

WILLIAM DUNCAN, one of Blairsville's prosperous merchants, is a son of James and Sarah (Clark) Duncan, and was born in Cambria county, Pennsylvania, March 27, 1838. The Duncan family is of Scotch descent, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century the paternal grandfather, William Duncan, emigrated from Scotland to America, in company with two of his brothers, and settled in Dauphin county. From these three brothers have sprung a numerous progeny. James Duncan (father) was born in 1800, in Dauphin county, but removed in early manhood to Cambria county and for several years drove a six-horse team and hauled goods on the old pike, between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Leaving the pike, he engaged in farming, lumbering and milling until his death. He was a whig and an attendant of the Presbyterian church, to whose support he contributed liberally. He inherited those sterling qualities of his race, for industry and thrift, and at the time of his death, which occurred in 1859, he had succeeded in gaining considerable material wealth. He was kind to the poor and enjoyed the respect of all who knew him. He married Sarah Clark, who was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church, and lived to the advanced age of eighty-two years, dying in 1889. Her remains are interred beside her husband in Belsano cemetery, Black Lick township, Cambria county. Her father, Thomas Clark (maternal grandfather), was a native of Ireland, and located in Indiana county, where he purchased two or three farms but soon removed to Cambria county and built the first saw-mill that was erected on Black Lick creek. He delighted in hunting deer, bears and panthers and was known as the greatest hunter in Cambria county and died in 1850, at an advanced age.

William Duncan was reared in Cambria county and attended the public schools. He assisted his father in the lumber and flour business until 1883, when he went to Johnstown and for three years was engaged in taking contracts for the Cambria Iron company. In 1886 he came to Blairsville and opened his present mercantile establishment on the corner of Diamond and Liberty streets. He deals in dress goods, notions, carpets and tinware and also handles watches and jewelry. His stock of goods is well selected and adapted to the wants of his many patrons.

On December 9, 1862, he married Emily Emerson, daughter of the late Dr. E. P. Emerson, who was one of the pioneers of Blairsville. In 1821, Dr. Emerson built the first hotel in that place, on the lot now occupied by Ray's ware-house. He was a native of Ireland, where he was graduated from a well-known medical college, and came to America to seek a wider field for the practice of his chosen profession. To him belongs the distinction of having been the first physician of Blairsville. Mr. and Mrs. Duncan are the parents of three children: Sadie M., William B. and Thomas E.

William Duncan is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church and a staunch republican. He owns the block in which his store is situated and has an interest in a large lumbering and flouring-mill business in Cambria county. He is affable, genial, enterprising and well respected.