

John Armstrong

ARMSTRONG, JOHN, Dry-goods Merchant, was born in 1779, near Enniskillen, Ireland. He early came to the United States, and settled in Pennsylvania, where he received a good education, and started in life as a teacher. Between 1790 and 1800, he came to Maysville, Kentucky, where he remained the rest of his life. Three other brothers came to America with him, all of whom raised large families, and became wealthy and valuable men. Their parents finally followed, and afterwards made their home and died in Maysville. Mr. Armstrong spent some time, after his arrival in Maysville, in a small mercantile business, through the town and county; but was finally able to establish himself in Maysville, where his business continued to flourish, year after year, until it had become of large proportions, and he one of the most wealthy, public-spirited, and valuable men in the county. He was largely concerned in the construction of the Maysville and Lexington Turnpike, the first macadamized road built in the State. He was the first president of its company, and held the office during his life. He was a contemporary with Christian Shultz, Andrew M. January, and a few others, with whom he was largely instrumental in building up the town and county. The public improvements of the State, indeed, began in the Maysville pike. He built as many as a half a hundred of the houses now standing in Maysville; and built and donated to the city a house for the use of the public-schools—the only gift to the schools ever made by a citizen. His name was for fifty years identified with all the business and social interests of the community; and was, doubtlessly, one of its most useful and esteemed citizens. He was mainly instrumental in the erection of the Third Street Methodist Church, the first built in Maysville for the Northern wing of that body. Armstrong Chapel, in East Maysville, owes its name to him; and his home was *sometimes* the church, and *always* the resort of the Methodist minister. He was a pillar in the Methodist Church. Although a liberal and public-spirited man, he was a man of moods and eccentricities; and these often gave interesting colors to his deeds and gifts. He was a man of medium size; and, although not robust, could maintain himself long under great physical and mental pressure; and was one of those men who make out of the world about what they wish. He died August 12, 1851. Mr. Armstrong was four times married: November 13, 1800, to Mary Smith, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania; to Mrs. Ann Brown, of Cincinnati, in 1831; February 4, 1834, to Mrs. K. B. Pascault, of Baltimore; September 19, 1836, to Mary Nowland, of Kent County, Maryland. Only five of their children are now living: James S., of Paris, France; Mrs. Eliza Lee, of Baltimore; Mrs. Emily Dobyms, of Maysville; Mrs. Amelia Duke, of Maysville; and Frank W. Armstrong, of Hillsboro, Ohio.