

MAHANOY CITY CHRONICLES/Researched by Lorraine Stanton

Players on the Mahanoy scene...

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Herald writer

HERE ARE some biographical sketches of people who made contributions to the development of Mahanoy City. You won't find their names on the rolls of the rich and the famous, but neither were they insignificant in the roles they played on the local scene.

SOLOMON H. LUTZ was one of the pioneer carpenters who came to Mahanoy City in its infancy and devoted the remainder of his life to building the town.

Born in 1826 in Lewistown Valley, he arrived in Mahanoy City in 1860 and constructed his own home at 500 E. Mahanoy St. He died there on July 21, 1895. His widow, Kate (Kline), continued living there until her death in the early 1900s.

Many of the older homes in Mahanoy today were the handiwork of Solomon Lutz whose skill with hammer and saw were applied to his trade for 35 years.

His son, Robert, also took up the carpentry trade. He was born in Mahanoy City on March 31, 1874, and began working alongside his father. After the father's death, Robert worked for other carpentry contractors until 1906 when he formed his own business.

He served on Mahanoy City Borough Council for two terms prior to World War I. He and his wife, Mabel Kriner, had seven children: Leon, Carrie, Robert, Norman, Ira, Martha and Roy.

JOHN KEILMAN arrived in Mahanoy City in the days when you could count the number of buildings on one hand.

A native of Hoenbach, Germany, he came to America in 1855 and made his way to Mahanoy City where he joined

the Faust and Boyer families as the early settlers.

Keilman spent his early years helping the to clear the Mahanoy forest, then took up mining for 10 years. In 1871 his attention turned to family and he bought 50 acres of brush land in Rush Township. He cleared the land and farmed it until his death on Feb. 20 1888.

He and his wife, Susanna Young, met on the ship sailing to America. Their five children were Margaret, Mary, Susan, Dora and John Jr.

After Mr. Keilman's death, the farm was taken over by his son, John Jr., who prior to that time had served as the Barnesville postmaster and station agent for the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. He helped to organize the Lakeside Grange, was secretary for both Reformed and Lutheran congregations of Christ Church, served on the Rush Township school board.

John Jr. went all the way to Iowa to be married on March 16, 1898, to Anna Scherer. They had six children: Mabel, Roy, twins Ruth and Mildred, John and Elmer.

THE GARRETT family of the late 1800s was much better known in Pottsville than in Mahanoy City, but two members of the family, Nathaniel and Hannah, spent a portion of their lives here.

Nathaniel was born in Pottsville in 1831 and came to Mahanoy City after his service in the Civil War. He worked at Hills Colliery where he eventually became inside foreman and spent his older years there as a watchman.

He lived at 24 W. Laurel St. and had three sons: William, a butcher; Maurice, a dressmaker; George, a laborer; also a daughter, Clara.

Hannah Garrett lived in Pottsville until the death of her



CLASS OF 1911 — Seventy-seven years ago this month, diplomas were presented to these seniors at the Spruce Street Grammar School. In front are (from left) Minnie Sieger, Edward Sadusky, Bessie Littlehales, Arthur Schoener, Anthony Danisavich, John Danko,

husband, Francis Seltzer, some time prior to 1890, after which she came to Mahanoy City to live with her youngest daughter, Rebecca, at 106 W. Mahanoy St.

The Garretts had a proud history in Pennsylvania. The great-grandfather of Nathaniel and Hannah came from Germany and settled in Lebanon County where he was one of the first

commissioners to serve when the county was formed in 1813.

His son, Jacob, spent his life in Lebanon County, but Jacob's son, George (father of Nathaniel and Hannah) moved the Garrett name to Pottsville where he earned a living as a charcoal burner until his death in 1842. He and his wife, Mary Mills, had six other children.

JOHN PRICE was a name

Mae Foley and Michael Holly. Back row: Hazel Kates, Frederick Walewsky, Rachael Cohen, Edward Courtney, Dorothy Heiser, Henry Rynkiewicz, Veronica Larkin and Joseph Malloy.

(County Historical Society photo)

recognized in the mining industry around the turn of the century in Mahanoy City.

For many years he worked at the Buck Mountain Colliery and eventually became inside foreman at the Vulcan Slope, where 300 borough men earned their livings.

He was born in Wales on 1884 and was three years old when brought to America by his

parents, John and Mary Ann Price. They also brought two other children, Thomas and William.

The family chose Mahanoy City as their home. A few years later they moved up the mountain to New Boston to be near the father's work in the mines, but soon moved back to Mahanoy City and finally located in Buck Mountain and became a patch family for keeps.

Young John began work in boyhood as a slate picker in the Buck Mountain breaker. From that position he moved miner's helper, then miner, fire boss, assistant inside foreman and on June 16, 1912, was named inside foreman for the Vulcan slope section. At age 28, he was one of the youngest foremen in the region. He and wife, Mamie Kraunch, had three children: Thelma, Margaret and John.

WILLIAM OLIVER was 26 years old in 1869 when he decided to leave the mines of Staffordshire, England, and bring his wife, Hannah Beddard, and two children to America.

After 15 days on the ocean they landed in New York and came directly to Mahanoy City where William worked in the mines until his death in 1901.

They found a home at 24 W. Spruce St. where six more children were born: Eliza, Hannah, William, George, John and Emma.

Son George, born in 1870, began work as a slate picker at the age of nine years, became a miner at age 20, eventually was made a fire boss at Tunnel Ridge Colliery, and in 1906 was elevated to inside foreman at Hills Colliery.

He served eight years on the School Board including two years as president. He and his wife, Annie Bradley, had four children: Edith, William, Annie and Elsie.