

CAPTAIN JAMES S. NESBIT. One who has passed through the perils incident to early western mining camps, and shed his blood and risked his life on southern battlefields, is Captain James S. Nesbit, ex-associate judge of Indiana county, and a prominent merchant of Indiana borough. He is a son of James and Margaret (Smith) Nesbit, and was born in Conemaugh township, Indiana county, Pennsylvania, October 30, 1833. The Nesbit family, of which Captain Nesbit is a member, was founded in Conemaugh township in 1805 by his paternal grandfather, Nathaniel Nesbit, who came in that year from Ireland and settled in the above-mentioned township. Of his sons, James Nesbit (father) was born in 1807, and died May, 1852. he was a prosperous farmer, a member of the United Presbyterian Church, and married Margaret Smith, who was a native of 'Elder's Ridge, and united at an early age with the U. P. Church. She was born in 1812 and passed away in 1843. when in the early prime of life.

James S. Nesbit was reared on a farm and received his education in the early common schools of Conemaugh township and Elder's Ridge academy. Leaving school, he was engaged for some time as a clerk in a mercantile establishment, and in 1854 made the then perilous trip across the "Plains" to the gold fields of California, where he was engaged for six years in mining. In 1860 he returned to this county, and on September 19, 1861, enlisted in Co. F, 55th regiment Pa. Vols. He was elected captain and commanded the company in South Carolina and in the armies of the James and Potomac. They fought bravely in some very hard battles. On June 3, 1864, Capt. Nesbit succeeded to the command of the regiment at the battle of Cold Harbor. During that terrific struggle he carried a line of Confederate breastworks, and, in daringly exposing himself to the enemy's fire, he was struck in the left thigh by a musket-ball. He was borne from the field taken to the hospital at Washington City, from which he was sent home. After a short stay he reported on crutches to the hospital at Annapolis, Md., where he was discharged October 8, 1864, on account of his wound. In January, 1865, he engaged in the drug business of Indiana, which he followed until 1873, when he went to Virginia and bought a farm in the Roanoke Valley. After two years of experience farming there he returned to Indiana, where he engaged in general mercantile business, in which he continued for five years. At the end of that time he again embarked in the drug business and followed it successfully until 1887, when he removed to Walworth county, South Dakota. He there turned his attention to farming, but at the end of two years returned to Indiana. In November 1889, he opened his present general mercantile establishment on Philadelphia street. His stock is large and well selected, and his patronage is good and rapidly increasing.

November 20, 1860, he married Margaret Houston, daughter of William Houston, of Indiana. They have nine children: Robert, James, William, Frank, Annie, Joseph, Charles, Samuel and Maggie. The four oldest sons are now in South Dakota.

Capt. James S. Nesbit is a member of the United Presbyterian Church, Indiana Post, No. 28, G.A.R., and Encampment No. 11, U.V.L. He is a staunch republican and was elected associate judge of Indiana county in 1870, but resigned two years later upon removing to Virginia. He has served as burgess and school director. His life has been one of activity and event, of adventure and travel, and of patriotism and usefulness. He is one of Indiana county's honored sons and useful business men.