

WILLIAM A. EVANS, who has been farming in White township for over twenty years, was formerly a resident of Cherryhill township and has lived all his life in Indiana county, having been born April 3, 1841, in Brushvalley township, where the founder of the Evans family in this region settled over a century ago.

The Evanses are of Welsh extraction. Hugh Evans, grandfather of William A. Evans, was a native of Cardiff, Wales, and crossed the Atlantic when a young man, working to pay his passage on the vessel. Among the passengers was a young English girl with whom he fell in love, and they were married when they landed at Philadelphia. They came to the Welsh settlement near Ebensburg, in Cambria county, Pa., where they remained for a short time, until they came to Indiana county, locating in Brushvalley township. They were among the first settlers there. Locating in the wilderness, Mr. Evans built his log cabin and set to work clearing up the land. He remained but a short time on his first farm, buying a 400-acres tract, all brush and timber, near the site of Mechanicsburg, upon which he settled down to farming. Much of this land is still in the family name. Here he built a dwelling house and barn, and also erected a saw and grist mill—the first of the kind in Brush creek valley. The mill was of stone, and stood on Brush creek about three-quarters of a mile below the present site of Mechanicsburg, and for many years was a prominent landmark. He also owned a distillery. He worked hard and faithfully, prospered in his own affairs and did his full duty as a citizen, being one of the enterprising and progressive men of his day and generation. He was a strong abolitionist. He died on his farm in 1849, at the age of seventy years, and was buried in what is known as the Evans graveyard in Brushvalley township. He was a member of the Baptist Church, the first Baptist to settle in the township. His first wife, Hannah, died leaving children as follows: Ann, who married John Kelly and (second) James Stewart; John; Hugh, who died at Altoona; Mary, who married Henry Grumbling; Elizabeth (Betsy), who first married Joseph McNutt; Evan, who lived in Brush Valley; William; and James, who died in Center township. Mr. Evans married for his second wife Esther Creswell, and she bore him three children; Ellen, Rebecca and Lucinda (who married rev. A. B. Runyan, a well-known Baptist minister of Mechanicsburg).

William Evans, son of Hugh, was born in Brushvalley township, passed all his life on the old Evans farm, and was always engaged in farming and milling. He owned 135 acres. In politics he was a Whig, and he took considerable interest in the fortunes of his party and in local public affairs, serving as judge of elections and as school director. In religious connection he was a Presbyterian. He died in 1857, in his fifty-third year. His wife, Susan (Wilkins), who was born in Brushvalley township, daughter of Andrea and Elinor (Robinson) Wilkins, the former an early settler in Indiana county, died in 1871. She was the mother of eight children, five sons and three daughters, namely: Dr. John, late of Homer City, where his family now reside; Andrew W., deceased, who served nine months in the Civil war; Samuel W., deceased; William A.; Nancy E., who married Jerry Rhodes (both are now deceased); Susan Jane, widow of W. Scott McCormick, of Indiana; Sarah Elizabeth, deceased; and George W., deceased (his family live in Indiana borough). Of this family John and Samuel were in the

Union service during the Civil war for three years, and William was drafted, but did not have to enter the army because his three brothers were soldiers.

William A. Evans was educated in Brushvalley township, where he lived until 1864. That year he moved to Cherryhill township, of which he was a resident for twenty-five years, owning a farm there. In 1889 he came to his present location in White township, buying the farm upon which he has since had his home. Farming has always been his principal occupation, and in connection therewith he has been successfully engaged in the breeding of Holstein cattle, of which he has made a specialty, being now quite extensively interested in that line. For nine years he also carried on dairying. He is a go-ahead farmer, and is recognized all over the county as an intelligent worker along the best modern methods. In 1893 he was manager of the Indiana County Fair Association, and when it changed its location to the present grounds he superintended the moving. He has served his township in the offices of school director, supervisor and overseer of the poor, and in every position he has been called upon to fill has justified the confidence placed in him by his fellow citizens.

Mr. Evans was the first carrier on the mail route from Indiana to Mechanicsburg, in Brushvalley township. His father had the contract, and William A. Evans, then a youth of fifteen, did the work.

In 1865 Mr. Evans married Flora Stutchill, a native of Greenville, Indiana county, daughter of Alexander and Martha (Evans) Stutchill, and granddaughter of ex-Sheriff Evans, of Indiana county. Mr. and Mrs. Stutchill lived in Indiana county from an early day. Ten children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Evans; Nettie is the wife of James A. Simpson, a farmer of White township, and has four children, Florence, Mark and Martha (twins) and Isabelle; Mary lives at home with her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Evans and their family are members of the Presbyterian Church of Indiana, in which he serves as elder.