the classics and higher mathematics. The toil of teaching was not congenial; hence he devoted his energies to the profession of law, which has proved much more agreeable and remunerative.

Having a taste for politics, in 1876 he was chosen Secretary of the Republican State Central and Executive Committees, in which positions he continued--rendering satisfactory and efficient service--

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until 1884, when he was elected Chairman of said Committees and was called upon to manage the exciting campaign of that year, and also the one of 1888. He was never an office seeker. Many times he has refused official position, notably the nomination for Judge of the Circuit Court of the First West Virginia District when a nomination was equivalent to an election. Without his knowledge or consent he was appointed Postmaster of the City of Wheeling in April 1889; and in obedience to a Federal statute, when he accepted the office of Postmaster he promptly resigned his committee chairman-ships. The office he now holds does not prevent him from continuing the practice of his profession.

Mr. Cowden is a Calvinist in faith and for many years has been a Ruling Elder in the United Presbyterian Church in the City of Wheeling and Superintendent of the Sunday School. He has been twice married. His present wife is the daughter of the Rev. J.T. McClure, D.D., for nearly forty years pastor of the church to which Mr. Cowden belongs.

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CHARLES PAGE THOMAS MOORE.

The Supreme Bench of West Virginia has had upon it few, if any more gifted and popular wearers of the judicial ermine than the one whose kindly eyes seem to face this biographical sketch. Since the early days of the State's existence, when party lines were sponged out by the overshadowing issue of National preservation, no party candidate, even for Judicial honors has, like Judge Moore, received at the polls the endorsement of the voters of both political organizations, thus evidencing, in popular judgment, his fitness for the duties and honors of the highest tribunal known within the State.

He was the youngest of three children from the marriage of Thomas Moore and Augustus Delphia Page, the father being a native of Shenandoah County, and the mother of Staunton, Virginia, a daughter of Major Charles Page, who wedded Susan Tapp. His father, who previously located in Greenbrier County, west of the mountains, died in Lewisburg, March 27, 1832, and his mother died June 21, 1844. Immediately after the mother's demise, Charles, who was born February 8, 1831, was taken to Mason County, and adopted by his Uncle, George Moore, and wife, NEE Frances Harness. They took the deepest, almost a parental interest in his welfare, and educated him liberally. His first instruction was by private tutors; then in Marshall Academy of Cabell County, presided over by Josiah Pogue; then at venerable Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, and in Union College, N.Y. In 1850 he founded, in connection with Dr. Letterman, the Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity, whose membership numbers the ablest literary graduates in every state. From Union College he received the graduation degree of Bachelor of Arts, at the hands of Eliphalet Nott, D.D.

L.L.D in July 1853.

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His law course was taken at the University of Virginia, and he was licensed to practice, after thorough examination by Judge Richard Field, Lucas P. Thompson, and George W. Summers. In September, 1856, he was admitted to the Bar of the Circuit Court of Mason County. At the spring election of 1858 he was chosen Commonwealth's Attorney for that County, serving in such capacity until the beginning of the Civil War. In the arena of debate and personal influence, he took an active part in opposition to the spirit and ordinance of secession.

In the convention of 1866 he withdrew in favor of General John H. Oley; and in 1868 he was the nominee for Congress in the Third District by the "Constitutional Union Party," but by operation of the Registration Act in his district he was defeated at the polls.

He wedded February 9, 1865, Willa K. daughter of Jacob A. Kline of Mason County, by whom he is the father of four daughters. She was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, her father being a native of Winchester, Va.

In 1870 he was elected upon the Democratic ticket as one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of Appeals for twelve years, but by the adoption of the new constitution of 1872 his term was made to expire December 31, 1872. He was re-nominated by his party, and at the polls received the highest endorsement a free people could give--almost the unanimous vote of the electors for another term. In the allotment provided by the Constitution, the Governor drew for him in open Court the full and longest term. He was President of the Court, by choice of the other Judges, and was so acting when he resigned in 1881; and, in consequence of the death of his adopted parents, sought the more quiet and congenial life of the farm, near Elwell, Mason County, West Virginia.

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Here he takes, though in the prime of life, and solely from preference, the otium cum dignitate of a post graduate in public life, practicing his chosen profession of law in such cases as invite his own rich experience.

JOSEPH JACOB WOODS.

The pending session of the legislature which began its roll call in January, 1889, and still is subject to an expected re-convening by Executive order, has occasioned vivid interest, as well as adverse criticism by some, and with others, approval over the entire State, and awakened the attention of even the nation. The election of a Senator for the next six years was unusually exciting, the Democratic party having but one majority upon joint ballot, but the declaration duty of the joint session upon the vote for Governor in 1888 was the thrilling theme. The center of observation was the Speaker of the House, who, by virtue of the position, presided, also, over the Declaration Assembly. Those who attended at the State House during these exciting hours will recognize his face in the engraving fronting this sketch. He was born December 15, 1852 in Ohio County, Virginia. The incidents of early life were not different from those usual with school boys. He first attended the country schools of the county, then the select ones of Wheeling, city; spent over a year at Washington and Jefferson college, Pennsylvania; then entered Princeton College, N. J., from which he graduated with the class of 1872; studied law and began practice in Wheeling in 1874, where he still continues professional activity in all the Courts, Municipal, Circuit, Supreme and Federal. His first appearance in the law enacting department of West Virginia was as a Member of the Senate in 1879-81 from the Counties of Ohio, Brooke, and Hancock, composing the Third District. His course there met with the approval of his Democratic constituents in Ohio County, and he was elected as Delegate to the House in 1883. At the fall election in 1886 he was again sent to represent his County in the House of Delegates and served upon the Committees of Judiciary, Elections and Privileges, Private Corporations and Joint Stock Companies, Forfeited and Unappropriated Lands, and Rules. The voters of Ohio County returned him at the election of 1888, and he was almost without opposition elected to the Speakership for a second term.

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JAMES HENRY BROWN.

For nearly half a century the subject of this sketch was been a well known character in the Great Kanawha Valley. He was born in Cabell County, Virginia, December 25, 1818, and was educated at Marietta College, Ohio, and at Augusta College, Kentucky, from the latter of which he was graduated in 1840. He studied law in the office of John Laidley, of Cabell County, and in 1842 was licensed as an attorney. His practice covers a period of nearly fifty years in the Circuit Courts of Cabell, Lincoln, and Kanawha Counties, and in the United States District Court, the Court of Appeals of Virginia and West Virginia, and in the Supreme Court of the United States.

In 1848 he located at Charleston, Kanawha County, where he has since resided. In the winter of 1854-5 he was a delegate to the Democratic State Convention at Staunton that nominated Henry A. Wise for Governor; and in 1855 he was a candidate for the State Senate, but was defeated. In 1856 he was a delegate from Kanawha County to the Democratic convention at Parkersburg, which nominated Albert G. Jenkins of Cabell County, for Congress.

Schooled in the doctrines of the fathers of the Constitution, he repudiated the modern heresy of secession. While he maintained the just rights and reserved powers of the States and the people on the one hand, he defended with equal firmness the constitutional powers of the national Government on the other. He therefore denounced secession as tending inevitably to disintegration and the ultimate destruction of all Government. In the spring of 1861, while the convention at Richmond was passing the ordinance of secession, he was a delegate to the Union Convention at Parkersburg, that nominated Hon. John S. Carlisle for Congress. . No man in the Southern section of the State took a more determined stand for the Union than did James H. Brown. He was a delegate to the Wheeling Convention in 1861 that rescued the western portion of Virginia from the vortex of secession and rebellion, and was, also a member of the Legislature of the Restored Government of Virginia. He was a leading spirit in both of these bodies, which were practically

in session at the same time.

He was elected Judge of the 18th Judicial Circuit of Virginia in the winter of 1861-2, and it is a remarkable fact that not one of his decisions was ever appealed to a higher court. In 1863 he was elected to the Convention that formed a Constitution for the new State of West Virginia. May 28, 1863 he was elected a Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia which office he filled with conspicuous ability for the full term of eight years. After the expiration of his term as a Supreme Judge, he resumed the practice of his profession at Charleston. He was again twice nominated by his party (he became a Republican in 1861) for the office of a Supreme Judge, and was defeated, along with the rest of the ticket. In 1882 he was nominated and elected by the Republicans a Member of the House of Delegates of West Virginia from Kanawha County, and was the acknowledged leader of his party in that assembly. Judge Brown was twice his party's candidate for Congress in the 3rd West Virginia District, first in 1883, at a special election to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of John E. Kenna, and again in 1886. He was both times defeated but reduced the majority from several thousand to a mere nominal figure.

Judge Brown is a man of marked ability. He is fluent in speech, logical in thought, pleasant in manner. In matters of religion he favors the largest liberty of conscience. He is a Member of the Presbyterian Church, and for many years has been a Ruling Elder.

JOHN S. WITCHER.

The subject of this sketch is at present, a Major and Paymaster in the U. S. Army, stationed at Newport Barracks, Ky, and is a gentleman eminently worthy of the responsible position which he holds, by virtue of a long and honorable record in the military and civil service of his country, an unblemished moral character habitual courtesy and excellent business qualities.

General Witcher affords a pleasing illustration of the virtue of Republican institutions, in fostering honest ambition unblest by the accidents of fortune, and opening the door to honorable distinction for those who struggle faithfully to deserve the favors of the fickle goddess.

He was born July 15, 1839, in Cabell County, Virginia, and is, consequently, in the fifty-first year of his age. His parents, both natives of Virginia, resided on a farm, and young Witcher was brought up to agricultural labor. His father owned slaves, but liberated them before the civil war; and the son was trained from infancy to those Union sentiments which, in the years of early manhood, he so gallantly vindicated with the sword. He received but a common school education and worked on his father's farm until he attained his majority--in 1860. At the Presidential election immediately following, he cast his maiden vote for "Bell and Everett, and the Union".

He labored hard in opposition to the ordinance of secession; rendering himself, thereby, so obnoxious to the prevailing sentiment of Southwestern Virginia that he was placed under arrest by the Confederate authorities. On account of his youthful appearance, and through the influence of friends, he was released, but compelled with his father to seek refuge within the Federal lines which had by that time (in 1861) extended across the Ohio border some distance into Virginia. In this situation he remained until the movement to restore and reorganize the State Government of Virginia commenced. Mr. Witcher took an active part in said movement

and on the establishment of the new order he was elected by the loyal citizens of his native county, Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts of Cabell County. His new position was perilous because of constant raids by Confederate guerillas, to whom he was a mark for special vengeance. His many escapes from capture, while guarding the records in his charge amidst the wild forests of the Guyandotte form a romantic episode in the early history of our civil war. It was treason to the Confederacy and the Old State, to accept, or hold office under the restored Government; and had young Witcher been taken, his doom would have been that of a traitor.

John S. Witcher was the only man of his race and name who thus rallied to the defense of the old flag. Scattered over Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri they all took arms against their native land, while he, alone remained to defend her. This situation continued until the Confederate General Loring, raided the Kanawha Valley in 1862. Mr. Witcher then resigned, and in September of that year, enlisted as a private soldier in the United States Army. He was in a short time, promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant, and Commissioned by the Governor of restored Virginia to recruit a Company of Cavalry for the Union service. He speedily raised a full company of native West Virginians and received in rapid succession the appointments of First Lieutenant and Captain therein. On reporting with his company to the Governor, at Wheeling Captain Witcher and his men were, by special request of His Excellency, mounted, armed, and equipped in the very best manner then known to the service.

The company thus raised by Captain Witcher was incorporated as Company "G", into the Third Regiment of West Virginia Cavalry. A portion of this regiment was assigned to the Army of the Potomac; the rest, including Company "G", were ordered to duty ~~xxxxxxxx~~ as scouts in the Department of the Kanawha. This Department was then under the command of Col. R.B. Hayes, of the 23rd Ohio Volunteers, and the West Virginia detachment of Captain Wheeler was to co-operate with that regiment, under

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general command of Colonel Hayes. Captain Witcher's company rendered valuable services in this, their first field. Their lines extended across the country south of the Great Kanawha River, from Charleston to Guyandotte, and the Big Sandy, on the Kentucky border. They soon became a terror to the ever marauding bands of Confederate guerillas, and in six months they captured five hundred Confederate soldiers and some thirty odd commissioned officers C.S.A. besides large quantities of arms, munitions and supplies, turning them over to the Federal authorities. Captain Witcher's efficiency in this constant warfare induced his Commander and friend Colonel Hayes, to give him a battallion of Cavalry and a company of infantry, and to grant the request of the people in that disputed territory to whom Captain Witcher had endeared himself, by continuing him in the same service.

Captain Witcher, with his increased command, effectually guarded the Kanawha country from raiders, and protected the river lines of communication and transport. These services resulted in his promotion to the rank of Major--although the junior of twelve Captains in his regiment--an event in the fall of 1863.

At this time the regiment was ordered to rendezvous at Charleston to perfect its organization; after which it was transferred to the command of General Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley. On its arrival in the new field it was assigned to the brigade of General W. W. Averill. The Confederate general, McCausland, at the same time raided Southern Pennsylvania and raided Chambersburg. Averill's brigade, with Major Witcher's command, was dispatched to intercept, and capture the invading Confederates. Averill pursued McCausland through Pennsylvania, and into West Virginia. He overtook him at Moorfield, on the Potomac July 7, 1864 and engaged him before daylight of that morning, Witcher's regiment leading the charge. The enemy was utterly routed, and fled, leaving the most of his men dead, wounded and prisoners, and losing large quantities of arms, munitions, plunder, and supplies. In this action the West Virginia regiment was commanded by the gallant Major S.B. Conger, brother of the Hon. O. D. Conger, a distinguished representative in Congress, from Michigan.

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Conger fell early in the action, and the command was assumed by Major S. B. Witcher, after his horse had been shot under him. He led the regiment to victory, losing two officers and thirteen enlisted men in the fight. The victorious brigade then returned to the Shenandoah, and his regiment was assigned to the brigade of General George A. Custer, with whom it served until the close of the war, Major Witcher continuing in command. During the rest of the campaign the regiment participated in the subsequent battles of Carter's farm, Newtown, Winchester, Bunker Hill, Martinsburg, Hagerstown, Hancock, Moorfield, Martinsburg (second), Bunker Hill (second), Buckletown, Bunker Hill (third), Steverson Depot, Winchester (second), Fisher's Hill, Mt. Jackson, Brown's Gap (two fights), Milford, (two fights), Front Royal, Mt. Jackson (second), and Ninevah.

In February, 1865, Major Witcher and his regiment were specially detailed for service with Generals Sheridan and Custer on their memorable march to Petersburg and Richmond. On the march they took part in the battle of Waynesborough where the remnant of Early's Army was captured. Arrived before Petersburg Major Witcher participated in all the fights around that city, including the three days contest at Five Forks, where Sheridan turned the Confederate flank, compelling the evacuation of Richmond and the flight of the Southern Army towards Appomattox. In the actions attending the pursuit which followed, Major Witcher had a hand, sharing in the charge at Harker's plantation and Sailor's Creek, and leading that of Deep Creek. The latter charge was so dashing and brilliant as to merit special commendation.

After acting as Special Escort to General Grant and staff from Dinwiddie Court House, Virginia, to Appomattox, on the morning of the surrender, and witnessing the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox Major Witcher's regiment started with the Army of General Grant to re-inforce General Sherman, then beleaguering Johnston, in North Carolina. But on reaching the State line and receiving news of Johnston's surrender, the army returned to Petersburg, and thence to Washington.

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Lieutenant Colonel D. H. Strother (Port Crayon), had hitherto been nominal commander of the Third West Virginia Cavalry; but he was absent the whole time on staff duty with with General Hunter, and resigned his nominal command when all was over. Major Witcher was, on the earnest recommendation of Generals Custer and Sheridan, thereupon appointed Lieutenant Colonel, to fill the vacancy. The application to the Governor of West Virginia for his appointment was as follows:

Headquarters Third Cavalry Division. M. M. D.

Nottoway C. H. April 6, 1865.

F.P.Pierpont, A. Gen'l, W. Va.

Gen'l and C.:

I have the honor to recommend Major John S. Witcher, Third West Virginia Cavalry, for promotion to Lieutenant Colonelcy in his regiment, which place, I have been informed, is vacant. If there was a higher place in his regiment vacant I would certainly recommend him for it. He has commanded his regiment throughout this perilous campaign with marked abil ity and gallantry.

Very respectfully, your ob'dt ser'vt,

H. Capehart,

Col. Com'dg, Third Cav.Div., M.M.D.

On this recommendation General George A. Custer, with his own hand, made the following endorsement:

Headquarters Third Div. Cav. April 16, 1865.

Among the many gallant soldiers from West Virginia, I know of none more worthy of or deserving that Major Witcher. He has distinguished himself in every engagement of the present campaign by his daring and energy. I concur fully in the recommendation of Colonel Capehart.

George A. Custer,

Br't Maj. Gen'l Com'dg.

Such an endorsement from such a source, when the recent tragic end of the hero who wrote it is considered, imparts a heroic ECLAT to the record of our soldier, and entitles him to a lofty niche in the temple of his country's fame, from which no man who loves the Great Republic would wish to dislodge him. The application was cheerfully granted. The President (Johnson) soon after brevetted him Colonel "for gallant and meretorious services" in the Shenandoah campaign; and Brigadier General "for gallant and meretorious services" before Richmond and Petersburg in the spring of 1865, especially for a charge led by him at Ford's Station, on the South-side Railroad.

The reports of the Adjutant General of West Virginia for 1864-5, make special and honorable mention of the last named services, and so blazons his name in the galaxy that flecks his country's record.

After participating with his command in the grand review at Washington, D.C. and the ovations that welcomed the returning brave, General Witcher was ordered to Wheeling; and was there mustered out of service in July, 1865.

The career of General Witcher since his retirement from the volunteer service has been in keeping with the successful record which he made on the field. Soon after his return home he was, in 1866, elected as a Republican to represent his native county in the Legislature of West Virginia. He served for a term with honor to himself, his country, and his State. Although an uncompromising Republican, he has always been regarded a liberal one. Ever, when expedient, fearlessly advocating his own and his party's principles, he never unnecessarily offended the prejudices or wounded the feelings of any who differed from him on great National questions. His kind and gentlemanly bearing to his opponents has had the effect which he often describes in saying, "that his very best friends and neighbors are amongst those who fought against him in the late war."

In 1867 he was elected Secretary of State and served two years, when he was elected to the Forty-first Congress from the Third Congressional District of West

Virginia, defeating Hon. Charles P. T. Moore, the Democratic candidate. General Witcher was re-nominated by his party for the Forty-second and Forty-third Congresses; but was in each case, defeated by his Democratic opponent, Hon. Frank Hereford. After his first defeat, and ~~with~~ at the expiration of his term in Congress General Witcher was appointed by General Grant, Collector of Internal Revenue for the Third Revenue District of the State. In this office he served for five years, when the office lapsed because of the consolidation of the District with the First. His administration was crowned with the gratifying notice from the accounting officers of the Treasury, that his accounts were found to be all correct, and were allowed. During his tenure of the office he was appointed by the State to represent it in refunding the State's interest in the Covington and Ohio Railroad. At a meeting held soon after, in Richmond, Virginia, the road was transferred to its present Owners, and its name merged in that of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, with which it was consolidated. General Witcher was elected a Director of the new consolidation, and took an active part in transferring the State's interests to the present management, that has opened up this great National Highway.

In 1878 President Hayes appointed him United States Marshall for the Territory of Idaho. On visiting the territory and observing the situation, he declined the office, though strongly urged to hold it, by the most prominent and responsible citizens of the Territory. He was then appointed United States Pension Agent for the District, comprising the District of Columbia, the States of Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey; the Soldier's Homes, and all pensioners residing abroad; with office in Washington city. The heavy responsibilities of this office requiring adequate security, the new Agent had to meet the demand of the Department for a bond in the penalty of half a million dollars, secured by unincumbered real estate. Although this was, under the circumstances, an enormous amount, and the people of his section of West Virginia are generally poor, his friends, irrespective of party, came to his assistance, and promptly staked their hard-earned fortunes

of a life-time, upon his integrity. This wonderful confidence was not misplaced.

The rolls of the Agency carried 20,000 names of pensioners, residing in every State of the Union and on every continent of the globe, to be paid quarterly. Notwithstanding the annual disbursements involved touch three millions of dollars, warranted by seventy odd thousand vouchers, General Witcher's administration brought no unsatisfied complaints from pensioners, or animadversion from the Government, nor censure from the press. This is wonderful, considering the embarrassments attending the course of such claims. The papers were often executed by incompetent and inexperienced officials, and must be legally and technically correct to "pass muster". Confusion and mistakes may arise from changes of residence, erroneous or incorrect Post Office addresses and fraudulent interference. Never-the-less, General Witcher's indefatigable attention and care carried immunity from such difficulties.

After serving in this position for over two years, his health, which had been materially impaired and under-mined by exposure and hardships during the War of the Rebellion, gave way to that extent that he was admonished that he must give up a place that was otherwise congenial and remunerative, or prepare for the worst. Upon making the situation known to his old and steadfast friend, President Hayes, between whom and himself for the past twenty years there had been, and still exists a warm friend-ship, the President at once, and of his own accord, without one word of line of recommendation from anyone, sent to the Senate General Witcher's name as Paymaster, with the rank of Major in the United States Army. The National Republican, published in Washington, D.C., in noticing the change, said:

"The NATIONAL REPUBLICAN has already announced the resignation of General John S. Witcher as United States Pension Agent at Washington, and his appointment by the President as Paymaster in the United States Army. This change has been

sought by General Witcher from sanitary considerations, alone. He has held the position of Pension Agent at this point for over two years, and has devoted himself to the discharge of his duties with an assiduity of purpose and labor that has over-taxed his constitution and under-mined his health. It was this consideration, alone that prompted him to surrender this position for another that will afford him more out-of-door activity, which he confidently hopes may re-invigorate his system and restore his health. No officer of the Government has applied himself more constantly to his duties than has General Witcher to the pension office during the entire period of his official relation. In season, and out of season he has been at his desk, caring for the entire detail of the business. Each pensioner, aggregating some twenty thousand, has been promptly and cheerfully paid, a task which involves much care and personal attention.

"Those conversant with the business of the pension office bear testimony to the fidelity and correctness with which a large sum of money has been disbursed, and the satisfactory manner in which the varied duties have been discharged. He leaves this position to enter upon his new field of usefulness, bearing with him the universal respect of all who have any knowledge of his official character, and are at all conversant with his industrious, methodical and correct habits in performing the duties and discharging the responsibilities of the important trust he is about to vacate."

"After taking the oath of office and filing the required bond as Paymaster, he was ordered by the War Department to report in person to the Commanding General, Military Division of the Pacific, for duty; and upon reporting he was by that officer ordered to report to the General commanding the Department of Arizona, and was assigned to duty with station at Tucson, Arizona Territory, where, in connection with his duties as Paymaster, he had a good opportunity to study the Indian problem. The Apache Indians were on the war path the greater part of the time of his service in

in that Territory, necessarily made his service hazardous in the extreme, as he had to travel through the heart of the San Carlos Indian Reservation to reach some of the extreme forts and temporary camps on the Mexican border, which he was ordered to pay. In making these trips it was a common occurrence to come upon the lifeless and mangled remains of some soldier, prospector, or ranchman who had fallen a victim to the murderous and blood thirsty Apaches. Shortly after one of their most barbarous and destructive raids that was ever made on the frontier, General O. B. Wilcox, then commanding the Department of Arizona, appointed General Witcher President of a Board of Officers; and a full company of cavalry was placed subject to his command, and the Board was ordered to visit such portions of the Territory recently raided by the Indians as they thought best, and report among other things, the number of people murdered, the number and kind and value of stock killed and driven off during the Indian hostilities, occasioned by the outbreak from the San Carlos Indian Reservation; also the whereabouts of the Indians, their movements, routes traveled and such details as might be of service to guard the country in the future. The order was promptly and satisfactorily executed; and the report shows that during one raid, forty-two men were killed, and many wounded, besides much valuable property was burned, stock killed, driven off, &c. This report was forwarded through the General of the Army to the Hon. Secretary of War and a copy furnished to the Hon. Secretary of the Interior. This brief references to his services on the frontier shows that although only a short time in the army, by his soldierly and gentlemanly deportment he had won the confidence and respect of his superior officers.

After serving two years in the Department of Arizona with station at Tucson he was ordered by the War Department to report to the Commanding General, Department of California, and was ordered to take station at the City of San Francisco, California, where he remained for five years. His office in the Department of California was no sinecure, as his duties necessitated his visiting, alternately

Northern and Southern California, and the State of Nevada. In order to reach certain forts he had to travel the greater part of the distance by the old time stage coach; and during his five years of service in the Department of California he traveled some 15,336 miles by rail, and over 7,000 miles by stage coach. A good portion of this travel by stage being through a sage brush and desert country. Often in winter the mercury was down to twenty-five degrees below zero, and in summer the heat was intense and the alkali dust stifling. In addition to this duty General Witcher has paid his share of the troops stationed at forts around the harbors of San Francisco, San Diego, and Humboldt, California. He was ordered from the Pacific Coast to Newport Barracks, Kentucky, where he is now stationed.

General Witcher is still in the prime of life, courteous, obliging, gentlemanly--an officer of the days of yore, and bids fair in his present administration, as in all of his trusts of the past, to come out with the indorsement of his Government and his countrymen generally, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

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JOHNSON NEWLON CAMDEN.

One of the most successful men ~~of~~ our state has ever produced is the subject of this sketch. Hewas born at Collins Settlement, Lewis County, Virginia March 6, 1828. His grandfather emigrated from Maryland to that County about the beginning of the present century and there reared his family, which included four sons, all of whom have made their mark upon the history of the State. One of them, John S. Camden, the father of Johnson N. Camden, inter-married with the Newlon family, of Lewis County, and moved to Sutton, the seat of justice of Braxton County, in the spring of 1838.

Young Johnson N. Camden, one of the children of this marriage, spent his early boyhood in Braxton County. He had the benefit of the limited schooling which that section then afforded. There were no railroad facilities then available. The people who lived along the Elk River depended upon canoe transportation for many of the necessities, as well as luxuries of life, and many of them relied upon the rifle and fishing rod to help out their larders. In these employments unusual skill was developed. The canoemen frequently propelled their trim crafts up the stream at the rate of thirty miles a day, and handled the rifle and rod with equal dexterity. Contests of skill in these directions were frequent, and as a boy young Camden excelled in all of them. As a marksman, he had more than local reputation: his canoe was among the swiftest, and his rod among the most expert. In all the sports of field and river he found never ending delight and his fondness for the scenes where he laid the foundations of a rugged manhood continues in his maturer years. His recollections of them now are among his most pleasant memories, and referring to them long after the cares of business and public life had removed him from their neighborhood he remarked to a friend, "The Elk is the most beautiful river I ever saw; its waters are the clearest, and its wood skirted banks the loveliest in the world."

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In 1842, at the age of fourteen, he went to Weston and entered the office of the County Clerk of Lewis County as an assistant, remaining there a year, or two. Returning to school, he spent two years at the Northwestern Academy at Clarksburg and returned to Braxton, serving a year as Deputy Clerk of the Circuit Court of that County under his Uncle, col. William Newlon. At the age of eighteen he received an appointment to the military academy at West Point, and after two years' study there resigned his cadetship, and taking up a course of legal study, was admitted to the bar in 1851. He served as Commonwealth Attorney of Braxton, and subsequently for Nicholas County, became interested in surveying and secured possession of several tracts of wild lands in these counties, and in 1853 went to Weston in Lewis County, and accepted a position in the bank there, holding it for the next four years. A feeling that he needed more active employment and a wider field induced him to quit the bank in 1857; and soon after, becoming convinced that his abilities lay in the direction of promoting new enterprises and industries rather than in the practice of law, he gave up that profession as a means of livelihood.

Up to this time, his change of employment had doubtless been regarded as a misfortune by his friends, but his varied experience in a limited field fitted him admirably for the wider sphere that awaited him.

In 1859 he turned his attention to the West Virginia oil field, which was just beginning to attract notice at Burning Springs, on the Little Kanawha river. Petroleum had long disturbed the working of the Salt wells at that point and those who operated them, referring to its injurious effect upon the salt, called it "Devil's grease". There was but one oil well at that point which has since become famous in the history of West Virginia petroleum interests, when Mr. Camden organized a working company, leased a piece of land and began boring for oil with the rude appliances then in vogue. The oil lay near the surface. Within a few weeks a stream of crude petroleum poured out so rapidly that no provision could be made to control, or store it, and, as a temporary measure, it was run through troughs into an old

flat-boat in the Little Kanawha, a few rods distant. Fortunately, two thousand oil barrels had been forwarded a few days previously from New York to General Karnes, the owner of the only other well in that section. His well was not then producing. The barrels were turned over to Mr. Camden, filled by hand from the flat-boat and shipped to Parkersburg, and the results of this first week's work to the company which he controlled, was about \$23,000.00. This success induced a speculative fever, of which Mr. Camden was quick to take advantage. The property was being rapidly taken up or leased, when he effected an arrangement to purchase one-half of the Rathbone tract from its owner, Mr. Rathbone for \$100,000.00 and to work it thenceforth in connection with that gentleman.

The would-be purchaser had scarcely a tenth of the sum required, but investors, having faith in his sagacity came forward with offers for an interest with him; and he was able to sell three fourths of his contract for \$100,000.00 and secure a fourth as his profit on the transaction. What the result of this enterprise would have been if the proposed arrangement for the developing the tract had been carried out, cannot be told. The civil war came on soon after the transfer of the property was made, the absence of many of the parties interested and who went South with the Confederacy, interfered with the payment of the consideration agreed upon and the contract was finally cancelled by mutual consent. The West Virginia oil field being part of the debatable ground of the two armies and subject to hostile raids, soon became comparatively deserted. Nevertheless, Mr. Camden did a profitable business there during the next three years. He arranged a partnership with John and J.C. Rathbone, the original owners of a most profitable oil tract, and developed that and other property in the West Virginia belt. Their business increased so that banking facilities were needed; and in the early part of 1862 the First National Bank of Parkersburg, one of the most successful banking institutions of the State, was organized, with Mr. Camden as its President. During

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these years it is safe to say that he owned an interest, with one exception, in every oil-producing territory in the State of West Virginia, and the history of its oil producing interests would be lacking its central figure if the part he took in its development were left unwritten.

In 1864 Mr. Camden made another change in his business, and perhaps no single act of his life better proved his keen foresight and accurate judgment in business matters at that time. During the early years of the war the Pennsylvania oil region began to take the lead in petroleum interests. The Pennsylvania oil tract was larger than that of West Virginia, and its wells were more enduring and reliable. The capital necessary for development was more readily concentrated there than in the new State, and Mr. Camden rightly judged that it was destined to take precedence as the oil-producing territory of the country. With these points settled he only awaited an opportunity to transfer his capital and energy to another branch of the business. This opportunity came in 1866. In that year he and his partners sold their ~~xxxxxxx~~ property on the Little Kanawha to parties in New York for \$410,000.00, and abandoning almost entirely the business of producing petroleum, began the work of refining the oil products of West Virginia and neighboring territory. He and his associates built ample storage tanks at Parkersburg and erected an extensive refinery at that point, which soon built up an extensive and profitable business. The diminution of the West Virginia oil field which had been anticipated followed later, and the refinery at Parkersburg was frequently embarrassed for want of crude oil sufficient to run its stills, and while considering ways and means of obviating this difficulty, Mr. Camden came in contact with the Standard Oil Company which was then just beginning its commercial career; and recognizing the futility of continuing independent action in the limited field which he had hitherto occupied, he formed the alliance with the Standard, known as the Camden Consolidated Oil Company, which was intended to embrace a friendly union of all refining interests in West Virginia. With this combination began

Mr. Camden's wonderful financial career, which thenceforth and until this time has been one of unbroken prosperity. The Standard Oil Company, quick to recognize his executive ability, made him one of its Directors and gave him personal control of its West Virginia and Maryland combinations. The Parkersburg Refinery became one of the great sources of supply for the South and West, and so continued until the necessities of trade and commerce required the transfer of a portion of its business to the sea coast. During its best years more than 300,000 barrels of refined oil were turned out annually, and upwards of 15,000,000 of staves were used each year in the manufacture of the barrels in which the oil was transported to the market. When the export business of the combination reneccitated the removing of the refining interest to the sea board, Mr. Camden brought about the union of the oil refineries of Baltimore under the single management of the Baltimore Inited Oil Company, an organization with \$1,000,000.00 capital, of which he was elected President.

No portion of Mr. Camden's history has more fully demonstrated his business capacity than the successful establishment of these, and other enterprises in connection with the Standard Oil Company and more fully measures up the matchless commercial success of that organization. Some one has said that the growth of that corporation is "the romance of commerce." It stands without a rival among the corporate bodies in the trade of the world. From small beginnings it has expanded until it controls the oil trade of the globe". Its success is the result of invincible energy, shrewd organization and patient fidelity to the details of a great enterprise and creative genius, which rank among the most conspicuous traits of Mr. Camden's character, are the elements which have made it powerful.

In an article contributed by Mr. Camden to the North American Review of February, ^{*}1822, the work accomplished by it is referred to; and as in most of it he has borne some part, a portion of the article then furnished would

** mistake?*

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seem to belong to this biography.

After reviewing the history of perroleum since the opening of the first oil well in Pennsylvania, August 28, 1859, down to the year 1882, and admitting that to our national characteristics is to be largely attributed the unprecedented development of the American petroleum industry. he refers to the agencies t rough which it was wrought. "The specifica agency through which this development has been mainly effected," he wrote, "is the organization known as the Standrad Oil Company, which may be defined to be an association of business houses united under one management in such a manner as to insure harmony of interests and a consolidation of capital adequate to any possible business emergency, yet each retaining its individuality and even competing sharply with the others.

"In order to appreciate what the Standard Oil Company has achieved it is first necessary to glance at the ondition of the oil industry at the time when this company entered it. All the circumstances surrounding the first production of petroleum tended to make it an unbusiness-like enterpeise. The novelty of the article, the romance of the search for it in the wilderness, the sudden and fabulous wealth that rewarded success, all these attracted, especially the unsettled and adventurous elements of the community and made the oil regions in 1865 almost the counter-part of California fifteen years before + + + * + + In such a condition of affairs the state of the oil industry was, of course, deplorable from a business stand-point. The universality of speculation, the utter disregard of the laws of supply and demand, aggravated by the haste of each land owner to multiplt his wells and get as large a share as possible of the underlying oil pool which his neighbors were sucking up; the lack of handling facilities resulting in prodigal waste, the appar~~ant~~ instability of the whole business which was hourly expected to vanish--and in many instances did vanish as suddenly as it had appeared--all this conspired to

make the oil regions a pandemonium of excitement and confusion, and the simple statement of a man's connection with oil was a severe blow to his credit. The refining of oil at this early period was on a basis but little better than its production. Processes were extremely crude, and their product would be today unmerchandise for illuminating purposes. Still, the demand for it was great and growing, and refineries multiplied. The competent and the incompetent rushed into the business in shoals until the refining capacity of the country was more than three times that for consumption. Reaction, failures, and demoralization were the inevitable consequences.

"The refiners recognized the dangerous and demoralized condition into which their excessive capacity had brought them. The world would take only so much refined oil as it needed for immediate consumption, and no more; and the manufactured article, unlike the crude, could not be stored for any length of time. Various efforts were made to correct the evils of over-production, through pools and running arrangements, restricting capacity; but pools were broken and agreements were ineffectual until the lowest ebb in the oil business was reached. By this time bankruptcy had overtaken a large portion of the refining interest and was threatening all. Such in general, was the situation out of which was developed the Standard Oil Company as a necessity to arrest the conditions which were driving all connected with the business to bankruptcy and ruin. To limit production was impossible. The extent of the oil field was a matter of conjecture, while the number of persons who would engage in boring wells and in prospecting for new territory was without limit. Leaving production, therefore, to take care of itself, the labors of the Standard Company were concentrated upon the refining interest with the object of stopping the disastrous over-production of the manufactured products. Without entering into the details of their progress, how the principal interests were first united under the management of the Standard Company, and how others gradually came into co-operation, while those less hopeful of the future of

the business were bought out for money; how ineligibly located, or poorly equipped refineries were dismantled, and others better adapted to their purposes were improved--it is only necessary to state that their success was such as to vindicate the wisdom of their broad plans and to establish the superiority of their business methods. It did more than this. It demonstrated that under such firm and intelligent control the oil business had possibilities which the doubting ones, and the public, generally had not seen; and this demonstration was followed by an antagonism to the company such as all great and successful organizations have to meet. How these possibilities have been developed is indicated by the facts that a day's work of the Standard at this time involves among other things, the handling of more than 60,000 barrels of oil, the putting together of ninety tons of tank iron, and the making of 100,000 tin cans holding five gallons of refined oil each, and 25,000 oak barrels, to hoop which requires 150 tons of iron.

"But, while a commanding position in refining was thus being won, the Standard managers were equally active in the mechanical and chemical departments of the business. Under their direction, the process of refining was improved more rapidly than ever before. Oils grew better, cheaper, and more uniform; and as the problems of distribution were grasped and solved, the markets for these products widened continually. In a word, the phenomenal genius for organization which all concede to the Standard, produced its natural results throughout the entire business; and from being one of the most irregular and unprofitable of American industries, oil refining and selling became thoroughly systematized and in the train of system followed economy and success.

"The question of oil transportation and storage early engaged the attention of the Standard corporation. At the outset the methods of carrying oil were as primitive as might be expected. Imperfect barrels, carried upon wagons were jolted to and fro upon the corduroy roads which connected with the streams, where rafts and

flat boats received them for further laborious transportation. With such methods as these and a universal craze for well boring, it is small wonder that a large proportion of the oil brought to the surface had to seak back into the earth or float off through the water courses of the vicinity.

"This condition of things however did not last long. Rainroads were built, tank cars invented, and finally in 1865, iron pipes began to be laid, to bring oil from the wells. During the ten years following, a number of pipe line companies were organized for running and storing the crude liquid. Each company covered certain territory and producers availed themselves of the pipe line facilities. Each producer received a certificate of deposit for his oil, redeemable in oil at any time on payment of storage charges. These certificates, which were not negotiable, were influenced somewhat in value by the pecuniary standing of the company, but more particularly affected by the nature of the territory the pipe line covered. It was like Old State Bank currency. Outside of its particular territory a pipe line certificate was at a discount. In 1877 the Standard Oil Company consolidated these various organizations under its own control as the United Pipe Lines. The result is that today an oil certificate, like a greenback, is as good in one part of the country as another and can be negotiated at any of our commercial centres.

"These brief statements however, give only an outline of what the Standard Oil Company has accomplished. It has been the instrument, if not the cause, of almost the whole development of the oil industry, production excepted, during the last decade; of vastly improving and bringing to uniformity all oil manufactures; of cheapening these latter to an unprecedented degree and pushing the introduction of American petroleum to the remotest parts of the earth; of furnishing employment to a host of men equal in number to the standing army of the United States, and of giving an impulse to prosperity to every locality in which its operations are conducted. It has probably had less trouble with its enormous laboring force

than any other corporation of comparable importance in the world."

One phase of Mr. Camden's career has commended him to the admiration and affection of West Virginians has been his constant attention to the development of his native State. At home, or abroad, whether engaged in enterprises which required the world for a field of action, or those which were limited to his own immediate neighborhood, he has never lost faith in the promise of the State as a mining, manufacturing, commercial and agricultural centre, nor ceased his efforts to bring out its magnificent possibilities. When he began his work in the Valley of the Little Kanawha the various sections of the State were unconnected by any satisfactory or reliable means of communication. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad connected the Northern and the Eastern Panhandles; but the Northern and Southern portions of the State were practically disconnected during a considerable portion of the year, and water transportation between them was at all times limited and unreliable, while the interior of the State still lay remote from the paths of progress and development. The improvement of the Little Kanawha River and the establishment of ~~water~~ slackwater ~~transportation~~ navigation from Parkersburg was the first public enterprise in which Mr. Camden bore a part, in connection with General Jackson and other enterprising citizens of the Little Kanawha Valley, and the work still stands as the pioneer of the splendid system of river and harbor improvements now in progress on other streams of the Commonwealth. By the time this improvement was established he had made his earliest ^{successful} ventures in developing the oil interests of the State, and it is characteristic of the man that with the first fruits of his enterprise he undertook to open up the section in which his boyhood days were spent and around which his fondest associations clustered.

He joined in the project of a narrow gauge railroad between Clarksburg and Weston, and with his accustomed vigor, pushed it through to successful completion. Once established, its successful management demonstrated the availability of the narrow gauge system as a means of developing other portions of the ~~State~~ interior of the

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and the result was its extension to Buchanan, in Upshur County, and the incorporation of the narrow gauge railroads which are reaching out to the County seats of Braxton, Gilmer, Jackson, and other counties of the State hitherto inaccessible by railroad transit.

Still later he joined with ex-Senator Henry G. Davis and others, in the construction of the West Virginia Central Railroad now running from Piedmont, in Mineral County, through the Elk Garden coal section beyond Fairfax stone, and which is likely in the near future, to have connections with Tidewater at Alexandria and the coal sections of the Kanawha Valley. Of the Ohio River railroad, now opened between Wheeling and Huntington, it may be said that its existence is mainly due to Mr. Camden's zeal and energy. Begun as the Wheeling, Parkersburg and Charleston Railroad, and having as its primary object the bringing of Charleston, the State Capitol, into closer connection with other important sections of the State, the completion of the Kanawha and Ohio from Point Pleasant on the Ohio, to Charleston, required only the construction of the present Ohio River railroad, a distance of only 171 miles along the lowlands of the Ohio Valley from Wheeling to Point Pleasant, to bring the two extremities of the State into close communion. This work has been successfully accomplished. In its construction Mr. Camden not only has the largest money interest, but he may be said to have furnished the means for its construction, the great bulk of the investment having been subscribed by his business friends and associates, who pinned their faith upon his judgment of the enterprise. More than this, he has given his personal attention and care to the details of the work, pushing it through seasons of apathy and disaster as earnestly as in seasons of enthusiasm and success; and whatever may be its future, he may point to the work accomplished as an earnest of his patient, resolute endeavor to succeed.

A glance at the map shows the present and prospective value of the State of the railroad enterprises which Mr. Camden has been largely instrumental in securing. As before stated, the Ohio River Railroad follows the Ohio River from Wheeling to Huntington, and at Point Pleasant connects with the Kanawha and Ohio, furnishing a

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through route from Wheeling to Charleston, the State Capital and the coal fields of the Upper Kanawha.

River

The Monongahela Railroad from Fairmont to Clarksburg develops one of the finest coal fields in the State, it being a continuation of the Pittsburgh and Connellsville veins into West Virginia. In connection with this road Mr. Camden also organized a Coal and Coke Company in which he is largely interested, with a capital of two million dollars, for the development of the coal and the erection of coke ovens along the line of the road. This company has purchased a large amount of coal and has five hundred coke ovens about completed. It is believed that this coal field that remained neglected so long, is destined to make West Virginia the rival of the Pennsylvania fields of the same veins of coal, both for fuel and coke. This enterprise, of itself, is sufficient to entitle Mr. Camden to the highest consideration of the people of West Virginia, as it will likely also prove the most important of all his undertakings.

The Clarksburg, Weston and Midland Road connects with the Monongahela River railroad at Clarksburg and forms a continuation of the same line to Weston and thence to Braxton C.H. on Elk River. These roads also form a direct line from Elk River by way of the Monongahela Valley and Morgantown to Pittsburgh. The road from Weston to Buchanan, and thence up the Buchanan River in the direction of Webster C.H. opens up a vast territory of country, rich in timber, minerals and good lands which would have remained practically inaccessible except for railroad facilities. These, with other roads projected by Mr. Camden, will probably leave him without a rival in substantial improvements to his State.

A former biographer has noted one phase of Mr. Camden's career which is worthy of remark and emulation. He has never been a dickerer or speculator. He never organized a company into which he did not put his own money and energy, and in

his creations and operations he has been governed by broad business principles.

Mr. Camden's political life has been marked by the same boldness and vigor which appear so prominently in his business history. He came to the front in 1867 as a leader in the movement to enfranchise citizens of the state who had been denied the right of suffrage for their adherence to the fortunes of the Southern Confederacy. The Conservative party, as those who supported this movement were termed nominated him for Governor a year later, and he made an aggressive and well organized campaign, but the operation of the disfranchising statutes reduced his support to the extent that he was defeated by 2,500 majority. During the two years following an amendment was submitted to repeal this disfranchising clause of the State Constitution and modify other clauses of it not in harmony with amendments to the Federal Constitution already adopted. Mr. Camden endorsed the proposed amendment throughout and thereby prevented his re-nomination by the Democratic party of the State in 1870, but in 1872 the Democrats of the State again made him their standard bearer, with the exception of those who united with the Republicans to defeat the new Constitution of the State, adopted in that year. This combination again deferred Mr. Camden's success, but rendered him none the less prominent among the leaders of his party. He had a large and devoted support in the Senatorial contest of 1874, and in 1880 was almost the unanimous choice of the Democratic caucus for a second term, but by means of a disaffection in his party's ranks--the majority on joint ballot being small--he was not re-elected, although he had the power to name and elect the gentleman who succeeded him March 4, 1887.

As a Senator Mr. Camden was a worker rather than a talker, although he has the faculty of expressing his views clearly and forcefully when the necessity arises. His business experience, added to the professional training of his younger years enabled him to take hold intelligently of the varied questions presented for the consideration of the Senate, and close attention to the duties of his position and courteous bearing towards his associates gave him a position and influence in

body which enabled him to represent the State ably and efficiently. After retiring from the Senate Mr. Camden was urged by his party friends to allow his name to be used in connection with a nomination for the Gubernatorial office. He refused, declaring his intention of retiring from ~~business~~ politics, and at the same time stating that by giving his entire time and energies to the development of the great natural resources of his native State, he hoped to be able to prove himself, to some extent, a benefactor of his fellow citizens. This was a wise determination, for with his vast means and wide acquaintance with wealthy and influential men in other States, by the carrying out of the vast public enterprises in which he is now engaged, he will rear for himself a monument that party dissenters cannot tear down, and which will cause his name to be remembered for generations to come.

Mr. Camden's personal appearance is a very fair index of his mental characteristics. Heavily framed, his tall, stout figure still suggests the military training of his early days although time has rounded out its ample outlines. A good grey head and beard likewise whitened with "the snow that never melts", show the advance of age, but there is no suggestion of antiquity in his firm movement, and his whole appearance indicates a vigorous and well-sustained physical organization. Keen grey eyes, a prominent nose, and lips that close firmly under a clipped mustache give his countenance a firm look in repose; but the features lighten up with animation in conversation, and the general expression is pleasant and kindly. Ordinarily slow of speech and guarded in his statements, choosing his words with deliberation and evidently weighing his remarks well before giving them utterance, his manner, as well as his matter inspires confidence in business conversation, and conveys the impression of a modest and careful, but self-contained and resolute character, cautious in forming conclusions, but ready to act upon them when formed. In social intercourse there are few men more entertaining and attractive. A good liver, hospitable and generous, true to his friends and singularly free from continued resentments,

with the ability to separate himself entirely from business cares, in social circles and a mind cultivated by reading, travel and observation, he can adapt himself readily to any surroundings, and there are few people thrown into social communication with him who do not become his admiring friends.

In his domestic life he has been as fortunate as in his business and political career. In 1858 he was married to Miss Anna Thompson, daughter of the late Judge George W. Thompson, of Wheeling. Two children of this marriage, a son and daughter, are still living, and with their mother make up a home circle of marked cultivation and refinement.

JAMES HARVEY FERGUSON.

James H. Ferguson was born April 14, 1817, in Montgomery County, Virginia. In 1835 he removed to Barboursville, Cabell County, where he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1840. In 1845 he removed to the County of Logan and was elected Prosecuting Attorney of that County, which office he filled until the year 1848, when he was elected a Member of the House of Delegates of Virginia from the Counties of Logan and Boone. He was re-elected to the same office in each year until 1851, when a new Constitution of the State was adopted. In 1850, while a Member of the House of Delegates, he was elected a Member of the Constitutional Convention of 1850-51 from the District composed of the Counties of Mason, Putnam, Cabell, Wayne, Boone, Wyoming, and Logan and was consequently a Member of both bodies at the same time. On his first appearance in the Legislature he was made a Member of the Judiciary Committee--the most important committee of the body--and at each session thereafter, until the close of his service, he was Chairman of that Committee. During his service as a Member of that Legislature, the country was in a state of great excitement over the question of slavery, and especially over the celebrated "Willmot Proviso" which had been offered to a bill in the Congress of the United States to prohibit slavery in any territory acquired from Mexico by a treaty of peace with that country. A protracted discussion was had in the Legislature over this proviso, in which he participated, taking the Southern view of the question. But his remedy for all such legislation by Congress was nullification, and not secession. He always opposed a dissolution of the Union, and long before the commencement of the late civil war, he gave up the doctrine of nullification, rightfully concluding that a State could not be practically both in and out of the Union at the same time. He supported the great compromise of 1850, of the slavery question in its relation to the territories of the United States, brought forward by Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, and adopted by Congress. Entertaining these views he regarded it as his duty to support the Government in all its measures to defend,

protect and perpetuate the Union of the States against the misguided efforts of those who sought to destroy it, and he did so from the commencement to the end of the war. In 1864 he settled again in the County of Cabell, and in the fall of that year was elected to the House of Delegates of West Virginia, and served by re-elections, through the sessions of 1867, 1868, (and extra session), and 1871. At all these sessions except that of 1865 he was Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and at the sessions of 1868 he was Chairman of the joint committee on the revision of the Code of West Virginia, made by the revisors, which Committee was charged with the duty of amending that revision and reporting it to the Legislature for action; and by appointment of the Legislature he prepared and indexed that code (the code of 1868) for publication. At the session of 1865 he introduced a Bill abolishing slavery in West Virginia and succeeded, after much opposition, in securing its passage, after much opposition, in advance of the adoption by any other State, of the Amendment to the Constitution of the United States for that purpose.

In 1868 he was elected Judge of the Circuit Court for the Judicial District composed of the Counties of Logan, Boone, Lincoln, Wayne, and Cabell, for the term of six years; but resigned after a service of one year and seven months, and returned to his practice at the Bar, in which he is now actively engaged, principally as Attorney for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company in West Virginia.

In 1875 he removed to the County of Kanawha, where he now resides. In 1876 he was, together with E.W. Wilson, now Governor of the State, and William A. Quarrier, elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates from Kanawha County; and in 1880 he was again elected, together with the same gentleman, to the same office. At the time of their first election, the permanent location for the seat of Government for the State was the main question in which the County of Kanawha was interested, and they were elected with special reference to that matter. At the request of his distinguished colleagues, he took charge of the contest in reference to that question on behalf of the City of Charleston, prepared all the bills offered on the sub-

ject, including that which finally passed the Legislature, and which resulted in making Charleston the permanent seat of Government of the State.

Judge Ferguson's wife was formerly Miss Lizzie A. Creel, daughter of George A. and Prudence S. (nee Spencer) Cook, of Wood County, Virginia. Their home, appropriately called "Grand View" is situated on the crest of the hill south of the Kanawha River which flows at its base, and seems almost to hover over the City of Charleston, beneath. From it, the eye looks out upon the magnificent panorama of hills and vales extending away for miles in distance, as well as upon the limpid stream which pursues its sinuous way along the beautiful Valley of the Kanawha. Their property includes the historic "Hale's Branch," where, a century ago young Hale, on a trip to that spring for a pail of water for the use of his affianced wife, lying sick in the fort on the opposite side of the river, in compliance with a wish expressed by her, was shot and killed by an Indian from the hill beyond. And now, although a hundred years have flown since the life-blood of this heroic youth crimsoned its waters, the spring, the scene of the tragedy, still flows gently on, reminding us of those beautiful lines:

"Men may come, and men may go,

But I flow on forever."

Judge Ferguson, by common consent, is regarded the ablest legislator ever born in Virginia, west of the Blue Ridge. His handiwork is seen in almost every line of the legislation of our State. He is also eminent as a lawyer. But few men in both Virginias can be justly ranked as his equal in that learned profession. Although above the allotted "three score years and ten," he is in good health, and is actively engaged in the practice of his profession.

JAMES MADISON LAIDLEY.

The subject of this sketch was born in Parkersburg, Virginia, January 9, 1809. As was his father before him, he too, is a lawyer by profession. He moved to Kanawha County in early life, and engaged in the practice of his profession, which he unceasingly maintained until recent years. He was compelled to relinquish it because of the encroachments of age. He has been a prominent character in politics and business in the Great Kanawha Valley for more than a generation and has indelibly left his impress upon the times in which he lived.

Mr. Laidley was a Delegate from the County of Augusta, Virginia--while a student at General (afterward Judge) Baldwin's Law School, at Staunton--to the first Young Men's National Whig Convention, at Baltimore, that nominated Mr. Clay for the Presidency in 1832; was a delegate from the Counties of Kanawha, Mason, and Cabell, and Logan (now comprising the territory forming ten counties), to the State Whig Convention at Staunton, that nominated what was called the "double-shot" electoral ticket (Harrison and White) for the Presidency in 1836, and with E.W. Newton, then of Wheeling, were the only two representatives from west of the Alleghanies; was a Member of the Legislature of Virginia in the long session of 1848-49 at Richmond and the Fauquier White Sulphur Springs, that adopted the Code of 1860; was the Whig candidate for Congress from the Eleventh District of Virginia in 1859, in opposition to Albert G. Jenkins, the successful Democratic candidate, who afterwards distinguished himself as a Confederate General. In 1876 he was the candidate of the National Greenback-Labor party for Governor of West Virginia.

While never seeking office voluntarily for himself, there were few more active and successful than he in promoting the laudable aspirations of others--his purse, pen and services being subject to the command of his friends. Mr. Laidley is one of that loyal class of men who accord to others more credit than he claims for himself; and when allusion is made to his disinterested zeal and activity when engaged in a common cause, he insists that it be associated with the efforts that were put forth with his, as he regards them equally unselfish compeers, such as Hon.

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A. W. Quarrier, Colonel James Atkinson, E.W. Newton, Major John M. Doddridge (now of Wheeling) and Colonel Joel Ruffner--all but one of these men having rested from their labors. The profession of law has been his chief pursuit; that of salt manufacturer and its kindred branches of trade, for many years engaged much of his attention.

While taking no active part in the civil war that resulted in the formation of the State of West Virginia, as a State's Rights Whig he deemed his highest allegiance due to the Mother State--yet zealously fought against secession as neither rightful, nor expedient, and wholly incompatible with the Federal compact of Union. But, as the popular will is the very essence of a Democratic Republic, subordination to that will be held to be an imperative duty incumbent upon the citizen. Mr. Laidley takes the position that the most material and important change wrought in our political system by our late civil war is in the entire withdrawal of all control over the finances of the people from the several State Governments, and in rightfully asserting exclusive jurisdiction where the Federal Constitution has lodged it--in Congress; and since 1871; and since 1871 has devoted most of his leisure moments in maintaining the superiority of the Government Treasury Notes as the most perfect symbol of paper money that human ingenuity can devise--maintaining that the real independence of the people cannot otherwise be ~~sustained~~ That the stupendous system of individual and corporate credit, and its counter-part, debt, can never be abolished nor diminished under the existing monetary system; that the debts of the human race throughout the commercial world, which have increased during the last quarter of a century in a ratio almost ten-fold greater than the earth's yield of the precious metals, must continue to be augmented with increasing population and wealth, so long as that system obtains; that, as a "Model Republic" the enlightened world is now looking to us for a remedy commensurate with the evil, and which Mr. Laidley has persistently maintained, can most efficiently be found in the annual issue of full legal tender Treasury notes, ample for all home expenditures of the

GRANVILLE PARKER

This fearless writer and friend to the new State was born in Chelmsford, Massachusetts January 18, 1809, and died in Wellsburg, West Virginia May 10th, 1881. He received a common school education, and like many young men of New England, learned other advantages by teaching. He studied law in vacation hours, and began practice in Lowell, Massachusetts, and afterwards located in Worcester.

At the dawn of the civil war in 1861 he came to Guyandotte, Cabell County, Virginia, having in charge extensive tracts of land throughout the Southwestern counties. Quick in impulses, ardent in temperament, frank and genial in manners, and devoted to the Union of the States, he warmly advocated the restoration of the Virginia government under the Wheeling movement. His versatile and able pen, as well as the eloquence of his tongue, were used in support of his views. He was sent from Cabell County, a delegate to the convention of November 26, 1861, to frame the first constitution of the proposed State. In this important assembly he was a valuable member, largely influencing the fundamental legislation there enacted.

In 1840 he married Eliza A. daughter of Philip True, of Portland, Maine. Upon the death of his daughter, Lizzie G., he published a collection of her poems, which were the inspiration of rare talent and patriotism. Another daughter, Emily T., survives, who now resides in New York City.

In 1875 he collected together many of his articles contributed during the war to the metropolitan journals of the East, and addressed to prominent leaders in and out of Congress, upon the principles involved in the conduct of the war, and subsequent legislation in the South, and published them in a volume of nearly 500 pages, entitled, "The formation of West Virginia, and other Incidents of the late Civil War." In this collection he embraced articles carefully prepared and well worded upon a wide range of subjects, displaying in their treatment a clear perspective of the duties of a citizen, and a mind active, cultured, and devoted to the land he loved and the elevation of his fellow men.

Government, to be indefinitely continued as long as the necessities and convenience of the people may require.

Mr. Laidley's dignified contributions to the literature of financial economy betray a mind highly cultivated and gifted. His articles, innumerable of which have appeared in the journals throughout the country are of that elevated and classic style which never fails to attract the attention of the learned, and critical searchers after truth. A great many people believe with him, that the views of Mr. Laidley will become the accepted doctrine of governmental finance before many years. He was one of the thirteen promoters of the Industrial Union (representing the States of Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia), resulting in the convention at Cincinnati on the twenty-second of February, 1887, and in the organization of the "Union Labor Party". Attaching the highest importance in its legislative aspect that Mr. Laidley does to the money problem, it is not surprising that the fiscal plank in the platform of the new party does not go as far as he deems the exigencies of high civilization demands. He attributes to scarcity of money, alone, not only the prevailing labor troubles, but the rapid growth of monopoly, anarchy, pauperism, and crime. He holds that if the perpetuity of the American Republic is dependent upon the ^{same} enlightened sentiment, particularly when it is universally conceded that paper money is an absolute necessity of the commercial world--for ultimately the choice must be made between the issue of the Government and the issues of banks--the latter resting upon individual responsibility or upon impossible gold and silver.

JAMES HEREFORD MCGINNIS.

Hon. J. H. McGinnis, contestant for a seat in the Fifty-first Congress, was born in Logan County, Virginia, on Pigeon, one of the tributaries of the historic Sandy River July 30, 1834. He is, as the name indicates, and his twinkling eye and ready wit discover, of Irish ancestry. He was educated in the ordinary schools of the locality; taught school at the age of seventeen years; studied law under Judge H. L. Gillespie, and was admitted to the Bar of Raleigh County in 1858. He was elected Prosecuting Attorney of that County shortly after his admission, serving in such capacity for three different terms. From 1867 to 1869 he was law partner with Lieutenant Governor Samuel Price. He married Mary, daughter of Colonel William Williams, of Pike County, Ky.

He ran for Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit in 1880, but was defeated. In 1888 he was nominated for Congress from the Third District, upon the Republican ticket, and so reduced the hitherto Democratic majority as to claim the election on the face of the returns, receiving 19,097 votes against 19,070 votes for John D. Alderson, Democrat, who was awarded the certificate by Governor Wilson on the ground that the vote of Kanawha County, which gave a majority for Mr. McGinnis of 1,304 votes, was hung up under judicial writs and could not be counted for him. He is genial, social in his nature, and has a vein of humor interwoven with all he says or does. His residence is at Raleigh Court House.

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IRA J. MCGINNIS.

Ira J. McGinnis was born in Cabell County, Virginia July 13th, 1832. His paternal ancestors were Scotch-Irish; his maternal, Welsh. His Grandfather, Edmund McGinnis, was born in Frederick County, Virginia, and moved to Greenbrier County, arriving at Guyandotte October 6, 1802. Thus, the record shows three generations "to the manor born".

Ira J. McGinnis was born and reared on a farm near Guyandotte. He had no scholastic advantages above the country "old-field" schools of the day; but a natural love of books and considerable ambition, led him to great studiousness, so much so that without a perceptor and with borrowed books, he attained a scholarship at his majority of which a collegian, of liberal advantages, might well be proud. Of his own choice he studied law, obtained a license to practice, and was admitted to the bar in 1856. Soon after his admission to practice he was elected Prosecuting Attorney of Cabell, his native county, of which his grandfather had been surveyor, Sheriff, and Representative in the General Assembly of Virginia seven sessions, and of which his father had been a Justice for many years; also Sheriff, and representative two sessions in the General Assembly of Virginia. Mr. McGinnis was elected to the State Senate of West Virginia in October, 1874, serving four years: two at Charleston; two at Wheeling. He was an acknowledged leader of his party in the Legislature, being a fluent public speaker and a vigorous debater. He was elected as a Democrat to the office of Judge of the Eighth Judicial Circuit at the October election of 1880, and served the full term of eight years, from January 1, 1881. At the expiration of his term of office he was an independent candidate for re-election, but was defeated by the regular nominee of the Democrat party.

Judge McGinnis is tall of stature, and has a commanding presence. He is courteous and polite, and is generous to a fault. He is a good lawyer and was highly esteemed as a Judge. In 1884 he removed from Guyandotte to the prosperous City of Huntington, where he now resides, and is engaged in the successful practice of his profession.

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ALEXANDER THOMAS LAIDLEY.

Alexander T. Laidley was born April 14, 1807, at Morgantown, Virginia. At the age of thirteen he moved to Cabell County, where he remained until 1824, when he removed to Kanawha County and entered the Clerk's office as a Deputy under his Uncle the late Alexander W. Quarrier. He remained in the Clerk's office for six years and then entered the mercantile business as a bookkeeper in Malden, where he continued for two years. He then went to Wheeling and clerked in a store for a year, and in 1832 he became a Deputy in the Circuit Clerk's office. In 1838 he was appointed Clerk of the Circuit Court of Ohio County, and remained in that position for fourteen years. He returned to Kanawha County in 1854 and has resided in Charleston to the present time. For many years he held the position of Master Commissioner in Chancery, in Kanawha County. In all the positions Mr. Laidley has ever filled he was efficient, courteous and successful. He was twice married. By his first wife a Miss Blaine, who was a cousin of the Hon. James G. Blaine, he had one child, the late Captain Richard Q. Laidley, who died in Charleston in February 1873. His second wife was Miss Rena McFarland, a daughter of the late James C. McFarland, of Kanawha. He had no children by his second wife. Mr. Laidley is esteemed through-out the Kanawha Valley as a man of high, personal character, and as an intelligent, influential citizen. For more than half a century he has been a leading member of the Protestant Episcopal Church.