

WILLIAM PETER TOWNSEND, a well established business man of Leechburg and a descendant of one of the early settled and most substantial families of Armstrong county, is a son of Joseph and Martha (Ulam) Townsend, and was born on the old Townsend homestead farm, in Kiskiminetas township, Armstrong county, Pennsylvania, March 15, 1827. At an early day in the history of Northampton county the Townsend family came from England and settled within its borders. Among its descendants were three brothers, Joseph, Isaac and John. The second brother, Isaac Townsend (grandfather), was born in 1761 and came to what is now Kiskiminetas township in 1786. He was one of the pioneer settlers of that section and understood tanning, carpentering and cabinet-making as well as farming. He worked, as occasion demanded, at each of his different trades. He farmed for several years with his gun always near him, frequently went with his family to the Hannastown fort on account of the Indians, and suffered all the privations of frontier life. He drilled the first salt wells on the Kiskiminetas, became the wealthiest man in his section and at his death, left a large farm to each of his seven sons: Isaac, John, Robert, William, Henry, Richard and Joseph. He married Rachel King, of Northampton county, who was born in 1762 and lived to be ninety-two years of age. They had thirteen children of whom six were daughters. Polly, one of these daughters, was the wife of Simon Turney, an uncle of Hon. Jacob Turney, of Greensburg, Pa.; and another, Susan, married Daniel Ulam. Joseph Townsend (father) was born on the home farm August 30, 1797. He followed farming besides having a store at Dam No. 3, on the river. In 1860 he removed to Jackson county, Kansas, where he died November 8, 1863. He was a successful business man, a democrat in politics and an elder in the Lutheran church, of which his father had been a prominent member. He had served continuously for many years in the most important township offices. He married Martha Ulam, daughter of Daniel Ulam, and who was born May 16, 1800, and died in 1865. They were the parents of ten children, of whom six are living: Laban, a merchant of Apollo; W. P., D. U., and S. B., farmers of Kansas; and Amanda and Hannah E., wives of William and Francis Bedker, of Kansas. Those deceased were Diane E. (Timms), Catherine, Amelia and Lavina.

William P. Townsend was reared on a farm and received his education in the old subscription and early free schools of the county. Leaving school, he was engaged for some time in farming and then embarked in the mercantile business at Dam No. 3, which he followed for several years. He left merchandising to purchase the packet-boat "Indiana," which he ran two years and then re-embarked in the mercantile business. In 1880 he came to Leechburg, where he engaged in his present grocery, queensware and cutlery business. His store room is commodious and well arranged for the large stock of goods which he displays. His aim has been to please and satisfy his customers, and how well he has succeeded is attested by the popularity of his house and the large trade which he enjoys. He is a democrat in political opinion. He is conspicuous for promptness and energy and is well qualified for the business in which he is engaged.

December 23, 1891, he married Belle Clawson, a daughter of Peter Clawson, the grandfather of Sheriff Lucian Clawson, of Westmoreland county. They have been the parents of seven children: Thomas T., born October 19, 1852, an excellent machinist and in the employ of the Westinghouse company, of Pittsburgh; Lucy N., born December 12, 1854, and wife of Lewis Clawson; Daniel H., born December 27, 1857; Joseph T., who died in 1889; Kate, Eva, wife of Rev. W. J. Miller, pastor of the First Lutheran church of

Leechburg; and William S., who was born February 16, 1869, and is engaged in the wholesale grocery house of R. C. Orr, of Pittsburgh, Pa.