

DANIEL MCAFOOS. One of the oldest, if not the oldest, native residents of Valley township is Daniel McAfoos, whose memory goes back almost to the pioneer days of Armstrong county. He is a son of Jacob and Eva (Schreckengost) McAfoos, and was born on the farm adjoining the one upon which he now resides in Valley township, Armstrong county, Pennsylvania, January 4, 1813. Jacob McAfoos was born east of the Allegheny mountains, removed, when a young man, to Westmoreland county, where he remained but a short time and then came to what is now called Valley township, but which was then an almost unbroken wilderness filled with wild animals, and frequented by Indians. He was one of the earliest settlers of the county, killed a great many bears and deer, and cleared out the farm upon which the subject of this sketch was born. He often hunted with the Indians and was a great favorite with them, as he was a good wrestler, a swift runner and a fine shot. He was a Presbyterian and an old-line whig, and died in 1859, at seventy-five years of age. He married Eva Schreckengost, a native of eastern Pennsylvania, who was of the same religious faith as her husband and passed away in 1881, aged eighty-four years. They were the parents of eight children: John, Daniel, Margaret, Jacob, Mary, David, Elizabeth and Simon.

Daniel McAfoos was reared on his father's farm and obtained his education in the old log school-house of pioneer days. He had to walk some four miles to school, and often through snow two feet deep. These schools were only kept open for about two months each year and afforded all the opportunities for education which the people had in those early days. He often hunted with his father and helped to kill bears, deer and wild turkeys. When old enough to do for himself he engaged in farming which he has followed ever since. His early farming was done with rude tools and implements. His plow he made and equipped with wooden mold-boards. His corn he often ground by hand, as it was seven miles to Kittanning by a mere path through the woods, and the rude, primitive mill there was often crowded with a week's grinding ahead. Mr. McAfoos owns a farm of seventy-five acres of good farming and grazing land which is six and one-half miles from Kittanning.

On November 5, 1840, he married Lydia Reynolds, a daughter of Job Reynolds, of this county. To them were born five children: Julia A., Sarah J., Henry, Lizzie and Phoebe.

Daniel McAfoos is a republican in political affairs and a member of the Reformed Presbyterian church. Now almost an octogenarian, Mr. McAfoos can look back over a long life spent in clearing a wilderness region and making a comfortable home for himself. Within that time he has seen a prosperous and productive country grow up out of the wilderness-sweep in whose depths he had often heard in his boyhood days the howl of the wolf and scream of the panther.