

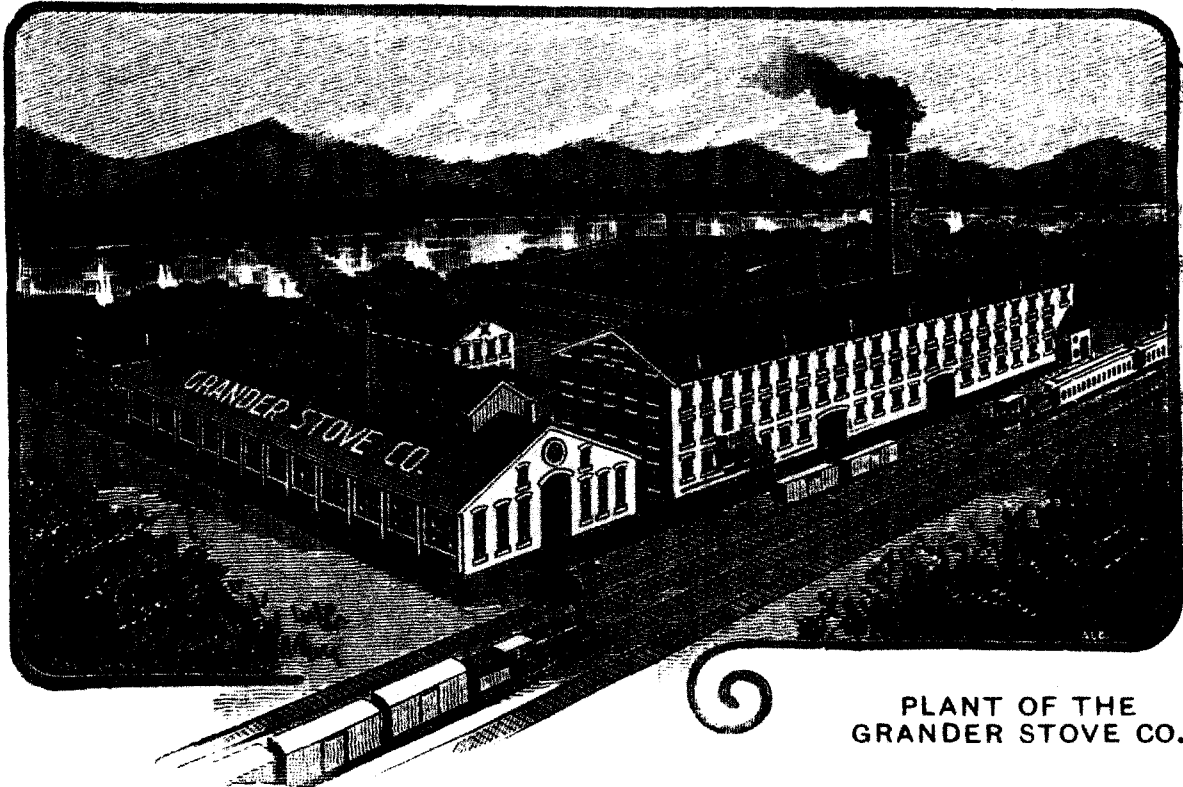
John Milton Lewin's Royersford Shoe Store



Lewin's First Shoe Store

J. Milton Lewin, oldest son of William Lewin, spent most of his boyhood days helping on his father's farm. That farmhouse, also known as the Lewin homestead, is today the main museum house of the SFAHS. J. Milton would have preferred a college education but his father objected. He attended the Hobson School in the neighborhood and entered the shoemaker shop of John U. Bean, in Upper Providence Township, on April 1, 1873, to learn the trade. He served two years as an apprentice, and then opened a shop of his own in Royersford on April 1, 1875. With no competition to speak of, his small business

prospered. In fact it did so well that he was able to purchase half interest in the general store of Rogers & Son just two years later. He continued in that business from May 27, 1879 until August 1, 1881. He then sold his interest in the business to Jones Rogers, and entered the shipping department of the Buckwalter Stove Company, where he continued until September 13, 1883. It was at this time in 1883 that he got back into the business of being a shoe dealer. J. Milton Lewin built a new store at 437 Main Street in the borough of Royersford where he operated a successful business for nine years. On September 1, 1892, he sold his shoe business to F. S. Brown in order to raise enough money to purchase Benjamin Carver's interest in the Grander Stove Company. Mr. Lewin was later elected treasurer of this Royersford company. (artist sketch shown below)



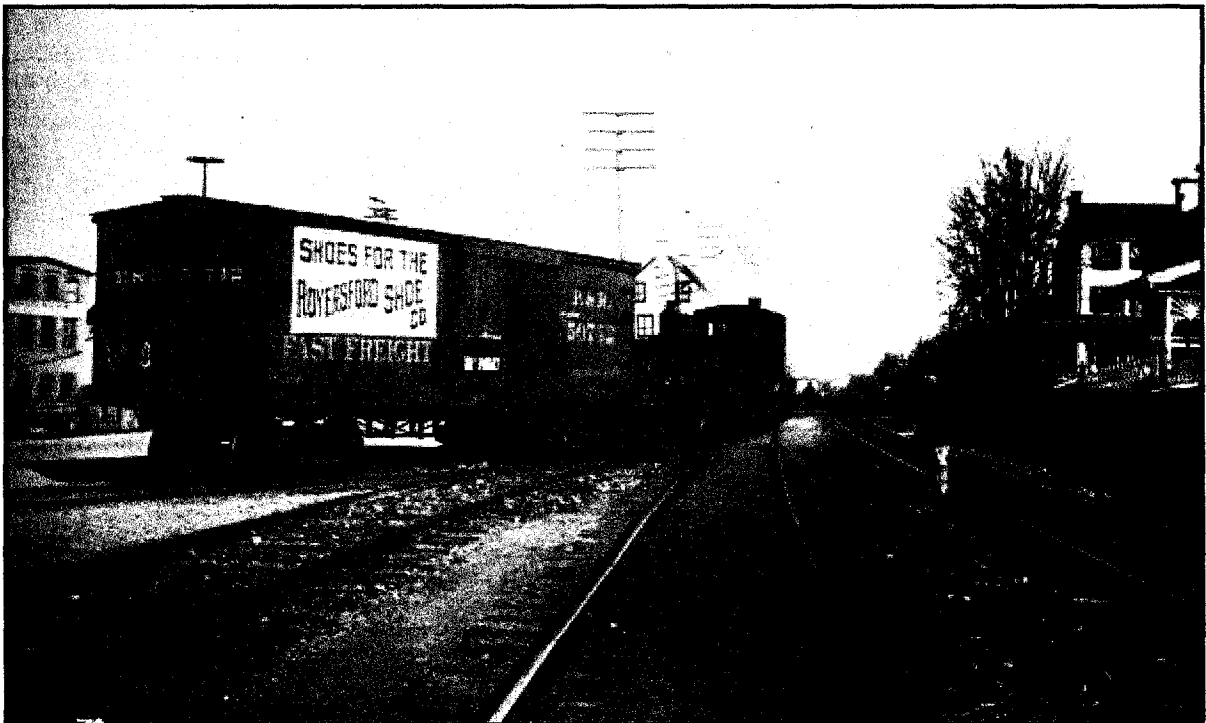
PLANT OF THE
GRANDER STOVE CO.

In 1896 J. Milton Lewin seized the opportunity to repurchase the shoe store and the surrounding property in a Sheriff's sale. He promptly reorganized the business as the Royersford Shoe Company and had a grand reopening in 1897. The new proprietor was John Snyder whose name appears on the store front sign in the



1897 Photo - Re-Opening of the New Royersford Shoe Co. Store

photo shown. The following year, 1898, J. Milton Lewin published the Archives of Royersford. This book used to advertise his shoe business and distributed at his store was one of the most complete historical overviews of Royersford in its time. Many consider it to be an essential reference for anyone studying the borough's history prior to 1900.



MACHINE SHOP

THE 'SHIFTER' AT WORK

AMERICAN HOUSE

The archives book contains a written history of Royersford with expressive narratives on all of the businesses, schools and churches of the times and over 65 quality photographs.



J. Joshua B. Walther, 1874-1944



B. F. Sargent, 1871-1910



Stephen Carter, 1871-1910



Francis E. Emmert, 1868-1910



H. W. Eberhart, 1871-1910



R. J. Lettice, 1871-1910



John Straffer, 1871-1910



J. M. Lewin, 1871-1910



Howard B. Walther, 1871-1910

BURGESSES OF ROYERSFORD—PAST AND PRESENT.

WHAT'S THE NEXT HOLIDAY?

Royersford Shoe Company 1899 Calendar

New Year '99

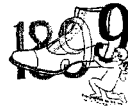
SUNDAY, JANUARY 1
BANK CLOSED MONDAY

Make good resolutions this month, but temper 'em with caution, that they break not.

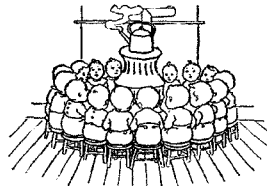
A RULE to know how many days every month in the year has:

"Thirty days hath November, April, June and September, February hath XXVIII alone, And all the rest have XXX."

Learn to Write the "9"



And every time you write it, remember—NINE dollars will buy three pairs of our 1899 shoes—or, 25 will buy two pairs of our patent leather shoes. Or, 35 will buy a pair of Women's Shoes of elegant design; a pair of Men's Shoes of the latest shape; a pair of Children's Shoes, and Rubbers for all three. Don't forget the 9 when you date your letter, and don't forget us when you want shoes.



WE ARE COOKING UP SOME SURPRISES FOR OUR FRIENDS THIS YEAR

SUNDAYS

- 1
- 8 FIRST AFTER EPIPHANY
- 15
- 22
- 29



WEATHER FORECAST FOR JANUARY
Probably blizzardy
Good rubber boot weather

Don't risk your lungs by getting snow in your shoes
We have a boot combination here that will keep your feet dry and WARM at the same time

Royersford Shoe Co.

ROYERSFORD, PA.

Shown here is the front page of a Royersford Shoe Co. calendar that was published in 1899 by J. Milton Lewin. The SFAHS was able to purchase this item through an e-Bay auction in March 2006 and it is currently on display in our museum. We also have a copy

of the "Archives of Royersford Book" and a history of the Lewin family in our library. The little cobbler shop that is situated at the back of the main house is in fact J. Milton Lewin's first shoe store as shown on the front page. Visitors are always welcome.

J. Milton Lewin throughout his years was associated with many Royersford businesses, among them the Royersford Iron Foundry, of which he was president at the time of its sale to Floyd Wells & Company. He assisted to organize the Penn Glass Company, and was one of its board of directors. He was one of the founders of the Keystone Meter Company, and continued as a director until its reorganization. Mr. Lewin was treasurer of the original Enterprise Hosiery Company, of which he was one of the organizers. He with five other persons organized the Fernwood Cemetery Company. He was also a director of the Industrial Savings Bank, chartered March 21, 1902. Not only did he assist in the organization of that institution, but was also very prominent in the organization of the two national banks, the Home and the National Bank of Royersford.

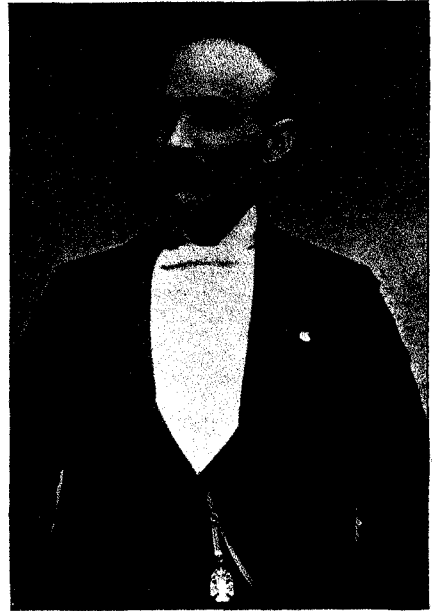
In addition to his many business ventures and accomplishments, J. Milton Lewin was also one of the founding fathers of Royersford. He was directly involved with the incorporation of the borough in 1879. Thirteen years later in 1892 he was elected and served as Burgess of the town.

J. Milton Lewin was 45 years old when he posed for this photograph that appeared in his book. The caption reads "Proprietor of the Royersford Shoe Co." Written history is often based on what remains and what we choose to lay emphasis on. I guess for me, in spite of the overwhelming number of involvements and accomplishments of this man, I still cling to the memories of that little cobbler shop and the young boy, who as a shoemaker's apprentice, went on to become a prominent businessman in his home town of Royersford.

J. Milton Lewin was born in Springville, now Spring City on June 21, 1853. He was the eldest son of William and Rebecca (Custer) Lewin. The Lewin families are of English descent. William and Rebecca had a large family with nine children. In 1861 they purchased 31 acres of land in Royersford and built their farmhouse on the road we now call Main Street. That house shown below, looking very much as it appeared in 1861, is the fourth oldest house in the borough of Royersford.

J. Milton was married to Lizzie Bean on February 18, 1875. They had three children, William A., Isaac E., and Lawrence H. Lewin. Lizzie died in 1894 and J. Milton later married Mary G. Gibson. In 1923, at the age of 70, when some of us are retired or at rest, J. Milton was on the road again. He packed up his bags and left Royersford for the Isle of Pines where he purchased a grapefruit plantation. That venture soured as the isle was

JOHN MILTON LEWIN



PROPRIETOR OF THE ROYERSFORD SHOE CO.

hit by a tidal wave wiping out everything. Milton then resurfaced in Philadelphia, working for the U. S. Mint. A short time later he opened a cigar store in Philadelphia, which proved to be his last business venture.

In 1938, J. Milton Lewin at age 85, died from a heart attack. His body was returned to Royersford for the services and burial. A private funeral was held at his son, Lawrence B. Lewin's house at 523 Washington Street in Royersford. That date was September 7, 1838.



526 Main St. Royersford Lewin Homestead circa 1898 - Boyhood home of J. Milton Lewin