

## BIOGRAPHICAL

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### PHILIP DIMMITT, M. D.

The late Dr. Philip Demmitt, whose death on November 23, 1898, at the age of seventy-one years cast a shadow over all of Shelby and the adjoining counties of this state, was one of the leading physicians and surgeons in this portion of the country, and also one of the most extensive and progressive farmers Shelby county has ever known and one of its most prominent and influential citizens, giving close and intelligent attention to public affairs and rendering the general public excellent service in various ways besides the advantages they derived from his professional work and his farming operations.

Dr. Dimmitt was born in Washington county, Kentucky, on December 11, 1824, and was a son of Judge Walter B. and Louisa (Hughes) Dimmitt, also Kentuckians by birth, the father having been, like the son, a native of Washington county. He was, however, reared and educated at Harrodsburg, in the adjoining county of Mercer, and for a time was assistant county clerk of that county. Later he returned to Washington county and served as sheriff there. In 1829 he moved his family to what is now Marion county, Missouri, arriving in this state and that portion of it before the government surveys were made. He made

a wise selection of his location and pre-empted a large body of land, on which he carried on extensively as a planter and general farmer. He also rose to prominence and influence in local affairs, served as county judge for a number of years, and was everywhere regarded as one of the most public-spirited and representative citizens of the section of the state in which he lived. His death occurred in 1849, and that of his widow, whom he married in Kentucky, in 1872.

The Dimmitt family was of French origin. Its progenitors in the United States came to this country at an early day and took up their residence in Maryland. But the spirit of adventure and desire for better conditions in life and opportunity that brought them across the Atlantic led them to leave the older and more settled part of the country and seek a new home in Kentucky when that now great and progressive state was a part of our expansive frontier, and to brave the hazards and privations of pioneer life. The same spirit impelled the Doctor's parents to come to Missouri when it, too, was on the frontier, and repeat on its soil the performances and achievements of their forefathers on that of Kentucky.

Dr. Philip Dimmitt, who was one of the most successful and distinguished

members of the family in the New World, began his scholastic training in the primitive country schools of his boyhood and youth and completed it at Marion College. At the age of twenty-one he began the study of medicine under the direction of Dr. J. H. Kibby, of Palmyra, Missouri. After a sufficient preparatory course of reading he entered Missouri Medical College, and from that institution he was graduated in 1849. But he was not satisfied with his professional acquirements, even as a beginner, and after a practice covering a number of months he matriculated at the St. Louis Medical College, where he pursued a more extended course and from which he was graduated in 1852. During the next four years he practiced his profession at Monticello, in Lewis county. In 1856 he changed this to Boonville, Cooper county, where he remained four years.

But in the meantime he visited Shelby county in 1860 and bought a farm four miles northeast of Shelbyville, which became his final home and from it as a center he conducted a very active and extensive practice for a period of fourteen years in addition to farming on a very extensive scale. At the time alluded to the Doctor owned a number of slaves, and as he would neither sell nor hire any of them to other persons, he was obliged to keep them employed himself and he added to his landed estate until at one period he and his sons farmed over 1,400 acres of land, and he was one of the busiest, most extensive and most successful cattle feeders in Shelby county, and by his progressive methods one of the most valued con-

tributors to raising the standard of live stock in this portion of the state.

Still, large and exacting as were his farming and stock operations, they did not curtail his professional activity. He was universally considered the leading physician of Shelby county while he remained in active practice, which he did until he reached the age of fifty years, retiring in 1874. In that year he founded the Shelby County Savings Bank and became its cashier. Some years later this institution was converted into the private banking house of Cooper & Dimmitt, and as such it continued in business and flourished many years. For data concerning this banking institution see sketch of J. T. Cooper on another page of this volume.

On January 31, 1850, Dr. Dimmitt was united in marriage with Mrs. C. F. (Agee) Henderson, the widow of Addison J. Henderson, and at the time of her marriage to the Doctor only twenty-two years old. They became the parents of six children, all of whom are living: Walter A., a leading farmer of this county, a sketch of whom will be found in this work; Frank, who is president of the Old Bank of Shelbyville, and whose life story is also recorded in this volume; Marvin, a banker in Clarence, this county; Prince, the president of The Bank of Shelbyville, an account of whose useful life adds to the interest and value of this history; Pope, who is a resident of the city of St. Louis; and Lee, whose home is in Shelby county.

The mother of these children died on July 6, 1893, and the father, as has been stated, on November 23, 1898. He was united in a second marriage with Mrs.

Hattie Hillias, the ceremony being performed in 1897. She is still living. The Doctor's first wife was regarded as one of the most estimable ladies in the county. In fraternal life the Doctor was a Freemason and active in the order for a long time. His religious affiliation was with the Methodist Episcopal church, South, and in its affairs he also took a zealous and serviceable part. In all the relations of life he was worthy and fully entitled to the high rank he held in the regard of the people as a man and citizen. In his profession he was highly cultivated and exhibited great practical skill. In business he was upright, conscientious and progressive, and in connection with public affairs and the general welfare of the people he was one of the most enterprising and far-seeing, as well as one of the most helpful and inspiring men in the community.

#### WILLIAM H. WARREN.

The late William H. Warren, who passed the greater part of his life of seventy-two years in this state and much of it in Shelby county, and whose death on September 7, 1898, was universally deplored, was one of the leading and most representative citizens of the state. He was prominent in business and social circles, dignified and adorned 'domestic life by the practice of every manly virtue and took an active and helpful part in building up and improving the city of his home.

Mr. Warren was a native of Kentucky, born in the famous county of Bourbon on July 23, 1827. He was a son of William and Charlotte (Harrington) Warren. They were born and reared in Ken-

tucky. They were the parents of eight children, four of whom are living. These are: Amanda, the wife of W. P. Sidner, of Clarence, this county; Nan, the wife of James Combs, of Los Angeles, California; Georgiana, the wife of S. A. Sparks, of Blackwell, Oklahoma; and Sallie, the wife of J. T. Smith, of Monroe county, Missouri. In politics the father was a Democrat and in church affiliation a Baptist. He moved to Kentucky with his parents in his childhood and to Missouri in his early manhood. In this state he was profitably engaged in farming and raising live stock in Monroe and Marion counties until his death in 1872.

William H. Warren grew to manhood on his father's farm in Monroe county and obtained his education in the public schools near his home. The period of his childhood and youth was one of hardship, privation and toil, for the country in which he was reared was still wild and undeveloped, and to bring it to productiveness and civilization required the energies of all who lived in it. His opportunities for schooling were therefore very limited and embraced in their scope only the rudimental branches of scholastic training. But the purpose of Nature seemed to be to breed in our Western wilds a race of men rather than scholars, and fit it for conquest over the wide domain of fertility through which the savage denizens of the plain and forest were still roaming. And in doing this she was preparing the children of her seeming neglect, but real providence and care, for any duty that might subsequently devolve upon them. The demands of the time were for men of capacity in useful, practical affairs, and accordingly, after leaving school, Mr. Warren learned the