

PAUL GRAFF. In Western Pennsylvania as nowhere else in this country are concentrated those industrial forces and facilities so necessary to an enlarged and enduring success in manufacturing, and one of Indiana county's useful citizens, who has always been active in developing the mineral resources of his own county, is Paul Graff, president of the First National Bank of Blairsville and a member of the well-known firm of John Graff's Sons. He is a son of John and Lucy S. (Hacke) Graff, and was born at Blairsville, Indiana county, Pennsylvania, on Independence Day, 1838. His paternal grandparents, John, Sr., and Barbara (Baum) Graff, were among the early settlers of Westmoreland county. John Graff, Sr., was born at Newid, Germany, April 15, 1763, and his grandfather resided at Grafnauer, which meant nobility and castle or nobleman Graff's castle. John Graff, Sr., came to Westmoreland county in 1783 and died December 31, 1818. he was a deeply religious man and married Barbara Baum, who was born in path Valley, Huntingdon county, and died in 1846, aged seventy years. She was remarkably strong, as were all the members of her family, which was appropriately named Baum--a word in German meaning Tree. She was once captured by Indians, but former kindness bestowed by her upon an old warrior of the marauding party which had taken her, caused him to secure her release. John Graff, Sr., and his wife Barbara were the parents of twelve children: Henry, Mary Lose; Sarah Barnes, William, Margaret Colcasure, Joseph, Elizabeth Armstrong, Peter, Jacob, Matthew, Paul and John. One of the sons, John Graff (father), was born August 3, 1800, near Pleasant Unity, Westmoreland county, received a fair education, conducted a store at Pleasant Unity for three years and in 1837 removed to Blairsville, where he purchased a half interest in a warehouse and store owned by his brothers peter and Henry. Two other houses were subsequently erected, and in 1847 he assumed charge of the three houses and their mercantile business. He admitted his three sons, Jacob, Paul and Charles, into partnership with him and established the present general mercantile house of John Graff's Sons. He was decided opponent of human servitude and was run by the Liberty party of the county as a candidate for the Legislature and afterwards for Congress. He was a zealous and efficient member of the M. E. church, to which he came from the Reformed church. He advocated the free school law of 1834, served under it as a school director, and was successively a whig, free soiler and republican in politics. He died in 1885, and was at that time the senior, as regarded age and durability of commercial life, of all the merchants doing business in the county. As a man, his aim was to do good and his character was above suspicion. In 1824 he married Lucy Sophia Hacke, who was a daughter of Nicholas Hacke, of Baltimore, Md., and died March 4, 1876, aged seventy-one years. Their children were Henry, Caroline Shields, dead; Alexander, Jacob, who married Sallie Davis; Paul and Charles, who married Margaret Loughry.

Paul Graff was reared at Blairsville, He received his education in the common schools and Plainfield academy, near Carlisle, Pa. He was carefully trained to business under the watchful care of his father, and in order to fully qualify himself for commercial life, he took the complete course of Duff' Business college, of Pittsburgh. Leaving school, he became a partner with his father and brothers, Jacob and Charles, in the mercantile business and since his father's death has continued in partnership with his brothers, under5 the firm-name of John Graff's Sons. They have one of the largest and best stocked general mercantile establishments in the county. Mr. Graff is a member of

the Royal Arcanum, Knights of Honor, Chosen Friends, Bakers' Association, Heptasophs and Merchants' and Salesmen's Association.

In 1860 he married Elizabeth A. Mowry, daughter of Henry and Charlotte Mowry, of Blairsville. Mr. and Mrs. Graff are the parents of five children: George R., who is employed in the freight department of the W.P.R.R.; Frank M., a graduate of Lafayette college and in business with his father; Wilber P., in the senior class of Lafayette college; Laura M., now in her senior year at Blairsville seminary; and Water R., at school.

Paul Graff is a very strong and active republican and has been president of Blairsville school board for three terms. He is a trustee and has been class leader of the Blairsville M. E. church for the last twenty-one years, as well as superintendent of its Sunday-school for nearly the same length of time. He is also treasurer of the board of stewards and was a member of the building committee which erected the present fine church structure, which was dedicated in December, 1889. To his church he has always been a generous and willing contributor and also has always encountered all moral and religious enterprises. He is president of the First National bank of Blairsville, treasurer of the Blairsville Brick company and a stock-holder in the Cheswick Land company. While active in mercantile and financial enterprises, Paul Graff has also been one of the foremost men to push forward the material development of his section of the county. He was largely instrumental in the organization of the Blairsville coke-works and the Cheswick Land company. For over thirty years he has been in close contact and competition with business men all over the southern part of the county, yet nothing unfair or dishonorable has ever been charged against him, and his word is as good as his bond. As a citizen Mr. Graff is public-spirited and patriotic, concerned for the welfare of both his home and his country. He is not ambitious for political honors, though he never shrinks from any official duty and never refuses to serve his fellow-citizens in a public capacity whenever they call upon him to do so.