

### WILLIAM H. ELSTON.

For many years Mr. Elston has been an active factor in the commercial circles of Bellville and is still to a limited extent engaged in the tailoring business, although he is virtually living retired. He has certainly earned his rest, for through long years he has labored earnestly and steadily, endeavoring to gain that competence for which all are striving.

He was born in Litchfield, England, August 11, 1829. His father, William Elston, was a native of Noblesville, England, and later resided in Birmingham, where he followed shoemaking until after his wife's death. He married Ann Osborn, a native of Litchfield, England, who died in Birmingham, when about thirty-five years of age. She was a consistent member of the Congregational church and an earnest Christian woman. In 1836 the father came with his family to America, locating in Lowell, Massa-

chusetts, where he engaged in the manufacture of shoes and also conducted a shoe store until 1854, when he came to Bellville, where he followed the same business until his death. He was an active member of the Presbyterian church and for many years served as its chorister. He had three children, but the first born died in infancy. Mary, the second, has been a preacher and elder in the Shaker church at Shirley, Massachusetts, for over fifty years.

William H. Elston, the other member of the family, went to live with an uncle in England at the time of his mother's death, but when ten years of age he crossed the Atlantic to the new world, joining his father in Lowell, Massachusetts. He made the voyage on the ship *Concordia*, which arrived in Boston in July, 1838. For a few months he resided with his father, and then went to Providencetown, Massachusetts, where he lived with a merchant tailor, under whose direction he learned the trade, making his home there until his marriage, with the exception of the time spent on the sea. He made two voyages as ship keeper on whaling vessels and was afterward in the navy as seaman and commodore's cockswain for three years and ten months. His experience on the sea covered a period of about eleven years. When only eighteen years of age he was made the second mate and when on a trip to the West Indies the entire crew, with the exception of Mr. Elston and one seaman, died of yellow fever. Our subject then secured a crew of colored men and brought the ship safely back to Boston. He twice experienced shipwreck on the coast near Boston.

At length he abandoned life on the ocean wave and accepted a position as cutter in a large tailoring establishment in Boston, where he remained until July, 1856, when he arrived in Bellville to visit his father. Being greatly pleased with the country and its prospects Mr. Elston determined to locate here and began working at the trade in the employ of a Mr. Moore. About a year later he entered into partnership with his employer, conducting a clothing store and merchant tailoring establishment. Two or three years later he purchased his partner's interest in the store and carried on the business for many years, having the leading establishment of the kind in the town until about fifteen years ago, when he sold out. He now does a small tailoring business, for indolence and idleness are utterly foreign to his nature and he would not be content to put aside altogether the care and responsibility of business life. His excellent workmanship as a tailor and his honorable methods of business secured to him a liberal patronage and brought to him a richly merited competence.

On the 7th of April, 1852, Mr. Elston was united in marriage to Miss

Elizabeth L. Alexander, of Providencetown, Massachusetts. She was a daughter of Isaac Bemis and Elizabeth (Glyspie) Alexander. Her father was born in Boston June 10, 1810, and died in Providencetown January 8, 1890. He was twice married, his first union being with Elizabeth Glyspie, by whom he had seven children. The mother died in Providencetown April 10, 1848, at the age of thirty-five years, and he afterward wedded Caroline Patten, by whom he had two children, both now deceased. The children of the first marriage were as follows: Elizabeth L., the eldest, became the wife of our subject. Sarah Willston, born February 24, 1837, died July 6, 1838. Margarette S. and Nancy, twins, were born February 8, 1848, and the latter died on the 17th of May of the same year. Robert Glyspie married Amanda Melvina Clifford, by whom he had three children, and for his second wife chose Lucy Hamilton. Mary H., born in Providencetown September 26, 1842, married George H. Lewis. Martha A., born in Providencetown April 1, 1845, is the wife of Captain Elisha Holmes Tillson.

Mrs. Elston was a member of the Episcopal church during her residence in the east, but had no church connection in Ohio, as there was no organization of that denomination near her home. She was an earnest Christian woman in whom the poor and needy found a faithful friend, while those in distress always received her earnest sympathy and assistance. She died November 28, 1898, respected by all who knew her and greatly beloved by her family and many friends. She left three children: Lizzie, now the widow of Benton Garber, of Bellville; Nellie G., the wife of Dr. J. B. Lewis, of Bucyrus, Ohio; and William Blake, who was graduated at the high school at Bellville, at the age of seventeen. Soon afterward he was offered the position of assistant superintendent of the schools of Bellville, but refused and began learning the tailor's trade of his father. He was employed as a cutter in large establishments in Chicago and other cities for some time, but is now conducting a profitable and extensive business of his own in Peoria, Illinois.

Mr. Elson, of this review, gives his political support to the Republican party, but has never been an aspirant for office. He belongs to Bellville Lodge, No. 376, F. & A. M., and is the second oldest living member of Clinton Commandery, K. T., at Mount Vernon, Ohio. He is now the oldest living member of Bellville Lodge, No. 306, I. O. O. F. He was the president of the Beneficial Insurance Company for a great many years, and when it failed closed out its business without employing an attorney. A faithful member of the Methodist Episcopal church, he served for a quarter of a century as the superintendent of its Sunday-school and for about twenty-

three years he was a church steward. He withholds not the hand of assistance from those in need of aid and is well known for his charity and benevolence. In business he prospered and was always willing to share his success with those less fortunate. His life has been an active and useful one, commending him to the confidence and respect of all, and his name deserves mention upon the pages of the history of his adopted county.

Mr. Elston recently made a visit to the home of his youth and the grave of his mother in England, and also to the Paris exposition. He found in England two aunts, ten cousins and other old friends. The trip altogether, was one of the most interesting events of his life.