

JEFFERSON COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

HER PIONEERS AND PEOPLE

ILLUSTRATED

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Thus his start in life was similar to that of many of our self-made men, full of hard work and self-denial, with very little schooling, most of his education having been acquired in the School of Experience and College of Hard Knocks. Possessing a great fondness for reading, most of the money retained by him for his own use was spent for books, and his spare time was occupied in familiarizing himself with history and general literature. He was promoted from time to time by the railroad company, but reading law at night after his day's work was done he was in due time admitted to practice law, and shortly afterwards quit the railroad service and became associated with Edward A. Carmalt, Esq., in the copartnership of Carmalt & Strong, which partnership is still existing.

Mr. Strong has been a Republican all his life, having been secretary of the Republican committee for a number of years, accepting the position when every office in Jefferson county was held by a Democrat except the one county commissioner which the law allowed the minority party; and so thorough was his organization work, assisted by his law partner, who was chairman of the Republican County committee during the same period, that when he declined to continue as secretary the county was good for about three thousand Republican majority, and it has remained Republican ever since. He was elected district attorney of Jefferson county in 1894 and again in 1897, and conducted the office with credit and honor.

It was largely through Mr. Strong's genius and capacity that the Pittsburgh & Shawmut railroad was promoted and built, although he has never been employed by that company. This railroad opened large coal fields in Armstrong and Jefferson counties. About 1899 Gen. Thomas H. Hubbard became interested in the development of coal lands in the counties named and engaged Mr. Strong as purchasing agent. For about fifteen years he has been continuously at work on this gigantic enterprise, and his efforts have had so much to do with the development of Armstrong as well as Jefferson county that the people feel he should be accredited to Armstrong as much as to Jefferson county, especially as during the period mentioned he has spent fully one half of his time in Kittanning and Armstrong county, and the other half at Brookville, where his family resides. Through the years of investigation referred to he has acquired special knowledge of the mineral resources of Jefferson and Armstrong counties, which knowledge

When old enough, and until sixteen years of age, Nathan L. Strong worked on the old "up and down" sawmill owned by D. Carrier which his father operated by contract, attending school during the winters. During the hard times of 1873 his father met with financial losses, and in order to tide them over the panic a loan was obtained by his mother giving a mortgage on the home, which she owned. This mortgage they were unable to pay, and when the subject of this sketch, then seventeen years old, obtained a situation as telegraph operator on the railroad, having done chores around the freight office for the opportunity to learn the business, the accumulated interest had largely increased the debt. The position given him was at Summit Tunnel, at a salary of forty dollars per month. In order to save his earnings he arranged to board himself, his mother sending him a basket of provisions weekly, and in return he sent her thirty dollars of his earnings each month to apply on the mortgage, which practice he continued until after he was twenty-three years of age and until his mother wrote him that the debt had been fully paid.

he wishes to use for the benefit of the people generally.

During the past twenty years Mr. Strong has devoted much of his time to industrial development without ever having received a dollar therefor. Personal gain has always been a minor motive, his ambition being the development of the resources of the hills and valleys of his birth that the community might be prosperous, that the owners of land might realize upon the buried treasures, and that men might have employment. He is a man who has visions that become realities. He sees far ahead, and the ambition to accomplish that which has taken definite form in his mind ever drives him on.

Mr. Strong and his law partner, Mr. Carmalt, equal owners of a tract of land lying in Brookville along the three railroads, the Pennsylvania, the Pittsburgh & Shawmut, and the New York Central, have given free sites to the A. D. Deemer Furniture Company, four acres; to the Brookville Glass & Tile Company, six acres; to the Union Auto Specialties Company, ten acres; to the Webb Manufacturing Company, one half acre, and to the Brookville Woolen Mills Company, six acres. They also helped to establish the Summerville Telephone Company.

Mr. Strong is an eloquent and persuasive speaker. His argument before the Rivers and Harbors committee, at Washington, in relation to the natural resources of the Allegheny Valley and tributary territory, contributed to the securing of an appropriation of three hundred thousand dollars to continue the improvement of the Allegheny river. He served a term on the Brookville school board, also on the borough council. He is a fluent and forcible writer, and is the author of the by-laws of the Brookville Park Association and the Jefferson County Agricultural Society, having been a director of both organizations since their inception. These corporations are not for profit. Their laudable purposes and unique public-spiritedness, as set forth in the by-laws, are fair specimens of his literary style and genius. He is a member of the building committee of the beautiful Park Auditorium, which is a splendid memorial to the public spirit of the people of Brookville. He also took an active part as a member of the building committee of the new Methodist Episcopal Church. His philanthropic, promotive, and kind-hearted disposition has made for him many admirers, who for years had been trying to prevail upon him to become a candidate for Congressman. In 1916 he was nominated by

the Republicans of the Twenty-seventh Congressional district, composed of Armstrong, Clarion, Jefferson and Indiana counties, over the opposition of an almost impregnable organization, and was elected at the general election in November.

Mr. Strong is a member of the Pennsylvania Society of New York; the Community Club of Brookville; the Pittsburgh Athletic Association; the Americus Republican Club of Pittsburgh; New Bethlehem Lodge, F. & A. M.; Coudersport Consistory, thirty-second degree, Scottish Rite Masons; and Syria Temple, A. A. O. N. M. S., of Pittsburgh. He is a trustee of the Brookville Y. M. C. A., which has erected a fifty thousand dollar building, a steward in the Methodist Episcopal Church of Brookville, president of the Boy Scout Council of Kittanning, and a member of the finance committee of the Boy Scout Council of Brookville, and is at present promoting the Brookville Improvement Association, another organization not for profit, its proposed object being to render assistance to worthy local enterprises.