

JOHN HARRISON SWASY, a successful farmer and stock raiser of Blacklick township, Indiana county, is a native of that part of the county, born Feb. 10, 1850, in Center township. This family has long been settled in New York state, and many of the name are to be found on Long Island and in central and northern New York, as well as in New Jersey and elsewhere. It has been spelled in various ways.

John Swasy, the founder of the branch in Indiana county, Pa., was a native of New York State, and crossed the Allegheny mountains when a young man, looking for a location where he could make a home. He settled not far from what is now Homer City, in Center township, this county, where he engaged in farming and passed the remainder of his life, dying on his farm. He owned a tract of 109 acres. His wife, whose maiden name was Bonner, also died on the homestead. They were members of the M. E. Church. Three children were born to this pioneer couple: Rebecca, John and Jane.

John Swasy, son of John, was born May 21, 1824, on the farm in Center township, and attended subscription school in the neighborhood. He followed agricultural pursuits all his life on the homestead, was a hard worker, and became a much respected citizen of his locality. He died on the farm July 18, 1895, and is buried in Oakland cemetery, at Indiana. Mr. Swasy was a member of the M. E. church at Homer City. In political association he was a democrat, but he never took any part in public matters. On Nov. 17, 1846, he was married in White township, this county, to Sarah B. Allison, who survives him, residing on the home farm. She became the mother of five children: Martha married Houston Monshower and resides in Worcester, Mass.; John Harrison is mentioned below; Hannah, wife of Lemuel Kunkle, resides on the homestead in Center township; Mary Ann married John Anthony, of Armstrong township, Indiana Co., Pa; Robert Allison makes his home at Erie, Pennsylvania.

The Allison family to which Mrs. Swasy belongs, are among the first white settlers in what is now Center township. A full history of its early representatives here will be found elsewhere in this work. Andrew Allison, son of Robert, settled in Center township in 1788; he had been a soldier in the Revolutionary war. His son Robert Allison, born Feb. 9, 1794, married April 14, 1819, Hannah Bryan, who died March 24, 1879; his death occurred Aug. 15, 1866. They had a family of eleven children, born as follows: Hannah, April 14, 1820 (died Sept. 25, 1838); Jane, Feb. 24, 1822; Nathan B., Jan. 7, 1824 (died April 6, 1828); Sarah, Jan. 27, 1826 (now the widow of John Swasy); Rebecca, March 31, 1828; Martha, Feb. 16, 1830; Mary, Feb. 19, 1832 (died Jan. 17, 1853); Nancy, March 1, 1834; Charles T., Feb. 15, 183- (died Aug. 25, 1863, while serving in the Civil war); James S., Aug. 9, 1842; Emma J., March 20, 1848.

John Harrison Swasy spent his boyhood days on the home farm and obtained his education in the local public schools. Remaining at home until he reached the age of twenty-two years, he then started farming on his own account in Blacklick township, on the Lyons homestead, a tract of 126 acres where he has since resided, and upon which he has made extensive improvements. In 1901 he built a substantial and convenient barn, and in 1908 erected the handsome residence which he and his family now occupy. Other buildings have

also been put up which add materially to the equipment and value of the property, and Mr. Swasy has been very well rewarded for the years of thrifty labor he has put upon the place. He is not only interested in the advancement of the general welfare, and supports every movement which promises to benefit his township and fellow citizens, being public-spirited on all matters pertaining to his community. In Politics he is a staunch Democrat. He was one of the organizers and charter members of the local grange, No. 317, Patrons of Husbandry, and has acted as steward of that body, in the promotion of whose interests he has taken an active part. His religious connection is with Hopewell M. E. Church, of which he is a trustee.

On June 3, 1875, Mr. Swasy married, in Blacklick township, Myrtilla Lyons, who was born there, daughter of William and Eliza (Deviney) Lyons, and they have had three children: Myrtle, formerly a school teacher of Indiana county, who married J. Elder Smith, son of John T. Smith, of Blacklick township; Logan, at home; and Charles O, who is now clerking for the Josephine Furnace & Coke Company of Josephine, Pennsylvania.

James Lyons, the first of his family to settle in Indiana county, was born in Ireland, and came to America in 1764, some years before the Revolution. He made his home in Pennsylvania, at first in Conococheague valley, moving in 1808 to Blacklick township, then a part of Westmoreland county. His children were: Samuel, Alexander and James.

Alexander Lyons, son of James, married Margaret McFarland and to them were born five children: Martha, wife of Matthew Lichenthall of Prairie City, Ill.; James A., of Beaver county, Pa.; Mary who married James Reed, of Prairie City, Ill.; Eliza A., deceased; and William, of Blacklick township, Indiana Co., Pennsylvania

William Lyons, son of Alexander, was born on the homestead, and followed farming the greater part of his life. He spent some years at Steubenville, Ohio, where he kept store, later returning to the homestead, where he cultivated a tract of 118 acres now owned by George Clawson. He made a number of improvements on that place, where he spent the remainder of his life, dying there Jan. 31, 1881. He is buried in the Ebenezer cemetery in Conemaugh township. In religion he was a Presbyterian, in political sentiment a Republican. His wife, Eliza (Deviney), daughter of Aaron Deviney, died in 1876, on the homestead; she was a member of the United Presbyterian Church. They had a family of ten children: Newton died while serving in the Civil war; Martha died in 1909; Melissa married George Harmon, of Cuba, Mo.; Alexander is deceased; William died in infancy; Ella married Mark Hunter, of Peoria, Ill., and is deceased; Myrtilla married John Harrison Swasy; Harriet married Henry Mahon, of Pittsburg; Dudley lives in Westmoreland county; Luna married Dayton Ray and resides in Youngstown, Ohio