

The End of an Era: How Industrialization Changed the Lives of Pennsylvania German Farmer William S. Beck and his Children

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1. **William¹ S. Beck** was born 23 November 1839 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, to Daniel Beck and Hannah Fisher;¹ he died 17 December 1913 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.² William married Mary Ann Albright 13 January 1864 in West Newton, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.³

Mary Ann Albright was born 23 February 1846 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, to Jacob Albright and Susanna Mathias;⁴ she died 19 March 1921 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁵



¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 120096 (17 December 1913), Wm Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421401574_0576-00088 : accessed 8 January 2020), 1913 > range 120021-123520 > image 88.

² Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 120096 (17 December 1913), Wm Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421401574_0576-00088 : accessed 8 January 2020), 1913 > range 120021-123520 > image 88.

³ Deposition of Claimant, 1 January 1914, Mary Ann Beck, Widow's Pension Application No.1019869, Certificate No. 772729, service of William Beck (Private, Company B, 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Civil War); National Archives, Washington, D.C.; photocopies held by Alice Childs, Highland, Utah.

⁴ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's (or St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 2, entry 17, birth of Marie Anna Albright, 23 February 1846; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1148. Original records were in possession of Miss Grace Albright of Ruffsdales Pennsylvania when the book was compiled in the 1960s. Attempts to reach living family of Grace Albright have been unsuccessful. Grace's relationship to Mary Anne Albright is unknown.

⁵ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 31221 (19 March 1921), Mrs. Mary Anna Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_1521003238_0729-01796 : accessed 12 August 2020), 1921 > range 029501-032500 > image 1796.

A Long Tradition of Farming

William S. Beck was born on 23 November 1839, the eighth child of Daniel Beck and Hannah Fisher.⁶ The family lived in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁷ William's death certificate states that he was a retired farmer who was born and died in Youngwood, a borough in Hempfield Township.⁸

Hempfield Township was organized on 6 April 1773.⁹ Its settlers were nearly all Germans who had migrated from the eastern and southern counties of Pennsylvania, and all were of the Lutheran or Reformed faith. The township contained an abundance of fertile land, which appealed to Pennsylvania German farmers in whom a love of the land was deeply ingrained.

Author George Dallas Alberts described the feeling of Pennsylvania Germans thus: "He [the Pennsylvania German immigrant] was sensitive to one of the finest feelings which ennoble human nature, the feeling when, looking out on a tract of land, however barren and unfruitful, of knowing that it was his own, that it was secured, for the greatest part, by the earliest and most simple of titles, that of occupancy, and that all he possessed or might acquire was owing to his energy and his strong arm."¹⁰

The tradition of farming was passed on to William from his father Daniel Beck who espoused the same occupation, as did William's grandfather Leonard Beck. Daniel purchased Leonard's land from his elder brother Adam Beck after the death of their father in 1835.¹¹ William carried on the family tradition; he was a farmer by trade by the time he was twenty years old.¹²

⁶ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 120096 (17 December 1913), Wm Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421401574_0576-00088 : accessed 8 January 2020), 1913 > range 120021-123520 > image 88.

⁷ 1840 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Hempfield Township, page 391 (stamped), line 7, David Beck; image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/2921412:8057> accessed 18 April 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication M704, Roll 498. The census names David Beck rather than Daniel as the head of household. This appears to be a mistake on the part of the census taker. No David Beck is known to have lived in the area in 1840. Further, the neighbors to David Beck in 1840 match Daniel Beck's neighbors in 1850. Finally, the household members in 1840 all match up with the family of Daniel and Hannah Beck.

⁸ "Youngwood, Pennsylvania," Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youngwood,_Pennsylvania : accessed 6 July 2020), paragraphs 1-3.

⁹ George Dallas Alberts, editor, *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1882), 528; digital version, ULS Digital Collections, University of Pittsburgh (<https://digital.library.pitt.edu/islandora/object/pitt:31735056287844> : accessed 18 March 2022).

¹⁰ Alberts, *History of the County of Westmoreland*, 154.

¹¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, April 1814-April 1817, vol 22, p. 92, entry for Daniel Beck, 15 June 1835; images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-79LJ-W> : accessed 7 April 2020), FHL microfilm #929116, image 77.

¹² 1860 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, page 484 (stamped), page 146 (penned), dwelling 995, family 991, household of Daniel Beck; digital image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7667/images/4293563_00603 : accessed 9 January 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication M653 roll 1195.

A Civil War Soldier

William Beck left the farm and enlisted in the cause of the United States during the Civil War. He served from 16 October 1862 until 23 July 1863 as a private in Company H of the 168th Pennsylvania volunteer infantry.¹³ This regiment was organized at Pittsburgh, from October to December 1862.¹⁴

The 168th Pennsylvania moved into Washington, D.C., and then on to Newport News and Suffolk, Virginia from December 6-17, 1862, where they were attached to Spinola's Brigade, 7th Corps, until December 1863. The regiment moved to Berne, North Carolina, in late December into January 1863. Their subsequent service included an expedition into Trenton, an expedition to relief of Little Washington; Blount's Creek; Swift Creek Village; Dix's Campaign; and Harper's Ferry. Finally, the regiment moved to Boonesborough, Maryland, on 11 July, and was in pursuit of Lee from 11-24 July 1863. The soldiers in this regiment mustered out on 25 July 1863.¹⁵

Now released from military service, William returned to Westmoreland County, where he married Mary Ann Albright six months later, on 13 January 1864.¹⁶ They were married by Samuel B. Lawson, probably at Seanor's (St. Paul's) Church, which was located between the boroughs of New Stanton and West Newton in Hempfield Township.¹⁷

Three weeks after the wedding, on 6 February 1864, William enrolled in Company B of the 28th Pennsylvania volunteer infantry.¹⁸ William was mustered into service 14 March 1864 at Greensburg under Captain Croftin.¹⁹ With this new regiment he engaged in the Atlanta Campaign; the battles of Davis's Cross Roads, Resaca, Dallas, New Hope Church, Allatoona, Gilgal Church, Kennesaw Mountain;

¹³ William Beck (Private, Company B, 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Civil War), Declaration for Invalid Pension, Application No. 327135, Certificate No. 399599; National Archives, Washington, D.C.; photocopy held by Alice Childs, Highland, UT.

¹⁴ "168th Regiment Infantry," *Civil War Archive* (<http://www.civilwararchive.com/>; accessed 23 March 2022).

¹⁵ "168th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment," *The Civil War in the East* (<https://civilwarintheeast.com/us-regiments-batteries/pennsylvania/168th-pennsylvania-infantry/>; accessed 23 March 2022).

¹⁶ Deposition of Claimant, 1 January 1914, Mary Ann Beck, Widow's Pension Application No.1019869, Certificate No. 772729, service of William Beck (Private, Company B, 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Civil War); National Archives, Washington, D.C.; photocopies held by Alice Childs, Highland, Utah.

¹⁷ Deposition of Claimant, 1 January 1914, Mary Ann Beck, Widow's Pension Application No.1019869, Certificate No. 772729, service of William Beck (Private, Company B, 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Civil War); National Archives, Washington, D.C.; photocopies held by Alice Childs, Highland, UT. The pension application includes a "true copy" of the couple's marriage certificate, which names S.B. Lawson as the minister who performed the ceremony. Samuel B. Lawson served as a Reverend at Seanor's (or St. Paul's) Church from 159-1855. See Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's (or St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956," (Hempfield Township), "Lutheran Minister at Seanor's (St. Paul's), p. 2, entry 5, S.B. Lawson (1859-1865); image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018>; accessed 15 July 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1044.

¹⁸ Muster-Out Roll of Captain William C. Armor (Co. B., 28th PA Volunteers), discharged July 1865, line 34, William Beck, private; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Civil War Muster Rolls, 1860-1869," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/9040/images/41733_0009-00009; accessed 16 June 2020), Infantry > 28th Pennsylvania > Company B > image 1; citing Pennsylvania, Civil War Muster Rolls and Related Records, 1861-1866, Records of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, Record Group 19, Series 19.11, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

¹⁹ Muster-Out Roll of Captain William C. Armor (Co. B., 28th PA Volunteers), discharged July 1865, line 34, William Beck, private; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Civil War Muster Rolls, 1860-1869," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/9040/images/41733_0009-00009; accessed 16 June 2020), Infantry > 28th Pennsylvania > Company B > image 1; citing Pennsylvania, Civil War Muster Rolls and Related Records, 1861-1866, Records of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, Record Group 19, Series 19.11, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Sherman's March to the Sea; Carolinas Campaign; and the Battle of Bentonville.²⁰ The regiment mustered out on 18 July 1865.

A Return to Farming

After the war, William returned home to Hempfield Township, where Mary Ann and their first-born son John Miller Beck (born in June of 1864) awaited his safe arrival. In 1866, William purchased eighty-nine acres of land that neighbored his father-in-law Jacob Albright's farm.²¹ William and his wife Mary sold the land one year later for a \$200 profit.²² In 1868, William purchased his father-in-law Jacob's farm, totaling 102 acres, for \$6000.²³

By 1870, William had apparently established himself as a farmer, his property now being valued at \$8,000.²⁴ William and Mary Ann's family was also growing. They had added one daughter, Elmetta (born in 1866) and one son, Alfred (born in 1868) to the family.²⁵

William's father Daniel Beck died intestate 14 September 1869, and William and seven of his siblings sold their shares of Daniel's property to their youngest brothers John and David in 1870 and 1871.²⁶ The three brothers now lived and worked on neighboring farms.

Increasing Prosperity and a Changing Landscape

During the next decade, William and Mary engaged in a number of property transactions throughout the area. In April of 1871, they sold five acres of their farm to a man named Jacob Bills for \$407.00.²⁷ In April 1873, William exchanged some of his land for three lots of land in the village of New

²⁰ "28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment," *The Civil War in the East* (<https://civilwarintheeast.com/us-regiments-batteries/pennsylvania/28th-pennsylvania-infantry/> : accessed 23 March 2022).

²¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, June 1867-April 1868, vol 60, p. 75, entry for William Beck, 26 February 1866; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-49ZX> : accessed 19 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929183, item 2, image 395; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

²² Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, June 1867-April 1868, vol 60, p. 77, entry for William Beck, 26 March 1867; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-49WN> : accessed 19 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929183, item 2, image 396; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

²³ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, May 1868-March 1869, vol 63, p. 534, entry for William Beck, 4 April 1868; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-38K9> : accessed 20 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929131, image 278; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

²⁴ 1870 U.S. Census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, page 265A (stamped), page 37 (penned), dwelling 271, family 265, household of William Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-67J7-83D> : accessed 26 March 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication M593, Roll 1465.

²⁵ 1870 U.S. Census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, page 265A (stamped), page 37 (penned), dwelling 271, family 265, household of William Beck; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-67J7-83D> : accessed 26 March 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication M593, Roll 1465.

²⁶ "Pennsylvania, Wills and Probate Records, 1683-1993," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.org> : accessed 31 March 2020), negative search for Daniel Beck. For John's deed, see Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol.179, p. 304, entry for Hannah Beck et al to John Beck, 14 December 1870; digital images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 10 April 2020), Deed > Book 179 > pages 304-306. For David's deed, see Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol.183, p. 31, entry for Hannah Beck et al to David Beck, 14 December 1870; digital images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 10 April 2020), Deed > Book 183 > pages 31-32. The deeds state that Daniel Beck died intestate.

²⁷ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, December 1871-Mar 1872, vol. 71, p. 120, entry for William Beck et ux to Jacob Bills, 1 April 1871; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-DKS5> : accessed 22 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929185, item 3, image 459; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

Waterford, Hempfield Township.²⁸ Three days later, he and Mary Ann sold the same three lots to William Duff for \$430.00.²⁹

The couple purchased one and one-half lots in East Huntingdon Township in December of 1873 for \$210.³⁰ They sold the same property for \$2400 in 1879.³¹ William and Mary sold two additional lots in New Waterford to Dr. H. Henry in January of 1876.³² They then purchased a house and lot “in the town of Scottdale, fronting on Mulberry Street” in April of 1876.³³

Although William and his sons continued working the family farm into the beginning of the 1880’s, industrialization began creeping into the lives of the Beck family.³⁴ Their long tradition of farming gave way to the oil and gas industries. In 1885, William Beck leased eighty-eight acres of his farm, “excepting and reserving therefrom 48 acres around the buildings on said premises” to J.M. Guffey of Pittsburg for the purpose of drilling and operating for petroleum oil or gas.³⁵ Guffey was to pay William fifty dollars for each well drilled.

William still claimed the occupation of farmer in 1900.³⁶ However, his sons had moved on to exciting new opportunities. Beginning in the 1860’s, the railroad came into dominance in the world of transportation, and rail lines were extended into every corner of Pennsylvania.³⁷ Between 1860 and 1920, the industry grew from 2600 miles of track to over 11,500 miles of track in the state. William’s brother David granted a sixty-foot wide right of way to the Loyalhanna & Youghiogeny Railroad Company for the construction of train tracks in 1894.³⁸ The expansion of the railroad into the Beck’s back yard

²⁸ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, September 1875-February 1876, vol 87, p. 578, entry for William Beck, 1 April 1873; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-7Z4T?mode=g&cat=119334> : accessed 20 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929141, image 299; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

²⁹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, April - August 1873, vol 76, p. 473, entry for William Beck et ux to William M. Duff, 1 April 1873; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-DPSG?cat=119334> : accessed 20 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929186, item 2, image 591; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

³⁰ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol. 99, p. 598, entry for Peter Loucks et al to William Beck, 24 December 1873; images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 22 June 2020), Deed > Book 99 > page 598.

³¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, August - November 1879, vol 99, p. 604, entry for William Beck, 8 August 1879; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-898Q-1?cat=119334> : accessed 22 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929191, item 1, image 7; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

³² Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, September 1875-February 1876, vol 87, p. 579, entry for William Beck, 11 January 1876; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-7Z4T> : accessed 20 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929141, image 299; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

³³ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deeds, August - November 1879, vol 99, p. 602, entry for William Beck, 14 April 1876; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSNP-898S-N?cat=119334> : accessed 22 June 2020), FHL microfilm #929191, item 1, image 6; Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds, Greensburg.

³⁴ 1880 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, Stanton District, enumeration district (ED) 111, page 33B (stamped), page 2 (penned), dwelling 15, family 16, household of William Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYBD-5W9> : accessed 26 March 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 1204.

³⁵ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol. 142, p. 38, entry for lease, William Beck to J. M. Guffey, 5 November 1885; digital images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 22 June 2020), Deed > Book 142 > page 38.

³⁶ 1900 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, enumeration district (ED) 72, page 66B (stamped), page 19B (penned), dwelling 376, family 394, household of William Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-6XB3-Y6H> : accessed 26 March 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1496.

³⁷ “Railroads of Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/railroads/history.html> : accessed 24 March 2022).

³⁸ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol. 234, p. 19, entry for David Beck and Sarah Beck to Loyalhanna & Youghiogeny Railroad Company, 16 August 1894; digital images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<http://www.wcdeeds.us/dts/default.asp> : accessed 10 April 2020), Deed > Book 234 > page 19.

provided jobs not only with the railroad itself – there was also a massive increase in iron making and coal extraction.

William and Mary Ann’s sons abandoned farming for work in these industries. John and Harry were both engineers for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.³⁹ Melvin was a coal miner by 1900.⁴⁰ He later worked as a stationary engineer for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and died on 2 July 1909 from shock due to injuries from being run over at the Pennsylvania Railroad Station at Greensburgh.⁴¹ Alfred left the state of Pennsylvania and moved west to Utah. In 1900, he worked as a coal miner in Scofield, Carbon County, Utah.⁴² By 1910 Alfred was a railroad engineer living in Salt Lake City.⁴³

A Civil War Pension

The 1890 Dependent Pension Act allowed veterans who were disabled and unable to perform manual labor to apply for a pension, even if their disability was not a direct result of the service in the war.⁴⁴ The requirements were simply that the veteran had to have served at least ninety days, and he had to have been honorably discharged. William Beck successfully applied for a pension in 1891, stating that he was “2/3 unable to earn a support by reason of rheumatism.”⁴⁵

Although somewhat disabled, William claimed the occupation of farming until his death in 1913.⁴⁶ With his sons working for the railroad, William may have hired outside help to keep up his farm.

³⁹ For John’s occupation, see Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 92081 (7 October 1935), John Miller Beck; *Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission*, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42342_646933_0739-00674 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1935 > range 091501-094500 > image 674. For Harry’s occupation, see Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 29490 (11 March 1952), Harry L. Beck; *Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission*, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42410_2421401696_0698-02808 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1952 > range 027601-030150 > image 2808.

⁴⁰ 1900 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Ruffs Dale District, East Huntington Township, enumeration district (ED) 94, page 250A (stamped), page 3A (penned), dwelling 40, family 41, household of Melvin P. Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-642Q-N8W> : accessed 6 June 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1497.

⁴¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 63361 (2 July 1909), Melvin P. Beck; *Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission*, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_1220705043_0566-03540 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1909 > range 060001-063800 > image 3540.

⁴² 1900 U.S. census, Carbon County, Utah, population schedule, Scofield, Winter Quarters, Clear Creek Precincts, Scofield Town, enumeration district (ED) 87, page 42A (stamped), page 9 (penned), dwelling 149, family 149, Alfred W. Beck in the household of Chas Hughes; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-68KP-T5> : accessed 2 May 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1682.

⁴³ 1910 U.S. census, Salt Lake County, Utah, population schedule, Salt Lake City Ward 3, enumeration district (ED) 129, page 119B (stamped), page 14B (penned), dwelling 286, family 291, household of Alfred Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYBX-9P7M> : accessed 3 May 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T624, roll 1607.

⁴⁴ *Congressional Record: Containing the Proceedings and Debates of the Fifty-First Congress, First Session*, vol. XXI, part III (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), 2834; digital version, *GovInfo* ([https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/crecb/crecb/Volume%20021%20\(1890\)](https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/crecb/crecb/Volume%20021%20(1890)) : accessed 25 April 2022).

⁴⁵ William Beck (Private, Company B, 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Civil War), Declaration for Invalid Pension, Application No. 327135, Certificate No. 399599; National Archives, Washington, D.C.; photocopy held by Alice Childs, Highland, UT.

⁴⁶ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 120096 (17 December 1913), Wm Beck; *Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission*, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421401574_0576-00088 : accessed 8 January 2020), 1913 > range 120021-123520 > image 88. William’s occupation is listed as “retired farmer.”

Several “farm laborers” lived near William in 1900.⁴⁷ In his later years, William continued buying and purchasing land in and around Hempfield township.⁴⁸ He also invested in the McKinley Mining and Development Company of the Territory of Arizona.⁴⁹ William died a wealthy man, with a large estate that was divided among his widow and heirs.⁵⁰

Death and Burial

William S. Beck died 17 December 1913 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁵¹ He is buried in Hillview Cemetery, Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁵² His wife Mary Ann remained a widow until her death in 1921.⁵³ She is buried with William in Hillview Cemetery.⁵⁴

William¹ S. Beck and Mary Ann Albright were the parents of seven known children:

- 2 i. JOHN² MILLER BECK, born 4 June 1864 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁵⁵ married first Maggie M. Reamer 22 September 1888 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁵⁶ married second Elizabeth Stamm 26 January 1899 in

⁴⁷ 1900 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Hempfield Township, enumeration district (ED) 72, page 66B (stamped), page 19B (penned), dwelling 376, family 394, household of William Beck; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-6XB3-Y6H> : accessed 26 March 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1496.

⁴⁸ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol. 228, p. 253, entry for Samuel W. Caldwell et al to William Beck, 12 December 1893; images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 22 June 2020), Deed > Book 228 > page 253. And Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book, vol. 236, p. 291, entry for Etta Beiter and Joseph Beiter to William Beck, 5 March 1894; images, "Archive Search," *Westmoreland County Recorder of Deeds* (<https://www.wcdeeds.us/PaxWorld/views/Archives> : accessed 22 June 2020), Deed > Book 236 > page 291.

⁴⁹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Will Books, Volume 16-18, entry 539, p. 209, will of William Beck, 28 November 1913; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Wills and Probate Records, 1683-1993," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8802/images/005547056_00524 : accessed 2 April 2020), image 524. William bequeathed his shares in the McKinley Mining Company to his grandchildren in his will.

⁵⁰ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Will Books, Volume 16-18, entry 539, p. 209, will of William Beck, 28 November 1913; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Wills and Probate Records, 1683-1993," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8802/images/005547056_00524 : accessed 2 April 2020), image 524.

⁵¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 120096 (17 December 1913), Wm Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421401574_0576-00088 : accessed 8 January 2020), 1913 > range 120021-123520 > image 88.

⁵² *Find a Grave*, database with images, (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47701010/william-beck> : accessed 2 April 2020), memorial #47701010, William Beck (1839-1913); citing Hillview Cemetery, Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; maintained by Jeremy, contributor 47152404.

⁵³ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 31221 (19 March 1921), Mrs. Mary Anna Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_1521003238_0729-01796 : accessed 12 August 2020), 1921 > range 029501-032500 > image 1796.

⁵⁴ *Find a Grave*, database with images, (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47701011/mary-a-beck> : accessed 8 June 2020), memorial #47701011, Mary A. Albright Beck (1846-1921); citing Hillview Cemetery, Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; maintained by G. Stoecklein, contributor 46965842.

⁵⁵ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's or (St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 76, birth of John M. Beck, 4 June 1864; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049.

⁵⁶ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Marriage License Docket, volume 8-10, page 458-459, no. 2010, John M. Beck and Maggie M. Reamer, 18 October 1888; database with images, "Pennsylvania, County Marriages, 1885-1950," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9PXF-9767> : accessed 4 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1316384, item 1, image 51.

- Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁵⁷ Died 7 October 1935 in Huntingdon, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁵⁸
- 3 ii. ELMETTA CORA BECK, born 19 May 1866 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁵⁹ married Joseph Beiter 15 October 1890 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶⁰ died 18 December 1934 in Penn, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁶¹
 - 4 iii. ALFRED WAKEFIELD BECK, born 10 October 1867 in Hempfield, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶² married Lois Fjeldstead 14 September 1893 in Gunnison, Sanpete County, Utah;⁶³ died 18 January 1867 in Otto, Big Horn County, Wyoming.⁶⁴
 - 5 iv. HARRY LEONARD BECK, born 20 October 1870 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶⁵ married Emma Fox 18 September 1895 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶⁶ died 11 March 1952 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁶⁷

⁵⁷ Della Reagan Fischer, compiler, "Marriage Records from Westmoreland County, Pa. Newspapers 1866-1899," *Collections of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, vol. 1, p. 22, entry 521, John M. Beck – Lizzie Stamm – 26 January 1899; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSZZ-79TV-K> : accessed 19 March 2022); FHL microfilm 102,485,487, image 28 of 235.

⁵⁸ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 92081 (7 October 1935), John Miller Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42342_646933_0739-00674 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1935 > range 091501-094500 > image 674.

⁵⁹ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's or (St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 78, birth of Elmetta C. Beck, 19 May 1866; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049.

⁶⁰ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Marriage License Docket, volume 15, page 514, no. 3836, Joseph Beiter and Elma Beck, 15 October 1890, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania; database with images, "Pennsylvania, County Marriages, 1885-1950," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GPXV-XXR> : accessed 24 March 2020); citing FHL microfilm #4838965, item 1, image 65.

⁶¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 115505 (18 December 1934), Etta Beiter; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42342_646933_0735-01133 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1934 > range 114501-115868 > image 1133.

⁶² Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's (or St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 78, birth of Alfred W. Beck, 10 October 1867; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049.

⁶³ Sanpete County, Utah, Marriage Licenses, book 5, page 55, Alfred W. Beck and Lois Fjeldsted, 14 September 1903; database with images, "Marriage license records, 1888-1966," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939F-KJ3D-7Y> : accessed 12 February 2020); FHL microfilm #481511, image 38.

⁶⁴ Big Horn County, Wyoming, Standard Certificate of Death, File no. 1942, Registered no. 13, (18 January 1942), Alfred Wakefield Beck; Bureau of Vital Statistics, Department of Health, State of Wyoming; copy held by Alice Childs, Highland, Utah.

⁶⁵ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 29490 (11 March 1952), Harry L. Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42410_2421401696_0698-02808 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1952 > range 027601-030150 > image 2808.

⁶⁶ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Marriage License Docket, volume 22, page 58, no. 8289, Harry L. Beck and Emma Fox, 18 September 1895, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania; database with images, "Pennsylvania, County Marriages, 1885-1950," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-YMN7-33C> : accessed 5 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #4460765, item 3, image 531.

⁶⁷ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 29490 (11 March 1952), Harry L. Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42410_2421401696_0698-02808 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1952 > range 027601-030150 > image 2808.

- 6 v. MELVIN P. BECK, born 2 October 1872 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶⁸ married Lottie Sampsell about 1893, probably in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁶⁹ died 2 July 1909 in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁷⁰
- 7 vi. LIZZIE TORRENCE BECK, born 2 September 1874 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁷¹ married Harry E. Neighley 19 June 1912 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁷² died 25 December 1919 in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.⁷³
- 8 vii. EMMA FLORA BECK, born 2 December 1876 in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁷⁴ married Frank E. Geisel 8 June 1898 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania;⁷⁵ died August 1961 in Highland, Madison County, Illinois.⁷⁶

⁶⁸ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's or (St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 79, birth of Melvin P. Beck, 2 October 1872; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049.

⁶⁹ 1900 U.S. census, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Ruffs Dale District, East Huntingdon Township, enumeration district (ED) 94, page 250A (stamped), page 3A (penned), dwelling 40, family 41, household of Melvin P. Beck; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-642Q-N8W> : accessed 6 June 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1497. States Melvin and Lottie had been married for seven years. For Lottie's maiden name, see Cuyahoga County, Ohio, marriage records, 1936-1937, volume 179, page 595, George S. Beck and Josephine M. Rooskes, 9 January 1937; database with images, "Ohio County Marriages, 1789-2013," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9392-BL9V-Y8> : accessed 6 June 2020), image 299. George's mother is named Lottie Sampsell.

⁷⁰ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 63361 (2 July 1909), Melvin P. Beck; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_1220705043_0566-03540 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1909 > range 060001-063800 > image 3540.

⁷¹ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's or (St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 80, birth of Lizzie Florence Beck, 2 September 1874; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049. All other records give Lizzie's middle initial as "T." This record is a transcription and could have been mis-read.

⁷² Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Marriage License Docket, volume 38, page 75, no. 32686, Harry E. Neighley and Lizzie T. Beck, 19 June 1912, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania; database with images, "Pennsylvania, County Marriage, 1885-1950," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-YMN7-BX5> : accessed 6 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #4460768, item 2, image 159.

⁷³ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, certificate of death, no. 125241 (25 December 1919), Lizzie T. Neighley; Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Harrisburg; digital image, "Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1967," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421406259_0584-01346 : accessed 9 June 2020), 1919 > range 124001-125491 > image 1346.

⁷⁴ Della Reagan Fischer, "Seanor's or (St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed Church Records, 1821-1956 of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania," p. 7, entry 81, birth of Emma Flora Beck, 2 December 1876; digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/222018> : accessed 11 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #1414854, item 15, image 1049.

⁷⁵ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Marriage License Docket, volume 23, page 424, no. 10895, Frank E. Geisel and Flora E. Beck, 8 June 1898; database with images, "Pennsylvania, County Marriages, 1885-1950," *FamilySearch* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/41381_2421406259_0584-01346 : accessed 6 June 2020); citing FHL microfilm #4460766, item 2, image 317.

⁷⁶ "The Grim Reaper (Mrs. Flora Geisel)," *The Daily Courier* (Connellsville, Pennsylvania), 1 August 1961, page 2, column 7; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/50011/images/NEWS-PA-TH_DA_CO.1961_08_01_0002 : accessed 10 June 2020).