

COMMEMORATIVE

BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD

—OF—

DUTCHESS COUNTY,

NEW YORK,

CONTAINING

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF PROMINENT AND REPRESENTATIVE
CITIZENS, AND OF MANY OF THE EARLY SETTLED FAMILIES.

—ILLUSTRATED—

CHICAGO:

J. H. BEERS & CO.

1897.

his judicious management, and make one of the best farms of the size in that section.

On January 25, 1849, Mr. Baker married his first wife, Miss Catherine E. Meddaugh, daughter of James Meddaugh, a well-known farmer of the town of Lagrange. Two children were born to them: Annie E., who died at an early age, and Mary, the wife of Court A. Van Voorhis, a farmer in the town of Wappinger. Mrs. Catherine Baker died December 24, 1875, and January 17, 1877, Mr. Baker was united in marriage with Harriet A. Croft, daughter of Henry D. Needham, a farmer in the town of Wappinger.

In politics, Mr. Baker is a Republican, but he does not take an active part in public affairs, preferring a quiet home life and the peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of his past labors.

WILLIS DEAN, a prominent agriculturist, residing near Wappingers Falls, Dutchess county, is one of the most highly respected citizens of that county. He is descended from an old English family, and his ancestors in the American line crossed the Atlantic at a very early period. John Dean, his grandfather, was a leading farmer in the town of Kent, Putnam Co., N. Y., and Niles Dean, our subject's father, succeeded to the homestead, and followed the same occupation. He married Nancy Northrup, also a native of Putnam county, and reared a family of nine children: Milton, a farmer in Putnam county; Rensselaer, a carpenter in Patterson, N. Y.; Anner, who married Philip Smith, a farmer in Steuben county, N. Y., both now deceased; Willis, our subject; Ursula (deceased), who married the late Benjamin Stone, a farmer in Steuben county; Lafayette, an agriculturist in the same county; Jackson, a carpenter in Lee county, Iowa; Erastus, a machinist in Binghamton, N. Y.; and Oliver, a comb manufacturer in Binghamton. Our subject's father was a man of prominence in his locality, and in politics was a Whig. He died in 1837, and his wife survived him many years, departing this life in 1858.

The subject of our sketch was born at the old homestead, September 10, 1821, and remained there until he attained his majority, when he learned the butcher's trade. He followed this for two years in the same vicinity, and in 1845 moved to Glenham, Dutchess

county, and about three years afterward settled in Hughsonville. He continued his business successfully until 1875, when he retired, and purchased the farm of 100 acres upon which he has since resided. A good manager, his industry and thrift have enabled him to accumulate a competency, and in addition to his farm, he owns four houses in Hughsonville.

On December 22, 1846, he married his first wife, Miss Catherine Squires, a daughter of Jonathan Squires, a well-known farmer in Putnam county. She died in 1880, leaving no children. In 1889 Mr. Dean married his present wife, a lady of Holland-Dutch descent, Miss Jeannie Westervelt. She is a granddaughter of George Westervelt, and a daughter of John C. Westervelt, a native of New Jersey, who has been for years a prominent manufacturer and coal dealer in New York City. Her mother, Cornelia Westervelt, a native of New York, is no longer living.

Mr. Dean has always endorsed the principles of the Democratic party, and has held several minor offices. The Dean family is noted for advanced views on the temperance question and other reforms, and has always been connected with the Baptist Church, which both Mr. and Mrs. Dean attend.

Seven brothers are living. The eldest, Milton, is now eighty-three, and the youngest, Oliver, is sixty-six. They have their annual reunion in the month of June. All have Christian principles, using no intoxicating liquors, speaking no profane language, and are straightforward in every respect.

HENRY B. KNICKERBOCKER, a representative and successful farmer of the town of Pine Plains, Dutchess county, was born on February 28, 1832, upon the farm which is still his home. There his grandfather, Benjamin Knickerbocker, located over a century ago, and it has been in the family ever since. The grandfather was a man of excellent judgment, and was very successful in the operation of his land. He married Alatika Smith, by whom he had four children—two sons and two daughters—namely: Peter, Alatika, Henry, and Hannah (who became the wife of Lewis A. Pulver).

The birth of Henry Knickerbocker, the father of our subject, occurred upon the homestead in 1798, and he inherited half of the place from his father. He followed agricult-

ural pursuits throughout life, and in his earlier days also conducted a gristmill upon the farm. He was united in marriage with Miss Lydia Pulver, daughter of Peter Pulver, and four children were born to them: Cornelius and Emeline (now deceased); Henry B., subject of this review; and Jane, widow of William Smith. The father died in 1861, the mother in 1886.

Our subject received a somewhat limited education in the district schools, but this has been greatly supplemented by extensive reading and observation in later years, so that he may be termed a self-educated man. At the age of eighteen he took charge of his father's farm, assuming the entire responsibility, and since that time has successfully managed the place. On reaching his majority he came into possession of 109 acres belonging to his father, and in 1865 purchased of Hiram Wilson the remainder of his grandfather's farm, so that he now has a valuable place of 215 acres. He is careful and methodical in business, and has converted his land into one of the most highly cultivated and attractive places in his locality. Besides general farming he is successfully engaged in sheep raising.

On September 26, 1860, Mr. Knickbocker married Miss Phœbe Stickle, daughter of Jacob and Hulda (Card) Stickle, and they have become the parents of two children: George H., of the town of Northeast, married to Julia Collin; and Fred, at home. Until President Lincoln ran for his second term, Mr. Knickerbocker had always supported the Democracy, but at that time he voted for the martyred President, and was a Republican for several years, but now his allegiance is given to the Prohibition party. He and his wife and sons are members of the Presbyterian Church of Pine Plains, of which he is an officer, and takes an active interest in Church work. In the prosperity of his town and county he has been an important factor, assisting in everything for their improvement, and throughout the community he has many warm friends.

EDGAR CLARK (deceased). The subject of this sketch, formerly one of the leading agriculturists of the town of Northeast, Dutchess county, was a descendant of one of the oldest families in the country, the head of the American line, Thomas Clark, having been a passenger on the "Mayflower."

Several generations of the family have made their home at Plainfield, Conn., and there our subject's grandfather, Ezra Clark, was born in 1748. He came to Dutchess county in 1795, and became very prominent, owning large tracts of land, and taking an influential part in local affairs. He married Mary Douglas, and had ten children, among whom was Moses Clark, our subject's father, who was born May 20, 1785, at the old home in Connecticut. He was ten years of age at the time of his father's removal to Dutchess county, and the remainder of his life was here passed. On November 3, 1808, he married Mary Wiggins, daughter of Arthur Wiggins, of New Milford. This family was of Scotch origin, but had lived in the North of Ireland for some time previous to emigration to America. Soon after his marriage Moses Clark purchased the farm of 600 acres near Miller-ton, now owned by Ambrose Culver, and made his permanent home there. Later he bought another farm of 176 acres, now owned by his granddaughters, Elizabeth and Carrie D. Clark, and at one time he had about 1000 acres of land at different points. He was a man of great energy and excellent judgment, and possessed much influence in the community. He died August 12, 1854, and his wife April 25, 1874. They had eight children, a brief record of whom is as follows: Ambrose, born September 11, 1809, married Julia A. Collin, of Northeast; Mary E., born January 13, 1811, married Ambrose Mygatt, of Amenia, N. Y.; Edgar, born February 22, 1813, was married (first) to Mary Ann Holbrook, of Northeast, and (second) to Emeline Dakin, also of Northeast; Julia L., born October 26, 1814, was married (first) to Peter Righter, of Pine Plains, N. Y., and (second) to Solomon Weaver, of Branchport, Yates Co., N. Y.; Emily A., born June 25, 1816, married George E. Crane, of New Milford, Conn.; George, born May 3, 1818, was married (first) to Emily Rogers, of Fishkill, N. Y., and (second) to Ada Stevens; Harriet J., born April 19, 1827, married Willard Weed, of Torrington, Conn.; and Moses C., Jr., born April 29, 1833. None of this family are now living except Mrs. Emily A. Crane and Mrs. Harriet J. Weed.

The late Edgar Clark was a man of wide and accurate information, always interested in the topics of the day. He received a good English education in boyhood, attending the common schools near his home, and, later,