

## T H E S I S .

Subject, Washington County.

Name, Margaret D. Vance.

Washington County, the first county formed by the legislature of Pennsylvania after the Declaration of Independence had been promulgated to all nations, is named after the immortal Washington. Hence the people of the county are preeminently proud of the character of the county in all respects.

The act for forming Washington County was passed by the legislature of Pennsylvania on March 28th, 1781, the county being formed from a part of Westmoreland County. The original county was much larger than the present one. The inhabitants considered it too extensive and by various acts of legislature it was reduced to its present size. The county is now bounded on the north by Beaver Co., on the northeast by Allegheny Co., on the east by Fayette and Westmoreland counties, on south by Greene Co., and on the west by the

state of West Virginia. The greatest length of the county is thirty-two miles, its average width is twenty-eight miles. It contains 896 square miles or 573 440 acres of land. Our county is in latitude  $40^{\circ} 10' 21''$  north, and is longitude west from Washington, D. C.  $3^{\circ} 12' 53''$ .

Washington county is watered by many streams and thus many beautiful valleys are formed. The land is of a rolling character and although it cannot be called mountainous it may be termed hilly. These hills are cultivated to their very tops; and the county is second to none in point of picturesque scenery. The county supports thousands of sheep and is the largest wool growing county in the state and the second in the United States for quality of the wool.

Looking at the county from a geological point, we find that the rocks are of the upper series of bituminous coal formation,

consisting of alternate strata of sandstone, shales, and limestone, with coal-beds from three to eight feet in thickness interposed.

The layers which are nearly level are sometimes cut through by the deep valleys and we are able to see them in the steep banks and along the hill-sides. The situations of these layers are favorable inasmuch as they furnish great facilities for mining and quarrying. Coal for domestic use is found in every part of the county, and along the Monongahela it is mined in great quantities and carried to Pittsburg; from there down the Ohio.

The principal stream of the county is the Monongahela River which forms the eastern boundary of the county. The river is navigable for large boats as far as Morgantown, West Virginia. This river is constantly filled with boats which carry the coal from this

county and those adjourning down to the southern part of our country. Other streams of the county are Tennile Creek, Pigeon Creek, Pike Run, and Mingo Creek.

Millsboro, located at the southeastern point in the county at the junction of Tennile Creek and the Monongahela River is the oldest town in the county. The town was laid out in 1770. The first settlers of the county were composed of the Scotch Irish element, those who came from the west of Scotland and the north of Ireland. These early settlers, over 125 years ago, crossed the mountains and settled in an unknown wilderness to secure the blessings of civil and religious liberty. No county in Pennsylvania, yea even in these United States, can boast of a better, purer, more intellectual and devoted company of Christians than those who found a home in Washington County.

As the school-house was considered as essential to the welfare of the county as was the church, it was not long before they sprang up all over the county. Washington, the county-seat, is the seat of the famous Washington and Jefferson College. The public schools in our county are making rapid progress in educational matters. The present County Superintendent of Public Instruction is Prof. Frank A. Hall, a man of unusual ability.

This county was originally divided into thirteen townships but as the county became more thickly settled, it became necessary to form new townships and boroughs.

The county-seat is at Washington, a beautiful town situated in the central part of the county. The name of this town was originally Passet and was laid out by David Hoge on October 13, 1781. The town is situated on the National Road

and is about 32 miles from the city of Wheeling, W. Va. and 30 miles from Pittsburg.

The situation of the town is healthful, and is adapted to manufacturing. The streets are rectangular and are from 60 to 66 feet in width. The public buildings in the town consist of a town-hall, engine house, post office, citizen's library, numerous churches, several banks, modern school buildings, glass works, tin plate mill, Female Seminary, and W. & J. College. At the present time a fine new court-house is about to be built which will add much to the beauty of the town. The atmosphere surrounding Washington is of an educational and religious nature; parents realize this and the town is filled with students from our own state as well as with those from the neighboring states.

Other towns of the county are Millsborough, California, Monongahela.

Charleroi, West Brownsville. These are but a few of the many towns in the county.

At California on the Monongahela is situated the Southwestern Normal College of the tenth district. The aim of this school is to promote the great cause of education by preparing teachers for the work. At the present time the school has an enrollment of 800 students. The principal of the school is Rev. Theo. J. Ross, the vice-principal Rev. G. L. Ehrenfeld.

About one mile and a half north of Washington is situated a home for the employment and support of the poor of the county. Near this home is another one for orphan children. At Morgantown there is a large school for boys who need reforming.

Washington county has been connected with many important military movements. The seat of the "whisky insurrection"



was along the border of Washington and Fayette counties. In the war of 1812 the volunteers from our county far exceeded the first call. In the war with Mexico, and in the late Civil War companies were enlisted soon after the first call. And in the war to-day between our country and Spain the boys in blue from Washington County are in camp ready to be sent where Uncle Sam needs them.

In August 1818, the U. S. mail stage commenced running over the National Road from Washington, D. C. to Wheeling, West Virginia. This road which crosses the county was located by Col. Eli Williams. The days of the stage coach are passed and our traveling is done by steam. The railroads of the county are the Baltimore and Ohio, Chartiers Valley, and other branches of the Pennsylvania

lines.

Much more could be said about our beautiful county but we will close by saying that besides the bustle and hurry of her flourishing towns, may be found numberless nooks where

Great Nature, in her loose array,

Derives from art no foreign aid;

The lofty oak, the spreading bay,

With shade still deepening into shade,  
The moss, the ivy, and the vine,

Increase the awful gloom profound,

Whilst hills and lonely wilds combine

To shed fantastic terror round.