

JAMES HEILMAN, one of Kittanning township's most substantial and progressive farmers and oldest and highly respected citizens, is a son of Jacob and Susanna (Waltenbaugh) Heilman, and was born on the farm on which he now resides, in Kittanning township, Armstrong county, Pennsylvania, February 15, 1829. The Heilman and Waltenbaugh families figure conspicuously among the pioneer settlers and prominent land-owners of Kittanning township, and in the old legal records and assessment lists of the county. The Heilman name was written Hileman and Hyleman, and the Waltenbaugh name was spelled Waltenbough. Peter Heilman, the grandfather of James Heilman, was born on shipboard, while his parents were crossing the Atlantic ocean from Germany to the United States. He was reared in Northampton county, where he learned the trade of weaver. He married and came to what is now Kittanning township, in 1796. His son Jacob Heilman (father), was born in Northampton county April, 1791, and died in Kittanning township December 27, 1876, aged eighty-five years. He owned eight hundred acres of land and was a prominent distiller of his day, when Armstrong county whiskey had a reputation as far south as New Orleans for being good, and the "Heilman whiskey" was highly esteemed as one of the purest whiskies in the market. Jacob Heilman started in life with an ax and grubbing hoe, and acquired his wealth by honest labor and judicious management. He was a strict Lutheran, and voted the democratic ticket until 1854, when he became a republican. He was a good business man, served his township as school director and married Susanna Waltenbaugh, daughter of Adam Waltenbaugh, of Fayette county. She was a consistent member of the Evangelical Lutheran church, and passed away April 27, 1877, when in the eighty-fifth year of her age. They had four children, of whom but three are living.

James Heilman was reared on the farm and attended the schools of his neighborhood, in which he obtained a good common business education. He has always been engaged in farming, and owns the part of the old homestead farm of two hundred and twenty-five acres that was cleared and improved by his grandfather, Peter Heilman. For the last ten years Mr. Heilman has made a specialty of stock-raising and fruit-growing. In his extensive orchards he raises the finest variety of fruits to be found in Armstrong county.

October 9, 1956, Mr. Heilman married Magdalene Reichesrt, daughter of G. A. Reichest, of this county. Mr. and Mrs. Heilman have seven children: James T., Ella L., Rose C., Grace R., Maggie G., Emma R. and Ethelind.

James Heilman is a republican politically, has served as school director, auditor and assessor of his township and is now overseer of the poor. He is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran church, and is well-known in his community for his strong sense of justice and his unshaken firmness in supporting whatever he conscientiously believes to be right.