

History of York County, Biographical, Illustrated, Volume II, Chicago, J. H. Beers and Company, 1907

Prof. J. W. Thoman, son of **Anthony H.** and **Sarah (Wildasin) Thoman**, is, perhaps, known more widely than most men among the teachers and educators of Pennsylvania. He is a native of Hanover, Pa., where he was born July 17, 1858. At the age of six years he was placed in the public schools of his native town, and one year thereafter his parents removed to Adams County, near Abbottstown. In the winter young **Thoman** attended a country school, and in the summer he enjoyed the advantages of a select school at Abbottstown. His time, when not in school, was employed in working on the farm. In 1875 he entered the East Berlin Normal School, and attended a second term there the following year.

In the fall of 1876 **Mr. Thoman** entered upon his first work as a teacher in the public schools of York County. He became acquainted with the prominent teachers of that county, which induced him, in the spring of 1877, to enter the old York County Academy. He again, after being there one term, engaged in teaching, and so continued until 1883, when he entered the Shippensburg State Normal School. After spending one year in that institution he again engaged in his profession, and rapidly advanced in his chosen calling.

In 1884 **Prof. Thoman** was elected principal of the Abbottstown schools, and continued at the head of those schools with growing popularity. His winter's work was augmented by a term of summer instruction, with a view of preparing young men and women for the profession of teaching. The result of his enterprise was a popular Normal School for teachers, which he continued for a period of six years, and the large numbers of ladies and gentlemen who attended the school was a perceptible indication of its efficiency and real excellence.

During the time of **Prof. Thoman's** incumbency at Abbottstown, other places extended calls to him, among these, Duncannon, Perry Co., Pa., where he was elected in the fall of 1888 to the principalship of the schools at a large increase of salary, above that which he was receiving at Abbottstown, but owing to the persistent appeals of directors, patrons and pupils of Abbottstown he was induced not to accept the position. He held his first provisional certificate in 1876, passed the examination for professional certificate in 1882, and in 1886 passed the examining board on Permanent certificates with an average of ninety two per cent. He also holds two certificates under the Departmental Service of the Government of the United States.

In May, 1890, **Prof. Thoman** was elected county superintendent of schools of Adams County, was re-elected in 1893, elected for a third term in 1896, and continued to serve until June, 1899, a period of nine years in succession.

He is a member of the Reformed Church, and, in connection with his public school work, held the superintendency of Emmanuel Reformed Sunday-school of Abbottstown for eight years. **Prof. Thoman** held, from time to time, positions of trust and responsibility, and in December, 1903, was employed by the Record Publishing Company, of Hanover, Pa., to audit the accounts of the company. On May 1, 1904, when the Record Publishing Company and the Hanover Herald consolidated and became incorporated under the name of the Hanover Printing Company,

Prof. Thoman was the man chosen for the responsible position of cashier and bookkeeper, the position which he holds at the present time.

On Dec. 30, 1880, **Prof. Thoman** was united in matrimony with **Miss Phoebe Mummert**, the daughter of **Samuel** and **Rebecca (Wehler) Mummert**, of Hamilton Township, Adams County. This union has been blessed with three children, two daughters and one son, as follows: **Carrie Mae**, born Nov. 26, 1881; **Gertrude Naomi**, born Sept. 15, 1884; and **Horace Clay**, born Sept. 2, 1888. On April 1, 1904, he with his family removed from Abbottstown to Hanover, where he will, doubtless, spend the remaining years of his life. A notable feature of **Prof. Thoman's** work is the full and earnest devotion to that which is before him. Whatever demands his efforts receives from him careful and painstaking attention. [The above sketch was given by one who has been in close touch with **Prof. Thoman** since boyhood.]

www.theperryhistorians.org