

ECT 12-24-1877



"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."

JOHN H. WALLACE, Parkesburg's Oldest Resident.

Seventy-five Years a Member of the Church.

The Event Duly Celebrated.

"I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread."
"Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."
"And even to thy old age I will be, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you."
"Children's children are the crown of old men, and the glory of children are their fathers."

Wednesday, December 22nd, 1807, being the 75th anniversary of his membership of the Church on earth, directs attention to the fact that Parkesburg has as one of its honored citizens a remarkably old man, and at the same time one whose faculties are unusually well preserved at that age—a sort of second Neal Dow in this respect.

John H. Wallace, the subject of this sketch, was born September 8th, 1803, on the farm now owned by him in Highland Township. His parents, John and Margaret Wallace, were of Scotch-Irish ancestry. His grandfather, Thomas Wallace, came to America from the county of Derry, Ireland, in 1769, bringing with him his two sons, John and Charles. He was killed in the war of Independence and interred in Montgomery Square, Montgomery county. His mother was the daughter of Arthur Parke and Janet Hope, who resided on an adjoining farm and whose piety and devotion to the church has left its impress to the seventh generation. John and Margaret Wallace were married September 13th, 1782, and settled on the farm previously owned by James Smith in West Fallowfield township (now Highland). They had a family of eight children, Mary Saitclair O'Donnel, Jane Reid, Arthur, Thomas, Tabitha (Glasgo) Stewart, Margaret Ramsey, and John, who died in infancy. John H. was the youngest of his family and has outlived them all by 23 years. Mr. Arthur Park Wallace being the last to pass away in the year 1874. He received his education at the Hollis schoolhouse in Highland township, now the tenant house on the McCauley farm, and in the schoolhouse north of our borough, also fitted up for a dwelling. He taught school for several quarters in the old Hollis schoolhouse and was always a promoter and friend of education. When a new schoolhouse was erected for the northern portion of Highland township he came forward and donated the southern corner of his property for that purpose, and enjoyed for many years seeing his own and his neighbors' children being prepared in it for future usefulness in the world. The only remaining schoolhouse of his early years living is Isaac Martin, of Marlborough, a brother of Curtis Martin, deceased, of Highland Township. In the year 1829, at the age of nineteen years, he united with the Upper Octorara Church, then under the pastorate of Rev. James Latta. It seems that an extensive revival of religion took place in

from a prayer-meeting held in the home of his aunt, Mary McClellan, who lived on the farm now owned by Mr. Maule, west of our borough. As the fruits of this revival seventy-nine persons united with the church in 1822 and forty-five in 1823. In the year 1828 he married Rebecca Rankin, sister of Mrs. Jane Martin and Mrs. Susan Stewart, both deceased. She died of consumption in the year 1830, an infant daughter dying two months previous to her mother. In 1832 he was again married to Jane Patton (who died on the 14th of January, 1884, in her eighty-fifth year). Together they cared for the aged mother, Margaret Wallace, who died in 1836. Seven children came into their home as follows: Martha, who married Temple Jones, who has been deceased for a number of years; Margaret, who married Levi Smith and lives in Honeybrook; Isabella, who lives at home with her father; John P., who married Susan Davis and lives at the eastern end of our borough; J. Hayes, who married Matilda Harper and who was accidentally killed on the railroad (his family reside in Denver, Colorado, with the exception of the son Herbert, who, with his wife and son John reside at Victor, about 200 miles South of Denver, this being the only great grandchild in the family); Maria Jane, who is also at home with the father, and Enoch Ambrose, who died in infancy. In the year 1854 Mr. and Mrs. Wallace left their home in Highland to the care of their children and removed to Pequea, Lancaster county, to take charge of the farm and to care for Mrs. Wallace's aged and blind father, who was beyond his three score and ten years. They remained with him until his death in 1858, when they returned to their home in Highland Township, where they remained until 1881, when, feeling the necessity of giving up active work, Mr. Wallace purchased a home in Parkesburg near the rolling mill, which he afterward sold for the extension of the works, and came to live in his present residence on First avenue. In 1882 Mr. and Mrs. Wallace celebrated their golden wedding. Of the little company present on that occasion nearly all have passed away. Mrs. Jane Wallace, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Buggs, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Reid, Mrs. Marshaal, William Wallace, J. Hayes Wallace and his sons John Y. and Eugene Wallace. Mr. Wallace has lived to see great changes taking place around him. He remembers this place when the Old Fountain Inn and one or two other

if anything was wanted in the store line, Sadsburyville was the nearest place to obtain it. A letter came it was addressed "Wallace Boyd's Post Office, 45 mile stone Lancaster road," or "West Fallowfield, Chester county." He has lived to see his township divided, all his old neighbors and friends disappear from earth, and every farm in the neighborhood of his old home change owners. He has always taken a deep interest in everything that has been for the advancement and good of his fellow men. In politics Mr. W. was always a good and true Democrat until the South rebelled against the government and took up arms against it, when he voted the Republican ticket, remaining true to that party until, becoming convinced of the great curse the saloon was becoming in our land, his last votes were cast for the prohibition of the liquor traffic. His life has been a strictly temperance one in every respect, never having been addicted to tobacco or intoxicants in any form, although his life from its earliest stage was a busy one, he always took ample time for sleeping, eating and the sufficient recreation of seeing and conversing with his friends about the current events of the day. Since 1887 he has read his Bible through fifteen times, giving much labor and time to it. Until very recently it was his great pleasure to occupy the pew in Upper Octorara Church remedied him continuously for over thirty years. Here he has sat and listened to each succeeding pastor with increasing attention and growing interest, claiming each as his best and truest friend and each succeeding last the best of all. Much of his time is now spent in reading his Bible and enjoying the papers that come into his home, hearing them read and reading them, and seeing his friends and hearing of their welfare. The many kind expressions of sympathy by his pastor, who has called on him, and the choir who have come and sang for him, and those who have visited him in his old age, many of whom have passed from time to eternity, have been remembered by him with much pleasure. Many of his birthdays during the past few years have been observed as they came and went, but the happiest and most enjoyable was his last spiritual birthday, the 22nd of December, 1807, when seventy-five years were rounded out since he first connected himself with the Upper Octorara Church and he came identified with God's people. His pastor, Rev. T. R. McDowell, made it an event memorable in the annals of the church by inviting the members of the congregation to call on him during the day and extend the hand of Christian fellowship, and by holding the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting with him at his home, where, with songs of praise, words of comfort and cheer and earnest prayers to the Father of all mercies, this privilege that comes so seldom in the life of any one person was most fittingly commemorated. In closing this imperfect sketch of the life of one who has lived so many years beyond the allotted period of man, we can well close with the words of the Psalmist: "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him; with long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation."

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9/13/1892

Birthday Anniversary.
The eighty-ninth birthday of John H. Wallace was celebrated at his home on First avenue, Parkesburg, on Thursday, the 8th of September, 1892. The parlor was tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens. The guests present were Rev. T. R. McDowell, Stephen Buggs, St. Wm. Boggess and wife, T. Selzer and sister, Mrs. A. E. Reid, Mrs. O. F. Baldwin, Miss Mattie Buchanan, Mrs. Haslett, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Smith, Mr. and Mrs. John P. Wallace, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Wallace and Miss Margaret Scott.

When the dinner hour arrived they were invited to a table bountifully spread for the happy occasion, a pleasant feature of which was the birthday cake, occupying the centre of the table, with the inscription, "Birthday, 1803," above and "1892" beneath. A short programme was carried out during the afternoon, which embraced both our aged friends Stephen Boggess, in his 80th year, and John H. Wallace, in his 90th year.

Appropriate remarks were made by Wm. R. Wallace, Wm. Boggess, T. Selzer and Rev. T. R. McDowell. Several beautiful songs were sung by Mrs. Haslett. Greetings from the grandsons, Herbert and Ernest Wallace, of Denver, Colorado, were read. "Sabboth Reminiscences of a Hundred Years Ago" was recited by Mrs. A. E. Reid. A brief outline of the family history was read and by request it is given for publication. In the year 1783 there came a letter to Thomas Wallace in America, from his stepmother, Mary Tobemore, county of Derry, Ireland, informing him of his father, John Wallace's decease in that place, on October 14th, 1781. His mother, Elizabeth, having previously died, in the year 1772. Thomas Wallace, their son, came to this country in the year 1708, with two motherless boys, John and Charles. John was fourteen and Charles nine years of age. When the Declaration of Independence was declared, Thomas Wallace, having again married in this country, had adhered to his wife and two children and entered the American Army. Of that life of sickness, suffering and death we know but little. Only this, that the son John made every effort to go to him with comforts, but was intercepted by British soldiers, and narrowly escaped with his own life. Word afterward came that he had died in a Germantown hospital, and was buried in Montgomery Square, North Carolina.

The two young men settled in West Fallowfield, now Highland township, Chester county. It was then almost covered with timber, and the paths the Indians trod only a few years before were plainly visible, when horseback riding and walking were the only means of transport. Yet amid all these hardships rejoiced that they were counted worthy to build up a name and a home for their children in this new land. Charles, the younger boy, settled on the farm afterward owned by Israel McClellan. He had nine children, one of whom filled for many years the pulpit of Pequea Presbyterian Church, in whom we feel more particularly interested, settled on the farm now owned by the youngest son, John H. Wallace, whose eighty-ninth birthday we celebrated to-day. His wife, Margaret, was the daughter of Arthur Park, a prominent Elder in the Upper Octorara Church, and whose farm embraces the tract of land directly adjacent on the northwest. She was one of ten children whose descendants have multiplied on the face of the earth. Aunt Mollie McClellan, whose name is linked with one of the greatest revivals that ever visited Octorara Church, was a member of this family, and the Rev. John Whitrow, of Chicago, her grandson, is still a living memorial of her faith and prayers. Martha Patton, another, whose daughter Maria was among the first missionaries which went out to the Sandwich Islands, in 1827, and whose children and grandchildren rise up to call her blessed, Elizabeth Daniel, another whose grandchildren, some of whom are with us until this day, and others are scattered abroad.

Into this interesting family our grandfather, at the age of twenty-seven, entered and chose Margaret for his wife. They went to housekeeping in an old stone building near the present one, which was built by them in 1809, when his son John was but two years old. Their family consisted of seven children. Mary Sinclair Wallace, the oldest of the family, was born July 3d, 1785, and lived to be sixty-nine; Jane Reid died at the age of eighty-two; Arthur P. at eighty-five; Tabitha Stewart seventy-seven; Margaret G. Ramsey fifty-eight. These all, with Thomas, are buried in Upper Octorara Graveyard, where were laid also the bodies of the parents, John and Margaret, and the grandparents, Arthur and Janet Hope Parke. The youngest son, John, remained of all the family. Then following years made it necessary for him to quit the old farm in retire to a quieter life, and on April 1st, 1881, he with his family came to Parkesburg to sojourn. On June 12th, 1882, ten years ago, the golden wedding anniversary was observed. Six of that little company have passed away from earth. "We shall go to them, but they shall not return to us." This interesting occasion closed with singing the hymn, "Blest be the tie that binds," and prayer by the Rev. Thomas R. McDowell.