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BIO: William Wallace HAYS, Dauphin County, PA

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Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County,  
Containing Sketches of Representative Citizens, and Many of the  
Early Scotch-Irish and German Settlers. Chambersburg, Pa.:  
J. M. Runk & Company, 1896, page 258.

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HAYS, WILLIAM WALLACE, was born October 23, 1836; died March 31, 1870, at Harrisburg, Pa. He received his preparatory education in the public schools and Harrisburg Academy; entered the sophomore class of Jefferson College, Canonsburg, in 1853, graduating in 1856. He then went to Texas, where he remained two years, teaching in Victoria and Goliad. After returning North, he began the study of law with Robert A. Lamberton, Esq., and was admitted to the Dauphin county bar December 6, 1859. He began the practice of his profession at Harrisburg, continuing until his appointment by Governor Curtin, in 1861, as chief clerk in the office of the secretary of the Commonwealth. On May 1, 1866, he was appointed deputy secretary of the Commonwealth, discharging the duties of that office until the close of Governor Curtin's administration. He then resumed his profession of the law, and in connection with it served as clerk to the Board of Claims from January to June 1, 1868. In October following, having been nominated by the Republicans of the city of Harrisburg, he was elected mayor thereof, the duties of which office he entered upon January 11, 1869. His health, however, soon began to fail him, and he died while in office, in his thirty-fourth year. "Mr. Hays was a truly Christian gentleman, he thought more of right than he did of life. His nature was of that intensity which inspires men to die for the truth, while his convictions on all subjects relating to the ordinary and extraordinary affairs of life, here and hereafter, were governed by the strongest principles of religion and justice." Mr. Hays married, March 5, 1861, Mary Straughan Day, born September 13, 1837; daughter of Dr. Stephen F. Day and Eliza Floyd Straughan, of Wooster, O.

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## Day made name not only in medicine, but in bringing rails to town

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By PAUL LOCHER

Staff Writer

WOOSTER -- If you walked the streets of the town between 1827 and 1862, one of the most instantly recognizable figures you would encounter was Dr. Stephen F. Day, one of Wooster's earliest physicians.

Standing over 6 feet tall -- quite a height for a man to reach in the 19th century -- and described by historian Ben Douglass as "exceedingly corpulent" in his later years, Day was easily one of the most respected citizens in Wooster.

Day's residence at Wooster's north end was the Italianate brick structure that later served as the Children's Home, before becoming what is today known as the Kinney Building.

A native of Morris County, N.J., where he was born Sept. 4, 1798, Day moved with his family to a farm in Washington County, Pa., at the age of 7, remaining there until the age of 16. At that point he traveled to Canonsburg, Pa., to study medicine with a doctor named Leatherman. After receiving his diploma from the Medical College of Philadelphia, Day started up a practice at Florence, Pa.

In the spring of 1827, Day relocated to Wooster, where in 1835 he married Eliza E. Straughan of Salem, Columbiana County.

One of Day's greatest achievements during

his years in Wooster was helping bring the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railroad through the town, working in concert with the Larwills and other early town leaders.

Douglass wrote of him, "In aid of that enterprise he was one of the effective canvassers, and one of its most eloquent advocates. Not only was he a pleasing and convincing speaker, but he excelled in conversation. There was a richness, copiousness, versatility and enthusiasm which, though it sometimes bordered upon art, nevertheless fascinated and regaled. He was an expert in controversial argumentation. Every word was as smooth as if it had been dropped in oil."

Two of Day's proteges were Dr. Leander Firestone whom he trained from 1833-36, and Dr. Edward Thomson, from 1839-42.

In March 1863 Day was attacked by paralysis, the effects from which he never fully recovered. As a result he was confined to his bed until Nov. 25, 1869, when a second such attack ended his life.

Source: Douglass History of Wayne County.

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