

History of Westmoreland County

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John McCreary , who was for many years a prominent and successful horse dealer in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, was born in Allegheny township, November 28,1845 the son of George and Sarah (Kline) McCreary.

John McCreary(great-grandfather) emigrated to this country from Ireland in 1775, settling in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. There were three sons in the family, John, William and Henry. Having settled in a community in which the German language was spoken and taught in the parochial and subscription schools, they learned to speak this language, and it formed the basis of their education. About 1780 the three sons left their homes for the west, as it was then called. William and Henry went to Kentucky, where they prospered.

John McCreary(grandfather) settled in Salem township in the village of New Salem, now Delmont, later removing from there to Allegheny township. His children were: John, Elizabeth, Mary, Samuel, Henry and George. John was a successful business and was extensively engaged in farming and droving. He owned a fine farm in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which he afterward (pg 140 now) made his home. He was a man of sterling character, a Whig in politics, and a member of the Methodist church. He died in 1865. The death of John McCreary,Sr. occurred in 1844.

George McCreary , the youngest son of John McCreary , and father of John McCreary , was born on the old homestead, August 8,1808. He acquired a common school education, was a farmer, an uncompromising Democrat in politics, and a member of the Lutheran church. He was rugged in sincerity and emphatic expression and act. He married Sarah Kline, a woman of amiable disposition, who was universally loved. Their children were: Levi, John, Hiram, Henry, Jane, Susan, Mary and Adda.

There were no startling epochs in the life of John McCreary. In the business he chose, that of dealing in horses, he was successful, because he was painstaking, energetic and honest. He had thousands of patrons in western Pennsylvania, with whom he dealt for more than a quarter of a century, with ever-increasing confidence. He had none of the wiles so often practiced by members of his profession. The magnitude of his operations was remarkable, and for years he maintained a large sales stable in Brooklyn, New York. He was a member of the Lutheran church, and always an active Democrat. In 1884 he was the Democratic candidate for treasurer of Westmoreland county. He made a most gallant fight, but with all his colleagues on the ticket met defeat. He never faltered in his devotion to Democracy, John McCreary married, January 11,1886 Bethelda Cresswell, daughter of Samuel Stuart Cresswell, who wife was Rachel Hylyer. Samuel Stuart Cresswell was a son of Samuel Cresswell and his wife, Elizabeth Stuart, a great-granddaughter of Charles Stuart, who was defeated in a battle for the British crown and compelled to fly to Spain. His wife and two children, a boy and a girl, were carried to the British Colonies in America and sold for their passage money. They descended from the Scottish Highlands and participated in quelling the Irish rebellion during the reign of King William. Samuel Stuart Cresswell was born near McCarricksburg, Indiana county, Pennsylvania, November 11, 1822 and died at Homer City, Indiana county, May 29,1902. Mr. McCreary's devotion to his father and mother never wavered. He saw that they were comfortable during their lives. His business triumphs only increased his care and concern for those he loved. To his widow he left a handsome fortune as an evidence of his devotion. His last illness found him in the midst of his well-established and hopeful enterprises, and on the second day of November, 1903, death stopped the swift running current of a useful and successful life.