

JOHN HECKMAN, a leading merchant and highly-respected citizen of Elderton, is the eldest son of Michael Heckman, and was born near Leechburg, Armstrong county, Pennsylvania, August 24, 1828. His grandfather Heckman was one of the early settlers of Westmoreland county, and married Maria Iseman, by whom he had nine children. One of these children was Michael Heckman (father), who was born in 1800, in Westmoreland county. He attended the subscription schools of that period. He was a farmer by occupation, owning one hundred and fifty acres of land, on which he raised large crops of grain and considerable stock. He was an uncompromising democrat, and took an active part in local politics. He died in 1882, a consistent member of the Evangelical Lutheran church. He married and reared a family of seven children, of whom one is the subject of this sketch.

John Heckman was reared on a farm and attended school in the log school-house situated some two miles from his father's house. He began life as a farmer, assisting his father until he was twenty-eight years of age. He then purchased a farm which he tilled until 1868, when he engaged in the huckster business, which he followed for the ensuing seven years. From 1875 to 1885 he was engaged in farming, and then removed to Elderton, where he resided for three years. In 1888 he embarked in his present general mercantile business on Main street, at Elderton. He carries a complete and carefully-selected stock of goods, well adapted to the numerous wants of his many patrons.

He married Catherine Dice, daughter of John and Catherine (Sipes) Dice, of Armstrong county. They have had four children: Michael, Harvey (dead), Thomas M., born in 1857, and Anna Maria, born in 1860, and now a partner with her father in the mercantile business.

Politically, Mr. Heckman is a Jacksonian democrat, and has been elected by his party as inspector of elections, school director and member of the town council. He has always taken an active part in the work of the Lutheran church, of which he is an elder and has served as deacon and trustee. He owns a fine two-story brick residence at Elderton, besides his store-room and other valuable property. He has acquired, by honesty and industry, a competency, and is known as one of the reliable business men and prosperous citizens of the county. The Heckman family is of German origin, but for over a century has been American by citizenship. It is a family that possesses many worthy qualities of character, and ranks as one of the substantial families of Armstrong county.