

# VENANGO COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA

## HER PIONEERS AND PEOPLE

*Embracing a General History of the County*

PREPARED BY

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Charles William Mackey was born Nov. 19, 1840, in Franklin, Venango Co., Pa., and began his education there in the public schools. Later he attended the Venango Academy and had private instruction under Prof. William Burgwin. When he went to work he learned the printer's trade, and was publishing a newspaper when a mere youth, but by the time he was eighteen he had decided to take up the study of law, which he commenced with his brother-in-law, Hon. Charles E. Taylor. His legal studies were interrupted by the Civil war, for he was among the first to offer his services, assisting in recruiting the first company in the county, the Venango Grays. This command was mustered in as Company C, 10th Regiment, Pennsylvania Reserves, and attached to the division first commanded by Gen. George A. McCall, later by General Meade. Entering the service May 6th as first lieutenant of his company, his first active duties were at Baltimore and Washington. From August to November he was detached on recruiting service in Pennsylvania. Thereafter, until March, 1862, he was in McCall's Division of the Army of the Potomac, and detached as ordnance officer on the staff of Gen. E. O. C. Ord. He took part in the expedition to Gunnell's Farm, Va., Dec. 6, 1861; reconnaissance to Dranesville, Dec. 10; action at Dranesville, Dec. 20; advance on Manassas, March 10-15, 1862; McDowell's operations against Fredericksburg, in April-June; Peninsular campaign in June and July; Mechanicsville, June 26; Gaines' Mill, June 27; Charles City Cross Roads, June 30; Malvern Hill,

July 1; was at Harrison's Landing until Aug. 15; in the movement to Centerville, Aug. 15-26; Pope's campaign, Aug. 26-Sept. 2; engagements at Gainesville, Aug. 28; Groveton, Aug. 29; Second Bull Run, Aug. 30; Chantilly, Sept. 1; Maryland campaign, in September and October; battle of South Mountain, Sept. 14; Antietam, Sept. 16-17; advance on Falmouth, Va., in October and November; "Mud March," Jan. 20-24, 1863; duty in defense of Washington, February to June; Gettysburg, July 1-3. He received his honorable discharge July 11, 1863, and shortly afterward received the appointment, from Secretary Chase, of special agent from the treasury, being assigned to the district of Eastern Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. In that capacity he collected and disbursed large sums of money, and his accounts were audited as perfect, his duties being creditably and ably performed in spite of the adverse conditions caused by the unsettled state of affairs at the time. He resigned Aug. 1, 1865.

It may be appropriate here to mention that after his Civil War service Captain Mackey gave further military service in the Pennsylvania National Guard, and in 1872 received his captain's commission therein from Governor Hartranft. He was a valued officer, and relinquished his connection with the Guard reluctantly, because of the ever-increasing pressure of business.

Captain Mackey returned to Pennsylvania when he gave up his treasury position and shortly afterward gained admission to the bar, Aug. 29, 1865, on Sept. 1st becoming a member of the law firm of Taylor and Gilfillan, of Franklin. Business came rapidly, and it was not long before he ranked with the best patronized lawyers in this region, being retained as counsel in some of the most important cases in western Pennsylvania. On Dec. 5, 1875, he was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the United States, on motion of Hon. Jeremiah S. Black, former attorney general. Corporation law was his specialty from the outset of his practice, and from acting as solicitor for various railroad and other corporations he also became connected with them in an official capacity, forming so many associations of important character that he was regarded as one of the strongest corporation lawyers in the State. His gift for organization brought him particular renown, and he has a record of having organized or helped to organize a hundred or more corporations, with an aggregate capitalization of one hundred and fifty millions. Twenty-odd railroad companies, six gas com-

panies, sixty-seven manufacturing companies, several banks, three companies for the reduction of ores, and several coal mining and quarrying companies, go to make up this total, including the following: Allegheny Valley Railroad, of which he was attorney several years; Olean, Bradford & Warren Railroad (now a part of the Western New York & Pennsylvania system), of which he was the projector, vice president and general solicitor; Pittsburgh, Bradford & Buffalo Railroad, of which he was projector and president; Cincinnati & Southeastern Railroad (now part of the Chesapeake & Ohio system), of which he was a projector, vice president and general solicitor; Pittsburgh & Western Railroad, of which he was a director and general solicitor; Norfolk & Virginia Beach Railroad, which under his management established the beautiful summer and winter resort at Virginia Beach; New York Connecting Railroad (now owned by the Pennsylvania), of which he was a vice president, having under way the project of a bridge over the East river between Morrisiana and Brooklyn; Colorado & Northwestern Railroad, of which he was vice president and general counselor; the Firth-Sterling Steel Company of Pittsburgh, which has furnished large quantities of projectiles to the government; the American Axe & Tool Company, one of the largest concerns of the kind in the country; the Columbia Gas Light & Fuel Company, of which he was also president, which supplies natural gas to various places in Pennsylvania and, through conduits, to Youngstown, Ohio; the Franklin Natural Gas Company, of which he was president; the Franklin Steel Company, whose works are now the Franklin plant of the American Steel Foundries; the Anglo-American Oxide Company, whose works are in Belgium; the Shenango Coal & Mining Company, one of the largest coal corporations in western Pennsylvania; the National Lead Company; the Columbia Spring Company; the National Saw Company; and the Erie breweries, whose consolidation he effected. He was a director in several Pennsylvania banks, the Exchange Bank of Franklin, the Savings Bank of Franklin, the Emlenton Bank and the Edensburg Bank.

For many years Captain Mackey maintained offices in New York City, transacting most of his operations from that point. He also had law offices in Franklin, being senior member of the firm of Mackey & Hughes, of that city. Though handling enough legal and business responsibilities to more than fill one man's time, he was long active in politics, as a stanch

Republican, from the time he cast his first vote for Lincoln, in 1864. It was said that no man in Pennsylvania rendered the party better service than Captain Mackey, and he was its candidate in 1884 and 1886 in the Twenty-seventh Congressional district of Pennsylvania. His defeat both times was brought about by the use of a large corruption fund in Erie, for except in that city he had a majority largely in excess of that of any Republican candidate in the district for years, the vote he drew in his own county being larger than Blaine's in 1884 and nearly three times the majority given for Governor Beaver in 1886. In 1888 his work as a speaker in New York and New Jersey attracted wide attention. In Franklin, where he made his home, he was city solicitor, city councilman and mayor, receiving the highest honors his fellow citizens could bestow.

Captain Mackey had numerous social connections, being a companion of the New York Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion; a member of Mays Post, G. A. R., of which he had been commander; a member of the Army and Navy, New York, Manhattan Lawyers', Colonial, Hardware and other clubs of New York City; the American Geographical Society; the New York Medico-Legal Society; the Grosvenor Club, of London; the Duquesne Club, of Pittsburgh; and the Nursery Club, of Franklin. Fraternally he was a Mason, a past commander in the Knights Templar, a district deputy grand master and district deputy grand high priest, Royal Arch Masons. He died May 25, 1917, at Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania.