

JOHN DITWILER.

There have been few residents in this portion of Ohio who have enjoyed to greater degree the esteem and friendship of a large circle of acquaintances than John Ditwiler, now deceased. He was a man of sterling worth, of genial disposition and unfailing courtesy, and these qualities rendered him popular, while his sterling character enabled him to retain friendship when gained. He was born in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, in 1825, and was a son of Jacob Ditwiler, who died during his infancy, while his mother passed away in 1876, at which time she was visiting her children in Cheshireville, Ohio. During the days of his boyhood and youth John Ditwiler remained upon the farm and assisted in the labors of field and meadow, while in the schools of the neighborhood he acquired his education. On attaining his majority he became connected with the dry-goods trade, but after two years' failing health, caused by confinement in the store, forced him into other fields of labor and he became a traveling salesman, in which enterprise he was very successful. He had the ability to dispose of goods readily, for he was well known for his integrity and trustworthiness in trade transactions. He remained upon the road through a long period, but at length became connected with the manufacturing interests of Mansfield, organizing and establishing the Buckeye Suspender Company.

Mr. Ditwiler was united in marriage to Miss Olive J. Gurney, a daughter of Samuel and Jane (Cross) Gurney. The family is of English lineage and the ancestry can be traced back to James VI. The family coat of arms has been furnished by a cousin. Nathaniel Gurney, the grandfather of Mrs. Ditwiler, was born in England in 1786, and after coming to America took up his abode on a farm in Maine, about 1816. He carried on agricultural pursuits throughout his entire life and in addition to farming he was also a stockholder in a bank, was the owner of a vessel and was a very wealthy man. He died in Belfast, Maine, in 1871.

Samuel Gurney, the father of Mrs. Ditwiler, was born in Maine in 1813, and died in early manhood, in New Orleans. His wife, who was born in 1811, died in Bellville, Ohio, in 1878. In their family were three sons: John, a farmer of Huron county, Ohio; Oliver, who is living in Bellville, Richland county; and Louis, of Mansfield. The daughter became the wife of John Ditwiler, and their marriage was blessed with the following named: Harvey G., who is now forty-nine years of age and was married, in 1879, to Miss Nettie J. Redrup, and they had two children: Mary Olive, now the wife of Fred Martin Bushnell, who is the cashier of the Richland Savings

Bank, of Mansfield; and Harold R., a bright boy of seven years; Hulbert W., who is forty-six years of age, married Helen Corlies in 1889, and they have two children, Herbert C. and Dorothy, aged, respectively, ten and seven years; Homer B., who is now forty-two years of age, married Miss Hattie H. Johnson in 1884; in 1897 she departed this life, leaving two children: Ethel May, who is now fifteen years of age, and John Chester, a youth of thirteen.

Since the father's death the three sons have continued the business which he established, being now successfully engaged in the manufacture of skirts and suspenders on an extensive and growing scale. All are enterprising and progressive men, the labors of the one supplementing the efforts of the other, so that the firm is a strong one and its success is assured. The sons and their families are communicants of the Congregational church of Mansfield. Hulbert W. is the only one connected with a secret society and he belongs to the Odd Fellows fraternity. The brothers follow in the political footsteps of their father and have been stalwart Republicans throughout the period of their majority.

Mr. Ditwiler was called to his final rest August 21, 1890, after having been a member of the Congregational church for many years, and he was one of the deacons at the time of his death. He was also a member of the Odd Fellows order from early manhood. His was a busy, useful and honorable career, and his labors resulted in bringing a comfortable competence to the family. In 1867 he came with his wife and children to Mansfield, which has since continuously been the home of Mrs. Ditwiler, whose residence is located at No. 46 West Third street. She is a well known lady, for through more than a third of a century she has continued in Richland county and has ever won the love and respect of those with whom she has come in contact through her many excellent qualities.