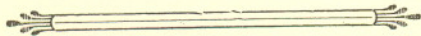


subject, who occupies the responsible position of agent at Siegfried for the Central Railroad Company of New Jersey, to which he was appointed in July, 1880.

Charles A. Hills was born in this county October 18, 1852, to Martin and Louisa Hills, the former deceased. The mother, who survives, makes her home in Allen Township. Charles A. was educated in the public schools, and when attaining his majority began learning the art of telegraphy. He was afterward appointed operator and agent at Weissport for the Central Railroad Company of New Jersey, where he remained for five years, and was then transferred to this place, and here he has been operator and agent since.

In 1873 Mr. Hills was married to Miss Annie Bollinger, a native of Whitehall, this state. The lady was the daughter of Ulrich and Christena (Meyer) Bollinger, both of whom are now deceased. Their union has been blessed by the birth of five children: Gertrude, Arthur, Daisy, Clarence and Harold.

Mr. Hills is a self-made man, and one who by an honorable and upright course in life commands the esteem and confidence of the entire community. In politics he never fails to cast a vote for Republican candidates, and is greatly interested in the success of his party. He is a true Christian, and the Reformed Church finds in him one of its most active workers. He stands high in Masonic circles, holding membership with Porter Lodge No. 284, at Catasauqua, and Council No. 356, R. A., at Bethlehem. As an Odd Fellow he belongs to Siegfried Lodge No. 1026, and is also connected with the United Beneficial Society at Whitehall.



GEORGE W. BACHMAN, a representative and well known business man of Freemansburg, has been in the mercantile trade in this place since 1881. He carries a stock of general merchandise, consisting of dry goods, boots and shoes, groceries, crockery and hardware, and by

his upright manner and honest dealing has gained the respect of the community in which he lives. Mr. Bachman is a native of Northampton County, and was born September 24, 1851, being the son of Aaron and Eliza (Laubach) Bachman, natives of Northampton County, but both now deceased. The Bachman family were early settlers in the Lehigh Valley, and well known in the vicinity. Aaron Bachman was for many years a well known canal-boat builder and was a member of the firm of G. & A. Bachman. At different times he filled all the local offices of his township, and also served as County Commissioner for years. His birth occurred April 14, 1808, and he departed this life June 16, 1886. His wife, the mother of our subject, was born December 9, 1815, and passed to the land beyond January 6, 1880.

Of the children comprising the parental family the following survive: Alfred, a resident of Bethlehem; Peter S., who is also making his home in that city; Sylvester A., residing in Philadelphia; Allen H., a farmer in this county; Harvey L., living in South Bethlehem; Mary, the wife of M. J. Hess, of this county; Annie, the wife of Hon. R. K. Bachman, of Bucks County, this state; Aravesta M., now Mrs. Clyde Miller, of Birmingham, Ala.; and George W., our subject. Peter S. has been a member of the State Assembly of Pennsylvania, and is a popular man of the county.

Our subject was reared in Northampton County, attending the public schools of his native place, and also the private schools of Bethlehem. When sixteen years of age he began learning telegraphy in the Lehigh Valley Depot at Freemansburg, and subsequently became station agent at this place, serving as such for five years. After resigning his position as station agent, he became identified with the mercantile business, forming a partnership with R. K. Bachman & Bro. At the expiration of a twelvemonth the connection was dissolved, and our subject became sole proprietor of the store, and in this avocation has become very successful.

October 14, 1874, occurred the marriage of Mr. Bachman to Miss Mary E. Freeman, and of their marriage five children have been born. They are: Estella M., Jennie F., Laura E., Ralph S.

and Roland A. Mrs. Bachman is a daughter of Dr. G. W. Freeman, a prominent physician of this city. Mr. Bachman is serving as School Director of the borough and is the present School Treasurer of his district. He is also the Secretary of the South Bethlehem National Bank, and one of the Directors, and ranks among the most prominent men of the vicinity on account of his public spirit and enterprise. In politics he is a Democrat and an ardent supporter of the principles of that party. He and his estimable wife are active members of the Lutheran Church, of which he is an Elder and the Financial Secretary.



FRANCIS WEISS, deceased, was one of the large coal operators of Pennsylvania and a man of remarkable ability. Born at Weissport, Carbon County, August 17, 1820, he is the son of Thomas Weiss, who was also born in the same village. His grandfather, Col. Jacob, was a native of Virginia, where he was educated as a surveyor. When a young man he came to Pennsylvania and settled in Carbon County, upon the present site of Weissport, which was named in his honor. At that early period it was a fort. He served in the Revolutionary War and was Quartermaster-General of the army, with the rank of Colonel. For his day he was a very noted man. He was a scientist and geologist, and it was really due to him that anthracite coal was introduced. The story related in the early history of the county is something to this effect: Philip Ginter, an old hunter in the mountains, on one of his trips noticed a small black stone dislodged by his feet, and discovering more he concluded it was the stone coal he had heard of. He took a few specimens to Col. Jacob Weiss, who in turn carried them on horseback to Philadelphia, where he had a blacksmith friend; but though they tried to burn it they were not very successful. Not daunted, however, he returned and gathered more of the coal, Mr. Ginter having shown him the place, and in return received a title for a small property. Once more he took these specimens to Philadelphia and they placed

them on the coals. They did not succeed in making them burn at first, but left to go to dinner, and on their return found everything red hot. They soon discovered that, just as they had left, an underdraft had been produced by raising the log that lay in the front, and thus they discovered the principle that all that was necessary in burning this variety of coal is a good underdraft. As he did not have any capital, and there were no means of transportation, for years afterward nothing was done with the industry. The Colonel was a Lutheran, in which faith he died in 1840. Our subject's father was a farmer and lumberman until his death, which occurred at Weissport.

Francis Weiss started out in life a poor boy, working on a farm and in a sawmill until eighteen years of age. He educated himself and taught school for a while at Weissport, in the old octagon stone schoolhouse, which is still standing, though not in use. At the age of eighteen he joined the engineers' corps of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, beginning as axeman and working his way up until he had charge of the corps. While with them he assisted in surveying the Lehigh and Morriss Canals laying out some of the locks along the former, and later in life helped to survey the Lehigh Valley Railroad. In partnership with Messrs. Belford, Sharp and John Leisenring, he embarked in business, and as they had no capital, the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company advanced them their mules, with which to start mining at Summit Hill. There they mined for four years with success, and during that time planned and built the "Gravity" Railroad from Summit Hill to Mauch Chunk, in order to convey the coal to the latter place. This was one of the most remarkable railroads ever constructed, and is now the famous "Switchback." The firm leased a valuable tract of land from the Cox estate at Eckley, and engaged in mining, under the firm name of Sharp, Weiss & Co., the latter being the superintendent of the mines and the former the financier of the concern. Shortly before the war Mr. Leisenring retired from the firm and became President of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company.

For a few years but little headway was made. It was about 1860 that the coal business commenced