

Biographical Review

THIS VOLUME CONTAINS BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF

THE LEADING CITIZENS OF

LIVINGSTON AND WYOMING COUNTIES

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"Biography is the home aspect of history"

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Courtesy of Phil Palen, Gowanda, N.Y.

branch business of his employer, which had been established in Warsaw. In 1872 Mr. Moody and William Sheldon succeeded to the business, which they jointly conducted until 1876, when Mr. Moody assumed the entire control. He enlarged it by the addition of a trade in coal, and afterward, when the salt business became remunerative, added a lumber traffic.

The last two branches of business monopolize most of his time at present, and he is usually engaged at his coal sheds at the railroad or in the office in the village.

On the 14th of June, 1877, he was married to Elizabeth M. Garretsee, a daughter of Henry and Elizabeth (Arr) Garretsee, and a native of Warsaw. They have two children — Jennie, a little maiden of thirteen years, and William Garretsee, both notably bright children. One infant daughter, Bessie, whose death has given them a stronger claim upon heaven than was ever felt before, lies buried in the village churchyard.

Mr. and Mrs. Moody are united by the bands of a common religious faith, both being members of the Congregational church. Mr. Moody, who has served as Town Clerk and village Clerk, and is now village Trustee, has certainly been successful in his business affairs. Few men are competent to establish themselves financially without the aid of a small capital as a basis of action; but this is what his energy and perseverance have accomplished, and commendation is his just due.

WILLIAM CANNING, farmer and mason, one of the loyal and enterprising residents of the town of Gainesville, Wyoming County, N.Y., was born on the historic soil of Scotland, October 31, 1832. He was the son of William Canning, Sr., also a Scotchman, and grandson of James Canning, whose life was also passed among Scottish lakes and hills, and who, being an industrious machinist, was able to maintain his large family of children till they came to maturity. His son William, the third child in the order of age, was brought up to the trade of millwright, and was a well-

known master mechanic, an excellent workman. He died at the advanced age of eighty-four. His wife, Agnes, mother of William of this narrative, was born and brought up in Scotland. She was a daughter of William Halliday; and she became the mother of nine children, four of whom are still living — John; Elizabeth, married to Mr. McNeil, a ship's carpenter; William; and James. Both parents were devoted Presbyterians. Mrs. Canning died in Scotland at the age of seventy.

William Canning, the chief character of this sketch, was twenty-four years old when he left his family and the acquaintances of his early years, and with his young wife set sail for America. The journey by water being safely passed, he went out to the western part of New York State, and there he settled in the little town of Great Valley, in Cattaraugus County; and for a time, till he could make acquaintance with the new environment, he gave his attention to farm work. Later on he went to Olean, a town in the same county, and began work at the trade of mason, which he had learned in Scotland; and there he remained until the time of the Civil War, when he enlisted as private in Company G, One Hundred and Fifty-fourth New York Volunteers. He served three years, and during his period of service he was promoted to be Second Sergeant. He was under the leadership at different times of nearly all the prominent generals — McClellan, Burnside, Hooker, Meade, and, after the battle of Gettysburg, General Sherman. He passed through all the important battles and skirmishes; and at Pine Knob, Mo., he took the part of First Lieutenant, and led two companies into the field. Although exposed to great dangers, he was never seriously injured. He received his discharge at the close of the war, being recognized officially as Second Sergeant, but now holds the commission of Second Lieutenant. The country having been restored to peace, Mr. Canning sought his old home at Olean, where he remained for a time, and then lived four years in Allegany County. He moved next on to a farm known as the Smith farm, located in Gainesville on the line between

this town and Pike. In 1886, as a change seemed desirable, he moved into the village, where he had built a small house. To this dwelling he has made various additions from time to time, till now he has a fine large house in a pleasant locality, convenient for the prosecution of the mason's work which he has again resumed.

On the 24th of July, 1855, William Canning was united in marriage to Miss Jane Blackstock. Her father was James Blackstock, of Scotland, who was at one time a store-keeper, and later turned his attention to farming. Both he and his wife were members of the Presbyterian church, and spent their lives in their native country, her father living to the age of seventy-two years and her mother to be seventy-six years of age. Mr. Canning's wife was their youngest child. Two others of their five children remain, and are residing in Scotland at the present time; namely, William Blackstock and Mary, wife of John Beatty. Mr. and Mrs. Canning have had five children to give them joy in their household. A brief mention of them is as follows: Mary E. is married to Venner W. Dowell, a farmer in the town of Hume, whose two children are named Edith and Miles W.; William E., a farmer, is established in Colorado, and is married to Nora Lucas, daughter of a well-known farmer of Silver Springs, and they are the parents of three children—Lucas, Claude, and Gladys; Maggie has been an invalid for fourteen years; Agnes B. is the wife of Charles Higgings, a farmer of Denver, Col. (they have lost their only child, Neta); and Edith G. Canning has filled the important post of teacher for several terms.

Mr. Canning is a member of the Gainesville Post of the Grand Army of the Republic, in which he has held the office of Commander two years, besides other minor offices connected with the organization. He is connected with Castile Post, No. 488, and is likewise a member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen, where he has been Master Workman, and has taken from the start a very prominent position. In politics Mr. Canning is a Republican, and has made clear, by loyalty to his adopted country in the

past, that he is not afraid to show his colors when called on to maintain the principles of his party. Mr. Canning and his wife attend the Congregational church in Gainesville.

ISAAC BURRELL KNAPP, an enterprising farmer in Ossian, Livingston County, N.Y., was born on a farm adjoining the one where he now resides on January 6, 1861, a few weeks before the outbreak of the Civil War. His grandfather, Joel I. Knapp, and his father, Harvey W. Knapp, were born in New England, but came to Ossian among the first settlers in 1814, while the last war with England was in progress. At that time Ossian was only a forest. They purchased a tract of land, and built a log house, which is still standing, though later its owner erected larger frame buildings. He had a family of nine or ten children, and continued to live in Ossian until his death.

Harvey W. Knapp was reared a farmer, and followed agricultural pursuits until he was twenty-one, when he began working by the month for his wife's father, Mr. Burrell. After a time he bought a farm, clearing a large part of it, and was also in the lumber trade. He died March 8, 1895, nearly two years after he had passed his eightieth birthday, March 13, 1893. His wife, mother of our subject, was Elizabeth Burrell, one of the eight children of Isaac Burrell, an early settler, a farmer and lumberman, who also ran a saw-mill. Mr. and Mrs. Harvey W. Knapp reared three children—Mary Elizabeth Knapp, Margaret J. Knapp, and Isaac B. Knapp, the subject of the present sketch. Their mother is living, having passed the sixty-ninth anniversary of her birth, August 13, 1894. Both of her parents attended the Presbyterian church.

Isaac B. Knapp spent his early years in attending the district school; and, remaining on the old homestead as he approached manhood, he worked with his father in carrying on both that and an adjoining farm. He was married February 1, 1881, to Inez M. Hess, daughter of Alfred Hess, a worthy representative of an old family. Inez was born in