

HISTORY  
OF  
WESTMORELAND  
COUNTY  
PENNSYLVANIA

---

GENEALOGICAL MEMOIRS

COMPILED UNDER THE EDITORIAL SUPERVISION OF  
JOHN W. JORDAN, LL.D.,  
OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

ILLUSTRATED

---

VOL. II.

---

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

THE LEWIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

1906

JOSEPH T. DOUGHERTY. A visitor in Vandergrift would not be long in discovering that Joseph T. Dougherty is one of the moving spirits among the "mill men" and therefore one of the representative men of the community. From the hour that Mr. McMurtry signified his desire to "give every man a show for his white alley," Mr. Dougherty has been a progressive and enthusiastic promoter of every good thing. He is an original thinker. His mind is constantly at work devising ways and means for the improvement of men and conditions and for the development of all phases of life in this industrial center. Impulsive in temperament, generous in disposition, he does not stop to consider whether policy would sanction the carrying out of his plans. He is not a trimmer in any sense. Were he more *sauve*, were his motives mercenary or ulterior, and did he go about guided by policy, he might be more popular and gain more votes at an election, but he is controlled by none of these things. He is an altruistic optimist. If he can help the other fellow he will gladly do it, cost what it may.

He is positive in his make-up, a man with iron in his blood. You always know where to find him on every issue. He has a high moral sense of the possibilities before the people of Vandergrift. He is so appreciative of all the good things done for the people and is so enamoured of the scheme by which the company has always been willing to "help the people to help themselves" that he has not only endeavored to get for himself and his family all that he could, but has been glad to co-operate in every endeavor to promote the industrial, educational, political and religious welfare of all. Owing to the public spirit manifest, he was elected a member of the first school board, serving in that capacity for five years, during three of which he was its president, rendering invaluable service in the construction of our school buildings and bringing the public school system of our town at once into the front rank of the county. He was president of an association which fostered a Boy's Brass Band, securing for the young men the necessary musical instruments and providing trained leadership, developing through their public performances a civic spirit. In all the agitation for the creation of a Young Men's Christian Association he has been a leading spirit. When Mr. Oscar B. Lindquist was compelled to resign as burgess, owing to his removal from the town, there was a general call for the appointment of Mr. Dougherty as his successor. When the legal question was raised as to the possibility of his being burgess and being a member of the school board at the same time, he resigned as burgess, preferring to remain as a promoter of the schools. Mr. Dougherty joined the First Methodist Episcopal church and has been one of its most active members, carrying into all his church work the same earnest and enthusiastic spirit. He has been and still continues superintendent of the Sunday school, three times being elected a delegate to the lay convention which meets at the same time of the annual ministerial conference.

But it is among the working men that his strong and masterful personality has been felt. A man of intense convictions, positive in utterance, with the temperament of the orator, his magnetic influence has been felt in all the gatherings of the men. As presiding officer or as the spokesman of the men he has had a large place in the shaping of legislation, in the evolution of policies and in the presentation of the wishes of the men to their employers. No one has commanded the respect of the employers more than he. Such has been his manifest sincerity of purpose and down-right honesty and such has been his absolute confidence in the integrity of the promoters of Vandergrift and their real and sincere desire to do all in their power, not only to make money for themselves, but to have the world see by their actions that it "pays to

treat labor decently," that we are not surprised to know that during the labor troubles of 1903 not one man in all the Kiskiminetas Valley threw down his tongs to join forces with the strikers, but every last man stood by the company. Widows were not pinched, children were not starved, men were not crazed by drink and passion, but in peace and sweet contentment every man sat under his own vine and under his own fig tree. A marked advance was made in the solution of labor troubles and a new era began in the industrial world. When in times of prosperity a company voluntarily advances its men, when in times of depression the men voluntarily ask for a reduction, one may believe that confidence and mutual interest dominate the life of that industrial center.

That was a great day in the history of Vandergrift when all the working men, at the close of those troublous times, gathered together in the Casino for good fellowship. By a coup de etat, Mr. McMurtry was present. It must have been the proudest day of his life. After the ostensible purpose of the meeting had been carried out, its real object was discovered when, as the spokesman of the working men, Mr. Dougherty, who had championed the plan from its inception, was introduced and in a speech that was a model in composition and with emotions stirred far beyond the ordinary, presented to Mr. McMurtry a loving cup, the gift of every man in his employ, intrinsically valued at \$4,500.00, designed and wrought out by Tiffany, but in reality the faintest evidence of the real love and abiding affection of every man, woman, and child, for they all knew him as a real friend in every way. One can now more readily believe that the armies of capital and labor will yet meet, not as did Caesar and Pompey at Pharsalia in deadly conflict, but like Jacob and Esau in the mountains of Gilead in brotherhood and joy—the feud ended. Such an opportunity comes to few men. To have been chosen by his fellows for this high honor was a mark of distinction of which every man might well be proud. But this was not the only time he was called upon to represent his fellow workmen as they sought to show appreciation of some one with whom they had been associated in the work. When Mr. S. A. Davis, long the division superintendent of the mills, removed from the town to accept a still higher position in the company, Mr. Dougherty was compelled to leave a sick room that he might, in the presence of a great company, voice the sentiments of the employees, as he presented Mr. Davis and his esteemed wife with beautiful and costly gifts. Possessed of a fine command of language, a musical voice and a commanding presence, as a speaker he wins attention and hence is in frequent demand. A fraternal order to which he belongs, when the annual memorial service is held for the departed members, though professional speakers may come from a distance, he is always expected to make one of the addresses.

Seeking to advance the interests of the men, he was largely instrumental in forming the Steel Workers' Relief Association, composed of the workmen of the various mills located in the Kiskiminetas Valley, and was selected as the first president, which position he still holds. A student of men more than of books, though an industrious reader, he knows men. Having reached this influential position while yet in the prime of young manhood, the steps by which it has been attained have been those of toil. The son of a man who bravely served his country during the Civil war, the greater part of the education that was obtained within the walls of the school room came from attendance at the Soldiers' Orphan School located at Dayton, Pennsylvania, where his years from eleven to fifteen were spent. Leaving at this youthful age he has bravely made his way by depending on his own exertions. Laboring about lumber mills and coal mines for a time, he entered the service of the Pennsylvania railroad, to which he gave almost seven years service. Then entering the em-

ploy of the Apollo Iron and Steel Co., at Apollo, Pennsylvania, in six months he had passed from a subordinate position to the charge of a pair of rolls, the most responsible and best remunerated position among the workmen of the mills.