

MAHANOY CITY CHRONICLES/Researched by Lorraine Stanton

Residents who helped mold town

By **BILL O'BRIEN**
Herald writer

DR. A. B. SHERMAN was one of Schuylkill County's oldest, if not the oldest, practicing physicians when he died on Dec. 10, 1900, at his home at 217-19 E. Centre St., Mahanoy City. He was 78 and had been practicing since 1852.

Dr. Sherman was a pioneer doctor in the Mahanoy Valley, having served the people of Ashland and Girardville before coming to Mahanoy City.

In Girardville, where he spent most of his life, he was a deputy coroner during the height of the Molly Maguire troubles during the early 1870s. As such, he was in charge of the inquests for the murders in that section, in addition to treating victims of the violence rampant during that era. In community circles, he was an organizer and president of the Girard Savings Fund Association.

In Ashland, he was a director of the Citizens National Bank for many years, and active in the Masonic, Odd Fellows and POSofA fraternal groups.

After moving to Mahanoy City in the 1880s, he took up residence with his son, Austin, an attorney and justice of the peace, at 217-19 E. Centre St.

He involved himself in the local government and was elected to the Mahanoy City School Board, serving as president and later as treasurer.

He also served the county as a physician for the Poor District (now Rest Haven), and filled a federal position as president of the regional pension examining board.

Dr. Sherman originated in Montrose, Susquehanna County, where he was born in 1822. In addition to his son in Mahanoy City, he had a son, Harry, who was practicing medicine in

Easton in 1900.

BERNARD WISZINSKI was representative of a new wave of immigrants — those from Eastern Europe — who arrived in Mahanoy City during the latter 19th century and added another distinctive flavor to the melting pot.

His tailor shop to the 300 block of West Centre street made him a familiar figure in the First Ward during the early decades of the 20th century, and in the 1903 election he was chosen by the residents of that ward to represent them on borough council.

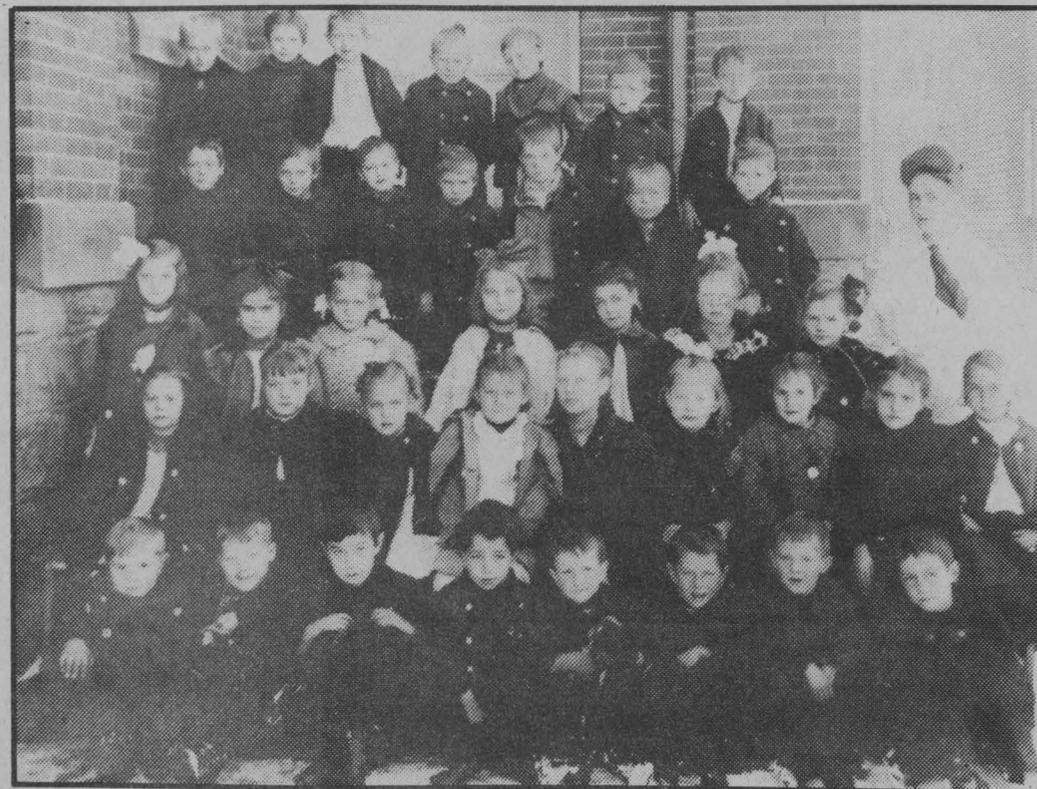
Mrs. Wiszinski was a native of Lithuania, then part of Russia, where he was born on Aug. 15, 1873. It was there he learned the tailoring trade which he brought with him to America in 1890.

After six months in New York City, he set out for Pennsylvania's anthracite region and landed in Hazleton. After working there for several months as a breaker boy and a laborer digging cellars for home construction, he moved on to Mahanoy City and found a job in his chosen trade, a tailor shop.

By 1896 he had accumulated enough capital to open his own shop at 311 W. Centre St. In 1898 he moved the shop to 323 W. Centre and made it his permanent business site.

For a brief period he branched into the saloon business, but he made the move at the wrong time. The 1902 strike was about to begin and it dragged on for six months, leaving the townfolk with little money to spent on beer and liquor. So he dropped the bar business and concentrated on tailoring and attending to his governmental duties as a member of borough council.

He and his wife, Anna Miloski, a native born American, had two



1907 SCHOLARS — Mahanoy City Borough was six years shy of its 50th birthday when these second graders posed at the Pine Street School. Any of them still alive today would be nearing their 90th birthdays. In the front row are (from left) Nicholas Smith, Karl Wertz, Frank Petrosky, William Bendinsky, Harry Luke, Harold Saint Clair, Clarence Kemery and Christie Smallwood. Second row: Emma Bankes, Barbara Pearson, Amelia Heisroth, Maggie Litwaitis, Ella Smith, Elizabeth Petri, Florence Bollinger, Ruth

boys, Bernard, born in 1904, and Edmund, born in 1905. The family attended Saint Joseph's Lithuanian Catholic Church.

ANICETAS STRIMAITIS was another early Lithuanian im-

migrant.

He came here in the 1890s to work in the mines, and it almost cost him his life. While employed at the Elmwood Colliery he was caught under a fall of coal and

Deem and Raymond Hand. Third row: Marian Wright, Mary Rich, Marian Kolb, Evelyn Hoppes, Lottie Richelderfer, Anna Fogarty and Minnie Wolf. Fourth row: Lewis Wertz, Leon Scherer, William Norris, Frank Norris, Frank Algonas, Walter Saint Clair and William Sporinsky. Fifth row: Wilbur Webb, Arthur Kemery, William Fanelli, John Fenton, William Stocker, William Walker and Joseph Litsch. The teacher is not identified.

(Schuylkill Historical Society photo)

spent 18 months recuperating in the Miners Hospital at Fountain Springs. He never returned to mining but found success in other endeavors.

After attending night school to

obtain a better command of English and other basic subjects, he became a partner in a Mahanoy City butcher shop and remained in that business for two years. He left here to locate in Mount Carmel and worked in the butcher trade for the Weissinger Brothers.

His next move was to Shenandoah where he took a position in a grocery store. Shortly afterward he joined the Lithuanian language newspaper, Darbuiniku Viltis, as supervisor of the job printing department.

Politics got him his next job in February 1905 when he became supervisor of the infirmary at the county alms house, commencing in February 1905.

Mr. Strimaitis was born in Lithuania-Russia on Oct. 17, 1875. He was three years old when his father, George, died. After attending school for several years, young Anicetas went to work in the fields beside his mother, Agotta (Laurinaitis). At age 15 he left Lithuania and sailed to America.

His first 18 months in this country were spent in Worcester, Mass., where he worked in a butcher shop. He left there in 1892 and made his way to Scranton where he took a job in the mines and became a U.S. citizen.

Two years later he came to Mahanoy City where he met and married Miss Marguerite Lutkevitz. His talent as a violinist and composer of instrumental music and lyrics made him popular among the Lithuanian American community here.

During his seven years in Mahanoy he was active in the various ethnic organization which sprang up among the immigrant population. He made his mark on the local fraternal scene by founding an organization known as The Independent Club.