

Why This Was Written

Research has a way of turning corners and having a whole new vista open up before you, pulling you into an area of history that you did not expect to enter. I was looking at old deeds and discovered that there were many pages in consecutive order of filed deeds recording the buying of properties for school houses in Warwick Township. I had also seen on the early atlas maps from 1864, 1875, and 1899 that the locations of early school houses were marked by an icon that looked like small school with a bell-tower on top. This was all I needed to dig further. And dig I did! What I thought would take a few months turned into over a year of gathering and co-ordinating material.

The old deeds provided dates and The Lititz Record (1877-1937) and The Lititz Express (1877-1937) provided a wealth of information about what was happening in the realm of education. . Local correspondents from the small villages in the township provided small snippets of what was occurring in their neighborhood to what happened when a teacher was too sick to teach school. This did not happen often. One answer I found was that the school most often closed its doors until the teacher recovered. The one instance where the teacher (who needed time for family matters) tried to supply a substitute and was censored because the substitute was not certified. The school was closed until the regular teacher returned and the students had to make up the days that were taught by the stand-in.

Teachers were chosen on a yearly basis by the Warwick Township School Directors, and applicants were expected to pass some fairly rigorous testing in order to be certified. This would allow them to teach, usually, grades 1 through 8 in a small school building that could be very cold in the winter-time. The number of students would vary from about 25 to sometimes almost 50. When the higher numbers were reached the people of that area would start making sounds about having the school enlarged and having two teachers, and even having a graded school where the students would be divided into groups closer in age. As the pupil population grew the need for a high school for the township became more apparent. The students going on to high school needed to go outside of the Warwick Township District. Lititz High School was one of these. The Warwick Township District had to pay for these students to attend, and it was felt that a high school was needed for the district. It was built in Rothsville, and with this the modern age of education began in Warwick Township.

I hope you enjoy reading about these early schools and how they came and went. I am sure more information will come to the surface about these schools, but for now, I must draw this chapter to a close.