



*Saml Bonnell*

DANIEL and MARTHA BONNELL, the parents of Samuel, were among the early settlers of New Jersey. Daniel Bonnell was born in the city of Paris, and came to this country when a child. He was a soldier in the Revolution, and helped achieve the liberty and independence of the "Great Republic." About the year 1796 he emigrated from New Jersey to Lexington, Kentucky, where he engaged in farming. Samuel, whose portrait adorns this page, was the youngest but one of nine children, five sons and four daughters. He was born on the 23d day of October, 1796; his youngest sister was born about six months after the death of his father, who, while on a journey from New Jersey, where he had gone to receive a payment on the farm he had sold, was taken sick on his return, and died on the way. Previous to this he had selected a home, and entered a section of land in the Ohio territory, in what is now the Township of Clear Creek, Warren County. He had built a log cabin and cleared off eight acres, and put in four acres of wheat, and the balance in corn. In March, 1797, the widow, with her family, removed to their new home in the wilderness. Their nearest neighbor was seven miles distant, and the nearest grist-mill was twenty-two miles. From the age of five until he was ten years old, Samuel enjoyed the usual advantages of a backwoods education, by going to school to a cross Irishman, in a log house, with oiled-paper window-lights. The course of instruction for advanced classes consisted in reading in the New Testament, spelling from Dillworth's American Spelling-Book, mixed with a little arithmetic and writing. These branches, interspersed with frequent lessons in natural history, in the shape of Blue Beech and Black Walnut, were considered in those days quite sufficient to fit a man for the active duties of life. Our subject says he used to get about six lessons in that kind of natural philosophy to one in the other branches.

At nine years of age he left his mother's roof, and went to live with a married sister, where he remained until he was fifteen years old. He at this time received an offer of twenty-five dollars per month to join a detachment of the army as musician, which he accepted. He served in that capacity about eighteen months, when peace was declared, and he returned home. He then apprenticed himself to a tailor, at Franklin, and served four years, when he bought his time and opened a shop in Middletown, and commenced business for himself. About three years after this he became acquainted with and married Miss Elizabeth Dickey, the daughter of Adam Dickey, of Amanda, one of the old pioneers of Butler County. Mr. Bonnell, by close application to his business, and steady, temperate habits, was able, at the end of twenty years, besides supporting his young, growing family, to purchase a farm of one hundred acres of land. He sold out at Middletown, and moved on to his farm, one and a half miles east of the village, where he has lived ever since. For this farm he paid nineteen hundred dollars.

His present farm consists of one hundred and twenty-seven acres, beautifully situated on the south bank of the Miami River, and within sight



*Elizabeth Bonnell*

of the enterprising village of Middletown. For the same lands he purchased at nineteen dollars per acre he has been recently offered and refused to take two hundred and twenty-five dollars per acre. Mr. Bonnell is the father of ten children, eight sons and two daughters. Four sons and two daughters are still living, all married except two sons.

On May 20, 1869, Mr. Bonnell and his wife celebrated their "Golden Wedding" in the midst of a housefull of relatives and friends.

And this old couple bid fair to live to celebrate their diamond wedding. Mr. Bonnell in politics was an old line Whig until the disruption of that party, since which time he has voted with the Republicans. He has been a man of uncommonly hardy constitution, having never been sick but once in his life, and that was forty-five years ago. He is to-day a hearty, hale old gentleman, of a genial, social disposition, benevolent and kind to the poor, enjoys company and conversation with a keen relish. His eyesight and hearing are considerably impaired, but his memory and other faculties are as good as ever. And now, at the advanced age of seventy-eight years, he stands before the community that best and noblest type of manhood, an honest man and a gentleman.

ELIZABETH BONNELL, the noble old lady, whose portrait also graces this page, was born on the 10th day of December, 1799, at Connellsville, Pennsylvania, consequently is now seventy-five years old. She was the second daughter of Adam and Mary Dickey, who settled in Cincinnati in 1801. It is related of Adam Dickey that he made the first brick ever laid in a house at Cincinnati. In the year 1806 Adam Dickey removed with his family to the place where the village of Amanda now stands, in Butler County, where he and his estimable wife lived until their death. There were ten children in the family, seven boys and three girls; of these all have gone down the stream of time into the ocean of eternity, except the eldest, Samuel, who owns and lives on the old homestead, William and Robert R. Dickey, of Dayton, and Elizabeth, the subject of this sketch. She was married to Samuel Bonnell May 20, 1819, and is the mother of ten children, eight sons and two daughters, who all grew up to manhood. Four of her sons have since died. She has always been noted for her active industry and devotion to her husband and children. Her piety and moral goodness of heart are widely known and appreciated by her numerous friends and acquaintances.

The "Golden Wedding" of this genial old couple, celebrated on May 20, 1869, was an occasion of much interest to a large circle of relatives and friends. She is still an active housekeeper, and takes charge of the house and entertains visitors with as much alacrity as most young ladies of half her age.

The Presbyterian Church at Middletown has been honored by her membership now nearly fifty-two years. She bids fair and it is to be hoped that she may live many years yet, a blessing to her family and a model for the rising generation.