

MAHANOY CITY CHRONICLES/Researched by Lorraine Stanton

A peek at more borough pioneers

By BILL O'BRIEN
Herald writer

TODAY'S CHRONICLE provides a glimpse of a few more pioneers and the contributions they made to the early growth of Mahanoy City:

GEORGE H. YOUNG was 48 years old and had a family of six when he gave up the security of an established occupation in the Bloomsburg area and came to the Mahanoy City in 1863, a few months before the new frontier town made its entry into boroughhood.

Mr. Young was born in Germany in 1815 and worked in the mining industry there before emigrating to America in 1846. He made his way to Columbia County and secured employment at an ore mining operation which he eventually came to manage.

When the anthracite industry began to boom at the start of the Civil War, Mr. Young decided to take the risk of a new venture and joined the coal rush to the Mahanoy Valley. He moved the family here and, with his experience, found no trouble securing employment in the mines for the remaining nine years of his life. He died on Aug. 6, 1872, age 57 years.

During the nine years given to him to spend in Mahanoy City, George Young made his contribution to the community in his own quiet way. He was one of the pioneer supporters of the German Catholic Parish, Saint Fidelis, which was established the year he arrived in town. He helped to perpetuate his ancestral heritage by teaching the German language to parish youth. He was equally devoted to his adopted country, always proud of the fact that he participated in every election

during the years of his citizenship.

He and his wife, the former Catherine Deisinger, had six children who reached maturity. They were (according to the Samuel T. Wiley biographical history of 1893): Mrs. John (Elizabeth) Bosche and Wendell Young, Saint Clair; Mrs. Michael (Mary) Whitaker, Gilberton; George Jr. (a biographical sketch of him is included below), Barbara and Anna, Mahanoy City.

GEORGE H. YOUNG JR. was eight years old when his father brought the family to Mahanoy City. He was born in the Bloomsburg area on Feb. 15, 1855.

Four years later, at age 12, he went to work in the mines and spent the next 19 years employed at the collieries around Mahanoy City. During that period he launched his own family, following his marriage on Jan. 28, 1879, to Lizzie Maley, daughter of Peter and Mary (Betz) Maley of Shenandoah. They had six children: Anna K., Mary A., William G., George J., Therressa L. and Frank P.

In 1886 Mr. Young accepted the position of inside foreman at the West Lehigh Colliery, Tamaqua, and in 1889 became inside foreman at the Oak Hill Colliery near Minersville.

In 1891 he decided to go into the mining business for himself. He formed a partnership with John B. Maley (a relative of his wife) and leased the Emerald Colliery at New Street (between Pottsville and Mount Laffee). Mr. Young served as general superintendent of the operation and, according to the Samuel T. Wiley history of 1893, the mine "operated with a very creditable degree of success" and had a yearly output of 6,000 tons.

WILLIAM E. GROVER, a dental practitioner, was not one



WE LOVE A PARADE — From its pioneer days, Mahanoy City's townsfolk have loved parades. The one pictured above was staged by the United Mine Workers for Johnny Mitchell Day in October, 1912. Note the fine view enjoyed by folks watching from the roof of the street awning at left, the same vantage point used by the photographer. The first known parade here took place a year before Mahanoy became a borough. It an

of the early pioneers in Mahanoy City, but he arrived here at a time when his professional skill was needed to serve an expanding population. It was 1890 and new immigrants, especially from eastern Europe, were arriving daily. During the decade from 1880 to 1890 the borough's

population almost doubled, rising from 6,891 to 11,286. By 1900 it would reach 13,504 and by 1910 it attain its all-time official peak of 15,936.

William Grover was a descendant of an old Columbia County farming family. His grandfather and father, Michael and Nathan

impromptu affair in 1862 when workers from the Mahanoy Tunnel armed themselves and, led by fife and drum, marched through town to demonstrate their intention of keeping possession of the tunnel until the railroad company coughed up the money due them for wages. The town is currently preparing for another mammoth parade next Labor Day as a climax to the borough's 125th anniversary year.

Grover, respectively, were born there, the latter in 1831. William was born there on March 8, 1856, one of eight children of Nathan and Eliza (Swank) Grover.

When William was 16 years old, the family moved to Hazleton where the father opened a tobacco store. After completing

his education at Hazleton High School, William became an apprentice clerk in the company store system owned by the Coxé Brothers, then a major anthracite operator in Luzerne County. He eventually was promoted to superintendent of the company store at Gowen, Luzerne County, but his heart was set on dentistry.

In the early 1880s he took a course that provided him with enough skill to practice dentistry for two years in the Rock Glen area, just over the Schuylkill County line north of Nuremberg. He then completed his studies at the Pennsylvania Dental College in Philadelphia, where he was graduated in 1889.

After practicing briefly in Hazleton, he came to Mahanoy City in 1890 with his family, locating on East Pine Street. His wife was the former Linda Snyder of Columbia County, to whom he was married on June 1, 1878. Their children were Lulu, Bessie, Claude, Edith and Walter.

Devoting most of his time to his family and his practice, Dr. Grover limited his local affiliations to membership in the Methodist Church, the Odd Fellows Lodge, and the Patriotic Order Sons of America. He had served a term on the school board at Rock Glen but never became active in Mahanoy City politics.

The Samuel T. Wiley History of 1893 had this to say about him: "Dr. Grover is a man of good social and intellectual parts, qualifications which when combined with a persevering spirit and close application are sure to crown their possessor with ultimate success."

How long William Grover and his children remained part of the scene in Mahanoy City is not known. Only two Grovers can be found in the 1987-88 county telephone directory, both in Schuylkill Haven.