

BIOGRAPHICAL AND PORTRAIT

# CYCLOPEDIA

OF

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CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY, NEW YORK.

WITH A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE COUNTY

BY

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upon the same day and their remains were buried in the same grave. They reared a family of six sons and five daughters: James (dead); Sallie, wife of Judge Abner Lewis; Clark, who died at Panama in 1889; William and Angeline, now in Wisconsin; James H.; Maxon of Poland; Ann, Amy, Finley and Mary.

James H. Sweet possessed but few advantages to obtain an education during his boyhood days, and spent a few months in winter subscription schools, which he often attended through severe snow storms. After working on his father's farm until he was of age, and then for a short time as a farm hand in his immediate neighborhood, he went down the Mississippi river to Louisiana, which he soon left for the western states and territories, in which he remained for a few years. At the end of that time he returned to Chautauqua county, where he erected a saw and grist-mill on French creek, which three years later he exchanged for a farm of one hundred and seventy-four acres of land in the town of Busti, where he followed farming for twenty years. In 1866 he sold his farm and came to Jamestown, where he purchased some valuable lots and erected his present convenient and comfortable residence.

He married Lois Moore, who died and left two children: Franklin M., of Jamestown, who married Eliza Gray; and Adaline, wife of N. W. Hall, a tobacco dealer of Corry, Pa. He married Lois Hart, and his children by this second union are: Albert L., of Jamestown, who married Augusta Davis; Reuben E. married Angie Stirdevant, has one child, Edith, and resides in Buffalo; and Emma M., wife of D. S. Horton.

James H. Sweet is a republican in politics, having been formerly a whig, and has been a member for over sixty years of the Methodist church, of which his wife has been a member for many years.

**ELIAL W. SKINNER.** One of the best known and most successful of Portland town's grape growers is Elial W. Skinner, who is a son of David and Mary (Williams) Skinner, and was born on the farm where he now resides, September 30, 1838. David Skinner is a native of Chenango county, New York, and came from there to Chautauqua county in 1820, when he located in what is now Portland town and has ever since resided there. Although now (1891) in his eighty-ninth year, he is active and vigorous and enjoying much better health than would be expected of one of his age. He has always been engaged in agricultural pursuits on an extensive scale; at one time he was the largest individual real estate owner in that town, and kept great numbers of live stock. Mr. Skinner is a democrat and is a great worker. His staying powers in any kind of work were at one time a matter of renown. He is of Irish descent, while Mary Williams, his wife, was Scotch. She is still living, aged eighty-seven years, and is quite an active old lady.

Elial W. Skinner has spent his entire life on the farm. He received his education at the common schools and academy. He owns forty acres of his father's homestead and has a very fine vineyard and is one of the leading farmers.

In 1870 he married Bessie, daughter of Luke Haight of Brocton and they have two children, one son and one daughter: William and Lillian.

Elial W. Skinner is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church and the Equitable Aid Union. In 1862 he enlisted in Co. E, 154th regiment, New York Volunteers and served three years as a private, participating in the battles of Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. At the latter place on July 1, 1863, he was taken prisoner and held for eighteen months. Ten months of the time were spent in the vile and notorious Andersonville, where so many perished from want of the necessities of life. June 25, 1865, he was dis-



charged at Elmira, New York, and returned to his home. Mr. Skinner is a companionable gentleman and has a pleasant home, in which his friends are royally entertained. He is intelligent and well informed and has the courage of asserting his convictions.

**A**SA TEFFT was born in the town of Lebanon, Madison county, New York, February 1, 1819, and is a son of John and Elizabeth (Dye) Tefft. Both parents were natives of the State of Rhode Island, where his father was engaged in farming. At that time he belonged to the predominant political party—the Whig; while religiously he never allied himself with any special sect or denomination. When past the middle of life, he migrated into the State of New York and died in Lebanon at the age of fifty-one years. His wife was by descent a Quaker. Grandfather Tefft came to Madison county, New York, from Rhode Island about ninety years ago, where he engaged in farming and passed the remaining years of his life.

Asa Tefft lived in Madison county until he was fifteen years of age, where he received a common school education and began his career in life. Upon coming to Chautauqua county he engaged in farming in the town of Ellery and in 1851 purchased the farm in the town of Stockton upon which he now resides. He is still living at the age of seventy-two years, enjoys good health and is as actively engaged in farm duties as when in the prime of life. Two years ago he became a member of the order of Patrons of Husbandry; religiously he is a spiritualist, while politically he has always given the Republican party his warm support, at the hands of which party he has been a member of the excise committee on various occasions. Besides farming, he takes a special interest in breeding fine stock, notably Durham and Jersey cattle and is also the owner of a large and well-equipped dairy.

On August 28, 1841, Mr. Tefft became united in marriage to Elizabeth C., daughter of Nathaniel Miller of Forbes, Onondaga county, New York. They have had one daughter: Alice, who died in 1861.

**L**EWIS B. THOMPSON, a rising young business man of Kennedy, who, by his industry and intelligence, has reached an eminence in the business community of his town second to none, is a son of William and Roxana (Bates) Thompson, and was born in Buffalo, Erie county, New York, July 7, 1860. His grandfather Thompson was a native of Canada, but came across the lake and settled in the Empire State, where he followed shoemaking until he died. Joseph Bates (maternal grandfather) was a native of Ellington, and was a miller by trade. He married and reared a family of eight children,—three sons and five daughters. He was a devout church member.

William Thompson was born in Toronto, Canada, in the month of September, 1830, and coming to the town of Silver Creek, followed shoemaking. From Silver Creek he went to Meadville, Pa., where he still resides. In 1854 he married Roxana Bates, a daughter of Joseph Bates, of Ellington, and they were blessed with one child, Lewis B. William Thompson spent nearly thirty years in various capacities on the railroad. He was conductor on the Erie, and held the same position on the old N. Y., P. and O., which is now a division of the Erie railroad.

Lewis B. Thompson is the only child of his parents. He came to Forestville with his parents, where he spent his childhood and youth until ten years of age, attending the common schools. His folks then went to Ellington, then to Poland, and finally down into the Keystone State. He spent three years at the latter place, and then began life braking on the railroad,—an employment that kills no less than three young men, the flowers of the coun-