

## MAHANOY CITY CHRONICLES/Researched by Lorraine Stanton

# The story of two superintendents

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Herald writer

IN THE 86-YEAR history of the Mahanoy City School District, 11 men had the distinction of serving as superintendent. Today's chronicle tells the story of two of these administrators who directed the education of the town's youth during the boom years of the 1800s.

ELI S. REINHOLD arrived in Mahanoy City in 1870 to serve as the superintendent of schools, but he was soon lured away from education to a more lucrative career in banking.

He came from prominent Lancaster County lineage, the town where he was born having been named after his family.

Before fate directed his footsteps to Schuylkill County, Mr. Reinhold alternated jobs several times between education and business, until banking finally opened the door to success for him in Mahanoy City.

The Eli Spayd Reinhold story begins with his birth at Reinholdsville on Jan. 14, 1847. After an education at Myerstown Academy and Millersville State Normal School (now Millersville University), he was qualified for a career in commercial law and bookkeeping. However, upon returning home he became a teacher.

After three years in the Lancaster County classrooms, he left teaching to accept the position of bookkeeper for a major wholesale firm in Philadelphia. But the lure of education was still strong, and when the Union Business College opened in 1865, he accepted a position there.

Once again, business extended an opportunity and he answered the call. The New York Life Insurance Company opened a western office in Detroit and wanted a reliable bookkeeper. Union Business College recommended Eli for the job and off he went to Detroit in 1866.

However, the pressures of

business and the rugged mid-west winters proved too taxing, and his health began to fail. He returned to Lancaster to recuperate for a while, then set his sights on resumption of a teaching career, which brought him to Schuylkill County.

When the Mahanoy City School District advertised for a superintendent in 1870, Mr. Reinhold was one of the applicants. He was hired and became the third man to hold the office, but would remain in it for only one school term.

In August of 1871 he resigned the superintendency and joined the staff of the First National Bank, which put him in the company of some of the town's most noted pioneer businessmen and industrials who founded the bank.

Mr. Reinhold's affiliation with the First National was to last 18 years. By 1881 he had accumulated enough capital to purchase a half ownership of the town's principal newspaper, the weekly Mahanoy Tribune, which he also served as editor. In 1882 he traveled to Europe and wrote a series which appeared in the Tribune, describing the cities he visited. The series was of great interest to the many Mahanoy residents who were immigrants from that continent.

By 1885 Mr. Reinhold was ready to get out of the newspaper business and sold his share to his partner, Isaac Y. Sollenberger, one of the town's pioneer lawyers.

The year 1889 saw the town booming with 11,000 people, double the number who lived there when Eli Reinhold first set foot in the borough. With the growing population and thriving industry, the time was ripe for another banking institution. Thus was formed the Union National Bank and founders chose Mr. Reinhold as the man to run it as cashier.

Living in the heart of mining country also led to his avocation as a delver into geology and mineralogy. He accumulated a large collection of specimens



**TEACHERS IN 1899**— These were the men and women who moulded the youth of Mahanoy when the borough was preparing to leave the 19th century and enter the 20th: (from left) front, Unidentified, Minnie Reed Giffin, Carrie Hassel Warning, Mary Leahy, Unidentified, Unidentified, Hannah Edwards, Theresa Bastian Post, Minna Huppert. Second row, Mary Moll, Unidentified, Sallie Hough, Rebecca Linton, Superintendent William Ehrhardt, Unidentified, John Linton, Ella Flail Shelly, Unidentified,

and wrote numerous articles on the subject for the scientific publications of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, of which he was an associate member.

The Reinhold residence was at 114 W. Centre St. (now the site of the Bell Telephone building). His wife, the former Louisa Compton, a New Jersey native, who came to Mahanoy City with him. They were married in 1866 and had only one child, Milton

C. Reinhold, who became a lawyer in Pottsville after his graduation from Bucknell University.

**FRANK S. MILLER'S** tenure as superintendent of schools last six years, 1890-96.

He was the greatgrandson of Adam Miller, a Protestant Irish immigrant who was one of the early settlers in the vicinity of Clifford, Susquehanna County (north of Scranton) where he

James Prosser. Third row, Jennie Kline, Mary Entwistle, Hawthorne Lyon Ball, Unidentified, Elizabeth Hornsby Dieter, Della Murphy McInerney, Elizabeth Flanagan, Laura Perry, Unidentified, G. Margaret McCauley, Unidentified, Unidentified. Fourth row, Annette McInerney, Mary Muldowney Scully, Viola Clay, Margaret McGuire, Unidentified. Back row, Mary McAtee, Unidentified.

(Schuylkill County Historical Society photo)

arrived in the late 1770s and devoted his life to farming.

Adam's son, Charles (grandfather of Frank), became a Baptist minister who spent most of his career serving the congregation at Clifford, Susquehanna County.

One of the eight children of Rev. Charles Miller was Seward E. (father of Frank), who was born at the Clifford homestead in 1825. After graduation from the University of Lewisburg, he

became an attorney in Luzerne County, but later turned to his father's vocation and became a Baptist minister in 1855.

Rev. Seward Miller also sired eight children, the third of whom was Frank S., born at Clifford on May 9, 1862.

Frank was valedictorian of the class of 1883 at Millersville State Normal School. He took graduate courses in German and French, also studied law and was qualified for the bar but never took the admittance exam. His first job as an educator was principal of Everett High School, Bedford County, which he undertook at the age of 21.

In 1880 he left Bedford County to become principal of the academic department at Pierce Business College, Philadelphia. Two years later, Mahanoy City School Board extended him the invitation to supervise the borough system and he accepted effective April 1890. At that time the town had 2,000 children in 32 classrooms.

Mr. Miller was in the fifth year of his marriage to the former Clara Gardiner when he came here with her and their four daughters, Helen, Edith, Adeline and Edna. During his six-year tenure they lived on South Main Street, but the 1890 borough directory does not list the address on that street.

There's also no information at hand as to where Mr. Miller went after leaving the superintendency.

**THE ELEVEN** who served as chief administrator during the history of the Mahanoy City School District were:

Elijah Bull, 1865-68.  
Channing Stebbins, 1868-69.  
Eli S. Reinhold, 1870-71.  
William L. Balentine, 1871-90.  
Frank S. Miller, 1890-96.  
William N. Ehrhardt, 1896-1915.  
Hiram W. Dodd, 1915-16.  
Henry A. Oday, 1916-35.  
Joseph F. Noonan, 1935-37.  
Harvey S. Bolan, 1937-42.  
Joseph E. Boyle, 1942-59.