

Liberty Band concert dedicated to Altmiller

The second concert of the 1983 series which will be presented Sunday by the Hazleton Liberty Band will be dedicated to the memory of Justus C. Altmiller who was one of its founders and its leader for about 25 years.

Justus C. Altmiller was born in Lautenhausen, Germany in 1840 and came to America at the age of fifteen. He worked in the mines, on the railroad, and as an engineer for A. Pardee & Co. at their flour mill.

In 1859 he, along with six other musicians, organized "Gleim's Band" which met and rehearsed in the old Odd Fellows Hall on East Broad St. near Cedar. Together with the other members of this band he enlisted as a musician in the Union army in 1861.

When the regimental bands were disbanded by an act of Congress in 1862, he returned to Hazleton and resumed his position with A. Pardee & Co. He reenlisted with other band members again in 1864 and served in the band of the First Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps until his discharge on June 13, 1865. He was with the band when Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court on April 9, 1865.

After the war when John Gleim I retired as leader of the band, Justus was chosen as leader and served in that capacity until 1892 when he surrendered the baton to his nephew, Justus E. Altmiller.

Some of the high-lights during his tenure of leadership included participation of the band in: State Firemen's Parade in Philadelphia in 1866 winning first prize, the Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia in 1876, leading the parade for the State Convention of the Independent Order of Redmen in 1884, The State Convention Parade of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1885, and James G. Blaine's Reception in Hazle-



Justus C. Altmiller

ton in 1886.

Upon Mr. Altmiller's return from the War he entered the grocery business and in 1870 added a full line of dry goods. He was not only a respected and straightforward businessman, he was a public servant as well. He was elected to council on the Republican ticket and served from 1883 to 1892. He was elected Mayor of Hazleton from 1895 to 1898. His incumbency in both offices was noted for efficiency and capability. He also served as director of the Hazleton Building and Loan Association.

At his passing in September 1910, the entire band participated in the funeral rites in full uniform with draped instruments.

The concert will be presented at the Hazleton Senior High School and the public is invited to attend free of charge.