

MAHANAY CITY CHRONICLES
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THEY HELPED TO BUILDING COMMUNITY...

HENRY BURNARD and son John played significant roles in the building of Mahanoy City during its expansion era before the turn of the century.

They were a family of carpenters whose skills went into the construction of many homes and other structures as the borough stretched eastward and westward from its core.

According to an 1893 biography (Samuel T. Wiley), Henry was 33 years old when he left his home in Cornwall, England, and sailed for America, arriving in Mahanoy City in 1868.

With him came his two sons, John, nine, and Richard, seven, whose mother was buried in England where she had died in 1866.

After settling in Mahanoy City, Henry married the former Miss Millicent Symons by whom he had three children: Millicent, Lily and Arthur. Their homestead was at 421-23 E Centre St.

Working with his father, young John learned carpentry and earned his living at the trade until 1884 when, at the age of 25, he went into business as a building contractor. In 1892 he also began dealing as a lumber supplier.

One June 20, 1882, John took a bride in the person of Miss Emma King, daughter of George King. However, she died two years later. John married a second time on April 30, 1889, the bride being Miss Jennie Edwards, daughter of Thomas J. Edwards of Mahanoy City. They had three children, Hamilton, Jane and Norvin.

He also became active in local politics and was elected to a term on borough council in 1890.

ANDREW HOPPEs didn't arrive in Mahanoy City until 1877, when the borough was 11 years old, but he became one of the town's major real estate holders.

He was a descendent of an old German farming and milling family which had been in American for four generations.

His greatgrandfather, a native of Saxony, came to the new land in the mid-1700s and settled in the farming area of Lehigh Valley, where he spent the remainder of his life.

The greatgrandfather's son, Michael, grew up in the Lehigh region and served in General Washing's army during the Revolutionary War. After the war, Michael moved north over the Blue Mountain to establish a farm in the West Penn Township area (then part of Northampton County) which later (March 1, 1811) became part of then newly formed county of Schuylkill.

It was there that Christian Hoppes raised his 12 children, one of whom, was Andrew, born Jan 19, 1828.

In this young, Andrew worked in saw mills and grist mills long enough to learn the trade and go into the business for himself. He also operated two farms totaling 285 acres and an 80-acre timber tract on the Blue Mountain. He married the former Susanna Mosser and like his father before him, sired 12 children.

At the age of 51, Andrew decided to forsake the farm and moved to the coal town of Mahanoy City, where he entered the flour mill business and began to purchase homes and business places for rental income. His homestead was at Second and Centre Streets.

When Andrew's wife died in Mahanoy City on March 9, 1890, six of the Hoppes children were living in town; Israel, employed as a colliery stationary engineer, residing at 201 E Centre St; William, a bookkeeper, 203 E Centre St.; Dennis, a merchant, 205 E Centre St; George, a salesman, 207 E Centre St; Jacob, a salesman, 426 E Mahanoy St; Emma, wife of Adam

Wingert (see biography below), a blacksmith, 207 E Centre St. Another daughter, Sarah, was married to Charles Brode, Barnesville.

The Hoppes name is not to be found in Mahanoy City today, but it is prolific in the West Penn Township area where Andrew originated. The Mantzville telephone directory lists a total of 19 Hoppes families.

ADAM WINGERT, the son-in-law of Andrew Hoppes mentioned in the foregoing, was nine years old when his family came to Mahanoy city in 1865. Thirty-three years later he would become the outside foreman at Mahanoy City Colliery, a position which made him one of the best known citizens in the Mahanoy Valley.

Wingert was a descendent of a family which had been in Pennsylvania since the Revolutionary War times. His father, John Wingert, who spent all his life in Montgomery County, was a building contractor whose work included the construction of several locks in the Schuylkill Canal in Berks County.

Adam Wingert's father, Daniel, was born in Montgomery County but spent his early adulthood in Berks County working as a blacksmith at Robesonia Furnace and Sinking Spring. He and his wife, the former Mary Kauffman, had 10 children including Adam.

When Daniel brought his family to Mahanoy City in 1865, his skill as a blacksmith enabled him to secure employment at the Tunnel Ridge Colliery.

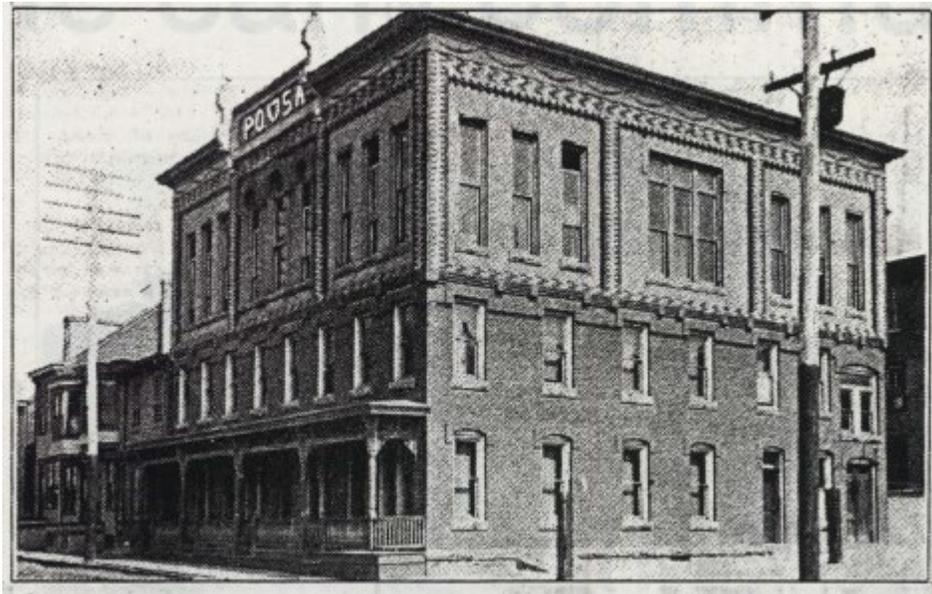
Young Adam attended a few years of grade school here before going to work as a slate picker in the breakers. Like his father, he eventually learned blacksmithing and working in that line for 15 years at the Mahanoy City Colliery, until he was promoted to assistant outside foreman. Finally, in 1898, he became the general outside foreman.

Adam and his wife, the former Emma Hoppes, had one child, Kate, who became the bride of Harry Christ, a mining engineer for the Locust Mountain Coal Company at Shenandoah.

Adam Wingert family was prominent in Salem Evangelical Church where he served as president of the board of trustees for 25 years and chaired the building committee during the erection of the present edifice at Fourth and

Centre Streets in 1903-04. He was also superintendent of the Sunday school for 10 years and a member of the choir for 20 years.

One of Adam's sisters, Ella, lived in Locust Valley and was married to John Klingerman, whose father, David Klingerman, was a pioneer settler in that valley.



FROM THE PAST - The Patriotic Order Sons of America was one of the most prominent organizations in Mahanoy City's early history. The POSofA building at Second and Pine streets, pictured here in 1913, was the scene of much activity, with residential tenants on the two lower floors and a meeting hall above. Many local folks may also remember when Joseph Ricchiuti conducted a barbershop in the basement which was reached by going down steps thru the door at lower right. One of his apprentices was a lad named John Sullivan, who later acquired the nickname "Puck". Today the old building stands in a state of disrepair, a reminder of a bygone era during which fraternalism thrived.