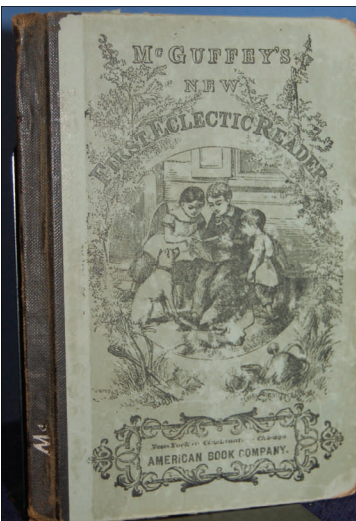


History of William Holmes McGuffey

McGuffey School District is named after William Holmes McGuffey. McGuffey, author of the Eclectic Readers, was born in a one-room log home in West Finley Township on September 23, 1800. He was the second of eleven children in his family. McGuffey spent just two years in the log home located five miles southwest of Claysville, PA, before his family moved to Ohio. In 1932, Henry Ford had the home moved to Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan.



McGuffey was a very good student and even though he was just 14 years old, the principal of the school provided him with a certificate that would let him become a roving teacher. McGuffey realized that he needed a more formal education and he enrolled in Washington College in 1820. This college is now Washington and Jefferson College in nearby Washington, PA. Upon graduation in 1826 with a B. A. degree, he became a professor of Languages at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He also became an ordained Presbyterian minister in 1829. In 1822, William and his brother Alexander prepared their first reader called *A First Reader*.

The first and second eclectic readers were published in 1836. The third and fourth Readers were copyrighted in 1837. By 1920, over 120 million copies of the Reader were sold in the next 85 years and were used in some 35 states. They were called “eclectic” because they included stories, poems, essays, speeches, and scripture. They are still used today, often by the homeschooled.



There is a memorial located on the site of the one-room log home in memory of William Holmes McGuffey. The inscription on the marker reads in part, “Educator, advocate of free public schools, author of McGuffey Eclectic Readers and founder of the graded studies system.”

