



GEN. REUBEN WILLIAMS.
EDITOR NORTHERN INDIANIAN.

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Gen. Williams, whose portrait adorns this page of our work, was born in what is now the city of Tiffin, Ohio, in the year 1833. His ancestors, in the paternal line, were distinguished for their services during important epochs in the history of our country. His grandfather served with credit during the continuance of the Revolutionary war, as a volunteer in the Maryland Continental army; while his father, after whom the subject of our sketch was named, served gallantly in the late war with Great Britain, and was the Sergeant who commanded the guard for the prisoners of war captured by Commodore Perry, at the battle of Lake Erie, while being taken to Chillicothe, Ohio, at that time the capital of the State.

After the war, his father settled in what is now Tiffin, Ohio, and remained there until he emigrated to Indiana, in 1845, making his home at Warsaw, Kosciusko County.

Upon the arrival of the family in their new home, the subject of this sketch, then about twelve years of age, finding himself possessed of an extremely limited education, and knowing that his father was barely able to provide for his numerous family, not being very abundantly provided with this world's goods, determined to shift for himself, and thus contribute, indirectly, to relieve his parents of the charge of his support.

After a three-month's term of school at Mr. Cowan's Seminary, and a still shorter one under the care of Joseph A. Funk, Esq., we find him making his first entry into the business which was destined to be the great work of his life, when he commenced to take his first lessons in the "art preservative," under the instruction of Andrew J. Bair, at that time the editor of the Whig organ of Kosciusko County. After completing an apprenticeship of four years at the printing business, he, for a short time, published the "Warsaw Democrat," when, feeling a desire to see something of the world, he traveled extensively in several of the Western States, working in various newspaper offices in Iowa. While at work in that State, the great party of the future was being organized, and the old members of the Whig party in Kosciusko County desiring to have an organ which would correctly represent the views of the then new (Republican) party, which, although young, embraced nearly all Antislavery men, presented a request for him to return to Warsaw, and establish such a paper, assuring him of their cordial support should he do so. He returned to Warsaw in 1856, and, in company with G. W. Fairbrother, commenced the publication of the *Northern Indianian*.

On the 5th day of April, 1857, he was united in marriage with Miss Jamima Hubler, a daughter of the late Maj. Henry Hubler, a veteran soldier of the wars with Mexico and the great rebellion. This marriage has proven a happy one, and, as old age comes to them with silent tread, they can look with satisfaction to the past and feel happy in the love and respect of the fine family of children who gather at their hearthstone.

In the midst of his duties as a journalist, and while giving the benefit of his ablest editorial work to the party of his choice, came the storm of secession, which, for a time, threatened to engulf our country. When Sumter was fired upon, he felt it his duty to serve his country in another way, and, for more than four long years, his life was spent upon the "tented field." The day Sumter fell, he caused to be published a call for volunteers, and, on the 19th day of April, 1861, the first company that Kosciusko County sent to the field was organized. Of this company, he was chosen Second Lieutenant, and, in a few days, accompanied it to Indianapolis, where it, with several other companies, was mustered into the Twelfth Regiment of Indiana Infantry Volunteers.

With this regiment his subsequent fortunes were closely identified during the war. The regiment

was mustered into service for one year, but, on the expiration of its term of service, the General Government needing soldiers more than ever, he took an active part in the re-organization of the regiment, "for three years or during the war," and to such good purpose, that the records of the War Department show that a large portion of the regiment had re-enlisted within a week of their discharge.

Upon the organization of the regiment in 1861, it was ordered to Evansville, Ind., where it remained for some time, giving security to travel and commerce on the Ohio River, and looking after the rebel sympathizers on the Kentucky side of the river.

On the evening of the defeat of the Union troops in the first battle of Bull Run, the regiment was ordered to join the command of Gen. N. P. Banks, at Harper's Ferry, Va., which order was executed with promptness. Soon after their arrival in Virginia, Capt. Hubler was promoted to the position of Major of the regiment, and Lieut. Williams was promoted to the Captaincy of the company by its unanimous vote. The Twelfth remained with Gen. Banks until April, 1862, participating in a number of skirmishes and engagements of a minor character, and, in the spring of 1862, composed the advance guard of the Union army when it occupied Winchester, Va.

On the 11th day of December, 1861, Capt. Williams was captured by a Confederate force under Stonewall Jackson, while making a reconnaissance of the enemy's position, and was taken to Richmond, Va., and confined in the famous "Libby" Prison, where he remained until exchanged in the following March.

Upon the re-organization of his regiment, Capt. Williams was commissioned its first Colonel, and held that rank until the battle of Richmond, Ky., where Col. William H. Link, the commanding officer of the regiment, fell mortally wounded, when Gov. Morton commissioned him Colonel, which rank he held until near the close of the war, when he received the appointment of Brevet Brigadier General of Volunteers, from the President of the United States. After succeeding to the command of his regiment, he was frequently called upon to take command of his brigade, by virtue of his being the ranking officer of the command; and, during the famous Atlanta campaign, he commanded a fine brigade until its close. After the fall of Atlanta, Col. Williams was selected as one of the court-martial convened to try the Indiana conspirators, or "Knights of the Golden Circle," a treasonable organization existing in Indiana and other States. In this capacity, he voted for the hanging of Milligan and other conspirators, and it is no fault of his that they exist to-day.

At the conclusion of these courts-martial, Col. Williams rejoined his regiment at Savannah, Ga., and commanded it on the march through the Carolinas to Petersburg and Richmond, and thence to Washington, where his regiment had the honor of leading in the grand review, and was the first to pass before the President and the thousands of visitors from all portions of our country. Its appearance, as it marched down Pennsylvania avenue in column of companies, was so impressive as to draw forth storms of cheers from the spectators, while officers and men were almost covered with the bouquets and wreaths of flowers bestowed by the fair ladies of Washington.

During the advance of Gen. Sherman through South Carolina, it became necessary to destroy certain railroads and stores of the enemy on the line of the railroad running from Florence to Charleston. The mission promised to be a very difficult one; but Col. Williams accepted it, and, with a few hundred mounted infantry, left the column while it was in full march to the northward, for this dangerous expedition in a direction nearly opposite. Cutting loose from all communication, he penetrated the country to Florence, in the face of a superior force of the enemy, and succeeded in destroying a large

number of railroad bridges, a large quantity of rebel stores and material; and, had his force been adequate, could have released the Union prisoners at Florence, as he penetrated into the suburbs of the town; after which he, by forced marches, rejoined Gen. Sherman. For his masterly execution of his orders on this occasion, he received the thanks of Gen. Sherman and Howard in person, and was recommended for promotion at once. Upon the arrival of his command at Washington, Col. Williams received his appointment as Brevet Brigadier General, which the President requested Gen. John A. Logan to deliver in person, with his compliments.

After a few weeks' sojourn at the national capital, Gen. Williams was selected to take charge of a large number of Indiana regiments returning to their homes after the close of the war, which duty he fulfilled, and saw them safely mustered out at Indianapolis. During his military service, the General was present at the engagements at Dam No. 4, Richmond, Ky., siege of Vicksburg, Jackson, Miss., Mission Ridge, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, July 22 and 28, Jonesboro, Bentonville, siege of Savannah, and innumerable affairs of lesser importance.

The General always felt proud of his regiment, as, indeed, he well might, for but few others could compare with it in drill and discipline. The regiment was on one occasion especially complimented by Gen. Sherman for its soldierly appearance upon dress parade.

Retiring from the service at the close of the war, the General embarked in the book and stationery business, but remained in that for a short time only, as there was an almost unanimous desire upon the part of his old friends that he should again assume editorial control of the *Indianian*, and, in a short time, we again find him the editor and proprietor of that journal, and from that time on he has been at the head of that paper, save a short intermission, which has, under his guidance, taken a front rank with country papers. In 1867, he was chosen Clerk of the Circuit Court for Kosciusko County, which position he filled four years, in connection with his editorial position, when he was again chosen without opposition in his own party for a second term.

In 1875, upon the urgent solicitation of prominent Republicans in the city of Fort Wayne, he consented to take charge of the *Daily Gazette*, in that city, which position he held until December of the same year, when he received the appointment of Deputy Second Comptroller of the United States Treasury, at Washington, which office he held for the space of seven months, when repeated solicitations from old friends in Warsaw and Kosciusko County, caused him to relinquish his position and re-connect himself with his old paper. Since that time, he has remained at the head of the *Northern Indianian*, which has by his labors become a power throughout Indiana.

Although Gen. Williams has seen much more of all conditions in life than most men have the opportunity of seeing, he is still in the prime of life, being now in his 46th year, and bids fair to live to a good old age.

The General has an interesting family of five sons and one daughter; his daughter, the eldest of the family, is the wife of the Hon. Stanfield B. Frasier, Register in Bankruptcy, and a promising member of the legal fraternity. His boys are fast growing into manhood, and can soon divide with him the labor he has sustained alone.

The late Senator Morton held Gen. Williams in high esteem and entrusted to his care numerous missions requiring tact and prudence in their execution. Especially was this so during the dark days of the rebellion, when Gov. Morton was the chief officer of our State Government.