

JACOB J. BECK, a respected citizen of the borough of Dayton, and formerly a prosperous farmer of Wayne township, is a son of Jacob and Catherine (Wagel) Beck, and was born in the Ligonier Valley, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, December 17, 1815. His paternal grandfather, George Beck, was of German descent, and settled in an early day in eastern Pennsylvania, probably Montgomery county, but soon came to Crooked creek, where he resided until his death. He was a farmer and a gunsmith, and built and operated a gunpowder factory on the Kittanning road, not far from the county seat. He was a member of the Lutheran church, and in politics a democrat. He married Elizabeth Holsopple, and their union was blessed with nine children, six sons and three daughters. One of his sons, Jacob Beck (father), was born on Crooked creek, and lived there until after his marriage, when he went to the Ligonier Valley. He built a powder factory, which he operated for some time, and removed to Sewickley creek, Westmoreland county, where he engaged quite extensively in the manufacture of salt. In 1818 he came to Armstrong county, and located on Pine creek, in Wayne township, where he purchased a farm, and erected a saw-mill and carding-factory. During the latter years of his life he gave his time mainly to his mill and factory. In politics he was a democrat at first, but afterwards became a whig, and served as county commissioner for several terms. He held nearly all of his township's offices, and was a member of the Lutheran church in his youth, but afterwards became a Methodist. He was twice married; his first wife was Catherine Wagle, and to their union were born eleven children: Elizabeth, George, Isaac, Margaret, Jacob J., John, Catherine, Adam, Martin, Simon and Christiana. His second wife was Barbara Clever. Mrs. Catherine (Wagle) Beck was a daughter of Abraham Wagle (maternal grandfather), who was a farmer on Crooked creek, where he reared a family of two sons and several daughters.

Jacob J. Beck was educated in the schools of his time, and commenced life as a common laborer. At twenty-five years of age he entered his father's mill, where he worked until his marriage (1841), when he engaged in farming in Wayne township. In 1875 he retired from active business, and came to Dayton, where he has resided ever since.

September 28, 1841, he married Margaret Rupp, daughter of Jacob Rupp. Mr. and Mrs. Beck are the parents of two children: George, a traveling salesman for a Williamsport candy-house, who married Harriet Seese, and has two children,--Iva and Carrie; and Sarah, who married William A. Fleming, and has six children,--Cloyd, Maggie, George, Mary, Leona and Grace.

Jacob J. Beck is a staunch republican, has always been a warm friend of education and has served for several years as a school director. He formerly was a member of the Reformed church, but some years ago united with the Methodist Episcopal church of Dayton, of which he is a trustee.