

JESSE MERRILL

General **JESSE MERRILL**, was born in New Berlin, Union county, Pa., March 28th, 1836. He is a son of James Merrill, who was a prominent lawyer of Union county, and a member of the Pennsylvania constitutional convention of 1838. The subject of this sketch attended the public schools of New Berlin until he reached his sixteenth year. He then spent one year at the Tuscarora academy, in Juniata county, Pa., after which he began teaching school, and followed the profession for about four years. He then began the study of law with his brother at New Berlin. The following year he entered the law office of Lawson & Brown, at Milton, Pa., where he remained at his studies until 1859, when he was admitted to practice law in the courts of Northumberland county, Pa. He shortly afterwards came to Lock Haven, where he has remained ever since. General Merrill enlisted in Company D, Pennsylvania Volunteers, in the spring of 1861, and received a commission as second lieutenant. In the fall of the same year he was detailed for duty in the signal service corps. When the signal corps was organized as a separate branch of the service, he was transferred from his company with the rank of captain. In January, 1862, he was appointed to organize the signal service in the army of the Ohio, and he took command the following spring. By virtue of his position as signal officer, Captain Merrill was on the staff of Generals Buel, Rosecrans and Thomas, as they in succession commanded the army of the Ohio, which afterwards became the army of the Cumberland. In the fall of 1864 he went East on a sick leave, and was soon after assigned to duties in the Army of the Potomac and James, and later to the department at the South, where he had his headquarters at Hilton Head, South Carolina. Here he remained until mustered out of service, in October, 1865. It was at this time that he was brevetted major by President Johnson for long, faithful and meritorious services. He returned to Lock Haven in November 1865, and resumed the practice of law. In April, 1871, he was appointed major-general of the National Guard, of Pennsylvania by Governor Geary. It was during his term as commander that the 11th Division was called out to quell the riot at Williamsport. In 1880 General Merrill received the Republican nomination for assembly, but was defeated by S. Woods Caldwell, the Democratic nominee.¹

1. ¹ Furey, J. Milton; Historical and Biographical Work, or Past and Present of Clinton County, comprising a sketch of every town and township of the county from date of settlement up to the present time. Also Biographical Sketches of many prominent citizens, business men and old residents, and a complete history of all murders, floods, and important events that have occurred in Clinton County. Pennsylvania Grit Printing House, Williamsport, Pa., 1892.