

JAMES DIXON, the "grand old man" of Blacklick township, is the oldest living citizen of that township, where his entire life of over ninety years has been spent. He has lived at his present home for sixty-eight years. He is a native of the township, born June 25, 1822, and is a notable representative of one of the oldest and most prominent families of southern Indiana county. The Dixons are of Scotch-Irish extraction.

The first of the family to settle in Indiana county were Joseph and Samuel Dixon, supposedly brothers, who came from the Cumberland valley in Pennsylvania, and located in Blacklick township, then a part of Westmoreland county. Their tract of land adjoined General Campbell's. Both participated in the Indian wars. Joseph Dixon was obliged to retreat from his land to Wallace's fort, and purchased or took up land adjoining the fort, where the rest of his life was spent, and where most of his children were born. They were: John, said to be the first white child born north of Blacklick, Pa., who married Elizabeth McQuiston, and died in 1843; Rebecca, who married Israel Grey; Nancy, who married Joseph Colbertson; and Joseph.

Joseph Dixon, son of Joseph, is supposed to have been born at or near Wallace's fort, in October, 1781. In 1804 he came to Blacklick township, and settled on the land which his father owned. He had a tract of 300 acres, which he improved and cultivated, and later added 200 acres to the homestead, becoming one of the largest land owners of his day, and was a well-known and respected citizen of that section. The remainder of his life was spent on his farm, where he died Feb. 24, 1853, aged seventy-one years, four months, ten days, and he was laid to rest in Hopewell cemetery. He was a Whig in politics. His first marriage was to Margaret Caldwell, his second to Mary Dixon, daughter of Samuel and Nancy (Dixon) Dixon. Nancy, wife of Samuel Dixon, was the second white woman to land on the west bank of Blacklick creek. The children born to Joseph Dixon were: Jane married George Dickie, of White and Center townships; Nancy married Daniel Smith, of Center township; Samuel married Ellen Shields and (second) Mary McGuire; Joseph married Margaret Campbell and died in Burrell township; John died on the homestead; James (born to the second marriage) is mentioned below. Mrs. Mary Dixon died June 24, 1860, aged seventy-two years, and was laid to rest in Hopewell cemetery. She was a member of Hopewell M. E. Church.

James Dixon spent his boyhood days on the homestead. He attended the little log schoolhouse located in Dixon district, and continued to make his home on the homestead with his parents until he came of age. Then he started to make his own way. He worked on a near-by farm for one year, and in 1844 located at his present place, a tract of 212 acres, where he has made his home for the last sixty-eight years. During the greater part of that period he has given most of his time to agricultural pursuits, cultivating and improving his homestead, to which he has added other land. For the last twenty years he has lived retired from active labor. Now in his declining days he is tenderly cared for by his daughters. Although past fourscore and ten years he is still active in mind and body, retaining all his faculties except his hearing, and takes a deep interest in all the doings of the day as well as his own business affairs. He is a man of strong

convictions, and possesses an indomitable will, and when he considers himself in the right will fight to the end against any obstacles. He is imbued with the spirit of the strong Scotch-Irish race which has been such a potent factor for good institutions. In politics he was originally a Democrat, casting his first Presidential vote for James K. Polk, and he has never missed a Presidential election since. Since the days of Lincoln he has supported the Republican candidates down to and including William H. Taft. The only public office he ever held was that of township assessor. Mr. Dixon has been a lifelong member of Blacklick M. E. Church, and was one of the organizers of the first church of that denomination, in the town of Blacklick, being now the last survivor of that zealous company. He served the church as member of the building committee, Sunday school teacher, and later superintendent of the Sunday school. No resident of Blacklick township is more highly respected than Mr. Dixon. He has lived to see many changes in that region, most of them for the betterment of social conditions, and during his long life has witnessed remarkable progress in every line of human endeavor as well as in agricultural work, where his chief interest lay.

In 1843 Mr. Dixon married Mary Earhart, who was born Oct. 27, 1823, in Blacklick township, daughter of William and Mary C. (Keener) Earhart, and died Nov. 1, 1899, after a married life of about fifty-five years. She was interred in Blairsville cemetery. Mrs. Dixon was a member of Hopewell M. E. Church and a true Christian in all the relations of life, noted for her goodness and charity. Twelve children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Dixon: Mary Catherine married John Lewis, of Jacksonville, Pa.; Nancy died in infancy; Elizabeth died in infancy; Clara died in infancy; Annie E. resides at home with her father; William E. is engaged in the meat business at Cokeville, Pa.; Isaac Newton resides at Latrobe, Pa., where he holds the office of county poor director; Joseph Harry died after reaching maturity; Samuel Edward died after reaching manhood; Charles resides with his father; Hettie L., now at home, was married and had two children, Hazel, who died when four years old, and Charles, who is now studying at the State normal school at Indiana, Pa.; Emma died when young.