

HON. HENRY PUNCABEE KINNEAR.

(396) "Hon. Henry Puncabee Kinnear (Youngsville), one of the successful business men of Warren county, was born in Youngsville, July 26, 1816, devoted his entire business life chiefly to the lumber interests from which he retired in 1882. He was elected sheriff in 1843 and again in 1861; and was a member of the Legislature in 1846-47 and 48; he also held minor offices in the town. He is now a director and superintendent of the chartered Point Chautauqua Company on the Lake, which has a capital of \$100,000. On March 28, 1842, he married Abigail Morgan of Chautauqua county, N. Y. They had four children—George W., Harry C., C. F. L., and Florence D., the latter married M. D. Whitney. George W. enlisted in Company I, One Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania Volunteers and served to the close of the war. Henry P. was a son of Henry and Margaret Kinnear. They were born in Ireland—he in 1764, she in 1776—and were married in Center county in 1797. They had a family of nine children—James, Ann, Margaret, Rebecca, Judge Carter V., Robert, Charles, and Hon. Henry P., one died in infancy. Henry P. is the only surviving one. They settled in Youngsville where they purchased a tract of land, in 1816 Henry engaged in the mercantile trade, being the first merchant in that township. He was appointed recorder and commissioner of Warren county by the governor, and also acting Justice for several years. Mr. Kinnear's mother, Margaret, was never sick a day, and lived until she was 105 years old when she died from a fall. Henry Kinnear died in 1826, and his wife in 1856. (Warren County History, 1887.)

The Youngsville Savings Bank was established in 1875, with Henry P. Kinnear as First Vice-President, later he succeeded John McKinney as President of the Bank, and

remained in office until his death June 28, 1885. He had joined the Methodist church on probation in 1876.

His father, Henry Kinnear, was constable of Venango County in 1810, and received a wound while attempting to reprehend a prisoner from which he never recovered; he died March 6, 1826.

In the interest of the History of Youngsville and of Warren County, as well as in justice to a good man, I am glad of the opportunity to pay a tribute to the memory of Honorable Henry P. Kinnear. He was my friend and I was his friend, and I feel that I knew him so much better than many others that I can truthfully speak of some of his sterling virtues, and feel it both a pleasure and a duty in so doing.

I first made his acquaintance in 1869, and was present at the dedication of the Odd Fellows Cemetery of Youngsville by Grand Lodge Officers of Pennsylvania, of which Mr. Kinnear was one, on October 19, 1869. Past Grand Sire J. B. Nicholson of Philadelphia acted as M. W. Grand Master and Honorable Samuel P. Johnson delivered the Historical address. It was a great and grand occasion. There were delegates sent from the Warren, Titusville and Tidioute Lodges and large numbers came from nearby towns, and it was the largest assembly of people that Youngsville had ever seen within her gates.

To Henry Kinnear was due the success of this great public spirited undertaking. It was the proud culmination of his untiring activities begun in 1866, when he and two other trustees purchased the ground for this purpose. Later, on November 29, 1884, I was one of the five incorporators of the Odd Fellows Cemetery Association of Youngsville, Pennsylvania, and Henry P. Kinnear was one of the three trustees and remained so as long as he lived. He it was who caused the remains of Matthew Young, the founder of Youngsville, to be removed from the old cemetery and re-interred in a location near the center of the new cemetery; and to him is due the selection of the rough granite boulder—appropriate as a monument to the plain,

solid, unpolished Scotch character—in which is sunk a copper plate suitably engraved. Some years later he took me to his own cemetery lot and showed me a grave already dug and lined with brick, and I understood that it was prepared in advance for himself when it would be uncovered and opened when needed. Henry P. Kinnear was first in every movement for the progress and elevation of the people. There was nothing done for the better development of the community and for the advancement of the town that he did not lead in promoting. He was a leader in the work for better schools. I well remember the fight for a new school building. He took three or four carpenters with him to Sherman, N. Y., to examine a new school house just built in that village of about the size of Youngsville. Plans were brought back and he succeeded in getting them approved and the right school directors elected, and the school house was built in spite of violent opposition. This school building still stands, now veneered with brick, and is an historic monument to his civic pride and his love of educational advancement. He was a leader in the agricultural fair movements, when it used to have its annual meet at Youngsville. He was an exceedingly modest man. He admired and gave great praise to others for their good deeds, oftentimes when he himself was the moving spirit, but took no credit to himself. I recollect that one morning when the mail had been received he announced that he had a letter from Horace Greeley, and that he had accepted the invitation to make an address at the Agricultural Fair. Everyone was pleased. But Greeley was a poor penman, and later it was discovered that what he really did write was his regret that he had to decline the invitation.

He was one of the first—with Vincent, Miller and others—to start the first Chautauqua, on the west side of Chautauqua Lake, but told me he tried to buy the Bemus farm at Bemus Point, because of its high and beautiful location. Later he was the leader in developing and building up and laying out the grounds at Point Chautauqua, on the east side of the lake.

He served two three-year terms as Sheriff of Warren County, and was a member of the State Legislature in the session of 1847. In February of that year he got a bill passed making the bridge across Brokenstraw Creek at Irvineton a County bridge. Thirty-two years later I was in the Legislature and on petition of 1,017 citizens of Warren County, of which he was one, I had passed a bill repealing this act and making it a Brokenstraw Township bridge. He told me that at the time he got the bill passed there was no railroad in Warren County, and the entire west half of the County had to drive over that bridge in going to the County seat, and that the east half of the County had to drive over that bridge in their travels to Titusville, Erie and other places west, and that it was an unjust burden for Brokenstraw Township to keep up the bridge for the entire County—that they had done it for a long period of years previous to 1847, but that as the County had kept it up for thirty-two years since 1847 and as there was now two railroads running from Warren west through Irvineton up the Brokenstraw Valley, he believed that now the Township should take care of the bridge, the County having built a new one. I think everyone recognized that his reasoning was just.

His father was born in Ireland in 1764, and came to this country in 1790, and to Youngsville in 1816, where he built the first store in the village. He was commissioned a Justice of the Peace and in 1819 was appointed one of the first commissioners of Warren County, serving two years. Henry P. Kinnear no doubt inherited some of his Irish diplomacy and resourcefulness from his ancestors. He was often engaged in manufacturing lumber and in running rafts of lumber down the Brokenstraw and on down the Allegheny River. As illustrating his resourcefulness, I remember his telling me of his running logs down Matthews Run—a small tributary of Brokenstraw Creek. In fact it was so small where it ran through the farm of Samuel Hull that he fenced it up in two or three places by running his fence across the creek through his fields. Kinnear

had a lot of logs up the creek above these fences and was waiting for a raise of water in the Creek so that he could run them through into the Brokenstraw. Neither argument nor diplomacy would avail with Mr. Hull. He remained obdurate and told Kinnear that the only way that he could get his logs would be to wait for snow and haul them on sleds in the public road. As it was late in spring, Kinnear knew that there would be no more snow that season, and as he was in the Legislature, he had hurried through an act making Matthews Run a navigable stream for the running of saw logs. When Mr. Hull saw that he had been outwitted, he yielded to the new law, but it was doubtless a long time before he became reconciled to the practical joke. But I think that neither Mr. Kinnear nor any one else ever again used that stream for the running of logs.

Mr. Kinnear was a good rifle shot. His marksmanship was well known, and I am one who has reason to know of its excellence—in my trial of skill with him, where the score was found to be largely in his favor, after he had too generously announced it more favorable to myself.

Such straws are indices to character. In the winter of 1882 and 1883 I had invited him, the Methodist minister of Youngsville, and two other gentlemen of Warren County to hunt and fish in the region of my Company's lumber plant in the Ozark hills of Missouri, where they spent a few weeks and had a good time. The day they left Mr. Kinnear called me aside and told me that while hunting in the woods the day previous he saw what he supposed was a black bear, at which he took careful aim and fired, and the "bear" dropped; when he reached his game he found it to be a dog—his bullet had sped true, and the dog was dead. In coming out of the woods he met the owner of the dog and told him of the humiliating incident and asked him to call on me, and that I would act for him in settling for the dog. There has never been a very stable market for dogs in southeast Missouri, and when the owner came in a few days later, I was able to conclude a settle-

ment so that it only cost Mr. Kinnear ten dollars. The story got out, but he always bore the references to it in the best of good humor.

Henry P. Kinnear was born July 26, 1816. He died June 28, 1885. He was generous and kind; an earnest friend to the poor and the unfortunate; and was a most useful man in the community and a great helper in church and social work. He built the parsonage for the Methodist Church, of which he was a member. I remember that at one time he promoted a Bell Social to raise money to purchase a bell for the new school house, and some hand bills were sent out that at this musicale Kinnear was to sing a solo and I was to play the accompaniment. It helped draw a crowd and the money was raised. His song was "The Wolf Went up the Mountain," but my playing on the organ was unnamed in any polite language.

Mr. Kinnear has been long and is yet sadly missed by those who yet live that knew him. The children loved him, and they missed his "Santa Claus"; and those whom the children love have much of sunshine and goodness in their character.

Some one ought to write up the history of all those good old pioneers, and of some of the people of later date, in the history of Youngsville and of the Township of Brokenstraw, for the benefit of their descendants and for the descendants of their neighbors and friends of this and of succeeding generations.

There is history in cemeteries, and 'tis there will be found the index to much of the history that should be written and preserved.

JOHN B. WHITE,

Kansas City, Mo., May 1st, 1916.