

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LING, one of the oldest citizens of East Wheatfield township, Indiana county, who is now living retired at his home at the foot of Laurel Hill, was born in Somerset county, Pa., Sept. 16, 1832, and comes of an old and honored family of German extraction.

Philip ling, the grandfather of Benjamin Franklin Ling, made his more in Shade township, Somerset county, where he followed farming, but died while still in the prime of life, in 1814, when about forty years of age. He married Elizabeth Manges, who lived to the ripe age of ninety-two years, and died in Bedford county, Pa. She was also of German descent and a member of an old family.

William Ling, son of Philip Ling, and father of Benjamin F. Ling, was born in Shade township, Somerset Co., Pa., in 1806, and there grew to manhood and made farming his occupation. He was but eight years of age at the time of his father's death, but remained with his widowed mother until he began farming on his own account, and in 1850 came to Indiana county and began farming at the foot of Laurel Hill, in east Wheatfield township, near the Indiana and Cambria county line. Here he purchased a tract of 131 acres, which is till in the possession of the family, made extensive improvements, erected a comfortable home and other buildings, and continued in farming and stock raising until his death, Oct. 30, 1880, at the age of seventy-four years, seven months , twenty-six days; he was laid to rest in Blacklick Church cemetery. He was a Republican in politics, but never an office seeker. His religious views were those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which he was ever a consistent member. On March 14, 1830, Mr. Ling was married to Mary Berkey, who was born Sept. 30, 1812, daughter of Joseph Berkey, of Somerset county, and she died May 4, 1888, aged seventy-five years, seven months, four days. She was buried beside her husband. The children born to William and Mary Ling were as follow: Elizabeth, born Dec. 11, 1830, died Nov. 18, 1832; Benjamin Franklin is mentioned below; Mary Ann, born Sept. 9, 1834, married George Washington Tomb, and died Dec. 16, 1866; Chauncey, born Nov. 6, 1836, a blacksmith, died Aug. 4, 1866; Rebecca Berkey, born Nov. 16, 1838, married Thomas Wilson Bowen; Reuben H., born Dec. 14, 1840, married Elizabeth Bolar and is living on a part of the old homestead; Christopher Berkey, born June 5, 1843, was a soldier in the Union army during the Civil war, and died at Gettysburg, July 18, 1863; Emmeline Jane, born July 23, 1845, married Charles Teter, of Johnstown, Pa., and died Feb. 19, 1869; Jeremiah Berkey, born March 20, 1849, married Matilda Clark, and is now engaged in farming in East Wheatfield township; William F., born Feb. 24, 1852, died Nov. 4, 1855.

Benjamin Franklin Ling, son of William Ling, was educated in the public schools of his native county and came to East Wheatfield township in 1850 with his parents, continuing as his father's assistant until he was twenty-five years of age. At that time he embarked in agricultural pursuits on his own account, purchasing the Rankin farm of 100 acres, and there, from 1853 until the time of his retirement from active life, he followed farming, dairying and stock raising, so industriously devoting himself to his labors as to accumulate a handsome competency and develop an excellent property. He is now the owner of a farm of 161 acres, on which are located a comfortable residence, substantial barns and

commodious outbuildings, all erected by him, and numerous other improvements have been made on the property. This farm is now being operated by his son, who is also caring for the productive apple orchard that was planted by Mr. Ling many years ago. Mr. Ling's life has been one of industry and conscientious effort, and now in the evening of life, he may look back over a useful and well-spent career, satisfied in the knowledge that his record is unmarred by stain or blemish. Although he has passed fourscore years, time has been lenient with him, and he is in the enjoyment of perfect health and in full possession of his faculties. He has reared a family of children who are a credit to him and to their community, has given them excellent educational advantages, and fitted them for whatever position in life they have been called upon to fill. A Republican in political matters, he has served for more than a quarter of a century as a member of the township school board, and for several years was overseer of the poor. He has been active in the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which he is a trustee, and in every walk of life is esteemed and respected by all who know him.

On July 8, 1858, Mr. Ling was married in east Wheatfield township to Elizabeth McFeaters, who was born in Pine township, Indiana Co., Pa., daughter of John and Susanna (Deyarmin) McFeaters, and granddaughter of William and Margaret (Campbell) McFeaters. On July 8, 1908 Mr. and Mrs. Ling celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary, on which occasion were present ten children, sixty grandchildren, and a number of great-grandchildren. The children born to Mr. and Mrs. Ling were as follows: William, born Aug. 16, 1859, married Sarah Stephens, and died in 1902, leaving six children, Robert Henson, Fred Elizabeth, Walter and Wilber, twins, George and Thomas; Mary married Thomas Jefferson Davis, of Buffington township, and has five children, Norman, Stanton, Elden, Dalton and Melvin; Agnes Jane, who was for some years a school teacher, married Robert Elder, of Juniata, Pa., and had six children, Philip., Benjamin L., Roberta, Bryan, Charles and Walter; Teresa Ella (Tessie), widow of Fletcher Bracken, who was killed in a powder mill explosion at Seward, June 19, 1892, has four children, Walter, Homer, Jessie Elizabeth and Chalmer; Laura Emma, who married E. G. Neely, of Carlisle, Pa., has six children, Mary Elizabeth, Edith, Margaret, Harry Marlin, Kenneth and Elmer Norman; Lizzie Ida, who married Sanford U. Syster, of Derry township, Westmoreland county, has eight children, Harry, Iva, Frank, Roy, Clyde, Carl, June Rose and Dale R.; Charles Bowen, of Juniata, Pa., married Mary Stutsman and has five children, Minnie, Benjamin L., Henson, Alberta and Theodore; Fannie R., who married Albert Plowman, a railroad engineer residing at Derry, Westmoreland county, has three children, Ralph, Mabel and Floyd; Ada C., who married John Stutzman, of Buffington township, has seven children, Hazel Fern, Edward Ling, Pearl E., Benjamin L., Clyde, Gladys and Herman; Edward M., who is engaged in operating the home farm, married Martha Plowman, and has two children, Mervin Chalmer and Mildred Violet.