

JOHN A. BLANEY, an influential citizen of Plum Creek township, a business man of great energy, and the present postmaster of Whitesburg, is a son of Hugh and Hannah (Shots) Blaney, and was born September 11, 1832, in Armstrong county, Pennsylvania. Hugh Blaney (father) was born in Ireland in 1796, and emigrated from that country to Armstrong county about 1815, when the old "State road" was being built. That great highway of traffic started from Philadelphia and passed through Harrisburg to Pittsburgh. This pike was the great road through Armstrong county until the era of railroads. Hugh Blaney was a shoemaker by trade, but after coming to this country he bought a farm which he tilled until his death. He was a consistent member of the Evangelical Lutheran church, and married Hannah Shots, of Kittanning township, by whom he had seven children.

John A. Blaney was reared on a farm and attended the subscription schools in Plum Creek township during his boyhood. He then worked on his father's farm for one dollar and fifty cents a month, which sum was afterwards increased to three dollars per month. He remained at home until he was twenty-four years of age, since which time he has been engaged in mercantile pursuits. He owns a large, well cultivated farm on which are built six dwellings and equal number of barns; this farm is well stocked with cattle, sheep and horses. He has made a specialty of the dairy business, and has a large creamery from which he sells two hundred and fifty pounds of butter per week. He has a general mercantile store at Whitesburg, and carries a heavy stock of goods.

In 1857 he married Minerva St. Clair, of Plum Creek township. To Mr. and Mrs. Blaney have been born twelve children, eight of whom are living: William E., born in 1862, a farmer and merchant; Hannah Jane, born in 1864; Rose, born in 1866; Ellen, born in 1868; Maggie, born in 1870; Frank, born in 1872; Belle, born in 1874; and Joseph A., born in 1876.

John A. Blaney is a republican leader in Armstrong county, has been postmaster of Whitesburg for many years, and served several terms as overseer of the poor. By reason of his sympathetic nature he was well adapted to fill the latter office. He now resides at Whitesburg, where he owns a comfortable and tasteful home and a large and well-appointed store-room, which he constantly keeps filled with first-class goods. He has slowly but surely widened out his sphere of commercial operations until he now employs from eight to twelve men in his various business enterprises. He is a highly esteemed member of the Presbyterian church, and very active her various charities. He was for some years an active member of the I.O.O.F. and the Patrons of Husbandry. Mr. Blaney has acquired his fortune by the labor of his own hands; he is a man of character and good social and mercantile standing, and well and favorably known throughout the township and the southeastern part of Armstrong county.